IN 1968, IN MANY COUNTRIES OF WESTERN EUROPE, STUDENT MILITANCY HAS RISEN TO UNPRECEDENTED LEVELS - REACHING IN FRANCE THE HEIGHT OF DAILY MASS BATTLES WITH THE POLICE, THE PARANOID MILITARY FORCES OF THE CAPITALIST STATE.

In France (considered in detail in another article in this issue) less than 10% of university students come from industrial working class homes, the overwhelming majority being drawn from the middle strata of the population. That "middle class" students rather than workers should have initiated the 1968 wave of militant class struggle in France is a phenomenon that calls for comment. The principal reason for it are threefold:

Firstly, conditions within the universities are deplorable. The number of French university students has risen in the last ten years from 170,000 to 514,000 - with no comparable increase in teaching staff, accommodation or facilities. Further, until the reforms forced on the authorities in May/June, the administration was mediaeval and bureaucratic in the extreme.

Secondly, over the past fifty years the character of the university has undergone a profound change. Once a primary function of the universities was to train personnel for the independent professions - law, medicine, etc. But with the development of finance capitalism, these professions have to a great extent been incorporated either into the apparatus of the state or into that of the great capitalist trusts, so that the former members of the professions have been increasingly transformed into employees. In recent years, too, there has been a tendency for the creation of a "reserve army" of unemployed among such occupations, so that the student no longer feels secure in his post-graduation prospects. Thus the student from the middle strata, who tends to have the outlook of the petty-bourgeoisie, whether he can be formally classified as petty bourgeois or not, tends to see himself as being at best degraded into a depersonalised "cog in the machine" of finance capitalism. And he tends to see the university as a monstrous factory for the mass production of deindividuated, enslaved experts.

Thirdly, while the French workers are at a large extent organised under right-wing leadership (including that of the revisionist Communist Party) this hardly applies to students. Consequently, spontaneous militancy among students is less easily disciplined, controlled and damped down.

These factors have been incorporated into a "philosophy" by the German-born professor at the University of Chicago, Herbert Marcuse, who has become the intellectual idol of many European students. But Marcuse has distorted

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE
City Notes

In June the American tobacco firm of Philip Morris made a $46 million takeover bid for a half-share in Britain's second largest tobacco group, Gallahers, whose products include "Senior Service", "Kentish", "Benson and Hedges", and "Belmore". On July 16th this offer was topped at $65 million by America's second largest tobacco firm, the American Tobacco Company, makers of the million-selling, imitated "Lucky Strike" cigarettes.

It was announced on July Ist that British American Tobacco, the giant flour milling, baking and food manufacturing group, is to merge with Courage, the malting, and San, Plato and Scott's Porridge Oats combine. Courage is forecasting pre-tax profits for the current year of $4.6 million, down 27%.

On the same day it was announced that Perrett Owen has purchased Festo-Swindon (manufacturers of bread making machinery, Flitworth sticks, radiators and other domestic appliances) from the British Motor Corporation for £4 million.

Also during July the giant Farm Electrical Industries made a takeover bid of £9.3 million for Renewal Manufacturing, the food mixer and dishwasher group.

HOW TO GET IN THE "HONOURS LIST"

In 1962 Cutts paid £280 for the 21st birthday celebrations of the son of Robert Mellish, the present Minister of Works, and also lent Mellish £4,000 for the purchase of a house. On January 1st, 1963 this 1945 conviction for receiving stolen coal having been characteristically overlooked Cutts's name appeared in the "Honours List" as an M.B.E. - proposed by Robert Mellish.

"THE AFFLUENT SOCIETY"

The Report of the Prices and Incomes Board on Rents of Local Authority Housing (H.15, Cmnd.3604) states that in the three years 1965-67 the average rent of council houses in London have risen by 35.9%, in the rest of England and Wales by 34.9% and in Scotland by 20.5%.

The real character of the "Prices and Incomes Board" is an instrument to hold down wages but not prices is well illustrated by the central recommendation of the report which is that weekly standard rents, which have risen in England and Wales in recent years by an average of 36.4d. a year, should be future rise by an average of 29.6d. a year.

A government sample survey of housing carried out in 1967 disclosed that out of a total of 15.6 million dwellings in England and Wales, 1.6 million (10%) were slums unfit for human habitation, while a further 4.5 million (29%) either lacked one or more basic amenities such as indoor W.C., fixed bath, hot water, or running hot and cold water or were in urgent need of repairs. Thus a total of 6.1 million dwellings (40%) were in unsatisfactory condition.

The Transport Tribunal has announced that as from August kinema buses and underground buses in London will go up by 4d. to 54.

In July Britain's two major tobacco companies - Imperial Tobacco and Gallahers - announced that the prices of their cigarettes would go up immediately by 1d. for twenty, and that the prices of most of their cigarettes would rise simultaneously by 2d. on cases.

Imperial Tobacco make a profit of £4 million in 1963, Gallahers a profit of £235 million.

City Notes

In June the board of directors of the International Publishing Corporation - which publishes the "Daily Mirror" and many other papers and magazines - dismissed Cecil King as its Chairman. He was succeeded by Hugh O'Conor.

The big shareholders in the corporation had for some time been dissatisfied with the fact that profits before tax, which dropped by £2 million last year, fell this year by a further £4 million to a "mere" £6.5 million - the lowest figure since the corporation was established. This dissatisfaction came to a head with the publication, on the eve of the municipal elections, of an editorial entitled "Enough is enough!" attacking the libel action over the signature of Cecil King, King, a comparatively small shareholder in the corporation with only 4,000 shares, was blamed for the fall in profits by virtue of his policy of introducing, not anti-labour policies, but "too much politics" into the "Mirror". As one Frank journalist on the paper put it: "He made a record of his name. They don't care about politics or any kind of serious stuff. They want scandal, pin-ups and sport."

In May it was announced that Proctor had made an agreed takeover bid of £26 million for another chain of retail chemists, Timothy Whites and Taylors. The new group will have almost 2,000 shops valued at over £200 million.

Should you wish your name to appear in the Queen's "Honours List" without the bother of sailing round the world, the career of millionaire Oliver Cutts (sentenced in July to three years' imprisonment) throws an interesting light on the way to go about it. All you need is £1 million - and no scruples.

Having made a fortune by a series of dubious property deals which began during the war, in the 1950s Cutts - the son of a Peckham boxer - began making donations to charitable causes, for which his name was added to the guest-lists of those expensive and exclusive "charity balls" patronised by members of the rich and famous. Meeting Princess Margaret at one of these functions, he learned that she liked camellias; from that time a bunch of camellias was sent by chauffeur-driven Rolls-Royce to Kensington Palace each week while they were in season. The royal letters of thanks opened the doors to other circles.

In the middle 1950s he bought Folke's Farm, at Fordingbridge in Hampshire, and proceeded to build up a herd of Priesian cattle; this enabled him to join the British Priesian Cattle Society, in which he mingled with representatives of many aristocratic families. Buying a riding school in his wife's name, he learned to ride and added hunting to his social assets.

In 1961 he offered 15-roomed Timsbury Manor, near Romsey, Hants, to the International Athletics Club as a training centre for the Tokyo Olympics. In a blaze of publicity an army of volunteers moved in to clear the grounds and paint the mansion, while extensive alterations were carried out by means of public subscriptions. In 1966 Cutts sold the reconditioned Manor for three times what he had paid for it in 1958.
The militant class struggles in France which rose to a peak in May/June 1968 began among the students at the "École de Lettres" - a section of the University of Paris in the western suburbs of the capital opened four years ago to relieve congestion at the Sorbonne, the Left Bank centre of the university. In November 1967 a strike took place among sociology students at Nanterre, directed principally against overcrowded classes; the authorities capitulated, and extra staff were sent to Nanterre and other improvements promised.

The lesson - that direct action could bring quick resolution of long-standing grievances - was noted by other students. In January a group of anarchist students occupied the main hall at Nanterre, and police were called in to expel them. This action welded the mass of students into sympathetic action and the police were driven from the college buildings. Anarchist slogans of the "It is forbidden to forbid" type began to appear.

On March 19th a student from Nanterre was arrested during a Vietnam demonstration in Paris. In March 22nd, 8,000 students packed into the main hall of the college for a protest meeting, and a group of anarchist students, led by Daniel Cohn-Bendit, carried out a symbolic occupation of the council chamber on the top floor of the college and then marched out again.

On April 4th, Alain Peyrefitte, the Minister of Education, ordered Nanterre to be closed, and the students replied by occupying the college buildings, now awash with anarchist slogans and portraits of Mao, Trotsky and Che Guevara. Two days later the Dean of Nanterre, Pierre Grosfest, was forced to reopen the college and to grant a number of concessions to the students, including the right to participate in the administration of the college.

On May 3rd, the Nanterre students organised a march to the Sorbonne to protest against the threat of action against Cohn-Bendit by the disciplinary committee of the University of Paris. The Rector of the University, Paul Roche, called in police to clear all students from the Sorbonne. As at Nanterre the previous September, this action welded students and staff into sympathetic action. UNEF (the students' union) and SNE (the university teachers' union) called out all their Paris members on strike.

On May 6th, 30,000 students taking part in a protest demonstration in the Latin Quarter were attacked by police and the first street barricades went up.

On May 10th students, children and workers succeeded in occupying the whole area around the Sorbonne, but were attacked by the "riot police" with a savagery and brutality unprecedented even for them. In consequence the trade unions called a 24-hour protest strike for Monday, May 13th.

Faced with this growing opposition, the authorities capitulated on May 11th. Prime Minister Pompidou agreed that the Sorbonne should be reopened and the police evacuated, and that the arrested student leaders should be released. The Senate of the University of Paris accepted the demands of students and staff, and the governing body of the university was reorganised to give the professorial staff 50% of the voting power, the lower grades of staff 25% and the students 25%.

On Monday May 13th, the students reoccupied the evacuated Sorbonne in the midst of the general strike.

The Workers Take Up the cudgels

The right-wing trade union leaders among...
whom must be numbered the Communist leaders of the General Confederation of Labour, the CGT) had dismissed the militant movement of the students with a sneer as "infantile extremism". Nevertheless the widespread indignation at the police brutality forced them to call the 24-hour token strike on Monday, May 13th. But their aim was that, after this abysmal day of protest, the workers should carry on as before. But while the workers did, for the most part, return to work on the morning of the following day, they said - and said loudly and bluntly: "The students have won improvements and concessions by direct action. Why do we not also make demands for improvements and concessions? Why should our strike be only a 'token' strike?"

The lead was taken by the workers of the nationalised Renault car plants where, on May 16-17th, strikers occupied the factories, demanding higher wages, shorter hours (working hours in France are the longest in Europe, averaging 46-47 a week) and worker participation in the administration of the plants.

The Role of the Communist Party

Meanwhile the students had begun to raise political demands for the ending of the Galtier regime. Faced with the prospect that these political demands would be taken up by the working class, the revisionist leadership of the Communist Party (which plays a similar role in French capitalist society to that of the Labour Party in Britain) decided on May 17th that it must take over the leadership of the spontaneous workers' struggle in order to ensure that it was directed towards purely economic demands and was in no way linked with the movement of the students. Within twenty-four hours the industries organised by the Communist-led CGT - mines, railways, engineering - had come to a halt, and by the weekend the other union organisations had followed suit. France was gripped by a general strike which paralysed the entire country, while in Paris the students fought on behind barricades of paving stones and overturned cars.

The right-wing trade union leaders urged the government that "to save France from anarchy" substantial economic concessions must be made to the working class so that they might "regain control". The government agreed and the terms of an agreement were hammered out: they involved a 10% all-round increase in wages, an increase in the minimum wage of 36% to 52.14d., an hour, and a phased reduction of hours to 40 a week.

When this "summit" agreement was reported to the workers, the general response was an indignant shout of "Ne signez pas!" (Do not sign!), and the strike continued.

On May 29th, while 800,000 strikers marched through the streets of Paris, de Gaulle flew round the army headquarters in France and Germany and received pledges from the generals that he could rely on the armed forces to "restore order" if called upon. On his return to Paris on the 30th the General made his famous broadcast in which he declared that all necessary force would be used "to defend the Republic". The National Assembly was dissolved, elections announced for three weeks' time, and the tanks began to rumble towards the capital.

In the absence of leadership of the workers' and students' struggle by a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Party, these moves were sufficient to enable the ruling class to capture the initiative. From this moment on, the wave of militancy went into decline among both workers and students. The police began to move in on pickets and to expel the students from various buildings which they had held for the past month. The whole weight of the Communist Party was directed to urging the workers to end their strike and a mass return to work began, although in most cases only after further concessions had been gained - a wage increase of 12-15% and full or half payment for the days of the strike.

The French Communist Party - once the glorious revolutionary party of the French working class - had, under its treacherous revisionist leadership, succeeded in assisting the French monopoly capitalists to suppress a wave of spontaneous working class and student militancy unprecedented in Western Europe for many years. It had assisted them to regain control of a situation that was slipping from their grasp. It had helped to give tottering French capitalism a new lease of life.

The Fruits of Revisionist Betrayal

On June 12th, the government banned all demonstrations and outlawed seven "leftist" student organisations, without interfering with the activities of the fascist "Occident" group. After permitting the pro-fascist Georges Bidault to return to France, on June 15th de Gaulle released from prison (as a result of the demands of the generals he had met the previous month) General Raoul Salan and 49 other leaders of the fascist OAS. This action assured the Galtier party of fascist support in the forthcoming election.

The results of the flagrant betrayal of the class struggle of the workers and students by the revisionist Communist Party (which fought its election campaign under such outright right-wing slogans as "Vote Communist to End Disorder") were manifested in the General Election of June 23rd/30th, Working class and student voters who had previously voted "left" abstained in large numbers (abstentions were 28% in Paris, 36% in the Latin Quarter), petty-bourgeois and "middle-class" voters, frightened by the unorganised and unled student militancy, rushed for the shelter of de Gaulle's "paternal
stability. Fascist elements who had previously abstained out of disgust for de Gaulle's "surrender" in Algeria were persuaded by the rehabilitation of Salan and other fascist generals to give their support to the Gaullists.

As a result of all these events, the Gaullists and their Independent Republican allies increased their seats in the Assembly by 86 - from 342 to 350. On the other hand, the representation of the Communist Party and its electoral ally, the "Federation of the Left" led by Francois Mitterand, fell by more than half, the number of Communist deputies being reduced from 75 to 34, that of the "Federation of the Left" from 118 to 57. For the first time in French parliamentary history a single party, the Gaullist party, obtained an absolute majority in the Assembly - one, in fact, of 50 seats.

Such were the fruits of the revisionist Communist Party's betrayal of the class struggle, its repudiation of revolution, its policy of "democratic socialism through parliamentary elections".

ONE LESSON ABOVE ALL MUST BE DRAWN FROM THE MOMENTOUS CLASS STRUGGLES IN FRANCE OF 1968: IT IS THAT SPONTANEOUS CLASS MILITANCY, HOWEVER BRAVE, HOWEVER SOLID, CAN LEAD ONLY TO CLASS DEFEAT UNLESS AND UNTIL IT IS LEAD BY A REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST-LENINIST VANGUARD PARTY OF THE WORKING CLASS.

Another "Cultural Revolution" Ends In Fiasco

The ALBANIAN SOCIETY in Britain was founded in 1957 for the purpose of spreading information about the People's Republic of Albania - now the one remaining country in Europe continuing to build socialism under the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist Party - and to foster friendship and understanding between Albania and Britain. In recent years the activities of the Society have developed considerably and its membership has doubled in each of the last two years.

In these circumstances some of a "left" revisionists decided this spring to try to "take over" the Society from its members and transform it from a broad friendship organisation into a narrow "leftist" political sect dedicated to support for the faction in China headed by Mao Tse-tung. The campaign began with the publication by Ivor Kenna (of the "left" revisionist "Pineberry Communist Association") of a libellous circular directed against the Secretary of the Society, Bill Bland. As a result the Committee suspended Kenna from membership for conduct detrimental to the Society.

Faced with the impossibility of convincing the membership of the Society to support their plans for "reforming" the Albanian Society, this group of disruptors then attempted a "cultural revolution" for, as the Committee of the Society correctly put it in their communiqué, a "fascist-type coup" against the Annual General Meeting of the Society; they introduced forcibly into the meeting a number of people who were not, and had never been, members of the society (including such criminal characters as the notorious Albert Manchanda)and demanded their right to "vote". As a result the A.G.M. had to be adjourned. The disruptors then proceeded to call their own bogus meeting in order to pretend - such is the fantasy world in which "left" revisionists live - that it was an "Annual General Meeting" of the Albanian Society.

When the Annual General Meeting of the Society was reconvened on May 12th, under the security conditions necessary to preserve the democracy of the membership, the members unanimously confirmed the expulsion of Kenna, together with those who had taken part in the bogus meeting, namely: R. Archbold, N. Berger, F. Kenna, G. Lee, S. McConville and J. Shapiro.

Folklorist A.L. Lloyd was elected as the new Chairman of the Society, and Bill Bland re-elected as Secretary, supported by a Committee consisting of M. Baker, M.J. Fletcher, F.D. Rushworth and A.D. Sheperd.

(Readers interested in membership of the ALBANIAN SOCIETY, which costs 10s. a year, should write to the Secretary at 26, Cambridge Road, Ilford, Essex).

THE CAPITALIST WORLD

British Pension Has Been in Vietnam

In June Dr. Steven Rose told a meeting of the Committee that the "first gas" CI developed at the Ministry of Defence research establishment at Porton had been made available to the United States. Used by American forces in Vietnam, it had been responsible for more than 30,000 casualties. Dr. Rose said that 25 tons of GE was enough to kill the entire population of the world. While the British government continued to produce 40 tons a year.

.setResult

On July 4th West German Chancellor Eissenger issued a denial that he knew anything about the anti-semitic attacks on the Jews while he held a high post in the Nazi administration.

On the following day a press conference in East Berlin was shown documentary evidence from the Nazi archives which established that Eissenger joined the Nazi party in 1933 and held membership card no. 2,651,930. He rose to be Deputy Director of the Nazi Foreign Ministry's political broadcasting department, and not only signed documents relating to anti-Jewish atrocities, but took part in these personally.

E.U.A.

In the Democratic presidential primaries held in New York State in June, Senator Eugene McCarthy, who had been campaigning for the ending of the U.S. war of aggression in Vietnam, received the support of 56 delegates against 3 for Vice-President Humphrey.
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

In the last issue of RED FRONT, we commented on the ousting of the old-guard revisionist leaders of the Czechoslovak Communist Party by a "liberal" ultra-revisionist faction, as follows:

"Various public statements by the new leaders have made it clear that their basic aim is to replace the present system of state capitalism with a free capitalist economy operated within the framework of multi-party parliamentary democracy." They propose in the economic field:
1) to permit freedom of private enterprise;
2) to permit foreign private investment in the economy;
3) to break the present close economic ties with the Soviet Union and the other revisionist countries of eastern and central Europe, so that foreign trade may be oriented towards the capitalist world. ....

These proposals have, not unnaturally, aroused the trepidation of the old-style revisionist leaderships still in power in other countries of eastern and central Europe - particularly those in the Soviet Union, Hungary and the German Democratic Republic."

(Red Front, Vol.3, No.2, May/June 1968, p.7)

Developments since then have more than confirmed the correctness of this analysis.

At a press conference on May 14th, Prime Minister Cernik confirmed that it was intended to introduce "free enterprise and competition", while Deputy Prime Minister Sik said that Czechoslovakia would welcome the investment of "Western capital", including the formation of "joint ventures", and that offers were streaming in from western European countries. This last statement is an exaggeration, since most capitalist interests are adopting a policy of waiting to see if the new "free enterprise" leadership can maintain its position.

One of the main planks in the economic programme of the Czechoslovak ultra-revisionists is to allow heavy industry to run down to a considerable extent, and to develop intensively light industries producing the luxury and semi-luxury consumer articles demanded by the new class of state capitalists. This requires extensive capital investment, which the leadership hopes to meet partly or wholly by means of a loan from one or other of the developed capitalist countries.

Taking advantage of the official demagogic propaganda about "the new freedoms", the workers have been putting in wage demands sup-

ported by threats of strike action. In May Pillar, a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party, said that for the government to grant these demands would be "economic suicide".

These developments have further increased the trepidation of the orthodox revisionists in the former socialist countries, especially those of the Soviet Union, who have issued strongly-worded statements about the danger of "revisionism" and "counter-revolution" in Czechoslovakia. In May Soviet President Podgorny sent a pointed greeting to his "Czechoslovak brothers" wishing them success "in the struggle against the scheming of quarters hostile to progress and socialism".

In June the High Command of the Warsaw Pact Organisation, dominated by the Soviet revisionists, sent Soviet and Polish armed forces into Czechoslovakia against the decision of the Czech leaders. On July 15th, Colonel-General Vcclav Pechlik, head of the Czechoslovak Communist Party's Defence Department, admitted this publicly in effect when he called for revision of the Warsaw Pact organisation and declared that nothing in the Warsaw Pact treaty justified the stationing of troops on the territory of a member country that did not want them.

The aim of the ousted old-guard revisionists in Czechoslovakia was to organise a coup by the People's Militia, a para-military organisation still under the control of the orthodox revisionists, and then to call on the Soviet Union for its military forces to assist them in putting down the "foreign-inspired counter-revolution" of the ultra-revisionists. This plan ran into difficulties when the ultra-revisionists organised a campaign based on nationalism which confused sections of the People's Militia, and when other revisionist parties - notably those of Rumania, Yugoslavia, France, Italy and Britain - issued statements opposing Soviet intervention. On July 14-15th the revisionist leaders of the Soviet Union, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary and the German Democratic Republic held an emergency meeting in Warsaw to decide on their course of action in relation to Czechoslovakia in these circumstances. A joint letter was sent from the meeting to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia.

POLAND

In Poland a number of the leaders of the "liberal" ultra-revisionist faction (corresponding to that headed by Dubcek in Czechoslovakia) of Jewish origin, and the still dominant orthodox revisionist faction headed by Gomulka has for some months been waging a campaign against them on the basis of anti-Semitism.

Continued on Page II
No Tears For Kennedy!

The Big Television Show is over. The pool of blood - in colour if you can afford it - has been mopped up from the hotel floor. The pet social psychologists of the Establishment have mouthed their fatuous phrases about "the violence of American society" - and blamed it all on the American Indians. The king-size candles of St. Patrick's Cathedral have been wrapped in cellophane until the next Big Show.

In fact, there have been few victims of assassination, apart from Rockwell, for whom working people need feel less sympathy. The American advertising agencies, whose task is to sell any product which can pay their not inconsiderable fees, be it Coca Cola or Kennedy, had recently built Robert Kennedy into the false image of the millionaire's son whose heart was with the poor, the shy, not-too-bright All-American college boy who stood for what tens of millions of Americans wanted: "change".

Robert Kennedy was, in fact, almost a burlesque of the unprincipled, opportunistic politician created by the automated, electronic machine of American capitalist politics. The policies of "change" which he put forward in his pre-election campaign were drawn up for him by computers fed with public opinion polls. These showed that x million voters wanted the end of the war in Vietnam, that y million negro voters wanted better housing, that z million Zionist voters wanted the United States to continue full backing for Israel. "Here I stand", declared Robert Kennedy, "carrying onward the banner of 'change' brutally torn from the hands of my brother!" The advertising agents who wrote his demagogic speeches conveniently omitted to mention that it was under the regimes of John Kennedy that the brutal United States aggression in Vietnam took on its present shape, that the "change" for which John Kennedy stood was symbolised by the "Bay of Pigs" invasion of Cuba! It is significant that Robert Kennedy's entry into the Presidential campaign was approved by his powerful and wealthy backers only at a comparatively late stage in the campaign, when the student-backed campaign of Eugene McCarthy in opposition to the United States war in Vietnam had revealed the need for them to sponsor a Presidential candidate standing for a "change" that could be kept safely under their control. Now, at the time of writing, these same backers are considering whether Edward Kennedy, cashing in on widespread sympathy which the assassinations of his two brothers has aroused, can take Robert Kennedy's place.

Assassination is, of course, no weapon of politically conscious revolutionaries. For every member of a ruling class that falls victim to an assassin's bullet, there are a dozen under-studies waiting hopefully in the wings. In fact, political assassination may well serve - consciously or unconsciously - the interests of the ruling class by providing it with a pretext for more extreme measures of repression against the progressive movement.

While, therefore, deploiring the assassination of Robert Kennedy, we shed no tears for this unscrupulous demagogue who was a tool of the most vicious and reactionary ruling class the capitalist world has yet produced. Let those who must weep do so for the Vietnamese who have given and are giving their lives every day for the freedom of their country. But tears will not stop the murderous aggression of the United States in Vietnam. To stop this anger is needed - anger against the Johnsons and the Kennedys whose crimes under the assassination of a single capitalist politician appear but a petty misdemeanour. Such burning, righteous anger can indeed help to mobilise the peoples of the world into an invincible, militant front against their greatest enemy, the American imperialists - who are also the greatest enemy of the American working people themselves.

DATES TO REMEMBER. No. 3

JUNE 2nd, to 6th, 1868:

THE FIRST TRADES UNION CONGRESS

From 1858 onwards attempts were made to unite the infant workers' societies of the various trades into a single powerful organisation. Among the early unsuccessful ventures in this direction were the National Association for the Protection of Labour (1859), 1st by John Dobbs, and the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union (1859), formed at the instigation of Robert Owen.

From 1858 Trades Councils were formed in various industrial centres to unite the local trade union branches, and the movement for a permanent national trade union organisation was given new impetus by the founding in 1864 of the International Workingmen's Association (the First International) under the leadership of Karl Marx.

The First Trades Union Congress was held in the Mechanics' Institute, David Street, Manchester from June 2nd, to 6th, 1868 - just one hundred years ago - with 33 delegates present. The congress resolved:

"That it is highly desirable that the trades of the United Kingdom should hold an annual congress, for the purpose of bringing the trades into closer alliance, and to take action in all Parliamentary matters pertaining to the general interests of the working classes."

The degeneration of the T.U.C. under successive right-wing leaderships of the last forty years - leaders who Lenin aptly characterised as "intellectuals of the capitalist class within the labour movement" - is well illustrated by the Centenary Report held this June in the citadel of the working class, the Guildhall, at which the guest-of-honour was that eminent trade unionist Queen Elizabeth II!
STEPNEY MEETING LAYS BASIS FOR ACTION COUNCIL

At a public meeting convened in Stepney, East London, on June 13th by the Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Britain, a Preparatory Committee was elected for the formation of an Action Council in defence of the rights and liberties of the working people.

The Council will be organised on the basis of individual membership and of the affiliation of local trade union branches, tenants associations, and other base organisations of the working people.

The Council will do all in its power to coordinate resistance to all attacks on the living standards and democratic rights of the working people, including in particular their freedom to organise for struggle, and will call for the nomination of independent working class candidates in both local and national elections in order to expose parliament as the deceptive front disguising the rule of the big monopolies and the banks.

Plans for the formation of Action Councils in other parts of the country are proceeding.

The Preparatory Committee,

The following Declaration was adopted unanimously by the Stepney Meeting:

DECLARATION

The past two years or more have witnessed the most serious and far-reaching attacks on the fundamental interests of the working class of any in the post-war period. Acting through its present chosen instrument, the Labour Government, British finance-capital is now gathering all its forces for the carrying through of the final measures aimed at destroying the whole traditional basis of working class rights and liberties. Already the Prices and Incomes Acts and other reactionary legislation - which the report of the Conciliation Committee proposes to further extend - the provoking of demagogic racist attacks against our class brothers from the colonial lands who are immigrant workers, are essential to the continued rule of monopoly capital if it is to maintain itself and its system of profit, interest and rent extracted from the labour of the working people in the conditions of ever more open disparity of interest between the tiny handful of monopolists at the top and the mass of the working people whom they oppress and exploit. In particular, they are necessary to the interests of the monopoly capitalists if they are to

AIMS

1. To organise the working people of East London, on both an industrial and a residential basis
   a) to resist all attacks on the living standards and democratic rights and freedoms of the working people of all races and nationalities, including especially the right to organise on an independent basis, for struggle against economic exploitation, political and ideological reaction and bureaucratic oppression, deception and demagogy.
   b) to promote the independent class militancy and fighting spirit of all sections of the working people through the putting forward of both immediate and long-term practical demands designed to extend and deepen the democratic authority of the working class and its organisations in all spheres of economic and political life.

2. To render effective practical assistance to all sections of the working class and working people in the establishment of such independent organisations of struggle in all spheres as will promote the achievement of the above aims: these would include Tenants Associations, Anti-Racist and Anti-Fascist Vigilance Committees, Consumers' Prices and Rents Vigilance Committees, and so forth.

3. To cast off the long-standing disruptive and disarming role of the established political parties in all spheres of working class life and struggle and to facilitate the exposure of modern parliamentary practice as a demagogic front of deception designed to conceal the real rule by force of the capitalist class.

4. To put forward independent working class candidates for parliament and the local councils, in order both to expose the swindle of parliamentary shadow-boxing which disguises the oppressive dictatorship of monopoly capital and its state, and also to develop through independent working class initiative the basis for the future representative councils embodying the democratic rule of the working class, the foundation of a socialist Britain.

Immediate Demands

1. The inalienable right of all workers to withhold their labour, to
organise strike committees and to raise support and funds for striking workers, whether within the existing trade union structure or outside of it, whether "official" or "unofficial", must be maintained. All pending or envisaged legislation which attacks or restricts this fundamental freedom of the working people must be abandoned.

2. The right of all workers to conduct all negotiations with employers directly through their elected local, regional or national representatives must be maintained. All State interference with negotiations, disputes and strikes must be ended. All organs and bodies designed to undermine the independence and unity of the trade unions and other working class organisations, such as "Joint Consultation Committees", "Joint Shop Stewards and Management Committees", etc., must be abolished.

3. The right of all working people to organise demonstrations and campaigns in pursuance of their class interest must be maintained. All actual or pending legislation designed to restrict these fundamental freedoms must be withdrawn or abrogated. The right of all workers to protect themselves against police provocations and brutalities must be fought for and recognised.

4. Municipal and private rents to be held at their present level. The right of tenants to withhold any increases of rent imposed upon them by either municipal or private landlords must be fought for and applied by means of rent strikes organised by tenants associations, which shall collect the standard rent due at the level prevailing prior to the increase and hold it on the tenants' behalf until such time as the increase is unconditionally withdrawn.

5. All measures designed to divide the working people on the basis of income, such as means tests or differential rent schemes, must be abolished. The principle of "a fair rent that all can afford" must be upheld and fought for.

6. All restrictions on councillors who are council tenants to sit and vote on housing committees must be removed.

7. All elected representatives, parliamentary and municipal, must be subject to recall, the procedure for recall being initiated upon demand of not less than ten per cent of the electorate.

8. The aldermanic system, an intolerable restriction on the working people's right to elect their own representatives, must be abolished.

9. All necessary measures to be implemented to achieve a cheap, efficient and fully adequate state-subsidised system of public transport. The present policies favouring private transport must be reversed.
THE DONOVAN REPORT: A SUBTLE ATTACK ON THE WORKING CLASS

In June the Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers’ Associations, which had sat for more than three years under the chairmanship of Lord Donovan, issued its Report. During its long deliberations many Tory politicians and big employers had been loud in their demands that the Commission should recommend the legal prohibition of strikes - or at least of unofficial strikes.

In comparison with these demands, the Commission’s report - largely drawn up by Professor Hugh Clegg, of Warwick University - appears at first glance to be "liberal", for it does not recommend the legal prohibition even of unofficial strikes.

What it does recommend, however, is more subtle and therefore more dangerous for the working class.

Firstly, it recommends that a change in the law should be permitted whereby leaders of unofficial strikes would be liable to be sued in the civil courts for damages for inducing their fellow-workers to break their contracts of employment. But there would be a further consequence of such legislation: an employer could take out an injunction in the courts against the leaders of an unofficial strike, and if this injunction were disobeyed, the strike leaders could be imprisoned indefinitely for contempt of court. Since some 95% of stoppages in Britain are unofficial (not because they are frivolous, as the capitalist press always suggests, but because the leaders of the unions are in the main in the pockets of the capitalist class and regard their main function as one of "disciplining" their members) Professor Clegg has devised a subtle way of hamstringing the workers’ struggles without the stigma of "fascism" that attaches to the legal prohibition of strikes.

Secondly, the Report recommends the setting up of a new state body, the Industrial Relations Commission. One of the main functions of this body would be to press trade unions to alter their method of collective bargaining. At present the typical agreement reached by collective bargaining covers an industry, leaving the shop stewards in each factory, or in each department of a factory, to reach agreement with the employers on variations which are often significantly in advance of the national agreement. The Commission recommends:

1) that agreements reached by collective bargaining should be for a particular company, or for a particular factory;

2) that union officials - these days usually the management’s best friends - should take part in their negotiation and not merely, as at present, the shop stewards who generally have the confidence of the workers; and

3) that all such agreements should be registered with an expanded Ministry of Employment.

The aim of this proposal is expressed in the Report as clearly as Civil Service English permits: it is to cut out factory and departmental variations favourable to the workers negotiated as a result of pressure from the shop floor; these give rise to what the pet economists of the capitalist class call "wage drift" which is not controllable by the Prices and Incomes Board.

"The registration of company and factory agreements would expose the whole process of pay settlement to the influence of policy, i.e. incomes policy - Ed. ... They would bring 'bidding up' for labour into the open and thus render it susceptible of control. ....

"Incomes policy must continue a lame and halting exercise so long as it consists in the planning of industry-wide agreements, most of which exercise an inadequate control over pay."

These two primary recommendations of the Donovan Report are thus aimed at holding down workers' wages more effectively and at hamstringing the class struggle of the workers for improved pay and conditions.

It is necessary thoroughly to expose these reactionary aims of the Donovan Report, to the workers, for they form a further step in the direction of the implementation of a corporate state structure in which the trade unions are no more than impotent state-controlled "labour front" organisations, as in Nazi Germany. It is necessary to mobilise the maximum struggle on the part of the organised workers to prevent the implementation of the recommendations of the Report, and this can undoubtedly best be done through the formation of Action Councils in industry and the localities.

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- 34 Upper Tooting Park, London N4)
RAILWAYS

On July 6th the work-to-rule of the National Union of Railwaymen (which began on June 24th) and of the footplatemen’s union ASLRF (which began on July 1st) resulted in British Railways accepting the railway unions’ proposals which they had previously rejected. The agreement will give wage increases of between 3 and 4½% to almost 200,000 railwaymen. The government-backed demand that the increases would be withdrawn if a major productivity deal to cover the cost was not negotiated by September 2nd, was abandoned.

ROLLS-ROYCE BRISTOL ENGINES

On July 15th, 100 delegates attending a meeting in London of the Rolls-Royce Bristol Engine Combine Action Committee recommended to the 33,000 workers at the firm’s establishments that there should be a general overtime ban and a “blacklist” of all work transferred from the company’s factories at Cardiff and Burslem (Glos.), which the management threatens to close in September as part of a “rationalization” programme.

70,000 municipal busmen are to strike unless they receive the negotiated rise of £1 a week.

which has been frozen by the government.

FORDS

In June 167 women sewing machinists at the Ford car plant at Dagenham struck to demand regarding. They complained that they were the victims of sex discrimination in that they received only 85% of the male wage for the same work. The stoppage was declared official by the three unions involved: the Vehicle Builders, the Transport and General, and the Foundry Workers. The strikers were joined later by 197 women from the Ford plant at Halewood (Liverpool).

After ten days the union leaders agreed with the Ford management to recommend that the women should return to work on the promise that a “fact-finding committee under an independent chairman” would investigate their case. The workers declined and continued their strike until they received from Minister of Labour Barbara Castle “satisfactory assurances” of a “fair hearing”.

B.O.A.C. PILOTS

The fortnight-long strike of 1,040 British Overseas Airways Corporation pilots, estimated to have cost the airline about £5 million, ended on July 1st with agreement that negotiations would be held between the corporation and the British Airline Pilots’ Association under the chairmanship of Professor J. Wood of Sheffield University for a new contract of service under which salaries will be related to operating conditions (such as weight, speed and type of aircraft) and to experience.

The Revisionist World

Continued from page 6

A third faction headed by Minister of the Interior General Moczar (made in July a Secretary of the Central Committee and a Candidate Member of the Politbureau of the Polish United Workers’ Party) wishes to retain the present revisionist bureaucratic dictatorship but to follow an independent national course similar to that taken by the Rumanian revisionist leaders. The faction headed by Moczar is now not only organizing a “Young Poles” propaganda campaign directed at the Soviet Union, but is using the official anti-Semitism sponsored by the Gomulka faction against Gomulka himself, who has a Jewish wife.

To such a gutter level has politics in a former socialist country been reduced after twelve years of revisionist rule.

"COMRADE" MANNERHEIM?

During an official visit to Finland in April, Rumanian revisions: leaders Prime Minister Maurer and Foreign Minister Maneau laid a wreath on the tomb of Field Marshal ("Butcher"") Mannerheim, the fascist dictator who opened the door into Finland for nazi troops in 1940.

YUGOSLAVIA

During the weekend of June 2-3, about a thousand students occupied the administration building of the University of Belgrade after clashes with police in the streets of the capital. Among the slogans carried and shouted by the demonstrating students were some of a Marxist-Leninist character calling for the overthrow of revisionism and the ending of the official policies of restoring capitalism. The official leadership of the students, however, succeeded in suppressing the more radical demands and securing majority acceptance for comparatively mild demands for the democratization of university administration. The latter demands were immediately accepted by the Belgrade University Council and a few days later endorsed by President Tito.

PEOPLE’S CHINA

In May it was reported that Canadian journalist David Crook had been arrested in China on charges of “being a supporter of Liu Shao-chi”, the President of the People’s Republic who has been a leading opponent of the counter-revolutionary faction headed by Mao Tse-tung.
LETTERS FROM READERS

THE REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE P.R. CHINA

"The January issue of RED FRONT, containing the Report of the Central Committee of the M.L.O.B., is a truly historical and significant document, not only for the M.L.O.B. movement, but for all Marxist-Leninist movements. The Central Committee's analysis, based on correct Marxist-Leninist thought, showed both political honesty (a rare commodity among Marxist L.O.s these days) and inspired us with great confidence in the integrity of the Central Committee. After all, it is not an easy matter publicly and openly to admit that an organisation such as the M.L.O.B. has been totally incorrect in its previous policy. In this case by supporting the then Ten-thousand-faction in the People's Republic of China. The Marxist-Leninist analysis of the Chinese situation in the January issue was clear, well-documented and convincing. It deserves as wide a circulation as possible among the working people and especially among the anti-clerical communists and "Marxist-Leninists" abusing in Britain and overseas. The 'Chinese Situation' report is altogether admirable and demands close study and respect.

I shall certainly follow the activities of the M.L.O.B. in future, and pledge my support to it.'

P.A., Sheffield.

"When I first read the attacks made by some groups calling themselves 'Marxist-Leninists' on the M.L.O.B. report on the 'cultural revolution' in China, I found myself confused. The supplement 'The M.L.O.B. Replies to Its Critics' in the last issue of RED FRONT made me realise how baseless and dishonest all these attacks on the M.L.O.B. were. Reading the original report again, all my doubts have disappeared and I appreciate that they were due to my political blindness being blinded by emotional prejudices.

In my view the 'Report on the Situation in the People's Republic of China' ranks as one of the few truly Marxist-Leninist documents which appear in the international Communist movement since the death of Stalin.'

S.F., Peru.

STUDENT GRANTS

"Recently I attended on behalf of RED FRONT a public meeting organised on the question of student grants by students of Cambridge University. No straining amongst the public could fail to be moved by the accounts of hardships which were related: the cases of student complaints to draw on their lecture and holiday grants to meet living expenses, and of one student in receipt of a grant of £30 a year who had not added to this entire sum on travelling expenses. It was noted that the seriousness of the problem varied from area to area, grants to students being made at the discretion of local authorities: in one case a grant offered had been £5 a term! All this in face of the rising cost of food, clothing and accommodation.

The demands made by the students could be considered too moderate. Since it was only proposed that grants should be adjusted to bring them into line with the increases in the cost of living since 1961. Differences of opinion expressed at the meeting were chiefly concerned with the best form of action to achieve these moderate demands. One Tory speaker expressed the view that 'demonstrations of a violent character' could damage the students' fight with the public. In discussion, I spoke on behalf of RED FRONT and made the point that to ignore public demonstrations would only isolate the students from the public, since they could not rely on press and telegrams to express their case, while history showed that demonstrations of militancy were often effective in producing results where years of mild and polite protest had failed.

I expressed the view that it was important that the students should get together with the organised workers for joint action in pursuit of the betterment of their living conditions. I said that the Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Britain has completely sided with the demands of the students for increased grants and that the columns of RED FRONT were always open to them to present their case on this and other grievances. The leaflets which I distributed after the meeting were well received.

The capitalist press, of course, has been running true to form in seeking to set the public against the students. The Daily Mirror, in particular, reached a new low in journalism when it published hypocritically against the students who faced Wilson's axe and spatred an American official with paint; it even demanded the stopping of their grants! But the Americans are not rocking boats and throwing paint in Vietnam; there Wilson's Friends are using megaphone, high explosives and toxic gases against the people. Why should the students apologise to those who conduct the savage atrocities being committed in Vietnam! The right of students to demonstrate is an important democratic right which not only students must fight to defend.'

D.C. Leitchworth.

THE NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR

'True assessment of the African masses is yet to come. The convulsions so far in those parts of Africa under Black rule are no more than tremors in the revolutionary furnace. The world's monopoly interests, while still screaming their 'democracy' over the African booby, are also manoeuvring to embrace their respective Black puppets in the Black-rulled African countries. As for the 'socialist' countries, the Soviet Union and East Europe are busy stretching their economic tentacles without regard for ideological considerations. Even the People's Republic of China is very active aiding armed struggles, including those with bourgeois aspirations.

In all the Black-rulled African countries, the level of political consciousness based on class analysis is very low among the bulk of the African masses. And where such consciousness is being aroused and harnessed towards socialist revival, lowering the barriers, the eating classes resort to tribal sentiments, thus replacing class consciousness among the masses with tribal consciousmess and diverting the course of social revolution to that of tribal equilable. Nigeria, ever since the dropping of the Feodosia group, has been a centre of such reactionary intrigues, of which the birth of 'Ifeare' and the civil war raging ever since - with all its sufferings for the masses - represents the climax. Else foreign monopoly interests were involved, using their intelligence agents and economic trump cards to work on the masses and trade leaders, and using propaganda machines to deceive the masses and at home. The blinding effect of appeals to tribal sentiments can be brought home to the British people by the analogy of the recent Mau,Mau in Kenya or the British White working class. If Robert Powell with a single speech could arouse some sentiments in the British White working class, can we imagine what publicists and fascists could unleash if an influential party resorted to a blatant racist campaign.

It is yet to be shown that the bourgeois ruling classes on both sides of the Nigerian conflict are remarkably similar in composition. On both sides they include left-overs from the old corrupt civilan government, South-African bourgeois army officers, bourgeois intellectuals and local capitalists. On the 'Ifeare' side there are some social democrats in the hierarchy, Major-General Sani, the leader of the 'Ifeare' side, is unmistakably bourgeois. Colonel Sfakas, the leader of the 'Ifeare' side, is more authentic, so much so that some progressive quarters acclaim him for a socialist. Yet his emphasis all along on religion and tribe, the fact that he inherited a great forum from his millionaire father and received an Oxford education, his recent pronouncement that he hopes for 'free enterprise into 'Ifeare', all these hardly combine to make a socialist. At present the masses are polarized into two bitterly opposed camps, with one side being supported by 'Ifeare' and the 15-odd other ethnic groups supporting 'Rigiera'.

The Nigerian left stationed abroad are actively engaged in polemics. Those supporting 'Ifeare' are mostly Ibo but with a good number of non-Ibo as well. Countering the above is the other left's school of
LETTERS CONTINUED
thought (mostly non-Rhodesian) writers but with a small number of these too), and adventuring this following argument:

1) If the left should succumb to bourgeois intrigues and MinWing propagandists by supporting “Biafra”, they will be stiffened to succumb to other reactionary influences in future, and hence assist the reactionary fragmentation of Africa for the world monopoly interests to prey upon.

2) Recognizing the inescapable fact that the problem of the Black man in Africa can only be solved by socialist integration rather than reactionary fragmentation, the present complex situation in Nigeria calls for a principled united effort of the Nigerian Left from all the ethnic groups and from both sides to bring pressure to bear on the bourgeois regimes on both sides to compromise on a loose federation so that an immediate and might be put to the slaughter of the masses on both sides. This can be followed by the next phase, i.e. how to cash in on the real role played by the forces of reaction, the militant mood of the masses and the obvious incompetence of the bourgeois bureaucratic-set up in Lagos and hence shorten the myth of tribal incompatibility which the army of the Black man has coined for the Black man’s perpetual subjugation and dehumanization.”

Group for Nigerian Revolution, Birubugus.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

We are pleased to publish (in slightly altered form) this statement as an editorial comment.

It appears, however, that they have been influenced by a "liberal intellectual" view prevalent in British institutions of higher education to the effect that, there is a difference of opinion amongst, in order to be "inclusive" one must not quote the arguments put forward by both sides but at all costs avoid coming down on either side, since to do so constitutes "partiality" and "prejudice". Thus, the GROUP FOR NIGERIAN REVOLUTION presents two different viewpoints on the Nigerian civil war, but carefully avoids endorsing either. But the revolution in Nigeria, as everywhere else, requires leadership and there can be no leadership based on the kind of non-committed "standing on the sidelines."

We hold that only Marxist-Leninists, which align up to its theoretical principles the collective revolutionary experiences of the working people of all lands, can support the correct path for the liberation of the Nigerian workers and masses. The statement of our Nigerian comrades makes mention of Marxist-Leninism; it speaks throughout of the "left" - a vague term which may be held to include liberals, social-democrats, revisionists, Trotskyites and anarchists.

In addition to the two viewpoints put forward in the statement of the Group for Nigerian Revolution, there is a third: the viewpoint of Marxist-Leninist, and on this basis let us state that this is the only true left viewpoint, while both the viewpoints presented by the group objectively serve the interests of reaction.

Marxist-Leninists hold that the revolutionary process in a colonial-type country must go through two stages in its development: firstly, the stage of national-democratic revolution directed against foreign imperialism and colonial feudal/merchant forces inside the country; secondly, the stage of socialist revolution. As our Nigerian comrades point out when they speak of the "peace"-"independence" of 1960, the national-democratic revolution has not been completed in Nigeria, which has a semicolonial status.

However, the failure of our Nigerian comrades to use Marxist-Leninist analysis tends them to make what is, in our view, a fundamentally wrong appraisal of the character of the present Nigerian civil war. They present this as a conflict between "bourgeois ruling classes on both sides"(para.7 of our summary), and as essentially created artificially by the Nigerian national bourgeoisie for the purpose of "replacing class consciousness among the masses with tribal conscious-ness and diversifying the course of social revolution on to that of tribal squabbles" (para. 7 of our summary).

There is no doubt that each side in the civil war is being supported by different imperialist groupings. Those which support the Federal Government hope to gain concessions throughout the country, those which support "Biafra" hope to gain even more profitable concessions in that part of Nigeria to which the "Biafra" authorities succeeded in winning "independence" from Lagos. But the civil war has a much wider social content that a mere struggle between what our Nigerian comrades call the "imperialists": "respective Black puppets". (para. 1 of our summary)

The majority of the Nigerian national bourgeoisie are in support of the Federal Government in the civil war, for they understand that the creation of a unified state abrogating a single market is an essential condition for the development of capitalism in Nigeria. On the other hand the "Biafra" authorities, despite support by some local capitalists (as our Nigerian comrades point out) represent in the main the most reactionary pro-capitalist feudal and semi-feudal social forces, which have sold themselves completely to foreign imperialism in an effort to preserve their existence.

"Biafra" is not a nation. The Nigerian nation is still in process of development. The war of the Federal Government for the unification of the country is playing a positive role in the development of the Nigerian nation. The "Biafra" revolt is a petty-資本ist campaign to defend the formation of a united Nigerian nation and state, and its role in relation to the national-democratic revolution is a counter-revolutionary one. Thus the first "Left" viewpoint presented by the Group for Nigerian Revolution, the viewpoint which calls for "independence" for "Biafra" is reactionary, counter-revolutionary viewpoint.

On the other hand, the second "Left" viewpoint presented by the Group for Nigerian Revolution calls for the unification of the country as the only road to the liberation of the masses of Nigeria.

But the Nigerian state is a federal state. The "Biafra" revolt is directed against the participation of "Biafra" in that federal state. To call for a "state" on a basis of a "Biafra" that would ultimately end the civil war is to call for the dissolution of the federal state on an aspect that will satisfy the aims of the "Biafra" counter-revolutionaries for independence in Lagos, one in which the relations between "Biafra" and the rest of Nigeria are purely formal. In August 1967, only a few weeks after the outbreak of the civil war, the "Biafra" authorities announced that they would accept a "limited services authority" to link "Biafra" with the rest of the Nigerian Federation". This second "Left" viewpoint presented by the Committee for Nigerian Revolution is thus essentially the same as the first; it calls for practical independence for "Biafra" under the aegis of a "Biafra" federal state.

We Marxist-Leninists analyze the present war on the part of the Federal Government of Nigeria for the unification of the country as a part of the national-democratic revolution, which is a necessary prelude to the future socialist revolution there. It is socially progressive and in spite of the fact that it is being fought by bourgeois forces, has potential of that.

The Group for Nigerian Revolution, on the other hand, presents two viewpoints on the civil war without chiding between these. But both these viewpoints call in question the future for the victory of the war aims of the "Biafra" counter-revolutionaries, call in question the practice of non-communist social forces in the Nigerian state, call in question the potential of the "Biafra". The pretext for this counter-revolutionary line is "sufferings for the masses" (para. 11 of our summary) and "the slaughter of the masses by both sides" (para. 1 of our summary).

This is essentially the same line as that put forward by pacifists in relation to the war in Vietnam. They emphasize the sufferings of the Vietnamese people - and of the American soldiers - as a pretext for calling for "Peace In Vietnam", but in the present situation, to call for "Peace in Vietnam" is to call on the Vietnamese people to lay down their arms while U.S. forces occupy their soil; it is, in effect, to call for victory for the U.S. aggressors and defeat for the just struggle of the people of Vietnam to liberate their country from the foreign invaders and oppressors.

"Biafra Radio" - and the international propaganda machine linked with it - emphasizes the sufferings of the Nigerian masses as a pretext for calling for "Peace in Nigeria", but in the present sit-
UNITY AT THE CROSSROADS

HAROLD MUGGINS IS A MARTYR

by John Arden

In June UNITY THEATRE presented the premiere of a new "satirical" play by John Arden titled "HAROLD MUGGINS IS A MARTYR".

But satire - whatever exaggerations, fantasies and parables it may use to give point to its rapier - needs to reflect truthfully and with basic realism the social evils against which it is directed. Arden's theme is the crushing by "Big Business" of the petty bourgeoisie - "typified" by Harold Muggins, the proprietor of a shoddy "café". One can, perhaps, accept the representation of monopoly capital in the shape of a metal-nosed gangster, for in capitalist society the line between legal and illegal private enterprise is thin indeed. But salvation for the petty bourgeoisie can lie only in alliance with the basic progressive force in British society - the working class; and the "workers" Arden portrays are indeed a poor lot of corrupt, frightened, racist,istem crawlers. In Arden's play "salvation" for Muggins comes from alliance with a rival gangster.

The content of "HAROLD MUGGINS IS A MARTYR" is thus fundamentally reactionary and anti-working class.

That Arden has talent as a playwright we know from some of his earlier plays, but no-one would suspect it from "HAROLD MUGGINS ... " which has a literary quality that matches its content - that of a four-rate comic strip. The dialogue is, on the whole, so inept that it is almost a relief that much of it is shouted so incoherently as to be unintelligible. In fact, with the exception of the author and his wife (who play Mr. & Mrs. Muggins) and the actor (unidentified in the programme) who plays the sinister "Mr. Big", the cast behave as if they were presenting an end-of-term school play, in which the slightest coy ough is enough to draw hilarious laughter from an audience composed of parents and friends.

Joan Littlewood - before she deserted the theatre to propagate her scheme to bring about the social revolution by means of a great Film Palace - built up from Stratford a commercially successful trend of theatre based on caricatured characters drawn from the lumpen-proletariat - prostitutes, pimps and pickpockets. Arden's new play is an inferior imitation of this trend which, since it is no longer fashionable with the predominately bourgeois audiences of the West End, he has descendingly permitted UNITY to produce. "Mr. Muggins ... " is imprecated with the infantile philosophy of bourgeois youth throughout the generations - from the Dadaism of the 1910s to the marxianised hypnism of contemporary Chelsea - that to be "a daring revolutionary" one needs only to "shock Daddy". In pursuance of this philosophy, Arden gives us obscene gestures, an irrelevant nude girl and a W.C. on the stage. Stalin described the artist as "the engineer of the human soul"; clearly Arden, "slumming" at UNITY, aspires to be its sanitary engineer! All this was defended by a young intellectual member of the cast in a discussion which followed the play under the pretext of "the need for experiment in the theatre". But there is, in fact, nothing new about this reactionary, scatological, pornographic decadence, and it is no less boring today than it was in 1915.

We understand that these are difficult days for UNITY. But as friends who wish it well, we must express the view that the presentation of this kind of anti-working class filth is inexcusable, and a disgrace to everything for which this theatre has

Continued on page 15

PIERRE LOTI

A poem by Nazim Hikmet

("Pierre Loti" was the pseudonym of Louis Marie-Jules Vidu, 1850-1923, French naval officer and writer of many novels, mostly with an oriental theme.)

Optical Bird: Submission!

Earth!: Style-work, sereamumious.

Water: Cables of silver stripes.

Musk: A diamond set on a silver tray.

Rajah: A thousand-year-old shah!

Human: From minarets:

Oriental: Mists made of mother of pearl,

Women: Working their homes with their feet,

In the wind, green turbaned faces:

Remember me to prayer!

This is the orient of the French poet sees.

This is the orient of those books that came out from the press at the rate of a million a minute.

But neither yesterday

nor today

nor tomorrow

are they like this:

never existed

and never will.

Oriental: The soil on which

the naked slave

die of hunger

The common property of everyone except those born on it.

The land where hunger itself

perishes with famine!

Yet the flowers are full to the brim,

full of grace -

only for Europe.

Arab: The white boys Chinese

hang themselves

from the swords of their dreamdreams.

And if the highest

the stupidest

the most empty

the most empty

hill of the Hindus,

British officers listen to a jazz band:

they dip their soiled feet

into the danger;

into which

Africans drop corpses with white teeth,

and Anzacs has become

the sweetest

of the steep.

Oriental: I have had enough!

Oriental: I will swallow:

no more -

we're sick of it, sick!

Continued on page 15
PIERRE LOTI Continued

If one of you, last, can give life to a continent now but if he’s a bourgeoisie to hell with him! And especially you, you Pierre Loti, like a typhus bug, going through our yellow, old, sick skin - a French officer seems more sympathetic.

But you, as a French officer, Loti, how could you forget so quickly for quicker than a prostitute, the value of a man who’d just been freed? You planted his head in our heart and taking it for a wooden target shot your bullets at it.

Those who do not know must know now you are no better than a charlatan. A charlatan who sells in the East rotten French fabrics at a profit of five hundred per cent. Pierre Loti, oh, what a pig of a bourgeoisie you are! If I believed in a soul separate from matter, on the liberation day of the East I would crucify your soul on the head of a bridge and make in front of it, I give you my word, we give you our hands to the assassins of Europe, let’s ride our horses together, look at the battlefield in near the day of freedom never still. In front of us the year of liberation of the East, writing a blood-red handshake!

Our horses’ hoofs go deep into the belly of imperialism.

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'UNITY' AT THE CROSSROADS
Continued from page 14

stood for thirty years. If UNITY is not to commit suicide and for it to continue on its present course of becoming a Salon des Refusés for material rejected by the bourgeois theatre, a kind of theatrical annexe to that great practical joke the "Institute of Contemporary Arts", would be a fate worse than death! Those in its leadership must grasp, with all the talent, sincerity and enthusiasm which they undoubtedly possess, that it is the working class which will build the new socialist Britain - not the playboys of the "avant-garde" (which is really a dernier-garde! nor the lumpen elements who form the "heroes" of Arden's play. The theatre must base itself, not on the childish babblings of the most uneducated strata of the petty bourgeoisie, but on the artistic ideology of the working class, on socialist realism, with all the infinite scope for experiment which is possible on this solid foundation. It must become once more the cultural centre of the working class - a theatre which inspires the workers in their struggles, which helps them to distinguish friends from enemies, which shows them in images and words of the highest artistic quality their path forward and the bright future that lies before them.

UNITY stands at the crossroads. It must choose whether to become once again the cultural servant and mentor of the working class, or to continue along its present road of bourgeois decadence and self-destruction.

LETTERS CONCLUDED

section to call for "Peace in Nigeria" is to call on the Federal Government forces to abandon their just struggle to unify the country; it is to be effete. To call for victory for the reactionary forces by the "Haiastro" group reflects the interests of the Federal Nigerian Government, in fact, proposed the establishment of a neutral corridor through which food and medical supplies could be channelled to eastern Nigeria, but this has so far been refused by the "Haiastro" authorities. As the "Guardian" put it (July 29th, p.4): "The Red Cross ..... feels that Colonal Opiko is allowing people to starve for political ends". The task of revolutionaries is to place the blame for the suffering of the masses squarely where it belongs: on the shoulders of the counter-revolutionary "Haiastro" regime. Revolutionaries are not pacifists. Certainly we work for a world in which war will be a dark memory of the barbaric past. But we understand that, to achieve that goal, revolutionary means are necessary, for they will not find from history at our polite request. If revolutionaries were to renounce socially just and progressive civil war out of concern for the suffering which such a struggle entails for the masses, they would condemn these masses to ongoing sufferings at the hands of those reactionary forces. Surely we do not need to defend revolution to a body calling itself the Group of Nigerian Revolutionaries.

The compromising national bourgeoisie is not capable of carrying the national-democratic revolution in Nigeria through to completion - and, of course, it will be an outright enemy of the future socialist revolution. The successful completion of the national-democratic revolution and its transformation into the socialist revolution requires the leadership of the working class and the working class in turn requires the leadership of a vanguard Marxist-Leninist Party. Furthermore, a unified front needs to be established between the Nigerian workers and peasants and the working classes of the imperialist countries, such as Britain, for all have the same principal essay in the shape of world imperialism. A united front between the Marxist-Leninists in Nigeria and those in Britain would be a significant step towards that wider united front. The key to the victory of the revolution in Nigeria, as everywhere, is international proletarian unity.

We should be pleased to discuss these questions separately with our Nigerian comrades at any time.

RED FRONT
is the organ of the MARXIST-LENINIST ORGANISATION OF BRITAIN. All communications should be addressed to The Editorial Committee, 34 Upper Tollington Park, London N.4.

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To: The M.I.O.B.,
34 Upper Tollington Park,

I wish to apply for candidate Membership of the Marxist-Leninist Organisation of Britain.

Name

Address: