

A CRISIS MET AND OVERCOME

The recent High Court case in Glasgow, in which two members of our Party, one ex-member, and a non-member figured, has evoked widespread shock and disgust at the severity of the sentences imposed - 26 years (the longest sentence in a Scottish court in living memory) 25 years, 24 years, and 6 years - after they were declared guilty by a jury on a number of charges of robbing several banks in Glasgow. The judge, Lord Dunpark, after a few minutes deliberation, saw fit to perform his stipendiary function in this vicious manner, reminiscent of the atrocities of the notorious Judge Jeffries. In many countries judges are assisted by a panel of Lay Assessors, but not here; we may find a judge, whose enormous salary enables him to be boozed up and overfed every night, appearing next day suffering painful consequences, and solely responsible for imposing sentences on fellow mortals. Recently, south of the border, a judge was alleged to have fallen asleep whilst trying a case. At the subsequent Appeal Court these scandalous sentences were confirmed by Lords Grant, Milligan, and Wheatley, except in one instance reduced by two years. In the course of his observations on the evidence Wheatley observed that the law "has to preserve the interests of the state and thus of the community." Our advice to him would be to study "Lenin on the State", thereby making himself informed on the nature of the capitalist state which exists exclusively to preserve the interests of the few and is thus hostile to the interests of the many - the community.

Much is made by all kinds of apologists of the alleged high quality of justice in our Law Courts. An analysis of our high-ups in the legal machine, however, reveals personalities who have often achieved 'eminence' by winning a ruthless rat-race, or by a form of nepotism, but more frequently by jumping ahead of the others on an appropriate political band-wagon. Such people lay very great stress on cash and social prestige values. They are very far removed from any experience of contemporary working-class lives and conditions. Capitalism pays its judges exorbitant salaries so that they will never fail to subscribe to the principles upon which the robbery system of capitalism functions.

THE JUDGES' FUNCTION ██████████ DEFENCE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

It is not at all surprising, therefore, that any case before such sycophants, even slightly tinged with Anti-Establishment politics, immediately alerts the Judiciary to its ruling-class defence of private property. There is no such thing as "impartiality" on the part of our Judiciary and we declare that these sentences are a case in point. The same High Court of Scotland recently tried a man who killed another and imposed the modest sentence of

eight years imprisonment. There is also the case of an ex-Tory Member of Parliament who got a tiny prison sentence of one year, having been found guilty of embezzling £20,000. Such is the quality of 'justice' meted out by these be-wigged, be-gowned, and devout (!!!), "So help me god" gents.

All this should burn into the minds of our working-class the necessity of destroying the rotten class-ridden capitalist system of 'Law' and the creation by the workers of genuine 'People's Courts' in which the circumstances of each case will be judged on its merits strictly and exclusively in the interests and welfare of the workers. A panel of workers would cast aside the absurdities of so-called Case Law, so beloved of the legal fraternity.

Incidentally, the police, and especially the uniformed section, are the most visible or tangible barriers or front-liners, set up by the capitalist class to repel the first assaults on their privileges. It is their duty always to defend capitalist 'ethics of Law and Order', or quickly lose their jobs; but they are far from being the most important factor ultimately in the physical defence of the 'Establishment'. The Armed Forces with their powerful weapons are by far the most potent and dangerous instruments of suppression used by the enemy.

POLICE — ARMY — PRESS — RADIO

In both the police and the Armed Forces there are decent human beings, often suffering from an excessive sense of duty and dedicated loyalty which lands them in a dilemma of consciously acting against the best interests of their fellow wage-earning workers. Amongst them, on the other hand, are the superficially clever but ruthless types who care nothing about the people's interests or social justice but are at all times motivated by the main chance for themselves. It has to be recognised that both the police and the Armed Forces tend to attract to their ranks certain sadistically inclined youths, and it appears that the proportion of this type may be increasing in both Services. Nevertheless, whilst never underestimating the capacity of the forces used by capitalist 'Establishment' interests to hit hard and most effectively where the defence of the people is weakened by lack of unity under correct leadership, all enemies of the people can and will be defeated by tactics based upon the science of Marxism. Never by romantic adventurism.

The close alliance of the capitalist press, radio and television with the judiciary was certainly high-lighted by the reporting and commentaries arising from the trial referred to, making the case, again and again, for the ending of these organs of capitalist propaganda. All press, radio and TV apparatus and materials must be taken over by the workers for their exclusive use.

Reporters and editorial staffs at present employed by capitalism are reduced to the status of mere touts for prostitutes, required to paint the dirtiest and most lurid distorting pictures of their fellow-workers. All this allegedly for the so-called "sacred freedom of the press" but in fact always for the defence of capitalist apologetics and profits. All who allow themselves to be drawn into this cesspool by being egotistical or mercenary informers are traitors to the interests of the working-class and must therefore be severely condemned.

The foregoing views are of course revolutionary in their implications but our Party insists that without the transfer of power from the capitalist minority to the workers' majority, genuine justice for the workers must remain a mere mirage.

ESSENTIAL - A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

The Workers' Party of Scotland accepts the principles of Lenin's teaching on the necessity for a "Revolutionary Proletarian Party of a New Type", and the views of that remarkable revolutionary, John Maclean, who demonstrated clearly the application of such teaching to the particular circumstances of the workers of Scotland. His demand for a Workers' Republic of Scotland remains relevant today. THE W.P.S. (M-L) IS BASED, THEREFORE, UPON THE CONVICTION THAT SO-CALLED MARXIST OR SOCIALIST ASSOCIATIONS, CLUBS OR GROUPS CANNOT PROVIDE THE DISCIPLINED DEMOCRATIC-CENTRALISM INHERENT IN A MARXIST PARTY WHOSE FUNCTION IS TO CARRY ON AND DEVELOP THE STRUGGLE IN SCOTLAND, HOPEFULLY LOOKING TO SIMILAR DEVELOPMENTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES WITH CONSEQUENTIAL INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION.

Certain revelations at the High Court trial referred to came as a grave shock to our members generally and we must be perfectly frank and, where appropriate, candidly self-critical. Apart altogether from certain allegations against our members, Matt Lygate and Colin Lawson, which were accepted by the jury as proof of guilt, our Party was distressed to find that these two comrades had for many months successfully deceived their comrades in the Central Committee in relation to what amounted to factional activities. They seriously misused, without any authority from the Party, the Vanguard Books premises in Glasgow and they maintained a close association with non-Party persons for purposes contrary to the Party's interests.

There were claims that co-operation and contacts were established and maintained with certain guerilla movements in Scotland, all again without the knowledge or consent of the Party Central Committee or its Secretariat. All this apparently anarchistic activity was presumably maintained by our two members who well knew that, to avoid the danger of our Party being beheaded, our Central Committee had, some time ago, taken a firm decision against exposing its leading officials to unnecessary risks. During the

same period essential Party work was neglected, particularly the drafting and printing of leaflets and the publishing of the "Scottish Vanguard". With the benefit of hindsight it is now clear that the thoughts and actions of these comrades were pre-occupied with activities which they positively knew were never, nor would have been, authorised by the Party leadership. Neither Matt Lygate nor Colin Lawson are illiterate fools and we can only assume that, having failed to trust the collective leadership of their comrades, and departing from Marxist-Leninist realism, their judgement was so seriously distorted that they embarked upon a policy of romantic adventurism. Astonishingly, their conduct may have revealed a degree of political immaturity.

SELF-CRITICISM/REALISM

Members of the Central Committee and its Secretariat can and must be criticised for failure to deal positively with certain political weaknesses revealed from time to time in the conduct of these two comrades.

This crisis has laid a heavy and unnecessary extra burden on the members of the Party, but it is gratifying that the membership generally has remained united and determined to carry on and develop our efforts with the workers of Scotland. Many lessons on the importance of Party discipline and rectitude are learned and perhaps will have strengthened our capacity for the mounting and revolutionary struggles ahead of us.

We think it wise to restate here in summary from the policy of the W.P.S.. Our Party is guided by the teaching of the great Masters of Scientific Socialism, Marx, Engels, Lenin, John Maclean, Stalin, Enver Hoxha and Mao Tse Tung. Their teaching must be applied to the circumstances of the workers of Scotland today in a manner most appropriate, recognising that, as in the case of Ireland, Scotland continues to be an oppressed Nation under British Imperialist rule. The strong Scottish Nationalist sentiment must be assessed correctly by us in Scotland as an important factor in the political situation, coupled with the widespread and growing resentment against the Westminster dictatorship. It is most regrettable that many well-intentioned class-conscious workers in England are clearly lacking in knowledge and information on this aspect and consequently do not respond to comradely appeals for co-operation, some, in fact, suffering still from bourgeois Great-Nation chauvinist influences. The class structure in Scotland is predominantly proletarian - wage and salary earners - with a very small rural community and a negligible petit-bourgeois element but with a very powerfully entrenched capitalist minority.

Action Committees With Political Objectives

Our Party places the utmost importance upon the development of rank-and-file, or "grass-roots", ACTION COMMITTEES which must always couple economic demands and industrial action with clearly defined political aims for the transfer of all power, not merely "Workers' Control", from the present capitalist minority and its Westminster Dictatorship to the mass of the wage and salary earners. Reliance upon the established organs of state power, including the bureaucratic elements in the Trade Union leadership, Labour Parliamentarians, and the United Kingdom Parliament itself, is an utterly bankrupt policy. Our Party entirely rejects the theory that the workers must restrict their mode of action, the form of attack against their exploiters, to so-called "Legal" processes, and we held that they must exercise their class power and authority without reference to any other authority. So-called "Moral Seruples" cannot be allowed to stand in the way as obstacles to a realisation by the workers of the higher and honourable morality of justice for the masses. For example, and to be somewhat topical, if and when it is necessary and expedient funds can and should be transferred, by whatever process is necessary at a particular time, back to the workers who are the sole producers of all wealth, from the coffers of the capitalists, whether in banks or any other monetary institutions.

In all their efforts the workers of Scotland will constantly look hopefully to their class comrades in England, Wales and Ireland and in the wider international sphere for support. In the event of the workers of England moving rapidly ahead of ours in militant and revolutionary action, then of course our Party would gladly merge with such successful leadership. It cannot be said, however, that that time appears to be on the horizon yet.

Again let us emphasise that at all times our Party policy must be settled collectively. No action by any member is permitted outside Party policy. Any interpretation must be the final duty and responsibility of our Central Committee. Whilst it is always regrettable when a member fails to observe a disciplined role, our current experience is not unique. There is not a single political organisation which has not suffered from such aberrations.

The Failure Of Infiltration And Fronts

Ours is not a clandestine Party. This is not necessary meantime. Unlike the "Communist" Party of Great Britain and other self-styled "left-wing" movements, we do not seek to infiltrate other bodies to secure office and superficial power, nor do we create "Front" organisations controlled by our Party. We always co-operate openly with outside bodies with whom we may agree on

specific issues. "Infiltration" and "Frontism" have signally failed in attempts at idealistic short-cuts to what they imagine to be revolutionary socialism. We are amused, therefore, to find the Scottish Committee of the Communist Party of Great Britain, (which, incidentally, we regard today as merely the left wing of social-democracy), disclaiming any connection with the W.P.S.. To quote them in part - "The clandestine and conspiratorial activities of this group's estimated membership of seventy" - "none of whom hold position in the Trade Union and Labour Movement". For years we have set our faces against seeking office in other bodies.

Our Party openly declares its revolutionary aims and practical policy. We are undismayed that our Party is smaller but proud that its membership is politically well educated by comparison with a high proportion of political illiterates comprising the mass membership of certain other organisations including the C.P.G.B. We shall, of course, always listen to constructive criticism from any quarter, hopefully looking for evidence that they have done better than us, but we shall not be diverted from our purpose even if and when driven underground. We shall certainly not desert the workers whose class integrity and strength must always be the sheet-anchor of any proletarian revolutionary movement.

THE THRESHOLD OF UNIVERSAL WORKERS' POWER.

This is the century of the greatest revolutionary changes in the history of mankind. It is the very eve of the final triumph of the liberation movements and the class struggles of the workers everywhere. We stand on the threshold of the final destruction of world imperialism which, though never surrendering voluntarily, is rapidly retreating in the face of the advancing forces of Socialism.

THE WORKERS' PARTY OF SCOTLAND (MARXIST-LENINIST), CONFIDENT IN THE CAPACITY OF THE WORKERS, THE WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS, WITH GROWING POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND MARXIST-LENINIST LEADERSHIP, WILL CONTINUE TO PERFORM ITS FUNCTION IN ITS SMALL BUT IMPORTANT SECTOR OF THE WORLD REVOLUTIONARY FRONT. THIS WILL BE DONE NOT BY EASY SLOGANISING ABOUT "GENERAL STRIKES" OR BY DEMONSTRATIONS AND DELEGATIONS TO TORY OR LABOUR GOVERNMENTS, BUT BY GETTING TO UNDERSTAND THOROUGHLY THE MOOD AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE WORKERS IN ANY GIVEN PERIOD AND CIRCUMSTANCE. THUS WILL THE PARTY BE ENABLED TO PROVIDE A MARXIST-LENINIST "BLUE-PRINT" TO MAP THE ADVANCE OF THE WORKERS TO EVER HIGHER LEVELS OF REVOLUTIONARY POLITICS AND EMANCIPATION.

LONG LIVE THE WORKERS OF SCOTLAND IN ALLIANCE
WITH THEIR COMRADES EVERYWHERE.

(Statement of the Central Committee of the W.P.S. (M.L.)

1st June, 1972.