# THE TASKS AHEAD

# The Perspectives Discussion at the

# 1976 National Conference of the International Marxist Group

"I cannot help recalling a conversation I happened to have at the Congress with one of the "Centre" delegates. "How oppressive the atmosphere is at our Congress!", he complained. "This bitter fighting, this agitation one against the other, this biting controversy, this uncomradely attitude!"

"What a splendid thing our Congress is!", I replied.
"A free and open struggle. Opinions have been stated. The shades have been revealed. The groups have taken shape.
Hands have been raised. A decision has been taken. A stage has been passed. Forward! That's the stuff for me! That's life! That's not like the endless, tedious word chopping of your intellectuals, which stops not because the question has been settled, but because they are too tired to talk anymans."

"The comrade of the "Centre" stared at me in perplexity and shrugged his shoulders. We were talking different languages." (Lenin – One Step Forward, Two Steps Back)

This is the spirit in which the International Marxist Group, as every section of the Fourth International, seeks to hold its conference and pre-conference discussions. It is a method unlike that of any other major group on the British left. The Workers Revolutionary Party has expelled

before the 'conference' every single opposition tendency since 1960. The International Socialists have expelled every opposition to date and refuse serious rights of organisation and democratic discussion to minorities. In each case the word of the omnipotent leader, or of a tiny inner circle, is supposed to be a substitute for serious discussion within the membership.

The IMG attempts, within its organisational and political resources, to place itself in an entirely different tradition — that of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg and the Communist movement before it was crushed by Stalin. Discussion and internal democracy is not a luxury but a necessity. It is the only way in which all the experience of the organisation can be brought to bear in determining its political line.

To gain that democracy requires serious rights of organisation and discussion for minorities. For the IMG conference, one delegate has been elected for every three members in order to allow serious representation of minorities; the fares of every tendency to speak at pre-conference discussion meetings in the areas have been paid by the national organisation; a total of 66 discussion documents have been produced; each branch for the last two months has had regular pre-conference discussions, and on top of this each area of the country has had three aggreggates at which speakers from the different view points have put forward their positions; and supporters of different documents have been able to organise themselves into tendencies and factions.

The discussion has centred on general perspectives in Britain, intervention in the trade unions, the Labour Party, the crisis in Scotland, questions of women's oppression and anti-imperialist campaigns. The contributions below represent a short summary of the five main positions which emerged in the course of the discussion.

At the same time there has also been a separate discussion, culminating in a full day at the conference, on the differences which have emerged inside the Fourth International on the question of Portugal (for documentation see Intercontinental Press, 22 March 1976).

After the conference the line which gains a majority will be applied. A leadership will be elected on that basis. 'Another stage', in Lenin's words, will be passed through. In a supplement to the paper after the conference we will discuss the outcome of the conference.

# Tendency 1

(The contributors declared a faction in the IMG last November.

The political basis and aim of our faction is to continue the struggle for Trotskyism against the line of the IMG and international leadership. Sections of our perspectives – dealing with women's oppression and the history of our struggle so far – had to be omitted from this outline for reasons of space.)

1. The economic, political and social structures of capitalism today fall into ever deeper crisis throughout the world. The liberation struggles of the oppressed masses in the 'Third World' now combine with mounting struggles of the working class in the main imperialist centres — in Western Europe, Japan and America.

This process strikes many blows to the power of the imperialist ruling class. The state power of the bourgeoisie is overthrown in Indochina and Angola. The world revolution is on the offensive.

The reformist and Stalinist leaders of the workers movement can neither halt the tide of revolt, nor can they lead the way forward to socialism. These features of the world political situation create the most favourable conditions for the working class and for the building of mass revolutionary parties.

Events in Britain today can only be assessed within the material reality of this overall process. It would be a grave error to decide that recession in 1974. the decline in the size and scope of workers' struggles in Britain during the last year signifies a reversal of the basic tide of events, which remain very much on the side of the working class. In the face of employers' attacks on jobs and conditions, of moves to strengthen the repressive powers of the state and attacks on basic rights, the betrayals of trade union leaders and Labour politicians have not wiped out the major gains of the



past years.

2. The working class rests on the experience of struggles which removed the Heath Government with its statutory incomes policy, and the apparatus of the Industrial Relations Act. They went on to win a big rise in living standards at the depth of the international recession in 1974

Most importantly, the tens of thousands of militant workers who came forward to lead these struggles in occupations, organising picketing, political strikes and demonstrations have not accepted the cowardly collaboration of their 'leaders' with the anti-working class measures of the Labour Government. On the contrary, this decisive layer of militant workers now seeks a way forward against these attacks.

They turn to those trade union

and Labour leaders who have cultivated a 'left image' in the past.

These elements reply with no more than empty rhetoric and verbal protests. Only the Trotskyist programme offers the answers which are needed. Our task is to put forward a line of struggle for that programme which will open the way to forging the militant workers into a new revolutionary leadership in the workers movement which can challenge the betrayals of the present leaders.

Our indispensable weapon for this task is the Transitional Programme, which embodies the practical method for leading the militant workers away from illusions in parliamentary reform towards a conscious struggle for socialism. To carry out this task in practice, it is necessary to reject the positions advanced by

the leadership of the IMG and the United Secretariat (USFI).

3. The only policy to defend living standards against rising prices and wage control is for a sliding scale of wages. To defend jobs, for work-sharing with full pay. To defend public services, for a sliding scale of public expenditure.

It is a central part of the Trotskyist line to fight for and to help the advanced workers develop the means by which such policies can be taken up and put into practice. Without this, such policies are reduced to empty slogans. Thus, the fight for workers inquiries into the operation of different firms and branches of the economy is a central part of the Trotskyist programme and struggle for the coming months.

4. The struggle against British

imperialist domination in Ireland is a major part of the crisis for the ruling class. The defeat of British rule in Ireland will be a milestone on the road to workers power in this country. While the IMG on paper has a principled record of defence of the right to self-determination for Ireland and for immediate withdrawal of British troops, in practice our work has been confined in small circles of the TOM, mainly among elements who already oppose British rule in Ireland,

The pacifism and parliamentary illusions which dominate the workers movement are falsely seen as a uniform anti-Irish chauvinism. This has led us to abstain in the debates in the unions and the Labour Party, leaving the field open to the Stalinists and the reformists. To reverse this we must turn the energies of every member towards a fight in the workers organisations against youth unemployment and recruitment into the army.

Under the slogan of 'Unemployed youth into the unions — not into the army' we must campaign for jobs, not guns in the service of imperialism, for the youth. Together with this we must agitate for workers defence of every union and Labour Party member detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. On this basis we will politically prepare and build the forces for a mass working class movement under the banner 'Ireland is One Nation — Britain Out Now'.

5. The international rise of workers' struggles points to the burning need to build a world party for socialist revolution. Such a party must be based on the development of a Trotskyist programme wh which draws on the experiences of the workers movement and points the way forward in the struggle for socialism. It will be built in a common struggle for this programme in every country.

The forces of the IMG must be turned towards the task of political re-construction and re-building a strong world party — a real Commu-

# Tendency 1 continued

nist International - which will unite national sections under a single discipline in struggle for a common Trotskyist programme.

This task is essentially a political one which can only be carried through in the struggle for revolutionary leadership in practice. In this respect, the political positions of the USFI concerning the nature of the petty bourgeois leaderships of the Chinese and Cuban workers states and the need to build Trotskyist parties in these countries reflect grave weaknesses.

The direct relevance of these questions is clearly shown in the practical line advanced by the leadership for Britian today, with its project for a 'class struggle opposition' relying on the emergence of a 'progressive' current in the labour bureaucracy.

6. The emergence of the Workers Socialist League out of a struggle for Trotskyism in the degenerated International Committee represents an important development for the political reconstruction of the Fourth International. Despite

political weaknesses in the WSL particularly its failure to grasp adequately the history and devel-opment of the USFI - its daily struggle to develop and win support for the Trotskyist programme among decisive sections of militant workers represents a major gain for the world movement.

#### UNITE

For this reason we say that the Conference should resolve to unite the forces of the IMG with the WSL as a vital part of our perspectives for the year ahead.

Tendency 2

(Our tendency is in political solida rity with the Leninist Trotskyist Faction (LTF), a faction within the Fourth International to reverse the ultra-left turn initiated at the 1969 World Congress and to win the Fourth International back to the transitional method and programme.)

Since taking office, the Labour Government has carried through a wide-ranging programme of antiworking class measures to bail British capitalism out of its deepening crisis. In doing so, it has been able to count on the support of the leaders of the Labour Party and the trade unions.

The result has been drastic cutbacks in the social services; mounting unemployment; escalating attacks on democratic rights; inflation; wage controls; speed-up; and a deterioration in the quality of life. Fifteen thousand troops have been kept in Northern Ireland. The right to abor-/ tion is under further attack.

The treachery of the labour leaders has disoriented large sections of the working class and prevented them from fighting back effectively. Nevertheless, the working class has suffered no major defeat for 40 years and in the post-war period has come to expect rising living standards. As the ruling class steps up its offensive, the class struggle will tend to deepen, giving rise to big working class struggles, which will be reflected within the trade unions and the Labour Party.

## Key

The key question that the workers have yet to overcome is the crisis of leadership. The betrayals of the labour leaders underscore the urgent need to win the workers to a revolutionary socialist consciousness and practice and so forge a new, revolutionary leadership. The building of a mass Leninist combat party is a pre-condition for the successful socialist revolution. It is only when such a party has been built and the present reformist misleaders of the working class pushed aside that we will be able to determine the course and outcome of the class struggle.

The construction of such a party is a gigantic task and can only be achieved by participating in the class struggle armed with the transitional programme and method. By cratic and transitional demands, which speak to the concerns and interests of the exploited and oppressed, the masses can be spurred into anti-capitalist struggle, using proletarian methods of mass action. In fighting to win their demands, the masses, through their own experience, will develop a socialist consciousness and an understanding of the need to take power.

This approach is diametrically opposed to the 'strategy' of the three tendencies in the IMG which adhere to the International Majority Tendency (IMT), all of which base themselves on the concerns of the 'new mass vanguard' rather than the objective interests of the masses.

#### Social

Today's ruling class offensive is not confined to attacks on wages and living conditions. It also involves an attack on social and political rights. The working class cannot make a socialist revolution without winning to its banner all the oppressed - women, youth, immigrants, blacks. If the working class is to mobilise all the forces available for the socialist revolution, it must champion the demands of all the oppressed.

Many struggles of the oppressed challenge the major pillars of capitalist rule and thus help the working class as a whole to achieve its goal of abolishing capitalism and replacing it with a socialist society. Struggles such as the Irish people's fight for self-determination and the campaigns of the women's liberation movement, students, blacks and immigrants, play an important role in educating the workers to assume their historic responsibilities.

These struggles help to overcome the divisions within the working class which are consciously promoted by the ruling class. All other tendencies in the IMG have failed to grasp the central importance of these issues to the success of the coming British revolution.

The most effective way we can give revolutionary leadership in the class struggle today, thereby increasing our influence and winning the maximum recruits to our movement. is by adopting the following orientation and tasks.

#### Demand

We must continually demand that

the Labour Party and trade union leaders chart a course in the objective should propagandise within the

mass organisations of the working

class for a fight to defend the interests of all the oppressed. Against unemployment and inflation, we fight for: the shorter work-week with no loss of pay; for the labour leadership to assume the responsibility of organising the unemployed; for the sliding scale of wages, tied to an accurate cost-of-living index.

We advocate a massive public works programme and an end to all cuts in social services. We stand for workers democracy within the Labour Party and the unions. We urge the labour movement to use its power to campaign to get the troops out of Ireland; to back up the fight for free, legal abortion; and to champion the struggles of students, blacks and immigrants. We advocate reliance on proletarian means of struggle, not parliamentary or judicial means.

We continually counterpose our class-struggle programme and actions to those of the labour bureaucracy, thereby laying the basis for the building of a classstruggle left wing within the labour movement and for the recruitment of the more militant workers to the IMG.

#### Ireland

Fifteen thousand British troops are maintained in Ireland in violation of the Irish people's right to selfdetermination. Living in the oppressor nation, we must do everything possible to build a solidarity movement in defence of the Irish struggle. In fact, this task is the acid test for all those claiming to be revolutionary socialists.

The Troops Out Movement (TOM) must gather sufficient strength to force the Government to withdraw its troops. TOM must build broad actions demanding the immediate withdrawal of the troops; and we must aim to win the troops themselves to the solidarity position and to TOM.

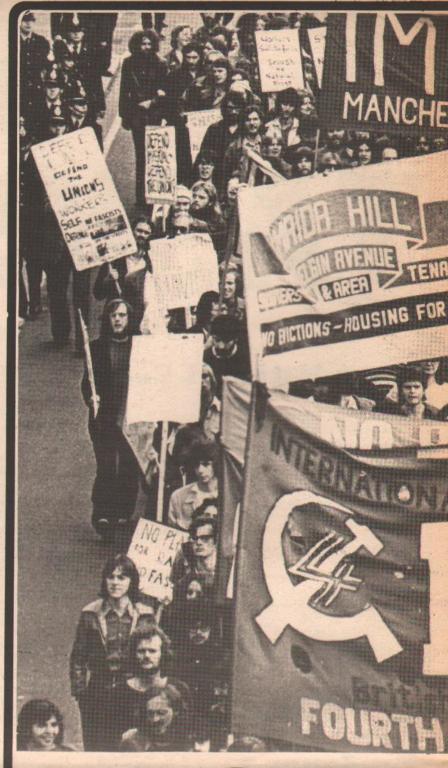
The fight for free, legal abortion plays a powerful role in exploding capitalist attitudes to women and in liberating women from the shackles of enforced motherhood and family ties. The fight to win this right brings women into sharp conflict with the capitalist state and its ideologists. The National Abortion Campaign (NAC) has already proved its ability to mobilise thousands of women for the right to choose. We must build NAC as the priority campaign of the women's movement.

Students are a key element in the current radicalisation. The needs of modern capitalism have led to a huge increase in the student population and to the relative proletarianisation of intellectual labour. Students today are potential allies of the prolet-

### **Opportunities**

There are big opportunities in the colleges and in the NUS to build a class-struggle left wing campaigning around the cuts, grants, women's oppression and Ireland, To seize these opportunities and give leadership to the unfolding struggles of students and youth, the IMG should set up a Trotskyist youth organisation.

These are a few of the concepts and tasks that we must adopt in the period ahead in order to make the maximum gains.



# TASKS

The Perspectives 1976 National Conference of t

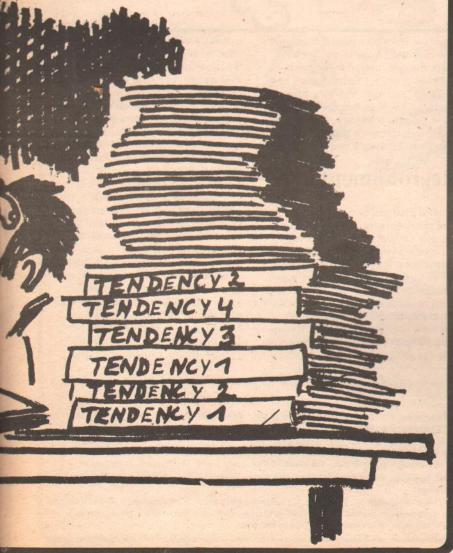


ANDREW WIARD (Report)



# AFEA

Discussion at the International Marxist Group



# Tendency 3

#### 1. IS THE TASK OF THE DAY REPLACING THE PRESENT LABOUR PARTY LEADERSHIP? aided and abetted by the CP.

Serious socialists see the need to sweep away the present leadership of the working class and replace it with one which fights for a thoroughgoing anti-capitalist policy. But this will require many years of struggle and the building of a new revolutionary party. What is the central task of today, of the next year or eighteen months?

The USFI theses say that it is to replace the present Labour leadership with an alternative one. The theses say that, ' ..... a necessary precondition for a generalised successful defence and counter-attack, reversing the limited gains scored by the bourgeoisie during the last six months,' is 'the emergence of an alternative leadership', and that this 'cannot be created in the immediate future - the coming 12-18 months which is the time posed outside the Labour Party

From this flows the central IMG slogan of 'Remove the Callaghan-Healey leadership'

We think this way of posing perspectives is wrong. The working class can counter-attack even if the lefts fail to challenge the Labour leadership. In our view the main slogan for today should be: 'Defeat the Labour Government's attacks on working people -For class struggle solutions to the capitalist crisis.' We think that such policies are summarised in our Action Programme, and the essence of it is the struggle to take control of the economy out of the hands of the capitalists through workers control and nationalisation of the banks and manufacturing

#### 2. CLASS STRUGGLE CUR-RENTS AND THE LABOUR

The Labour Party's hold over the majority of the working class will only be broken during mass revolutionary mobilisations. This general historical truth is not, however, a sufficient guide to day-to-day orientation. In particular, it is wrong to think that the broad vanguard of working class militants is actively committed to the belief that if the lefts held power, the Labour Party would become an adequate vehicle for socialism. The experience of the working class since the war has left the bulk of class conscious workers cynical and sceptical about the lefts.

This relationship between the lefts and the broad working class vanguard has been demonstrated over and over again during the last months: the failure of the Manifesto groups; the lack of enthusiasm for the chauvinist campaign over the EEC; the lack of polarisation in the mass organisations over the Labour Party leadership contest; and many other examples. On the other hand, there has been a growth of movements expressing political activity outside the framework of labourism - the women's liberation movement and NAC; the anti-fascist committees; various solidarity movements; etc.

In addition, we have seen the development of trends at the base of the mass organisations seeking alternatives to reliance on the lefts: the National Assembly on Unemployment - basically organised by the CP; the IS 'Right to Work' march (which despite its sectarianism got substantial declarations of support from trade union bodies); and the MCAPP conference.

How should these currents fight within the mass organisations? Should their main task be to build 'a united left movement'? Vote the right out of office and the left in? Get all unions to affiliate to the Labour Party and flood back in the CLPs? That is the logical line for those who think that the key task is to replace the Labour Party leadership.

We disagree with this line. We think that the key task is to organise a class struggle tendency on a definite platform of demands at the base of the mass organisations, primarily

Without the building of such an organised tendency, the bureaucracy will be able to continue to manoeuvre,

#### 3. LEFT CAUCUSES IN THE UNIONS

The lefts must be put to the test not just in words but by actions: we must demand that those who claim to oppose the Government's policies come forward with a platform of class struggle demands and organise around them. The CP leadership has refused to fight for such a class struggle tendency in the unions because this would embarrass its attempt to maintain a cosy relationship with the left bureaucracy. At the same time IS plays down the necessity for an adequate programme of action, and puts its own desire for recruitment first.

In our work towards building a class struggle tendency we seek to build left caucuses in individual unions, to develop existing rankand file movements to give them more adequate policies, and to establish cross-union contacts between such caucuses.

We consider it essential for the IMG to start a serious debate with the CP and IS militants on the need for such a class struggle tendency and on the kind of action programme required by the working class. The publications of the IMG must be geared towards the problems of this debate and our work in the trade unions must be based on a coherent plan of action on these policies.

Where local Labour Party organisations have turned towards the class struggle and campaigns like NAC, Chile and Portugal solidarity, etc., this is of great assistance in developing those struggles. But Labour Party bureaucracy places very narrow limits to the scope of such activity Where there is such a clash we consider that the urgent needs of the class struggle come before Labour Party membership.

The lack of flexibility of the Labour Party is most clearly shown by the emergence of the Scottish Labour Party: threatened with electoral annihilation by the SNP, a section of the Labour Party bureaucracy broke to form this party. This is a potentially very positive development if the SLP

develops a programme of class struggle demands for the Scottish working class.

#### 4. CLASS STRUGGLE CAN-DIDATES

In the absence of any alternative party to the Labour Party, socialists will continue to vote Labour against the Tories, Liberals, etc. But in some Labour strongholds, socialists should seem to challenge the Labour Party electorally by standing class struggle candidates counterposing our programme of action to the rotten classcollaborationist policies of the Labour Government.

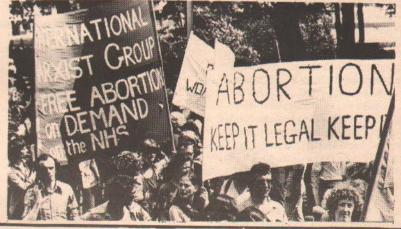
#### 5. PREPARING FOR A NEW WORKING CLASS LEADER-SHIP

The IMG is a revolutionary Marxist group which fights for the international needs of the working class and champions the rights of all oppressed groups: defence of the right of the Irish people to selfdetermination and immediate withdrawal of troops from Ireland; the fight against racialism; the struggle for the liberation of women; solidarity with the Portuguese and Spanish working class; and the fight against British imperialism's manoeuvres in Southern Africa. The British working class will never mount an effective challenge to its reformist misleaders until it has grasped the importance of these

We believe that the present crisis within the revolutionary left has a potentially positive aspect: that of facilitating essential political clarification, which can both promote unity in action by the revolutionary left and regroupment on a programmatic basis with the Fourth International

At the same time we think that through correct tactics it is possible to start the process of breaking the total domination of the Labour Party over working class politics before the onset of a revolutionary crisis, and that it is possible to build a new revolutionary socialist party with significant influence amongst the mass of the workers before a decisive confrontation between the classes.

The successful building of such a party able to challenge Labour's monopoly hold over working class politics would enormously strengthen the possibilities of victory in the revolutionary crisis ahead.



# Tendency 4

Nowhere is the uneven character of the combined process of the European revolution more clearly shown than in Britain. The miners' strike brought down the Heath Government. By this action, they set back not only the Tory Party, but also the project of confrontation backed by the ruling class. Yet two years later, the labour movement bureaucracy has led the working class into a number of defeats.

Since the summer of 1975, the political defeat suffered at the hands of the bourgeois coalition headed by Wilson in the Common Market referendum, the effect of the £6 limit in driving down real wages by over six per cent, and the increase in unemployment to nearly two mil'ion (in real terms) have both accompanied and reinforced a sharp downturn in mass struggle.

The crisis, reflecting the underlying decline of the rate of profit, has continued to affect all the classes. This is shown by the continuing inability of British imperialism to defeat the Republican masses in the north of Ireland and the development of the national, social and economic crisis in Scotland.

Massive redundancies of women workers, along with slashing attacks on social expenditure, result in the throwing of the burden of social provision back onto the family.

#### POTENTIAL

The racist measures of the Labour Government aimed at immigrants with the collaboration of the TUC leaders - have provided fertile ground for the renewed growth and activity of the fascist groups.

These features of the objective situation have not eliminated the potential of the mass struggle of the working class as a principal political feature of British society, and do not represent a qualitative defeat. On the

# 4 Supplement \_\_\_\_\_ continued

contrary, the basis for our perspectives over the next year must be that the working class is capable of launching successful defensive struggles against the assault of the ruling

The achievement of a second round of severe wage restraint by the Labour Government, in collaboration with the trade union bureaucracy, confirms the rightward shift of the main leaders of the mass organisations, particularly those previously associated with the left (Jones, Scanlon and Foot).

#### LEADERSHIP

The intervention of Scanlon in the recent disputes in British Leyland indicates that fight backs against the Government's policies, however fragmented and partial in the first instance, will run full tilt into the opposition of this bloc. This poses the question of a struggle for the leadership of the mass organisations themselves in this period.

Revolutionaries must confront the mass struggle of the working down the Labour Government, by pinning the responsibility for Labour's likely fall from office on the right-wing leaders of the labour movement and by posing the removal of this leadership.

#### **OPPOSED**

Such an approach is directly counterposed to the ultra-left position of bringing down the Labour Government, or the belief that it is possible to create an electoral alternative or new political party for a section of the mass of the working class in this period.

The recent wave of strikes in the car industry, the big turn-out at the National Assembly on Unemployment, and the latest round of union conferences show the existence of a layer of militant rank-and-file workers starting to commit themselves to a struggle against the policies of the Labour Government. Vacillating between them and the pro-Government bloc are the 'official lefts' like Benn, Buckton and Clive Jenkins. These opportunists aid the

DEFEND

the arguments of the reformists that class will have the effect of bringing

right in deeds, but attempt to prevent themselves from being outflanked in an upsurge.

The IMG must fight to unify in action all those forces prepared to fight against the Government's policies, isolate and defeat the supporters of these policies, and continually force the lefts to take action in relation to the struggles of the working class or expose them in the eyes of the greatest number of workers.

The major practical task of the IMG must be a turn towards the formation of tendencies in the trade unions, and actively encouraging our fellow socialists in the Labour Party to do likewise. The activity of such tendencies will be centred on the fight for a permanently structured, cross-sectoral opposition within the mass organisations which fights for their leadership around a programme of demands which enables forms of class-wide action to be built giving the present defensive struggles an anti-capitalist dynamic. The most decisive points of this programme must deal with the questions of incomes policy, cuts and unemployment.

#### CAMPAIGN

In the wages field, it means a systematic campaign for the sliding ≤ scale of wages, based on a workers cost of living index. This principle of automatic compensation for inflation must be carried forward in the context of social expenditure, combined with the demand for the opening of the books to lay a political and practical basis for organising a national campaign around the demand for the nationalisation of the banks and finance houses.

The demand for the opening of the capitalist books also provides a

direct itself towards those forces breaking from social democracy and around those political issues on which these breaks will occur. This determines the following general outline for the IMG's work.

1. Because of the role of the Labour Government, and the shift to the right of most of the traditional 'left' leaders, the prospect in the next year is not one of massive battles (as in 1972) but of a simmering crisis, creating enormous stresses on every aspect of the fabric of society. This will create a varied and piecemeal development of struggles struggles against racism and fascism, on wages and speed-up, factory closures, cuts, position of women, etc.

Tendency 5

Factions are not formed lightly. We have, by and large, been members of the IMG for a number of years, and in opposition to the present majority leadership for two or three years. It is only on the basis of extensive experience and a prolonged struggle to correct the mistaken theory and practice of the leadership that we have finally drawn the conclusion that this leadership is an obstacle to the further development of the IMG and the Fourth International in Britain. We conclude that this leadership must be replaced, and from this flows our decision to form a faction.

#### Theses

The theses presented by the USFI to the coming IMG conference (published in International, Vol.3, No. 1) draw out the following line to guide the work of revolutionaries in the coming period.

'Under these conditions, where every objective development creates the need for a generalised political response and leadership of the working class, but at the same time the overwhelming majority of even the most militant workers still give their. political allegiance to the Labour, Party, such a leadership and political perspective cannot be created in the immediate future - the coming 12-18 months which is the time posed outside the Labour Party, if it is to be credible and acceptable to large sections of the working class. The whole pressure of the situation is thus to the creation of a challenge to the leadership of Wilson-Murray-Jones inside the Labour Party and the labour movement.' (International, fractions in the trade unions on a

#### Differ

We differ with the central strategic line put forward here, namely that the alternative leadership and programme is going to emerge from within the Labour Party. The effect of this line, and the central slogan of replacing the Callaghan-Healey leadership, has already had very serious effects on the practice of the IMG.

It has led Red Weekly to overreact to every small statement and move of opposition made by left Labour MPs. It even led to proposals last summer that the IMG should

build Manifesto groups. It has led to subordination of the practice of the IMG to gaining alliances with these wretched elements. It has led the IMG to minimise the importance of events which occur outside the Labour Party (such as the ISdominated Right to Work March).

It has led in the student field to the IMG raising the demand that the NUS affiliate to the Labour Party, so that students can be a part of the battle to change the Labour Party leadership. And it has led to a downgrading of the importance of the longterm fight to win support in the trade unions. The adoption of this strategic line has led to a growing crisis in the work of the IMG, because it runs counter to the real course of the class struggle.

#### Breaks

In opposition to this line, we put forward a line based on the possibility of seeing breaks from the Labour Party, and of developing minority programme which breaks from the reformism of the Labour Party. Further, we say that this is absolutely necessary to build a revolutionary leadership and party. Already the last year has given evidence of this the break of the Scottish Labour Party, the election of independent socialists to the left of the Labour Party in local elections in Newcastle and parts of Wales.

This we sum up as a line of preparing a challenge to the monopoly hold of the Labour Party over working class political representation. There will be a continuing erosion of the electoral base of the Labour Party, which will be multiplied by large scale confrontations in the future. The task of the IMG is to

#### Alternative

2. The crucial test for revolutionaries will be their ability to carry out an alternative revolutionary programme which provides a line and perspective for all these varied and partial struggles in such a way as to begin to pull all areas of resistance together behind a clear-cut alternative revolutionary programme. This we term the Action Programme.

Out of partial fight backs we must draw together forces into a ational class struggle tendency. This is not an immediate possibility in the next year, it is the perspective which informs all our work for the foreseeable future. It must be centralised around our programme and not around a system of alliances with left social democracy.

3. In particular, we understand the need to be implanted in these partial fight backs, because they give us a real opportunity to carry aspects of our programme into agitation and practice. This necessitates consistent long-term work in the factories, shop stewards committees, and unions. The reformist leadership must be challenged all along the line, and this can only be achieved through long-term work to win a base for our ideas in the decisive sections of the organised working

4. This line determines our attitude to work in elections, where the monopoly hold of the Labour Party is most clearly shown. Already the forces exist in many areas, drawn

starting point for the struggle against unemployment through demands relating to work-sharing without loss of pay enforced by workers control. In this context the demand for a programme of nationalisation and and public works, to meet social need and employ the jobless, becomes part of a practical strategy of struggle for the working class.

The guiding theme is the struggle for workers control of the economy, counterposed to all forms of classcollaboration promoted by the bureaucracy such as participation comm-

#### PRINCIPLE

The principle of the self-organisation of the working class as the leadership for all the oppressed layers in society must also inform our work among women, black people and students. The formation of action committee type bodies in the localities provides the best organisational means of cementing an alliance between those sectors and the organised working class. We must initiate mass action around demands which lead them to the firm conclusion that the only way out of their oppression is in alliance with the organised workers.

The growth of the fascist groups and the strengthening of the repressive state apparatus through such

devices as the Prevention of Terrorism Act mean that campaigns for the defence of democratic rights and consistent propaganda for workers self-defence must be part

of our activity. We will more directly orientate our work around the demands of 'Troops Out Now from Ireland' and 'Self-Determination for the Irish People' into the trade unions and Labour Party. We will fight against the imperialist 'cordoning off' of developments in the south of Europe from the rest of the European working class devoting increasing resources to solidarity action with the struggle in Iberia and drawing out the lessons of these revolutionary experiences for the vanguard in Britain.

A further priority will be in relation to the armed struggle in Zimbabwe, which poses also a deep crisis of one of the most important imperialist bastions in the world - the racist state of South

#### RED WEEKLY

The transformation of Red Weekly into an organ more capable or relating to the wider debates inside the mass organisations is an essential part of centralising the work of the organisation and greatly increasing the numbers of advanced worker militants within its ranks.



together through campaigns around the cuts and so on, to put forward class struggle, united front candidates in many local elections. These electoral activities will be a vital part of tying together the basis of a class struggle tendency, and developing the challenge to the Labour Party on the widest possible scale.

## Regroupment

Our attitude to regroupment of the revolutionary left is determined by our understanding of the need to create a revolutionary pole around our Action Programme at the core of all moves towards a class struggle tendency. We welcome the IMG's turn towards a consistent orientation on regroupment. But we should not pretend that revolutionary regroupment means other organisations joining the IMG and the Fourth International in one step. The IMG's ultimatistic presentations in the 'Faction and Party' series in Red Weekly can only be counterproductive.

What is needed is fundamental programmatic debate with other organisations on the left. This should be done in the context of discussion around the positions put forward for the 11th World Congress of the Fourth International.

Finally, despite the depth of our criticisms of the IMG leadership, we remain loyal members of the IMG. We think the USFI has demonstrated that it is the only force in the Trotskyist movement which has the programme and analysis to respond to the rise in the world revolution and working class struggle over the past decade. We do not believe that it is possible to build a British section of the Fourth International by going round or outside the IMG.

The percentage of the delegate votes cast for the documents of the above tendencies was as follows:

TENDENCY 1 3.5% TENDENCY 2 5% TENDENCY 3 33% TENDENCY 4 57.5% **TENDENCY 5 15%** 

(The total comes to more than 100% because a number of delegates voted for more than one document - in particular, for those of Tendency 3 and Tendency 5. It should be noted, however, that a small number of delegates voted for none of the main-line tendency positions)

The line put forward by Tendency 4, having won the support of a majority of the delegates after a democratic discussion and vote, is therefore the line which the organisation as a whole will fight to implement in the coming year.