

SPECIAL BRANCH

Special Report

IF REQUIRED, REFER TO [REDACTED] FOR DETAILS OF HOW THIS INFORMATION WAS OBTAINED [REDACTED] FILE REFERENCE 15th day of June 1976

SUBJECT

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1. The following information has been received from a reliable source:-

2. On Saturday, 22 May 1976, between 12.30 pm and 6.30 pm at the Lindhurst Hall, Warden Road, NW5, a pre-conference summary aggregate meeting was held of the London membership of the International Marxist Group. Approximately 120 persons were present.

Reference to Papers

40/6/59

3. The meeting was chaired by Maggie BAKER who introduced the first speaker, Steve POTTER of Tendency 7 (The Majority Tendency). He outlined how concessions wrested from the government by sections of the working class, for example, the railmen, had in the early 1970's had come to a halt with the INE referendum. A new vanguard was now re-appearing and it was, therefore, essential that the INE continued to build tendencies in the Labour Party and in trade unions where the organisation could intervene on its national campaigns.

4. Peter GOWIE then spoke on behalf of Tendency 2, opposing the view expressed in the thesis prepared by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International (which embodied the political line supported by Tendency 2). He denied that the emergence of an alternative leadership, which could only arise from within the Labour Party, was a necessary pre-condition for a generalised fightback by the working class in defence of its living standards. This position, he declared, flowed from a wrong analysis that the left forces within the working class would not fight if their leadership refused to fight. GOWIE saw an increasing contradiction between the left-wing bureaucrats and the left vanguard, and it was therefore wrong to combine them under the term 'left social democrats'. The left bureaucrats were not vacillating in their position and the masses on the left remained, in his view, under their despised and discredited control because they had not found an alternative leadership. In conclusion he saw the tasks of the INE in the coming period as the building of a class-struggle tendency at the base of the working-class movements (in this context he quoted the achievements of the International Socialists in the CPGB elections) and the pursuing of campaigns through mass action on a local rather than national basis.

5. On behalf of The Tendency, Arthur STEWART explained that the political question which was posed by the present economic situation was the weakness of the working class and

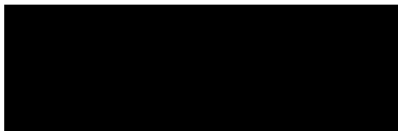
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... it was in its traditional out. He felt that the slogan of
organise the working class to expose the lefts' expressed the
problem, not the task, facing the revolutionary left. It was
wrong, in his opinion, to build extra and unemployment committees,
for such bodies would arise spontaneously through existing working
class organisations. The correct orientation of the IWO was
seen, by the Tendency, as allying itself with those forces
which did not look to any social democrats for leadership,
that is to say with women, blacks and students.

6. The next speaker was Martin RABY of the Trotskyist
Opposition, the name adopted by those former supporters
of John STRAWSON who had not left the IWO to join the
Workers Socialist League. After explaining that it was no
fault of the Trotskyist Opposition that its document was not
available in London, RABY declared that a militant workers
vanguard had arisen out of the struggle, a fact recognized
by the IS and the Workers Revolutionary Party and adapted
to by both groupings. He felt that the IWO also should fight
for its revolutionary politics inside this vanguard, because
of its false conception of the united front tactic the IWO
had mistakenly ignored the Troops Out Movement labour movement
conference in Ireland, struggle around the prevention of
Terrorism Act and support for Spanish workers, thus leaving
the field open to the Communist Party.

7. The final introductory speech was given by Nigel WINTERS
(believed to be a party name) on behalf of Faction A, which
comprises the remainder of those members of the IWO who did
not follow Peter GOWAN into Tendency B following the split in
Tendency A. WINTERS stated that the Labour Government was
softening up the working class, whose partial resistance was
both fragmented and confused. In his opinion it was the left
social democrats who had been the bulwark of the attacks on
the working class and made those attacks possible. In that
context, an alliance of the trade union movements and the
Labour Government held great dangers for the working class
movements. In his view it was the lack of both an alternative
programme for action and an alternative leadership that led
militants to support the right to work campaign, as this
filled a vacuum for them. The task of the IWO therefore was
to break the Labour Party's monopoly hold by building a
militant vanguard, an essential prerequisite to dual power;
this task could best be achieved by serious gripping work inside
factories and trade unions.

8. From the floor of the meeting a series of interventions
was then made by various adherents of the three tendencies and
Faction A, each reiterating various aspects of the respective
programmes. The speakers included:



Tendency F

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Tendency E

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Pat JORDAN
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The Tendency

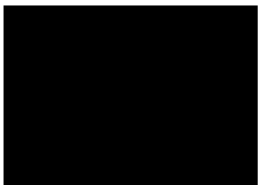
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Faction A

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The five main speakers then summed up their respective positions and the meeting closed promptly at 6.30 pm."

9. References of persons known to have attended the meetings:-

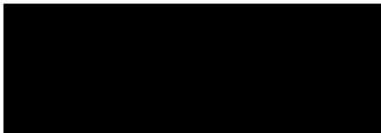


- Maggie BARKER
- Steve POTTER
- Peter GOWAN
- Arthur STEWART
- Martin WADY

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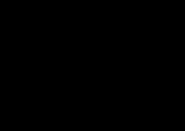
Pat JOHN

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G.T.M. Craft

Chief Inspector

R. Wilson

CHIEF SUPERVISOR

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