

METROPOLITAN POLICE

S.D.S

Special Report

SPECIAL BRANCH

15th day of June 1980

SUBJECT

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

2. "On Saturday 19th April 1980 at the South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1, the Socialist Workers Party held a Party Council meeting. The agenda for the day's business was set out as follows:-

10.00 - 1.00 The Industrial and political situation.

1.00 - 2.00 Lunch.

2.00 - 2.45 Unemployment and the Right to Work Campaign.

2.45 - 4.15 Party building.

4.15 - 4.30 Party finance.

4.30 - 5.00 International report.

5.00 Resolutions.

3. After the registration of delegates to the Council and official observers had been completed, the business commenced at about 10.25am, under the chairmanship of [redacted] the National Secretary of the SWP.

4. The first contribution to the proceedings was from Duncan HALLAS of the SWP Central Committee, who stated that he intended to cover the current industrial situation and future prospectives including 'left' unity. The views of the CC were contained in a briefing document issued to all those present. (See attached document 'Notes on the current situation and prospects'.)

5. HALLAS's starting point was, naturally enough, the recent steel strike. He felt that the intervention of the SWP had been effective, the limited but tireless work by Party members in certain areas such as Sheffield and Scunthorpe had proved vital in the establishment of new branches in these areas. The situation in those areas now had to be further exploited in order to sustain those achievements.

Reference to Papers

Socialist Workers Party 'Party Council' Meeting - 19.4.80

400/80/23

TO [redacted] 26 JUN 1980 P.A. IN [redacted]

6. His theme, which he repeated consistently, was that of a continued downturn in the confidence of the working class, although there was much bitterness amongst those sections of the class who had been involved in industrial disputes with the Tory government. In situations such as British Leyland, the failure of the trade union bureaucracy to support Derek ROBINSON was symbolic of this defeatism. Yet HALLAS saw in the May 14th 'Day of Action', a chance for the SWP to tap much of the anti-Tory feelings which was relevant in the working class. The 'Day of Action' had to be seen as a priority for all SWP members as a way of building the struggle against the Tories, using the visible objective of the proposed anti-union laws. This would be the start of a continuing planned conflict for the rest of this year, with the planned 'Right to Work' march playing a significant role. HALLAS interdispersed his treatise with many anecdotes of incidents during the various disputes of the year.

7. He told the meeting that intervention in industrial disputes, on a localised basis, was important to the SWP. Strikes such as 'Chix' in Slough were excellent opportunities for members to work hard to establish rank and file activity and solidarity with other local trade union bodies, while at the same time developing a geographical base enabling the SWP politics to have an impact on the community.

8. The question of 'left' unity was then raised by HALLAS, his main point being an insistence that the Party should not hide its politics when co-operating with left-reformists and sectarian groupings. This aim would be achieved by genuine activity and positive demands for action within any particular situation. The way to build a revolutionary party was not to be submerged within a huge radical protest group, but to appear to be independent within that group by remaining publicly credible with widely publicised intentions and views. He mentioned the recent debacle with the 'Labour Co-ordinating Committee', but insisted that the SWP must remain active within it, with constructive activity and criticisms in order to prevent its reformist drift.

9. HALLAS asked that anti-fascist activity, which was bound to increase with the re-emergence of the demoralised National Front, should be seen within the whole framework of the class-struggle, using the anti-Tory feeling which many such situations threw up. He called for a realistic approach to such work, dependent on membership and exploitation of various situations as they occurred.

10. During this period, HALLAS often stressed the importance of the distribution of the 'Socialist Worker' newspaper (SW), a point which was amplified by Tony CLIFF later in the proceedings.
11. His conclusion followed the theme that he had laid down at the beginning, which was that although the working class was at present defeatist and on a downturn the outlook was favourable.
12. The contributions from the floor which followed were many and varied and were cleverly and strategically prompted from the chair by Privacy. The most prominent were those from the SWP members who had been working around the recent disputes. Two British Leyland shop-stewards, Privacy and Privacy, spoke pessimistically about the situation concerning the workforce, using such a phrase as, 'being kicked in the teeth'. Neither of them could see any immediate upturn for the confidence of BL workers. Another delegate, Privacy, whilst appreciating the feelings of these two, felt that her geographical branches' intervention in the Midlands area had been successful and productive. Large quantities of 'SW' had been sold, many bulletins effectively distributed and consequently some new members recruited.
13. The Steel Strike 'success' story was then discussed, with a certain note of optimism for the future. Privacy from Sheffield and Privacy of the CC, who was the prime organiser of the SWP intervention, espoused this triumphalist approach. Privacy especially looked to the success of the SWP's 'Real Steel News' combined with the militancy of areas such as Scunthorpe and Stocksbridge as possibly markers towards a new trend in working class awareness of the political situation.
14. Privacy, from Talbot Linwood, disagreed with the CC line on the downturn of the working class, he argued that events in the recent industrial field had shown that the mood of pessimism had turned a corner and that the responsibility of the SWP, was to take the initiative and not analyse the situation too much.
15. Various other contributions from the floor were made, but nearly all consisted of individual delegates explaining the industrial work in which their areas were involved. After a brief conclusion by HALLAS in which he re-emphasised the points he had made earlier, the meeting adjourned for lunch at 1.10pm.

.../...

[REDACTED]

16. The afternoon session opened at 2.5pm with [REDACTED] who outlined the CC prospectives concerning unemployment and the proposed 'Right to Work (RTW)'. He began by giving an analysis of the current industrial situation as described in the Party Council Document (Industrial) 2 (see attached) and continued with an explanation of the credibility of the RTW campaign amongst the 'Left'.

17. [REDACTED] followed the line contained in the CC document, with an emphasis on the idea that more enthusiasm had to be applied in the organisation of the RTW activities. It must not be seen just as a way of obtaining contacts, but rather as a way of continuing all other aspects of SWP activity including anti-Tory work. If the RTW was to succeed it had to show a gradual growth of activity to build an effective exhibition of working class indignation at Tory class attacks.

18. Trade union support for the march was essential and such support should again be part of the routine activity of the SWP within the workplace, building up to the activities in September. [REDACTED] also referred to the united front activity especially with the Labour Party, saying that the RTW march over the years had highlighted the ills of capitalism in the guise of unemployment, and has been used against both Labour and Conservative governments. This was an excellent chance for the SWP to discover the true colours of the local MPs by asking them to sponsor the march, many so-called 'left' members would be exposed in this way. However, a non-sectarian approach for support would have to be made to attract the radicalised periphery which was available.

19. [REDACTED] concluded that it was essential that the RTW campaign should be seen by members not as a limited event, but as part of an overall strategy which should start at once and be continued after the RTW march.

20. Tony CLIFF from the CC, continued the afternoon programme by introducing the prospectives on 'Party Building'. His theme was 'Small is Beautiful'. CLIFF's analysis of the class situation was naturally enough the same as HALLAS's, and thus covered much of the same ground regarding the industrial situation. He felt heartened by the advances made by many SWP organisers in the recruitment of new members during the recent industrial disputes.

.../...



21. CLIFF thought that the key to these achievements was the 'SW' newspaper. The selling of the newspaper was the single most important factor in the successful building of a revolutionary party. The effective distribution of 'SW' in the workplace, to contacts and in public places was essential to progress. The smallest of branches had a part to play in this role, in fact, CLIFF assured the meeting that the smaller isolated branches had shown a more significant rise in paper-sales than their contemporaries in the large conurbations, who appeared to be somewhat lethargic in their activities around the papers.

22. He continued the theme of smallness by illustrating the success of the SWP in smaller issues such as the 'Chix' strike. Issues such as these were an essential part of party building, as they gave the local geographical branch a target to pursue and thus expand. He thought that it was 'useless' for a branch or district to concentrate on just one issue. The geographical unit however small was essential to the welfare of the Party and its future. Even such issues as the 15.5 campaign, Party Council Document 3 (see attached), showed that small SWP branches with no engineering members had succeeded where there had been little or no activity in larger units. CLIFF thought that for the SWP to succeed it must return to basics and not attempt to over-reach itself. Effective organisation was the key-word. Public meetings were also vital but they had to be prepared in order to ensure that those attending were not all SWP members; new contacts had to be attracted!

23. The Council delegates who discussed this topic were all apparently in an optimistic mood, accounting in great detail, the success of their responsibilities in achieving what CLIFF had stated. [Redacted] from Lancaster was in particular a shining example to all those present. [Redacted] from Leeds provided the council with more [Redacted] on activities. Other participants included [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] [Redacted] and [Redacted] all of whom in their positions as Party bureaucrats, put forward the party line most fervently, with particular emphasis on increased paper sales.

24. At the conclusion of this debate, [Redacted] replaced [Redacted] in the chair, the reason being that the Glasgow resolution had been brought forward to 4.15pm to allow more time for discussion. This motion was put forward by [Redacted] of Glasgow who broadly attacked the CC for failing to implement the intent of the SWP Conference in the organisation of the National Council, he then listed the various items of disagreement. (See attached documents).



25. The response that followed [Privacy]'s proposals took the whole meeting by surprise. [Privacy], in his role as National Secretary, appeared to take the whole issue as a personal insult and proceeded to verbally attack the whole of the Glasgow delegation. He accused them of bitterness because they had lost a similar motion at conference and this was continued by listing their failings as an area and included many acrimonious personal insults to those present. [Privacy] replying to [Privacy] did not respond in such a personal way, but attempted to put forward a logical argument. [Privacy] from the floor, argued that the proposal was badly worded, inconclusive and irrelevant. He suggested that the motion should not be put to the vote but just noted. After further discussion the Glasgow delegation concurred with [Privacy] and the proposal was subsequently noted.

26. [Privacy] continued the proceedings with a report on the finances of the SWP. He explained that the Party had been overspending and the subsequent effects of financing the activities around the steel dispute had produced a financial crisis. The extra £2,000 per month fund introduced to cover expenses by the way of increased subscriptions had achieved its target, yet stringent economy measures had had to be taken which included the dismissal of a number of full-time employees of the Party, together with wage cuts for those remaining.

27. [Privacy] insisted that there had to be a continued drive towards members increasing subscriptions. He was considering introducing a direct link between full-time organisers and their areas whereby the areas would be responsible for their expenses.

28. The final item on the timetable was the International Report from [Privacy]. He started by giving the Council a rundown of the membership figures of fraternal organisations abroad:-

50	Ireland
150	USA
50	Canada
90	West Germany
90	Australia
10	Cyprus

.../...

29. [Privacy] explained that relationships were being established with certain continental sections of the Fourth International. These to date had been productive if somewhat tentative. In France and Spain, interest had been shown in fraternal links by various leftist groups and possible meetings were in the pipe-line. [Privacy] felt that the most optimistic moves were those with Norway and Denmark, where consultations had taken place with leftist tendencies within the reformist left of those countries. He reported little progress with the 'soft-maoist' groups within Europe.

30. In answer to a question concerning the Socialist Workers Movement in Ireland, [Privacy] replied that the SWM having existed for a period as a tendency within the Socialist Labour Party, had now broken with them and they had re-established themselves as a separate entity. [Privacy]'s contribution was a limited one owing to lack of time.

31. The Party Council concluded its proceedings at 6pm.

32. The opinion of many of the delegates and observers who attended was that the Council Meeting had not achieved its purpose. Instead of being a forum for discussion and decision making as part of the democratic centralism essential to SWP politics, it was seen as the Party 'hacks' laying down the 'gospel' for the delegates to relay to the 'Troops'. The attitude of some of the CC speakers could be gauged as slightly patronising, and this rankled many experienced delegates, who saw the whole proceedings as informative but failing to adhere to the intentions of conference in the establishment of the Party Council."

33. The persons identified as being present are listed in Appendix 'A'.

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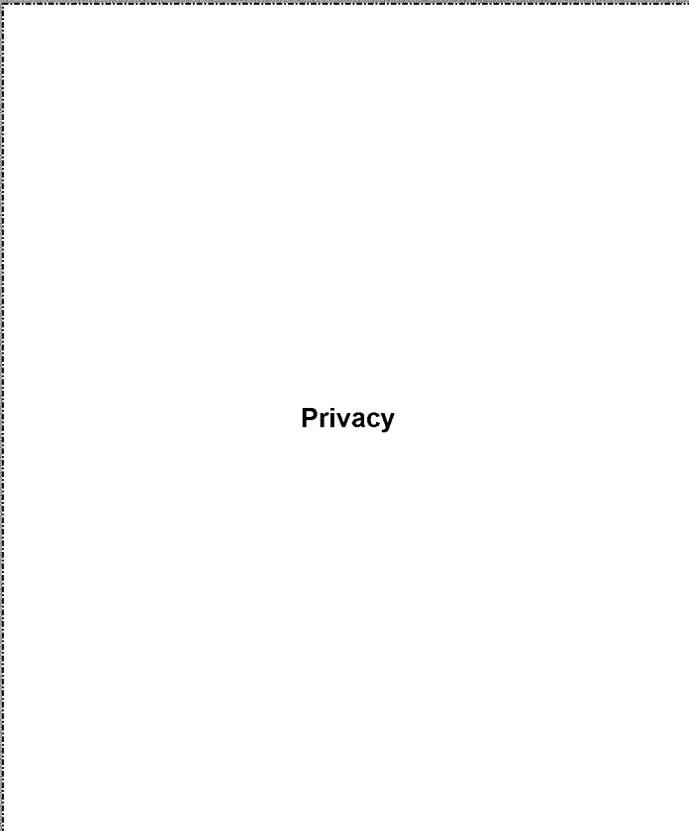
Barry Moss

CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT



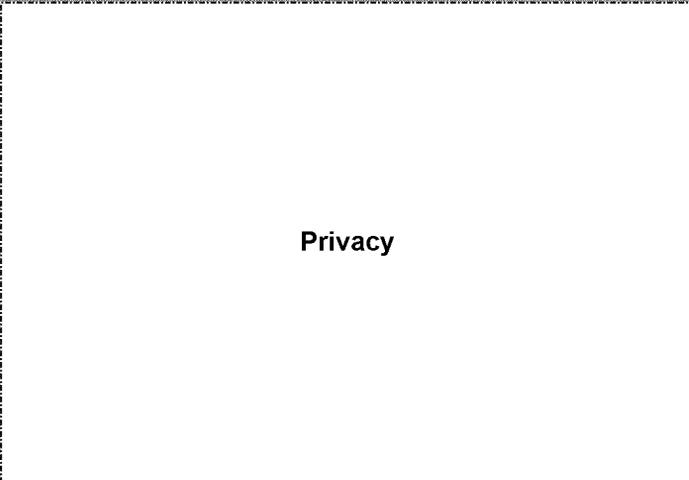
APPENDIX 'A'

Persons identified as being present at the SWP Party Council on  
19.4.80

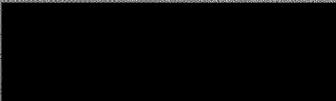


Privacy

Tony CLIFF



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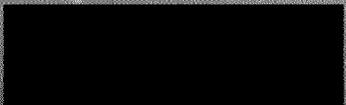
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Duncan HALLAS

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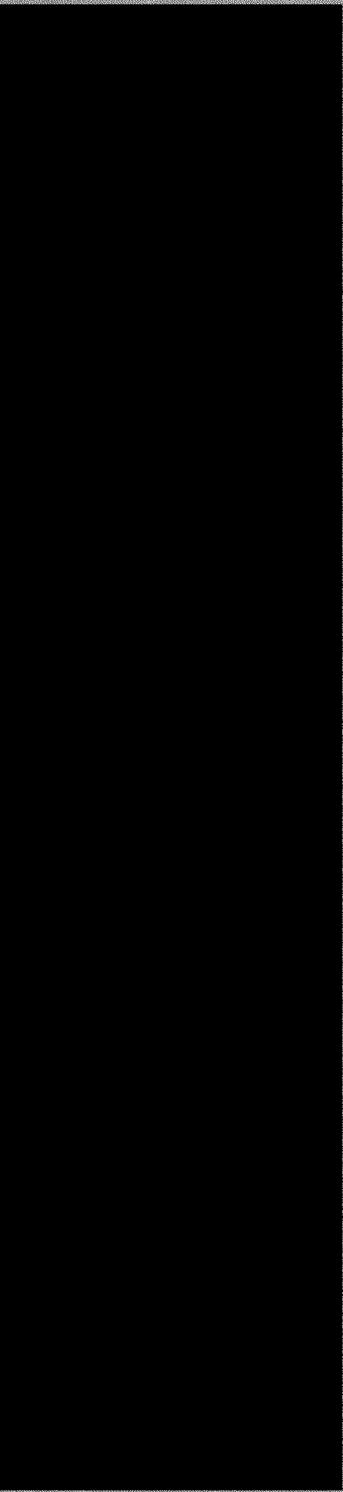
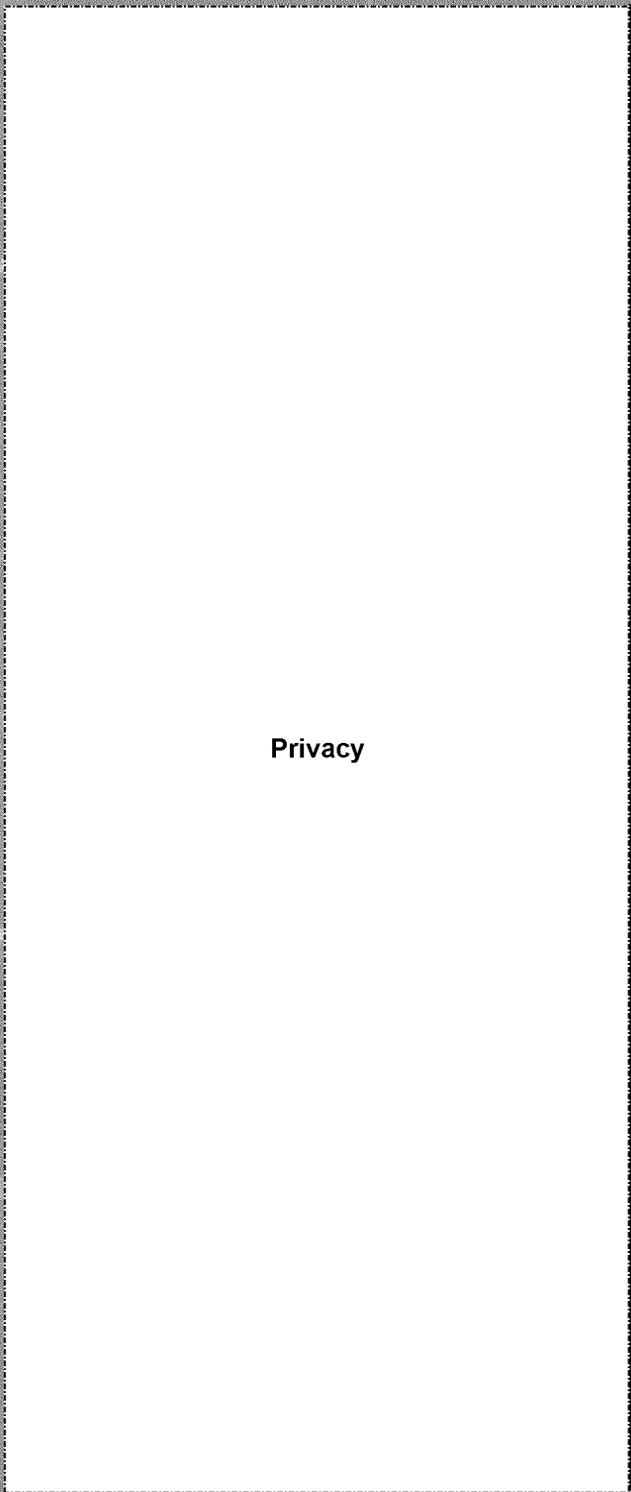
Chris HARMAN

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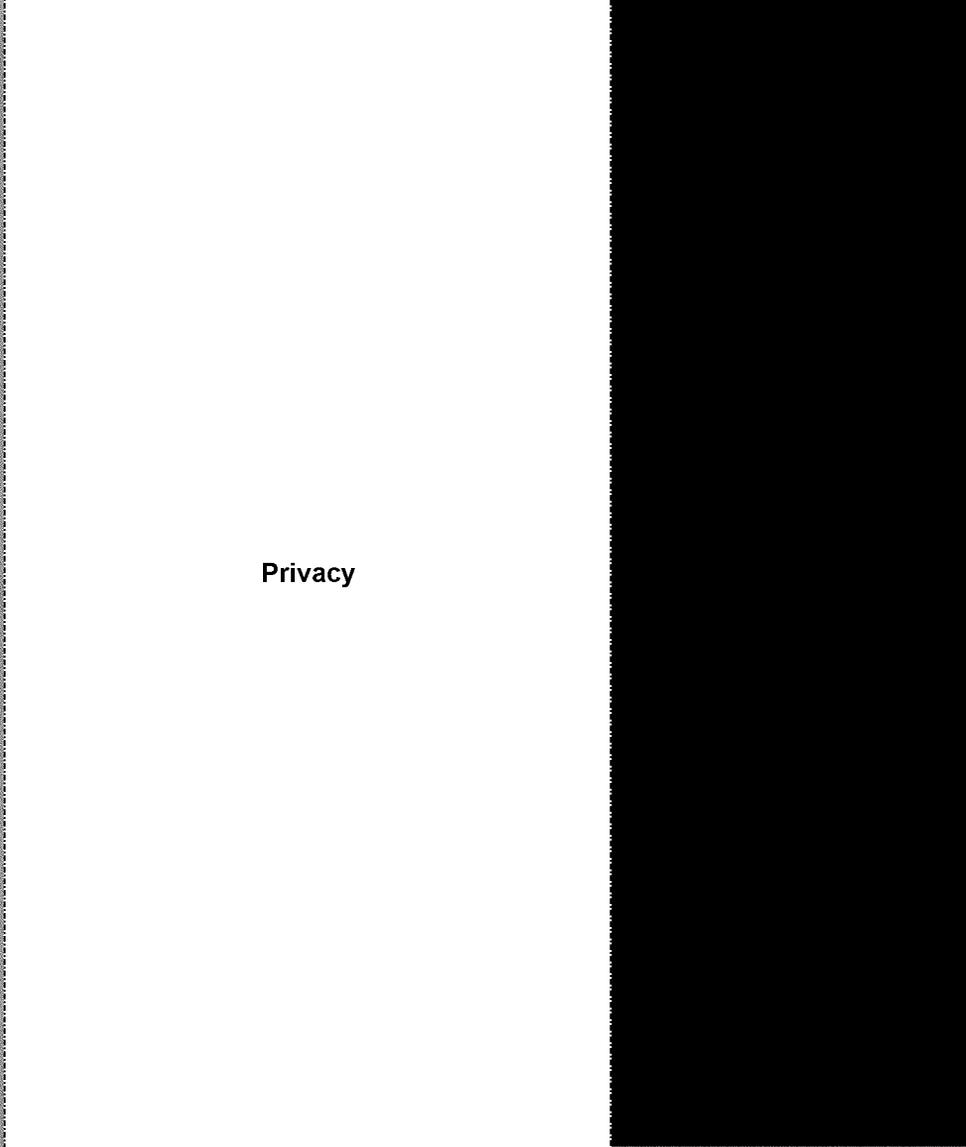


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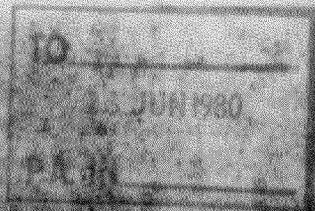


Privacy



PARTY COUNCIL 19th APRIL 1980

10.00 - 1.00	The industrial and political situation. Including prospects after the steel strike, Leyland and proposals for engineering industry.
1.00 - 2.00	LUNCH
2.00 - 2.45	Unemployment and the Right to Work Campaign including proposals for autumn.
2.45 - 4.15	Party building in the present period.
4.15 - 4.30	The state of Party finances.
4.30 - 5.00	International Report.
5.00	Resolutions.



## NOTES ON THE CURRENT SITUATION AND PROSPECTS

1. The outcome of the steel strike was not a defeat but it was a most mostly and limited success. Lack of solidarity and the manoeuvres of the union bureaucracies kept steel moving and prevented an outright victory. The course of events at British Leyland from Robinsons sacking to the acceptance of the imposed pay settlement, and the failure of the strike call of the South Wales NUM are other indications that the effects of the downturn are not yet spent. It is true that substantial pay rises are still being conceded (eg railways) and that the government is by no means reaching its objectives. The situation is to some degree fluid but overall the downturn situation continues. We are far from the situation of the early seventies.
2. At the same time there is unquestionably growing bitterness and politicisation among quite large sections of workers. The militancy of many of the steel pickets, the 'post-strike' stoppages in S. Wales and S. Yorkshire, the reception of Carlisle at the NUT Conference and various other indications show this. The effects of more cuts, rising unemployment the anti-union laws, increasing police harassment of blacks (and not only blacks) and Tory ideological justification will all feed a growing anti-Tory mood. This provides a fertile field for us. The modest but very important recruitment of steelworkers to the SWP is a pointer to the possibilities.
3. The combination of a basically defensive situation in the industrial struggle (and a weakening of both organisation and solidarity in some cases) and a growing anti-Tory feeling makes May 14 very important to us. It is an action but an action within the bounds of possibility given the downturn. A real national strike on May 14 can focus and so reinforce the anti-Tory mood. It will raise the confidence of militants and lay the basis for future actions. It is absolutely essential that the SWP is seen as the most energetic fighters for the 14th. Every member has a contribution to make; in workplaces, in union organisation, in poster and leafletting (which members unable to do other things can certainly contribute to). We must emphasise, to those who are dubious about token actions (or pretend to be to avoid any action) that the 14th is the first step in the fight against the anti-union laws but it is a necessary step.
4. The impact of the Tory government and the movement of the official leadership into a position of (largely verbal) opposition ensures that we are one of several oppositional tendencies operating in the workers' movement. The most significant ones, apart from the SWP, are left (and some not so left) reformists. Therefore, the united front tactic will be central to our activity within the general anti-Tory current. The effects of the united front tactic are to strengthen the struggle against the capitalist class and therefore, as a necessary condition for so doing, to strengthen the revolutionary trend against the reformist one within the workers movement. Therefore, under no circumstances can the SWP hide its distinctive politics in the course of united action. We want to promote action, we do not artificially differentiate ourselves from the reformists in terms of demands (the 'they say strike so we say general strike' syndrome of sectlets), we do differentiate ourselves by tireless activity and determination to push action to the limit of the possible in each situation. And we argue, at all suitable moments, the need to build the SWP. The tone of the argument can be friendly or sharp, according to circumstances. The argument has to be continually pushed. The united front tactic is not a dissolving of the party into an amorphous anti-Tory bloc. It is a means of building the party.

contd./

5. One aspect of this is our approach to the various initiatives of the Labour Coordinating Committee (and of course to the CP also, to the extent that they make any). The LCC is a thoroughly reformist outfit which, due to various circumstances (one of which is the decline and rightward drift of the CP) is attempting to develop a cadre of activists in the trade union movement. It is proposing to call (in addition to a cuts conference) a 'rank and file' union conference. The LCC leaders are conscious opponents of the SWP. Their aim is to channel the politicisation and radicalisation into the safe fold of the Labour Party. Our response has to be exactly the same as it was (over a decade or more) to the LCDTU. Support for any positive initiative. Criticism of evasions and compromises with the bureaucracies. Demand that they take their own slogans seriously and fight for actions in support of them. It is not necessary to speculate about how successful the LCC may be. Whatever operation they undertake, we must be there in force.

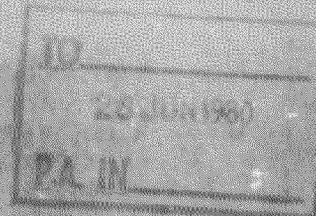
6. A very important non-national field of work for us is the rash of 'small' disputes (Chix, Massey Ferguson, Knowsley etc). Support work and political intervention around such disputes will not be undertaken by left reformist organisations (unless a dispute assumes Grunwick proportions). We must always undertake it. There will inevitably be many such disputes, given the present political climate. For particular SWP districts or branches they can be even more important than the big national operations.

7. We must be quick to react to the unpredicted <sup>or</sup> unexpected. We did not predict (specifically) the Bristol events. There will be other explosions to which we need to react (and to intervene) at short notice. International events eg in the Middle East, may become important quite suddenly. In British politics (as Iran did), anti-Tory feelings may become partly channelled into unexpected directions. The growing instability of capitalist society everywhere and the weakness of conscious revolutionary marxist cadres in most working classes, make rapid and unexpected upheaval inevitable. The point is not to try to invent a crystal ball but to be prepared for rapid seizure of unexpected opportunities.

8. The key to all our activities is Socialist Worker. Nothing is more important than establishing SW as the informed, hardline paper of the left in the anti-Tory current. This means systematic attention to selling the paper regularly to everyone who comes into or near our periphery. The means of achieving this will have to be discussed at length on the basis of the actual experience of comrades. One thing can be said in advance of this discussion. The systematic visiting (every week) of contacts (including those who are not membership prospects in the immediate future) with SW is an essential job we are not in general doing properly. It must become a priority. A comrade who can do nothing else, for reasons of personal situation, who every week takes the paper to 5 or 6 contacts is doing very important revolutionary work.

9. An initiative on unemployment is essential this year. A separate document will follow.

Central Committee  
10.4.1980.



### Introduction

The Tory offensive is in full swing with the public spending cuts biting deep and unemployment spiralling towards 2 million and the argument for fresh effort into the Right To Work Campaign should be obvious. The Tories' punitive approach towards the unemployed (witness the budget cuts to Social Security and Earnings Related Unemployment Benefits), the continual argument for profitability in the private sector and 'viability within cash limits' for the public sector is the foundation of their offensive. Unemployment is now being used to discipline and intimidate trade union militancy, which was clearly demonstrated at Leyland. Similarly the sell out of the Steel Strike is the concession by TU leaders to the argument for viability and the inevitability of redundancies. The Employment Bill is being pushed through because the Tories are confident that they can take us on. That confidence is founded on the fact of mass unemployment.

### RTWC Credibility

The fightback from the TUC and the Labour Party against unemployment is pathetic. There is no credible organisation of the unemployed and only the RTWC has any credibility in trying to link unemployed protest action with the necessity for greater militancy from the employed. The Communist Party's CAYU has collapsed after an abortive attempt last October to copy the RTWC and organise a march. The Labour Party Young Socialists did tentatively launch Youth Campaign Against Unemployment (YCAU) but it too collapsed into the tired, boring world of resolution mongering in Labour Party Wards. No doubt efforts to relaunch CAYU and/or YCAU will be made - and if they are successful we will of course do our utmost to form a united front; but for the moment, modest as the RTWC maybe, it is the only organisation that has consistently kept pushing the issue of unemployment with the trade unions and it is the only organisation to have mobilised significant numbers of unemployed and in particular unemployed youth.

We must now build on that credibility to expand the base of the RTWC and in so doing increase the audience for our political ideas. It is well known that without the SWP there would be no RTWC. That does not equal a secretive front - indeed we are openly public and proud of the fact that at least the SWP has not ignored the unemployed, and that however modest at least we have built the RTWC. SWP leadership of the RTWC does not stop the Labour Party and even some CP involvement. It does mean that any increase in RTWC activity is further credibility to our own party - the SWP.

### Proposed National Initiatives:

Throughout the 5 years of the RTWC local activity has been very reliant on national mass marches. Within the SWP an element of tiredness has crept in about organising yet another march to the TUC. In relaunching the RTWC this year we must break out of that and regenerate fresh enthusiasm and flair if we are to broaden the support. In order to do that the following national initiatives are planned.

1) A 2 week march from Port Talbot to London relating specifically to the proposed steel and pit closures in S Wales. Already the Port Talbot Steel Strike Committee and S Wales Executive of the NUM have agreed to sponsor this march.

2) An unemployed/youth mobilisation to the Tory Party Conference - starting on October 7th followed by a mass anti-Tory rally on October 11th at Alexandra Palace.

3) An unemployed march to the TUC in conjunction with a Trade Union 'Defy the Employment Bill - Fight Unemployment' lobby of the TUC.

Continued pressure on the TUC is central to our rank and file perspectives. Of course it is the Tories to blame, but it was the TUC who led us into this mess with their acceptance of unemployment cuts and the Concordat under the previous Labour Government. In particular we have to continue to locate ourselves at the centre of the campaign against the Employment Bill. The TUC will be the focus for opposition to the Tory laws just as it was in the early days against the Industrial Relations Act. An unemployed march and TU lobby of the TUC will be an important continuation of last years Defend our unions conference and our subsequent united front

26 JUN 1980

more articulately than any number of Conference delegates- and we will be there at this year.

But in addition we must focus major efforts on the Tory Conference itself. The deep seated anti-tory anger could guarantee much wider support for an unemployed operation directly against the Tories than if we just went to the TUC alone. Under the Labour Government's TUC Social Contract it sufficed to march to the TUC alone. Now we must march against the Tories and lobby the TUC.

#### Winning TU Support and Sponsorship of the RTWC

Against the Tories TU support should be much easier to win than in previous years. We need a long campaign for trade union sponsorship and finance. Without the money we cannot organise the unemployed and this year we are going to need far more money to fund far more ambitious initiatives. But the most important aspect of getting the money is the extent to which it opens the door to political debate. Inevitably when a shop stewards committee or TU branch is approached for a donation the debate about how to fight unemployment is raised. In going for such financial support we must also get our speakers into TU meetings, set up our workplace bulletins urge bulk orders for Defend Our Unions Pamphlets and follow up with SW scales. The canvassing for finance is the cutting edge for increasing our industrial periphery. It helps establish us as part of the movement.

Obviously wherever we can we our members should fight for support within their own trade unions but in addition we need workplace visiting by unemployed comrades, students teachers on holiday and so on. Every trade union contact must be followed up particularly those around Defend Our Unions Committees. There are many new TU bodies that we must try, nor must we forget workplaces other than factories such as offices hospitals etc. This canvassing should start as soon as possible. If a shop stewards committee can be persuaded to give a donation in April we can suggest a speaker for a meeting in May and by June we can go back to urge them to send a delegation down to the TUC Conference Lobby and then in September we can push for a coachload down to London in October for the rally in October. In other words we ought to see the whole thing as a means of starting a political relationship, and it should become part of our routine work in each locality to build up a network of TU and Rank and File contacts.

The building of such local networks does not cut across fraction work in the specific unions, indeed it should help the fractions. This year we will need more systematic work from our fractions around the RTWC and wherever possible we should consider specific letters urging support of the RTWC relating to the prevailing issue in that union. Similarly we need to develop more specific demands to each union, posing defiance of the Employment Bill, The Rank and File Code of Practice needs to be made more specific. Such work against the Employment Bill clearly links with co-ordinated efforts within the unions to win more support for the RTWC.

It must be emphasized the importance of an early start to the campaign. The build up to go May 14th should become part of the overall operation and whilst arguing for strike action we should also raise the arguments for support of the RTWC and for continuing the pressure on the TUC. It is with the aim of building such a network that we have deliberately chosen a long 'run in'.

#### United Front:

much of our previous United Front activity has been directed toward the CP as the actively organised centre of the Broad Left in the unions. The decline of the CP has been quicker than any of us predicted. The CP is no longer the natural home for militants - its behaviour is more like that of a sect albeit with still sufficient influence within the TU bureaucracy to still block us.

The fact that the RTWC is more impressive than CAYU and that the EFOU was as representative as the LOSTU are all testaments to the decline of the CP and not to our particular strength and the speed of the CP's demise poses problems to us. We now have to pose a united front to the mass of the TU militants in or sympathetic to the Labour Left over the heads of the CP. The RTWC is an ideal vehicle for such united front approaches and we should seek to put the LP on the spot as much as possible. Every local NP should be approached and asked to sponsor the RTWC. If they agree we should ask them to officially call on the local LPs to support, get the NP to speak at meetings give money etc. If they refuse we should occupy their surgeries demanding why not! Similarly we should approach all local LP wards, ILPS branches etc.

Although many of the militant workers who draw closer to us may not themselves attend their local LP ward meeting or whatever it will be still important for us to be seen approaching everyone in a non-sectarian manner for support. Those sections of the LP who refuse even such token support will expose themselves.

Such united front activity does not mean that we dilute our argument for a new revolutionary party the SWP, - indeed a united front will just mean that we have a larger audience for our politics. It will also demonstrate to thousands of militants the fallacy of the LP's claim to being a 'mass' party when it comes to organising unemployed protest. It will show that they are in the same small league as ourselves - except that we are better at it. The whole argument about reformism will be posed and if they can't even organise unemployed action against Thatcher then what chance the transformation of society?

The orientation of united front action towards the LP does not mean that we drop our approaches to the CP. In fact the more success we have in working with the LP then the more the CP will have to come to us. Unity in action goes hand in hand with fraternal debate of our political differences.

It is essential too that the work done around the RTWC is followed up after October and that the whole thing is seen as a longer term and use the contacts that are made to develop work locally.

As to actual activity, we must start to organise of SW and start organising such things as occupations of local Tory offices, disrupting civic banquets etc, occupation of job centres, cut hospitals etc.

TO  
28/11/74  
P.S. W.

The increasingly rapid collapse of the Communist Party from its role as the only serious organisation to the left of the Labour Party, is perhaps most obvious in the engineering industry.

Only a few years ago their influence in the bureaucracy of the AUEW was the jewel in the crown of the CP industrial strategy-the 'Broad Left'.

Today that strategy is in tatters. Hugh Scanlon a lord, the AUEW Executive under complete right wing domination; the National Committee under

Privacy

A Rank and File level, during last year's national strike, the Derek Robinson affair and a whole series of local disputes the CP organisation and politics have been tested and shown to be severely lacking.

For we find ourselves both on the dangers and obvious opportunities. The danger is the loss of confidence of the employers and the right wing leadership increases with every retreat and the shop floor organisation is inevitably weakened as a result.

On the other hand, the inability of the CP to mount any opposition to the drift to the right gives us the chance to challenge seriously for leadership within the rank and file.

The "Charter" has grown modestly in influence over the last period. The Rule 15.5 Campaign was a significant breakthrough. That success has brought with it the expectation that the "Charter" can deliver again on other issues. Open scabbing in the latest Leyland strike is the most obvious example. However it is essential to recognise that any campaigns which we do mount will rely to the major extent on the SWP.

Privacy

Therefore the timing and nature of our interventions need to be taken with that in mind. The Rule 15.5 Campaign showed clearly that where an SWP branch or district, often with no engineering member at all joined in the campaign the results were forthcoming.

In contrast, significant major districts produced the most miserable performances.

It is proposed that the "Charter" will hold a national conference on the general theme of "stop the rot Kick out the Right". A small pamphlet will be produced within the next few weeks to assist the organisation for the conference and afterwards during the presidential election campaign.

This conference will be a critical test of our ability to begin to replace the CP in the industry. But it must be emphasised again that every SWP branch will have to assist to ensure success.



April 1980

Party Council reaffirms the decision taken at National Conference that:-

"The National Committee is responsible for assisting the Central Committee in the work of leading the party. The NC shall have the power to take decisions on matters of general policy which shall be binding on the CC."

Party Council expresses its dissatisfaction at the failure of the Central Committee to carry out the spirit and intent of this conference decision as exemplified by.....

- 1) The lack of documentation prior to NC meetings.
- 2) No consultation with NC delegates regarding the agenda for meetings.
- 3) No issues of internal members bulletins since conference (ie 5mths).

This has resulted in :-

- a) Any discussion being dominated by CC members who have had prior discussion of the agenda
- b) No structure to the discussion at NC with no resolutions or prior discussion, it is very difficult to clarify the terms of the discussion and to make policy decisions.
- c) No attempt by the CC to involve the NC in any leadership role in the party; In spite of the often high level of discussion no decisions are forthcoming and therefore no serious attempt to use the NC to carry them in the party.
- d) A low attendance on the part of the NC delegates, (only 25 present out of 40 at the last NC).

Party Council agrees that this state of affairs is totally unsatisfactory especially given the extremely volatile nature of the class struggle at the moment, and instructs the Central Committee to remedy the situation forthwith, to ensure implementation of the conference decision.

Glasgow Area Aggregate.

