Two important statements, one on the Pakistan crisis and the other on Northern Ireland, were adopted by the Bureau of the Socialist International at a regular two-day meeting in London on 11-12 September. The text of the Pakistan statement, adopted unanimously on 11 September following a first-hand report on the situation from Conor Cruise O'Brien (Netherlands-Labour Party; see page 192), the Bureau unanimously adopted the following statement:-

The Bureau of the Socialist International congratulates the Labour Parties of Britain and Ireland for their constructive attempts to find a just and peaceful solution to the problems of Northern Ireland.

The Bureau calls for the immediate ending of internment without trial in Northern Ireland and for the early opening of talks involving representatives of the Northern Ireland minority as well as the majority, supports the 12-point programme recently put forward by Harold Wilson as a basis for constructive political action; calls also on all socialists, both in the Republic and Northern Ireland to resist the present drift towards increasing violence and civil war, in particular to repudiate clearly the different forms of sectarianism, bigotry and ultra-nationalism now being whipped up in their respective communities, and already threatening in the first instance the lives and livelihoods of working people and their families.

The main business of the first day of the Bureau meeting was a discussion of the strategy to be adopted by the Socialist International towards the many progressive democratic parties in the Third World which do not have membership of the International at the present time. It was agreed that a special Third World Working Party should be established to make detailed proposals before the next Congress of the International in Vienna in June 1972 on the extension of membership to new parties in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Other aspects of the first day’s session were a report on the first meeting of the Socialist International Study Group on the Middle East which had taken place in London the day before, and a strong condemnation of the reported arrest by the Dominican Republic authorities of the President crisis, and then stated that the introduction of internment by the Northern Ireland Government in collusion with the British Conservative Government had produced a serious deterioration in the situation. Speaking of the British troops in Northern Ireland, he said that their withdrawal would almost certainly lead to the massacre of tens of thousands of Catholics by Protestant extremists.

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of the International Union of Socialist Youth, Rafael Alberquerque, and six of his comrades in the Dominican Revolutionary Party Youth. The latter development was of the International Union of Socialist Revolutionary Party Youth. The latter Youth, Rafael Alberquerque, and six Dominican Revolutionary Party.

Recent announcement of a Berlin Soares described the increasing persecution of his comrades in the Dominican socialist leader, Mario Soares. Senhor statement protesting against the arrests in recent months and called upon the near future.

The Sunday session was also notable for a report by the Portuguese exiled socialist leader, Mario Soares. Senhor Soares described the increasing persecution of Portuguese trade unionists in recent months and called upon the parties of the Socialist International to support the struggle of the Portuguese democrats. After hearing this report the Bureau decided to establish a sub-committee on Portugal to report on developments in that country to the Bureau.

Consideration of the Greek question resulted in a decision that the Chairman and General Secretary should send a letter to the President of the United States condemning in the strongest possible terms the continued backing which the Athens fascist régime is receiving from the American Government.

Towards the end of its session the Bureau heard reports from the General Secretary of IUSY on the re-establishment of this organisation and from the Chairman of the International Council of Social Democratic Women, Anna Rudling, on the ICSDW Seminar to be held in Singapore this autumn.

Bureau Attendance


SOCIALISM AND SOCIETY

Workers Take Control on the Clyde

David Kemp

David Kemp of the British Labour Party probes the background to the great industrial crisis in the shipbuilding yards of the Upper Clyde. The crisis, which has resulted in the workers taking over and running the yards, has given the British Labour movement timely inspiration, highlighting as it does both the reactionary character of the Heath Government and the brutal inhumanity of latter-day capitalism.

On the morning of Friday, 30 July, a shipbuilding union official approached the security man on guard at the main gate of John Brown's, which is Glasgow's most famous shipyard, where the Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth and QE2 were built. By the authority of the shop stewards committee and the co-ordinating committee of the trade union movement of the Upper Clyde shipyards, the workers hereby take over this yard, he said. 'You will now take orders from the shop stewards only.'

It was an emotional moment. Upper Clyde shipbuilders, of which Brown's was part, had just been forced into bankruptcy by the refusal of further financial aid by Britain's rigidly doctrinaire Conservative Government. And the previous evening, amidst scenes of uproar and intense anger in the House of Commons in London, John Davies, the Conservative Trade and Industry Minister, had announced his plans for the dismemberment of the group. These plans meant the closure of two out of the three UCS shipyards—including Brown's—and the eventual redundancy of 6,000 of Upper Clyde's 8,500 workers. Now, in taking over the yards, the Clydeside workers were asserting their right to work.

At the time of writing, some eight weeks later, the UCS occupation can already be counted as a political success. The courage, dignity and organisation of the UCS workers have inspired the whole of the British Labour movement at a time when such inspiration was never needed more desperately. The Government has very probably been forced to modify its draconian proposals for closures and redundancies, though the final solution for Clydeside is as yet unclear. And for the first time in Britain, quantifying the real social cost of industrial closures has become the subject of widespread research and public debate.

One of the most important by-products of the 'work-in' has been the establishment of a committee of inquiry by the Scottish Trades Union Congress to examine the effect on people and industry in West-Central Scotland of 6,000 workers becoming redundant.

UCS have lit a beacon for the British working class that, it is arguable, could have been lit nowhere else in Britain. For the shipyards' collapse occurred in the context of a severe recession in the Scottish economy that was the direct result of Conservative policies. The Conservatives, for instance, had abolished regional investment grants, which shattered industrial confidence. They had also cut back spending in the nationalised industries, which had a particularly severe effect in Scotland.

The cumulative result was that by August there were 135,000 unemployed in Scotland, 40% more than in the same month in 1970. Scottish unemployment was much worse than in Britain as a whole — 6.3% (males 8.2%) of the working population compared with 3.7%. In Glasgow the position was even worse. By April there were already 30,000 men out of work, exactly one-third of total Scottish male unemployment. The spectre of mass unemployment had returned