

The revolutionary democratic road to socialism

This draft programme has been produced by the RDG with the intention of having it debated and adopted by the Socialist Workers Party (UK). We will be writing to the Central Committee and requesting that it be circulated to SWP branches in the 1996 pre-conference period. RDG comrades are prepared to attend any SWP meeting to explain and debate this policy.

In our opinion the SWP will be strengthened by debating and adopting this draft. But if the SWP adopted a different programme it would help the development of the communist movement as a whole. As marxists we have everything to gain from greater political clarity.

This has been one of our main criticisms of the SWP. In 1974 the International Socialists adopted a new programme which is summed up by the slogan "Neither Washington nor Moscow but international socialism". This programme has not been debated or amended in over 20 years. Most members have never even heard of it, let alone seen it. Yet considerable changes have taken place in world capitalism since 1974, not least of which has been the break up of the USSR.

Until 1991 it was a condition of membership, Clause 2(a), says "a member is one who accepts the programme" etc. This reflected a communist tradition, which was always serious about the marxist programme. For example the membership clause of the Bolshevik party says "a member of the RSDLP is who accepts its programme" etc. But the SWP constitution was ignored in practice. Nobody had to accept a programme they had never seen.

The IS of the early 1970s, debated and passed a new programme and took the question of the revolutionary programme much more seriously than the Central Committee does today. In the Bolshevik tradition, the revolutionary programme is the foundation of the revolutionary party. The party is comprised of all those who accept the programme and a prepared to fight for it. The aim of the party is to win the working class movement to support the programme and take power on that basis.

The programme is a central part of democratic centralist organisation. The programme centralises the politics of the party. But it also makes this democratically accountable to the membership and the wider working class. Without a programme, the SWP is less centralist and less democratic than it should be.

Instead of the political centralism of the programme, we are left with bureaucratic centralism. On any programmatic question the leadership will tell the membership the answer. But nobody really knows what theory and assumptions are behind it. In our opinion the SWP's politics is strongly influenced by syndicalism and Labourism.

Syndicalists do not see the need for a political programme. One day a spontaneous general strike will erupt and the working class will take power. Who needs a programme for this? An alternative is to give critical support to the Labour party programme at a general election.

The SWP does not need a programme because of its syndicalist and pro-Labour approach to politics. We reject both the Labourist and syndicalist roads to socialism. This is why we have produced our draft programme. This programme is not completed. In truth no programme ever is. We intend to amend and update it in the light of feedback and criticism. For us a programme is a living expression of our marxist politics. It is not something to be passed and then ignored for 20 years. We hope that when you read our programme you will gain a clearer understanding and insight into the politics of the RDG. By clarifying political questions we can make our contribution to the rebuilding of a communist party in the UK.

The draft programme has four sections

- A. World capitalism and world revolution.
- B. The United Kingdom

- C. The minimum democratic programme
- D. The transitional programme

Sections A and Section B set out a theory of world capitalism and our analysis of the prospects for the British revolution. Both the minimum programme and the transitional programme are based on the ideas of transitional politics which informed Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

In addition to this there ought to be a fifth section - an international socialist programme. This would be a common programme to be adopted by all sections of the world party. It is a programme for the revolutionary transformation of the global economy under a world plan, supported and carried out by the workers of the world.

An important difference between anarcho-communists and revolutionary democratic com-

munist is in our methods - propagandism versus transitional politics.

Propagandism means to convince workers of communism by propaganda. The working class listens to the message of communism, delivered by terrorism (eg, the Red Brigades) or by tailing the economic struggle (syndicalism) or as propaganda on its own (eg, Socialist Party of Great Britain).

Transitional politics means rejecting those conceptions of the role of the party. Transitional politics means defining the road we must take to get to communism. The party is a combat organisation which must lead its troops down that road. We must identify the key defensive positions of the enemy, capture them one by one, and steadily march on to the final battle.

The revolutionary democratic road is a strat-

egy which helps identify the first skirmishes (minimum programme), the intermediate battles (transitional programme) and the final confrontation (international programme).

The task of Marxism and the SWP is not to tail-end the spontaneous struggles of the working class, but to merge with the working class movement and lead it down a different road. As events unfold, we will be able to see whether our 'battle plan' or programme is basically correct and needs a bit of fine tuning; or whether it is leading us astray and should be ditched. Every Marxist organisation that has the courage of its convictions and puts forward a programme can be judged by the movement. It is only the most cowardly opportunists who think they can ingratiate themselves with the masses by hiding their programme ●

Draft programme of the Revolutionary Democratic Group (faction of the SWP)

A. World capitalism and world revolution

1. Capitalism

1. The world economy is based on capitalist relations of production, distribution and exchange. It is divided into nation-states, each ruled by a relatively small class of people. These are the top industrialists, bankers, financiers, state officials and military chiefs who collectively form the capitalist class. This class has overall control of the national economy through the state, the banking and financial system and capitalist enterprises, which may be private or state owned.

2. These enterprises hire workers on a labour contract. This contract between the employers and workers conceals a relationship of class exploitation. The working class, comprising of manual, white collar, scientific and technical workers, collectively produce society's wealth. But this wealth belongs to the employers. Part of it is used to pay wages, the remainder is a surplus which adds to the accumulated stock of wealth and provides luxury incomes for the rich.

3. The employers and workers are the major social classes in capitalist society. Between them is an intermediate or middle class whose exact nature varies from country to country. The middle classes may include the small business owners, the small farmers, intellectuals and the management bureaucrats. They have a privileged position relative to the mass of workers, and play a vital role in maintaining the stability of the social order. However the position of the middle class is dependent on the capitalists who rob and oppress them. In times of crisis, sections of the middle class may be driven into bankruptcy and unemployment, and may ally themselves with the working class.

4. The employing class is driven to extract more and more surplus value from the workers. This drive is fuelled by rivalry, both national and international, between capitalist enterprises in search of profits. As a consequence wealth and power tends to concentrate in the hands of the largest enterprises, banks and nation-states, whilst poverty is produced amongst the working class. The production of poverty in the midst of vast wealth is the inevitable result of capitalist exploitation. This tendency is only modified by the working class through the strength of its economic, ideological and political struggle.

5. The extraction of surplus value in the

workplace depends on the relationship between employers and workers. But the accumulation of surplus value requires the use and circulation of money and credit. The capitalist financial system is prone to crisis. Inflation, debt crises, bankruptcies, financial scandals and frauds disrupt the process of production. Whatever the immediate cause of financial crises, their real roots lie in the system of production for profit itself. Under capitalism, a never ending drive for economic growth and higher productivity leads periodically to declining rates of profit, financial crises and economic recession.

6. Instead of planned social development to meet the needs of working people, capitalism produces massive waste of productive resources. Mass unemployment is the inevitable result of the anarchy of the capitalism with its booms and slumps. The unemployed, forming a reserve army of labour, forced to live in poverty, enable the employers to keep down wage levels, and reinforce their control in the workplace.

■ The capitalist state

7. The state is the means through which a ruling class exercises control over the population and the resources of a given territory. Whilst the means of control varies, it is always and ultimately dependent on armed force. Every state is an instrument for the dictatorship of a ruling class over the oppressed class or classes.

8. The capitalist state serves the common interests of the capitalist class, both at home and abroad. It sets the legal, administrative and monetary framework for the national market. It maintains and regulates the economic, social and cultural conditions under which the exploitation of the working class and the accumulation of capital takes place.

9. The essence of the capitalist state are the institutions of bureaucratic, judicial, military and police power. However the particular form of state and methods of government vary from country to country. In some states capitalist governments are appointed by military dictatorship or absolute monarchy. In others they are elected and derive their legitimacy from the system of parliamentary or bourgeois democracy. In either case, the government depends upon the support of the capitalist state to enforce its policies.

10. Amongst parliamentary or bourgeois democracies, there are considerable differences over the extent to which the people can influence the government and the state. This will depend in part on the nature of the constitution, the system of election, the extent of democratic rights and civil liberties, and on class organisation and class struggle.

11. In general, a constitutional monarchy, in which state power is exercised on

behalf of the crown, is the least democratic form of parliamentary democracy. A federal republic is more democratic and may enable national unity to be maintained in states where different nationalities co-exist. But a democratically centralised republic can provide greater freedom and democracy than a federal structure.

12. The Dual Power Republic, emerging out of a democratic revolution, is the most democratic form of bourgeois democracy. It is the result of the co-existence and rivalry between two national centres of political power. The bourgeoisie is represented by the government and the state and in the parliament or constituent assembly. The working class is represented in elected workers councils, with delegates to local and national assemblies.

13. The Dual Power Republic provides the greatest freedom for the working class under capitalism. But far from solving the fundamental problems of capitalism, this leads inevitably to an intensification of class struggle. Consequently the Dual Power Republic remains highly unstable until one or other centre of political power emerges victorious. It is the transitional form between the capitalist state and the democratic workers state.

■ Imperialism and the Russian revolution

14. At the end of the 19th century the most powerful capitalist economies were becoming dominated by a few large monopoly enterprises and banks. In conjunction with their own nation-states they began to export capital, seize colonies and raw materials and open up new markets. Colonial imperialism was a new stage in the development of capitalism as an international system. It drew together the most powerful capitalist states and their colonies in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and South America into a world market. Colonial imperialism established a network of colonies and satellite states from whom monopoly profits were extracted.

15. Under imperialism, the drive to accumulate capital produces imperialist wars, national democratic revolutions and revolutionary wars. Imperialist wars arise out of the struggle between capitalist states over spheres of influence and profits, on a global, regional or local scale. At the same time imperialist exploitation and national oppression generates mass popular resistance, which may produce democratic revolutions and revolutionary wars.

16. The first imperialist world war (1914-1918) was fought to redivide world markets and colonies. Millions were killed or reduced to poverty and near starvation. Out of the horror of this

war, the people of the Russian Empire rose in revolt, producing the single most important revolution of the 20th century, the Russian Democratic Revolution (Feb 1917-March 1921)

17. In February 1917, the Tsarist system of government was overthrown by a popular uprising. This created a Dual Power Republic, based on the provisional government and the Soviets of workers deputies. In October 1917 an armed insurrection transferred power to the working class and the peasantry. Under the leadership of the Communist (Bolshevik) Party, they established the world's first democratic workers republic based on Soviets or workers councils.

18. In mid-1918 the revolutionary Bolshevik government was faced with a counter-revolutionary uprising and intervention by both German and Allied imperialist forces. They took steps to nationalise the major industries, radically extending the state capitalist sector. As the country was plunged into civil war, the Workers republic was reorganised as a military dictatorship under the Communist Party and Red Army (War Communism). By the end of 1920 the counter-revolutionary uprising had been suppressed.

19. Despite this victory, the destruction caused by the civil war, and the international isolation of the Republic, had greatly weakened the working class. In March 1921 a popular democratic uprising in Kronstadt was defeated. Workers democracy was never rebuilt, and control over state capitalism was secured by the state bureaucracy. This was later consolidated by the victory of Stalin's faction in the Communist Party.

20. Events in Russia cannot be seen in isolation from the international situation. The working class suffered serious defeats in Hungary (1919) and Italy (1920). But the key to international socialism was the German Democratic Revolution (1918-1923). The defeat of the revolutionary movement of the German working class in 1923 ended the possibilities for international socialism. Workers suffered further defeats in Bulgaria (1924), China (1925-26) and the UK (1926). By the mid-1920s international capitalism had restabilised.

21. In 1928 international capitalism plunged into further crisis. With the onset of the world recession and the growth of mass unemployment in the 1930s, working class democracy suffered massive defeats in Germany and Spain at the hands of fascism. Fascism represented the most barbaric form of state capitalism, reinforced by police terror, slave labour and extermination camps.

22. With the victory of fascism in Italy, Germany and Japan, and growing rivalry amongst the imperialist states, preparations began for a new world war (1939-1945). The United States, the United Kingdom, the USSR and France formed an alliance to defeat Germany, Italy and Japan and redivide the world market.

2. International state capitalism

23. The war brought about a restructuring of the imperialist system. A new world order was established by the USA and the USSR, the two most powerful imperialist states. The USSR took control of the East European market and began to extend its influence into other parts of the world, for example China and North Korea. US imperialism became the dominant world power, establishing a new international monetary system based on the dollar. In the post war period US multinational corporations began to spread around the world.

24. The old system of colonial imperialism, which served neither the interests of Soviet or US state capitalism, began to break up. A series of anti-colonial democratic revolutions established independent states in India, China, Egypt, Algeria and elsewhere across Africa. By the 1960s the French and British Empires were largely dismantled. As a result colonial imperialism was transformed into a higher form of imperialism, namely international state capitalism.

25. The period 1948-1973 was period of economic expansion fuelled by the arms race between the major imperialist powers. Japan and West Germany began to build up their industrial strength. France, West Germany, and Italy formed the European Economic Community. In the industrial centres of America, Europe and Japan it was a period of economic growth and full employment. Workers were able to win improved wages, conditions and social provisions. A new layer of capitalist states began to industrialise. Some of these states such as Israel, South Africa, Brazil, India, Iran, Argentina and Iraq, began to emerge as sub-imperialist powers with significant armed forces.

26. Nevertheless for the majority of the world's people, in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the development of capitalism produced unemployment, poverty and famine for the peasant farmers and urban poor. Popular opposition to imperialism led to national democratic revolutions in Africa (e.g. Algeria), in the Middle East, (e.g. Palestine) in Asia

(e.g. China, Vietnam,) in Latin America (e.g. Cuba) and in Eastern Europe (e.g. Hungary and Czechoslovakia). But the most significant was the revolutionary democratic war fought by the Vietnamese people.

27. In 1968 the imperialist system was shaken by a wave of mass democratic struggles which swept Europe and America for democratic and civil rights and against the Vietnam war. By the early 1970s with the impact of these struggles and the defeat of US imperialism in Vietnam, the international system of state capitalism began to break down.

28. In 1973 the world price of oil quadrupled, creating a major economic crisis. As inflation rose, the major capitalist governments began to cut back on spending. By 1975 a world recession had begun, as production, trade and investment fell. Mass unemployment reappeared in the industrial centres of capitalism.

■ The crisis of world imperialism

29. The world recession has produced a deep and ongoing crisis within international state capitalism. The intensification of competition is driving the least profitable parts of the world economy into bankruptcy. This is forcing the restructuring of the world market. It is producing major conflicts both within and between nation states as the capitalists seek to raise the level of productivity and profit.

30. The crisis marks a new epoch in the development of world capitalism. It is characterised by growing economic, social and political instability. This epoch is transitional between the break up of the old system of imperialism and the creation of a new world order. The nature of the new world order is not predetermined, it depends on the class struggle.

31. The situation that has developed in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union is one major example of the impact of this crisis. In the 1980s, the world recession and the defeat suffered by the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, forced the Stalinist ruling class in the Soviet Union to begin restructuring the economy.

32. Under Gorbachev, the policy known as "perestroika" sought to raise productivity so that the USSR could compete more effectively on the world market. This process opened up divisions within the ruling class between conservatives and reformers. This enabled and encouraged popular democratic movements to emerge across Eastern Europe and within the Soviet Union.

33. Between 1989-92 popular democratic movements arose in Czechoslovakia, East Germany and Bulgaria and re-emerged in Poland. In Romania, an armed insurrection overthrew the Ceausescu regime. As a result of mass struggle, the Stalinist regimes were ended and the apparatus of repression partially dismantled. Yet none of these democratic revolutions led to the transfer of power to the working class. On the contrary, they opened up the national economies to new forms of capitalist domination, especially by multi-nationals corporations.

34. The reunification of Germany symbolised the ending of Stalinist control over Eastern Europe. It gave further encouragement to the democratic revolution in the Soviet Union. The main impetus for this came from the mass strike movements of the working class, particularly the miners in the Donbas, and the national movements in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Armenia, Ukraine, Georgia, etc. In 1991 the democratic revolution gained fresh impetus following the defeat of an attempted military coup. On January 1st 1992, the Soviet Union was formally ended and replaced by the Confederation of Independent States.

35. In 1991 the crisis of imperialism led to war in the Middle East between US capitalism and its allies and the Iraqi capitalists, over the control of oil supplies. The Gulf war exposed the reality of the new world order. Thousands of Iraqi people, victims of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, were slaughtered by US and allied forces. This showed again that imperialism cannot provide democratic and peaceful solutions to the use of the world's resources. In the new epoch, wars of mass destruction are the inevitable product of imperialist rivalry, for regional and world domination.

36. The crisis within the old system does not bring imperialism to an end. On the contrary, it opens the way for the emergence of new world powers and new rivalries. Japanese, European and especially German capitalism, now challenges the dominant position of the United States. Trade wars between the US, the European Community and Japan are the first step on the road to new and wider global political and military confrontations.

37. It is a matter of time before some incident sparks off new imperialist wars. Such wars are the inevitable product of imperialist rivalry, an essential means to resolve the issue of world domination. There are no peaceful solutions to the problems of world imperialism. Because of the destructive power of modern technology, including nuclear weapons, wars are now an even greater disaster which threaten

the very survival of the human race.

■ The crisis of democracy

38. The crisis of world imperialism is uneven. Each nation-state will be affected to a different extent as a result of its own history and specific circumstances. Whilst in general the crisis will begin to take political form, in some cases this will produce constitutional crises and even political revolutions.

39. A common feature of the crisis is the growing dissatisfaction and alienation of the working class from the state. This particularly affects the most oppressed sections of the working class, that is the youth, the unemployed and the poor, or those oppressed because of their race, sex or nationality, or as gays, or disabled or religious minorities.

40. The crisis of imperialism shows the inability of the capitalist state to solve the fundamental problems of society. The alienation of the masses from the state may produce apathy and demoralisation. But it will also produce periodic outbursts of mass action, riots, demonstrations, strikes and other forms of protest. These mass struggles bring the crisis of democracy to the fore.

41. This crisis also gives rise to new political movements and parties opposed to the state and the constitution. Such movements may be democratic or anti-democratic. For example in China, South Africa, Ireland, Ukraine and Kurdistan pro-democracy or national democratic movements have emerged. In France, Algeria, and India, there are significant fascist or religious fundamentalist movements.

42. However in some states, the political crisis becomes particularly acute. Where the old regime has become a barrier to the accumulation of capital, it becomes a weak link in the chain of imperialism. Whilst the reform of the state becomes an urgent necessity, conservative forces within the old regime retain the power to resist change.

43. The fight within the old regime between conservatives and reformers cannot be settled without the intervention of mass struggle. This creates the circumstances for political and constitutional crisis. In the face of this, the system of government begins to lose its legitimacy, becomes paralysed, incapable of effective action. Only the overthrow of the constitution can break the deadlock and begin the national democratic revolution.

44. Democratic revolution is by no means the automatic result of the crisis. On the contrary the crisis breeds counter-revolutionary movements such as fascism and religious fundamentalism. These are aimed at destroying the leadership of the working class, repressing parliamentary democracy and the trade unions, and halting the democratic revolution.

45. Revolutionary workers, as the most class conscious representative of working class, are not in the least indifferent to the crisis of the capitalist state, to bourgeois democracy, constitutional crises or democratic revolutions. On the contrary, as the vanguard of the democratic revolution, the working class must seize every opportunity to act independently with its own democratic slogans and demands, and lead the broader strata of the oppressed in the struggle for democracy and international socialism.

3. World revolution

46. The world revolution is the uneven, combined, and ongoing revolutionary struggle of the oppressed peoples of the world for freedom and democracy. The seeds of the world revolution can be found in the democratic struggles and movements against women's oppression and racism, for gay liberation, against national oppression, for workers rights and civil liberties.

47. National democratic revolutions, for example in South Africa, Palestine, El Salvador, and Ireland, are an integral part of the world revolution. The destruction of the old constitution opens up a revolutionary period in which the oppressed classes may succeed in overthrowing the state. The impact of this can spread far beyond the borders of the particular state.

48. The bourgeoisie is a counter-revolutionary force, opposed to the national democratic revolution. The "progressive" liberal or left wing of the bourgeoisie may pose as an ally of the revolution in order to subvert it, hold back the mass struggle and preserve as much of the old state as possible. Bourgeois liberalism is particularly dangerous for the working class.

49. The political leadership of the national democratic revolution can only be provided by parties of the petty bourgeoisie or the working class. The petty bourgeois parties represent the interests of the urban middle classes and peasantry. But they are capable of winning support from the working class. Such parties cannot lead the revolution beyond bourgeois democracy, state capitalism or dependence on world imperialism.

50. Of all sections of the people who may rebel, only the working class can provide consistent revolutionary democratic leadership. The working class must form its own party and set its own independ-

ent aims, seeking to win political power. To achieve this the advanced sections of the working class must lead the oppressed to overthrow the existing constitution and establish a Dual Power Republic.

51. In a Dual Power Republic, the capitalist state will still exist and the bourgeoisie will still hold political power. The working class must continue the democratic revolution until power is transferred from the capitalist state to Workers councils supported by the armed working class.

52. The working class must build its own democratic state, the democratic dictatorship of the working class. The major industries and banks must be nationalised, that is converted into state capital and brought under workers control. Such measures do not amount to abolishing capitalism or introducing socialism, but are necessary for the defence of workers democracy.

53. No national democratic revolution or workers state can introduce international socialism. Only through the internationalisation of the democratic revolution will it be possible to move towards socialism. The democratic revolution must spread to a series of countries and especially the centres of imperialist power, the USA, Japan and the EEC. In passing through these stages, the revolution becomes permanent. The world revolution is transformed into the international socialist revolution.

■ International socialist revolution

54. World capitalism or imperialism cannot bring peace, prosperity or social justice for the majority of the world's people. This system, riven with crisis, threatens the survival of the human race and the destruction of the world's environment through its never ending drive for profits. It is an urgent necessity that imperialism is replaced by a new world system of international socialism.

55. International socialism can only be established through an international revolution, which brings multi-national capital under social control. The multi-national corporations, banks, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, must be taken over. The United Nations organisation must be replaced with a World Congress of working peoples representatives. This cannot be done within the confines of one or a few countries. It can only be achieved on a world scale.

56. By taking control of the commanding heights of the imperialist economy, the international working class will begin replacing the world market by international planning, and co-operation. It will mobilise the productive power of working people, not for profit and greed, but for social and environmental needs.

57. Central to the aim of international socialism is the eradication of world poverty and unemployment, the abolition of the class system, and the elimination of all forms of national, racial, and sexual oppression.

58. International socialism will significantly extend the productive power of the world economy, freeing the working class from capitalist monopoly, greed, exploitation, and waste. It will remove all artificial barriers to the free use of the world's technology, to the free movement of people, and to maximising socially useful output and trade. It will begin to overcome the distinction between intellectual and manual labour.

59. International socialism does not mean the end of the class struggle between capital and labour. It represents a higher stage in world history, when the working class have gained the upper hand in the struggle against the exploiters. This struggle will continue until the nation state eventually withers away and a classless society is achieved. Our aim is a communist society, that is a world community based on real human freedom.

■ The world party

60. The international working class is the only class capable of establishing international socialism. Advanced sections of the working class in each country must unite in an International or World Party, based on the best traditions and experience of the first four Internationals. The task of this party is not only to support and link struggles of workers in different countries. It is to enable the working class to lead the national democratic revolution on to workers power and international socialism.

B. The United Kingdom

4. The development of the UK state

61. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a Constitutional Monarchist state ruling the people of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. This Union state exists to manage the affairs of British capitalism at home and abroad. It protects and advances the general

interests of the capitalist class, giving particular support to the special interests of financial capitalists of the City of London, and the landowning and farming interests.

62. The British state has its origins in the English republican revolution of the 1640s, the constitutional settlement of 1688 and the Acts of Union. This established the constitutional monarchy on the basis of the union of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Government passed into the hands of the Tory and Whig aristocracy serving the interests of the landowners, merchants and financiers of the City of London. During the 18th century the state promoted agricultural, financial and colonial policies which paved the way for the development of industrial capitalism and the working class.

63. At the end of the 18th century, new democratic forces began to emerge, inspired by the French republican revolution. At first the state was able to resist and suppress these struggles. But by the 1820s and 1830s the popular movement for constitutional change had become irresistible. In 1832 the government passed the Reform Act which enfranchised the middle class. A mass working class movement, organised around the demands of the People's Charter, began to challenge the state. Chartism was the first revolutionary democratic movement of the working class. The defeat of Chartism in 1848, drew to a close a revolutionary period in early working class history.

64. By the middle of the 19th century, British capitalism dominated the world market. A new period of colonial expansion brought greater prosperity and stability. In 1875, Queen Victoria was crowned Empress of India, symbolising the new age of the Imperial Monarchy. The British Empire ruled nearly one third of the world's people in India, Pakistan, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, West Indies, parts of the Middle East, Africa, the Far East and China.

65. Under the Imperial Monarchy, profits from the colonies provided the basis for a new reformism within the United Kingdom. Skilled workers organised themselves into craft unions, such as the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (1851). In 1868 the TUC was founded. In 1867 and 1884 the franchise was extended to give working class men the right to vote. The trade union movement began to look increasingly to parliament for legislative and social reforms with the formation of the TUC Parliamentary Committee.

66. In the 1880s trade union organisation spread to previously unorganised unskilled workers. A new wave of militant struggles saw a rapid growth of union membership following the success of the women match workers strike at Bryant and May (1888) and the gas workers and dockers (1889). These struggles went in parallel with a growth in syndicalist ideas amongst militant workers. In 1900 the Labour Representation Committee was set up. By 1906 this became the Labour Party to represent the trade unions in parliament.

67. However in the decade before the first world war (1914-18) British imperialism was under increasing challenge from German and US capitalism, and from growing working class militancy at home. The Liberal government (1906) brought in a series of social reforms which led to the constitutional crisis of 1910-11 over the powers of the House of Lords and Irish home rule (1912). The first world war brought this internal crisis to a temporary end.

68. Workers from Britain, Australia, Canada, India, Ireland and the other colonies were mobilised to defend the Empire. In the United Kingdom the trade union bureaucracy and Labour Party leaders rallied to support the imperialist war effort. For the first time representatives of Labour were given positions in the cabinet and political influence in the state. This co-operation was vital to the ruling class, enabling it to protect its monopoly profits and seize new territories in Africa and the Middle East.

69. The British Empire emerged from the war significantly weakened but largely intact. In 1916 the Easter uprising in Dublin struck the first blow of democratic revolution against the Empire and the war. In 1917 the Russian democratic revolution struck another major blow. Growing discontent among the working class was reflected in a rising level of industrial unrest, reaching a peak in 1919 of over 35 million strike days.

70. During the war shop-stewards organisations spread through industry. Prominent among these new rank and file organisations were the Clyde Workers Committee and the Sheffield Workers Committee. In January 1918 a national delegate conference of Shop Stewards set up a National Administrative Council of the Shop Stewards and Workers Committee Movement to provide the rank and file movement with national leadership.

71. The crisis of the war and the example of the Russian revolution inspired militant workers and socialists to form a united communist party. In August 1920 the Communist Party of Great Britain was set up from the unification of the British Socialist Party and the Socialist Labour Party and

other small socialist organisations. The CPGB attracted to its ranks a majority of the leading working class militants.

72. The Labour Party was reformed in 1918 to provide a safe parliamentary alternative to democratic revolution and communism. Having been granted cabinet posts during the war, Labour now sought to form a government independently. The party adopted a new constitution with political aims and a structure which included individual membership. This enabled sections of bourgeois liberals to defect to Labour. In 1924 the first minority government was formed.

73. The early 1920s was a period of mass struggle, which ended with the defeat of the miners in the general strike of 1926. The new CPGB played an important role in these struggles. It led protest action against unemployment through the National Unemployed Workers Movement. In 1924 the National Minority Movement was set up to organise the militant minority in the trade unions, on a united front basis.

74. During the slump of the 1930s the working class faced mass unemployment and the threat of fascism. In 1931 a second minority Labour government collapsed as Ramsey MacDonald, became head of a coalition National government with the Tories and Liberals. In 1932 the Independent Labour Party (ILP) disaffiliated from the Labour Party. Despite over three million unemployed, the British Empire continued to provide a degree of economic protection from the world market. Part of the economic burden of the slump was shifted to the colonies.

75. The British ruling class, whilst initially sympathetic to Hitler and Mussolini, did not need fascism to destroy the working class movement. Nevertheless the state protected fascist rallies. The ILP and the CPGB played a leading role in organising working class opposition to Mosely's British Union of Fascists. In 1936, the anti-fascist movement drove the fascists off the streets in a series of confrontations such as Cable Street in the East End of London.

76. The world recession and the growing rivalry between the imperialist powers led to world war two. The rise of the Nazis in Germany and the destruction of the German working class movement paved the way for German rearmament and expansionism. In the Far East, Japan began to challenge both British and US imperialism. In the face of these threats to the British empire, the policy of appeasement was abandoned, and preparations began for a new world war.

5. The Social Monarchy

77. During and after world war two, the Imperial Monarchy was transformed into the Social Monarchy. The war significantly increased the involvement of the state bureaucracy in planning and directing economic and social life. The Labour government (1945-50) established new social welfare provisions. The National Health Service was set up and a number of industries were nationalised. In 1952 Elizabeth Windsor was crowned head of the "welfare state", and became the official symbol of the new era.

78. The Social Monarchy was a product of class struggles brought to a head by the imperialist war. In Europe, popular armed resistance to the Nazis and the defeat of Germany had created a revolutionary crisis. Nationalist struggles in India, Vietnam and Palestine sounded the death knell of the British and French colonial empires. In the UK, the working class and the trade unions emerged in a much stronger position, reflected in Labour's election victory of 1945.

79. The war economy laid the foundations of the Social Monarchy in the expansion of arms production and the development of a state capitalist sector. The Bank of England, and the gas, water, electricity, coal, railways and parts of the air and road transport industries were nationalised. Against the background of the "Cold War" and the Korean war (1952), state spending on armaments provided major support for the economy, through the aircraft, shipbuilding, engineering, electronics and communications industries.

80. World war two changed the relationship significantly between British and US imperialism. By the end of the war, the UK was heavily in debt to the US. Major US military bases were established. British capitalism became part of the new international trading system based on the dollar, and a major recipient of US foreign direct investment.

81. By 1947, British imperialism had been forced to abandon control of India, Pakistan and Palestine. In the same year the British ruling class acquired nuclear weapons, the new symbol of an independent British imperialism. But in reality the United Kingdom was becoming a sub-imperialist power, dependent on the United States and providing the main support for US foreign policy, for example during the Korean and Vietnam wars.

82. In 1956, the British and French governments sought to reassert their old colonial policies by in-

tervening in Egypt to seize control of the Suez Canal. But the Tory government suffered a humiliating defeat, when the US government refused to support the Anglo-French intervention. The Suez crisis showed that the British ruling class could no longer act effectively without US support.

83. Suez forced the ruling class to recognise that the colonial era was coming to an end. But the real impetus for change came from the anti-colonial and revolutionary struggles of African workers and peasants. These struggles forced British imperialism to concede national independence in Kenya, Ghana, Aden (Yemen) Nigeria and eventually Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

84. In the 1950s British capitalism entered a new period of economic growth. Conditions of near full employment enabled workers to strengthen workplace and trade union organisation. The accumulation of capital and rising real wages drew new groups of workers into employment. Women joined the workforce in increasing numbers. A new generation of workers arrived from India, Pakistan and the West Indies to fill low paid unskilled jobs.

85. The Social Monarchy was created out of the racist traditions of the British Empire. All senior positions in the Royal Household, civil service, and the armed forces remained the preserve of the white and largely protestant ruling class. The monarchy represented a white society, in which black people would serve as second class subjects, discriminated against in jobs and housing.

86. The Social Monarchy represented a new social contract between the ruling class and the working class organised through the institutions of British Labour. It symbolised post war Britain rebuilt on conservative foundations. The regime's social base was broadened with the support of the Labour Party. But the aristocratic and elitist class system was preserved. The old public schools, the Oxbridge Universities and the honours system were protected. The traditions of the old Empire were maintained by the new Commonwealth, with the British monarchy as its head.

■ The State bureaucracy

87. The Social Monarchy provided a new disguise for the bureaucratic-military state, which governed the United Kingdom. The state was controlled by the Whitehall Mandarins, Chiefs of the Armed Forces, heads of the Security Services (MI5, MI6), Police and Judiciary. Power is concentrated in the hands of this elite, conservative in its traditions and outlook, and dedicated to upholding the interests and prejudices of the ruling class.

88. The Whitehall Mandarins are a small tightly knit group of top civil servants. They have considerable power, protected by the conventions of the Crown and the laws of official secrecy. They control an extensive system of information gathering, including the secret network of spying and surveillance.

89. The Mandarins run the Ministries and Departments of State, such as the Foreign Office, the Treasury, the Department of Agriculture and the Ministry of Defence. These Departments serve the general interests of British capitalism and provide support for particular capitalists such as car manufacturers, oil companies, farmers and arms manufacturers.

90. At the centre of bureaucratic power is the Treasury. Its influence pervades the whole bureaucracy. Treasury officials plan and manage the taxation, spending and borrowing decisions for the huge state budget. In conjunction with the Bank of England, the Treasury ensures that the interests of the City bankers and financiers are of paramount importance in government policies.

91. The Treasury manages the accumulation of national capital in the UK. The system of taxation extracts vast sums of wealth from the working population. This is directed in support of the interests of the capitalists, landowners, bankers and the Windsor parasites. The real extent of this bureaucratic waste, corruption and mismanagement is hidden behind the veil of official secrecy.

92. The Whitehall bureaucracy extends its influence into many aspects of economic, social and cultural life through an extensive network of Quangoes (Quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations) In the early 1980's there were 489 such organisations, for example the Arts Council, the Atomic Energy Authority, the Countryside Commission, and the Commission for Racial Equality.

93. The bureaucracy also controls over 1,500 advisory bodies, such as the Parliamentary Boundary Commission and the Arbitration and Conciliation Service (ACAS) and 67 Tribunals including the Supplementary Benefits Appeal Tribunals and the Rent Tribunals.

94. The British monarchy is the head of the Civil Service, Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, Police, Judiciary and Prison authorities. The British Crown employs over 516,000 civil servants, 233,000 armed forces, 152,000 police and 38,000 prison staff (1994) to maintain its authority over the people of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

95. This bureaucratic state is the major barrier to the real democratic control of society. It is the main enemy of the people in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, especially the working class and the millions living in poverty. To establish democratic control of the state, the bureaucracy and the repressive apparatus must be dismantled.

■ The British Constitution

96. The unwritten constitution of the United Kingdom is the legal framework for the exercise of bureaucratic and political power under the Social Monarchy. The constitution is based on the traditions and laws of constitutional monarchy and unionism, set out in the Bill of Rights (1689), the Act of Settlement (1701), the Acts of Union, the Parliament Acts (1911 and 1949) and the Representation of the People Acts (1948 and 1949)

97. Authority vested in the Crown is exercised by ministers, civil servants, judges, police and secret service chiefs and the commanders of the armed forces. Under the Acts of Union (1535 and 1707) and the Government of Ireland Act 1922, the authority of the crown extends to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

98. The Union state is neither a centralised nor federal system of democracy. A central parliament exists along with separate national bureaucracies, the Northern Ireland Office, the Scottish Office and the Welsh Office. Scotland retains its own legal system, but not its own means of law-making. The people of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have no elected assembly to control their national bureaucrats.

99. The people of Northern Ireland have a unique position within the Union under the Government of Ireland Act 1922. They were separated from the majority of the Irish people by the forcible partition of Ireland in 1922. The division of Ireland was in violation of the right of the Irish people to self determination, expressed in the 1918 general election. Northern Ireland was founded on anti-democratic principles based on religious and political discrimination.

100. Whilst a majority of the protestant population of the Northern Ireland are loyal to the Union, a significant nationalist minority have never accepted the legitimacy of partition or the British crown. The Northern Ireland parliament at Stormont (1922 - 1975) was not a genuine democratic assembly. It was the instrument of protestant ascendancy, ensuring discrimination against the Catholic minority and the repression of Irish republicans.

101. Throughout the Union, Her Majesty's Government is conducted by ministers and civil servants in the name of the Crown. Normally this is dependent on the support of a parliamentary majority. Political power is therefore divided amongst the bureaucratic, hereditary and elected parts of the constitution. As head of the government, the Prime Minister is in a powerful position as the lynch pin in the system, linking the monarchy and bureaucracy with the political parties as represented in parliament.

102. The Monarchy and the House of Lords are hereditary parts of the constitution. These institutions have an important influence, but limited power. The House of Lords can scrutinise and amend legislation. The monarch can appoint Prime Ministers and dissolve parliament. These powers are limited both by law and convention. Nevertheless in times of political crisis, the discretionary powers of the monarch would be of crucial importance. They provide the legal authority for the state to govern without recourse to parliament.

103. Under normal circumstances, the Royal Prerogative enables servants of the Crown to act outside parliamentary control. In the name of the Crown, ministers and civil servants can enter diplomatic relations with other states, conclude treaties, command the armed forces, declare war, make peace, appoint judges, initiate criminal prosecutions, pardon offenders, appoint ministers, including the Prime Minister, summon and dissolve parliament, confer honours, create peers and appoint bishops.

104. Privy Council advises the Monarch on the use of Royal powers. In normal times, it enables ministers and leading members of the Opposition, loyal to the Crown, to meet in private and agree common action in support of the state. This ensures that narrow party interests and rivalries do not undermine the fundamental interests of the state.

105. The real function of the Privy Council is to subvert parliamentary democracy, ensuring a united front between the leaders of the bourgeois parties, especially in time of war or civil crisis. It could, if necessary, override parliament and assume dictatorial powers.

106. The House of Commons, elected by universal suffrage, represents the democratic part of the constitution. The first past the post electoral system divides the majority of seats between the two main parties, which form Her Majesty's Government and Loyal Opposition.

107. The distribution of seats is unrepresentative

of the national electorate, and discriminates against small parties. Shifts in population and periodic changes in constituency boundaries leave the system open to gerrymandering by the ruling class.

108. Even in the most democratic bourgeois republic, parliamentary assemblies do not exercise real control over the state. But certain features of the British constitutional monarchy render the House of Commons even more supine and ineffective as a representative body.

109. Members of Parliament do not exercise any real control over ministers or civil servants. The House of Commons cannot convene itself, nor control its own agenda nor compel civil servants to reveal information which might embarrass the government. The system enables the executive to effectively control parliament and establish a near monopoly of political power.

110. The subordination of the House of Commons to the executive is further reinforced by its ancient traditions and rituals. It has more in common with a Victorian gentleman's debating society than a real democratic assembly. The House of Commons is a political circus whose real function is to entertain the population with the illusion of democracy.

111. The central principle of the constitution is the sovereignty of the Queen in Parliament. Legal authority does not come from the people as citizens, but from the Monarchy, Lords and Commons. The people of the United Kingdom are subjects of Her Majesty and Her Majesty's Government. This is often misleadingly called "parliamentary sovereignty" to perpetuate the illusion that the government of the people is carried on by the people and their representatives in parliament. In reality neither the British people nor the House of Commons are the sovereign authority either in theory or practice.

112. The British constitution is a obsolete facade, concealing the real nature of bureaucratic and political power. Government is conducted in the name of the crown with a substantial degree of independence from parliament. In conjunction with official secrecy, press censorship and news management, the constitution helps protect and conceal the activities of the corrupt and repressive state bureaucracy.

■ The bourgeois monarchist parties

113. Traditionally the British constitution with its first past the post system has produced two major parties representing the conservative and liberal wings of the ruling class. Other parties have secured no more than minor representation in parliament.

114. This pattern of class representation continued under the Social Monarchy. Elections to the House of Commons were dominated by the main bourgeois monarchist parties, the Conservative Party and Labour Party. These two parties have been the main political support for the state.

115. Both parties were committed to the fundamentals of the Social Monarchy, including the Unionist constitution, state capitalism, the welfare state, the alliance with US imperialism and support for NATO. However they differed in their relationship to the working class, to social reform and the trade union bureaucracy.

116. The Conservative or Tory party is the largest conservative party in Europe. It serves the interests of the aristocracy, the landowners, the City and sections of industrial capital. Around this coalition of interests, the Tories have built support amongst the small business class and more conservatively minded sections of the middle and working class.

117. The Labour Party is the party of incorporation of the working class. It was forged from an alliance of the trade union bureaucracy, middle class socialists and liberals. The politics of the Labour Party are pro-capitalist policies mainly restricted to social reform.

118. The Liberal Party was the traditional party of the liberal bourgeoisie during the 19th century. Under the Social Monarchy this role was taken over by the Labour party. But it retains significant electoral support, appealing to the democratic aspirations of the middle class alienated from the major capitalist parties. In 1987 the Liberals merged with the Social Democrats to become the Liberal Democrats.

119. The Ulster Unionists governed Northern Ireland through the Stormont parliament until the 1970's. They have represented the special interests of the protestant bourgeoisie of Ulster both in parliament and to the Whitehall bureaucracy. The Unionists have traditional links with the Tories and draw electoral support from the protestant middle class and working class in Northern Ireland.

■ The Social Monarchy in crisis

120. The relative decline of British capitalism goes back to the period 1870-1914 and the emergence of competition from German and US capitalism. Over the next hundred years a significant productivity gap opened up between British capital and its

main rivals.

121. By the 1960's British capitalism had become uncompetitive, compared to its Japanese and European rivals. British industry performed poorly in world markets in terms of productivity, investment, innovation and exports. Foreign capital was increasingly able to penetrate domestic markets.

122. British capitalism had become a weak link among the advanced capitalist economies. Economic decline and low productivity were the result of years of mismanagement, under-investment, incompetence and corruption organised by the Treasury, the City and major monopolies.

123. The dismantling of the British Empire further exposed the weakness of British capitalism and reduced its share of world trade. The banks and multinationals began to see Europe as a new source of profits. In 1972 the UK joined the Common Market as a means to revive the ailing economy. The aim was to open up export markets and investment opportunities for the largest British capitalists.

124. From the 1960's successive governments sought to rectify the productivity gap with an assortment of modernisation plans and anti-union laws, beginning with Wilson government (1964), Heath (1970), Callaghan (1976) and Thatcher (1979). Every attempt to reform the system failed to reverse the process of long term relative decline in any significant way.

125. The British Social Monarchy had become one of Europe's ancien regimes, a barrier to economic, social and political progress. The bureaucracy, the Treasury and the vested interests in the City were a fetter on the development of the productive forces. The continuation of the bureaucratic Social Monarchy would inevitably lead to further long term economic decline and social decay.

126. The first serious crisis of the Social Monarchy arose between 1968-74. In 1968 the Civil Rights movement in Northern Ireland mobilised mass protests and met with police repression. New nationalist movements emerged in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. By the early 1970's there was a growing wave of trade union militancy, including the occupation of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders and two national miners strikes.

127. In 1974 the world price of oil quadrupled, precipitating a major economic crisis. World capitalism entered a new phase of crisis and recession, which exposed more forcefully the inability of British capital to compete. With rising inflation, the threat of nationalism and trade union militancy, and the defeat of the Tory government, the old regime hovered on the brink of collapse.

128. The new Labour government began to restore stability and rebuild the confidence of the ruling class. By 1976, following the Common Market referendum, this had been largely achieved. The government, supported by the IMF and the trade union bureaucracy, began implementing wage controls, cuts in social welfare and raising unemployment. This enabled the employers to mount a new offensive against the working class.

129. By 1979 low paid workers began to fight back. During the "Winter of Discontent", public sector workers took national strike action. Labour's policy of attempting to buy off the nationalists in Scotland and Wales by Devolution failed to secure more than a small majority in the referendum. In parliament, the government was defeated over the Devolution Bill and Tories won the subsequent election.

130. The new Thatcher government began rebuilding the anti-working class offensive, which had stalled under Labour. The Tories cut public spending on social programmes, raising the level of unemployment to three million. New anti-union laws were brought in step by step. In 1984 the government carried out its plans to attack the miners and smash the NUM. A year long national strike ended in defeat for the miners.

131. The Tories were now able to push forward with the "Thatcher revolution", whose aim was to bring about a massive transfer of wealth to the rich. The ideas of "free market" economics provided the justification for a wholesale attack on all the social gains won by the working class movement under the Social Monarchy.

132. The government began to undermine the economic and social foundations of the Social Monarchy. The state owned industries were privatised. Steps were taken to dismantle the welfare state. Full employment was abandoned. Reform of local government centralised more power into the hands of the Whitehall bureaucracy.

133. The Tories sought to reinforce these policies by the further integration of British capitalism into the European market. In 1987 the government signed the Single European Act. Under the Treaty of Maastricht, the Tories prevented British workers from obtaining the minimal social rights obtained by other European workers. The Tories guaranteed the multi-nationals a pool of cheap exploitable labour.

134. Nevertheless the "Thatcher revolution" failed to transform the competitive position of capital-

ism in the UK, despite its anti-working class policies. British capital became increasingly dependent on financial markets and investment abroad for its profits. Working class organisation was weakened by means of mass unemployment. Thatcherism succeeded in producing a massive transfer of wealth to the rich, and poverty for a growing and destitute section of the working class. But the problems of low social productivity remained unresolved, threatening a further collapse of the manufacturing base of British capitalism.

■ The degeneration of the Social Monarchy

135. The "Thatcher revolution" sounded the death knell of the Social Monarchy. Far from solving the problems of low productivity, Tory policies prepared the ground for a much deeper crisis. The process of decay and degeneration, far from being halted, began to accelerate.

136. The situation in Northern Ireland shows where the degeneration of the Social Monarchy can lead. Prolonged economic decline and a divided working class has produced greater poverty, unemployment and worse housing conditions. It is the working class that suffers most from this and from state violence, which is necessary to maintain the status quo.

137. The decay and degeneration of the Social Monarchy provides a breeding ground for chauvinism, racism and fascism. The State has promoted racism with its immigration controls, discrimination, and police harassment. As social conditions continue to deteriorate, racism becomes an increasingly important weapon to divide the working class and bolster support for the state. The stench of chauvinism and racism rises from the rotting corpse of the old regime.

138. The British Social Monarchy is now in its final period of crisis and decay. This is reflected in a deep crisis within the two main parties, the Tories and Labour. There is a growing loss of confidence in the political system, among broader layers of the population. In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales large sections of the population reject Unionism and are alienated from the state. A similar process is taking place in the inner cities as a result of poverty and state racism.

139. The situation facing the working class is now particularly acute. The long term decline and decay of the Social Monarchy has had disastrous consequences. The world recession and the Thatcher "revolution" accelerated the process. British capitalism has become a low productivity and low wage economy. Mass unemployment, poverty and poor housing blight the lives of millions of working people.

140. The decay and degeneration of the Social Monarchy now threatens the democratic rights and civil liberties of the entire people. The long term failure to solve the economic and social problems has created a more fertile ground for the growth of the most backward racist and anti-working class forces. Without revolutionary force to break up the old bureaucratic regime, real economic and social progress will prove impossible and further decline is inevitable.

6. Labourism and the Social Monarchy (1945-79)

141. During and after world war two, the leaders of the Labour Party, TUC and the trade unions forged a new relationship with the state bureaucracy. Labour became a party of government at both national and local level. The TUC and the trade union bureaucracy were brought into partnership with the government and the employers.

142. The Labour government (1945-50) had a major role in creating the Social Monarchy. With its roots in the trade unions and working class communities, Labour won the support of millions of workers for the new welfare state.

143. The Labour party became the left wing of the Social Monarchy. Labour governments 1964-70 and 1974-79 came to power committed to managing "welfare" state capitalism with the support of the trade union bureaucracy.

144. With the expansion of the public sector, the membership of trade unions grew steadily reaching a peak of 12 million organised workers in the 1970's. The Trades Union Congress (TUC), the official leadership of the British trade union movement, was dominated by the bloc votes of the major unions, such as the Transport and General Workers (T&GWU) and the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW) exercised with the minimum of accountability to their membership.

145. The TUC and the trade union movement was controlled by the trade union bureaucracy. These full time officials formed a privileged social strata in terms of income and status, dependent on both the employers and the working class. Their role was to mediate between the employers and

workers, extracting minor concessions, whilst guaranteeing the stability and continuation of the system of exploitation.

146. During the 1950's there was a growth of working class organisation in the workplace. Shop stewards and joint shop stewards committees spread across industry and the public sector. Between 1953-64 over 43 million working days were lost through strike action. These strikes were typically unofficial, short in duration and reflected a new confidence in rank and file organisation at the workplace.

147. In the early 1970's there was a significant rise in the level of working class struggle, beginning with the workers occupation of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders. This culminated in the victories won by the miners strikes of 1972 and 1974, and the defeat of the Tory government.

148. In 1974, against a background of a rising level of working class struggle and political crisis, a Labour government was returned to office. The new pro-capitalist Wilson government had to concede cabinet posts to prominent Labour lefts, such as Tony Benn. Labour's aim was to pacify the working class and restore the confidence of the capitalist class.

149. In 1975 the Common Market referendum enabled the Labour leadership to begin a counter attack against the left. In 1976 the economic crisis forced Labour to sign an agreement with the IMF cutting public expenditure, raising unemployment and restricting wage increases. By 1979, low paid workers in the public sector, began to fight back. They took strike action, and indirectly this led to the defeat of the government.

150. The experience of Labour governments showed that in reality they represented the interests of liberal capitalism. This was in contrast to the ideology of Labourism, which stressed that the party was a workers party, representing the interests of the working class.

151. Labourism was the main ideology within the British working class in the post war period. It legitimised the role in society for the trade union bureaucracy. It provided an answer to the desire of the working class for change, by promising liberal reforms within the constitutional framework of the Social Monarchy.

152. Syndicalism was the main alternative to Labourism. These ideas saw trade union action rather than political action as the means to advance working class interests. In this tradition, economic reforms were to be won by militant trade union action, rather than through parliamentary struggle, which was a diversion.

153. The ideas of both Labourism and syndicalism are based on the liberal theory of economism or economic reformism. This theory suggests that workers can achieve socialism by economic reforms rather than political revolution. The difference between Labourism and syndicalism is whether such reforms are best achieved by parliamentary or trade union methods.

154. Economism is a conservative ideology. In the post war period, it supported the Social Monarchy. The material basis for economism has been the vast wealth accumulated by British imperialism. This enabled the ruling class to concede reforms and bribe sections of workers, whenever it was necessary, in order to keep them tied into the system.

■ The British left and the Social Monarchy.

155. In the post war period the socialist movement provided the main political opposition to Tory and Labour governments. It comprised of the Labour left, the Communist Party, the Trotskyists and the anarchists. The British left played a major role campaigning for nuclear disarmament (CND), opposing the Vietnam war and in supporting the struggles of trade unions such as the National Union of Mineworkers.

156. The Labour left was the petty bourgeois socialist wing of the Labour party, led in the 1950s by Aneurin Bevan. Their programme for national socialism envisaged a Labour government extending the welfare state with nationalisation and planning.

157. In the 1970s a new leadership emerged around Tony Benn, Eric Heffer and Dennis Skinner. The Labour left had a base amongst Labour party and trade union activists, and amongst left wing union officials such as Arthur Scargill, the President of the National Union of Mineworkers.

158. The Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) was the largest and most influential party to the left of the Labour party. Its support reached its peak in the early period of the Social Monarchy (1945-56). The party was based on Stalinist ideas of national socialism reflected in its programme - "The British Road to Socialism."

159. British Stalinism incorporated both the traditions of Labourism and syndicalism. The party believed that socialism would be introduced by a left Labour government in alliance with the Communist Party and other democratic forces. At the same

time in the 1960's and early 1970's the party was the main organisation of trade union militants and shop stewards engaged in industrial action.

160. During the 1950s and 60s new organisations emerged on the fringes of the working class movement based on the ideas of Trotskyism. By the early 1970's the three most important of these, the Workers Revolutionary Party, the Militant Tendency and the International Socialists had between them a few thousand supporters.

161. The theory and practice of the British left was based on economism. The Labour left, the CPGB and the Militant Tendency represented reformist and centrist trends tied to Labourism. The Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) and the International Socialists, renamed the SWP in 1977, were ultra left trends combining abstract socialism with syndicalist practice.

162. During the 1980s the weaknesses in the theory and practice of the British left were increasingly exposed. The miners strike (1984-5) and the resistance of Lambeth and Liverpool Councils (1985) were led by the Labour left. Despite the determination of the miners and council workers, both struggles ended in defeat.

163. These struggles were sabotaged by the leadership of the Labour Party. But the failure of the Labour left, the Communist party and the Militant to act independently of the Labour and TUC leadership was a major factor contributing to those defeats.

164. The WRP and the SWP provided no theoretical or practical alternative to the leadership of the miners and council workers. Both organisations related to these struggles from a propagandist and syndicalist perspective. The WRP demanded a general strike. In 1982 the SWP dropped its "rank and filist" perspective with propaganda for the maximum programme, under the slogan "socialism is the only answer".

165. All the programmes and strategies of the main organisations of the British left, failed during the 1980's. The "Alternative Economic Strategy" (Labour left/CPGB), the "British Road to Socialism" (CPGB), "Labour to power on a socialist programme" (Militant) and "Rank and Filism" (SWP) were all abandoned.

166. None of these organisations sought to win the working class to a programme of democratic political revolution. The influence of the Labour left declined. The CPGB and the WRP broke up. The Militant was witch-hunted out of the Labour Party and split. The SWP abandoned any serious intervention in the trade unions and became a propaganda sect. The break up of the Soviet Union added to the growing ideological and political vacuum on the left. To-day the British left has no credible programme and hence no political direction.

7. Democratic revolution

167. The degeneration of the Social Monarchy means that there are no solutions to the crisis within the existing constitution. Whichever government remains in power or comes to power will face a deteriorating situation. The whole system of government is obsolete and a barrier to solving the basic problems of productivity and social welfare.

168. The British constitution provides democratic legitimacy for a corrupt bureaucratic state. Maintaining the old constitution protects the state bureaucracy, and strengthens its centralising and anti-democratic tendencies. It bolsters the power of the bureaucracy and prolongs the death agony of the old regime.

169. The British system of "democracy" is an empty shell. Institutions such as the monarchy and the House of Lords are obsolete and parasitic. The House of Commons is unreformable and largely powerless to check the government. The right of the Irish, Scottish, and Welsh to self determination is denied. Democratic rights and civil liberties have been steadily eroded.

170. Democratic illusions in the old constitution are particularly dangerous at a time when the bureaucracy and police are concentrating more power into their own hands. But the depth of the crisis is destroying all democratic illusions. The British constitution will prove unsustainable. It will come under mounting pressure from the fascists, the nationalists, the liberal reformers and from the democratic demands of the working class.

171. The economic and political integration of the UK into the European Union also undermines the constitution. Since the Single European Act of 1986 and the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 the central principle of the sovereignty of the Queen-in-Parliament has been abandoned. Laws passed by the European Union can now take precedence over British law. This creates an even wider gap between the constitution and how the people are actually governed in practice.

172. Constitutional change is inevitable. This affects the vital interests of all social classes and strata under the Social Monarchy. Classes with a vested interest in the status quo are resisting democratic

change and even seeking to remove democratic rights. Demands for democratic constitutional change arise from those classes and strata, which seek more political power.

■ Liberal reform

173. Liberal reform is the option favoured by the left wing of the bourgeoisie. To-day it is a prominent part of the programmes of the Labour Party, and the Liberal Democrats. Their aim is to preserve the Monarchy and the Union. Campaigns like Charter 88, and the Scottish Constitutional Convention reflect a growing recognition of the need to reform the system of government.

174. Liberal reform will not solve the terminal crisis of the Social Monarchy. Reforming the constitution will speed up the process of disintegration. Moderate reform will be resisted by the bureaucracy. But preventing reform and removing democratic rights leads slowly but inevitably to a growing constitutional crisis.

175. The approaching constitutional crisis prepares the ground for a democratic revolution. Whilst liberal reformers seek to patch up the existing constitution, democratic revolution destroys it by means of mass mobilisation and struggle "from below".

176. A democratic revolution in the United Kingdom will necessarily be republican and involve the reconstruction of relations between England Ireland, Scotland and Wales on a democratic basis. The demand for a democratic republic distinguishes liberal reformers, whose aim is to preserve the crown, from those prepared to fight for a popular democratic revolution.

■ Republicanism

177. The growth of republican sentiment and the emergence of a republican movement is a measure of the proximity of the democratic revolution. Northern Ireland is the only part of the United Kingdom with an organised and militant republican movement. Republicanism has a mass base amongst the working class of West Belfast and Derry.

178. Between 1968-70 the mass movement for civil rights was transformed into a new republican movement led by the Provisional IRA. In 1981 the deaths of Bobby Sands and other Irish hunger strikers brought a wave of support for the IRA and led to the election of the first Sinn Fein MP's.

179. Republicanism has played an important part of the struggles of the Irish people. But it is also part of the revolutionary history of England, Scotland and Wales. There have been two distinct traditions, bourgeois republicanism and republican marxism (i.e. working class republicanism).

180. The bourgeois republican tradition began in the English revolution, with Cromwell and the Levellers. Later it was inspired by the French revolution, Tom Paine, Wolfe Tone, and the Fenians. Bourgeois republicanism aims to establish a parliamentary republic. Both Cromwell's new model army and to-day's IRA represent a revolutionary form of bourgeois republicanism.

181. The second tradition, republican marxism, arose with the left Chartists and was developed by Marx, Engels, Connolly and MacLean. Republican marxism fights for a workers republic, but recognises that a bourgeois republic is a step forward, especially if won by the most militant and revolutionary class struggle.

182. In Dublin 1916, these two traditions, represented by Sinn Fein and the IRA, and James Connolly's Citizens Army, formed a republican united front and began an armed insurrection. This uprising was crushed. But the popular sympathy won by the revolutionaries triggered the Irish democratic revolution, ending with the partition of Ireland in 1922.

183. Since the 1920s and the death of the Scottish republican marxist John MacLean, British marxism has avoided the republican question. The Communist Party of Great Britain was not based on republican marxist ideas. The aim of a workers republic was abandoned in the "British Road to Socialism". The party adopted a passive form of bourgeois republicanism.

184. Neither was the Trotskyist movement based on republican marxism. The centrist wing, such as the Militant Tendency inside the Labour party, took a similar passive and abstentionist position to the Labour left. The ultra lefts, such as the SWP, were equally passive and abstentionist, on the grounds that anything less than a workers republic was not worth fighting for.

185. Between 1950-1979 the Social Monarchy enjoyed broad class support. No class sought to build or support a republican movement. The British Labour party provided the main support for the Social Monarchy within the working class movement. The Labour leadership were committed to the monarchy. The Labour left sought reforms within the Social Monarchy and considered republicanism to be irrelevant.

186. During the 1980s the Thatcher government began creating the circumstances for a growth of

republicanism. In Scotland Tory policies brought growing hostility to Unionism and demands for democratic change. Between 1988-91 a mass democratic movement emerged in opposition to the poll tax. In Scotland and England, republicans were active in the movement.

187. In the 1990s the Royal Family became involved in controversy over the Royal Marriages and the Queen's non-payment of taxes. As a result of this, debate opened up about the future role of the monarchy in the United Kingdom. For the first time since the 1950's the permanence of the monarchy was called into question.

188. Republican arguments were expressed more openly and more widely. Opinion polls suggested that 20% of the electorate were republican. New republican tendencies began to emerge amongst left Scottish and Welsh nationalists, the Bennites, and left radicals from the Greens and Liberal Democrats.

189. Working class republicanism had no party to represent its aspirations. The SWP, now the largest organisation to the left of the Labour party, is at present, incapable of filling the republican vacuum because of its attachment to Labourism and syndicalism. The party does not adopt republican slogans. It either abstains or is passive on the republican question.

190. The crisis of the Social Monarchy creates the objective basis for a new republican movement. But without republican parties this potential will remain latent. At present neither the middle class nor the working class have moved decisively to reject the constitutional monarchy. The middle class retains its illusions in the monarchy and its fear of republicanism. The working class is still dominated by Labourism. Nevertheless republicanism is now on the political agenda. As the crisis deepens it could become the rallying point for all opposition to the old regime.

■ The bourgeoisie and the democratic revolution

191. The British ruling class has been the main support for the Social Monarchy. They are a most conservative ruling class. They have gained most from the existing system, and have most to preserve. They know that democratic reform and especially popular democratic revolution could pose a serious threat to their class power.

192. The bourgeoisie are a counter-revolutionary class. Their aim is to avoid a democratic revolution or if necessary suppress it. If democratic reform is the only alternative, it should be as minimal as possible. It should be implemented as slowly as possible, and as much of the old system patched up and maintained as far as possible. However the ruling class are divided as to how these aims are best achieved.

193. The conservative wing, mainly represented through the Tory party, is opposed to constitutional change, fearing that it will open the door to more revolutionary changes. The conservatives defend the existing constitution, especially the monarchy and the union. They consider that democratic reform should be avoided because it represents a real threat to the stability of the old order.

194. The liberal wing of the bourgeoisie, normally represented by the leaders of the Labour and Liberal Democrats, believe that democratic reform is unavoidable. The existing constitution must be reformed in order to safeguard capitalism and preserve the fundamentals of the old order. Far from democratic reform weakening the system, they believe it is essential to save it. Reform carried out from above, without mass struggle, is the best means to avoid democratic revolution from below.

■ The middle class and the democratic revolution

195. The Social Monarchy was supported by a broader middle layer of society, comprising the middle class and the upper layer of the working class, the professional and skilled workers. This strata has been vital in maintaining the stability of the Social Monarchy.

196. The middle class has no economic power independent of the bourgeoisie or the working class. They are a dependent class, which must ally itself with the bourgeoisie or the working class. Consequently the middle class tends to produce ideologies of both right and left. The more conservative sections identify their interests with the bourgeoisie and the more progressive sections identify with and seek to influence the working class.

197. Middle class ideology has its roots in the economic activity of the small business entrepreneur and the managerial strata. A variety of political ideologies promote individualism or bureaucracy as the best means of organising society. These ideas are expressed through anarchism, Thatcherism, fascism, Stalinism and radical bourgeois democracy.

198. Nationalism is a common theme of middle class ideology whether from the right or left. It is the means by which the middle class seeks to present its own interests as representing the interests of the

society or nation. Middle class nationalism appears in the form of simple patriotism, fascism, radical nationalism and national socialism.

199. Traditionally the middle strata voted overwhelmingly for the Tory or Labour parties. The interests of the small business, the managerial strata and the skilled and professional workers have been represented within the main bourgeois parties, by the Tory right and the Labour left.

200. Middle class interests are also represented by a variety of small parties, which reject the constitution as the means of advancing the interests of the middle class. The anti-constitutional parties have included the British National Party (BNP), the National Front (NF), the Scottish National Party, Plaid Cymru, Sinn Fein, and the Green Party.

201. The deepening crisis of the Social Monarchy will radicalise the middle strata. It will drive many to abandon the pro-monarchist parties for more radical solutions to the political and constitutional crisis. This will be reflected in growing support for small radical parties.

202. Sections of the middle class threatened by the economic crisis will seek "revolutionary" solutions. They will turn eventually to fascism or democratic revolution in the hope of securing a better bargaining position within a "new" nation state.

203. The fascist parties, such as the British National Party and the National Front, represent a radical petty bourgeois reaction to the crisis. They aim to replace the Constitutional Monarchy with a fascist dictatorship, which can smash the organised working class. The fascists seek to mobilise a popular nationalist movement on the streets, using racism to unite a mass movement under middle class leadership.

204. The Green Party

205. The nationalist parties, Plaid Cymru, the Scottish National Party and Sinn Fein have a common aim of ending the Union between England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. the programme of the most advanced and left wing of these parties, Sinn Fein, does not go beyond state capitalism and a parliamentary republic.

206. Sinn Fein is distinct amongst the middle class parties in the UK. It is a revolutionary republican party supporting armed struggle to achieve its aim of a united Ireland. Its armed wing, the Provisional IRA, is engaged in a war against the British Army and the British occupation of Ireland.

207. The interests of the working class are served by supporting every revolutionary bourgeois democratic movement, directed against the existing social and political order. We therefore give unconditional support for revolutionary republicanism in Ireland, without abandoning in any way our criticism of the middle class, its programme and methods.

208. The crisis will draw left or progressive sections of the middle class towards republicanism. It is one means to gain greater political leverage over the bourgeoisie. But as a class of small business and management, they cannot carry the democratic revolution into the workplace without losing power to the working class. The democratic interests of the middle class are therefore limited to creating a parliamentary republic.

■ The working class and the democratic revolution

209. The democratic revolution cannot provide any complete or final solution to the economic and social problems of the working class under capitalism. Nevertheless the democratic revolution serves workers interests, by extending democratic rights, and raising the working class into the position of a democratic ruling class.

210. Far from being indifferent to democracy, it is in the interests of the working class that all democratic issues are solved as radically as possible, as quickly as possible, and by mass revolutionary action. In the struggle to advance democracy, the working class is the only consistently democratic class.

211. Unlike the bourgeoisie, workers have no interest in preserving the rotten, putrefying and noxious monarchist constitution. On the contrary, they have every interest in destroying it as quickly as possible. Under the impact of the crisis, the most advanced sections of the working class will not only support a new republican movement, but become its most militant supporters.

212. The republican working class is the vanguard of the democratic revolution. The working class suffers more than any other class from oppression, discrimination and lack of economic, social and political rights. The democratic revolution is the means by which workers win back and extend their rights and eradicate all forms of oppression and discrimination.

213. The working class is the only class that can carry the democratic revolution into the workplace. Democratising the workplace is the foundation of the democratic revolution. It is the means by which workers can begin to rest control from the capitalists, bringing the whole economy under democratic

control.

214. The working class will either lead the democratic revolution or be relegated to supporting the political parties of the middle class. To become the leadership of the revolution, the working class must create its own party with its own independent class aims and programme.

215. The aim of the working class must be to carry the revolution beyond a parliamentary republic and establish a workers republic, based on Workers Councils, defended by the armed working class. Such a republic would represent the first major step towards international socialism.

216. The working class cannot lead the revolution without its own independent democratic rank and file organisations. Workers must build their own forms of democracy within the workplace, such as elected Workplace Councils and Joint Shop-Stewards Committees. The aim of these Committees must be to fight for and establish workers control over management.

217. The struggle to democratise the trade union movement, that is the TUC, trades councils and trade unions is also essential for workers control over current struggles, and to strengthen workers democracy in the democratic revolution. All trade union officials and delegates must be regularly elected, subject to immediate recall. All officials must be paid no more than the average wage of the workers they represent.

218. Workplace councils must build links at local, regional and national level through elected and accountable delegates subject to recall. This movement for workers control must become the rank and file movement of the working class. A national rank and file movement for workers control is an essential foundation for working class leadership of the democratic revolution.

C. The minimum programme

■ For a federal republic, united Ireland and workers councils

219. The revolutionary socialist workers party must become the vanguard of the working class in its struggle for revolutionary democracy, international socialism and communism. In preparing the working class for its historic role as the leader of the national democratic revolution, the party must develop and use the minimum democratic programme.

220. The minimum democratic programme is a transitional programme which takes the working class from the pre-revolutionary period to the establishment of a dual power republic.

221. The dual power republic is a republic emerging from the overthrow of the old constitutional order. This republic is a bourgeois republic, within which the working class has its own rival centre of power, the workers councils.

222. In the United Kingdom the minimum democratic programme is summarized by the demand for a federal republic of England, Scotland, Wales and a united Ireland, and for the building of rank and file democracy in the workplaces and trade unions.

We are for:

- (i) The abolition of the monarchy
 - (ii) The abolition of the House of Lords. Parliament to consist of a single legislative assembly of people's representatives
 - (iii) The abolition of the union of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
 - (iv) The immediate withdrawal of all British troops from Ireland
- The unity and alliance of workers of all countries is incompatible with the use of force, direct or indirect, against other nationalities.
- (v) Self determination for the whole of the Irish people, i.e. an immediate All Ireland Referendum on the British presence in Ireland.
 - (vi) The separation of the church from the state. For the disestablishment of the Churches of England and Scotland.
 - (vii) The abolition of all repressive legislation such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the Immigration Act, and the Public Order Act, the Anti-Trade Union laws and the Criminal Justice Act
 - (viii) The abolition of all state secrecy.
 - (ix) The removal of all British troops abroad and the closure of all British military bases abroad.
 - (x) The withdrawal of all US armed forces from Britain and the closure of all US bases.
 - (xi) The publication of all secret treaties with foreign powers.
 - (xii) Withdrawal from N.A.T.O.
 - (xiii) Repudiation of the terms of the Treaty of Rome, the Single European Act and the Maastricht Treaty
 - (xiv) Unilateral nuclear disarmament.

We are for

- (xv) A Federal Republic of England, Scotland and Wales.

(xvi) United Ireland.

(xvii) Self determination for Wales and Scotland. The right of all member nations of the federal republic to freely secede and form independent states. The right of referendum on secession to be guaranteed. Member nations must be attracted exclusively by voluntary agreement and not by force whether direct or indirect.

(xviii) The separation of the church from the schools. All schools to be absolutely secular.

(xix) Biennial parliaments.

(xx) Proportional representation at all elections.

(xxi) The election of all judges and state officials by the people with the right to recall any of them at any time by decision of a majority of their electors.

(xxii) All representatives and elected officials without exception, to be paid no more than an average wage, to be subject to recall at any time upon a decision of the majority of their electors.

(xxiii) Full freedom of information.

(xxiv) Full trade union rights and civil liberties for all members of the armed forces and police. All officers to be elected and subject to recall.

(xxv) For the right of citizens to bear arms in defence of their democratic rights. For the professional standing army and police to be replaced by the people's armed militia with elected officers, subject to recall.

(xxvi) Local self government on a broad scale. The election of all local officials subject to recall.

(xxvii) The abolition of the Council Tax and its replacement by a local progressive direct income tax. Amnesty for all poll tax prisoners and the writing off of all debts.

(xxviii) A Bill of Rights covering the democratic rights of all citizens. Unrestricted freedom of conscience, speech, press, assembly, information, movement, association and to take strike action.

(xxix) Equal rights for all citizens regardless of sex, creed, race, sexuality, and nationality.

(xxx) The right of the population to receive education in their native (mother) tongue. The native language to be used in all local, public and state institutions.

(xxxi) For the right to sue any official before a jury.

(xxxii) A free national legal service. For all laws to be drafted in plain language accessible to the citizen.

223. Along with the extension of democratic rights for all citizens of the federal republic, we are for the extension of the constitutional rights of working people and the building and strengthening of the independent democratic organisations of the working class.

Therefore we demand:

- (xxxiii) The right to work.
- (xxxiv) The right to a minimum income guaranteed by the state.
- (xxxv) A thirty five hour week.
- (xxxvi) Equal pay.
- (xxxvii) Full time and part-time workers to have equal rights to holidays, pensions and job security.
- (xxxviii) Equal rights for all workers, regardless of sex, race, nationality, religion etc.
- (xxxix) The right to join a trade union.
- (xxxx) The right to strike over any issue with or without the approval of trade union officials.
- (xxxxi) The right to picket. For the organised defence of the picket under the control of the strike committee.
- (xxxii) The regular election of all trade union officials with the right of recall. Officials to be paid the average wage of the workers they represent.
- (xxxiii) All officials of the Trades Union Congress (TUC) to be regularly elected with the right of recall. Officials to be paid the average wage.
- (xxxiv) The merger of all trade unions into a single national union in which all officials are elected by and accountable to the rank and file
- (xxxv) Shop stewards and joint shop stewards committees to be established in all workplaces, regularly elected and subject to recall.
- (xxxvi) Workplace councils to be established in all workplace regularly elected by all the workers in a workplace and subject to recall. All major decisions affecting the workplace must be presented to the workplace councils for agreement.
- (xxxvii) Local area Workers Councils to be formed from delegates from workplace councils and other democratic organisations. All delegates to be elected, accountable and subject to recall.
- (xxxviii) Regional Assemblies to be formed from delegates from Local area Workers Councils. All delegates to be elected, accountable and subject to

recall.

(xxxix) A National Assembly to be formed from delegates from Regional Assemblies. All delegates to be elected, accountable and subject to recall.

D. Transitional programme

■ All power to the workers councils

224. The achievement of the democratic republic and the growing influence of workers councils would represent a significant political advance for the working class. The Dual Power Republic would represent the most democratic form of the bourgeois republic. This would provide the greatest freedom for the working class to organise themselves.

225. The dual power republic, whilst providing the greatest freedom, would not create economic stability or social harmony or solve the pressing needs of the poorest and most oppressed sections of society. It would lead to an extension and intensification of the class struggle.

226. The capitalist class, fearing the power of the workers, would use all the counter-revolutionary means at its disposal to smash workers democracy. Such action might include economic destabilisation, fascist terror and the preparation for military dictatorship. It would be essential for the working class movement to organise its own self defence and create its own armed workers militia.

227. The dual power republic would not be capable of solving the political or economic crisis. This would bring home to the mass of workers the fact that the democratic revolution cannot be completed or democratic rights fully established or protected under bourgeois rule. The defence of the working class and the development of the revolution requires workers control over the state and the national economy. The immediate task facing the revolution is to bring state capitalism under workers control.

228. In order to achieve this it is necessary to transfer political power to the National Assembly of workers delegates supported by the armed workers militia. A workers government would be elected by and accountable to the National Assembly. The tasks of the workers government, the workers councils and the working class would be to establish control of the economy, expropriate the major private enterprises, to build a new democratic state and take action to deal with the major social problems of unemployment, bad housing, homelessness, health and safety, pollution, and education.

229. The crisis of dual power means that the party must replace the minimum democratic programme by a transitional programme. This is a programme for a workers government. It should include all the demands of the minimum programme that have not been achieved.

The following demands have not been amended since 1987 and are at present under review.

230. The demands of the transitional programme are:

- (i) The transfer of supreme authority or sovereignty to the National Assembly of workers delegates. Sovereignty is derived from the working class and vested in elected workers delegates, accountable and subject to recall.
- (ii) A workers government to be elected by and accountable to the National Assembly.
- (iii) The armed forces and police to be replaced by an armed workers militia.
- (iv) A constituent assembly of workers delegates to decide on the constitution of the new state, including a Bill of Rights of Working People.
- (v) Workers control to be established in every workplace. Elected workplace councils to have full authority to supervise and control all aspects of enterprise policy.
- (vi) Nationalisation of the land without compensation. The right of disposal of land to be vested in Local Workers councils.
- (vii) Nationalisation without compensation and under workers control the banks and financial institutions. The abolition of the Stock Exchange. The merger of all banks and financial institutions into a state bank. All financial information to be publicly accountable.
- (viii) Nationalisation without compensation and under workers control of the major private Enterprises.

(ix) The establishment of a workers Inspectorate to investigate all standards and regulations, including health and safety, and make public all findings and recommendations.

(x) All commercial secrecy is abolished. All information within an enterprise to be publicly accountable.

(xi) The abolition of the National Debt without compensation

(xii) The establishment of a state monopoly of foreign trade.

(xiii) Provide state support for workers co-operatives.

(xiv) State regulation and workers control over prices.

(xv) The abolition of income tax. For a profits tax and wealth tax.

(xvi) An emergency programme to establish full employment.

(xvii) A national incomes policy with a national minimum and maximum. All incomes to be publicly accountable.

(xviii) National pay bargaining between trade unions and government.

(xix) Retirement pensions to be paid at the average wage.

231. In establishing workers control of the economy, the workers government, with the support of the workers, will make immediate improvements in social provision for the welfare of the working class and the most oppressed sections of the people.

(xx) A free comprehensive national health service, under workers control. The abolition of private health care.

(xxi) Free abortion on demand and free contraception.

(xxii) The closure of all nuclear power stations.

(xxiii) The housing stock to be placed under public control.

(xxiv) The abolition of all mortgage debt.

(xxv) The right to a house built to approved minimum standards set by elected bodies of building workers and tenants.

(xxvi) A tenants charter setting out the rights of tenants in their own home. All extortionate and unfair rents to be abolished and replaced by a reasonable national scale of standard rent.

(xxvii) The abolition of all private fee paying schools.

(xxviii) Free integrated nursery schools in workplaces and localities.

(xxix) For a genuine comprehensive system of primary, secondary and tertiary education.

(xxx) The right of all young people to a trade union-workers approved apprenticeship and professional training for all socially productive occupations.

(xxxi) Open access to further and higher education backed by state grants for all students. The abolition of means testing.

(xxxii) Reform of the marriage and divorce laws. All discrimination against co-habitation to be abolished. Marriage not to be based on a duty of monogamy or sexual rights and duties. Divorce to be made cheap and simple on the application of one partner. The abolition of private maintenance.

(xxxiii) State support for single parent families.

(xxxiv) Private profiteering in prostitution to be made illegal. Prostitution to be provided in state establishments under the control of the prostitutes or in co-operatives with regular medical inspection.

■ For an international socialist programme

232. Capitalism is an international system which can never be fully destroyed within one country. By leading the national democratic revolution, the working class can bring the forces of capitalism under a measure of control and temporarily mitigate its worst excesses. But a workers state in one country cannot begin to build international socialism. Only if democratic revolutions begin to spread across the world bringing the working class to power in a series of countries will it be possible to construct an international socialist society. It is essential therefore to build an International Party on the basis of an international programme. This programme should set out those measures which the working class and their governments in different countries can unite around on the basis of replacing imperialism with a new world order •

Workers of the world unite!

Forward to international socialism!