

# RED WEEKLY

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# STOP POLICE STATE MOVES! TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND!

The Labour Government is going to try and deal with the question of Ireland in the tried-and-true fashion of capitalist Governments—by more repression.

This is shown both by the package of harsh measures unveiled by Jenkins—which he himself describes as 'draconian'—and by the news from the North of Ireland that the army has been given a free hand to wade in against the pro-Republican, catholic population.

This will not only apply to anti-IRA operations but, as the *Daily Telegraph* puts it, to 'crimes and lawlessness in the Republican trouble areas'. In the language of the army and the *Daily Telegraph* this means that all mass actions in the catholic ghettos will be coming under the gun.

In the wake of the Provisionals' denial that they had anything to do with the Birmingham bombings there are good grounds for being suspicious as to who exactly was behind them. But whoever it was—whether politically misguided sympathisers with the Irish cause, right-wing provocateurs, or individuals manipulated by the state's 'dirty tricks' department—one fact is certain: there is an alternative way to deal with the situation in Ireland—and that is to get British troops, who have no business being there in the first place, out now.

The labour movement should be demanding that the Labour Government does this, instead of enacting a whole series of new repressive measures.

The failure of the British labour movement to live up to its responsibilities to support the struggle of the Irish people has had dangerous consequences. It is this which has permitted the situation to reach its present state. Moreover, the ruling class has been able to exploit this weakness of the workers' movement to introduce, undercover of 'fighting terrorism' and 'dealing with the troublemakers', repressive techniques in a way which would otherwise have been fought tooth-and-nail.

A number of militants have begun to realise the dangers involved and are taking up the call for a conference of the trade union movement to tackle the Irish question. These points were made at a recent conference on Ireland organised by the Connolly Association, by Labour MP Jock Stallard, and Manchester AUEW district president Stan Cole, among others.

As a TGWU Midlands executive member put it: 'We must take the decision-making out of the hands of the military and into the hands of the labour movement. The movement will not get anywhere by letting the right-wing take away the freedom of the British people.'

This is a task which must now be taken up throughout the labour movement as an urgent priority.

## Provisionals deny Birmingham bombing

The way the bulk of Britain's capitalist press was going on about it there was no doubt at all that it was the IRA which had been behind the bombs. Despite the disclaimer by Brendan Magill, spokesman for Sinn Fein, the press plugged this theme for all it was worth. Their aim was obviously to build up an atmosphere of hysteria so as to pressurise the Labour Government into banning the IRA.

Since then the Provisional IRA has issued a statement denying any complicity in the Birmingham bombings. The *Times*, *Guardian*, *Financial Times*, *Daily Mirror* and *Sun* were among those who failed even to mention the statement.

The *Daily Telegraph* mentioned it, but claimed that the denial 'was being treated with extreme scepticism by security forces and the intelligence services.' Surprise, surprise. As if British Intelligence, having made full use of the bombings to harass Irish militants and isolate opponents of British policy in Ireland, would publicly accept the Provo denial.

Certainly an air of mystery surrounds the whole situation. The *Times*, for instance, gave an incredibly contradictory account on Friday of the bombings: 'The Birmingham Post received a warning call at 8.11 p.m. [a bit further on in the same paragraph] Police attempted to clear the area but the explosions took place within

12 minutes of the warning... [a few lines further down in the same report] The bombs went off at 8.30pm'

Now, the time difference between 8.11 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. is 19 minutes, and neither *The Times* nor the other papers explain why, if there was a 12 or 19 minute warning, the police did not clear the pubs.

The Provisional IRA statement raises the possibility that the bombings were planned by some splinter group not associated with the Republicans, but infiltrated by state agents; or that they were carried out by extreme right-wing groups as a deliberate provocation to force the Labour Government into banning the IRA and to strengthen chauvinism towards the Irish community in this country.

The activities of the Special Branch and the intelligence services in relation to the Lennon and Littlejohn affairs have given us convincing evidence of the 'dirty tricks' of which these groups are capable.

It is in these areas that a real investigation should be mounted. Having aided in the cover-up of the Littlejohn and Lennon affairs, it is hardly surprising that our 'liberal' Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins is concentrating his attention in other directions.

C. Howard



Photo: PETER HARRAP (Report)

## The rule of Jenkins' law

JENKINS'S BILL is deliberately aimed to intimidate the opponents of British imperialism's bloody war in the six Counties—like these 14 members of the 'British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign' already being prosecuted for their

leafletting of soldiers.

Irish people are liable to deportation and rights of entry into Britain are to be drastically restricted.

Organisations can be proscribed for 'promoting or encouraging terrorism'. Under this blanket formula any organisation which defends the oppressed minority of the North and champions their cause could, in practice, be banned.

People can be fined an unlimited amount and jailed for up to five years for supporting any banned organisation financially or in other ways.

The police will be allowed to arrest

without warrant, and to keep their prisoners under wraps for up to seven days—all they have to do is get permission from the Secretary of State.

No wonder that Jenkins described his measures as 'draconian.' They are measures that will delight the ruling class. Not only will they see them as means of strangling the opposition to the war in Ireland, but they know that they can be used against the working class in future struggles.

The workers' movement must say 'no' to Jenkins's proposals. If it fails to fight against these repressive laws it will find itself at the receiving end and its own rights ground into the dust.

# SHREWSBURY: Lobbying for a lobby for a lobby



Photo: PETER HADJAP (Report)

Some of those outside Congress House on 20 November recognised the need for strike action rather than just another lobby to free the 2

The official union campaign to free the *Shrewsbury 2* has the urgency of a funeral march.

First there was the UCATT call that the TUC should see Jenkins and organise a lobby. Meanwhile the Communist Party switched off the unofficial strikes and all eyes were turned towards Congress House.

Resolutions poured into the TUC to mount a campaign of agitation and propaganda including demonstrations.

On 18 November the TUC's finance and general purposes committee met - including representatives of all three building workers unions. Not having to worry about a growing strike movement, the worthies at Congress House put forward the 'original' suggestion that there should be another TUC delegation to see Jenkins. Perhaps the TUC delegations like the tea and biscuits served by the Home Secretary.

## CONSISTENT

However the CP are consistent and very patient. By the next day it was urging support for the lobby called by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions and the Building Workers' Charter. The lobby - surprise, surprise - was going to Congress House!

The first call for a TUC lobby of Parliament had been made on 3 November. Seventeen days later the CP was still calling for a lobby

of the TUC to get them to lobby Parliament.

On the 20 November the lobby for the lobby took place. This time the TUC 'moved'. It agreed in principle to organise a lobby. However it 'forgot' to set a date. Thinking that it might have a change from Jenkins' tea and biscuits to Wilson's cakes and sherry it called for an 'urgent meeting' with the premier.

## PROGRESS

Well progress is progress, even though Warren and Tomlinson's sentences are ticking by, so leading CP member and LCDTU chairman Kevin Halpin welcomed the TUC decision.

Len Murray was not so euphoric as Halpin. He explained that a final decision on the TUC national lobby would depend on the projected meeting with Wilson and on the outcome of the application on behalf of the two men for leave to appeal to the House of Lords. The date for the application is 3 December.

Out and around Westminster things are moving even slower on the Shrewsbury front. Jenkins politely refuses to discuss the two imprisoned workers explaining that it is *sub judice* - which is a fancy Latin phrase meaning he intends to prop up the capitalist law and as far as he is concerned Warren and Tomlinson can stay in jail. Anyhow Jenkins is too busy scheming how he can use

the Birmingham bombings to attack workers' rights to bother about imprisoned pickets.

The jailing of the *Shrewsbury 2* and the Prebbles' High Court anti-picketing decision have flashed the green light for the police to step up their harassment of even the most peaceful picket lines. While the TUC leaders play 'break a picket line' and the CP pleads with them to join the 'lobby game' the ruling class use their courts to attack the labour movement.

Unless lobbies are backed up with industrial action, neither the TUC nor the Labour leaders will move. By subordinating the campaign to simply putting pressure on the union bureaucrats and Labour Ministers, the CP is leading it up a blind alley.

## SUPPORT

On the 28 November there will be a lobby of the delegates to the Labour Party Conference. The North West Regional Council of UCATT has urged all building workers in its region to attend and support is growing from other areas. This can and must set the basis for re-invigorating the new campaign.

Every attempt must be made to turn this into a really massive mobilisation which can prepare for all-out action to force the release of Warren and Tomlinson.

BOB PENNINGTON

# Tax avoidance - what you're missing

Most workers object to paying income tax. After drudging away on a hospital ward, sticking the grind of the assembly line or slogging their guts out on the coal face, they resent a chunk of their wages being ripped-off to pay for what they have produced anyhow.

If you feel that way, perhaps you ought to get in touch with Nicholas Buser, who is a director of Investment and Property Studies. Mr Buser runs a racket on tax-avoidance. He and his colleagues organise 30 to 40 one-day conferences each year called 'Tax avoidance - the opportunities now.'

For the small sum of £40 you can slip along to the Royal Lancaster Hotel - next session 3 December - to get wised up by a barrister and a tax expert. After cocktails and a £2.50 a-head lunch, you can sit back and learn the 80 Guidelines to Business Tax Planning. This is then followed by 40 Ideas for Personal Tax Mitigation and 20 Savings from Transactions Abroad.

There are some problems, however, for workers. Very few nurses have investments abroad, nor is that a field into which ancillary workers and shop assistants have plunged their £20 to £25 a week net wages. So the tax fiddles on overseas investments are

not going to be much help to them.

Nor is it likely that car workers, coal miners and railway workers will be able to off-set their working expenses against business costs. The company Rolls Royce, the West-End pent house flat for entertaining and the secretarial expenses allowed for the wife are just not claimable by workers.

Nor can workers look forward to a booze-loading, free gorging session paid for by the company. Although you could ask the management to send you - all expenses paid - as a delegate, they are unlikely to see any point, since you won't be eligible for these contrived fiddles. Besides, if you could get in and learn what 'our betters' are doing, it might spoil their patriotic image.

Not surprisingly, some delegates attend incognito. Their names are not on the delegates' list, nor do they wear the conference name badges. Whether or not these are some of our more wealthy Labour MPs or shy business folk we do not know. But we appreciate it does make selling the social contract a little harder if you get caught with your hand stuck in the national till.

# More concessions for Loyalists

The Labour Government's man in Northern Ireland, Merlyn Rees, has produced a new 'Green Paper' on Ireland on the Constitutional Convention. The Convention which is scheduled to meet after the February 1975 elections, was first mooted after the collapse of the 'power-sharing executive' on the heels of the Loyalist strike last April.

Rees' strategy represents an attempt to formalise the capitulation to the Loyalists which has characterised Labour policy since April. In order to smash the armed vanguard of the Catholic community, the Provisional IRA, the Labour Government cannot afford to antagonise the Protestants. As a result, massive concessions have been made to the Loyalists.

The Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve and the Ulster Defence Regiment have already been greatly expanded in order to include the members of para-military Loyalist groups. At the same time the Army remains passive in the face of the almost daily killings of Catholic civilians by the Loyalists; instead of putting a stop to this, it steps up its own harassment of the Catholic ghettos.

Only 10-15% of the activity of the security forces is concentrated in Loy-

alist areas, although more arms have been found there than in the Republican zones.

These victories helped the Loyalists to scoop up 58% of the vote in the recent General Election. The 'moderate' Protestants crumbled to a paltry 8%. It is clear that this pattern will be repeated in the February elections, and that the Loyalists will get an overall majority.

The 'Green Paper' now recognises that the Convention is unlikely to satisfy imperialism's hopes of a solution through 'power-sharing'. On the contrary, the Convention is likely to ratify a return to the pre-1969 Stormont regime - B-Specials and all.

Given all this, it is necessary to step up the fight for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. A recent Gallup Poll commissioned by Merplan revealed that of a random 1,000 people questioned, 69% now favoured withdrawal. Now is the time to drive the issue right into the labour movement by supporting the call by Labour MP Joan Maynard for a trade union conference on Ireland.

Albert Cox

# Scottish teachers take to streets of London

Two trainloads of Scottish teachers - organised by the East and West of Scotland Action Committees - descended on London last week to lobby MPs in support of their pay claim.

All the efforts by the Labour Secretary of State for Scotland, William Ross, and the trade union bureaucrats have so far failed to persuade the teachers to respect

the social contract and call off their action. By organising through Action Committees, with delegates from each school responsible to regular mass meetings, they have taken control of their struggle away from the bureaucrats of the Educational Institute of Scotland and into their own hands.

Their demand is for an immediate across-the-board increase of £15 - and they intend to stick out for it!

## RED LADDER BENEFIT

Red Ladder, the pioneer socialist theatre group, have in the past six years done a tremendous job for hundreds of trade union branches, conferences, schools, tenants' associations and women's groups.

Their vivid presentation of working class struggles and their superb exposition of women's oppression through the medium of the theatre deserves the full support of socialists and trade unionists.

In order to keep going and extend Artists are putting on a *Rock Event*. Living Newspaper will also be helping out, and Cass and Friends are putting on a display of *Socialist Karate*. David Skinner, the ex-councillor from Clay

their activity, Red Ladder need money. So on Monday 2 December they are running a benefit night. Their programme includes their own play *A Woman's Work is Never Done*; Combine will present *Songs of the People*; and Celebrated Cross, will be making a special appearance.

With tickets at only £1 a head the show promises to be of tremendous value, and the money made will go to an excellent cause.

RED LADDER BENEFIT - Monday 2 December, St. Pancras Assembly Rooms, Euston Road, London NW1 - starts 7.30pm. Doors and bar open at 7.00.

## FUND DRIVE

This week's been a bit disappointing, with only another £70 coming in. The total now is **£1462**

The Government has introduced new repressive laws this week amidst mounting hysteria. A huge task now faces us to counter this witch-hunt.

With your help our paper can be a major weapon in this fight. Please rush every penny you can spare to: RED WEEKLY FUND DRIVE, 182 Pentonville Road, London, N.1.



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)



.....GOING



GONE.....

# Workers fight back against Healey's hatchet



One group of workers have decided that Healey's plans for slashing social expenditure to fill the bosses pockets must be resisted — this is the press release they have put out.

At its meeting on Sunday 10 November, Left Unity — a grouping of socialists active in the AUEW in Leeds — decided to put its full weight behind the campaign that is building up in opposition to call cuts in social expenditure. The reasons for this are twofold.

Firstly we believe we are witnessing nothing less than the crumbling of all aspects of the 'welfare state'. This extends from education cuts and cutbacks in council house maintenance, to public works, youth clubs and the entire health service all falling to ruin.

In other words, working people, without whose struggles the Welfare State would never have arisen, are facing a whole series of attacks on their living standards which go beyond the falling value of their wage packet.

Some of the consequences are, in Leeds:

- \* The use of inferior concrete on some new schools resulting in them becoming dangerous;
- \* Public Works and Housing programmes grinding to a halt;
- \* Attempts to cut an already inadequate and underpaid teaching force;
- \* A decline in the maintenance of existing housing stock;
- \* Attempts to give no grants to Further Education students;
- \* Attempts to chop down Youth clubs.

Secondly we believe we have a duty in the engineering industry to make it quite clear to our fellow workers that we should be prepared to take industrial action to secure a halt in the decline of these aspects of our living standards just as much as we are, say, on threshold payments.

We would support the calling of a conference of all those prepared to fight the cuts to plan out a programme of action, and in the interim we will be looking to our Labour MP's to add their weight to the campaign.

Let it be known that working people, whether they be engineers, council workers, health workers or teachers, will not lie down and allow the employers and their allies to solve the deep crisis in their system by making cuts in our living standards.

Instead, industrial rates should be raised to meet the increased costs, with no allowance for passing this on by increasing prices. Let them, instead, raise the funds from their bankers and speculators.

## IN FOCUS

### Issues at Labour Party Conference

The agreement patched up between the Labour Party Executive and the Labour Cabinet over Ministerial responsibility was clearly timed to take the heat out of this week's Labour Party Conference.

Whether or not it does so remains to be seen. Certainly delegates will have more than enough grievances to fuel a good working model of the Inferno at Central Hall next week.

**\*THE BUDGET.** Labour's last Budget was greeted with almost universal indignation by the rank-and-file of the labour movement. The only alternative to the Government's pro-capitalist policies are socialist policies which base themselves on the struggle of the working class. Such policies would entail the drawing up by the whole workers' movement of a workers' plan for the economy, including measures for the nationalisation of key industries and the banks and insurance companies. Such a plan would rely on workers' control to ensure its implementation and the breaking of any sabotage attempts by the bosses.

**\*THE SOCIAL CONTRACT.** The crisis of capitalism has created a situation where workers must run ever more frantically just to stand still as far as living standards are concerned. Those who cannot keep this pace up—students, old age pensioners, the poorly organised—are slipping steadily backwards. Not satisfied with trying to trip workers up through the social contract, the Labour Government is now talking about building a brick wall across the road in the form of pay laws.

The Labour Party Conference should spell out where it stands. It should affirm the right of workers both to protect their living standards and improve them, whether the bankrupt capitalist system can afford it or not. No Government should be allowed to reintroduce pay laws, and every section of the workers' movement should commit itself to taking part in the organisation of a general strike if such a move were attempted.

Instead of holding down wages the Government should be forced to protect all working people's incomes from inflation through the enactment of a law that would extend the 'thresholds' to give 100% protection from inflation for all wages and state benefits.

**\*IRELAND.** Labour Party Conference should demand that Labour deals with the Irish question by getting British troops out. At the same time the workers' movement should pledge itself to support the struggle for a united Ireland and all the struggles of catholic working people for an end to their oppression.

**\*THE PICKETING LAWS.** When in opposition, Labour made all kinds of promises about reversing the reactionary decisions on picketing made by the courts under the Tories. But they have done nothing about this.

The Government should be compelled to pardon the Shrewsbury militants immediately, abolish all anti-picket laws, and do away with the conspiracy laws. Labour Conference should proclaim its willingness to organise mass demonstrations and support industrial action launched by any section of the workers' movement aimed at obtaining these demands.

**\*THE COMMON MARKET.** The Labour Government is busy 'renegotiating' Britain's position in the EEC. But no amount of 'renegotiation' can change the nature of the EEC as a capitalist body, designed to serve the needs of Europe's capitalists. It is not in the interests of workers in this country or anywhere else to shore up such a body.

The Labour Conference should be pledged to campaign vigorously for Britain's withdrawal. Instead of hob-nobbing with 'Eurocrats' in Brussels the British labour movement should be linking up with other European workers who are fighting the capitalist crisis—like those in Italy and France at the moment. In this way a genuine working class internationalism can be forged, and the fight begun for the Socialist United States of Europe.

**\*WORKERS DEMOCRACY.** The dispute over Ministerial responsibility is just the tip of a big iceberg. Labour Party militants should fight for workers' democracy at all levels—in the organisation of the struggle, in the Party, and in the functioning of the Labour Government.

The decisions of democratic, representative bodies like the Labour Party Conference must be binding upon Labour MPs—including Government Ministers. At the same time the Government should take its policies not from the ruling class bureaucrats of Whitehall, the capitalist experts of some 'think tank,' or the big shots of the CBI, but the millions of working people who elected them. It is to these working people and their organisations that the Government should look for implementation of its policies—not the capitalist state machine.

One delegate to the Labour Party Conference who will be putting the Leeds workers' views forcefully is TERRY JACQUES, President of Leeds District AUEW and Convenor for Hoe-Crabtree. Here he speaks to RED WEEKLY.

What are the problems posed for the labour movement by Healey's latest budget?

To be disillusioned with the current Labour leaders you have to have illusions in the first place. I lost mine five years ago.

Healey is typical of previous Labour Chancellors. For Labour to do anything radical for the working class would mean upsetting the whole establishment, Parliament and the lot. It would mean having all the media against you.

It's the Parliamentary Labour Party that's the problem. The split between the PLP and the Party, and the same at council level, is all wrong. Here there is need for radical change to get the idea of mandates accepted into the organisation. For example, with trade union sponsored MP's, the union becomes subordinate to the party. The Labour Party, in fact, should be subordinate to the unions.

Democracy inside the Labour Party and throughout the workers movement is essential if we are to prevent another bosses budget. This must include putting the PLP under the control of conference, and all Labour MP's responsible to the party and the unions who put them there.

What do you think should be the response of the workers movement in general now?

One of the things which has to be fought is that as a result of the budget millions of pounds are again

going to be doled out to the employers with no control over how that is to be spent by those directly affected on the shop floor.

Everyone agrees that investment has just got to take place for the economy to improve, but do you know that £2 million a day, even before the budget, has been going from the state to private industry with no public accountability whatsoever? I personally think that if Benn wins against the Lever lot in the Cabinet over his National Enterprise Board proposals this could provide us with new scope. For the first time ever, there will be legislation enabling workers at the rank and file level through their shop stewards committees to veto investment plans involving loans or handouts to industry.

I think this will assist the development of struggles of the workers movement to progress to the point where we are really beginning to challenge what the employers believe to be one of their 'inalienable rights'...where they will invest.

Another aspect of the budget which will have to be confronted head-on by the labour movement is the provision for price rises to allow companies to increase their profits and pass on wage increases.

One of the things that has to be done here is to build up a campaign for the continuation of thresholds. Who would have thought

a year ago that thresholds alone would be worth nearly a fiver? If we had got a fiver and no threshold we would have thought we were doing quite well! Instead we've needed that just to stand still.

In fact thresholds themselves underestimate inflation because the official Retail Price Index excludes rent, rates and mortgages. So we should be fighting not only for the continuation of thresholds but for their extension to cover all increases in the cost of living. Then any wage increase we win will actually be an increase.

A year ago last May, the Tories introduced the threshold idea because they never dreamed inflation would take off like it has. Well this time it's backfired in their faces and I don't think we can allow a Labour Government to wriggle off the hook just like that!

Increasingly over the last few years we have learned that the positions of the PLP have been decided by the actions of the workers' movement, both in and outside the Labour Party. This is the result of a trend among the people who actually face the problems — the rank and file — towards breaking from the deeply ingrained idea that those in power 'know what's best'. In fact it is the other way round, and the workers movement is beginning to show it.

# CHILE: THE REPRESSION GOES ON



## New face for junta - but same reality

A fortnight ago 27 well-known politicians of the Chilean right - mostly members of the Christian Democrat party - issued a statement of support for the September 1973 military coup as 'the only alternative to the situation of economic chaos and systematic arbitrary actions of Popular Unity'.

They called upon the population to close ranks behind the junta in a policy of 'national unity to face the serious problems of the moment'.

The declaration was published after a series of contacts between junta chief Pinochet and leaders of the Christian Democrat party. It is undoubtedly the first step in the junta's search for a 'new face', following the collapse of its attempts to build a base by attacking the 'decadent professional politicians'. These decadent gentlemen are now its only possible prop.

The declaration aims to boost the junta's campaign to improve its international image. The regime is anxious to reassure potential foreign investors that the internal situation is returning to 'normal' now - that the resistance has been crushed, the repression is therefore being eased, and that a stable and strong government exists which has the social and political support of wide sectors of the population.

### REPRESSION

The reality, of course, is very different. The repression is just as widespread and intensive, with continuing mass arrests and further atrocities. The most recent of these was the murder of the young MIR militant Lani Videla Moya, who was strangled and thrown into the garden of the



Junta chief Pinochet - repression still his main weapon

Italian Embassy in Santiago during the night of 3 November.

Repression continues to be the main weapon of the junta. It has no alternative means of maintaining its

rule, faced with growing economic chaos, mass starvation, more than 20% unemployment, and inflation which for basic food products has now topped 1000% since the coup. Any easing of the repression would lead to an immediate spontaneous outburst reflecting the growing influence of the resistance.

That the resistance is growing has been shown among other things by the reaction to the death of MIR leader Miguel Enriquez - when slogans were painted in tribute on the walls of many popular areas, and the statement of the MIR Political Committee was widely circulated in the factories and shanty towns. The second clandestine edition of the MIR's paper, *El Rebelde*, has recently appeared; the first appeared in August, and 20,000 copies were distributed throughout the country.

The number of Popular Resistance Committees - in the factories, shanty towns, offices, universities, etc - is also growing daily.

### ILLUSIONS

The declaration of support for the coup by the right-wing politicians will not erase this reality. Indeed, it only helps to underline the junta's real political intentions. It also shows how criminal are the illusions peddled by the reformists of an alliance with the Christian Democrat leaders.

In contrast to the reformists' willingness to compromise is the position of the revolutionary left - notably the MIR, and also our comrades of the Liga Comunista - who have acted from the first in accordance with their statements that it is necessary to remain in Chile and to organise a solid resistance without giving the junta the slightest room for manoeuvre.

Continued international solidarity will be vital in backing up their efforts so as to bring about the speedy overthrow of the junta.

## Vicious attacks on gays

A common feature of fascism wherever it occurs is its intensification and utilisation of the sexual oppression of 'normal' bourgeois rule. Fascist movements take the glorification of the nuclear family to its ultimate degree - and of course the main sufferers of this are women and homosexuals.

Thus in Nazi Germany the number of homosexuals murdered in the concentration camps ran into hundreds of thousands - and similarly in Spain the fascists set up special execution squads to murder gays.

This horrific pattern is now being repeated in Chile. It was noticeable that even before the coup the slogans of the fascists were not only directed at Allende's 'communism' but also claimed that Allende and all the leaders of Popular Unity were *maricones* - a Spanish word similar to faggot. This was entirely predictable, for in the 1950s the extreme right wing Ibanez regime had hundreds of homosexuals drowned in the Pacific - mainly by sinking them in boatloads.

After the coup, the junta claimed to have discovered sexual devices and pic-

tures showing Allende engaged in homosexual acts with Fidel Castro. More vicious is the fact that scores of homosexuals have been raped, tortured and murdered by military squads - and, in the case of male homosexuals, castrated.

The Homosexual Liberation Front of Argentina has issued a world-wide declaration calling upon Chilean gays to join the socialist resistance, and calling for whatever assistance Latin American and world-wide gay communities can give to help them. The declaration states: 'The death of Lolo Pinales (a well-known Santiago gay activist) shows us once again that to be homosexual is a manifestation of human affirmation and dignity that the fascists cannot understand'.

In Britain today the National Front has similarly, in its championing of the family, declared war on homosexuals. To fight this means fighting sexism - which in turn means full and active support to the demands of the women's and gay movements.

Steve Cohen

## Labour lines up behind South African racists

THE ATTEMPT OF THE BIG IMPERIALIST POWERS (including Britain) to save South Africa's bacon at the United Nations through the use of their 'veto' power fell apart last week when the General Assembly voted to expel South Africa for the next year anyway.

The Labour Government once more lined up behind white racism, voting against the expulsion and 'deploring' the decision.

The expulsion certainly came as a shock to South Africa, which had earlier breathed a sigh of relief when their expulsion had been blocked by Britain, France and the US. South Africa had been hoping to use this victory to try and manoeuvre in its foreign relations both with the black African states and the world as a whole.

It is this which lies behind certain statements that have emerged from South African politicians in recent weeks. On 5 November, just after the vetoing of South Africa's expulsion, Prime Minister John Vorster asked his critics to 'give South Africa a chance of about six months, they will be surprised at where this country will stand'.

But a system like the vicious racism of 'apartheid' cannot be taken apart bit by bit. Too many whites in South Africa have deep-seated interests in its continuation, and the blacks have suffered too long to wait patiently for tiny handouts while the brutal economic exploitation and police repression continues in force.

Vorster realises this, and had no sooner spoken his words of 'moder-

ation' than he was vigorously backpeddling.

Ten days later, for example, he told a gathering of black political leaders: '...if there are people who are raising your hopes that there will one day be one man one vote in the white Parliament for you, then they are misleading you, for that will never happen'.

Liberation can only come to South Africa through the struggle of the black people of the entire continent. It is the responsibility of the labour movement in Britain to solidarise with and support that anti-racist and anti-imperialist struggle, not to cooperate in the attempts of white racists to cover over their blood-stained regimes with a phony 'liberal' whitewash.

The Labour Government should be told to stop its policy of aiding the cover-up operation of people like Vorster. Instead, it should end all aid, trade, investment and diplomatic support for the white racist regimes, and give its backing to the black anti-imperialist movements fighting these regimes.

Ray Alexander.

The following open letter to the British Medical Association was sent to the Secretary, Dr Derek Stevenson, on 12 November by the Committee for the Defence of Chilean Health Workers.

Dear Dr. Stevenson,

Since the coup in Chile in September 1973, a number of Chilean doctors have come to this country and are now working in the National Health Service.

Their personal reports concerning their own experiences and first hand knowledge of their former colleagues has corroborated information from the international press, British journalists and international organisations such as the World Council of Churches, International Commission of Jurists, and Amnesty International, that in Chile since September 1973 there has been systematic persecution of physicians and health workers. Many have been arrested without trial and tortured to death.

The Emergency Committee to save Chilean Health Workers, formed in the USA, has documented evidence of 63 health workers who have been executed - many of them internationally known medical and public health workers, experts in their field - and 174 held in prison or under house arrest.

As a result of our concern, British doctors have joined with other health workers to form The Committee for the Defence of Chilean Health Workers (CDCHW). This includes doctors, nurses, health visitors and technicians.

The aims of the Committee include:

1. Obtaining accurate information about Health Workers illegally detained, imprisoned, or being persecuted at the present time.
2. Taking active steps to bring pressure on Chilean authorities to release such persons, or give an account of the charges on which they are being held.
3. Arranging for financial aid, employment and accommodation for persons in danger who wish to emigrate (this has proved highly effective in obtaining the release of numerous persons to date).

As a leading professional body in the world in medicine, we feel the BMA has an obligation to take effective steps to:

1. Write to the Chilean Colegio Medico to ascertain the fate of: Arturo Jiron - former Minister of Health, presumed to be under house arrest; Hugo Behn - former Director of the Department of Public Health, Professor of Biostatistics, Santiago; Patricia Barcelo Amado - Paediatrician of Arraran Hospital; Natacha Camion - General Practitioner of Cautin Province; Alvaro Yanez del Villar - Consultant Physician; Bruno Garcia - Psychiatrist of Valdivia Province.
2. Inform the Colegio Medico of the concern of the British Medical Association over reports of doctors participating in

carrying out torture.

3. Consider sending a delegation of observers to Chile to investigate the current situation.

4. Take active steps to facilitate the exodus of endangered Chilean doctors and other health personnel, by writing to the British Ambassador in Santiago with offers of employment for such persons.

It should be emphasised that similar activities by pressure groups in the USA and other countries have already been successful in securing release from prison and emigration of a large number of highly skilled medical personnel. The American Public Health Association, with 25,000 members, last month passed a resolution to send a delegate to Chile to investigate the current situation.

We would be pleased if you would kindly respond to this formal request stating the BMA's position with respect to these matters, and specifying what immediate action they are prepared to take.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Roland Littlewood,  
for CDCHW,  
Hackney Hospital,  
London E9.

# ZIONISM ON THE WARPATH

It seems clear that the precarious pseudo-peace in the Middle East brought about by Rocket Man Kissinger is likely to give way in the very near future to renewed hostilities.

Last weekend's partial Israeli mobilisation on the border with Syria was designed, at least in part, to test out Washington's reaction to a possible Israeli attack. But the principal motive behind the war scare was probably to prepare the Israeli population for a lightning strike against Syria.

If, as is possible, Syria refuses in the coming week to extend the UN troops' mandate on the Golan Heights, the smallest incident could spark off a full-scale war which will leave the Sadat-Faisal-Kissinger strategy in pieces.

The Zionist State has no alternative now but to seek to reverse the political defeat it suffered at the hands of the Arab regimes last October. To retain its status as US imperialism's blue-eyed boy it must decisively reassert its military domination of the region.

A further factor is the dramatic internal crisis of the Zion-

ist State, highlighted by militant workers' struggles against the Government's austerity measures and a very high rate of emigration. War is one way in which the internal disintegration of Zionism can be checked and a climate of chauvinist 'national unity' restored.

One unknown in the present situation is the attitude of the United States. Recent speeches by Kissinger and others, however, combined with the unprecedented flow of US arms to Israel, suggest that a hard-line policy is being considered as a result of the Arab regimes' refusal to lower oil prices. Such a modification of US policy would effectively indicate that US imperialism had given up its 'softly, softly' approach to the Arab regimes.

The decision of the recent Arab summit conference at Rabat to recognise the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians, and Yasser Arafat's historic appearance at the UN, have been received as victories by the Palestinian and Arab masses. In the West Bank area the struggle against the

Israeli occupation has intensified, and the hysterical and brutal response of the army has dispelled once and for all the myth of 'the liberal occupation'. But Israel is almost certain to receive US support in its refusal to negotiate with the PLO and accept the creation of a Palestinian-Arab state.

Socialists must begin now to campaign in the labour movement against any imperialist military intervention in the Arab world, against the attempts by Washington and Tel Aviv to reach a settlement at the expense of the Palestinians, and against the war moves of the Zionist State.

Without the least illusion in the Arab regimes, revolutionaries must be for the defeat of Zionism in any war that breaks out in the Middle East. Between the semi-colonial societies of the Arab world and the Zionist fortress of imperialism, there can be no neutrality.

Bob Slansky

## KURDISTAN: another Bangladesh?

DEMO 'Self-determination for the Kurds.'

—Called by Brunel University Students Union.  
Saturday, 30th November, 1974. 1.00 p.m. Speakers  
Corner to Iraqi and Soviet Embassies.

The regime in Iraq has claimed to be the staunchest enemy of imperialism and Zionism. It is a false claim.

Those who doubted this had some of their illusions removed when the Iraqi army stood passively by while the Hashemite monarch of Jordan butchered the Palestinians during the month of black September in 1970.

Nonetheless, illusions in the nature of the Iraqi regime continue to persist. The British Communist Party and its supporters neither mention the struggle waged by the Kurds against the regime nor the brutal repression which confronts all communists and revolutionaries opposed to the Ba'athist Government

### FRAGMENTED

The struggle of the Kurdish people against national oppression dates back to the post-World War One period, when the Kurdish people were fragmented and divided amongst the artificial states created in the area by British and French imperialism. Iraq was one such state, and the bulk of Kurds were to find themselves within its frontiers.

The struggle of the Kurds has been uneven over the decades, but it has nonetheless proved to be a constant thorn in the flesh of successive Iraqi governments. In March 1970, however, the Iraqi Government signed a pact with the Kurdish Democratic Party which granted the Kurds a form of limited autonomy.

This agreement gave the Iraqi Ba'athists a badly-needed breathing space to consolidate their regime, which lacked popular support. They started off by smashing the Iraqi Communist Party, and especially its revolutionary wing (Central Command), which was at the time waging an armed struggle in Southern Iraq. The Soviet Union aided this task by instructing their appendage within the Iraqi CP (the Central Committee wing) to capitulate to Ba'athism.

This helped the regime to stabilise itself and develop its repressive forces. This strengthened state apparatus has substituted for the social



Kurdish guerrillas of the Pesh Merga on

base which the Iraqi Ba'ath so conspicuously lacks.

### NEW WAR

Once the CP had been assimilated and its dissident wing smashed, the Iraqi butchers turned once again to 'solve the Kurdish problem'. In March 1973 a new war was launched which continues to this very day. At the same time the Iraqis, following the Zionist example of moving Jews into conquered Arab villages, are Arabising Kurdish areas.

This has led to the forced expulsion of Kurds on a massive scale from key cities (such as Kirkuk), and their replacement by Arab villagers from the south. During the present war over half a million Kurdish refugees have fled either to the liberated areas or over the Iranian border to escape the indiscriminate bombs dropped by Iraqi MIGs. The aim of the Ba'athists is to wipe out the Kurds as a nationality. In other words: genocide.

### STRAINS

The Ba'athist experiment in Iraq depends to a certain extent on their

ability to crush the Kurds *decisively and quickly*. The strains of the failure to do so can already be seen in:

1. Large-scale defections of soldiers and officers to the Kurds, coupled with the battle order of the Ba'athists to shoot in the back all those who 'retreat' in the face of the Kurds;
2. The summary execution of dozens of officers and soldiers on charges of organising 'communist cells' in the army;
3. The execution of officers who merely resign from the army.

British socialists must understand that the Kurds are not simply fighting for self-determination, but for the right to live. The wall of silence surrounding the Kurdish struggle is a result of both imperialist and bureaucratic pressures, but the Kurdish revolution is part and parcel of the Arab revolution. That is why the IMG will be participating in the demonstration called by the Brunel University Students Union on 30 November for 1.00 pm at Speakers' Corner.

Salah Jaafar

## Who's afraid of Vladimir Bukovsky?

Preparations for the National Union of Students Conference at Margate this weekend are acquiring the elements of a suspense story: the Case of the Missing Report.

A number of local students' unions were preparing to ask written questions on the NUS Executive's report on Soviet dissidents before the deadline for such questions, which was 5pm last Friday, 22 November. Interest had been intensified by the news that there was a minority report on the issue, opposing the Communist Party dominated 'Broad Left' majority of the Executive.

But Friday 22 November passed away without so much as a murmur, let alone

quite another.

The leadership of the Communist Party would like us to believe that the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and the subsequent purges and imprisonment of Party members and revolutionary socialists, were an aberration, an unfortunate and even deplorable exception to the general rule in Eastern Europe.

In reality, of course, it is not the repression in Czechoslovakia that has been the exception, but rather the Dubcekite liberalisation which preceded it.

The facts of political repression in the USSR can no longer be seriously challenged. It would be impossible for CP leader John Gollan to claim that the incarceration of Grigorenko and Bukovsky in mental hospitals was a humanitarian gesture towards madmen. Nor is it possible for the Western Communist Parties to put forward the old line that some hundreds of dissident intellectuals, many of whom proclaim their support for socialism, amount to a dire counter-revolutionary threat to the conquests of the October Revolution.

So instead they try to portray the repression in the Soviet Union as a marginal feature of life in that country, occasionally deploring the use of 'administrative measures' to deal with 'political problems'.

### BUREAUCRACY

For socialists in the West, however, it is not Grigorenko or Bukovsky or Moroz who present a 'political problem' in the Soviet Union, but the Kremlin bureaucracy itself. Nor is the Kremlin's terrorisation of the dissident intellectuals some 'administrative excess' but a central task for the bureaucracy, in its efforts to crush the aspirations of the working masses for a return to workers' democracy and soviet power.

It is *this* fact, that the power of the regimes throughout Eastern Europe rests on the *suppression* of workers' democracy that links the invasion of Czechoslovakia with the imprisonment of oppositionists in the Soviet Union. And for the British Communist Party to admit this would amount to a denunciation of fifty years of its own history, since the history of the CPGB since the rise of Stalin has been one long tale of subordinating the interests of the international workers' movement to the interests of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

The test for the NUS Executive majority at Margate this weekend will be quite clear cut: will they take vigorous measures in support of the international campaign to release both the Czech socialists Jiri Mueller and Jaroslav Sabata and the Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky? Will they attempt to wrench the campaign for democratic rights in the USSR out of the hands of the *Observer* and the Foreign Office and call for the release of imprisoned dissidents in the name of the *socialist* movement in this country?

Their reluctance to publicise their own report on Soviet dissidents suggests that the Executive has no such intention, and that a struggle must be launched on the conference floor to provide the National Union of Students with a socialist policy towards the suppression of democratic rights in Eastern Europe.

Oliver MacDonald



Vladimir Bukovsky, at present serving a 12 year prison sentence in the USSR for campaigning for democratic liberties. The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation has called for international action in March 1975 to demand Bukovsky's release. The Kremlin gave him a particularly severe sentence after he had effectively exposed the use of psychiatric hospitals as a means of terrorising the opposition. Bukovsky himself has spent six years in various mental hospitals and prisons, including the notorious Serbsky Institute, for circulating copies of Dijas' 'The New Class' in 1962.

a mimeographed report, from the Executive.

### EMBARRASSMENT

The Communist Party's embarrassment is understandable. For them, protesting against the repression of former leaders of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party like Jaroslav Sabata is one thing; but opposing the imprisonment of Soviet socialist oppositionists like General Protr Grigorenko, or Soviet civil rights leaders like Vladimir Bukovsky, or spokesmen for oppressed nationalities like the Ukrainian oppositionist Valentin Moroz, is

## THE STRUGGLE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION IN KURDISTAN

IMG Public Meeting, Saturday 30 November at 6.00pm  
in the Roebuck pub,  
Tottenham Court Road (Warren Street tube)

As the stock exchange crashes to below its 1935 value, many capitalists are losing their composure. Labour Chancellor Healey's budget, giving industry £1½ billion when it needs £3 billion immediately, reduced the *Investor's Chronicle* to black depression: 'Capitalism could die of neglect' is all they could say.

The press and TV report only 'spectacular' events like the Court Line crash and the financial turmoil of Ferranti and British Leyland. It is in the small print of the bosses' papers that the truth comes out. In the Companies Court, recently, Justice McGarry wound up 200 companies in a three-hour session — he even congratulated the Clerk for hurrying business at the rate of one firm every 45 seconds.

The ruling class have endless economic policies by which they would like to get the working class to take the burden of the crisis. But they don't have the political means for carrying through any policy because of the proven strength of working class resistance to incomes policy, and attacks on trade union organisation. Heath, speaking in Oxford before the election, rebuffed calls for 3 million unemployed saying such a policy would provoke a wave of factory occupations and would be political suicide for the Tories.

The ruling class of course, remain implacably opposed to nationalisation. If every firm facing financial ruin was nationalised, nearly one-third of British industry would be taken out of private hands. The biggest cabal of capitalists support Harold Lever's plan for direct state finance to industry. The state would provide the cash — but without strings. There would be no controls over how the money is used. That way profits will be guaranteed, but jobs left last on the list of priorities.

In the labour movement the fight for nationalisation of firms to avoid redundancy will mount as more firms crash, fold-up or try to cut the work-force. But for Benn and the Cabinet, the fight for nationalisation has nothing to do with defence of jobs against the bosses and the banks — it is all a matter of the 'viability' of each enterprise on the capitalist market.

It is Benn's hedging over workers facing redundancies that has re-awakened ideas about 'workers cooperatives'.



# WORKERS' CO-OPERATION WITH

FOR OVER TWO YEARS NOW, the question of 'worker-directors' and 'workers' cooperatives' has been discussed on the floors of trade union conferences. The TUC Conference this year voted for a policy of 50 per cent representation of workers and employers on Supervisory Boards in companies employing over 200. Schemes for worker cooperatives are meeting with support from the Labour Government.

For some employers, 'participation' promises a timid and pliant work-force in return for the flattery of sherry and cigars in the boardroom (dressed up, of course, with phrases like 'progressive and harmonious labour relations'). Equally, many militants reject 'participation' in principle as blatant class-collaboration. Even Ray Buckton (General Secretary of ASLEF) claims that for a trade union member to take on the job of a worker-director would be tantamount to '...coming out of the factory to do a job of exploiting his fellow-workers.'

At NVT, Meriden and IPD, Liverpool, where workers' cooperatives are at present being planned, the problems are more immediate. None of the workers aim to become businessmen. Neither are these schemes the brain-child of some conscience-stricken capitalist who wishes all rich men thought alike. It was the bankruptcy of these firms and massive redundancies that led to the co-op idea. At Meriden, the workers have occupied the factory for over a year. At IPD, two occupations have taken place in two years.

## JOBS

While at Meriden the projected work-force of 800 is only half the original 1750, there is no doubt that in both plants jobs will have been saved, at least for the present. Certainly too, the management structures of the co-ops give the workers more access to information and greater involvement in decision-making.

At Meriden top managers will be employed and paid salaries, but the 12-man supervisory board will include representatives from the eight unions in the plant — along with Government and local industry. At IPD, most of the management have stayed on and will have two representatives on the board and the workers three. The workers have asked the Government to appoint the General Manager.

But everywhere there are real dangers. When a single factory goes

American market. The co-op will also have to compensate the present owners for machinery and premises, and also for the Triumph trade name. The owners will also be market controller of the product for two years — for a rake-off of course. All in all, the workers have conceded what the previous boss could not impose on them through several militant strikes before the closure was announced.

## NATIONALISATION

Why didn't the workers demand nationalisation? The Labour Cabinet, Benn in particular, have been deeply involved in both schemes. In fact Benn supports them as examples of 'industrial democracy' in action. The

— by —  
**SAM BOYD**

bust, it's because of the logic of the capitalist market. There's simply no reason, in capitalist terms, why such a factory should continue in production. The only way jobs can be saved is either by the creation of new markets, by a massive increase in productivity allowing the factory to compete on existing markets, or through nationalisation and state-backed finance to cover losses.

In the cases of Meriden and IPD, it's a combination of all three. This means the workers, particularly at Meriden, will pay a high price for their co-op.

Production at Meriden will be about 24,000 bikes a year — nearly the old production figures — but with half the original work-force. This amounts to an increase in productivity of about 80%. It must be one of the most swingeing productivity deals in history. The workers have also agreed to end 'restrictive practices', an end to the piece-work system, and have paid back their redundancy money!

## COMPENSATE

Apart from this, while in occupation the workers have carried out unpaid modifications to the major product, the Triumph Bonneville 750 'twir', to allow sales on the



For Tony Benn, the question of workers' democracy and nationalisation is simply one of preserving sectors of the economy under capitalism.

answer lies in Labour's conception of nationalisation. For Labour, the question of nationalising companies or industries cannot be decided by how best to preserve jobs, but how best to preserve a sector of the existing economy.

For shipbuilding and aircraft that decision isn't difficult, since these are huge concerns and many other industries are all tied up with them. But in capitalist terms, to nationalise small, single factories like Meriden



Jimmy Reid, speaking to the workers at John Brown's shipyards, on the Clyde in 1971. This struggle, although doomed to failure, reawakened interest in the question of self-management and co-operatives.

and IPD would be 'economic madness'. Their disappearance would have little impact on other firms and industries.

At IPD, the state assessor originally turned down a loan and after a feasibility study even pronounced the co-op scheme 'not viable'. Later, under pressure, Benn agreed to a £3.9 million loan. The workers at Meriden have occupied over a year and still their co-op is not off the ground. For Benn, Jack Jones and the other 'lefts' who eventually backed the schemes, the issue was how 'viable' these co-ops would be on the market, not whether the struggles could become part of a strategy against redundancy for the whole workers movement.

## KNUCKLED UNDER

From the start, the local leaders involved in these struggles have observed the rules of the capitalist market and the law, or have eventually knuckled under to it. Bill Lapworth, T&GWU Divisional Organiser and originator of the co-op idea at Meriden, argued against confrontation, in order to persuade the Government that £5 million would be in good hands. The co-op was announced in the *Financial Times*. Stan Ely, Deputy Convenor at IPD, said: 'Our image is not to be a group of militant shop stewards who are going to squander £3.9 million'. Les Huckfield, MP for Nuneaton and closely involved in Meriden from the start, is more blatant in recommending that the workers adopt the values of their old boss: 'If the so-called professionals from private industry can't make a success of it, then what is the harm of letting the workers have a go?'

## INTENSE PRESSURE

Clearly, if these cooperatives get off the ground, the workers will eventually be faced with intense pressures to take steps that would be fought to the death by the workers in an ordinary plant. The only way such problems can be avoided is to take the campaign into the

trade union movement and mobilise against capitalist pressure for further concessions.

At IPD, such future problems are not unforeseen. There, they are determined not to compromise the workers' interests in the decisions they have to take. They are determined to call on wider trade union support if they find suppliers and customers resist the wishes and policies of the co-op. If this occurs, the germs of real workers' control will be underway at IPD and some pitfalls in the present schemes can be avoided.

But at Meriden, a new threat has arisen to the co-op scheme. The workers at another NVT factory at Small Heath, alarmed that Benn's grant and the concessions on productivity exacted from the Meriden workers are a threat to their own jobs, barracked Benn at a mass meeting with the demand for a comprehensive nationalisation of the whole motorbike industry.

The old management of NVT created splits between the workers of both factories by their schemes to guarantee jobs in one factory and not the other. It was in 1970, long before NVT decided to fry and close Meriden, that BSA-Triumph sacked 3,000 workers at Small Heath to concentrate production at Meriden.

## TRAGIC

The rift between the workers at the two factories also reflects the sectional interests of the workers at the Meriden factory in their determination to 'go it alone' with the co-op scheme. At present they have no wish to mount a joint fight with all workers in the motorbike industry to defend jobs. To put the narrow interests of jobs in one factory of the group before the fight for a common job policy by all the NVT workers could have tragic consequences.

Militants should not be opposed in principle to rationalisation or mergers of small factories into a



... after their occupation in  
... of workers' control,

# CO-OPS — WHICH WHOM?

... unified larger group. They  
... no interests in maintaining  
... and old-fashioned factories  
... existence long after they have  
... ved their purpose on the capit-  
... t market, let alone are capable  
... playing any role in a planned  
... ialist economy of the future.



... Huckfield, Labour MP for Nun-  
... on, who quite blatantly told  
... rkers that they would have to  
... pt the methods of their bosses.

Even if unity of the workers  
... won in the industry around  
... demand for nationalisation,  
... workers should insist that any  
... structuring of the factories in  
... group should not jeopardise  
... s. Demands for work-sharing  
... a shorter working week, as  
... l as constant access by the  
... rkers to all plans for reorganisa-  
... on, should be put to the fore.  
... e experience of the Meriden  
... rkers in their campaign for a  
... op could be invaluable in ensur-  
... g that any nationalisation  
... me includes real elements of  
... rkers control in the interests of  
... workers, not the capitalist  
... rket.

Access to discussion and infor-  
... ation at top management level  
... d give workers important

weapons. The secrecy of business  
... affairs is something all employers  
... use against workers. This is obvious  
... in strike situations where bosses  
... use veiled threats of redundancy  
... and collapse to beat workers down  
... and back to work.

## INVESTMENT

But even outside these situations,  
... there is a vast area of decision mak-  
... ing affecting their future which work-  
... ers could exploit to prepare a suc-  
... cessful response to all attacks from  
... the employers. Such decisions are  
... those on investment, on changes in  
... technology, location of factories,  
... take-overs and manpower planning.  
... The fight for all information on  
... matters affecting workers and for  
... the right to veto unacceptable man-  
... agement decisions is at the centre  
... of this.

Whether workers fight against  
... the redundancies arising from the  
... operation of the capitalist market  
... by creating co-ops financed by the  
... Government, or by control over the  
... decisions of state bureaucrats in  
... nationalised industries, workers'  
... democracy — involving report-backs  
... to the shop floor, mass meetings  
... with instant right of re-call and  
... veto of management decisions by  
... mass meetings of workers — is vital.

## RALLYING POINT

Even more important, however,  
... is the policy which the workers  
... and their representatives pursue.  
... Are they fighting simply to guar-  
... antee jobs in this or that individual  
... concern, as at Meriden (in which  
... case the law of the market will  
... almost inevitably overtake them  
... so long as capitalism survives) or  
... do they use their struggle, as did  
... the Lip workers, as a rallying point  
... for a fight by the workers' move-  
... ment as a whole to impose the  
... only real long-term solution: the  
... planning of the whole economy  
... under the direction of the working  
... class?

# 'Islands' of socialism & how they flopped

'You will say to those now in possession of riches, honours,  
powers and privileges: "Retain these in perfect security....Our  
whole conduct and proceedings shall be a pledge to you that  
we will never attempt to dispossess you from any part of them  
....The cause of contest between us will henceforth cease...'  
— Robert Owen

Most people now see 'the Co-op'  
as the 'divi-shop' round the corner,  
and a grouping in the Labour Party.  
But now, as workers are resisting the  
bosses' attempts to close factory after  
factory, one popular way of fighting  
closures is to suggest the formation  
of a workers' co-operative to run the  
factory.

launch an Owenite community. De-  
spite its prestigious sponsors — its  
chairman was the Duke of Kent,  
and its other members included the  
Duke of Sussex, Sir Robert Peel  
(later founder of the English police  
and Tory Prime Minister), and the  
famous economist David Ricardo  
— it raised only £8,000 and the



Robert Owen's model factory at New Lanark, with which he attempted  
to show other bosses that they could give good conditions to the workers  
and still make a handsome profit!

This has been seen at IPD Kirkby  
in Liverpool, NVT-Meriden, the  
Scottish Daily News, Propytex-Hart-  
lepool, BSC-Shelton Heath, and BSC-  
East Moors Cardiff.

The ideas behind the new schemes  
— backed by Tony Benn and the  
Institute of Workers Control — may  
be just as dangerous in the long run  
as those of the 19th century advoca-  
te of co-operatives, Robert Owen,  
who thought that the working class  
should try to persuade the capitalists  
to change society by force of argu-  
ment and 'moral example'.

Owen argued that workers should  
form cooperative communities produ-  
cing all kinds of goods — a utopian  
collective economy inside the wider  
capitalist economy. But all attempts  
to do this failed (indeed most didn't  
even get off the ground) for the same  
reasons that today's factory-based  
co-ops face problems—the hostility  
of the capitalists to the idea.

Owen's crusade to build islands  
of 'socialism' found little serious  
backing beyond various groups of  
intellectuals and skilled workers. In  
1819, a Commission was set up to

scheme had to be shelved.

Efforts to raise cash through co-  
op savings schemes for workers also  
failed. Then the idea of co-op shops  
was hit on. The original idea was that  
the profits would be saved to found  
communities and co-op factories —  
unlike the CWS today, where a por-  
tion of the profits are distributed in  
dividends and the rest ploughed back.  
The Owenite co-op shops at first did  
quite well: by 1830, there were 500  
societies with 20,000 members.

Owen then insisted the co-ops  
join together with various early trade  
unions whose unemployed members  
would produce goods to be sold in  
'bazaars' where the working class  
could exchange and barter on the  
cheap. (He called this the 'Grand  
National Moral Union of the Useful  
and Productive Classes'). This scheme  
collapsed through lack of finance and  
most of the co-op shops then simply  
went out of business.

In all Owen managed to found  
only eight co-op communities, and  
eventually all his schemes foundered  
under pressure from the realities of  
the capitalist market — either in rais-

ing funds, or because of the difficulty  
of maintaining a co-op without re-  
sorting to the very methods the co-op  
tries to escape: increasing work-speed  
and productivity, the pressure to eco-  
nomise and threaten jobs, and the  
problems of finding reliable markets.  
**FAILURE**

After the collapse of 'Owenism'  
most of the co-op societies moved,  
in the direction of the co-op (CWS)  
as we know it. The idea that workers  
should save to found co-op factories  
was abandoned and replaced by the  
idea of paying out the 'divi' to the  
individual worker.

The CWS of today, with its notori-  
ous attacks on working conditions  
in its refrigerator factories in New  
Zealand and its tea plantations in  
India and Sri Lanka, has no idealist  
pretensions, whatever its supporters  
might say.

The nearest thing to Owen's  
ideas today can be found in the Scott  
Bader chemicals firm, and the Indus-  
trial Common Ownership Movement  
set up under the leadership of Ernest  
Bader. Bader formed his co-op firm  
in 1951 and the group now includes  
10 member firms — including the  
Fakenham leather goods factory,  
which was occupied by women work-  
ers two years ago in their fight against  
closures. Bader's ideas are similar to  
Owen's: '...the division between capi-  
tal and labour encourages selfishness  
and greed and until the two are uni-  
ted in a common purpose there will  
be no peace.' The co-ops in his group  
are 'meant to develop as a model of  
a new social order demonstrating a  
new industrial way of life.'

All the workers have shares in the  
concerns and they are run with work-  
er-participation in management.  
But there is no real independent orga-  
nisation of workers in the concern.  
No wonder that Scott Bader tops the  
chemical industry for return on capi-  
tal and sales per employee.

## DIFFICULTIES

The Bader group is also running  
into difficulties. In the present eco-  
nomic crisis, cuts in salary are being  
discussed. Their 'ideal' of self-financ-  
ing is breaking down. About 78 per  
cent of the surplus is taken up with  
tax and capital needed for ploughing  
back. The concern is now running a  
huge overdraft.

If ever the proof of the impos-  
sibility of applying the co-op idea  
were needed, the Bader group is it.  
To meet the economic crisis of capi-  
talism head-on, the workers' move-  
ment must launch an offensive ag-  
ainst all the aspects of the capitalist  
economy — for nationalisation of key  
industries, the banks and finance  
houses under workers' control.

Isolated schemes of workers'  
management and 'participation'  
cannot stop the attacks on workers'  
living standards that the crisis forces  
on every economic concern operat-  
ing on a capitalist basis — whether  
run by the workers or by the capi-  
talists.

Triumph workers refused to allow these motorbikes—worth over  
£1 million— out of the factory until their jobs were guaranteed



# PUBLIC SECTOR

## HOW CAN WORKERS PREPARE

### TO FIGHT FOR WAGE CLAIMS?

FALLING APART



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

The social services have taken another hammering in Healey's Budget. Healey stated that public spending would be limited to a real yearly increase of 2% per cent after allowing for inflation. Since public spending has recently been rising at an annual rate of 7 per cent, this means in effect a drastic cut back.

The great reformist dream of the Welfare State is being ground into the dust. Ironically, it is the Labour leaders—the architects of the Welfare State—who are not only presiding over its demise, but are wielding the knife themselves in their frantic efforts to save capitalism.

The public sector is the fastest growing sector of the economy. But the nature of the work in the public sector is labour-intensive, which gives little scope for increases in productivity.

As something like 75 per cent of the expenditure of local authorities goes on wages, this has a crippling effect on their budgets. Rates—the largest source of income—cannot be increased sufficiently to keep pace with inflation, and so the situation goes from bad to worse.

At the national level the various social services are thrown into competition with each other for finance, while the ailing private sector presses its claims on the

Labour Government in order to keep afloat. In this battle it is the capitalists who are coming out on top. Healey's Budget gave them a subsidy of £1.5 billion—just for the next six months. In the next year the amount will be doubled.

The effects of this are there for all to see. Local authorities are carrying out cuts in their educational programmes, local services are deteriorating, building programmes are grinding to a halt, and worsening services are costing more and more. The National Health Service—the pride and joy of social democracy—is under-financed, under-equipped and understaffed; indeed, it is well on the road to collapse.

The 1945 Labour Government kept capitalism intact by selling to the working class the idea that in the 'mixed' economy wages and conditions could be improved, and a Welfare State would be constructed. The break-up of the Welfare State is therefore not just a financial crisis affecting a number of institutions, but represents the disintegration of the basis on which Labour's class-collaborationist policies were established.

As TIM HALL explains, the effects of this crisis give a new dimension and importance to the forthcoming wage struggles in the public sector.

This winter some of the most pressing problems over wages will be faced by workers in the public sector—particularly those employed by local authorities.

Claims are in from busmen, dustmen and other local authority manual workers, hospital ancillary workers, water workers, gas workers and electricity workers. These groups, although they keep 'essential services' ticking over for capitalism, suffer time and again from low pay and the refusal of their union leaders to mount a real offensive against the state employers.

But lack of organisation and the betrayals of the union officials will be the least of these workers' worries this winter. The biggest bugbear of all for local authority workers is that the local authorities just haven't got the money to pay. When even Labour-controlled councils say they just can't meet the workers' demands, they will be telling the strict truth.

#### CAPITALIST GAME

But this is only a problem because the councils insist on following the rules of the capitalist game.

The total public sector borrowing requirement is running at £683 million at present. It will of course cost millions more to pay the interest on this debt to the banks. The present housing crisis would not exist but for the huge proportion of housing costs which go in interest payments to financiers for initial loans. About 80

per cent of payments on housing go on interest rates.

For the Labour Government however, such considerations are irrelevant. Their Budget has opted to save private firms at the expense of the social services.

In the last few months the Labour leaders have trotted out two lines about the crisis and the social contract. The first is that Labour will meet the crisis with a 'fundamental shift in the balance of wealth and power'. The second is that the social contract 'is about far more than wages'. Supposedly it's also about massive social reforms in health, education, housing, social services, and local authority spending.

The Budget shows that this is all lies. It also sends a clear message to the public sector workers whose claims are being negotiated now—they can expect no aid from Labour and the social contract.

Nor can they expect much help from their own unions leaders, who sold them out under Phase 2 and Phase 3. The point has already been driven home in Scotland, where the regional officer of the General and Municipal Workers' Union, David Tomlinson, last week accused striking sewerage workers of being 'financed by left-wing extremists'. He demanded that they return to work immediately.

There is obviously a crying need here for a strategy for independent working class action. This must con-

sist not simply of preparing a militant and united struggle of all public sector workers, but should be based on a strategy for the whole working class to work out and implement a solution to the crisis of the welfare state.

The Labour Party has always argued against the need for a real anti-capitalist programme by pointing proudly to the institutions of the welfare state and saying: 'There, the system can work perfectly well with public and private enterprise alongside each other'. This looks pretty sick now.

In the coming wages struggles, these workers cannot afford to take any responsibility for the crisis capitalism has forced onto the public sector. The alternative is to project a workers' solution to the crisis around which a movement can be built for the future.

#### ENQUIRY

Apart from the immediate demand for the claims to be met in full (including all the demands on threshold extension and consolidation, equal pay, and the national minimum wage), workers should organise their own enquiry into the financing and organisation of their area of the public sector. Such 'workers' reports' can be the basis of a campaign inside the rest of the labour movement for support for all public sector workers.

Action committees that spring up in the course of the struggles should unite not only all groups of

workers with claims in the public sector, but also representatives from other unions immediately affected by the public sector.

Such wider forums can begin to spell out a strategy for winning more fundamental demands than simply those of the public sector wage claims—such as those for a sliding scale of state expenditure in workers' interests, the nationalisation of the building trade, and a campaign for useful public works to be undertaken immediately in the local areas.

#### ANCILLARY WORKERS

At present, it is the hospital ancillary workers who are preparing the fight for their claim. Already demands for an improved claim have come from several areas.

It is very doubtful that the unions involved will even stick out for the terms of the official claim—which even if met in full would mark a cut in living standards. From London, Portsmouth, Manchester, Aberdeen, and Dundee the cry has now gone



out to reject the terms of the claim, and begin the struggle to deal a crushing blow to the social contract.

This cry should be taken up throughout the public sector and into the workers' movement as a whole.

## WHAT'S ON

**IMG GAY GROUP:** Contact J. Mills, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds.

**'BRITISH LEYLAND' — An Economic Report,** pamphlet on the background to the present crisis inside BLMC. 10p per copy, send cash with order to: 72, Cambridge Road, King's Heath, Birmingham.

**'NATIONALISATION or Expropriation'** second edition of pamphlet produced in 1973 by the Ligue Communiste, French section of the Fourth International. 10p per copy, send cash with order to: 72 Cambridge Road, King's Heath, Birmingham.

**SHEFFIELD RED CIRCLES:** Every Wednesday at 7.30pm in the Lion Hotel (corner of The Wicker and Nursery Street).

**'SEXISM, SEXUALITY and Class Struggle' — new pamphlet** including interview with French women bank workers, produced by Bristol IMG for Red Weekly Fund Drive. Single copies 15p inc p&p, or 10 copies for £1 post free. Order from: Jo Ray, 4 Badminton Road, Bristol 2; or K-K Corp., 20 Villa Road, London SE24.

**FOR SALE** in aid of Red Weekly Fund Drive: poetry book 'Last Summer's Diary' by Robert B Findley. Send 20p for book and postage (with address to Bob, Keynes Tower, Flat 1, University of Essex, Colchester.

**CADRE SCHOOL** for IMG members working in the NHS, London, 7-8 December. Applications to J. Knight 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1., not later than Wednesday 27 November.

**COMRADES** (3 or more) seek cheap self-contained flat/house. South central London preferred. Contact Vel, 837 6954 (day).

**COULD ANYBODY** who has been blacklisted by employers (i.e. been prevented from getting other employment after leaving a job) please contact Box RW/78; hoping to compile a dossier to expose this; for a National Council for Civil Liberties campaign; all communications will be treated with necessary confidentiality.

#### SOCIALIST WOMAN

New issue now out, with articles on the Charter campaign, the NUS women's campaign, the socialism and women conference, women and fascism.

Single copies 10p (10 or more, 9p each including postage—or 8p if picked up direct) from:

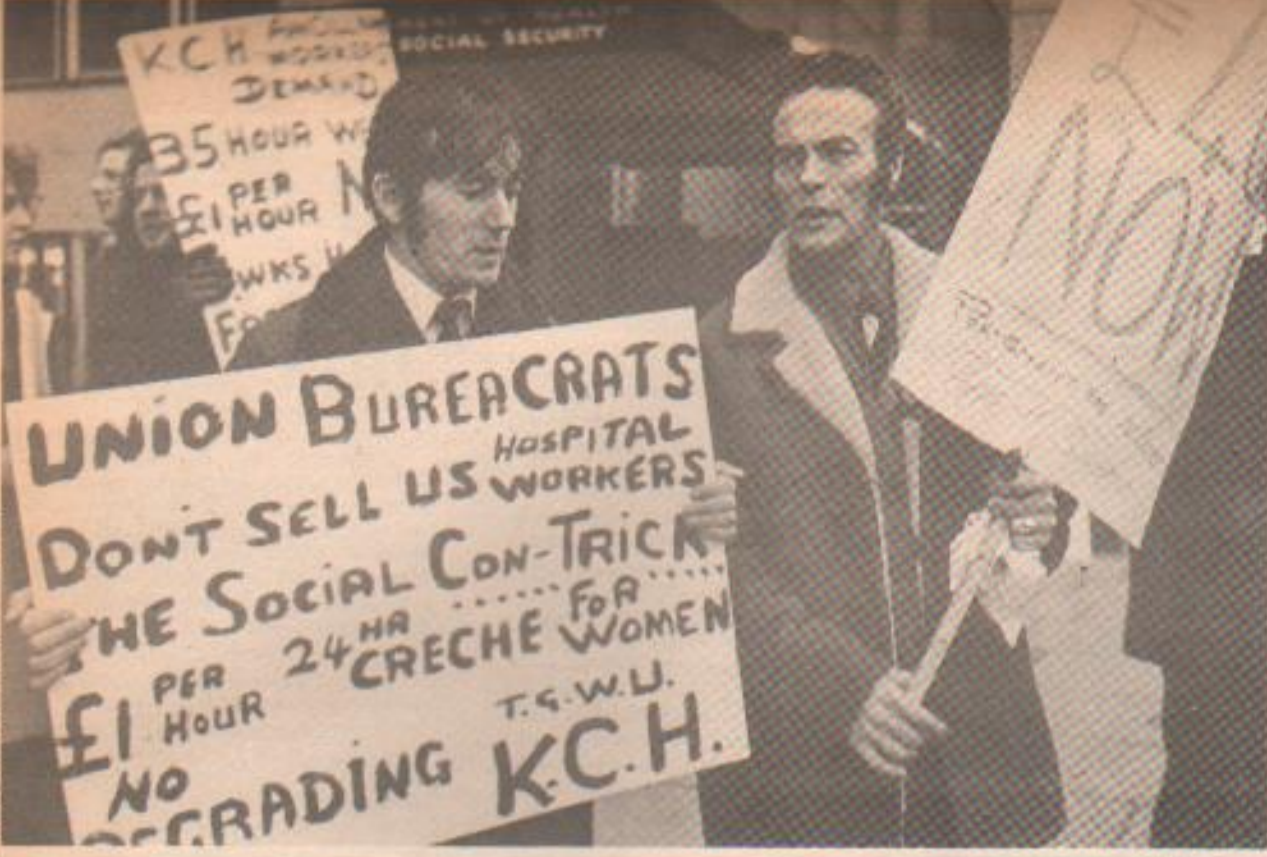
RED BOOKS, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)



Photo: PETER HARRAP (Report)



# WE AIM TO SHOW THAT THE WAGE-CLAIM IS PART AND PARCEL OF DEFENDING THE HEALTH SERVICE

After the long-drawn struggle over the nurses' pay claim the crisis-wracked National Health Service is now faced with a pay claim from the ancillary workers. In early 1973 ancillary workers fought a long-drawn out struggle against the Tory Government and its Phase 2 policies. Unsupported by the rest of the unions, lacking any leadership from their own unions, these workers were eventually driven back to work. A number of ancillary workers' union branches are now demanding a higher claim than that drawn up by their leaders. The Portsmouth NUPE branch has called for a £40 basic; 24-hour nurseries; and equal pay for women workers now. They are also demanding that the membership through elected delegates must determine the claim. RON PEARSON (right above), a leading NUPE shop steward, told *Red Weekly* how he sees the fight for the claim, and how it is tied up with the fight for an improved health service.

**How should we respond to the offer?**  
NUPE has asked for everyone to reject it. They've rejected it in toto. Now this is the first time that this particular union, or any union in the public sector that I know, has turned down an offer and said they will go for more. The only thing is that they are going for the original claim, the £30, threshold, etc. Now the reason we are going for the £40 and the nil-norm threshold, is that up to now our biggest problem has just been keeping up with inflation. In that

sense the Tory threshold has given us more, about £4, than the biggest claim we have won, which is about £2.50. The only thing is that now we must have it built in to overtime, when you consider that in this hospital 10 hours overtime a person is nothing. The £40 and the nil-norm threshold have to be taken together, because it's a safeguard against the cash increase being cut by inflation. It's a fact that if we had no threshold over the next year, to negotiate the present claim would be to negotiate a 25% wage cut.

**The EC is saying that we now have to fight for the original claim. What do you say to that?**  
When the original claim was decided for £30 plus threshold etc., it was 18 months ago, and certain people thought then that this was the ultimate. Even the left or the militants fought then for £35. and didn't envisage what was on the cards over the next months. But what the left was saying was shown to be true, that with inflation like it is, £30 is nothing now. We've got

to reply to the offer by updating the claim. What about the other aspect of the claim, equal pay for women. The women in the health service have been doing equal work to men. The male and female nurses do the same job, and though there are no women porters the domestics are the equivalent. Equal pay has been demanded over the last five years or so. Ninety per cent of the union in the health service are women. If they get equal pay and equal status they are going to get involved in the union. If we are fighting for £5 how can we say to women 'stand out and support us' if they are saying to themselves 'well they'll get £5 but we're only going to get 30 bob'. What's the importance of winning nursery facilities?

Well it's quite a simple thing. They set up a course for mature students here, for women with kids and family commitments, which I estimate cost them about £180,000. They did it as a source of cheap labour to help overcome the staffing shortage. When the women finish that course they find out they can't do what they were doing on their training. They can't have six weeks holiday with the kids. They can't start at nine in the morning when the kids go to school. If they are put on a shift they can't take up the jobs at all because they won't get the flexibility of hours. So if we look at understaffing, the first reason for it is under-pay. But a second reason is that there are just no facilities for women, and women with kids in particular, to come to work. Even in an old place like this it wouldn't take much to provide a 24 hour nursery, with beds, the lot. Let's turn the private wing into a creche - that's the best thing. You mention the private wing. With Barbara Castle making moves on private patients, and the consultants threatening retaliation, how do we fit that into the pay claim and defending the NHS?

First on the private patients. As far as I'm concerned it's cancerous anyway. But if the consultants in this area start to threaten NHS patients with a work to rule, we've already told management that we will start blacking private patients yet again. Barbara Castle can say what she likes, but she's talking about only one out of every six private beds coming back into the NHS. We're talking about all six coming back into the NHS. It's been talked about for long enough. So we've got to ban all private patients as quickly as possible. Can you say how the health workers who lack the economic power of groups like the miners, can win over

other sections of workers to act on their behalf? If the health workers in all unions were united and organised together we could have a lot more muscle, even though we don't have a finished product like the Ford workers do. But the important thing is that we educate our shop stewards so that they don't know only about this or that point in the wage structure, but see it as part of the whole defence of the NHS. Whenever a Government is in trouble, the first thing they do is go to the public sector and make cuts. We sit back now and see the cuts taking place, and we say that we're not going to be scapegoats for the Government and the capitalists. We are going to stand up and fight the cuts. It's by saying this to other workers that we aim to show that the wage claim is part and parcel of defending the NHS. Underpay causes understaffing and a collapse of the health service. It also undermines the health of the hospital staff themselves. In our hospital sickness among the staff has gone up from 5% to 35% because of all the overtime we have to put in. With decent wages, these problems can be overcome. And if we get hammered on the wage claims, we will also get hammered in fighting against the cuts in the building programme. A bad health service is a wage cut for all workers. Imagine paying 30 bob a head for everyone in the family to get medicine. A family of five paying £7.50 a week for health - that's a wage cut. How should militants be organising now to fight the claim?

There's got to be some kind of rank and file move on the claim. There's got to be action starting on this claim now. And it doesn't matter what union you're in, the rank and file have got to get organised. What do you think about setting up Action Committees in each area of the country, to cut across union divisions and organise the struggle?

This is a must. If the workers in the NHS don't stand up and fight now for a better NHS, then it'll all be back to private practice. We've got to call for Action Committees so as to make for full rank and file participation. And we've got to go outside the NHS to draw in outside bodies. How about organising all workers in the public sector?

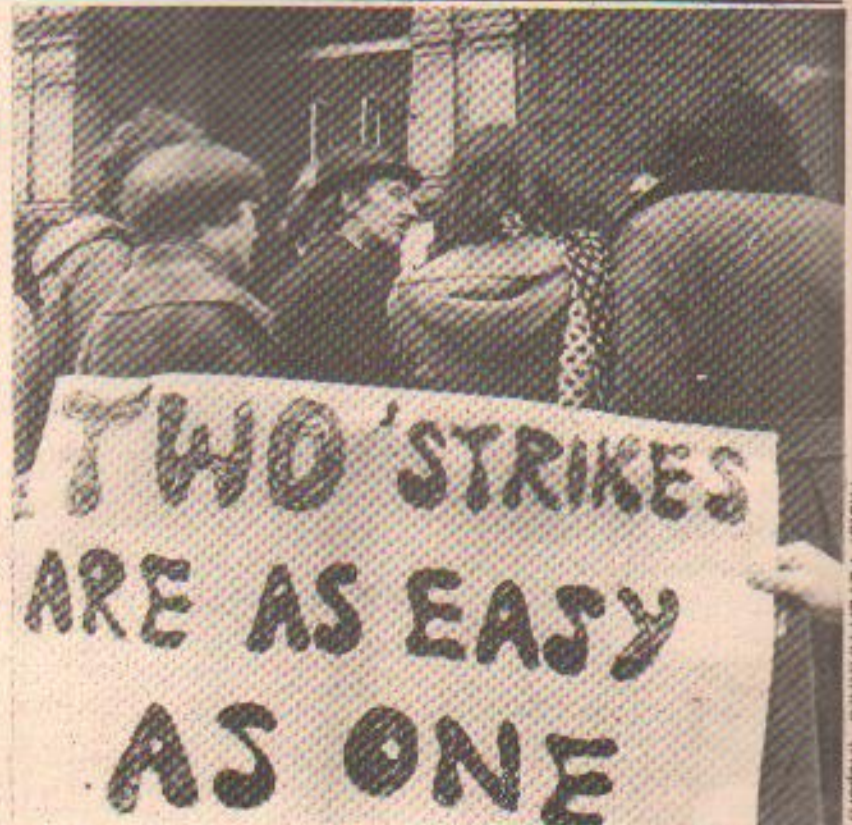
Yes, it's not just a matter of them supporting us, we've got to support each other. It's all the public sector workers together. We've got to be organised so as to work together. If we don't we're just going to get smashed.

# NUJ retreat heralds rout?

'I don't underestimate the difficulty of reimposing sanctions now that we have lifted them,' Ken Morgan, general secretary of the National Union of Journalists, admitted to journalists from local papers who had come to picket the NUI's resumed negotiations with the Newspaper Society proprietors on Monday. It was the offer of 'more pay talks' and the reinstatement of over 60 journalists sacked by the *Kentish Times* and *Slough Evening Mail* which persuaded the NUI's negotiating committee to call 1,000 London suburban journalists back to work and put an end to the nationally-imposed sanctions. Yet it was the effectiveness of these sanctions - including a refusal to handle the work of non-NUI contributors - which inspired the *Kentish Times* sackings in the first place. Now that NUI chapels have succeeded - for the first time in many years - in really pressurising their affluent managements, they are justifiably afraid

that this new retreat by their negotiators could rapidly turn into a rout. Year after year, NUI annual conferences have vigorously censured the executive for selling out to the Newspaper Society press barons. Junior journalists - who often head news desks although they are meant to be under training - still begin at an incredible £14 a week. Even the most experienced provincial journalists earn little more than £40, although their employers are notching up millions. Last week the London action committee took a hint from previous experience when they moved into the action room at the NUI offices, throwing out the national officials and taking co-ordination of the strike action into their own hands. They completely stopped 26 of London's hundred or so papers (in their various editions), and editorially gutted another dozen. If the strike action had

continued, militants fully expected to bring at least half of the papers to a total standstill. But the crunch came as a result of secret deals made last Friday, and supported by a 7 to 1 vote by the negotiators. Unfortunately the action committee was not strong enough to hold out against the back-to-work call. If the anticipated stab in the back materialises, demoralisation will almost certainly follow. The Newspaper Society journalists are weary of being thrown against a brick wall and instructed to leave off just as the bricks begin to crumble. There is a very real need for a socialist grouping within the union which can wage a consistent and independent fight for the ideas necessary to take the struggle forward. Unfortunately, Journalists Charter, dominated by the International Socialists, has so far failed to take on this task. Dick Brinsley



Morgan (centre) under fire from militant journalists on Monday for calling off sanctions simply to resume talks with the bosses.

Photo: PETER HARRAP (Report)

Photo: PETER HARRAP (Report)

# The Communist Party & the Working Women's Charter

We have received the following letter from an IMG militant active in the London Working Women's Charter Campaign. We print it in full in the belief that it can begin a useful debate, and invite responses from other activists in the Campaign — both those who agree and those who disagree with the remarks below.

In a recent article in the *Morning Star* (13 November) entitled 'Root the Charter in the unions', the Communist Party made a very revealing attempt to combine support for the Working Women's Charter with rejection of the Charter campaign.

According to the article, the disorganisation from which the recent London delegate conference of the Campaign suffered, vindicates the CP view that the Charter should, from the beginning, have been raised entirely through 'the existing structures of the unions...performing the function of a militant pressure group for the demands of women within the movement' (emphasis added).

Unfortunately, the leaders of the CP are rather slower to grasp reality than some of their women members. Because the CP equates 'the women's movement' with women militants in the trade unions, they ignore the fact that many of the women fighting for the sort of demands in the Charter are not primarily organised in this fight by a trade union, but by the women's liberation movement. This, and not 'inadequate' ad-hoc structures (as the article suggests) is mainly what explains the high proportion of white collar women at the London Charter Conference (it should be noted that this was equally true of the meeting organised by the London Trades Council in March which launched the Charter).

What is so important about recent developments is that for the first time women militants in the trade unions and in the women's liberation movement are coming together for a united fight against aspects of their oppression.

But this development is evidently distasteful to the CP. They would like to squeeze the 'women's movement' into the official channels of the trade unions — primarily at the level of the district bureaucracies, where they are fairly confident they can control it. It was an embarrassment to the CP that during the equal pay strike of the SEI women in Manchester the Charter campaign started to call up the strength of the trade union movement in support of the strike (with no sign of it being restricted by its 'inadequate' structure). Several hundred people from different unions, and from outside the unions, were mobilised to one rally which raised over £100 for the strikers.

What did the CP do to put its fist where its mouth is on the issue of equal pay for women? Did it call for a levy of AUEW members to finance the strikers? Or organise sympathy strikes, blacking, mass picketing to stop male blacklegging? No: the CP-controlled district committee of the AUEW sold the women out with



The SEI women strikers — sold out by the CP-controlled district committee of the AUEW with as little fuss as possible

as little fuss as possible, for fear of disrupting their cosy relationship with Scanlon and Co. So much for 'militant pressure group' politics. This incident alone has done much to convince women that 'pressure' only means anything when they take the struggle into their own control, and fight for the widest possible support.

It was because of the need to organise themselves in this way that a significant majority of the women at the London Trades Council meeting in March voted against the motion put by Mary Davis (co-author of the *Morning Star* article) which would have handed the task of organising the campaign to the LTC on a basis of 'district committees and trades councils'. (Apart from the fact that the LTC was shortly to disappear due to TUC reorganisation. The CP now wishes to substitute for it the south-east regional council of the TUC).

## ALTERNATIVE

What the *Morning Star* 'forgets' to mention is that when their motion fell the meeting was bureaucratically manoeuvred to prevent voting on an alternative resolution. That resolution proposed an organisational form that would draw on all bodies and individuals prepared to be actively involved in a campaign based on the Charter. It was in

order to prepare for a rapid move to a representative delegate meeting (which the LTC meeting was not) that a temporary ad-hoc committee was proposed. This resolution was clearly aimed to 'root the campaign firmly in the unions' (as well as all other organisations of the working class). But it proposed a way of actually getting on with that job, rather than passing the buck to others in the hope that they might do something.

Certainly, we have only made a beginning in getting bodies of the trade union movement to take up the campaign, and only a few women militants on the shop-floor yet know about it. But those who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

The local conferences being organised jointly in many areas by the Charter Campaign and the trades councils represent a big step forward both in raising the issues taken up in the Charter within the labour movement, and in creating the basis of support for struggles of women on these issues.

Mary Davis and Linda Smith do end their article by asking: 'Will the South East regional council pioneer the way?' But we ask: 'Will the CP fight for all trade union bodies to support the Charter Campaign, which is already pioneering the way?' — FIONA FREDENBURGH, London.

## 'A tale of two sell-outs'

What is it like to be sold out? After six weeks on strike I think I am qualified to answer this question.

I work for Thom's Consumer Electronics (Bradford) — the largest colour TV factory in Europe — repairing TV's before they leave the factory.

After Phase 3 our union negotiators met management to discuss a claim for a 35 hour week and £7 across the board increase. Well, they had discussions and management turned us down flat. At this point a mass meeting was held, and the work-force decided on a go-slow. This had the required effect of making management talk to us.

Enter the AUEW district secretary to help negotiate. However management did not really want to talk, and so at the mass meeting held on Friday 20 September the decision was taken to give the company ten days notice of industrial action.

To shorten a long story, but we came and the management laid-off most of the workforce not on strike. For six weeks our only income was from tax rebates (strike pay had been delayed by the APEX strike at AUEW headquarters).

Yet the strike was solid — at mass meeting after mass meeting there were overwhelming votes (2000 to 12) to stay out.

Then came the sickening sell-out — there are no other words for it. After six weeks management offered £5 across the board. Our negotiators accepted, and recommended to the shop stewards committee that they accept. Subsequently the shop stewards committee recommended to the mass meeting that we should accept.

The excuses given were the classical ones: management couldn't afford our full claim; the strike was in danger of collapsing (less than a week after a solid vote to stay out); anyway, it was only an interim settlement.

The mass meeting was virtually railroaded into acceptance. Nobody from the floor had a chance to put up serious resistance by speaking to the meeting.

All the questions were answered by the AUEW district secretary, who is after all the most experienced at sell-outs, sorry, 'negotiations'. All questions about the 35 hours demand were shouted down — by shop stewards, among others.

This, of course, had the effect of isolating the best union members. So we go back to work for less than half our claim. But we go back 'united'!

The really disappointing thing is that throughout this strike no political leadership emanated from the 'left talkers' on the negotiating and shop stewards committees. This I would attribute to their rejection of a Marxist analysis of the situation, and their failure to see a need for theory. What we required was an elected strike committee directly responsible to mass meetings and subject to recall if we didn't like what they were up to.

To sum up, this can be seen to be the tale of two sell-outs — one economic and the other political. — AUEW SHOP STEWARD, Bradford.

# Scottish Nationalist Party -Racist?

As a socialist and activist in the AUEW, I've been pleased to see the recent big upsurge in Scotland. But I must say that while I'm pleased at *Red Weekly's* full coverage of the struggle, I'm a bit puzzled by the confused line put across in some articles in your paper.

Your paper has correctly given full support to the lead which the lorrymen, bus drivers, teachers etc. have given in fighting the social con-trick, and in one article by Alan Freeman (*Red Weekly*, 31 October) a proposal is made for an alliance of striking workers throughout Scotland on a programme of action. Yet in the same issue Alan Jones equates the rise of the SNP with the racist ideas of Powell!

How can *Red Weekly* praise the Scottish workers for their class instinct, yet imply that they tolerate a big racist party in their midst?

I don't think that any Scottish worker should support the SNP in any way, as they are a middle class party. But it must be realised that independence is a question which is relevant in Scotland. The Scottish workers have shown that they are far ahead of their English counterparts.

I notice that Alan Freeman mentioned John MacLean in his article. MacLean was a great working class leader, but does *Red Weekly* know of his views on Scottish independence?

MacLean's line today would have been the same as in 1923. Surely *Red Weekly* wouldn't equate MacLean's line with Powell's! So how about saying exactly where you stand on this? Apart from this, keep up the good work.

DAVE ROBERTSON — Motherwell.

## OUR REPLY

Trade union militancy and reactionary political positions on key questions such as racism or national chauvinism can go hand-in-hand. Capitalist politicians like Powell or the SNP are a threat precisely because they can win well-organised and militant groups of workers to racist and chauvinist positions.

After all, the Protestant working class in Northern Ireland is capable of militant struggle (as in the recent general strike) but remains thoroughly tied to the ruling class and reactionary ideas. The same goes for the London dockers who marched in support of Powell in the 1960's.

As comrade Robertson points out, the SNP is a 'middle class party' and in so far as they succeed in winning support from the Scottish workers they are doing the same job of splitting the working class as the Unionists in the North of Ireland, or as Powell and his ilk would like to do in England.

John MacLean is in a different class altogether. Even though we might disagree with his position on Scottish independence, he was a revolutionary who ferociously defended the independence of the working class from the capitalists and their state.

We hope that the broader questions that Dave Robertson raises about Scottish nationalism will be the subject of a continuing debate in our columns. — The Editors.

## 'Morning Star'

A reader has sent us for publication the following letter, which he has written to the *Morning Star*

On 12 January you published a letter from me stating I had become a new reader of your paper and on 14 January I sent a cheque for £10 to Zaida Curtis for your Fighting Fund. Twice since I have sent you items for publication without success.

Now I have decided to discontinue subscribing to your paper since it appears to me you have deliberately chosen to relegate the matter of the very greatest importance to progressive worker power, to a position of non-importance.

I refer to the Shrewsbury 2, who, judging by today's *Star* of 16 November (which gives no mention to them on Page 1) are to be abandoned to the humiliating experience of serving out their prison sentences with the daily taunts of the 'screws' that their friends have deserted them.

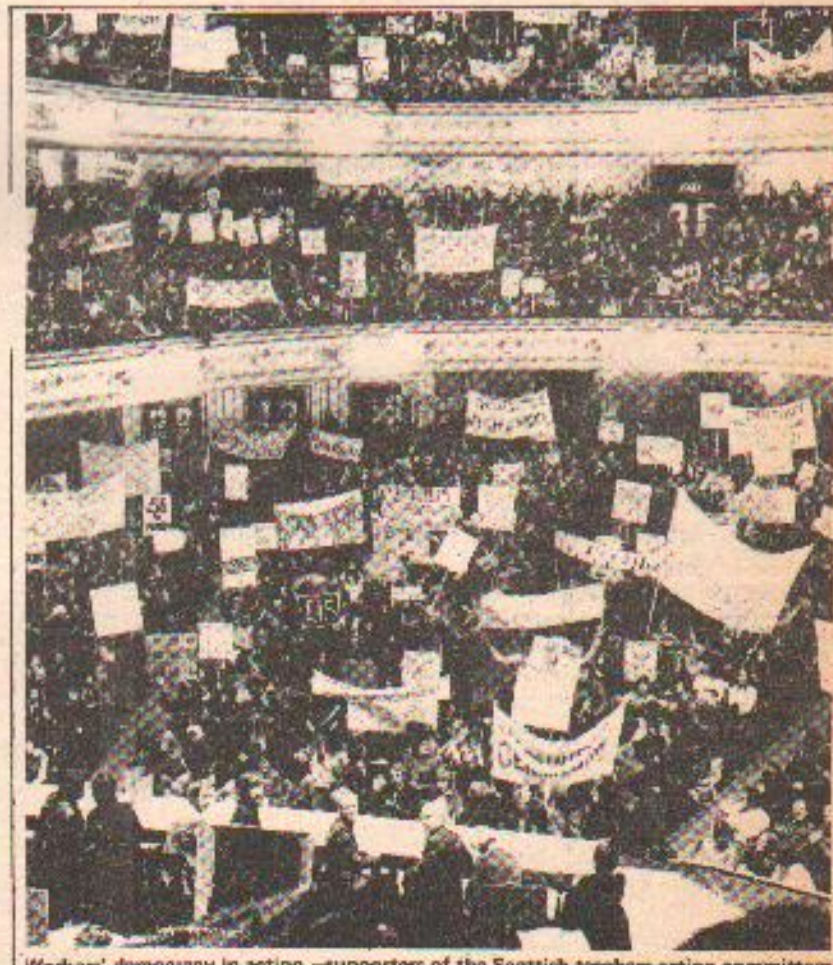
You know it was only action that secured the release of the Pentonville 5 and it was only action that could have saved these two.

What is the use of pleading to Roy Jenkins. The men has no heart and cer-

tainly no concern for workers who fail to obey sacrosanct capitalist laws. (You also have chosen to forget the Price sisters whose pleas to Roy Jenkins have also failed.)

The deterrent effect of these sentences (strengthened by the 'Prabbles' decision) can effectively cripple all future picketing unless someone with power or a loud voice quickly gives a lead to straggling militants for action now (on a massive scale). I am convinced that call is not coming from you, or from John Gollan who in a half-page article on the Labour Government, devotes ten words to say the Shrewsbury 2 'should be released'.

No, I have decided, your paper is not for me. The only way you could ever win me back would be to publish this letter (which of course you will not do) and to play your full part in demanding 'action now' to secure the immediate release of Warren and Tomlinson, and for good measure, the Price girls sent back to serve their sentences in N.Ireland. — L.S. CHELL, Brighton.



Workers' democracy in action — supporters of the Scottish teachers action committee

# 'SWEEP OUT BOSSES' - Hoover workers

The fight against the lock-out of 2000 workers continues at the Hoover Motors plant in Perivale, West London. It looks as if the struggle, now five weeks old, could be a long one but the Hoover workers are determined to keep fighting.

John Cope from the Hoover shop stewards committee made this clear when he made an appeal at the LPYS Young Workers Conference last Saturday. 'Management consciously took the decision to put us on the streets', said Cope. 'They believe that because we are locked out we will accept anything to get back in there to make their profits. Management want to see us humbled,' he continued, 'but if they think we will rush for the privilege of working on their terms, they've never been so wrong.'

## CLEARLY

The Hoover workers see quite clearly what the management are attempting to do. This lock-out was deliberately designed to cause mass redundancies—a convenient way for the bosses to streamline the workforce.

They hope that if they lock people out long enough eventually a large proportion of them will be forced into looking for alternative jobs. The situation is especially precarious for women workers, most of whom get no benefits whatsoever not having paid full insurance stamps.

Because of the question of redundancies the Hoover workers have raised the issue of nationalisation. John Cope has contacted the local Labour MP suggesting that he meet up with the constituency MP's from Cambuslang and Merthyr Tydfil—where the other Hoover plants are

and that they should get together with the Labour MP's representing the unions at Hoovers—T&G, G&MWU and AUEW—to discuss nationalisation plans. He also suggested that perhaps Tony Benn should be invited to the discussions.

Cope is demanding the right to examine the company's books, and shop stewards from Hoover will be amongst those addressing the meeting on Workers Control to be held in Caxton Hall on Wednesday.

## VITAL

Solidarity actions and support are vital to the strength and morale of the locked-out workers. A tour of twenty of the largest local factories by members of the shop stewards committee begins this week. This is being organised by the Brent Working Womens Charter Campaign and the Brent Trades Council. The factories include Rolls Royce, British Oxygen, GEC and Glacier Metal.

Successful meetings have already been held, including one at Middlesex Polytechnic in Enfield where the Socialist Women's Group organised a lunchtime support meeting raising £23 for the hardship fund.

Margaret Thompson, a representative of the women at Hoovers, addressed the 65 students present, stressing particularly the important role played by women workers and the huge problems confronting them in this dispute.



'If management think we will rush back for the privilege of working on their terms, they've never been so wrong'



The miners have decisively rejected the Coal Board productivity deal. But as JEFF KING explains, the NCB are not letting the grass grow under their feet in seeking new ways to boost production at the expense of the miners.

## Back to work at STC

The struggle at the Standard Telephones factory in New Southgate—for demands which included the continuation of thresholds and equal pay—is now over. Last Friday a mass meeting accepted an offer from management, against the recommendation of the joint shop stewards committee, which goes nowhere near achieving the objects of the struggle.

The offer was an increase of £6.50 for semi-skilled workers and £6.00 for skilled workers, 92% of equal pay in January and 96% in July. There is to be no continuation of thresholds.

The only small gain which has been made is that female grades as such have been abolished, and the wages of the women will now be defined purely as a percentage of existing male grades. The management, no doubt, want all the women to go in the lowest male grades, so

it is essential that a struggle is waged against their plans.

This must not simply be left up to the shop stewards committee, who have fought a pretty half-hearted struggle so far. It is necessary for all the women in the factory to meet to make sure a real struggle against management is waged.

## CORRECTION

We wish to apologise for an unfortunate error which crept into the photo caption which accompanied last week's article on the STC dispute, referring to the strike by black workers in summer 1973. This should have read 'The racist leadership of the unions in the factory during that strike' and not 'the racist leadership of that strike'.

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Last week at an extraordinary press conference, NCB Chairman Sir Derek Ezra, NUM President Joe Gormley, and Vice-President (and CP member) Michael McGahey all affirmed their belief that the miners could meet the target of 120 million tons.

Ezra talked about demonstrating 'solidarity at the top', and said this would be supported by visits to the coal fields by 'national leaders of management and unions'. Gormley said that they 'realised their obligations'. Nodding his approval at McGahey he added: 'Michael and I have said we will go with the chairman of the NCB to an area and even to individual collieries to encourage them to meet the targets...'

## CAMPAIGN

Ezra and his cohorts on the Coal Board organised a vicious campaign to discredit the NUM opponents of the productivity deal. Days later we have the spectacle of McGahey offering to go round Britain holding Ezra's hand and telling the miners to work harder. No wonder Gormley prattled on about past bitterness having 'to be forgotten'.

The reason that Ezra, aided by Gormley and the NUM right wing, can make such a quick recovery is because the left in the NUM, particularly the Communist Party, has no alternative plan for the industry.

This is why Joe Whelan, CP member on the executive for the Nottinghamshire area, voted at first for the deal. The deal was of course more favourable to Nottinghamshire than elsewhere. Lacking an alternative, he saw the deal simply from the point of view of how much it would offer his own area members.

Having fought against the NCB deal, the left find themselves having no other policy than that of demanding higher wages. The response of the NCB and the government is simple. They retort: you want more money—then give us more production.

Unlike the left, the Government does have a plan for mining—which is to close down the 'uneconomic' pits, exploit to the maximum the more productive coal fields, and boost production by using a smaller labour force.

## PAY

Although defeated in the first battle of the war, the NCB and the Government have no intention of surrendering. They are determined to use coal and all other energy resources to prop up British industry, and they intend the miners shall pay for it.

Because the CP want to make an opportunist alliance with the so-called 'progressives' and left Labour MPs they find themselves entrapped in the mesh of the social contract, and can only insist that Labour applies the 'social aspects' of the contract and puts the incomes policy to one side.

But the whole purpose of Labour's social programme is to lure

the working class into accepting an incomes policy. And now even its promises of limited social reforms are being quietly shelved as Britain's capitalist economy simply cannot afford to pay for them.

Because the CP sets as its main aim winning over the 'middle ground' and building a parliamentary alliance with 'progressives' in the Labour Party, it is forced to tail-end social democracy. It is therefore restricted to fighting the more blatant attacks from the government and the NCB as one-off issues, and between times putting its main campaign behind pressurising the more 'moderate' union leaders into fighting for reforms.

## IMPOSE

The present crisis of British capitalism cannot be solved by piecemeal reforms. The ruling class will either force the workers to pay for the crisis or the labour movement will mount a challenge to impose its own solution. One of the ways the left in the NUM have to do this is to fight for the control of the coal industry by the miners. That means fighting Ezra and his colleagues—not going on productivity jaunts with them.

Furthermore it means that the miners have to have their own plan to meet the energy crisis and that must be done in alliance with workers in other sectors of the energy industry. Unless the NUM left are able to convince their own members that there is a working class alternative to the plans of the NCB, in the long term they will be defeated.

The left now has to begin a serious campaign for the nationalisation, under workers control, of the whole energy industry. It has to insist that money be made available for research and development in the industry and that the amount of money and its control be determined by the trade unions.

## 2 new pamphlets from the IMG

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## CRUCIAL DECISIONS FACE STUDENTS

THE THOUSAND or more students meeting at the Margate NUS Conference this weekend will never before have attended such an important gathering. The fate of the grants campaign and the living standards of students rest in their hands.

The Labour Government, trapped in a reformist rut, has continued to chop the social services, especially education. A few days before the Budget, Edward Short put it bluntly: 'I cannot see where the Treasury is going to find the money to increase public expenditure, in real terms.'

Hot favourites to be cut are higher education and the discretionary awards given by local education authorities. Rampant inflation has meant that the education budgets of the college authorities have shrunk still further.

It is no wonder that they want to put up rents and prices by between 20 and 40 per cent. The Labour Government has not exactly helped with its decision that the extension of the rent freeze will not apply to students.

### DETERMINED

In the face of the moves by the Labour Government and the college authorities to make students and college workers pay for the crisis, students have made a determined response. In 30 towns there have been squats and occupations, with rent strikes, pickets and refectory boycotts elsewhere. The term has seen the biggest wave of student direct action since the late 1960s. But where has the NUS executive been during all this? Last week, for the first time since 1968, a Vice-Chancellor closed down a campus

at Bath — and with a huge occupation, the students asked NUS President John Randall to come down.

No such luck. He and his colleagues on the executive had more important tasks. They were scurrying off to brief Members of Parliament.

This highlights their approach to the campaign. For them the influence they could wield within the 'House' was more important than the direct action the membership were taking.

### LESSONS

The struggles waged so far this term are rich in lessons. It has become clear that the days of the quick victory are gone. The authorities can no longer afford to buy off students. They have drawn the battle lines, and dug in for trench warfare.

Students must organise campaigns of direct action in the colleges, using all sorts of tactics. Occupations, for example, have to be used to launch other action and take campaigns into the local colleges and labour movement.

With the cuts biting in all sectors of education, and within the whole of the public sector, joint actions can be organised with teachers, school students, hospital workers, building workers and the college staff. A massive programme of public works could kill two birds with one stone.

Area campaigns have already been successful in Leeds and Newcastle. It is on an area basis that the small colleges can really be united. In Leeds, students from three colleges occupied the town hall to force the council to reverse the £55,000 cut in discretionary awards. In Newcastle the

## Coventry conference ducks NF challenge

The long-awaited Coventry Conference against Racism and Fascism took place last weekend, as the National Front were busy trying to stir up strikes against the IRA.

Over 300 delegates from student unions, trade unions and immigrant workers' organisations attended the Conference, which included six workshops on subjects ranging from racism to the growth of the 'strong state'.

The Conference was marred by the attempts of the Communist Party on the platform to prevent any amendments being put to the comprehensive sixteen point Charter against racism and fascism drawn up by the Trades Council and Warwick NUS.

When the platform was eventually

defeated by a vote on this question, several IMG amendments which had emerged from the workshops were put. One called for reliance on workers' organisations rather than the Race Relations Board to fight racism. It was passed against CP opposition. Another called for the right of black workers to organise their own caucuses in the unions, and was defeated by the chair's casting vote.

Another amendment calling for a recall conference — prepared by the circulation of documents and amendments — before March 1975 was passed.

The CP don't like democracy at conferences, especially when they get politically defeated. In Monday's *Morning Star*, Ken Graves attacked the IMG for forcing 'sectarian demands' on the conference. Yet it is the CP who are sectarian for trying to force their own political perspectives into the Charter without allowing them to be challenged, especially their strategy of fighting racism by strengthen-

ing the Race Relations Act to fight racism, calling for 'alliances of all democratic forces'.

A spokesman from the Coventry Branch of the Indian Workers Association (GB) commented to *Red Weekly*: 'The whole approach from the organising committee was sectarian. The organising committee was not prepared to accept any amendments democratically'. He added: 'We ought to have strong immigrant caucuses at the place of work. The CP are frightened of strong immigrant caucuses and they always try to confuse it with separate trade unionism, which we have never believed in.'

But there was one really scandalous feature about this Conference. While delegates discussed fascism, no statement or resolution on the subject of Ireland came from the Conference to challenge the impact of the NF on this issue in the Midlands, despite the efforts of Maurice Ladimer from the Birmingham Anti-Fascist Committee and several IMG speakers to point up the need to respond publicly to the NF's hysterical campaign.



Racism and fascism will be defeated by mobilising the workers' organisations, not by 'alliances of all democratic forces' and reliance on the Race Relations Board

## Scarman in public order dilemma

area NUS, representing 24 colleges, has organised around a squat demanding that the local council purchases some of the empty property in the city for use by the homeless.

### PROGRAMME

The Margate conference must work out some overall programme for joint action with trade unionists to solve the crisis in the social services, of which higher education is only one part. The days when students could stand alone are gone. Now more than ever, the question of student-worker solidarity is crucial.

Students, like other sections of society — especially those on fixed incomes — are in a situation where inflation is rapidly eating away at their income. Only the IMG at this conference has any solution. We will be arguing for the grant to be tied to a student cost-of-living index, so that for every percentage increase in this index there will be an automatic increase in the grant.

However, students, like the working class, have the right to an increase in their living standards, not just compensation. Thus the sliding scale has to be tied to a flat rate increase in the grant.

If students have to continually chase after the effects of inflation then the likely result is simply demoralisation. The sliding scale will defend the gains already made and act as a springboard to win a real increase in living standards. That is why IMG students will be calling for:

- £850 for all, tied to a sliding scale.
- Abolition of discretionary awards and discrimination against married women.
- For a rent and price freeze.
- The Labour Government must reverse the cuts.
- For a student-worker alliance.

Rick Sissons

'If we took away banners we didn't like we would be collecting hundreds every week'. So said police Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Wilfred Gibson, last week at the Scarman Tribunal on the 15 June anti-fascist demo in Red Lion Square.

Gibson's verbal slip proved one of the points that Rock Tansey, representing the IMG, was making against a police proposal that the cops be given powers to 'confiscate any article likely to cause a breach of the peace'. It would open up demonstrators to on the spot political censorship by the police.

...And they claimed the Tribunal was aimed at presenting public disorder!

This incident illustrated a point which came out clearly from the proceedings as a whole.

The police are forced by the growing strength of the labour movement to demand ever more repressive laws, while at the same time pleading with increasing desperation that 'the police wish to remain impartial in the eyes of the public — it is the only defence we have'. This accounts for the hilarity which greeted Gibson's verbal slip.

### CORNERED

While the police were worrying about the relation of class forces outside the Tribunal, Scarman was cornered by the relation of forces inside the Tribunal. The left — IMG, NUS and Liberation — answered the police proposals point by point.

Scarman had to admit that if he recommended the second police proposal that demonstrators be forced by law to give seven days notice to the police, 'difficulties' would arise. Trade unionists spontaneously marching to their trade union HQ for instance, could find themselves slapped inside for conspiracy.

And as Scarman agreed, this proposal had nothing whatsoever to do with Red Lion Square, since Liberation had notified the police — three weeks before.

The only police proposal which Scarman could accept without reservation was one to make it an offence to

## Bath authorities in hot water

The college authorities at Bath University have finally adopted the ultimate weapon. The library, shop and sports facilities have all been shut down.

Bath students joined the battle last Wednesday when 400 occupied the administration buildings. They are demanding the 35% rent increase be dropped; that campus prices (which the administration want to put up by 33%) be lowered; that there be no staff redundancies or wage cuts; and a guarantee of no victimisations as a result of the occupation.

The academic staff have demanded that the university be kept open, while the campus ASTMS branch have stated that the disruption lay squarely at the door of the vice-chancellor and called for the facilities to be reopened.

The closure of a college in response to student direct action is unprecedented since LSE in 1968. Even Sloman during the big struggles at Essex last summer did not go that far.

But through all this vice-chancellor Rotherham still claims that the grants campaign has his 'full support'. He is one of the representatives of the authorities whom, according to Communist Party NUS President Digby Jacks in 1973, students should win to their side.

Bath students realise that it is no use winning a higher grant if rents and prices immediately go up. Students must fight locally and nationally both against the lousy grants system and the education cutbacks.

The cash crisis in higher education has opped the stakes. The authorities and the Government are partners in the same game of making students and workers pay for the crisis. Having stuffed and cut education, they gave students a raw deal and expected them to throw in their hand. But students at Bath and across the country have called the bluff and are fighting back.

disobey an inspector's directions on a demonstration.

### TON OF BRICKS

But what must be must be. The police have to hit demonstrations and pickets hard, and Scarman must make some worthwhile recommendations. Not to do so would outrage the rest of the judiciary, who are now coming down on the working class through the courts like a ton of bricks.

The left's presence inside the Tribunal has helped lay the basis for a campaign of protest at the police proposals. This must now be developed, so that when Scarman is reflecting over Christmas on what he should say in his Report, he will not forget about the public disorder liable to be created by any new powers given to the police.

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