

# WORKERS' ACTION

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10p

THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINEWORKERS will ballot its members on the union's early retirement claim on December 8 and 9. The feeling of pitmen on this issue is well expressed even by right-wing Nottingham miners' leader Len Clarke, who proposed the early retirement resolution at the last NUM Conference:

"We have always supported Labour Governments and the TUC. But there is a feeling in our industry, and one which I personally support, that if the Government wants to keep miners underground until they are 65, then it should fall".

The terms of the ballot will be as to whether NUM members agree to reject the National Coal Board's present derisory offer. But the NUM leaders who are now trumpeting defiance of the Government upheld, by a majority, both the Social Contract Mark I and the present Mark II model.

Now they are demanding a quid pro quo in the shape of early retirement. But will they be prepared to smash the deal they wrongly fought to uphold only a few months ago at the time of the NUM's last ballot?

This claim is of course one way of fighting unemployment. As Gormley himself has pointed out, "It is the union's firm belief that at a time when the country has one and a half million unemployed is precisely the time to give serious consideration to situations — such as exists in the mining industry now — where real social progress can be made while creating thousands of job opportunities, especially to younger people".

And, quite rightly, the NUM is demanding that the cost is borne by the bosses, not by the workers. They are demanding full pay for those retiring early.

**CUT THE DOLE QUEUES!  
CUT WORKING TIME!  
Miners lead with retirement claim**

## SUPPORT THE MINERS!



But if full pay is right for those retiring early — and there's no doubt it is! — then it is right for those reducing the working week and working a 35 hour week rather than 40. Claims based on the principle of a reduction in the working week, the working year (i.e. longer paid holidays) and the span of the working life (early retirement on full pay) should be prepared throughout industry, and the miners' claim supported to the hilt!

**NEXT month's NUM ballot on action to secure the Union's early retirement claim is likely to get overwhelming support. But the ballot will probably not mention any specific form of action, and won't necessarily mean a majority for strike action.**

The NUM Executive's decision to ballot is not surprising. The Union's last conference gave unanimous backing to the early retirement motion, and the issue has long been a popular one in the coalfields. As one delegate put it:

"We've had similar resolutions passed way back in 1963 and what have we achieved? Nothing!... We must get through to the Government that we mean business because the frustration at the stonewalling tactics to thwart this has reached breaking point. That frustration must not be allowed to dissipate into angry words, but must be funneled into creative action".

"In France it's 50; in Belgium it's 55; in Germany it's 60. It's even 60 in Spain. There's another point that must not be forgotten. Because of our inability as a Union to win back the seven-hour day, the present generation of miners will have spent more time underground than their fathers did, and the physical and mental demands of that can be seen in the living memorials in every coalfield in the country".

Len Clarke, President of the Notts.

ive of the miners' leaders, had tabled the motion at Conference. No doubt he hoped to defuse pressure on the wages front, and also revive 'special case' considerations in the spirit of this year's Seamen's settlement and according to the letter of the miners' 1972 and 1974 victories.

However, the issue has unified the miners more than a wage claim (bedevilled with talk of restoring differentials and introducing pit-by-pit productivity agreements); it has exposed the Government's hollow promises more than a straight wage claim (it was in the name of an improved 'social wage' that the wage freeze was promoted by the majority of the NUM leaders); and, while being argued in terms specific to the mining industry, it has sparked off so-called fringe benefit claims in other industries (most noticeably the steel industry, where the ISTC, the main union, called for early retirement the next day after the NUM Executive meeting).



The claim is for retirement at 60 by January 1977, at 59 by June 1977, at 58 by January 1978, at 57 by June 1978 and at 56 by January 1979. It goes on: "By June 1980 retirement should be at 56 years, with make-up pay ensuring no loss of income or concessionary fuel entitlement up to State retirement age."

**Stop the Dublin hangings**

THE DEATH SENTENCE still hangs over the heads of the two Irish anarchists, Noel and Marie Murray. They were sentenced to death by hanging by the Special Criminal Court for the supposed murder of a policeman during a bank robbery. The statements from Marie Murray used in court to secure the conviction were extracted under great stress: the torture of her husband and another defendant, Ronan Stenson. The latter, after his treatment by the police, is now in a mental institution.

The Murrays are still waiting for the result of the Supreme Court appeal proceeding November 1st-3rd.

Their main hope rests with international pressure and the efforts of the Murray Defence Committee, which is demanding a re-trial with a jury and opportunities for defence inquiry into the arrest and treatment of the Murrays, and abolition of the Special Criminal Court.

Send protests from international movement bodies against hangings to Prime Minister Liam Cosgrave, c/o Dail Eireann; Dublin, with a copy to the Murray Defence Committee, 155 Church Rd, Colbridge, Kildare.

Join the demonstration 2.30pm at Speakers' Corner on Saturday 4th December.

THE NEW "Health and Safety Mines and Quarries" report reveals a sharp worsening of conditions for pitmen. The number of deaths in 1975 was nearly twice the number the previous year.

Sixty-four miners were killed and 586 seriously injured compared with 48 and 497 in 1974.

There were twelve deaths in South Wales pits alone in the three months of the year.

These figures are additional urgent proof of the need for early retirement, as well as an improvement in safety conditions — particularly in pit transport, which is responsible for a third of all deaths and injuries.

**UNDER THE HEADLINE**, "Miners are drunk with power", Wood Wyatt, who frequently appears drunk in a more conventional sense, tells the readers of the "Sunday Mirror": "Naturally you would suppose that these demands were at least confined to underground workers. Not a bit of it."

"The miners have not, in their statements, excluded anyone — even those who may never have seen a coal face".

But who are these members of the NUM who have never seen a coal face?

There are 240,000 mineworkers in Britain. Of these about 190,000 are underground workers. Of the 50,000 surface workers, about 30,000 have already worked at least 25 years underground. Of the remaining 20,000 — only 8% of all mineworkers — a majority are there because even before working underground for 25 years they suffered injury or were too bad enough to make underground work impossible.

the course of any negotiations going to be Gormley's determination to reintroduce differential pit-by-pit productivity schemes. This squares nicely with the class's interests as expressed in "The Economist": "The general principle is that the cost of retirement should be paid by productivity in the mines. present productivity in the industry is dropping; it could fall by 10% a year. If the miners would agree to a pit-by-pit productivity scheme (which, so far, they have stoutly resisted) then enough extra could be generated to pay for an early retirement scheme". And in neatly with the Government's tentative plans for a productivity-based pay-for-it-yourself type scheme when the present pay runs out.

But all this is speculation. now it is up to the rank and file of the miners to call the NCB to Government to order, and to ensure massive support for their claim at the December ballot.

In justifying his capitulation to the Government's wages policy, Gormley is fond of saying that he does not mean that miners should sue the Labour Government. Quite right! The fact that the Government is one which the majority of miners will have voted for does not stop them treating it as an enemy, as long as it refuses to act on their behalf.

**Make the bosses bear the cost!**



# Britain must keep out of Rhodesia

THE IMPORTANT negotiations at Geneva have been those between the British Government and the Zimbabwe nationalists. Ian Smith declared that the nationalists would "come crawling back" from any intransigent stand they took; but in reality his mocking comment could better be applied to himself. Just a short while ago he was saying that white minority rule in Rhodesia would last 10 centuries, and now he says that a 23-month timetable for majority rule is negotiable.

Smith is, in the long term, not able to play any decisive role. He is not able, because Vorster and Kissinger say he should not be able. They can see, after the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique, that the white supremacist regime in Rhodesia must fall sooner or later.

Accordingly they are bending their efforts to see that it falls in the best way possible for the safety of US and South African imperialism. They have little patience with bone-headed white Rhodesian die-hards who want to fight to the end without calculation or foresight.

## Big toll

In the shorter term, Smith and the people he represents are very powerful. They can exact a big toll in lives and misery in the time before they lose power — and socialists should make sure that that time is as short as possible. But anyone glorying over any apparent victories for democracy won by Ivor Richard or Henry Kissinger is just mis-attributing victories already won by the struggles of the liberation movements in Mozambique and Angola and the black workers in South Africa, who broke the back of the support for the Rhodesian white supremacy.

The two perspectives for Zimbabwe now are: a well-managed transition to a regime like Zambia, where a black bourgeoisie will guarantee the safety of white-minority and imperialist property; or a militant battle by the black population for the

# Rhodesia



Bishop Abel Muzorewa Joshua Nkomo Ndabaningi Sithole

radical overthrow of white supremacy — including white economic supremacy. That battle would act as a major boost to the prospects of a revolutionary upsurge by the working class in South Africa — the key to the proletarian revolution in the whole region.

In the disputes — so far, at least — between the Zimbabwe nationalist leaders, all have made radical speeches, but none has stuck intransigently to a radical line of action. The formation of a common front between Nkomo, the most conservative of the nationalist leaders, and Mugabe, the most radical, underlined the fact that the disputes have, so far, mostly been about jockeying for position. Men like Mugabe who have led the most militant struggles against white supremacy — the guerilla struggles — are also closely linked to the governments of the African states surrounding Rhodesia, governments which greatly value their economic relations with South African and US interests. The chief guerilla force, ZIPA,

led by Mugabe, was largely the creation of the Mozambique government, being formed after an internal battle between commandos of the guerilla forces of ZANU.

## Settlers

Britain's role is not that of gallant fighter against white supremacy — as the dilatory record of 'sanctions' since the Unilateral Declaration of Independence over ten years ago shows. Rather it is that of helping the white settlers to find the best solution, aiding Vorster's and Kissinger's strategy, pulling the nationalist leaders to the most conservative position possible, and helping the nationalist leaders to contain and channel the militant struggle of the black people of Zimbabwe, which today takes the form of guerilla operations and tomorrow may develop in the form of trade union struggle or rural land seizures.

The key issue in the Geneva negotiations is the question of the

'transitional government'. The Kissinger proposals included an effective white veto in the transitional government and the disarming of the guerilla forces in favour of the Rhodesian army.

Scarcely any faction of the nationalists, or of the African governments surrounding Rhodesia, could accept that scheme, which would leave the black people of Zimbabwe indefinitely at the mercy of white-dominated armed forces. The most probable compromise proposal — one already pushed by President Nyerere of Tanzania and by the USA — is for a major British role in the transitional government, maybe even British control of the armed forces.

## Key rôle

Such British intervention would be reactionary. Whatever the justifications, it would be a colonial intervention. The property, the land, and the power in Zimbabwe should belong to the people of Zimbabwe and no-one else. They have no need and no reason to rely on Britain to supervise them. British troops, or a British Governor-General, could have no other function but to obstruct the rights of the people of Zimbabwe.

It would inevitably come into conflict with the militant struggles of the workers and peasants.

Britain, at present, plays a key rôle in imperialist strategy for Southern Africa. Labour and trade union militants must demand that the Labour Government refuse to play that rôle:

- No intervention by any imperialist power — Britain, Commonwealth force, or UN force — in Rhodesia.

- Full support for the militant forces of Zimbabwe nationalism in their fight for unqualified majority rule.

- Solidarity with black workers' struggles in South Africa.

- The Labour Government must break all links with the white-supremacist regimes.



GDUPs

run into

a blind alley

THE GDUPs — the 'dynamising groups of popular unity' set up in Portugal to support the presidential campaign of Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, earlier this year — held their congress on Sunday 21st November. But the 'Movement of Popular Unity' established at the conference is nothing but a front for the Maoist UDP.

The PRP, the other major group which supported Saraiva de Carvalho, eventually walked out, facing as it did a congress 90% made up of pro-UDP militants who were often ready to settle debates by fist fights. MES, a smaller group, had scarcely any presence at all.

The UDP's line advocates an 'anti-fascist government of national independence', comprised of individuals like Saraiva de Carvalho who oppose both 'fascism' and 'social-fascism' (the Portuguese CP), and puts the socialist revolution off to a future 'stage'.

Thus the mass support for Saraiva de Carvalho — hailed as the movement of the working class vanguard, not only by the UDP and PRP, but eventually by the LCI, Portuguese group of the USFI — has run into a miserable blind alley. And that was predictable. Support for the personality campaign of a bourgeois military figure could never lead to anything positive in terms of working class politics. C.F.

# S.A. mine owners in fear of solidarity

IN THE LAST TWO weeks, 22 trade union activists have been 'banned' in South Africa. Banning is a form of house arrest, under which you can do a job, but you must not participate in any social activity without first gaining police permission.

One of those banned is Alpheus Mthethwa, President of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union. For two years MAWU has been struggling with British Leyland (South Africa) for recognition as a trade union. As a result, workers have been victimised, and the South African security police called in. Now the South African state has been summoned again, for more attempts to stifle the leadership of the workers.

Commenting on the bannings, the Johannesburg evening paper, "The Star", mouthpiece of the mine-owners, on November 20th, complained over the over-reaction and jitteriness of the government and the likely growth in militancy of black workers, and continued:

"If the government insists on cultivating insensibility to the local stirrings, it should at least be aware of the potentially serious repercussions abroad. Workers around the world have an empathy transcending international borders which triggers a response when brother workers anywhere come under the heel. When their emotions are aroused they can bring trade to a damaging halt, regardless of their own government's intentions. Perhaps they have not yet reached this state of anger, but there are rumbles".

The message here is unusually clear. It vindicates the position that solidarity action must be built between British and South African workers, not as a liberal gesture but as a fight against the common enemy — international capitalism.

Part of the 'rumbles' that "The Star" may have been referring to is the recent decision by the ICFTU (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) to declare a week of

industrial action from January 1st against South Africa, in particular at docks and air terminals. Len Murray and Jack Jones were parties to this decision, and the TUC and the T&GWU have protested at the banning of the 22 trade unionists.

The reaction of the ICFTU and the TUC certainly shows the seriousness of the situation in South Africa. The proposed action, however, will only be a holding operation unless solidarity action is built at rank and file level. The decision of the Leyland Shop Stewards Combine taken on 11th August 1976 is a model of this type of solidarity. The decision pledged full support for MAWU in their fight for recognition and backed this up by threatening to black components to be exported to Leyland South Africa.

Solidarity of the same kind is urgently needed in all other industries. There is hardly one major British firm which does not have investment in South Africa — and each firm there pays starvation wages and uses the Apartheid state to smash strikes and enforce the exploitation of cheap labour. The Labour Government's complicity in Apartheid is yet another example of its class collaboration and is contrary to all Conference decisions.

What we can do is:

- Send resolutions from trade union, Labour Party and LPYS branches demanding the immediate withdrawal of the bannings on the 22 trade unionists. Demand immediate recognition and elementary union rights in South Africa.

- Find out whether the firm you work for has plants in South Africa and what conditions are like. Demand that the shop stewards' committee support the fight for union recognition and union rights in South Africa.

- Fight in the Labour Party and the trade unions to break the capitalist link between Britain and South Africa. DAVE SPENCER

# Suarez regime shaken by response to arrests in the Basque country

THE SUAREZ REGIME has had to retreat in its attempts to beat down the revolutionary left in Spain in preparation for the referendum on its reform proposals, due this month.

On 20th November, police carried out the biggest mass arrest in Spain since 1968, seizing 154 people attending a conference in the Basque country of the LCR-ETA6 (a Spanish sympathising section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International). Members of other revolutionary groups were also seized.

The Communist Party, the Socialist Party (PSOE), and the nationalist organisations in the Basque country, as well as the revolutionary left, immediately protested against the arrests. There were strikes in the building industry and in several eng-

ineering factories in Navarra, as well as several student strikes. Shaken by this response, the police released, first 119 of those arrested, then, on 23rd November, the remaining 35 — not, of course, without beating and torturing several of them.

The repression, however, will doubtless continue, particularly against the Maoist PTE-ML, designated in a confidential circular by the Spanish Minister of the Interior as the priority for police action.



LAST SATURDAY the 'Peace People' came to London. After free publicity from the press, the TV, and the Churches, and despite big-name attractions ranging from the Archbishop of Canterbury to Joan Baez, they mustered, not the 50,000 that was talked about, but 15,000 for their march from Hyde Park to a rally in Trafalgar Square. This was the only time for five years that the authorities have seen fit to lift their ban on Irish rallies in the Square.

The 'peace' slogans were meaningless bleatings like "Governments and Gunmen have failed — Give God a chance". The only voices raised to show a way out of the violence in Northern Ireland came from the opponents of the 'peace people'.

Mainly made up of Workers' Action supporters, International Socialist and International Marxist Group members, they kept up a constant barrage of the slogans, "Ireland unfree will never be at peace", and "First step to peace — troops out now!".

Ironically, the police displayed a show of some considerable force, just to make sure that the 'peace people' had their way! Just as in Northern Ireland the

'peace people' support the largest organisations for violence, in the form of the British Army and the sectarian police force, so in Britain the police made quite sure of things, by throwing a cordon two-deep around the demonstrators for Troops Out, and compressing them into a corner of the Square, harassing them at other stages of the day's proceedings, and making 14 arrests.

Notable by their absence from any show of opposition were the Communist Party and the 'Militant' tendency of the Labour Party. Indeed, the CP's paper, the 'Morning Star' was rather sympathetic to the 'peace' rally.

Other groups which were infatuated by the nature of the 'peace' movement included Chiswick Women's Aid, who were on the main demonstration, and the 'Power of Women Collective', the 'Wages for Housework' people, who told our reporter that they were 'looking into the peace movement'.

The 'Peace Movement' has achieved considerable success in the 12 weeks

since it began, mobilising, mostly through the churches, thousands of people with a genuine desire for peace. But the tone which this movement must inevitably take was indicated by the comment to be heard from many 'peace' marchers, "We're here against communism"; and its success is entirely illusory, because 'peace at any price' is not even possible, let alone desirable, in Northern Ireland. The movement took a giant step backwards when (reportedly under threats from the UDA) it repudiated its hesitant criticisms of British Army violence. It is not impossible that larger demonstrations will be held in the future, but the lack of any solution means that the writing is on the wall, and very soon, for the movement led by Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan.

BOB SUGDEN

Would anyone who saw the arrests on the 'Peace through Freedom' demonstration last Saturday please contact M. Tait, 29 Old Bond Street.

# Democracy in the Labour Party

## WHY ARE THEY AFRAID OF ANDY BEVAN?

THE clearest sign of the nature of the campaign being waged against Andy Bevan's appointment as Labour Party National Youth Officer is the fact that it is being promoted most vociferously by the arch-Tory Daily Express.

Andy Bevan was regularly appointed by the Labour Party National Executive Committee to the position. Present Labour Party structure — wrongly, in our view — does not allow for the YS to elect the Youth Officer, but there is little doubt that Bevan would win a majority in a vote in the YS.

There have been no allegations, let alone any evidence, of anything improper in Bevan's standing as a Party member or the procedure of his election.



Yet an outcry is raised against Bevan being Youth Officer. And all those who raised their hands in horror at the ousting of Reg Prentice — guilty of grossly anti-working class actions, like his attacks on the Shrewsbury 24 — by democratic vote of the rank and file members of his local Party, are eager to support the ousting of Bevan by bureaucratic pressure.

The Labour Party agents have protested against the job going outside their ranks. While no doubt the agents have ample cause for grievance at their miserable pay and conditions, those grievances cannot be good cause to deny the YS, or even the NEC, the right to elect the officers they want.

The other objection is that it is dangerous to allow a "Marxist" access to confidential material at Transport House.

DECADE AFTER DECADE the same cycle can be seen in the labour movement. The right goes on the attack, aiming at the mainstream left. Those mainstream leftists, who, perhaps, used to be militants some years ago, but now have become attached to their top positions, try to deflect the blow by striking against those to the left of them. By purging the 'far left' they hope to buy the silence of the right. But it never works. Every bit of victimisation and red-baiting creates a precedent, and soon today's red-baiters become the victims themselves.

Today we are seeing the beginning of the process. Bone-headed Tory Iain Sproat brays against 'Communists' in the Cabinet. The way-out right-wing Social Democratic Alliance echoes him within the Labour Party.

Leading Labour Ministers respond by trying to show themselves tough against the left. They attack the Hayes and Harlington CLP's effort to replace their MP, Neville Sandelson. They put pressure on the National Executive Committee to reverse their appointment of Andy Bevan as Youth Officer.

And the Labour Party Young Socialists majority, in their turn, resort to bureaucratism, trying to evade questions about LPYS representative Nick Bradley's signature on a declaration supporting the Social Contract, and, in one local LPYS, trying to silence revolutionary socialists in the YS.

The scene is all set for a repeat of the cycle. But it need not and should not come off. All the concerted efforts of the Labour Right didn't manage to deflect Newham North East CLP's ousting of Reg Prentice. The principle for the Labour Party — the mass party based on the bedrock organisations of the working class, the trade unions — should be the broadest democracy for all socialist currents of thought: and intolerance only for those who seek to use the Labour Party to attack the working class.

In the view of Workers' Action, Bevan is far from being "too left wing". The characteristic of the 'Militant' tendency, to which he belongs, is an ultra-passive attitude to working class action combined with formal recitals on the merits of nationalisation. It is by no means impossible that Bevan, as Youth Officer, would be prepared to join in purges against the left in the YS, as 'Militant' supporters in Chester have attempted.

However, what worries the 'Express' and Callaghan about Bevan is the extent to which he is left-wing, that is, committed to upholding the interests of the working class and of working class action, above, and against, the Labour hierarchy. Their fear about 'confidential information' is obviously not that Bevan might leak it to the Tories, but that he

might leak it to Labour Party rank and file members.

It is appropriate, therefore, that Callaghan's move against Bevan comes at the same time as his and Michael Foot's declaration of support for Neville Sandelson, treasurer of the right wing Manifesto group of MPs, under attack from his constituency party. Following close on its heels is a witch-hunt against "Militant" supporters in Bradford, initiated by the "Times" on 29th November — in more genteel language than the "Express", but with the same neo-McCarthyite approach.

Socialists in the Labour Party and YS must oppose all these moves, if we value working-class democracy in the Labour Party and don't want to let the Tory press call the tune for us.

COLIN FOSTER

## ORGANISING THE UNEMPLOYED — OR CONVINCING THE GOVERNMENT

THE 'YOUTH CAMPAIGN against Unemployment', initiated at the Labour Party conference in September, has sizable and growing support from MPs and prominent trade union figures. However, the indications from the campaign meeting in London, last Sunday, November 28th, are that the LPYS majority, leading the campaign, is willing to leave it as an impressive cavalcade of sponsors and general declarations, without the essential task — brought up by several floor speakers — of mobilising unemployed youth on their own account, in direct action.

LPYS chairman Andy Bevan, from the platform, kept to the usual routine of telling us how bad unemployment is, how the programme of the YS is the only real way to fight unemployment, and how, of course, only socialism would provide the cure.

The first dissenting voice came from a "Tribune" supporter. He questioned the fact that the campaign had shown less activity than the IS had managed round the 'Right to Work' march, and remarked that none of the previous speakers — all 'Militant' supporters — had said anything about how to organise the campaign; but he concluded by advocating the reactionary demand for import controls.

Michael O'Sullivan, a Workers' Action supporter from Tottenham LPYS, argued that the campaign should take as its next step forward the setting up of unemployed workers' centres which can begin to organise unemployed youth as a united fighting force. This has already been done in Coventry, drawing in some hundreds of unemployed youth. Basing itself on such organisation, the LPYS can begin to launch a real fight, pulling in support from local

Trades Councils and trade bodies and putting the labour movement dignitaries who sponsor the campaign to the test.

Michael O'Sullivan also criticised the campaign's call for a "socialist plan of production". He pointed out that no such plan is possible without first smashing the capitalist state. Those who have attempted to devise 'socialist plans' within capitalism have inevitably ended with anti-working class perspectives.

Andy Bevan, in reply, did not directly answer the call for the establishment of unemployed workers' centres. He did, however, attempt to justify a 'campaign' of speech-making, by declaring that the YS was very small in relation to the whole labour movement, and therefore all we could do was to run a programme and try to win over to it.

On the 'socialist plan of production', his answer was that, of course, you cannot plan capitalism. Once you have nationalised the monopolies, then you have social planning. In other words, he reduced 'Militant's' idea, "nationalisation equals socialism". Connolly's retort is apt: if that is so, "then the army and the police, the judges, the heads of the informers and the heads of the state would all be socialist functionaries as they are all state officials..."

'Militant's' equation makes socialism purely a matter of government action — and thus makes all their concept of campaign work patiently arguing until we convince this or a future government to do socialism for us. But YS members who want to fight unemployment now need a different strategy and campaign!

## Dissent not silenced in Chester YS

A BLATANT attempt by 'Militant' supporters to suppress democratic discussion in Chester Labour Party Young Socialists has been defeated. At the November 25th LPYS meeting, local Labour Party secretary Stan Phillips officially condemned the exclusion of Workers' Action supporter Steve Diggins from the previous week's meeting, and announced that the local Party would be conducting an inquiry into the incident.

Moreover, in an election for LPYS representative to the Party GMC, Steve Diggins lost by only one vote to YS Chairman Greg Oxley — a major turnaround in a YS where only three months ago Oxley would have received a unanimous vote.

On November 11th Steve Diggins put forward a resolution condemning the fact that Nick Bradley, LPYS representative on the Labour Party National Executive Committee, had signed a statement in 'Tribune' by the NEC Left which endorsed the Social Contract — in contravention of LPYS policy.

The chairperson ruled the motion out of order.

The majority of the meeting wanted to discuss the matter. The chairperson's

ruling and right to be in the chair was challenged. (There had not been a usual election to the chair at the beginning of the meeting). On this point the meeting was curtly told that it had already decided before the meeting. The 'Militant' supporters threatened to walk out if the resolution were not held over to the following week, when more 'Militant' supporters would be present.

At the following meeting, on November 18th, the self-appointed chairperson of the regional YS Secretary, Mick excluded Steve Diggins from the meeting on the grounds that his action at the previous meeting was 'contrary to the traditions of the labour movement'.

The action of these 'Militant' orders does, indeed, conform to the tradition of the labour movement that is, the tradition of the reformist, bureaucratic element in the labour movement, stifling any criticism that upsets 'business as usual'.

That tradition has received a defeat in Chester. We must now see that it is not defeated nationally. If it is not, 'Militant' supporters too stand to suffer in a drive against left-wing dissent.

### THE Y.S. MAJORITY AND THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

## Bradley responds at last

LABOUR PARTY young socialist members have for several weeks been attempting to find out why Nick Bradley, the YS Labour Party NEC delegate, signed a document in "Tribune" (September 24th), which, contrary to YS policy, endorsed the Social Contract.

After a number of resolutions had been sent to the YS National Committee, a reply has at last been circulated. It transpires that Bradley at a NEC meeting voted with the Left amendment on the TUC-Labour Party liaison committee document. This amendment stated: "While accepting that the Liaison Committee's document represents the best compromise that could be obtained by the NEC representatives on the Committee, the NEC notes that there are wide divergences between the document and the policies of both the party and the TUC, and will draw the attention of annual conference to these divergences".

As a matter of fact the document might well have been "the best compromise". Certainly

there was nothing wrong in voting for the amendment, as that did not entail approval of the NEC policies.

But the amendment was defeated. It was then decided by the 11 who voted for it to produce a paper pointing out the "wide divergences" and publish it in 'Tribune'. That too was a reasonable thing to do — hardly inflammatory, but reasonable. Bradley is not being criticised for that. What he is being attacked over — and this is the accusation he is trying to dodge! — is the preamble that introduces this paper in 'Tribune'. The preamble (which refers to the defeated amendment as an "offer by the Left of a compromise") endorses the Social Contract... and Bradley's signature is there endorsing the preamble.

Perhaps the luckless Bradley was not consulted. Perhaps, as is rumoured, Ian Mikardo just wrote the preamble and attached the names of the 11 who supported the amendment on the wing. But however much Bradley could argue along those lines, there is no doubt that, at the very

least, he should have made a statement in "Tribune" disassociating himself from the NEC Left's support for the Social Contract. "Tribune" editor Richard Clements has confirmed to "Workers' Action" that he is willing to print any such statement received from Bradley.

Now, two months after the publication of the preamble, it is only in response to pressure within the LPYS that Bradley is issuing any sort of explanation. The LPYS National Committee [NC] has still not said anything.

Until Bradley does clearly dissociate himself from the endorsement of the social contract, he and the NC show themselves up as pitiful windbags, always ready to declaim on Marxism and the Socialist Programme, but unable to muster enough courage for a clear stand — even on paper — against capitalist policy here and now. YS members must continue to harry them, demanding explanations.

MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN

## NOLS crackdown slated

IN A CLEARLY bureaucratic manner, the leadership of the National Organisation of Labour Students has disaffiliated the 'Militant'-dominated Liverpool University Labour Club from the national organisation on the grounds of non-payment of annual affiliation fees. Four other Labour clubs who, like Liverpool, owe money for last year's Conference delegates, but which are not 'Militant'-led, have not suffered the same fate.

At a special meeting of the club, a resolution condemning the action

of the NOLS leadership was passed with everyone, including CLP supporters, voting for it. The club was moved by YS regional secretary Mick Slater — whose concern for the labour movement democracy, however, not quite universal — has also been involved in the drive to exclude a non-'Militant' supporter from Chester YS meetings.

An amendment moved by YS members to get the club officers to contribute to the £150 deficit in the finance, was also passed.





A DECEMBER 1956 resolution of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party describes the events of that year as "a Horthyite-Fascist-capitalist-feudal counter-revolution". It is a simple formula — everything had hyphenated into one word.

The ideological hacks patrolling both sides of the Cold War divide basically agreed on what the Hungarian revolution was about: the stalinists — in order to justify suppressing it — agreed with the Coca-Cola newscasters of Radio Free Europe beaming in from Munich that the Hungarian people had risen up against communism and in favour of the restoration of capitalism.

Writing before the Russian revolution of 1917, Lenin explained that those who expected a revolution to be pure and uncomplicated would have to wait for ever to see one. The Hungarian revolution — crushed while the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was celebrating the 39th anniversary of the Russian October — was no exception. But

**"A Horthyite-Fascist-capitalist-feudal counter-revolution" — based on soviets!**

one thing more than any other refutes the Cold War slanders and reveals the progressive and proletarian character of the Hungarian uprising: the strong development of workers' councils — the most advanced to appear in thirty years.

But the appearance of workers' councils in Hungary in 1956 serves as more than evidence of the popular character and proletarian driving force of the rising. Here, yet again, was proof that the soviet, or workers' council, is the spontaneous form of proletarian democracy and proletarian power.

The first workers' councils to appear in Hungary in 1956 were in Miskolc, a heavy industrial town of about 100,000 inhabitants in North West Hungary.

As in many other places, the students were an important catalyst in this development. Also, oppositionists sympathetic to the policies of Imre Nagy or the Petofi Circle held important positions in the local Communist Party. It was within this general ferment, before the outbreak of the revolution itself, that the Dimavag Iron and Steel Foundry

It was this council which drew up on October 24th the first programme of a workers' council. The sixteen-point programme was partly a response to the news they heard over the radio of the events in Budapest the day before. But the demands went much further.

A broadcast over Radio Miskolc the following day summarised the programme: "We demand that all important party and state posts should be occupied by communists faithful to the principles of proletarian internationalism — above all by people who are Hungarian and who respect our national tradition and our thousand-year long history.

"We demand the opening of an investigation into the organisations responsible for state security (the AVH) and the removal of all those leaders who are in any way compromised.

"We demand a public investigation into the crimes of Farkas and his agents (Wladimir Farkas, son of the old stalinist leader Mihaly Farkas, was a general in the AVH; nicknamed "the torturer", it was he who had tortured Laszlo Rajk).

"We demand that those responsible for the bad administration and execution of the plans should immediately be replaced. We demand a rise in real wages. We demand a guarantee that parliament immediately ceases to be a rubber stamp and that its members cease to be puppets giving the seal of approval to already made decisions."

The workers' council then went on over the next days to create smaller committees to supervise the administration of the revolutionary forces, including the army and the police. The AVH barracks had been disarmed peacefully after an earlier bloody confrontation, when these most hated members of the oppressing state apparatus had fired on an unarmed crowd. Now a National Guard was formed under the control of the insurgents' council, and on the following day Radio Miskolc announced: "For two days the town of Miskolc has been under the leadership of the workers' council and the students' parliament".

The high point of the development of the Miskolc soviet was between October 26th and October 28th, after its delegation had visited Imre Nagy in Budapest and won his support.

Meanwhile, however, workers' councils had sprung up all over Hungary, particularly in the

after October 23rd. In Budapest itself the big development of workers' councils did not really take place until the second Russian intervention on November 4th.

The workers' council in Gyor was not set up until October 26th although demonstrations and armed actions had taken place on a large scale. Gyor, in the words of Isaac Deutscher (who overestimated the activity of reactionary forces in the town) was "the real headquarters of the rising in the provinces. Its soviet was



Imre Nagy — about-face

elected after workers from all the town's major factories marched to the town hall to elect a National Revolutionary Council to take over the town's administration.

This Council, whose overwhelming majority were workers, was not in fact "national" at all. Then why did it call itself "national"?

Peter Fryer in his book 'Hungarian Tragedy' gives the answer. "The term 'National' didn't mean that this council laid claim to any authority outside its own region: such committees without exception were either called 'national' or 'revolutionary'. In their spontaneous birth, their composition, their feeling of responsibility, their role in the administration of public life, as a restraining influence on the "wildest" elements of the youth, in the skill with which so many of them handled the problem of the Russian troops and, above all, in their startling similarity to the soviets or councils of workers', peasants' and soldiers' deputies that arose in the course of the [Russian] revolution of 1905 and again in 1917, these committees which spread like a net over the whole of Hungary were remarkably similar. They were, in the first place, the organs of the rebellion — the congress of those

self-administration of the people that trusted them.

Thus they had great authority, and it is no exaggeration to say that up until the Russian invasion of November 4th real power lay in their hands."

In Gyor the council was based on the railway wagon works which employed over 10,000 people. Bill Lomax in his recent book "Hungary 1956" reports on the other factory councils in Gyor: "Other prominent workers' councils were those of the machine tool factory, the textile factory, and the printing works, as well as those set up by the miners of nearby Tatabanya and Balinka. It was in the course of organising the strike that the

**3-man militia patrols — one worker, one soldier and one student**

workers' councils were first established, but in the following days they quickly came to take over the functions previously performed by the trade union and Communist Party organisations in the factories.

"Section and personnel chiefs were almost everywhere dismissed, and new plant managers elected by the workers' councils. Similar councils were also set up by the soldiers of the Hungarian Army units stationed in Gyor.

"These soldiers' councils kept in touch with the workers' councils, while a Revolutionary Military Committee was established to coordinate their activities under the overall direction of the Gyor National Council. Still more councils were set up by

students and apprentices of the town's schools and technical colleges, as well as by committees of intellectuals and of peasants."

In Magyarovar a workers' council was elected by secret ballot. It consisted of 26 members, of whom four were members of the Communist Party, others being unattached or members of the Social Democratic, National Peasant, or Smallholders' Party.

Its programme demanded free, democratic elections under UN control, freedom for democratic parties, freedom of press and assembly for the trade unions, amnesty for prisoners, dissolution of the compulsorily formed collectives and abolition of class differences."

In Scopron the workers' council was also elected by secret ballot in the factories and in the agricultural school. It also organised a militia which sent out patrols in groups of three — one worker, one soldier and one student.

Workers' councils were set up to organise the general strike and take over the administrative functions of the provincial towns and industrial centres. In Solnok, in Dunapentele, in Debreczen, Pecs and Salgotarjan the workers established their power, in varying degrees cooperating with the students.

The high point of the first wave of development of the workers' councils came after October 26th. By that time the general strike was organised in every corner of Hungary, some workers' councils had organised themselves on a county-wide and region-wide basis, and Imre Nagy had aligned himself with the programme of the Miskolc soviet.



# HUNGARY 1956

## HOW THE SOVIET ORGANISED WORKERS'

# ARY

## 6 DVIETS THE RISING



This startling about-face by the popular figure-head of the revolution who until that time had used his influence to demobilise, disarm and even suppress the uprising gave a big boost of confidence and authority to the councils.

The Miskolc delegation had visited Nagy on October 26th. Nagy, to their joy, expressed his agreement with their demands and even seemed to want to go beyond them to establish on a permanent basis a national system of soviets wielding real power. The delegation had merely demanded an immediate increase in wages, pensions and family allowances, an end to price rises, abolition of taxes on households without children, the sentencing of Farkas, a Parliament and not a congress of yes-men, the withdrawal of Russian troops, publication of the Russo-Hungarian trade agreement and a correction of mistakes in state planning.

On his return from Budapest, Rudolf Foldvari called over Radio Miskolc for the workers of the smaller plants in the county of Borsod to elect workers' committees. On the same day a first meeting was held of all the existing workers' councils in Borsod to form a county-wide soviet.

On 28th October Radio Miskolc — no doubt emboldened by Nagy's response — announced that the soviet had dissolved all the communist organisations in the county and approved the action of the peasants, who had been forced into collective farms,

withdrawal of Russian troops.

4] The elaboration of a new constitution.

5] The abolition of the AVH; the regime should base itself on only two armed forces — the national army and the conventional police.

6] Complete amnesty for all who have resorted to arms and the trial of First Secretary Gero and his accomplices.

7] Free elections with the participation of several parties within a period of two months.

In response to the slanders spread by the Russian bureaucracy that Budapest was threatened by counter-revolutionaries, Radio Miskolc broadcast a counterblast. Addressing Nagy, it promised "You have only to pick up the telephone and in three hours we will be there, the workers of Ozd, Diosgor and Miskolc, all twenty thousand of us and armed."

The horizon of the workers' councils by this time was not limited to Hungary alone. Radio Miskolc broadcast calls on the Polish and Czech workers, while the workers' council of Scopron sent two student delegates to Austria to win support and spread the news.

In Budapest spontaneous demonstrations and armed actions took place throughout the first week of the revolution. The workers' councils, however, only developed their massive strength after the second Russian invasion on November 4th.

The Belioannis electrical equipment factory in the Kellenfold district was first; then came the Ganz electrical works in Czepele. And then, between November 8th and November 12th, workers' councils were set up in the districts of Kispet, Zuglo, Obuda, Angyafold and Ujpest — the districts that took the brunt of the Russians' murderous assault.

Immediately these councils took on political functions. As the provincial councils had been encouraged, surprisingly, by Nagy, the Budapest councils took their encouragement from the fact that General Grebbernik, the commander-in-chief of the Russian occupying forces, had given them de facto recognition in his dealings with the Kellenfold council.

The first move to set up a city-wide council was partly thwarted by the arrest on November 13th of delegates from Ujpest. But on the next day the council was set up at a meeting attended by some fifty delegates from Budapest and some also from Miskolc and Gyor.

This meeting elected a committee to carry through the strike

against the occupying forces; but soon dissension weakened them. On 15th November the General Workers' Council of Czepele called for a return to work, and on the next day the Central Workers' Council of Greater Budapest followed suit. But there was a great deal of resistance to these decisions, and in Czepele the leadership of the Council was replaced by a more militant group.

Now plans went ahead to extend the workers' councils nationally and organise them into a single authoritative body. A detailed plan for this was proposed on 18th November and an appeal was sent out to all workers' councils in Hungary. One of the signatories to the appeal stated "The principal task of this national conference was to create a power under the direction of the workers, and in opposition to the (Kadar) government"

Invitations were also sent to the Kadar government and to the Russian military authorities. The latter did turn up ... in the form of about four hundred tanks blocking off all the roads to the building where the meeting was to take place.

Delegates were arriving not only from all over Budapest, but from the workers' councils at Gyor, Tatabanya, Pecs, Omló and Salgotarjan. There were also a number of peasants' delegations.

On 23rd November the Council organised a 'one month anniversary' demonstration in favour of the revolution. It was a demonstration in reverse — everybody was asked to stay indoors. Budapest in a matter of one second became a haunted city.

Attempts to organise a National Workers' Council on a definite political programme continued. A meeting for this was set up on 6th December, and it arranged a further meeting for three days later. But in the early hours of 9th December the government arrested a majority of the Central Council's members and issued a decree declaring its dissolution.

The delegates who were not arrested turned up only to hear both of these arrests and of the killing by Russian troops of miners demonstrating in Salgotarjan. A two-day protest strike was immediately called. The leaders of the Budapest Council, Sandor Bali and Sandor Racz, avoided arrest by being guarded by their fellow workers at the Belioannis factory.

On the 11th, Bali and Racz accepted an invitation from Kadar himself to discuss with him. They were promised safe

conduct. But the moment they left the factory, they were arrested and imprisoned.

This action called forth another strike.

None of the other workers' councils held out as long as the Budapest Council. In Pecs and Salgotarjan, however, there was very courageous resistance to the invasion. In Pecz miners and students organised into small bands and took to the hills where guerilla resistance continued for several weeks after November 4th. In Salgotarjan there was a

**Miners and students took to the hills and kept up the armed resistance**

huge demonstration — the biggest that had been held there — as late as December 8th in response to the arrest of two leading members of the County soviet.

The demonstration was fired on by Russian tanks and Hungarian state security forces.

And in Gyor the breadth of the opposition made it impossible to crush out all open revolt immediately. Indeed, although the National Council of Gyor had been smashed, oppositional voices were heard until May 1957 when Attila Szigethy, the leader of the Council, was arrested.

The experience of the Hungarian soviets confirms entirely the importance Leninists have learned to accord them since the revolution of 1917.

And it confirms to the hilt — notwithstanding the slight regional and chronological variations — Trotsky's evaluation of the Petrograd Soviet in 1905, where the phenomenon of workers' councils made its first appearance:

...[In] Petersburg itself we must recognise the Council [Soviet] of Workers' Deputies as the cornerstone of all these events. Not only because this was the greatest workers' organisation to be seen in Russia up until that time. Not only because the Petersburg Soviet served as a model for Moscow, Odessa, and a number of other cities. But, above all, because this purely class-founded, proletarian organisation was the organisation of the revolution as such. The Soviet was the axis of all events, every thread ran towards it, every call to action emanated from it.

"What was the Soviet of Workers' Deputies?"

"The Soviet came into being as a response to an objective need — the need born of the course of events. It was an organisation which was authoritative and yet had no traditions; which could immediately involve a scattered mass of hundreds of thousands of people while having virtually no organisational machinery; which united the revolutionary currents within the proletariat; which was capable of initiative and spontaneous self-control — and most important of all, which could be brought out from underground within twenty-four hours".

**'Pick up the phone and we'll be there, all 20,000 of us and armed!'**

in chasing the Kolchoz managers off the farms and distributing the land between themselves.

It also announced the intention of building a nation-wide system of soviets and urged its listeners to "build workers' councils in all the provincial towns and unite these to form a single authoritative movement." It then put forward its programme for this movement.

The programme consisted of seven points:

1] The building of a free, sovereign, independent, democratic and socialist Hungary.

2] A law establishing free and general elections.

3] The complete and immediate

## WORKERS' ACTION supporters' groups

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# Lysenko's 'science': quackery rammed through by Stalin's death-machine

by NEAL SMITH

Merrily play on, accordion,  
With my girlfriend let me sing,  
Of the eternal glory of Academician  
Lysenko.

He walks the Michturin path,  
With a firm tread; he protects us from  
being duped by Mendelists-Morganists  
[Russian song of the late 1940s]

LAST WEDNESDAY, at the age of 78, Trofim Denisovich Lysenko died, bringing to a close the most bizarre and outrageous career in the history of modern science. The favourite of Stalin and Khrushchev, Lysenko had by the 1950s destroyed one of the most advanced schools of genetics in the world, thrown back whole sections of Russian biology 150 years, and been directly responsible for the imprisonment and death of hundreds of Russian scientists.

## Boot-boys

Lysenko and his fellow scientific boot-boys climbed to power in the Russian scientific establishment during the 1930s. The late '20s and early '30s saw the violent ultra-left turn in Stalinist policy at home and abroad, and the launching of a corresponding assault on 'bourgeois' tendencies in the cultural and scientific spheres. In genetics (the science of heredity) the fiercest battles turned about the problem of the inheritance of acquired characteristics.

Experimental genetics had established that acquired characteristics (like strong muscles through exercise or a sun-tan through sun-bathing) are not passed on to offspring. You don't have big muscles because of your father being a champion weight-lifter. Instead, changes in the appearance of living species,

or the appearance of a new species, come about through natural selection and the mutation of the genetic material, the chromosomes.

That was the view of the mainstream of Russian geneticists of the period — some of whom, like Chetverikov and Vavilov, were pioneers in the field. In opposition to them arose a group centred on the Timiryazev Biological Institute, who argued in favour of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, on the grounds that Engels had supported this idea.

Indeed he had. In his book, "The Role Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man" he had suggested that characteristics acquired because of diet or exercise could be inherited. Certainly he would have modified his views in the face of the later overwhelming scientific evidence. But the fact that they could quote Engels in support gave a certain 'ideological' weight to the Timiryazev group.

## Teaching 'seeds'

The controversy was sharpened further by the work of Lysenko, a horticulturist without any formal scientific training. In 1928 he wrote an article about crop yields of winter wheat sown in the spring rather than the autumn. He claimed that if seeds were 'taught' to resist the cold by being kept at low temperatures for sowing, the plants that grew would be more frost-resistant. He termed this process 'vernalisation'.

His 'discovery' came at a particularly propitious moment for the Stalinist bureaucrats, who were seriously worried about

repeated crop failures due to frost, and wanted some quick way out.

Lysenko was then appointed director of the Agricultural Institute in Odessa, and from there began to launch a campaign against contemporary genetics. He was supported by a demagogue called Prezent, a lawyer who orchestrated most of the campaign against Lysenko's opponents.

## Moscow Trials

During the early '30s Lysenko and Prezent denounced the chromosome theory of inheritance as 'idealist' and put forward their own theory based on the whole cell. All those who opposed them were condemned as 'kulaks, wreckers, and saboteurs', even though they included such serious scientists as Vavilov.

By 1937, the year of the great Moscow Trials, the Lysenkoites had escalated their campaign, referring to their opponents as being part of the so-called 'Trotsky-Bukharin school of sabotage'. Algot, later to be executed for refusing to renounce his scientific beliefs, was attacked by Prezent thus: "another Trotskyist bandit, the geneticist Algot, having laboured not a little in littering the minds of our readers with the metaphysics of Weissmannism [Weissmann was one of the originators of the genetic theory of inheritance] is becoming a Menshevizing idealist, in every way trying to separate theory from our socialist practice".

In 1938 Soviet geneticists had planned to host an international conference on genetics. At the instigation of Lysenko and Stalin it was cancelled. A wave of arrests and a purge of scientists followed. Lysenko was made president of the LAAS, the Russian Academy of Agricultural Science.

## Died in Jail

Two years later, Vavilov, his most determined and prestigious opponent, was arrested and imprisoned without trial. In 1942, he died in jail, of malnutrition — starved to death for his commitment to science.

More purges followed. At the infamous LAAS congress of 1948, packed by Lysenko with his supporters, Lysenko's hatchetmen were placed in all important positions. A reign of terror began in Russian biological institutions. All taints of the 'old' genetics were destroyed in an orgy of heresy-hunting. Hundreds of scientists lost their jobs, genetics textbooks and laboratories were destroyed, scientists were arrested and killed.

This confirmed Lysenko at the height of his power. Plaster

busts of him were sold in shops; statues erected in public squares; the State Chorus sang a hymn honouring his name.

With the death of Stalin in 1952, Lysenko lost his most influential ally. But he was soon adopted by Khrushchev. Like Stalin, Khrushchev found Lysenko's scientific theories offered a quick solution to the problems of Russian agriculture.

But it was a wrong solution. Vernalisation was a disaster, and Lysenko's theories came under increasing attack from Russian biologists like Zhores Medvedev.

In October 1964 Khrushchev fell from power, largely because of the failure of his agricultural policies. Lysenko shared in

first base — were not articulated.

Lysenko could rise to power, regardless of the scientific validity of his theories, over the dead and tortured bodies of his opponents, in the same way that Stalin climbed to power on the basis of the atomisation of the working class and the physical suppression of the core of the Bolshevik Party.

Fighters for scientific truth like Vavilov and Algot deserve to be remembered alongside Trotsky and the Left Opposition for their heroic struggle against Stalinism.

Today the heirs of Lysenko still survive in Russia, but with little influence. The true heirs of Lysenko are in China, where Lysenko is still the official doctrine.



Stalin boosted Lysenko...

his disgrace. His influence waned dramatically, and Russian genetics once more emerged as a modern science. Announcing Lysenko's death, the official newspaper "Izvestia" did not even mention his scientific theories.

The rapid rise of Lysenko was the result of the perverted 'road to socialism' followed during the Stalinist period. All objective difficulties were to be overcome by efforts of political will. The bureaucracy approached scientific questions, like other questions, 'from the standpoint of administrative convenience'. In the same way as workers and peasants were slave-driven into obeying the dictates of the Five Year Plans, so nature itself was to be put under the command of politics.

## Chinese heirs

Lysenko seemed to offer an easy solution to the failures of Russian agriculture. Once he found favour with Stalin, all else was assured by the bureaucratic machine he could harness to crush the resistance of Russian scientists and to make sure that critical protests from the agricultural workers who had to execute Lysenko's specious theories — protests which in a healthy workers' state would quickly have stopped Lysenko's quackery if by chance it ever got off



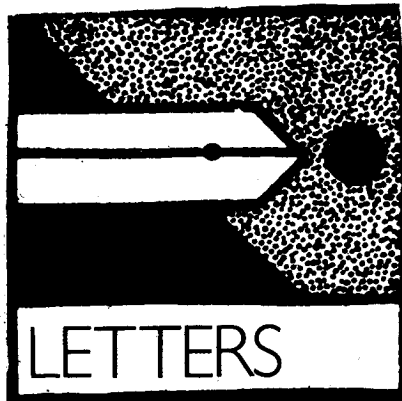
Zhores Medvedev exposed him

There politics are still in command of science in the crudest sense imaginable.

Since the days of Marx and Engels, scientific knowledge has made enormous strides and overturned completely many of the well-established scientific theories of the 19th century. It is impossible to reject out of hand Einstein's relativity theory, Freud's psychology, and modern genetics (as was done in Stalinist Russia) because these theories were not foreshadowed in the works of Marx and Engels.

Marx and Engels strove to be objective seekers after scientific truth, and were prepared to modify or abandon their ideas in the light of new facts and experiences. They based their politics on science, and not vice versa; and were always bitterly contemptuous of people who moulded their 'scientific' theories to fit their political prejudices — even if those prejudices were healthy. Utterly alien to their approach is the attempt to use political notions based (really or pretendedly) on social science to prejudge the investigations of natural science. And still more alien is the use of catchphrases to solve questions, the attempt to regulate all scientific problems from the standpoint of administrative convenience, the obscurantist dogmatism that pervades the method of Stalinism.

Gedling:  
why no  
Area  
support?



THE VAST majority of mineworkers at Gedling Colliery, who are in dispute for a second time, due to the return of a NACODS member, Dennis Scott, are bitterly disappointed and disillusioned with the behaviour of their full-time area officials under the leadership of Len Clarke.

At a mass meeting held during the first stoppage, Len Clarke and other area officials present gave an assurance that the deputy concerned [whom Gedling mineworkers objected to because of his disregard for safety regulations — see WA 32] would not under any circumstances return to Gedling Colliery. Quote: "If this man returns you will have our full support. You will not

have to come out on strike, I will come personally and get you out. I give you my word on that".

The deputy concerned has in fact returned to Gedling, and the NUM membership are on strike without any support whatsoever from Area.

We at Gedling would welcome the Area officials concerned to a mass meeting to explain why they have betrayed us on this issue. It is an issue on which a jury consisting of Snow White and the seven dwarfs, plus three blind mice and maybe Mr Magoo, would find for the Gedling branch of the NUM in the action taken by the membership.

JOHN PRICE, Gedling, Notts.

# NUS SERVICES COLLAPSE NO WHITEWASH OF BROAD LEFT!

**THE COLLAPSE**, with the loss of 200 jobs, of the National Union of Students Travel and Printing service companies last week, has plunged the union into the most potentially disastrous crisis it has ever seen.

Why? A major part of the blame must be laid at the door of the Broad Left leadership of the union. Only a few weeks before the collapse, NUS President Charles Clarke gave assurances that "the light was at the end of the tunnel" for NUS Travel. These assurances were still being repeated two weeks ago, when the real state of the companies was obviously clear to the Broad Left leadership.

This total disregard for accountability to the membership and employees was carried through to the last moment. The 200 employees were given only 4½ hours notice of their dismissal. Most of them lack union protection, since NUS has encouraged them to remain in staff associations rather than joining proper trade unions. Chris Morgan, the national treasurer, speaking to the Scottish Council of the NUS in the aftermath of the crash, had the audacity to justify the NUS leadership line on the grounds that they had had to 'maintain confidence' in the company.

The disgraceful and unprincipled performance of the Executive, scabbing on both the service employ-

ees and the membership, is a blow to the credibility of the Broad Left. But it also seriously threatens the very existence of a powerful national union of students.

The growing spate of disaffiliations from the NUS will be given a considerable impetus by the crash of services, because the NUS leadership have made the services — rather than the political need for a fighting national union — their major argument against disaffiliation. The right wing British Students Association has been using the lure of even cheaper travel on certain routes to encourage disaffiliation from the NUS in their favour. In Scotland the disaffiliation danger is strengthened by nationalism. Soon, probably, only 25% of students in Scotland will be affiliated to NUS.

With the national conference of NUS at Blackpool approaching on December 10 to 13, Broad Left can expect a barrage of criticism from the left, and offer of some kind of deal from the right. They may concede a few positions on the Executive to the right in order to retain overall control.

Calls at NUS Scottish Council for an investigation of what led up to the liquidation, to be conducted by a committee elected from the floor of Blackpool conference, were defeated in favour of a Broad Left call

on the Executive to conduct the investigation. The Broad Left motion piously continued "Council reserves the right to criticise and condemn, in the strongest possible terms, the National Executive, if the report... shows that the National Exec or any other agency had been guilty of negligence or incompetent handling or control of the NUS service companies board". It's like instructing the Exec to take a communal bath in a tank of white paint!

It seems likely that this proposal will be taken up by the Broad Left in Blackpool. Militant socialist students must propose a clear alternative, on pain of seeing the Broad Left's funeral becoming the funeral of the left as a whole. An investigating committee should be elected from the floor of conference to report and make recommendations to NUS Conference in April 1977. NUS must be committed to campaigning for the nationalisation of the NUS service companies, under workers' control, thus guaranteeing re-employment for the sacked workers — and also for the nationalisation without compensation and under workers' control of the whole travel service industry. And the NUS executive must be instructed to work for the full unionisation of all NUS employees in TUC-recognised unions.

CALLUM McCRAE

# Overseas students win first round

## Middlesex occupation wins demands on fees

STUDENTS at Teesside Polytechnic and at Middlesex Polytechnic have won their demands opposing discriminatory increases in overseas students' course fees.

Middlesex Poly's Academic Board accepted all the students' demands, agreeing to inform the Department of Education and Science the Polytechnic would "oppose any system of Admission based on considerations of Race, sex, creed or Nationality" as undermining the traditional autonomy of Academic Institutions to select students on academic grounds and as racially discriminatory (that is they would refuse to accept the new Government proposals: to tighten control of overseas students through academic vetting procedures given to Immigration officers and increasing the policing role of college authorities).

They also agreed to recommend to the Joint Education Committee for the Polytechnic that they should "immediately examine further the possibility of providing for a Polytechnic hardship fund for students who at present face great difficulties which are likely to increase in the future". Thirdly, and most importantly, they agreed to oppose any recommendation from the DES to increase overseas students fees, and that "in any event overseas students' fees should be decreased to the level paid by home students in 1976/77".

The occupation at Middlesex had overwhelming support from the students. The students union meeting — with an attendance of over 800, the biggest-ever branch meeting — voted overwhelmingly to occupy the Polytechnic. The occupation was led mainly by overseas students, who realised that if the increases in fees went through they wouldn't be able to finish their courses.

Ian Cunningham, a student involved in the occupation at Middlesex, told Workers Action that although they won on a local level, they didn't get a lot of support on a national level. "Particularly disappointing was the role of the National Union of Students (NUS), they haven't done very much at all. The NUS is definitely dragging its feet. We have to be prepared to take further action. This is not the end of it."

It is vital to spread the overseas students' campaign to other colleges, because so long as Polytechnics like Middlesex and Teesside are isolated, they will only succeed in winning a victory over their own Directorate but not in forcing the DES at a national level to reverse its decision. — This is why it is not enough for the Directorate at Middlesex merely to investigate the possibility of a hardship fund, it should immediately be instituted as of right. Overseas students are facing increases now, therefore, as in universities, the hardship fund should already be operating.

The Government is continuing its onslaught on overseas students. On the 25th November, Shirley Williams, Secretary for Education and Science, announced that nearly two million students on courses at further education colleges face more increases in fees in the next academic year. Last July the Government claimed it would abolish the fee differential for home and overseas students — it would be £650 for all undergraduates and £750 for those taking higher degrees from next autumn. Now undergraduate

overseas students will still be charged £650, but home students will only pay £500. And overseas post-graduates will be charged £850, but home post-graduates only £750. This is blatant racial discrimination against overseas students. All colleges need to follow the example of Middlesex Polytechnic, where the students have already pledged themselves to take further action should their demands not be implemented.

Sue Carlyle

## Teesside: deportations postponed for now

ON TUESDAY 23rd November students at Teesside Poly agreed by only 50 votes out of 1300 to call off the week-long occupation. It had been called against the threat to foreign students likely to be deported because they could not pay their fees by the end of December. (See WA 37).

Many of those who were for winding up the occupation felt that the main demands had been won. From a position of "no negotiation", Mr D S Clarke, Chief Administrative Officer, switched to "no deportation" and "a reasonable time to pay the fees".

However, as over 600 students realised, a careful reading of Clarke's letter of Friday 19th November to the Student Union president, shows no guarantees beyond the end of the present term — and those assurances had existed before. Certainly, in view of the circumstances of the calling-off of the sit-in, a militant response would result from any attempt by the Poly authorities to de-register a student and inform the Home Office (leading to immediate deportation); but students may yet come back from their Christmas holidays to find many of their friends no longer with them.

And even should the Poly authorities extend the fee-paying period, unless action is taken on a nationally coordinated basis this issue will recur. At the heart of it is the issue of foreign students paying more than double the fees of British students for the same course, in many instances. Furthermore, annual hikes in fees of around 30%, leading payment for education on ratepayers and foreign students as part of the educational cuts policies, are a recipe for built-in divisions between national and foreign students. When many foreign students inevitably find difficulties in raising cash not originally budgeted for, they are presented as not paying their way, undermining the educational provision of the rest, etc.

Any national campaign must take up the question of discriminatory fee scales and residential charges; it must fight for no fee increases, for the granting of three terms for overseas students to pay fees, and the withdrawing by the Department of Education and Science of the threats of de-registration and deportation presently hanging over many foreign students because of fee difficulties. Above all, it must fight for the complete ending of deportation threats, through the repeal of all immigration controls.

P.S.



**THE WORK-IN** and occupation of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital, against its proposed closure, is now entering its third week. The hospital services are running as normal (with the workers taking decisions) except that operating facilities are no longer available because the lift does not work.

The campaign to save the EGA snowballed during the summer when the EGA maternity home at Belalze Grove was suddenly closed. The patients were told at 9am, with no warning at all, to go home or move to the Whittington. EGA workers organised a successful one-day protest strike in July.

In September the EGA campaign organised a public meeting in a local school which was supported by other London hospital workers, the local Labour Party, and tenants' associations and other organisations. Local people were angry that the whole area of Somerstown, where the EGA is situated, could be sold off to property speculators.

In October, Raymond Moyle, the new Minister of Health, met nursing staff, council workers and interested groups from outside the hospital, and finally representatives from NUPE. Moyle told the workers he would consider their case; but he had already stated that he could act only within the constraints laid down last February by Barbara Castle,

the then Social Services Secretary — that is, that the EGA be closed down and moved to a new home within the Camden/Islington area.

The work-in and occupation has 100% support from the workers in the hospital. Arthur Churchley, shop steward at the EGA, told *Workers' Action*: "If every hospital under threat of closure did the same, the impact would be tremendous". The workers are prepared to stop patients going out and are monitoring all the equipment.

Ironically, the hospital is now getting more patients than before — a total of 46 now as against 26 four weeks ago. The hospital doctors, supporting in their own way the work-in and occupation, sent a circular to all the local GPs to tell them that the hospital was still open and asking them to send patients. The ambulancemen are giving their support by refusing to move patients to the Whittington.

One reason for the unanimous support of workers at the EGA is that it is a women's hospital. The workers are being bulldozed into the Whittington hospital, which they don't want. Once in the Whittington hospital, the EGA staff and patients will not be maintained as a separate unit, thus defeating the principle of the EGA: to provide treatment for women by women, and to concentrate on women's special health needs.

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, who

publicly available. ■ The restoration of all services and upgrading of the present site. ■ Improved and extended facilities for women throughout the NUS and for training women medical staff. The right of everyone, if they so choose, to be treated by a doctor of their own sex.

founded the hospital in 1866, was the first woman doctor. Her purpose was to give women the opportunity to train and practice in medicine (even today only 27% of registered doctors are women) and to enable women, if they choose, to be treated by women doctors. Even though women use the health service more than men, women's special health needs are a sadly neglected area of medical research, and the present cutbacks will mean a further reduction in women's facilities.

The hospital workers can see that the EGA has been deliberately run down. No money has been spent on it for ten years. The lift has not been repaired, so that the operating theatre can no longer be used.

The Area Health Authority claim lift repairs would cost from £30,000 to £100,000. The workers doubted this but when they asked to see the file they were told it had been 'lost' and were refused an independent estimate of the cost of repair. The AHA refused to accept an estimate by engineers who maintain London Transport lifts — on the grounds that they were not competent! This makes especially relevant the demand of the campaign for an enquiry into the financing of the hospital with information made publicly available.

Six MPs, including Jock Stallard, MP for St Pancras North, are meeting Ennals, the Social Services Secretary, on 30th November, to put the case for the EGA. Immediately, the workers need messages of support and donations. Send to Joint Shop Stewards Committee, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, Euston Road, London NW1.

MARIAN MOYLE  
MARY CORBISHLEY

Demands of the 'Save the EGA' Campaign

- Immediately: repair of the lift and the heating system to ensure that the hospital is kept going.
- A guarantee of no job losses.
- An enquiry into the financing of the hospital with information made



# WARRIORS IN

# ACTION

## 200 picket NUT

TWO MORE LONDON schools, Highbury Grove and Stockwell Manor, have received threatening letters from NUT General Secretary Fred Jarvis, stating that, unless NUT members in those schools cease operating the unofficial three day no cover sanction against the cuts, then they will be summoned to the Union's Disciplinary Committee. Teachers in Highbury Grove at least have deliberately failed to meet the deadline given by Jarvis. If things go against them, they could be the second school after Little Ilford, in Newham, to find its NUT members suspended from the Union.

A picket in support of the Little Ilford teachers themselves was held last Saturday morning (27th) outside NUT headquarters in London. About 200 teachers turned up, and many of them went into the building to lobby the NUT Executive, who refused to allow a delegation in or to send an Executive member out to address the lobby.

by Ian Hollingworth

In the resultant anger and confusion, with many people crammed into the limited space outside the Executive Chamber, a snap proposal was made by members of the IS to occupy the chamber, with what appeared to be a majority voting in favour. Dissent at this tactic and a request that the lobby meet downstairs to discuss the best way forward were met with cries of "fuck off" from certain comrades of the IS. The Little Ilford teachers themselves were not in favour of the occupation, and went downstairs to meet the press, at which point they were followed by a large number of teachers.

### Crush

About 80 teachers left upstairs then occupied the Executive Chamber, whereupon the Executive attempted to walk out. In the crush that fol-

lowed, one Executive member was heard to say to an Asian teacher, "It's having people like you in our schools who can't speak proper English that's causing half the trouble".

The police were called in, whereupon those occupying the chamber issued a statement condemning the suspensions of the Little Ilford Teachers, and joined the rest of the lobby downstairs in the hall.

### Lie

In the debate that followed, various dirty tricks of the Right in the NUT over the Little Ilford affair were revealed. In Holloway School, Islington, NUT members were informed that they were not able to discuss the issue of Little Ilford as the President of Newham NUT had ruled it out of order there!

There have been letters circulating NUT Associations from certain Newham NUT officers, stating that



## THE UNIONS



there was no support for the Little Ilford teachers in Newham because it had not been discussed. This is a lie based on the fact that those officers walked out of the October NUT meeting rather than let the suspended Little Ilford teachers address it unofficially. In fact, Little Ilford was discussed, and support was massive amongst over 100 teachers who remained there.

In Brent, teachers have been told that they can't discuss Little Ilford because it is 'sub judice'.

The Appeals Committee did not meet as expected on the 27th. The final date for a meeting has yet to be fixed.

Send resolutions condemning the victimisation of the Little Ilford teachers to Fred Jarvis, General Secretary, NUT, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1.

## Birmingham LPs adopt WA line on racism

80 DELEGATES at the Birmingham District Labour Party conference on racism last week put out a statement pledging themselves to set up a labour movement anti-racist committee with delegates from shop stewards committees, ethnic groups and other grass roots organisations.

Alex Lyon MP, introducing the conference, spoke in support of further immigration controls and attacked the resolutions put forward by supporters of Workers' Action and Red Weekly — hardly surprising as they pointed out that all immigration controls are inherently racist and argued for the expulsion from Labour Groups of "any councillor or MP who seeks to further racist policies".

The conference, however, adopted these positions. The statement put out by the conference recognised that the problems of unemployment, shortage of housing, overcrowded schools and other social problems are not caused by immigration but by the obsolete capitalist system of production, which cannot provide for the needs of black OR white workers.

The conference thus adopted a position on racism that has a real possibility of mobilising the labour movement in a fight against fascists and racists. Delegates also agreed to support Labour councillors who ban the use of council property by fascist organisations; to urge the active participation of ethnic minorities in democratic institutions, particularly the trade union movement; and to call for the repeal of the 1968 and 1971 Immigration Acts.

The anti-racist committee set up is not just a hollow shell. It could provide the basis for a real fight against the fascists and racists.

JIM DENHAM

## Anti-fascists march in Bolton

300 ANTI-FASCIST demonstrators marched through Bolton on Saturday 27th, against the fascist National Front and National Party paper sellers. They were also protesting against a £70 fine imposed on one militant for throwing an orange on a previous demonstration in Bolton on 21st August. Except for the orange being thrown, the August demonstration was peaceful on the part of the demonstrators. The violence came from the police, who charged the demonstrators, and later attacked one of those arrested in the cells giving him a cracked rib.

The police have cooked up evidence in court so far, making the August demonstration sound like a pitched battle.

Messages of support and funds are needed for those defendants still to appear in court. Send to: Bolton Anti-Fascist Committee, c/o Neil Duffield, 52 Yewdale Gardens, Brechtmet, Bolton.

## DEATH MAKES A GAP IN THE PICKET LINE

THE 'BINGO' STRIKE at Club One and the Rialto in Coventry is now in its sixth week. Pickets are out every day, and now include Theatre One, a cinema owned by the same firm, Orr Enterprises. On Friday and Saturday nights, the most popular bingo nights, with a normal 800 customers at Club One, mass pickets are out, and have kept numbers to under 100. All the customers have signed a petition the women have put out, and the majority are supporting them.

The strike, by 65 women, is for union recognition. Orr Enterprises has been paying only 56½p an hour — so that with overtime they take home only £14 per week. The management refused to negotiate with the women on these rates, so they decided to join the T&GWU. The management response was to refuse recognition to the T&GWU and insist that the Union they should join was NATKE, a scab union.

One of the strikers told "Workers' Action" about the inhuman treatment of the workers by management before and during the strike. When one of the bingo-callers had a heart attack, the manager just pushed him out of the way and only called an ambulance when the game was finished. In contrast, when the under manager died two weeks ago,

the strikers withdrew the picket for a few hours as a mark of respect. Management used this to get deliveries in!

Management have done their best to break the strike, giving out complimentary tickets to get customers to cross the picket line. They have even stood outside deliberately lying to the customers, telling them the women are on £1 an hour.

The first response on the local T&GWU leaders was disappointing. True, several left-wing members did join the picket lines, Eddie McCluskey, T&GWU deputy convenor at Chrysler, being invited round the corner for a fight by the

THE EXPECTED attempt to break the picket line of the North East London Poly cleaners, last Monday, 22nd November, did not materialise. The Factory Inspector, however, turned up — accompanied by the Poly Safety Officer, a police inspector, and a coachload of the 46 cops.

The Factory Inspector found that most of the asbestos dust — in protest against the dangers of which the cleaners went on strike — had already been swept up, not by the cleaners. He also discovered blue asbestos in the boiler room, which the cleaners use in the course of their work, but he declared that in his opinion the level of asbestos dust was too low to warrant action.

## GPO workers stick to safety

RECENTLY CPSA members at Bristol Computer Centre noticed that the glue used to stick labels on envelopes was dissolving the plastic cups used to ladle it out of the container. When we investigated, we found that plastic cups were used because the metal ladle had been eaten away! This worried us, so we asked management to contact the manufacturers and find out what safety precautions were necessary and what the glue contained.

The next day we were shocked to get a telex stating the precautions required — none of which we had ever heard of. In particular, smoking should be banned in the vicinity of the glue, because the solvent Trichloroethylene becomes phosgene (a war gas) in the presence of a flame or heat. We had been using the glue for over six years, and smoking had always been allowed.

The manufacturers' representative told us that the warnings had

only been issued two years ago in the light of new regulations. The Post Office management locally never received it. There was a 1½" x 2" label, now missing, stuck on the 3-foot high drum. The representative also said we were the only people to complain so far!

We insisted that he find out the effects of prolonged exposure to this solvent and have now stopped using the glue in favour of another glue without the solvent.

There are two points here for other workers. First, that things you have been using for years may now have been discovered to be dangerous, but the warnings about it have not been passed on or enforced. Second, and most important: it is up to the unions to check the safety of working conditions. Never rely on the management, nor accept anything suspect without query.

CHRIS WHYTEHEAD

manager. It is true also that the police nearly lifted a prominent TGWU full time official. However, despite the TGWU District Committee's resolutions, it has been left to the women themselves and socialist militants in the town to keep the strike going.

Their determination seems to have impressed the TGWU officials, and, since one was reported to have said that his job depended on them winning (!), some action on blacking and support from the big factory battalions may be forthcoming.

At a time when the Trico strike has highlighted the need still to fight for equal pay, the trade union movement must give full support to this type of struggle. Messages of support and donations to: 42 Hamilton Rd, Stoke, Coventry.

DAVE SPENCER  
FRAN BRODIE

The cleaners are maintaining their picket until two basic demands are met: full pay for the duration of the dispute, and unionised labour to be used on all precincts of the Poly. Their union official, Bill McColl, had assured them that an agreement he had negotiated would be ratified at a meeting of the joint education committee on Thursday last, but in the event the committee did not even meet.

Attempts to break the picket line are still likely. Messages of support and donations to Holbrook Cleaners' Strike Committee, NELP, Holbrook Hub, Holbrook Road, Stratford, E15.

IAN HOLLINGWORTH

## ACAS lock-out

FOR THREE WEEKS now the mainly Asian and West Indian workforce at Grunwicks in North West London have been waiting for the government's conciliation service, ACAS, to turn up and ballot the workforce. The workers are demanding recognition of their union, APEX. For too long they have suffered slave-like conditions and disgusting wages: £25 for a 35-hour week, £28 for 40 hours, compulsory overtime at a moment's notice.

Management are now refusing to let ACAS into the factory. At the same time they have given the workers inside a £5 rise. By the time ACAS ballots the workers, including those still working, management will have done their best to recruit more workers and win over those inside. The strikers favour the ACAS ballot and believe they will have the sympathy of the workers inside, but they must be under no illusions and not allow the fate of the strike to hinge on the findings of ACAS.

Management have told the workers they can stand outside in the snow all winter — the workers reply they are prepared to win this strike!

M.M.

## STC dig in to resist job loss

WORKERS AT Standard Telephones and Cables Ltd of New Southgate, North London, are still strong in their determination to fight against proposed redundancies of 450 workers in the electro-mechanical division.

STC is the principal British company of the notorious international monopoly IIT. The New Southgate site is just one of the STC plants affected by modernisation by the Post Office and cuts in Post Office spending. Management announced the 450 redundancies to the employees at the end of September. At a meeting called immediately afterwards by the Joint Shop Stewards Committee, workers at the factory voted to resist the redundancies.

Early in November, 500 employees went

to lobby Eric Varley, Secretary of State for Industry. Far from finding reassurance that their fight would be supported, union officials were told of further £200 million cuts by the Post Office over the next three years, of telephone exchange equipment.

In addition a modernisation programme by the Post Office involves a shift from electro-mechanical exchanges (produced at New Southgate) to electronic designs, which they claim require only about half the manufacturing work force.

This, say STC, will mean a further loss of 1500 jobs, in addition to the 22% cut-back in the workforce made over the last

## EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Paid ads, 8p per word; block ads, £5 per column inch. Send copy to 'Events', 49 Carnac St, London SE27, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

THURSDAY 2 DECEMBER. Meeting of Socialist Teachers' Alliance supporters, 7.30 at the Prince Albert, Wharfedale Rd, N1.

FRIDAY 3 DECEMBER. RCG Edinburgh public meeting, "Women's Oppression under Capitalism". 7.30pm at the Trades Council Club, Picardy Place, off Leith St.

FRIDAY 3 DECEMBER. People's Democracy meeting on "What is the Peace Movement?" 8pm at the 'George', Liverpool Rd, London N1.

FRIDAY 3 DECEMBER. London Spartacist group forum, "Marxism against feminism — women's liberation through socialist revolution". Speaker from EB of *Women and Revolution*. 7.30pm at the Skinners Arms, Judd St, London WC1.

SATURDAY 4 DECEMBER. Protest against Bury Council's plans to close Sefton St Old People's Centre. Assemble 12 noon, Sefton St, Whitefield.

SUNDAY 5 DECEMBER. Birmingham Workers' Action readers' meeting — Marxist education series. "The capitalist state and the revolutionary party". 3pm at 102 Teignemouth Rd, Selly Oak.

SUNDAY 5 DECEMBER. Manchester conference "For Freedom in Southern Africa". 10am to 5pm at SOGAT Social Club, 4-8 Gt George St, Chapel St, Salford. Delegates' credentials from Anti-Apartheid, 565 Wilmslow Rd, Manchester 20.

MONDAY 6 DECEMBER. Public debate: "Peace in Northern Ireland — which way?" Speakers: Tom Litterick MP, representatives from Troops Out Movement and British Peace Committee. Speaker also invited from N. Ireland Peace People. 7pm at NUFTO Hall, Jockeys Fields, WC1.

FRIDAY 10 DECEMBER. RCG Manchester public meeting, "Women's Oppression under Capitalism". 7.30pm at the Basement Theatre, Town Hall Extension, Albert Sq.

SUNDAY 12 DECEMBER. International-Communist League public meeting on the struggle in Southern Africa. 7.45pm at the Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road.

MONDAY 13 DECEMBER. Manchester Workers' Action readers' meeting on "Women's Liberation". 8pm at the People's Centre, Moss Lane East, Moss Side.

TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER. Cardiff Workers' Action readers' meeting on "The Struggle in Southern Africa". 7.30pm at the Rhymney Hotel, Adam St, Cardiff.

WEDNESDAY 14 DECEMBER. Central London Workers' Action forum: "2. The Erfurt Programme and the Second International". 8.45pm at the 'George', Liverpool Rd, London N1.

year. A STC plant at East Kilbride, Scotland, is to close, with 550 out of the 650 workers losing their jobs.

At present these STC proposals are being rejected by the Unions, says Roy Sanderson, who is coordinator of the eight unions in the telecommunications industry. M Corbisbley

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