

workers' ACTION

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8000 workers at Plesseys Edge Lane, Merseyside, works, have seized their factory.

Plesseys bosses arrived on the morning of Tuesday 8th March to find themselves locked out by a picket organised by the Joint Shop Stewards committee. A work-in is being organised, to defend jobs at Edge Lane and in solidarity with Plesseys Kirkby plant, where the 400 workers started a work-in on Monday 7th March.

Plesseys have given 90 days notice of 4,000 redundancies in their total 18,500 workforce. Kirkby is to close, as is one of Plesseys Sunderland factories, employing 2,000. 1,300 jobs are to go at Edge Lane, 300 at Speke, and another 700 among installation workers up and down the country.

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The reason Plesseys give is lack of government demand for telephone components. Post Office telephone switching equipment orders were cut by 30% last November.

For Plesseys bosses the rundown of their telecommunications business is a misfortune, but they can make up for it in the other parts of their empire. For Plesseys workers there is no choice but to defend their jobs — or join the end of the one-and-a-half million dole queue. In Sunderland there is already 13.5% unemployment, and Kirkby has an even higher rate.

Two tasks now face the occupying workers. First, to extend their struggle, forming a fighting alliance with the Sunderland work-

PLESSEY WORKERS

SEIZE THE PLANTS

ers, with other Plessey plants, and with Post Office workers whose jobs are also threatened by the cutbacks. Secondly, to consolidate and build on their control of the factories. Their response to the problem of reduced orders should be work-sharing,

under workers' control, and with no loss of pay. They should use the strength they have won by occupying the plants to enforce that demand, insisting on nationalisation without compensation if Plesseys refuse.

Bas Hardy/Jon Riley

8,400 OCCUPY IN FIGHT FOR MERSEY JOBS



500 people marched in London last Saturday to Century House, headquarters of MI6. Known also as the Secret Intelligence Service, MI6 is Britain's spying and sabotage agency overseas. Sources in Washington have confirmed that the CIA's "destabilisation" operation in Jamaica at the time of the recent elections — exposed by Philip Agee shortly before Merlyn Rees ordered his deportation from Britain — was a joint initiative with MI6.

Agee's attempt to get round the deportation order by appealing to a Scottish court has failed, but Mark Hosenball, due to be deported under the same order, has appealed to the High Court and also is considering marrying an Englishwoman to get British citizenship and evade the deportation order that way. John Berry, Crispin Aubrey, and Duncan Campbell, charged under the Official Secrets Act, in a related case, are all out on bail and due to come up in court on 26th April.

For the Agee-Hosenball Defence Committee, contact 278 4575; for the Aubrey-Berry-Campbell Defence Committee, 278 2377.

Fords support Leyland against blackmail

THE THREATS and warnings Leyland workers are hearing from the National Enterprise Board, the Government, and trade union leaders, are nothing new. But the volume of the present barrage of bluster and bullying is unprecedented.

Parliamentary debates, TV documentaries, threatening letters, front pages from Fleet Street and joint union-employer ultimatums are all bearing down on the 3,000 Leyland toolmakers, striking for the right to negotiate with the employers on the basis of all the Leyland toolrooms together rather than as part of plant-plant bargaining.

They say either the workers end the strike now, or they will be out of work. The most cynical expression of this blackmailing line came from Callaghan when he said, "The greatest differential of all is between a man in a job and a man out of one, and some of the Leyland workers may be out of one".

The workers have stood solid against such threats since 11th February. But what is the truth behind the threats?

Almost certainly there will be no closure, no break up of the company, no plant shut-down, and no hiving off. Leyland is too import-

ant a company for British capitalism, even if it is making losses, for it to be shut down.

But if there is a plan to shut the firm down, then the workers should know about it.

Even Harry Urwin, the deputy general secretary of the T&CWU, who sits tamely on the National Enterprise Board, has complained about 'the amount of information about the company which the NEB members had to regard as classified and commercially sensitive'. It is time that the workers knew the facts.

Instead of Eddie McGarry repeating, after the

Cars Council meeting, that "they're not kidding", he and the stewards should organise committees of investigation from the shop floor. They should inquire into every aspect of the company's affairs, its finances, its procedures, and its relations with the State and other companies.

There should be no business secrets. That secrecy only means a veil drawn over what the workers need to know.

What would such an in-

vestigation reveal? Bankruptcy? Of course, it will reveal a company whose share of the home market is declining, and which has been rescued from the bankruptcy that its previous owners had led it to.

But investigation would also reveal the necessity, not of closure, but of expropriation of the entire motor industry, from showrooms to component firms.



CONT'D ON BACK PAGE

Eurocommunism: another trend in treachery

The "Eurocommunist summit" meeting of the leaders of the French, Italian and Spanish Communist Parties in Madrid last week was the official baptism of a well-established "trend" — the cautious term is insisted upon by Santiago Carrillo, General Secretary of the Spanish CP.

The declaration of the three parties neither committed itself to establishing a new movement, nor even to criticising openly the Soviet Union (though each of the parties has done that). After affirming solidarity with the struggle of Spanish democrats against the legacy of Francoism, it spoke of developing "international solidarity and friendship within a framework of independence for each party, equality of (national) rights, non-interference, respect for the freedom of each party on the basis of the conditions in each country to choose its own path and solution to the construction of a socialist society".

This incantation of national independence — the strain runs throughout — was followed by an equally incantatory commitment by the three parties to a catalogue of civil liberties and concluded with the only — indirect — reference to the situation within the Soviet Union: "The communists of France, Spain and Italy attach the greatest importance to the complete implementation by all states of all the details of the last section of the Helsinki agreement."

OO

What does define "Eurocommunism" and what distinguishes it from the opportunism of those parties who loyally follow every dot and comma of the Moscow line? If one is to believe the CPSU, the Eurocommunists do not accept the revolutionary Marxist doctrine of the state: "Experience has shown", lectures Pravda in an oblique reference to the meeting which the Russian press has uniformly failed to report, "that it is impossible to create socialism within the framework of the bourgeois state. History offers us numerous examples of which Chile is only the latest... Peaceful violence (sic!) is inevitable in the course of the transition from capitalism to socialism."

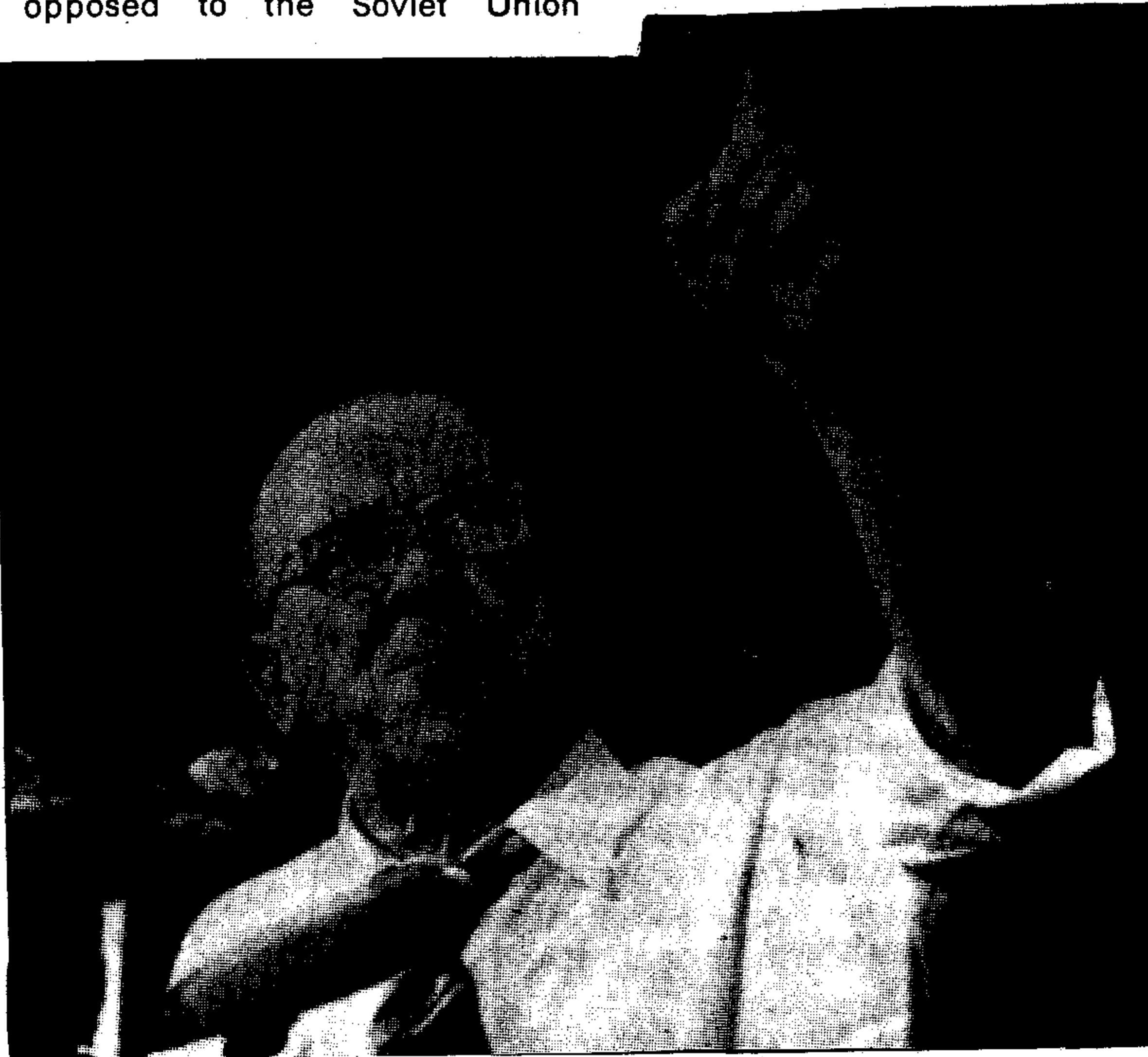
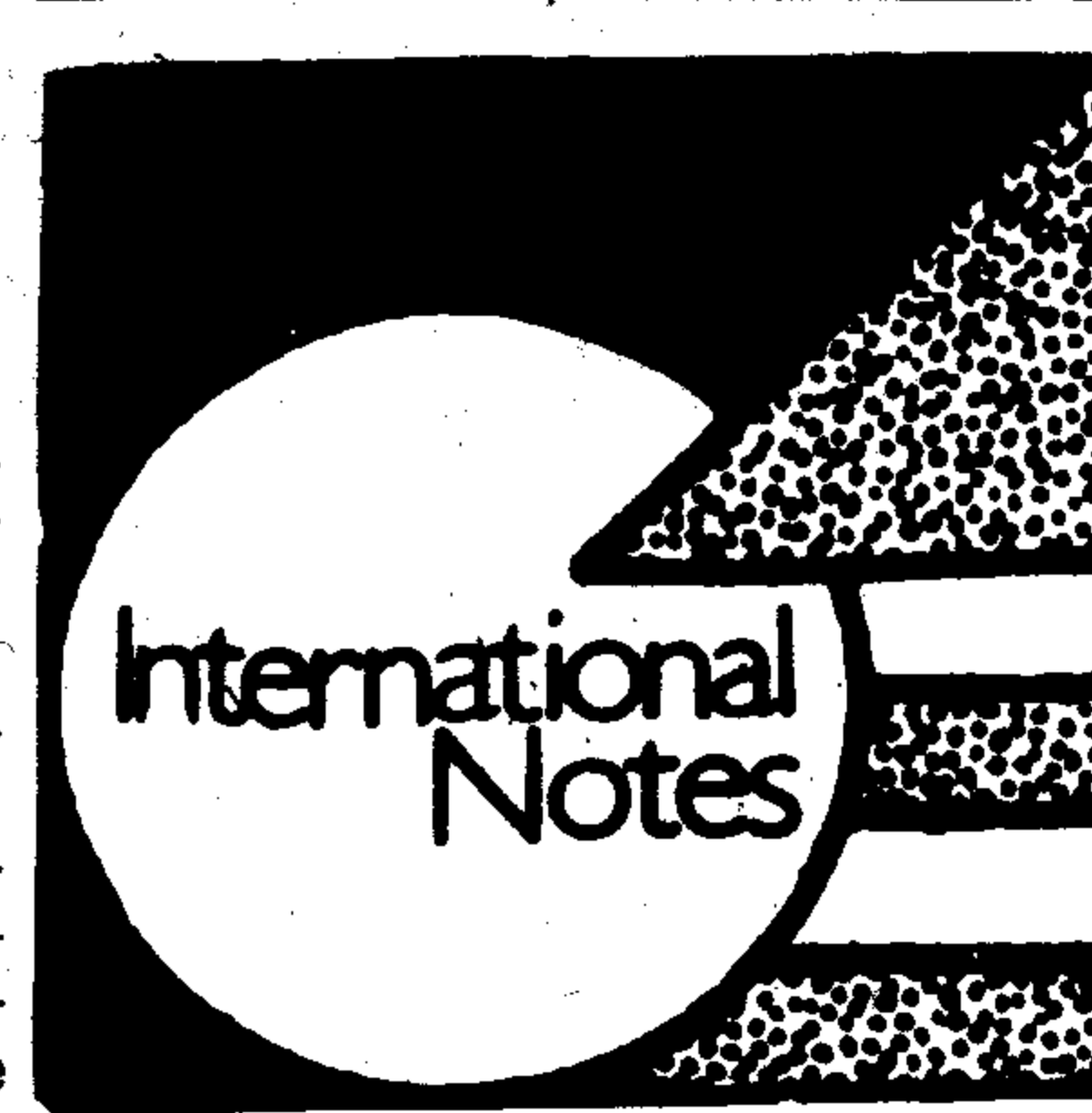
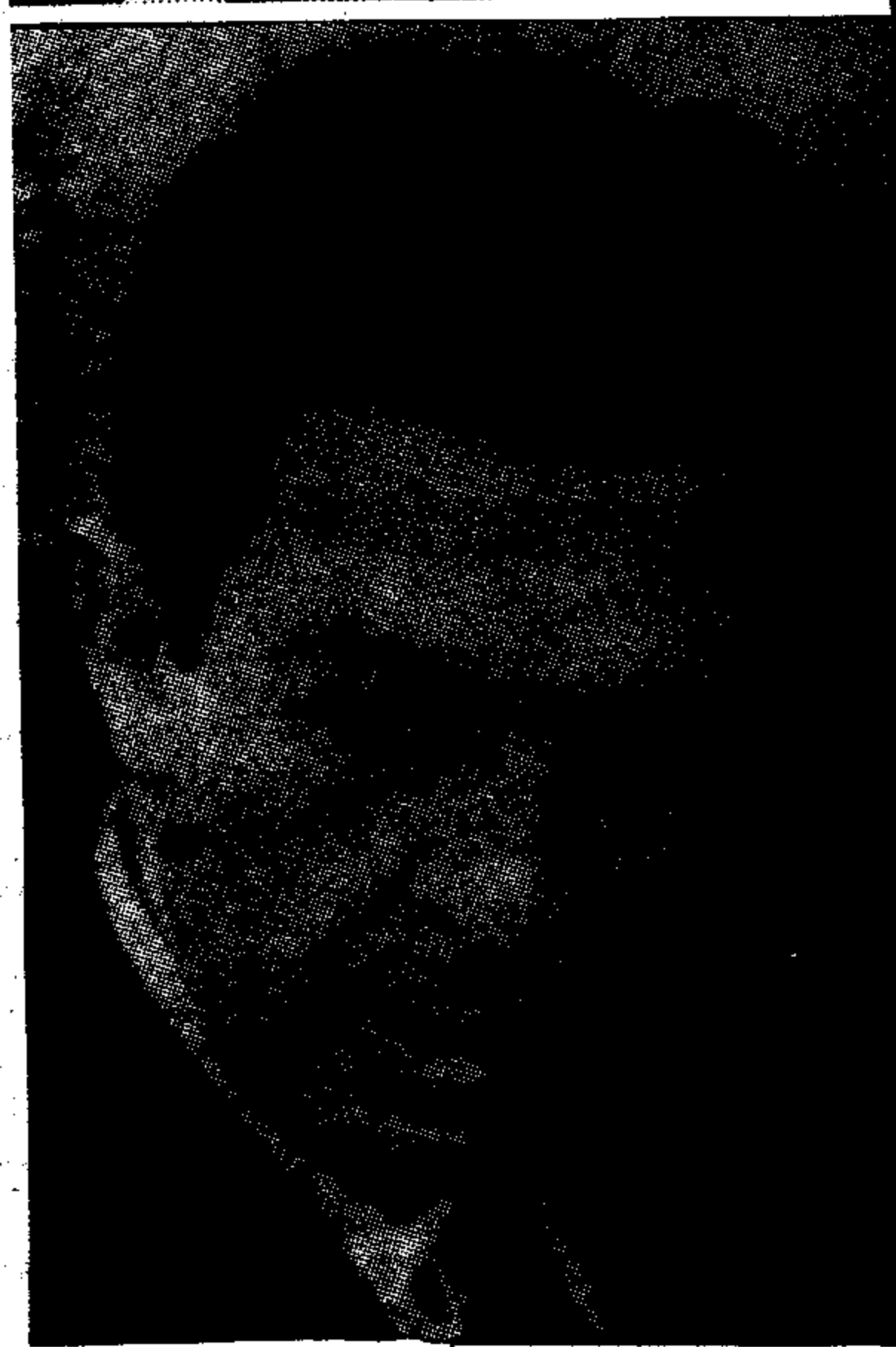
Of course, it is true that the Eurocommunists do not accept the Marxist doctrine of the state or the dictatorship of the proletariat. But then neither does the CPSU.

What the Eurocommunists represent is the victory within certain Stalinist Parties of national adaptation. Hence the insistent references to each party's independence. For instance, Humanite, the

paper of the PCF, commented, "Without doubt each of these parties has come to define its path, the conditions of its struggle, quite independently. Without doubt, the situations in the respective countries are different and the approaches to problems will therefore sometimes differ."

This nationalist orientation is not new; what is relatively new, however, is its dominance over the

parties' ties to Moscow. This division is clearest in Greece where there are two CPs officially referred to as the Communist Party of the Exterior (pro-Moscow) and the Communist Party (Interior) which allied with the Italian CP. And its sharpest expression is the willingness of the French, Italian, or Spanish CPs to support NATO — that is, a military bloc directly opposed to the Soviet Union



The leaders of 'Eurocommunism': Carrillo [below], Marchais [top left], and Berlinguer [bottom left].

Soares tours Europe's capitals for support

"EUROPE IS WITH US" was one of the main slogans of the Portuguese Socialist Party in 1975 and 1976. It was certainly true, in its own way; the Social-Democratic Parties of Europe, and especially of Germany, gave lavish aid to the SP while NATO armed forces made their own, parallel, preparations to keep the militancy of the Portuguese working class under control.

SP leader Mario Soares is now hoping that "Europe" is still with him. On his current tour of European capitals he is expected to present Portugal's formal application for EEC membership. So far the new EEC Commissioner Roy Jenkins has welcomed the application.

Soares is backing up the application with a wide-ranging series of austerity measures in Portugal, announced at the end of February. Combining a

15% devaluation with strict pay controls, these measures are calculated to drive down real wages and to satisfy the International Monetary Fund, from whom Portugal is seeking a loan.

The question is how far the EEC countries' interest in restoring capitalist stability in Portugal will outweigh their reluctance to bring into the EEC an ailing economy with unemployment unofficially at 25%.

The still-seething working-class opposition to the Soares government, expressed in industrial action by building workers, textile workers and printers, and reflected in opposition by the Communist Party and the liberal-bourgeois PSD to Soares' austerity package, is the most powerful incentive for the EEC to agree to Soares' request. But even that agreement may not be enough to save Soares.

Anti-Irish law renewed again

On Wednesday 9th March the Prevention of Terrorism Act is due to be renewed by Parliament for a third year.

In the immediate aftermath of the Birmingham bombings in November 1974, when the Act was first rushed through, there was not sufficient resistance to record a single vote in Parliament against it. "Support for the IRA" was outlawed; the police were allowed to detain people for seven days without charge; and the Home Secretary gained the power of arbitrary exclusion orders against Irish people in Britain.

In the following months, opposition began to surface. The T&G WU Executive Committee, in March 1975, decided to call on the union's sponsored MPs to vote against renewal of the Act. When renewal came up, on 19th May, there were 12 MPs voting against it.

But now the Act is gradually becoming, not an emergency measure, but standard law. 2,251 people have been detained under the Act over the last 2½ years; of those 105 have been charged with criminal offences. In May one man was sentenced under the Act to six months imprisonment and a £400 fine — for selling a poster.

81 people have been deported under the Act.

Hammersmith Trades Council support helped James O'Rourke to win an appeal against an exclusion order, and Bletchley Trades Council helped to secure Joe Gallagher's release after he had been arrested under the Act. No mass campaign against the Act has yet appeared, and as yet only small forces are committed to support the demonstration against the Act called for 27th March (2pm, Shepherds Bush Green). That support must grow!

On 19th March there will be another demonstration to block a repressive law; in this case, the Criminal Trespass Bill. Under this Bill trespass becomes a criminal rather than a civil offence. Anyone illegally occupying premises will be liable to six months in prison, while anyone who uses force to enter premises with intent to occupy them is liable to two years. Conspiracy to commit either offence is liable to any sentence, at the discretion of the judge.

Huge demos
call on Labour
to break
apartheid links



'Victory to the freedom fighters!' was the cry on the 5,000 strong South Africa solidarity demonstration in London last Sunday.

AS PHASE 2 of the Social Contract draws to an end, 1977 is expected to be the fourth year in succession that personal consumption will be below the level of 1973. The Social Contract has been the framework for serious slashing of wages and a massive increase in unemployment. 15% inflation is one indication that it hasn't even begun to solve the problems of the capitalist system.

That there can now be any expectation that the Social Contract will reach Phase 3 is entirely due to the willingness of the trade union bureaucrats still to play ball with the Government, and the inability of the working class to find a way round the bureaucrats.

The union leaders were, after all, the architects of the Social Contract.

Fleecing

But no-one — neither bosses nor bureaucrats — is clear as to how to continue the Social Contract. They know what they want. But the employers are leery about settling for a new "formula" when the union leaders may not be able to control the rank and file. And working class militants are increasingly unwilling to submit to a new round of wage fleecing.

That is the message spelled out with mounting urgency and force by the Leyland strikers, the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions conference, and the avalanche of anti-Social Contract resolutions that has piled up for union conferences.

So the cry goes up for price controls.



McLennan

Price controls in 1975 helped sell the crucial Phase 1 of Social Contract wage limits. Of course they did little to maintain working-class living standards. But that was never their purpose. Nor is it their purpose now. They are intended to gull workers into abandoning the self-reliance that is being re-born in wage struggles, and to look instead to a new arrangement with the Government. It is demanded that the Government should, once again, "control" prices. The TUC demands it, Jack Jones writes in the Financial Times to demand it.

And the Communist Party demands it.

The CP's role can be important in determining

whether the Government can deliver what the bosses want. For if in straight politics the Communist Party is the despised and Stalinist-tainted weakling of British reformism, in industry the CP is sometimes the essential force for reformist deals — the left-reformist fall-back. It makes left noises, but still collaborates.

Thus, the CP-led Broad Left in the AUEW, which is nominally opposed to the Social Contract, is pushing for president of the AUEW Bob Wright, who accepts it, and is allied with Hugh Scanlon, one of its architects.

Price controls is the key 'immediate' demand in the minimum programme of the CP, published for the 'Morning Star' Rally and the LCDTU conference. The 'Morning Star' quoted CP general secretary Gordon McLennan summarising that programme:

"A six month ban on price increases [to be followed by price controls]; the restoration of cuts in

public spending; an end to the export of capital; the introduction of import controls; an extension of public ownership, including banks and insurance; and a cut in arms expenditure"

Two days earlier the 'Morning Star' had listed the programme in detail under the headline, "How to stitch up the hole in your pocket".

Below the article citing McLennan, the 'Morning Star's' editorial rightly castigated the TUC Economic Review for dodging "the central issue that faces trade unionists today... pay policy". It would be more to the point if they had castigated Mr McLennan for dodging the issue: his minimum programme ignores the matter entirely.

Instead McLennan focuses on price controls.

Price controls, like everything else in the CP's programme, are a policy to unite left Parliamentarians and left trade union leaders — definitely not a policy for the action of the masses of working people. To the degree that militants agree with it, it will convince them to rely on the trade union bureaucrats and capitalist state action.

Prices are largely determined by the world market and a national government can exert only limited control. A government managing a capitalist economy also faces the fact that prices do regulate profits and investment, which are



Editorial

DON'T FALL FOR JONES MIRAGE

Rising wages must beat rising prices

central to the mechanics of the capitalist market system. It cannot seriously regulate prices without disrupting that system. Price controls are therefore marginal, paid for from revenues, and used to cement deals with the trade union bureaucracy.

The price control demand is either a mystified demand that the Labour Government overturn capitalism, or plain nonsense. The only control over prices is to insist on keeping wages at least level with them, through agreements guaranteeing regular increases to keep pace with the cost of living (a 'sliding scale'). That is something the working class can start fighting for now.

Hot air

If we suppose the Labour Government were to set about serious price controls, trying to work the capitalist system on the basis of pretending that it is a different system, that the working class already controls the economy, it would disrupt and cripple capitalist operations and provoke a Chile-type backlash.

The mobilisation of the working class to fight for a sliding scale of wages would simultaneously be a mobilisation to fight off attacks on the working class, to smash the bourgeois state, and to replace it with a workers' state. The

CP programme would, however, cripple the system without preparing the working class to fight off the backlash and overthrow it.

The only reason it is not a kamikaze programme is that it is hot air and flak. It is neither the basis for bureaucratic action, nor working class action.

On the contrary, it is a basis for licensing and dis-infecting a new bureaucratic deal with the Government, trying to subdue the wages issue by focusing on token price controls.

The rest of the CP's programme is not even coherent.

The problem of reducing the balance of payments deficit would only be a working class problem with a workers' state. Under the existing system, "ending export of capital" would in any case not add to Britain's riches, but cut into the income of the country.

The demand to "direct funds lying idle" into industry most clearly begs the question that hovers over the whole undigested 'minimum programme' — ownership and control. For whether that investment would produce exploitation — that is, capitalist industrial relations — or not, would be determined by which class ruled, the working class or the capitalists.

The programme assumes that the state is neutral, that it can be transformed

gradually, that the overthrow of the capitalists and their state is not a precondition for working-class socialism.

The CP thinks that its 'minimum programme' would "start a process of shifting the balance of wealth in favour of the working people"; that it would, 'as such', "bring about far-reaching social changes and open the way to a Socialist Britain".

'As such' this programme could only come about through action by a blundering government which saw itself as outside the class struggle. It could only end in a capitalist backlash. And if the working class had been following the CP's thinking, and believed that this sort of programme served its interests, the backlash would catch the working class unawares.

Treachery

But the absurdity of the programme is one thing — the practical meaning of the CP demands, here and now, is another.

To demand exactly what the trade union bureaucracy need to ride the wage storm is conscious treachery, gilded by social demagoguery. If not for the key position of the CP, it would be just empty and foolish words. Now, they are treacherous words, which will help disorientate militant workers.

Will the wages revolt be disoriented, or will it break the Social Contract limits? The conference called by the Leyland Combine Committee for April 3rd will be decisive.



Militants should fight for the Conference to adopt the following policies as the basis for a fightback:

Automatic cost of living wage increases, £1 for every 1% rise in the index; and monitoring of the index by working-class organisations. Full support for battles for straight wage rises.

Against unemployment — work-sharing, under workers' control, and with no loss of pay. Nationalisation without compensation of firms declaring large-scale redundancies.

Against the cuts — Labour councils should refuse to make the cuts, and instead stop making interest payments. Nationalisation without compensation of the banks and financial institutions.

Demand that the Labour Government breaks from the bosses and the bankers and carries out these measures. The organisation and mobilisation of the rank and file of the trade unions and the Labour Party is the only way to give us the power to impose our demands on the Labour government & the strength to defend ourselves when the Labour leaders renege and betray.

ITALY — CLASS COLLABORATION

THE UNIONS AND THE FACTORY COUNCILS

THE TRADE UNION SPLIT [of 1948, into the CP-led CGIL, the Socialist UIL, and the Christian CISL], was followed by a violent repressive offensive on the part of the Italian bosses, who literally chased the trade union movement out of the factories. The unions then adopted a territorial structure, with the trade union leagues and the Chambers of Labour, and was no longer represented in the factories except by internal commissions with no negotiating power and without links with the workers...

Negotiations were carried on between union confederations and the bosses in each sector of industry, but no instrument of daily defence of the workers against all the expressions of exploitation in the factory (speed-up, piece-work, grading, etc) existed.

In the '60s... negotiating powers were gained at factory level, together with the establishment of workplace trade union branches.

But the struggles of 1969 led to a qualitative step forward in this process. As Vittorio Foa explains: "The upsurge of struggle in 1968 put trade union unity with its feet on the ground, by entrusting the workers themselves with its construction. Before, the workers generally followed the directives (and thus also the divisions) coming from the provincial and national leaderships. Now the workers decided on their own demand and looked after the running of their struggles. Unity in the factory rapidly became trade union unity..."

This drive for democracy and unity was expressed by the election of delegates [shop stewards] coming from each group of workers and responsible to it... There was thus created a network of worker representatives responsible solely to the workers and not to the trade union leaderships, overturning all the schemas of the trade union bureaucracies. The metalworkers' federations of the three trade union confederations were the quickest to under-

stand this movement and to base themselves on it to build a powerful trade union movement. They were the first to fuse at the top, giving birth to the FLM, the Metal Workers' Federation. But the dissolution of the three federations (FIOM, FIM, UILM) was subordinated to the realisation of the unification of the whole movement.

As from 1971, trade union fusion was systematically impeded by the trade union leaderships. The CISL and the UIL, being in a minority, were afraid of passing under Communist control. As for the CGIL, it was wary above all of the powerful stimulus to struggle that this unification would represent, and, in the PCI's perspective of alliances, it had a special interest in maintaining a Christian union like the CISL, representing the "popular base" of Christian Democracy. Trade union unity was thus put off to the Greek Kalends, and was replaced by the federal pact signed on 24 July 1972, giving birth to the CGIL-CISL-UIL federation, which functions with veto rights for each confederation...

... the factory councils have been at the head of the response to the "stangata" (the austerity plan), in October and now. They have promoted a very lively debate in factory assemblies, passing dozens of motions condemning the trade union line and demanding a national assembly [of councils]. Likewise the re-election of delegates, at the beginning of December, expressed this political ferment at rank and file level. On the one hand, the participation in the elections was the largest in recent years, showing all the value that the workers attach to their unitary representation. On the other hand, the number of non-union delegates increased [the delegates are elected by all workers, unionised and non-union] and there were changes in the political relation of forces in the councils [with an increase in the forces to the left of the CP]...

from 'Rouge', 10-11 Feb. 1977



STRIKE WAVE SAVES INDEX-LINKED PAY RISES

by Colin Foster

ITALY IS the one country of the EEC economically sicker than Britain. Unemployment is two million and inflation is running at 20%. The Italian government desperately needs the loans of \$530 million from the International Monetary Fund and \$500 million from the EEC which it is applying for.

As a condition for its loan, the IMF demands a drastic reduction of labour costs in Italy. The Christian Democratic government of Giulio Andreotti first set its sights on ending or curtailing Italy's "sliding scale of wages".

This "sliding scale" provides for automatic increases in wages every three months in line with the Government cost-of-living index. Despite its inadequacies — no monitoring of the cost-of-living index by the workers' organisations, no back-dating of the increase — it gives Italian workers some protection against inflation.

Luciano Lama, general secretary of the main trade union confederation, the CP-led CGIL, at first favoured conceding to Andreotti on this point — for example, by agreeing to increases every six months instead of every three months. A major wave of strikes in October blocked this notion, and both Socialist Party trade union leaders and CP union leaders other than Lama declared that the "sliding scale" could not be given up. They agreed, however, that Italian workers should pay for the capitalist crisis in some other way.

On 11th November Andreotti issued an ultimatum to

the unions. Either the unions come to an agreement with the employers on reducing labour costs, or the Government would impose wage-cutting measures. He offered the unions and the CP responsibility without power — and they accepted.

On 27th January, the unions came up with a scheme — cutting seven days a year of public holidays, cutting the above-the-odds sliding scale payments which chemical and bank workers were getting, cutting retirement pensions, a drive against absenteeism, and increased labour mobility.

Proudly, they announced that this would cut labour costs by 10 to 15%. The Government quickly ratified the agreement.

The strength of working-class opposition to the scrapping of the sliding scale, in Italy as in Holland recently, refutes those (like the SWP/IS in Britain) who argue that the sliding scale saps working-class militancy. In periods of high inflation, the sliding scale is the most elementary unifying demand which asserts the will of the working class not to pay the cost of capitalism's crisis.

However, the Italian ruling class is not likely to leave

the matter there. In early February, the Government announced increases in indirect taxes that will cost workers about £20 per head per year. Further attacks of the sliding scale are almost certain.

The Government is now moving to freeze all wage negotiations at factory level. The factory council of the huge FIAT-Mirafiori works passed this resolution: "The Mirafiori factory council reaffirms the judgment it has expressed on the recent Government measures and considers them quite unacceptable... It demands a general initiative of struggle which unites and leads forward the initiatives taken in different sectors recently..."

A general strike, to smash the austerity plan and bring down the Andreotti government, is what that 'general initiative' would have to be. To open up revolutionary perspectives for this general strike, it would have to be linked to the coordination and extension of the factory councils, as the basis for workers' government resting not on Parliamentary manoeuvres but on extra Parliamentary struggle



Brian Faulkner trampled a second time

VIRTUALLY the sole event in the north of Ireland reported extensively in the British press last week was a non-event. Brian Faulkner, ex-Prime Minister of Northern Ireland, was killed in a fall from his horse while out hunting with the East Down Hunt last Thursday.

But Faulkner had already

been thrown and trampled to death politically in 1974 by the Orange mob whose bigotry he had successfully ridden all his political life.

Brian Faulkner was a typical product of the Orange capitalist ascendancy of the Six Counties of Northern Ireland. He was the son of a clothier in Cookstown, Co.

Tyrone, who went into business and politics on his own account, becoming a member of the Orange Order, the Apprentice Boys of Derry and the elite Royal Black Institution, MP in Northern Ireland from 1949, on, Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Commerce.

His whole political career was directed to the maintenance, servicing and exploitation of religious and political differences within the Six County working class. In July 1956 he reminded Orange employers that when their fellow Orangemen were out of a job "they should regard it as their responsibility to find them work".

Yet even this regard for fellow Orangemen was eclipsed by his devotion to the union with Britain, as he explained in July 1960. "No matter what social problems may arise from time to time in Northern Ireland, the paramount aim should always be to see that the Union flag flies unmolested and that the Border is maintained... We have often been accused by our opponents and even by some within our own party of flag-waving and playing up the Border issue. I personally make no excuse for doing this".

As Premier after 1970, Faulkner introduced internment without trial in August 1971, an action which re-

sulted in the arrest and torture of many innocent people.

With a world-wide outcry over the shooting-down of 13 unarmed civilians in Derry in 1972, Britain decided on a drastic root-and-branch approach in the Six Counties and abolished the Six County parliament, replacing Stormont with direct rule. Faulkner emerged in this period as the chief defender of British and international capital in the North.

Faulkner fought an election in 1973 promising that he would never share power with "Republicans" (that is with 6-County Catholic politicians). Holding two-thirds of Orange votes in the elec-

WHILE JUNTA WAITS IN THE WINGS



Immediately revolutionaries in Italy can demand that the CP and SP bring down the Government by voting against it in Parliament, and form a government based on the workers' organisations.

The 1,700,000-member strong Italian Communist Party, however, not only refuses to engage in revolutionary struggle against the Andreotti government; it does not even go so far as ordinary bourgeois parliamentary opposition.

Since 1948 Italy has been governed by the Christian Democratic Party, usually in coalition with a variety of smaller parties. The problem of finding viable coalitions has become sharper and sharper in recent years as the Communist Party vote has steadily increased. In the last general election, in June 1976, the Communist Party got 34% of the votes (as against 27% in 1972), and the Christian Democracy 39% (the same as in 1972).

The Italian ruling class, together with its creditors and paymasters in the USA, is still unwilling to see the CP in the government. They fear that the workers supporting the CP would expect too much from a government including "one of their comrades".

Almost certainly, within the coming years, it will be necessary to bring the CP

into government.

The government formed after last June's elections is a Christian Democratic minority government, which can only survive by the Communist Party and the Socialist Party agreeing to abstain rather than vote against it. If the CP and SP voted against the government, they could very quickly bring it down and force a place in the new government for themselves. All this would not go one inch beyond bourgeois Parliamentary manoeuvring. So eager is the CP, however, to prove its respectability as a potential coalition partner for the Christian Democrats (Italy's party of big business!) that they continue to keep Andreotti in power.

The CP's policy is based on what they consider to be the "lessons of Chile". The Popular Unity in Chile, they believe, went too much to the left, and isolated itself too much from the bourgeois forces like Chile's Christian Democrats. The Italian CP thus arrives at the remarkable conclusion that it is too risky to advance to socialism except... in close alliance with the bourgeoisie!

So as further to demonstrate its responsibility, the Italian CP has explicitly supported NATO, and even had a former NATO commander on their slate in last June's election.

But the genuine lessons of Chile, concerning the inevitability of violent action by the bourgeois state against any movement threatening its vital interests, are far from irrelevant to Italy. The fascist movement in Italy, although currently in decline, is one of the largest in Europe, and influential inside the armed forces. A military coup is a medium-term alternative for the bourgeoisie, instead of or after CP involvement in the government.



The major organisations to the left of the CP, grouped together for last June's elections under the banner of "Democrazia Proletaria", are failing to rise to the situation. On the contrary, they are in chaos. Lotta Continua's last congress ended without any political decisions being taken. After a long crisis, the PdUP finally split at the end of February. The right-wing majority, round Magri and Rossanda (which, for example, opposes calling on the CP to vote against the Christian Democrats!) will probably unite with the minority of Avanguardia Operaia (round Campi), while the PdUP minority is likely to link up with the AO majority.



ion, he double-crossed his supporters and assumed leadership of the ill-fated "power-sharing executive" in 1973.

The Ulster Workers' Council stoppage in 1974 was the answer of Orange work-

ers who felt Faulkner had double-crossed them. It brought down the Executive. This episode gave Faulkner a phony reputation as a "statesman" and a "liberal", and the reward of a peerage in this year's New Year Honours List.

Meanwhile the state of the Six Counties remains as miserable as ever; and the British press is as silent as ever. The British Army, RUC and paramilitary Orangemen carry out the same sickening repression and terror. British troops still act as a regular army of occupation. Recently, in a typical case which untypically came to court, five soldiers of the Black Watch were convicted

of planting bullets on civilians and assaulting them.

A pernicious form of internment still exists under the guise of detention: suspects can be sentenced to prison for long periods by special courts in which the identity of those giving evidence against the accused is hidden by a curtain. Catholic areas are still being systematically terrorised by the troops, including by covert SAS activity.

It is all a fitting epitaph to Brian Faulkner, a petty Northern Ireland sectarian politician who could not even keep faith with those whose bigotry he shared and exploited.

CHRIS GRAY

THE LEFT AND THE THREAT OF ANOTHER CHILE

If the CP is leading the working class to passive submission or a new Chile, what of the forces to its left? Democrazia Proletaria's failings are specially clear on the military question.

Sometimes they talk about "breaking up the armed forces" but in their election campaign last June, they spoke of "democratic reform of the armed forces". And last October they introduced a Parliamentary Bill for that "democratic reform". [DP has six members in the Chamber of Deputies]. While calling for freedom of association inside the armed forces and the election of soldiers' delegates, the Bill also states: "The tasks of the 'representative organs' are linked to the military decisions of Parliament"; and "It is forbidden for soldiers to be involved outside their duty with matters than concern military secrets".

"THE PARLIAMENTARY BILL on the Armed Forces was presented by Gorla (Avanguardia Operaia), Milani (PdUP) and Pinto (Lotta Continua) and published in 'Quotidiano dei Lavoratori' of 29 October... Right from the first article we are struck by the naively nationalistic tone of the whole draft. The first article begins, in fact with the affirmation that "the defence of peace and of national independence is the sacred duty of every citizen, and it is an inalienable and indispensable right to hold the means for its fulfilment".

Yes, that is what it says. It really does speak of "national independence", "defence of peace", "sacred duty", quite in the style of the most trite rhetoric of the patriotism of the last century.

But — the perplexed reader asks himself — doesn't the de-

fence of peace, without the victory of the working class on a world scale, lead to petty bourgeois pacifism, which sees 'good' things, like peace, as the objectives of the workers' movement, and 'bad' things, like war, as the objectives of the bourgeoisie?

We can only agree with this reader and remark that peace and war mean absolutely nothing, if the class interests that lie behind these general concepts are not defined. Peace and war can be progressive or reactionary, according as to whether they are in the interest of the proletariat or of the bourgeoisie. With this line the Democrazia Proletaria should have been on the side of interventionism in the first and second world wars, defending the 'capitalist fatherland'.

Let us read further. The authors of the draft have probably read the Constitution too often and could not get out of referring to it. In any case it is often cited as a reference point, with the 'good' meaning supposed to be understood. Once again in the first Article, "The Armed Forces of the Republic are the expression of the Italian people and organise its defence..."; and, further on: "The aims of the army, the navy and the air force are, under the authority of the directives which are in accordance with the military and political decisions of Parliament, to assure the defence of the institutions freely established by the Italian people"....

What sense is there in talking of the Armed Forces as an expression of the people, when it is used exclusively for class aims — like imperialist war, the suppression of strikes inside the country, and strikebreaking... from 'La Classe', Dec. 1976



WORKERS' ACTION supporters' groups

BANGOR, BIRMINGHAM, BRISTOL, CAMBRIDGE, CARDIFF, CHESTER, COVENTRY, EDINBURGH, HUDDERSFIELD, LEICESTER, LIVERPOOL, LONDON, MANCHESTER, MIDDLESBROUGH, NEWCASTLE, NEWTOWN, NORTHAMPTON, NOTTINGHAM, READING, ROCHDALE, SHEFFIELD, STAFFORD, STOKE.

Write for details of meetings and activities to:
WASG, 49 Carnac Street, London SE27

SWP — the socialist lonely-hearts club



Paul Foot appeals for members to 'link the fragments'

THE recent 'declaration' of the SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY by the International Socialists is one further step in the slide of IS into a sect totally immersed in itself and its own activities and campaigns — which, in turn, are aimed at one target: 'building the party'.

The pages of Socialist Worker are full of reports of SWP campaigns. On half a dozen major issues, there is a separate SWP campaign, justified on the boast that "the only organisation fighting racism/unemployment/for women's rights/for troops out of Ireland etc is the SWP". Even if this glib assertion was true, it would be no excuse for the SWP's practice of pretending the rest of the labour movement just doesn't exist.

Claims

In an attempt to back up Socialist Worker's extravagant claims, Paul Foot has written "Why You Should Be a Socialist", which could as well have been titled "Why You Should Join the SWP".

The case will be familiar to readers of SW. Certainly it is no less simplistic. Thus capitalism is bad because of the

Bruce Robinson reviews Paul Foot's 'Why you should be a Socialist'

greedy capitalists, who are "not people with any natural ability" (whatever that may be). Capitalists are individuals who have privileges and unearned income.

This tells us nothing about the dynamic of the capitalist system and its laws of motion — which apply whether or not the individual capitalists are greedy. Capitalists have to force down working class living standards not because they are nasty or want an extra meal at the Ritz (though both may be true) but because they are forced to do so if they are to survive the competition of other capitalists.

The same "cowboys and Indians" approach runs through the whole book. The class nature of the state is defined not according to its overall structural role of defending capitalist property and interests, but according to its leading personnel. Thus "army officers are selected for their breeding", the police "are also controlled by members of the wealthy class or by people who would like to be members of it" and the civil service is "controlled by wealthy men and women".



The general conclusion would seem to be a straight reformist one: change the personnel, and you'll have a workers' state!

At points, the simple-mindedness reaches the level of plain insult: reformist governments outside Britain are referred to as "Labour Governments", and, in a completely a-historical parallel, we are told that the Russian Mensheviks had politics "similar to those of the left wing of the British Labour Party".

One could put it all down to bad style if only the book contained a single idea of what "being a socialist" means — if it came up with any sort of even approximately right programme to take us towards a socialist society. Predictably, it doesn't. It leaves the converted to ask: "Yes, but what do I do? How do I respond to problem X, what do I tell my workmates to do about situation Y?"

Foot gives one answer to such questions. The solution for every problem and situation is — "Join the Right to Work Campaign and the SWP".

Help

So does the SWP have a political function of leadership? No. Foot defines its purpose as giving a more coherent and comprehensive form to the militancy which already exists in the trade unions. The Right to Work Campaign is there to organise "workers' representatives all across industry and the public services so that they can provide strength and confidence to fight for workers' advance in every section. Its aim is to provide help and industrial support wherever workers find themselves in conflict with their employers..."

All very nice. Just like Star Trek. But in the class struggle, strength and confidence are not all that may be needed for "workers' advance" (a nicely vague

phrase: advance to where?) In fact, strength and confidence very often ebb away because of confusion over goals or because of threats, promises or divisive ruses from the bosses. The answer is not just to say "you should be strong and confident"!

Foot's argument for the SWP itself is also purely organisational. It can perform certain technical tasks — "link the fragments" of isolated trade unionists, "pool resources and experiences", and "give every isolated socialist the confidence to organise and argue for socialist policies...", otherwise he might get fed up with people "seeing him as a bit of a crank".

Abuse

Just once does Foot depart from this "contact and information club" view of the party. Rightly, he points to the pivotal role of the revolutionary party in a revolutionary situation. In many such situations, the workers have suffered defeats because of the betrayal of their Stalinist and reformist leaderships. Thus it is necessary to win the workers from these traditional, treacherous leaderships.

But treachery and betrayal are not just personality traits any more than the state is a capitalist state because the generals went to public schools. Stalinist and centrist parties snatch defeat from potential victory because of their politics. AND SO COULD THE SWP!

The whole drift of Foot's book is that the SWP won't betray because they are better people, rather than because they have clearer or more correct politics.

One word substitutes for correct politics — confidence. The theory seems to be that the rank and file militant in industry has all the right politics. The SWP is there to give him the confidence to use them.

Foot not only shrugs off the necessity for political programmes — he heaps abuse on socialists who concern themselves with politics, descending at this point to the level of Private Eye (his previous journalistic stable). Other groups on the left are "small groups of fanatics" for whom most workers have "a healthy

contempt". Their aim, Foot tells his readers, is "theoretical purity without any contact with real life or real human conditions. So they turn in among themselves, purge themselves of deviants and pour oceans of bile on one another in order to prove their purity", says Foot, not of course pouring oceans of bile, and covering up the fact that in the last 5 years several hundred people have been purged from IS, including most of its founding members.

This section of Foot's book is so dishonest and hypocritical that it should draw angry protests from SWP members who remember the facts.

Foot projects an advertiser's image of a healthy, forward-looking party. But all he means by it is that the SWP shuns politics. When it comes to its relations with the mass party of the working class, the SWP is completely sectarian. It is also very wrong.

The Labour Party, he says, lost its 'mass campaigning focus' after 1950, once its mass vote was stable and assured. After that "the party began to focus exclusively on what was happening in Parliament."

Homely

Thus he implies that the Labour Party has undergone a major change for the worse since the War, that the PLP was not always autonomous of the rank and file, that the Party was once focused on mass struggle more than on Parliament, and that there was once a 'golden age' of pioneer socialists.

This is all absolutely elementary nonsense, as Foot very well knows. It's hard to see what purpose such deliberate miseducation is supposed to serve. Unless it is to give the impression that the SWP is no less accessible, homely and familiar than the Labour Party next door, only it's young and dynamic and willing to do "mass campaigning" if given half a chance.

Well, that's just fine, and it's better any day than the pretence that the SWP is a revolutionary party. Perhaps too that's why Foot took the title of his book from one written in the 1930s by left reformist John Strachey...

Left Labour 'regrets' drowned in nostalgia

JUDITH HART, prominent 'left wing' member of the Labour Party National Executive Committee but now once again Minister for Overseas Development, gave her views and theories on the Labour Party and socialism at a meeting in Basingstoke on Saturday 26th February. The occasion was the first public meeting to be held in the town by recently-selected Labour parliamentary candidate Bob Harris.

Judith Hart drew up no list of positive government achievements. Instead, she focused on "a very real danger from the right".

Hart's fears were concentrated on the Parliamentary Tory Party, aiming to rally people round Labour as a lesser evil. No mention was made of the National Front and other rapidly-growing fascist parties, or of Enoch Powell, whose electoral activities are conveniently restricted to Northern Ireland.

No surprise. In Basingstoke last November, Hart shared a platform with Powell in BBC radio's 'Any Questions' programme, and attacked militants who intervened to silence the racist Powell.

Hart said that the halt in the Labour Party's 'march towards socialism' in recent years

was attributable to two factors. The crisis of world capitalism makes socialist gains "not possible" at present (so, you can only overthrow capitalism when it is strong and stable?); and the "generation" of Labour Party leaders of the 1950s and 1960s were not so firmly committed to the ideas of socialism as those "coming to the fore" now, or, indeed, those "who led the party in the 1920s and 1930s".

So the true socialists of today are those who are carrying out crippling cuts in the National Health Service in the name of a Manifesto which said, "Labour created the NHS and is determined to defend it. Immense damage has been done to it by Tory cuts in public expenditure...". The socialists of the past, apparently, are those who systematically aided the defeat of the General Strike in 1926 and participated in the sell-out of Ramsay MacDonald's National Government of 1931.

And Judith Hart's answer was to elect a Labour Government committed to a Manifesto containing "socialist policies". So, in the end, we are asked to have faith in yet another manifesto from 'socialists' who are proud of the history of 1926 and 1931.

'Don't rock the boat!' Labour Left is warned

"DON'T ROCK THE BOAT" was the message from the Greater London Regional Conference of the Labour Party last weekend. Time and again delegates were told, "if we are united we can win the GLC elections in May; if not, we will lose".

The first resolution to be debated was on racialism, proposing a total ban on fascist meetings and an all-London campaign. But, as the mover, Ted Knight (Norwood CLP) pointed out, the heart of the motion was "the repeal of the 1971 Immigration Act and all other immigration controls". If we say "we are anti-racist — but", then "that but lets in every racist organisation in the country".

Nonetheless the whole section was deleted by a large majority. The carcass of the Norwood motion was then passed, but is entirely useless.

Jim Callaghan told the conference that London was "a shining example" of what could

be achieved by cooperation between national, regional and local government. As other speakers pointed out, this shining example includes a 112% rise in public transport fares in the last 18 months with more to come in July, while London Transport operates only 85% of scheduled bus services, annual rent increases, and the cutting of thousands of jobs through natural wastage.

The regional executive had failed even to bring the GLC election manifesto to conference. The issue was only discussed after an emergency resolution was put down by the South Suburban Cooperative Society, who demanded the production of a supplementary document giving the Labour Party's policy.

As a delegate from Romford CLP pointed out, the Manifesto (which commits the GLC to virtually nothing) "is contrary to the interests of the people" and will not win the election.

But the motion was still re-

jected by 256 votes to 941. That vote has made the already remote possibility of the Labour Party retaining control of the GLC remoter still. Already 8 CLPs have refused to accept the Manifesto and have decided to fight on the basis of conference policy.

An emergency resolution from Norwood, Hackney Central and Richmond Labour Parties opposing the witchhunt and demanding the disbanding of the NEC sub-committee on Reg Underhill's report, was defeated 494-628 on a card vote, despite the support of the T&GWU, APEX, UPW, and London Co-Op block votes.

Many delegates clearly thought that the Underhill allegations should be looked into, although they were against witchhunts. But, as Workers' Action supporter Simon Temple argued in moving the resolution, "The witchhunt has already begun. In some parties the right of left-wingers to membership is being questioned. For many the Underhill report is already established fact".

The widely-reported victory of the Left in the elections for the regional executive is hollow given the policies adopted by the conference. Even the open racist Robert Mellish was given a standing ovation by most delegates when he retired as regional chairman.

Ray Saunders

Wildts workers: We shall overcome

MARCHING BEHIND the banners of Leicester Trades Council and AUEW, and singing "We Shall Not Be Moved", the Wildts workers demonstrated their determination to win the fight against redundancies.

As they passed the front offices of this Bentley group factory, the workers jeered defiantly at the management.

A mass meeting overwhelmingly decided to continue the strike, now in its third week. Packed into the hall of a local working men's club, the workforce, consisting of AUEW, APEX, TASS and ASTMS members, listened to the works convenor outline the history of the dispute as the stewards' committee saw it. It was, he argued, a fight against all redundancies and against all attempts to smash the strong organisation within the factory.

What a defeat would mean is spelled out in the minutes of the main Sears Holding board meeting obtained during the occupation. They tell of management's de-

light in having broken the strength of other factories in the Bentley group. They boast that £25 wage cuts can now be implemented. The minutes show that they want Wildts to be a replica.

Voluntary redundancies, especially must be opposed. They mean breaking the unity of the strike; and all redundancies, voluntary or otherwise, are jobs lost, in a city with 12,000 unemployed.

Support for the Wildts dispute has been coming in from up and down the country. This needs to be stepped up. Speakers should be invited to address mass meetings and large donations should be secured.

All this is elementary solidarity action. The Wildts workers need it now, and demand it as a basic right from all militant workers.

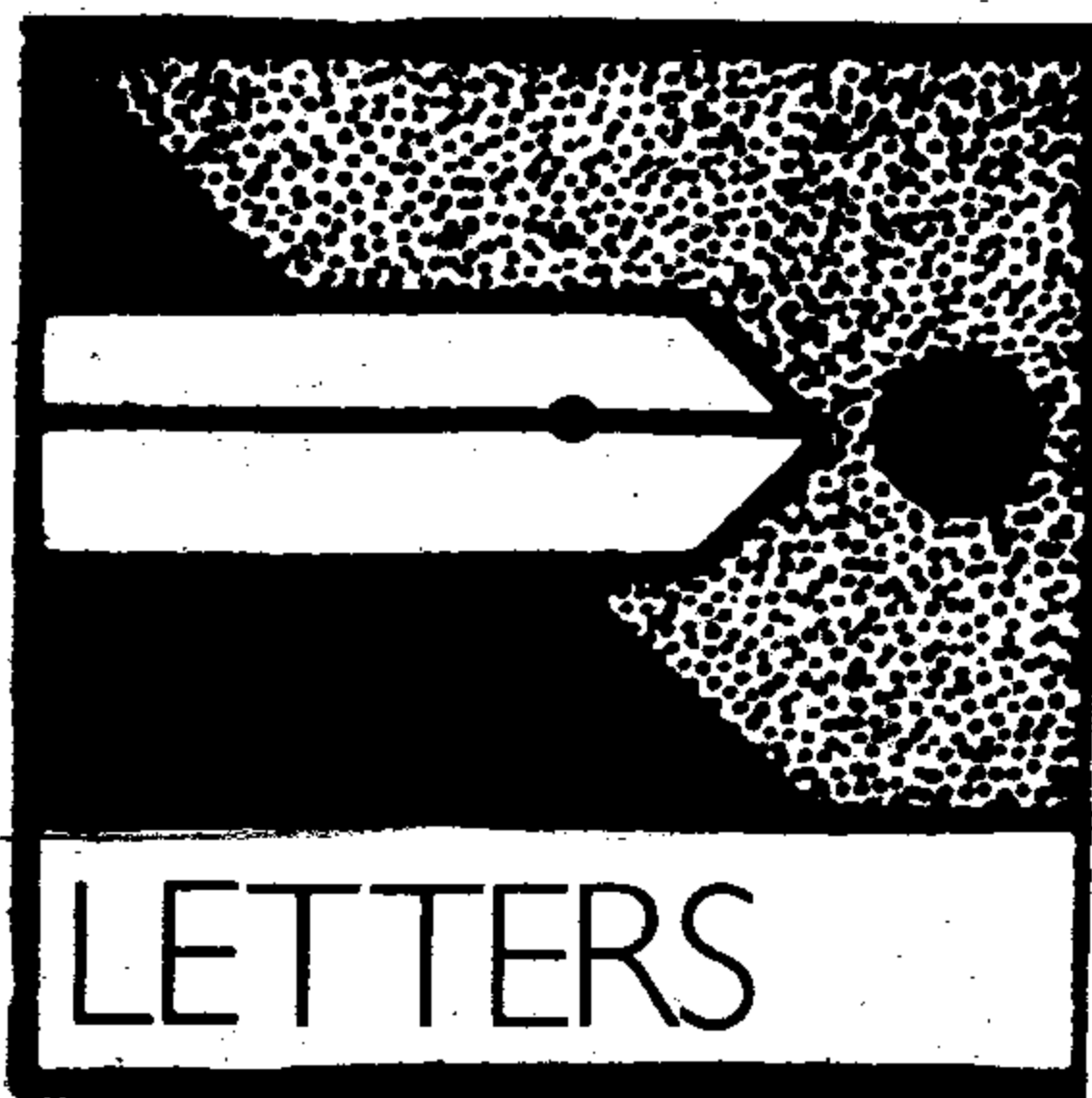
However, more is needed. This single initiative against redundancies needs to be developed. As the leaflet produced by 'Rebel' supporters in the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment argues, "The Wildts occupation has focused the attention of the whole Leicester labour movement. At the same time as giving full support to Wildts, the YCAU must show how to develop this single initiative into a broad-based campaign against unemployment.

"This could be done by the YCAU organising groups of unemployed workers to visit factories, leafletting the workforce and addressing mass meetings. We must urge workers to follow the example of Wildts. In addition we must argue for work-sharing with no loss of pay... and systematically reducing the number of hours worked, with no reduction in wages..."

The demands for the Wildts dispute remain: No redundancies; no plant closures. Messages of support and donations should be sent to D. Billington, 2 Granby Rd, Leicester.

STEVE PUNTER

Tikkoo: hit him where it hurts



Dear comrades,

I WOULD LIKE to make a few comments on your front page article about the storming of the Globtik Venus.

It is true that the response of organised trade unionists has been magnificent. In Cardiff 18 seamen were signed on to join the ship, but were stopped by the prompt action of the local branch of the National Union of Seamen. A union official was even sent down to the bus station to meet a coach sent by Tikkoo to pick the men up, in case anyone

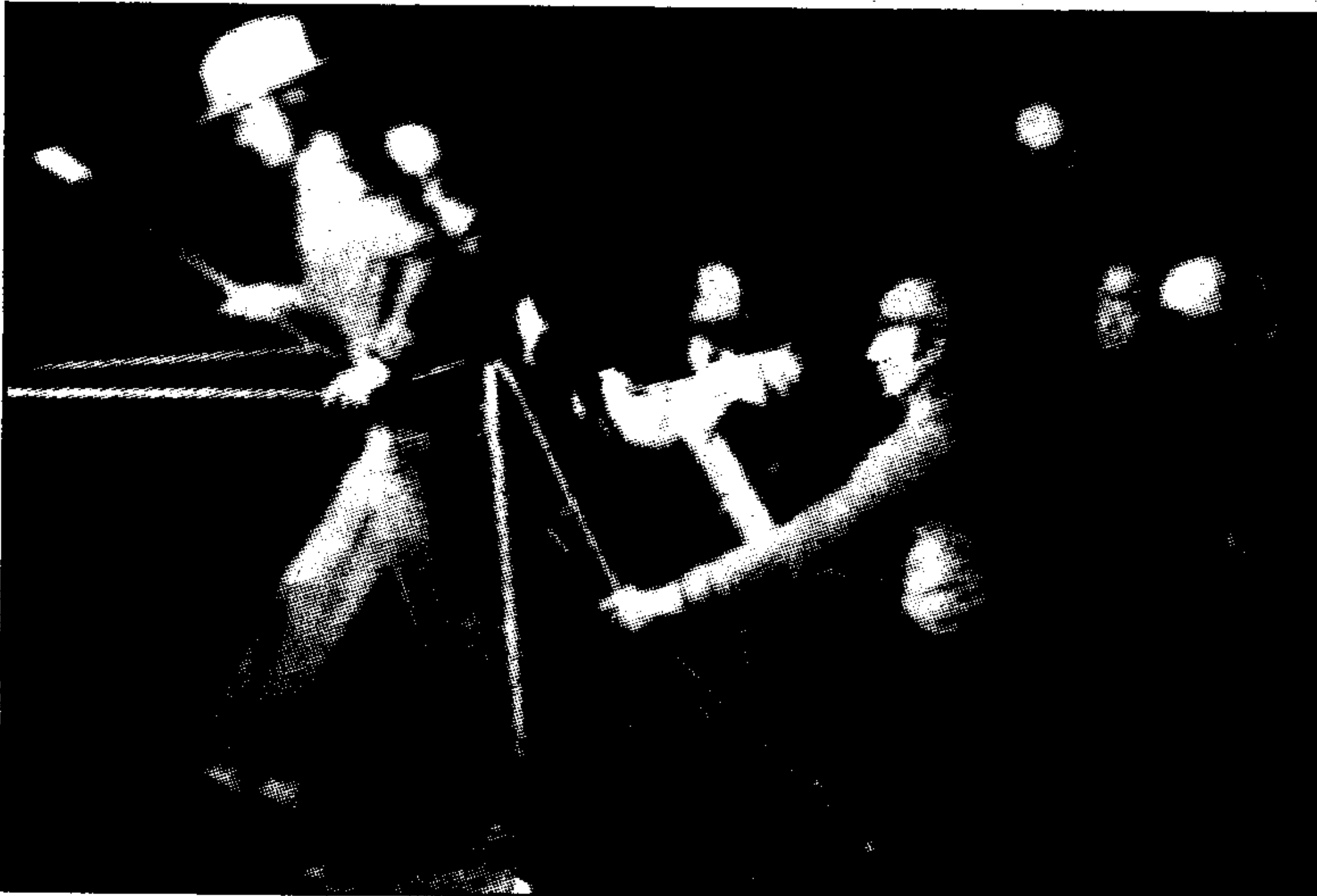
slipped through.

The response of the French unions in refusing to unload the oil, thus keeping the ship in port, was also impressive.

But a question that hasn't really been asked is, why did the situation arise in the first place? Jim Slater, our union's General Secretary, may have described the incident as "a day of shame for British shipping", but equally shameful is the fact that such wide differentials exist between the wages of European and Asian workers. The Filipino crew were getting \$197 a month, whereas European seamen at the moment get \$507.

That our union should have tolerated this for so long, and even profited from it with handouts from the bosses, should be a source of shame for every member.

The union has recently decided to end its support for this blatant racial discrimination. We must make sure that the solidarity shown to the crew of the Globtik Venus is used to fight every case of discrimination we can find. And we must insist that equal pay is not used as an excuse by the bosses to



sack large numbers of seamen who are employed at the moment as cheap labour.

As for Mr Tikkoo, I agree that all his ships should be immediately blacked. We've got to hit him where it hurts, in the pocket.

Tikkoo has announced to the press that he intends to leave the country.

I doubt if any seaman will weep at that. But stay or go, we should demand that the Labour Government takes over all his assets without compensation and puts them in the control of the workforce. That's the best way to safeguard our jobs and conditions.

Geoff Williams [NUS, Cardiff]

Socialist teachers chase false unity

150 attended the Socialist Teachers' Alliance conference last weekend, 5th-6th March. The International Marxist Group and the Workers' Socialist League were the main political forces represented, besides Workers' Action supporters and other Labour Party members.

This conference had been designated by last November's founding assembly of the STA to discuss a programme of action. Resolutions were adopted on fighting the cuts and on union democracy.

In the openness of the discussion and the fact that some

vital political demands like the nationalisation without compensation of banks and financial institutions were adopted, the STA conference was a great advance from the other left teachers' caucus, "Rank and File", which is bureaucratically dominated by the Socialist Workers' Party (IS). Some people in the

STA, however, were still chasing after a spurious all-embracing unity, and denouncing the 'sectarianism' of programmatic arguments.

In the workshop sessions on Sunday, the majority were against the position put by Workers' Action supporters, that teachers should boycott school governing bodies, which are only another form of 'participation'. Policy proposals from Workers' Action supporters for 'positive discrimination' for women in NUT elections, and for restructuring the NUT with school-based branches, were also rejected.

The STA decided to build support for the 3rd April conference against the Social Contract, and to plan a daily bulletin at the Easter NUT conference. It will also be producing a bulletin and a journal.

IAN HOLLINGWORTH

Workers' Action teachers have just published a 'Manifesto for Socialist Teachers', available, price 15p plus 9p postage, from 49 Carnac St, London SE27.

3000 protest cuts in Cambridge

OVER 3000 trade unionists in Cambridgeshire struck on March 1st in protest at the County Council's plans for spending cuts that could result in an estimated 1000 lost jobs. The strike action closed schools and the technical college, as well as stopping most dustbin collections and other services.

700 demonstrated outside the Tory-dominated Council's annual budget meeting to demand no cuts and no redundancies. They were given a cold reception by county councillors, both Labour and Tory, who argued that cuts were 'inevitable'.

Janet Jones, Labour chairperson of the County Social Services committee, declared that she was well-known for supporting workers' struggles... and then said the demonstration was not needed, because the Labour group had 'succeeded' in getting a vague promise not to impose direct redundancies immediately.

At a rally afterwards, Trades Council chairman Tony Carter argued for building up to pressure the Government to increase the rate support grant next year. Another speaker, however, from the City Council G&MWU, did point out the need to fight against the cuts now, and to link up with the fight against the Social Contract. Strike action, not pressure-politics, is needed.

MACCLARKE

DEAD HAND OF MILITANT

FRANK ALLAUN introduced a note of unintentional irony when he brought fraternal greetings from the NEC to the North West regional conference of the Labour Party Young Socialists in Manchester on March 5th. He praised the LPYS and contrasted the average YS member with the older members among whom, in many cases, "the mind by constant repetition of messages runs into a rut".

If Allaun had staged for the rest of the meeting he would have seen that the dominant 'Militant' tendency

suffer from political tunnel vision which would rival that of any older member.

The 'Militant' had a clean sweep of successful motions, on nationalisation, a 'socialist plan of production', and Ireland. But the hollowness of their 'socialist policies' was inadvertently revealed by Dot Kinrade, North-West representative on the YS national committee, when, commenting on the activity in the Chile Solidarity Campaign, she said that "many comrades don't

realise how much work has been done on Chile". Likewise, in reply to an amendment calling for affiliation to the Working Women's Charter Campaign and the National Abortion Campaign, chairperson Lesley Holt indignantly proclaimed that YS was already affiliated to both!

The fact that official YS campaigning activities are so feeble that YS branches are unaware of them shows the sterility of 'Militant's control.

Kevin Feintuck [Birkenhead LPYS]

WICKMANS IN ACTION

NO FEE INCREASES say 100,000 students

LEN MURRAY of the TUC last week tried to blame overseas students for the lack of educational opportunities that faces the majority of working-class kids. At a conference to mark the tenth anniversary of the polytechnics, he said:

"Of immediate concern to the TUC is the fact that so many openings in higher education courses in engineering & technology are not taken up. And no less than 37% of the places in those full-time courses in polytechnics are taken up by overseas students."

If the places are open, he can hardly blame overseas students for blocking the chances of others. He implied that if only it wasn't for all these foreign students, the working class would be snapping up places at colleges and polytechnics. In fact Len Murray's real concern was that British capitalism should get the necessary supply of trained people, and he sees no room to train overseas students for 'foreign' capitalism.

On March 2nd, while 100,000 students at 100 colleges, universities and polytechnics were occupying to fight increases in students' fees and the quota system, all Len Murray could do was spew out this nationalist muck.

And the National Union of Students' comment on this attack on overseas students? They said they were 'concerned' if Murray's speech means he wants to see a cut-back in overseas students.

So far, despite threatened or actual police harassment and the attempt by the Broad Left NUS Executive to make this into another 'token' battle, occupations are spreading.

Militants are now faced with the task of building full national coordination of those in struggle, strengthening links and fighting against harassment of isolated militants and colleges. In London the strength of the occupations has been increased by the creation of the London Coordinating Committee. But regional coordination is not enough — a national coordination and leadership is essential, through a national conference of occupied colleges. Students should not be intimidated by accusations of 'illegality' from the Broad Left — such committees and conferences are the legitimate and necessary weapons of all those involved in struggle.

Meanwhile the Exec calls for token national demonstrations should not be allowed to defuse the fight. Militants should use "Days of action" as a way of strengthening and extending the bases of occupation, as the only way forward.

In resisting harassment and intimidation from the police courts and college authorities, students must make it plain who is responsible for damage, violence, or inconvenience. Porters at LSE have stated that any damage caused is the responsibility of the bailiffs and not the students. At Middlesex Poly students stood up to threats from the directorate of police action — and the police were not used.

Other tactics used to discredit and stir up hostility against students have included college authorities closing down services and blaming it on occupying students. At Middlesex Poly the directorate have shut down catering services and falsely blamed it on the students.

Students must fight against such tactics by means of propaganda and by making strong links with all other unions involved in the colleges, as well as by taking practical steps to

maintain essential services if necessary. All victimisations must be resisted with full strength.

The proposed fee increases will mean a jump from £416 to £850 for an overseas postgraduate student (£182 to £750 for a 'home' student), for an overseas undergraduate £416 to £650 ('home' student, £182 to £500), for an overseas student on an advanced further education course £416 to £650 ('home' student £150 to £500) and for an overseas student on a non-advanced further education course £260 to

£360 ('home' student £104 to £170 approximately).

The NUS demands that the fee increases on overseas and self-financing students should not be implemented. Their demand for no quota system for overseas students should be supported and coupled with the demand for overseas students to receive a grant and for repeal of the 1971 Immigration Act.

Finally, NUS's demand for a "long-term commitment to abolish fees altogether" is to them just pie-in-the-sky; but for us it is a necessity to make education available to more than a wealthy few.

Neil Cobbett

ACTION NOW TO WIN GRUNWICK STRIKE

AFTER four and a half months of delays and evasions, ACAS (the government Arbitration, Conciliation, and Advisory Service) is finally publishing its report on the Grunwicks dispute on Wednesday 9th March. According to advance information, the report is favourable to the claim for union recognition for which 200 workers have been on strike since August last year. There is, however, no legal obligation for the Grunwicks bosses to accept it.

At a delegate support meeting for Grunwicks on Monday 7th March, called by the Greater London Association of Trades Councils, No. 8 District of the Confed, and the South East Region TUC, Roy Grantham

Many of the Grunwick strikers are battling against a triple oppression. 90% are Asian or West Indian, and a large proportion are women.



Leyland

FROM PAGE ONE

And if there is any attempt by the Government to close the company, or a part of it, whether temporarily or permanently, this attack should be countered by the seizure of the plant.

But right now it is the toolroom workers who are on the attack. This attack must be pressed forward, or the initiative will go out of their hands. The April 3rd Leyland convenors' conference must be brought forward so that it can serve as a rallying point for the toolroom strike.

Fords stewards have said

(general secretary of the strikers' union, APEX) outlined his view of the dispute as it now stands.

After the ACAS report appears, he said, we should... wait another two weeks, for the next TUC General Council meeting on 23rd March. The General Council should call for industrial action to shut down the scab operation which Grunwicks has been running since the strike began.

On the most effective form of blacking against Grunwicks — the mall blacking for which APEX has a standing request to the Union of Post Office Workers — Grantham was evasive. Nor would he take up the call from AUEW delegate and Workers' Action supporter

"If they (the Leyland strikers) consider a strike by us would help, we will consider it". This shows the tremendous potential for spreading the strike, so that not only can the toolroom men win their demands, but the great dam of the Social Contract is burst.

Bringing forward the April 3rd conference is not the only way to do this, but it would be one of the quickest. Without an escalation of this strike, the bombardment from the press, the trade union leaders, TV, government, and bosses may have its effect. And the defeat of this strike will make it more difficult to mount any real struggle against another crippling round of wage controls.

Paul Adams

COVENTRY: NOW WICKMANS SHOP FLOOR ARE OUT

AS WHITE COLLAR workers at Wickmans machine tool factory, Coventry, resumed work last week, the shop floor workers marched out of the gates in protest against the settlement the white collar workers had won.

The shop floor workers' shop stewards are now considering further action.

The white collar workers had been on work to rule for two weeks and in occupation for a week, demanding compensation to maintain differentials after the manual workers at Wickmans had been granted staff status. They won a 4% wage rise plus a lump sum payment and full back pay for the period of the work to rule.

Representatives of the white collar workers insisted that they did not want to be elitist, but were simply reacting to the fact that their gross pay was now below that of the shop floor. If overtime pay was taken into account. Strike leader Bob Griggs declared that he was in favour of complete parity.

A united fight by white collar and shop floor workers would be best. But if the white collar workers' struggle pushes the shop floor workers into fighting for increases in their turn, that is better than 'united' passivity.

The Coventry Massey-Ferguson AUEW strike against speed-up, now in its 10th week, also faced problems of unity. At a meeting called by the Massey Ferguson stewards on 1st March, not only the major factories in Coventry but also the MF components factories in Kilmarnock and Peterborough were represented.

But Kilmarnock and Peterborough are still unwilling to give support to Coventry. MF Coventry left the combine committee some time ago, seeing no point in it as they were already the highest paid workers in Massey Ferguson. Now that short-sighted attitude is boomeranging.

The toolroom strike for higher pay at Coventry GEC plants ended on Monday 7th March with an agreement on increased holiday pay and talks on the other items of the workers' claim.

D.S.

EVENTS

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

FRIDAY 11 MARCH. London Spartacist group forum on "Leninism, the National Question, & Ireland". 7pm at Conway Hall, London WC1.

SUNDAY 12 MARCH. Campaign against the Criminal Trespass Law day conference for Wales. 11am to 5pm, Miners Hall, Merthyr Tydfil. Details c/o AUEW-TASS, 18 St Anne's Close, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid-Glamorgan.

SUNDAY 13 MARCH. Rally against racism, organised by Leicester Anti-Racist Committee & supported by Leicester TC and Leicester S CLP. 3pm YMCA Hall, Granby St, Leicester.

SUNDAY 13 MARCH. "A Sense of Loss", Marcel Ophuls' documentary about the north of Ireland which the BBC refused to show. 3.45pm at The Other Cinema, 25 Tottenham St, London W1. The film will be followed by a discussion.

SUNDAY 13 MARCH. Workshop on "What is a socialist feminist practice?" No. 1: "Is unemployment an area of feminist struggle?" Caxton House, St Johns Way, N19. More details: 13 Malfort Rd, London SE5.

SATURDAY 19 MARCH. Symposium on the issues raised by Tyndale, organised by the Socialist Teachers' Alliance and 'Radical Education'. 10.30am to 4.30pm at Sidney Webb College, Barrett St, W1.

SATURDAY 19 MARCH. 'Liberation' conference against racism. 9.30am to 4.30pm at Friends House, Euston Rd, London NW1. Delegates' credentials (£1) from Liberation, 313-315 Caledonian Rd, London N1.

SATURDAY 19 MARCH. 'Hospital Worker' conference, Portland Hall, 16-22 Riding House St, London W1. Credentials for trade union delegates £1 from 265a Seven Sisters Rd, N4.

SUNDAY 20 MARCH. International-Communist League public meeting. Sean Matgama on The Struggle in Ireland. 7.45pm at the 'Roebuck',

108a Tottenham Court Road (Warren St underground).

SUNDAY 27 MARCH. Demonstration against the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Assemble 2pm at Shepherds Bush Green.

SUNDAY 27 MARCH. 'Campaign for democracy in the labour movement' recall conference on wage control and union democracy. 10am at Digbeth Hall, Birmingham. Credentials 50p from Kevin Lee, 44 Devonshire Rd, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham 20.

SUNDAY 3 APRIL. Conference on wage restraint called by the Leyland combine committee. Credentials 60p from P. Nicholas, 88 Newbridge Rd, Small Heath, Birmingham B9 5JG. Conference starts 10.30am at Birmingham Town Hall.

MONDAY-THURSDAY 4-7 APRIL. 4 days of Marxist discussion on the Soviet Union, in central London. Register with 'Critique', 9 Poland St, London W1.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 21-22 MAY. National conference of the Working Women's Charter Campaign — "Which Way Forward for the Charter Campaign?" Delegates' credentials £1.50 from Jill Daniels, 1a Camberwell Grove, London SE 5 (701 4173).

"INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST" No. 4, including the debate on the Workers' Government at the 4th Congress of the Communist International (first time in English for 50 years); 'The I-CL & Women's Liberation', and the development of capitalism in Russia. 30p plus 6½p postage from G.Lee, 98 Gifford St, London N1 0DF.

"WOMEN'S LIBERATION & WORKERS' REVOLUTION"; a new pamphlet from the International-Communist League. 20p plus 6½p postage from G.Lee, 98 Gifford St, London N1

"WOMEN'S CHARTER", paper of the Working Women's Charter campaign. Issue no. 3 now out: price 5p, from Jill Daniels, 1a Camberwell Grove, London SE5.