

CHARTIST

LABOUR'S REVOLUTIONARY VOICE

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HEALEY'S AXE HITS JOBS & SERVICES

FELLED BY THE AXE. That's Labour 1974 Election Manifesto. It is also our health, education, housing and social services following the presentation of the Government White Paper on Public Spending. Chancellor Healey—Wilson's chief executioner—has finally cut to shreds the last tattered remnants of the Manifesto pledges to restore full employment, redistribute wealth and power to working people and expand social services.

The projected cuts amount to £2,400m over the next four years, with the greatest burden falling in the year 1976-77. While wages are being held down by the £6 limit, and real cuts in living standards were imposed by this policy last year the TUC leaders, led by Jack Jones and Len Murray continue to peddle the pretence of the 'social contract'. Far from Wilson's side of the 'bargain' being kept the 'social' wage as well as real take-home pay of the working class is being slashed.

by Mike Davis

fore the demands of the CBI and City money merchants. But even these cuts will not satisfy the demands of big business. In fact the cuts are not even enough to cover the increase in the INTEREST payments on public sector borrowings which are estimated at £3,300m for 1978-79.

The more the Labour Government tries to solve the capitalist crisis on the backs of the working class, the more firmly does the crisis grip the Labour Government. Worst of all, a 'welcome' mat is being laid for the Thatcher-Joseph brand of Toryism which plans to remove every social conquest of the labour movement since the war.

The TUC expressed "anxiety" 24 hours after the cuts were announced. Since then no opposition has been forthcoming. TUC chief, Len Murray knows full well that last year's Congress resolved to mount "firm opposition to any reduction in the level of social and public services". Such defiance of TUC policy should be reversed immediately with a campaign to ensure the defeat of Healey's proposals.

The 'Tribune' MPs issued a statement calling the White Paper the council Denis Healey—



maiden of the City, the CBI and other enemies of Labour in the British Establishment". The statement went on to threaten that the cuts, "will be resisted by the trade union and labour movement... and we in Parliament will combine to fight against the implementation of the public expenditure cuts by every means open to us."

SPECIAL CONFERENCE

From these statements workers could expect that the 80 plus members of the Tribune Group of MPs will be voting and organising against the cuts. But not so. Arthur Latham, chairman of the Tribune Groups, expects no more the 30 MPs to oppose the cuts. But what about the rest, including Michael Foot?

Instead of talking left and acting with the Wilson-Healey leadership the Tribune MPs should immediately withdraw support from the Government and launch a struggle throughout the constituencies and unions for a complete end to the £6 limit and further cut-backs in social spending. Such a campaign would lay the basis for the calling of a special LP and TUC Conference at which a working class alternative to Wilson's betrayals

WHERE CUTS BITE

- Planned spending on Education to be cut by £618m by 1978-79.
- Roads and transport will be cut by £506m.
- £150m off health and social services by 1978-79.
- Housing subsidies will be £310m lower than planned a year ago.
- Civil servants and administration to be cut to save £180m by 1978-79.
- Environmental services to be slashed by £224m.
- Defence spending to be cut by a meagre £198m.
- Capital expenditure on nationalised industries to be reduced by £325m.

But in spite of these projected cuts the burden of taxation is planned to increase. Above all, jobs will suffer as programmes of rationalisation slash employment in the nationalised industries and civil service.

3-DAY WEEK

'Back to work with Labour' was the rallying cry of the 1974 Election campaign. This was the slogan of the Islington.

O'HALLORAN'S RECORD

Q. What is the record of MP O'Halloran and the local councillors in representing the interests of the working class in Islington.

A. The whole conception of working class people in Islington is beyond the comprehension of O'Halloran and his like. The situation regarding O'Halloran is that he is probably the very worst member of the Parliamentary Labour Party. He has never made a major speech on any major political issue. If you look at his voting record he has always supported the Government line, when it comes to cuts etc, and in that sense he makes good lobbyfodder.

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Q. How do you see the fight in the Labour Party being taken up against these people?

A. O'Halloran was a product of the demoralisation of the 64-70 Wilson Government. It is only in a period of mass demoralisation that a man like O'Halloran can get his tentacles into the Labour Party. A large, mass active Labour Party campaigning locally would never have let him get in. It is really a question of turning

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you fight solely on the political issues and keep personalities out of it. I don't think you can change the political situation without removing the people who are a block to that change. I certainly think that in the case of the O'Halloran gang. It's necessary that they have to be fought and replaced and we have to draw peoples' attention to that need. You can put up any resolution - as left-wing as you like - and O'Halloran's supporters will often cynically vote for them. As long as it does not tie them to doing anything - if you call on them to act you get a very different response.

Q. Have you appealed to the NEC, and how do you intend to take up the fight against your expulsion?

A. Yes, I have appealed to the NEC, and as far as I'm concerned I do not accept the verdict.

My own ward, Highview, voted, at the last meeting, to condemn my expulsion by 27 votes to nil with 4 abstentions. Also, a number of other wards and union branches, for example, King Cross ASTMS,

bad example. sense is slightly excessive. er- theless it's just not enough to go in- to the Labour Party with correct political ideas on how to achieve socialism without understanding that this fight is one against the Labour bureaucracy, the single biggest block to achieving this. Now whether its the open corruption of North Islington or more subtle forms that they had to contend with in Newham North-East, or even in most Labour Parties where there is an entrenched grouping which likes the little bit of power that goes with it. In all these places its important to see that it's a fight not just against their political ideas but of physically replacing them. Now this is not an easy way. The real question in the launching of a fight to build a new leadership in the Labour Party is the question of removing those leaders who do not carry out policies in the interest of the working class and replacing them with people who will.

THE CHARTIST

Monthly Journal of the Socialist Charter Movement.
 Editor: M. Davis, 82 Loughborough Rd, London SW9. 01-733-8953

Behind the Scottish Labour Party

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT'S proposals for a devolution of power to a Scottish Assembly have caused deep divisions in the Labour Party in Scotland. Two Labour MPs - Jim Sillars and John Robertson plus the former Research Officer of the Labour Party in Scotland have formed a separate Scottish Labour Party.

This development has been triggered by the complete failure of the Government to give the proposed Assembly any real powers, for example the right to levy taxes and take over industry. The promise of an Assembly has won widespread support in Scotland. But an Assembly that has no real power and is completely subordinate to central government in London is little more than a glorified county council. It is a complete fraud. This has only added to the bitterness felt by Scottish workers at the betrayals of the Labour Government. Betrayals which hit particularly hard at the Scottish workers. It is this that adds to the confusion and disillusion of Scottish workers and drives them into the hands of the reactionary Scottish Nationalists.

NATIONALIST FEELING

It is this rise in nationalist feeling that has created the conditions for the emergence of the SLP. The SLP, based on the working class, in opposition to the SNP, in an attempt to prevent the Nationalists from annihilating Labour at the next General Election. Recent bye-elections have given an indication of what is likely to happen.

The Labour bureaucracy has reacted with typical hostility by accusing Sillars and company of being the 'splitters' and threatening any Lab-

our members who support the SLP with expulsion - especially if they stand candidates against the Labour Party. That in itself is not surprising, but what is shameful is that they should get the support of a left like Eric Heffer in this high handed bureaucratic attitude. In a recent Tribune article Heffer wrote, "those who joined the SLP were helping to create confusion and disunity in the ranks of the labour movement", and that "they were objectively helping the political enemies of the working class." Thus Heffer shifts the blame from where it really belongs - on the shoulders of the present Labour leadership - to those who have acted out of the frustration and despair engendered by the policies of that leadership.

He also warned, that those "who set up a new political party of the SLP type are excluding themselves from membership of the Labour Party"... and, of course, if they were to stand candidates against the "official Labour Party candidates then the expulsion of those concerned is automatic". Talk like this can only drive Scots workers into the arms of the SNP.

Irrespective of whether we sup-

port the establishment of the SLP, it is still part of the workers' movement and we defend its right to organise as such. We also must fight for the right to dual membership in both the SLP and the Labour Party and the right to affiliate to the Labour Party as an autonomous section.

NO STRUGGLE

But the SLP leaders, in particular Sillars and Robertson did not conduct any struggle in their constituencies and split without any serious attempt to win the rank and file to their position, confronting the bureaucracy. For this they must be criticised. Also, their political programme, although bearing all the hallmarks of Tribune's politics, is heavily tinged with nationalism. The SLP must be condemned too, for operating a series of bans and prescriptions against members of the Communist Party, the International Socialists and the International Marxist Group, etc.

We say to the leaders of the SLP: How can you expect to be taken seriously or wage a fight against the Labour Party bureaucracy in Scotland when you operate their methods to deal with opposition?

LEFTS FAIL VICKERS WORKERS

THE VIRTUAL closure of Crabtree/Vickers Water Lane works in Leeds means the destruction of the best organised AUEW factory in the Leeds district. Seven years ago when Vickers took over the factory, they transferred offset litho work to other factories leaving Water Lane entirely dependent on the manufacture of printing presses. Now as recession deepens in the printing industry, Vickers have followed up the 70 redundancies announced six months ago by announcing closure.

A press release issued by AUEW convenor, Terry Jacques - a left Labour Party member, recently

BY GRAHAM DURHAM

feated in the elections for AUEW district secretary - pointed out that stewards had warned of the dangers of concentration on printing press production. Yet the AUEW stewards at Crabtree/Vickers have posed not a single proposal for defending the 300 jobs involved at the firm.

Instead they have protested about management's refusal to negotiate redundancies, called on the Labour Government to reverse its policy of refusing to prop up the British press industry and demanded import

being "dumped" in Britain.

None of these proposals from the 'Broad Left' stewards present a strategy for defending the workers' jobs. Only by leading a struggle to occupy the factory on a policy of forcing open Vickers books and worksharing without loss of pay throughout the firm. Clearly such action would need to be followed by support actions from the Vickers Combine Committee - especially from the profitable armaments factories in Barrow and Elswick. Alongside such actions, a demand for nationalisation of Vickers without compensation and under workers' control must replace the plea-

MPs resign from Aborts up Select Committee

his right hand man. All four must resign from this committee immediately, and all Labour MPs must boycott it as its aims are contrary to Labour Party policy.

Since 111 MPs, including Harold Wilson and Shirley Williams, sold out on 9th February, it is up to the LP rank and file to ensure that a repetition does not occur. These MPs must not be allowed to forget the

responsibility of the Local Government unions and CLPs. They, too, must take a stand and join the campaigns in the local areas to advance the struggle for womens liberation.

Since the vote was taken, the National Abortion Campaign has stepped up the struggle for free abortion on demand - a woman's right to choose. The NAC has called a national demonstration for April 3rd. It is essential that all Labour organisations and womens groups mobilise for this demonstration.

Assemble at Speakers Corner, Marble Arch and march to Trafalgar Square for a rally. 1:30pm.
 *Free Abortion on Demand!
 *No return to the backstreets!

PART OF 1975 LABOUR CONFERENCE RESOLUTION FROM NUPE.
 "Conference... calls for extended facilities for pregnancy testing, contraception, and abortion so that they are available to all women on request, free of charge and opposes moves to restrict the availability of abortion on social grounds."

LABOUR BREAKS PLEDGE TO CROFTERS

By BRYNLEY HEAVEN

WILLIAM ROSS, Secretary of State for Scotland, and his cronies will be taking a lot of their worries with them to the Party's annual Scottish conference this month (March). The somersaults and contortions on devolution and the desperate attempts to outflank the nationalists and Jim Sillars' new Scottish Labour Party are likely to dominate the proceedings.

Delegates can also be sure of a challenge to Labour's disgraceful betrayal of the crofting populations' of the West Highlands and Hebrides. Successive Scottish Conferences of the Labour Party have demanded public ownership of crofting lands, but the Crofting Reform Bill, scheduled to become law around Easter, instead grants crofters the "opportunity" to become owner-occupiers (for fifteen times their annual rental) much as the Tories offered council tenants the chance to buy their homes. Crofters are promised a "study" of public ownership of common grazing grounds - once the proposals become law!

Not surprisingly, the new legislation gets enthusiastic backing from the Tories, the Liberals and the Scottish Nationalists and, as the West Highland Free Press admits, the near-unanimous hostility of the Labour Party.

CROFTERS CHARTER

Last month four members of the Labour Party's working party on 'Land in Scotland' resigned in protest, among them Margaret MacPherson, herself a crofter. As supporters of the CROFTER'S CHARTER which calls for "all privately owned crofting estates to be brought into public ownership" they state that "the only people who stand to benefit (from the Crofting Reform Bill) are the landlords and local entrepreneurs"... "the decision to extend the jungle laws of the property market into crofting will, in time, lead to the destruction of all crofting communities." The working party itself had expressed "profound opposition to owner occupation."

Even in the oil boom years, the Western Isles constituency has a higher proportion on the dole than any industrial area. Labour must immediately withdraw the Crofting Reform Bill and nationalise crofting estates without compensation to the large landowners. This is the only way to guarantee agricultural livelihoods on these marginal lands.

Communities, some of which were decimated by clearances generations ago, have a right to expect this at least from a Labour Government threatened with the erosion of

ISLINGTON CAMBUSE in Scotland.
 THE CUTS CONFERENCE. On Saturday March 13th, at Lofting Rd. Library. Details from 15 Bayon House, New Orleans Walk, London N. 19

LABOUR MOVEMENT ASSEMBLY on Unemployment. Saturday March 27th, at Central Hall, Westminster. Detail available from 'Assembly', No. 8 Confederation District Committee, 12 Denmark St. London WC2.

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LABOUR'S CUTS BOOST JOBLESS

BY PAUL MOORE

THE LABOUR Government has now taken measures to ensure that this year there will be no massive increases in household rates, like those of 1974 and 1975. But this is to be done at the expense of local government workers wages, held down by the £6 limit, and above all JOBS. On the one hand, council staff numbers—like civil servants, and workers in the nationalised industries—must be slashed. At the same time, thousands of capital projects such as new schools, old peoples' homes, must be scrapped, putting yet more workers on the dole.

Last year, a small percentage growth was allowed to local authorities. This year Government circular 88/75 prevents even that, by telling councils to have NO GROWTH in 1976/77, and pointing out that grants which make up over half of a Council's income, will not be forthcoming for new projects. And as the local authority associations pointed out, because all councils have a certain amount of committed expenditure arising for the first time next year, (mainly the effect of programmes started this year), "No Growth" can only be achieved by CUTS in existing services.

BIGGEST CUTS

Increases, say the Wilson Government, should also be made on all council charges from rents to Meals on Wheels, and the use of new social service buildings should be delayed. Capital expenditure, on new buildings, is to be the priority for the biggest cuts. On social services across the country, capital expenditure rose 143 per cent between 1969 and 1974. Be-

A LONG STRUGGLE has been waged in Islington North Constituency Labour Party against the right-wing policies and bureaucratic practices of MP Michael O'Halloran and his supporters. Keith Veness, a NUPE shop steward and member of Islington North LP has been a leading militant in the fight for socialist policies and leadership in this CLP. He has recently been expelled from the local party for his pains. Chartist spoke to him about the situation in Islington North.

Q. What were the reasons, as you see them, for your expulsion from the Labour Party?

A. The Labour Party in North Islington has been run, certainly for the last seven years by a group owing allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. These people you would find on the extreme right-wing of the party insofar as they have any politics. They are not prepared and cannot afford to have anybody query what they are doing and challenge them to speak out on behalf of the working people in Islington.

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CUTS BEFORE HEALEY'S AXE

● HEALTH

CAPITAL SPENDING in the National Health Service from 1972 to 1977 cut by 28 per cent, yet $\frac{3}{4}$ of all beds are in hospitals built before 1913.

● HOUSING

REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS—budgeted 1975-6 at £572m. The Government has now cut this to £271m. MUNICIPALISATION—The loan sanction has been cut out for tenanted properties except in improvement areas.

MORTGAGE LENDING—halved last June by the Government.

REDEVELOPMENT—Compulsory Purchase Orders rejected by the Government, but no increase in funds for rehabilitation.

RENTS—Councils told to increase rents or have their grants cut. In Leeds tenants have had two increases within six months (April and October 1975).

● EDUCATION

LOCAL AUTHORITY CAPITAL SPENDING down from £615m in 1972/3 to £350m in 1974/5. Around 7,000 teachers are now on the dole.

TEACHER TRAINING—cut from 30,000 in 1975 to 12,000 in 1978. CIRCULAR 10/75 says (1) in areas of falling population teaching staff must be cut; (2) in higher education staff ratios should be 'tightened'; (3) in primary education, four year olds should not be admitted; (4) maintenance should be cut.

Already the Inner London Education Authority plans to cut back by 500 teachers during the next school year.

● SOCIAL SERVICES

From 1974-77 capital spending is to be reduced by 38 per cent.

● TRANSPORT

Government subsidy to be cut from £123m in 1974/75 to £50m in 1978/79.

● British Rail fares up 50 per cent during last year, with another increase planned for March 28th of 15 per cent.

● Birmingham bus fares to double this year.

● Greater London Council bus fares up by two-thirds over last year.

● In Leeds fares have almost doubled in the last year.

tween 1974 and 1977 it is to be REDUCED by 38 per cent. But soon the limit will be reached for capital cuts: and then the reductions in staff and/or wages must begin if the Government carries through its policy of redistributing resources in favour of private capital.

So a tremendous threat exists to jobs. Already 'natural wastage' is being skilfully used and vacant jobs remain unfilled. Many right-wing

Council leadership's have eagerly spread the smokescreen of Michael Foot's Job Creation schemes. But neither Foot nor local Labour leaders have made clear that the new temporary jobs created under this scheme are far fewer than the number being quietly pruned away.

Yet there is an alternative policy. Already public service workers and localised campaigns are beginning to fight back against the threat to

their members' jobs.

Labour councillors should now be giving a lead and refusing to act as administrators for Wilson and Crossland, who are in turn the agents of big business. Councillors CAN refuse to increase rents, rates, fares and other charges. Above all, they CAN use cash left over in the council balances at the year end to launch crash programmes of PUBLIC WORKS. Every council has plans for nurseries, health centres, Old People's Homes and estate modernisation waiting in cold storage by dictate of the Labour Government. Money from the council balances could put these programmes quickly into action, providing several years work for unemployed workers and useful community assets.

DRAIN

Further funds could be obtained by cancelling the enormous interest payments on local authority debts which are paid to the banks and finance houses. These interest payments can account for over half the rate income of local councils and are a permanent drain on local authority finance.

By refusing to pay these debt charges and by spending the balances Labour councillors would show in action a determination to defend working class living standards. At the same time the basis for a campaign for the nationalisation of the banks and finance houses by the Labour Government—without compensation—would be laid. Providing support for such a struggle is organised in the local labour movement, tenants associations, nursery campaigns etc, then a real fight could be launched to turn the tide of Wilson's betrayals.

Labour Democracy in North Islington

Last year he refused to have anything to do with a local Labour movement campaign against the Common Market. All he could do was to sign adverts in the 'Times' for the Labour Committee for Europe and the Get Britain Out Campaign on successive days. This is the sort of political clown he is.

Now as regards the councillors who support O'Halloran. You have to look at their diabolical record from 1971-74, when the O'Halloran group had all the councillors. Few resources were put into the north part of the borough because no councillors were fighting or arguing for them. They never attempted to rally tenants groups or community groups. Their links with the trade unions are extremely tenuous. Their whole record was abysmal—a whole number of these councillors never spoke during the three years they were on the Council. Since 1974 there have been some changes in the wards who now have some councillors who are prepared to fight on issues.

Q. How do you see the fight in the Labour Party being taken up against these people?

A. O'Halloran was a product of the demoralisation of the 64-70 Wilson Government. It is only in a period of mass demoralisation that a man like O'Halloran can get his tentacles into the Labour Party. A large, mass active Labour Party campaigning locally would never have let him get in. It is really a question of turning



O'Halloran

CHARTIST INTERVIEWS KEITH VENESS

the Labour outwards and building a movement in Islington that has clear POLITICAL aims. Having said that, there is a big temptation to say that you fight solely on the political issues and keep personalities out of it. I don't think you can change the political situation without removing the people who are a block to that change. I certainly think that in the case of the O'Halloran gang. It's necessary that they have to be fought and replaced and we have to draw peoples' attention to that need. You can put up any resolution—as left-wing as you like—and O'Halloran's supporters will often cynically vote for them. As long as it does not tie them to doing anything—if you call on them to act you get a very different response.

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My own ward, Highview, voted, at the last meeting, to condemn my expulsion by 27 votes to nil with 4 abstentions. Also, a number of other wards and union branches, for example, King Cross ASTMS,

have sent in resolutions condemning my expulsion.

We also need support from outside. One of the best forms of support is the passing of a resolution demanding a full Labour Movement Inquiry into the affairs of North Islington CLP. I think the only answer is an inquiry into all the malpractices in this party and see how deeply the MP is implicated.

Q. What implications do you think your expulsion has for other socialist militants fighting in the Labour Party against the right-wing?

NEW LEADERSHIP

A. Firstly, North Islington is a very bad example of right-wing domination of a Labour Party and in that sense is slightly exceptional. Nevertheless it's just not enough to go in to the Labour Party with correct political ideas on how to achieve socialism without understanding that this fight is one against the Labour bureaucracy, the single biggest block to achieving this. Now whether its the open corruption of North Islington or more subtle forms that they had to contend with in Newham North-East, or even in most Labour Parties where there is an entrenched grouping which likes the little bit of power that goes with it. In all these places its important to see that its a fight not just against their political ideas but of physically replacing them. Now this is not an easy way. The real question in the launching of a fight to build a new leadership in the Labour Party is the question of removing those leaders who do not carry out policies in the interest of the working class and replacing them with people who will.

1920s STORMY DAYS

MAY 1976 WILL MARK THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GENERAL STRIKE. IN THIS ARTICLE GRAEME ATKINSON STARTS THE FIRST OF A THREE-PART SERIES COMMEMORATING THE EVENT.

THE YEARS 1919-26 saw great political and social upheavals in Britain, stemming from a dual crisis of British capitalism which had entered a phase of irreversible decline under the impact of the First World War and from the challenge of the USA. Also, it faced a deep cyclical crisis when the post-war inflationary boom, from which the workers had made great gains, collapsed in the mid-1920s.

The fight for these gains - higher wages and better conditions - necessitated increased organisation. Between 1917 and 1920, trade union membership leapt from 5½ million to 8½ million. The example of the Russian October Revolution in 1917, when the Russian workers and peasants had seized power under Bolshevik leadership, and the revolutionary wave that swept Europe gave added impetus to the workers' struggle.

As class conflict sharpened, every sphere of society was affected: even the police went on strike! The intensity of the struggle astounded the employing class which responded, characteristically, with attacks on living standards, basic rights and union organisation.

Triple Alliance

Even before the boom ended the Tory-Liberal Coalition Government provoked a rail strike with an attempted wage cut. Despite the strenuous efforts of the National Union of Railwaymen's leader, J. H. Thomas, to betray the strike, the government gave way when the Triple Alliance - transport workers, railmen and miners - called for action.

Workers' militancy took on political features as was demonstrated by the "Jolly George" incident, when London dockers refused to load weapons destined for use against the Soviet Red Army. Councils of Action were formed for a struggle against British imperialist intervention in Russia.

The next round involved the miners who demanded a wage increase and invoked the Triple Alliance. When the coal owners refused to cough up, the miners' strike began. The threat of solidarity action by the railmen and transport workers created panic in the ruling class which, while buying time, also legislated the Emergency Powers Act. The decisive test had only been postponed.

emergency powers

By 1921, in the wake of the economic crisis, 2½ million were unemployed and the employers on the offensive. Workers in the export industries - ship-building, mines, engineering - were in the firing line. These industries suffered from a chronic lack of investment and surplus capacity, along with what employers considered inordinately high wages. In April 1921, the coal-owners demanded cuts in miners' wages, and locked out the miners. The Triple Alliance called a sympathy strike for April 16th, 1921, but the Coalition Government was now on a civil-war footing. The Emergency Powers Act was implemented, army reservists mobilised and troops posted to industrial areas. The union leaders surrendered, the miners being left to fight alone for two months before

conceding defeat. Not surprisingly, this abject betrayal was called 'Black Friday'. Reformist cowardice served to demoralise whole sections of workers and encourage the employers, who went on to defeat the engineers and virtually smash the remnants of the war-time shop stewards movement. Dockers, builders and textile workers also suffered serious reverses, to the extent that war-time pay increases were slashed by 75%.

The struggle entered a lull until 1924 when workers began to regain the fighting spirit so lacking in the Labour and trade union leadership. The young Communist Party (CP) fought resolutely between 1922 and 1924 to halt the retreat. The new resolve to resist wage cutting gave heart to the militants who began to organise for the battles ahead.

The CP launched the Minority Movement, a mass rank and file organisation which was to embrace



A. J. Cook a quarter of the organised trade union movement. Its first victory was to secure the election of A. J. Cook as Secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. The MM aimed to turn the fight from a defensive one into an all-out assault on the employers and the state.

Red Friday

The employers, too, were in no doubt about the gravity of struggles ahead and began to get ready. First, the coal barons demanded new cuts in wages and threatened a lock-out. This was a premature move and was rejected by the miners who knew coal stocks were low. In July 1925, the Tory Government backed down and granted the coal bosses a nine month subsidy to maintain wage levels... the famous partial victory, 'Red Friday'. Nine months preparation for all-out class war were bought by the Tories. As Tory leader, Baldwin, put it: "We were not ready".

The massive crisis of the coal industry determined the employers' attitude. The return to the Gold Standard had forced up British export prices and had made coal uncompetitive in a market flooded with cheap German and Polish coal. Wage cuts were necessary if profits were to be made and this would involve sharp conflict with the miners, necessitating the most detailed preparations by the capitalist state.

In September 1925, earnest preparations began. The 'unofficial' Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies (OMS) was set up to maintain communications and supplies. The Government divided the country



Reception given to unemployed outside Ministry of Labour

THE ARMISTICE of 1918 was (supposedly) to usher in a new epoch of peace and prosperity. Wal Hannington, at that time a member of the British Socialist Party, recounts the atmosphere of the period.

"The four years of slaughter and suffering had come to an end, and the end was a signal for the outburst of joy and patriotic enthusiasm. Were we not victors in the war? Then bring out your national flags. Give colour to the celebrations of victory and peace."

'FIT FOR HEROES'

The then Prime Minister, Lloyd George, was making the most extravagant promises. Britain was to become "A land flowing with milk and honey", "A land fit for heroes to live in" etc. The reality of the post-war period, though temporarily eclipsed by all the tub-thumping chauvinism and baseless optimism, was soon to reassert itself—a reality of chronic mass unemployment.

From the end of 1919 unemployment had been rapidly rising until in the autumn of 1920 it had reached nearly 2 million. The majority of these men had been recently demobilised from the armed forces or were formerly employed in the war industries. Masses of ex-service-men who had experienced the horrors of the Somme, Passchendaele, etc. were now to taste the bitter fruits of peace in the form of unemployment and poverty. Lloyd George's phrases now rang like stinging mockery in the ears of the men and women who had survived the imper-



Unemployed women workers on the march for jobs. into ten regions, each under a Civil Commissioner and 88 Voluntary Services Committees were formed to keep local services in operation.

The police force was next enlarged through an enormous recruitment of middle class people to the Special Constabulary, while the armed forces were alerted and mobilised to guard docks, railways and telephone exchanges. Warships were anchored in the Mersey, Clyde, Humber and Tyne and troops armed with gas, were despatched to the main industrial centres.

While this took place, the Trade Union and Labour leaders made no preparations whatever... except to betray the miners. When the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry reported that wage cuts and longer hours were necessary to restore competitiveness to British coal, it

ialist holocaust only to be cast onto the industrial scrap-heap of capitalism.

It was against this historical background that the setting up of the National Unemployed Workers Movement (NUWM) took place. (Prior to the founding of the NUWM, the unemployed, being unorganised, had been literally begging for coppers in the streets. In London in particular, rival groups of unemployed would compete with each other scrambling after pennies).

Wal Hannington had served his apprenticeship (both industrial and political) as a toolmaker and had led many workers struggles in the immediate post-war period. He was blacklisted by employers and as a result unemployed. Hannington was perhaps the leading figure in the movement of unemployed workers, as well as being a founder member.

The movement itself was initially a movement of the unemployed of London, founded at the Bookbinders Hall, St. John Street, Clerkenwell. Delegates came from 12 London unemployed organisations, and a London District Council of unemployed was established. Hannington was elected organiser for the Council, Percy Hays secretary, and Jack Holt chairman.

This meeting followed the brutal police repression of an unemployed

was clear that a fight would not be avoided. The coal owners declared a lock-out for May 1st 1926 unless the miners accepted lower wages and longer hours. The miners replied with the slogan "Not a penny off the pay, not a minute on the day. No district agreements."

On April 20th, the Tory Government declared a state of emergency and mobilised the Special Constabulary. On 29th April, the Executives of the unions met in a special TUC Conference amidst frantic efforts by 'leaders' like Thomas and J. R. Clynes to avoid a confrontation.

On May 1st, the miners were locked out and there was a massive majority in other unions for a general strike to defend the miners. NEXT MONTH: We look at how the Minority Movement organised for the General Strike.

Pages f

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From working-class history

VIEWER LOOKS AT WAL HANNINGTON'S CLASSIC STORY OF UNEMPLOYED BATTLES IN THE 1920s & 30s

UNEMPLOYED BATTLES 1919-36'

demonstration which had taken place earlier in the year in Whitehall. During the demonstration, unemployed veterans of the trenches many of whom were wearing their medals and decorations, were unceremoniously clubbed and batoned by the police. This had a politically galvanising effect upon the unemployed. They were no longer prepared to beg—the demand on subsequent demonstrations was "work or full maintenance."

NUWM CONFERENCE

The first national conference of the unemployed workers movement took place during April 1921, at a time when unemployment stood at 2,126,000. The NUWM was now founded properly, and the principle of "work or full maintenance at trade-union rates of wages" was taken up as the main plank in the platform of the movement. All subsequent conferences were at pains to stress the necessity for the closest possible relationship between the organised unemployed and the Labour and trade union movement. All branches of the NUWM were instructed to apply for affiliation to their local trades councils. Predictably enough, the Labour Party executive and the TUC were not interested in an organisation of the unemployed. Overtures by the London District Council to the official leadership of the Labour movement were to no avail. Mass demonstrations of unemployed

were organised. In some instances these achieved a limited measure of success, for example, the changes in the system of poor-law relief. These demonstrations were nearly always accompanied by indiscriminate police violence of the most brutal kind. Here Hannington describes a particular demonstration in London: "The bugle for fall out was sounded, and immediately the police, mounted and foot, charged down upon the unarmed and helpless half-starved demonstrators. Men and women fell before the blows of the police clubs, some were trampled under the hooves of the horses, men were caught up and beaten to the ground and left bleeding. Four were frog-marched to the police station nearby and charged with "assaulting the police" (sic). One of those arrested was a Battersea borough councillor by the name of Wheeler; The chief police evidence against him was that he had a water bottle in his pocket and the police claimed that he carried this as a weapon to use against them. He was sentenced to two months hard labour."

HUNGER MARCHES

In 1922 the first of the national hunger marches took place. These marches brought out hundreds of thousands of unemployed workers onto the roads of Britain in protest against unemployment. More important perhaps, was the setting up of a Joint Action Council between the



Workless in the 1920s

NUWM and the TUC. This council was to discuss and carry out joint work including picketing, unemployment demonstrations etc. A very fragile bridge was being constructed between the employed working class and the organised unemployed.

However, after the betrayal of the 1926 General Strike came the 'Stolypin' period in the Labour movement. The rightward shift in the trade union bureaucracy resulted in a witchhunt of militants. A severance of all connexions between the TUC and the NUWM took place and the Joint Advisory Council was wound up.

This was the period of the Mond-Turner talks, peace in industry etc.—in other words class collaboration. A period where after the defeat and demoralisation of the working class, the right-wing were able to strengthen their controlling position in the labour movement.

The rest of the book deals largely with the hunger marches and various struggles against such infamous measures as the "Not Genuinely Seeking Work" clause, and the even more infamous "Means Test" both of which disqualified hundreds of thousands from unemployment benefit. Hannington's description of the period (1930-34) when unemployment had reached a staggering 2,643,127 sounds strikingly similar to Engels' "Conditions of the Working Class in England" revealing the poverty and

deprivation of almost a century before.

Hannington quotes a statement issued by a Dr. O'Hara, medical officer of the Durham County Society for the prevention and cure of consumption: "Most of our children are suffering not so much from TB as from starvation. 75 per cent of the cases admitted to the society's sanatorium are definitely due to starvation." And again, "During the year (1934) 95,270 men and lads offered themselves as recruits to the British army. 23,582 were rejected on sight, they were so obviously unfit. 71,688 were served with notice papers for a medical test. Out of that number 66,429 were rejected, leaving only 28,841 passing the test."

HARROWING

Hannington's harrowing descriptions are those of a betrayed and defeated working class. It was precisely the crucial defeat of 1926, that led to the mass pauperisation of large sections of the working class through unemployment.

With the close of the post-war boom, mass unemployment has reappeared as the endemic feature of the capitalist mode of production. The working class is at present undefeated; Hannington's book should serve as a salutary and timely reminder of the lessons of past generations and the exacting price of defeat.

JOBS SCANDAL IN TEXTILES

THE TEXTILE industry played a major role in establishing the world dominance of British capitalism in the early part of the last century. Textiles were the first major industry to adopt modern factory methods of production. The enormous expansion of capitalism in the mid-19th century was spawned in the cotton belt of Lancashire. The proud boast used to be 'Britain's bread hangs by Lancashire's thread'. To today's unemployed textile workers this slogan must sound like a sick joke. The industry has been in decline for many years now, and the worldwide capitalist crisis has turned this decline into a dizzy downward spiral. Figures recently published in Manchester show that in the first month of 1976, in the Lancashire area alone, over 6,000 jobs were lost. This means that textile workers are joining the swollen dole queues of the North West at a rate of 120 a day. During 1975 the number employed in the industry declined by 7.5 per cent, and for every worker thrown on the jobless scrap-heap, there are many more on short-time working or off temporarily.

PETE TOWEY

What is the attitude of the textile union leaders to this crisis? The only 'solution' they can offer is the old, old cry of 'import controls'. This dangerous and reactionary nonsense is echoed by the Tribune-ites in the Labour Party and by the Communist Party who vie with each other in nationalistic drum-beating.

Textile workers should be quite clear on this issue. Import controls and other measures designed to protect and preserve a bankrupt British capitalism, do not guarantee the safeguarding of a single job. Such policies, which provide capitalists with a 'safe' home market, thus meaning higher prices, are divisive above all, setting one section of workers against another.

By calling for import controls, textile union leaders are calling for solidarity with British capitalists in their struggle against foreign capitalists and workers. Worse still, by giving a 'left face' to this chauvinism, the Labour and trade union lefts are leaving the working class wide open to the propaganda of the fascists—who have been very active in spread-



Import controls no solution to unemployment.

ing their faith in the textile manufacturing areas.

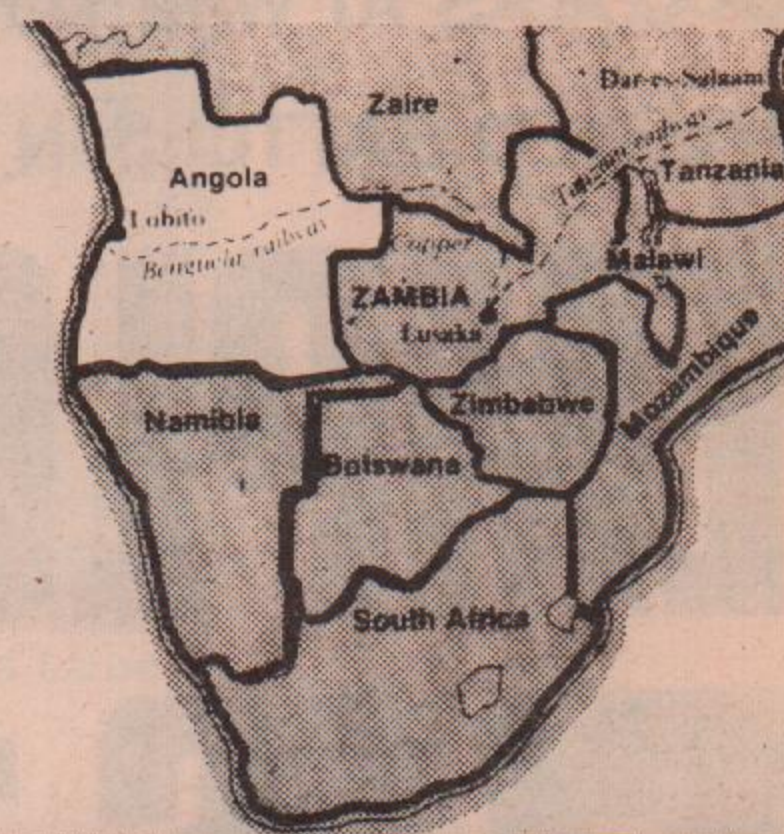
Instead of participating in flag-waving, company supported (and in some cases company financed) campaigns for import control, textile workers should be demanding ACTION from their union leaders to safeguard jobs. The starting point must be: NO REDUNDANCIES! NO SHORT TIME OR LAY OFFS. If the employers threaten redundancies force open the company books to trade union committees, make the case for workers control.

The demand for WORK-SHARING,

with no loss of pay is crucial to preventing redundancies. Let us see the textile union leaders campaigning on this basis and for every firm declaring redundancies the call should go out for nationalisation without compensation. With this sort of fight, backed up by work-place occupations textile workers jobs and livelihoods can be saved. The collapse of the textile industry is a savage indictment of capitalist production for profit. A real fight for jobs could underline this point and make irrefutable the argument for a planned, state-run textile industry.

ANGOLAN VICTORY SOUNDS DEATH-KNELL FOR APARTHEID IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

by
DAVID HOOKES



IMPERIALISM has suffered a major defeat in its southern African strategy with the crushing of its puppet-mercenary armies in Angola and the coming to power of the MPLA. It is, at this moment, frantically recognising the government it had only yesterday tried to crush militarily, primarily through its client South Africa. The imperialist powers hope by this about-face to encourage the petit-bourgeois nationalist tendencies in the MPLA to gain the upper hand over those sections striving to fight for working class interests. They have learnt that the most radical left-wing nationalist movements have proved susceptible to collaboration with imperialism in defence of their NATIONAL interests.

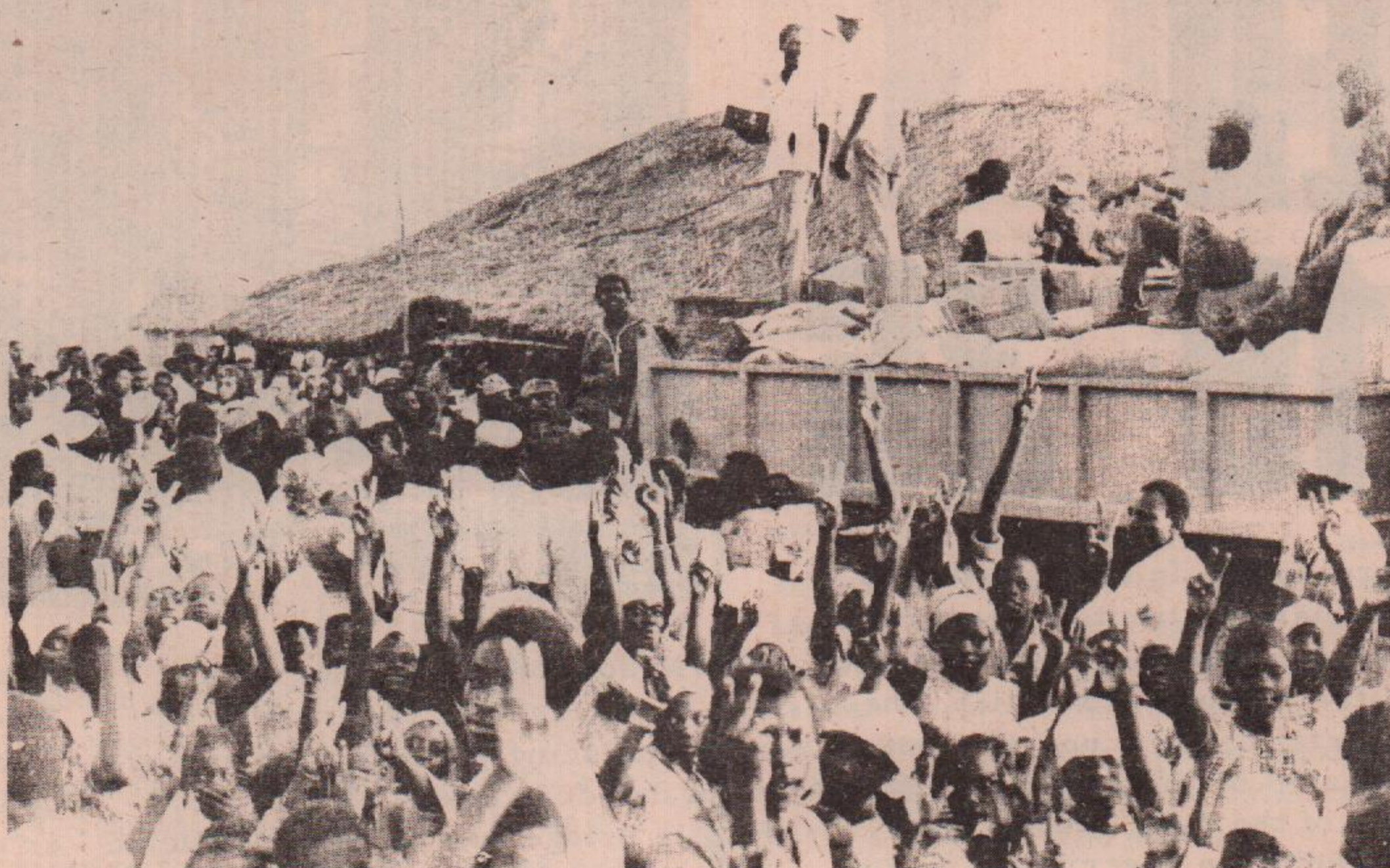
The need for such an accommodation with the new government of Angola is urgent for two reasons. Firstly, there is the immediate economic one to protect their existing investments in Angola (oil, iron-ore, etc) and any future 'slices of the action'. The securing of a conduit for the mineral exports from their client states, Zaïre and Zambia, is also of vital importance.

anti-imperialist

Secondly, and most importantly, there is the significance of the Angolan victory for the developing anti-imperialist struggle in the rest of Southern Africa. There have already been political consequences in the unmasking of the anti-apartheid, anti-colonialist rhetoric of most African nationalist politicians as a sham. It has revealed their true class position as hirelings of neo-colonialism.

Zaire and Zambia actively encouraged a military invasion by South Africa of another African country, and this was explicitly accepted by half the members of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), (before the undisputed MPLA victory). All this completely shatters the racial-nationalist theory of the African anti-colonial revolution, exposing its true class basis.

The immediate problem for imperialism in Southern Africa is the strengthening of the anti-colonialist struggle in Namibia and Zimbabwe (S. W. Africa and Rhodesia) in the wake of the MPLA victory. The successful military defeat of white and



Mass popular support for MPLA victory

black pro-Western forces in Angola is an enormous encouragement to the liberation forces of these countries. In a more concrete way the Angolan and Mozambique victories can provide reliable base areas for their struggle.

For imperialism, however, the struggles in Namibia and Zimbabwe cannot be separated from the most important confrontation, that is, between its 'colons' in S. Africa itself and the black South African working class. A South Africa militarily extended in Namibia and Zimbabwe would be considerably weakened in its capacity to fulfil its most important role. That is, of policing the black working class in the interests of super-profits for imperialist, mainly British, finance and industrial capital.

Already more far-sighted 'liberal' imperialists are pointing this out, and advising South Africa to accept a settlement in Zimbabwe and to withdraw from Namibia. In return they promise active support in the event

of internal insurrection (that is workers revolution).

In South Africa itself there can be no nationalist solution. The vast mass of the people are working class not peasants. It is a working class that has already experienced the ineffectiveness of a middle class nationalist leadership. The S. A. Communist Party in alliance with middle class liberals have attempted to support the emergence of such a leadership which has signally failed to win the confidence of the working class on any scale.

Already the British ruling class, through its careerist flunkies, the Labour Government, is manoeuvring to do a deal with Smith in Rhodesia. If he renounces U. D. I. they will give him military support against the liberation movements. This they hope, no doubt, will buy time and enable them to deal with any revolutionary tendencies in the Zimbabwe liberation movement in order to select a suitably pliable Banda-type stooge. Again the ultimate aim is to take



Striking workers in Durban, S. Africa

pressure off South Africa and leave it free to crush any internal unrest.

The significance for the working class and marxist movement in Britain of the coming struggles in Southern Africa cannot be over-emphasised. In terms of the direct interest of British capital, the position of South Africa as a supplier of gold, (the basis of exchange for inter-imperialist trade), of the protection of the imperialist trade routes and of military control centred on the Cape, South Africa is a key-stone of the world-capitalist structure.

It is therefore in the class interests of British workers to give the fullest possible support to the workers and peasants of Southern Africa in their struggle against racist and capitalist tyranny.

A campaign of class solidarity must be launched in the labour movement, with particular emphasis on the struggle to break the servile collaboration of the Labour Government in the defence of capitalist interests in South Africa.

M.P.L.A. and the Labour Government

THE VICTORY of the MPLA over the imperialist-backed FNLA and UNITA forces in Angola is an event that should be welcomed by all socialists inside the British labour movement. The establishment of Popular Movement control over the largest area of Angola has meant a severe blow to the right-wing African nationalist regimes in Southern Africa who have been preparing to do a deal with the racist South African and Rhodesian governments.

The 'Chartist' unequivocally states its full and unconditional support for the victory of the MPLA. This victory is a blow to capitalism and imperialism in southern Africa and it has opened up great prospects in the progress of the socialist revolution for the African working class.

The position of the 'Chartist' in this respect contrasts sharply with the political manoeuvring and interference in the affairs of the Angolan people manifested by the Labour Government. Throughout the period of the civil war Premier Wilson and co had refused to come out and give support to the MPLA government in Luanda. Instead the Labour Government chose to give credibility to the South Africa-backed UNITA faction by describing it as "left-wing" and

calling for a coalition between the two parties. The MPLA pointed out that Mr. Wilson had refused the advice of outside countries to set up a coalition government with the Tories and the Liberals after the General Election of 1974, and that they could not see why, therefore, this solution was considered acceptable in Angola.

But having given begrudging recognition to the new People's Republic of Angola, the official Party newspaper "Labour Weekly" goes on to state that "recognition does not imply support". This view expressed by the Labour Government is a thinly veiled threat to Luanda not to step out of line and against the imperialist interests in southern Africa. In fact, Foreign Secretary, James Callaghan has demanded of the MPLA leaders that they "make it crystal clear that they were not intending to send their troops on from Angola into Zambia, Rhodesia or any other countries which adjoin Angola."

Whilst demanding the MPLA refuse to go to the aid of SWAPO liberation forces in South West Africa or liberation armies in Zimbabwe, Callaghan nonetheless provides covert support to South

African and CIA-backed forces presently occupying these countries.

Worse still, Callaghan has even suggested that the Labour Government would be prepared to aid the racist Smith regime in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) should the anti-imperialist conflict next threaten this supposedly 'rebel' colony of Britain.

The Labour and trade union movement in Britain must scuttle these reactionary intentions of the Wilson Government. The call must go out from every trade union and local Labour Party that British workers support the right of the African people to wage war against the pro-imperialist regimes in southern Africa in any way that they themselves see fit. Furthermore, we must make it clear to the government that if the support of the Soviet Union or Cuba, or any other workers' state, is enlisted by the liberation movements, then that also is their sovereign right.

In fact, the provision to the MPLA and other anti-imperialist liberation movements of material and military aid, should be the duty of any regime or government which calls itself socialist. And this should include the so-called socialists in the Labour Government.



M.P.L.A. SOLDIER IN ANGOLA

Portugal & Britain: workers face common struggle

Geoff Bender

THE WORKERS of Portugal, whose struggles have opened up the present period of revolutionary upheaval in the Iberian peninsula, now seem in danger of being eclipsed by the rising tide of the Spanish working class. However, it is vital that the tasks of solidarity with the Portuguese workers are not obscured in the kind of 'democratic' haze being generated by our Labour and trade union leaders around the issue of Spain.

with the government. However, the Portuguese workers are not prepared to sit back and watch their living standards and hard-won rights eroded indefinitely. So far the



Speaker from 'Republica' workers commission at solidarity meeting (1975)

Today the working class in Portugal faces both rising repression and inflation and unemployment worse than at any time since the fall of Caetano. Since November 25/26th the Sixth Provisional Government, under the control of Soares and the treacherous leadership of the Socialist Party (PS), has mounted increased repression against the left. Not only have those soldiers and officers implicated in the November 25th events been imprisoned but one person was killed when the National Republican Guard fired on an unarmed demonstration demanding their release. Meanwhile, backers of Spínola's March 11th bid for power and even the former PIDE-DGS chiefs have been freed.

unemployment

On the economic front, the government have attempted to fix wages while inflation has pushed prices sky-high. Egg prices are up by 33%, potato prices by 21% and carrot prices are up by 140%. There have been meat shortages and even the dried salt cod which has been an important part of the diet of poorer Portuguese in the past is now totally beyond their reach. Unemployment, swollen by returnees from Angola and by the demobilisation of left-wing regiments after the events of November, has reached 20%. The Government has also attempted to reverse the nationalisation of sections of the economy and evict squatters from occupied property.

The restoration of Radio Renascença and Republica to their former owners has deprived the working class of the voice these organs provided, whilst in the rest of the media the new editorial boards work closely

Government has feared to launch a direct assault even on the organisations of the far left let alone the trade unions or workers commissions, yet only the most massive repression could enforce the austerity measures capable of solving the economic crisis in the interests of the capitalist class.

The problem with many industries is that their main role in the past has been the provision of components and semi-manufactured goods rather than the completed articles. At Timex, in Caparica, for example, and in the Lisnave and Setenave shipyards the call has gone out for the conversion of ex-

isting equipment. As the world capitalist recession strikes at its weakest links, and the multinationals like ITT run down their Portuguese holdings the need for the planning of production to meet the needs of the working class becomes an important rallying cry, but in the last analysis this can only be achieved on an international basis.

One heartening aspect of the unemployment situation is that despite greatly increased pay, a mass recruiting campaign, with high pressure radio and TV advertising, for the Republican National Guard has gone largely unheeded.

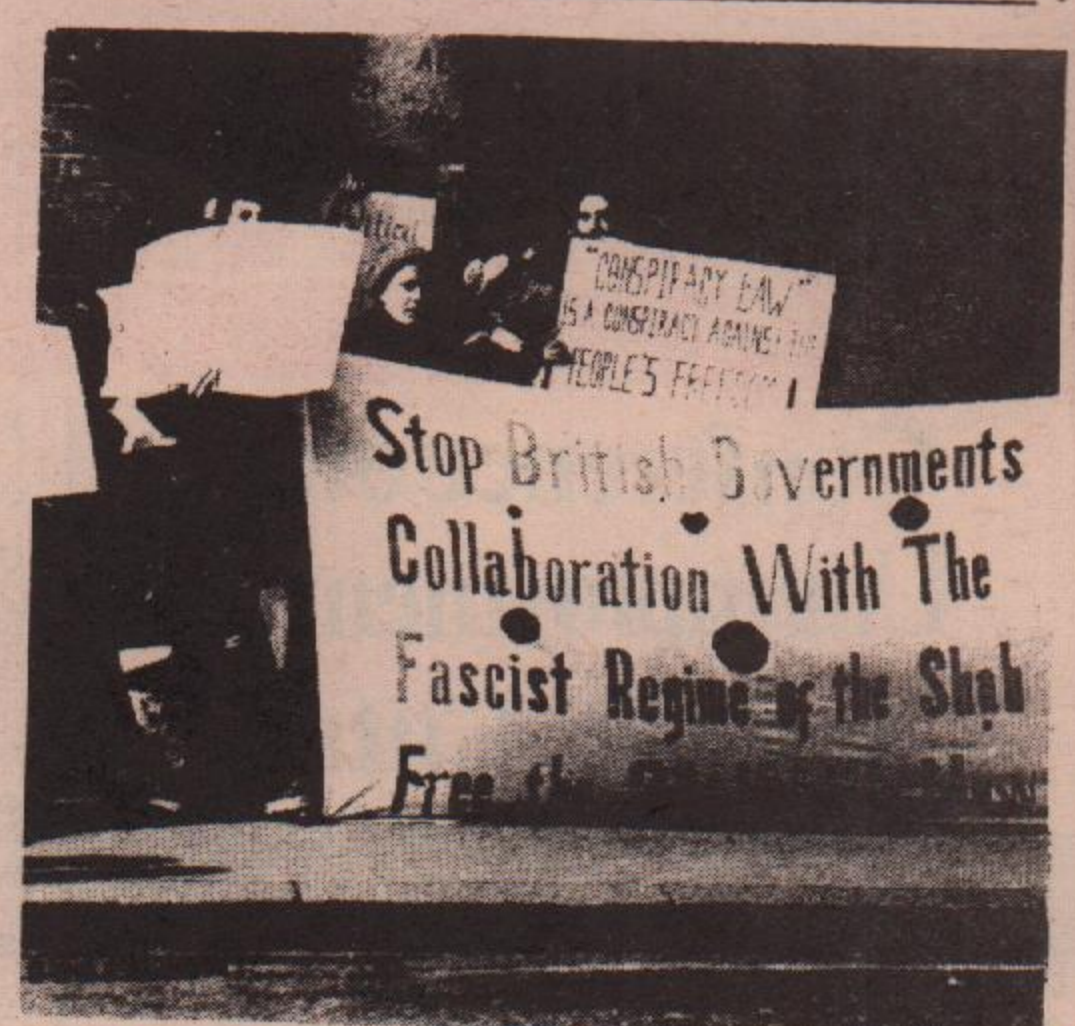
sidelines

But British workers cannot afford to sit on the sidelines. The same multi-nationals, on whose behalf the Azevedo Government is attacking the rights and living standards of Portuguese workers, are behind the Labour Government's £6 pay limit and the mounting redundancies here in Britain.

The fightback against the attempts of the multi-nationals, aided and abetted by both the Wilson and Azevedo Governments, to sabotage the Portuguese economy and strangle the revolution, must be co-ordinated and linked to the fight for jobs and wages in this country.

Already delegations of trade unionists have visited Portugal and representatives of workers commissions have spoken here in Britain. The Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class is holding a Conference on the 13th March to hammer out a way forward for the Solidarity Campaign. Every trade union branch, Trades Council, Labour Party and Labour Party Young Socialist branch should have delegates there.

The Conference will be held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London. Delegates credentials and more information from the Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC1.



Picket outside Old Bailey before release.

IRANIAN 21 - CROWN CASE FALLS

by Mark Douglas

THE "IRANIAN 21" students charged with 'conspiracy to trespass' (in their own Embassy) were cleared of all charges at the Old Bailey on Feb. 16th.

This second victory notched up against the 'conspiracy laws' will aid all campaigns for direct action.

The ultra-repressive regime of the Shah of Iran continues though. The Iranian 21 Defence Committee which drew support from the Left and student unions is to continue the campaign to expose the terrorist regime of the Shah. The international campaign is led by the World Confederation of Iranian Students, which has been the main opposition internationally to the CIA-backed Shah and his hated police, SAVAK.

The Shah, who is on very friendly terms with the Labour Government, has interned 45,000 political prisoners-workers, peasants, students and intellectuals, and employs the most brutal forms of torture. Trade unions and political parties are illegal.

The Labour Government must be forced to break all economic links and 'technical aid' to this regime, through motions, pickets and full support for Iranians in Britain in any direct actions aimed at isolating and exposing this bloody state.

Frank Stagg's blood on Jenkins' hands

THE DEATH OF Frank Stagg in Wakefield jail—after 62 days on hunger strike—adds yet another martyr to the list of men and women murdered by British imperialism. Their crime: to fight for the national liberation of Ireland.

The responsibility for the death of Frank Stagg lies squarely with the Labour Government. The refusal of Home Secretary Jenkins to grant Stagg's demand for recognition of his right to serve his sentence in the north of Ireland must be condemned by the entire labour movement. It is another example of the cold-blooded determination of this government to be as ruthless with the republican opponents of Britain's presence in Ireland as was the last Tory Government which supervised the Bloody Sunday slaughter four years ago.

Similarly, the undignified kidnapping of Stagg's body by the Eire government and the mobilisation of thousands of Gardaí and Irish army troops to prevent demonstrations of solidarity with Stagg shows the

complicity of the Cosgrave regime with British imperialism.

As attention focuses on the republican struggle in Ireland, it is necessary for the socialist press in this country to stand against the hypocritical press coverage of violence in Ireland. There is a qualitative difference between the violence of the oppressor—the British army and the Loyalist murder squads—and that of the oppressed nationalist community.

While defending the right of the Irish working class to oppose the British presence, it is necessary to stress that the murder of innocent workers whether in Ireland or Britain hinders the fight for a united working class solution in Ireland.

For British workers, the key task is to campaign against the repressive implications of the Irish situation and to build a powerful campaign for the immediate withdrawal of British troops through strengthening the influence of the Troops Out Movement in the working class.

BUILD TOM DELEGATION TO IRELAND

THE CAMPAIGN FOR the immediate withdrawal of the British army from the North of Ireland, the Troops Out Movement (TOM), is organising a fact-finding tour of Ireland.

The delegation's tour of Ireland, planned for the Spring bank holiday weekend in May, has amongst its sponsors Brian Sedgemore MP, Harry Selby MP, Robin Corbett MP, Joan Maynard MP, Maureen Colquhoun MP, William Wilson MP, and trades councils in Hackney, Barnet and Crawley, as well as many other prominent labour and trade union figures.

The proposal for the delegation have been widely welcomed by leading representatives of the Irish Labour movement. Whilst in Ireland the delegation will meet representatives from trades councils, trade unions and shop stewards committees, sections of the main political parties, civil rights organisations, radical lawyers groups, and tenants and community organisations. A particular effort is being made

to ensure support and representation on the fact-finding tour by local Labour Parties and Young Socialist branches. The projected delegation itself is in line with the past activities of the TOM such as the May 1975 Labour Movement Conference on Ireland and the highly successful Troops Out meeting organised at last autumn's Labour Party Conference. The purpose of these functions is to bring to the attention of the British labour movement the real role of the army in the north of Ireland in propping up the sectarian six county statelet and how the existence of this statelet is a denial of the right of the whole of the Irish people to national self-determination.

If your Labour Party, LPYS or trades council or trade union branch would like to sponsor a representative of its own on the delegation; or if you would like more information on the delegation, write to Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland, 1, North End Road, London W. 14.....

BY BERNARD MISRAHI

Conference on Unemployment and the Cuts

IN SOUTH WEST London unemployment is reaching alarming proportions. Redundancy has claimed, and will claim many jobs while school-leavers, unable to find work are not being organised. At the Brixton Labour Exchange over 7,500 sign on, at Tooting 4,300 and at Battersea and Clapham 3,600.

Employed workers are also threatened. The more on the dole, the greater the supply of cheap labour, the easier it is for employers to lower real wages and conditions.

In the last six months:-

- Lambeth Council have cut £1 million off next year's budget removing 130 posts from the establishment.
- The GLC is running down its staff by 10%.
- Teachers are unable to find work due to the Inner London Education Authority budget cuts.
- Pye's TMC factory has announced it will close soon with 250 job lost.

These attacks on the living standards of working people are a direct result of the present policies of the Labour Government.

In response to this situation Lambeth Trades Council and Norwood Labour Party have decided to call a Conference to discuss the fight against unemployment and the cuts. The Conference has also been sponsored by Wandsworth and Battersea and Southwark Trades Councils and the South West London 'Right to Work' Committee.

The Conference will be at: STOCKWELL HALL, STOCKWELL PARK WALK, BRIXTON ON: SATURDAY APRIL 3RD, 2:00pm - 5:15pm.

Creche available.

Delegates are invited from trade union branches and Labour Party branches. For further details write to V. Wiseman, Secretary, Lambeth Trades Council, 23, Saunders House, St. Martins Estate SW 2.

DESPITE THE DECISIONS of last year's TUC and Labour Party Conference calling for free National Health Service abortions for all those women who requested them, 111 Labour MPs were among those who voted on a free vote to reconvene the Select Committee set up during the last session to consider the James White Abortion (Amendment) Bill.

Since then four Labour MPs have been among the six members who have resigned from the committee which always had an anti-abortion bias. Not satisfied with Parliaments' acceptance of the restrictive proposals from the committees' last report, which are already being implemented, James White and his cronies are intent on removing the 'social clause' from the 1967 Act.

Now that the MPs who have resigned, have finally recognised the real intentions of the Committee, it is essential that they take a clear position and are seen to lead a fight for free abortion on demand.

There are four Labour MPs left on the Select Committee. These include James White and Leo Abse,

RATHER THAN FIGHT the real causes of the crisis, the TUC, Labour councils and the Government look to racist solutions.

This is clearly shown in two recent moves to further restrict the free movement of immigrant workers and overseas students. For some time now the TUC have been insisting that the Government save the jobs of British workers by imposing import controls to keep foreign goods out. Now they are insisting that the Government keep out foreign workers.

RACIALISM

Harry Urwin (of TGWU, which has gone on record as opposing racism and produced a pamphlet on the subject introduced by Jack Jones), recently led a team from the Hotel and Catering committee of the TUC to the Government. They requested that Wilson cut the work permits of 14,500 overseas workers who are employed in the industry.

"These foreign workers are being used as cheap labour", bleat the union leaders who have consistently failed to initiate or support moves to organise them. A recent example was when the London Eating Houses locked out 300 Turkish TGWU members, with union officials refusing to lead any serious fight. Overseas workers in the National Health Service, in the GLC area are also threatened with loss of work permits — but at least the National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) have resolved to oppose this.

But not all TGWU members are happy with Urwin's report. A resolution passed by TGWU branch 1/696, which all workers should support, states that "This branch condemns

the TUC for asking the Home Office to restrict the issuing of work permits for immigrant workers. We see this as an attempt by the TUC leadership to divert attention from the real causes of unemployment, and make one of the most exploited sections of the working class pay for a crisis which they have in no way caused."

It is clearly only one step from refusing permits to those who want to work here to sending back those immigrants who have already settled in Britain. The notion that "the foreigners are to blame we must look after our own people first" thoroughly permeates the TUC report. Maybe the TUC don't see this. The National Front and National Party certainly do.

ILEA cut the quotas

SEVERAL THOUSAND students from mainly 'Commonwealth' (that is, ex-British colonies) countries come to this country to study (mainly technical subjects) because adequate facilities don't exist in their own countries. They are charged three times the fees that local authorities pay on behalf of British students and three times normal hostel fees in some areas.

Those whose fathers are not oil sheiks and need to work in the vacations and evenings, have to get special permission to do so which is often refused. If the college authorities feel they are becoming insubordinate they can be deported without a trial. Apparently the Labour Inner London Education Authority still believe over-

seas students have it too easy and are cutting the quota by 60 per cent. Other education authorities could well follow in the same vein as ILEA — the largest of the EA's.

All this reinforces the racist legislation which already exists. The 1971 Tory Immigration Act is still law. Those immigrants who are allowed into this country and who are insolent enough to repay the kindness of the authorities who let them in by fighting in the trade unions for better pay and conditions can also be deported without trial.

In the face of growing unemployment and longer waiting lists for council housing racist 'solutions' will become more popular. Rather than oppose these ideas, the TUC and Labour Government prefer to accommodate to them, thus encouraging those racists who demand more extreme measures.

Some people are fighting these measures. The National Union of Students is campaigning against discrimination faced by overseas students. A campaign by the West London labour movement prevented Franco Caprino, an Italian TU militant, from being deported. We must watch out for similar racist schemes being peddled in our own workplaces and organise to throw them out.

The Campaign to Repeal the 1971 Immigration Act is organising a demonstration on April 11th assembling 2.30 at Marble Arch. For further information about affiliating to this vital campaign write to 45, Kensington Park Rd, W11. Tel: 727-2993.



Supporters of the National Abortion Campaign lobby against Select Committee

MPs resign from Abortion Select Committee

by Von McClarey

his right hand man. All four must resign from this committee immediately, and all Labour MPs must boycott it as its aims are contrary to Labour Party policy.

Since 111 MPs, including Harold Wilson and Shirley Williams, sold out on 9th February, it is up to the LP rank and file to ensure that a repetition does not occur. These MPs must not be allowed to forget the

PART OF 1975 LABOUR CONFERENCE RESOLUTION FROM NUPE. "Conference...calls for extended facilities for pregnancy testing, contraception, and abortion so that they are available to all women on request, free of charge and opposes moves to restrict the availability of abortion on social grounds."

responsibility to their sponsoring unions and CLPs. They, too, must take a stand and join the campaigns in the local areas to advance the struggle for womens liberation.

Since the vote was taken, the National Abortion Campaign has stepped up the struggle for free abortion on demand—a woman's right to choose. The NAC has called a national demonstration for April 3rd. It is essential that all Labour organisations and womens groups mobilise for this demonstration.

Assemble at-Speakers Corner, Marble Arch and march to Trafalgar Square for a rally. 1:30pm. *Free Abortion on Demand! *No return to the backstreets!

Selected works of Wilhelm Reich

NEW CHARTIST PAMPHLET

sex and the class struggle

30p

MEETINGS

ISLINGTON CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CUTS CONFERENCE. On Saturday March 13th, at Lofting Rd. Library. Details from 15 Bayon House, New Orleans Walk, London N. 19

LABOUR MOVEMENT ASSEMBLY on Unemployment. Saturday March 27th, at Central Hall, Westminster. Detail available from 'Assembly', No. 8 Confederation District Committee, 12 Denmark St. London WC2.

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