

# RED WEEKLY

15 APRIL 1976

No. 146

PRICE 10p

# TUC MUST KICK OUT BUDGET

The TUC leaders are already manoeuvring to accept the Budget terms. But the decisions of the ACTT cine-technicians and actors' Equity to reject the 3 per cent norm is the first blow to be struck in the battle to defeat the Budget proposals—proposals which will mean a further drop in living standards on top of the 5 per cent

drop caused by the £6 limit. Despite earlier statements that 3 per cent would not do, union leaders like Jack Jones seem gratified at the apparent support indicated for Healey's proposals in weekend opinion polls. Meanwhile Hugh Scanlon continues to act as the Government's cop in British Leyland. This week saw the ex-left leader of the

AUEW 'carpeting' his members at Drews Lane and Longbridge for striking against the £6 limit.

It is Scanlon and Jones who need the carpeting. It is they who have presided over the mass unemployment of their memberships, not the tool-room workers in Birmingham. It was Scanlon who 'com-



Union leaders Jones and Scanlon—act as Government's foremen against working class

pletely and absolutely' supported the cuts in education, health and the other social services, not car workers. It is Jones and Scanlon who cynically enter into a game of 'name your price' with Healey, in which the only losers will be those they represent.

The union conferences over the Easter period and in the summer must reject this wheeling and dealing as well as the new phase of incomes policy.

The Government have laid down the timetable for acceptance of the 'son of £6'. It will culminate with a special meeting of union executives in June set up to accept the proposals without any general debate in the trade union movement. The demand that a full and democratic TUC be recalled to break with the Budget policies as a whole must go up from every rank and file body in the trade union movement.

This has to be a central point for the day of mass action on 26 May voted for by the 3,000 delegates at the

National Assembly on Unemployment. Pledges of industrial action are already beginning to come in. The need to link the rejection of Labour's incomes policy with opposition to the still-growing mass unemployment is becoming increasingly clear—even at the risk of embarrassing the gentlemen of the TUC, who think that crocodile tears over unemployment can go hand in hand with abject support for the policies which sustain the chill of the dole queue in the lives of millions.



We've finally left Pentonville Road. From now on all mail (both editorial and distribution) should be sent to: Red Weekly, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

Unfortunately there's one small snag—the crisis of capitalist nationalisation means that the GPO hasn't got around to moving our phones yet! We hope to have this sorted out in a couple of weeks, but meanwhile please use the following number: 01-278 9529. And watch this space for progress reports.



A small start to a big job. Several hundred supporters of the Campaign to Repeal the Immigration Act marched through London last Sunday to call for the repeal of the 1971 Act and all racist legislation. On the very same day, Enoch Powell was making yet another viciously racist speech on mugging—which he termed a 'racial' crime, resulting from an 'alien implant' of blacks within our society. The fact that Powell's audience was a Police Federation

seminar, together with the predictable crowing of the press next day, highlights the need to extend and step up the fight against racism. The whole weight of the labour movement must be thrown into a campaign not only to end police harassment of the black community and to respond to attacks by open racists like Powell, but also to eradicate all traces of racism from within the working class movement itself.

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

# ALL OUT ON 26 MAY

SUNDAY  
**25**  
APRIL

**STOP**  
the NHS cuts

**BAN**  
all private practice  
**DEMON-STRATE**  
12.30 on 25 April,  
Hyde Park to  
Trafalgar Square

Called by the National Co-ordinating  
Ctte against cuts in the NHS  
Supported by NALGO, NUS, SMA,  
AUEW, Sheffield Dist.Ctte,  
CLPs, Manchester TC, etc

# TEACHERS' UNION CAN GIVE LEAD AGAINST BUDGET

The annual conference of the National Union of Teachers at Scarborough next week will be one of the first conferences of a major union since the Budget and the Government's announcement of huge public expenditure cuts.

The debate and decisions at this conference could set the tone for the response of the trade union movement to Healey's Budget and the cuts. The Labour Government is obviously thinking along similar lines.

Fred Mulley, the Education Secretary, will address the conference on its very first day — before delegates have had a chance to discuss a single resolution!

Mulley will obviously use this opportunity to defuse any opposition to the cuts and attempt to line up NUT support in the TUC for Healey's new wages restraint proposals. Not that Mulley will have much difficulty with the majority of the NUT leadership.

Fred Jarvis, General Secretary of the NUT, is an avid supporter of the

social contract and will undoubtedly follow the line set by Mulley. Although Jarvis has called Healey's cuts in educational spending 'spitting in the eye of the TUC', he is unlikely to return the Chancellor's compliment. He is in fact presiding over a right-wing dominated Executive that is tied hand and foot to the Government's anti-working class policies.

## ATTEMPT

The NUT Executive's militant sounding support for a special TUC conference to 'discuss the Government's policy on public spending' is in fact an attempt to cover up for their general inactivity on this question. Their current support for such a conference follows three previous rejections of the same call, and only comes after the announcement of the massive £1,000 million cuts in educational spending.

The real character of the right-wing NUT leadership's attitude towards fighting the cuts is made clear by their refusal to defend London teacher militant Mike Colley from attempted victimisation by the Inner London Education Authority.

## ELECTED

Colley, a school delegate, was elected to attend the South East Region TUC demonstration against education cuts on 21 October 1975. Although the NUT Executive refused to support him, he received backing from a wide variety of bodies in the labour and trade union movement — including Constituency Labour Parties, trades councils, union branches,

Labour MPs, and many others.

As a result of this, the governors of his school rejected out of hand any attempt by the Labour-controlled ILEA to victimise him. The breadth of support for his defence campaign shows the way in which a campaign against the education cuts can and must be built.

Rejecting this approach, Communist Party teachers — the strongest grouping on the left in the NUT — have refused to organise any fight against the right-wing NUT leadership. In their journal, *Education Today and Tomorrow*, they argue that the onus for fighting the cuts lies 'not (on) the Executive but (on) the local Associations'. Far from challenging the right-wing leadership, they call for 'highly selective action which forces a change in policy — anywhere'.

## DESPERATE

These desperate words reflect the extent to which CP teachers are prepared to toe the line laid down by the right wing in order to preserve their Executive places. They piously hope that 'the conference will provide a great forum of opposition to the cuts and a focus around which the whole progressive movement can rally'.

However, at a time when education faces its severest attack for decades, the CP's call for unity is very hollow. They never answer the question — 'unity for what and with whom?' Furthermore, after a year of virtual inactivity against the cuts by the NUT Executive, CP teachers

are now helping the right wing to introduce severe disciplinary procedures against militants prepared to fight the cuts and take action now — which rather destroys the CP's point about the onus being on local associations to take up the fight.

## TASK

The task facing militants at the NUT conference is to fight for a break with the right wing's collaboration with Labour's anti-working class policies, and spell out how a united working class response to unemployment, the cuts and Healey's incomes policy should be built.

An important step forward could be taken by uniting those forces in the NUT prepared to link up with the moves in opposition to the Government already being made in the rest of the trade union movement. By linking the fight against education cuts to the campaign against all cuts in public spending, and by uniting with the fight against unemployment through building support for the 26 May day of action, militant teachers can begin to pose a credible alternative to the betrayals of the right-wing leadership.

## AMENDMENTS

The IMG, having won the support of many local Associations, will be proposing amendments in all the major debates in order to develop this fight.

Bernard Regan (East London delegate).

# LPYS conference poses real question HOW TO FIGHT RIGHT WING

The agenda for the Labour Party Young Socialists Conference at Blackpool this Easter might suggest that Britain's first Soviet is about to be formed just behind the Golden Mile. But impressions can be deceptive. Although there is a torrent of resolutions inspired by comrades supporting the paper *Militant*, neither Nora Beloff, the Labour leaders, nor the ruling class need tremble about the consequences of conference adopting most of them.

One gentleman who can certainly afford a smile is Merlyn Rees, Labour's Minister of State for Northern Ireland and MP for Leeds South. Obviously the *Militant* supporters in Mr Rees's constituency believe in peaceful coexistence with their MP. Although Rees is the helmsman of Britain's policy of repression against the Catholic minority in the Six Counties, the *Militant* comrades have found other areas on which to concentrate their attention.

Ignoring Ireland, their resolution extols the virtues of China's planned economy but informs the Chinese masses of their need to make a 'new revolution'. Such benevolent advice will doubtless inspire the Peking working class to new heights of struggle, but it will probably arouse less enthusiasm in the Catholic ghettos of Northern Ireland.

## Ignore

On safer terrain than Mr Rees's constituency, other *Militant* supporters have moved resolutions on Ireland. These, however, studiously ignore the fact that the nationalist population is the spearhead of the struggle against imperialism in Ireland, and talk in general about unifying the working class 'around a socialist programme'. This postpones any serious fight against imperialism until the 'Orange Loyalists' are won over.

Worse still, these resolutions make no call for independent action against the policies of the Labour Government. Fortunately resolutions from both Carlton and Hackney North & Stoke Newington LPYS branches urge the conference to affiliate to the Troops Out Campaign. The *Militant*-inspired resolutions stop short of any such proposals for action, restricting themselves to general calls on the labour movement.

Of course, it is not incorrect to demand of the labour movement and the Labour Government itself that they do certain things. But the central question is how to create the relation of forces which makes it possible to force such action by the labour movement on issues like Ireland. That means building united

fronts in all sections of the workers movement on campaigns such as 'Troops Out'.

This weakness is not just confined to the question of Ireland. On issues like women's oppression it is again the non-*Militant* left who are behind resolutions supporting 'free abortion on demand, freely available on the NHS' and demanding that the LPYS National Committee affiliate to the National Abortion Campaign.

## Crisis

Furthermore, it is the non-*Militant* left which takes up the crisis inside the National Health Service not just by coming out against the Government's policies or providing a 'socialist blueprint', but who urge the LPYS to link up and practically support organisations like the National Coordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS.

Again on Spain it is the non-*Militant* left who give a lead on how to break from dogmatic propagandism. A resolution from Hemel Hempstead calls for 'building solidarity in all sections of the British working class in support of Spanish workers' struggles .....'. It wants the LPYS to support demonstrations, pickets and actively campaign for an embargo on Spanish goods, and says that the LPYS should set itself 'the objective of building the broadest united front in the workers movement to win these aims', asking the National Committee 'to organise a conference of Labour Parties and the LPYS to initiate a campaign .....

## Oppose

Over unemployment and falling living standards, the traditional leadership of the LPYS gathered around *Militant* correctly oppose the pay norms and demand more nationalisation and a reduction of the working week without loss of pay. But their resolutions contain no real proposals for action.

This is shown by the failure of the *Militant* comrades to mobilise their

considerable base inside the LPYS and in many Constituency Labour Parties to make a significant intervention in the 27 March Assembly on Unemployment. It is shown even more by their failure to turn the LPYS into a campaigning organisation that can involve youth in actual struggle against unemployment, instead of simply carrying resolutions calling for nationalisation of the '250 monopolies'.

The divisions at Blackpool will not be about programme — the most committed Marxist could vote for the majority of the 168 resolutions. The divisions will take place on how to fight for the resolutions and how to mobilise real forces to break the grip of the right-wing leaders.

By joining in such campaigns as Iberian solidarity, supporting the NCC 25 April demonstration, working to build local Action Committees as agreed at the 27 March Unemployment Assembly, by actively building NAC and fighting to strengthen and extend the Troops Out Movement, the LPYS can play an im-

portant role in the struggle against the pro-capitalist policies of the Labour leaders. Such activity would bring new forces into the fight on these essential issues. It would help to build working class unity and would swell the opposition against the traitorous leaders of the labour movement. Furthermore, it would demonstrate to the working class, and working class youth in particular, that there is a genuine, fighting opposition inside the Labour Party.

Jeff King

Jeff King

## Where were they?

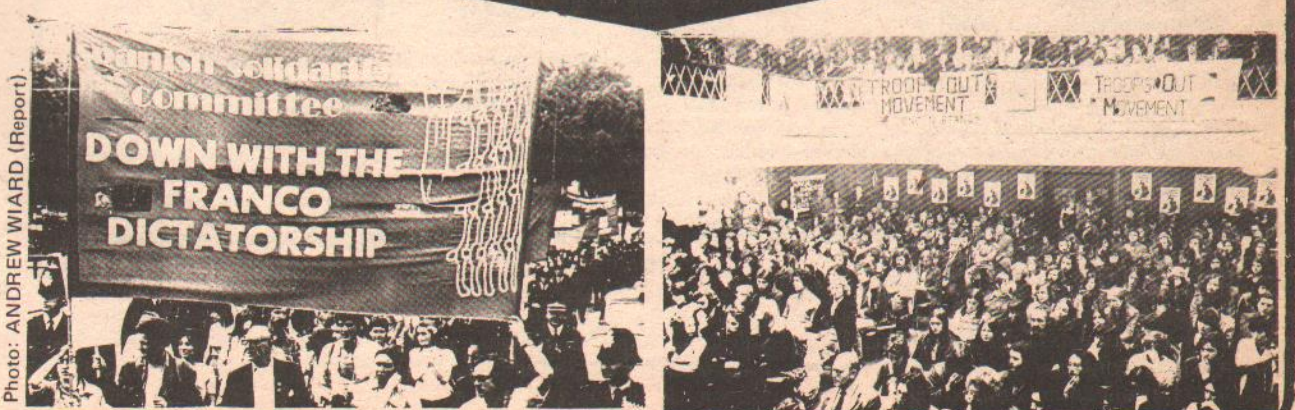


Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

# FINAL "BLITZ" FOR CUTS DEMO

JANET MAGUIRE, the organiser of the National Coordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS (NCC), reports on the final stages for building the 25 April demonstration against the cuts and private practice.

One encouraging aspect of the mobilisation has been the support we are getting from local Labour Parties. Brighton, Labour Party, for instance, voted last week to support the demonstration and to send a contingent.



Sponsorship for the demonstration is still coming in. Latest sponsors include the Nottingham branch of the building workers' union, UCATT; two shop stewards committees in Sheffield, Neal's and Laycock's; GMWU North London Hospitals branch; and the Bristol West and Battersea Labour Parties, who are not only sponsoring the demonstration but have affiliated to the NCC.

To encourage the maximum turnout of their members, NALGO are sending out 1,000 posters and handbills advertising the demonstration. The London Co-op Political Committee has also circulated its members with mobilising material.

To give the campaign a real last-minute boost in London, a team of NCC supporters has been set up to 'blitz' the hospitals, building sites, factories and docks with posters, handbills and propaganda for 25 April. This team will also do open-air meetings, and it is hoped that they will be able to speak on sites and to shop stewards committees. The team is made up of people like teachers on holiday over Easter, students and some health workers who are using their days off to boost the campaign.

The NCC has now received a supply of badges. The sale of these is an excellent way of popularising the campaign. Furthermore, the money collected will be a big help towards paying for the cost of the demonstration and taking the campaign forward afterwards.

NCC supporters travelling down on coaches on 25 April should make sure that they have a supply of the badges on hand for sale to the coach travellers. Supplies can be obtained from the NCC at 55 Bridge Lane, London N.W.11 price 15p each. For all orders over ten a discount of 2½p is allowed per badge — money must accompany the order.

Along with the public sector unions in Brighton, the Labour Party is organising a public meeting 'Against Cuts in the Health Service' on 22 April. Ernie Roberts (Assistant General Secretary of the AUEW) and Steve Johnson (NALGO National Health Officer), both members of the NCC, will be speaking.

Other public meetings arranged to build the demonstration include ones in Liverpool on 14 April, Oxford on 14 April, and Leeds on 22 April. These meetings will have local trade union speakers as well as national speakers from the NCC.

In Colchester support for the demonstration was raised at a meeting of more than 60 people called around the demands — 'Fight the Cuts in the Social Services and Defend the NHS'. The meeting was sponsored by Colchester Trades Council and local branches of ASTMS, NUPE, COHSE, NALGO and the NUS. Steve Johnson spoke for the NCC and called on all the people present to attend the 25 April demonstration and get their organisations to support the demonstration.

## RULE 14 - To fight or not to fight

"The battle against bans and proscriptions in trades councils continues" declared *Socialist Worker* on 10 April. It should have added — without the help of the International Socialists.

After first voting against the new Rule 14 on Camden Trades Council, IS have now adopted a policy similar to that of the Communist Party. They are asking their members to get delegated to the 'reformed' Trades Council meeting in May on the basis of accepting Rule 14 under protest, instead of standing on the basis of continuing the fight against bans and proscriptions.

At Westminster Trades Council, IS split and half their members voted for Rule 14. At Greenwich a specially convened executive committee meeting voted unanimously to reverse the Trades Council's opposition to Rule 14 after receiving letters from the TUC and the Greater London Association of Trades Councils disaffiliating them. Both the president and secretary are supporters of IS. To their credit, three IS members did vote against Rule 14 when the EC's decision was ratified by 21-7 at a full council meeting.

What makes these events doubly scandalous is that *Socialist Worker* has continued to present the IS's position as one of total opposition to Rule 14. A case of one line for the members, another for the masses?

It may be that opponents of Rule 14 will eventually have to accept it. But the IS's actions are in fact demobilising the fight against Rule 14 before

it has had the chance to get off the ground.

Late next month the National Conference of Trades Councils take place. That at least could provide the opportunity for all those opponents of Rule 14 to make their voices heard — loudly and in unison. But if opponents of Rule 14 adopt different tactical positions all over the country, that will only help the TUC to get away with further bureaucratic manoeuvres to control trades councils' policies.

The Joint Consultative Committee which acts as a Standing Orders Committee for the Conference has already ruled out of order six of the 38 motions sent in.

All the motions attack Government economic policies, in particular the cuts in public expenditure. The exact texts of the motions are not being released, but the TUC, which has a majority on the Standing Orders Committee, has decreed that the motions are 'against TUC policy' or 'infringing on the province of individual unions'.

Delegates to the Trades Councils Conference should argue for the referring back of the Committee's report. All the resolutions should be heard, whether they conflict with TUC policy or not, and future TUC moves to stifle democracy in the trades councils must be vigorously resisted. But to do that means not only putting a line of opposition to the new Rule 14 but also carrying it through in practice.

SUNDAY  
**25**  
APRIL

**STOP**  
the NHS cuts

**BAN**  
all private practice

**DEMONSTRATE**  
12.30 on 25 April,  
Hyde Park to  
Trafalgar Square

Called by the National Co-ordinating  
Ctte against cuts in the NHS  
Supported by NALGO, NUS, SMA,  
AUEW, Sheffield Dist. Ctte,  
CLPs, Manchester TC, etc

# IN FOCUS

## All out on 25 April

The 25 April demonstration against cuts in the National Health Service can and should be a real show of organised working class opposition to the cuts that the Labour Government is imposing on an already sick and declining health service. Coming at a time when the Labour Government is about to announce legislation which will enshrine private practice in the NHS for ever — as well as allowing it to flourish freely outside — the demonstration can be a real slap in the face for the treacherous right-wing leaders.

The forces that march behind the slogans of the NCC must be mobilised in a fight to put those demands into action. The NCC calls for an immediate cash injection of £1,000 million. It demands a sliding scale of social expenditure. It wants the abolition of all secret deals and therefore insists that all the books be opened for the inspection of the workers' movement. Correctly rejecting the idea of some 'impartial' Royal Commission investigating the NHS, the NCC counters by calling for a workers' enquiry.

Such a programme is not only necessary in the NHS — the fight for it has to be extended right across the public sector and into private industry as well. By building an independent working class resistance to the attacks on the NHS, the NCC has charted the way forward. It is showing in practice the type of programme and organisation that the working class needs if it is to break form the treacherous class collaborationist policies of the Labour leaders and the trade union bureaucracy.

The NCC should spell out to all those mobilised for the 25 April demonstration the need to take that programme into the campaign being fought against unemployment. The savage cuts being perpetrated in health, education, and the social services cause unemployment and wastage. At a time when more hospitals are needed, when more schools are required and more houses should be built, the unemployment figures have never been higher.

By giving full and unstinting support to the 26 May day of action and raising the demand for a programme of public works, the NCC can take the campaign another important step forward.

## Broad left opens door for Tories

Bidding farewell to the National Union of Students conference, retiring deputy president Alistair Stewart finished with a word of welcome for new executive member Steve Moon — a supporter of the Federation of Conservative Students. It was a fitting finish to a conference where the Broad Left won 11 out of its 12 executive positions because of a transfer of votes from the Tory students.

Tory support was also the deciding factor in the re-election of Broad Leftists Charles Clarke as president and Sue Slipman as national secretary. The election of the latter — by little more than 100 votes over IMG member Valerie Coultas — was particularly significant because Slipman, formerly responsible for international affairs, symbolised the CP-backed Broad Left's uncritical stance towards Soviet foreign policy.

### Significant

Overall, the elections showed that while support for the FCS has grown amongst students, and the Broad Left has now lost its automatic majority, support for the revolutionaries has not declined at all. The BL's deals with the Tories only served to highlight their weakness.

On unemployment, the conference threw out an amendment calling for import controls and backing the Tribunes' economic programme. An IS/IMG amendment calling for support for the Right to Work campaign and the establishment of action committees to campaign for a mass mobilisation by students and workers on the 26 May day of action was easily carried.

The international debate also caused the executive a lot of problems. The conference started off with a successful call for delegates to the next international meeting of European student unions to be elected from the floor of the conference.

There was clear dissatisfaction with the performance of executive-selected NUS delegates at the previous meeting of this body — its communique was



AL STEWART — welcome for Tories

overwhelmingly rejected and the delegation, including Clarke, was censured. Delegates argued that the communique, initially drafted by the NUS delegation, gave completely uncritical support to the Soviet Union's foreign policy.

Strong criticisms were also voiced about the South Africa campaign — particularly in relation to the executive's lack of action over Angola and its failure to take up the Labour Government's collaboration with the Vorster regime.

Charles Clarke attempted to portray the conference to the press as a huge victory for the Broad Left. But even Broad Left executive members had to admit that while their strength on the executive had never been so great, their support on the floor of conference had never been so thin.

The FCS stated the situation more clearly — the BL's victory was dependent on Tory backing. Sue Slipman's disgusting attempt to avoid a censure for not supporting

the Bloody Sunday demonstration on Ireland by falsely associating it with the bombing campaign in Britain — and even stating that NUS was not in 'favour of self-determination for the Irish people' — showed the depths to which the BL is prepared to stoop to cement this alliance with the right wing and ignore the mandates of conference.

Fortunately the executive of the NUS doesn't have the TUC's power to break conference mandates and impose restrictions on 'dissent' sections of its membership. Individual student unions are allowed to decide their own attitude to each issue and each campaign.

### Majority

The majority of the NUS executive have in the past used this federal structure as an excuse not to campaign for conference decisions among the mass of the membership. Revolutionary students and all socialists must use this leeway to fight for democratic reforms in their local student unions, to campaign for the broadest possible mobilisation on 26 May, and to begin to raise the issues of South Africa, Spain and Ireland before the mass of students — not just in their own college but in all the colleges in their area to consolidate in practice the victories gained at NUS conference.

Only such a united fight will win the mass of students to support socialist solutions to their problems. The FCS are waiting in the wings if this opportunity is missed.



Broad Left lost automatic majority among conference delegates

# COPS TELL ARRESTED CIVIL RIGHTS CAMPAIGNER

## 'We can do anything we like under the anti-terrorist act'

Margaret O'Brien, secretary of the London based Irish Civil Rights Association, was recently arrested and held for five days under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. She relates how a member of the Anti-Terrorist Squad mouthed to her: 'You are in very serious trouble, Mrs O'Brien. We could slap a conspiracy charge on you or get an expulsion order'.

Margaret O'Brien did not need to be told that. A consistent campaigner for the rights of Irish people in this country, she knows by now that when you are arrested under the PTA you are indeed 'in very serious trouble'. As Margaret's husband Frank overheard two policemen saying during his arrest: 'We can do anything we like under the Act'.

While the O'Brien family were

being held their interrogators did indeed do as they wanted. They held Mrs O'Brien for five days in solitary confinement, and they questioned her on no less than seven separate occasions during that time. On one occasion she was interrogated in total darkness with a buzzing noise coming from behind her head — a similar technique to that used against internees in the North of Ireland.

### ARRESTED

Frank was also arrested and held for three days; and their 15-year-old daughter Margo was arrested, photographed, finger printed, interrogated and told that she was going to be put into care as her mother was going to prison.

Since the introduction of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, none

of this is terribly exceptional. Hundreds of Irish people have undergone similar treatment — indeed, as Margaret O'Brien points out: 'The English people are also having their rights eroded.'

What gives Mrs O'Brien's case a macabre touch of irony is her position as a campaigner against the PTA. How many tut-tuts have we heard from drawing room liberals in this country who lecture the South African Government for arresting civil rights workers under a similar 'Anti-Terrorism' Act? Well it is happening in England today, although the protesting liberals are few and far between.

The O'Brien family owed their eventual release to luck rather than any 'democratic' concessions. In the first place, the phone rang as the twenty policemen were carting off the O'Brien family, and Margo



MARGARET O'BRIEN

managed to grab the receiver and shout down what was happening.

Usually nobody knows when someone is arrested under the PTA, but that phone call enabled the caller to alert Margaret's friends — and even the media could hardly ignore the arrest of someone as prominent as Margaret O'Brien.

### RELEASE

The second piece of luck came in jail itself, when a row developed between the Anti-Terrorist Squad and the Special Branch over what should happen to Mrs O'Brien. Margaret played one off against the other, and this in no small way contributed to her eventual release.

What happened to the O'Brien family while they were locked up was bad enough; but for the workers movement what happened to Frank O'Brien afterwards is in many ways more serious. When Frank returned to Thorn Electric, where he has worked for twelve years, he was shunned by his workmates who threatened to strike unless he was sacked.

At least Margaret was not faced

with a similar reception at work — in fact the National Executive of her union, the AUEW-TASS, are demanding an inquiry into why one of their members was treated in such an arbitrary fashion. TASS deserve to be congratulated for this action, but Frank O'Brien is now out of work.

### APOLOGIES

Surprisingly, he does not seem bitter at the action of his brothers: 'Those I work with know nothing about Ireland except what they read in the *Sun* and *Mirror*', he comments, almost apologising for his workmates. But such apologies are out of place. Quite simply, the men at Thorn Electric are a disgrace to the working class; it is they who should be treated as outcasts, not Frank O'Brien.

So if twenty policemen come for you in the morning, do not blame Margaret O'Brien, and do not blame the Provisionals or bombs on the London tube. Blame the British presence in Ireland from which the PTA flows, blame Roy Jenkins and the Labour MPs who voted the Act into existence, blame the men at Thorn Electric who have made it all too easy. And note these words of Margaret O'Brien:

### OBLIGATION

'They asked me on a radio programme if I did not feel that the Irish in London had an obligation to help the police catch the bombers. I say that the British people have an obligation to get their troops out of my country. Any violence has come from their refusal to let the Irish people run their own affairs. Give the Irish nation back to the Irish people so that we can have our own destiny in our own hands. Let them get the hell out of there.'

## 7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast



15-year-old Gerard Craig after a British soldier fired a rubber bullet in his face last month

'Write a piece on the bombs in Britain', said the comrade from Red Weekly. So I sat down and began to compose an article on how revolutionary Marxists in Ireland oppose this bombing campaign, explaining that the bombs are no substitute for the lack of a mass movement opposed to British imperialism in Ireland, and arguing that the energies of the group or groups responsible for these bombs would be immeasurably better employed if they were directed at rebuilding this mass movement.

But while such an article would certainly reflect the views of the revolutionary left in Ireland, it would fail to convey the real subjective feelings of the anti-Unionist working class and rank-and-file Republicans.

Bombs in Belfast are routine. As I sit here typing this article I hear the dull thud of another. I'm told that it was at Daly's pub, just up the road. Loyalists chucked a bomb through the door into the midst of the crowded throng of Catholic workers enjoying their Saturday afternoon pint and watching the sports programmes on TV. I can hear the wail of the ambulance sirens as they rush to the scene of the explosion from the nearby hospital.

I don't know if anyone has been killed or what the injured total is. But statistics are rather bare anyway. They cannot convey the anger on the Falls or the sorrow in Catholic homes tonight if a friend has to knock at the door to say that Michael or Sinead won't be coming home any more except in the undertaker's box. Yes, bombs are routine in Belfast.

### Routine

Death is routine in Belfast. Ninety-nine people have already died this year — that's eight or nine deaths each week. Young men like Francis Rice, who died in the gutter of a back-entry of the Loyalist Shankill Road with his throat cut from ear to ear. Or the young musicians of the Miami Showband, machine-gunned to death by an Ulster Volunteer Force assassination squad on their way home from a dance. Or the Ballymurphy housewife who collapsed and died from a heart attack after witnessing the brutal arrest of her son by British soldiers. Yes, in Belfast death is routine.

Intimidation is routine in Belfast. A nod from a Loyalist can see you driven from your job, even your home. And if you refuse to leave — well, a petrol bomb through your bedroom window might influence your decision. Or the friendly local unit of the Ulster Defence Association might pay a visit to remind you of your responsibility to the community — as the fifty Catholic residents of St. Johns Place in Larne discovered only



a few weeks ago, when they were subjected to an invasion by cudgel-wielding UDA thugs in full uniform.

But then, as was pointed out by the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the local defenders of 'law and order' in the area, the UDA were keeping down vandalism. Yes, intimidation in Belfast is routine.

In Belfast, harassment by the British Army is routine. House searches, arrests, attacks on peaceful demonstrations, the collection of intelligence which is then handed over to the Loyalist paramilitaries are all daily occurrences in Belfast. Beatings with batons reinforced with lead, the firing of rubber bullets at point blank range, torture by military intelligence, assassination by the SAS — they're all aspects of routine life in Belfast.

Civil rights — or rather their denial — are routine in Belfast. For fifty years under the sectarian Stormont regime, Catholics were discriminated against in terms of votes, jobs and houses; they were subjected to torture and imprisonment without trial. Then British democracy intervened and it was a case of play it again Jim, Willie, Merlyn ..... Discrimination, imprisonment without trial continue as routine for nationalist workers in Belfast.

Yes, that's right: bombs, death, intimidation, harassment, discrimination are all routine in the North of Ireland and they all stem from imperialism's refusal to recognise the right of the Irish people as a whole to self

determination and end the forcible occupation of the Six Counties by the British Army.

Not surprisingly, therefore, there have been very few tears shed in the Catholic ghettos over the bombs in Britain. Not surprisingly, people say that the British population is now receiving the same kind of medicine which British imperialism has dished out to the Irish people for seven hundred years. What should also not surprise British socialists is the failure to differentiate between the British ruling class and the British workers.

### Erupted

When the Catholic masses erupted onto the streets of the Northern cities in 1968 pledging that they would never again submit to the Unionist jackboot, the British ruling class and the British labour movement declared in unison that they did not know of the plight in which the nationalist minority in the Six Counties had been. It is now eight years since the first civil rights demonstrations. No longer can the British workers movement feign ignorance.

There is only one road to guarantee that the bombs will end in London, Dublin and Belfast, and that is for the British workers to stand apart from their ruling class, to recognise the right of the Irish to self-determination, and to launch a campaign now to end the occupation of the Six Counties, for the immediate and total withdrawal of British troops.

Dossier

# 'THE BEST TORY BUDGET SINCE ROY JENKINS'

— City Stockbroker in the *Sunday Times*, 11 April

Dennis Healey has produced a Budget which changes nothing — and yet somehow changes everything.

It changes nothing in the sense that (to use the language of the commentators) Healey has produced a 'neutral' Budget — neutrally maintaining one and a half million unemployed. But the rules of the game have certainly been changed. Healey has topped and tailed a carrot and offered the union bureaucracy the bit you throw away — a 3 per cent pay deal plus back-dated tax concessions.

This fraudulent scheme — it would mean a seven per cent cut in living standards over the next year even if the annual rate of inflation in 1976-77 was reduced to 12½ per cent — caused even Jones and Murray to turn white. Not because they oppose cutting their members' living standards — after all, they have been doing that quite successfully with the £6 limit — but because, to use Murray's words, it has put them 'on the spot'.

## Capitulation

Last year's capitulation by the TUC on wage controls, far from strengthening the hand of the unions in relation to the Government's economic policy, has meant that Healey can now turn round and tell the union bureaucrats just what they can or cannot have. When Wilson asked everyone to give a 'Year for Britain' last summer the union bureaucracy's collapse prepared the way for Healey's attacks on social spending, the latest Budget and another year of hard Labour.

Capitulation doesn't bring concessions but prepares the way for further attacks. Murray and Jones already fear that the lesson may be sinking in among wider layers of the rank and file. And now Healey is telling the bureaucracy to capitulate without even the smokescreen provided by back-room manoeuvring.

Healey's master stroke is to link the tax concessions to the achievement of a 3 per cent norm. In this way he is attempting to line up every group in society against the trade unions if they do not accept the deal.

Heath's mistake was to take on the miners when neither the middle classes nor the whole of the ruling class were ready for a head-on confrontation with organised labour. This 'Labour' Government — if it survives much longer — intends to make no such mistake.

Healey has placed the TUC leaders right on the spot by making them appear to the mass of the population as the people who will decide whether they get a tax cut or not.

## Weapon

But his weapon of strength is also a confession of the ruling class's economic weakness. The role of the trade union bureaucracy has always been to argue about how to carve up the cake. In apparently ceding to the unions the power to determine to a small extent the level of taxation, Healey is trying to make the bureaucracy the official policemen of the cake-cutting.

Any union leadership worth its salt would reject this fraud, saying we don't want to dole out the crumbs but want the cake — and the bakery too! It would refuse to police the

Chancellor Healey has produced one of the most anti-working class Budgets ever to come from a Labour Government. Not merely does it make huge economic attacks on the working class — we have had plenty of that before — but it systematically attempts to line up every section of society against the organised labour movement.

The workers movement cannot meet such an attack simply by demanding bigger wage increases and a return to free collective bargaining. An alternative programme for the organisation of the economy — measures which protect the working class from the effects of the capitalist crisis and prepare the way for socialism — has to be put forward. In the following pages, *Red Weekly* looks at Healey's fraud and some of the policies which are needed to fight it.



working class in the interests of capitalism and say: 'Yes, we will have "policemen" but they will be our members, organised in the factories, sites and social services to fight for workers control over production and in defence of the welfare services.'

Such a leadership would campaign for the formation of workers and housewives committees with control over prices — the best way to win over the middle classes driven into the arms of reaction by soaring inflation. But the present trade union leadership, while they fully understand the political cunning behind Healey's move, have neither the policies nor the intention to fight him.

The 3 per cent plus tax concessions isn't the only fraud in Healey's budget. What happened to Healey's bold announcement

when introducing the public expenditure White Paper that unemployment would be reduced to 600,000 by the end of 1978?

That would have required an annual growth rate of 8.5 per cent — which is slightly less likely than Britain putting a person on the moon in the same period. In fact Joel Barnett, Healey's understudy and secretary to the Treasury, confessed to the Commons Committee on Public Expenditure that it was anybody's guess what the annual rate of growth would be.

However, the present concentration on rationalising industry and cutting welfare services, which are amongst the biggest employers, means that boom or no boom, two million unemployed by 1980 is more likely than Healey's guesswork.

The fraud is just cheap trickery when it comes to pensions. For months pensioners have been paying increased prices for electricity, gas and food. But they won't get any increase until November, and even then it will fail to keep up with the higher prices already paid — a mere £15.30 for a single pensioner instead of the £16.30 needed just to pay for past inflation.

The Government has consciously changed the rules — excluding the peak months of 28 per cent inflation last summer by basing the pension increase on the projected level of inflation between November 1975 and November this year. A similar fiddle has been applied to unemployment and sickness benefits, conveniently saving the Government £500 million in the process.

## Concessions

Further tax concessions have meanwhile been made to the bosses and the rich. If you care to put your money into pictures and statues, you can pass on any amount of money to your children. Another £65 million in tax has also been given back to those wealthy enough to possess stock which can appreciate.

Meanwhile managers wanting cheap labour can now get £20 a week per head for keeping on people they want to sack. For thus 'saving' a few thousand jobs, the Government will pay those responsible for the present mess £60 million.

The Budget is a nasty cheap fraud. It is based on the hope that production will rise by 4 per cent over the year to mid-1977 while wages will be restricted to a 3 per cent rise. The benefits of increased production, even in the unlikely event of it being achieved on such a scale, are reserved for the ruling class.

As far as inflation goes, there is little likelihood that it will run at as little as 12½ per cent over the next year, with a further reduction to 5 per cent by the end of 1977 — so the cuts in living standards will be even greater than the 7 per cent Healey is proposing, on top of the decline already suffered under the £6 limit.

## Inflation

The present run on the pound pushes up the cost of living daily, accelerating the rate of inflation. The *Financial Times* noted on 6 April: 'As the threat of the recent sharp devaluation works through, there is a clear threat that prices may rise faster later in the year'.

The *Economist*, the magazine of big business, was well pleased with the Budget. It smugly commented: 'If a Conservative Government had dared to propose anything so sensible as a 3 per cent minimum for wage rises in 1976-77, the trade unions would be mounting demonstrations in the streets. Because a Labour Government has proposed it, the unions will try initially just to bargain the proposals' cutting edges away.'

We must wipe the smile from their faces by organising to smash up that rotten alliance between the trade union bureaucracy and the Cabinet which has guaranteed the 'success' of Labour's anti-working class policies. Having gone through purgatory over the last year, let's avoid hell over the next!

MICK GOSLING

FIGHTING HEALEY'S BUDGET



# INFLATION - Automatic pay rises can beat it

The highlight of the Budget proposals are the 'tax concessions' promised in return for the 3 per cent wage limit. According to the Government, 'a taxpayer on average earnings would gain as much from a one per cent reduction in the rate of price increase as from a £1 a week pay increase'. Impressive looking figures are produced to 'prove' that by keeping down wages someone on the average wage will gain approximately £3 in the pay packet. But all this is based on the fairy tale that this incomes policy will reduce inflation.

In fact the Government is pursuing a whole series of policies which are either directly intended to, or will inevitably result in, prices increasing. Take the continual devaluation of the pound. This is of course produced by the international capitalist crisis, but it is also a conscious policy of the British employing class and the Labour Government. Business magazines like *The Economist* openly declare that they want the exchange rate to keep falling and that a large part of the fall has actually been created by the Bank of England. Yet every fall in the value of the pound dramatically increases prices both for raw materials for industry and, most of all, in the price of food and other essentials for the working class.

In fact the fall in the value of the pound is so great that it has already made totally unrealistic Healey's promise to reduce inflation to single figures by the end of the year. The Henley Centre has estimated that the slump in the pound itself will drive up inflation by at least a further 3 per cent.

## Sliding scale....of profits!

The other obvious instance where prices are being deliberately inflated is in relation to profits—the section of total value produced by the working class which is taken by the capitalist class. All the talk by Healey of the need for industry to increase its profits means for the working class one clear thing—not merely speed-up and productivity drives to increase the amount of work done, but increased prices to drive down wages and restore profits. The whole aim of Government policies is not to hold down prices but to hold down wages while prices rise more rapidly. The aim of the Government's policy is not to hold down prices but to increase profits. This is the sole purpose of the 3 per cent wage limit.

Big business certainly has little confidence in the ability of the Labour Government to hold down inflation for any period of time. One of the concessions forced by the bosses from Healey is an apparently small item which allows 'extension of

the allowance of stock appreciation for two years'. This clause is of vital interest to the ruling class. It means in effect that as the price of the goods they hold in stock rises due to inflation, so also the rate of tax paid—which would normally go up with price—decreases. In short, stocks 'appreciation allowances' are an automatic form of protecting profits against inflation. While rising prices must be allowed to cut wages, the ruling class has no intention of letting its profits be affected by inflation in the same way.

No wonder the *Sunday Telegraph* of 11 April could be so confident in predicting an increase in profits of 13.8 per cent this year, as against a further 2 per cent drop in living standards.

## Effect of thresholds

But if the ruling class is insistent that its profits should be protected against inflation, it is also completely against granting the sole demand capable of protecting wages against inflation, that of automatic pay increases to compensate for rises in the cost of living. The only time in the past few years when there was even a minimal step towards protecting wages against inflation, particularly the wages of the low paid, was under the old threshold system. In Spring 1975 a survey revealed that in 62 out of 82 major national agreements for workers earning less than £30 a week a greater than average increase was registered. But without the threshold this would only have been the case for 42 of these groups.

The Tories originally devised the threshold system as a method of holding down wages. But the Labour Government was eventually forced to scrap them because by reflecting the rate of increase in prices, in however distorted a way, they were proving too expensive for the employers.

The most important initial step in the struggle against inflation and its effects is to ensure that every one per cent increase in prices is accompanied by a corresponding increase in take-home pay. This demand must be extended to cover all state benefits and grants. The new cash limits on social spending must be countered with the demand for a sliding scale of social expenditure. The starting point of the fight for this demand must be that the capitalists bear the cost of inflation. But this means that the distortion of the price index by the state statisticians must be thoroughly exposed through the drawing up of a cost of living index by committees of trade unionists and housewives, carrying out systematic surveys of prices instantaneously at the local level. Figures produced by ASTMS researchers have shown that Treasury estimates on inflation are up to one third lower than trade union calculations. Such local surveys could really begin to challenge the propaganda campaign of bogus figures flooding out from Whitehall.



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

Marching for jobs on 26 November—the kind of action to throw back Healey's attacks

After the experience of the 5 per cent fall in living standards caused by the £6 limit, most militants have probably correctly concluded that any incomes policy under capitalism cuts wages rather than defending them. But still many workers accept the story that inflation is caused by wage increases or public expenditure. This lie can and must be nailed.

Although excessive wages are supposed to be the cause of inflation, the share of wages and salaries in the economy has actually been falling as inflation speeds up.

When wages do go up there is no iron law which says that prices should also increase. If an increase in wages was match-

international Monetary Fund and the *Financial Times*? It is certainly true that the proportion of state and public expenditure has increased enormously. But even the capitalist press hard-liners admit that this expenditure itself is not inflationary.

The vast bulk of this figure is composed of 'transfer payments' paid for by sales of goods, rent, state loans, taxation etc. This is not inflationary as everything in this category which is put into the economy is balanced up by finance taken out.

What does cause inflation is the slump in the rate of profit, the consequent

# INFLATION - WHOSE RESPONSIBLE?

ed by a fall in profits of the same amount, then a wage increase would not produce a price increase at all. Nor do wages make up the whole cost of a product. There are also such factors as the wearing out of capital (depreciation costs), import prices and other non-labour costs. In fact, wages on average only account for 60 per cent of the cost of producing goods. Because of this the situation that exists today, where prices are actually going up faster than wages, cannot be produced by increases in workers' incomes but only by other factors.

Is the 'missing link' the cost of public expenditure, as is claimed by the

failure of the capitalists to invest, and the subsequent attempts of the state to stimulate that investment through expansion of the money supply. It is the capitalist investment strike, where investment is determined by profit and not by need, which lies at the root of the inflationary crisis.

Britain among all the major capitalist countries has the lowest rate of increase in investment, the sharpest decline in the living standards of its working class, and the highest rate of inflation. These facts are connected and they directly contradict the lie that the responsibility for inflation is that of the working class.

# TAXING US TO PAY THE BA

Healey claims to be bringing tax relief to millions. But it is the Labour Government which has taxed the working class to the limit.

The indirect taxation proposed in the Budget on petrol, drink and cigarettes will raise the cost of living by nearly one per cent. These taxes hit out at the consumer. The £115m raised in this way will come from the pockets of the millions, not the coffers of the oil, tobacco and liquor monopolists.

## Prices

All the tax increases will be directly passed on in higher prices. The argument that an increase in the price of petrol will serve the interests of conservation and anti-pollution is rubbish. Only an integrated transport system with prices accessible to the working class would offer such a possibility. Labour's policy is quite the reverse, increasing fares on all public transport and cutting back on the existing services.

There has been much talk by the Treasury mandarins of the benefits to 'Mr Normal' who has two children under 11 and gets the average manual wage. But until the 1968 Budget introduced by Roy Jenkins, 'Mr Normal' did not pay any income tax. Since then the burden of taxes on working people has risen enormously.

Under the last two Budgets introduced by Denis Healey, nearly one pound a week in real terms has been knocked off disposable income through the combined effects of inflation and taxation. Just to reduce the proportion of workers' income taken in tax to 1974 levels would mean moving the personal allowance for a married worker up to £1,255, not the marginal increase of £130 to £1,085 proposed.

Healey will not even give real concessions in return for wage controls. He is like a robber who having taken £1,000, then says that it is a concession if he gives back £100!

Among the reasons for this huge increase in taxation is the Government's need to pay off its debts. In the future money paid out to City financiers will zoom—and so will taxation.

## Interest

The cuts in social spending were needed partly to resource the huge interest which has grown up on the national debt. This debt is the result of the sale of stocks by the Government to the finance houses to meet its expenditure. The money-lenders' interest repayments will reach the staggering sum of £3,050m by 1979. The International Monetary Fund—as a condition of more loans—has

given the Labour Government only two ways out of this growing bankruptcy situation; increased taxation on incomes or more cuts in social expenditure. All the signs are that the Labour Government will do both.

## Tax rich

One policy option deliberately ignored by the Labour Government is serious steps to tax the rich. In 1970 there were 8,926 people with incomes exceeding £20,000 a year, getting between them a grand total of £275 million. This was considerably more than the total expenditure of all the local authorities in the country on personal social services such as old people's welfare, child care, aid for the handicapped and a whole range of other services for those deprived of proper care.

Two years ago, Healey promised that a wealth tax would be introduced in this Budget. In February 1974 Fleet Street affected an attack of the vapours when the Chancellor-to-be threatened to squeeze the rich 'until the pips squeak'. The Labour Left took him at his word, happy to be fobbed off with this verbal assurance. Today not a trace of those proposals remain.

Increases in taxation are often defended by the social democratic leaders on the basis that there is no

other way to pay for social services. But it is a lie that the tax revenue goes only to help the deserving—unless City financiers are included in this category. The cessation of all interest payments to these gentlemen would immediately remove a massive burden off the backs of the working class.

Equally the proposals of the Labour Party Home Policy Committee to nationalise the banks and six insurance companies and reveal all the accounts of the Bank of England and the 'Big Four' could provide an initial starting point for a campaign for workers' control of the activities of the City—beginning with the demand for the opening of their accounts to the labour movement.

## Misery

The tragicomic taxation of those already paid so miserably that they are entitled to state benefits is only the tip of an enormous iceberg of misery produced by the throwing of the burden of meeting the capitalist state's debts onto the backs of the working class.

Steve Potter



# ...FIGHTING HEALEY'S BUDGET...

# JOB S: LIES, LIES AND MORE LIES

Every single statement made in the Budget about decreasing unemployment is a lie. Healey claims that the aim is to reduce unemployment to 700,000 by 1979—which would still be an outrageously high figure. But the claim that this can be achieved is based on a 'prediction' that between 1976 and 1979 industrial output will increase by no less than 28 per cent—more than twice the rate achieved even at the height of the capitalist boom of 1972-73. Healey claims that industrial investment to achieve this will increase at 10 per cent a year—a complete fraud in a situation where investment is now actually lower than it was in 1970 and where it has not grown at 10 per cent a year at any time in the last decade.

The real facts, however, are brought out in the recent report of the Cambridge Economic Policy Group. This finds that 1½-2 million will be unemployed by 1980. This is the real scale of attack which the working class faces.

As for the so-called job protection measures taken by the Government they are not even a decent fig-leaf. The Government estimates that £1,000 needs to be spent to create each new job. Yet the entire investment in the jobs creation scheme is only £70 million. Even on the Government's own figures, this means that only 70,000 jobs will be created to breach an official level of unemployment of 1¼ million and a real level which is nearer 2 million.

The situation on jobs will be made still worse by the vast social expenditure cuts which are threatened.

The long-term plans of the Government are even worse. For example, in the next two years alone it is intended to cut 20,000 jobs in aerospace. In the next 10 years it is planned to eliminate no less than 275,000 jobs in the motor and component industry.

The recent report by Counter Information Services summarises the situation very well: 'The Government defends its policy of shifting resources from consumption to investment by claiming that it will create more jobs. But the investment is to be used to increase the productivity of the existing industrial base. Apart from North Sea Oil, there is no area where industrial investment is taking place to any significant degree.'

'As productivity increases less labour is needed. The growth of productive capacity has not been enough to compensate for this, and the point was long ago reached where more labour is being expelled from production than is being re-employed. As a result the number of workers in manufacturing industry has fallen from 9,010,000 in 1964 to 7,758,800 in 1974.'

## Import controls

But if the prospect for savage cuts in jobs is clear, unfortunately those who still want to work in a 'mixed economy'—the Labour lefts and the Communist Party—have no alternative answer. Their supposed solution to unemployment is import controls.

The TUC has called for 'import penetration ceilings' for each sector of industry, demanding import controls to save £1,350 million on the balance of payments. This, it is claimed, would save 250,000 jobs. The Cambridge Economic Policy Group has called for import controls to cut the rate of increase of imports of manufactured goods from 10 per cent to 5 per cent a year. The saving on the balance of payments, it is claimed, would ensure that unemployment would fall to 900,000 by 1980.

The reality is that import controls provide no solution whatever and are a reactionary diversion from the real problems. The first and

immediate effect of import controls would be yet greater price rises—cutting the living standard of the working class still further. The next effect would be retaliation by other countries. The only effect of import controls would be to increase prices and lose jobs. Furthermore it is a *reactionary* policy as it believes (in any case falsely) that British jobs can be saved at the expense of the jobs of workers in other countries.

The trade union leadership combine this demand for import controls with the cry for 'controlled reflation'. This demand has partially been met by the Budget. But it is no breakthrough for the working class. It simply means concessions to big business and increased productivity.

## Work-sharing

Now Jack Jones is trying to fill in the wild projections of economic growth by calling on the trade union movement to boost productivity. In this he follows the example of the US trade union leaders, who helped the auto manufacturers to increase production in their Detroit factories by 40 per cent without any significant increase in the number of workers employed or the amount of capital re-investment.

The fight against the productivity drive now starting to get underway will involve a direct challenge to the traitors like Jones and Scanlon, who now act as the Labour Government's foremen in British industry.

The workers at the Triumph factory in Coventry have taken up the gauntlet. Their decision to veto the speed of the line was taken in pursuance of implementing a productivity agreement, but it is also the most direct response to productivity drives in themselves.

On the basis of this action, the slowing of the line speed can be used to provide extra work for the jobless. **The principle of work-sharing with no loss of pay is a direct challenge to the union leadership, who will not even fight for their declared policy of the 35-hour week.**

## Public works

Against useless pleas to the Government to save jobs, workers can begin to initiate this process themselves through the opening of the books to impose a systematic work-sharing project and nationalisation on the basis of plans which defend workers' jobs, supervised and controlled by the workforce themselves.

Opening the books, nationalisation, workers control and a massive programme of public works; these are the real alternatives to the pro-capitalist policies of Healey and the reactionary utopias of the Labour left

Alan Jones



Hackney Trades Council delegate Hind Makya addressing the Charter conference

# NO CONCESSIONS FOR WOMEN!

Healey has made much of his offer of income tax concessions in return for a 3 per cent wage limit. But 25 per cent of the labour force will get nothing out of this magnificent gesture. They are the married women workers, who are lumped in with their husbands for tax purposes.

It's not as if women are working for pin money. Under the impact of the crisis every penny counts. A recent Woman's Own survey showed that three out of five women workers regard their earnings as an essential part of the family income.

But Healey's Budget plan means that these women will be left more or less defenceless against the effects of inflation, with no tax concessions and only a 3 per cent wage rise. And one has to ask—3 per cent of what? With women among the most lowly paid sections of the workforce, that could mean a rise of only 75p! About as useful as a teacup of water in a furnace.

Healey has certainly ripped away the facade of Labour concern for women's rights provided by the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts. In practice, however, these Acts are already being shown to be a farce. One group of women, for instance, had their claim for a big increase to give them equal pay turned down by a tribunal because they did heavy manual work all the time, while the men had the relief of a little clerical work!

The setting up of local investigatory committees to monitor the practical workings of these Acts was one of the calls from last weekend's Working Women's Charter con-

ference. The conference—attended by over 400 people, including 280 delegates—also decided that the Campaign should hold a mass rally at the end of this year to chart the way forward in the light of these findings.

Other national focuses for local action around the Charter will include the 25 April NCC demonstration, the 26 May day of action, and a national conference on 'Women, Cuts and Unemployment'. These activities will lay the basis for a vigorous campaign to demand that the TUC adopt the Charter at its next Congress.

Conference also discussed the progress of the nursery campaigns taken up by many Charter groups, as well as support for the National Abortion Campaign. A campaigning newspaper is planned to help in building support for all the demands of the Charter and showing how they are closely linked.

A major debate at the conference took place on the question of amendments to the Charter. It was decided that the amendments would not be regarded as final but adopted as the basis for a discussion and campaign throughout the workers movement over the next year. Among them was a new demand which is vital in the present period—the right of women to work.

The campaign for the Working Women's Charter will be central in overcoming Healey's splitting tactics and building a united labour movement response to the Labour Government's attacks.

Pat Masters

# BANKERS

# THE BANKS



# YES, THERE IS A SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE

According to Healey and Callaghan there is 'no alternative' to their Budget. The working class must tighten its belt in order to help the great god of capitalist profit out of its crisis.

The reality, however, is that capitalism has nothing to offer the working class and is worth no sacrifice whatsoever. Already the present capitalist recession - brought about purely because capitalism produces for profit and not for need - has made 15 million people unemployed in the advanced capitalist countries alone. In Britain industrial production is actually lower than it was six years ago; the living standard of the working class has fallen by 6 per cent in six years; and unemployment is at its highest level since the 1930s.

In previous pages we have looked at the immediate steps that can be taken to protect the working class against the capitalist crisis. These demands, however, also begin to prepare the way to impose workers control over the economy. They are part of a transitional programme towards a planned economy and a workers state.

## REVOLUTION

The creation of such a state will involve a working class revolution, and socialism has never meant merely dreaming about what will exist in the future. However, when capitalism has nothing to offer but a worsening crisis, it is worth looking at even the first steps that could be taken with a planned economy and a workers state. It shows the socialist alternative to the Budget and capitalism's crisis.

One of the first tasks of planned economy would be to eliminate the inequality and waste in capitalism - the situation whereby, for example, £1 million can be spent on something like the investiture of the Prince of Wales while in that country nearly a third of the houses are over 80 years old and there are 37,000 houses without even an inside toilet.

In relation to the inequality of income the situation is also absurd. For example, in 1975 the total of

all incomes of over £75 a week was £2,400 million a year. This is more than sufficient to double house building, or would allow pensions to be increased by three quarters.

Higher pay is evidently needed for highly trained specialists and for workers such as miners who do dangerous jobs, but even half this would allow £1,200 million to be saved.

## GIGANTIC

The second colossal cost imposed by capitalism is military expenditure. Of course even a workers state in Britain would need to spend money on defence against imperialist attacks. But absolutely gigantic savings are possible compared with capitalism and its imperialist requirements - and above all from an army which can't defend anybody except the capitalists.

The defence budget at present is £4,000 million a year. This goes to keep armed forces of 370,000 people whose sole real role is to repress the Irish, bolster up the imperialist military alliance of NATO in West Germany, garrison foreign bases in Cyprus, Malta, Hong Kong etc. and supply weapons and men to the utterly reactionary Sheiks of the Arab Gulf. The cost of all this is gigantic. Since the Second World War Britain has spent over £80,000 million on arms - well over £5,600 for every family of four.

Reduction of current arms expenditure by only a half - and much more than this could be achieved by a workers state - would release £2,000 million a year. It would also leave the world a decidedly safer and freer place by closing down all the British bases abroad.

## MISUSE

In addition to these vast personal incomes and military expenditure, there is of course a vast misuse and misdirection of resources under capitalism. For example, in the boom of 1971-73, no less than £4,000

million was used on land speculation and office building in London alone. In the United States - and Britain is not far behind - it is calculated that 50 per cent of the cost of many goods in the shops is accounted for by advertising and packaging. Elimination of this waste would release vast resources.

The Cambridge Political Economy Group has calculated that around 1,300,000 people in Britain are employed in advertising, financial and legal networks, generated by property disputes, property ownership and other 'industries' purely necessary because of capitalism's profit and private ownership system.

Coupled with the elimination of other jobs unnecessary in a workers state - for example, social security investigators, private detectives and the like - a cutting back on jobs in this area of only 50 per cent would generate £2,100 million for productive employment. This would, for example, allow the house building programme to be more than doubled.

## ANARCHIC

Providing work for those released from unproductive industries would provide no problem in a planned economy. Only in the anarchic economic system of capitalism can the scourge of unemployment exist. Even in a bureaucratically planned economy such as the Soviet Union, unemployment simply does not exist. Under capitalism, however, astronomical resources are wasted in this way - even leaving aside the enormous human misery involved.

There is a tremendous shortage of houses, schools, hospitals and so on, yet 300,000 workers in the construction industry are unemployed.

If we take just these obvious cases of the absurd misuse and non-use of resources by capitalism, then the total savings are immense. The Cambridge Political Economy Group, on whose calculations we have drawn heavily, find the following as the immediate savings.

● Ending upper class consumption	£1,400 million
● Cutting military expenditure	£2,000 million
● Eliminating waste and redundant services	£4,900 million
● Creating full employment	£3,500 million
<b>Total</b>	<b>£11,800 million</b>

In fact even the sums we have considered in this article are piffling compared to what is possible with a planned economy. Consider even an increase in the annual rate of growth of the British economy to 6 per cent - a very minor figure and exceeded even by capitalist countries such as Japan. If such an economic expansion had been achieved between 1951 and 1973, then the economic production of Britain would be double what it is now.

What could be achieved on an international scale and with a world economy defies description. But if we take 1962 as a base year, then we find that an increase in the growth



## to this

rate of the West European economies from 5 to 10 per cent would make it possible to surpass the standard of living in the United States within less than ten years.

On the basis of modern science and modern means of production what could be achieved is virtually limitless. A United Socialist States of Europe would allow a rapid reduction of the working week, a complete reorganisation of the cities, abolition of the stinking slums of capitalism, and vast economic support for the countries of the 'Third World'.

Of course the elimination of this crazy system of capitalism will hurt some people. In Britain the top 100 firms account for more than half of industrial production, and a takeover of the top 250 firms would bring virtually all industrial production under control.

The owners of these firms would undoubtedly suffer and would strike back with every means at their disposal - including their control of the state and armed forces. The struggle for a workers state and planned economy will inevitably culminate in a violent clash for power between the working class and the capitalist class.

But there is no way of avoiding that violence. The only question is whether the working class will fight or allow itself merely to be attacked by the capitalist class without resistance.

Healey's Budget will not lead to a rosy capitalist prosperity. On the contrary, it continues to plot a course which is steadily eroding the social, economic and political gains of the working class. The resistance is growing. Our task is to organise that resistance in the direction of the fight for workers control to lay the basis for a planned economy.

## -WHAT'S ON-

**GREATER MANCHESTER** Troops Out Movement forum: 'The role of the army in Ireland'. Tues 27 April, 7.30pm, the Black Lion, Chapel Street, Manchester 3.

**STOP THE PRIORY SCHEME** and all private practice! Public meeting organised by Wandsworth Campaign Against Private Practice, Weds 21 April, 7.30pm, at Battersea District Library, Lavender Hill, London SW11. Speakers include Mike Ward (Labour councillor), Steve Johnson (NALGO) and Sue Holland (ex-chairperson, Wandsworth & E. Merton CHC).

**MOZAMBIQUE REVOLUTION:** Frelimo English language quarterly. Independence issue now available: price (inc p&p) 50p; annual sub £2. Also 'People's Power in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau: new bi-monthly series of reports, major speeches and policy statements, news etc. Sample copy 50p, annual sub £2.50. Both available from: Mozambique and Guinea Information Centre, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC2AH 7JJ.

**CRITIQUE CONFERENCE:** 30 April/1 May, Kings College, Cambridge. 'The Future Socialist Society': Friday - Trotsky and Counter-revolution, M. Cox and D. Law (7.00) Saturday - The Transitional State, S. Meikle (10.30): Social Planning and Self-Management, C. Goodey (2.00): Central Planning and the Problem of Prices, G. Smith (4.30). Social in evening. Sleeping bag accommodation - please register needs in advance with John Barber, Kings College, Cambridge. Registration: £1 for Critique subscribers, £1.25 non-subscribers.

**'THE NEW TECHNOLOGY** and the Fight for Jobs in the Print', meeting organised by Committee against Print Redundancies, Thurs 22 April, 7.30pm in Freemason's Arms, Long Acre (Holborn tube). Speakers on the British and American situations plus two print-workers from the occupied IMRO works in Rouen, France.

**RED BOOKS** comprehensive list of titles now available - Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Mandel, Lukacs, Novack, Cannon, Deutscher, etc. Send s.a.e. for copy to: Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

**'THE LEFT and the Labour Party'** - open forum with Ralph Miliband (author of 'Parliamentary Socialism') and Tony Banks (former Labour candidate). Thurs 15 April, 7.30pm at Socialist Centre, 233 Jesmond Road (nr Cradlewell pub), Newcastle. Social afterwards.

**REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST** Group meeting in Scotland: David Yaffe on 'The Crisis - A Marxist Analysis'. Tuesday 20 April, 7.30 pm in Park Place Primary School, Dundee; Wednesday 21 April, 7.30 pm in Trade Union Centre, Picardy Place, Edinburgh.

**WORKERS BOOKSHELF** - a socialist mail-order book service offers a wide selection of books on Marxist theory, labour history, women and international affairs. Pamphlets our speciality - over 60 titles. S.a.e. (foolscap) for catalogue to: Workers Bookshelf, 150 Foster Road, Trumpington, Cambridge.

**GENERAL STRIKE** - 50th anniversary delegate conference, 23-25 April at Sussex University. Details/delegate credentials (£3) from: Pete Cresswell, Trade Union Group, Sussex University, Falmer, Brighton. **NEW PAMPHLET** produced by Birmingham IMG - 'The IMG: What We Stand For'. Proceeds to Red Weekly Fighting Fund. 1-5 copies, 10p each + 10p postage; 5-10 copies, 10p each + 15p postage; over 10 copies, post free. Write to: Martin Tolman, Aston Union, Gosta Green, Birmingham B4 7ES.

**FOR CHEAP**, reliable IBM typesetting with fast turnaround, phone Stephanie on 01-837 6954.

**BENGALI FRIENDS** in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and 'Srani-Dal-Biplab' (Fourth International paper) contact: Bengali, c/o Internationalen, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

**DEFEND THE RIGHT** To Work badges - 17p including postage from: Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1. Bulk rates on enquiry (01-278 9526).

**GLASGOW** Socialist Forums - every Thursday in the Iona Community Centre, 7.30pm.



## and this



# COUP SEALS

# CRISIS OF PERONISM

The coup which overthrew the rotten regime of Isabel Peron has opened up a new period in Argentina's political history. The Government of General Videla puts the seal on the crisis of Peronism which had been developing ever since Peron's return in 1973.

This crisis of the Peronist movement places grave responsibility on the revolutionary Marxists of the PST (Socialist Workers Party — the Argentine sympathisers of the Fourth International). Although there have been many very militant workers' struggles over the last two years, what has been lacking so far is a coherent programme of struggle based on independent class action.

This new challenge is already confirming the bankruptcy of those like the Argentine Communist Party who aim to tie the workers move-

ment to 'progressive' sections of the bourgeoisie. The Communist Party now favours the Videla faction of the coup because it is holding in check the Pinochet wing of the armed forces! In fact, they have gone so far as to issue a statement emphasising the similarity between their programme and certain objectives of the junta.

## BLOODIER

Clearly the coup is not yet a *Pinochetazo*, but this is not due to some conciliatory nature of the military. On the contrary, they are held back mainly by the fear of an open civil war which would be far bloodier than the present toll of one person killed every five hours. As it is, the right-wing death squads have been able to step up their murderous activities while labour leaders



Isabelita Peron—her overthrow puts seal on crisis of Peronism



are given heavy jail sentences under the junta's new laws for possessing weapons for self-defence.

If repression has not reached the scale of 1955 (when Peron was first driven from power) or the Chile of 1973, this is only because of the level of organisation, experience and militancy which the workers movement has developed since the famous semi-insurrection in Cordoba in 1969.

A key issue now is the economic policy that will be followed by the junta. This is bound to dissolve middle class support (and a certain working class passivity) as the illusion disappears that the military can restore order, clean up corruption,

and bring economic prosperity.

There is no chance of an 'economic miracle' on the Brazilian model, precisely because the workers movement is strong enough to resist such attacks on its living standards.

The new economy minister, Martinez de Hoz, has already indicated that he will pursue a policy of 'austerity' — similar to that of the Peronist minister, Mondelli, which led to a massive wave of strikes up and down the country last July. The deepening economic recession and the incredible 600 per cent yearly inflation rate point to an inevitable confrontation with the working class and the popular masses as a whole.

Just to take one example — the last wage increase conceded by the Peronist Government was 20 per cent. That was more than swallowed up, however, by a rise in the cost of living of 54 per cent between February and March.

## Open letter from overseas students

We are students from overseas following a course in English as a foreign language (EFL) at Hackney College, Stoke Newington Centre. We have learnt that the Inner London Education Authority has decided to close this course as from the end of this session (July 1976). Why?

It seems that the official reason is the ILEA's reorganisation ('rationalisation') of EFL teaching and its concentration in a few chosen ILEA colleges, of which Hackney is not one.

First, we want to question this idea of reorganisation, as it seems to us that provision of EFL courses is necessary in every locality in London — not just in a few scattered centres — if it is to meet the needs of the city's multi-racial community as well as of visiting students. Second, we strongly suspect that this idea of reorganisation is in fact a smokescreen behind which cuts in student and teacher numbers are going to be made.

The recent revelation that ILEA plans to cut the number of overseas students by 60 per cent over the next five years makes this clear. As well as 60 student places, vacancies for three teachers will be lost permanently with the closure of this course.

As overseas students we come to

study here because English is a necessity for us in order to continue our studies and gain adequate work qualifications. We finance ourselves entirely while we are here, and pay three times the college fees paid by resident students. (Incidentally, almost no other country discriminates against foreign students in this way — the Swedish government and East European governments actually give them state grants.)

After completing our course in English, many of us wish to go on studying here, mainly to gain technical skills and qualifications which are much needed in our own countries and are often difficult to obtain there. (Many of us come from former British colonies and non-industrialised countries.)

We do not take college places away from resident British students. As a result of what seems to be the failure of Britain's education system to meet the needs of the majority of its young people, there are not enough resident British students to fill many of the existing further and higher education courses. Many of these actually depend on having a certain number of overseas students to keep them open, or 'viable'.

If these courses have to be closed because of cuts in overseas student numbers, there will be as a result a permanent loss of course provision for resident British students as well. Any suggestion that resident students would benefit from a reduction in overseas student numbers is entirely wrong.

It is easy to attack foreign students as it is easy to attack immigrant workers, by blaming them directly or indirectly for causing economic and social problems. But we did not cause the crisis of Britain's economy and our removal will not help solve it. Nor will the Government's overall policy of cutting back on social expenditure.

This policy may be in the interests of financiers and industrialists concerned with falling profit margins, but their problems are not ours, nor are they those of the great majority of people — immi-

grants and British-born alike — whose work is the real basis of this country's prosperity. What is worth defending, if not people's right to decent education and social facilities?

That is why we think the defence of this one course is important, not just for us and the students who may come after us, but as part of the defence against all cuts everywhere in education and social expenditure. Foreign students are among the first to be singled out, but the cuts will not stop there unless they are

opposed now. The loss of one course in one college is the thin end of the wedge. We ask the ILEA to reverse its decision, and we ask for your support.

For further information, messages of support, leaflets/petitions, please contact the Student Union Representative, Hackney College, Dove Road Annexe, Islington, London N1, or phone 01-254 8040.

OVERSEAS STUDENTS at Hackney College.

## LETTERS

### What attitude to bombings?

The article on 'Bombings — who's to blame?' (*Red Weekly*, 1 April) was very useful as regards the correct revolutionary principles on which a movement in solidarity with the Irish revolution should be built. However, I felt it was very evasive on what specific attitude socialists should adopt towards a Republican bombing campaign in Britain.

The article correctly pointed out the opportunist nature of the International Socialists, who tie 'Troops Out' to the planting of bombs in Britain and pay only lip service to the principle of self-determination. It also correctly hit on the dilemma of the Provisionals — their complete lack of political strategy in turning to a bombing campaign that rejects any role for the British working class in the struggle for Irish freedom.

However, the article was very loose on what we should argue for when the bombs start in British cities. It is not enough to say that what we have to do is build a movement based on 'Troops Out — Self-determination for the Irish People'. We have to say that we defend 100 per cent the right of the Irish people to bring the war over to Britain.

After eight centuries of national oppression, 50 years of Orange rule, internment, harassment, and denial of basic rights by the British over the Irish, they have every right to bring the war over to Britain.

We do of course say that the tactic of bombing the British working class into a 'Troops Out' position is mistaken. Were we on the Army Council of the Provisionals, we would vote against employing such a tactic, but alas, we are not in such a position, and have no right whatsoever to insist that the Irish struggle is fine and should be supported only so long as the Irish keep it to themselves.

This, of course, does not mean that we should capitulate to every twist and turn of the Provisional leadership. We should polemicise with them at all times. But this can only be on the basis of genuinely showing in action that we solidarise with their struggle (something on which *Red Weekly* does have a proud record).

This also should not mean that the only campaign we build on Ireland is one of pure principles and on a 'solidarity position'. It is absolutely correct to build a movement on Ireland which draws in the widest forces possible, and the latest Troops Out Movement campaign based on simply 'Britain out of Ireland' is an absolutely correct way to progress.

However, within that movement we do have to explain exactly what should be the correct revolutionary position. I feel that *Red Weekly* was very evasive on this in the article on the bombings — PHIL DEXTER, Newcastle.

## GAY RIGHTS

I acknowledge *Red Weekly's* principled position towards gay rights. Your article on the Tony Whitehead picket and your comments on Jeremy Thorpe were in pleasant contrast to the silence in all or most other left papers.

It is highly important for gay people to join in united struggle with other groups against all oppression — however, it is equally important that revolutionary groups make gay people welcome when they do participate.

I enclose a cheque towards the Fighting Fund — RICHARD TARRY (for East London Faggots).

## Power

General Videla has proclaimed that the junta will stay in power for three years in order to 'eradicate subversion and promote economic development'. But the workers movement will fight desperately to prevent another defeat like Chile, and to drive the military and capitalism with it from power.

The vulnerability of the junta was symbolised with the execution of Pavon, a top police chief, by resistance forces on the very day that Videla was sworn in. Videla cannot be allowed to bleed the Argentine working class as he plans.

In Britain that means launching a campaign against the regime which can draw on the momentum gained by the movements on Chile and Brazil to demand that the Labour Government break all links with these military oppressors. To this end, *Red Weekly* urges trade union branches, Labour Party wards and all other working class organisations to affiliate to the Argentina Support Movement (further information from 1 Cambridge Terrace, London N.W.1.).

## Juan Sosa



Juan Peron—his death in 1974 precipitated crisis

# an interview with



## Leonid Plyushch

Leonid Plyushch, a Soviet mathematician and communist, was freed from jail and deported from the USSR after an international campaign to secure his release. We are pleased to reprint extracts from an interview taken by our French comrades of the Ligue Communiste Revolutionaire

**Q. What are the major opposition currents in the Soviet Union? Are there Marxist currents?**

A. The principle division of the opposition in the Soviet Union is the division between the democratic movement and the anti-democratic movement. The chauvinists of all stripes (up to and including the fascists) and certain far-right Christian currents constitute the anti-democratic movement. But it must be noted that numerically these groups constitute only a very small fraction of the opposition.

As far as the democratic movement is concerned, it includes democrats who are fighting simply for respect for Soviet law on individual freedom, religious currents that demand freedom of conscience, patriotic currents of the various nationalities, and neo-Marxists, the social-

ist currents, which are still not very numerous. But it is necessary to stress the much too general and conventional character of these labels.

The neo-Marxists are trying to analyse the causes of the defeat of the October revolution and the other socialist revolutions, to analyse the changes that have occurred in the world since the death of Lenin, and to work out a new action programme for Marxists in the USSR. Nevertheless, I have not read any serious Marxist programmatic document in the *samizdat* (self-published) publications.

**Q. Do you think it is possible to speak of a crisis of the opposition, and if so, what are the reasons for the crisis?**

A. In fact, there are certain signs of a crisis of the opposition. I see two reasons for it. First, the very severe repression of the opposition by the KGB, a repression that began in 1968 and was stepped up considerably in 1972. Today the Ukrainian resistance has in fact been crushed, but I don't think it will remain so for very long.

The second reason is the gap that exists between certain currents and the workers and peasants. Nevertheless, I think that this situation will change for the better relatively soon.

**Q. What has been and what is the attitude of the democratic opposition towards the working class? Can one speak of a gap between the opposition and the working class?**

A. As a whole, the democratic opposition is conscious of the need to improve the material situation of the workers and peasants and to eliminate the privileges of the bureaucracy.

But in the democratic *samizdat* the main emphasis is placed on demands relating to respect for legality and individual liberty, in a manner that is not justified proportionally. It is an essential insufficiency of the movement, although it is quite correct to think that democratisation of the country is the principal task.

The majority of democrats, with the exception of the neo-Marxists, ridicule the belief in the leading role of the working class.

**Q. Can one speak of social and political passivity of the working class? If so, why? Isn't this contradictory with the news we have about strikes and clashes with the police that sometimes comes out of the USSR?**

A. Yes, the working class in the USSR is very passive. There are many reasons for this. The main one is the absence of organisations expressing the interests and consciousness of the class of workers.

The second reason is the absence of traditions of struggle for their interests. The third is common to all classes in the USSR, and that is fear for one's family, fear of losing a good job, fear of the prisons and the camps. The fourth reason is a deep mistrust of all propaganda and all agitation.

Workers' strikes and demonstrations in the USSR are very rare. They are evidence only of discontent against the regime and not of activity on the part of the workers.

**Q. One gets the impression that the national question is one of the major contradictions of bureaucratic society today. What do you think of this?**

A. One can say that the Soviet Government consciously and unconsciously pursues the policy of Tsarism. The Russification of culture and the falsification of the history of all peoples (including the Russian people) are some of the aspects of this policy. Behind verbal internationalism lurks great Russian chauvinism.

One of the most repugnant manifestations of this chauvinism is anti-Semitism, which is applied under the pretext of anti-Zionism; but there was also the deportation of the Crimean Tatars, the Meskhets, and the Black Sea Greeks, deportations which Stalin carried out by accusing these peoples of 'treason to the fatherland'. Can a whole people be traitors? Traitors to whom? To the Russian people?

The bureaucracy is the essential source of this great-power chauvinism. The nationalism and chauvinism of the non-Russian peoples is a reaction to this. The role of the bureaucracy in this chauvinist policy is more and more understood by non-Russian patriots. Also, it seems to me that the struggle of nations for their self-determination will take on an increasingly anti-bureaucratic character, fusing with the democratic movement.

**Q. How will the new Five Year Plan affect the standard of living of the popular masses?**

A. I think that the difficulties of bureaucratic management of the economy will increase, and this will obviously have consequences on the standard of living of the popular masses.

**Q. Do you think a gradual democratisation of Soviet society is possible?**

A. I hope so.

**Q. Do you think that a wing of the Soviet bureaucracy is favourable to a democratisation of Soviet society and is capable of carrying this out?**

A. No, I don't think so.

# Piece-meal changes in women's role

Soviet celebrations of International Women's Day on 8 March have been and gone for another year. The national holiday was marked with the usual official gathering in the capital, attended by an impressive assortment of government and party leaders and addressed by the space heroine Valentina Tereshkova and other women famous for their successes in production. The Central Committee's message to 'Dear Soviet Women' was along the traditional lines:

'The warmth of the female soul, the solicitude of wives and mothers makes the Soviet family strong. Loving and attentive, they raise their children — the future builders of communism — to be healthy of body and ideologically firm of mind and worthy citizens of the socialist fatherland. The nation is grateful to you women for your great and noble work....'

But this year was a little different, for 1976 is the beginning of the 10th Five Year Plan and the 25th Party Congress has just finished its session. Congress directives made the usual promises to improve living standards and specifically 'the work conditions and everyday life' of women, but this year the measures to be taken to achieve the desired goal were outlined in more detail.

## PAID LEAVE

These measures include wages for women who stay at home and look after their babies in the first year after birth. Previously women have had four months paid leave — two months before and two months after childbirth — and the option of another ten months unpaid leave with their job held open for them. The proposal is therefore to encourage all mothers to stay at home for the first year by offering them a wage for the work. A second directive is to provide greater opportunities for women to work a part-time day or part-time week, and to provide women with work that they can take home to do.

Soviet women have for long had to shoulder the double burden of work in production and all domestic responsibilities — as 90 per cent of Soviet women work, the average woman puts eight hours daily into production and an estimated four hours daily into housework, with consequently less time than her husband for sleep and leisure. It must come as a welcome relief to them to hear that the Government has recognised their position as intolerable. However, although it is not yet clear what impression these changes will have in practice, the tendency is obviously to solve the problems of woman's double load by piece-meal changes within the family system, and by trimming woman's production role so that she can meet her domestic commitments.

The Soviet economy could not function without women, and there is no possibility of a mass exodus of women from production. Nevertheless, it is important to understand how such government legislation threatens women's position as highly-qualified workers capable of holding posts of importance and responsibility in the work collective.

Women constitute 50 per cent of the Soviet student body and 50 per cent of the qualified 'specialists'. The claims of housework have in the past already made it more difficult for women to get to the top. If women are now to take several years off to bring up their families — and, worried by the dropping birth-

rate, the Government is encouraging larger families — and to perform their work outside the collective, their chances of playing an equal role in social and political life will recede even further.

The Soviet bureaucracy has never displayed any real understanding or interest in the liberation of women, and its 1976 directives show once again that it prefers to sacrifice liberation to what it chooses to call the 'needs' of the domestic economy.

The Bolsheviks believed that the domestic economy which determined women's inferior position in society would with the transition to socialism be eliminated by the socialisation of both housework and the upbringing of children. Far from believing that the introduction of women into production would automatically bring their liberation, they outlined measures for the creation of a whole network of communal facilities. In the early years after 1917, however, the country was too poor to carry out fully such a programme; and in the late 1920s and '30s the growing control of the bureaucracy was accompanied by a rejection of these perspectives, with the family and the domestic economy being heralded as an integral and important part of socialist society.

Over the years, it is true, much has been done to lend women a hand. The 1976 directives promise more pre-school facilities, including 2.5-2.8 million extra kindergarten places (in 1975 pre-school facilities provided for 11 million under-sevens), more extended day school schools, and more pioneer camps. And the new plans also speak of new labour and time saving gadgets in the home and the marketing of semi-processed foods.

But the pre-school network and the schools only free women for the time that they are needed in the factory or office, and the most modern home appliances or generous supplies of frozen and tinned foods do not free women from the housework. Even when there is talk of improving communal facilities, this is again seen as assisting women — as easing and complementing the family's domestic economy, rather than replacing it.

## NO EXCUSE

There was never any excuse for calling woman's oppression her liberation; but whereas in the 1930s and '40s the economy was not advanced enough to attempt the socialisation of housework, the USSR is now wealthy enough to provide 24-hour nurseries and other forms of social upbringing on a mass scale, and to maintain a system of cafes and restaurants with fare cheap and appetising enough to replace the private kitchen. There is no longer any need for the domestic economy — only the bureaucrats' need for the family unit that absorbs the time and energy of its members and atomises the working class, thus depoliticising it.

In the early days of the revolution, working women had their newspapers and conferences and organisations through which to discuss and fight for their interests. Stalin, needless to say, found such practices incompatible with his style of 'socialist construction'; and to this day Soviet women are without the channels through which to articulate their needs. The struggle for the 'active democratic participation of the masses in public life' of which British CP leader John Gollan has spoken involves the re-birth of these women's organisations and of the fight to eliminate the domestic economy and the family relations it fosters.



Women's conference in Moscow

\*\*\*\*\*

The above is condensed from a more extended interview with Plyushch which appears in the current issue of *Inprecor*, the fortnightly information journal of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. It appears as part of a dossier on 'The Soviet Union after the 25th Congress' which also includes a balance sheet of Brezhnevism and an interview with dissident Zhores Medvedev.

Other articles in this special double issue cover the death agony of the Arias Government in Spain, the elections in Portugal, the civil war in Lebanon, and the repression in Uruguay. Copies can be obtained for 40p (plus 10p p&p) from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. — or why not take out a subscription? Just send £7 to the

**inprecor**  
international press correspondence  
Semaine, no. 615, 1 April 1976 B.L.E. 40.40p

**THE SOVIET UNION AFTER THE 25th PARTY CONGRESS**

Interview with zhores medvedev  
Interview with leonid plyushch

same address and receive every issue for a year.

# Bureaucrats battle for power



HUA KUO-FENG.

China's rumbling political crisis entered a dramatic new phase last week when violent demonstrations shook Tien-an-men square in Peking for the first time since the cultural revolution ten years ago. According to the Hsinhua News Agency, a hundred militia were wounded during the rioting, twelve of them seriously. Vehicles were set on fire, and a Public Security Office facing onto the square was burned and ransacked.

On the Ching Ming festival the day before the riots, thousands of mourners had filed into Tien-an-men to lay wreaths to the memory of Chou En-lai, who died in January. It was the removal of these wreaths during the night by security police that provoked the violent reaction of the crowd. Tens of thousands of militia were drafted in, many of them (to judge from vehicle licence-plates) from outside the capital, to quell the rioting.

Reports state that some of Chou's mourners raised slogans in support of the 'moderate' Teng Hsiao-ping, who has been under attack from 'radicals' in recent weeks. A document purporting to be Chou En-lai's political testament, published recently in Tokyo, showed that Chou and Teng shared similar political positions.

In this sense, whoever organised the incidents in the square was executing Chou's testament. But the size of the demonstrations does not necessarily reflect widespread mass support for Teng and his policies. Judging by reports, pro-Teng slogans were only raised by a handful of demonstrators, and most of the crowds were drawn by affection for Chou En-lai rather than support for Teng.

## Modernising

Serious observers will wait for more evidence to emerge before drawing firm conclusions about the meaning of the Tien-an-men troubles. But it is clear that they were closely connected with the recent sharpening, triggered by the death of arch-mediator Chou En-lai and the imminence of Mao's own 'meeting with Marx', of the power struggle that has rumbled on in the party leadership ever since the cultural revolution.

To apply the labels 'moderate' and 'radical' to the leadership factions involved is only useful if they are properly qualified. It would be just as wrong to confuse Chiang Ching and co. with the genuinely radical forces that emerged during the cultural revolution, as it would be to accept the slander that Teng Hsiao-ping is out to 'restore capitalism'.

The two factions both share the aim of modernising China's poor and backward economy before the year 2000. Where they differ is on how to achieve this aim. Mao's instinctive response to the problems of economic development is to launch limited campaigns to reduce privilege, corruption and other symptoms of bureaucratic degeneration that might threaten to alienate the rank-and-file. The proposals of his opponents are more classically Stalinist: to allow small increases in differentials for a growing 'professional' stratum, and thus to create a narrow privileged layer to act as a cushion between the rule of the bureaucracy and the masses.

But in other ways the Maoists are clearly to the right of their opponents. Their proposals for 'all-round dictatorship' have meant in practice the extinction of all elements of proletarian democracy. The 'moderates' in the leadership, despite their hostility to real socialist democracy, favour a certain liberalisation in political and cultural life to ease

# for power

GREGOR BENTON explains why the factional struggle in China has burst out into the open again following the death of Chou En-lai.



Chinese soldiers demonstrating against Teng Hsiao-ping

social tensions.

Other issues which may divide the two camps include foreign policy, and in particular relations with imperialism and the Soviet Union. Here the evidence is flimsy, but all Mao's past opponents have been more prepared than him to see joint action with the Soviet Union, and the implications are that the present dispute is no exception.

It would be over-simple, however, to see the Tien-an-men events exclusively in terms of the struggle at the top. Once the violence flared up it was Wu Teh, staunch 'moderate' and ally of Teng Hsiao-ping, whose voice boomed out from the public address system warning against 'class enemies and counter-revolutionaries'. The rioting also gave Teng's opponents in the leadership precisely the excuse they needed to strip him of all the powers he has accumulated in recent months.

A common feature of most political campaigns that have developed since the cultural revolution is the constant emergence of forces mobilised outside the conventional channels and independent of all wings of the bureaucracy.

## Development

Workers' political actions in past years invariably developed in the shadow of the student movement or a section of the bureaucracy; but the 1974-75 strikes were remarkable for their apparent independence of all outside influences. This growing maturity and self-confidence of the Chinese workers partly reflects their numerical growth and the rapid socio-economic development of the country.

Other sections are also becoming increasingly alienated from the established order. Since the cultural revolution many millions of young people have been dispersed from the cities to the countryside because of the inability of China's industry to absorb new levies of

school-leavers. This 'rustification' drive discriminates against workers' children and suspected political dissidents, and such youth therefore resent their fate and see themselves as especially disadvantaged. Many tens and even hundreds of thousands have fled back to the cities, where they present a serious crime problem and are an obvious focus of dissent.

## Corruption

Ordinary Chinese have many other reasons to resent the Maoist leaders. The cultural revolution failed to resolve most of the grievances and tensions it so dramatically spotlighted. Big income differentials still divide bureaucrat and worker in China (although they are still far lower than those between capitalist and worker in a country like India), and the Chinese press revealed widespread bureaucratic corruption and abuse of power during the 1973-75 campaigns.

Historically, Maoism drew its strength from the mass movement, in its struggle both for power in the country and power in the party. The erosion of the Maoists' mass base since the cultural revolution has left them stranded, and incapable of dealing a death-blow to their opponents at the top. This is the root cause of the persistently unstable balance of power in the Chinese Communist Party leadership.

In the cultural revolution Mao struck down Liu Shao-chi by launching the masses against him. Today Teng is toppled by a blow not from the Maoists' base but from his own, i.e. as a result of the recklessness of a section of his supporters who created the space for unwelcome tensions to rise and express themselves. This is the ultimate measure of the degeneration of Maoism in China.

Even during the present crisis this fear has played a major part in the calculations of the Maoists, who continued to warn their supporters against independent mass action even after the Tien-an-men riots.



TENG HSIAO-PING.

In fact, all Mao's recent campaigns have been markedly totalitarian in character, in sharp contrast to the classical Maoist themes of participation and the 'mass line'. The same Mao who in 1966 inspired the youth in China and the world with rhetorical references to the Paris Commune now eulogises Chin Shih Huang, China's ruthless first unifier and a practitioner of the totalitarian philosophy of legalism.

The Maoists' fear of the mass movement has inevitably reduced the force of their drive against the 'moderates' in the leadership. It is a little remarked but telling detail that the same day Teng was stripped of his posts, his close ally Li Hsien-nien reappeared in public after a period of absence. Moreover Hua Kuo-feng, the man chosen to fill Chou's old post as prime minister, is not a 'radical' but a compromise candidate acceptable to both factions.

## Bureaucratic

But as Mao's death draws nearer, the pressures that emerged almost immediately after Chou's death for a quick resolution of the leadership struggle are bound to intensify — all the more so since the 'radicals' are aware that Mao's powerful backing for their faction can only last as long as he does. Fearful of the masses, both leadership factions will probably confine their battles to the bureaucratic apparatus, in which case the struggle will more and more assume the typically Stalinist form of police purges, frame-up trials, and so on.

But in the long run, as Mao has never tired of saying, it is the masses who make history.

In the struggles that break out in future years, revolutionaries will support neither of the existing leadership factions, but take the side of the independent workers movement. At the same time they will seize on the radical aspects expressed in a fragmentary and distorted form in the rival programmes of the two factions — the egalitarian drive of the Maoists, the timid liberalisation calls of the 'moderates' — and weld them into a new independent revolutionary programme.

## The SUN sinks in the West

Short of pictures last week because of a process workers' strike, Rupert Murdoch's *Sun* promised its buyers 'lots more to read' instead. On China there were more words—but precious little to understand.

John Greally set the scene on 6 April. According to him it was a question of 'a little lotus flower who became a fire-breathing dragon'—a reference to Mao's wife, Chiang Ching. The trouble all started apparently when 'sex kitten Chiang ... moved into his legendary cave, and into his plank bed'.

Surely that explained everything? Not quite. Two days later it was Iain Walker's turn to come up with a sensational new angle on China's problems: 'Mrs Mao, who wears baggy trousers and a workman's cap, has organised a campaign against well-dressed Teng, who has the best-cut tunic in the country.'

Haute couture rivalries as the explanation of China's crisis was perhaps pushing it a bit far even for *Sun* readers. But it reflects Murdoch's policy of cutting his cloth to fit a particular purpose.

Rupert and his mates are doing well out of capitalism, and the problem with news about political and social conflicts is that it tends to raise awkward questions about the policies which flow from that system. The answer—trivialise everything so that it becomes simply a matter of personalities. In the short term it pays. In the end, however—as strikes by his journalists and printers in Australia have already shown—it is Murdoch himself who will get scorched.

# PAY STRIKES ROCK LEYLAND

A new spate of strikes against the Labour Government's pay policy is sweeping British Leyland. Infuriated by the erosion of pay differentials, 70 tool-makers at the Drews Lane transmission plant in Birmingham have now been out for nearly two weeks demanding a £10 increase to give them parity with staff demonstrators. At Longbridge 1,000 toolroom workers are demanding an extra £9 in a parallel claim.

But the most advanced challenge to the Government's pay strategy is coming from 6,000 workers at the Triumph car plant in Coventry. BL management are refusing to pay a productivity increase due in April until June because of the 12-month rule between settlements. The workers have responded by reducing output to the levels before the deal took place, cutting the speed of the line by five per cent.

Continuing the scab role it played in the SU Carburettors dispute, the AUEW Executive has ordered all three groups of strikers back to work. The Tories have also seized on the disputes. Michael Heseltine, shadow industry secretary, has called for the breaking up of Leyland into smaller firms.

Others are demanding an end to differential disputes and higher output as the price of the next dollop of Government aid to the firm. Yet the stop on capital investment, initiated by BL in December 1975 in an attempt to bludgeon its workers into higher productivity, has already caused serious damage.

Some of the real causes of Leyland's crisis were given away in the Commons on 5 April by Coventry Labour MP, Geoffrey Robinson: 'Mistaken management decisions taken last year to reduce tool programmes, institute

wasteful and unnecessary voluntary redundancy programmes and wasteful and unnecessary sales promotion programmes have done far more to damage the production, sales and profits of British Leyland than all the strikes last year and this year put together.'

In pursuing their pay claim the Triumph workers have given a lead in how to fight back against the mass sacking and productivity increases contained in the Ryder strategy. If you can veto line speed to protect wages, why not do the same to protect all jobs?

The best way to achieve this is to demand access to all Leyland's investment and production plans through 'Open the Books' committees to work out a policy of work-sharing with no loss of pay. Capitalism has shown that it cannot run the car industry. To protect their jobs and living standards, the workers will have to control it.

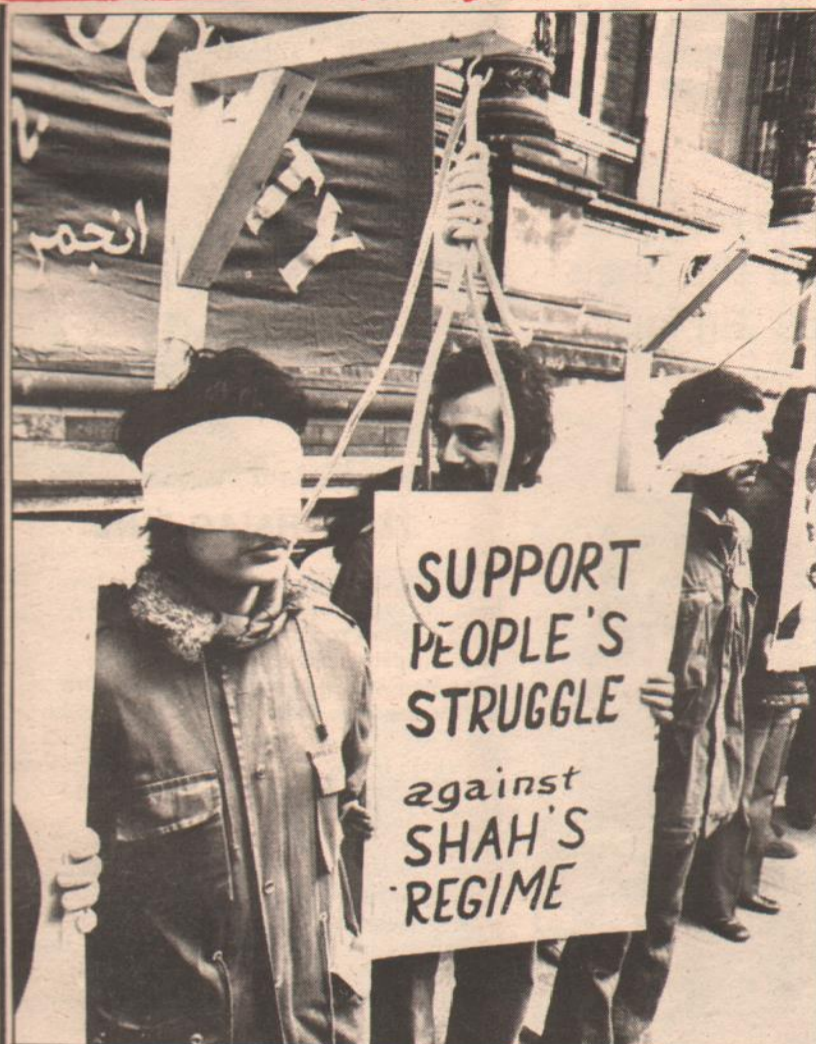


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

Britain had a royal visitor last week—Empress Farah, the wife of the Shah of Iran. Here for the opening of the World of Islam Festival in London, she was followed by strong pickets of Iranian students protesting against her presence in this country. As they stated in their leaflets: 'She does not represent the Iranian people, artists or the Iranian Moslems, but a dictatorship engaged in the most savage repression of all these.'

Two years ago, one of Iran's best contemporary writers, Gholamhossein Sa'edi—best known internationally as the script writer of the film *The Cow*—was arrested and after months of torture forced to give an interview denouncing his writings as 'rubbish'. More recently four famous Iranian artists were arrested and sentenced to 2-11 years prison in secret for no apparent 'crime' other than rehearsing for a

performance of a play by Gorki. Another writer, Hamid Mo'meni, has just been seized by the SAVAK, who refuse to say what they have done to him.

The Iranian Moslem clergy also suffer from similar repression. They too have to put religion at the service of the regime or else face imprisonment and torture. There are hundreds of radical clergymen in the Shah's jails, and several of their leaders have been killed under torture.

The Shah's dictatorship has nothing in common with Islamic art and culture. The presence of Farah at the Festival was nothing but a sick joke—an insult both to the Iranian people, whom she claimed to represent, and to the Festival itself. Nevertheless the police once again showed whose side they were on by arresting six people at the pickets.

## Bang on target!

The launching of a £1,500 quarterly Fighting Fund for Red Weekly has met with a great response from readers. A carworker walked in and gave us £100—money he'd saved to help Red Weekly despite suffering the cost of being on strike for well over a month last year.

Hillingdon Squatters and Tenants Association held a very successful social and sent £42. And a regular supporter, L.Sinclair, sent another £15. Our thanks also to East London Faggots, who sent £3.50 in recognition of Red Weekly's stand on gay rights; Manchester NALGO workers, £3.20; Bradford IMG, £4.70; Bristol IMG, £6.50; Watford IMG, £8; E.J. Hughes, £1; Des Stepto, £1; and 30p from Hemel. This week's total is £185.20, giving us £266.86 in the first two weeks of our new Fighting Fund!

That's bang on target—and let's keep it there. Every pound, every penny given to the Red Weekly will be used to improve and expand the resources of the paper to provide you, our readers, with a better fighting weapon for the socialist alternative. Just keep that money coming in. Make cheques/POs out to Red Weekly (FD) and send them to: 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.



NAME.....	SUBSCRIPTION RATES
ADDRESS.....	DOMESTIC: £7 per year
	£3.50 for six months
	FOREIGN: £9 per year surface mail
	£12 per year airmail

Write to RED WEEKLY (distribution), 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

# PORTUGUESE ELECTIONS Trotskyists banned

The military Council of the Revolution in Portugal has intervened in the election campaign to 'suspend' the Internationalist Communist League (LCI—sympathising organisation of the Fourth International) from making any radio or TV broadcasts over a period of eight days. The ban, from 10-17 April, was imposed after a TV broadcast by the LCI had appealed to workers supporting the Communist and Socialist parties to demand that their leaders break with the reactionaries—going on to name two of the latter as commando chief Jaime Neves and northern military commander Pires Veloso, both members of the Council.

The LCI had earlier been warned that its election propaganda was a 'threat to the unity and cohesion of the armed forces'. The imposition of the ban last Saturday was justified on the basis that the LCI had been 'making statements injurious to the democratic institutions of Portugal'.

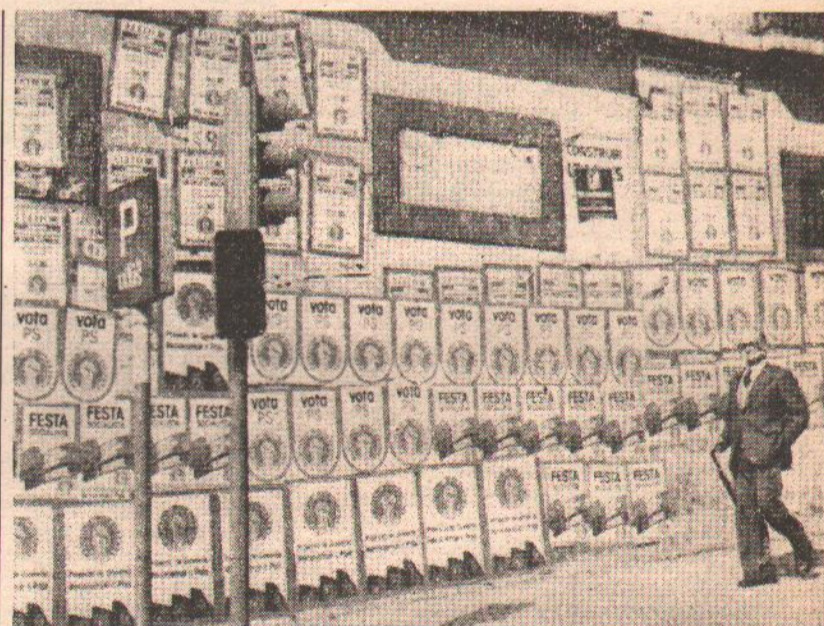
The reference was apparently to the Trotskyists' demand that the CP and SP leaders should also break with the GNR and PSP special police forces. These have been busy 'democratically' murdering demonstrators and breaking up strikes since the ruling class regained the initiative after the events of 25 November.

This suspension of the LCI's rights of free expression highlights the delicate manoeuvre which the ruling class is trying to carry out through the elections. On the one hand it hopes to gain an electoral mandate for the two main openly pro-capitalist parties, the CDS and the PPD. This will help to prepare the establishment of an authoritarian regime led by a strong military president (who will be elected separately in June).

## Tribune

On the other hand, the elections also offer the workers movement a tribune from which to organise and clarify its positions—an opportunity which the LCI has seized with both hands, unlike the ultra-lefts of the PRP (Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat). The suspension of the LCI's broadcasting rights, in fact, merely testifies to the impact its propaganda has been having inside the workers movement—particularly among supporters of the Communist and Socialist parties.

The leaders of these parties, having for so long provided a 'left' cover for the reactionary policies of the Sixth Provisional Government, have now declared a 'social truce' for the period of the election. They have refused to support strikes or to condemn openly the use of police to break up pickets and factory occupations. Despite this scabbing, however, the working class still has its own organisations forged in the struggles after 25 April 1974, and has been putting them to good use in



a series of tough defensive struggles against the employers.

Indeed, a second wave of unionisation is now under way, which is developing within a context of broad discussion on the statutes and platforms of the unions. The themes discussed during the recent congress of 300 delegates of the textile unions in the wool and clothing industries (sectors that include 250,000 workers)—workers control, planning, worker-peasant unity, etc.—also indicate how the present strengthening of the unions is combining with the gains of the past.

The workers' response to the growing capitalist offensive has taken many forms, some of them new. There have been strikes with occupations (Transports Estefania, Tome Feteira, the file factory in Viera de Leira) and a strike with a picket squad and locking-up of the employers (Firestone). This reflects a certain link-up between past experience and the needs of the current defensive struggle.

In Coimbra the public transport employees carried out a militant strike, while the pharmaceutical aides have rejected overtime work throughout the country.

The hospital workers held a total strike and then went on an administrative strike in some hospitals. In addition, there have been mobilisations in decisive sectors (engineering, construction), and in sectors that had not engaged in important struggles up to now (municipal employees, public services).

The reformist leaderships continue to counterpose the 'electoral battle' to these struggles against the capitalist attacks. But the LCI is putting them on the spot by demanding that the SP and CP form a government—not one based on the presidential pact, or on an alliance with the PPD or CDS, but on the workers own organisations, the trade unions and workers commissions—to implement a plan of anti-capitalist struggle to defend the interests of the workers and peasants.

'All power to the workers, peasants and soldiers organised in a national congress of workers commissions to destroy capitalism and advance the construction of a new society, a socialist society—Vote LCI.'

Ric Sissons