

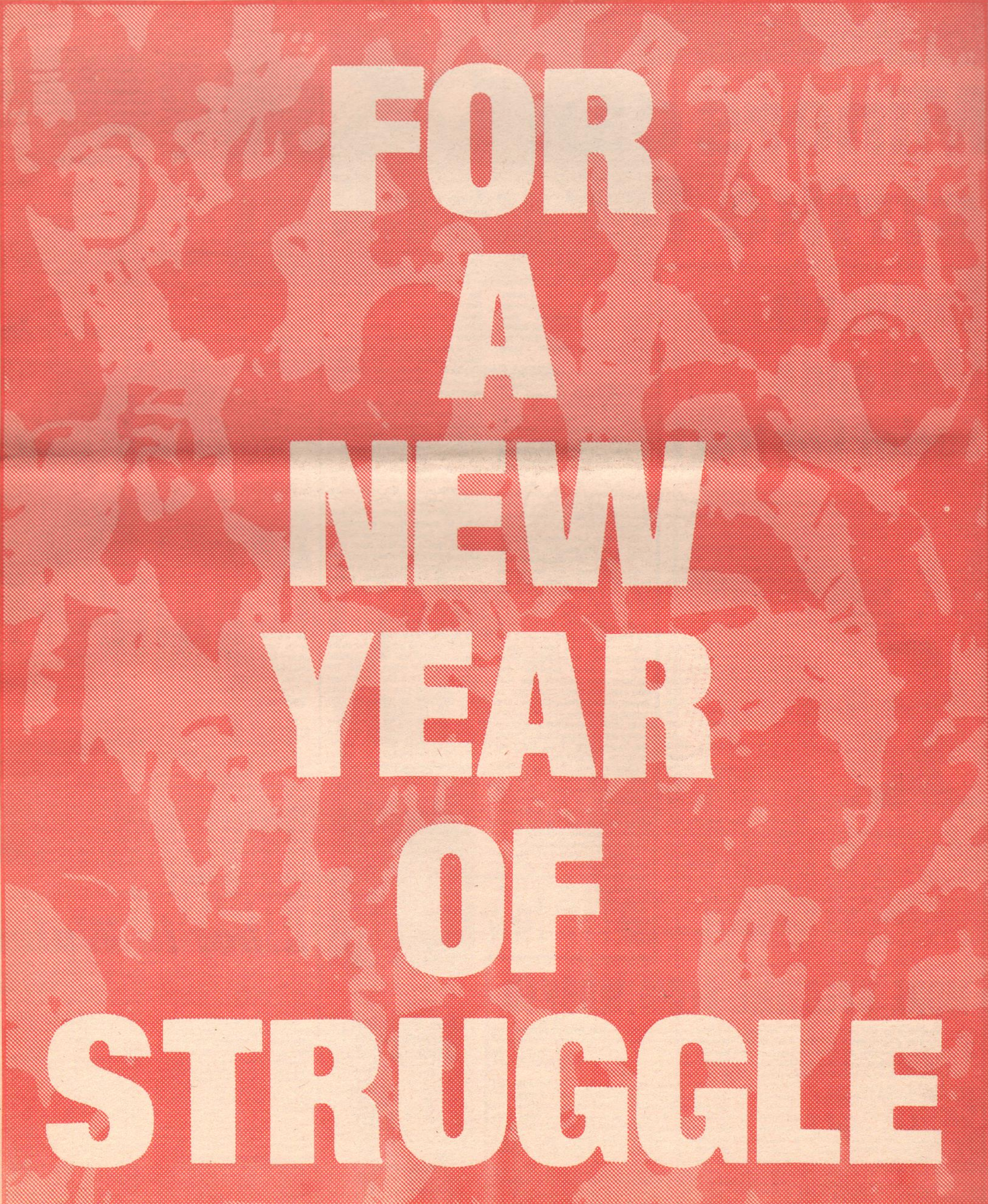
RED WEEKLY

This is the last Red Weekly of 1976. We have Christmas holidays as well, so the next issue won't be until 6 January. But to make up for this big gap in your life next week, we include AN EXTRA FOUR PAGE CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT in this issue.

22 DECEMBER 1976

No. 180

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**FOR
A
NEW
YEAR
OF
STRUGGLE**



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

Miners can strike for us all

Engineers Challenge Social Contract

THE INTRODUCTION of postal balloting and the development of press interference in elections, combined with the growth of organisations like Truamid, Datum Line, IRIS, etc. is the main reason for right-wing victories in the AUEW. This is what Bob Wright, newly elected as the union's assistant general secretary, argued at a Broad Left meeting in Birmingham on 11 December. He also supported

while the right wing had been campaigning up and down the AUEW in support of the Labour Government's policies for the last two years, the Broad Left had failed to fight among the membership for opposition to the Social Contract. As a result it was hardly surprising that the right wing was making headway.

POSITIVE

A number of positive steps are to be taken, though. The first is an election campaign for Larry Connolly, a member of the Workers League but officially backed by the local Broad Left, who is to run for the position of Birmingham East District Secretary in March. Public meetings, visits to branches and factories, publicity, etc. are all being organised around the central theme of opposition to the Social Contract and wage restraint.

Secondly, Bob Wright announced that a meeting of the Broad Left on a national basis is to be convened in Birmingham in February to decide on the candidate for the presidential elections, as Scanlon is retiring in 1978. This will also discuss the basis for the subsequent campaign. JOHN GRAHAM [AUEW Shop Steward].

AS SOON AS the massive 78 per cent majority in favour of industrial action was announced, miners' leader Lawrence Daly rushed to reassure the Coal Board, the Government and the City that his membership hadn't really meant it.

Like the father of Oliver Twist, embarrassed that his off-spring should dare to ask for more, Daly bleated that he 'did not believe that a majority of members of the union were seeking confrontation'. Daly, the union's general secretary, also said that he continued to support the Social Contract, and that 'both the Government and the TUC would be drawn into the further talks as the question arises of the compatibility of any revised deal with the limits of the Social Contract'.

TUC boss Len Murray has already made his position clear. On 24 November he warned that 'any earlier retirement for the miners must be counted against the 5 per cent ceiling for improvements under the current incomes policy'.

The National Coal Board put a similar argument to the miners in the negotiations leading up to the ballot — and even Daly found it unacceptable. Nevertheless, both Daly and NUM president Joe Gormley have made it clear that they see the huge majority in favour of industrial action not as a means of securing the full retirement claim, but rather as a negotiating lever — something to wring out 'concessions' from the Coal Board, as Gormley put it.

Gormley and Daly have both made it clear that for them the Social Contract comes before any commitment to the full claim. Though mind you, it's a different thing when it comes to the Social Contract actually applying to the NUM bureaucrats themselves.

Indeed, last June Gormley and Daly themselves broke the pay code; not only did they get the statutory £6 a week rise, but the union executive also voted to pay the rates on their houses. In Gormley's case, it is a sum of £345.57 yearly, and for Daly it's £281.74.

So, as with other supporters of the Social Contract, Daly and Gormley operate on a system of double standards — the Social Contract doesn't apply to the better off, but it does apply to those like the miners who work underground, who labour until they're 65, and who suffer all sorts of crippling illnesses through their working conditions.

It's a different matter with Arthur Scargill. The president of the Yorkshire NUM commented on the ballot result: 'I want to warn all those speculators of compromise that only a meaningful response from the National Coal Board, which includes both underground and surface workers, will be accepted here in Yorkshire.'

Scargill has to spell out exactly what he means by a 'meaningful response', but he knows as well as anyone that it will take more than militant phrases to make Daly and Gormley carry out the NUM policy — as decided at conference, and by the ballot — on early retirement now.

What is necessary is a fully fledged campaign both in the pits and in other sections of the workers' movement to prepare for strike action. Scargill has talked himself into a position where he has the influence to lead that campaign: the rank-and-file mineworkers have indicated, by their vote, that they would willingly respond.

The best New Year's resolution the miners can have is STRIKE AGAINST THE SOCIAL CONTRACT, STRIKE FOR US ALL.

Scotland: not such a merry Xmas

IN THE SUMMER of five years ago, more than 100,000 Scottish workers took to the streets in meetings, strikes and demonstrations to prevent the closure of the UCS shipyards on the Clyde. These actions threw a roadblock across the plans of the Heath Government to literally 'butcher' the labour force at one of Glasgow's main industrial sites.

Today the Labour Government appears to have taken up where the Tories left off. In the same UCS Clydebank yard, now owned by Marathon oil rig builders, 1,000 men have had to accept 'suspension' because of lack of orders. In the same week another 1,200 workers at Babcock and Wilcox in nearby Renfrew were given notice of redundancy in April.

The sackings at both plants illustrate dramatically just how shaky industry has become in the west of Scotland. Both plants are now relying directly on Government subsidy.

Marathon, the 'new hope' for the Clyde, are demanding pre-financing of a rig to be built in advance of any order. At Babcock's the future of the labour force depends on whether it can win a government order for a new coal-fired power station to be built next year.

Among the so-called 'boom industries' of light manufacturing,

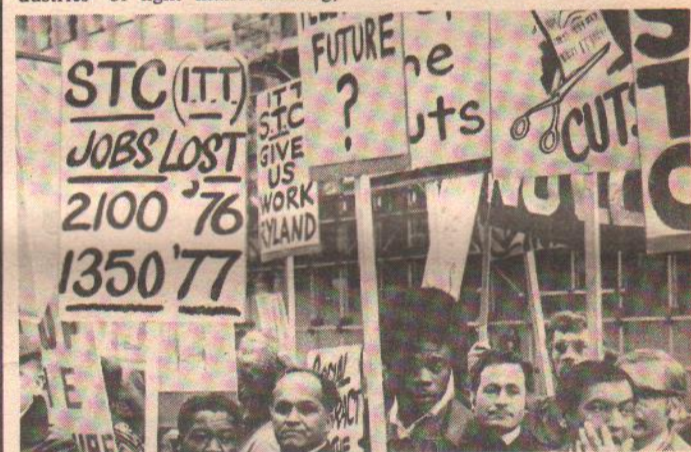
jobs! Maybe little else could be expected from McGrandle, who has managed to preside over the worst electoral defeats in Labour's history. Unfortunately the line of the trade union leaders in the west of Scotland is little better.

The leadership platform at last week's STUC demonstration against unemployment insisted that 'this wasn't a demonstration against the Government'. Alex Ferry, secretary of the Clydeside Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, had obviously taken this to heart when he said, 'if there is a way to be found (to avert the Marathon redundancies) then Bruce Millan will find it'.

ALTERNATIVE

The perspective of Glasgow's trade union leaders boils down to influencing their mates in the Labour Cabinet. But this is the perspective of lunacy.

This same Bruce Millan, Scottish Secretary of State, is the architect of the cut in the rate support grant which will lop £27 million off this year's budget for local authorities and £60 million from next year's. The consequences of redundancies and wage cuts have already been seen in Glasgow ETV and the Highland cleaners' strike this year.



Workers at STC find themselves in the front line of the fight against unemployment in Scotland.

the slump is just as deep. Multinational plants set up in Scotland in the 1960s on the strength of regional subsidies are now closing down one by one. Workers at plants like Personna or STC (a subsidiary of ITT), generally with a high proportion of female labour, now find themselves in the front line against unemployment.

CUTS

The Budget will only speed up this process. The cuts in public expenditure will mean the wholesale dismantling of local council direct labour departments, especially in Glasgow.

The response of the Labour Party was tragically predictable. The Government had responded 'very well' to the priorities, explained Jimmy McGrandle, Scottish Secretary of the Labour Party. This in the very week when over 2,000 workers had just lost their

But there is an alternative. The example set by the workers at Personna last year can be followed today: immediate occupation of the plants, and a campaign for work-sharing without loss of pay. Private enterprise is steadily creating an industrial desert of the Clydeside region; firms declaring redundancies should be taken over and nationalised.

None of this would please Bruce Millan very much, but the strength and enthusiasm seen among Scottish workers in the early stages of the UCS fight five years ago is a far more effective friend than any Labour minister.

Over the Christmas period, highly organised and unionised workers from half a dozen plants in the west of Scotland will be facing redundancy. Hopefully the New Year will see that organisation and strength on the offensive again.

NEIL WILLIAMSON

...nor in Wales

ERICA BARNETT, Publicity Officer of Mid-Glamorgan NALGO, and a candidate for the union's NEC from the South Wales District, writes:

The Government's latest twists and turns make it clear that the interests of working people are very far from their hearts. When the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Joel Barnett, says that these measures will bring about a 'stability of exchange rates', of what use or benefit is that to working people?

Even in the Government's own terms — the maintenance of the Social Contract — these measures are going to give them plenty of headaches. The leaders of the big industrial unions may still find it possible to canvass the idea that reducing public spending will

beginning to see the link between cuts and unemployment. The cuts of £83 million in the education budget over the next two years stand out like a sore thumb. It's impossible to get away from the fact that if less schools and school extensions are going to be built, then there are going to be less jobs for building workers.

The first reaction from people in South Wales to the education programme cuts is very strong. Education has always had a strong influence on the Welsh, and this cut will have a serious effect on any proposals for Welsh-speaking schools, of which there are very few in South Wales.

Knocking the last nail in the coffin, on top of increased unemployment and reductions in services, are the price rises in some of the most staple foods, such as butter and sheep's milk, some in

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)



BOB WRIGHT

the idea of the Social Contract in principle, merely arguing against the present incomes policy and the cuts in public expenditure.

This view, however, was not generally accepted at the meeting. Many militants pointed out that the work of mobilising the rank-and-file was not being done.

MORE OVERTIME BEING WORKED

Figures published in this month's AUEW Journal reveal a startling development. At a time when unemployment is at its highest for over 36 years, more overtime than before is being worked in industry.

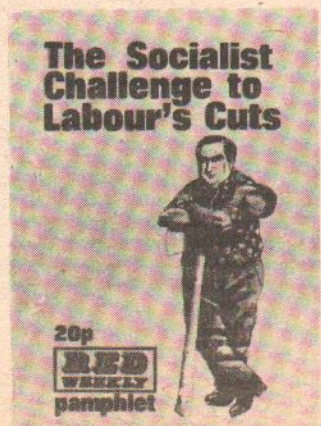
The total amount of overtime worked has topped 14 million hours, or the equivalent of 350,000 jobs on a 40 hour week. This represents an increase of over three million hours.

Rather than employ more labour and invest in additional plant to meet demand, the employers are rather offering more overtime as a temporary measure. At a time when the returns on investments are not yet high enough or firmly enough guaranteed, despite the best efforts of the Labour Government, the employers clearly do not feel confident enough to buy new plant. Rather they are trying to squeeze the maxi-

incomes policy. In some low paid industries this actually makes overtime working cheaper than normal working [see The Attack on Inflation — who pays? by Chris Pond, price 50p from Low Pay Unit, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG].

While it is easy for union leaders to bemoan the fact that their members are working excessive overtime, this is in reality a cover-up for the policies they have foisted upon the trade union movement. With living standards falling dramatically due to the TUC-Labour Government wage restraint programme, it is very difficult for shop stewards to stop their members pressing for more overtime.

For the majority of workers such individual solutions as overtime to the problem of a declining value in the pay packet is the only way out. Unless the



THE POACHER AND THE GAMEKEEPER

LABOUR PARTY General Secretary Ron Hayward summed up the decision of last Wednesday's National Executive Committee to appoint Andy Bevan as full-time Youth Officer with a warning. He regarded Bevan 'as a poacher we propose to make gamekeeper'. But the message was clear: the witch-hunt is not over.

To drive home the point, he recounted an alleged conversation he'd had with Bevan at the Labour Party Conference. He told Andy: 'If you accept the Queen's Shilling, you have to obey the instructions of the Queen. If she says "march", you march; if she says "jump", you jump'. The 'queen' in this case, Hayward said, was the NEC and party conference.

Meanwhile, a few hundred yards down the road from the NEC meeting at Transport House, MPs were preparing themselves for Healey's blatant betrayal of the last Party Conference decision against the cuts. The General Secretary, supposedly bound by Conference decision, had nothing to say about the task of 'jumping' to build 'active resistance' to the mini-Budget measures.

RIGHT WING

Hayward, Wilson, and other members of the right-wing block that defends the Government's Tory policies may attack in the name of democracy, but their witch-hunting has shown that it is they who are really the violators and attackers of democracy.

On the one hand, the witch-hunt is designed to act as a smoke-screen for the impact of the Government's policies. They are trying to place at the door of the whole left the responsibility for the collapse of Labour's electoral support.

On the other hand, the Government and the right wing, well-trained in the politics of betrayal, know full well that the defeat of Labour at the next election will spark off a process of reflection and debate in the ranks of the labour movement. They are frightened that this will lead to an organised opposition, and they have decided to try to remove the far left as a potential focus for that opposition.

GREAT DANGER

This is why the same NEC meeting also took a proposal to resurrect the infamous Underhill report put on ice a year ago, which argues that 'infiltrators' constitute the great danger facing the Labour Party. But by a vote of 13 to 12 they decided to postpone discussion on this



ANDY BEVAN

question for one month.

This is also why Cabinet members Michael Foot and Shirley Williams will be speaking in Hayes & Harlington early in the new year in defence of the constituency's MP, Neville Sandelson. He was one of the 69 MPs who voted with the Tories in favour of Common Market entry. He refused to support the Shrewsbury building workers, was a founder member of the right-wing Manifesto group of MPs, and led the campaign to defend Reg Prentice.

Ron Hayward was not available for comment as to which 'poacher' needed dealing with amongst this motley crew. But Neil Kinnock, 'left' MP for Bedwely, was quick to 'jump' when called upon, and right into the thick of it. He will be speaking alongside Foot and Williams, also in Sandelson's defence.

Kinnock has realised that it is infinitely more cosy to bed down together with loyal suppor-

ters of the Government line like Neville in Parliament than to take one's left rhetoric seriously, voting against the cuts in the House of Commons and mobilising active resistance outside.

INSPIRATION

Other 'lefts' aren't so honest. Benn waxes forth about how Marxism has been a great source of inspiration within the Labour Party at the same time as he countenances the most vicious anti-working class Government policies since the 1930s.

The witch-hunt will continue. But it will not be thrown back through soft-talking by Benn or anyone else. It will only be defeated by actively organising throughout the labour movement — for the extension of Party democracy and against the Government's policies, and against the real poachers who support them.



spective for so building the Assembly that it can contribute to a discussion on achieving the broadest possible unity of those willing to fight unemployment.

YOUTH

A sponsored walk around all the major local factories by unemployed youth to win shop stewards and trade union delegations to the Assembly, followed by a local conference a week later on how to take up the campaign, are types of methods to which all activists against unemployment can relate.

Credentials for the Assembly can be obtained from: N. Bradley, 22 Frankham House, Deptford Church St., Deptford, London SE8.

Fighting for jobs for youth

JOHN PARKINSON
(Bristol West LPYS)
reports on the Youth
Campaign Against
Unemployment.

The YCAU was initiated at the Labour Party conference by the Labour Party Young Socialists, 'to combine militant demands for action now with the perspective of socialist measures'. Such healthy sentiments in a depressing backdrop of increasing redundancies have won sponsorship for the national campaign from many leading Tribune MPs, Constituency Labour Parties and a whole host of convenors and shop stewards committees throughout the country.

So strong has the response been that a National Assembly Against Youth Unemployment has been called for 29 January.

SPONSORS

Unfortunately the record of many of the Tribune sponsors has not always been so healthy. Eric Heffer calls in *Labour Weekly* for the labour movement to be 'realistic' and for 'party compromise'; Ron Thomas states at a local Tribune meeting that he has 'no answer' to the wage restraint policies of the Social Contract.

What these people fail to realise is that the disastrous policies of their leadership and

Militant fail to see the necessity of drawing in those organisations who have been active in fighting unemployment. They merely write off the Right to Work Campaign, the Working Women's Charter groups, and black and anti-racist groups as being 'outside the official movement'.

Nevertheless the National Assembly could have potential for grouping together activists from the workers movement who reject the 'official' leadership and its policies. For example, in Bristol two public meetings to launch the campaign and a committee of the YCAU have mapped out a per-

LCDTU - The kiss of life?

DOES THE Liaison Committee for Defence of Trade Unions call for a conference against the cuts on 26 February mean that this organisation has woken from its past year of slumbers — or is it merely sleep-walking?

The Communist Party, the moving force behind this rank-and-file organisation, clearly does not intend to build a conference which can launch action against the offensive by the Labour Government. If they did have that intention they would have recalled the 3,000 delegate strong National Assembly on Unemployment which met in March.

DEMONSTRATE

The aim of the conference is to

in the past — Scanlon and Jones and the rest of the left bureaucrats — have played in actively supporting Callaghan's policies. But a little room for manoeuvre has opened up with the public sector union leaderships' campaign against the impact of the cuts on their membership.

Now their aim is cautiously to follow behind Fisher *et al* while avoiding like the plague the sort of action which could bring the rank-and-file into conflict with the Social Contract and the rest of the trade union bureaucracy.

It certainly is not possible to ignore the action of the lefts in forming a public sector bloc to protest against the cuts. But the aim has to be to commit these lefts to what they will try and avoid like the plague — national strike action against the cuts.

that these union leaders name the date for national strike action against the cuts. In building the lobby a campaign to commit as many trade union organisations as possible to strike action must be the goal of all LCDTU delegates, so as not to place reliance in lefts of Fisher's stamp.

TOTALLY

The only way in which the LCDTU conference will be in a position to do this is by breaking totally with the CP's strategy of alliances with the left bureaucracy, in which the latter always call the tune. It is for this reason that *Red Weekly* calls on its supporters to get delegates on the basis of resolutions calling for action and ensuring democratic dis-

IN FOCUS

For a New Year of Struggle

TO SPEAK PLAINLY, Healey's 'mini-Budget' is the finishing touch to a year of set-backs for the working people of Britain in their attempts to defend their standard of living.

The cuts announced last week, added to those made earlier in the year, now tot up to £8,000m. removed from services, with the axe falling mainly on some of the essential gains won by the labour movement this century — education, health and housing. Inflation is now eroding wages and salaries held down by incomes policy at a rate of 10 per cent a year. Unemployment shows no sign of being reduced from 1.4 million and the 'shadow' half a million unemployed women.

The political root of these savage attacks on the living standards of the working class is the Labour Government. Using the umbrella term of the Social Contract, they have steam-rolled acceptance of these policies using the inspiration and willing support of their trade union lieutenants, Murray, Jones and Scanlon.

The alternative fought for by revolutionary Marxists is based on one simple idea — that the capitalists should bear the cost of the capitalist crisis. In the course of such a battle the basis can be laid for the overthrow of a system which is incapable of producing anything but poverty and immiseration for the working class — the sort which increased the number of people living under the official poverty line by three million in the first year of the Labour Government in 1974.

To employ the jobless and meet social need, a crash programme of public works must be fought for, with spending on services automatically compensated against inflation. The same principle should be extended to cover wages and all state benefits such as pensions, grants, dole money and other payments based on a price index compiled by a labour movement enquiry.

The same task of enquiry into the affairs of the ruling class should be extended to those firms declaring workers redundant. Their books and forward plans should be opened to the workforce and a plan drawn up for work-sharing without loss of pay. Firms and industries unable to guarantee this basic right to work should be nationalised under a system developed through such action — a system of workers control.

Such policies would only be the basis for a more far-reaching programme which in addition would have to undertake the task of fighting for women's rights. The poison of racism must also be confronted by the scrapping of all racist laws, the right of black people to organise in their own defence, and the driving of fascists and racists from the labour movement and the streets.

But however limited this programme, it poses point blank the question of power. The finance for such a programme could be gained from the nationalisation of the top monopolies and their super profits, including the banks and the finance houses. Additional finance could be gained by cutting expenditure on the armed forces in the interests of all those oppressed by British imperialism, but particularly in Ireland.

Of course such policies would rouse the most violent opposition from the ruling class and their press and parliamentary representatives. Only the mass action and self-organisations of the working class could overcome that opposition.

That is why these policies will remain words on paper unless they are linked to that need for mass organisation in the working class. The basis certainly exists: the 60,000 workers who poured into the London streets on 17 November to protest against the cuts; the 75 per cent of miners who voted for action in support of their claim for early retirement; and the hundreds of thousands of women who face the super-exploitation which the Trico strikers successfully challenged in their historic equal pay strike.

But there is no alternative leadership to the likes of Jones and Murray which workers are prepared to recognise as yet. It can only be built through the fight for the united front.

What does the phrase 'united front' mean today? First and foremost it means demanding that those 'lefts' forced into the 17 November demonstration by their membership, particularly those like Alan Fisher of NUPE, must be compelled to go a step further — by naming the day for national strike action against the cuts. The conference called by the public sector unions in March must be lobbied with this slogan to the fore.

Local alliances of these unions, based on the perspective of national action, should be built in every area.

The various rank-and-file organisations and campaigns in the unions, the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions, the Right to Work Campaign, and the forces around the Working Women's Charter must be unified on the basis of opposition to the Social Contract and the fight to remove its backers at every level.

The blatant betrayal of the Labour Party conference resolutions instructing the Labour Government to carry out no further cuts in services puts the labour movement in a new situation. The demand for the recall of the conference to bring Callaghan and Healey to account is an essential part of unifying the powerful rank-and-file opposition to the cuts in the trade unions with the left in the constituencies. But such a campaign for the recall of the conference has to include a fight against the policy of the last conference in supporting the Social Contract, and a recognition that this in fact holds back the fight against the cuts.

This is the programme for a left wing in the working class — an opposition committed to the policies of class struggle, not class collaboration. The coming year will see any such opposition in a minority. But it is a minority which can win the resistance in the class to mass action against the betrayals of this Labour Government. Those betrayals unless fought will bring in the most viciously anti-working class Tory Government since the Second World War.



A section of the 5,000 strong crowd who demonstrated in September against Oxford's £3m cuts in education.

EDUCATION CANED AGAIN

LAST WEDNESDAY Chancellor Healey swung his axe yet again against those who are rapidly becoming his favourite target. His Christmas present to school children was yet more education cuts, with a total of £83 million to be sliced off education spending over the next two years.

These are just the latest in a long line of education cuts imposed by Healey and the Labour Government.

In August 1975 the Government announced that 12 colleges of further education were to be cut.

In February 1976 Healey's White Paper on public expenditure sliced £1,033.3 million off education spending over the following three years. The intention was to secure vast reductions in the number of university and polytechnic students, major restrictions in school and other education building programmes, and a cut-back in book and equipment provisions.

In July 1976 Healey's cuts slashed a further £45 million off the education budget. The principal targets were universities and school buildings.

In November 1976 the Labour Government announced 30 more colleges of education were to close. Gordon Oakes,

Minister of State for education, also said that £39 million was to be cut from local council education expenditure. The Government's Education Bill, published the same month, added to the chopping list by saying that in future handicapped children would be taught in ordinary schools.

On top of all this, various local councils have been trying to implement their own cuts policy. For instance, in November 1975 the Education Committee of Gloucester County Council announced education cuts of over £1 million.

The consequences of both these and Healey's latest cuts hardly need spelling out. For the school children it means over-crowded classrooms, dil-

apidated buildings and a serious shortage of books and other equipment.

It is not only education standards which are hit. The other major effect of the cuts falls on the teachers. The National Union of Teachers estimates that there are now 20,000 teachers unemployed, and the Government has already cut back 7,000 jobs in higher education.

But as all this was taking place, James Callaghan himself entered the 'great debate' on educational standards to complain that not enough attention was being paid to the teaching of science and mathematics. Yet according to a survey conducted earlier this month by the NUT, 13 out of

every 100 teachers unemployed have qualifications in teaching mathematics and science.

This is one example of the type of hypocrisy under which the current leadership of the labour movement operates. Another is to be found in the personage of Fred Jarvis, General Secretary of the NUT. On the one hand Jarvis spoke of how he 'deplored' Healey's latest attack on education; on the other he witch-hunts members of his own union who actually fight the cuts in practice.

SUSPENDED

Thus Jarvis has suspended NUT members at Little Ilford school in London because they operated a 'no cover' policy — refused to take the classes of teachers who were absent for more than three days — in protest at the cuts. Now Jarvis is threatening the same punishment on teachers at Highbury Grove school, North London, where the staff are also operating 'no cover'.

In a letter to his union members at the school, Jarvis moans: 'There should be no impression in the minds of your colleagues that unofficial action will pressurise the Union into giving official sanction to such action.'

But it is the teachers at Little Ilford, Highbury Grove and other schools up and down the country operating 'no cover' who indicate the way in which the latest cuts can be fought. There is also the example to be followed of the 5,000 who demonstrated in September against Oxford's education cuts.

UNITY

It is no use relying on the likes of Jarvis to throw back Healey's policies of educational deprivation and teacher unemployment. The only way in which a successful fight-back can be won is by following and extending what is happening at Little Ilford, Oxford and the rest — by building the broadest possible unity in action against Healey and where necessary against Jarvis as well.

BUILDING RESISTANCE

J. HEWITT, President of UCATT BE/269 Branch, writes from Nottingham:

Two major bankruptcies have hit the building trade in the Nottingham area. The crash of David Charles Homes caused about 300 redundancies. At Vic Hallams Ltd., big redundancies are still hanging over the head of employees.

These closures are just some of the results of the continuous and deliberate Government policies of cutting public spending — cuts in new homes, schools, hospitals, etc. These cuts have made building workers the largest group of workers on the dole queue — one fifth, to be precise.

This is a ludicrous situation with one million homeless, over-crowded schools, and a desperate shortage of beds in the NHS.

The effect of Chancellor Healey's latest cuts — £300m off home building over the next two years, and £20m off schools — plus the cutting of the rate support grant will lead to a reduction in contracts and even more workers' skills thrown on the scrap heap.

But unemployment does not only hit building workers. Thou-

sands of workers in the building supply industry are already feeling the squeeze, with a large surplus of bricks and cement and orders continually falling.

Other dangers are looming up. The National Federation of Building Trades Employers have launched a massive campaign in the national press against council direct works schemes, not just in terms of major construction contracts, but also routine maintenance of existing homes.

In addition, Tory councils put redundancy for direct works employees at the top of the list.

This is the fertile breeding ground for the re-emergence of the 'lump' system, with all its anti-trade unionism and inefficiency.

What we in Nottingham UCATT are calling for to combat both unemployment and the deliberate 'run-down' of the industry is a massive programme of public works to maintain and improve the standard of living of working people, coupled with an expansion of direct labour schemes as a step towards the full nationalisation of both the building and building supply industries.

Attack on abortion rights restarts

AS THE COLLECTION of evidence and mobilisation for the Abortion Rights Tribunal progresses, events on the parliamentary scene emphasise once again the need for continued vigilance and activity in the working class movement to defend and extend the provisions of the 1967 Abortion Act.

The Criminal Law Bill now being introduced through the House of Lords seeks, among other things, to increase the maximum fine for offences in connection with the Abortion Act from £100 to £1,000. This has been presented simply as an attempt to clamp down on illegal abortionists.

However, it will in no way solve the problems of back street abortions, which arise because of the inadequacy of the NHS provisions. And it will also open wider the door to those who are trying to deter doctors who provide abortion on demand, since they persistently argue that this is 'illegal' under the terms of the 1967 Act.

Another development has been the final report of the rump anti-abortion Select Committee. A superficial glance at their proposals might suggest that the leopards had changed their spots and were at least concerned about making abortion safer and more easily available. A closer scrutiny quickly dispels such an idea.

None of their recommendations are any advance on the limited steps already being taken by the DHSS to improve the NHS service, and most are a positive hindrance. For example, the Report suggests that abortion units should be set up in local hospitals, but only on a 'strictly experimental basis', and only where women 'entitled to have an abortion under the terms laid down by the Abortion Act 1967' can't get one.

and by throwing out these anti-abortion doctors, can regional inequalities be eliminated.

Another suggestion is to mount a thorough investigation of the true cost of abortions to the NHS, with pay bed charges mentioned as one guide line. The logic is presumably to establish that the abortion service is so expensive that at a time of NHS cuts it can't be afforded or provided free of charge!

SESSION

But as if this wasn't enough, there is the news that high up on the list of Private Member's Bills this session is almost certain to be one which will attempt to restrict further the grounds for abortion under the law by tinkering with the 'social clause' in the 1967 Act — a clause which considerably widens the scope for sympathetic doctors to give abortions legally.

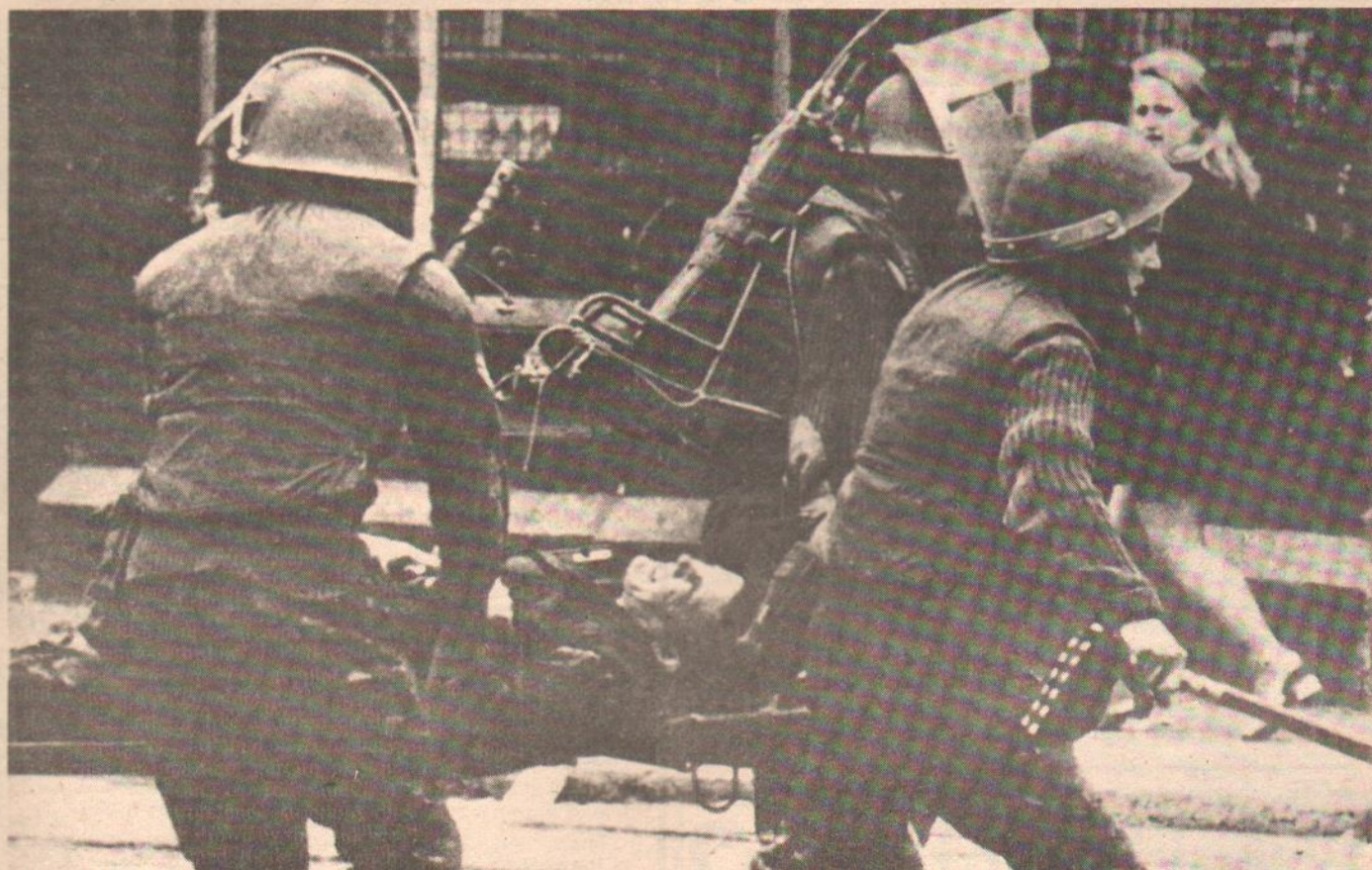
This renewed attempt to consign women to the horrors of backstreet abortions requires a stepping up of the campaign in defence of the '67 Act' and for free abortion on demand. The Tribunal on 29 January has an important part to play in pointing out to thousands of people the present restrictions on abortion, as shown by the evidence to be presented there by women who are directly affected, and by other working class people.

It will also lend weight to the call to be put out by the National Abortion Campaign for a demonstration against any anti-abortion Private Member's Bill.

DOCTORS

Since it is doctors who decide who is entitled to an abortion under the Act, and since the Select Committee wishes to allow anti-abortion doctors to continue in positions of responsibility in the NHS, it is clear that there are very few places indeed in their eyes where such experimental units would be needed.

Areas like Birmingham, where in 1974 only 12 per cent of abortions were done on the NHS, would probably continue that way, since Professor Hugh McClaren, member of the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child and a senior gynaecologist in the area, would claim that any woman



The training our men get in the streets of Belfast is inestimably valuable' - British GOC, Sir Frank King.

£400m extra for armed forces

'ME AND MY PARENTS are saving as hard as we can to buy me out of this rotten life. The only regret I have is that they will get more money for their murder machine.' That was how a recent letter from one of our soldier subscribers began.

He needn't worry too much. Despite all the shrieks from the right-wing press and retired colonels last week, the Labour Government has just added £400m to defence spending.

Now watch closely. This is how they did it. On Tuesday they announced defence supplement-

The total defence budget for 1976/77 now stands at a massive £6,140m. Defence expenditure in Britain as a percentage of Gross National Product was 5.7 per cent last year, higher than anywhere else in Western Europe apart from Greece and Portugal.

This is not surprising, given that just one of the Multi-Role Combat Aircraft being developed for the armed forces costs £10m (enough to pay for the construction of 50 new primary schools), and that Britain wants 385 of them.

According to the last Govern-

ment armed threat of counter-revolution in Eastern Europe, it also acts as a policeman for the Western European working class. The 1967 colonels' coup in Greece was based on the NATO 'Plan Prometheus'.

While NATO waits to flex its muscles against the latest bogey of Euro-Communism, British soldiers at least are already getting a piece of the action. 'The training our men get in the streets of Belfast is inestimably valuable', says the British Chief of Staff in Northern Ireland, Sir Frank King.

professional British Army is now the most highly trained and motivated counter-revolutionary force in the world — as the Irish people know to their cost.

The demand that the Labour Government should withdraw from both NATO and Ireland would, if won, immediately cut defence spending by half — releasing enough money to build 400,000 council houses to house the million homeless in Britain.

The demand for trade union rights in the army would give the opportunity to our correspondent mentioned above to draw in more

NAC NEWS
Day of Evidence
Abortion Rights Tribunal
JANUARY 29th
CENTRAL HALL WESTMINSTER

Your evidence counts!

ASIAN FAMILY HARASSED OFF ESTATE

YAKUB ISMAIL, his wife and two children are an Asian family at present living in Hackney bed and breakfast accommodation. But they have been offered a GLC flat in Hollybush House, Hollybush Gardens, London E2.

ATTACKED

This is not the first time an Asian family have been offered the flat. The previous occupants were an Asian family by the name of Ali. They were threatened and then attacked by a gang of white youths until they were harassed off the estate.

So Mr Ismail has quite naturally turned down the offer. He explained why in a sworn statement to Holloway Housing Aid Centre:

..... as I was walking through the estate to get to the flat I heard one of a group of youths who were playing in the yard say, "another troublemaker coming". When I looked over the flat I found that there was no water cistern in the toilet, no taps at the kitchen sink, no lock on the front door, no glass in many of the windows, red paint sprayed on several walls, obscenities scratched a quarter of an inch deep across one wall ...

A neighbour also made a statement backing up the tales of harassment:

'Mr Ali spoke to me on a number of occasions about the troubles he was having. The same week that he moved into the flat, Mr Ali told me that his clothes line on the balcony had been cut and his

washing stolen.

'Some weeks later Mr Ali told me that he had been stopped by a gang of white youths at the corner of his estate on his way back to his flat. One of the gang produced a knife, and they told Mr Ali that they didn't want any more Asian families on the estate, and that if he did not leave his flat and clear off the estate they would kill his children, then his wife, and then him. Mr Ali was very frightened by these threats, but decided to remain where he was for the time being ...

'One night at the end of July a gang of white youths came into the yard of Hollybush House. The gang was led by who used to live in Hollybush House with his parents, and who later squatted no ... Hollybush House with a friend and got evicted by the GLC.

'The gang started throwing stones through the windows of Mr Ali's flat, which Mr Ali kept and put in his wardrobe. Mr Ali's son was terrified by this attack and was sitting in a corner with his hands over his head. Mr Ali told me that he thought for the sake of the safety of his family it would be better if he left ...

'Soon after he left his flat was broken into, ransacked, and some of his belongings were thrown over the balcony into the yard below. I saw, a youth on the estate, running from the scene, and I went to complain to his mother about this. The same night a brick was thrown through my window, and my pram shed was broken into.

'I have not seen Mr Ali or his family since they left the flat.'

Holloway Housing Aid Centre and North Islington Housing Rights Project have roundly condemned the refusal of the GLC to look into the disappearance of the Ali family, and their insensitivity to the justified fears and anxieties of Yakub Ismail's family.

INSISTING

The GLC is still insisting that the Ismails should move into the flat despite its state of repair — a demand which Mr Ismail is quite justified in thinking constitutes harassment against himself and his family.

• The International Labour Conference has adopted a convention aimed at providing better condi-

tions for immigrants. The document is mild enough, simply requiring a commitment to equality of social security, trade union, and cultural rights. But even that's too much for the Labour Government.

Last week a White Paper was published explaining why Jim Callaghan could not possibly sign the convention. The reasons are:

* Present regulations require three years residence before an immigrant's dependant can qualify for a mandatory award for higher education.

* The Labour Government has not accepted the obligation that schools must instruct the children of immigrants in their mother tongue.

* Free choice of employment for short-term immigrants is not permitted in this country.

* There is no automatic rights in the United Kingdom for immigrants to be joined by their parents.

That's the law in Britain, as defended by our Labour Government — one of the harshest in its treatment of immigrants in the whole of Western Europe.

IS / SWP spot the difference

THE INTERNATIONAL Socialists have been holding a series of meetings in preparation for the launching of the Socialist Workers Party early in the new year.

At the last two meetings, Paul Foot has spoken on 'The Decline of the Labour Party and Reformism' and Ian Birchall on 'The History of the International Socialists and the Revolutionary Left in Britain'. The central theme of both these speakers has been 'Labour Party in decline — IS/SWP on the upsurge'.

SIMPLE

This rather simple view of the world was evident in Paul Foot's contribution, the bulk of which was a witty and clear exposure of the bankrupt record of reformist

betrayal. However he used this biting and correct criticism to draw the conclusion that as a consequence of the withering away of the economic basis for reformism, the Labour Party was essentially in a state of permanent decline.

The British insularity of the IS was evident when comrade Foot was asked how he explained that despite the growth of extreme left organisations in France and Italy, the mass reformist parties of the working class had undergone not a decline but a massive growth — with 75,000 people joining the French Socialist Party in the last two years, 93,000 joining the French Communist Party in 1975.

Unfortunately Foot failed even to try to analyse these developments or seriously consider if similar ones could take place in Britain. His only response was that this proved that revolutionary socialists had to work harder — or, more specifically, members of the IS/SWP had to work harder.

With Foot proclaiming that it was 'a waste of time' to adopt any orientation to the Labour Party, it came as rather a surprise that at the following meeting Ian Birchall expressed the view that 'there are more revolutionary socialists in the Labour Party than in IS'. This appeared to rather confuse IS members present, but the rest of Birchall's speech aimed to reassure them.

After a potted history which included the rather peculiar statements that 'no Koreans fought in the Korean War' and 'no workers fought with Tito', comrade Birchall concentrated in his summing up on the IS view of the united front and its view of the internal regime of the party. Unfortunately there was a lack of clarity in what he said.

On the one hand he recalled the IS of 1968 when they made a big unity appeal, and said that this was what they must do again with the launching of the SWP. But then he failed to answer a question as to whether this meant IS would make a similar appeal for other groups to join the SWP, and if they did would such groups be given tendency rights.

POLICY

His comment on the internal regime was rather worrying. He sought to defend the many series of expulsions the IS leadership have carried out, and said that only 'temporary factions' would be permitted. How temporary the comrade did not spell out, but the current limit within IS is three months.

Essentially the impression to emerge from both these meetings was a depressing one. The 'proclaiming' of the SWP, the Jack of realism on how to orientate to Labour Party militants, the harshness of the internal regime, and most of all the repeated view that IS is and will be the only pole to which militants can relate had a familiar ring to it: the old sectarianism which has bedevilled the British revolutionary left for so long.

It is only to be hoped that the IS/SWP draw back from this path, and that any 'unity' offensive which the SWP does launch, if it does, will not simply be a recruitment manoeuvre.

New film for struggle

OCCUPY! (for distribution details contact The Other Cinema, 01-734 8508), is one of the few serious attempts to record working class history on celluloid.

HISTORY

The film, directed by Gael Dohany, reconstructs the history of the occupations of the Fisher-Bendix factory, near Liverpool, from the threat of massive redundancies in 1972 to Tony Benn's decision to set up a workers co-operative in 1974. Three separate sources are used: documentary footage shot by Granada TV at the time; interviews with the workers involved, taken last year; and a reconstruction of the events by the Everyman Theatre Company.

The effect of these three intermeshed methods is an exciting and graphic presentation of how it felt to be involved in these events, and what it means to workers to experiment with control over their own lives. It is clear that the impact of this experience is imprinted

deeply in the minds of workers who, even after four years, recall these events as if they had happened yesterday.

This makes a sharp and deliberate contrast to the Granada newsreels which, although not unsympathetic, are incapable of capturing the essence of this experience. There are weaknesses in this method, however. The theatre sections only occasionally add to our understanding of what is going on. More often they simply reconstruct events which are presented more vividly in the recollections of the workers themselves.

The failure goes deeper than this. The central problem with the film, and one which the use of dramatic reconstruction could have overcome, is the absence of any critical analysis.

ANARCHY

The anarchy of Fisher-Bendix, under its successive owners, is very easily ascribed to 'mismanagement'. But it may often be good

CLUB WIELDING SCABS IN JURE OXFORD PICKET

TENSIONS have increased in two strikes at Oxford hotels. The strikers, members of the Transport and General Workers Union, are demanding recognition and reinstatement of victimised workers.

At the plush Randolph Hotel about 10 scabs set about pickets with broom handles last week, hospitalising an officer of Oxford Trades Council, Keith Dancey. This followed an incident the night before when, under police escort, a delivery of oil was made at three o'clock in the morning. In spite of the many witnesses eager to give statements to the police on the incident, no-one has yet been charged.

No such reticence on the part of the boys in blue was shown in arresting pickets however. Six have been arrested on charges varying from obstruction to actual bodily harm. One has already been acquitted because the police could offer no evidence, but the rest will not be tried until the end of January. A defence campaign has been launched on their behalf.

Talks have now begun with the Randolph management, but they are being deliberately dragged out by the hotel bosses. The T&GWU has promised to widen official support.

At the Linton Lodge Hotel the strike is in its fifth week. Management have torn out phones and cut off electricity to the staff house.



They are now pushing for the eviction of the workers, and have gained a High Court summons to this end. Strikers travelled to London on Monday to fight for a roof over their heads.

Although support for both strikes has been widespread in the Oxford area this has not yet extended beyond resolutions of support and money. Pickets have been maintained by strikers and

the Oxford Student Trade Union Liaison Committee.

Catering workers in particular, but all trade unionists who are prepared to fight to defend the right to organise, should rush resolutions of support [plus donations] to Randolph Hotel Strike Committee and Linton Lodge Strike Committee. Both c/o Transport House, 46 Cowley Road, Oxford.

management to create massive redundancies. Indeed, it became apparent in the film that there were people making a lot of money out of the 'troubles' at Fisher-Bendix.

Above all, although we begin to understand from the film that

there was some difference between the first and second occupations, the distinct issues of workers control, participation and cooperatives are not raised.

The Fisher-Bendix workers, like Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, were

simply seeking a new employer to take over the factory and guarantee jobs. Their experience of workers control was not tied to an understanding of an overall solution to unemployment.

The limits of this strategy were demonstrated by the fact that within a year of the first occupation the new bosses of IPD began to implement redundancies again. This was not simply mismanagement. In practice it exposed the weakness of the workers' previous demand for a new capitalist owner.

A final caption points out that if the Government's proposals for the introduction of a Criminal Trespass Law had been in force in 1972, this action would have been illegal and the workers would have lost their jobs. Perhaps the greatest use for this film is to build the campaign in defence of the right to take direct action and to defeat these proposals.

EXCELLENT

Despite these reservations, the film is a useful and important starting point for a discussion on the tactics and politics of direct action. If you get a chance to see it, do. It will be an excellent opportunity to launch these debates.

WHAT'S ON

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.

CAMBRIDGE Challenge Group — discussion group for regular Red Weekly readers. Meets Wednesdays at 8pm in the 'Man on the Moon', Norfolk St.

JUST OUT: 'Women & Revolution' 13 (Fall 1976). Articles on Gay Liberation, Soviet Art before Stalin, 'Socialist Feminism', women as scapegoats for unemployment, and more. 35p from iSt-B, BCM Box 4272, London WC1.

'SAM THE MAN': CAST's 75-minute comic tragedy on the ever popular question, 'What has happened to the Labour Left?', will be performed at 10pm on 1 and 2 Jan. at the Drill Hall, 16 Cherties St., London WC1. Adm. 75p.

HELP SELL TICKETS to buy a tractor for the Baracoco co-operative in Central Portugal. Prizes: three holidays for two in Portugal plus £20 spending money. Tickets 25p or £1 for book of five. Order from: Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC2. **BRITISH Ethiopian Information Group** has been formed in London to dis-



LABOUR'S PROGRAMME FOR ONE



TRIBUNAL DO NOT WORRY
US
WE DON'T CARE WHAT
THEY SAY
OUTSIDE TRICO WE WILL
STOP
TILL WE GET EQUAL
PAY

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

'If the trade unions will seize the opportunity and if women will respond, there is no reason why the Bill should not be the means of bringing an end to an era of financial exploitation of women's work.' This was Barbara Castle's promise in 1970. The Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts are now one year old. And the picture of their achievement built up by the labour and women's movement bears little resemblance to this rosy forecast by the Labour Government.

3 R'S

Employers were given five years in which to avoid the Equal Pay Act. Many employers ignored the legislation completely. Others rallied round the banner of the three Rs — regrade, rationalise and restructure.

Employers have walked unimpeded through the loophole which allows exemption from equal pay where there is a 'material difference' in the job. At the firm of Hellerman Deutsch Ltd, for instance, the separate category of female viewer was removed to comply with the Act — but their male counterparts retained their previous staff status, although this was no longer a real difference between them.

A Tribunal ruled on this case that, 'This was an anomaly the firm had to cope with, and was a genuine material difference allowing the men to retain their higher pay'.

Women at the Glen Alva textile company in Scotland also lost a claim for equal payment of day rates on the grounds that the men's night work 'constituted' a genuine material difference.

The Tribunal found that, 'as a generalisation, stores is the sort of work a woman cannot do as well as a man'. She lost her job.

LOW PAY
The New Incomes Survey of 1975 shows that while male earnings averaged £60.80, 10 per cent of women earned less than £23 and 90 per cent earned less than £56.20.

With examples like these, it is not surprising that women have got little joy from the Tribunals. A recent report by the print union, SOGAT, shows that 139 cases have been dismissed by the Tribunals and only 55 have been successful.

REDUNDANCY

When the equal pay legislation was introduced, employers received guidelines from management consultants and the Department of Employment. Among the suggestions was 'the reorganisation of work or reducing dependency on unskilled female labour by automation'.

For many women equal pay has meant the dole queue. Recently a Tribunal accepted the redundancy of a woman capstan operator at Meggitt Engineering Ltd, stating that 'redundancy

caused by the cost of equal pay was still redundancy'.

Restructuring involving part-time work has also been used to get round equal pay. Last year the Agricultural Wages Board gave equal pay to women, but also introduced a new part-time rate for those working less than 30 hours a week. The new part-time rate was the same as the previous female rate.

A woman clerk working part-time in the buyers' department of Headway Shopfitting Ltd discovered that her job was reorganised to a full-time post requiring lifting of heavy weights, overtime and driving.

The Sex Discrimination Act has turned out to be more of the same. Seventy-three per cent of SDA applications to Tribunals were lost in the first six months of the legislation. A recent survey of 40 major companies by the Equal Pay and Opportunities Campaign showed that only one-third of them had any equal opportunities policy, less than a quarter had made changes in the area of training, promotion and fringe benefits, and only a third were monitoring to investigate whether present procedures discriminate against women.



Words are not enough

THIS TIME last year the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts were heralded as a breakthrough for equality. Evidence like that presented on these pages shows that the cosmetics are wearing thin.

The Labour Government and the trade union leaders promised 'equality' as a reward for the wage restraint and unemployment contained in the Social Contract. However, women will never be equal if they are denied the educational opportunities, child-care and abortion facilities and other conditions that lay its basis. On all these fronts, the Social Contract ensures that women's rights are a direct target of the attack.

Bound by their complicity with Healey and Callaghan, the Labour and trade union leaders are unwilling to take up a fight which goes further than the window dressing of the EPA/SDA. Such a fight would have to strike at the

heart of the Social Contract which they have carefully nurtured: Hence the opposition of the TUC General Council to the demands of Working Women's Charter, and Scanlon's refusal to throw national blacking action behind Trico women; hence the Equal Pay and Opportunities Campaign can conclude that it 'feels that in hiding behind the legislation, unions refusing to face up to, let alone tackle, discrimination which patently exists'.

At every step we must ensure that the leaders are not allowed to shelter behind the demagoguery about 'equality'. They must be forced to take up a real fight. Unity at every level of labour and women's movement in the build-up to the Rally on Women's Rights is just a start. The women of Trico have shown, when the chips are down we must rely on our own strength, energies and organisation.

The most serious difficulties with the legislation result from its in-built flaws. Both the SDA and the EPA lay great stress on changing the ideas which lead to discrimination against women. Neither confronts the conditions which create these ideas.

Any serious attempt to undermine the long history of discrimination would need to sever the ties which hold women to the isolation of the family. The Working Women's Charter recognises that this means adequate provision for child-care, maternity and paternity leave, abortion and contraception, equal educational opportunities, and financial independence in the areas of social security, pensions and taxation.

On all these the legislation has nothing to say.

An example of how this omission makes the legislation irrelevant to most women is the job evaluation procedure put forward in the Equal Pay Act as a means of assessing 'work of equal value'. In most schemes the factors used for assessment are loaded against women from the start.

Failure!

women remain in the lowest graded, lowest paid jobs because of their family responsibilities and continued inequality in areas untouched by the legislation.

FLAWS

Take the example of skill. In 1970 43 per cent of young men obtained apprenticeships on leaving school. For young women the figure was only 7 per cent and these were mostly in low paid areas such as hair-dressing and typing. Since then the gap has only widened. Today three-quarters of women are in jobs which take less than six months to learn.

It was inequalities like this which hit women packers at the Diagrit Grinding company. A Tribunal agreed with the company that job evaluation ruled out equal pay with the male shop floor workers because of differ-

claimed discrimination when she was denied sick pay. Her claim was rejected on the grounds that sick pay was only given to workers with merit awards for experience and length of service. For most women, family responsibilities make such awards difficult to obtain.

Similar flaws exist in the fabric of the Sex Discrimination Act. The Act states: 'It will not apply to differences of treatment for other reasons, e.g. because a potential employee is not suitably qualified for a particular job, or because a potential borrower lacks sufficient financial standing.'

While women continue to be financially dependent on husbands and are tied to their traditional role of wife and mother, they will never be 'suitably qualified' or have 'sufficient financial standing'. Unless these real material conditions of inequality are challenged, the

DENIS HEALEY has announced another £2½ million's worth of cuts in education and in the health service.

And for the Labour Government, women's health can be cut first. Two women's hospitals, the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and South London Women's Hospital, are now threatened with closure. Earlier this year, Tower Hamlets council proposed to axe the plan for an outpatient abortion clinic at the London Hospital in Whitechapel.

NEEDED

The Government has also decided that it cannot provide for any more projects concerning battered

First for the chop

women — partly for reasons of economic restraint and partly because of 'the sharp improvement in facilities' in the last year. This blatantly contradicts the Select Committee Report on violence in marriage, which stated that far more refuges are needed. The Women's Aid Federation has also pointed out that far from there being enough refuges, the Home Office does not even support some of the existing ones.

CUTS

Cuts in these sorts of services mean that women are increasingly forced to give up their jobs and bear the burden of the crisis on their

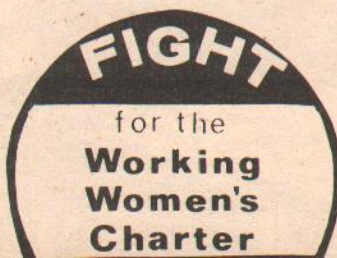
Many women work in the public sector in jobs that are too often a reflection of their duties in the family — cleaning, cooking, serving, caring, etc. These jobs will be the first to go, because the cuts are directed in that area.

Cuts in social expenditure mean cuts in nursery facilities, substantial increases in nursery charges. Actions have been taken over the country — and notably in Preston — against attempts by local authorities to implement cuts in nursery provision.

Rationalisation in industry means that women's jobs are being chopped. Once again, because of the increasing lack of facilities, many women work part-time or twilight shifts and certainly in the lowest paid jobs.

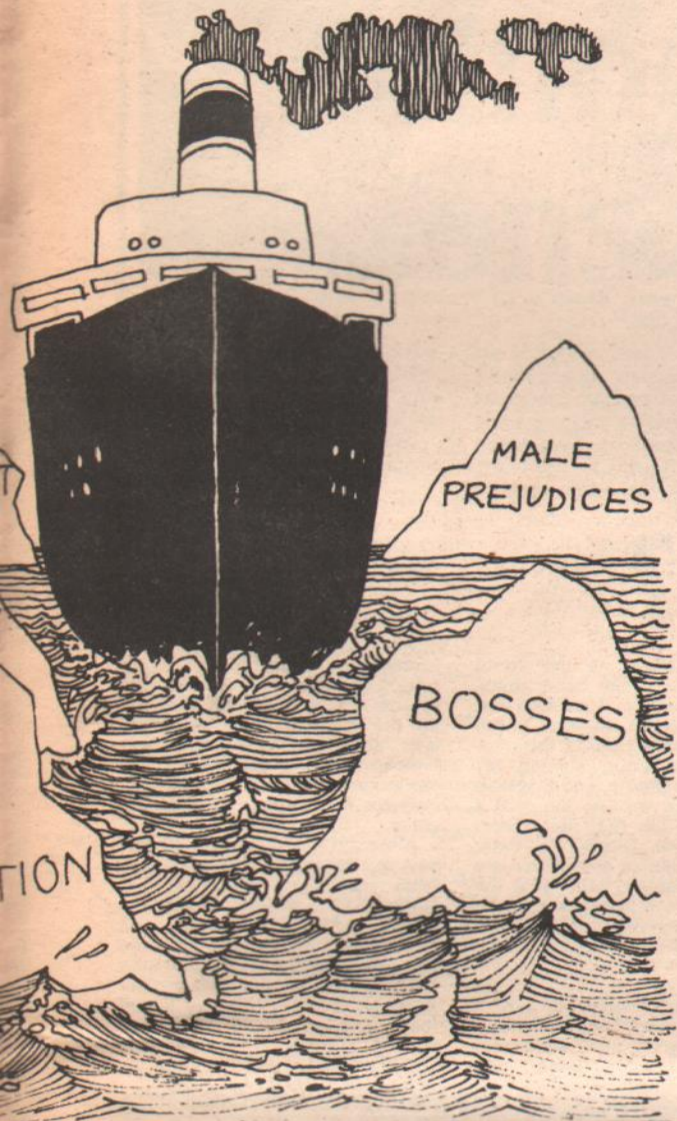
Unions do very little to organise these women, and to a large extent accept that the primary role of women is in the family and that they only work for 'pin money'. Women's jobs tend to go first. The rate of unemployment for women is still twice as high as that for men.

Cuts in employment only serve to drive women back into the home, making nonsense of the equal opportunities legislation. To guarantee any



R WOMEN - YEAR ON

By CELIA PUGH and ANNE CESEK



Women Fight Back

ONE YEAR ON FROM THE SDA
FEB 26th
A RALLY FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

In the year of the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts, many major unions have started to discuss their attitude to the legislation in light of its obvious failings and loopholes.

The recent national women's conference of the General & Municipal Workers Union drew up and accepted a detailed set of proposals to plug the loopholes in the Equal Pay Act. The proposals include:

- * No employer to be able to take an equal pay claim to a tribunal.
- * 'Equal pay for work of equal value' to be the paramount clause, as recommended by the TUC.
- * Tribunals to take the broadest possible approach in considering whether work is of a 'broadly similar nature'.
- * Amendment of a clause allowing inequality where there is a 'genuine material difference' between male and female workers.
- * Trade unions to be able to claim the lowest male rate and complain against discriminatory pay structures.
- * Trade unions to be able to bring equal pay claims on behalf of members.
- * Tribunals not to consider job evaluation schemes to which unions object.

At the Scottish women's TUC conference a delegate from the clerical workers' union APEX, Ms Isobel McIlroy, argued that equal pay would never be achieved

General Council, said that the TUC was redrafting its Women's Charter. It would be published in the New Year and would lay more stress on the rights of part-time women workers, health care, family planning, cancer screening, and abortion.

These are just two examples of the sort of debate occurring inside the trade union movement: an attempt to assess the effects of the legislation and how the fight for women's rights can be carried forward. These debates are developing as a result of the experiences of the mass of women throughout this last year of so-called equality.

In order to begin to assimilate these experiences and debates, the Working Women's Charter Campaign put out a call for a national Rally to be held at Alexandra Palace on 26 February around the theme of 'ONE YEAR ON FROM THE SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT - A RALLY FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS'.

This is gaining widespread support from the labour and women's movement, as it will give women the opportunity to exchange and discuss their experiences through speakers, stalls and exhibitions, making that day an important event in the life of these movements.

Red Weekly supporters are asked to build support for the Rally and donate money. Organise for the Rally in your union and locality and help

* 30 MPs threatened a revolt against the Government over the shelving of the Child Benefit Scheme.

* The TUC voted for specific amendments to be made to the Equal Pay Act, calling for 'equal pay for work of equal value'.

* Denis Healey said on the eve of the pay deal that 'we do not on this occasion have to provide for large equal pay increases'.

* David Ennals described the fight to stop the closure of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital for women 'as a campaign for lesbians and cranks'.

* The Parliamentary Select Committee looking into the workings of the 1967 Abortion Act called for more restrictions on women's right to abortion.

THEN THE WOMEN AT TRICO STRUCK FOR EQUAL PAY - THE FIGHT WAS REALLY ON!

Their 21 week strike shook the legislation, the tribunal system and the compliance of the trade union bureaucracy with the Labour Government's Social Contract to their foundations. The publicity around the strike showed women everywhere that the struggle for equality, far from being achieved, had only just begun.

That fight means self-organisation; it means challenging the backward ideas of male trade unionists; it means taking on the Labour Government and the Social Contract. It means that winning equal pay without child care, equal opportunity, maternity leave, free contra-

ception and abortion on demand, financial and legal independence, the right to work, and the right to express one's own sexuality is no real victory.

It also means relying on one's own struggles rather than the promises of the Labour Government, and fighting inside the labour movement to win support for the struggle for women's rights.

Looking back at the last year, women have taken the lead in this fight. There have been many equal pay strikes, unionisation strikes, strikes against cuts in services, and campaigns against cuts in nursery facilities, closures of hospitals, and the attacks on women's rights to abortion.

Hundreds of cases have been submitted under the Sex Discrimination and Equal Pay Acts, though only a few have been won. Unions have begun to monitor the effect of the Acts and discuss amendments to the legislation.

The EGA women occupied their threatened hospital, women formed probably a majority of those marching on 17 November; up and down the country they have taken the fight into their own hands.

The Trico strikers drove home the message to the whole labour movement: Denis Healey was wrong, most women don't already have equal pay. His legislation didn't get it for them, and only women's own strength in struggle will.



Burnley

MILITANT mothers and trade unionists brought Lancashire County Council to a halt earlier this month. They were protesting against a proposal to raise nursery fees by an enormous 120 per cent in 1 January from £5 to £11 per week.

The Tory-dominated County Council responded to the protest by calling in the police to 'clear out' the demonstrators. But these bullying tactics have only fuelled the growing stream of protest against fee increases.

George Rawlinson, a Sheet Metal Workers Union shop steward, moved the resolution at the Trades Council. He told Red Weekly: 'our union branch has a policy against the cuts, so when the petitions came round at work all the blokes signed it. They didn't see it as just a women's issue. Everyone realises that the fee rise is a cut by the back door. They hope to price many parents out of the market and then close the nurseries through lack of demand.'

The campaign which has now begun almost at the eleventh hour must be stepped up if these savage cuts, a real blow to women's rights, are to be defeated. But Ron Williams, acting chairperson of Preston

UNITY

More parents may refuse to pay rather than go through the new means-testing.

Those that do go through with it can expect no joy - a single mother earning £32 a week has been asked to pay the full £11 a week. This will make it uneconomic for many women to go to work, or it will drive them to using unregistered baby-minders.

George Rawlinson told us: 'Preston Trades Council called an emergency public meeting last week to discuss the nursery campaign. Fifty people, mainly women, turned up and an action committee has been set up.'

'We aim to get the parents involved, organise factory-gate and shopping precinct meetings, and continue to circulate the petitions. We're also hoping to force the County Association of Trades Councils to call a regional demo.'

The Labour Group on the County Council knew of the proposed increases way back in May. While consistently opposing them in words, they organised no serious action or campaign against them, nor did they make the facts and figures fully available to the local labour movement. Fifteen hundred parents may now have to literally pay the price.

In Preston the Trades Council condemned the use of police to clear out the protesters, demanding that the council should be held to account for its actions.

When art becomes a commodity

WHAT TYPE of company has its offices in Geneva, is registered in Panama, insured in London and banked in Bermuda; makes its purchases and issues financial statements in dollars, and trades its shares in Swiss francs? Answer: an art investment fund, 'Modarco'. The Panama registration is useful because, as Note G of Modarco's 1975 financial report says, 'Under present legislation in Panama the company is not subject to corporate or other taxes'. Modarco's art collection is conservatively valued at \$20 million.

Modarco is typical of what the whole art market is about: maximum speculation in any art object — be it an old master painting or a signed tin can of artist's shit — with the minimum return to State or society.

The artist as creator and manufacturer of his product has an unusual degree of control over his work. But once his painting or sculpture is on the market it may disappear — often for years — to circulate between dealers, auctioneers and collectors, changing hands at a profit for all involved —

except, of course, the artist.

If the artist is lucky enough to find a Bond Street dealer to promote his or her work, he or she must expect to give the dealer a commission of around 50 per cent. Since the trade is only interested in the artist's product, the presence of the artist becomes a liability.

An artist might 'produce too much' for the market to bear or 'lose their talent' — which means that the artist's recent work is being rejected by collectors and the market price is declining. From the art trade's point of view, the only good artist is a dead artist.

The dealer's trade is mostly export. In the case of contemporary art, exports account for 90 per cent of sales. The trend is towards quoting prices only in dollars, Swiss francs or German marks so as to avoid constant repricing in discredited sterling.

Every run on the lire also sends a wave of Italians to the art markets of Europe. While in Britain the art trade deny with monotonous regularity that speculation is a motive

for collecting, in Italy it is openly encouraged.

One magazine issues half-yearly reports on the markets of contemporary artists. Each entry has subdivisions such as: Notes on market history; General market characteristics; Current market situation; Market distribution; History of auction prices; Circulation of forgeries (forgeries being the bane of the art world).

Although the art trade would happily strip the entire country of every art object if it was profitable, it closed ranks with the country's wealthiest 1 per cent in the battle against the wealth tax, and echoed the chorus of protest at this supposed threat to 'our' national heritage. In fact the proposed tax would have allowed a measure of tax relief for works of art made available to the public — and a work of art available to the public is not available to the art trade.

Hugh Leggatt, a London dealer, became secretary to an anti-wealth tax pressure group called 'Heritage in Danger'... at the same time, Leggatt was chairman of a committee set up to encourage the sale

of works of art from Britain to Arab states.

Britain's 1 per cent have been victorious: the wealth tax is shelved. Meanwhile they have won another victory in the new capital transfer tax, which is replacing estate duty: works of art which form part of an estate are conditionally exempt from paying any tax.

The conditions are such that in order to make beneficial use of this 'escape clause' one would have to be very rich indeed; but being very rich one could end up paying very little tax through the simple expedient of transferring a large part of one's estate into gilt-edged works of art.

Recently British Rail's pension fund purchased a number of old master paintings for investment. It paid prices that sent the dealers and auctioneers laughing all the way to the bank, but this is the least disturbing aspect of it. Far worse is the collusion of a state organisation in capitalism's most blatant speculative jungle.



Pierre-Auguste Renoir's 'La Promenade', sold last November for £682,000.

As commodities, works of art act as completely unproductive repositories of capital, generating no tax or revenue and providing minimal employment. Speculation in land is governed by legislation that prevents the wilder type of

adventure; nothing governs the art market, which hides behind the alibi of art and manipulates the critics, museum curators and art 'experts' into backing its cynical ventures.



children's rights

I'd like to comment on a statement in Neil Williamson's article on devolution [Red Weekly, 9 December].

He says in relation to extending democratic rights in Scotland: 'The opportunity should be taken to lower the voting age to the real age of maturity, which is 16.' Whilst I agree that the exclusion of 16- and 17-year-olds from the 'democratic process' is a denial of their rights which should be fought, what about people under 16? What do we mean by 'maturity'?

If revolutionaries decide on an age of maturity at 16, we are selecting an age which marks above all else entry into wage-slavery for most people — or the dubious privilege of the dole queue. It is capitalism that tells us that this is a sign of 'maturity', as a means of encouraging us to accept the terms of exploitation that are offered to us.

Until the age of 16 we are dependent on others economically, but so are the unemployed, housewives, disabled and elderly, which has led to a lack of social power for these groups. Again it is capitalism that measures our status in economic terms.

There are many complicated questions to consider in the area of the rights of young people. For example, the age of consent for heterosexual acts is 16, and for male gays is 21. The law is quite clearly repressive to young people who want to express their sexual feelings, which they should be allowed and encouraged to at any age. These laws are supposed

to protect 'children' [at 20?] from sexual abuse by adults, but they fail to do this in so many cases that this cannot be an excuse for defending laws which [a] discriminate against gays; [b] discriminate against young people; [c] enforce secrecy, embarrassment, guilt, lack of information about sex in this society.

Certainly it is not true to say that 14-year-olds [and five-year-olds too] have no conception of politics, even if the goings-on in Parliament mean little to them. Oppression is felt keenly by kids who have no control at home or school. Revolutionaries must fight this oppression, which exists to prepare us for the lack of control we will experience in adulthood.

So if we do call for the voting age to be lowered to 16 it must be seen in the context of extending the rights of young people as a whole, and a struggle to transform the social relations of childhood to make 'growing-up' a process of expanding awareness and consciousness about the world. When we are called 'immature' by parents, teachers, magistrates, psychiatrists, etc., it is usually because we refuse to accept the rules and conditions of capitalist society in one way or another; so I interpret the word 'maturity' as including some kind of submission to authority.

I'd like to see much more discussion of children's rights and ageism in the Red Weekly, because the issues seem both very important and very difficult to me. — RACHEL ADAMS (Nottingham).

Kick out the Lords!

I have been surprised by the inadequacy of the response of the left press over the past few weeks to the actions of the House of Lords. First the Lords over-ruled the Government and the courts in giving the go-ahead to the Tameside Tories to dismantle the comprehensive scheme in that area.

Subsequently the Lords have systematically carved up the few scraps of progressive legislation (pay-beds, dock-labour, etc.) which the Government has introduced. Quite understandably this has provoked a fierce debate in the media and a healthy reaction against the Lords in the labour movement.

This is because these actions demonstrate very clearly how the institutions of British democracy are designed to block any developments which go against the interests of the capitalist class. Jack Jones's plea for the workers movement to pull in their belts in exchange for a few crumbs of progressive legislation in Parli-

ament willing to legislate socialist measures would be tripped and destroyed by the Lords and judges. In other words, we can't rely on Parliament or wait for a 'left Labour government'. The only factor which finally decides is the strength and determination of the labour movement in the factories and on the streets to sweep away those capitalist institutions which stand in the way of socialist change.

The debate around the Lords is, however, also instructive in respect to the motives of the present Government and the lefts, both inside and outside the Cabinet. These people have shown that they lack the courage to mobilise the workers movement even behind the paltry crumbs of legislation they have introduced, let alone on issues like the cuts and unemployment.

They fear the consequences of calling on the workers movement to defend their sacred cows. They fear that such a mobilisation of

measures and leaders of the present Government.

Yet it is ironic that about the only issue on which the Labour Party could now even come near to winning an election is precisely a clear-cut call for the abolition of the House of Lords. No, they prefer to wait till the Treasury and City kick them out, and Benn hopes then to make his move for leadership of the Labour Party — after a massive electoral defeat.

Our Constituency Labour Party is already fighting for the abolition of the House of Lords. I believe the far left must champion this call and demand of the 'lefts' in Parliament and the trade unions that they campaign for this throughout the labour movement. Any future sabotage from the Lords must be met with the call for a general election with the Labour Party pledged to get rid of this putrid bastion of 'all that's British' once and for all. The far left can contribute to this by making this demand a central

Misquoted?

I wish you to print my categorical denial of the statements attributed to me at the Manchester student conference on 4 December and printed in both Red Weekly and Socialist Worker as being my words.

I hope and expect in honesty that this refutation of the falsely attributed statement will be printed, and my actual, exact statement, which I will now repeat, will be set out in full, as I shall now give it accurately.

Counter to the statement of both Red Weekly and Socialist Worker, to the effect that I 'disassociated myself from comrade Aaronovitch', I did nothing of the kind.

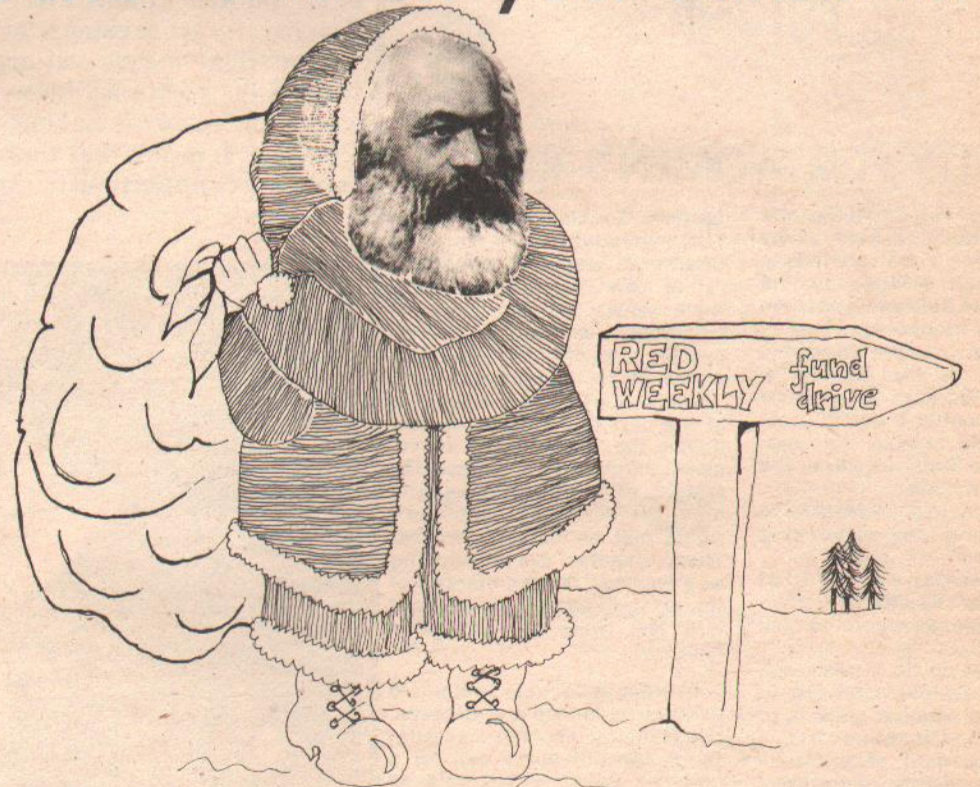
Following comrade Aaronovitch's statement, to the effect that all the criticism being made was opportunistic, I pointed out that this was not so, that I was both a Broad Left and a Communist Party member, making my criticism reluctantly, and disliking very much to do so; but that I nevertheless felt that the leadership had been unwise to enter upon an expansion of services [my reason, obviously, being that the present economic climate made expansion unwise], and that there had been some irresponsibility here.

My reason for speaking [which since my honestly intended statement has been wrongly used, in a way I could not possibly have

foreseen, I very much regret having done] was only to indicate to comrade Aaronovitch that not all the criticism was opportunistic, since my own at least was honestly felt, made from principle, and voiced with reluctance, only for the reasons I have here given.

Although not to blame, since I had not the experience to foresee false use being made of my statement, I deeply regret the misuse made of my words, and apologise to my comrades for the mistake I made. A companion letter to this one is being sent to Socialist Worker, and it is hoped they, like you, will print the correct account. — HEATHER JORDAN Swansga.

Have you put the Red Weekly Fund Drive on your Xmas list?



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CLIVE TURNBULL reviews the *Socialist Register* for 1976, edited by Ralph Miliband and John Saville (Merlin Press, £2.50 — available from Red Books).

Stalinism and socialist democracy-lessons of 1956

THE BULK of this year's *Socialist Register* contains articles marking the 20th anniversary of Khrushchev's secret speech to the 20th Congress of the CPSU and the Soviet invasion of Hungary.

The significance of these articles is that they deal with the impact of the 1956 events within the Communist Parties outside Eastern Europe. Most of the authors were party members in 1956.

BOMBSHELL

The 20th Congress revelations in February 1956, coming from a central leader of the CPSU, exploded like a bombshell throughout the Communist Parties. Khrushchev's speech was delivered in a secret session from which delegates from other CPs were excluded, and details of the report leaked only slowly.

Articles reporting the Congress by British party leaders contained only hints of what had been said. It was not until April that two articles by Harry Pollitt (then CP general secretary) summarised the speech.

As John Saville reveals, even this summary omitted 'specific details that made the impact of Khrushchev's speech so shattering: the fact, for instance, that 1,108 delegates to the Soviet Party Congress of 1934 — out of a total of 1,966, including Central Committee members — had been arrested by 1938 (and almost all of them done to death, it could be added).'

The reaction of the CP leadership was summed up by R. Palme Dutt in the May 1956 issue of *Labour Monthly*: 'That there should be spots on any sun would only startle an inveterate Mithras-worshipper.' The full text of the speech only appeared in June — not in the CP press, but in the *Observer*, which devoted a whole issue to it.

One article in *Socialist Register* contains interviews with leading members of the French and Italian Communist Parties in 1956, and shows that Khrushchev's speech was part of the struggle for the CPSU leadership.

Jean Pronteau, a member of the PCF Central Committee in 1956, recalls confronting Maurice Thorez, its general secretary, after learning of the secret speech on a trip to Poland.

'He looked at me expressionless: "The report? What report?" I replied: "The report Khrushchev made in closed session, the secret report."

'I started to get worked up, and took out of my briefcase the notes I had taken in Poland. At that point Thorez said to me: "Oh! So you've got it. You should have said so straight away."

'And he added in a pontifical manner: "Anyway, just remember one thing. This report doesn't exist. Besides, soon it will never have existed. We must pay no attention to it."

Thorez's position throws light on the possible motives of the CP understood the quiet pleasure he showed, when the "anti-Party group" almost managed to seize power and overthrow Khrushchev. 'It was a near thing. Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich had a majority in the Praesidium. If it hadn't been for Zhukov's tanks, Khrushchev would have been beaten.'

Thorez' position throws light on the possible motives of the CP leaders in Britain in suppressing debate in the party. John Saville describes the fight he and other CP members waged in trying to raise questions about the 20th Congress in the party press.

Finding the official organs — the *Daily Worker* and *World News* — closed to debate, Saville and

Edward Thompson produced their own journal, *The Reasoner*. In the course of the year leading up to the special CP Congress in April 1957, the CPGB lost 7,000 members, a fifth of its total.

The *Socialist Register* articles also raise a question which has been ignored, not surprisingly, in the debate among CP leaders on 'Socialist Democracy — Some Problems', in *Marxism Today* this year. This is the complicity of the CPGB leadership in the crimes of the Soviet bureaucracy.

CASE

Malcolm McEwen relates the case of Edith Bone, a British CP member and *Daily Worker* correspondent who was released after seven years imprisonment in Hungary, following the return of Nagy as Prime Minister.

'...it rapidly became known, and was admitted by Campbell and Pollitt at the EC, that during Edith Bone's disappearance they had several times "inquired" about her, and had received no satisfaction whatever from the Hungarian Party, or Rakosi its general secretary... It was all very well for Pollitt to say that "unity" must be defended at all costs, but the costs had to be borne by the Edith Bones, not by the Pollitts who enjoyed innumerable trips and holidays in Eastern Europe.'

It has taken Gollan twenty years to produce criticisms which he fought to suppress in 1956. An article by Ralph Miliband in this *Socialist Register* accurately describes Gollan's article in *Marxism Today* (January 1976 issue, now available as a pamphlet):

'It is in fact a lamentable document, written in the familiar wooden style associated by long usage with such productions, mealy-mouthed, full of careful ambiguities and euphemisms, and generally content most commonplace formulas in the Communist movement concerning Stalinism and its consequences.'

Despite its limitations, Gollan's article and the fact that the CPGB Political Committee sanctioned its publication reflects a shift since 1956. Now there are at least the restricted outlets of the *Morning Star* letters column, *Comment* and *Marxism Today*. But as Miliband notes, discussion in the CP is still limited to branch level and the 'sacrosanct "ban on factions"' ensures that no nationally organised opposition to the leadership can develop.

TURN

The 'mealy-mouthed' criticism that the CPGB is now prepared to make of the CPSU is not the result of a shift towards Trotskyism. Rather it is part of the general turn by a number of European CPs to distance themselves from the CPSU.

This has been a reaction to the repugnance of workers coming into the struggle over the recent period to the bureaucratic practices of the Soviet bureaucracy. It has also been a reaction to the pressure from the European social democratic parties which have sought to shift the relation of forces in the working class in their favour through defence of democracy in the workers states.

Nevertheless it turns the spotlight on questions of extreme importance for revolutionary Marxists. We will therefore be taking up

THE BIERMANN COMETH

'A man's a man beer is beer
Biermann came from there to here
You did not want to drink' (Reiner Kunze)

21 NOVEMBER, STUTTGART. A short, stocky figure, with a heavy moustache and a jacket three sizes too large, walks onto the stage of the Schwabenlandhalle. Before a packed audience, Wolf Biermann alternates songs, poems, speeches and political debates with his audience for more than three hours.

This is the German Federal Republic, capitalist Germany. Twenty years earlier, as his friend Kunze tells us, Biermann left this Germany to live in

struggles against the bureaucracy. Biermann combines support for the opposition with a critical Marxist appraisal:

'And an envoy for Comrade Dubcek who has gone down the Turkish drain and who should rather have gone the straight way under the axe or the crooked way under the tanks or should have swum in his people like the famous fish of Comrade Mao
And that's why I sing of the healthy uppishness of those cast down in the face of all reaction in the face of the counter-revolution of 21 August.'



the German Democratic Republic. Now, the fiercest critic of the Stalinist bureaucracy, he has had his GDR citizenship removed. Nothing is left to him in the West except the solidarity of the thousands who joined him in the Internationale at the Schwabenlandhalle.

The expulsion of Biermann was a trick. For many years — although he had eventually been refused permission to perform, record or publish — he had turned down opportunities to leave the country, to abandon the struggle he had chosen, for fear that he would not be readmitted. As he wrote: 'I am in the better of the halves, but I must endure double the pain.'

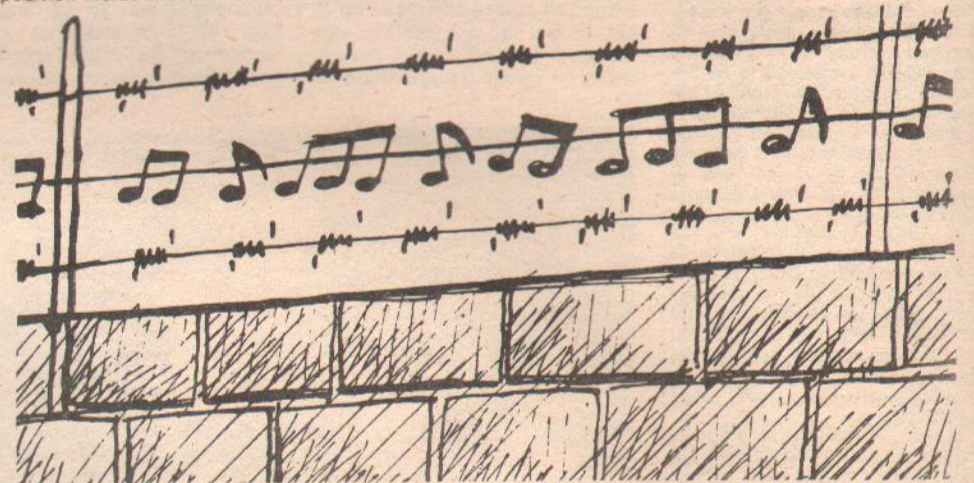
When he received an invitation from the West German metalworkers union to do a concert tour, he applied for and was granted an exit and re-entry visa by the East German bureaucracy. But this was simply part of a cynical plot. Once he had departed, the SED (East German CP) promptly announced that he would be refused readmission.

This has brought about the biggest display of opposition inside the GDR since the 1950s. Thirteen

Biermann's central weakness, which reflects the confusion of the intellectual opposition in the workers states, is his illusions in 'Eurocommunism'. He has said that if he fails to regain admission to the GDR he intends to live in Italy, where he sees a growing and progressive Communist Party. Ironically Biermann and others, who are clearly left critics of the SED, have latched onto what is essentially an opportunist and rightist liberal criticism of the workers states' treatment of dissidents.

How this attitude will survive prolonged exposure to the betrayals and undemocratic practices of the 'Eurocommunist' parties is questionable. Already Biermann has made clear criticisms of the reformist line of the Chilean CP. If he can develop his understanding of the need for workers democracy in the Eastern bloc into support for the struggle for organs of workers power to smash the capitalist states, revolutionary Marxism will have found its clearest mouthpiece in the workers states. Sadly he is not yet in that position.

RICHARD CARVER



writers sent a resolution to the party leadership which has been supported by hundreds of intellectuals. Volker Braun, Fritz Cremer the sculptor, Sarah Kirsch, and Gunther Kunert were among the prominent names on this list.

For the SED, incensed by the television broadcast of Biermann's Stuttgart concert (West German programmes are easily picked up in the East), this was the signal for further repression. Kunze had already been expelled from the Writers' Union. Professor Robert Havemann and other prominent oppositionists have now been arrested. The singer Nina Hagen, writer Thomas Braasch and actress Katarina Thalbach have also been forced to leave the GDR.

Like most poets in the GDR, from Kunert to Kunze, Biermann regards Bertolt Brecht as his 'mentor'. The dominant influence on all these poets has been Brecht's later work written in the GDR, which pares language to its minimum:

'And I always thought: the very simplest words
Must be enough. When I say what things are like
Everyone's heart must be torn to shreds.
That you'll go down if you don't stand up for yourself
Surely you see that.'

This is Brecht's last poem. But for Biermann the stronger influence must have been Brecht's earlier work, the songs and poems written for performance.

Economy is still of primary importance here, but concessions are made to the demands of song and verse. 'The very simplest words' present poetry which is not a monument to individual talent, but an intervention into real struggles. Biermann is not a poet of the order of Brecht, but he is a unique performer and political entertainer.

He also has a clearly defined position on the bureaucracies of the workers states. On each of his public appearances — indeed, in his initial decision to leave the West — he acknowledges the qualitatively superior character of the workers states. They constitute the basis on which socialism will be built.

Yet he combines this with the fiercest polemic against the parasitic bureaucracy: 'The smallest bureaucrat/the meanest bureaucrat/cries for his post./Socialism has triumphed/as soon as he has his job/as soon as he has his cash.'

For Biermann, as for Trotskyists, the unconditional defence of the workers states must be combined with

WHAT WAS NOT MEANT by Bertolt Brecht

'When the Academy of Arts demanded freedom
Of artistic expression from narrow-minded
bureaucrats
There was a howl and clamour in its immediate
vicinity

But roaring above everything
Came a deafening thunder of applause
From beyond the Sector boundary.

Freedom! it roared. Freedom for the artists!
Freedom all round! Freedom for all!
Freedom for the exploiters! Freedom for the
warmongers!

Freedom for the Ruhr cartels! Freedom for Hitler's
generals!

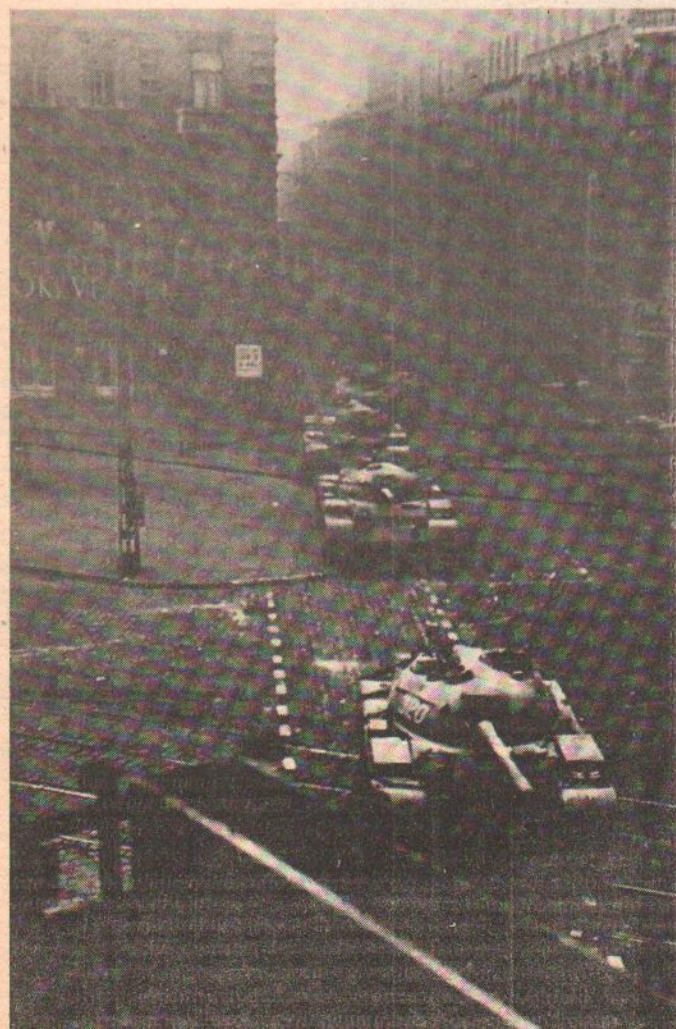
Softly my dear fellows

The Judas kiss for the artist follows
Hard on the Judas kiss for the workers.
The arsonist with his bottles of petrol
Sneaks up grinning to
The Academy of Arts.

But it was not to embrace him, just
To knock the bottle out of his dirty hand that
We asked for elbow room.
Even the narrowest minds
In which peace is harboured
Are more welcome to the arts than the art lover
Who is also a lover of the art of war.'

BERTOLT BRECHT

(From *Brecht Poems 1913-56*, edited by John Willott)



Jamaica's problems far from over

THE PEOPLE'S NATIONAL PARTY, led by Michael Manley, retained office in a landslide victory in last week's Jamaican general election. With the high 80 per cent poll favouring the PNP, they gained 48 of the 60 parliamentary seats.

REFORMS

In voting for Manley, Jamaicans have given their support and approval to the 'democratic socialist' policies of the PNP's last five years in office. In rejecting the right-wing Jamaica Labour Party's alternative of 'Free up the private sector', they have come out firmly against any return to big capitalist and imperialist domination.

CIA Role Explained by Agee

PHILIP AGEE visited Jamaica shortly before the elections to expose the CIA's attempts at 'destabilisation'. He told us:

'My visit was at the invitation of the Council of Human Rights. The Government didn't have anything to do with my trip, but they were certainly curious about what I had to say.'

'Manley, of course, has established very close relations with Cuba, and I think that is the main reason why the Americans want to bring him down. He himself, not to mention the left wing in his own party, represents to the CIA an extension of Cuban influence.'

'At the same time there are large American investments in bauxite mining in Jamaica, and these are insured by the US Government for a total of \$533 million. If these assets are nationalised, American taxpayers will have to pay out a tremendous amount of money to the owners and shareholders of Alcoa, Kaiser, Reynolds, and the other companies.'

'I met with a number of Government leaders in private, and there was much concern over what the CIA had been doing there over the last year. There's just such an incredible coincidence of events that all fit the pattern perfectly.'

'Even the CIA people there were quite extraordinary. Only one of them had a family; he only had his wife, and she happened to be his secretary in the office. None of the others had wives or children there, so there was no question of large vans of household effects to worry about picking up if you had to leave fast, no children's schools to worry about.'

'In addition to that they seemed to be living almost all in the same apartment building, which is quite unusual because they're normally supposed to go out and mix into the community — spread out around town and get to know the people. But here in Jamaica they were practically living under siege conditions.'

'Indeed, three of the nine agents I named had left by the time I got there — one only the week before. They also knew I was coming, because they asked the Jamaican Government not to allow me in.'

'As for British Intelligence operations in Jamaica, I don't know about their involvement because I was concentrating on the CIA question. But you have to remember that in the case of Guyana in the early 1960s, when it was still a British colony, it was the CIA which was undermining and subverting the Jagan Government. Jamaica is independent, and I would think that it is the CIA which is principally involved.'

The swing to the PNP in poor and rural areas shows that Manley's policies have been working for many Jamaicans, at least for the present. However it is worth having a look at them in some detail to see if they are going to continue working in the future.

Soon after coming to power in 1972 the PNP embarked on crash programmes to tackle the country's major problems of unemployment, poverty and homelessness (a legacy both of British imperialism and of the pro-imperialist JLP). Manley introduced the 'impact' employment programme, the National Housing Corporation the Land Lease to help small farmers, free education, and a minimum wage.

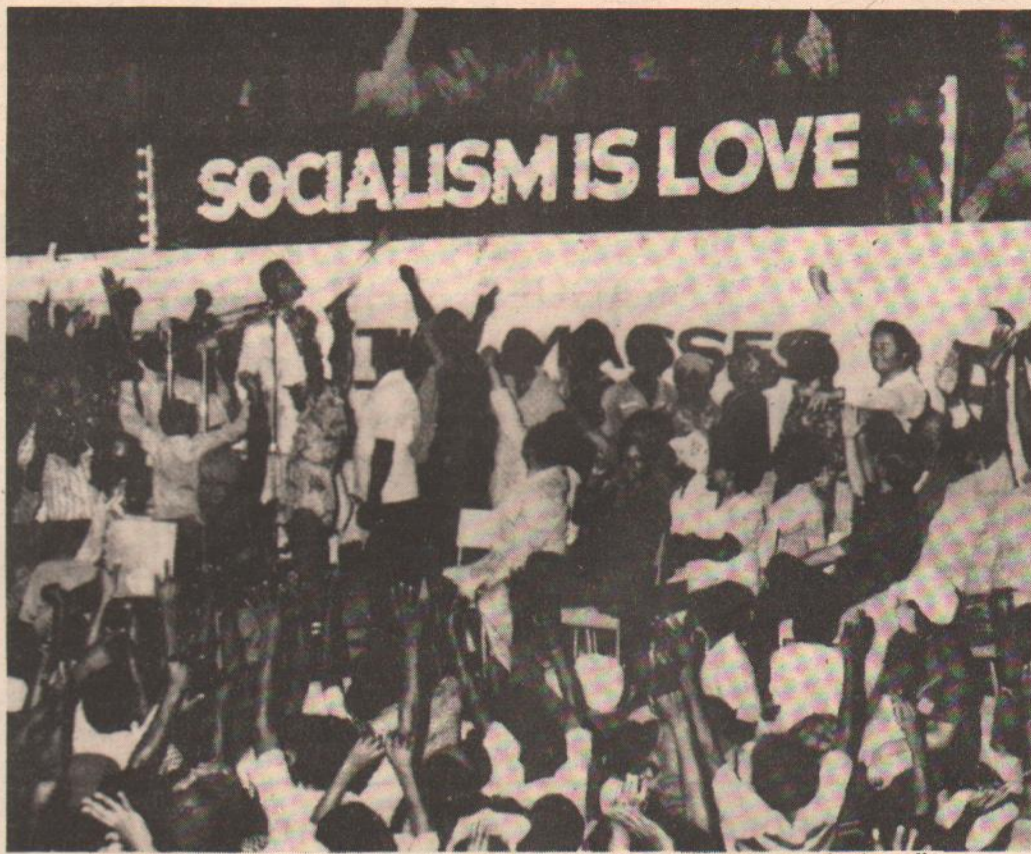
Some of the money needed for these social reforms came from increased taxation, import controls, and a new levy on bauxite, a principal source of revenue for Jamaica. The PNP also pledged itself to a greater intervention by the State in the economy (though stressing at the same time its support for a mixed economy), and sought aid from neighboring Cuba and the Soviet bloc (though stressing also that Jamaica still welcomes investment from the West).

CIA

Not surprisingly, these measures have annoyed local and foreign businessmen. As a result, many of them have actually been voting with their feet against Manley and taking their moneybags with them.

In the past couple of years over £200 million has been shipped out of Jamaica by local businessmen, foreign investment has dropped by half, Jamaica's reserves are now exhausted, and the country is £50 million in debt. In addition Jamaica has been hit hard by what is happening on the world market, in particular the steep rise in the price of oil and the fall in bauxite and sugar prices (Jamaica's main exports).

Under these circumstances the PNP's ambitious programmes of social reform are threatened with cutbacks and abandonment even before they have begun to come to grips with the 26 per cent unemployment rate, the rising cost of living and inadequate social services. In fact the last year has seen hundreds laid off in the bauxite industry, a wage-freeze introduced



MANLEY (at microphone) points out PNP slogan to a wildly enthusiastic pre-election rally.

and anti-strike legislation attempted.

The election was also fought around a second major issue: the open attempt by right-wing forces, aided by the CIA, to 'destabilise' Jamaica. The beginnings of this were withdrawal and discouragement of investment, sabotage of the tourist industry (very important to the Jamaican economy), and a scare-mongering campaign which used Manley's connections with Cuba to whip up anti-communism.

MURDER

At the beginning of the year this was stepped up and money and guns supplied to JLP thugs to beat up, murder and burn down the homes of PNP supporters. Over the summer the rate of political murders rose to 30-40 per month.

Manley's response to the political violence was to introduce a State of Emergency last June. Since then over 250 people have been detained under its powers.

The Emergency continued to operate during the election itself, and marches and motorcades were banned.

CHOICES

Troops, police and tear-gas accompanied party campaigning, but this did not prevent candidates from being shot, with others assaulted or threatened with violence. Under these circumstances, what to do about the gunment became an important election issue.

These two issues of the economy and political violence will also be the principal test-cases for Manley's new term of office.

As far as the first is concerned, he has received a clear mandate from the electorate to continue with his programme of social reform under democratic socialism. However, the stark reality of the economic crisis has led members of both parties to talk of devaluation as a temporary solu-

tion.

It also seems likely that Jamaica will be forced to lean on the US or IMF for financial assistance, despite the PNP's anti-imperialist stance. Some actual cutbacks have already been made in the programmes, such as the youth schemes, and the wage-freeze continues.

As for the gunmen, the Gun Court legislation of 1974 and this year's State of Emergency offer no real or lasting solution, although they may have temporarily stemmed some of the right-wing thuggery. In fact, increasing the powers of the police and the military in this way establishes a threatening apparatus of repression which is much more likely to be used against the left in the future — as is now happening in India.

Certainly, if Manley continues to offer only such panic measures (as he seems to be doing by extending the Emergency into next

year), without really eradicating political violence, then the ground will remain fertile for continued foreign interference by the CIA.

Two choices face the PNP. Manley can continue to attempt to carry through his 'democratic socialism' under a mixed economy, seeking aid and trade from both East and West.

In this case, he will be in a very similar boat to Allende and Popular Unity in Chile. The world economic recession will increase the small but already noticeable shift to the right in home policies as the Government is unable to keep its promises, has to fall back on money loans from the US, on devaluation etc, and continues to erode civil liberties by emergency measures.

STERILE

But Chile showed that you simply can't serve two masters and hope to introduce a sort of creeping socialism without the capitalists noticing or minding. At some point they always attempt to 'turn it back'.

The alternative, as the left in the PNP recognise, is to demand not 'Forward with Democratic Socialism' through the continuation of the present policies, but 'Forward to Socialism' through full socialist measures. This has also been the position of the Stalinist-influenced Workers Liberation League, the largest left-wing grouping.

At the same time, however, WLL and most of these left forces also advocate maintaining the unity of the party, which contains left, middle and right wingers. This would actually be sterile and disastrous in the present situation.

CUBA

The only possibility of getting more far-reaching socialist policies adopted will be through the expulsion of the right wing from the party. Furthermore, socialist measures can only be carried through by the mobilisation of the workers' own independent organisations, and not through reliance on the PNP.

For the success of this second alternative (compared to the disaster of Chile) we can look at Cuba and the course of the revolution there. Cuba has featured prominently in the elections, and has been used as a propaganda weapon by both right and left. The coming period in Jamaica could well put Cuban socialism (both its successes and shortcomings) to a dramatic test.

SHEILA MALONE

IMG NOTES

National IMG Student School for members and sympathisers interested in joining IMG. Will be held in Birmingham on weekend 8/9 January. All student members to attend. Details from National Centre.

National IMG Teachers Fraction for members. Sunday 9 January, 11 am. Details of venue from National Centre.

IMG Engineering Secretariat, Sunday 9 January, 1 pm, Birmingham.

IMG Trade Union Cadre School for IMG comrades designated to attend by their fraction. Agenda includes: the Minority Movement; the National Left Wing Movement; organising the left in the unions, 1965-75; Labourism, industrial unionism and social democracy; the industrial strategy of the CP; a class struggle left wing — other parties and today. Saturday/Sunday 22/23 January, London.

IMG National Transport Fraction for all comrades working in transport unions. Sunday 30 January, London.

National Engineering Fraction, Saturday 5 February, Birmingham.

IMG Public Services Fraction, 6 February.

Trade Union Commission, Saturday 12 February, 11 am, at National Centre.

IMG Members in the ASTMS or the AUT, in higher education, please contact M. Holbrook, Dept. of Sociology, University of Durham, New Elvet, Elvet Riverside, Durham DH1 3JT. This is urgent.

IMG National Working Women's Charter Campaign Fraction, 8 January, London. All branches to send representatives.

IMG National Abortion Campaign Fraction, 9 January, London. All branches to send representatives.

IMG Members wishing to get kits on 'History of First Three Internationals' Debates and Practice on Women's Oppression', please order through your branch organiser. Cost 90p excluding pamphlets. Limited numbers now being re-printed.

National Fund Raiser wanted by IMG. A really challenging job for someone with flair and organising ability. The IMG has no rich backers and relies on raising funds to finance its campaigns, etc. The National Fund Raiser will also play an important role in projecting the public face of the IMG. Details from National Centre.



Police disperse crowd in Kingston, Jamaica using state of emergency powers brought in by the Manley Government and now extended.

Colombian Trotskyists unite against repression

COLOMBIAN PRESIDENT López Michelsen has now got through the first half of his four year term and has a good chance of completing his allotted time. This alone would seem to set Colombia apart from the rest of Latin America, now under the heel of the military boot, but the fact is that the economic and political tendencies of the rest of the continent are also present in Colombia.

This year has been marked by a noticeable upsurge in the mass struggle: important strikes at Riopaila and Vanitex have been part of a general trend. As a result of this recent reactivation of working class struggle there has been an important development of class struggle oppositions in many trade unions, such as the oil workers' union. By far the most significant struggle has been the 52-day strike of health workers which ended in victory towards the end of October.

The response of the Government has been to put the capital city virtually under military occupation, with troops of the hated BIM (Brigade of Military Institutes) patrolling the streets daily. New powers have been granted to the police to detain people for up to 180 days for 'disturbing the peace', and hundreds of students and workers are being imprisoned under this law. The Government has also granted the army sweeping new powers to combat 'subversion', which in Colombia includes not only the workers movement but also an important peasant

come to the surface. The Colombian Trotskyists have called for a united front to combat the repression — a movement which must not tie its fortunes to the coat tails of the 'progressive' or 'liberal' bourgeoisie if it is to succeed. The present reunification of Trotskyist forces is a big step towards the formation of a credible revolutionary pole in Colombia firmly rooted in the workers movement.

Developments on this front began early this year with the decision by the Bloque Socialista conference to declare its affiliation to the Fourth International. Then the forces of the Comandos Camilistas, who were following a similar development, fused with the Liga Obrera Comunista (Communist Workers League) and launched the fortnightly paper **Poder Obrero** (Workers Power). The organisations supporting **Poder Obrero** have since reached agreement with **Espartaco** (Spartacus), which is the official section of the Fourth International in Colombia.

• The comrades in Colombia have also been in the forefront of the international campaign to save the lives of Pérez and Apaza, two trade union militants of the PST [Socialist Workers Party], Argentinian section of the Fourth International, whose lives are in danger in Argentina. They have organised support amongst trade unions, political parties and MPs for these comrades, using them as a symbol of the



Brigadier Harry Baxter, commander of the Ulster Defence Regiment, follows General Spinola and Ambassador Ewart-Biggs in his choice of facial adornment. His politics aren't dissimilar either.

No season of goodwill in Ireland

MANY North of Ireland exiles will be returning home this Christmas. But a lot will do so with a good deal of apprehension. Once back in the Six Counties they will have to contend with the British Army and Ulster Defence Regiment; and if they are lucky enough to survive those institutions, the Prevention of Terrorism Act means that they may be held or even deported back to Ireland on their return journey.

adier Harry Baxter, who is commander of the outfit, recently said of the 1,600 ex-B-Specials in his regiment that, 'I very much welcome their experience'.

First there is the British Army and the UDR. Last week Northern Ireland Secretary Roy Mason announced that he intended to withdraw 500 troops from their occupation of the North of Ireland and replace them by expanding the UDR. While any troop withdrawal can only benefit the Irish, the prospect of an expanded UDR

is a chilling one.

The UDR was set up in 1970 to replace the exclusively Protestant B-Specials, the para-military wing of the Unionist regime; and replace them both in content and role is exactly what the UDR have done. Even the UDR chiefs occasionally admit this. Brig-

EXPERIENCE

The type of experience those in the UDR gain is illustrated by the fact that more than 100 members of the regiment have been charged (and mostly convicted) for offences involving association with the Loyalist paramilitary organisations.

There are the examples of UDR Sergeant James McDowell and Lance-Corporal Raymond Crozier, who were both jailed for 35 years in October for their part in the Miami Showband massacre; and of Noel Walley, another UDR sergeant who in 1972 was convicted of offences arising out of the attempted assassination of two Catholics.

George Farrell, who was given 15 years for planting a bomb in Donegal in November this year, was a member of the UDR, the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Defence Association. Another who held joint membership of the UDR and UVF was William McComb, who earlier this year was jailed for 10 years for his part in an armed robbery.

WELCOME

These are just a few of the individuals who find a welcome in the UDR, and who make life rather dangerous for any anti-imperialist in the North of Ireland this Christmas. And although conditions in Britain can hardly be compared with those in occupied Ireland, the homeland too has its delights.

Most notable is the Prevention of Terrorism Act, under which 2,000 people have been held in detention without trial for up to seven days since its introduction two years ago. But just as there are many in the Six Counties who continue to resist the British Army, the UDR and the other Loyalist thugs, in Britain as well the campaign against the PTA is growing.

Recently established is People Against the Prevention of Terrorism Act*, which is seeking to bring together all those groups and individuals who have campaigned against the PTA. At the first national co-ordinating meeting of the new body held recently, plans for a national demonstration in March 1977 were agreed, as was the production of a pamphlet.

MOVEMENT

As in 1976, the movement against British occupation of Ireland will be continued in the New Year on many fronts.

In Ireland the recent emergence of mass demonstrations for political status of Republican prisoners, and the mass actions on the streets against the British troops in such areas as Turf Lodge, are the most positive developments for many months. In Britain there is still a burning need to build an open and united 'Troops Out' movement, and to weld together the actions against the PTA.

Until all this and much more is achieved, until Britain finally gets out of its oldest colony, the 'season of goodwill

Franco's heirs score a point

THE REFERENDUM on the Spanish Government's 'reform' plans resulted in a higher pro-Government vote than anyone expected.

The result was reminiscent of the Franco constitutional referenda, which usually produced more Yes votes than the number of electors. This time, though, there was one big difference. Twenty-two per cent of the electorate responded to the call of the illegal working class parties to boycott the referendum, while a further 3 per cent cast blank ballot papers.

But the Yes vote last Wednesday was an overwhelming 94.2 per cent of the total votes cast. If the boycott was a big advance on the fake referenda of Franco's day, it was a setback that it was not more substantial and that the Government vote was so high. Why was this?

KIDNAPPED

* A little-known left group kidnapped Antonio Oriol, the President of the Council of State.

No commentator has failed to remark on the incredible good fortune of the Government, with this affront to its authority coming

only days before the referendum. Nobody actually knows what GRAPO, the kidnapping group, is. It is suggested that it is the successor to FRAP, whose militants were among those executed by the dying Franco in September 1975. This is entirely unconfirmed.

BOMBINGS

GRAPO first came to light when it claimed responsibility for the wave of bombings around the fortieth anniversary of the Civil War in July this year. But it is known that at least some of these were right-wing provocations. The regime has consistently shown that it is not above staging such provocations itself.

A good example is the Madrid cafe bomb of September 1974. A cafe frequented by police was bombed causing a number of deaths. The strange fact is that there were no policemen in the cafe at the time. Even stranger is that there had been a warning posted in the Madrid police station to keep away from the cafe!

This bombing was the signal for a massive wave of arrests of left-wing militants. Could it be that

this time, too, the Government has staged an action which would boost its credibility as the guardian of law and order and discredit the workers parties? Already Communist Party leader Marcelino Camacho and 36 other militants have been arrested since the referendum.

Alternatively, the fascist bands have been actively mounting similar provocations. The most notorious was the murder of a woman in Santurce in July by a number of fascists (who were also policemen) dressed as Basque fishermen. Even the Spanish press could not stomach this and it was exposed to the world.

INSANE

If the kidnapping was mounted by a left organisation, then it was a piece of insane ultra-leftism. It is impossible to see that the working class can make the slightest gain from having its own political weight replaced by a band of guerrillas.

But the demand which is being raised by the kidnapers — for the release of all political prisoners — does highlight the repressive character of the regime. Two hundred militants, mainly Basques, are still held in the sub-human conditions of the Francoist jails. Oriol, a hard-line rightist who favours this repression, deserves anything he has coming to him.

INSTRUMENT

* The Government remains the instrument of a thoroughly anti-democratic dictatorship.

The other obvious factor in the Government's victory at the polls is its total control of the news media in the referendum campaign. It followed Franco's doctrine that non-participation represented an affront to the regime. Therefore no propaganda facilities were allowed to any of the parties of the Democratic Coordination or the revolutionary left.

There is a simple reason for this. If it had allowed air time to the left, rather than the extreme right, the terrain on which the campaign was fought would have shifted from banal democratic rhetoric to the very real questions of political prisoners, the 40 police murders in the last year, the illegality of the working class organisations, the undemocratic electoral procedure for the proposed Cortes and the whole range of democratic liberties which are still suppressed.

DEMOCRACY

As it was, there can be little doubt that a large portion of the Government's vote was a vote for



'Perhaps they'll let us out on the 15th so we can vote.'

democracy for forty years, would clearly vote in favour of anything which appeared to guarantee democratic rights. If the opposition had been allowed democratic participation in the campaign, rather than underground activity, the abstention rate would have been far higher.

BOYCOTT

* The Communist and Socialist Parties utterly failed to launch an effective campaign for a boycott of the referendum.

For weeks after the announcement of the referendum, both parties (PCE and PSOE) dithered over whether they would call for an abstention (a blank ballot paper) or a boycott. In the case of the PSOE this was not clarified at any point. The PCE, on the other hand, with the threat of not being legalised, was more ready to support the boycott.

But the actions of both the PCE and the PSOE over the past weeks have been towards demobilising the working class. First the defeat of the Madrid bus workers, largely engineered by the Stalinists, and

class could not be brought to bear on the referendum campaign.

The big exception was in the Basque country, the stronghold of the militant working class and the far left. Following the lead of the LCR (sympathising organisation of the Fourth International) the far left mounted a campaign for an active boycott involving strikes and demonstrations.

The arrest of 154 comrades of the LCR and the massive defence campaign forced the PSOE and PCE to support this call. The referendum results in the Basque country clearly reflected this mobilisation. In Vizcaya there was a 45 per cent abstention and in Guipuzcoa 55 per cent.

REFERENDUM

The overall conclusion must be that the Government has gained considerable breathing space by the referendum result; but the continued struggle of the Basque workers shows that they are willing to take a lead for all the workers in the Spanish state. Despite the apparent success of the Government and the failure of the Stalinists and

UNITED MEETING AGAINST HEALY SLANDERS

Over the past year the Workers Revolutionary Party, headed by Gerry Healy, has conducted a vicious campaign against the Socialist Workers Party of the United States and two of its veteran leaders, Joseph Hansen and George Novack.

Healey and his followers in various countries have published articles and pamphlets, held public meetings and distributed leaflets and posters accusing Hansen and Novack of 'criminal negligence' in Trotsky's assassination and of being 'accomplices of the GPU', alleging that they have covered up crimes of the Soviet secret police and shielded its agents.

Throughout the world individuals and groups representing a rather wide range of tendencies in the left have spoken out against these slanders and have signed a statement declaring that the slanders constitute a shameful frame-up. A number of the signatories were personally involved in the defence campaign for Leon Trotsky.

Some of the signers of this statement belong to no organised

represent groups or organisations holding similar views on this question whatever their special political points of view may be, and though they may disagree with the SWP on a number of issues.

The signers of the statement felt obliged to speak out in defence of Hansen and Novack and the SWP against the smear campaign impugning their integrity. They express concern about the practice of such disruptive methods in the workers movement and ask others who share their position that frame-ups have no place in the socialist movement to add their voice of protest and public condemnation.

In response to this appeal a public meeting has been organised in London on Friday 14 January to publicly defend workers democracy and oppose the use of slanders and frame-ups as a way of settling political differences.

Speakers will include Ernest Mandel, George Novack, Pierre Lambert, Michel Pablo and Tim Wohlforth. Tariq Ali will be in the

GAMBLE WITH PROCTOR

RED WEEKLY

Sometime on Tuesday 11 January a pipe-smoking gentleman will stop pacing his room on the third floor of the American Embassy in London. The phone will ring. After he has answered he will book a long distance call to CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia. He will tell his paymasters that his first mission in Britain has been accomplished — an appeals tribunal has confirmed the deportation order served on ex-CIA agent Philip Agee. Agee is out.

by MICK GOSLING

At least that, and not the snow, is what Dr Edward W Proctor, the new CIA station chief in Britain, will be dreaming of this Christmas. It is now widely accepted that achieving the deportations of Agee and Hosenball has been amongst Proctor's first assignments here since he slipped in last autumn.

conditions to Britain, this can only heighten speculation that Agee is more of an export than a deport.

'LIBERAL'

Unlike his predecessor, Cord Meyer Jnr, Proctor is no dirty trickster slob who spends all his time chasing his secretaries. Indeed, as well as being something of an intellectual, he has also acquired a reputation as a liberal in the course of his 23-year stay with the CIA.

In October 1975, for example, Proctor helped to host a two-day conference for placement officers inside CIA Headquarters in Langley, Virginia. The purpose — to get the placement officers to recommend CIA careers to black college graduates and to spread the word that the CIA is 'an equal opportunity employer'. Reportedly, less than two per cent of the CIA's professional staff are black — unlike most of their victims.

In a less liberal vein, Proctor testified in court in favour of the censorship of *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* by Victor Marchetti and John Marks, which subsequently appeared with nearly 200 deletions. This was a unique case in American legal history. Nevertheless, Marchetti, an outspoken critic of the agency, apparently forgives Proctor personally and continues to believe that his former colleague is 'as pure as the driven snow'.

ICING

But Proctor's appointment in London is simply a case of the CIA changing the icing on the cake. He will continue to head the 60-70 agents who

TRAINING

Proctor's training makes him eminently suitable for British conditions. An economics expert with a PhD from Harvard, he is a former CIA Deputy Director for Intelligence — one of the seven to eight top ranking officials at CIA headquarters.

As Deputy Director for Intelligence, and now as Chief of Station, Proctor has a key role in preparing and answering the so-called Key Intelligence Questions, or KIQs. These are a list of what Washington most wants to know, the priority goals for all American Intelligence, open and covert. They are distributed over the signature of the US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger.

INFORMATION

In June 1976 Philip Agee received a copy of the KIQs for 1974-75 through the post. Two of the KIQs asked specifically for information on the economic performance of the major non-Communist industrial nations, particularly Western Europe and Japan, and on the positions these countries were likely to take in forthcoming international trade and financial negotiations.

In the wake of the IMF loan



After his speech at the NUS conference, Philip Agee received a five minute standing ovation.

operate from the Embassy alone, and will continue to rely on the professional dirty tricksters like Deputy Chief William Morrow McGhee, one of the longest serving CIA operatives in Britain, to gather in less accessible information.

Proctor himself will probably be concentrating on high level liaison with British Intelligence and watching out for the likely political repercussions of Britain's declining economy. A case perhaps of Watch Out There's a Trot About....

MICK GOSLING

Demonstrate

WE DON'T KNOW whether Dr Proctor had any of his friends in Newcastle last Monday, but if he did his dreams may have been rudely awakened. Well over 300 people attended a public meeting addressed by Philip Agee and pledged themselves to fight the deportation orders served on him and Evening Standard reporter Mark Hosenball.

A big contingent from Tyneside is now expected on the 9 January national demonstration which assembles at Embankment Tube station (formerly Charing Cross) at 12.45 marching to the Home Office and the American Embassy.

On Friday night another 150 people attended a

support meeting in Birmingham — despite the short notice at which it was called. Tom Litterick, Labour MP for Selly Oak, joined Agee on the platform of the meeting which was chaired by Frank Henderson, shop steward at British Leyland's Austin Longbridge plant. A defence committee has now been established to mobilise in Birmingham for 9 January.

Despite the short time for preparation, Red Weekly urges all its readers in London and in all those areas where mobilising committees are building the demonstration to get out on the streets that Sunday. STOP THE DEPORTATIONS — OUT WITH THE CIA!

Labour Government Supports Apartheid

Roy Alexander reviews a new Red Weekly pamphlet by Jim Atkinson — 'How the Labour Government supports Apartheid'.

The British labour movement is virtually unanimous in its condemnation of the brutal, racist apartheid regime in South Africa, particularly after the bloody events of last summer in the black townships.

These gave rise at the last Labour Party conference to the adoption of a resolution (Composite 44) which not merely protested at these events but went some way towards mapping out a policy for action against the racist regime. It called for a strict embargo on arms and military equipment and measures against British investment in South Africa, including the withdrawal of all investment by nationalised and Government-controlled industries and British banks.

How has the behaviour of the Labour Government been affected by the views of the labour movement? According to its spokespersons it shares the view of

opposition to apartheid. But its practice has flown in the face not merely of the democratically expressed will of the labour movement but even of its own public positions, which are little more than a cynical cover for the deep-going collaboration between British imperialism and South African racism.

This is thoroughly argued and documented in the latest Red Weekly pamphlet, 'How the Labour Government supports Apartheid'.

The author points out the rotten record of the Labour Government even over the crucial and emotive issue of boosting the military capacity of the racist regime. Under the so-called 'embargo' a whole range of products of military significance can be shipped to South Africa without even the formality of an export licence.

The real policy of the Labour Government was made crystal clear in October when it blocked with France and the US at the United Nations Security Council to cast a triple veto against a proposed mandatory international

arms embargo, despite the demand of the Labour Party conference the previous month for such an embargo.

The collaboration between the South African military machine and the British state exists on all sorts of levels, and even extends to the ominous sphere of the racist state's nuclear programme, which depends on uranium mined by the British multinational, Rio Tinto Zinc, aided by a long term uranium purchasing agreement with Tony Benn's Ministry of Energy.

As the pamphlet correctly argues: 'Our job in Britain is to build a movement with sufficient power to force the Labour Government

to stop collaborating with the racist butchers in Pretoria — whether militarily, politically or economically.' It also offers a number of concrete proposals for how this job can be got underway.

The most important opportunity in the near future is the national demonstration called by the Anti-Apartheid Movement for 6 March. This pamphlet will play a valuable role in the campaign of agitation in the labour movement which must be mounted to win support for this demonstration and ensure that it is a powerful outcry against the South African regime and the Labour Government's collaborationist policies.

INTERNATIONAL ACTION AGAINST RACISTS

ACTIONS throughout the world are being planned against the racist regimes of southern Africa. In particular the ICFTU [International Confederation of Free Trade Unions], supported by the TUC and the Transport & General Workers Union, have called an international week of action to boycott South Africa from 17-23 January.

The accompanying table shows the volume of trade with South Africa passing through British ports in 1974. As a first step to the complete end of all collaboration with South Africa, the ICFTU action is a welcome move.

In Belgium action is planned in both the Flemish- and French-speaking regions. The Flemish-speaking areas are arranging an anti-apartheid week leading to a national day of action on 26 February. This has been organised by the AKZA — Action Committee on South Africa.

Meanwhile the French speaking areas are planning actions to commemorate the 16th anniversary of

the Sharpeville massacre, in which 67 black people died at the hands of the racist police.

In Sweden the Africa Solidarity Groups are waging a boycott South Africa campaign during the winter.

Finally, the recent conference of the National Student Coalition Against Racism [NSCAR] in the USA has called for two days of national action over the complicity of the United States with the racist regimes in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. This activity will take place on 25-26 March with demonstrations, rallies and pickets.

These first moves internationally herald the beginning of this campaign to isolate Vorster's regime on a world level. They will be continued through to internationally coordinated actions on the first anniversary of the Soweto uprising. Through such events an international campaign of the scale not seen since the days of Vietnam can take shape.



Workers from Hopkinson's Ltd, in Huddersfield, march to demand the reinstatement of six sacked shop stewards and in support of a £6 wage claim. In the course of the wage struggle, one of the stewards discovered documents revealing the Rhodesian sanction-busting activities of the company. The workers have occupied

BRITISH TRADE WITH SOUTH AFRICA AND NAMIBIA VIA BRITISH PORTS IN 1974 IN '000TONNES.

SOUTH AFRICA/NAMIBIA				
Port	Imports	Exports	Imports	Exports
London	118	158	285.9	6174
Southampton	195	136	17055	2726
Bristol	49		2813	
Cardiff	68	1	2747	513
Swansea	7	3	818	2178
Liverpool	188	179	22221	3028
Manchester	74	134	5601	2835
Clyde	334	34	12509	787
Forth	128	1	3932	1350
Tees	268	56	17114	2491
Hull	192	15	4697	1894
Immingham	75	4	18716	2016

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

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