

RED WEEKLY

27 JANUARY 1977

No. 184

Price 10p

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THE CHARGE IS

RACISM

But others guilty with Powell

ENOCH POWELL has once again predicted civil war between whites and blacks in a deliberate attempt to stir up race hatred. Once again he didn't propose any specific attacks on black rights — merely talked airily of 'measures hitherto dismissed as impracticable or unthinkable'. But as the Daily Telegraph pointed out: 'a nod is as good as a wink'.

Enoch Powell does not stand alone in the dock, however. For all its present self-righteousness, the Daily Telegraph stands there too, along with the rest of the Fleet Street press. Who was it who printed scare headline after scare headline about Asians living in luxury hotels, which have made Powell's task all the easier? Here, too, racism is the charge.

And what about Brynmor John, Labour Minister of State at the Home Office? He complains that Powell is 'using language bound to cause the inflamed reaction he pretends to deplore'.

But who refuses to repeal the 1971 Immigration Act — the legislation which set the seal on immigration control and created a climate of fear and insecurity in the black ghettos? Who daily pauperises the same black ghettos through deliberate policies of mass unemployment, wage reductions, and cuts in housing, health and education?

And is it not Mr Brynmor John's precious Labour Government which cynically ignores the vote of its own party conference to abolish all immigration restrictions and support black self-defence? Here, too, racism is the charge.



Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

And then we have Tribunate MP Maureen Colquhoun. Stepping for a moment out of the sheltered confines of Parliament last summer, she 'got caught up' in the events at the Notting Hill Carnival. Now she explains that she has changed her views about the desirability of a multi-racial society.

'We need to think an awful lot about what politicians have done by putting black and white together', she says. 'I had the blind allegiance to the ideal that many of my fellow party members still have. I have had to readjust my ideas.'

The final patronising white icing on this racist cake was Ms Colquhoun's assurance that 'many of my friends who are black are absolutely super people because they are educated black people'. Educated not to struggle, perhaps?

A fitting comment on her statements came from Mr Bashir Maan, President of the Standing Conference of Pakistani Organisations in Britain, who said that if she was serious 'she had better join the National Front'. After all, like Ms Colquhoun, they support import controls too!

But the call by black organisations for Powell to be prosecuted, while it should be supported, is nowhere near enough on its own to deal with the racist menace. The ruling class courts, and the ruling class Parliament, will not eagerly turn on a member of their own Establishment.

There can be no reliance on Parliament, no reliance on the courts. The self-organisation of blacks in their own defence is the only guarantee against racists. Active support for such self-defence is incumbent upon the entire working class movement today.



WITCH HUNT FIGHT NOT OVER

ANDY BEVAN is back at work. Labour NEC voted overwhelmingly last week to declare his appointment as national youth officer irrevocable.

But then it made a big concession to the National Union of Labour Organisers (which has been refused recognition by the TUC) by voting to set up a joint working party which would 'translate into satisfactory agreement the custom and practice which has prevailed until now'.

Instead of rejecting the careerist implications of NULO's stand in blacking Bevan, the NEC has in effect endorsed them. Not one member of the NEC took advantage of the controversy to fight for an extension of party democracy by proposing that in future all full-time posts should be subject to election.

Now the NEC is to re-consider the Underhill Report on so-called 'infiltration' by Trotskyists into the Labour Party. In the witch-hunt atmosphere whipped up round the Bevan affair, any more retreats by the lefts could prove fatal. The right to organise around different currents of opinion on the way to defend working class interests must be asserted firmly and unambiguously.

LOBBY PUBLIC SECTOR CONFERENCE

The 17 November Steering Committee of eight public service unions was meeting as we went to press to finalise details of a conference at the end of March 'in defence of the social wage'.

But this conference, and the series of regional campaigns which are also planned, do not mean that these leaders plan to organise any serious struggle against the cuts. They merely reflect the extent to which these bureaucrats are under pressure from the action of the rank-and-file.

The March conference is likely to be at best a talking shop, dominated by union executives with no votes taken. Instead of breaking with the Social Contract and organising strike action against the Government's attacks, the purpose will be to put some more gentle pressure on Healey as he draws up the April Budget.

Militants should not be deluded by this left posturing into waiting for the union leaderships to deliver the goods. On the contrary, the fight must be stepped up for a representative delegate conference with the specific aim of organising national strike action against the cuts. In particular, the conference called by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions on 26 February should take the initiative in organising a mass lobby of the March conference behind this demand.

THE FIGHT FOR ABORTION RIGHTS - Pages 6&7

1976 - Year of equality?

The Equality Report is the latest publication from the NCCL Rights for Women Unit and is a 'comprehensive' guide to how the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts are working. True to the usual NCCL form, this survey is well-supplied with hard facts and figures, plus actual case histories of EPA and SDA cases brought before tribunals.

However, what the survey gains through statistical analysis it loses in political analysis. The conclusions drawn by the report are simple and legalistic, and tend to ignore the economic, social and political context in which the Acts operate. For example, while reporting that the EPA 'was never intended to give equal pay to more than a relatively small proportion of employed women: those who can compare their jobs to a man's job with the same employer', the NCCL suggests that the solution to the problem is merely to amend the Act.

TRIBUNALS

Again, when commenting on the number of cases which have been brought to the tribunals and have failed, they isolate the reason as being that too many women are likely to represent themselves. The solution to this aspect of the workings of the Act, as suggested by the NCCL, is for more women to join a union, and make the unions back their cases. To support this they cite the example of Trico:

... if a woman is a trade union member, she will stand more chance of winning equal pay and opportunity at work than if she is fighting a lone battle. The famous AUEW-backed Trico strike not only ended in victory for the women at Trico's, but served as an example of union strength to other women... While the NCCL are obviously right about Trico serving as an example to other women seeking equal pay, they miss out on the real lessons of Trico.

FUTILITY

Firstly, the case of the Trico women, and of the 400 other unsuccessful cases considered by the tribunals exposed the futility of relying upon the channels opened up by the Labour Government for achieving equal pay. The Trico women were extremely strongly organised within a union framework and they knew that it was precisely that organisation which would win, without needing to crawl to what were essentially shown to be the employers' tribunals.

Secondly, one lesson which Trico gives loud and clear, and which the NCCL seems to be deaf to, is that the Labour Government (which the NCCL accuses of not being 'radical' enough in implementing the legislation) besides giving

employers 5 years to avoid the legislation also provided flaws in the legislation which employers could exploit unimpeded.

The plain facts are that many women still earn half men's wages, and as a recent *Guardian* article reported, the gap between male and female hourly earnings has increased from 50p to 56p. Of 2,000 applications to the tribunals, only 568 have been heard. It is not surprising that women have taken militant action through their own trade unions in order to achieve their demands for financial equality at work.

NO GUIDE

The Equality Report, while recognising the conditions such as family responsibility, divisions between the male and female labour force and low pay, which place women in an inferior position within the labour force fails to draw any conclusions about the situation which produces them. Furthermore, it cannot give any guide to action.

We should read it to arm ourselves with the facts but we should at the same time look to the lessons of Trico and other struggles for equal pay.

PROBLEMS

Amendments to the Equal Pay Act and greater union representation at tribunals is clearly not going to solve the problems of the day-to-day working and living conditions of women. In a period when members of the trade union bureaucracy are all too willing to side themselves with the Social Contract and the other anti-working class policies of the Labour Government, they are not going to be willing to take up the question of a woman's right to financial independence and independence from family responsibility. In some cases the demand for equal pay is in direct opposition to the Social Contract. And women who are made redundant are not likely to find solace in the Tribunals, whether the Act is amended or not.

We must learn the lessons of Trico and prepare for a campaign of militant action in order to achieve our demands — for equal pay, for nursery facilities and for the right of women to work. The rally for women's rights on 26 February (now supported by broad forces from the labour and women's movement) has the potential to help us prepare that campaign. For the rally, unlike the NCCL, will be able to pose the fight for women's rights as a political rather than purely economic or legal one.

ANN BOND

* *The Equality Report* by Jean Cousins (NCCL, £1).



Women strikers at the Phillips-owned Magnavox factory in Barking, Essex voted to return to work last Friday. The strikers were demanding that the management at least negotiate on their use of pay grading to evade the Equal Pay Act. Partial concessions were made and talks are proceeding.

EGA - A Blow At All Hospital Closures

The last week has seen a walkabout PR job on the state of the National Health Service by David Ennals and Roland Moyle, Labour's chief hatchet men at the Department of Health & Social Security.

'I've seen worse' was Moyle's comment about Hackney Hospital, where the horrendously overcrowded conditions in the psychiatric wing have become nationally infamous as a result of the suicides of two patients. Moyle's words express the utter cynicism with which the Labour Government is butchering the health service, parts of which were in any case crippled from birth.

It's a pity that Ennals and Moyle haven't visited the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital. They would get an even warmer reception there than they've encountered elsewhere on their travels. The EGA occupation against the threatened closure of the hospital has begun to demonstrate in a protracted and consistent way just how much opposition can be focussed against the cuts.

SUPPORTED

Already the delegate conference on 12 February, organised at the EGA by the hospital shop stewards committee, is being very well supported by health workers and other labour movement bodies. But it must be built into a really big event, in line with the role that the struggle against the EGA closure should be playing in the struggle against all health cuts, both in London and nationally.

The pickets from local women's groups, trade union bodies, and shop stewards committees recognise the potential of the tactic used by the EGA workers. The occupation cuts across the vicious press strike — patients die' variety. It also provides a base from which to also provides a base from which to drive out into the labour movement locally and even nationally to win support for the occupation.

However, the so-called national backing from the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs [since the occupation started] and the National Union of Public Employees [since early this year] has amounted to not one practical proposal for developing the struggle.

A joint campaign by the public sector unions could build the EGA into a beacon for all health workers.

spiracy of silence has followed the holiday speechifying of the 17 November demonstration. Fisher and the rest refuse to commit themselves to supporting and developing their members' actions against the cuts because that would mean a break with the Social Contract which they helped to negotiate.

The EGA conference can begin to put the screws on these misleaders, as can the all-London conference for NHS shop stewards called for 23 February by the Camden Joint Shop Stewards Committee. A further focus will be the conference and one-day strike called by the London division of NUPE for 11 May.

At national level, an important initiative is the 19 March 'Save Our Hospitals' conference called by the IS/SWP-controlled Right to Work Campaign and the Hospital Worker newspaper. All Red Weekly supporters in the NHS are urged to build this conference and seek joint action with any local campaigns in order to make sure that these initiatives contribute to forging a united rank and file opposition to the NHS union bureaucrats.

RALLY SUPPORT GROWS

PERHAPS THE BEST indication of the need for the 'One Year On from the Sex Discrimination Act' rally on 26 February is the growing enthusiasm for it in the working class movement.

Already numerous trade union branches and trade councils have given their support. There are backers such as the Executive of the National Union of Public Employees, the women's sub-committee of the Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Section (AUEW), the Executive of the Society of Civil and Public Servants, the National Union of Students, the London Student Organisation and the Abortion Law Reform Association.

In addition, the sponsorship of 11 MPs has attracted the support of a number of political organisations; there are Labour Party branches, the Communist Party and the IMG.

ENTHUSIASM

And the enthusiasm for the Rally is not merely support on paper. It is being built through broad based public meetings, day schools and workplace meetings. In Brighton a public meeting to build the rally is being organised through a Women's Rights Committee, the Labour Party Young Socialists, Labour Party branches and trade union branches. In Oxford the trades council is organising a public meeting, and is setting up a series of investigations by local trade union branches into equal pay.

In Birmingham, the local Working Women's Charter Group has begun investigations into equal pay

* *The 26 February Rally for Women's Rights has provided an important focus for activity in the Hemel Hempstead area. A Working Women's Charter group has been formed and sponsorship for the rally has been won from Hemel Constituency Labour Party.*

The Hemel CLP motion — endorsed by the General Management Committee after being passed through the LPYS at the initiative of Red Weekly supporters — also called for the adoption of the Charter and affiliation to the Charter Campaign. Delegates were clearly outraged at the way the Equal Pay Act has been used against women fighting for equal pay, and they agreed without hesitation to organise a public meeting on 4 February to build for the rally.

Delegates were also pleased to hear a report from the founding meeting of the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign, and agreed to send delegates to its next meeting and to play an active part in the campaign. VINCENT MOSS (LPYS delegate to GMC)

cases which have come up at tribunals, and the local district of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers has committed itself to sending delegates to the Rally.

COMMITTEE

In Hackney, London, another investigatory committee has been set up by the local Labour Party, is exploring the abortion situation and will report its findings both to the Rally and to the Abortion Tribunal on 29 January. In Hammersmith a broad based committee is centring its investigations on the local employment situation of women. A day school in Bristol is being organised jointly by the Labour Party and the Charter Group, and there is also a half-day school taking place in Newcastle.

These are just some of the activities, which promise to make the 26 February rally a landmark in the campaign for women's rights. With the promises of the Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act being proved as hollow as the many other promises the Labour Government made to the working people of this country, the realisation is growing that parliamentary legislation is no substitute for self-organisation. On to 26 February. On to women's rights.

For more information on the Rally contact, The Secretary, SDA Rally, 33 Wemyss Road, London SE3. In the meantime:

* ORGANISE public meetings, workplace meetings, day schools, to build the Rally and collect information on the position of women in the light of government legislation.

* DISTRIBUTE literature, leaflets, posters, now available from the above address.

* DISCUSS booking stalls and exhibitions at the Rally — and encourage local campaigns and labour movement bodies to do likewise.

* COLLECT money, raise donations — the rally needs at least £1,000.

* BOOK coaches to come down to the Rally, and remember that there will be a social event in the evening, so book coaches to leave as late as possible.

HOW COULD this man assault a policeman while he was lying unconscious?

This was the tricky legal problem which faced Judge Martin and his colleagues at the Middlesex Crown Court last week. They were hearing the appeal of Right to Work marcher Mike Lynch against a conviction and three month sentence.

Mike, an unemployed miner, was on the Right to Work march from Manchester to London last year when it was attacked by the police near Hendon. He was beaten unconscious by members of the notorious Special Patrol Group. It was then that Mike assaulted them!

Of course this minor fact did not bother the magistrates who found him guilty and then rejected his ap-



Red Weekly fully supports the demonstration called by the Right to Work Campaign to coincide with the next appeals. This will be on 1 February at 10am, assembling at Middlesex Crown Court, the Guildhall, Westminster Square.

The slogan is Drop the



NAFF- Just 'vigorous moderates'?

PLAYING WITH WORDS is an old trick to confuse one's opponents. The National Association For Freedom should know: members tend to describe themselves as 'extremists of the centre' or 'vigorous moderates'. All of which might lead one to suspect that NAFF itself is not what its name might imply.

NAFF's latest claim to fame is that it was responsible for the courts' intervention against the plan by the Union of Post Office Workers (UPW) to black mail and phone calls to South Africa. Its administrative director, Major John Gouriet, claims 'that this is not the action of a right-wing group concerned to protect apartheid'. He has yet to explain, however, which of his members are doing anything to attack apartheid.

WHITES

On the contrary, there are clear indications that NAFF's much vaunted concern for freedom applies simply and solely to the whites in southern Africa.

* NAFF's fortnightly newspaper, *Free Nation*, commented on 6 August 1976 that, 'To insist on majority rule is a certain recipe for tyranny in South Africa South Africa is a society with a free press and an independent judiciary.'

* The latest issue of *Free Nation* devotes half a page to praising Racial Electronics, a company which 'is perhaps the most important model of everything which could and should be right about British business'. This is the same Racial which was described by the South African Commandant General in 1973 as having 'rendered invaluable service to the South African Defence Force'; and whose equipment was discovered in a Rhodesian armoured car captured after a raid into Mozambique in which at least 800 refugees were massacred.

LEGAL

NAFF's intervention against the UPW is by no means its first action. In little more than a year since its foundation in December 1975 following the shooting of Ross McWhirter, NAFF has funded the legal appeal which prevented the move to comprehensive education in Tameside; prolonged the union recognition dispute at Automat in Manchester; intervened to stop the blacking of mail to the strike-bound Grunwick factories in North London; and organised instant ballots to halt unionisation moves in the advertising industry.

NAFF is also currently providing assistance to management in the Oxford hotels dispute. One of these hotels, the Randolph, is owned by Trust Houses Forte — a director of which, the Hon. Hugh Astor, also happens to be a NAFF council member.

Other top businessmen on the NAFF council include: Sir Frank Taylor, director of Taylor Woodrow, English Electric, Babcock & Wilcox, and also a council member for Aims for Freedom & Enterprise; Lord De L'Isle, chairman of Phoenix Assurance; Ian H. Gilbert, chairman of Wilkinson Match (which has 17 subsidiaries in South Africa and one in Rhodesia); Lord Brookes, life president of GKN Ltd.; and Ernest Smith, president of the National Federation of Building Trade Employers (another of NAFF's campaigns is against direct labour and in favour of the lump).

Americans in Vietnam; Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templar, who led the British campaign against Communist guerillas in Malaya; and Brian Crozier, director of the Institute for the Study of Conflict and former chairman of the CIA-backed Forum World Features news agency.

All of which suggests that a more accurate name for the group might be the National Association for Privilege and Exploitation. But such right-wing fringe outfits are constantly cropping up. What's so special about NAFF?

For a start, not every such group can number seven Tory MPs (including two Front Benches — Rhodes Boyson and Winston Churchill) among its council members. Not every group's newspaper



NAFF boss John Gouriet goes to court past a picket defending international solidarity action.

can count figures like Tory leader Sir Keith Joseph among its regular contributors.

Not every group has a director who is also a speech-writer for Margaret Thatcher (NAFF director Robert Moss, editor of the *Economist's* 'Foreign Report' and author of the pro-junta *Chile's Marxist Experiment*, wrote her 'Iron Maiden' speech). Not every group can boast the Tory leader as guest of honour at its inaugural subscription dinner, as NAFF will be able to do this Thursday at London's Grosvenor Park Hotel.

NAFF, in fact, represents the first coherent attempt to bring the fringe groups — Aims for Freedom and Enterprise, the National Federation of Self-Employed, the Income Tax Payers' Society, and the Voice of the Independent Centre are all represented on the NAFF council — together with sections of the Tory Party in a serious political offensive.

COURTS

The first aim is to compromise the leaders of the trade unions by playing on the same constitutionalism which the Tories exploited so successfully in 1926. The talk about 'private armies' has subsided; NAFF's chosen field is the courts, where it knows it can use bourgeois legal procedure to tie its opponents in knots. With Tameside and two victories over Jackson under its belt, NAFF can already feel a certain pride of achievement in this sphere.

It is the same play on constitutionalism which lies behind the Tories' successful attempts to set up secret talks with TUC leaders behind the backs of the general council — on the basis that they would be bound to co-operate with any constitutional Government.

But this is just a first step. Despite all their talk about 'free-



GRUNWICK STRIKERS picket the London District Committee of the UPW to demand support for their struggle for union recognition.

the forces of the right in all branches of the state apparatus so that this confrontation takes place on the most advantageous terms. And this does not exclude the eventual recruitment of 'volunteers to maintain essential services'.

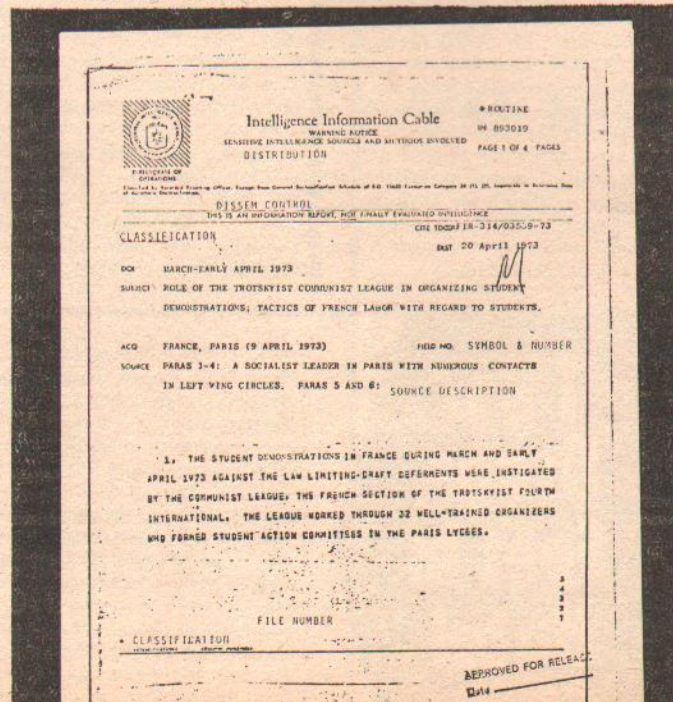
As Russell Lewis, former chairman of the Conservative Political Centre, wrote in *Free Nation* a few months ago: 'It is not confrontation, after all, which would be the ultimate tragedy. The ultimate tragedy would be to have a confrontation and lose.'

The same spirit should imbue the labour movement. A leaflet distributed by the Grunwick strikers outside a meeting of the London district council of the UPW last Thursday clearly posed the choice: 'Our great trade union, movement must ask itself: Are we going to stand by and allow the NAFF to paralyse our movement?'

The way to defeat NAFF's legal manoeuvring is not to send in your own lawyers laden down with further texts, but to assert through industrial action that one freedom without which the working class would very soon be crushed: the freedom to organise in defence of its interests and for a society without privilege and exploitation.

The strikes against the Industrial Relations Act showed that it was possible. But the trade union leaders' attachment to the Labour Government means that they are even more unwilling today than they were then to endorse such action. Conferences like that organised by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions are a great opportunity to seize the initiative out of their hands. No effort must be spared to ensure that this is exactly what happens.

JOHN MARSTON



IN FOCUS

NOT A GOOD START FOR THE SWP

THE LAUNCHING OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY at the beginning of this month was marked by an important turn for the former International Socialists. The transformation into a party was to be accompanied by serious and systematic work on the 'women's rights front'. This was a move to be welcomed.

But the line of march offered for the pro-abortion movement in the latest issue of *Women's Voice* is as follows: 'We must aim to build a campaign as successful as SPUC's. We do that in two ways. By learning from their success and by opposing them wherever they appear By actively heckling and picketing their meetings we show publicly that there is opposition to their ideas and we present other arguments to the many youngsters they involve'. Do the comrades of the SWP really believe that this comprises a socialist alternative to anything? Do they really think this is the way to build a mass campaign committed to fighting for a demand which is fundamental to the liberation of women?

When the IS presented the National Abortion Campaign with such a perspective they received a clear answer. Their strategy of anti-SPUC activity as the only way forward for the abortion campaign was firmly rejected in favour of developing a positive perspective for the campaign. This entailed building a mass campaign for women's rights rooted in the labour and women's movement, not one which simply reacted to SPUC 'wherever they appear'.

PERSPECTIVE

At least at that time IS argued for their perspective in the campaign itself. When they were defeated, however, their national representatives disappeared from the steering committee of the NAC. Members of the new SWP were heard up and down the country arguing against the Tribunal decided upon by the NAC.

Now that it is becoming increasingly clear that the Tribunal for Women's Abortion Rights can provide an important focus for the pro-choice movement, enabling it to map out how best to defeat the most recent threat to women's rights, the SWP national representative has suddenly re-appeared on the steering committee. And, with a sudden switch of policies, the representative even stated that the SWP was preparing evidence for the Tribunal!

This re-appearance was marked by the announcement of yet another sectarian venture by the SWP. The meeting was informed that *Women's Voice* and the National Organisation of IS Students had announced a demonstration on 25 February, the day of the second reading of the restrictive Benyon Bill. The burning question for the SWP was 'Would the National Abortion Campaign like to support this venture?'

In response to the Benyon Bill the National Abortion Campaign has called a variety of carefully planned and realistic initiatives, in unity with other pro-abortion groups. Nationally co-ordinated actions in localities; a march and lobby followed by a public meeting in London; a press conference; a picket of the DHSS sponsored by 30 pro-abortion organisations are some of these plans for action. The steering committee of the NAC therefore correctly called on the SWP to join in these actions. The meeting was unanimous on the need for the utmost unity in all initiatives in building a strong opposition to the Benyon Bill. The SWP's flippant claim that 'the more actions, the better' was thoroughly rejected.

BUILDING ITSELF

The SWP is more concerned about building itself than building the pro-choice movement. These are the politics of a sect, which were supposed to be rejected by the transformation of the IS into the SWP. If every political organisation represented on the steering committee, including the Labour Party, Communist Party and the IMG, decided to follow in the footsteps of the SWP and called its own actions where would the abortion campaign be today? Building a strong, mass movement for free abortion on demand on the NHS, and for women's right to choose, depends upon the ability of the campaign to draw the broadest possible forces into activity around policies which meet the needs of women, and hence the working class.

It is through organising and taking collective actions that people newly drawn into the campaign will develop a political consciousness capable of challenging the sabotage and inactivity of the present misleaders of the working class.

The latest *Women's Voice* reaches a telling verdict on the NAC. '.... NAC is incapable at present of providing the leadership to build a campaign with a continuous national focus for our supporters. NAC have a finger in every pro-abortion pie with a resulting plague of meetings. Meeting about meetings about meeting do not build an outgoing campaign.' The answer is the *Women's Voice* campaign!

If the past year is anything to go by, this alternative to NAC has sadly failed the test. A few anti-SPUC activities attracting minuscule forces, an about-face position on the Tribunal, and the substitution of a *Women's Voice*/NOISS demonstration for the actions called by NAC and other pro-choice forces will not only fail to build a mass abortion movement. It probably won't even build the SWP.

APPEAL AGAINST CIA LAUNCHED

An appeal has been launched for international backing for the lawsuit brought by the US Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance against the CIA, FBI, the National Security Agency, Military Intelligence, and other US secret police and spy agencies. First signatories include anti-war activist Philip Berrigan, linguist Noam Chomsky, Nobel laureate Linus Pauling, and feminist Gloria

world. It will help to expose the crimes of the US Government and its fellow conspirators in other countries. Victories in the lawsuit can open up opportunities for further actions against CIA crimes.

The aim of this initiative is to win endorsement for the efforts of the Political Rights Defence Fund, a non-partisan organisation set up

NUT leaders attack militants

By Bob Greenwood

Why is it that the National Union of Teachers is threatening to expel 30 teachers at Little Ilford School, Newham, from the union for taking 'no cover' action?

After all the NUT is actively encouraging teachers in Stockport, Oldham, Devon, Avon and elsewhere to operate the same sanction. And the NUT executive is committed by conference policy to fight all education cuts to ensure the full employment of all qualified teachers. The operation of 'no cover' — a refusal to teach classes of colleagues absent from school — is one way of doing this, as it is designed to encourage local education authorities to employ more teachers.

REASON

The reason the NUT gives for disciplining the teachers is that their action is 'unofficial', and that they have not followed union procedure. The implementation of union policy and the fact that 90 per cent of the school membership and 66 per cent of the local NUT Association voted for the same sanctions would seem 'procedure' enough.

At the root of the expulsion



BETH STONE

threats by the NUT bureaucracy is a wish not to promote a national fight back against cuts in education, as this would threaten the Social Contract. But as the NUT membership is looking for some kind of response against the cuts, the NUT bureaucracy promotes

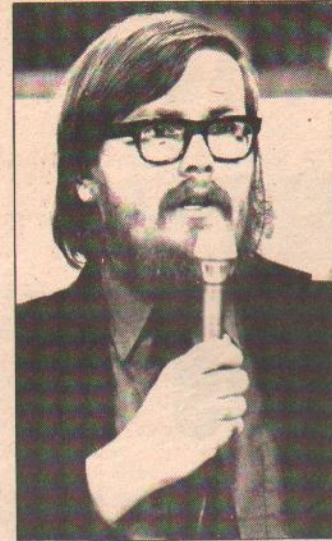
local struggles — although only to the extent that they do not threaten the Social Contract.

This is one reason why the intervention of the NUT in areas such as Oldham and Stockport has not resulted in the defeat of education cuts, but in negotiated cuts. The

militant associations, in London particularly, are in a position to expose and threaten this sell out. So the NUT leadership has to try to separate such militants from other teachers.

This explains why the essential activity of all socialist teachers is to defend their brothers and sisters at Little Ilford. If Little Ilford 'goes' then this will be a step back for the campaign against the cuts. The same applies to the attacks the NUT leadership have launched on executive members Beth Stone and Dick North who have been condemned by the executive for taking part in an occupation of NUT headquarters, in support of Little Ilford teachers, last November.

While the occupation itself — against the wishes of the Little Ilford teachers, by members and supporters of the Socialist Workers Party — played into the hands of the NUT bureaucrats, who are attempting to isolate the militants as mad ultra-lefts, the victimisation of Stone and North must be vigorously resisted. The election to the executive of these two SWP members was a gain for the left,



DICK NORTH

cover action is now the priority for all socialist teachers.

★ Last week Camden Trades Council passed the following motion in support of Little Ilford:

'This trades council supports teachers in London who refuse to

cover for colleagues who are absent and if they are forced out it would be a defeat.

Resolutions in support of the Little Ilford teachers, against the victimisation of North and Stone and the calling for automatic sanction for those teachers taking no part from work. We condemn the National Union of Teachers for instituting sanction against certain of its members in London for having taken this action. We also condemn the Inner London Education Authority and the Department of Education and Science for pursuing policies which have brought about the situation necessitating this motion.

The motion was passed 24-18. The overwhelming majority voting against were members of the Communist Party, one of whose members warned the trades council they would be 'rapped over the knuckles by the TUC for criticising the NUT'.

In the interests of maintaining good relations between the CP and the TUC leadership, Red Weekly is pleased to record this example of how the CP fight the cuts.



Conference can organise revolutionaries

The 'Campaign for Democracy in the Trade Unions', initiated by the Workers Socialist League, has organised a recall conference in Birmingham for 27 March. The first conference of the campaign, held last October, had serious shortcomings.

The organisers have never made clear whether they see this campaign as a broad-based united front or a conference of advanced militants. The idea that it could be the former was always a non-starter — the basis of the campaign has always been a full action programme encompassing an array of demands from those relating to women's rights and the fight against racism to the question of democracy in the unions.

Despite their continuing confusion on these two opposing aims of the conference, the organisers have made a number of changes which allow this conference to be widely built amongst advanced workers.

Firstly, the steering committee of the conference has agreed that political organisations supporting the conference can build for the conference along their own lines. Secondly, they have agreed that the floor of the conference and the

voting on resolutions and action will be open to individual militants as well as delegates. Finally, they have agreed to table 'action resolutions' which can inform the work of those militants attracted to the conference.

On this basis Red Weekly will make a serious commitment to 27 March. We will throw our weight behind the conference and urge our supporters to build it.

The issue of 'democracy' which hitherto figured as the centre piece of the campaign has been relegated. It now appears alongside the other demands of the action programme. This fits in with the stated goal of achieving the highest unity amongst the most politically advanced workers.

However, in place of the previous concentration on democracy, a goal of a broad based united front on wages is advanced. But the campaign and the conference cannot fulfil both tasks. A grouping of advanced workers around an action programme cannot replace the necessity of building wider united fronts inside the TUs. Any caucuses which come out of the conference should reinforce, not substitute for, the already existing formations which aim to

BROAD LEFT SHUNS FIGHT

The effects of the cut-backs in educational spending are becoming more apparent daily:

- ★ A recent survey of local government plans has shown that they plan to chop, in just eight districts, 1,000 discretionary awards for students on non-degree courses.
- ★ The Inner London Education Authority is trying to push through measures which will cut the number of overseas students at London Polytechnics by 60 per cent.
- ★ The government has again reduced its student number target for 1981/2 by 40,000.
- ★ A further 30 teacher training colleges have been scheduled to close.

In the face of these savage attacks, the Broad Left dominated National Union of Students Executive is actually scaling down its protests. Two weeks ago the Executive announced that it had decided to call off this term's grant demonstration because 'an NUS sponsored action against the cuts, held at a time when the trade union leaders have no national actions planned, would split students off from their allies'.

Fortunately not all students are holding off their protests until the trade union leaders act. Students at Central London Polytechnic have occupied their college in opposition to the ILEA proposals on overseas students, while students at Middlesex Poly have called two conferences: one on 12 February on the campaign against overseas students' fees increase, and one on 13 February which aims 'to ensure that those in support of socialist policies are adequately represented in the elections at the forthcoming national conference and in future

campaigns and conferences'.

Explaining the thinking behind this second conference, Middlesex student union president Ian Cunningham said, 'at the last conference we had a lot of support from other colleges because of our occupation on overseas student fees, and because our policies challenged the direction the NUS leaders are taking the union. Our biggest problem was that we weren't organised.'

Students at Manchester last week occupied the university telephone exchange in protest at the refusal of local authorities to increase the fees they pay to maintain union facilities in step with inflation.

As on the NUS Executive, the attitude of the Broad Left and Communist Party supporters in Manchester shows a lack of enthusiasm for the struggle; at last Wednesday's mass meeting they split three ways in the crucial vote — for, against, abstain.

The solitary action the NUS

leadership has taken is to call its own conference on the fees campaign for 29 January. But the conference was so late in being called, and so little information went out to the student unions that it cannot be seen as a serious initiative. Of course student unions should support it, but top priority should be to attend the conferences scheduled at Middlesex. (Messages of support for the Manchester occupation can be sent to: Manchester University, Student Union, Oxford Road, Manchester 15 (tel: 061-273 5111.)

★ A STRIKE at Birmingham University by members of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs is now in its tenth week. The strike is over the university's refusal to honour a national holiday agreement negotiated in 1974 which gave the technicians an extra five days holiday. According to ASTMS national officer, Reg Bird, the 24 hour picket of the University has ensured 'they have no oil, and coal stocks are almost exhausted'.

Inside the university, the Federation of Conservative Students leadership in the student union is behaving predictably. After the union had voted to support the strikers, the FCS is now campaigning to have this decision reversed, 'because it is not in the interests of the guild to support either side'. Yet clearly the attack on the ASTMS technicians is part of a more general attempt by the university authorities to cut back spending. They are also attempting to close down the canteen earlier and cut staff wages; so, whether in defence of their own facilities or in support of the technicians' demands, solidarity in struggle is the key task at Birmingham.

New from Red Books

182 Pentonville Road, London N.1 (01-278 9529)

Antonio Gramsci: Selections from Political Writings 1910-1920 (Lawrence & Wishart, £3).

This volume is the first of two containing a selection of Gramsci's political writings from his first entry into Italian politics to his imprisonment under Mussolini's fascist regime. The present selection of political articles culminates in the 'Red Years' of 1919-1920, and includes additional texts by Bordiga and Tasca.

It follows Gramsci's development as a revolutionary socialist through the First World War and the impact of the Russian Revolution up to the General Strike in April 1920 and the occupation of the factories in August/September of that year.

Complete with introductory material and explanatory notes, this volume of Gramsci makes available to English readers a profoundly original and practical body of thought which remains centrally relevant to contemporary Marxism.

T & G Drags Feet In Hotel Strike

AFTER WEEKS of pressure from strikers at the Randolph and Linton Lodge hotels in Oxford, the Transport and General Workers Union has finally accepted the call for action.

The strikes, now in their eleventh and ninth week; are over union recognition and victimisation, and last week the District Committee of the TGWU unanimously agreed to the demand for national blacking of the hotel owners — Trust Houses Forte.

But still the union drags its feet. Bert Ray, a TGWU official from London, has refused to implement the blacking decision before trying to arrange talks with management. Local officials have already obstructed sympathetic action at the Trust House Forte-run Gardner Merchants canteen in Cowley. Yet immediate and widespread action is the way to win the dispute, and workers mustn't allow the union bureau-

Indeed the question of a labour movement boycott of Trust House Forte has been raised in Parliament by Sheffield Labour MP Martin Flannery, in whose constituency there is another hotel strike taking place. But Oxford Labour MP Evan Luard has failed to show the slightest interest in the Oxford disputes.

This is all the more scandalous since harassment of Oxford hotel pickets has been a constant feature of the strikes. Anonymous threats of violence have been received by the Linton Lodge strikers and nine pickets have so far been arrested. Two of the four cases to have reached the courts have been thrown out, but the more serious charges have yet to be heard.

Support, especially financial, is desperately needed for the strikers and the pickets who have been arrested. Send donations to: TGWU, 5/670 branch, 4, Mount Farm Road, Oxford.

ANNA LARKIN & ALAN BATES

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

Photo: MARK RUSHER (IFL)



LABOUR'S VOICE OF HYPOCRISY

SHIRLEY WILLIAMS' attack on Trotskyism last week was more than just reactionary ranting. Hers was an articulate presentation of the right-wing line. It was designed to fulfil a specific purpose: to attempt to block any development towards an alliance between the traditional supporters of Labour's left wing and the far left tendencies in the Labour Party and the trade unions.

Her speech was a shot across the bows of the left-wing Labour leaders who defended the appointment of Andy Bevan as Labour's youth officer. She has no quarrel with the likes of Tony Benn, who a few weeks ago defended Bevan by arguing that Marxism has always had a place in the Labour Party.

She concentrated upon that issue which unites even the most right-wing and the most left-wing of Labour MPs, and which divides them all from Trotskyism. This is the idea that Parliament is the central agent of social change and progress.

THEME

Williams' central theme is that Parliament is the sole guarantor of democratic rights and individual liberty. Trotskyists care 'nothing for parliamentary democracy'. They are therefore hostile to individual liberty, and eager to suppress democratic rights. She concludes by asking four questions and says failure to answer them in the affirmative is adequate grounds for exclusion from party membership.

'Do you share our belief that our socialist objectives must be achieved by the method of democracy? Do you share our belief in the liberty of each individual human being, in his or her right to express his opinions and religious beliefs truly and without fear of the consequences? Are you prepared to say, so long as the system of parliamentary democracy is maintained in this country, that you will rule out violence as means to achievement of your political ends? Do you accept that, if the cause of socialism [as you define it] and the cause of democracy should come into conflict, you will stand by democracy?'

But to hear a right-wing member of a right-wing Labour Government trumpet the cause of democracy in this way does not wash.

SPEECHES

Today's Labour Government may find it useful to make speeches against the suppression of civil liberties in the Soviet Union. But when Trotsky himself was being hounded by Stalin, MacDonald's Labour Government refused Trotsky entry into Britain. Today, history is repeating itself as the Labour Government serves deportation orders on Agee and Hosenball, two comrades who have done more than anyone in Britain to expose the CIA's worldwide attacks on democratic rights.

And since when has a Labour Government been the authentic defender of democratic rights? On the contrary, Labour Governments have systematically attacked democratic rights to help out the capitalists. In 1969, they introduced 'In Place of Strife', a blatant attack on trade union rights. The same Government put the racist Immigration Act on the statute books, attacking the right of black people to enter and live in Britain. In 1974, they introduced the so-called Preven-

police harassment.

Since when has the Labour Government been opposed to the pursuit of politics by violent means? It was the Labour Government which sent troops to Ireland to deny the Irish people their democratic right to self-determination. It was the Labour Government which collaborated so forthrightly with America's imperialist war in Indochina. And today it is a Labour Government which is boosting the military capacity of the racist regime in South Africa. Labour has never been scared of using violence when it is in the interests of the capitalist class.

MANDATE

And when did a Labour Government ever apply the 'method of democracy'? What mandate has the present Government for its policies? Wilson never fought the 1974 elections with the promise that Labour would slash the social services, reduce living standards by nearly ten per cent and take the dole queues to one and a half million within two years. And over the same period, the Labour Government has flagrantly breached the democracy of the labour movement, by ignoring Conference decision after Conference decision.

There is no case to answer in Shirley Williams' allegation that it is Trotskyism which is the suppressor of democratic rights. It is Shirley Williams and her co-thinkers who must answer the charges, the charges of the Irish and Vietnamese people, the charges of the Shrewsbury building workers, the charges of black people, the charges of the working class.

CHARGE

And she must answer the charge of Trotskyists that Parliament is not the guarantor of democratic rights or the agency for socialism! Williams cites the examples of Portugal and Greece as two 'victories for human freedom'. But the overthrow of the dictatorships was not carried through by bureaucratic manoeuvres in Parliament.

It was the independent action of the working class which was the decisive factor. And what has been the role of the Socialist Government in Portugal? It has introduced austerity plans, created higher unemployment, reasserted the authority of the armed forces leadership by such measures as placing Otelo de Carvalho under house arrest, and rolled back the direct participatory democracy of the organs of popular power which expressed so clearly the creative activity of the Portuguese masses.

Shirley Williams has no reply to this charge because there is none. Nor can she point to the overthrow of capitalism by the Parliamentary road in any one country. All such attempts have brought, as the Chilean experience demonstrated above all else, is misery and death for thousands. Her attempted equation of Trotskyism with the suppression of democratic liberties in the Soviet Union is a pathetic lie.

LOST

Trotsky lost his life struggling against the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union. Forty years later, his ideas live on and terrify members of the Labour Government. In forty years time, the ideas of Shirley Williams will be where they



AUEW National Committee in session.

AUEW: Broad Left twists and turns

HUGH SCANLON retires as president of the Engineering Section of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers next year. The postal ballot to select a new president will open up a big political fight within the union.

Already the employers' organisations and the press are preparing an extensive campaign in support of the 'moderate' candidate. The right wing trade union pressure group Truamid has started circulating leaflets calling for support for the likely candidate of the right, John Boyd, who is currently general secretary.

The favourite to run against Boyd from the Broad Left is the assistant general secretary elect, Bob Wright. The final selection is to take place at a meeting in Birmingham on 6 February, which will be a national meeting of 'progressives in the union', to use Wright's words. Also to be discussed is the production of a new Broad Left paper to be called *Engineering Bulletin*.

At the moment the right must be odds-on to win the election. They will inevitably have the full weight of the capitalist press behind them, while the record of Scanlon himself in supporting the Social Contract is another boost.

FAILED

For over two years now the Broad Left has failed to launch one significant fight against the present right wing domination in the union. They have either supported the policies of the Labour Government, tried to avoid the question of the Social Contract or confined their opposition to the narrow circles of the National Committee. The result has been both a slow but sure re-establishment of the right in the AUEW and material defeats for the rank and file over jobs and living standards.

This is why the precondition for a successful offensive against the right is an election campaign which fights for opposition to the Social Contract. But, from the statements made by Bob Wright, it would appear that the leadership of the Broad Left is deliberately trying to avoid this issue. Instead, in asking support for the conference on 6 February, Wright calls for opposition to the 'erosion of democracy' in the union.

By centring on this issue and the inevitable cries about

from militants that today Scanlon supports the Social Contract as firmly as Boyd and that the Broad Left has not dissociated itself from Scanlon.

The decision to bring out *Engineering Bulletin* is symptomatic of such twists and turns. First they abandoned *Engineering Voice* to start *Broadsheet*. Now this has been dropped in favour of yet another paper. This is not an attempt to establish a serious rank and file paper, but simply another electioneering stunt to aid the Wright campaign which will disappear as quickly as *Broadsheet* when the

ballot is over.

It is therefore important that all militants attend the conference in Birmingham on 6 February to demand a break with the policies of capitulation to the right wing. This means a fight not only in the election campaign, but in the plants and factories around current pay claims. It is through the use of the industrial power of the rank and file that the anti-working class policies of the Labour Government can be reversed and their supporters in the unions defeated.

JOHN GRAHAM [Birmingham AUEW].



MOSS EVANS



JOHN COUSINS

By their friends ye shall know them

The support for some of the candidates in the forthcoming elections for General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union has been most revealing.

Take front-runner Moss Evans, for instance. Not only is Jones beavering away for him, but on 9 January the 'Business News' section of the Sunday Times came out in his support. And guess who was handing out leaflets in his support at a recent Rover shop stewards meeting in Birmingham? Members of the right-wing outfit Truamid.

Stranger still, however, has been the backing for John Cousins, who is trying to

'Vote for Cousins' was the headline over a piece by Patrick Hutter in the Sunday Telegraph of 23 January. Describing Cousins' attack on the union leaders for trying to take over from Parliament as 'splendid stuff', Hutter concluded that, 'We shall watch his progress with much interest'.

A view echoed by none other than Free Nation, the paper of the National Association for Freedom. 'Mr John Cousins: A Man to Watch' was the headline over their story. Free Nation commented approvingly that Cousins 'is regarded as the right-wing can-

WHAT'S ON

BATTLE OF IDEAS: London IMG public meetings. Tues 1 Feb, 7.30pm: John Ross on 'Imperialism, Stalinism and Permanent Revolution'. Room C101A, Claremarket Building, London School of Economics, Houghton St., WC2.

CYPRIOT Defence Campaign: public meeting, Wed 2 Feb, 7.30pm at Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Rd., N4; demonstration, Sat 5 Feb., assemble 2pm outside Harringay Civic Centre, High Rd—then march through Wood Green. High Rd, Green Lanes to rally at Newington Green.

WOMEN'S OPPRESSION Under Capitalism: A Revolutionary Communist Group public meeting to launch Revolutionary Communist No 5, which contains a major analysis of the position of women in capitalist society. Speakers: Olivia Adamson, Carol Brown. Friday 4 Feb, 7.30pm, Small Conway Hall, Red Lion Square (Holborn tube).

MARXISM & the Mass media: fortnightly series of open forums at the London Film-Makers Co-op, 44 Fitzroy Road, London NW1 (Chalk Farm tube/Primrose Hill BR). Sun 6 Feb: 'The Mass Media and the Class Struggle'—Paul Walton (co-author of 'Bad News'). **MANCHESTER Red Weekly Discussion Group:** Tues 31 Jan, 7.15pm, on 'The Role of the Family'. In the Red Weekly Centre, 14 Piccadilly, Manchester 1.

TWO WOMEN needed for play on nursery provision and women's relation to capitalism. Acting and musical ability useful, commitment to women's movement and revolutionary socialism essential. Pay £35 a week when touring, most rehearsal time unpaid. CounterAct, 27 Clerkenwell Close, EC1 (01-251 4977).

NAC DISCO: Sat. 5 Feb., with live band 'The Transcriptions'. 8pm-1.30am at The Basement, Shelton St., WC1. 75p. Mixed.

EDINBURGH RCG Weekend School: 'The Capitalist Crisis, Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat'. Sessions on the Crisis, S. Africa, Women's Oppression. Speakers: Ron Gallacher, Helen Forgan, Carol Brown, David Yaffe. Trades Council Club, Picardy Place (off Leith St.) 19-20 Feb. 10am. £1 entrance (50p unemployed and OAP). For ticket &/or information, write to RCG (WE/RW), 49 Railton Rd., London SE24 0LN.

NAC National Conference and meeting of socialist current of women's liberation movement in London on 'Women and Unemployment', 19/20 March.

BOLTON Red Weekly Discussion Group: Tues 1 Feb, 8pm, on 'The Battle of Ideas No 1', in the White Lion, Deansgate/Moor Lane.

SOCIALIST ACTION—New quarterly magazine by the League for Socialist Action. Includes articles on 'Racist Offensive', 'Struggle for Abortion Rights', 'Crisis in South Africa', 'The Transitional Programme Today'. Available in all leading bookshops or from LSA, 58 Auckland Road, SE19. 25p + 11p postage.

LATIN AMERICA Teach-in, York University, 29/30 Jan. Starts 10.30am. Speakers include representatives of MIR and ERP. Ring Students Union (0904 56128) for details, accommodation, etc.

BRISTOL Socialist Teachers Alliance meeting: 'No Cover and the Fight against the Cuts'. Tues 1 Feb, 7.30pm. Speakers: Berundra Singh (NUT Rep, Little Ilford School) and Jo Benefield (Bristol Teachers Association, in personal capacity). Polytechnic, Unity St.

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

TRIBUNAL



Why a woman's right to choose

WILLIAM BENYON, Conservative MP for Buckingham, has introduced a private member's Bill which will have its second reading on 25 February. According to *The Times* report of 22 December, this Bill is expected to contain the restrictions recommended by the Select Committee.

These include a shortened time limit, restrictions on doctors, controls on referral agencies, parental involvement for younger women, and a *carte blanche* for the police to inspect medical records.

This new attack on the limited gains of the 1967 Act highlights once again the difficulty women encounter when attempting to win the fundamental right to control their

legal representatives as chief arbiters.

In the nineteenth century formal legal restrictions were introduced during a period of 'liberal' reforms. The 1861 Offences Against the Person Act sounds like a law to protect people from abuse or assault. Yet it made abortion a crime punishable by life imprisonment. A pregnant woman ceased being her own person, and for the duration of her pregnancy became the state's.

The question of control is basic to the abortion issue. The state will allow all kinds of changes and amendments short of granting control. Even the 1967 Act, which gave Britain one of the most 'liberal' laws

the backstreet butchers.

Recently the abortion issue has surfaced in many countries. Women have begun to organise movements to win the right to choose for themselves — in the United States, Canada, Latin America, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and throughout Western Europe. They are building campaigns to get rid of legal and medical restrictions.

Many of these campaigns have focussed on the same slogan — 'Abortion — A Woman's Right to Choose'. This slogan spells out the situation which women are in. Abortion is a right of women which has been usurped by the state. The slogan points towards the state as the original aggressor. The struggle to win back for women the right to control their own fertility involves taking on the state, the Church and the legal and medical professions. All these institutions have a vested interest in the maintenance of a system based on private property, a system which needs to control female reproduction for its own interests.

The James White Bill, the Select Committee and the forthcoming Benyon Bill indicate the kinds of measures that will be taken to try to roll back every small advance. We will need to build a massive independent campaign to win the right to choose and to keep it, because the forces that have controlled women for years will not give up easily. The National Abortion Campaign is leading this struggle against every attempt to restrict legislation and towards winning a woman's right to choose. It deserves the support and participation of everyone opposed to the oppression of women.

GWYN VORHAUS

Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)



PART OF the massive June 1975 demonstration against the James White Bill. Similar action is needed to throw out the Benyon Bill.

own bodies. Abortion laws are the visible instrument of a systematic network of oppression. Twentieth century women in the most 'advanced' countries have the right to vote, to work, to choose a husband, to divorce, to travel unaccompanied and to control their own finances. But they rarely find that they can make the decision of whether or not to have an abortion.

Abortion was first outlawed by the Church. It has been estimated that about nine million women were killed during the Church-led witch-hunts of the Middle Ages. According to trial records, their 'crimes' involved practising abortion, giving contraceptive advice, and using drugs to aid delivery. It took about four hundred years to wrest control of fertility from women and to establish the state and its medical and

of its time, leaves no doubt about who controls the abortion decision. A woman must convince two doctors that she is unfit for the accepted role of motherhood. Child-bearing is the norm, abortion the exception.

The rationale for giving women worse education or jobs is that a woman's place is in the home. The female function is to have children, a biologically determined role. Ironically, science and technology have invented the means of overcoming this fatalistic destiny, yet the state prohibits their availability.

Contraception can be over 99 per cent effective and abortion can be safer than childbirth. The contradiction between what is possible and what is allowed grows sharper with every scientific development. Restrictive laws force women to choose between unwilling motherhood and

WOMEN'S MOVEMENT DECISIONS



NATIONAL TRIBUNAL ON ABORTION RIGHTS DAY OF EVIDENCE JANUARY 29 1977

Central Hall, Westminster, London.

TICKET 50p in advance
60p on day
35p oap/unemployed
from 11AM
Creche facilities provided

- ★ Return to the Backstreet Butchers (Chair: Renee Short)
- ★ 'The International Socialist Women's Movement' (Chair: Terry Marsland)
- ★ Plays, films, visual aids on abortion
- ★ 'Why not safer, easier abortion' (Chair: Dr. Berry Beal)

Italy - first step to free abortion

By SARAH HART

LAST FRIDAY the Italian Chamber of Deputies passed what the Vatican described as 'the easiest and most indiscriminate' abortion law in the world. This was against the opposition of the right wing, including the minority Christian Democratic Government.

The Italian bill is a composite, produced by a parliamentary committee, of various bills tabled by eight different parties. As such it hardly defends a woman's right to choose, but it makes a large dent in the existing fascist Rocco law on abortion.

In April 1976, after collecting thousands of signatures, the Socialist Party called for a referendum on abortion. This initiated a major political crisis. After their overwhelming defeat over the divorce laws, the Christian Democrats were unable to contemplate a referendum. The elections in June last year were a manoeuvre to postpone the referendum.

These elections resulted in gains for the Communist Party (PCI), but a minority Government of the Christian Democrats was formed.

The PCI's strategy of the 'historic compromise' means a desire both to enter into a coalition with the Christian Democrats and not to rock the boat in the present Chamber of Deputies. It has so far provided support for the Government by abstaining on all important issues. But the issue of abortion is causing some problems, as the official PCI line is that the final say should be with the woman.

Virtually every party has put forward some proposal for amending the Rocco law, which for-

bids abortion under any circumstances. The constitutional court has laid down that, at minimum, abortion must be legalised where there is grave danger to the mother's health and in rape cases. Under the pressure of the Catholic hierarchy, the Christian Democrats presented proposals insisting above all on the 'defence of life' and continuing to call abortion a 'crime'.

This is what the PCI has to compromise over if it wants to push for a place in the Government. It has continually emphasised that it does not want to alienate its Catholic support. But, as the French Trotskyist paper *Rouge* remarked, 'If the Catholic women in Italy do not have abortions, who does?'

On the left, proposals have been put forward by the Radical Party, which has been in the forefront of the struggle for abortion, and by the deputies of the far left Proletarian Democracy (DP).

Pinto and Corvisieri of the DP put a bill last October calling for free abortion on demand up to 22 weeks and decriminalisation after that time, up to nine months. They call for control of the doctors and hospitals to be in the hands of women, thus making 'a woman's

right to choose' a reality. This was denounced by the PCI as 'fascism'!

The women's movement in Italy laid out proposals which the DP deputies have taken up. The majority of the parliament group refused its support, passing their own bill. The debate about the political tactics of the far left in the Chamber. Pinto and Corvisieri believe that the grouping ought to be the main piece of the women's movement.

The other group of the far left, the Party of Proletarian Unity (PDUP) — the extreme left — at a majority of Avanguardia Operaia refuse to support a bill which clearly advances a woman's right to choose. Their excuse is that the collective which drew up the bill were undemocratic (limited to women from Turin). It was which led to the resignation of Corvisieri from AO.

The women's movement is divided, in that women in Turin are against the initiatives of the Turin women. They do not agree with their content but the principle of making proposals to Parliament. 'For us abortion is not a civil right, but a defence battle.'

The eve of the vote on the present bill saw the Pope broadcasting messages calling for change in the fascist law. It remains to be seen how far the Christian Democrats have pushed towards liberalisation, frightened as they are of the tacit support of the Socialist Party and the PCI, and how the PCI is prepared to compromise in order to stay with the Christian Democrats.

The importance of a bill like the Pinto/Corvisieri lines is not to be underestimated, but at the same time the fight for abortion rights cannot be left to the ties in the Chamber.

Even the far left in Parliament have shown themselves unwilling to defend women's rights. It is the actions of the women's class and of women themselves which will decide.



Platform at pro-abortion rally organised by Radical Party

Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)

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ABORTION RIGHTS - A SOCIALIST PERSPECTIVE

25p

Socialist Woman

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INTERNATIONAL NATIONAL TRIBUNAL

NAC TRIBUNAL

WOMEN MUST CHOOSE!

POINTS OF THE DAY
 'Steps or Forward to Free Choice'
 MP (one of the sponsors of the 1967 Act) on the latest attacks in Parliament on women's access to safe, legal abortion. 'Struggle for Abortion' of the Tobacco Workers Union. Ireland, Spain and America have been displays and small forums on aspects of 'Abortion?' (Socialist Medical Association).

After the Tribunal - what next?

'Backstreet abortion kills woman: Ms. Pamela Slater aged 23 died from an illegal £40 abortion carried out with the stem of a plastic flower, it was alleged in the Central Criminal Court today.'

Thus begins the report of a local paper on the plight of a woman who failed to get an NHS abortion. But when did this incident occur? Was it in the dark days before the liberal awakening of the 1967 Act? No, this tragic death occurred only last year, on 17 November, in South London, nearly ten years after the passing of the Act.

This is a glaring example of the inadequacies which still exist in the provision of abortion facilities. We might have come a long way since the pre-1967 days when this kind of incident was a regular occurrence, but we also have a long way to go before the suffering and frustration endured by women attempting to obtain abortions is ended.

We have succeeded in building a strong and representative movement to defend our gains and to fight for better facilities up and down the country — the kind of movement that can launch local campaigns for out-patient facilities, that draws support from many trade unions and Labour Parties and that can bring 30,000 trade unionists and women's liberationists out onto the streets as it did in June 1975 against the James White Amendment Bill.

This kind of movement has always been counterposed to the wheelings and dealings that the anti-abortionists have indulged in. Now we are facing a situation where these people are again crawling around the lobbies of Parliament, and have succeeded in getting support for a Bill, which by the time it has been amended, will be similar to its predecessor — the James White Bill.

The wide support for the Tribunal on Abortion Rights which is to be held this weekend and the number of activists expected to attend clearly demonstrates that many members of the 13 Trades Councils and Constituency Labour Parties, 15 trade union branches and four national

organisations who have sponsored the Tribunal have actively rejected the attempts of the Select Committee and, now, the Benyon Bill, to attack our abortion rights and that they are prepared to take action in defence of them.

When the idea of the Tribunal was first raised it was seen as a labour movement action which would act as an alternative to the rump Select Committee. The Tribunal would attempt to produce evidence about the abortion facilities up and down the country, and at the same time establish what the actual needs of women are and how we can fight for provisions to meet those needs.

Evidence that has come in so far shows that what happened to the woman in South London should come as no surprise. There are ten real blackspots in the country, where an average of only 20 per cent of abortions are done on the NHS. In these sorts of areas women find themselves at the mercy of backstreet abortionists or in the private clinics.

This situation is exacerbated by the cuts in public spending. Oxford Area Health Authority for example have issued a circular calling for restrictions in facilities in order to save money; the attempted closure of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital has meant the loss of 400 abortions per year.

Despite the downturn in the campaign, evidence is coming in to the Tribunal about some very positive campaigns for out-patient facilities. These have received wide support in areas such as Glasgow, Cardiff and Bristol. In Glasgow a campaign for out-patient facilities has been launched at a meeting attended by some 30-40 trade unionists representing five different trade unions and Glasgow Trades Council. The

campaign is to fight to implement TUC policy on abortion within their branches.

However, in order to really defend ourselves against the Benyon Bill we must begin to galvanise these local and sporadic actions into a national campaign. The Tribunal is supported by four national unions—ASTMS, NUPE, TASS and MPU. This must be more than paper support. The trade union movement at a national and local level must be forced to take action on this issue and in line with the TUC and Labour Party conference resolutions.

We say that anti-abortion MPs who are sponsored by different trade unions [Fred Willey, a sponsor of the Bill, is an ASTMS MP] must be removed if they go against union policy on this issue. The information and evidence about these MPs which is being brought to the Tribunal must be used to build local campaigns and lobbies of MPs on a national basis before the second reading of the Bill on 25 February.

Members of the Labour for Abortion Rights Committee should build active caucuses locally to fight inside the Labour Party for the removal of anti-abortion MPs in conjunction with other pro-abortion forces in their area.

Meetings should be organised in trade unions and Labour Party branches and public meetings should be held to report on the findings of the Tribunal and expose the nature of the present attacks on abortion rights. Such activities should be used to alert the local labour movement and to consolidate those people who actively opposed the James White Bill as part of a national campaign to start building for the demonstration on 14 May.

It is through this kind of local and national action, and not through relying on parliamentary expedients, that we can really force MPs to vote against the Bill. Only when their position is threatened in this way will action be taken.

Pro-abortionists should draw on the support shown for the Tribunal and use its information and conclusions to broaden support locally and nationally to build a united movement against the Benyon Bill.

It is only through unity in action that we can defeat this parliamentary clique and go forward to plan and fight for the kind of facilities we really need.

Under the slogan 'a woman's right to choose — free abortion on demand', NAC will advance in that united movement the democratic right of women to control their fertility and for provision of facilities so that that right is a reality.

Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)



A PICKET of the Italian Embassy in London demonstrates solidarity with Italian women in their struggle for abortion rights.

Top doctor speaks out against Benyon

PETER HUNTINGFORD, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the London and St Bartholomew's Hospitals talks to Dr Berry Beaumont, chairperson of the medical session at the Tribunal. Peter Huntingford is a Labour Party member and key note speaker in the final medical session.

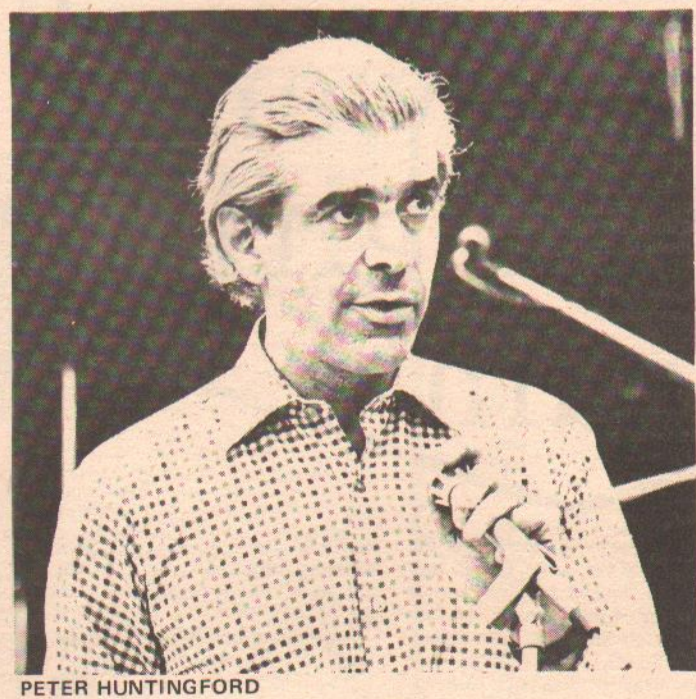
You are one of the minority of doctors who believe that women rather than doctors should be allowed to make the decision on abortion. What experience has led you to hold that position?

Mainly because I have had the privilege of listening to a large number of women who have been faced with the dilemma of an unwanted pregnancy and, in their own minds, they have come to the right solution. Listening to their reasons for wanting to terminate an unwanted pregnancy, I felt more and more that I was not really capable of making that decision for them, because the decision had nothing to do with health or medical matters, but with social conditions and emotional problems surrounding the woman. Nobody but she was in a better position to make a judgement on those matters.

I think that doctors can provide information on medical dangers of terminating the pregnancy or continuing with it, information on what abortion involves both immediately and in the long term and this might help the woman in refining her decision. But in my experience it has very seldom led to a change in her own attitude towards the pregnancy that she is carrying.

How far into pregnancy do you think the choice should be for the woman?

I think that the woman has the right to choose throughout the whole of



PETER HUNTINGFORD

her pregnancy. The problem is that the medical considerations change as the pregnancy advances and as long as she is in possession of the information of the difference in having a pregnancy, let's say, of 20 weeks terminated, as opposed to one of eight weeks, I am quite happy for her to make the decision.

The risk changes very little until 14-16 weeks. The risk is never greater of terminating a pregnancy than a pregnancy continuing. How could it be? Therefore the woman must always have the final decision in the matter.

Although the 1967 Act is restrictive already because it denies

women this choice, how much more restrictive do you think the situation would be if the Benyon Bill were to be passed?

It would be restrictive immediately in putting the abortion charities out of business. We think that the Bill will say that abortion referral agencies should have no connection with the service that carries out the abortion.

This would immediately put out of action the British Pregnancy Advisory Service and the Pregnancy Advisory Service which would affect about 40,000 women a year.

Indirectly it would have another impact and that would be on doctors working within the National Health Service. For quite a few women the certificate for abortion is signed by two doctors who work together and this would be disallowed, we think, by Benyon's Bill.

It would also be restrictive for those women who were requesting termination after 20 weeks of pregnancy. It's true that this is a very small number, but the small number are women who are in dire distress. In my own experience, women never ask for the termination of an advanced pregnancy except under very exceptional circumstances.

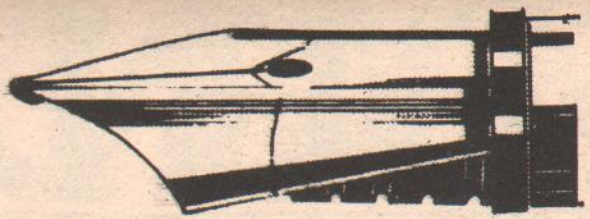
Another indirect effect would be that, given the present operation of abortion services in the NHS, so many people come into contact with the woman who would then be allowed to say, 'I have a conscientious objection to abortion', and raise another hurdle for the woman, either defeating her completely or delaying her.

I think that those who support women must unite to defend the Abortion Act of 1967, to extend that Act so that women are able to make their own decision and to force the Health Service to provide those services which are required to provide safe and early abortion.

People must understand the threat is real and that the fight is on. Battle must be waged.

Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)

TRIBUNAL



LETTERS

A series to look out for on school library shelves — and to throw out if you find it — is the Let's Visit... series published by Burke. A few quotes give the flavour.

From Let's Visit Vietnam: 'What were the Americans doing here anyway? Probably they had come to conquer Vietnam for themselves, the simple people thought — they did not realise that such ideas were being put into their heads by Vietcong agents'.

Meanwhile, 'in Hanoi, President Ho Chi Minh sat with a sinister smile....' But this shouldn't surprise us because 'The North Vietnamese are an eastern as well as a Communist people and are quite unpredictable' but 'like all

peasant peoples they have wonderful memories.'

Africa is explored in the same depth. Poor schooling for blacks in Rhodesia? Guy Winchester-Gould explains, 'African education is not compulsory, mainly because of difficulties in reaching a school.' [Let's Visit Rhodesia]. Oh that's all right then.

But what's going on in South Africa? 'You would think from some of our newspapers that the Bantu of South Africa are in a state of revolt. This is not so. They are better off than ever before' says Let's Visit South Africa.

Watch out for these books!

RICK HATCHER (Birmingham)

little
blue
school
books

1976-Who gained in Ireland?

John Magee's article '1976 — Year of the Tug-of-War' (Red Weekly, 13 January) put forward a position held by the majority of British Trotskyists — i.e. that imperialism has no strategy in Ireland. The comrade's arguments to support this were unconvincing or confused.

'Certainly it was a year in which the nationalist workers of the North of Ireland had their fair share of defeats... 1976 was clearly not a very good year for British imperialism'. So who gained? The Loyalists?

No, 'the regroupment of Loyalist organisations which had been given impetus by the UWC stoppage began to crumble'. The Southern Government? The comrade does not mention the position of the Southern bourgeoisie. But from these quotes it appears that the resistance lost some ground and nobody gained any. Is it possible that the resistance can be eroded and British imperialism will not benefit from it?

Unless we take literally the 'stance' of the Labour Government in 1976 as standing back in confusion we have to say that British imperialism has made significant gains in 1976. What it has been unable to do is pull together these gains into a revamped Sunningdale solution.

However the events of 1976 have laid the grounds for a series of political alliances between British imperialism, the Orange bloc, the Catholic middle class in the North and the Green bourgeoisie in the South. These alliances form the basis for a devolved government in the North in the very near future which can fare considerably better than the Sunningdale attempt.

The events in 1976 that have made this possible are: the introduction of the State of Emergency in the

South; the acceptance by the majority of the Loyalist organisations of the necessity to have some sort of rapprochement with the Social Democratic and Labour Party; the demoralising effect of the 'Peace Movement'; the reassertion of bi-partisanship in Britain; the failure of the trade union bureaucracy in the South to defend Southern workers' living standards; the failure of the Provisionals to make the political turns required in an increasingly difficult situation for the minority.

John Magee, in writing of the 'Peace Movement' that 'they had slotted in with the 'Ulsterisation' policy which British imperialism has been following', recognises a discernible trend in British intervention. In failing to see this 'Ulsterisation' and the 'security' initiatives as a part of a strategy the comrade risks falling into political passivity.

One factor which has made it easier for British imperialism to gain a breathing space and open up lines for itself is the puny nature of the anti-imperialist struggle in Britain. It seems that waiting for the upturn in Ireland has become a political position in Britain. With a genuinely critical situation developing in Ireland, the left in Britain finds itself in a very poor position to respond.

The struggle around political status in Ireland is a test of strength, the outcome of which will determine whether Britain is in a position to pose a new political initiative or not.

It is not too late for British revolutionaries to fight in defence of the resistance, but we must drop all notions that 'our' government and 'our' army are steering along without a rudder.

STEVE BELL (Cardiff).

Squatting and Housing Crisis

As an IMG member whose daily work is in a Housing Aid Centre and from experience as a trade unionist, I would like to take up the questions raised in Emma Tait's letter on squatting (Red Weekly, 6 January).

I won't, as she rightly rejects, just point to the 'few articles' Red Weekly has carried on squatting — although even with these 'few articles' I think Red Weekly has a better record than most. Neither will I point to the activity of 'one' IMG member who is very active in squatting.

Sister Tait rightly says that squatters are being used as scapegoats for the housing crisis, and that if the introduction of a Criminal Trespass Bill and other attacks 'are to be repelled then the left must take up the issue of squatting', but then she seems to imply that the way a 'small' group like the IMG should do this is by concentrating its energies in intervening amongst squatters.

But the very reason why squatters are being used as scapegoats is because of their isolation from the main labour and tenants movements, and the best way to fight these attacks is not so much by intervening amongst squatters, but as sister Tait rightly says, by

raising the issue in the labour movement.

On this, sister Tait probably remembers the last demonstration called by the Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law. She might remember that despite the fact that there were approximately 2,000-3,000 people on that demonstration there were only three trade union banners present. They were Islington Trades Council, National Union of Journalists Book Branch, and Central London clerical section of the Transport and General Workers Union. In all three of these organisations, IMG members played a prominent role in securing support for the demonstration.

Sister Tait's other main point is that squatting is a very advanced form of struggle and when it occurs in other countries (such as Portugal and Mexico) Red Weekly is full of it as 'a great revolutionary advance', yet 'squatting by the dispossessed (homeless) members of the working class in capitalist Britain is not seen in similarly glorified terms.' A short look at the three different situations would explain this.

Both Portugal and Mexico involved expropriation of capitalist and large landowners' property on

a mass scale, often organised by mass organisations of the working class and peasants. Portugal, in particular, was actually in a pre-revolutionary situation. In these circumstances these actions obviously were 'great revolutionary advances'.

However, while Red Weekly and the IMG unequivocally defend the right of homeless people to appropriate empty housing, it has to be said that not even the largest of the organised squats that have taken place here in recent years can be regarded as 'great revolutionary advances', even remotely comparable to those outlined above.

Unfortunately I do not think that the 'Housing Crisis' is going to be solved simply by the extension of the 'exemplary' tactic of squatting. In my view the majority of the labour movement will begin to take up the question through such struggles as rent strikes against the massive rent rises planned between now and 1979-80; and through a fight for a crash programme of house building to employ the 200,000 unemployed building workers.

MICK SULLIVAN (London)



SQUATTERS' ACTION stopped the bulldozers at St Agnes Place, Lambeth, on 19 January. Alderman Stimpson, leader of the Labour group on Lambeth Council, sent demolition cranes guarded by over 200 police to demolish 25 houses in an attempt to pre-empt the discussion of the matter by the Labour group, where opposition is growing to the Council's pro-demolition and anti-squatting policy.

stopped on the order of the temporary High Court injunction obtained by Lambeth Law Centre.

Last Monday the Labour group met and came out in favour of deferring any further demolition or decisions for one month pending discussions on rehabilitation and rehousing.

That was not the only decision taken. They also decided to press for tarpaulins to be put over the roofs of the houses that had been demolished—to protect them from further deterioration!

Crowds of squatters cheered when the cranes

'I wish I were a single girl again'

RELEASED recently, Adam's Rib is an LP of songs about women and their conditions of everyday life, written by Ian Campbell and sung by his sister Lorna.

It was remarkable that this record was produced at all, for Ian met with the refusal of several record companies that he appro-

ached to back the record. Yet the standard of the songs is high and Lorna is backed by well known and talented musicians in the folk field, such as John Dunkerley, Andy Smith, Brian Clarke and Dave Pegg of Fairport Convention.

But you don't have to be a folk enthusiast to enjoy the songs. For all politically conscious people it will come as a refreshing break from the pop world and its musical wallpaper.

The two outstanding tracks on the LP are 'The Lump' and 'Dear Diary (Cursed)'. The first of these tracks voices the anger of a pregnant woman faced with having to give up her job, clothes not fitting her anymore, getting tired and having little energy to do anything. She says:

'I could scream or hit him/He smugly says don't worry/Someday soon you will be slim/Oh, if life has any justice, I could give this

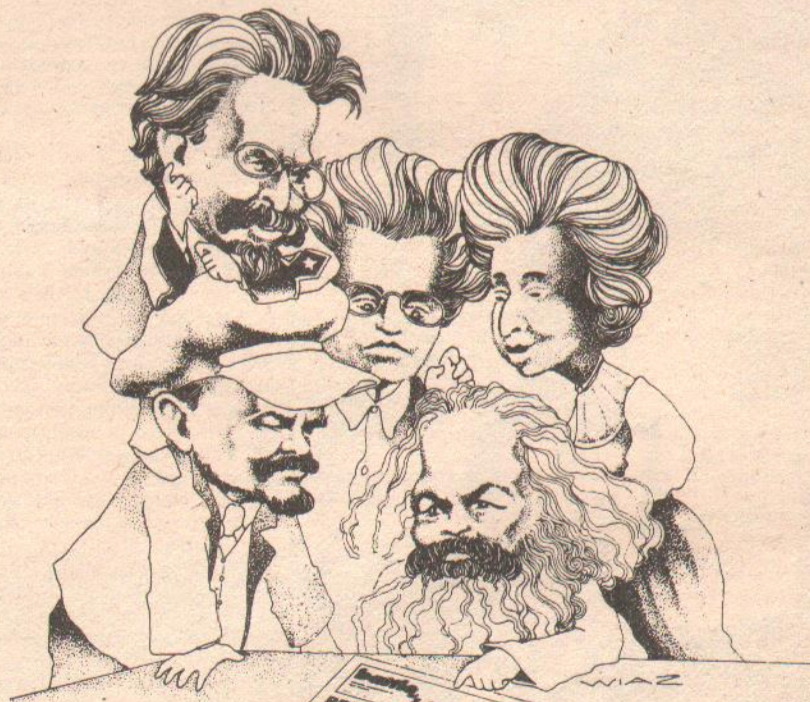
dicted by the impression given in the song 'Blue Day' where Ian has a woman, who is pregnant, say of her parents:

'and if they talk about abortion/Both of them can go to hell'.

The second track 'Dear Diary (Cursed)' tells of the girl in puberty finding out about her body by herself. She complains in her diary that no-one told her about menstruation and that she thought she was going to die. Eventually she realised that it was a normal thing, but is very angry at the fact that she was not prepared for it.

For me this record marks a tremendous step forward, not only in folk music, which is supposed to be about real people, but also in songs which can be used to explain and demonstrate the position of working people — particularly women — in this society.

JOHN BROWN



Unfortunately a gremlin interfered with the lay-out of last week's issue of the Battle of Ideas. This put sections of the article "State Capitalism" and the Struggle against the Bureaucracy" in the wrong order. The correct order of the article is as follows:

* The section presently entitled 'Bureaucratic Power and Bourgeoisie' should be moved to the beginning of the article.

* This first section should have as its continuation the section starting 'Now, the need to modernise the economy....' which starts in the third column of the present first section.

* The first two and a half columns of the present first section of the article down to the paragraph starting 'Now, the need to moder-

Our apologies to Oliver MacDonald and for trying our readers' patience.

Finally, a line was also omitted accidentally from the resolution printed under the heading 'The Fourth International and "State Capitalism"'. The second paragraph on page 4 should have ended with its eighth line, to be

Advertisement IMG NOTES

IMG Nation Transport Fraction. For all comrades working in transport unions. Sunday 30 January, London.

National Engineering Fraction. Saturday 5 February, Birmingham.

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

IMG Women's Commission. Sunday 13 February, 11am. At National Centre.

Extended IMG Irish Commission. 12/13 February. Documents to be in by 1 Feb.

IMG School on the Family. For members and close contacts. Saturday 5 March, London. Details next week.

IMG Women's Liberation National

AS A WAY OF promoting their new Socialist Workers Party, the former International Socialists have produced 20,000 copies of Paul Foot's *Why You Should Be a Socialist* ... the case for the new Socialist Workers Party [35p, available from Red Books]. GEOFF BELL reviews it.

As an argument for socialism, albeit at a rather simplified and at times patronising level, this book can only be recommended. In the first three chapters — on the current crisis, on 'what causes it', and on 'what we would put in its place' — comrade Foot provides a readable and effective introduction to the ideas of socialism. In these three chapters militants will find a good deal of useful material which can be used as a means of persuasion against those completely lacking in class consciousness.

But this argument is distorted by crude IS dogma. The post-war boom is explained entirely by arms spending and in later chapters the Soviet Union is denounced 'state capitalist' style as a place 'where workers are as impotent and exploited as anywhere else in the world'.

On a less conscious level, but equally characteristic of IS, every single worker depicted in Phil Evans's very funny accompanying cartoons is a man.

DISTORTS

Such a presentation does not give an accurate picture of the world, but distorts major aspects of it beyond recognition. Thus the book can only claim a partial success in making an argument for 'Why You Should Be a Socialist'.

However, 'The Case for a New Socialist Party' is not proved at all. There is not even the basis of the programme that would be needed by such a party.

It is becoming part of the 'IS tradition' that there should be little indication of how socialism should be won, what demands socialists should fight for, both inside and outside the mass organisations of the working class. There is only the simplistic adage that the 'rank and file' must fight.

But how? To build a genuine party with deep roots in the working class, tens of thousands of workers must be permanently won from their political support

CASE NOT PROVED



for the Labour Party to a revolutionary programme.

But comrade Foot dismisses as hopeless and ineffective actions designed to remove right-wing Labour MPs such as Prentice. His argument that this won't change much by itself is probably true, but what he ignores is that these struggles raise a fundamental principle which all socialists should fight for — that all representatives of any working class organisation should be answerable to their membership.

It is that principle, rather than the removal of a rather eccentric right winger, which made the media go into convulsions over the Prentice affair. Likewise,

while mentioning the weak-kneed response of the Australian Labour Party to Whitlam's dismissal and the subsequent general election defeat, Foot fails to record that the ALP experienced a massive growth in membership of workers determined to fight the right wing of the party.

Comrade Foot is forced to minimise or ignore such developments in the mass organisations because they do not fit in with his schema of the SWP. It is no surprise therefore when the book omits to argue the need for maximum unity in action within the workers movement around demands capable of taking the class forward.

Rejecting the united front, comrade Foot is only left with moving exhortations on the need to build the party and its trade union arms — the Right to Work Campaign and the Rank and File Movement.

This method is best illustrated when the book asks 'what socialist grouping can build a real socialist party'. The manner of the question is a giveaway. 'What socialist grouping', comrade Foot asks, and the assumption is made that 'the party' will be formed in no other way than one group growing and growing.

This is, at least on paper, a 'revision' of part of IS's history. In 1968 when they initiated a similar 'party building' exercise, they issued an appeal for other groups to join them. Whatever the merits of that particular appeal, at least it recognised that a call for

unity of the far left is an integral part of the building of the revolutionary party. There is no such recognition today. Neither does Foot even consider the traditional Trotskyist view that organised splits from reformist parties are also part of this process.

The last thing the British working class needs is yet another organisation which proclaims itself as the party, the way forward, and that there is nothing else to do, no other means of acceptable struggle, but to join the party.

'DEVIANTS'

The reason, says Foot, why workers should join the SWP rather than other existing revolutionary organisations is that the latter 'turn in among themselves, purge themselves of deviants and pour oceans of bile on one another to prove their purity'. Certainly the nature of the internal regime is decisive; if for no other reason than the inability of an undemocratic group to correct its errors.

Comrade Foot does not care to go into this. Yet, on reading his remarks about 'deviants' being 'purged', the many deviants the IS leadership has 'purged' within the last few years — members of Workers Fight, the 'Right Opposition', the Left Opposition, the Left Alternative, the IS Opposition, as well as many individuals who have also been expelled — could be pardoned a quizzical smile.

The Decline of Gerry Healy

TIM WOHLFORTH, national education secretary of the American Trotskyist organisation, the Socialist Workers Party, has just completed a speaking tour in Britain on the decline of the 'International Committee' of the Fourth International. We asked him why he thought this subject important.

You've been speaking up and down the country to audiences about the experiences and the present situation of the International Committee led by Gerry Healy. Could you say something about these meetings and your purpose in doing them?

Well, I felt that these meetings were important because this current was dominant for many years in Britain, so that in one way or another virtually every tendency which supports Trotskyism has had some relationship with it. So I thought that it would be extremely useful to clarify its history and why it has ended up in its present degenerate form.

What are the main points that you're taking up against the Healyites?

I begin historically, pointing out the strengths of Healy's group in the early period but also showing that in the period between 1953 and 1961 Healy really avoided dealing with any of the theoretical questions facing the international Trotskyist movement. This, I feel, was the beginning of his turn towards a certain insularity within Britain.

Then I deal with the period of the Stalinist break-up, the certain strength that he was able to bring around his movement, and how he failed to realise its potential — it just became a basis for his desire to go it alone, his feeling that he had enough support and enough forces and he didn't need any interference from anyone internationally.

So he turned in this insular, national direction and developed internal policies which crushed

any kind of opposition, any kind of collective leadership. This sectarian course really set the stage for the degeneration of the movement — to the point where today it is outside the pale of Trotskyism, substituting slander for any serious criticism of other groups' political positions.

But I think that it's very important for us to answer these attacks in order to maintain and sustain the proper methods of discussion and struggle within the Trotskyist movement itself. It's more a question of the interests of the Trotskyist movement than a question of the WRP, and a means whereby



TIM WOHLFORTH

those currents which have broken from Healy can understand the lessons of what Healyism is all about.

How do you explain this degeneration?

Well, any political tendency — even any individual in a political movement — has weaknesses. That can't be helped. But if they're part of the collective leadership of an international movement, if they're capable of developing a kind of atmosphere within their own movement where other forces can come in, be part of and influence the organisation, then these weaknesses can be minimised and other strengths developed.

I would say that the tendencies in Healy's personality and history that we're talking about only became absolutely dominant over the healthy side of his development in the period after his refusal to go into the reunification of the Fourth International in 1963. I think that the origins of the real development of Healyism as any kind of separate tendency hostile to Trotskyism are in the period 1961-63.

Committee functioned in the period after 1963 up to your expulsion?

Well, it really breaks into two stages. There's the period in which the French organisation, the OCI, was part of the International Committee — the period up to 1971; and then the period thereafter.

In that first period it was essentially a matter of a relationship between the OCI and the British organisation (then the Socialist Labour League). And the distinguishing feature here was that while there existed important political differences between these two major tendencies, they were never really discussed; very few documents ever came out, there was no real internal life of struggle over these differences. So when the split occurred in 1971, the discussion only took

national and 'Pabloism', etc?

Where I think the WSL's problem lies is that they have not really been able to think through how an international movement develops itself theoretically.

They tend to want to push that aside and have a sort of idealistic conception. Perhaps they think they have the whole theoretical schema worked out which explains all the problems of the post-war period, and no-one else has it.

But one must recognise that theoretical problems have to be worked out on the basis of the new experiences which allow the various tendencies, factions and sections around the world to learn from material reality, to learn from the actual developments in the class struggle, and on that basis to discuss our policies in relation to the theoretical implications of those policies; and, of course, on that basis we can go back into history and deal with historical questions.

But you have to proceed, so to speak, from the present back into the past, or you'll never understand the past. You can't jump back into the past and demand that everyone take this position or that position on 1953.

They should realise by the very degeneration of the International Committee that the issues of 1953 were not settled in 1953; that they were matters which had to be discussed over a long time within an international movement, and that the reunification in 1963 was not only principled but essential for the further theoretical development of all the tendencies.

I think that the comrades of the WSL still have a tendency to try to short-circuit the process of discussion and clarification on these questions and think that they can jump over the process of working in a common international movement with people even though they may have very big differences with them on many questions. That's the fundamental difference of approach as to how to resolve the problems of the Fourth International.

place after it. And then in the period from 1971 to 1974, leading up to the break of myself and Nancy Fields in the US, that of the Workers Socialist League in Britain, that of the Greek comrades, and so on — the real break-up of the International Committee — it functioned merely as some sort of low priority Foreign Office of the SLL.

How would you sum up the degeneration of the International Committee after 1963?

The main thing, I think, was that after they had failed to go into the reunification of 1963, the participants in the International Committee had to justify that break, and that was the central thrust. So it became very difficult to look at the United Secretariat and its evolution objectively and to deal with the question that perhaps they might at some point have to consider some form of unification with the United Secretariat. I'd say that this sort of factional justification of their course was at the heart of it.

What attitude would you take to currents like the Workers Socialist League, which still tends to view

US Elections: Votes for workers parties

A NUMBER of readers have written to us requesting that we print the SWP's presidential election votes. We have had to delay this due to the quaint habit of some electoral authorities in the USA of not publishing minority votes cast until later and sometimes not at all.

Printed below are the SWP results in comparison to those of other workers parties, most notably the Communist Party.

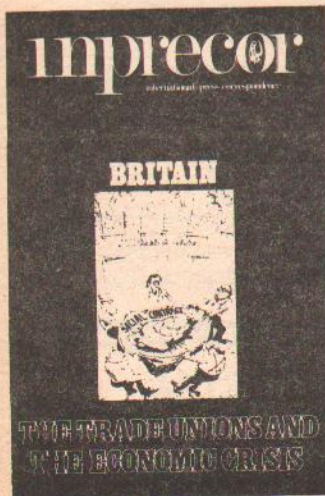
	Socialist Workers (Camejo)	Communist (Hall)	Socialist Labor (Levin)	Socialist (Zeldner)
Ala.		1,954		
Alaska				
Ariz.	928			
Ark.				
Calif.	17,259	12,766		
Colo.	1,071	403	12	
Conn.				
Del.			86	
D.C.		219		
Fla.	545			
Ga.				
Hawaii				
Idaho				
Ill.	3,615	9,250	2,442	
Ind.	5,695			
Iowa	267	554	167	234
Kan.				
Ky.	350	426		
La.	1,473	7,417		
Maine				
Md.				
Mass.	8,138			
Mich.	1,804		1,148	
Minn.	4,149	1,091	370	354
Miss.	2,805			
Mo.				
Mont.				
Neb.				
Nev.	161		66	
N.H.	1,184	1,662	3,686	469
N.J.	2,462			240
N.M.	6,996	10,270		
N.Y.				
N.C.				
N.D.	43	85		38
Ohio	4,717	7,817	68	
Okl.				
Ore.				
Pa.	2,998	1,869		
R.I.	462	334	118	
S.C.				
S.D.	168	318		
Tenn.		547		
Texas	1,723			
Utah	268	121		
Vi.	430			
Va.	17,802			
Wash.	905	817	713	358
W. Va.				
Wis.	1,691	749	389	4,298
Wyo.				
TOTALS	90,109	58,689	9,265	5,991

EDUCATION FOR SOCIALISTS

HEALY'S BIG LIE

The Slander Campaign Against Joseph Hansen, George Novack, and the Fourth International

- Statements and Articles by:
 - Joseph Hansen • George Novack
 - John and Mary Archer
 - George Breitman • Charles Curtis • Sam Gordon • Betty Hamilton • J. R. James • Pierre Lambert • Bala Tampore • Ernest Tapp • Charles Van Gelderen • Jean Van Heijenoort • 'New Politics' • 'Red Weekly' • 'Socialist Action' • 'Socialist Press'



40p (including p&p) from Red

60p (including p&p) from Red Books, 182 Pentonville Rd, Lon-

HOW BLACK SOUTH AFRICA EXPLODED

Everyone knows about the convulsions which rocked South Africa last summer. But until now there has been no detailed account of these events. The latest CIS report, *Black South Africa Explodes* [90p from Red Books], fills this gap, as well as providing an analysis of the role of British capitalism. CLIVE BALDWIN reviews the upsurge of the black students and workers and MARTIN METEYARD discusses British capitalism's contribution to South Africa's military strength.

Black South Africa Explodes provides the essential information for an analysis of South Africa today. Above all it is a powerful weapon in the struggle to build a Southern Africa solidarity campaign in Britain. After reading the CIS report no one can doubt that the apartheid regime rules solely by its monopoly of the means of terror and violence.

The CIS Report rigorously documents the day by day events in South Africa after the initial student protest on 16 June in Soweto. The spark that set off the fire that swept South Africa was the introduction of Afrikaans as a compulsory medium of instruction in schools. The students responded with massive demonstrations, their self confidence already fuelled by the defeat of the whites in Angola earlier in the year.

TARGETS

Government buildings and property were the chief targets; beer halls and bottle stores, the property of the Bantu Administration, were burned or smashed up. The students raised slogans such as 'less liquor, better education' and 'we want more schools and less beer halls'. These slogans brought to the fore two of the sharpest forms of their oppression. The beer halls are for many the only escape from the drudgery of life in South Africa. They are encouraged by the white regime, the effect being the numbing of black militancy and widespread apathy.

To increase their effectiveness the students begin to turn to the black working class. The police responded with increased violence. In a new upsurge on 4 August, the students marched on Johannesburg. 'Although students made no attempt to break through the cordon, and the front rank held up notices saying "We are not fighting, don't shoot", 12 of them were shot down and three died immediately.' By 11 August, Cape Town was ablaze as well.

A demonstration formed in Langa, one of the Cape Town townships, in solidarity with the victims of Soweto. As the CIS Report says, the march was peaceful, that is until the police decided otherwise. The protests spread to other townships and the death toll mounted. As one resident put it, 'It was a peaceful demonstration till the police arrived. It is only a pity that the police fired on the mobs because the people then adopted a militant stand. When you kids are shot you cannot keep your cool. I saw people fleeing in panic and shot as they were running away.' CIS concludes: 'It is very unclear when the police started shooting to kill, or who the first victims were. All we can say definitely is that armed police killed sixteen unarmed Africans that day and wounded at least 51 more'.

ESCALATED

The efforts of the students escalated. 'Weekend 21/22 August. Over the weekend leaflets calling for a three day general strike were put under the door of every house in Soweto. This operation was organised by the Soweto Students Representative Council and involved careful planning the week before. Black office workers had been approached and asked to make copies of leaflets calling for the stayaway. At the same time rumours of the strike spread among workers, and pickets were out at many stations, the previous week, of people who thought



A POLICEMAN and an interpreter on a police 'hippo' address a crowd of hostel dwellers outside Mzimhlope Hostel. As he finishes speaking the hostel dwellers, singing war songs and brandishing assegais, go on the rampage.



that the strike ought to start immediately. We had realised that we had gone as far as we could, and it was now important that we strike at the industrial structure of South Africa.' (Tsetsi Mashinini)

The strike was an obvious success. The evening papers reported that 'the absentee rate throughout Johannesburg was 80 per cent ...'. The Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce reported that 'the stayaway hit industrialists, retailers and insurance companies. Either no-one turned up on the black staff, or considerable numbers stayed away.'

As a response to the success of the strike the police tried to fragment the solidarity of the working class by attempting to turn the migrant hostel workers against the strikers. In certain cases hostel dwellers attacked the students and their supporters violently. 'First reports told of Zulu Hostel dwellers banded into a massive impi (tribal band), armed with sticks, assegais and pangas (long bladed knives) charging through the street breaking into homes and attacking householders.'

This of course was exploited to the maximum by the South African press and their supporters in Britain and elsewhere. The CIS Report contains an excellent account of this event, clearly showing the involvement of the South African Security forces.

This is the account of a reporter who spent the night in Orlande West, a township of Johannesburg: 'After witnessing

neighbours fleeing the township to seek refuge in townships deeper in Soweto, after watching houses being stoned and raided by heavily armed Zulus, I chose a coal box to shelter in. At two-fifteen in the morning, a police loud hailer warned Zulus (in Zulu) to stop raiding houses: "We didn't order you to destroy West Rand (Administration Board) property. You were asked to fight people only, so you are asked to withdraw immediately." Such incidents abounded. CIS relentlessly document the methods the police employed in their attempts to break the strike.

COLOUREDS

Not only the blacks were involved. The coloured school children in the Cape Peninsula demonstrated their support throughout July and August. CIS report that on 24 August several thousand coloured men, women and children demonstrated against the apartheid system. Once again another myth was shattered, the attempts of the regime to divide the two groups along race lines had failed. 'Black power was strictly for the blacks. Coloured power was something that people just thought of — a pipe dream but not real, not something to die for. Now all that's changed—and it's the children who have brought about that change.'

Monday 13 September was the first day

of the new general strike in Soweto. 'Azikwela' — Zulu for 'we do not work' — leaflets were distributed throughout the township by the Soweto Students Representative Council. According to CIS, by Wednesday half a million black people were on strike in the Reef and this time they were joined by 80 per cent of the quarter million coloured workers 1,000 miles away in the Cape. The strike in Cape Town was estimated at 70-80 per cent complete in industry and 40 per cent in commerce.

This was the high point of the strike movement. Although the general strikes showed the enormous power of the black working class in South Africa, the continual calling of such mass mobilisations without results ran the risk of demoralising the black workers. By November the workers were no longer responding to the calls of the students.

CIS make the correct point: 'The strike called in sympathy with those in detention was ignored by the vast majority of workers. They agreed with the students' demands, but in conditions of starvation wages and chronic unemployment, the failure of the Black Consciousness Movement to connect with the black trade unions meant that the breakdown of the tactic was inevitable. The fact that the best organised black workers in the mines and in Natal have not yet responded to the uprisings in the townships is also indicative of the gap between the young blacks and the trade unions.'

Jones Sabotages ICFTU Boycott

HOW NOT to bring the apartheid regime to its knees was graphically shown last week with the 'boycott' organised by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

With the craven capitulation of the leaders of the Union of Post Office Workers before the courts, it was left to their counterparts in the French post office to black mail and telephone calls to South Africa. Apart from this, the only industrial action in the advanced capitalist countries was taken by Italian airport workers and dockers in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway; although unions in some African countries also blocked transport and communications with South Africa.

meeting in November, for instance, Jack Jones was reportedly prominent in toning down demands for all-out strikes and a complete boycott of goods and all forms of transport to and from South Africa.

This was reflected in his request to members of the Transport and General Workers Union merely to 'harass and impede' trade with South Africa. Asked to clarify what this actually meant in terms of action, he commented: 'Everything that needs to be said has been said.'

Small wonder, then, that T & GWU members at Heathrow airport and Southampton docks failed to go through with their planned action when it came to the crunch.

The behaviour of Britain's other big union was even more scandalous. The Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers didn't even issue a statement of support until



JOHN GAETSEWE, general secretary of the South African Congress of Trade Unions visited London last week. It was banning or-

[18 January]: 'Well it didn't fit in with meetings of committees until now.' The plight of black workers in South Africa is obviously as nothing to that of the bureaucrats in the AUEW.

True to its origins as an imperialist-backed split from the World Federation of Trade Unions at the height of the cold war in 1949, the ICFTU sees change in South Africa as being brought about in collaboration with the bosses rather than against them.

Hence the TUC leaflet justified the week of action because 'British business ... stands to lose if matters are not put right'. The General and Municipal Workers Union, for example, confined its

instructions to 'asking its members to tell employers engaged in trade with South Africa that they regard the banning orders [on black trade unionists] as counter-productive' [Morning Star, 14 January].

Britain's top bosses aren't so naive. The Sunday Times [16 January] commented that 'the attitude of British business is shown to have hardened significantly over the past three years'.

British workers should take a leaf out of their employers' book and demand a similar hardening of attitude by their leaders against those who stand in the way of the South African masses' struggle for freedom.

THAT BRITISH AID and involvement is central to the apartheid regime's use of terror and violence is devastatingly exposed by the CIS report.

It explains how the arms embargo imposed by the United Nations in 1963 has been interpreted so loosely by member states with substantial trade relations with South Africa 'as to make a mockery of it... Any attempts, overwhelmingly supported by the UN General Assembly, to make the embargo mandatory have been blocked by Britain, France and the USA using their power of veto.'

The most recent British veto was cast just three weeks after the Labour Party conference had demanded 'British Government support for a mandatory UN arms embargo'.

SIDE-STEPPED

The CIS report outlines the way in which the embargo is deliberately side-stepped:

* The Government grants export licences under the 1970 Customs and Excise Export of Goods (Control) Order even for items whose use will clearly be military. A scandalous example of this is the recent granting of such a licence for the export of a multi-million pound communications system to the South African Armaments Board.

* British firms can grant manufacturing licences for their products to South African companies. On 9 August 1976, for instance, South African Defence Minister Botha opened the country's first factory for the manufacture of integrated circuits. As Botha pointed out, 'integrated circuits form part of all sophisticated weapons with electronic systems. A local manufacturer... will be invaluable.'

These circuits will be manufactured under licence from the British firm Plessey, which has provided all the necessary technical expertise.

* Then there are the South African subsidiaries of British companies. Here the Labour Government is directly involved through its ownership of British Leyland. Leyland's South African subsidiary, which refuses to recognise black trade unions, specialises in the production of Land Rovers — which go straight to the police and army.

* Finally, even general investment in South Africa contributes to its arms capacity. CIS explain: 'An armaments industry as sophisticated as South Africa's depends on a well-developed industrial base. It needs steel (British Steel), oil (BP, Mobil), chemicals (ICI, Shell, Hoechst) and many other materials and know-how.'

But again the British Government refuses to fall into line even with the Composite 44 resolution of the last Labour Party conference, which demanded an immediate freeze on all new investment in South Africa. On the contrary, the 68 per cent Government-owned British Petroleum has recently announced that it will spend £250m on a five-year investment programme in South Africa.

These so-called 'leaders' of the labour movement must be brought to account without delay, and a total ban placed on South African trade and investment which can help bring the apartheid regime to its knees.

How the Labour Government Supports Apartheid

RED WEEKLY pamphlet

BY JIM ATKINSON

20 p.

25p (including p&p) from Relgocrest, 97 Caledonian Rd, London N.1.

6 MARCH SOUTHERN AFRICA DEMONSTRATION, LONDON.

Assemble 1.30pm Hyde Park, Speakers Corner.

Arrives 3.30pm for rally Trafalgar Square. Called by AAM. further details AAM, 89

Mass Revolt Rocks Sadat



The explosive entry of the Egyptian masses onto the political scene during the last week has transformed the situation in the Middle East.

On 17 January, Egyptian Finance Minister Salah Hameed announced the 1977 annual budget which included a 90 per cent cutback in Government subsidies for commodities and foodstuffs. Immediately prices shot up. Rice rose by 16 per cent, petrol by 31 per cent and gas cylinders by 46 per cent. This is on top of a real inflation rate estimated at 50 per cent.

Behind the proposed cuts was the pressure of Egypt's international creditors: the Gulf oil producers, the USA and the IMF. The denationalisation of the economy and the economic opening to the West heralded by Sadat are based on massive reductions in Government spending, while keeping spending on defence and the repressive apparatus at an all-time high.

There is a massive threat to the partial economic gains of the Egyptian masses since the overthrow of the Farouk monarchy in 1952.

WORKERS

On 18 January workers and students from Cairo, Alexandria and Helwan took to the streets. It is impossible to estimate their numbers. As soon as a semi-organised group would set off marching down the city streets, the passers-by and resident population would swell their numbers. The army and police moved into action and the Government imposed a 14 hour curfew. Street battles, riots and fires broke out

on a massive scale for the next two days.

In Helwan, an industrial city south of Cairo housing tens of thousands of workers, all roads to and from the city were blocked as workers tore up the pavements and fought the police. In parts of Cairo groups of workers and students succeeded in wresting some small arms from the police and gun battles broke out. The Government decreed a complete shutdown of all universities, colleges and schools. The uprising began to spread to a number of towns in Upper Egypt.

Reports began to come in that some badly paid units of the police and riot squads were showing sympathy with the outraged population so the Government began to rely on its elite Saiqa

commando units.

There has not been mass anti-government action on such a scale since January 1952 in the events which led to the collapse of the Farouk monarchy and the reign of Nasser. The semi-official daily *Al-Ahram* estimated that more than 79 deaths, 800 injured and 2,000 arrests had taken place in less than two days.

On 19 January Sadat capitulated. Cairo radio announced that all proposed price increases were suspended 'for further study'. The Government's defeat accentuates the crisis of Sadat's strategic plan for a political and economic opening to imperialism. The expected foreign capital has not flowed into Egypt.

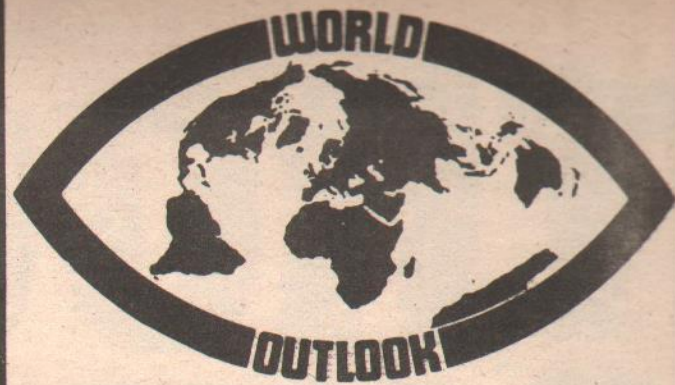
The steady flow of denationalisations and economic incentives to foreign capital were thus matched by an increase in Egypt's foreign debt, in a pathetic attempt by the regime to compensate through borrowing for its diminishing control over the economy. Sadat's room for manoeuvre entirely depended on his ability to control the mass movement politically.

ARSENAL

In October 1976 a presidential referendum was set up, ostensibly giving Sadat's policies the support of 99.93 per cent of the population (no more and no less!). A much-vaunted multi-party system has been launched by the regime. These and other measures make up the political arsenal employed by the regime to curb and confuse the mass movement. The events of the last few days have brushed all this aside.

Sadat's defeat greatly reduces his margin for manoeuvre in the next stage of the plan for an all-Arab settlement with Israel. There can be little doubt that the action of the Egyptian masses in less than two days has considerably reduced the prospects of an imperialist settlement in the region. This dress rehearsal entry of the Egyptian masses onto the political scene is just the tip of a giant iceberg that promises to change the shape of Arab politics in the coming years.

G. JAFAR



INDIA

INDIRA GANDHI, the Indian Prime Minister, has called elections for March. Under the extension of the parliamentary term enacted last November she was not required to hold them until March 1978.

This apparent change seems to be part of Gandhi's strategy throughout the 'state of emergency'. She has no wish to be tarred with the brush of a dictator, so elections were likely at some point. The advantage of now, rather than 1978, is that India's economy is looking fairly healthy. There is a negative inflation rate, production has increased and the Fifth Five Year plan is underway.

Many people point out that inflation was being reduced before the imposition of the emergency, but there is no doubt that Gandhi is counting on her economic record for victory at the polls. However, a large part of the increase in production has been from natural causes, principally a bumper harvest. Gandhi knows as well as anyone else that the current performance will not be maintained for another year.

The emergency, including repression against all political opponents, has also strengthened

which fights alongside the EPLF in the northern provinces. The EDU recently captured 56 armed men preparing an attack on Sudanese territory.



PINOCHET

CHILE

Only days after the World Bank had voted the Chilean Government a \$60 million loan, at least six private investment companies have gone bankrupt. This is developing into a major financial and political crisis, involving fraud charges against prominent bourgeois supporters of the junta. Two of the main private banks are now under investigation and a new decree recalling all loans within thirty days and requiring supervision by the central bank seems likely to cause new bankruptcies.



GANDHI

Gandhi's hand politically. The Gandhi group, especially her son Sanjay, has strengthened its hold on the political apparatus to such an extent that it has been able to dispense with the services of its most loyal supporter, the Communist Party.

By contrast, the opposition leaders have only just been released from jail and have no machinery to conduct an election campaign. An attempt to unify the major right wing parties and the Socialist Party has been frustrated on a legal technicality.

The working class and peasant parties, despite the apparent relaxation in the emergency, will still face massive repression if they attempt to mount a real challenge to Gandhi. Large numbers of Trotskyists and Maoists are still held in jail. Elections with no more than the semblance of democratic freedoms are a mockery.

CEYLON

Government threats to recruit scab labour have led the Ceylonese union leaderships to call off the strikes which have swept the country over the last month. The leadership of the rail workers union, who had initiated the strike over a pay claim following Government repression against student militants, had already called a halt to the action. However, their call was not followed by the membership.

ERITREA

The Derg, the ruling military regime in Addis Adaba, faces trouble on all sides.

Ethiopian soldiers, forced to retreat across the border to Sudan, have confirmed the Eritrean People's Liberation Front's complete control over the northern Sahel region of Eritrea. The soldiers said that they were fighting 'the whole population'. 280 troops have surrendered to the EPLF and are now fighting against the Ethiopian army.

The EPLF demands self-determination and independence from Ethiopia for Eritrea. Since last autumn, the dictatorship has moved in 7,000 extra troops to crush the nationalists. About a quarter of those are now on the casualty list.

The Derg's relations with neighbouring Sudan have been deteriorating in the last few days. Numeiry of Sudan claims that the Addis regime backed a coup attempt in Khartoum last July and now supports anti-Numeiry guerrillas. This is confirmed by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front.

ITALY

'Austerity requires a new system of values. It signifies strictness, efficiency, seriousness, justice.' Not Italian premier Andreotti selling his austerity package to the unions, but Communist Party leader Enrico Berlinguer. Austerity, he continues, 'can be a weapon for transforming society'.

As expected, the Communist Party and the main trade union



BERLINGUER

confederation which it controls are now moving closer to approval of the Government pay policy. This would be a massive blow to its membership and to the whole working class.

Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev has expressed his opinion too: 'In Italy there are too many strikes, too many parties and too much pornography'.

But Spanish CP leader Santiago Carrillo outshines them all. 'We know that foreign investors want to make money', he told Newsweek. 'We agree with this'.

SPAIN: Factory struggles erupt

The strike at Roca Radiadores, Catalonia's second largest factory, entered its third month accompanied by more arrests and clashes with police.

The cause of the strike is the sacking of 41 militants at the plant. Because it threatens the shaky project of reconciliation of the Government and the leaders of the Communist Party, the strike has been savagely attacked by the first and cold shouldered by the second.

On 11 January ten Roca workers were on defence guard outside the houses of some of the workers' elected delegates who had already had several physical attacks made on them, including their homes being fired on with machine guns.

The police moved in to arrest the guards. As soon as word got round, 500 workers gathered at the police station demanding their release. They then held a mass meeting which voted to march that afternoon to the town hall at Gavá.

Over 2,000 workers were on the march. The road was barred by police, who fired rubber bullets. Twenty-five or thirty workers were injured, one seriously. But the workers' display of strength had succeeded — that evening the ten detainees were released.

For the Spanish ruling class, this strike has got to be smashed. There are three reasons:

* The sackings of workers' leaders are part of the attempt to soften up the workers in the factories by getting rid of the most

politically advanced militants, an attempt which is backed up by the suspension of an article in the Labour Law which offered some employment protection.

* The Roca workers counterpose to the Government's programme a set of demands including amnesty for political prisoners, the right to work and for a general strike.

* The methods of struggle the Roca workers have adopted — regular mass meetings, elected and recallable delegates and self defence squads — if generalised to the whole Spanish working class, would put revolution on the agenda.

SOLIDARITY

It is for these reasons that the union organisations (Workers Commissions, USO and UGT) have refused to build the solidarity action which is desperately needed if Roca is to win. An exception is the Workers Commission of bank workers in Barcelona which has declared its full support, collected money, sent two delegates to the Roca support committee and called on the union organisations to back the strike.

As we go to press the 41 sacked workers face the dismissals tribunal. The Roca assembly has called for a 24 hour general strike in the Llobregat valley region.



Roca workers' solidarity Christmas card.

...and win!

MOTOR WORKERS in Pamplona supported by solidarity action in Britain have won an important victory.

The strike at Girling Espana SA was over a 30 per cent wage claim. Girling is part of a multinational making motor components and accessories, with plants in Britain, owned by Lucas. The Lucas Combine shop stewards committee decided to launch immediate solidarity action, blacking all parts to Lucas and Girling operations in Spain.

British Leyland management [for whom Girling Pamplona supply accessories] attempted to dodge the black by shipping parts under the name of Rovers. The Lucas combine committee found out about this and was able to make the black effective. This week the strike ended in victory for the workers, making another dent in the Spanish Government's austerity policy.

Although the strike is over the Lucas shop stewards will continue to strengthen links between shop

over a worker from Pamplona to discuss the lessons of the strike. Lucas and Girling workers have demonstrated how shop floor links and prompt blacking are one of the most effective ways to build solidarity between British and Spanish workers.

Red Weekly readers who know that their bosses have connections with Spanish companies should fight in their workplace to build links with the workers there. If you are not sure about your bosses' Spanish operations Red Weekly or Spain in Struggle [38 Hilldown Rd, London SW16] will try to provide the information.

As far as we know Roca Radiadores does not have any multinational links, but this does not make solidarity any less important. Spain in Struggle is launching a collection to support the Roca workers. Remember that Spanish workers get no strike pay. Already £11 has been collected by Spanish and British workers in Birmingham. Send donations to Red Weekly or Spain in Struggle [at the

No a otro Motor Ibérica.

Venzamos el Juicio del día 22, contra el despido Libre.

Hacia la huelga general con ROCA

700 YEARS IS TOO MUCH

RED WEEKLY

TROOPS OUT NOW!



This weekend is the fifth anniversary of 'Bloody Sunday', when fourteen civilians were gunned down by British troops on the streets of Derry. The past five years have seen little relief for the people of the North of Ireland from the war being waged in their country by Britain and its troops. Minor 'Bloody Sundays' take place every week in the streets of Belfast, Derry, South Armagh and elsewhere. Each one gives further substance to the latest slogan to adorn the walls of Belfast: in response to the slogan of the Northern Ireland Office and the now discredited 'Peace People', 'Seven Years is Enough', there is the message '700 years is too much'.

Explaining why, JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast on the Parachute Regiment as they were in 1972, as they are in 1977; and PETER STEWART reports on one Belfast family who have become victims of the 'Peace People' and the British Army they support.

To nobody's surprise the Labour Government has banned the use of Trafalgar Square for a rally on the anniversary of Bloody Sunday. This further denial of free speech on Ireland makes it all the more vital that there is a large attendance this Sunday at: 12 noon: Picket Trafalgar Square: Free Speech in Ireland! 1.30pm: Rally and Demonstration. Assemble Shepherds Bush Green: Troops Out Now!

Paras still on rampage

JOHN MAGEE in Belfast

FIVE YEARS AGO this Sunday a large demonstration set out from the Creggan area of Derry to march through the Bogside to the Guildhall Square in the centre of the city. It had been organised as part of a series of protests following the introduction of internment on 9 August 1971.

The march was certainly illegal — anti-Unionist marches usually are in the North of Ireland — but the Royal Ulster Constabulary had advised that the march be permitted and the organisers prosecuted afterwards.

Despite the cold some 3,000 people turned out for the demonstration. It was a cheerful crowd that wound its way through the Bogside streets; the sun was shining, parents had brought their children, everyone was good humoured.

KILLED

At the edge of the Bogside another crowd awaited the arrival of the march. There was no humour amongst them; they were British soldiers drafted into the area to stop the march getting out of the ghetto. In charge was the British Forces Land Commander, General Ford, and at his disposal was the First Battalion of the Parachute Regiment.

When the demonstrators reached the line of soldiers and armoured vehicles which blocked the exit from the Bogside, the stewards directed them to an impromptu meeting which had been set up outside nearby flats. Michael Farrell, author of *Northern Ireland: The Orange State*, described what followed:

'Suddenly the Paras opened fire. They fired repeatedly into the crowd, and then at people fleeing and at others trying to reach the wounded. They killed thirteen civilians (a fourteenth died later from injuries). Inevitably the Army claimed that someone had fired at them and that the thirteen dead were all terrorists and gunmen, but even the British government enquiry could produce no credible evidence. The commander of the Paras, Lieut-Colonel Derek Wilford, later got an OBE for his day's work.'

Five years later the parachute Regiment is still 'in service' in the 6 Counties, at the moment in West Belfast. They are making wide use of the 'stop, search and beat-up' tactic; dozens of raids on Catholic working class areas, in which houses are wrecked and bones broken, take place every day. A few days ago Jack Moore, the

taken to Springfield Road barracks where he was assaulted and interrogated for four hours. In hospital he was found to have 'a fractured skull, broken collar-bone, broken ribs and multiple lacerations to his face'. No charges were preferred against Jack; he is not a member of any organisation. The following morning two members of the Central Commit-

tee of Peoples Democracy received similar treatment at the hands of the Paras, again at Springfield Road barracks. Said Fergus O'Hare, one of the PD members assaulted, 'Far from being an isolated or unusual incident this is the treatment being meted out daily to the people of anti-Unionist working class areas. While we were in Springfield Road, two other men were receiving the same, if not worse, treatment. The situation is rapidly approaching the peak of brutality reached in August 1971.'

For Fergus O'Hare there is only one answer to the Paras' brutality, and that is to get the British Army out of Ireland, and to do it now.

The family the Army is trying to destroy

THE LENNON FAMILY live in Andersonstown, Belfast. Like so many other families in Ireland they have been on the receiving end of the British Army jackboot since 1969. Mrs Lennon has long since given up counting the times her home has been raided. In July

1972 she was alerted by a note dropped through her letter box. Opening the door she saw four British soldiers running away. The note was a death threat to her son Danny. It stated there was a £50 reward on his head. Mrs Lennon made a formal com-

plaint and was subsequently visited by a Major who assured her that the guilty soldier had been 'put in the glass-house'.

In the years that followed there was constant intimidation of every member of the family. Mrs Lennon can remember her sons being 'screened' as many as ten times a day. Threats to kill the Lennons were made by both British soldiers and RUC Special Branch.

GHOULISH

In August last year the British Army fulfilled their promise. A British Army patrol gunned down Danny Lennon in a burst of automatic fire into the back of a car he was driving. The car with a dead driver mowed down three children. Although this tragedy was a direct result of British Army action it was cynically used to trigger off the 'Peace at any Price' Movement. Meanwhile the campaign of intimidation of the Lennon family took a ghoulish form. Sick letters referring to Danny were shoved through the door of the Lennon home. One read: 'I don't know why your son was shooting at the

soldiers anyway, they never wanted to be here in the first place, it was the Catholics who sent for them, we would go home tomorrow if we got the chance.' The soldier who penned the letter tried to give the impression that the writer was a local, but made that fatal slip near the end.

The Monday before Christmas, Danny's brother Sean was arrested. His hands were tied with electric flex and he was put through a long series of interrogation ordeals. Despite threats to shoot him or to 'turn him over to the Ulster Freedom Fighters', Sean refused to sign fabricated statements. He was nevertheless charged with 'possessing weapons' at some previous date. This is what is known as a 'holding charge', a procedure which is no less than 'legalised internment'. One man has been in Long Kesh on a holding charge for two years.

BEATEN

British Army attention has now turned to the remaining two Lennon brothers Ciaran (18) and Damien (15). Ciaran's first arrest, during the present phase of harassment, came in

the week following Danny's death. He was taken into a British fort and forced to look at the bullet riddled car in which his brother had been slain. Then he was verbally abused and brutally beaten. Since then he has been threatened on numerous occasions and asked, 'How's Danny keeping?'

ALOOF

Damien was recently arrested, his hands tied, then beaten up and his coat torn from his back. When released he was told he would be charged with 'assaulting a soldier'. Just after Christmas one of the Lennon sisters was arrested and held for four hours.

The 'Peace' leaders remain aloof from this suffering for which they have direct responsibility. Betty Williams, commenting on the Queen's Christmas Speech, said, 'She was speaking from the heart with a family of her own.' Mrs Lennon speaks for the vast majority of nationalist mothers when she says to the British Army: 'Go home, leave us alone to live our lives in peace.'

10 good reasons why you should give to the IMG Fund Drive.....

Standing Order Authority form with fields for TO, Dear Sirs, A/C to be debited, Payee, At, Sorting Code No., and a table for First Payment Due, Last Payment Due, Amount, Frequency.

- 1. BECAUSE 154 comrades of the Spanish sympathising section of the Fourth International were arrested in the Basque country.
2. BECAUSE five factories came out on strike to free them.
3. BECAUSE of the rising tide of liberation struggles in Southern Africa.
4. BECAUSE the Fourth International is launching the biggest solidarity campaign since Vietnam, in solidarity with the black African masses.
5. BECAUSE the National Front is standing 318 candidates in the next election.
6. BECAUSE the IMG will be fighting for the broadest possible unity of left forces to fight back against the racist propaganda of the
8. BECAUSE the IMG is one of the major forces in building the NAC Tribunal.
9. BECAUSE the ruling class is forcing down the living standards of the working class.
10. BECAUSE the IMG and Red Weekly are planning a massive expansion of their resources in order to be able to fight more effectively for the broadest possible unity of all those in struggle.
AND because we are in danger of not meeting our January target unless a big effort is made this week to get your donations in. Next week we will print a list of all the donations we have received from our supporters and branches up and down the country. But we need to raise £2,500 per month to meet our May target. Come on comrades and friends, five days left to reach our January target. Rush your donations and



This cartoon is taken from Troops Out, the winter edition of the magazine of the Troops Out Movement. The journal contains an interview with the television director Kenneth Griffith on television censorship on Ireland, an article by historian Andrew Boyd on Irish trade unions, a full report of the Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland, and much more. Excellent value at 10p, available from Red Books, 182 Pentonville Road, London N1.

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