

RED WEEKLY

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17 FEBRUARY 1977 No. 187 PRICE 10p

BACK CAR WORKERS' DEMAND-

THROW OUT

CON-TRICK



Photo: DAVE EVANS (IFL)

Last Friday Eric Varley, Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon paid us a visit. Eric Varley told us it was a 'fact finding' mission, but the one 'fact' he was not prepared to discuss was his, Scanlon's and Jones's Social Contract.

Well, the 6,000 who demonstrated against Varley didn't see it that way; for us, the Social Contract was the issue.

Because for two years now the official 'leadership' of the labour movement have cut workers' wages, hospitals, schools and houses in the name of the Social Contract. They have cynically used the traditional loyalty workers have towards a Labour government to pursue policies which are contrary to everything a supposed socialist party stands for.

Well, we at Longbridge have had enough. The signs held up for Varley, Jones and Scanlon to see said, 'Scrap the Social Con-trick'.



The demonstration was necessary because, like millions of others, workers at Longbridge have been denied the right to express their views on what a Labour government and a trade union leadership say they are doing in our name and in our interests. They have tried to sell their rotten policies by holding up the spectre of the return of a Tory government.

That is the biggest con-trick of all. It was not 'greedy' car workers at Longbridge who allowed the Tories to gain sweeping by-election victories; it is not the cuts in our real wages that have caused the week-by-week price rises; it was not us who created the dole queue of two million men and women. It was Varley, Jones, Scanlon and the like — it is their policies which are opening the door for the Tories.

Now they are getting their answer. The working class



By BRIAN HERON, shop steward at British Leyland, Longbridge, and IMG candidate in Stechford by-election

opponents of the Social Contract are not limited to the 'extremists' the Fleet Street press love to witch-hunt; now they number hundreds of thousands.

The opposition to the Tory policies of the Labour Government and the TUC is growing daily. Now it needs to be organised.



to a wage claim which would automatically keep up with inflation is even more graphically illustrated internationally.

In Holland over 30,000 workers in 100 different companies are out on strike, demanding automatic compensation for price rises. The escalating nature of the strike has so frightened the government and the employers that they have now made major concessions to the strikers.

Such accelerating support for a sliding scale is understandable. In periods of high inflation it is the policy which guarantees the maintenance of workers' spending power.

INFLATION

As well as the economic impact of such demands, there is the equally important political impact; because, much more than a simple demand for a wages increase, a sliding scale, coupled with such an increase, places the blame for inflation squarely on the employers and the Government.

The Dutch strikers have demanded that the price index on which the wage rises are based must be worked out by trade unionists.

This is another challenge to the right of the government and the employers to make the economic decisions.

A sliding scale of wages answers Alan Fisher because if it is fought for nationally across different unions it can unite all working people by offering protection to lower and higher paid.

Which is why almost every forthcoming union conference has a demand for a sliding scale of wages placed firmly on the agenda.

A DEMAND TO FIGHT FOR

ALAN FISHER, the oh-so-left talking secretary of the National Union of Public Employees, has called for a halt to the growing campaign to ditch the Social Contract.

Last weekend he appealed to union leaders to 'wait and see what was on offer' before opposing a further year of incomes policy. Fisher argued that a 'free for all' only benefits those 'with the biggest muscle'.

There is no doubt that Fisher's arguments carry some weight. Simply demanding an end to Labour's incomes policy is no answer. Rather, militants need to offer their own 'incomes policy' — a socialist alternative to the Social Contract.

Such an alternative is being offered from Fisher's union. For the forthcoming national conference of NUPE, there are resolutions from four branches — those at Corby and Kettering, St George's Group Hospitals, Hart-

wood Hospital and Camden — demanding some form of 'sliding scale of wages'. And NUPE militants are not alone in pressing for this demand:

For the Representative Council of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, Manchester East Branch has a resolution demanding 'a national wage claim of substantial across-the-board increases, together with a sliding scale of wages which would auto-

matically increase the basic wages of all members at weekly or monthly intervals to keep pace with inflation'. A similar motion has also been passed by the Pendle branch.

For the National Union of Railwaymen conference, a London branch has submitted a motion which calls for the inclusion of a 'cost of living index' in any wage claim.

For the National Union of Teachers conference, East Croydon Association links a demand for an immediate increase of £500 with 'inflation proofing by automatic rises to compensate for increases in the cost of living'.

This increasing support and the depth of the employers' resistance

RALLY FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS 26th FEB

WORKERS OCCUPY, HALT HEALTH CUTS

WEST LONDON hospital workers scored a big success in their fight against Health Service cuts last week.

Joined by industrial workers, including a large delegation from Heathrow Airport, over 250 workers occupied Hounslow Old Town Hall, where the local Area Health Authority was meeting to give the final go-ahead for three more hospital closures in the Hounslow district.

As the AHA began to discuss the cuts, Carl Brecker of NALGO demanded that the assembled workers present their point of view to the meeting. This request was turned down on the grounds that workers 'had been consulted already'. But lobby stewards began to put their case.



CHRIS POTTER — Chairperson Ealing, Hammersmith and Hounslow Union Committee. 'If these cuts go through, women will be forced to stay in the home and give up their jobs to nurse the sick. Our action against the AHA is a big step forward against the cuts.'



BILL GEDDES — Hammersmith Hospital shop steward facing the sack. 'They are going to have to drag me out.' As a divisional council officer he will be going all out to get lay representation on the organising committee for the 11 May day of action. 'It's got to be a massive stoppage.'

of the AHA decision and a guarantee from the AHA chairman that no decision would be taken 'behind closed doors'.

An emergency meeting of the Area stewards committee, which put out the call for the lobby, afterwards decided that all future AHA meetings discussing the closures would be the focus of similar direct action.

The meeting heard from Richard Lugg, Heathrow convenor, who gave the date for a mass meeting of airport workers to listen to the case against the hospital cuts in the area.

STEWARDS

The struggle of two other hospitals, the Hammersmith and West London, represented at the shop stewards meeting will soon be coming to a head.

Workers at the hospitals (who had struck to join the lobby) will now be confronted with 'hard-line' cutbacks, including a call to the AHA to withdraw its commitment to 'no redundancies'.

Management intend to start anyway by sacking two workers in the catering department. One of them is Bill Geddes, chairperson of the local NUPE branch and the Hammersmith Hospital joint shop stewards committee.

STRIKE

Unless the AHA backs down on the request area-wide strike action is likely. We are preparing for this situation in the Hammersmith through regular sectional and mass meetings and will continue the vital

campaign for support in the labour movement.

MOTION

The demand for national strike action is vital to the success of every struggle going on against the cuts. Our branch has passed the following motion which I urge all public sector workers to fight for:

'This branch calls upon NUPE London Division and National Executive Committee to organise a mass lobby of the '17 November Steering Committee' conference (22 March, Central Hall) around the demand that our trade union leaders in the public sector organise a nationally coordinated one day Public Sector General Strike against the cutbacks in the public services.'

This should coincide with the calls already put out by the London Regional Division of NUPE for a Day of Action against the cuts on 11 May.'

ROS BUTLER [NUPE Shop Steward, Hammersmith Hospital].

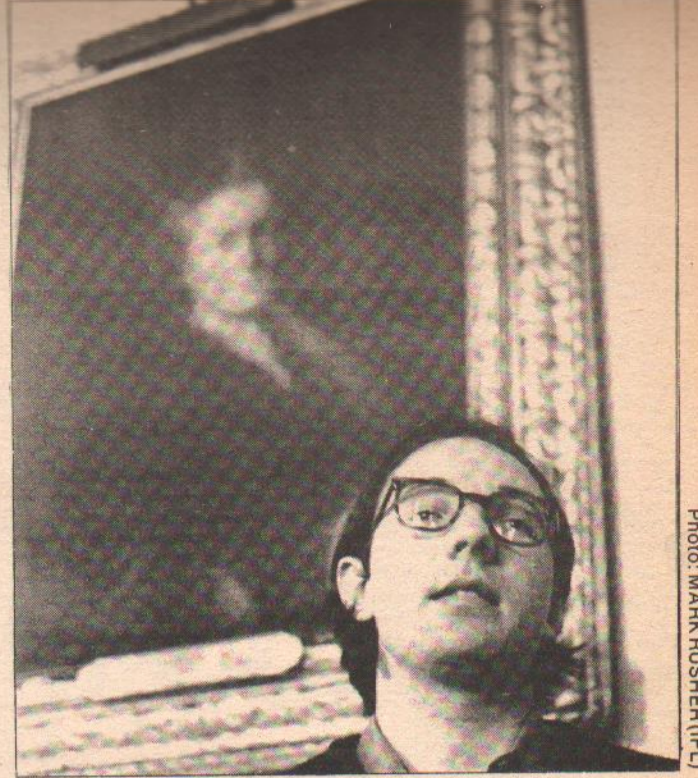


Photo: MARK RUSHER (FL)

Two hundred and twenty delegates attended last Saturday's conference in the boardroom of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson women's hospital, called by the EGA shop stewards committee.

Delegates saw the EGA as one of the major focuses for fighting hospital closures across London, and endorsed the shop stewards' position of refusing to accept any attempt by the Area Health Authority to move in-patients off the site. IMG member Dr. Dominic Costa (above) successfully moved an amendment recommending a campaign for London divisions and national councils of health service unions to call strike action of all their NHS members across London in the event of any such attempt by the AHA. The union leaders should be instructed to convey this decision to all the health authorities covering Greater London.

Frank Dowling, the full-time officer of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs responsible for the EGA, stated that the national executives of these unions were 'fully behind the struggle'. Rank-and-file action through pickets, resolutions, etc. will put the bureaucrats words to the test.

POLICE

The AHA adjourned and members tried to leave to avoid hearing the workers' policies. Only after police had been called in to escort them out was this permitted by the hospital workers, who sealed off the exits.

The demand that the AHA should follow the example of the Clay Cross councillors and refuse to implement the cuts 'won massive applause from the audience. Among those who spoke to the assembly was George Raine, a consultant in the area who would play a key role in maintaining treatment of patients at any possible work-in in the threatened Hounslow hospital.

The outcome of the meeting was at least a temporary postponement

Whose freedom of the press?

ON 17 FEBRUARY the TUC is holding a conference on trade unions and the media, to discuss means of improving coverage on union and industrial issues. The conference has come about as a result of a resolution initiated by the IMG and narrowly carried at last year's National Union of Journalists conference.

The NUJ called for a labour movement conference on press freedom. Needless to say, the TUC has interpreted this to mean a meeting of union executives and officials, together with industrial correspondents.

In spite of this, the hostility that exists to the mass media at all levels of the movement can be expected to surface at the conference. But it is not enough to deplore the media's bias. Journalists Charter and the IMG are therefore handing out the following leaflet at the TUC conference on Thursday:

'Few here today will consider that press freedom in Britain presently exists as anything other than the private fiefdom of the mass media's proprietors, managers and editors.

With an editorial standpoint confined by a narrow political spectrum, the media bosses are determined to maintain the status quo. They exercise their 'freedom' to deride and wherever possible derail any policies or actions that could mean a shift towards social-

ism. That the proprietors, managers and editors consider that their press freedom is less than secure is evidenced by their alarm over the journalists' post-entry closed shop, and the action taken by printworkers when their right of reply is denied.

We believe that certain positive steps can be taken now to break the stranglehold of the media bosses, and begin to establish real press freedom.

The National Union of Journalists' Code of Conduct provides valuable standards for press freedom, and is backed by disciplinary powers. The Code is an implicit indictment of much that appears in the mass media, and NUJ members are now beginning to insist that it is collectively implemented, particularly in relation to the media's racism.

The NUJ will need the full support of the labour movement if this is to be achieved. The Code should therefore be widely publicised in the movement, so that trades unionists know what is expected of journalists, and are encouraged, for example, to demand a right of reply when unfairly attacked. Bodies such as Trades Councils should be encouraged to hold meetings with

journalists to discuss the Code and its implementation.

While there is a growing demand for wider access to the 'mass' media, the dictates of capitalist financing now threaten even the present limited range of products. New technology, which can potentially enhance production, is instead being used to axe jobs in order to boost profits.

The labour movement should demand and fight for full protection for jobs and conditions in the media industry, and the creation of new publications for use by the movement and the community. A mass labour movement daily paper is a priority. Any company which cannot meet these requirements should be nationalised without compensation and placed under workers control.

The fourth TV channel should be placed at the full disposal of the labour movement. All legal restrictions on establishing radio and TV stations should be immediately abolished. In Italy, for example, over two hundred local radio stations are in operation, many of them run jointly by left-wing organisations with mass audiences. The British laws against air 'piracy' serve only to enforce the existing rigid monopoly and control of the mass media.

A socialist conception of press freedom holds as central the use of the media as a forum for debate.

Trade union journalists should provide a model for this. Editors of these journals should be regularly elected so that editorial policies are not constrained by any bureaucratic interests.'

MAIN ITEMS OF NUJ CODE OF CONDUCT

* A journalist shall at all times defend the principle of the freedom of the Press and other media in relation to the collection of information and the expression of comment and criticism. He/she shall strive to eliminate distortion, news suppression and censorship.

* A journalist shall strive to ensure that the information he/she disseminates is fair and accurate, avoid the expression of comment and conjecture as established fact and falsification by distortion, selection or misrepresentation.

* A journalist shall promptly rectify any harmful inaccuracies, ensure that correction and apologies receive due prominence and afford the right of reply to persons criticised when the issue is of sufficient importance.

* A journalist shall not originate material which encourages discrimination on grounds of race, colour, creed



Sister Stella Roe, Branch Secretary of Ealing and Hounslow NUPE Nurses, addresses the assembled workers after most members of the Area Health Authority had chosen to adjourn rather than hear the case against cuts.

★ JOBS ACTION

Thousands of workers in the telecommunications industry on the march in London on Monday. National strike action organised by the Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunications and Plumbing Union won the support of engineering staffworkers and members of the Transport & General Workers Union.

They were protesting against the threatened loss of anything up to 20,000 jobs in the industry due to cutbacks in Post Office orders to the industry.

Action against job loss will in the future have to confront the militant support of Frank Chapple, the EETPU leader, for the Social Contract by demanding: 'Against the...'



IN FOCUS

Grunwick strikers up against the law

The Arbitration, Conciliation and Advisory Service have come out in favour of the strikers at Grunwick. They are recommending recognition of the union [APEX] and have also stated that those in dispute are employees on strike, despite management's attempt to sack them.

The dispute was referred to ACAS during the strike, which has been going on for 25 weeks. The demands of the strikers are primarily for union recognition and for improved working conditions (i.e. an increase in the basic wage of £25 and £28, and no compulsory overtime).

The struggle poses key questions for the whole of the labour movement in that the strike at Grunwick could and can challenge the Labour Government's adherence to anti-working class law.

UPROAR

It is this law that caused the uproar when the Union of Post Office Workers wanted to stop all communications to and from South Africa for one week. The 1953 Post Office Act was invoked against them after such friends of South Africa and Grunwick management as the National Association For Freedom (NAFF) and the High Court Judges had canvassed vigorously for prosecution. For, sometime before the South African debacle, the UPW had blacked the mail to Grunwicks and, since the firm is a mail-order film-processing business, this was crucial for the success of the strike.

The NAFF took out a High Court injunction against the UPW, whose General Secretary, Tom Jackson, using the fact that ACAS had been called in as an excuse, backed down. This retreat was against the wishes of its members at the local sorting depot in Willesden. That was at the beginning of November. In January ACAS delayed their findings (which are only recommendations and carry no weight in law) for one month. This is hardly an academic point when you've been on the picket lines in freezing conditions for over 20 weeks already.

The ACAS findings, favourable though they are, are no substitute for working class action. The Grunwick strikers' union, the Association of Professional, Executive and Clerical Workers (APEX), are now rushing off to have talks with the employers. But there is no guarantee that Grunwicks will abide by the recommendations.

For the bosses ACAS has been just another attempt to dissipate the strike's militancy. The Grunwick strikers do not have any illusion in government bodies like ACAS but because of hesitancy on the part of some of the union leaders they have had to wait until ACAS reported.

LEADERSHIP

In particular, the central responsibility for the prolongation of the strike lies on the shoulders of the APEX leadership. Following setbacks they have no longer relied on the strength of the strikers and working class action to bring about a decisive defeat for Grunwick bosses. Now they are happy to play along with arbitration procedures as a substitute. They have given out good strike pay and vans for travelling round the country but they are not prepared to challenge the law, or even to put pressure on either Tom Jackson or the TUC to fight against it.

The responsibility for stopping the work still going on at Grunwicks lies squarely on the shoulders of APEX. They must act to stop the mail going in. In addition, the fact that ACAS received a petition from employees still working inside the factory saying they supported the union, despite management duress, shows that what is effectively scabbing can be halted. To do either of these things depends on APEX organising and involving the whole of the labour movement, both locally and nationally. As the Strike Committee says: 'Instead of talking with the Tory backers of Grunwick and the NAFF, the leaders of our movement should combine to stop the company's mail order and all other services.'

For this strike nails the lie that black workers are not prepared to organise. As with the Pentonville 5, Shrewsbury and recently Trico, the question is asked as to whose side the law is on.

The whole trade union movement knows that workers have had to fight — sometimes bloodily — for every right they have. Now a small group of ultra-right wingers are limiting those rights (the strikers are picketing chemist shops on Saturdays and NAFF have found a law that makes that illegal!). It is vital to challenge anti-working class law, and the Labour government in particular, to demand that the government changes the law and repeals the 1953 Post Office Act.

The most effective way of ensuring that the government takes up this demand is to show through strong solid working class action that the labour movement is prepared to fight this reactionary law by any means necessary.

For, again in the words of the Strike Committee: 'If the commitment of our movement to the end of exploitation and the fight against racialism means anything, we cannot be allowed to be isolated and defeated, a defeat which would be a severe set-back for the whole movement and for the confidence of black workers in it.'

(For donations etc. contact Secretary of Strike Committee, Mahmood Ahmad, c/o Brent Trades and Labour Hall, 375 High Road, London NW10.)

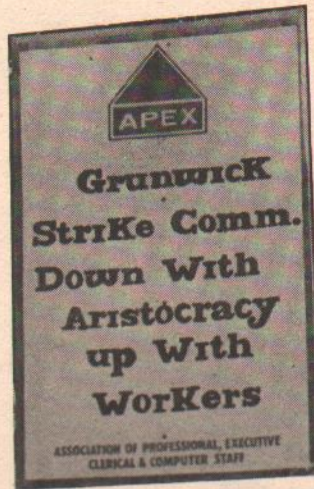


Photo: ANDREW WARD (Report)

ABOVE: Grunwick women strikers in discussion. A meeting last week, organised by the Grunwick Strike Committee, Brent Trades Council, and the local Working Women's Charter Group, decided to support the Rally on Women's Rights. They will jointly organise a stall, and send a contingent of 30 strikers.

BELOW: Grosvenor House Hotel workers on the march in Sheffield last Saturday. Like the Grunwick workers, they face a NAFF-backed management. Like the Grunwick workers, they are supporting the 26 February Rally on Women's Rights. Find out why on page 4.



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

AUEW - no waiting for Wright

THE LINES are now being drawn inside the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers for a battle over the election of a new President to replace Hugh Scanlon, who retires next year. Like the elections for General Secretary in the Transport and General Workers Union, these elections will focus on the fate of the Social Contract.

The tone of the right-wing campaign was set by their national meeting in Leeds two weeks ago. John

would leave him unable under union rules to defend his current position as General Secretary — leaving it open to the left and a 'Communist takeover'.

Instead Terry Duffy, who last year defeated Bob Wright in the Executive Committee elections, will be running for the right wing on a platform of supporting the Government's Tory policies and a good deal of red-baiting.

The campaign, which will be

particular the Broad Left, breaks with its past practice of dodging the central issue in the union — that of organising a fight-back against the Social Contract.

In this respect the national Broad Left meeting held in Birmingham on 6 February was not a hopeful sign.

Around 300 people attended the conference, the first national conference of the Broad Left in several years. Whilst the whole tone of the meeting — opened by a speech from Bob Wright — was one of opposition to the Social Contract and a third phase of incomes policy, the loudness of the attacks on the Social Contract was only matched by silence on how to organise against it.

Some delegates tried to move a resolution from Birmingham Broad Left, calling for a lobby of the forthcoming National Committee of the union in opposition to the Social Contract. The chairperson denied this 'liberty' of putting resolutions on the grounds it would sow 'divisions'.

What these divisions were had been revealed more clearly by Hugh Scanlon's speech. After having fought might and main to force the Social Contract down his members' throats for two years, he was not surprisingly opposed to even a lobby of the National Committee.

ceptance!

The Broad Left leadership prefers to gloss over these not unimportant differences, like Les Dixon who, summing up from the platform, said: 'Let's not go into the reasons why the movement (i.e. the 'left' leaders) didn't respond to the imposition of the Social Contract up to now'.

There is no indication that Wright, let alone Scanlon, is going to do anything to fight the Social Contract now. Wright's left talk on the Social Contract, and the reviving of local Broad Lefts and a Broad Left paper, are going to capture no-one's imagination if limited to electioneering.

This is especially the case when the Broad Left calls, as it does in its *Engineers Bulletin*, for an end to the Social Contract and the implementation of Labour's election manifesto — the core of which is the Social Contract.

Only when the left shows itself willing to fight for alternative policies to the Social Contract, and not wait for 'lefts' like Wright, will it be able to defeat the likes of Duffy and Boyd.

That is why a fight for the union to submit a national pay claim which can make good Scanlon's wage cuts of the last two years is so important.

THE WITCH-HUNT launched by the right-wing Labour bureaucrats in collaboration with their allies in the capitalist press has put to the test all those who consider themselves on the left of the labour movement.

Tribune has defended Andy Bevan, and the right of mandatory reselection of MPs — the two bug-bears of the right wing. Its editor, Richard Clements, writes in the current issue that: 'One thing is certain: expulsions, witch-hunts and the rest of that nonsense is not on'.

But *Tribune* has not been able to answer the political offensive of the right wing against the 'Trots'. That paper and the left MPs who support it have failed to confront the right head-on. Because the only answer to the charge of infiltration is to defend the right of all working class tendencies and organisations to affiliate to the Labour Party. It is a denial of democracy that socialists should be forced to hide their political colours in the Labour Party.

Richard Clements himself refers to: '... the inevitable differences which occur in a party which is seeking to argue its way towards a radical change in our society'.

But he fails to draw the obvious conclusion that only by allowing people to organise around their political positions within the Labour Party and ensuring democratic debate can different strategies get an adequate hearing, and the correct course be decided on.

This failure to defend the democratic organisation of the left opens the door to Labour's right wing, who have been quick to use organisational measures against their opponents. Shirley Williams has tried to equate the Stalinist suppression of democratic rights in the Soviet Union with the contempt in which Trotskyism allegedly holds democracy.

But it is Williams and her right-wing co-thinkers who share with the Soviet bureaucracy the method of slander and witch-hunt when unable to answer their opponents' politics.

But *Tribune*, by failing to defend democratic organisation in the Labour Party, cannot confront this argument. In fact the vacillation of Richard Clements has fuelled its fire: 'So there are two questions to be asked. First, do the Trotskyist organisations which are in the Labour Party — if they are in the Labour Party — still adhere to the basic Trotskyist theory that parties similar in nature to the Labour Party should be destroyed... Secondly, if they do not, do they still use a "discipline" against their followers which is over and above the rules and constitution of the Labour Party?'

It does not take Clements to ask such questions. Under democratic Party Constitution, Shirley Williams, Harold Wilson and many others have already done so. Rather than line up alongside these elements, *Tribune* should rather unconditionally proclaim: end all bans and proscriptions!

But there is a far more important reason why *Tribune* has been unable to answer the right wing. It is because *Tribune* and the left MPs share and have always shared with the right wing the notion that Parliament is the institution through which democratic rights can be protected and the principal arena in which the struggle for socialism is conducted.

But such ideas are simply bogus. Their commitment to 'Parliamentary democracy' stems from their desire to serve the interests of capital. The right wing know this full well. An Education Minister, Shirley Williams has been responsible for the decision to close down 92 teacher training colleges by 1981, and for policies which have led to 30,000 teachers on the dole. Why? Not because she thirsts after higher and higher unemployment, but because to do otherwise would be to pursue policies against the interests of the capitalists.

Yesterday's left winger and today's *Tribune* in right-wing Labour Government, Michael Foot, has taken the road of Shirley Williams — implement cuts, reduce wages, increase unemployment and join the witch-hunt to ensure the minimum of resistance by trade unionists and Labour Party members.

And what advice would *Tribune* give? Any attempt to legislate radical measures to solve the crisis in the interest of workers would meet the obvious hurdles of a boycott by the International Monetary Fund and Labour's own precarious Parliamentary position. If that was surmounted then as Jack Jones has pointed out, the ruling class will resort to coups, as they did in Chile. Where does the Parliamentary road lead to then?

Tribune is disarmed in the face of a frontal assault by Labour's right wing. It has no alternative but to line up politically alongside Williams's parliamentary road. Having done so, they not only fail to defend the far left from the right wing leadership's axe but put themselves forward for the chop. Remember that in the witch-hunt against Trotskyists in the 1950s, a motion to expel Aneurin Bevan was lost on the NEC by only one vote!

Socialist Commentary, the magazine associated with Labour's right wing, has just started to prepare tomorrow's fight with its call for a 'clear out' of the NEC allowing *Tribune* supporters 'their proper place in the party... as a minority element'. The article goes on: 'A good rule of thumb would be that *Tribune* types should have about a quarter of the places in party institutions!'

• Next week we will examine the position of the Militant newspaper.

CONFERENCE ON WAGE CONTROL

called by

CAMPAIGN FOR DEMOCRACY
IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

SUNDAY 27 MARCH, BIRMINGHAM

FAR LEFT UNITY & ELECTIONS

THE STECHFORD BY-ELECTION sees the simultaneous standing of two candidates who totally oppose the anti-working class policies of the Labour Government. These are Brian Heron of the International Marxist Group and

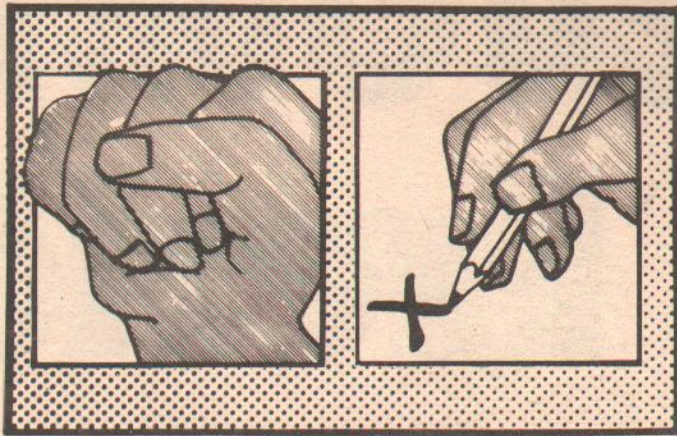
Ken Appleby of the Socialist Workers Party (International Socialists).

This clash is not of the IMG's choosing but is an unfortunate by-product of the sectarianism of the SWP. The IMG wrote to the

SWP, then the IS, five months ago attempting to avoid a situation of a clash of extreme left candidates, and seeking to arrive at an electoral agreement with the SWP regarding standing in elections.

The IMG proposed an agreement both to avoid clashes of constituencies between the SWP and the IMG at the next general election and in by-elections.

This was in line both with the needs of the class struggle in Britain and with the developing situation in Europe whereby forces of the extreme left have been able to overcome sectarianism and present united action in elections — as for example in Italy, with the 'Proletarian Democracy' slate of the extreme left, and the electoral agreement in France between the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire, Lutte Ouvriere and the Organisation Communiste des Travailleurs.



organisations to the left of the Labour Party contesting the same seats and a continuing clash between the SWP and the IMG at by-elections.

in getting socialist answers to the present crisis over to the largest possible layers of the working class.

Such clashes discredit the revolutionary left and do not succeed

In order to demonstrate clearly where the responsibility for the

clash in Stechford lies, and to urge the SWP to change its discrediting and sectarian policies, we print here the two letters sent by the IMG to the SWP in relation to the Stechford by-election and the coming general election.

In order to see the sectarianism of the SWP in perspective we need only compare the electoral agreement between the organisations of the French left which we print on the following pages. This agreement means that in every major constituency in France the workers movement will be able to vote for a revolutionary and class struggle alternative to the Socialist and Communist Parties. This is a major step forward for the revolutionary left.

A similar agreement in Britain between the SWP, the IMG and other forces of the extreme left would mobilise major resources, support and enthusiasm for a socialist alternative to the policies of the Labour Government.

The IMG would put major resources into such a campaign and a combined effort of the revolutionary left would have far greater impact than could be achieved by any of the organisations of the extreme left separately. We hope that the SWP will still reconsider its course and take up the proposals of the IMG.

To: International Socialists. 14.9.76
Dear comrades,

At its meeting of 5 September, the IMG Political Committee decided to run Tariq Ali* as a candidate in the Stechford by-election. Understanding that there was a possibility that the IS might be considering running a candidate in this constituency, and wishing to avoid a clash not in the best interests of revolutionaries, Brian Grogan contacted your national office on Monday 6 September and spoke to a member of your executive to indicate our willingness to discuss a way to avoid a clash on this and future occasions.

To expedite this, we indicated in *Red Weekly* this decision to stand only provisionally. Comrade Grogan was informed that you would be taking no decision on running until the weekend of 11-12 September.

We note, however, in *Socialist Worker* dated 11 September, that you announce that K. Appleby will be standing as IS candidate in Stechford. This will create the unfortunate situation where two revolutionary left candidates will be standing in the same constituency — a situation which will weaken the left in the face of the Labour Party and the fascist National Front.

We consider this would be an extremely undesirable situation and would propose a meeting of representatives of our two leaderships to discuss this situation as a matter of extreme urgency.

Fraternally, Brian Grogan (National Secretary, International Marxist Group).

* Tariq Ali was forced to withdraw for personal reasons and the IMG put forward Brian Heron, a Longbridge shop steward.

TO: International Socialists 23.9.76
Dear Comrades,

Since the election of the Labour Government, we have seen a growing passivity within the working class at a time of continuing unemployment, inflation, cuts, and a decline in the standard of living of the working class and various petty bourgeois layers. The TUC-Labour Government compact has been the most expressive symbol of this passivity.

Within the Labour Party itself, while some opposition has emerged at the constituency level, the total integration of the Tribunites in the Government has meant that an organised left social-democratic challenge to the Government (even of the Victory for Socialism variety) is not on the agenda.

The total inability of the 'lefts' to organise a fightback and the aggressive determination with which Jack Jones has defended the Government has without doubt created further demoralisation in the working class, symbolised by the massive abstentions in the Rotherham and Thurrock by-elections.

At the same time, both our organisations have noted a big rise in support for the fascists expressed in votes in local elections and the last two by-elections. These votes are higher than those gained by the Communist Party nationally and locally and reflect the impact which fascist and racist propaganda is having at the moment. Neither the Labour Party nor the Communist Party have been able to deal effectively with this challenge from the far right.

Alongside this a vanguard has emerged both inside and outside the mass organisations which has drawn some lessons from the betrayals of the left reformists and Stalinists. An electoral campaign by the far left and class struggle leaders would have a real chance of expressing the needs of this vanguard and presenting the possibility of an alternative perspective and fightback against the Labour Government's attacks.

We have noticed from your press and declarations that you have decided to embark on an electoral campaign. In our opinion this could be a positive step, if oriented to expressing the class struggle aspirations of the oppositional currents inside and outside of the mass organisations.

We believe that a united far left pole fielding between 100-150 candidates would be able to have a certain impact during the next general election. We are aware that you are the largest organisation on the far left with all that implies vis-a-vis of apparatus, resources, etc.

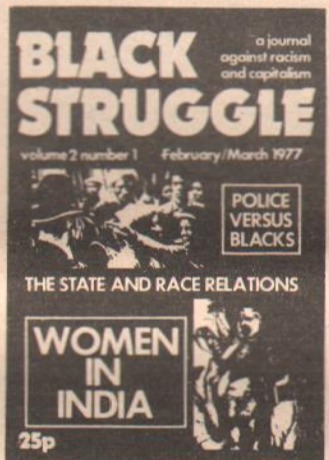
We are also aware that you are capable of putting up over 50 candidates on your own, but we believe that a united pole will have much greater possibility of demonstrating in practice to the practitioners of the parliamentary road to socialism (i.e. the CP) that the far left, even on this front, is capable of getting more votes than them.

Furthermore, in a situation where there are 50 IS candidates and 30 IMG candidates, in dozens of places, against each other, would tend to make the revolutionary movement look ludicrous and divided before the working class vanguard. A united campaign would in addition enable us to wage a really effective fund drive to raise money for 150 deposits from sources at present unsympathetic because of the divisiveness which exists on the far left in general. Fraternally, B. Grogan (National Secretary, International Marxist Group).

SECTARIAN

Unfortunately the present sectarian course of the SWP placed the needs of their organisation above the best interests of the working class and the revolutionary movement. The SWP leadership refused all approaches for avoiding clashes at the next general election and at the coming by-elections — refusing even to reply to the proposals of the IMG.

The result of this situation can be at the next general election the unnecessary one of two different



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Photo: LAURENCE SPANHAM (IFL)

SEVEN COLLEGES are occupied in opposition to increases in overseas students' tuition fees. On Saturday over 150 militants from 45 colleges met to discuss the broadening of the campaign. Two thirds of those present were overseas students and the militant mood of these students was reflected in the lively discussions that took place.

Tariq Ali led off a discussion on racism and Andy Durgan and Trevor Phillips spoke on the role of the NUS Executive in the campaign.

The complete lack of a viable strategy on the part of the National Executive was clearly shown by Trevor Phillips' comments. He opposed raising the demand for opposition to the fees increases on the basis that the winning of such a demand would in effect cut colleges' financial resources.

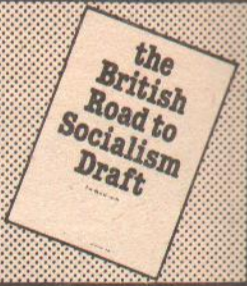
Instead he argued for a policy of demanding the waiving of fees for self-supporting students, a strategy

that both isolates the militants and fails to place the attack in its proper context, as part and parcel of the government's cutbacks.

Despite coming out in favour of widespread direct action in opposition to the fees increases, the conference failed to adopt a strategy whereby such national action could be organised. The unevenness of the militancy in different colleges was not adequately understood, hence proposals to use the colleges already occupied to spearhead support for national action and to establish rank and file co-ordination of the struggle were voted down by the meeting.

What the conference did do was to give the lie to those who are arguing that students will not be prepared to launch a fight back. Local and national co-ordination will be crucial to turning that militancy into a real weapon of struggle in the coming weeks.

Trotskyists Answer



THE PUBLICATION of the new draft of *The British Road to Socialism* this month was heralded with a fanfare of articles and statements in the Communist Party's press.

The draft's own introduction explains that:

'Since the last edition was published in 1968 there have been big changes in Britain and the world. To take account of these changes, and draw the lessons from them, this new edition of *The British Road to Socialism* has been prepared.'

However, one thing that has not changed since 1968 is the continued decline of the Communist Party of Great Britain in influence and membership.

According to the CP's own figures, its membership has decreased from 32,916 in 1967 to 28,543 in 1975. Over the same period, as young people were to form the backbone of the organisations of the far left, the membership of the Young Communist League declined from 5,642 to 2,300 and by September 1976 had collapsed to under 2,000.

DOWN

Circulation of the *Morning Star* is going down, and the CP's electoral performance fell from

CPGB's strategy and tactics is on the agenda. Lenin made the point:

'A political party's attitude towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it fulfils in practice its obligations towards its class and the working people. Frankly acknowledging a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the conditions that have led up to it, and thrashing out the means of its rectification — that is the hallmark of a serious party; that is how it should educate and train its class, and then the masses.*'

LEADERSHIP

But from the outset the CP leadership have announced that the discussion leading to the production of a revised edition of *The British Road* will not correspond to Lenin's dictum.

The fourth line of the draft states that:

'All that has happened in the years since 1951 [the date of publication of the first edition] has confirmed the need for Britain to take the new path outlined in our programme...'

The leadership has spoken. The central strategy outlined in 1951 was correct, and just needs to be

traditions of a Stalinist party, the CPGB will suppress this Leninist democratic right to organise tendencies and factions inside the party to fight for alternative political courses.

REGIME

The CPGB has criticised the witch-hunt launched by the Labour leaders, but themselves maintain an inner party regime which will make the Labourites appear democratic in comparison.

Gone is Lenin's idea of an internal democracy, 'the hallmark of a serious party'. Gone is what Lenin considered to be an 'essential condition of the Bolsheviks' success', 'a fundamental feature of our revolution (that has) a significance that is not local, or Russian alone, but international' — namely 'absolute centralisation and rigorous-discipline in the proletariat' produced by, amongst other factors, 'the most rigorous and truly iron discipline in our party'.

The Stalinists have obliterated this notion of democratic centralism. In its place they have substituted the limited freedom of certain individuals to express themselves in the pages of *Comment*, their fortnightly journal. Lenin understood the centrality

years. The Stalinists have substituted the internal regime of the Labour Party and international social democracy for that of the Bolsheviks.

The resolution passed at the 34th national congress of the CP in

November 1975 reads:

'Congress instructs the executive committee to initiate and facilitate the widest possible debate within the party and the labour movement with a view to the adoption of a revised edition of *The British Road*

to Socialism at the 35th national congress.'

This instruction will not be followed. The 'widest possible debate' is not possible without the full democratic rights of the membership.

But many advanced workers and youth still regard the Communist Party as the authentic voice of Marxism in Britain today. They will be impressed by the still superior organisational weight of the CPGB over the far left organisations despite the growth of the latter and the decline of the CP.

They will be unsure of the many references to 'socialist revolution' in the draft and confused as to whether this marks a real change of line based on the lessons of the last years. They will give the debate in the pages of *Comment* and the *Morning Star* the credibility which the CPGB claims for it.

So, over the next few weeks, *Red Weekly* will be taking up some of the central ideas of the draft. A critique of the CP's attitude towards Parliament, on the struggle for women's liberation, on the Labour Party and trade unions, on the transition to socialism is vital to the elaboration of a revolutionary strategy.

Red Weekly will be making its own contribution on these and other questions, and we invite

the British Road to Socialism Draft

for discussion

Revolutionary French Municipal

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS will take place throughout France on 17 March. These elections are especially important this year and will serve as a political test of the state of the confrontation between the right and the left parties, the latter grouped behind the Common Programme of the Union de la Gauche [Union of the Left], the bloc composed of the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, and Left Radical politicians.

The right has been in a minority since the last cantonal elections, which were held in March 1976. The political crisis is intensifying day by day and has now led to a break between the two components of the

presidential majority: the Gaullist Jacques Chirac and President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. The only solution the workers parties are offering in the face of the government's austerity plan and the growing discontent of the workers is to patiently wait for the results of the municipal elections and then, above all, for the results of the parliamentary elections in 1978.

To the great mass of workers the Union de la Gauche appears as the only credible alternative. It is in this context that three revolutionary organisations — the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire [LCR — Revolutionary Communist League, French Section of the Fourth International], Lutte

Ouvrière [Workers Struggle] and the Organisation Communiste des Travailleurs [OCT — Communist Workers Organisation] — have just signed a 'pact of alliance', the text of which we are publishing below.

This pact should enable revolutionaries for the first time to present in a united manner an alternative to the policy of the parties that claim allegiance to the Common Programme. The accord was concluded on clear bases: first, unequivocal denunciation of the Common Programme, a programme of class collaboration which places itself within the framework of bourgeois institutions; second, a call for the centralisation of struggles

against the austerity plan around a platform of unifying demands; third, an initiative of unity toward the CP and SP, which is concretized in a call for a vote for their candidates on the second round of the elections. [French elections are held in two rounds. If no candidate for a given post wins an absolute majority on the first round, a run-off is held between two candidates in a second round.]

To be sure, many disagreements continue to exist among these three organisations. But the unity that has been achieved will not fail to generate great interest, not just in France but in the European far left as a whole.

(Translation by Inprecor)

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS which has lasted for two years now, far from moving towards resolution, is instead getting worse. Inflation has scarcely slowed down, despite the Barre plan's claim to have frozen prices for three months. Unemployment is spreading. Thousands of lay-offs are still being announced, in the steel industry for example.

The employers are openly and cynically demanding the right to lay off whomever they want. It may be that in the coming months the number of unemployed in the country will no longer be one million — a figure that appeared enormous two or three years ago, but has been a reality for a year and a half now — but two million. Through the Barre plan, the present government has thrown its full weight into the balance to make the workers pay for the crisis. It has openly given employers the green light to lay workers off. It has decreed a wage freeze for the coming year. And, setting an example itself, it has annulled the so-called contracts for progress which had more or less guaranteed that wages in the public and nationalised sectors would follow rising prices, although with much delay.

Nevertheless the government and the president of the republic himself are facing increasing dissent, and even discredit. This is true even within the ruling majority. The resignation of former Prime Minister Jacques Chirac was a good illustration of this. The various formations of the majori-

ty are tossing obstacles in one another's paths, trying to trip one another up. With the creation of the RPR (Rassemblement pour la République — Rally for the Republic, the new Gaullist organisation), a portion of the right is seeking the means through which to evade responsibility for the economic crisis and the policy of the government; it is preparing an alternative.

There is a constant possibility of a political crisis which could lead at any moment to a government crisis, dissolution of parliament, and the calling of early legislative elections, even if neither Giscard, nor the major right-wing politicians, nor even Chirac wants it. In face of such an anti-working class offensive, the defence of the most immediate interests of the working class and the popular masses requires a united response of all the workers, who must counterpose their demands to the claims of the austerity plan of the employers and the government. All the organisations and all militants concerned about the defence of the interests of the workers should take part in such a response:

- **Against the spread of unemployment,** we say no to lay-offs. We demand jobs for all through a massive reduction in the work week (to 35 hours) and an increase in the number of workers.

- **Against factory shutdowns,** we demand that not a single worker be laid off, not a single factory closed, maintenance of all

jobs. When private employers prove incapable of guaranteeing the jobs of the workers, we demand the nationalisation of the enterprise by the state with no compensation and no resale to the capitalists, under conditions imposed and controlled by the workers.

- **We reject the wage freeze and the cancellation of wage gains:**

- maintenance of purchasing power, not on the basis of the index of the government, but on the basis of indices worked out by the workers and the trade union organisations;

- substantial and across-the-board wage increases (of at least 300 francs a month);

- no wages less than 2,300 francs a month.

- **We reject the challenging of the social gains that have been won:** for the elimination of personal charges, extension of social security, free health care.

- **We refuse to let our struggles be broken and our organisations repressed by the official or parallel police and the judicial system of the regime and the employers:** for workers self-defence. Fearful of being carried into the government on the basis of a workers mobilisation for their demands, the Communist and Socialist parties, with the support of the leaderships of the union federations, instead of assembling the workers and their allies in action around such a platform and against the consequences of the crisis and

the present government, are trying to limit and control the workers response. They are essentially devoted to preparing for a parliamentary majority in the framework of the electoral calendar defined by Giscard, if possible without any popular mobilisation. The leaderships of the CGT (Confédération Générale du Travail — General Confederation of Labour) and the CFDT (Confédération Française et Démocratique du Travail — French Democratic Confederation of Labour) are organising days of action but at the same time they are preventing any real coordination or unification of struggles. They back down before any test of strength with the regime.

The CP and the SP are allying themselves with the Left Radicals; they are extending their hand to the left Gaullists. And above all, they are preparing to govern along with Giscard, with full respect for the constitution of 1958. They commit themselves to administering the profit economy; they are thus prepared, once they enter the government, to impose on the working class and the other toiling layers the austerity policy that the right is having difficulty imposing today.

The workers must make no mistake. The Common Programme offers no way out of the crisis, for it does not allow for eliminating the system that causes the crisis. A majority for the Union de la Gauche (Union of the Left) represents neither workers power nor 'the road to socialism'.

Stakes of the municipal elections

THE COMING municipal elections, regardless of attempts to lend them a primarily local significance, appear as a national test and will be considered as such not only by the politicians but also by the workers and popular layers who place their hopes in a change in government.

It is now necessary, without abandoning the field of struggle for the sake of an electoral truce, to defend working class solutions to the crisis during these elections.

We will do this against all the formations of the right, against all those responsible for the anti-worker policy of the present government and its predecessor, but also against the parties of the Union de la Gauche, which reject any policy that would permit the costs of the crisis to be borne by the capitalists and not by the workers and other popular layers. It is not our intention to prevent the CP and SP from conserving or extending their positions in the municipal

elections against the right. We affirm right now that this will determine who we will vote for on the second round of the elections.

The presentation of 'For socialism, for workers power' slates will enable all the workers, all popular voters:

- To say that they have had enough of the right and of politicians in the service of the employers and their state;
- To say that they have firmly decided not

to bear the cost of the crisis and are prepared to fight for this without waiting until 1978, whatever the results of the elections;

- But also to say that they have no confidence in the compromise policy of the parties of the left, and that if these parties enter the government, they are determined not to allow them to carry out the policy of the right as they have done so often in the past.

Defend the interests of the workers in the municipal elections

WE DO NOT PRETEND that life or society can be changed by a city government. The political rights and material resources of the municipal administrations are narrowly limited by the bourgeois state, in which the municipal administration is a cog surrounded by a genuine strait-jacket. The city governments possess no autonomy to speak of. Even in the administration of municipal affairs, the state apparatus subjects the city governments to a control much more powerful than that of the citizens: manifold financial control over the budget, spending, and possibilities of borrowing; thus the city budget is made up of the crumbs the state feels like leaving to the cities. The fight for democracy in the cities thus requires a fight against the bourgeois state apparatus and can achieve success only by replacing the bourgeois state with a state of the workers.

In addition, since Gaullism came to power, the tutelage of the central state over municipal institutions has been strengthened. The budgetary strangling of most cities bears testimony to this. Only the 'right thinking' cities receive significant subsidies from the regime. The limited political independence the cities could have commanded thus tends purely and simply to disappear.

Our participation in the municipal elections therefore does not aim at sustaining the illusion that a city can be transformed into an 'island of socialism' in a state that remains fundamentally bourgeois. Even with revolutionaries at their head, city governments in the context of the present society and institutions would have no greater resources with which to profoundly alter the conditions of the workers. Thus, we refuse to submit ourselves to the logic of

simply managing the city institutions, even 'democratically', a logic which aims solely at reorganising municipal institutions as an integral part of an allegedly 'democratised' bourgeois state.

That said, in our programme we do propose increasing the budgetary resources of the cities in the framework of our general struggle for:

- elimination of the sales tax (VAT);
- a fiscal system essentially directed against the capitalists and those with large incomes.

We will participate in all mobilisations to demand that the state subsidise all the urgent projects which the cities are unable to carry out because of lack of funds. Likewise we support extending the competences of the municipal councils, against the tutelage of the prefectures and the central administration, and against the twofold

function of the mayor as agent of both the state and the city. The mayor's powers must be reduced to those of a simple executive of the municipal council.

But we know that such changes can be achieved only through an overall struggle by the entire toiling population against the bourgeois state. Moreover, this is true even of the limited demand that the cities be reimbursed for the VAT, the battle cry of the parties of the Union de la Gauche.

Nevertheless, it is in the context of the city that the toiling population finds itself confronted by the thousand and one problems that flow from the capitalist organisation of society. It is thus in the context of the city that revolutionaries can demonstrate, deal with, and link together the many aspects of capitalist society's inability to assure a life worthy of men and women for all those who create social wealth.



Striking agricultural workers sell produce to finance their struggle



Workers from Renault factory at F...

Platform for the Municipal Elections



occupy local council meeting, singing the 'Internationale'.

WE INTEND TO CONDUCT THE CAMPAIGN AROUND THE FOLLOWING THEMES:

Develop the possibilities of workers control

Democracy is a fiction today. A genuine municipal democracy would require that the elected representatives of the workers be under the constant control of those who voted for them. It would require permanent participation by the toiling population in all the affairs and decisions of the cities, which in turn requires that they have the time and information with which to do so.

Elected officials should be recallable at any time. But this is not the case today; elected local officials are not recallable by the voters. The mayor himself, once designated for his six-year term, can be removed by the minister of the interior but not by the

municipal council. And the council itself can be censured by the prefect if he decides that any council decision is 'illegal'.

The workers will not be able to radically overturn this situation unless there is a central political change. But it would be possible, beginning right now, for a municipal council that really represented the interests of the workers to place the council and all important municipal decisions under the direct control of the workers and toiling layers of the city. To do this, it would aid the development of organs of struggle and control that include both voters and non-voters, to any and all organisations that

represent the toiling population (trade unions, tenants associations, users of public services, etc.).

These organs, which could take various forms (neighbourhood or local commissions, struggle committees on particular problems, etc.), provided they were genuinely democratic mass bodies, would have the right to propose and control, would have *de facto* power over the questions with which they deal. Revolutionaries would commit the municipal council to respect the decisions of these organs and to submit to their control.

Support the struggles of the workers and the toilers

No municipal government can replace the struggle of the people themselves, but a municipal government that really represents the interests of the toiling population would fully support the struggle of the workers and all the exploited or oppressed layers of the population, in particular women, youth and immigrants.

This implies moral and material support to all the organisations these workers or layers of the population in struggle create democratically: trade unions, committees, various associations. This implies, in addition to financial support to the full extent possible, placing the offices and material resources of the city government at the disposal of these organisations.

★ The municipal government will support striking workers (free services for strikers and their families, canteens, etc.), respecting the decisions made democratically by the workers in struggle.

★ The municipal government will grant all aid to women struggling and organising

against their oppression and double exploitation; it will support and strive to satisfy their essential demands:

— possibility of information on sexuality and contraception for women and men in consultation centres as close as possible to work places and housing areas;

— equal rights and employment possibilities, equal job training and wages with men;

— total freedom of abortion through the development of adequate facilities, staffed by competent personnel, in each hospital;

— complete reimbursement by social security, development of child-care centres and nursery schools with mixed and well-trained personnel and with adequate material facilities;

— free availability of meeting places and discussion halls (women's centres).

★ The municipal government will extend full aid to unemployed workers so that they may come together and struggle. It will support and strive to satisfy their demands (free transportation, unemployment sti-

pendents to all those unemployed); it will facilitate links between employed and unemployed workers in the fight to reduce the workweek and hire unemployed workers. It will strive to force the offices of the national employment agency to remain open permanently so that the unemployed can organise and meet with the workers and trade unions of the factories in the area.

★ The municipal government will strive to foster class solidarity between French and immigrant workers against racism and will ban all racist propaganda in the territory of the city. It will place at the disposal of the immigrant workers material resources enabling them to safeguard their own culture.

★ The municipal government will materially and politically support the workers in uniform, backing their demands and their struggles for the right to organise. It will demand the right of a municipal commission to inspect all barracks.

Defence and extension of democratic rights

A municipal government, even one headed by revolutionaries, would be unable to prevent money from continuing to confer privileges, even in the realm of the expression of ideas. But by genuinely and completely placing its offices and material resources at the disposal of the population, a municipal government representing the interests of the toiling population would considerably alter the present situation.

All the political and trade union organisations of the workers and toiling layers, with no exclusion or restriction, will have the possibility of freely using the offices and means of expression commanded by the

municipal government. They would thus be guaranteed the right of assembly and expression, in reality and not merely in theory. Open to all the population, the city offices (with the aid of permanent posters, open municipal bulletins, etc.) would become a real permanent living forum in which all people could present their problems and attempt to resolve them.

The municipal government will stand on the side of the workers in struggle in opposing the intervention of the official or parallel police of the employers and the regime. In order to effectively oppose police occupations of factories and homes, evictions

and seizures of the property of tenants and immigrant workers, it will foster the development of workers self-defence.

No confidence will be placed in the police, even the local police, in the maintenance of order. We will base ourselves on the collective organisation of the workers. And the municipal government would do everything:

— To alert the population to the police harassment to which youth and immigrants are particularly subject;

— To shed maximum light on the activity of the local repressive organs (police stations, precinct stations, etc.).

Change the conditions of life

The problems that relate to the conditions of life cannot be resolved in the framework of the cities and within the limits of their present material resources. To simultaneously build housing, child-care centres, schools, and hospitals, to be able to staff them with qualified personnel, to establish a comfortable and effective network of mass transportation certainly exceeds the material resources currently at the disposal of municipal governments. Nonetheless, the city budget will be subjected to the control of the entire toiling population; it will be determined in consultation with this population and its organisations.

But regardless of the financial resources that limit its projects, the municipal gov-

ernment will politically and materially support all struggles to improve the living conditions of the population, which are in fact struggles against the state: the fight for free transit, for child-care centres, for adequate public services, against pollution, for health-care centres, for women's centres.

Although it is not possible for the municipal government to construct decent housing for all, it nonetheless can aid in organising the population around this important problem, among others. In order to put an end to the scandal of vacant housing while there are so many ill-housed people or people living in the streets, the municipal government, aided by neighbourhood committees, will make a count of the vacant

housing and the needs of the population.

It will support all occupations of vacant housing. Likewise, supported by neighbourhood committees, all the workers organisations, and tenants associations, it will call upon the entire population to defend workers threatened with eviction or seizure of property and to prevent these incidents, which will rise rapidly given the crisis and unemployment.

Municipal governments in the hands of real representatives of the interests of the workers would be able to aid the struggles of the workers and all the oppressed layers of the population. This would significantly change the conditions under which these struggles unfold.

Second Conference of French Trotskyists

THE SECOND CONGRESS of the Ligue Communiste Révolutionnaire [LCR], French section of the Fourth International, took place in Paris at the end of last month. Held from 27-30 January the conference was widely and sometimes sensationally portrayed in both the far left and bourgeois press as a 'congress of crisis'.

There was only one element of truth in the characterisation. The whole of the far left in France is experiencing serious problems. This is the product of a political situation dominated by the progress of the Union of the Left (the electoral bloc of the Communist Party, Socialist Party and the bourgeois Movement of Left Radicals around the 'Common Programme') and the widespread expectation of its victory in the parliamentary elections in 1978.

PASSIVITY

This expectation, allied to a high level of unemployment, has encouraged a passivity in the working class. Workers ask themselves, why struggle when the regime is finished anyway.

This consciousness is reinforced and promoted by the leaders of the Communist and Socialist parties and the two big union confederations. The reformists have systematically refused to organise a centralised response to the Giscard government's austerity programme (the Barre Plan), or against rising unemployment.

The organisations of the far left are finding it difficult to swim against the tide of these electoral illusions. Consequently, they find themselves with little political weight. But at the same time the far left organisations are more deeply implanted than ever before in the working class, at national union conferences and in the

The French section of the Fourth International, meeting in congress three weeks ago, drew a balance sheet of the problems encountered in two years of growth. RENÉ CHARRON and STEVE POTTER report.

leadership of numerous localised struggles.

So the problems facing the LCR arise in a situation where the organisation has increased the proportion of workers within its ranks and continued to improve its intervention into the trade unions. The Ligue has also experienced a 13 per cent growth in its membership since its last conference two years ago and now numbers 7,000 members and organised sympathisers.

The two main debates at the Second Congress centred on political perspectives in France and party organisation. Four tendencies expressed themselves during the debate (tendencies A, B, D, E). Tendency D represented the positions of the outgoing Central Committee majority. Numerically, the strongest opposition formed around Tendency A.

BLOC

Criticising Tendency D's analysis of the Union of the Left, Tendency A characterised the bloc as a Popular Front and put forward the demand 'For a Government of the Communist Party and Socialist Party without bourgeois



participation'.

Tendency D was not opposed to this demand, and saw the main element of the class collaboration of the Union of the Left not in the inclusion of the Movement of Left Radicals (a very small bourgeois formation), but in its refusal to break with the institutions of the bourgeois state, specifically the Constitution of the Fifth Republic which arose out of the Gaullist coup of 1958.

Further criticisms of Tendency A centred on Tendency D's analysis of how to relate to the workers

breaking with illusions in the leadership of the CP and SP, its policy for the unity of the far left and its united front tactics in relation to the reformist parties.

Tendency B claimed the main problem of the organisation lay in the lack of a high proportion of proletarian cadres and its adaption to the 'new petty bourgeoisie', which is how they characterised salaried layers.

Formed a few weeks before the Congress, Tendency E submitted a series of amendments to the political theses of Tendency D. These

concentrated on 'a lack of precision on the nature of the Union of the Left, on the phenomenon of radicalisation of the working class and on our tactic of the 'workers united front'. On the question of organisation... (Tendency D)... were reduced to technical solutions, which, positive as they might be, would not be effective without a mobilisation of the organisation on this question.'

During the Congress these amendments were accepted by Tendency D and the two tendencies fused on this basis.

in particular, for an expanded number of women and workers to be elected to the Central Committee.

WOMEN

A new factor in the pre-Congress discussion was the appearance of 'work groups', who refused to form tendencies, saying they did not aim to present a global alternative for the LCR. Some women delegates requested rights of tendency for a non-mixed group (exclusively of women comrades). This latter demand was rejected by the Congress.

One of the largest work groups from Brest defended the essential positions of the First Congress of the Ligue, in particular asserting that the organisation of the broad workers vanguard was the precondition for the fight for the workers united front. On the organisational front, they put forward criticisms of the leadership's method of work.

VOTE

On the vote on the political theses, those of Tendency D received 53.5 per cent of the vote, Tendency A 23.5 per cent, Tendency B 4.7 per cent; the various work groups received a total of 10.8 per cent; and there were 7.5 per cent abstentions or no votes. On the organisational theses, Tendency D got just 50 per cent of the vote. Tendency A got 23.4 per cent, Tendency B 4.8 per cent and the amendments of the Brest work group 14.7 per cent.

The Central Committee elected by the Congress included representation of all the tendencies. Of the 60 comrades elected, 15 were women.

FAR LEFT

Large numbers of messages and greetings were received by the Congress from sections of the Fourth International as well as other far left groupings. Enthusiastic applause greeted the addresses of the Lutte Ouvriere and the Organisation Communiste des Travailleurs (lately Revolution!). The LCR has just concluded an electoral pact for the municipal elections with these two organisations (see pages 6-7) under the slogan 'For Socialism, for Workers Power'.

The extremely positive and fraternal speeches of the comrades representing these groups inspired the hope among many delegates that the pact will be one more step in the process of joint action and debate towards regroupment of the far left to confront the decisive political battles on the horizon.

René Charron & Steve Potter

WHAT'S ON

Deadline: 5pm, Saturday before publication. Rates: 2p per word except for general movement events.

BRISTOL Socialist Challenge Forum: 'Ireland — A Better Life for All?' Speakers: John Sullivan, Steve Bell. Tues. 22 Feb. 7.30pm at Baptist Mills Centre, Horley Road, St Werburgh's (off Mina Road, nr M32).

HALF MOON Theatre, 27 Alie St., London E1: till Sat 19 Feb, 'Regina versus Stephens', a play about the British legal system by David Illingworth. 8pm. Ticket details: 01-480 6465.

MANCHESTER CACTL Benefit: Fri 18 Feb, with music from Harpoon and poetry from John Cooper Clark, plus disco. 8 till late (late bar), at The Squat, Devas St., Manchester. Also regional CACTL meeting, 7pm, Fri 18 Feb, same place.

WOMEN and Ireland: public meeting, Fri 18 Feb, 7.30pm, Lambeth Town Hall, Room 125.

'WHICH WAY for the Working Women's Charter Campaign? The WWC will be holding their National Conference in London on 21-22 May. Venue to be announced later. All enquiries to 1a Cumberwell Grove, London SE5 (01-701 4173).

BIRMINGHAM Trades Council Conference on Racialism: Sat 19 Feb, starts 10.30am. Digbeth Civic Hall. Credentials from Birmingham Trades Council, Ruskin Buildings, 191 Corporation St., Birmingham.

ETHIOPIAN Cultural Evening: Fri 18 Feb, 7pm onwards at the LSE. Organised by British Ethiopian Information Group and LSE Afro-Asian Society.

PORTUGAL/CHILE/BRITAIN: Popular power/popular culture. 3-day festival, 18/19/20 February at Conway Hall and The Other Cinema, London. For details phone: 01-511 0931.

'THE AUTONOMY of the Women's Movement' — pamphlet originally published by MSR in Ireland, reproduced by Cardiff IMG for IMG Fund Drive. Single copies 15p plus s.a.e. Reduced rates for branches: 5 copies 40p plus postage; 10 copies 70p plus postage; 50 copies £2.50 plus postage. Available from S. Bell, 11 Pen-y-wain Place, Roath, Cardiff.

'WHO KILLED John Short' and other poems by IMG militant Steve Bell. All profits towards IMG Fund Drive. Single copies 30p plus s.a.e. Half price for 5 or more copies. Available from S. Bell, 11 Pen-y-wain Place, Roath, Cardiff.

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

'TRADE UNION Democracy and the Social Contract' — Engineering Voice public meeting. 12 noon, Sat 26 Feb, Australian Bar, Hurst St, Birmingham. Speakers include Alan Thornett (candidate in I&G elections).

NAC National Conference, Sat. 19 March, South Bank Polytechnic, London.

LONDON Socialist Feminist meeting on Women's Unemployment: 13 March Caxton House, St John's Way, N19 (women only).

ALL-LAMBETH Anti-Racist Movement public meeting: Mon 21 Feb, 7.30pm, Brixton Centre, 2 St Matthews Rd. Featuring Broadside Mobile Workers Theatre, Alex Lyon MP, Grunwick speaker.

ALL-LAMBETH Anti-Racist Movement Conference: Sat 12 March, Stockwell Hall, Stockwell Park Rd, Brixton SW9. Open conference with delegations. Contact: ALARM, c/o Student Union, South Bank Polytechnic, 7 Rotary St, SE1.

'ONE YEAR On From the Sex Discrimination Act: public meeting organised by Cardiff West LPYS. Speakers include Ann Clywd, Anne Ceseke (Rally planning committee). Sat 19 Feb, 2.30pm, Oddfellows Hall, Newport Rd. Creche provided.

CELEBRATE International Women's Day with Cardiff Red Weekly supporters. Social, Fri 11 March, 7.30pm, Morland's Hotel, Splott.

'SOUTHERN AFRICA: The Struggle Continues'. Public meeting co-sponsored by Campaign Against Racism in the Media and Journalists Charter. Speakers: Eric Abraham (escaped South African journalist), Nkosazana Dlamini (SASO vice-president), Abdul S. Minty (AAM), and a member of the National Union of Journalists NEC. Thurs 3 March, 6.30pm, St Bride's, Bride Lane (off Fleet St), EC4.

THE RE-AWAKENING: February issue now out of journal produced by Chinese militants on the class struggle in China and Hong Kong. Contains articles in both English and Chinese on the situation in China since the death of Mao and on Sino-Soviet relations. Price 15p (inc p&p) from Red Books, 182 Pentonville Road, London N1.

INTERNATIONAL Communist League public meeting: 'Imperialism and the Class Struggle in the Middle East'. Speaker: Jack Price. Sunday 20 February, 7.45pm, at the Roebuck, 108a Tottenham Court Road (Warren St tube).

'TROTSKYISM and Revolution': Geoff Roberts (CP) debates John Ross (IMG). Thurs 17 Feb, 7.30pm, at Collegiate Theatre Conference Room, Gordon St., WC1. Organised by University College FI Soc/Comsoc.

WEST GLAMORGAN demo against the cuts: Swansea, Sat 19 Feb, Assemble 10.30am, Dyfatty Lights. Rally with Emyln Williams (S. Wales NUM) and speakers from NUPE, NUS, EGA.

POLISH WORKERS Defence Campaign: Film Benefit with film from Poland and speakers. Wed. 23 Feb, 7pm. Seats £1.50, unemployed/students 50p. Other Cinema, Tottenham St., W1. All proceeds to Polish Workers Defence Campaign in Warsaw.

FOUR DAYS of Marxist discussion on the Soviet Union: on the class character, Stalinism, political economy

FACTS ON THE LCR

* The occupations of members.

	Members	1st Congress	Sympathisers
Manual workers	13%	12%	14%
Office workers	21%	17%	19%
Technicians	6%	5%	5%
Administrators	6%	3%	—
Teachers	20%	21%	11%
Students	22%	16%	26%
School Students	2%	4.6%	16%
Apprentices	2%	0.3%	1%
Unemployed	5%	4%	2%

* Proportion according to sex

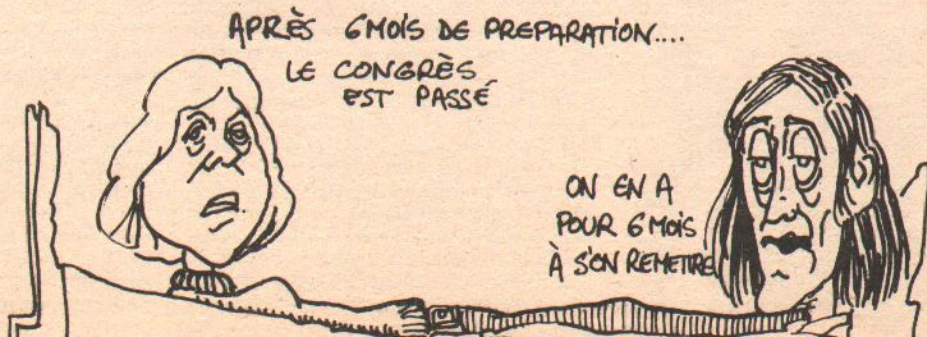
Women	30%	29%	37%
Men	70%	71%	63%

* Proportion of local leaderships according to sex

Women	24%	16%
Men	76%	84%

* The average age of LCR members is 25.8 years, and the average length of membership 3.9 years.

* Unionisation — 64% of all members are in unions as compared to 53% at the last congress.



TERROR

The far right's strategy of tension



LAST WEEK Spanish police freed the two prominent politicians kidnapped by GRAPO and arrested a number of members of the group. It is curious that this came only two days after the Government had imposed press censorship on this issue. This means that papers like El Pais, which has conclusive information on the identity of GRAPO, have been gagged.

Red Weekly was the first paper to point out how and why GRAPO is part of a right-wing 'strategy of tension' in Spain, designed to escalate political terror to provoke an army coup. This two-part investigation by CHRIS O'BRIEN examines the role of the Spanish far right in the international 'strategy of tension'.

THE PHRASE 'strategy of tension' originated in Italy. Although its meaning has been extended to include the operations of left-wing organisations, it describes a conscious orientation by the various fascist groups towards an escalation of political violence until bourgeois democracy becomes unworkable and the army is forced to intervene to stabilise capitalist rule.

An integral part of this strategy is the existence of a large network of fascist sympathisers within the army and the security forces.

The present violence in Italy coincides with the trial arising from the Milan bomb attacks of 1969, which marked the beginning of the strategy of tension. Recent events follow the same pattern. Violence by the right is answered by demonstrations. Fascists opened fire on a demonstration last week seriously wounding three people.

There have also been a series of bombings attributed to the far left. The principal organisation involved is the NAP, an organisation as shady as GRAPO and probably with the same origins.

UNDERGROUND

Fascism in Italy has continued to exist since the fall of Mussolini in 1943. The Republic of Salo, the last fascist outpost, drew up plans for the continuation of fascism underground. But the most important development was the split of Ordine Nuovo from the forerunner of the present MSI, the legal fascist organisation, in 1957.

This was followed in the 1960s by the formation of the Revolutionary Action Groups and later Avanguardia Nazionale by Stefano delle Chiaie. It was these organisations which initiated the strategy of tension.

Delle Chiaie was able to build solid links with members of the secret police and army who favoured a coup. By 1969 the preparation was over and the fascist terror started.

ARRESTS

The state's response was identical to that of the Spanish Government today. A wave of arrests of left-wingers took place. The scapegoat for the 1969 bombings was an anarchist, Pietro Valpreda, while another anarchist, Giuseppe Pinelli, 'committed suicide' at a police headquarters.

The Reggio Calabria revolt of 1970 reverted to more traditional fascist methods, but within the same strategy. The regionalist sentiment of the impoverished southern region of Italy was crystallised into a mass right-wing revolt. This, combined with the heightened terror, gave rise to three coup attempts in quick succession.

The best known is the Borghese plot which followed closely upon the Reggio riots. Prince Borghese, a fascist war hero from the Mussolini period, was chosen as the figurehead. After the failure of the coup he fled the country and was offered sanctuary in Spain.

MASSACRE

The strategy of tension culminated in the Brescia massacre in 1974, when fascists murdered 16 left-wing demonstrators. Among those implicated in the killing were Salvatore Francia and Stefano delle Chiaie. They too left the country and were offered sanctuary.... in Spain.

Spain has long been a favourite refuge for international fascists. It was one of the centres chosen by the Nazis in 1945 to deposit funds to ensure the continuance of Nazism. Nazi leaders, like the Croat Ante Pavelic, were wel-

comed by the Franco regime, along with other assorted rightists. The most important of these was the deposed Argentinian president Juan Peron.

But the Argentinian connection did not stop there. The first links of the Spanish far right with Argentina came through Hermenegildo Garcia Llorente, a Carlist leader, who made contact with 'Tacauro', which was attached to the Asociación para la Defensa de la Familia y el Estado, the forerunner of the Apostolic Anti-communist Alliance — the Triple A.

All these separate elements — Garcia Llorente, delle Chiaie and Francia and the Triple A — were to come together with dramatic consequences at Montejurra last summer.

The Triple A itself was founded

in Madrid by a Croatian ex-soldier who had been a member of Peron's bodyguard. Initially the organisation was composed of ex-members of the OAS, the French fascist organisation, and Argentinian exiles.

The Triple A pursued a similar strategy of tension with greater effect than in Italy. In little more than a year from the death of Peron to the dismissal of Lopez Rega, advisor to Isabelita Peron and protector of the Triple A, the organisation carried out more than 2,000 murders, mainly of working class militants. It consciously followed the model of the Death Squads in Brazil.

The aim was to bring about the institutionalisation of the fascist terror, making it the direct responsibility of the security forces. It had worked in Brazil and it worked in Argentina. The reason for the decline in the Triple A since last year's coup is that the state has taken over most of its functions.

'ANTI-BODY'

Last October, Government Minister Augusto Guzzetti explained that the only subversion came from the left. The revolutionary left was an 'anti-body' which could not be treated in the same way as the 'healthy microbes' of society.

The far right in Latin America has generally succeeded in getting its role 'institutionalised'. In Europe the fascists are trying to reverse a trend in the opposite direction. The clearest example is in Portugal, where former members of the dictatorship's secret police, PIDE, are now swelling the ranks of the far right organisations.

A tactic which is becoming increasingly common is actions by rightist provocateurs posing as left wingers. Apart from NAP and GRAPO the best example is the

killing of the Bolivian Ambassador in Paris last year by the 'Che Guevara International Brigades'.

Le Nouvel Observateur revealed that this was carried out by a right-wing group. Zenteno, the ambassador, was increasingly out of favour with the Banzer regime in Bolivia and his execution was staged so as to gain the maximum prestige for the regime.

The assassination squad was composed of fascists from a number of different countries. Its base was at Iscar, near Valladolid in Spain. Further investigations by the Barcelona paper Mundo indicated that the headquarters was run by a leader of the 'respectable' fascist organisation Orden Nuevo.

It is part of an international fascist network, alternatively known as the Black International or the Fascist International.

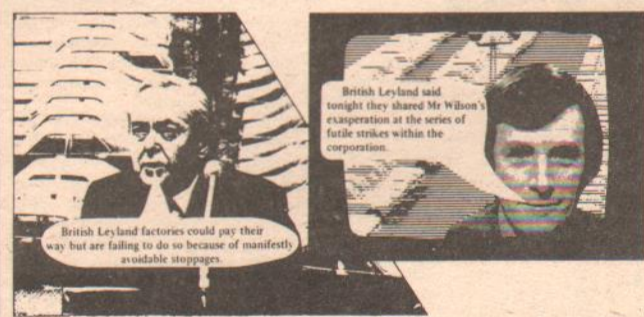
• Next Week: The Fascist International — Massacre at Montejurra — the CIA, the Spanish Government and the fascists.

IT IS SURPRISING that the police were able to overcome the bloodthirsty GRAPO kidnapers with no more than one shot being fired.

But even stranger are the statements made on Spanish television by the two kidnapped politicians. Oriol said that he never felt any danger and was 'like a guest in a country house'. Villaescusa, on the other hand, thought he only had a 50-50 chance of getting out alive.

Oriol was asked how he heard of Villaescusa's kidnapping. 'From the newspapers', he answered, 'I never saw the General'. Villaescusa said: 'We spent 11 days together sharing confinement and surveillance alike.'

Does anyone still believe in GRAPO?



NEWSPEAK EXPOSED

'Even active, class-conscious trade unionists — even those who have led strikes — grant a legitimacy and truthfulness to TV reporting, which is not accorded to the press.'

That was how Paul Walton, speaker at the second of the IMG's Marxism & the Mass Media forums, introduced his survey on TV coverage of industrial disputes. He is a member of the Glasgow University Media Group, which published their findings last year in a little-publicised book *Bad News*. His speech on the overt anti-working class bias of TV news was illustrated with video clips taken from all three channels.

Firstly there is language. Television news bulletins on industrial disputes give the impression that (a) wage rises cause inflation, (b) most strikes are irrational, (c) practically every strike is over pay, and (d) there are no causes of such disputes.

Secondly through visual 'interference' — editing etc. which often gives the impression that people are replying to questions they weren't even asked!

Thirdly there is a more subtle process at work which is used to downgrade workers, compared to management, in news interviews — curtains for the bosses, brick walls or the open street for the workers.

Lastly in terms of 'balance', although management and workers' representatives are given equal time, hosts of government offi-

striking workers. This is accentuated by the fact that 70-90% of televised strikes are unofficial, so that much of the time 'workers' representatives' (trade union bureaucrats) are themselves presenting anti-strike views!

But in the Glasgow dustcart drivers' strike and the Cowley engine-tuners' strike in early 1975 — 'politically sensitive' disputes — even these norms were brutally disregarded. In the Glasgow case, for example, during 104 bulletins and 20 interviews, the case for the strike was never put, nor was one striking worker interviewed!

Not surprisingly the TV companies have not welcomed the Glasgow group's study — apart from ignoring it on publication, ITN has now taken out a suit of 'defamation' against the group and their publisher.

A campaign to defend them, in a court-case which could cost £25,000, must be linked to the beginnings of a campaign by the left against this gross distortion of the electronic media. Perhaps through this we may begin to convince workers that TV is not 'neutral' or more reliable than the Express or the Sun.

CARL GARDNER

MARXISM and the Mass Media: series of fortnightly forums. Sun 20 Feb: 'Sexism and Racism in the Mass Media'. Speakers: Mandy Merck and

ROCA victory in sight

WORKERS AT the Roca Radiadores factory near Barcelona are within sight of victory in their three month strike against victimisation.

The first hearing of the Labour Tribunal dealing with the case of the 42 sacked workers delegates was adjourned on 22 January. Thousands of workers demonstrated outside the court while the sacked delegates told the magistrates that any decision must be approved by the Roca workers assembly.

The reconvened tribunal on 1 February heard the case of 35 of the workers and concluded that they should be reinstated. The company, of course, will not accept the decision, but it reflects the growing solidarity with the Roca workers.

Strikes were organised in more than thirty factories in the Llobregat valley to coincide with the hearings. Not for the first time in their struggle the workers faced the attacks of the police and fascists. On the first day of the tribunal dozens of police cars and Land Rovers occupied the centre of Barcelona to prevent any demonstration of solidarity.

BARRICADES

In other parts of the city, however, police action was less effective. Workers built barricades in the streets to defend themselves against police attacks. In the early hours of the morning

escaped but the other two were taken to waste ground where they were beaten up with iron bars. They were only saved by the arrival of other workers.

FIGHTS

At the Bru factory, where there was no solidarity action, fights broke out between members of the Communist Party-dominated Workers Commissions, which have abysmally failed to support the strike, and the anarcho-syndicalist CNT. The company, which for a long time refused to negotiate, finally agreed to talk to representatives of the area leaderships of the Workers Commissions, the CNT and the social democratic UGT.

The workers assembly refused to recognise any decision which such a negotiating body might reach. It decided that only democratically elected workers representatives could speak for the strikers.

The Roca strike continues. Each of the five thousand workers is agreed that the action can only be called off when their demands are met in full. The leaderships of the union organisations have consistently turned their backs on the strike because it presents a new type of trade unionism, based on democracy in the factory, which is in sharp contrast to the bureaucratic structures which they are trying to construct.

However, the Roca workers have shown that their democratic methods of struggle and their self-

defence against the fascists are capable of winning the support of the membership of these unions. Indeed, the leading political organisation in the factory, the Trotskyist LCR, actively participates in the Workers Commissions.

The Roca struggle has already galvanised the workers of one of the most important industrial regions in Spain. That is a good reason for the reformist trade union leaders to turn their backs on it.

SOLIDARIDAD CON LOS TRABAJADORES DE ROCA

INTERNATIONAL FORUM in Manchester

A series of meetings to discuss aspects of Marxist theory and contemporary politics.

23 February Hilary Wainwright

2 March Colin Bundy

9 March Neil Williams

The Labour Party and the Working Class

South Africa: Approaches to Revolution

Scotland and the National Question

23 March Pierre Rousset

27 April Perry Anderson

11 May Fred Halliday

18 May Brian Grogan

Vietnam since the Liberation of Saigon

The Western Communist Parties

China after Mao

On Regroupment: For a Unified Revolutionary Party

Wednesday at 8.00pm in the Council Chamber, Barnes Wallis Building, University of Manchester Institute of Science & Technology Students Union

7 Days in the 6 Counties



Five Black Watch soldiers were given prison sentences in Belfast on 4 February after conviction on 19 separate charges of planting bullets on civilians and assault on civilians. The charges related to events which took place while the Black Watch regiment was stationed in the Andersonstown/Turf Lodge area of West Belfast in the latter half of 1975. The prison terms imposed by the City Commission ranged from one to five years.

Now the MP for West Belfast at Westminster, Gerry Fitt, and his Social Democratic and Labour Party colleague Paddy Devlin have called for the British Defence Secretary to hold an enquiry into the fatal shooting of 17-year-old Leo Norney in September 1975 which also involved soldiers from the Black Watch regiment. Leo was shot dead while returning from his girlfriend's home on the night of Saturday 13 September, while walking along the Shepherd's Path, a lane used as a shortcut between the Whiterock and Turf Lodge housing estates.

The British Army alleged that Leo was a 'gunman' but passengers who had shared a black taxi with him pointed out that the taxi was stopped and searched only a few minutes before Leo was shot by another British Army patrol. Four 15-year-old boys also came forward at the time to dispute the Army's account. They told how they heard a single shot while crossing a field adjacent to the Shepherd's Path and how when they reached the lane they met an Army patrol and were ordered to lie face down on the ground.

These boys saw Leo Norney's body about 10 yards away and claimed that they heard different soldiers say 'Say it was a sniper's bullet' and 'If he is not dead now, we will finish him off'. An inquest held into Leo's death recorded a verdict of 'misadventure' but few people accepted this as accurate. A

From JOHN MAGEE in Belfast

Catholic priest who has since become involved with the Peace Movement, Father Patrick McWilliams, saw Leo's body and said at the time: 'I have never seen a body in such a condition. The hands were black and pulped. It was impossible to cross them. There must be a thorough investigation into this boy's death. He was murdered.'

The thorough investigation is still being awaited. Needless to say the inquest refused to challenge the Army's account, despite overwhelming evidence that the Black Watch were covering up. Mrs Norney for instance was able to tell the inquest that the Black Watch had raided her home at 4am on the Sunday — that is, five hours after her son had been shot dead: 'When I asked them what it was all about, they said one of my sons was missing.... My son's murderer was probably in the house then and I didn't know it. I didn't know until three o'clock on Sunday afternoon that Leo was dead.'

At the trial of the soldiers who planted evidence, a Major from the Black Watch regiment apologised for this '.... blot on what had otherwise been an extremely successful tour at Andersonstown'. The people of Andersonstown and Turf Lodge point to the death of Leo Norney and the scores of complaints alleging illegal detention, assault, abuse, burglary and robbery which were made against the Black Watch regiment to illustrate the Major's idea of 'successful'. In addition investigations have been held on charges that members of this 'illustrious' regiment looted right, left and centre while stationed in the Six Counties.

The behaviour of the Black Watch is, however, no different from that of the other British Army regiments who come over here to 'keep the peace'; just as the behaviour of the British Army in the Six Counties is basically along the same pattern as its behaviour in Aden, Cyprus and Kenya. The natives are 'savages' without rights. British soldiers know that they have little to fear from their employers if they step out of line. For example, until this recent case no British soldier has ever spent a day in jail for 'illegal' activities engaged in while on duty. And even in this case the soldiers can expect to rejoin their mates in the Army before too long. For immediately after the sentences were imposed they were spirited onto an RAF plane and flown to Britain.

The Northern Ireland Office has refused to disclose where the soldiers will serve their prison terms, whether they are still in military custody or what. All that is known is that they will be allowed to remain in the Black Watch along with the murderers of Leo Norney.

The sudden interest shown by the SDLP in the Norney case results from the fact that this conviction comes at a time when British Army repression is proceeding with ferocity. Resistance to the British troops is growing. Campaigns are developing to force them out of Republican areas and the SDLP is anxious not to be left out on a limb. But the anti-Unionist ghettos are after seven years too keenly aware of the sophistry and whitewashing techniques of British inquiries and will not be satisfied with any inquiry convened by the Defence Secretary. They want the British Army where it can do no more harm to young kids like Leo Norney; they want the British Army out of Ireland.



The Guildford Four [l to r]: PAUL HILL, PATRICK ARMSTRONG, GERARD CONLON, CAROLE RICHARDSON.

Torture & Frame-up the British way

At the European Court of Human Rights, the Attorney General, Samuel Silkin, finally admitted that that British government had tortured North of Ireland internees in 1971.

This admission was accompanied by assurances that such malpractices no longer take place. Yet while Silkin was speaking there was more evidence of the persistent denial of human rights the British government operates against those unfortunate enough to be suspec-

ted of resisting British rule in Ireland.

The first example emerged during the Balcombe Street trial when four young Irish Republicans were sentenced at the Old Bailey to a total of over two thousand years imprisonment. Such an outcome to the trial was predictable.

More surprising was the extent to which a previous police frame-up was exposed during the course of this show trial.

Throughout their trial Joe

O'Connell, Hugh Doherty, Eddie Butler and Harry Duggan claimed that they were soldiers of the Irish Republican Army, at war with Britain. In particular, three of them — not Hugh Doherty — claimed responsibility for bombing soldiers' pubs in Guildford and Woolwich.

Their claims were confirmed by a senior Home Office forensic scientist while he was being cross-examined in court. Mr Douglas Higgs, principal explosives officer at Woolwich Arsenal, said he had produced an official report which linked the pub bombing in Woolwich with other bombings. They formed a definite series.



EDDIE BUTLER

outlining what happens to those convicted of IRA activities. One man wrote:

'Persistent acts of victimisation are directed against IRA prisoners'. Their treatment by some Gartree prison officers, he continued, 'is so bad that even we who are in no way concerned with the IRA feel indignation at the way in which the wretches are suffering.... we do not want a riot here, but there are men among us who are serving such heavy sentences and are not going to tolerate such behaviour from their keepers. I give advance warning that a major riot is brewing'.

Another prisoner testified to *The Times* that drugs are used on prisoners. 'It is not unknown for men liable to disciplinary action to be taken to the hospital for a few days and drugged up. At least two men have been given injections which have really destroyed them'.

Perhaps in another six years another British Attorney General will admit to these charges; in the meantime, as with the charges of torture in 1971, the Home Office says the allegations are 'absolute rubbish'.

PETER STEWART & GEOFF BELL

VISITED

Mr Higgs told the court that he was subsequently visited by a Sergeant Doyle of the Bomb Squad who pressed him into omitting the reference to Woolwich in a later report.

The reason for police reluctance to charge O'Connell, Butler and Duggan with the Woolwich bombing is that four other people are currently serving life sentences for the bombing. They are three Irish men — Paul Hill, Gerard Conlon and Paddy Armstrong — and an English woman, Carole Richardson, who at their trial in October 1975 protested that their 'confessions' had been beaten out of them. All four have insisted on their innocence ever since.

Their trial was farcical. An English pop group gave evidence that Carole Richardson was with them when one of the bomb attacks took place miles away. The group even produced a photograph including Carole Richardson taken at the dance hall. She was still found guilty of committing murder that evening.

STANDARDS

The type of frame-up which the Guildford four were victims of is only one aspect of the standards of law and order which are applied to Irish political prisoners. Once

World Outlook

★ Argentina

'Don't cry for me, Argentina' is currently top of the British hit parade. It is a song from the musical *Evita* which is intended to glorify the memory of Eva Peron, wife of the late dictator.

But Argentinians have good reason to cry. Not for the memory of *Evita* but for the thousands of working class dead who are the bitter fruits of Peronism.

Argentinian workers are not inclined to let grief get the better of them. They have designed a form of industrial action called *trabajando con tristeza* — working with sadness. This is a form of go-slow, but it is not precisely demarcated. The workers literally work slower — with sadness.

It is impossible to combat. On a number of occasions troops have been called into the factories, but the workers then resume working at normal speed. When the soldiers leave they work with sadness again. Production has been hit heavily. In some cases it is only 20 per cent of normal.

Most effective has been the power workers' working with sadness. Attempts to victimise militant leaders were met with a go-slow which paralysed the Buenos Aires electricity system.

That is effective sadness. 'Don't cry for me, Argentina' would not impress the workers of Buenos Aires.

★ India

While the world press and Indira Gandhi herself are rejoicing in the return of 'democracy' to India, Socialist Party leader George Fernandes has gone to trial on a frame-up charge. The evidence is sticks of gellignite planted by the police.

The accusation itself is overtly political. He is accused along with 24 others of a 'well-planned and deep-rooted conspiracy to over-awe by criminal force the central Government and to commit various offences'.

Fernandes told the court that they had not been allowed consultation with their lawyers for seven months after their arrest and denounced the trial as a frame-up. On the political charge of organising opposition to the Gandhi dictatorship he is proud to be guilty.

★ Lebanon

Fighting has broken out in Beirut between the Palestinians and Syrian troops, part of the Arab 'peace-keeping' force. It seems that the Palestinians involved were commandos of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [General Command].

The clashes were probably a Palestinian response to the attempt by the Syrian army to install the Lebanese authorities in the Palestinian refugee camps.

★ Catalonia

Last week Spanish referee Ricardo Melero made a big mistake. He sent off Johan Cruyff of FC Barcelona.

After Cruyff had challenged a series of bad decisions he was

let loose. Spectators invaded the pitch. One landed a punch on the referee's jaw. The frontage of the Barcelona Stadium was wrecked, cars overturned and burnt, and a van was blown up.

There is more to this than Saturday football violence. FC Barcelona has long been an expression of the Catalan national identity which is suppressed by the dictatorship. It has a long standing rivalry with the Spanish Barcelona club Real Barcelona.

On this occasion the opponents were from southern Spain and the referee Spanish. For the football fans the sending off of Cruyff was a political act. Their response was a political one!



★ Transylvania

The Rumanian Communist Party paper *Scinteia* has got its teeth into a new story. It has resurrected Prince Vlad Dracula the Impaler, the prototype of Bram Stoker's novel and the Hammer films, as a national hero.

Not surprisingly Dracula got his nickname by impaling his political opponents and large numbers of the rest of the population as well. A good example was his mass murder of the Transylvanian Saxons.

But that is not what is at stake for the Rumanian CP. According to them he was a 'prominent personality of our national history, personifying the will of the Rumanian people to live freely within the boundaries of their ancestors' territories. By coincidence President Ceausescu is trying to fend off Soviet interference in Rumania's internal affairs.

Vlad the Impaler is praised for his 'strict internal discipline', a sort of Leninist before his time. No doubt typical of the way that the Rumanian CP settles disputes was Vlad's charming habit of skinning the soles of dissidents' feet and setting the royal goats to lick the wounds.

Or perhaps the *Scinteia* has in mind the expulsion of Chilean refugees from Rumania because of political disagreements with

spare Rib fights ban

THE OPPRESSION of women in Ireland is probably greater than in any other state in Western Europe; a record the coalition government in the 26 Counties appears determined to keep.

The latest foray into the wilds of Catholic feudalism is the banning by the government Censorship and Publications Board of the radical women's magazine *Spare Rib*. The moral guardians of the 26 Counties have complained that four issues of the magazine have qualified it for the appellation 'indecent and obscene'.

Spare Rib told *Red Weekly* that they thought the reason for the ban might be that the issues in question carried articles on abortion, masturbation and female orgasms.

Certainly one article in particular — on how to get an abortion — would not go down too well with the guardians of Irish morality, as abortion is illegal in the 26 Counties.

The banning of *Spare Rib* follows the seizure in December of a booklet produced by the Irish Family Planning Association entitled 'Family Planning', a topic which is again frowned upon by the state authorities. Erica Jong's *Fear of Flying* is another recent recruit to the long list of banned publications.

The most recent banning of



BRITAIN AND USSR TRADE WITH RACISTS

FOUR HUNDRED thousand pounds of tobacco in a Manchester warehouse has given a clue to an international Rhodesian sanction-busting ring.

A Rhodesian five cent coin

fell out of the consignment, which ostensibly came from Thailand. It led to investigations into operations conducted by a company in Geneva, Intabex, which markets tobacco for the Rhodesian company

Tradintex. Canadian television claims that Intabex sells to the Russians and Bulgarians.

Other revelations of sanction-busting by the Soviet Union have been made this

week. The main link was another Swiss company called Comaisa SA. So much for the Stalinists' protestations of wholehearted support for the Zimbabwean people.

Just as ironic is the author of the note to the United Nations Sanctions Committee alerting it to Russian activities — the British Labour Government.

The Government is only worried about the affront to its imperial pride. It has never shown the slightest inclination to respect the rights of the Zimbabwean people. It is still involved in negotiations to set up a neo-colonial state in Zimbabwe.

If the Labour Government cares so much about sanction-busting perhaps it will lend its support to the workers of Hopkinson's in Huddersfield, still on strike against their sanction-busting bosses.

Perhaps it would also care to break all diplomatic and trade links with the racist regimes of southern Africa?

Unite in Solidarity with the People of Southern Africa NATIONAL MARCH AND RALLY, SUNDAY 6 MARCH

Assemble Hyde Park 1.30, Rally Trafalgar Square 3.30

No Arms for Apartheid! Halt Investment in Apartheid! Support African Liberation Struggle!

Organised by Anti-Apartheid Movement, 89 Charlotte Street, London W1P 2DQ (01-580 5311)

Soweto Youth Rise Again



THE SOWETO students are on the march again. Police attacked demonstrations in the townships near Johannesburg last week and imposed a street curfew on students between 8am and 3pm. This amounts to forced attendance at school.

Six thousand youth came out on the streets against the current exams. Once again they have raised the demand for the abolition of Afrikaans in black schools and for an end to the apartheid education system. A further demand added after the upsurge last June is for the immediate release of all arrested students still being held by the racist regime.

Government propaganda about a disruptive 'minority' preventing serious students from sitting their exams did not carry much weight as the mass of African students in the townships rose up against the regime again. In the Soweto townships the schools in Naledi, Orlando, Madibane and Pimville were closed as students burned text books rather than sit exams. Student activity was extended to schools in the Pretoria and Cape Town areas as well.

The only reason the police response was not more violent was fear. They are afraid that if they open fire on demonstrations again they will face a similar upsurge to last summer's. But that may be coming anyway.

RIGHT WING ORGANISE IN LABOUR PARTY

A NATIONAL MEETING of the Labour Party's right wing has been organised.

This Friday, 'active and loyal Labour members' will discuss what Ian Wrigglesworth, the meeting's convenor and secretary of the right-wing Manifesto group of Labour MPs, described as the 'shambolic state of the party'.

By which he means:

'The failure of the NEC to rally support for the Government; the lack of a sensible voice in some constituencies; and the evidence of

infiltration by elements alien to the democratic socialist tradition.'

Certainly Ian Wrigglesworth and his fellow right-wing MPs cannot be accused of a 'failure' to 'rally support for the Government' and its Tory policies. Indeed, it is perhaps to show gratitude for such support that a member of the Government, Transport Minister William Rodgers, has agreed to chair the right-wing meeting.

Michael Foot, on the other hand, is not amused by the prospect of the right so publicly organising. One of the architects of the Social

Contract, and a key figure in the decision to establish a witch-hunting enquiry into so-called 'entryism', Foot is looking to present the 'unity of the party' as being threatened by the left.

Last week, he insisted that there was a 'whole range of matters on which I believe agreement can be reached between all sections of the party'.

This statement came just as the Home Policy Committee of Labour's National Executive endorsed the document 'Agenda for Agreement', which in stressing 'unity' in the party spoke of the need for the Cabinet and the NEC to 'sink their differences'.

All these calls for unity omit to mention on what policies the unity should be based, but the most recent example of the NEC 'sinking its differences' with the Labour right was the decision to establish the enquiry into 'entryism'.

Now, having got that through, Michael Foot is understandably upset at those who support his Government's policies doing openly and publicly what he is merrily witch-hunting the left for doing. However, such embarrassments, while uncomfortable, will not stop the right organising, being allowed to organise, and the left organising and being witch-hunted for it.

The difference is that the right are organising to support the Labour Government's policies, while the left organise against them. As the

RED WEEKLY



Workers' Jubilee 1917-1977



For those who may not have noticed, 1977 is the twenty fifth anniversary of the accession of Queen Elizabeth II to the throne. The media have made sure that nobody forgets the fact. The first day of the year gave people the chance to be bored solid with seven hours of "historic BBC film" of the 1953 Coronation with the Queen and hangers-on waving to the assembled crowds.

The Press is spewing out glossy magazines, old newspapers and special photos of the Queen complete with corgis. No doubt in the next few months every form of commodity possible will appear in special commemorative issue — the brewery Ind Coope are producing a special commemorative beer at 36p per 1/2 pint. This outpouring of publicity has not only the added virtue of making a few people a great deal of money, but also in crisis ridden Britain reasserts the ideas of respect and knowing one's place — on your knees.

Red Weekly also intends to celebrate a jubilee this year. 1977 is the sixtieth anniversary of the Russian revolution. The seizure of power by the Russian workers and peasants sixty years ago has made a greater contribution to humanity than anything the Royal Family has ever done or ever will do. We doubt if the press and television will devote their time to reminding the working class here and abroad of those days when millions of workers and peasants took history into their own hands.

This task falls on the shoulders of the workers movement, and for that reason Red Weekly will be carrying a regular weekly column tracing the history of the Russian revolution from March through to the storming of the Winter Palace and the seizure of power in November.

For the workers movement the Russian revolution is not simply a historic event worth remembering. It shows that the struggle for socialism is not an empty ideal but something that can be carried through by workers and peasants with the leadership of a revolutionary party. Those few months that shook the world and sent shivers down the spines of the ruling class contain valuable lessons for the movement today.

In Europe, particularly in Spain and Portugal, the working class has understood the need to organise itself, through such bodies as the workers commissions and popular assemblies, as the Russian people did in the Soviets.

The Russian revolution is not just part of history; in it there is also a vision of the future. In some small way it is hoped that Red Weekly's celebration of this jubilee will, through learning from that history, bring that vision closer to realisation.

RIC SISSONS

FUND DRIVE NEEDS BOOST!

So far this month we have received £332.64. With the open offer from a Red Weekly supporter to match every pound in the fund drive with an extra pound, that means £665.28.

The £332.64 received this month is a slow start considering that we need £3,200 to be on schedule for our £15,000 target in May.

This is not just an important month for the fund drive. On 26 February there will be a rally at Alexandra Palace on women's rights and the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts. The IMG and Red Weekly and its supporters have played an impressive role in building this rally. An IMG comrade is working with full-time responsibility for promoting the rally and ensuring the most efficient use of our resources. This is not extravagant. It is only a serious approach to the tasks facing us.

The IMG also needs resources to build the election campaign in Stechford. And who knows how many more elections there may be this year? The Red Weekly centre-spread this week shows how our French comrades have been able to win revolutionary unity in the local elections. We are fighting for the same thing in the elections this year. To do that requires an expansion of our resources. And that means more money.

Thank you to all comrades who have given this month. Let's have a push to get on schedule for the end of the month.

Send a donation to the IMG Fund Drive, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1, or save yourself the worry and just fill out the bankers order form and send it to the same address.

February donations so far:

Leicester IMG	15.10
Bedford IMG	2.00
Glasgow supporter	15.00
Surrey IMG	1.00
Cambridge IMG	75.00
N. London RW supporter	1.50
Bus worker supporter	2.00
NUJ member	14.89
HR, S. London	5.00
W. London IMG	41.15
Moray House Edinburgh	35.00
Leeds RW supporter	5.00
Supporter in France	10.00
Lorraine Hodges	10.00
Nottingham FI supporters	10.00
Swansea IMG	30.00
Oxford IMG	10.00
Bristol IMG	30.00
Southampton TGWU RW supporter	1.00
Collected at Red Weekly readers meeting on South Africa in Southampton	5.00
Southampton IMG	4.00
TOTAL	332.64

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 (address)

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Payee	Name	A/C Number
	RED WEEKLY	71016000

At Williams & Glyn's Bank Limited, 286 Pentonville Rd., London N1.

Sorting Code No. 15 05 70

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