

# RED WEEKLY

23 JANUARY 1975 No 85 PRICE 8p

INSIDE -  
Into the abyss?  
4-page dossier  
on the crisis

# TROOPS OUT NOW

The responsibility for the breakdown of the ceasefire in Ireland rests fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the Labour Government and its 'Irish Secretary' Merlyn Rees.

Throughout the whole charade, Rees' only concern was to appease the reactionary loyalist forces. Rees' Parliamentary reply to the Provisionals' ceasefire not only refused even the most miserly concessions to the beleaguered minority, but threatened the return of the sectarian RUC police to the ghettos. No wonder the loyalists and Tories greeted his statement with acclaim!

Britain's leading voice of reaction, the *Daily Telegraph*, summed up the feeling of all these elements when it reported that 'the firmness and moderation of Mr. Rees' reply turned him overnight from politician to statesman'. And this from the same people who only recently were calling for his resignation for being 'soft' on the IRA! Rarely has it been more clearly demonstrated on which side the Labour Government stands.

In response to the ceasefire Rees released a mere 25 detainees - five of them loyalists. Rees' policy on internment is simple, if brutal: once the minority gives in, then internment will end.

The threatened resumption of hostilities by the Provisionals is only one indication of the continuing combativity of the Catholics in the face of such a threat. The fight against internment can only be seen as part of a fight against British imperialist domination of Ireland. Internment will only be brought to an end when British troops are kicked out.

This is the problem with the proposed National Union of Students' campaign against internment. Of course such a decision to wage a campaign can only be welcomed, but by not linking the demand for the end of internment to a call for the immediate withdrawal of troops they have no effective reply to the

## Brian Grogan

right-wing, who try to label internees as 'terrorists' who must be 'dealt with'.

All the indications are that Merlyn Rees will now quickly call his proposed Constitutional Convention. Here he hopes to turn his flirtations with the loyalists into a more permanent bond.

Such a British-imposed solution has to be fought. The workers' movement in this country must not tolerate a 'peace' won over the broken spirit of the oppressed minority in the North.

The situation in Ireland is at a crossroads, and the Labour Government has clearly nailed its flag to the loyalist mast.

The Ulster Defence Association - the main paramilitary group of loyalist thugs - has spelt out what this means: 'We have now reached the point of survival or extinction. We intend to survive; we intend to destroy the enemy and all those who support it.' It is forces like these which the British army is protecting. It is forces like these which the Labour Government is cuddling up to. The workers' movement still has time to smash such a policy: we must mobilise to demand - troops out now.



British troops being stoned in Belfast by Republican youths. They recognise that the role of the troops is to protect the Loyalists and suppress the minority. The only answer is to demand their immediate withdrawal.

## Demonstrate against private practice!

THE MEDICAL COMMITTEE Against Private Practice - MCAPP - has called a demonstration in London for Saturday 22 February against the consultants' attack on the National Health Service.

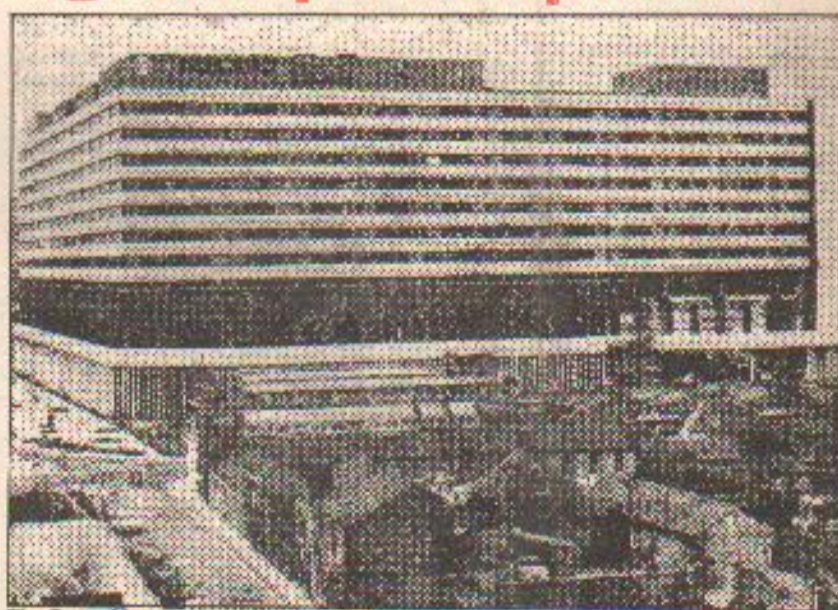
MCAPP - which is made up of doctors who are members of ASTMS - say that the demonstration has been sponsored by Labour MP Sid Bidwell; Jack Collins, a member of the National Union of Mineworkers executive; and Ernie Roberts, the assistant general secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

In a letter circulated to trade union branches, MCAPP point out that private practice outside the NHS drains 'resources and trained staff' from a 'deteriorating health service'.

### EXPANSION

The letter explains: 'Fighting this expansion of private practice must be the concern not only of trade unionists directly involved in building and servicing private hospitals and clinics, but of all workers who depend on the NHS for their health care.'

As the Labour Government bends over backwards to reach agreement with the consultants, the private health schemes are taking full advantage of the five-year phase-out period allowed by Mrs Castle. The British United Provident Association, Britain's biggest medical insurance scheme, gained 27,000 new members last year. This led to a 25 per cent increase in its subscription income, bringing in an annual revenue of over



The Cunard International Hotel in Hammersmith - one of the two luxury hotels the private health company BUPA has its eye on to convert into private hospitals.

## Continue anti-repression fight.

In all the hubbub about the negotiations over the Provisionals' cease-fire the Labour Government's 'Prevention of Terrorism' laws have been conveniently 'forgotten' by the capitalist press. But this measure is an essential part of Labour's plan to solve the Irish situation through repression - repression of the catholic minority in the north, and of the republican movement and their supporters in this country.

Moreover, as the recent case of Italian immigrant Franco Caprao shows, the state is involved in a more general crackdown against militants. Anti-Irish legisla-

the International Marxist Group launched an 'Open Letter to the Labour Movement' calling for the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

Signatories to the open letter include Labour MP Joan Maynard and Harry Selby, and Assistant General Secretary of the AUEW, Ernie Roberts.

Just last week David Skinner, MP Arthur Palmer Gedling (Notts area NUM) and Susan Harris and Anna Darb (Institute for Workers' Control) added their names to the letter.

## BLOODY SUNDAY

DEMO:

SATURDAY 1st FEBRUARY, SPEAKERS' CORNER, HYDE PARK, 5.00pm.

# THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

FRANCO CAPRINO, imprisoned since 16 December without trial in Pentonville prison pending deportation, will appear before the Home Secretary's panel of advisers next Monday, 27 January.

He will still not be told what the charges are against him, but will instead be questioned by the three knights who comprise Roy Jenkins' advisory panel. The three are: Sir Derek Hilton, Sir Clifford Jarratt and Sir Richard Hayward.

## NO POWERS

Lest even this panel make 'mistakes', the law has ensured that it has no statutory powers. The final word rests with the Home Secretary. But he needn't be excessively worried that they might let him down. They have, in fact, been chosen precisely to prevent embarrassment and to pay lip-service to the idea that the victim is allowed an appeal before the sentence is executed.

Hilton, who served in the Special Operations Executive (SOE) during the war, is clearly an old intelligence

hand now resting on his laurels and his directorships of companies such as Abbey National. Jarratt served in the Admiralty during the war and was Principal Establishment Officer in the Civil Service from 1946-50 - again a job not unconnected with British intelligence, since it involves vetting civil service appointments to ensure that no reds get behind the desks in

Whitehall.

Hayward does not have such splendid credentials, but even if he has any doubts his two fellow knights will soon put him in his place.

It is obvious from this that the only hope for Caprino lies in an effective outside campaign. But the

fact that no 'left' Labour MPs have taken up his case and carpeted Jenkins shows the problems involved.

## TRADE UNIONIST

It has now become clearer why this Italian immigrant worker is being victimised. The real reason seems to be his active membership of the International Branch of the

try or for reasons of a political nature [our emphasis]

These 'reasons of a political nature are never specified, but it doesn't need much imagination to understand what they are directed against the left, as are the phrases referring to the relations between Britain and other countries. In the latter case it certainly applies to left-wing militants - or else all the CIA agents in Britain would be expelled for harming relations between Britain and the whole of Eastern Europe and the USSR!

**CRITERIA**  
The current attempt being made by the Home Office to return to Uganda some African opponents of Amin's dictatorship gives us an idea of the criteria applied. Political refugees from dictatorships where Britain has economic interests will be treated with extreme suspicion and hostility. Chile is the one exception, because of the massive campaign waged by the left and trade union movement.

Britain is indeed one of the worst countries in the whole of Europe as far as immigration procedures are concerned. Racial and political discrimination are combined to give immigration officers their cue for not letting people into the country. Rumour has it that new immigration officers have to go through an unofficial initiation ceremony (seeing how many people they can send back) before being accepted as 'one of the boys'.

Recently the Home Office seems to have further tightened up its surveillance of foreign workers and students. *Red Weekly* has already received a number of complaints indicating a vicious campaign by the Home Office against all foreign citizens actively involved in trade unions or socialist organisations in Britain.

**MILITANT**  
Franco Caprino expressed the situation well when he told a recent visitor in Pentonville prison:

'It is no coincidence that at a time of growing crisis, when immigrants, the weakest section of the working class, are beginning to unite and find some confidence in their struggles, I am sitting here in a prison cell trying to fight a deportation order.

'There is no charge, no hint of what I am in prison except a short statement from the Home Office that I am a threat to national security. What does that mean? It means that I am a militant trade unionist. My arrest is yet another example of the tightening up by the ruling class in order to repress militancy.

'They told me here that if I signed a statement refusing to appeal against deportation I could have been back in Italy by Christmas.

'But I am appealing because I see my struggle as part of a general working class struggle and of a particular struggle by immigrant workers.'

It is now more than a month since Caprino was arrested, yet the campaign to free him is still painfully weak. Trades councils, trade union branches, students unions must be urgently mobilised to turn on the pressure. And the Labour 'lefts' must be forced to come clean on where they stand on this issue. Only such moves will make Mr Jenkins think again.

Terry Kelly

(For further information on the campaign, phone 01-959-9105)

A picket of Roy Jenkins' house was held last week as part of the campaign to win the release of Franco Caprino



Photo: PETER HARRAP (Report)



FRANCO CAPRINO

## Nottingham's Who Dunnett

On Sunday 12 January a delegation from the Labour Party NEC finally arrived in Nottingham to conduct an enquiry into the crisis of the Nottingham East constituency of the Labour Party.

The enquiry represents a manoeuvre by the right wing to enable them to chop the left. The crisis is based on the fact that:

1. The left have worked with people outside the Labour Party on such problems as Ireland, Jenkins' legislation, the Working Women's Charter and housing. This has brought them into conflict with the local

party machine, especially on housing, since it is the very Labour councillors who are presiding over a growing crisis in housing who by and large control the party machine.

2. The left have repeatedly questioned the appropriateness as a labour movement representative of the local MP, Jack Dunnett, who is a well-known property speculator. Massive documentation relating to Mr Dunnett's business interests is now being unearthed which should prove especially interesting in the light of the Stonehouse affair.

3. In order to stamp on the left

Dunnett has resorted to continuous obstruction, bureaucratic manipulation, and political suppression. When evidence of all this was presented by the left to the NEC delegation, Dunnett reportedly turned a deep shade of crimson, while his leading henchman and leader of the City Council, John Carrol, looked distinctly ill.

## BRIBERY

Amongst the charges apparently made were bribery, falsification of membership records, and deception at Market Ward meetings. It seems that six signed statements from Asian workers were presented to the enquiry, alleging the involvement of the right wing in offers of £5 to attend and vote at Market Ward meetings.

They also claimed that Labour Party cards had been handed out to non-members bearing false, backdated subscription records; and that voting by non-members had been based on deliberately lying to Asian workers, e.g. a motion of censure against dissident left-wing councillor Steve Evans was motivated by alleging that he was a racist, etc.

Other charges against the right reportedly brought before the enquiry included the use of writs in courts to silence oppositionists and the revealing of the identity of Labour Party members to their employers. This is only the tip of the iceberg...

The purpose of the NEC enquiry was to shut up the left, and the case of Eddie Milne has shown how ruthlessly this can be done.

A vigorous fight has therefore to be conducted within the trade unions to extend the basis of the enquiry and discipline the guilty members.

In this and in other campaigns on key issues, the left inside the Labour Party must unite with other forces outside the Labour Party fighting in the interests of the working class. This is the only way of resolving the dilemma confronting thousands of militants who still see the Labour Party as the only credible political instrument of the Labour movement, but are disgusted by its betrayals.

Bert Rothschild

## CAMPAIGN AGAINST 'CONTROL UNITS'

The following are excerpts from a Press Release issued by Radical Alternatives to Prison (RAP) concerning the campaign against the 'control units' recently introduced as a form of punishment for those who try to stand up for their rights within the prison.

To date there has been remarkably little interest taken about this issue. It should not be forgotten that the Home Office has designed these units for those they describe as 'subversives' and 'trouble-makers'. In effect these are the people with the courage to attempt to improve the appalling living and working conditions they are forced to endure inside. We who have grievances outside prison have the right to take action. Inside they have to grin and bear it - or else. Sentencing to this regime involves a minimum 6 month period of sensory deprivation which has been designed 'to create a framework which will help to bring the prisoner to realise that it is in his own interest to mend his ways'...

It is time people realised the significance of this sinister development in the penal system. (Some parallels can be drawn with

the sensory deprivation experiments carried out on internees in Northern Ireland in 1971.) Here we have again the involvement of doctors and psychologists, and now for the purpose of behaviour modification. This insidious trend in social control must be stopped now.

Prisoners are a forgotten minority. They can be subjected to this regime of torture. We cannot allow people to be treated in this way. We, on the outside are in a position to be able to do something. Three members of our society are incarcerated in these 'cages within cages'. Press reports of their health give cause for alarm. Action must be taken now.

For further information about control units and how you can help in this campaign contact: Radical Alternatives to Prison, Eastbourne House, London E.2. (tel. 01-981-0041).

## FREE FRANCO CAPRINO!

Mass picket of Thanet House in Strand (where advisory panel meets) from 1-2pm, Monday 27 January.

Also picket of Home Office at 6pm on Friday 24 January.

# SHREWSBURY

## On the march

# again!

THE PRESS, ASSORTED TORIES AND CAREERIST CHARLATANS from the right-wing of the Labour Government have been thrown into a right tizzy by last week's 8,000 strong demonstration and lobby of Parliament to demand the release of the Shrewsbury 2.

On Friday, the *Daily Mail*, more noted for its links with the Special Branch of the police and other ruling class servants than for its friendship for the workers' movement, printed a two-page smear on the campaign to free the pickets.

Monday Club Tory MP Peter Rost said the TUC should be billed for the extra costs to the police force incurred by the demonstration last week. No doubt the £1,600 extra doled out by the state to keep last week's demonstration in order stands well for penny-pinching Mr. Rost, beside the cool half-a-million pounds spent by the ruling class in their prosecution of the Shrewsbury workers.

### ARM-IN-ARM

But the class lines don't stop at the Tory Party and the press. Labour Education Minister Reg Prentice, who arm-in-arm with Home Secretary Jenkins has fought a militant battle in the cabinet to ensure the pickets are kept in jail and the laws on picketing are left intact, this week showed his true colours once again. Not satisfied with denouncing the delegates to the Labour Party Conference who voted for the release of Warren and Tomlinson, Prentice refused last week to meet a delegation from West Ham Trades Council. This open agent of the ruling class refused 'on principle' to discuss the Shrewsbury jailings.

Shrewsbury has sprung to the centre of the stage once more. The hysteria of the press and TV over Shrewsbury in the last couple of weeks is in stark contrast to the 'ring of silence' they threw around the arrests and the farcical trial in Shrewsbury.

The job of the press was to help their employing class and its state make sure the workers' movement did not go into action before the prison doors had banged shut on the Shrewsbury defendants.

Everything had to be done to make sure a movement like the one that freed the five dockers from the grip of the jail and the Industrial Relations Act in 1972, didn't happen again.

For over a year and a half, the ruling class has been more or less successful. The Labour Party, TUC and in particular the building union UCATT and the Transport Union did their utmost to stop any real action to free the Shrewsbury 2. UCATT even echoed the sentiments of the press and law-lords and branded the pickets as 'criminals'.

### ONE-DAY STRIKES

For the last year and a half, thousands of militants have taken part in one day strikes, protest rallies, two rank-and-file conferences in Liverpool and have broken their backs in the defence committees over the issue. The Communist Party, the most powerful force in the campaign, has always made its central objective getting the TUC to officially endorse the call for the release of the pickets. Until that aim was achieved they were content to keep a tight rein on and restrict the campaign to one-day protests and 'pressure'.

On 14 January, the CP's dream came true. They had sensed, after keeping the campaign in wraps for months, that the Shrewsbury issue was a golden chance to open up a chink in the armour of the Social Contract. After Labour was elected in February and October all the Labour Party and TUC leaders, including the CP's darlings on the 'left' like Jack Jones and Michael Foot, got together to tie the working class hand and foot to the Social Contract.

The CP's strategy, however, rests on an alliance with these 'lefts' who had lined up with all the other bureaucrats and the Government

around the Social Contract. There seemed no chance, on the central issues of prices and redundancy, of starting any action.

The CP sought some other issue on which they could unite with the 'lefts'. Shrewsbury was the magic formula. That is why last week's demonstration took place. Most of the jailed pickets have now been released. Only two remain inside. Trade union leaders of all colours and 'left' MPs who respect ruling class law apart from its occasional 'bias' can now safely get hot under the collar about the iniquity of the jailings and the 'ruthlessness' of the courts. After all, Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson are eligible for parole in March. If the Home Office grants parole the problem can be safely swept under the carpet.

It was for these reasons that the TUC eventually decided to back the

Shrewsbury 'is still a question of changing people's minds'. For Jones this means more speeches in Parliament and delegations to Harold Wilson. But for the thousands of militants who trekked up to the doors of Parliament, last week's show of strength must be the beginning of the final push to get the last two pickets out. The campaign to make sure the ruling class and their servants in the Labour Government take no more hostages and that there are no more Shrewsburies, has to take a radical turn.

The IMG and *Red Weekly* have campaigned for nearly two years for massive strike action, which is the only way to force the ruling class to free the pickets. This lesson is coming home. Nottingham Trades Council has called for a day of national strike action throughout the workers' movement. This has



Some of the 8,000 trade unionists whose march last week has thrown the Press, the Tories, and the right-wing Labourites into such a tizzy.

call for a national lobby. After they had turned their face against any action on pickets for over a year, Len Murray on the afternoon of the lobby emerged from an audience with Alex Lyon (Jenkins' right-hand man at the Home Office) to say he still hoped that Jenkins 'in his wisdom and mercy' could see his way to taking another look at the case of the Shrewsbury workers, and the law on picketing. For Murray and the rest of the TUC, last week's demonstration was an occasion to look a little left to militants, allow them to let off steam and post a polite warning to Jenkins that the TUC would like a change in the law on pickets.

### STAUNCH DEFENDER

Now Jack Jones, staunch defender of the Social Contract, says

been echoed by Jack Dunn, Kent miners' leader, Manchester and Salford Trades Guilds and others. These leaders and bodies must now unite all those who marched last week and thousands more in the localities and set a date for a national one-day strike of workers across all industries. Now the campaign is rolling again. It must not be allowed to almost die like last time. Action Committees with delegates from all workers' organisations should be set up in the localities to gain support for this policy.

Liverpool Trades Council have recalled the national conference on the Shrewsbury issue. At that gathering on 9 February, a decision can be made to take action that will free the two.

Sam Boyd

# IN FOCUS

## No ceasefire from Rees

When the Provisional ceasefire was originally extended the *Red Weekly* said: 'The possibility that the British Government will give concessions to the Provisionals sufficient to secure a more permanent ceasefire are non-existent.'

The situation remains one where the power of the loyalists is such that the Government is neither willing nor able to grant any major concession. The influence of the forces of loyalism is staggering. In the past 25 days of ceasefire the balance sheet has been totally negative to the nationalist minority—

- \* No let up in army activity and harassment
- \* The assassination by a British army death-squad of a leading Provisional, John Green, and the arrest of two members of the army council by the Southern Irish Government.
- \* Reappearance of the sectarian Royal Ulster Constabulary, accompanying British soldiers into all the pubs on the Falls Road, the heart of the Catholic minority area in Belfast.
- \* The release of a mere 20 Republican internees whilst releasing five out of the remaining 20 loyalist internees.

The British Government and the British army before, during, and after the ceasefire harassed, brutalised and terrorised the anti-unionist minority to the advantage of the loyalists. They do this in order to retain the support of the loyalists who are the surest bastion of imperialist rule in Ireland.

In the situation where these forces of reaction are undefeated, to call for 'peace', as does the Communist Party, is no more than to demand that the minority give up the struggle.

Equally it is a scandal for the *Morning Star* to say that the ending of the ceasefire by the Provisionals 'plays into the hands of the right wing and reaction, providing the British army with a new opportunity for harassment of the people'. It is virtually the IRA alone which has put a restraining hand on British imperialism!

The history of the past five years shows that the fight for even democratic demands involves armed defence against violent onslaught by the forces of loyalism and the British army. The six county state cannot be reformed. It is sectarian through and through, and provides the material base through which the Protestant working class is won to support of the imperialist link.

It is equally nonsense for the *Morning Star* to claim that the armed activity of the IRA maintains and deepens the division in the north of Ireland working class and makes the work of those fighting in Britain for democracy in the North more difficult. The sectarian divisions have always been there, and always will be whilst the six county state exists. And the six county state will remain in existence just that longer whilst forces in the British working class think it is Britain's job to impose a solution in Ireland—even a so-called 'democratic' one. No matter how well meaning such a sentiment is, it reinforces the chauvinism of the British working class and ensures continuation of the support which the British war machine needs in Ireland. The task is to get our ruling class out of Ireland immediately.

### INSANITY

But this chauvinist position is taken to the lengths of insanity when the CP claims 'The activities of the Provisionals, far from weakening British imperialist rule in Ireland have contributed to its strengthening'. After four British imperialist 'solutions' have bit the dust in the past five years because of the upsurge of the anti-unionist population led by the Provisionals, with the Orange monolith being shattered into 27 different varieties, only a blind factionalist could maintain such incredible nonsense.

The Provisionals do not foment the sectarian divisions: they lead the challenge to them. The Provisional IRA does not strengthen imperialism: it is the chauvinism of the British working class which lends a free hand to imperialism. The Provisional IRA does not play into the hands of the right wing and loyalists, it is the British Labour Government which does that.

The mistakes of the Provisionals are quite different. The growing strength of the loyalists in the recent period and the probability of a hand-over to them after the Constitutional Convention, is the most important question to which the Provisionals should be directing the attention of the anti-unionist people. This shows the place of any military activity at this stage. It should be directed at arming anti-unionists with the desire to arm themselves. Organising self-defence bodies that can develop into workers' militias is the task of the hour.

This cannot be done under the slogan of 'peace', in the false belief that this might calm the loyalists. Indeed, such a slogan cuts across the need to explain to the anti-unionist population that an armed confrontation with the forces of loyalism is more or less inevitable.

The Provisionals called the ceasefire originally because they were unable to show that the bombing campaign which they were conducting in the Six Counties and in Britain was connected with a perspective for victory. By winning concessions through the ceasefire, they wanted to show to the anti-unionist masses the tangible results of their bombing campaign.

Unfortunately, their campaign, especially in Britain, has allowed the Labour Government to play upon chauvinist sentiments and win backing for any future compromise that may be reached with the loyalists.

The 'tangible results' are much less favourable to the anti-unionists. In that sense the Provisionals restart their campaign from a weaker position than when they first called the ceasefire.

That's the problem. Victory is still not in sight. The task which remains is a political one: to elaborate a programme of action for the masses north and south to confront the imminent hand-over to the loyalists and to deal with the developing economic crisis in the South through a combined assault on imperialism.

Brian Grogan

PORTUGAL

# Trade union debate splits coalition

A MASSIVE CROWD of Portuguese workers—according to some reports as many as 300,000—marched through the city centre of Lisbon last week to demonstrate their support for 'trade union unity' and the establishment of a single trade union federation in the country.

Organised by the Intersindical union federation, the demonstration was supported by a wide range of left-wing political groups.

The controversy over the proposed new law on trade unionism—which the Communist Party, supported by left-wing members of the Armed Forces Movement in the Government, is relying on to establish the policy of 'trade union unity'—is threatening to split open the coalition Government. Two days after the massive 'unity' demonstration, some 50,000 workers responded to the call of the CP's coalition 'partners'—the Socialist Party and the Popular Democratic Party (an outright capitalist party that calls itself 'social democratic')—and attended a meeting against the new law, calling for the 'right' of workers to form several competing union federations—as exist in France and Italy, for example.

This stand of the Socialist Party, and their collaboration with the PPD, is the result of a steady right-

ward shift in its policies since the fall of the fascist regime. This has recently led to the split from the Socialist Party of a left-wing group that received more than one-third of the votes at the last Congress of the SP.

## INTERSINDICAL

If a single, unified trade union federation is recognised this can only be the Intersindical federation, which developed out of the Communist Party's underground resistance network against the fascist regime. Although the Communist Party is the predominant influence in Intersindical there are a number of large and militant unions within it which they do not control. In the period following the overthrow of the fascist regime the CP opposed all strikes, and the groups of the far left strengthened their position within Intersindical.

It was Intersindical which played the crucial role in mobilising the working class last September against the reactionary 'silent majority' demonstration. The crushing of this right-wing mobilisation forced Spínola to resign and represented a big setback for the political plans of the Portuguese capitalists.

But despite these big victories for the workers' movement, the reactionary offensive is by no means a spent force. The alliance of the



Part of last week's massive demonstration in Lisbon in support of 'trade union unity'

Communist Party and the more prominent leaders of the Armed Forces Movement is based on a basically contradictory policy. They proclaim the need to consolidate the democratic revolution before undertaking any fundamental anti-capitalist measures, yet it is the big capitalists who are behind all the manoeuvres of reaction.

Moreover the left in the Government have not carried out the sort of measures that would undermine support for the right-wing in the

countryside, where the power of the landowners, the moneylenders and the Church is still very strong. The divisions within the Government have also paralysed it in the face of the economic crisis which is producing mounting unemployment and a continuing high rate of inflation.

Although the giant march on 14 January was very impressive, the mass working class response to the reactionary offensive has no organised expression outside the trade unions.

But although there has been no concerted move so far towards the creation of workers' and peasants' committees to organise against the new reactionary offensive and to begin to tackle the urgent economic problems weighing on the masses, this remains a constant theme in the agitation of revolutionary groups, like the Portuguese Trotskyists of the LCI, who are steadily increasing their influence.

Robin Blackburn



Over 100 people gathered in Conway Hall last Friday to pay tribute to the memory of Jabra Nicola, Palestinian revolutionary and member of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International, who died at the end of December. The speakers—Charlie Van Gelderen, Tony Cliff, Moshe Machover and Akiva Orr—all stressed the need to continue the struggle for socialism in the Arab East to which he dedicated the 60 years of his life. Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

# Another blow to Franco

A NEW WAVE of workers' struggles has broken out in Spain, threatening to rock the reactionary Franco dictatorship to its very foundations.

In the northern city of Pamplona, 20,000 workers staged a virtual mini-insurrection on 15 January. The city was shut down in a 24-hour general strike, and thousands of workers took to the streets in mass demonstrations, joined by local university students

who had struck in solidarity with them. The riot police attempted unsuccessfully to stop the demonstrations with baton-charges, tear gas and rubber bullets. At one stage they opened fire, wounding three demonstrators. In reply the workers threw up barricades and trees and lamp posts were felled across city streets.

The struggle began the day before when police brutally attacked a peaceful solidarity demonstration of 2500 workers and miners' wives, organised in support of local potash miners who have occupied their pits the beginning of the year.

The previous day—13 January—workers from the SEAT car factory, joined by local students, took part in a 5000 strong demonstration in the key industrial centre of Barcelona in support of a struggle against victimisation that the SEAT workers have been engaged in since November. In the latest round the management had locked out almost the entire workforce for five days, and sacked four hundred militants. In addition, they had announced a programme of redundancies because of the world

crisis in the car industry.

The SEAT workers' struggle is not only directed against the management but also against the Government-controlled 'official' unions, who have engineered a sell-out 'agreement' with the company. The workers have refused to accept this deal and organised demonstrations outside the union headquarters demanding new elections for union representatives in the factory.

Struggles also broke out in many other parts of Spain last week, with 12,000 steelworkers defying the attempts of riot police to break up their demonstration against plant closures in the Basque town of Bilbao, and 7,000 shipworkers in the city of El Ferrol going on strike.

Clearly all the conditions exist for a generalised workers' offensive which could bring the dictatorship tumbling down, and there is talk again of a coordinated national general strike, such as was being discussed last autumn by the leaders of the underground 'workers' commissions' controlled by the Communist Party.

But the Communist Party saw such an action as simply a means of putting pressure on 'liberal' capitalist elements, and not as the beginning of an all-out fight for the destruction of the dictatorship. When it became clear that a general strike could not be held within such limits, the Communist Party seems to have got cold feet and scrapped the idea. Since then they have been very wary about the political struggles which have broken out, playing little part in the hunger strikes of political prisoners which have been the focus of the fight against the dictatorship, and actually opposing the general strike of 300,000 workers in the northern Basque region in solidarity with the hunger strikers.

But the present wave of struggles proves that the Communist Party cannot hold back the class struggle. And, as the Basque strikes show, a new revolutionary leadership is coming into being which can launch the kind of struggle necessary to put an end to Franco and his reactionary heirs. If the Communist Party should decide to act now it will only be for fear of losing ground to the

# Committee set up to defend German prisoners

## VOLVO BACKS CHILE JUNTA

Internationalen, weekly paper of the Fourth International in Sweden, recently revealed that Volvo, a major European motor company based in Sweden, had taken advertisements in *El Mercurio* in Santiago, Chile, to wish the Pinochet dictatorship happy anniversary on the occasion of its first year since the coup.

Following the exposure, the Chile Solidarity Committees took up the Volvo gesture as a symbol of Swedish capitalist complicity in Chilean repression. The capitalist press were forced to pick up the story, while the Social Democratic Government wrung its hands and did nothing.

Volvo has meanwhile decided that the 'financial climate is satisfactory' and the 'labour market receptive' to the expansion of Swedish capital in Chile. This expansion would take the form of new parts and assembly plants.

The Swedish Chile Solidarity Committees have called for international protests against Volvo, and already in Scotland the International Marxist Group has approached various organisations, notably the National Union of Students, with a view to organising a picket of the Volvo show-rooms in Glasgow.

When the German political prisoner Holger Meins died while on hunger strike last November, there was a widespread outcry against the conditions under which Meins and other members of the Red Army Faction (RAF—also known as the Baader-Meinhof group) had been kept in prison.

For a whole day the German Government was unable to make any reply to the allegations raised by defence lawyers in the press and the television. It appeared that the basis for a broad united front campaign had been laid.

Then on 10 November Judge Gunter von Drenkmann of the Berlin Supreme Court was gunned down on his doorstep. The action was quickly laid at the door of the RAF, and all the accumulated sympathy for them disappeared overnight.

Now two months later, it is widely admitted that Drenkmann was killed by a right-wing group. Even the *Guardian's* London Letter column recently put forward this view, pointing out: 'Drenkmann was one of the most liberal of Berlin's younger judges.'

The RAF has always denied any responsibility for the killing, but is

In any case, the killing had its desired effect, and the detention without trial and solitary confinement of suspected members of the RAF still continues—as does the hunger strike begun on 13 September. Ulrike Meinhof has now been in solitary confinement for two years.

## LAWYERS

Following the death of Meins, the government has pushed through laws which isolate the prisoners even from their lawyers. A recent statement issued by the defence committee pointed out the essence of these laws:

1. The trial can take place without defendants. The authorities evidently assume that by the time of the trial the prisoners will either be dead or unable to stand trial.

2. To exclude a counsel for the defence the mere suspicion of his being a political supporter of his clients will be sufficient. Right up to now the authorities have regarded the campaign against the prison conditions as support of this kind, and therefore have instigated proceedings against the prisoners' lawyers.

3. The lawyers must not make political statements in court. Hence they are forbidden to attack the prison conditions of their clients in open court or explain the political background of the trial, their clients' motivation and the entire way the charges against them are being framed.

4. No counsel for the defence must defend more than one prisoner in each particular trial. Up to now in Germany (as in most countries, e.g. USA, France) defendants who are accused as a political group (e.g. conspiracy) could defend them-

declarations and have joint defence councils.

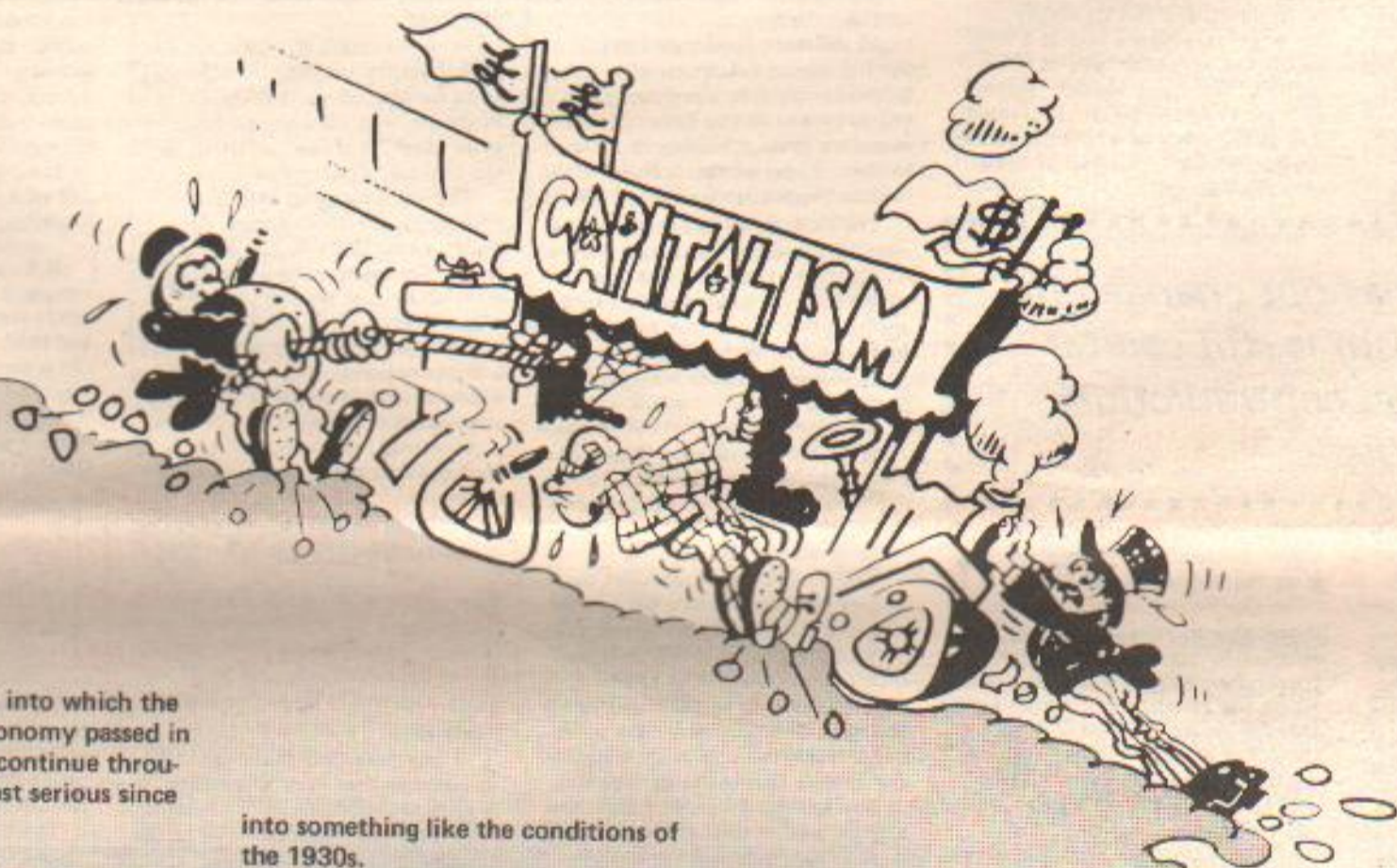
Last May the German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt (a close personal friend of Roy Jenkins) pledged Germany 'to an open society which leaves room for multiplicity of views and social groups'. The laws being enacted by the German social democracy today tell us something different.

The famous American lawyer William Kunstler recently described the new laws as 'starkly reminiscent of the denial to certain classes of persons of any meaningful legal rights in the courts of the Third Reich'.

One hundred and ninety other lawyers in the United States have also declared their opposition, and an international committee has been set up in Utrecht in Holland.

(Further information: International Defence Committee, c/o Institut für Entwicklungsethologie, Utrecht)

# Into the abyss?



The generalised recession into which the entire world capitalist economy passed in 1973-74, and which will continue throughout this year, is the most serious since the Second World War.

Surprisingly this crisis has been subjected to very little serious analysis by the revolutionary left, sections of which have for too long been content to repeat timeless phrases about the 'crisis of capitalism'. Indeed there *is* a massive crisis, but for revolutionary socialists to develop a correct strategy to combat the crisis and open up the road to workers' power, a correct analysis is necessary.

This issue of *Red Weekly* aims to make a contribution to the development of such an analysis by printing an adapted version of a lengthy article on the generalised recession of the international capitalist economy by Ernest Mandel, the leading Marxist economist and militant of the Fourth International. The complete article is published in the latest issue of *Inprecor*, the fortnightly information bulletin of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

## STATE POWER

Without falling into the trap of predicting the 'final' crisis of capitalism, which will only occur when the workers themselves seize state power, it is necessary to underline the scope of the crisis. Certain imperialist powers, notably Italy and Britain, have already exhausted their significant internal economic reserves, and a prolonged international economic recession would throw these countries

into something like the conditions of the 1930s.

## WALL STREET

Only concerted action by the most important imperialist powers, primarily West Germany and the United States, can succeed in keeping the weaker imperialist states from economic collapse, and prevent an international recession on the same scale as that following the 1929 Wall Street crash.

## POLITICAL DISASTER

Such action will almost certainly be taken. The strongest imperialist powers have not yet exhausted their room for economic manoeuvre, and a new 1929 in the present relation of class forces would be a political disaster for the capitalist class. Nevertheless the tasks which even these states can undertake have definite limits.

\* Firstly, it is by no means certain that in 1977-78—that is, in the next slump following the current recession—the capitalist class can prevent a new 1929.

\* Secondly, a new erupting crisis of an immediate nature—such as a new oil crisis or a severe miscalculation of policy by an important ruling class—could bring on such a collapse even at present, although this is not as yet the most likely variant.

\* Thirdly, even if the major capitalist powers succeed in stopping this recession developing into a 1930s type collapse, this can only be done at the cost of an acceleration of the already unprecedentedly high rate of inflation, of an increase in unemployment to its highest point since 1945, and by enormously depleting capitalism's reserves for manoeuvre in the new recession which will inevitably follow rapidly on the heels of any temporary upturn which can be created.

## INTO THE DUSTBIN

However, leaving aside the time at which recession will turn to slump, one thing is clear: the bankrupt capitalist system will not spontaneously remove itself. Only the working class and oppressed masses can throw it into the dustbin of history where it so richly belongs.

As Lenin was fond of pointing out long ago, for a revolutionary situation to arise it is not enough for the ruling class to be unable to go on in the old way. The working masses must also *refuse* to go in the old way. We hope this article contributes towards realising the second half of that equation.



For a generation the world has enjoyed its greatest boom. It is now suffering its greatest inflation and could shortly be suffering its greatest slump. This is how *The Economist*, the magazine of British big business, looked forward to 1975 in its issue of 21 December.

The spokesmen of capitalism have every right to feel gloomy. What revolutionary marxists alone foresaw and predicted is happening: the international capitalist economy is now going through its first generalised recession since the Second World War. It is the first recession to strike simultaneously at all the great imperialist powers.

In 1975, according to the latest report of the Organisation of Economic Development (OECD), its 24 member countries will fail to achieve one per cent growth between them for the second year running. While the combined output of the 20 biggest industrial countries rose by an annual average of 5½ per cent between 1962 and mid-1973, it has stood stock still since June 1973.

#### DISASTER AREA

A full scale slump will not occur yet. But a brief survey of the advanced capitalist world makes it look already like a disaster area.

Britain is now vying with Italy for the title of sick man of Europe. Inflation will continue to rip away at a rate of at least 20 per cent a year. Unemployment will continue its slow creep upwards from its present 650,000. The economy is only expected to expand by a miserly one per cent in 1975.

In Italy the most the capitalist class is hoping for is to halve the rate of inflation to 14 per cent. But this could only happen if their attempt to raise unemployment above the 1½ million level succeeded in frightening off the working class from defending its jobs and living

against price increases of nearly 25 per cent by increasing their wages by a third on average.

The recession did not hit the economy in France fully at the beginning of 1974. But for some weeks now industrial production has been stagnating and prospects for industry are mediocre. Industry is now functioning at only 80 per cent capacity, and there has been a sharp rise in unemployment to 650,000. Women in particular have suffered here: they account for at least 60 per cent of the unemployed while representing less than 40 per cent of the working population.

West Germany remains the strongest capitalist economy in the world—despite its one million unemployed. But the real strength of West German capital lies in the political weakness of the working class, smashed by a decade of fascism and world war. Its economic 'planning' owes its effectiveness to lack of major strikes and its ability to fix wages in advance and at a level below the annual growth of productivity. But these historic reserves of West German capital are limited, and as the crisis of world capitalism deepens it will inevitably be drawn into the swamp.

*'The leopard has not changed his spots. Capitalism is still capitalism. Its internal contradictions remain insoluble.'*

standards. Given the workers' recent success in forcing from the Government a 20 per cent reduction in electricity prices, this is hardly likely to happen.

The United States is in its deepest and longest recession since the Second World War. The economy has shrunk by 4 per cent in two years. Unemployment figures for December showed that more than 6½ per cent of the labour force—more than six million workers—are out of jobs. This does not include workers who have given up looking for work, nor does it include those who only have part-time jobs because they cannot get full employment. If the latter two categories are included, the actual number of unemployed would be closer to nine million!

The present world recession started to hit Japan in 1974 and, for the first time in a quarter century, the 'miracle' economy failed to grow. The working class fought back ag-

The present crisis is rooted in the way capitalism re-stabilised itself after the Second World War.

In the immediate post-war years it was able to raise the rate of exploitation by taking advantage of the tremendous historical defeats inflicted on the international working class through slump, fascism and war, and the betrayal of favourable revolutionary situations in France, Italy and Greece by the stalinised Communist Parties.

On this basis international capital was able to utilise the tremendous stores of technological advance built up in the previous period of slump to bring about a massive increase in productivity. The 'long boom' which resulted was financed through the creation of a mountain of credit—that is, paper money—by both capitalist governments and private industry.

Of course, capitalists could no more stop recessions than they could stop the rain. However, the way in which they dealt with these crises changed. Each recession was slowed down by pumping more money into the economy to stimulate a further bout of inflation-based growth.

Furthermore, because the capitalist countries did not suffer recession at the same time, a fall in production and internal demand in the countries hit by recession was compensated for by an expansion in exports to the countries that had escaped the crisis. In this situation each capitalist government was able to apply 'its own' credit policy, with successive phases of expansion and contraction tied in a 'flexible' manner to the world market through the ups and downs of the balance of payments of the countries in question.

Deeper economic transformations were also taking place during this long period of expansion. The internationalisation of production took new leaps forward, inevitably cutting across the attempts of 'national' capitalist governments to apply 'anti-cyclical' policies limited to nat-

Across the world—but in the USA in particular, the dole-queues get longer and longer. Without strong opposition from the working-class, this is the main price that capitalism will force the workers to pay for its crisis.



# THE BOOM

ional frontiers.

As inflation accelerated in all the imperialist countries, as it was bound to do, a very serious crisis was provoked in the international monetary system, leading in 1971 to the collapse of the dollar and the Bretton Woods agreements of 1944.

The collapse of the international monetary system led to the system of 'floating exchange rates', in which each currency finds its value against other currencies more or less freely on the open market. As it became impossible to resort to sharp devaluations to boost exports, as Wilson had done in 1967, all capitalist governments were forced by inter-imperialist competition to apply an anti-inflationary policy at the same time. Hence the generalisation of the recession.

The international capitalist economy has passed from permanent inflation stimulating economic activity to stagflation in 1970-71 and then to slumpflation in 1974-75, sliding from one to the other down the slope of the acceleration of inflation. Inflation and price increases are now persisting during a period of outright reduction in productive activity and of increases in unem-

ployment.

However much the apologists of capitalism try to blame the present crisis on the 'oil sheiks', increases in the price of oil account for no more than 2 per cent inflation in the imperialist countries.

The main cause of inflation is without doubt the inflation of credit, particularly in the private sector—in other words, the bank loans and paper money that served as the main prop for the preceding boom. The Western economy sailed towards expansion on a sea of debts whose cumulative effects necessarily accelerated inflation.

Moreover, the recession has been accompanied by several particular

automobile and construction industries. It then spread to the textile industry, to meat, to electrical appliances, and to building materials (glass, bricks, cement), finally hitting the petrochemical industry.

Steel was spared right until the end of 1974, but now the recession is hitting there too.

It would be incorrect to see the recession as leading directly to a new world slump on the scale of the 1920s and 1930s. Despite its peculiarities, the present crisis remains a classic capitalist crisis of overproduction, reflected in the vast amount of unused capacity in the economy. (In the United States this amounts

*'Of course capitalists could no more stop recessions than they could stop the rain.'*

bottlenecks.

Thus there have been shortages in some sectors even when there was a general abundance of commodities. The recession began in 1974 in the

to the virtually permanent non-utilisation of nearly a third of the productive capacity directed towards civilian productive goals.

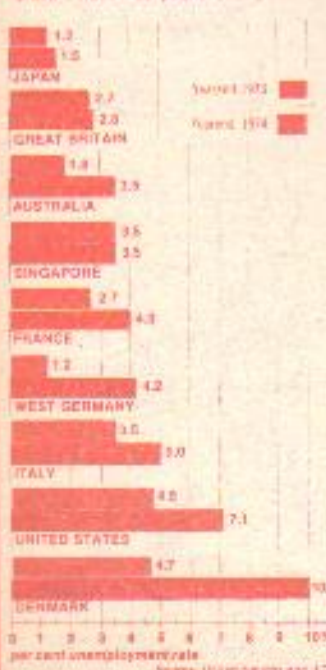
The breadth and duration of the

*'However much the apologists of capitalism try to blame the "oil sheiks", increases in the price of oil account for no more than 2% inflation in the imperialist countries.'*

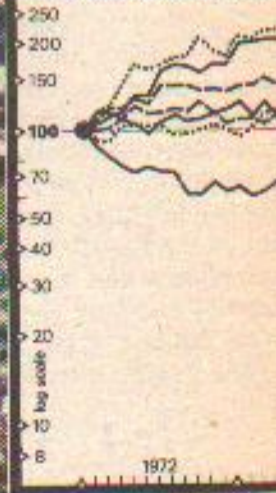
Thousands of Volkswagen cars lined up in a car-lot in Houston, Texas, waiting for buyers.

#### PEOPLE ON THE DOLE

As the world slips deeper into recession, rising unemployment has begun to replace inflation as public enemy No. 1.



#### The car share crash





# WHAT WENT

# BLIST

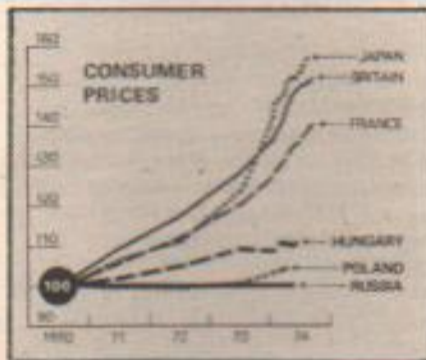
crisis can therefore be limited by a further injection of inflationary buying power into the economy to absorb some of this spare capacity. This occurred in West Germany just before Christmas, and also lies behind the \$ 16 billion dollar tax cuts announced by the Ford administration in the US last week. If the economy is refloated by means of further inflationary boosts in the coming months then international capitalism will avert a grave depression this time.

## NO CHOICE

A massive dose of inflation can foster a new upturn in the economy; but it will not last long. It will be dried up at its source by unbridled speculation, accelerated inflation, and a further decline in the industrial rate of profit.

But the capitalist class has no choice. To wait for the recession to become a slump, for monetary restrictions to 'break' inflation, for massive unemployment to drive down wages, would amount to suicide. It is not a question of what the capitalist class would like to do, but what the political conditions will allow the capitalist class to do.

What makes the current situation particularly grave for capitalism is



15 to 20 million unemployed in the United States, 5 million unemployed in West Germany, Japan and Italy and 3 million unemployed in France and Britain would immediately provoke a social and political crisis of such scope that the very survival of the system would be in danger in the short term. That is the fundamental reason why it will react to the recession through massive measures aimed at inflationary boosting of the economy.

Big capital is perfectly conscious of the long term risks it is courting in acting in this way. But faced with the choice between the devil and the deep blue sea it will choose the devil it knows - whatever the long term consequences.

The present recession is a gigantic social crisis as well as an economic one. The decline in standards of health, education and housing is occurring at an even sharper rate than the fall in real wages. The number of new housing units built in Britain and the United States fell by nearly 50 per cent last autumn (*The Economist*, 30 November 1974). In countries with a welfare state, living standards have been further eroded by

the combination of the generalised economic recession with an exceptionally high level of organisation, numerical strength and militancy of the working class. This in turn is combined with a severe political weakness of the capitalist system as a whole.

The past 25 years have seen a big shift in the relation of class forces in favour of the working class. Nowhere has the ruling class been able to inflict on the working class defeats so grave that the workers would be unable to respond to a large increase in unemployment.

Under these conditions, the decisive sections of big business calculate that

*'It is not at all an exaggeration to say that the millions of human beings who are threatened with starvation in the coming months will have been murdered by the profit laws of the market economy.'*

direct cuts in government expenditure.

The rude shattering of Welfare State Britain is seen most dramatically in housing. Some 18.2 per cent of British housing units are described as 'unfit dwellings'. The reality behind this official euphemism is that over one million families live in slums.

In Japan the anarchic nature of post-war industrialisation has led to the concentration of 41.5 per cent of the population in three urban centres - Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya - which occupy only 17.3 per cent of the total livable land. This has placed unbearable psychological pressures on the working people.

The records of labour accidents show that five to six thousand deaths result from some three hundred to four hundred thousand labour accidents a year. There were 3,873,167 workers injured and 61,507 killed in labour accidents between 1963 and 1973! Yet social security spending per capita in Japan is barely a fifth of that of the West European countries. Only 18 per cent of her roads are paved, and only 14 per cent of the population had access

avoided, it is not enough to try to make the market economy function better or to daydream about setting up an impossible 'mixed economy'.

The capitalist system and the bourgeois state must be overthrown. The regime of the workers must be established and in the semi-colonial countries, the regime of the workers and peasants.

The generalised recession of the international capitalist economy confirms that the system is sick, that it is in its historical death agony. But we know that death agony does not mean automatic disappearance, that the economic crisis does not in itself produce a victorious socialist revolution.

## LEADERSHIP

The generalised recession has broken out in a historical context infinitely more favourable to the working class than that of 1929-32.

But if the crisis of revolutionary leadership is not resolved; if the revolutionary workers party is not built in time; if the class consciousness of working people does not rise to the heights of historic requirements; and if the economic contradictions meanwhile

## How do you spell 'slumpflation'?

### Industrial Production in the Fourth Quarter of 1974

JAPAN	-2.6%
UNITED STATES	-2.6%
BRITAIN	-1.5%
WEST GERMANY	-1.6%
ITALY	-1.3%
FRANCE	-1.0%
CANADA	-0.5%

### Annual Rates of Consumer Price Increases According to Official Statistics in Third Quarter of 1974

JAPAN	23.4%
ITALY	20.8%
BRITAIN	17.0%
FRANCE	14.6%
UNITED STATES	11.8%
WEST GERMANY	7.0%

to adequate sewage facilities as late as 1969.

For the countries of the so-called 'Third World' the cost of the crisis is measured in life itself. It is calculated that to prevent mass starvation in India, Bangladesh, Tanzania, and the countries of the Sahel desert strip in Africa, eight million tons of wheat are needed in the next eight months.

According to the *Washington Post* (21 October 1974) if, during the period 1969-72, the United States, Argentina, Australia and Canada had simply maintained a constant level of cultivation, the extra production of wheat would have been approximately ninety million tons. But such a policy was not in the interests of the great capitalist cereal farmers and exporters: by cutting back production they were able to keep up their prices and profits.

It is not at all an exaggeration to say that the millions of human beings who are threatened with starvation in the coming months will have been murdered by the profit laws of the market economy - the same economy which produces the miseries of unemployment, rampant inflation and crumbling welfare services in the West. **BLOW TO REFORMISTS**

This generalised recession is dealing hammer blows to all reformist and gradualist illusions about the allegedly infinite capacities of 'adaption' of the capitalist system. It confirms what revolutionary Marxists have proclaimed, even at the height of the post-war boom.

The leopard has not changed his spots. Capitalism is still capitalism. Its internal contradictions remain insoluble.

If a return to unemployment, to graver and graver recessions, to galloping inflation, to famine throughout the world, to misery that can reappear on a grand scale even in the imperialist countries is to be

become more and more explosive - then it is possible that the imperialist bourgeoisie during the next few years may for a second time have recourse to the 'remedies' with which it 'resolved' the crisis of the 1930s.

Capitalism will then seek to inflict a very heavy defeat on the working class, to raise the rate of profit through super-exploitation of the workers, and to stabilise this system through a 'strong state' or even through a ferocious dictatorship. It would once again take the course of war.

These would be 'remedies' infinitely more catastrophic during the epoch of nuclear and biological weapons than they were during the epoch of Hitler.

Thus, the generalised recession also recalls the timelessness of the burning alternative: socialism or barbarism.

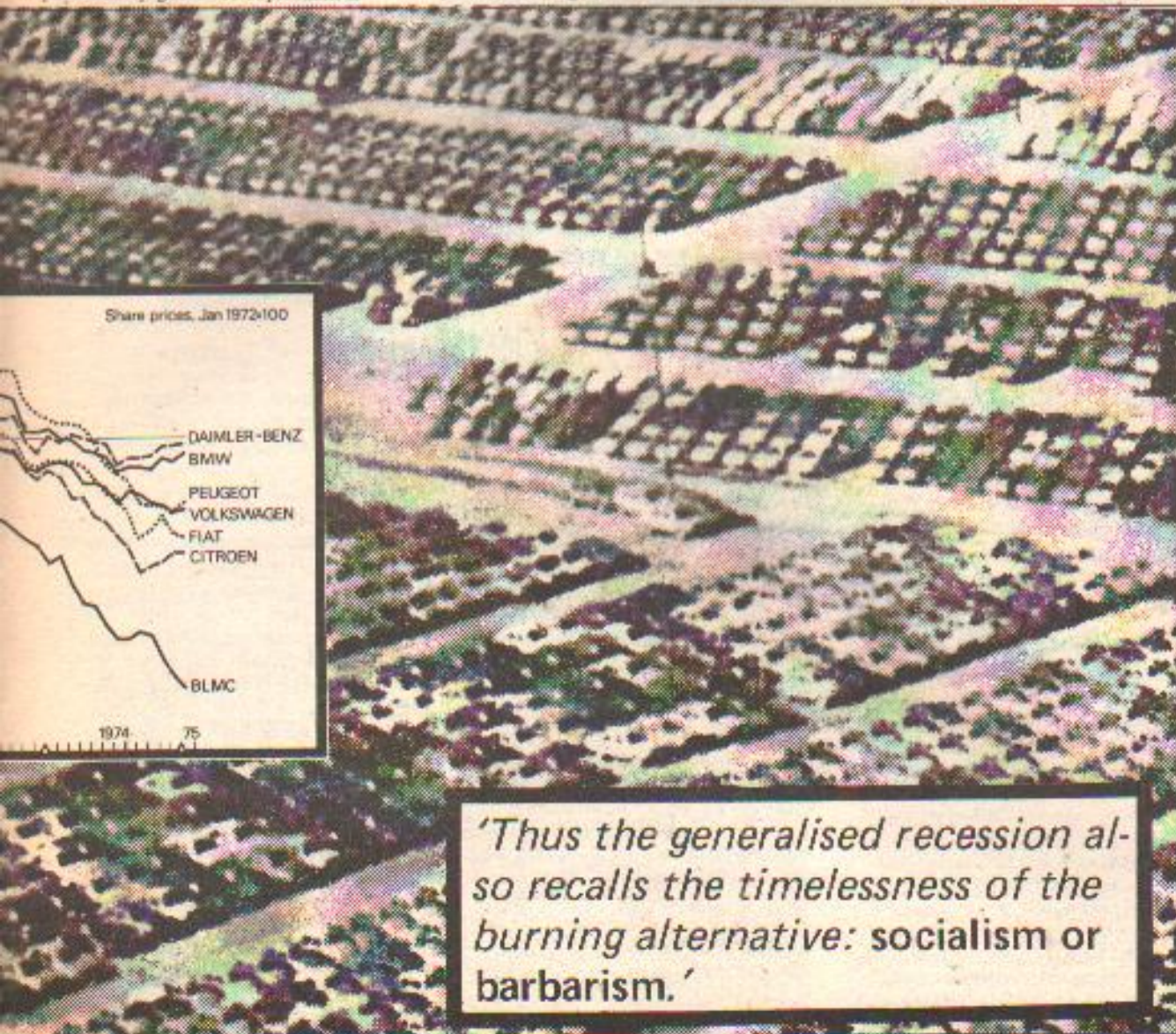
## SUBSCRIBE TO

### INPRECOR

THE GENERALIZED RECESSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CAPITALIST ECONOMY

France, Britain, West Germany, Japan, Latin America, USA, Europe, America

£4 for 1 year from: INPRECOR, 97 Caledonian Road, London, N.1. Current issue 45p (inc. p&pl) from: Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London, N.1.



*'Thus the generalised recession also recalls the timelessness of the burning alternative: socialism or barbarism.'*



# A BOOST FOR CAPITALISM OR A BLOW FOR SOCIALISM

AS THE CAPITALIST crisis bites home around the world this coming year Britain will be one of the worst hit victims. Even 'optimistic' predictions are now talking about record breaking inflation of more than 20%, coupled with mass unemployment worse than anything seen since the '30s.

At first glance the British working class would seem to be in a good position to do something about this crisis and the attempts of the capitalists to dump its burdens on the backs of working people. After all, with more than ten million members in a single trade union body—the TUC—British workers are among the best organised in the world.

So what plans are the 'leaders' of the trade union movement making for dealing with the crisis? What solutions do they propose? How do they plan to get them implemented?

## NO ANSWER

The answer is that the trade union bureaucracy has no real solution to the crisis, and is doing nothing at all about working out and implementing the sort of policies necessary to solve the crisis in the interests of the millions of trade unionists, and tens of millions of workers, in this country. This was made quite clear by TUC General Secretary Len Murray last week when he said, 'It is easy to dream up schemes of what other people—in this case wage earners—should do to solve the nation's economic problems... It might be more positively helpful if the CBI would put forward a programme to get their member companies to carry out essential investments and to protect jobs...'

Murray made this remark in reply to a proposal by the Confederation of British Industry that the trade unions should bail industry out of the crisis through a 'voluntary incomes policy. But it is important to note that the only alternative he can put forward to the CBI's capitalist scheme is another capitalist scheme—the bosses should work out a plan for more investment by capitalist industry.

This has been the message of the TUC in all the recent discussions about the state of the economy, and there is nothing new in this approach. Ever since its formation the TUC, and most of the unions it represents, have seen their job as simply defending the material welfare of their members through collective dealings with the employers. Questions of 'political' policies have been treated as matters on which the trade unions may have views, but must be left to the capitalist state, Parliament in particular, to deal with.

Thus the first coordinating body of the TUC was its Parliamentary Committee, whose job it was to keep an eye on developments in Parliament and to lobby the Government and political parties for the action it wanted from the state. After the Labour Party had been created and won support from most trade unions the job of representing trade union interests in Parliament and handling political matters was left to the Labour MPs.

## PROBLEM

The problem with such an approach has always been that Government policy and the actions of the state have a very big effect on the material welfare of working people. So the TUC has never been able to ignore Government policy. But its opposition to the trade union movement acting directly to determine 'affairs of state' has left it in a position where it can only endorse or reject Government policy, but without ever having an alternative or any means of putting such alternatives

how best you can get that real power...'

But this problem of power did not really worry the TUC leaders, because their idea of 'planning' was a thoroughly capitalist one. As Arthur Pugh explained, arguing against the proposal for a general strike in reply to the National Government, '...the British Trades Union Move-

industry. This body would be charged with drawing up comprehensive economic plans to guide Government policy.

In September the TUC voted to allow the General Council to formulate its own wages policy for the movement as a whole—an authority it needed if it were to make commitments on behalf of the trade unions in the preparation of economic plans.

## REALITY

In reality this was the application of Pugh's policy in a situation better suited to its success. The TUC now did all the things Pugh had dreamed of—it carried out its own 'research and investigation', and examined 'economic and financial questions'. But, as in Pugh's scheme, this continued to be separated from any means of carrying out TUC economic policies—except, that is, through reliance on the mechanisms set up by the capitalist state. Thus the TUC worked out its economic policy totally within the framework of capitalism: its 'planning' was simply a debate on how best to boost capitalism ('Build up ind-

with the Labour Chancellor, they decided to give a freer reign to wage claims, which increased workers' pay packets and their demand for goods, thus giving the economy the boost which the Government had refused to deliver.

## Chris Balfour looks at the TUC's economic policy

into practice.

It was this approach which led to a major defeat for the workers movement the last time a world economic crisis hit Britain with full force in 1931. That crisis split the leadership of the Labour Party, with its leading figures—the Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald, and the main architects of its economic policy, the Chancellor Philip Snowden and J.H. Thomas—leaving the party to form a coalition 'National Government' with the political representatives of the capitalists.

ment throughout the whole of the struggles of the past century has been gradually building, building and building. On its political side it built until it was able to put a Labour Government in the House of Commons. In the same way it must build up industry. We must go into these economic and financial questions, we must have research and investigation, we must make our own plan...'

In the years after the second world war, Government policy became a much more important factor



The TUC — planning for the future . . . . of capitalism

The economic policy of this Government involved wide-ranging cuts in expenditure which hit brutally at working class living standards—particularly those of the unemployed. The TUC opposed these measures, but the whole outlook of its leadership made it impossible for them to do anything about it. In September 1931—one month after the establishment of the National Government—the TUC met to discuss the situation. Badly shaken by its defeat, the TUC leadership moved a resolution pledging the TUC to 'boldly advance the present tendency towards a planned and regulated economy in our national life'. But, as one delegate pointed out, this was just a 'pious resolution which will make no difference to the real position', because it was not connected to any measures for actually securing the implementation of a 'planned and regulated economy'.

As the same delegate pointed out, 'you cannot naturally plan in this country because you have not real power, and the problem which this Congress ought to face, if you are going to have national planning, is

in shaping the state of the economy, but the approach of the TUC did not change appreciably. Until the early '60s, the only role that the TUC played in economic matters was to either grant or refuse co-operation with Government pleas for wage restraint.

The union bureaucrats readily went along with the Labour Government from 1947-50 when it called for a wage freeze, thus compelling the working class to subsidise the process of rebuilding post-war capitalism, but it steadfastly refused similar cooperation with Tory Governments for more than a decade after the defeat of Labour in 1951.

Eventually, the Tories had to impose a partial wage freeze—the 'pay pause' of 1961. This forced the union bureaucrats to recognise that they couldn't ignore economic questions, and the following year saw a major shift in the TUC's approach to economic policy. In exchange for an end to the 'pay pause', the TUC agreed to sit on the newly-created National Economic Development Council (NEDC) along with representatives of Government and

industry', as Pugh put it). In the process it also had to take on a share of responsibility for implementing that policy—which is, of course, what the capitalists wanted out of the deal.

## STORMS

This arrangement continues to the present day, but it has inevitably had some stormy periods, and far rougher ones lie ahead. The assumption lying behind the TUC's participation in the economic planning machinery of the capitalist state is that capitalism can continue to meet the essential needs of both the working class and the capitalists. The only debate is over who gets what. Thus the TUC participates in bodies like the NEDC to try and bargain for a bigger slice of the national cake for trade unionists.

Given the power of the organised working class, they have had some success in the past. And one thing the union bureaucrats have learnt is that if they are unable to come to an agreement they can always thwart Government policies by refusing to cooperate in their application. Thus in 1969, for example, after the unions had a disagreement



A 'PLEBS' STRIKE CARTOON THE ECONOMIST (1969) WHICH SUMMED UP THE WEAKNESSES OF THE TUC'S POLICY

## 'Plebs' apt cartoon during the General Strike perfectly summed up the weaknesses of the TUC's policy

Basically this is what the union bureaucrats—especially the 'left' variety like Jones, Scanlon and Jenkins—are threatening to do now. In effect they are saying to Healey, 'either you pump money into the economy to prevent unemployment or we'll do the job for you by letting wages rip.'

The trouble with such a threat is that it remains based on the old assumption that the economy is able to meet the needs of both classes. Only under those conditions can the unions successfully squeeze out extra cash without upsetting the whole applecart.

Even in 1969 their wage drive delivered a big shock to British capitalism. At the present time, when profit margins have virtually been worn to the bone and soaring inflation is making it difficult for even very big firms to make ends meet on a day-to-day basis, such a move would simply provoke a rash of bankruptcies and factory closures.

## ANSWER

The answer, of course, is not the 'wage restraint' which the capitalists and the Labour Government have been calling for. As they are now admitting, this involves a cut in the living standards of the working class in order to perpetuate bankrupt capitalism out of the workers' pockets. But neither do the policies of the union bureaucrats—'left' or right—represent a way forward.

The only real answer is the destruction of capitalism and its supplanting by a socialist economy. This requires a different kind of plan from the trade unions—not the bureaucrats' plan for the better running of capitalism to be carried out by the capitalists and their state machinery, but a workers' plan for socialism, to be put into action by the millions of trade unionists and their organisations.

In the coming months a myriad of struggles will be launched by workers in their own factories, firms and industries to combat the effects of the crisis. It is here that militants should be looking for the raw materials with which to develop a planned, socialist solution to the crisis—and not in the bureaucrats' hobnobbing with the employers' representatives and capitalist 'experts'.

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)



# LETTERS

## CONSULTANTS - WHAT ARE THE REAL ISSUES?

The views expressed in the 9 January issue on NHS Consultants must not pass without comment. It is said that the consultants, to a man, are in effect a group of money-grabbers who wish to 'hawk their trade'. It is true that many are engaged in private practice in ways which are unattractive to many people. But if I in turn may be allowed also to make a sweeping generalisation, then it is also true that many of them work greatly in excess of their reward.

Why have we not seen any leader in the press saying 'After 25 years of having their good will taken for granted, consultants are at last beginning to say, "We refuse to do unpaid extra time any longer", and our society, which condones mediocrity and often fails to recognise endeavour, must recompense? Surely a socialist paper would be right behind this.

If we are to see stark, derelict wards as depicted on your front page, in the event of a work to rule by the consultants, then the 'rules' must be absurd, and we should thank the consultants for doing so much more than is laid down for them, thereby keeping the system going.

Scant reference was given to the drastic point that we should make the NHS so good for the patients and rewards good enough for the consultants that private practice would not be a more attractive alternative to either group. Your articles should concentrate on this rather than indulge in throwing more mud around. — Dr. J.D. HUGGAN, Newcastle upon Tyne.

## Reply

Dr. Huggan has a valid point when he says that consultants should be paid for overtime. But he appears to be forgetting why the consultants are working to rule at the moment. The BMA have stated consistently that accepting the new contracts would destroy the "independence" of doctors: i.e. they want to be able to sell their skills to the highest bidder. This is being done at the expense of the NHS and the working class.

We cannot at the moment support demands on questions like overtime payments until consultants sign the new contracts and are committed to working full-time in the interests of the NHS.

There may well be consultants in the provinces who do work hard for the NHS, and we would call on them to come out against the action of those consultants who are taking action to protect their privileges and "independence". They should support the actions by other hospital workers in smashing the consultants' work-to-rule, participate in the action committees, and assist them to enforce bans on private practice.

Only when the present reactionary work-to-rule has been smashed and the future of the NHS secured can we discuss what may well be legitimate problems facing many consultants.

## ALGERIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Many militants, who have taken up the issue of British imperialism's present war in Ireland, have realised that there are

## RED WEEKLY SCOOP

As a regular reader of the *Red Weekly*, one of my main complaints in the past has been that it is not a newspaper, but more a commentary journal with a 'newy' first page. The article in the centre pages this week on the CIA was therefore a most welcome change. For the first time I can remember, *Red Weekly* had something of a 'scoop', complete with a well written commentary article on the Labour Party, demonstrating how US imperialism doesn't limit its activities to Latin America.

This is the way I feel you will be able to build the circulation of your paper, by being prepared to publish the 'other' side of the story. Of course we on the left cannot as yet challenge the capitalist press, but by exposing the myths like the 'free press', a real start can be made. I hope you are able to continue this. — WILLIAM PLANT, Leeds.

a number of parallels between this struggle and the Algerian war of independence which ended successfully 12 years ago.

Unfortunately, except for a pamphlet by Mike Farrell, it is difficult to obtain any information about this war against French imperialism. I would like to suggest that it would be very useful if you, as part of an internationalist movement, could commission an article or articles from your French section covering that period of struggle. I hope you will agree that it would be helpful to produce such an article, and I list some points which I think should be covered.

1. The rationale put forward by French imperialism for holding on to Algeria — how and why this changed?
2. The actions of the French armed forces — how the course of the war affected the attitude and morale of the soldiers?
3. How the Pleds Noir (poor whites) reacted — specifically covering the reactionary build-up and the effect of the French Government's declaration of withdrawal.
4. The attitude of the French labour movement and socialist organisations, especially the Communist Party.

—ALASTAIR RENWICK, London.

# Review

## Scream quietly or the neighbours will hear

SCREAM QUIETLY OR THE NEIGHBOURS WILL HEAR  
by Erin Pizzey (Penguin, 40p)

'One of my more bizarre conversations was with Lesley's social worker. She telephoned to say that Lesley's husband was terribly sorry, would she come back? I said, "But he threw scalding water over her and gave her second degree burns on her breasts." "Oh yes, I know", she said, "but he's terribly sorry."

This is an extract from Erin Pizzey's book about the work of Chiswick Women's Aid and the situation of battered wives. It shows the types of problems women face when they try to get out of an intolerable situation.

### EFFECTIVE HELP

The book gives a good introductory account of the position of battered wives. It deals with the myth that battered women are not seriously beaten or enjoy being battered because they have a masochistic desire to be a victim—a view seriously put forward by some psychiatrists and social workers. It also explains how difficult it is for such women to get effective help except via women's aid centres.

Legal actions against husbands are usually ineffective; police do not intervene in domestic disturbances; social workers encourage battered wives to return to their husbands for the sake of the family; women cannot leave their husbands and get social security or council accommodation as they are not classified as homeless, and are considered to have a home to return

to and a husband to support them. And as battered wives often cannot afford to leave home, it is then assumed they find their situation tolerable!

The consequences of wife battering are also terrible for the children. Some of the children in the Women's Aid Centre were terrified the first time they saw the men who worked in the play group there, as they automatically associated men with violence. A number had been battered by their fathers or their mothers.

Erin Pizzey, however, does not give a full analysis of why men batter women or how this can be stopped. She does not relate the problems of battered wives to the overall oppression of women.

The book also lacks any clear understanding of the role of the capitalist state. The agencies of the state — the law, the police, social security and social workers — cannot solve the problems of battered wives because one of the main reasons they exist is to prop up the family. The family as a property relationship encourages men to exert authority over their wives and enforce it by battering them into submission. The battering of wives occurs in all social classes; it is a common feature of the family structure.

### WOMEN'S LIBERATION

What solution, then, should socialists offer to the problems of battered wives? The question must be placed in the context of the struggle for women's liberation. This means that we have to work for women to have economic independence from men, to be able to



earn a wage on which they can support themselves and to be able to claim social security in their own right.

Women with children must be able to obtain council housing without reference to their husband's tenancy rights. Nursery facilities are also particularly important for battered women, as it is often chiefly the children who prevent them from leaving their husbands.

Women also need specific protection against male violence. Under socialism a workers' militia should undertake this task. Meanwhile battered wives have to rely on finding refuge in women's aid centres, as the isolation of women in the family makes any organised self-defence for women difficult.

The case of battered wives is important because it indicates the reality of marriage and family life in capitalist society. As Erin Pizzey puts it, the Englishman's home is his castle, and the wife and children are the prisoners of the castle.

The revolutionary left has unfortunately tended to ignore the question of battered wives and allowed work on it to drift into reformist channels. This is particularly unfortunate because the struggle to prevent women being battered by men is an important part of the struggle for women's liberation. It highlights the vulnerability and weakness of women in the family structure, and it represents the point where the family structure is in its most severe crisis and so highly likely to break.

Liz Lawrence

# ARTISTS OF THE LEFT UNITE

AN IMPORTANT agitational aid to the revolution in Russia in 1917 was the way that many artists, from all media, came over to the side of the revolution and put their talents at the disposal of the masses and their party. Mayakovsky, the poet and dramatist, and Meyerhold, the theatre director, are two of the more well-known examples.

Again in May 1968 many artists, particularly students in art-colleges, produced agitational posters which expressed the hopes and fears of the strikers, and attacked the state, particularly the police, often with great satirical power.

### CINEMA

In the last few weeks developments have taken place on the fringe of the cinema and the theatre which point to similar possibilities.

In the cinema, a group of revolutionary film-makers, calling themselves the 'Newsreel Collective', have come together to make monthly newsreels on the class struggle in Britain and other longer films on national and international events. The group has already made the highly-praised film on apartheid, *Last Grave at Dimbaza*.

It will be showing this, plus two

the end of the month (details below), to pay for the making of *Dimbaza* and to finance future films.

In the theatre, over 20 'fringe' companies held a conference in early January to set up The Association of Community Theatre. They discussed the role of such groups, how they can aid the community, and how they can contribute to the struggles of the working class.

An example of the way that this can be done was given by the 'North-west Spanner' group during the nurses' strike. By taking its play about the strike to factories and trade union branches, it actually helped to establish links between the nurses' action groups and other sections of the movement. This play was even instrumental in helping the formation of support committees for the nurses in some areas.

We have also seen some of the excellent work done by the Red Ladder Theatre Group, for example, particularly with its play on women's oppression.

The constitution of TACT creates a certain framework within the spirit of which these groups can operate. They committed themselves to full internal democracy, moves towards complete unionisation of this section of the theatre, and a theatre

One important aim which they set themselves was the struggle for the enlargement of Arts Council grants. In this they must see their struggle as inseparable from the wider struggle against the cuts in the social services, in hospitals, education etc., which the ruling class is trying to foist on the working class to make it pay for the crisis.

The theatre cannot be seen as a rarefied area of 'Art', above politics and the class-struggle, as the bourgeois theorists and critics would have it. It must be seen as a part of the social services if it is to be adequately defended and if it is to be made relevant to the needs and interests of working people.

When the cuts come in the theatre, they will inevitably hit first those groups which serve the working-class, rather than those which serve the pampered, pretentious taste of the capitalist intelligentsia. For example, the National Theatre even now gets a grant of £500,000 per year — twice as much as the whole of the fringe theatre put together, although it comprises over 120 companies!

If even this pittance is to be defended, a strategy of theatre in struggle has to be forged which in-

\*\*\*\*\*

## CINEMA BENEFIT

Newsreel Collective Benefit:  
COLLEGIATE THEATRE, 15  
Gordon St. W.C.1. (near Euston  
Station). THURSDAY 30  
January. 8pm. Tickets: 75p  
(50p for students and claimants)  
at the door, or in advance from:  
The Other Cinema, 12/13 Little  
Newport St. W.C.2. (734 8508)



© EZRA NATHAN

# Mass sackings threat in car industry

THE THREE-DAY WEEK NOW SWEEPING THROUGH THE BRITISH car industry is going to be followed by further short-time working and mass sackings.

At Chrysler UK 18,000 workers are now working only three days a week. It is no well-kept secret that the American bosses of this crisis-ridden company are considering closing down their loss-making British subsidiary.

## PET TYCOON

At British Leyland the coming three-day week won't solve their problems either. There is no doubt that the inquiry headed by Wilson's pet tycoon, Sir Don Ryder, will come out emphatically for boosting the work load, pegging wages and 'pruning' the labour force. This accounted for the intransigence of the Cowley management towards the engine tuners' strike.

## RARE TRIBUTE TO IMG

### The Economist

The International Marxist Group has long been aware that the capitalist class and its state take a keen interest in our activities. So it was all the more fascinating to read in the latest issue of *The Economist* (18 January), theoretical journal of the bourgeoisie, the following assessment of our Cowley comrades' pamphlet *British Leyland in Crisis: Cowley Under Fire*:

'The extreme left is sometimes better informed about British industry than its critics give it credit for, and a surprisingly penetrating analysis of British Leyland has just been published by the International Marxist Group (IMG).'

Rare praise indeed! The IMG is complimented on its use of inflation accounting methods 'to prove that the 1973 profit of £28 million was really a loss of £24 million' and our recognition that 'low investment lies at the root of British Leyland's troubles.' Our strange new 'friends' continue:

'The IMG is no less realistic in some of its judgements about the labour disputes at Cowley than in its financial analysis. The fundamental change brought about by the transition from piece-work is, it says, that the annual pay review becomes the major wage negotiation; as a result, the shop steward's only sphere of bargaining now concerns the level of output and so he is in danger of being known as the bloke who stops work, rather than the bloke who secures pay rises.'

It was a series of such unsuccessful sectional disputes that led to the undermining of the stewards, amongst whom the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) had a strong following, last spring. Added to this, the WRP was predicting at the outset of the three day week that six million people would be unemployed within a week, and twelve million shortly after.

Agreeing with the IMG's analysis, *The Economist* comments: 'Crying wolf like that is one reason why the WRP lost the men's confidence at Cowley.'

No doubt the WRP will seize on this as the ultimate proof of the 'middle-class revisionism' of the IMG, especially as their own pamphlet is dismissed by the same article. But before Healy screams about our 'betrayal' he should read on.

Not surprisingly, *The Economist* attacks our answer to the crisis in the car industry - nationalisation without compensation under workers control, with no reduction in the labour force and no loss of pay. After all, it would put their magazine out of business along with the whole ruling class if taken up throughout industry.

However, the comrades of the WRP should note *The Economist's* conclusion. Their pamphlet is written off as merely 'a stale left-wing diet', whereas 'the IMG doctrine...is all the more dangerous for being based on plausible premises.'

For 30p (plus 5p postage) you too can develop some dangerous ideas by sending for *Leyland in Crisis: Cowley Under Fire* from RED BOOKS, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

Emboldened by Wilson's threat to workers that they cannot go on expecting the Government to save companies from the effects of disruption caused by 'pointless industrial disputes', the car bosses are pushing for a showdown.

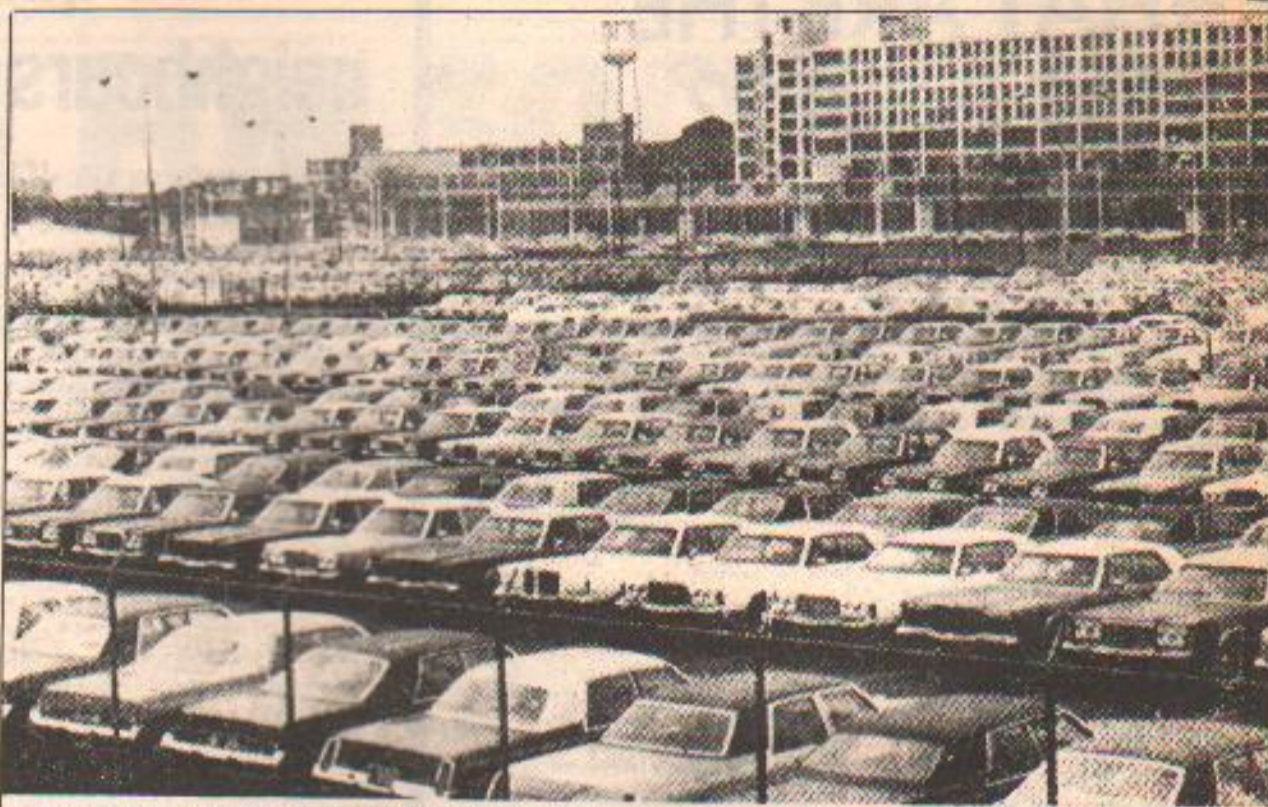
## PALTRY

The paltry £50 million guaranteed by the Government against BLMC's bank borrowing pending completion of Ryder's report is a drop in the ocean and will do nothing to solve the firm's problems. Even before the latest oil crisis sent petrol prices on another upward spiral BLMC was hopelessly in debt.

For years BLMC has been on the slide. Under-investment, grossly inflated profit returns in the more hazy days of increasing sales, and inefficient management put BLMC in the worst possible position to meet the world crisis that is blowing like a hurricane throughout the international car industry.

All the 'experts' are pessimistic and forecasts for 1975 vary from the hopeful - it will be as bad - to the realistic - it will get much worse. Competition must get fiercer. The car giants will battle for an ever shrinking market. The weaker companies will go to the wall. Crippling financial burdens will be hung round the necks of the survivors as they lurch into further indebtedness when they are forced into massive borrowing to finance their new 'competitive' products.

In this situation the outlook for debt-ridden BLMC is bleak. Last year a series of industrial disputes in the car industry masked the depth of the crisis, as this made sure insufficient vehicles were produced to meet demand. Production is now back to



Lumbered with 120 days' supply of unsold cars, Chrysler has already been forced to lay off its workers in the American city of Detroit. Now there is talk that its British subsidiary will be shut down permanently.

1962 levels and registrations are down by 25 per cent last year. Higher petrol prices, mounting unemployment and spiralling steel costs will make sure 1975 is a bad year.

## SAVAGE ATTACK

The solutions of the Labour Government made in alliance with, and at the behest of the car bosses to keep BLMC afloat mean a savage attack on car workers. The major task is for car workers to produce an alternative plan to that of the Labour Government. Failing to do that means mass sackings, lower real wages and back-breaking effort for those allowed to keep their jobs.

The BLMC stewards must not permit Wilson to take the initiative. This means a break from

their present 'wait and see' tactics and a decisive turn on their part to involve the entire work force in a fight to save jobs.

The workers must not be forced to pay for the crisis imposed on them by the capitalist system and should demand that all car workers receive their average weekly pay irrespective of cuts in hours.

Instead of pouring money into the coffers of the car bosses the demand has to be for the nationalisation of the industry. Nationalisation must have built-in guarantees that no jobs will be axed and there will be no deterioration in working conditions. Workers' committees in the factories must have the right of veto over all sackings and production increases.

The workers must have full infor-

mation at every stage of the nationalisation process. This means full access to financial records and future company plans. Ryder and his friends must be dismissed and replaced by workers' committees responsible to the workforce. This is in flat opposition to the participatory fairyland being advanced by the TUC and Benn, which is nothing more than a utopian scheme to run BLMC as a viable capitalist enterprise.

Of course, these demands will not be obtained by letters to Mr. Wilson or a lobby of parliament. They will only be achieved by uniting car workers in a massive fight to win them. Such a fight will call for factory occupations, mass pickets and strikes. The alternative is the dole and reduced pay packets.

Bob Pennington

# OUT OF TUNE.....

Against the background of the British Leyland 'rescue plan' launched by car bosses Stokes and Barber, the sectional strike of Cowley engine tuners grinds on. On Monday the strikers voted by 104 to 91 to continue their unofficial strike in support of their claim for skilled status.

A tuners' lot is not a happy one. Petty bureaucratic rivalry between the Transport and General Workers' Union and the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers stimulated by the AUEW's desire to boost its own membership, has manoeuvred the tuners into their hasty and divisive action.

British Leyland have no intention of granting the tuners' claim for skilled status. To do so would cut right across the principles of Measured Day Work which they fought so hard to introduce, and lead to the kind of leap-frogging sectional demands that prevailed under the old piece-rate system.

## HOSTILE

The assembly workers remain hostile to the tuners' claim, which they regard as petty and elitist as well as inopportune. They are cooperating with management to ensure as few rejects as possible, but even so, satisfactory production is far below the 80 per cent mark that management is claiming. Management has been able to exploit the men's genuine fears about three day working and mass redundancies to render the assembly stewards powerless to intervene in the dispute.



This sharp division has had its effects on the AUEW bureaucracy. In a shameful abdication of responsibility, the National Executive Committee refused even to consider the situation at its meeting on Tuesday 13 January.

Such hypocrisy can rarely have been rivalled. Apparently Reg Birch, the Divisional Executive member and the AUEW Executive's own house-trained Maoist, 'forgot' to raise the matter.

Having stirred up the horns' nest the bureaucracy has now retreated to its customary position of sitting on the fence, since they know that to declare the strike official would tear the unions apart inside the plant.

As if these manipulations and manoeuvres were not enough, the tuners have had to suffer Wilson's wrath as he

struggles to preserve his social contract with the bosses, and the whinings of that strike-breaking hysteric Mrs. Miller. Although representing minimal forces she has been built up by an army of Fleet Street reporters who have nothing better to do than camp on her doorstep waiting for her pearls of 'wisdom'.

Her 'line', predictably, has been to blame the tuners for the threat of short time, redundancies and closure. As a mouthpiece for company propaganda she clearly has no equal - even Symonds, the Company Plant Director, couldn't do better.

However, women trade unionists within the plant and throughout Oxford are to issue a statement to counter her lies. They are now better prepared to deal with her antics than during the strike

over the victimisation of leading shop steward Alan Thornett earlier this year.

## CRISIS

But, as the accompanying article shows, it is in the overall context of the crisis in the car industry, and British Leyland in particular, that the tuners' strike must be seen. It is not the action of the tuners but the collapse of the car market and the resulting fierce international competition for survival which causes British Leyland to move onto the offensive. At Cowley, a vicious increase in productivity is on the cards. Under cover of a reduction in Marina track speeds a savage de-manning operation is planned. So-called 'surplus labour' will be absorbed on the new model, but given the world slump in car sales this can only be the thin end of the wedge.

## NO LEAD

The bankruptcy of Labour's plans are obvious. But the Combine Committee has no strategy except to discuss raffles and dances and to tinker with British Leyland's 'participation' charade so beloved by Benn.

In this situation the Cowley assembly workers' new claim for a further £12 a week assumes tremendous importance. The TGWU Senior Steward, red-baiting Reg Parsons, will almost certainly use the dire straits of British Leyland to avoid a fight.

Militants will have to struggle, against the stream, for an all-out fight against any retreat on the claim.

And to be brought to a successful conclusion it will be necessary to see this fight as part of a broad strategy for the nationalisation of the car industry without compensation and under workers control.

Cowley IMG

# INSIDE THE UNIONS

IN THE PRINT

# THE 40p PER WEEK JOB STRUGGLE

This week several national newspapers did not appear, or came out in limited editions due to two different industrial disputes. The *Daily Mirror* has lost 22,500,000 copies and £1,150,000 in circulation and advertising revenue.

Behind the bosses' threats and union in-fighting, one issue overshadows all in the current Fleet Street row. As MICK GOSLING explains, the issue is jobs.

dictory element into the situation. The varying print unions will fiercely defend their own jobs, but often at the expense of other print workers. The reason the members of the NGA are taking action is not for a pathetic 40 pence a week, but because they believe that if they allow their traditional status to be eroded they will be the first to be dismissed.

Unlike the other print unions the NGA refused to de-register when the Tory Government brought in the Industrial Relations Act, and therefore it is not party to the pay negotiations which take place between the other five print unions and the publishers. It was at the meetings to discuss the annual pay claim which began in September, that the new pay deal was worked out which eroded the NGA's differential by 40 pence. Hence the NGA's action.

Now the employers are seeking to exploit the divisions between the NGA and the other print unions as part of a softening-up process prior to the introduction of massive sackings.

If the plans of the press barons are to be defeated, these splits in the ranks must be overcome. NGA members have given full support to the union's action because they fear that a defeat over the 40 pence would weaken them in the fight to maintain jobs on new processes. Instead of turning to the other unions for a joint fight against any redundancies, they preferred to argue their case to a capitalist court in the absurd hope that a judge would declare it illegal for a capitalist to dispense with workers! Such a policy is a recipe for defeat and demoralisation.

As the workers at the *Daily Express* in Glasgow showed last year, whatever the limitations of the final settlement, the way to fight redundancy and closures is not through the maintenance of craft differentials and illusions in the capitalist courts but through mass united militant action.

By taking over the valuable equipment contained in their place of work and challenging capitalist legality the unions can fight sackings from a position of strength and take the first steps towards workers control over the whole of the industry.

The claim of the National Graphical Association for a paltry 40 pence a week to maintain its traditional differential over non-craft workers has led to a new showdown on the national press.

The press barons, organised in the powerful Newspaper Publishers Association, have seized on this in order to threaten the dismissal of 7,000 NGA members unless they call off their industrial action. This blatant provocation on the part of the employers is exposed by the simultaneous sacking in a separate dispute of 750 clerical members of the National Society of Operative Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel (NATSOPA) working on the *Daily Mirror*, which is not a member of the Publishers Association.

## HARD LINE

The hard line taken by the press barons is a reflection of their desperation to introduce cost-cutting techniques into the archaic newspaper industry. During the past year inflation and a 70 per cent rise in newsprint costs have wrecked the budgets of all the newspaper groups. The only way the industry can survive is by a massive introduction of new technological processes.

Computer photosetting and faster printing presses mean one thing—cuts in jobs. Beaverbrook papers are already using rotary presses that produce papers at twice the rate of the old machines but need less men to man them. This led last year to Beaverbrook's closure of its Glasgow plant and the transferring of its Scottish production to its Manchester works.

What stands in the way of the Beaverbrooks and the Thomsons introducing further mass redundancies is the traditional craft consciousness and high level of union organisation of the print-workers.

It is this same craft consciousness which introduces a further contra-



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

## Media women attack sexism

Both the situation of women media workers and the image of women in the media were challenged by a conference held in London on Saturday.

The conference, attended by 300 women and a handful of men who work in the communications industries—newspapers, magazines, books, radio, television, the cinema and theatre—was organised by an ad hoc group of women and men in the media unions dissatisfied with the latter's failure to deal with women's situation in a determined way.

Two of the workshops at the conference—books and entertainment—decided to call separate meetings at the beginning of February for all women who work in these sectors; and one of the main decisions of the conference was that women's caucuses or committees should be formed at all levels of the unions, and especially at the place of work.

While the National Union of Journalists and the Association of Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians (ACTT) have established women's

committees, neither is rooted in the rank-and-file. They consequently find themselves isolated and powerless if they seek to challenge the union bureaucracy.

Numerous examples were given of discrimination against women media workers. In the theatre, for example, there are comparatively few parts for women because plays reflect discrimination against women in bourgeois society at large.

In television and the cinema, women are virtually excluded from technical jobs, and many avenues of promotion are all but closed to them. Instead they find themselves doing jobs which require secretarial-type qualifications.

### DISCRIMINATION

In press and publishing, women are again generally excluded from senior positions, and this is reflected at all levels of employment. A trainee journalist on a local newspaper explained how it is always the male reporters who are given hard news stories to cover, while she is sent out to report on baby shows.

The conference unanimously adopted the Working Women's Charter as a basis of the demands that should be raised in the labour movement,

bringing together the economic and social issues without which even nominal equality at work is ruled out.

### ANTI-SEXIST CODE

But most importantly, the conference adopted in principle a code on the presentation of women by the media. This highlights the ways in which the media reinforce women's oppression and exploitation, and their consistent disregard for women's attempts to fight on these issues. The adoption and implementation of this code by the media unions will seriously challenge the ability of editors to pursue their conception of the 'freedom of the press'.

It was also decided to form an ad hoc committee, to encourage and co-ordinate the initiatives that will now be taken, and to consider the problems involved in implementing the anti-sexist code.

Further information about the ad hoc committee, and copies of conference documents (price 40p) from: Penny Brown, 44a Abingdon Road, London, W.8.

Val Jones

\*\*\*\*\*

# WHAT'S ON?

\*\*\*\*\*

**FOR CHEAP RELIABLE IBM** Typesetting with fast turn-around phone Carl or Martin on 01-837 9987.

**MANCHESTER** Bloody Sunday Rally on 'British Troops Out of Ireland', with Joan Maynard MP; Ernie Roberts (AUEW); Eamonn McCann; Alastair Renwick (TOM). Sunday 26 January, 2.30pm, Small Hall, Barnes Wallis Building, UMIST (nr Piccadilly Station). Details from TOM, c/o 178 Oxford Road, Manchester.

**ACTIVE TRADE UNIONISTS** and other Marxists are invited to a Trade Union Day School on Saturday 25 Jan, 10am—5pm at Leeds Trade Hall, Saville Mount, Chapeltown Road.

**CONFERENCE** of Socialist Economists (CSE) Day School: 'The Current British Crisis'—papers on inflation and Ireland. Saturday 25 January, 10.30am, Birkbeck College, Gresse Street, London W.1. Room 401.

**TROOPS OUT NOW!** Birmingham IMG public meeting, 7.30pm, Thursday 22 January, Dr Johnson House, Birmingham.

**WEST LONDON TOM** film showing of 'Ireland: Behind the Wire' plus discussion led by two ex-soldiers. Friday 24 Jan at 7.45pm in Hammen Smith Town Hall, King Street, W.C.

**THE MEDICAL COMMITTEE** Against Private Practice (MCAPPI) is calling a meeting to discuss/organise action against the consultants' work-to-rule and private practice in general. All health workers, especially doctors and medical students, invited. Speakers will be NUPE shop-stewards from hospitals currently banning private patients, and a Junior Doctor on the consultants' con-trick. Duke of York pub, York Way, N.1. (Kings X tube). Wednesday 29 Jan, 8pm.

**RADICAL ALTERNATIVES** to Prison general meeting: Andrew Mann of the Children's Rights Workshop on 'Schools as Prisons', Sunday 2 Feb at 3pm in New Horizons, 1 Macklin Street, W.C.2.

**SOLIDARITY** with the Chilean Resistance! Public meeting Thursday 23 Jan at 7.30pm with speakers Robin Blackburn and Steve Hart. Students Union building, N.E. London Poly, Longbridge Road, Dagenham (nearest tube Barking). All trade unionists and socialists welcome. Organised by N.E. London Poly Chile Solidarity Campaign.

**DAY CONFERENCE:** 'Socialist Perspectives on Ireland', 15 February, 10am,

Further details contact: Socialist Society, Chelsea College. Organised with the help of TOM.

**LEEDS IMG** public meeting: 'The Crisis of the British Government's Strategy in Ireland', Thursday 30 Jan in Trades Council Hall, Saville Mount, Leeds 7, at 8pm.

**SITUATION VACANT:** Chile Solidarity Campaign requires a full-time organiser to expand Campaign work with the trade unions. Office skills and speaking experience an advantage. Apply in writing before 21 February to The Secretary, CSC, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7 7QG.

**'SEXISM, SEXUALITY and Class Struggle'**—a new pamphlet looking into the crisis in relations between men and women. Includes interview with French women bank workers after their strike last year. Published by Bristol IMG for Red Weekly Fund Drive. Send to K. Kong Corp. c/o 20 Villa Road, London S.W.9. 15p single copy, £1 for 10—includes p&p.

**ABORTION LAW UNDER ATTACK:** James White, Labour MP, is introducing a private member's Bill into Parliament which will prevent abortion on social

which abortion is legal (now 28 weeks) to 20 weeks. The London Co-ordinating Committee of the Working Women's Charter Campaign is organising a demonstration for the defence and extension of the Abortion Act on 7 February, when White's Bill will have its second reading. Everyone interested in planning this demonstration is invited to a meeting on Friday 24 January at 7pm at University of London Union, Malet St, W.1. Room 3A.

**MARXIST DISCUSSION GROUP** in Bradford: held at Albion Hotel, Leeds Rd, Bradford (opp DAF garage), beginning 7.30pm, upstairs. Friday 31 Jan: 'Reform or Revolution?' Plus Marxist social first Friday of every month at same address.

**CRISIS IN THE CAR INDUSTRY**—The Workers' Solution: IMG public meeting, Sunday 2 March at 7.30pm in Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham. Speakers: Bob Pennington (Nat. Sec. IMG) and speaker from BLMC Cowley.

**BENGALI FRIENDS** in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and *Srani-Dal-Sipab* (Fourth International paper) contact: Bengali, c/o Internationalist,

**THE ANTI-TERRORIST LAWS:** Meeting to discuss the significance of Jenkins' repressive legislation, Conway Hall, Saturday 25 January, 8pm.

**S.E. ESSEX RED CIRCLE:** 'History & Politics of the Fourth International and the IMG', Weds 29 January, 8pm, at 39 Kennel Lane, Billecay, Essex.

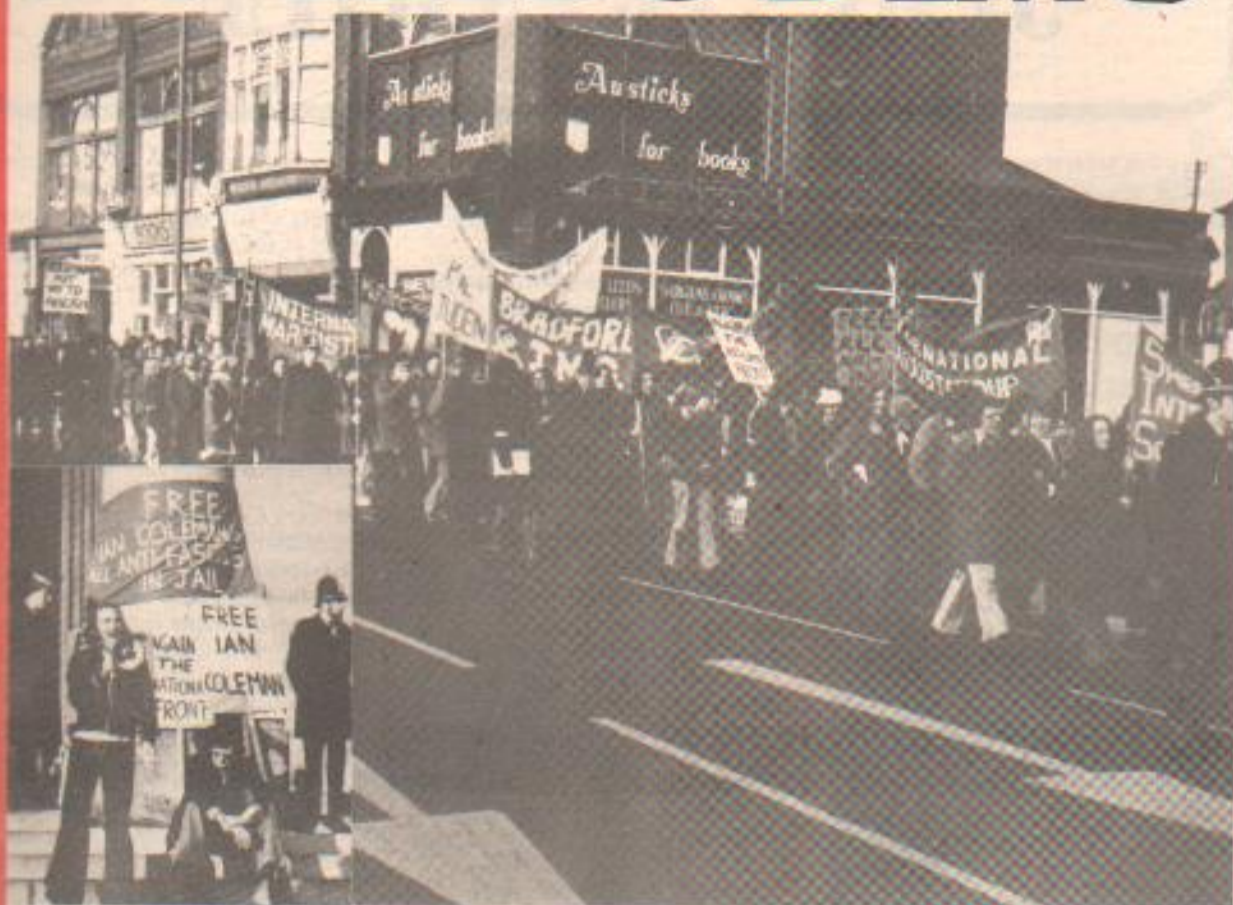
**IMG GAY GROUP:** Contact J. Mills, 163 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds.

**SHEFFIELD RED CIRCLES:** Every Wednesday at 7.30pm in the Lion Hotel (corner of The Wicker and Nursery St).

**SOCIALIST WOMAN FORUM:** 'Women and the Irish Struggle'. Tapes of Bernadette McAisley and speaker Stephanie Cronin. Tuesday 28 January, 7.30pm, the Roebuck pub, Tottenham Court Rd (nearest tube Warren St).

**TRANSFER** the Irish Political Hostages back home! British troops out of Ireland! Picket of Durham prison at 1pm on Saturday 1 February followed by rally at 2.30pm in Durham University Students Union. Speakers include: Albert Price (leader of Prisoners' Defence Committee),

# FREE IAN CALL BY LEEDS DEMO



Over 400 demonstrators from as far afield as Brighton and Preston demonstrated in Leeds last Saturday against the jailing of anti-fascist militant Ian Coleman. Coleman, whose appeal is now coming up, is serving 18 months as a result of a counter demonstration against the fascists of the National Democratic and Freedom Movement in Leeds last year. According to police witnesses Ian was alleged to have savaged several policemen in a whirlwind of Kung Fu style violence. As Kirk Mann, an engineering wor-

ker and a co-defendant with Ian, said when speaking at the demonstration: "We were prepared to stand up and say 'The National Front and other outfits like it are fascists. Their aim is to smash the organisations of the working class. We must stop them spreading their racist filth'". Leeds AUEW convenor and IMG militant Tony Maguire drew the links between the Coleman case and other state moves against the working class. He spoke of the use of the conspiracy laws and the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and said "these laws will be used

not just against so-called terrorists but against all working class militants". Dave Hallsworth, a member of IS who had to face National Front thugs in the recent Intex strike which followed his victimisation by management, stressed the importance of combatting the fascists 'on the streets and in the factories'. Members of the Communist Party, however, although they had spoken with representatives of the IS and IMG at a meeting the previous day and had urged support for the demonstration, were in the event markedly absent.

# RED WEEKLY

## RIGGING OIL DEVELOPMENT

AN EXTENDED MEETING of the Oil Rigs Liaison Committee (ORLC) involving shop stewards from as many rig construction sites as possible, was taking place in Glasgow on Wednesday to discuss action against the growing redundancies in the industry, which have been caused by cutbacks in oil rig orders.

Of 23 production platforms on order, 11 are being built, or will be, outside the UK—six in Norway, four in France, and one in Holland, reported the *Scottishman* on 6 January. Moreover a 50% cutback in orders threatens the 12 contracts still remaining in Britain. All this goes to indicate that a large amount of the oil development industry is currently being transferred out of the UK.

This must be seen in the light of the Labour Government's pledge to buy 51% ownership of the oil industry and impose high taxation on the landing of the oil. Since the expected revenue from oil plays such a major part in Labour's plans for overcoming the balance-of-payments problem, the oil companies' strategy is to slow down the development of the UK fields until Labour is intimidated into going back on its pledges.

The Labour Government has already partially capitulated to the oil companies with its announcement last week that it will take no profits from any companies in which it gains 51% ownership. One result has been a massive increase in the value of BP shares.

The oil companies' success is also a result of the British Government's need to use British oil as a guarantee for heavy borrowing from the European banks. If the rate of development is cut back, these banks can be relied upon to put swift pressure on the Government to change its

policies. The ORLC is an unofficial shop. The committee sees its role, not as a focus for the independent activity of the construction workers, but as a 'ginger group' to put pressure on the union bureaucracy and the Labour Government. This is shown by its lack of a long-term strategy to protect and improve the construction workers' living standards. By simply protesting at the redundancies, it finds itself actually being supported by the oil monopolies—as another means to pressure the Labour Government to maintain low taxation rates on the oil extracted.

'GINGER GROUP' stewards body formed nine months ago. It represents all the major unions in all the Scottish oil construction yards. This committee is a major step forward in the organisation of rig construction workers in Scotland, and to have built this organisation in such a short time is a major achievement. However there are serious deficiencies in its present strategy.

Finally, although the committee realises that the work is being transferred out of the UK, it does not see the need to link up with other European workers in a collective fight to protect their jobs. The committee has made no calls for this work to be blacked by European yards.

Only a strategy which includes the demand on the Labour Government to nationalise the whole oil industry under workers' control in an integrated energy plan produced and enforced by the workers, could effectively fight redundancies and lay the basis for an industry structured to meet the needs of the working class and not those of the oil companies.

Edinburgh IMG

## Teachers plan mass lobby for NUT conference

OVER 200 TEACHERS rejected the recommendations of the Houghton Report on teachers' pay at a conference organised by the '£15 Action Committee' at Holland Park Comprehensive School last Saturday. The conference was called to discuss the political implications of the Houghton Report and the struggle against it. The report was seen by the conference as an attempt by the Labour Government to buy off sections of teachers as part of the social contract, defusing any struggle around expenditure cuts and the fight against inflation.

A series of actions leading up to the 25 January Special Salaries Conference of the National Union of Teachers which will decide official union policy on Houghton, was agreed upon. These included a 3-day unofficial strike from 21 to 23 January, (or, if this is impossible, a one-day strike on the 23rd); a lobby of the NUT Executive on Friday, 24 January; and working towards a massive lobby of the Special Salaries Conference on 25 January.

These actions are to be backed up by a series of meetings at school and local association level, within the coming week. The representatives of the International Socialists at the conference failed to project any action beyond the tactic of token unofficial strikes. They saw this as the complete strategy for the fight

against Houghton, a fact emphasised by their mass walk out after their motion was passed. By doing this they totally failed to take up the key task of explaining the political implications of Houghton to the mass of teachers.

The Report's recommendations have already fulfilled one of its tasks—that of dividing teachers. Isolated strikes by militant schools will not even begin to tackle this problem.

A motion from Garret Green school attempted to come to grips with this problem. Its proposal, passed by the conference, was to establish a London Campaign Committee to mount a campaign against the report and to agitate amongst all teachers for an April pay settlement to include a £2,500 starting salary, with a sliding scale to protect all teachers' incomes from the effects of inflation.

An integral part of the Campaign Committee's work will be to take the fight around education to the working class through the trade union movement. It will also have to organise solidarity actions with other schools, and set up local community action groups—including parent-teacher action committees.

For further information contact the Convenor of the Campaign Committee, Cathy Kosrovi, at Garret Green Comprehensive School, Wandsworth.

## CONSULTANTS (from page 1)

hotels—the 320-room London International and the 640-room Cunard International—are swank places with TV in every room and private bathrooms for most guests. Bed and breakfast at these hotels presently costs about £10 a night.

Obviously the private sector is not letting the grass grow under its feet, and fully intends to cash in on the crisis in the health service. The Harley Street Clinic, according to its chairman and manager Dr Stanley Balfour-Lynn, has been approached by one of the largest trade unions which wants to invest money from its pension fund in a £3 million private hospital project.

The alarming growth of the private sector serves dramatic notice on the trade union movement that the fight

to defend the NHS is beginning in real earnest. The demonstration and rally called by MCAPP demands the support of the entire trade union movement.

They are asking organisations and individuals to sponsor the demonstration and mobilise support in their area. Those in London and the Home Counties are requested to send a delegate to the All-London Organising Committee which meets on Tuesday 28 January and Tuesday 11 February in the Duke of York pub, York Way, Kings Cross.

People out of London who cannot attend the meetings should write to Dr P Stern, 55 Bridge Lane, London N.W.11 for further details.

IMG Health Workers

## Subscribe to Red Weekly!

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

DOMESTIC: £5 per year  
£2-50p for 6 months.  
FOREIGN: £9 per year surface mail.  
£12 per year airmail.

Write to RED WEEKLY (distribution),  
182, Pentonville Road,  
LONDON N1, England.

