

CHARTIST

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8,500 Chrysler workers 40,000 steelworkers.... rail & postal workers...

STOP THE JOBS ROT!

UNEMPLOYMENT ON A SCALE not experienced since the 1930s, unabated price increases combined with savage public spending cut-backs is the grim prospect for 1976 — courtesy of the Labour Government. Has the Labour leadership abandoned the fight against the scourge of unemployment which threatens the living standards of millions? Many workers and their families already suffering the hardship of the dole will readily agree. Many more Labour supporters will find in the events of recent week's plenty of evidence to confirm this view.

feeble measures

Chancellor Healey's feeble measures, announced on December 17th, like Employment Secretary Foot's job creation proposals, are an insult to the labour movement and a stab in the back for the unemployed. Minor relaxations of hire-purchase controls, limited but extremely dangerous import controls on textiles and shoes, and a tiny fillip to the job creation scheme — which altogether will create less than 50,000 jobs when almost 1½ million are officially jobless — reveals that mass unemployment has become a major component in the Government's economic strategy. A strategy with nothing in common with socialist economics, to put British capitalism back on its feet at the expense of the working class.

If further evidence is needed it can be found in the refusal to immediately guarantee the jobs in nationalised industries: 40,000 steel workers threatened by the British Steel Corporation with the sack, and thousands of rail and post workers facing rationalisation. But above all it has been the debacle over the Chrysler crisis which has shown the abject capitulation of the Labour Government to the demands of British and international big business for mass sackings.

identified

The TUC General Council through its compliance with the £6 pay limit and Len Murray's disgraceful attempts to sabotage the mass jobs lobby of Parliament on 26 November, is in danger of being identified with the Labour Cabinet's criminal refusal to defend the right to work. This course must be altered immediately by a clear statement that not a single one of the 25,000 jobs at Chrysler will go. It should be coupled with the start of a campaign of action to ensure every worker has a job or is maintained on full pay. Part of this fight should involve a special TUC recall Congress to thrash out a programme of action.

Over sixty Labour MPs attacked

by Mike Davis



Hundreds of Chrysler workers headed 2,000-strong demo for jobs in Glasgow

Murray's outburst and supported the 26 November mobilisation. But these same MPs, along with the rest of the 80 Tribune MPs and the whole PLP failed to vote against the Chrysler "rescue" scheme which involves the sinking of 8,500 jobs. It has been this behaviour of the "Tribune" Group of MPs over Chrysler which has disarmed the working class in the face of the capitalist offensive on jobs. Tony Benn has been conspicuous by his silence.

In the 19 December 'Tribune' editorial the Wilson Government was described as having a "palsied hand" when it came to dealing with Chrysler management. They were being given money "with absolutely no guarantee that the money will be used to make the company viable

for any length of time", said the editorial which also approvingly quoted MP Neil Kinnock's call for "one pound's worth of public control for every £1 we give".

But in the 26 December 'Tribune', Brian Sedgemore MP had to apologise for the Left Labour MPs support for the Government's plan to sack 8,500 workers with no nationalisation. Opposition to the plan would have "... risked 50,000 people being put out of work immediately with more to follow when the multiplier took effect". By this sleight of hand Brian Sedgemore attempts to cover up the Tribune MPs vote for Wilson's scheme by suggesting 50,000 jobs have been SAFEGUARDED! Suddenly 8,500 redundancies become 50,000 jobs saved.

Never mind the Government's "palsied hand", the real problem is Tribune's palsied logic.

Trade unionists are expecting something very different from the unprincipled back-sliding of recent weeks from the Labour and trade union left-wing. Besides a commitment to defend every job with a fight for nationalisation without compensation of every firm creating redundancies, our Tribune MPs should abandon the nationalistic blind-alley of import controls which merely bolsters bankrupt capitalist ownership and mount a nationwide struggle throughout the labour movement to defend the right to work.

Personna

Workers are prepared to fight redundancies with occupations and demands for work-sharing with no loss of pay as the successful sit-in at the Personna razor blade factory in Glasgow showed. What is needed is some clear political leadership and support, not back-sliding to Wilson's betrayals.

Tribune MPs and trade union leaders should be in the forefront of the campaign in the localities involving meetings and conferences, fighting to unite the employed and unemployed through representative labour movement committees into a national movement against unemployment and the retreats of the Labour Government. Unemployment demonstrates the inability of capitalism to provide for workers needs. Rather than an excuse for half-measures it should be the reason for building a movement to sweep the system aside.

MAO JOINS U.S. HAWKS

Chris Knight

"TODAY it is the country which most zealously preaches peace that is the most dangerous source of war." The speaker was Chinese Deputy Premier Teng Hsiao-ping, addressing his guest, United States President Ford. "Rhetoric about 'detente' cannot cover up the stark reality of the growing danger of war." Teng left no doubt that it was the Soviet Union he was referring to: "In the international field we have a mutual interest in seeing that the world is not dominated by military force or pressure — what

in our joint statements we have called hegemonism".

Before his Chinese visit early last month, Ford had hinted that the Pentagon might have to accept certain cuts in arms spending in the interests of detente with the Soviet Union. China's rulers had been alarmed. The Russians were being appeased! The Maoists demanded an increased US military

budget as a safeguard against "the main enemy in the world today".

If you find this hard to follow, you can take comfort in not being alone. For supporters of Mao-Tse-Tung-thought throughout the world, these are perplexing times. Only five years ago, the Great Helmsman and his Government were denouncing the Russians for making concessions to the United States. In an attack on "peaceful co-existence", the "Peoples' Daily" raged

(Continued on page 7)

THE CHARTIST

Monthly Journal of the Socialist Charter Movement.

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The 'Mob' fall out amongst themselves

A FEATURE OF recent weeks has been the sordid saga of internal strife in the National Front, Britain's main fascist organisation. Ranged on one side are former (?) leading Hitler fans, Martin Webster and John Tyndall and on the other Messrs Kingsley Read and Roy Painter, ex-Tories who want a more discreet approach to their fascist heritage, and who have been gnawing at Tyndall's political vitals for some time.

They got their first bite when they shifted Tyndall from his position as NF chairman. They got the second when they deposed him from the National Directorate. But lately, they seem to have bitten off rather more than they can chew in attempting to render Tyndall and Webster politically impotent by expelling them.

clean image

At the root of these disturbances of the 'united' NF are basically two different outlooks on how to get political support. The Read/Painter wing are concerned to build up a clean image for the NF, aimed at attracting right-wing Tories who are reticent about getting mixed up with people who have a Nazi past. Garden parties, fetes, interventions in reactionary umbrella movements like the Festival of Light, the National Association for Freedom and the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) are the political arenas in which the rag-bag of ex-Tories want to get involved.

The Tyndall/Webster faction on the other hand appear to want to maintain the Front's past image, and have dented their appeal through their links with UDA and UVF murder-

ers. After much manoeuvring and an attempt by some 30 strong-arm Tyndall supporters to occupy the Front's Croydon H.Q., the matter was dragged into the law courts, with Tyndall asserting his rights as a member and Webster doing likewise. The decision of the court has been to reinstate Tyndall and Webster and their followers on the Directorate who were suspended. This will only sharpen the conflict between the two main warring factions.

both fascist

It must be clearly understood that both sides are inveterate fascists. In fact since October they have been vying with each other in their efforts to project a more racist, violent image. "Britain First" and "Spearhead"—journals of the rival wings—have been particularly vicious in their racist rantings. Britain First dishes out praise for "Mr. Alfred Hughes, a Tottenham news-agent" who "keeps a hatchet under his counter to deter black youths" and prints articles under such headings as "How Whites can fight back", while Tyndall's personal organ, Spearhead has produced a virulently anti-Jewish cartoon which originates from Mosley's pre-war newspaper and has made passing reference to "the twin evils of International Finance and International Communism,

perhaps better described as International Zionism"... a rehash of the 'world Jewish conspiracy' theory.

Not to be outdone, Britain First rushed into print with an issue containing no less than seven articles with anti-Jewish connotations. They also threatened violence saying "For those who attack NF members the day of retribution will come". But while the Read/Painter men talked their opponents acted. One NF member in Birmingham who took issue with Tyndall was attacked with iron bars to convince him of his error. The Fuehrer's followers also went on the rampage in Manchester to show that, as far as the Labour movement was concerned, they could give value for any Big Business donation that might come their way in future. Also, they have cemented an alliance with the British Movement, a gang of vicious thugs who fraternise with Waffen S. S. men in Europe.

If the split has significance it is this: both wings want to take advantage of the deepening economic and social crisis. They are split on how to seize the opportunity. The campaigns of the Left to expose them and deny them ALL a platform have been instrumental in intensifying the split.

However, there is no room for complacency as the 'Clockwork Orange' style of thuggery in Manchester proves. In a period of enormous

capitalist crisis it is inevitable that fascist movements will grow and try to split workers—especially the unemployed—with racialism and such reactionary rubbish as demands for import controls. The 'Tribune' Lefts and the Stalinists of the Communist Party actually open the door for fascist penetration of trade unions by echoing the nationalist calls for 'import controls' and avoiding principled support for the fight against British imperialism in Ireland, just as they refuse to mobilise to smash the fascists. Their policies and Wilson's betrayals of the working class create enormous dangers... as the rightward swing in some leading trade unions shows. The fascists feed on the betrayals of our reformist Labour leaders.

lesson

The central lesson for the labour movement is that the extreme-right wing and fascist forces will not collapse. They must be destroyed. For this reason, the campaigns against the NF must be stepped up. A national Labour and trade union anti-fascist co-ordinating committee should be built up and the local anti-fascist committees strengthened and turned towards the workplace.

Above all, the Left must get down to fighting seriously against Wilson's right-wing policies and organising for a working class answer to the problems of unemployment, cuts in public spending, homelessness, and the £6 pay limit. A real united fight on all fronts, combined with determined and positive workers' action against fascists whenever and wherever they appear would cripple the NF and turn its present crisis into a nightmare.

FRONT THUGS STRIKE IN MANCHESTER

ON SUNDAY 30 November, a Manchester meeting of the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL) was broken up by the fascist hooligans of the National Front. Arranged to discuss the Labour Government's repressive Prevention of Terrorism Act, the meeting had on its platform Eamon McCann of the Troops Out Movement, Pat Arrow-smith of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign, lawyer, Rock Tansey and Peter Bramah, Bury District Secretary of the AUEW. In addition, it had obtained sponsorship from sections of the local labour movement.

wreck

Before the meeting began, about forty fascists filed into the hall and sat in strategic positions to pen in the 30 genuine members of the audience. Most of them were National Front, although some wore UDA and UVF badges and all wore black armbands. From the outset it was clear that they would wreck the meeting. When warned about this, all NCCL organiser, Tony Casson, could do was waffle, apparently under the illusion that it was possible to debate with the fascists.

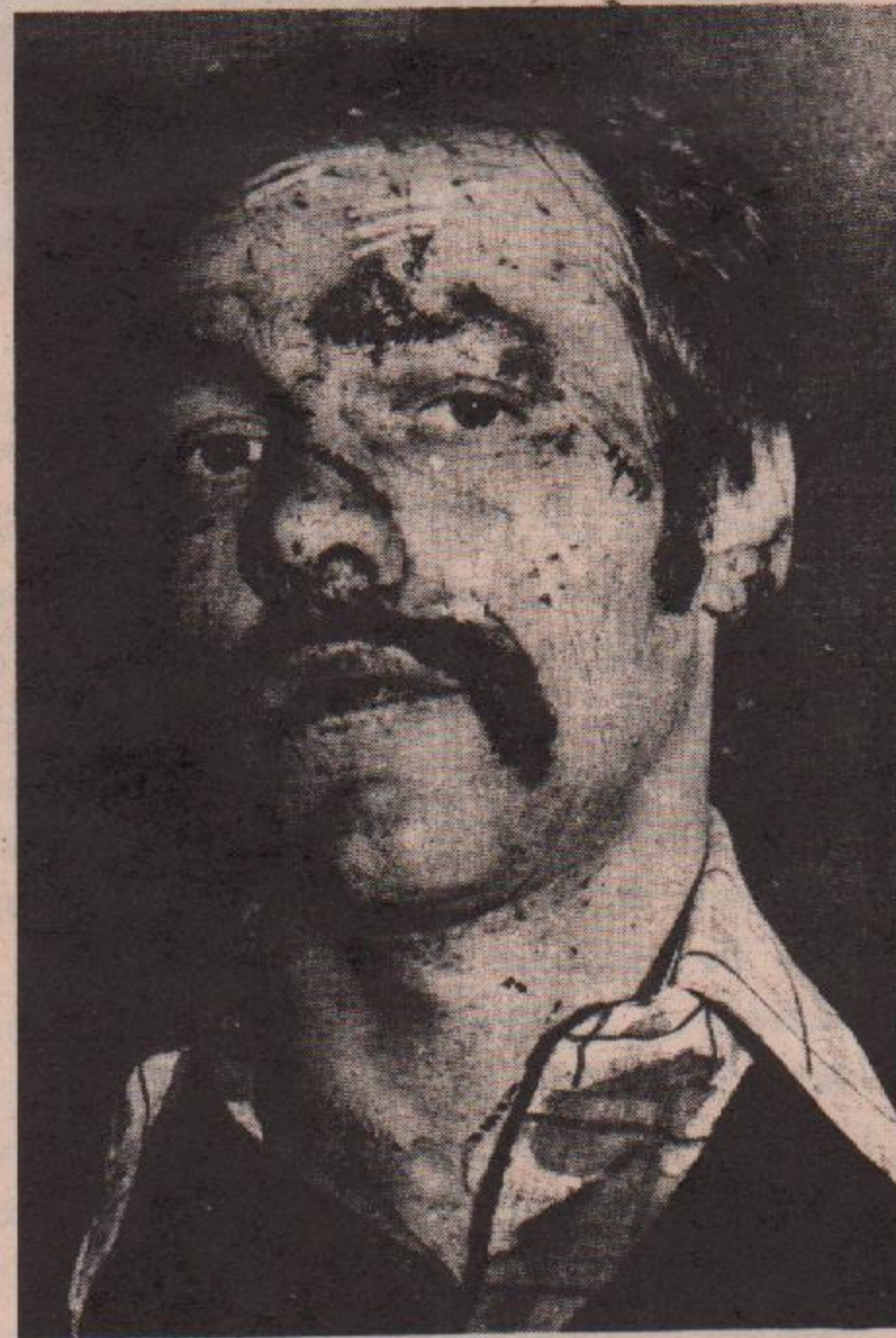
As soon as he opened the meeting Casson was abused by an hysterical fascist who said "I think people like you should be taken out into the street and slowly garrotted." A piece of concrete was then thrown

at Casson. The signal for an orgy of violence, in which half bricks and bottles were hurled, chairs used to smash light fittings and assault a sixty year old woman, whose head wounds needed six stitches. Having laid waste to the meeting room, these fascist advocates of 'law and order', and flogging for vandals, got to work on the foyer of the students' union building, where they vandalised vending machines, hurled more chairs and bottles and kicked in plate glass windows.

They then marched out of the building chanting, "Kill the Irish, kill the Jews, Hitler was right", leaving behind over £1,000 damage and six people needing hospital treatment. Malcolm Peach, a Communist Party member, got a broken arm and serious injury to his right eye. Graeme Atkinson, a Labour Party activist and Socialist Charter member had to have 21 stitches after having a bottle broken in his face.

Later, 30 of the fascists were apprehended by the police and several identified as having committed specific criminal acts during this planned and premeditated attack. As yet, none of these thugs have been charged.

It is noteworthy that the NF members there were probably party to the Tyndall-Webster faction, including Don Sayer, NF Lancashire Regional Secretary, Martin Goucher, an NF local election candidate, and one



Victims of Sunday's National Front attack in Manchester: Graeme Atkinson (left)—19 stitches after a bottle in his face. Malcolm Peach—severe eye injury and broken arm. On Sunday evening a police statement said none of the victims' injuries were serious.



Herbet Andrew, who stood as Parliamentary candidate in the Manchester Blackley division in the October 1974 election, when fascists hospitalised some Labour supporters. Equally noteworthy is the fact that with the NF members were known supporters of the Nazi British Movement and also the Mosleyite Action Party, who had been brought out of mothballs for the occasion.

The Manchester violence is part of a pattern. Leading National Front-er, Martin Webster justified it the day later on the grounds that the meeting was "provocative" and "anti-British", that is, it dealt with the Irish question. The fascists recognise that the Irish issue is the weak spot of the labour movement and seized on it. The attack was a real consequence of the labour move-

ment's failure to wage active struggle for the ending of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and build support for Irish self-determination and the withdrawal of troops. AND, this was NOT the first time the fascists have done this. In Liverpool recently, they smashed up a meeting of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association... and got away with it. Their gangster activities are a warning to the working class movement to take the Irish struggle seriously and to defend all its meetings.

A united workers' defence force must be built up in every locality to defend all meetings threatened by fascist violence and also to deny the fascists any platform from which to spread their anti-working class, racist filth.

THOUSANDS OF JOBS AT STAKE AS :

THE GUN that was being pointed at the Government's head by Chrysler's American bosses, is now being pointed at the car-workers of Chrysler by the Government.

On December 17th, Eric Varley, Secretary of State For Industry put forward the Government's plans to "save" the US multi-national. These were nothing but a complete capitulation to Detroit's blackmail and yet a further retreat from the Labour Party Manifesto pledge to "safeguard jobs"

Since late October, John J. Riccardo had been threatening to pull out of Britain and leave Chrysler's UK operation to flounder unless the British Government helped to subsidise the firm's tremendous financial losses. Wilson complained of "a pistol being pointed at our heads" and set Varley to work in order to cook something up acceptable to both sides (Cabinet and management that is).

£162 million

When announcing his measures, Varley spoke about the "fearsome choice" he had forced himself to make. He had decided to give Chrysler UK a "future" by coughing up to the tune of £162 million. Some £35 million of this has been raised by the banks. Every penny will only grease the palms of Chrysler's bosses such as Riccardo and will not guarantee a single job. Indeed the bankers' loan is nothing more than blood money, as they expect mass redundancies to make the ailing industry pay. It is Eric Varley's intention to make sure that they get them.

In the Commons he announced a total 8,500 sackings in the near future, (for example New Year 1976?). Bro-

WORKERS RESIST CHRYSLER BETRAYAL

BY DAVE WILSON



Eric Varley

ken down, these figures mean the loss of 5,500 at the Ryton plant in Coventry, and a further 3,000 at Linwood in Scotland. Altogether this means the loss of almost one third of Chrysler's UK work-force. Varley is under the grand illusion that he has done the other two thirds a favour by keeping the "subsidiary" open, we say, THANKS FOR NOTHING MR.

VARLEY !

It was no coincidence that Varley's speech, came no less than 24 hours after an influential "Think Tank" report was produced by the Central Policy Review Staff, who are of no small importance in Government planning. This report like so many others, wags a disapproving finger at car management, but as is so usual, the blame is shifted onto the working class. The CPRS call for mass sackings, closures, lay-offs, short-time working and speed up as a solution to the Motor Industry's problems. If these planners were to have their way then 2 out of every 3 would very shortly find themselves on the dole.

By not tackling the Chrysler crises with socialist measures, Varley and the Government are reduced to picking the brains of these "Think-Tank" people, and putting their report into reserve, for a future Tory Government to use.

The Government's excuses for not nationalising the firm were pathetic and an insult to any worker faced with the sack. Varley said that he was not prepared to take on the company's substantial liabilities". Yet even Chrysler's offer — all the plants and £35 million thrown in — was rejected by the Labour Government.

By refusing to act, the Government



are leaving tens of thousands of car-workers to their fate — to be sacked at Chrysler's leisure. The reformist leadership of the Labour Party and Unions, after years of encouraging workers to accept the employers' attacks as being "in their own interest" and "saving jobs in the long term" now want workers to take the rap and cover up for its own failings. Even the Labour left have no answers for the workers at Chrysler. They can only weep at the waste of tax-payers money and give Varley his due at doing the best of a bad job.

nationalise

The Chrysler car workers however do have the answers. Quite correctly they are calling on the Government to nationalise the company and have prepared to fight the 8,500 sackings by organising occupations and sit-ins in all Chrysler's UK plants as a precaution against mass lock-outs.

The CHARTIST warned in November/December that Chrysler would become the 'test-case' in the fight for jobs. With political leadership Chrysler workers will match the fight to defend not only their own jobs, but the jobs of hundreds of thousands of workers who will be placed in their situation in the coming weeks and months.

- Nationalise Chrysler Now, without compensation!
- Occupy to defend jobs!
- Work-sharing on full pay.

Rail workers organise to 'Stop Rail Cuts'

THE FIGHT is on again to defend the railways. But this time it is not Beeching's axe but the Labour Government that is doing the cutting.

The extent of the cuts the Labour Government's planners are contemplating is seen in the Reading University proposal for asphalted roads and cementing rail tracks for buses. The proposals would mean railways in 1981 of less than 4,000 miles compared to 11,000 today, and would virtually finish railways off as a public transport service. Moreover, acceptance of the plans would mean no railways at all for many more big towns like Aberdeen, Scarborough, Sunderland, Middlesborough and Lincoln to name but a few. It would mean thousands more jobs go to the wall, and an appalling deterioration of rail services between now and 1981.

staff cuts . . .

Pyke and Dodgson, in their book "The Rail Problem" call for massive staff cuts as the only way to make British Rail efficient.

It was against these proposals and Labour's present public spending cuts that 3,000 people, mainly railway workers, attended the Transport lobby of Parliament on Tuesday December 16th to "Stop Rail Cuts". The lobby organised by the three rail unions (NUR, ASLEF and TSSA) demonstrated the potential opposition that could be mobilised against any attempts to cut railway provision or labour.

At the meeting in Central Hall before the lobby, the rail union leaders



Some of the 3,000 rail workers from all over Britain demonstrating opposition to threatened cuts in the rail network.

and sponsored MPs were full of militant talk and measured threats to the Labour Government. Johnny Johnson, MP and TSSA referred to previous Labour election pledges and Party Conference decisions. "We expect our Labour Government to keep its promises"(sic).

Sydney Weighell, NUR general secretary, called the Minister of the Environment, Tony Crosland, "a bloody liar" for claiming they had no intention of cutting. The NUR paid £60,000 to the Labour Party election fund and wanted some return. Weighell stressed that the trade union movement was capable of running this industry and attacked the bureaucracy at the British Rail Board which was "perpetually moving filing cabinets." Railway workers are pretty cynical

about the sort of proposals we have been getting from Reading University professors. Neat book-keeping exercises inevitably fail in practice, and this one seems a dead sort. It is difficult to see how it would save money in the short term - it certainly would not in the long run. There is a limit to the amount of botching up that can be done on ancient signalling equipment and rolling stock.

But what of the union leaders plans to fight against rail cuts? The tub-thumping speeches in the December lobby disguise the fact that the NUR leaders are prepared to accept unemployment in the industry - providing it is not forced on them. In a NUR circular to branch secretaries, Weighell stated that the NUR envisaged "a reduction in the

KEVIN MOORE (NUR)

amount of rest-day/overtime working, but not in the area of a reduced rail system or compulsory redundancy."

By allowing certain "good house-keeping measures" to be taken, without a commitment for an expanded rail system the NUR disarms its members. By allowing natural wastage the system will be cut down, bit by bit. Local managements are already administering economy measures, despite the NUR instructions.

fight

NUR and other rail unions should fight for an expanded rail system properly integrated with a nationalised transport service. Only in such a system should we agree to any re-organisations for better use of freight guards or second men. It requires that the Labour Government implement the pledge to take over private road haulage companies and the development of a workers' plan for the transport system, worked out by trade unionists and working class representatives.

If the Labour Government is not prepared to honour pledges and stop all public expenditure cuts then we as the railworkers should be prepared to occupy and work the intended line closures with sympathy action by those working the London suburban lines. It is not enough to call on MPs (and then withdraw the call with a grovelling apology).

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE IN A CRITICAL CONDITION

THE NATIONAL Health Service has been, it seems, constantly in the news for the last couple of years. At present the NHS is under attack from the consultants who are threatening to withdraw (yet again) their services unless Mrs Castle refers the matter of pay beds to a Royal Commission. Also the NHS is of course under another, familiar form of attack. Money for capital expenditure has already been cutback and Denis Healey is likely to announce cuts in the current expenditure within the next few months.

The NHS, set up 28 years ago under the Attlee Labour Government was designed to be as Aneurin Bevan said then 'a comprehensive health service free to all at time of use, based on health centres ' where 'poverty would not be a disability and wealth not an advantage. ' Since then much has remained unchanged. For a start at the present time only one seventh of the 3,000 NHS general practitioners work in health centres.



Aneurin Bevan

Originally the NHS was set up as three separate parts: 1. the general medical services, including GPs, dentists, chemists, opticians, etc.; 2. the hospital and specialist services, catering for all kinds of physical and mental illness; 3. the local health authority services, supposed to prevent the development of ill health, providing for home nurses, midwives, ambulances etc.

This structure was reorganised in 1974. There is now supposed to be a single chain of command with the country divided into Regional Health Authorities (there are 14 of these in England). The RHAs are divided into Area Health Authorities (there are 90 of these). The AHAs are further divided into District Management Teams. This reorganisation has resulted in few gains and is itself partly the reason for much of the maladministration in the NHS.

DENYING

More and more administrative staff are being employed, leading to a situation where they outnumber doctors by 30%. A recent report on the NHS in the 'Sunday Times' revealed a state of affairs exemplified by the Humberside AHA spending money on the resurfacing of car parks and carpets whilst denying money for an intensive care unit for accident victims.

Control of the NHS has been contested since the beginning of the service. Bevan capitulated in 1946 to the consultants saying that he 'had to stuff the medical profession mouths with gold'. Since then the NHS has not been controlled by the Labour movement who struggled for decades to establish such a system, but by

Clive Pullinger (ASTMS)

an inefficient bureaucracy itself dominated by the medical hierarchy. This parasitic caste has spent the years since the NHS was set up maintaining the existence of private medicine within and expanding it outside the service. They have encouraged long delays and waiting lists for operations and treatment that persuade the rich (and a few working people who spend hard earned savings) to pay to jump the queue and gain a few comforts. Their control of policy decisions means that the less 'profitable' areas (for them) of medical care are neglected.

MUSHROOMING

Outside of the NHS there has been a mushrooming of private hospitals, nursing homes and medical insurance schemes over the last few years at a time of economic crisis which has led to a cutback of the NHS. Clearly the consultants and their friends in the Tory party would like to see the day when a two tier health service exists; an efficient one for the rich and a run down one for working people.

THWARTED

It is therefore important to ensure that the growth of private medicine is thwarted at every step (Labour councils must refuse planning permission for and trade unions ban work on the construction of private hospitals). A full restoration of all cutbacks (Labour and Tory) in NHS spending plus an immediate injection of £1,000M must be implemented now.

An end must be brought also to the state of affairs where nurses and ancillary workers are amongst the lowest paid. The situation where there are gross staff shortages of these workers must no longer be tolerated by the trade unions, especially at a time of high unemployment.

Although more and more people in the Labour movement are becoming aware of the threat to the NHS a greater mobilisation in defence of the service is still necessary.

Wellington Hospital in London's St John's Wood: Like all private hospitals, it leeches off the capital and skills of the NHS... for the benefit of the rich.



Barbara Castle, hard faced.

Castle stabs NHS

by Graham Durham

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT is at present engaged in a serious and widespread attack on the health standards of the working class. Ms. Castle is busy supervising massive reductions in National Health Service spending. Cuts are particularly affecting levels of staffing and hospital development programmes. Minority health interests such as the chronically sick and mentally ill are being worst affected - for example, spending on day-centres for the mentally ill is to be cut by 50% in 1976.

Yet such policies represent a complete reversal of the promises made in the October 1974 election manifesto. Within a few months, the Labour Government has forgotten its promise to reverse Tory cuts and its pledge of a government "determined to defend the NHS." Nor can health workers agree that the manifesto promise of the "rewards they so richly deserve" has been kept.

Instead the £6 pay-limit has ruled out the possibility of health workers improving their real standard of living. Mrs Castle has met the junior hospital doctors' demand for overtime payments for work in excess of 40 hours with stern resistance. Only the militancy of junior doctors has forced the Government to recognise a 40 hour week - although no promise of overtime payments has been made.

But it is the effect of the cutbacks

in Government spending which are having the most serious effects on the NHS. Within the first 7 months of 1975, the Labour Government announced three sets of cuts in public spending. In January growth rates for the Health Service were drastically cut back, in the April Budget a further £900 million was taken from public spending and in the "July measures" spending levels were reduced 10% below those proposed six months earlier.

The effect which these cuts are having on the Health Service is drastic. Recently COHSE estimated that the NHS is short of 80,000 nurses - yet in Glamorgan, nurses face redundancy for passing examinations. The story is the same for all ancillary and technical workers - as with nursing staff, overtime is being halted and serious under-manning is occurring because of non-replacement of staff.

DISCOVERY

The real impact which Government cuts are having has been shown by the discovery of 'secret' documents in various areas of the country which spell out money-saving plans made by regional and local area health authorities. In South Glamorgan, plans to make £1 million worth of cuts over a period of ten years have been revealed. In North East Thames, no new money is to be made available for development projects. Most horrific of all, the East London Area Health Authority - which includes Hackney and other areas with high rates of infant mortality, chest diseases and nervous conditions - plans to close down two of the seven hospitals serving the area. A circular to Heads of Departments in the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children invited proposals for cuts "even if by doing so, the level and quality of the service to patients is affected". Everywhere the story is

PROFIT BEFORE HEALTH

How private enterprise bleeds NHS

BY
GLYN BEAGLEY (ASTMS)



Adolf Jann president and chairman of Roche

AS THE dust settles on the Parliamentary debate about the Labour Government's recent decision to inject £162million into the ailing Chrysler motor giant, private shareholders are guaranteed their profits whilst car workers employed by the company find their jobs and conditions under the hammer. The subsidies to Chrysler, British Leyland and other ailing companies to finance flagging profits have received much attention recently.

But another sphere of even greater significance for working class people has received little or no attention in both the Tory press and Parliamentary debates. That area is the enormous state subsidies which are going to private enterprise via the National Health Service. It has taken the long legal action against Hoffman La Roche, which has only recently been settled to highlight the enormous profiteering the multinational drug companies make out of the NHS.

La Roche, a Swiss drug company had made profits to the tune of £12 million simply by transferring drugs from its Swiss factories to its UK subsidiaries at inflated prices.

But Hoffman-La Roche are not alone. Every one of the following companies have made more profits out of drugs than out of any of its other products.

1974 Profit Margins		
	pence per £1 of sales	
	Drug products	Non-drug products
ICI	29.0	14.9
Beecham	22.3	11.8
Reckitt & Colman	15.8	9.8
Glaxo	22.9	4.4
Fisons	16.8	6.5
Burroughs Wellcome	13.0	None made

These companies are parasitically draining the health service in the same way as Hoffman-La Roche. It is estimated that somewhere in the region of £150 million profit was made in 1974 by these companies, besides another £9½ million spent on largely unnecessary advertising. These enormous sums of money could have been spent on expansion of the health service instead of being used to drain the already inadequate resources that exist in the NHS.

But improving health facilities is indeed a remote thought from the minds of the bosses of these firms. Recently Glaxo announced drug pro-

fits of 18.3p per £1 of sales compared to 22.9p in 1974. This provoked the Investors Chronicle to talk in terms of "the poor profits showing of the past year" and "Glaxo's profit margin problems". Health workers and patients alike might well have some strong comments and actions to pass about these "problems".

But not only in the field of drug distribution to the NHS do we find abuse. The recent re-organisation of the NHS was carried out on the advice of a private firm of industrial consultants named MacKinley. Their fee for the work undertaken has not been revealed. But the results are in the form of an emphasis on top heavy administrative structures at the expense of health workers' facilities.

The only way to remove the stranglehold of the pharmaceutical companies have on the NHS funds, the wastage of money on advertising and to re-direct pharmacological research towards all fields of illness - not just the profitable - is the nationalisation without compensation of these companies, together with the rest of the medical supply industry. In this way the basis can be laid for replacing profiteering in health care with free comprehensive National Health Service.

More cuts in London

BY ANNA GALVANI

NOT CONTENT with slashing the Health services in East London, the Labour Government's scissors are now attempting to cut away in the Greenwich and Bexley area. Proposals have been released by the Area Health Authority (AHA) to:

- Rationalise the services in the area by completely closing four hospitals;
- This would involve the loss of a minimum of 700 beds, with a cut-back in staff of several thousand.

The reason quoted is decreasing demand for hospital beds. But waiting lists are increasing, and beds have already had to be closed due to shortages of staff. Two of the unions, ASTMS and NUPE, have already made their views felt to the AHA, and the new year should see the start of a concentrated attack on any cutbacks, with mass meetings, leafletting and picketing.

the same - beds are being lost, wards and local hospitals closed - all this when over 500,000 people face a long wait for necessary hospital treatment.

The complete abandonment of manifesto promises is leading to widespread opposition to the Labour Government's Health Service policy. A NUPE resolution calling for an end to all cuts in NHS spending and the abolition of private practice was carried at Labour Party Conference. Newcastle has recently shown her contempt for this decision by promising the British Medical Association the continuance of a separate private health service.

A national campaign against health cuts organised by the Medical Committee (MCAPP) got under way with a successful conference in October. The central focus of the MCAPP campaign must now be the fight within the Labour movement to commit the Labour Government to implement the 1975 conference resolution from NUPE.

FOLLOWING THE Labour Party NEC's rejection of Reg Prentice's appeal against removal by his local party, Harold Wilson made an unprecedented statement. In it he gave veiled support for "parliamentary Labour candidates" against official Labour candidates who had been selected by their local parties.

Wilson's speech reveals the extent to which this Labour Cabinet is prepared to defy the decisions of the LP membership against the adoption of right-wing policies and representatives.

The article below by Tony Kelly, (also published by 'Tribune') shows clearly that the members of Newham N. E. observed democratic procedure at every step of the fight

against Prentice.

Wilson's outburst against the democratic rights of Labour Party members is inseparable from the current political debacle of the Labour Government. The mounting opposition within the Labour Party to the complete abandonment of the pledges in the Manifesto to restore full employment, halt price rises and nationalise profitable industries lies at the root of Wilson's outburst.

In attempting to baton down on rank and file opinion Wilson is clearly aligning himself with Prentice and the most right-wing elements in the Labour Party. In doing so he shows his utter contempt for LP democracy and a cynical disregard for the socialist aspirations of the membership.

LABOUR'S SELF-APPOINTED SAMURAI

TONY KELLY

WHAT EXACTLY do any of the rank and file members of the Labour Party have to do in order that their wishes and decisions are respected and accepted by the more senior "self-appointed samurai" of the party?

In Newham North East we had a position where, for as long as Reg Prentice had been our candidate, there had been a continuous flow of motions and criticism about his actions and statements. These criticisms and resolutions reached such a crescendo that, in the opinion of the constituency officers (many of whom have been in the party for as long as I have been alive) it had become urgently necessary to consider the suitability of Prentice to be our candidate in the future.

ACCUSATIONS

In order that this might be done, consultations were held with our senior regional organiser as to the best and most constitutional method. Throughout the period in which this re-examination was progressing, the various members of the constituency party were constantly criticised by the news media. Vague suggestions and imputations were made that there had been some sort of infiltration, that certain unnamed members might not be genuine members of the party at all! Although many of the party's members were scrutinised in depth by various people, not one of these implied accusations was proved to have any foundation in truth whatsoever.

The whole of the democratic process in which we were engaged had to take place under the full glare of a publicity campaign which was skilfully and viciously maintained throughout. Worse, there were gross and uncalled for interference from many members and sections of the Labour Party. Unmentioned throughout the entire length of this unprecedented campaign was the fact that the entire proceedings were run under the constant supervision and direction of our senior regional organiser. After the constituency party's much publicised decision, it was first of all upheld by the National Executive Committee's organisation sub-committee and, at a later date, the National Executive Committee itself. To the best of my knowledge, no matter what certain secretive organisations such as the Social Democratic Alliance might have to say, none of the people concerned in these two bodies are actually fools or charlatans.

Can there be any sort of excuse

or explanation for the much publicised recent outburst from our ever-increasing autocratic leader? Is he trying to say that, no matter what degree of dissatisfaction any constituency party might have with its sitting candidate; no matter how carefully it ensures the most scrupulous observance of the party's rules and constitution, that he— one person elected by a minority of the party—is blatantly going to attempt to find some way of helping to oppose the official Labour Party candidate in any constituency? Is he saying that general elections are to be run by the Labour Party in order to ensure the return of candidates of whom he personally approves? Has our present bourgeois system of patronage reached such an unprecedented level that even the selection of candidates is now subject to the whims of one person?

BASIC RIGHT

This issue is far from being any sort of ideological argument between the so called "Right" and "Left" factions of the party. What is now being called into question is the basic right of any constituency party to make its own decision about its candidate. It appears that any such selection, having been ratified by our National Executive Committee, is now to be questioned by one solitary individual member of the party. What Harold Wilson must remember is that not one of his carefully chosen Cabinet colleagues would be in the Parliamentary Labour Party at all without prior selection by a constituency party.

All constituency parties must stand firmly by their democratic rights and duties which are firmly and clearly laid out in the constitution. We must not allow any constituency party to fall into the hands of groups or individuals who have narrow exclusive interests! Ron Hayward, General Secretary, made it perfectly clear at this year's conference that while in the past certain CLPs had been controlled by narrow sectarian groupings, the answer must not be to deny such a party its democratic rights but rather to ensure an ever-growing degree of participation by a constantly increasing membership.

To this end, we in Newham East have increased our party's membership by something over 50% in the last three months. We intend to continue in this manner and could well do without vague meanderings and mutterings from people who know little, if anything, about the local situation.

Portuguese Revolution in danger

by Graham Bash

FOLLOWING the disastrous failure of the so-called 'left-wing coup' in late November, Portugal's right-wing has lost no time in attempting to consolidate its gains. In the last few weeks there have been wholesale purges of the left in the armed forces and in the media.

● Over 700 people have been detained in custody, many still being held there.

● Over 70 officers and N. C. O. 's have been imprisoned, including the deputy commander of COPCON.

● COPCON has been disbanded and its chief Otelo de Carvalho has been stripped of his post along with former Army Chief of Staff General Carlos Fabiao. The 'Red Admiral', Rosa Coutinho has resigned from the Supreme Revolutionary Council of the Armed Forces Movement.

● Attempts have been made by the military authorities in some cases successfully to recover weapons in the hands of working class organisations.

● 30 Secretaries of State and Government officials have been dismissed as well as large numbers of Government employees.

● There has been a wide ranging programme of mergers and closures covering eight state-owned newspapers which were suspended after 25 November, together with moves to appoint new managers and editorial staff. This is a direct attack on the Communist Party's influence in the media.

● Wage negotiations were frozen till the end of 1975. And in late December, a whole series of austerity measures were announced including tax rises and the promise of wage cuts.

RE-ESTABLISHING

For the first time in recent months the Portuguese ruling class has partially succeeded in re-establishing its state power. And now, the right wing elements in the military, personified by new army chief General Ramalho Eanes, are attempting to press home their advantage. Their latest initiative is their call for the MFA to 'return to the barracks', and return power to the civil authorities. But this is not a move to take the army out of politics, but rather to take politics out of the army. The latest programme from the Supreme Revolutionary Council, described as the fundamental base for the reorganisation of the Portuguese Armed Forces, makes this quite clear. It states unequivocally that the responsibility for decisions 'is always that of the commander' and that 'orders cannot be questioned, bypassed or ignored.' At the same time, President Costa Gomes has called on the troops to respect military authority, to conduct themselves in an 'upright' manner, and to behave and dress properly.

The right wing's current hero, Col. Jaime Neves who led the commandos against the paratroopers rebellion, has made his position even more explicit. "The Commando Regiment is not satisfied. There is a lot more to be done and we intend going right up to the end."

But it is one thing to make such statements and quite another to carry them out. It is true that working class power within the armed forces has been seriously set-back. But the organisations of the working class remain intact, and still have not been decisive.

And the top military leaders are certainly not unanimously behind the Neves line. For instance, Melo Antunes, the present Foreign Minister whose 'document of the nine' played a key road in blocking the revolution-



Jaime Neves and Melo Antunes - 'divided we rule - for the moment'.

ary movement last summer, has taken a very different position. Essentially a left social democrat, Antunes has gone out of his way to defend the Communist Party and oppose the plans

to 'return to the barracks'.

It is still very doubtful whether the bourgeoisie has sufficiently recovered its control over the army to launch an all out offensive on the working

class. Paradoxically therefore, the clash that occurred between army units may have the effect of delaying civil war, which, until 25 November, seemed an immediate possibility.

It is thus possible that the working class will have a short breathing space in which to prepare its forces. But time is limited. The recent defeats have not been due to a lack of fighting capacity or will on the part of the labour movement. Rather, its weakness has been the lack of a clear-sighted leadership with deep roots in the class capable of developing and linking the organs of workers power, breaking down the divisions in the working class and winning to the side of the revolution the less well organised workers and sections of the lower middle class who at present support the Socialist Party.

The lessons of recent defeats must be learnt, and the confused and often treacherous leaders of the working class rejected.

Was there an attempted coup?

THE failure of the military revolt led by the Tancos paratroopers was an important defeat for the working class and has significantly altered the balance of class forces in Portugal. Until 25 November, the bourgeois 6th. Government of Azevedo had been increasingly unable to govern against the offensive of the working class because it could not rely on the armed forces. All this has now changed. But the question remains - was there really an attempted coup?

The answer is almost certainly no. There was a total lack of preparation from the left wing units involved and a total isolation from the majority of the ranks of soldiers and from the working class as a whole. The revolt was initiated by the Tancos paratroopers - by no means the most left wing part of the army. Indeed, this unit had carried out the blowing up of Radio Renascença only a few weeks previously. Obviously afraid of being deceived by their officers again, the

paratroopers spontaneously reacted to the provocation of the Supreme Revolutionary Council who replaced Carvalho as the Military Governor of Lisbon.

The action of the paratroopers appears to have sparked off a rebellion amongst some left wing units where talk of insurrection had been very much in the air. There is no evidence that the revolutionary left groups around the FUR (revolutionary united front) and the SUV (soldiers united will win) were in any way directly involved. However, the action bears the influence of the politics and psychology of many of these groups - i.e. a totally unjustified optimism regarding the balance of forces in the country as a whole, a 'putschist' mentality which ignored the need for gaining mass support from the working class and army ranks.

But the main responsibility lies squarely with the Communist Party. It appears to have given some veiled

encouragement in advance to a left wing revolt, though without totally committing itself, in order to strengthen its hand in the Government. But as soon as things went wrong, it ran for cover, refusing to defend those units who had committed themselves, and failing to use its undoubted base in the working class to mount a resistance to the repression that followed.

Needless to say, a scandalous role was played by the Socialist Party who sided with the Government and the military authorities throughout. On 1 December, the Socialist Party statement published on the front of 'Portugal Socialista' paid homage to "Col. Jaime Neves and his heroic regiment of Commandos", and S. P. leader Mario Soares personally accompanied the funeral procession of two commandos who were killed in the fighting. (From a report in the journal 'Our Common Struggle', the organ of the Portuguese Workers' Co-ordinating Committee, Dec. 1975)

Australian Labour led to defeat

BY GEOFF BENDER

THE CRUSHING defeat of the Australian Labour Party (ALP) in the General Election on December 13th is a tremendous blow to the hopes of the Australian working class, a boost for world imperialism and the Australian bosses and an indictment of the criminal policies of the Whitlam leadership.

The massive response to the constitutional 'coup' which sacked Whitlam's Government, in November was manifest in some of the most militant scenes ever witnessed in Australia. Scattered strikes, general stoppages, rallies and demonstrations broke out



in all major cities, whilst in Canberra, outside the Government offices, police and workers fought. A general strike to smash the caretaker Government of millionaire cattle-rancher and Liberal-National Country Party leader, Malcolm Fraser, was a common call at many of these protests. Even non-Labour voters, such as former Liberal leader, John Gorton, called for Labour votes against the threat to democracy. Why, then, did Labour lose?

Instead of using the momentum of the strike movement and demonstrations, Whitlam and ALP and Australian Council of Trade Unions president, Bob Hawke denounced them as anarchy calling instead, for a day's pay forelection funds and used every means to restrict the fight for a Labour Government to the ballot box. This, and the recent record of the Whitlam administration, especially the wage-cutting "indexation" scheme, soon cooled the enthusiasm of Labour supporters. Tragically, the Lab-

our left could offer no alternative.

Despite the defeat at the polls, which will set back, for some time, the industrial struggles, it will not be easy for the new Liberal-National Country Party Government to implement its anti-working class programme nor return to its former 23 years of undisputed rule.

A serious blow has been struck though, at the Australian workers' movement and in New Zealand, too, where the Labour Government have recently been replaced. There are indications that US imperialism, driven from most of the South East Asian mainland, is seeking a base to re-trench. The recent invasion of East Timor by the reactionary Indonesian regime, simultaneous with Ford and Kissinger's visit to Djakarta is a strong hint in this direction. The US leaders will, doubtless welcome the new 'reliable' Governments to the South, in Australia and New Zealand.

Clearly the response of the Australian workers' movement to the Fraser Government will be of more than merely local significance.

A new cover for repression in Six Counties



Profile of William Craig

"A key figure for British policy-makers"

BRITISH POLICY in the north of Ireland nowadays hinges around the key figure of Vanguard Party leader Mr. William Craig. Craig is suddenly the golden boy of the political scene in the six counties. He is being praised in the editorial columns of British newspapers and courted and feted by politicians like Merlyn Rees, the Labour government's Northern Ireland boss.

The reason for this is because of Craig's wholly unexpected 'moderation' in the wake of the Constitutional Convention. Having broken with the ultra right-wing United Ulster Unionist Council, (organisationally, but not politically) he is now busy attempting to win support amongst the loyalist population for an 'emergency coalition' with the middle-class Catholic Social Democratic and Labour Party. (SDLP)

Craig's own origins are from within the ranks of the formerly all-powerful Ulster Unionist Party. But, unlike the people who supported the wing of Unionism which favoured civil rights for Catholics (and which later split to form the Alliance Party in 1970), Mr. Craig made his name for taking a hard-line against the Civil Rights Association from 1968 onwards.

'SHOOT-TO-KILL BILL'

The mantle of moderation ill-becomes the man who earned the nick-name of 'Shoot-to-kill Bill', because of his role as Minister of Home Affairs for the Stormont government. It is vital that Craig's political position is assessed by all those in the Labour and trade union movement who are genuinely concerned about Ireland.

Craig served as the Stormont Minister of Home Affairs from 1967 until his dismissal in December 1969. During his period of office he acted swiftly to curtail any public demonstration from the Catholic population in favour of Irish nationalism or civil rights. In the autumn of 1967,

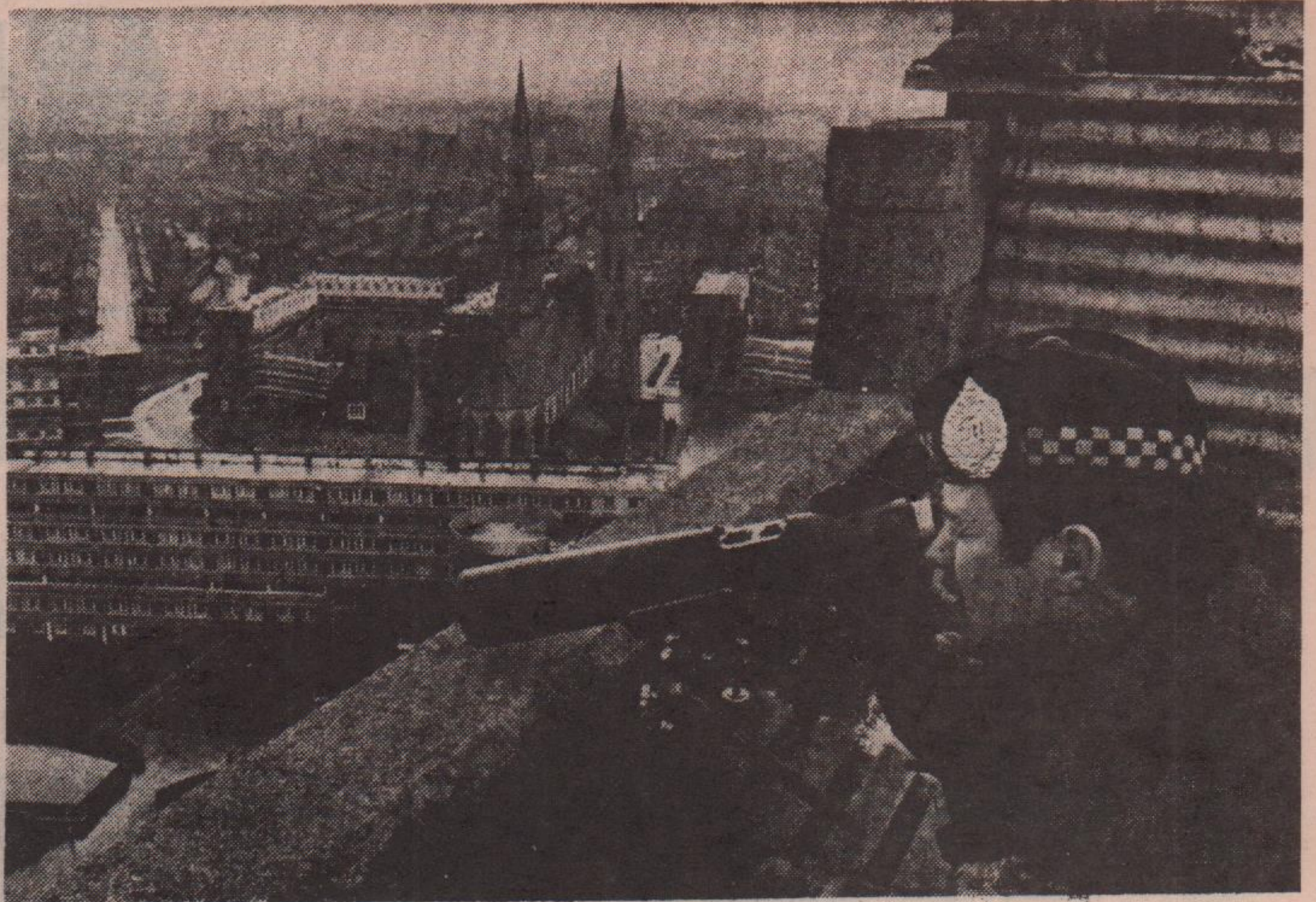
by COLIN KENNEDY
the high and mighty Minister of Home Affairs personally intervened into the political affairs of the students of the Queens University in Belfast in order to prevent them forming a Republican Club. This tawdry action was extended across the province and, for some obscure reason, the members of the Republican Clubs throughout the area found that their organisations had been outlawed.

The campaign which spontaneously emerged to protest against this suppression of basic democratic rights, the Students Action Committee Against Suppression of Civil Liberties, immediately became the target of the most extreme right wing provocations and acts of violence. It was Craig who had set this situation up; because of his fundamental and basic hatred of the Catholic population in the six counties and their nationalist aspirations.

EMERGENCE

In the following year of 1968, the months of October and November saw the emergence of the popularly supported Civil Rights movement throughout the six counties. Once again Craig reacted by banning these peaceful marches and whipping up sectarian feelings against the protesters. At a Unionist election meeting in the Ulster Hall on 28 November Craig described the Civil Rights movement as "bogus" and being made up of "ill-informed radicals who saw in protest a chance to renew a campaign of violence."

With statements of this sort coming from the Minister of Home Affairs, and the spectacle of Royal Ulster Constabulary "B-Specials" cracking open the skulls of demonstrators in Derry on 5th October, it is with little wonder that the average Protestant was whipped into a state of near hysteria against the



British soldier overlooks Divis Flats area on Christmas Day

Catholic community.

Throughout this period, William Craig was NOT what the British policy-makers wanted in the North of Ireland. They were desperately keen to see the reforms of the O'Neill regime gradually chip off some of the grossest excesses of violence and discrimination from the Orange statelet. But Craig rose up to articulate the prejudices and hysterical fears which had been implanted and then carefully nurtured within the Protestant population for generations. This monstrous tradition could not be wished away over-night. Indeed, as long as British policies remain the organising force in Northern Irish politics, then these dark phantoms from the Middle Ages will remain.

INEVITABLE

As a response to this fact, William Craig was inevitable. His dismissal from the Stormont Government in December 1968, his resignation from the Ulster Unionist Party and the establishment of his personal, paramilitary Vanguard Party in February 1972, have made him a recognised leader of the extreme Loyalist cause. His following within the Protestant population is large. As such, he is a key figure for British policy-makers in their considerations on the future of the people of this part of Ireland.

In Whitehall and in Westminster, the politicians and the bureaucrats are anxious to make sure that Craig wins out in the current power struggle within the Unionist camp. If the Protestant people are to be persuad-

ed then Britain has to demonstrate its good faith by using the Army, the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Ulster Defence Regiment with more determination against the nationalist population.

This is happening at the moment. With the increased use of police and courts against Nationalists and Republicans, the saturation of areas such as South Armagh with British soldiers and UDR men, British imperialism is out to prove that it can repress nationalist sentiment as effectively as Orange para-militaries and the like.

William Craig's image as the new "moderate" is utterly false. It is nothing more than a cover behind which the policy-makers of British imperialism can step up their assault on the rights of the Irish people. In order to do this, Whitehall is increasingly having to lean on the ultra-right reputations of people like Craig, as well as depending on the use of the Army and their associates.

No one in the British labour movement should be fooled by the manoeuvres of the Northern Ireland Office and their political master. The British army is in Ireland to prop up the shambles of the Six County state. It is doing this by playing up to every reactionary current in the Province.

There are no solutions in the interests of the Irish people along this route. Only a united Ireland can replace the present horrors of imperialist rule in the North East of Ireland. That is why we must campaign for self determination for the whole of the Irish people and the immediate removal of British troops.

MAO CONTINUED

back in 1970: "Whatever compromises may be reached between Soviet revisionism and US imperialism are mere temporary agreements between gangsters." And now these same "revolutionaries" are not just compromising with the US but siding with Pentagon "Hawks" and rightists like Ronald Reagan in lecturing Ford on the dangers of military weakness.

It is not only the Soviet Union itself that the Chinese are urging US action against. They also want "firmness" against every workers' or anti-colonial movement in the world which could be construed as Russian-influenced. The Chinese rulers commemorated the second anniversary of Pinochet's bloody overthrow of the Chilean Allende Government—by sending a trade



MAO TSE-TUNG WITH PRESIDENT FORD IN PEKING

delegation to Chile. Similarly the Maoists fully backed the anti-communists—principally the Socialist Party—in the recent dual-power situation in Portugal. Falling into the same pattern was the wreath brought to Spain by Hsu

Hsiang-chien, deputy chairman of the National Peoples' Congress, to mourn the death of Franco. Or one can take Angola, where the Chinese have been supplying large quantities of arms to the South-African- and CIA-backed FNLA and UNITA forces fighting against the Moscow-backed MPLA Government, which threatens imperialist interests to a certain degree.

China is ruled by a social layer of privileged bureaucrats essentially the same as that which dominates the Soviet Union. There is nothing to choose between the two ruling castes. Following Mao's victory in China in 1949, the Kremlin rulers gave "aid" to China only on the harshest economic terms. The Chinese broke from this relationship in the early 'sixties, and attempted the industrialization of China on a "go-it-alone"

basis. Inevitably, this proved impossible, and after a decade of upheavals and delusions the leadership is once again seeking aid from one of the "super-powers"—this time, the United States. The violent rightward foreign-policy shift is the result.

For many disillusioned Maoists, the experience has been a tragedy. Perhaps the best that can be hoped for is that it will have helped teach the best of them the bitter truth: that the only "super-power" which can be relied upon is the international working class, and that only a workers' revolution in the West can break the global log-jam which upholds the dominance of both imperialism on the one hand and Stalinism on the other, condemning the "third world" to backwardness and poverty and threatening the survival of mankind.

NURSERY

FIGHT BEGINS

BY GILLIAN WILDING

so these facilities are almost no use to these working mothers, and anyway they don't take children under 3 years old. Nursery classes do provide some double sessions so that a few children have a 30 hour week, though not usually before the age of 4.

In addition, of that 2300 working women with under-fives in Hackney, many will have 2 under-fives and some 3. There are 18000 under-fives altogether in this Borough. So we can safely predict that there is an urgent need for well over 2500 day care places. This many, and probably far, more children are in the care of child-minders at present.

Repeat this pattern for every Inner City authority and you get a glimpse of the size of the problem. And now we are faced with cuts! Islington Nursery Campaign and Islington Cuts Campaign have produced a leaflet showing what this means in their Borough. Cuts in staff, axing of plans for 120 more day care places this year and more next, one nursery to close altogether, 10 places cut in 3 others — all adds up to 217 places lost.

Against this background, a London Child Care Campaign (initiated by the



Working Women's Charter supporters join Islington picket against the cuts

Working Women's Charter Campaign) is beginning to organise. The next meeting is on Jan. 24th, 2pm, at the Essex Rd. Women's Centre, 108 Essex Rd. N1. Groups are active in Brent, Hackney, Islington and Enfield and reports on what they are doing will appear in the next WWCC newsletter.

Two conferences will be important for these issues in the coming months:

- THE LONDON CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND THE CUTS.

on February 28th. For information contact Michele Ryan, 39 Parkholme Rd. E8. 249-3072.

- THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER CAMPAIGN.

At the Lanchester Polytechnic, Coventry on April 10th/11th. For more information contact Liz Hambleton 690-5518.

Double victory in Notts East

LAST MONTH we reported on the background to the expulsion of Cllr Steve Evans from Nottingham East Labour Party. Since the article appeared the Labour Party National Executive Committee have upheld Cllr Evans appeal for reinstatement. In the second part of the article which was to deal with the Chris Richardson case we can now report that a successful conclusion has been reached.

The case first arose when John Carroll, agent for MP Jack Dunnett, issued a writ, alleging slander, for remarks made at a closed Party GMC. No substance was ever given to these accusations and no apology requested. When Chris offered an apology Carroll demanded a £500 security payment to his solicitors and the cost of an ad to be placed in the local paper and the New Statesman signed by the Chris Richardson Defence Committee stating that Carroll was justified in taking legal action. Chris, of course, refused risking a High Court trial which could have cost up to £5000 in costs alone.

However the case was never brought to court. In November 1975, after 3½ hour confrontation with Carroll's solicitor a statement was agreed with Carroll reluctantly agreeing to pay his own expenses, about a £1000 in all.

VICTORY

This victory was a result of the pressure put on Carroll and Jack Dunnett by the Chris Richardson Defence Committee and the local Parties — all six local CLPs, with the sole exception of Nottingham East, passed resolutions calling on Carroll to drop the writ. The publicity given the case by the Campaign For Labour Democracy and Chartist Conference Briefing also aided the fight.

This clearly will not be the last attack by right-wing cliques on the rights of Labour Party members. It is important that the lessons of the Chris Richardson case — the need for support from local parties and for the fullest publicity for such cases throughout the entire Party ranks — are learnt.

£250 fighting fund

Due to a useful last effort in the last month which brought in £120 (including over £50 from our Manchester cdes) we exceeded our £300 target by £30. We are asking our readers to give us £250 by May Day to help us move to a new premises and make important improvements to the paper.

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THE WORKING WOMEN'S Charter Campaign must not become a divisive force among women fighting for an extension of their rights. Due emphasis must be put on those demands which unite women working full-time, women working part-time and those women who would LIKE to go out to work but cannot, or feel they cannot, for various reasons.

This is particularly true for women with children of school age or under five, who can be only too easily divided from those without children. The campaign must give priority to issues like school holidays, and above all, day-care provision for the under-fives.

It is not much good to be offered equal pay or equal training opportunities at work if you can't get to work because of the children. The third demand of the Charter — "equal opportunity of entry into occupations" is meaningless unless the sixth demand about more day nurseries is achieved, plus other forms of social provisions not specified in the Charter.

URGENT NEED

Many people — and not only men — just do not realise how bad the present situation is regarding the day-care of children with working mothers.

Figures worked out recently for Hackney show that there are 2300 women with children under 5 years old working more than 18 hours a week. These are very conservative figures based on the 1971 census and on national statistics. The true figure in Hackney is almost certainly much higher. Yet there are only 379 Borough day nursery places and Hackney is better than some Boroughs.

Play groups and nursery classes in schools only provide 2½ hours sessions — as a total of 12½ hours per week —

IN FRANCE, over 20 people have been imprisoned (others also face charges), accused of carrying out sedition in the Army. This follows a massive explosion of feeling among soldiers (largely conscripts) in the French Armed Forces against pathetic pay (£6 a month till recently!), appalling conditions and brutal discipline (often involving the death or suicide of young recruits). Unofficial committees have mushroomed since the publication of a document 'Appeal of the 100' a couple of years back.

Involved in recent campaigns for democratic rights have been local branches of the radical CFDT (Democratic French Confederation of Labour), the second largest trade union grouping. The CFDT, once a Catholic union, is now aligned with François Mitterrand's Socialist Party. The Socialists have been giving tepid support to the idea of wider democratic rights, no doubt in order to gain cheap credibility among the left wing without having to do too much about it.

However, Socialist Party officials have been among those arrested for leafletting troops at railway stations, and Mitterrand has even offered to defend his supporters in court. Prime Minister Jacques

Revolt in the Ranks

by MARTIN COOK

Chirac has been publicly denouncing the Socialists for promoting fiendish conspiracies among the ranks. Action against the left by the hard-line Gaullists has been creating doubts among the more liberal types in President Giscard d'Estaing's Government, who fear too much repression may spoil the progressive and reasonable image Giscard has been trying to get across.

Help is at hand, however. The Communist Party-led CGT, the dominant French union federation, has been falling over itself in its haste to pillory the CFDT and S. P. for associating with 'extremists' and (horror of horrors) 'subversives' in their campaigns. Meanwhile Army C-in-C Gen. Bigeard protests that life in the barracks is like a holiday camp: the lucky conscripts "practically have breakfast in bed!" Just in case there are any complaints, however, the Defence Ministry has dredged up a half-hearted scheme for "commissions" which will deal with any

difficulties and take the soldiers' minds off these nasty trade unions.

It is worthwhile noting that an important catalyst recently was the visit to France of members of the Portuguese revolutionary soldiers movement SUV, who have shown the way forward. The French ruling class are terrified that their army might become "Portugalized". All the more reason for the lessons of what has occurred in Portugal to be learnt by the Labour movement everywhere.

Meanwhile in Britain, the acquittal of the 'BWNIC 14' comrades charged under the vicious Incitement to Disaffection Act is a great step forward. The immediate need is for an official Trade Union campaign for full rights for unions to organize in the armed forces. The use of troops in the Glasgow dustmen's strike showed the potential threat otherwise. As one of the French leaflets pointed out, some day it may be necessary for soldiers to point their guns 'the other way' — at the Tory officer caste.