

RED WEEKLY

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PORTUGAL - CRUNCH

The Portuguese revolution is facing its greatest right-wing threat so far. Defeated in its attempt to silence the working class newspapers and radio stations, faced with a growing revolt of the rank-and-file soldiers, the capitalist class and officer corps of Portugal is preparing a drive to smash the soldiers' resistance.

Left-wing regiments have been disbanded, 'unreliable' officers purged, and right-wing troops in Oporto have fired on the workers. New supplies of arms have been given to the pro-Government commando regiments. In the wings the fascists of the so-called Portuguese Liberation Army (ELP) are waiting, while the capitalist PPD claims to have organised armed militias and the CIA-financed Soares leadership of the Socialist Party is giving its full support to the Government.

On top of this, 5,000 right-wing troops have been recalled from Angola and the military command is preparing 'shock' regiments composed of officers and other reactionary forces.

The response of the rank-and-file Portuguese soldiers is showing the fruits of the last eighteen months of workers' struggles. Revolutionary forces have won a wide following. Four out of the five army units sent to seize the radio stations refused to carry out Government orders.

DECISIVE TURNING POINT

On 30 September a meeting of delegates from left-wing regiments took place at the barracks of the Lisbon light artillery regiment (RALIS). It was called to establish a co-ordinating committee to 'protect the gains of the workers'. In addition to the troops who mutinied at the radio stations, this meeting was attended by troops of the Coastal Artillery Regiment, the Setubal Infantry Regiment, the paratroops from Alfeite, and the garrison of the Almada fort.

Today the artillery of RALIS guards the road to Lisbon. The regiments have pledged to arm the workers if the right attempts a coup. No wonder the reactionary Prime Minister Azevedo has declared that 'at this moment it is not fully possible to govern in Lisbon'.

But despite the rallying of the left-wing soldiers, the dangers are great. The Communist Party, in one of the greatest acts of betrayal in the entire history of Stalinism, is fighting every attempt to mobilise the workers against the right-wing threat. It gives gigantic publicity to the use by ultra-rightist general Costa Gomes of the example of how 'order and not anarchy' reigns in Poland and Russia. It mobilised its entire apparatus to attempt to stop the workers' demonstrations against the Government seizure of the radio stations. CP leader Cunhal has backed the Government's moves with talk of the need for 'firmness'.

GREAT DANGERS

The decisive question is now whether the revolutionary left can begin to win the mass of the workers from the suicidal policies of the CP, and whether they can draw the SP and CP workers into united action against the line of Cunhal and Soares. The hostility and militancy of the rank-and-file soldiers is for the moment thwarting the Government. But to maintain that opposition, the left-wing regiments need to feel the mass weight of the workers behind them.

Portugal is now at a decisive turning point. If the right-wing officers are defeated in their attacks in the army, the backbone of capitalist state power in Portugal will be dislocated. If the left-wing soldiers are defeated the way will be opened to re-create an army of repression against the workers' movement. The situation cannot stabilise as it is now, and civil war is quite possible. Total international solidarity with the Portuguese workers and soldiers is needed.

For a workers united front against the repression!
Arms to the workers!

Workers, soldiers, peasants united will win!

IS NEAR



Dockers' Leader Calls For Indefinite Black on Spain

WALTER CUNNINGHAM,
Chairman of the Hull Docks
Shop Stewards Committee,
tells *Red Weekly* why his men
are blacking all Spanish ships.

● What led you to put a black on goods going to and from Spain?
The question came up on the shop stewards' committee when they shot the five people. The way we saw it, they didn't have a chance of a fair trial. It was a military court, which could only condemn them to death.

We don't have very much information on the internal situation in Spain, but we hope the black will influence events there. We hope that all major ports will

follow Hull's example. We understand that the Southampton area are doing the same as us.

All trade unionists should think hard about the situation in Spain, and take a lead from the Hull docks decision to boycott indefinitely all Spanish goods.

● The black has been imposed indefinitely then?

Yes. We agree with Jack Jones who called for 'maximum harassment' of Franco, not just a 48-hour stoppage.

Let me also say that there is no truth in the reports in the press that a busload of dockers were going on holiday to Spain. It was a busload of pensioners,

and two dockers were going along with them as escorts.

● At Heathrow the stewards seem to have taken the decision and then run into some difficulty when workers refused to carry it out. How was the decision taken at Hull?
The shop stewards' committee

discussed the question on the Monday. Then the next day there was a mass meeting which took the decision. All major decisions, including decisions about blacking, are taken by the men themselves. Of course we give them our recommendations.

IBERIAN FUND GROWS

Readers have continued to respond to our appeal to aid the Iberian comrades of the Fourth International - the LCI in Portugal, and the LCR-ETA (VI) in Spain.

The latest events in Portugal show once more how the crisis of international capitalism is finding its sharpest expression in the Iberian countries. Please help us to carry forward these struggles to a successful revolutionary conclusion. The total collected so far is £80.38. All donations should be sent to: Red Weekly (Iberia), 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.



THE SOLDIERS SAY 'NO'!

JOHN WEAL reports from Lisbon

Everyone talks of 'The Revolution' in Portugal today. But as in all revolutionary processes there are those for whom the revolution has been made, and must now be 'defended' (i.e. halted); and others for whom it has reached a turning point, and must now be carried through to the proletarian revolution itself if it is not to be crushed.

This division between the 'two revolutions' is the class divide between capital and labour. Today this division is finding its sharpest expression inside the armed forces. Most officers have already chosen their side; *today the fight is on for the ranks.*

The central task of the Sixth Provisional Government, headed by Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo, is to break the movement in the ranks of the armed forces — to restore 'authority' and 'discipline'. Nothing illustrates better the growing class polarisation in Portugal than the attitude of the different parties to the Provisional Government and this central task.

The right wing Centre Democratic Social Party (CDS) accepts the present Government — save for the Communist Party's presence in it — because, in the words of its leader Diogo Freitas do Amaral, it knows that for the moment: 'Few people would support any attempt to overthrow the present Government by violence [i.e. from the right] and.....any attempt could give the final victory to the left.'

ALLEGIANCE

The Popular Democratic Party (PPD) is in the Government, and is the party to which the most important sections of the bourgeoisie have transferred their allegiance. It also has a strong base in the Northern peasantry and other petty bourgeois layers. Its central aim is the stabilisation of the capitalist state, first of all inside the barracks — a task, they say, which must be accomplished 'within a month'.

By comparison, the Socialist Party leadership is not above a little 'revolutionary' rhetoric — but its

revolution it defends, and from whom. Soares says: 'The main enemy is the right which plots and waits.' Yet this 'anti-fascist fighter' sanctions the use of the COPCON commandos, led by the notorious rightist Jaime Neves, against the 'Soldiers United Will Win' (SUV) demonstrators outside the Trafaria prison; against the soldiers supporting the workers at Radio Renascença; and against the Armed Forces Handicapped Association.

DISBANDED

The Government in which the SP plays a leading role has now started to disband 'unreliable' regiments and transfer leftist officers and men. The Transport Regiment in Oporto has been disbanded after the soldiers voted — by 313 votes, with six abstentions and none against — to oppose the transfer of five soldiers and two officers. So much for the SP's concern for democracy!

At the same time the Sixth Provisional Government has not lifted a finger against a single rightist officer — an excellent way to deal with 'the main danger'.

Yes, this Government is surely 'defending the revolution': with one arm, begging bowl in hand, stretched out towards the Common Market of the capitalists; and the other arm busily creating a new 'military intervention force' to replace the 'less reliable' COPCON

tendency to link up with workers' and tenants' commissions and boot out their reactionary officers.

The truth is that the revolution must be saved today not from a rightist offensive against the Sixth Provisional Government but from the stabilisation project of the Government itself. The forces aligned against this project are to be found amongst the workers' and tenants' committees, amongst the peasants of the Alentejo, and amongst the rank and file of the armed forces. They are those like the soldiers' delegate from Setubal barracks who told me: 'I used to think the revolution was all flowers and peace. But to live it's necessary to fight. It will be bloody, but I'm not afraid to die.'

The SUV continues to grow. This Tuesday's demonstration in Coimbra follows their historic demonstration in Lisbon on 25 September. When they chant 'Soldiers will always be with the people' it is not a new slogan. But now it expresses an unambiguous alliance with the working class very different from the time when the ranks were still enmeshed in the shifting manoeuvres of the AFM and its so-called 'AFM-people' alliance.

CLASS DIVIDE

The sailors were at first slow to join SUV being more under the control of the Communist Party, which has little influence in SUV. But recently the Navy officers came out for Antunes (they were formerly Goncalvists), while the ranks withdrew their support for the Prime Minister. The class divide is widening. The AFM is a fiction now. The SUV is a conscious break with all past ambiguities. It is the mass expression of the im-

side the armed forces.

Links with the workers' and tenants' commissions continue to grow. In several areas, regiments give regular weapons training to civilians organised by the commissions.

Take the Setubal soldiers. Lieutenant Colonel Velasco, their commander, is a reactionary. He refused the use of army lorries to the 200 soldiers who voted to support the 25 September demonstration. The soldiers' £5-a-month pay made it impossible for them to reach Lisbon unaided. Undeterred, they approached the Setenave shipyard workers' commission and Setubal tenants' commission. These raised the money for coaches to take the soldiers across the Tagus to Lisbon. Another link was forged.

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Nevertheless, without a truly mass movement outside the army to defend the rank and file against repression, and to solidify with its demands — for democratic rights, a common front against reaction in the army, and for higher pay — there is a grave danger that the militancy in the barracks will be checked and repressed. Such a mass movement can only be built by means of a non-exclusive united front of workers, tenants and peasants and their organisations.

DOUBLE-GAME

But there is a problem other than the attitude of the SP leadership in carrying out this simple and necessary strategy — the policy of the Portuguese Communist Party. The PCP is playing a treacherous double-game which will result either in its demise as a mass working class party, or in the death of the mass movement itself.

Instead of mobilising the whole of the working class around the slogan, 'Out with the PPD and AFM Ministers; For a Workers' Govern-

ment', the PCP is participating in the Sixth Provisional Government. On the central question of army discipline, it is ambiguous, silent, or downright counter-revolutionary. It sided with the Government in attacking the sacking of the Spanish Embassy, and has now proposed a scandalous law for strict control of foreigners. When the troops entered the radio stations, its only utterance was to express 'astonishment that it had not been consulted'!

COMMISSIONS

While the PCP supports the various commissions at the base, it does not see them as a transition to organs of dual power, the framework for a future workers' state. It thus has no strategy for taking the masses forward against the project of Soares, who said in a recent *Le Monde* interview: 'One should accept and encourage spontaneous initiatives from the masses. But one must integrate them. It's not a question of instituting dual power. The objective is not to put a brake on the enthusiasm of the masses, and not to destroy democracy.'

The problem is that the enthusiasm of the masses lies precisely around the extension of their own organs and their own freedoms, which must inevitably come into conflict with Soares's attempts to stabilise (bourgeois) democracy. The soldiers are already finding out what it is to be 'integrated'. It involves the destruction of their own committees. The workers, including those in the PCP, can see that the same fate lies in store for them.

It is not surprising, therefore, that PCP workers — hesitating to take decisive action on a national level while their own party is in the Government — are leaving the party in increasing numbers. This is happening even in towns like Barreiro, the centre of the CUF monopoly, where for years the PCP was alone in heroically resisting the fascist regime.

The task of the revolutionary left is to galvanise all the committees at the base to involve the PCP and SP rank-and-file in a united movement to defend the soldiers. Unless they can succeed in this task, the radicalised soldiers will become demoralised, desperate and isolated. This is what the battle for the army is all about. It is a life and death question for the Portuguese Socialist revolution.

WHAT'S ON

HACKNEY NORTH LPYS public debate, 'Ireland—what policies for Labour?' between TOM (speaker Mike Knowles—sec. Hackney Trades Council) and LPYS National Committee (Bob Labi). Tues 14 Oct., 7.45pm, Stamford Hill Library, Stamford Hill, N16.

SCOTTISH NAC Conference, Saturday 25 Oct., from 9am—5pm at Queen Margaret Union, Glasgow University. Speakers include Dr Berry Beaumont (MPU—ASTMS), Dr Elizabeth Wilson (FPA Glasgow), Angela McHugh (AUEW shop steward) and invited MP, Creche available. Social in evening. For information and registration, contact Geraldine Smyth, 54 Grant Street, Glasgow (041-333 0318).

JUMBLE SALE in aid of National Union of Journalists Book Branch strike fund. Saturday 11 October, 1.30pm, at Methodist Church Hall, Stoke Newington High Street, N16. Admission 3p.

'THE COW': An Iranian film and discussion in aid of Iranian 21 Defence Campaign. Entrance 50p. Sun 12 Oct., 8pm, Collegiate Theatre, Gordon St (Euston tube).

LONDON Revolutionary Communist Group public meeting: Chris Davies and Frank Richards on 'The Trade Unions, the Left and the Crisis'. Tues 21 Oct., 7.30pm, Conway Hall (Holborn tube).

CENTRES FOR MARXIST EDUCATION exist in Leeds, Manchester and elsewhere. Spreading Marxist ideas in the labour movement and on the left is an essential part of the class struggle. CMEs aim to do this on a non-sectarian basis. Sessions and workshops on Basic Marxism, Marxism and Feminism, plus discussions on contemporary issues e.g. Portugal are examples of our activities. If interested contact Tom Steele, 16 Regent Park Terrace, Leeds LS6 2AX.

VIVA LA CAUSA! Films and discussion on US farmworkers' strike and boycott (speaker Elaine Elinson, UFW). Fri 10 Oct., 8pm, at Centreprise, 136 Kingsland High Street, E8.

BRUNEL Women's Action Group presents on Thurs 9 Oct: 7pm Broadside Theatre Group—international Women's Year Show + discussion; 8.30pm Film 'Coup pour Coup'; 10pm Women's Theatre Group. All at Upper West Refectory, Refectory Building, Brunel University, Kingston Lane, Uxbridge. Admission 30p.

CAMPAIGN to Repeal the Immigration Act — public meeting Friday 10 October, 7 pm, in Friends House, Euston Road, NW1. Speakers from immigrant organisations, JCWI, Camden Trades Council, Labour MP, and Peter Hain.

ROUGE RALLY in Paris 18—19 October: £5 deposit essential to secure a seat on the coach. Send immediately to: Jo-Anne, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1. (tel. 01-278 9526).

WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER Campaign—London Newsletter, available 10p + s.a.e. or £1 annual sub. Also coloured posters 20p, smaller posters 5p, speakers notes 10p, list of supporting organisations 2p, list of WWC groups, badges 15p—all at reduction for large orders and WWC groups. WWC: 49 Louth Hill

LONDON SOCIALIST FORUM: 'Crisis in the Health Service'. Tues 14 Oct, 7.30pm in the Metropolitan pub, 95 Farringdon Road.

WOMEN AND THE CUTS—planning meeting for conference on Sat 25 Oct., University of London Union (Room 3B), Malet St., WC1 at 2pm. Anyone interested in helping to draw up guidelines for the conference please attend.

HULL SOCIALIST FORUM: 'Labour and the Revolutionary Left'. Fri 17 Oct., 7.30pm at the White Hart, Alfred Gelder Street.

IRISH MUSIC NIGHT featuring Irish Mist at The Crown, Cricklewood Broadway, Sat. 11 Oct., from 8—12pm. 50p, proceeds to Armagh Relief Cttee.

GAY WORKERS CONFERENCE: Saturday 11 October, 10am—5pm at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. Further details from: Gay Worker, 5 Caledonian Road, London N.1. (please enclose s.a.e.)

HOMAGE TO MIGUEL ENRIQUEZ

Murdered by the Chilean Junta, 5 October 1974
VICTORY TO THE CHILEAN RESISTANCE

Meeting in commemoration of Miguel Enriquez, general secretary of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, MIR, in Chile, who stayed underground for a year after the Junta's bloody coup but was hunted down.

Speakers include Edgardo Enriquez, former Minister of Education in the Popular Unity government, Neil Kinnock MP, an official MIR speaker and a speaker from the Chile Solidarity Campaign national executive. Music and poetry recital 'Songs to the resistance', including the Chilean group Voices of Yoru, Jack Warshaw and Donald McGuire.

Friday 17 October, 7pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Tickets 40p on the door, or from Red Books (97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.) and other left bookshops.



'Lefts' give Wilson a helping hand

When the Labour leaders clambered into their first-class compartments on the trains home from Blackpool last week they wore the smug expressions of contented bureaucrats. The Annual Conference had supported their policies on nearly every decisive issue.

Ex-darling of the 'left', Employment Minister Michael Foot, had employed his hypocritical oratory to pull Conference behind the Government's policies. Jack Jones, another erstwhile 'left', had marshalled the block vote behind Wilson. The Government's policies — which mean lowered living standards, fewer jobs, less homes and bigger cuts still in the social services — had been sanctioned by Conference.

The open alliance of these 'lefts' was designed to present an aura of unity, and they were put up to argue for policies that the right-wing leaders would have found far more difficult to sell.

Nor did Wilson actually lack support from Benn despite his Attlee inspired rhetoric on the Wednesday — a strange source of inspiration for socialism. After making general points about the need for socialism, always a sure-fire winner at a Labour Party Conference, he made one practical point. He paid tribute to the trade union leaders for endorsing the £6 pay limit, which Benn in the midst of his enthusiasm for socialism perhaps (?) forgot was reducing the value of real wages. He also urged Conference to vote down proposals on nationalisation.

'LEFT' COVER

Later on TV he stressed his loyalty to the Wilson Government, glossing over Labour's anti-working class policies and providing the grateful Wilson with another 'left' cover.

Even Mikardo, who disassociated himself from the Wilson-Jones policies, took great care to do this at the Tribune meeting — always a good place to reveal bleeding hearts and 'left' consciences. His attack is to be welcomed; but like the other Tribune MPs, Mikardo has not associated himself with any of the workers' struggles against the Healey pay laws. In fact he presented the Labour Party Manifesto as the alternative to the Wilson-Jones policies. Unfortunately for Mikardo,

Defend WRP against State attacks

On Sunday 28 November, 100 Special Branch and uniformed police officers complete with dogs raided a house in Derbyshire being used by the Workers Revolutionary Party as a study centre. The raid came only hours after the publication by the *Observer* of the confessions of an actress, Irene Gorst, who claimed to have been 'interrogated' for seven hours by members of the WRP Central Committee — bar a two-hour lunch break.

The real reason for the raid was only too clear. The same day, on the same page, the *Observer* printed details of the Social Democratic Alliance's red-baiting attack on eleven members of the Labour Party National Executive. These eleven not only had snow on their boots, some had even written for the *Morning Star*.

There is a common purpose in these actions, as in earlier attacks — again spearheaded by the *Observer* — on the *Militant* grouping. This is to present all left wing opponents of the Wilson Government and its policies as sinister groups, operating in a mysterious world of plots and infiltrations. In this way political issues can be buried beneath a McCarthy-style hysteria.

In the case of the WRP the process has gone one dangerous step further. The police have been used on a massive scale in an act of outright political intimidation. How soon, may we wonder, will it be before a national committee meeting of a revolutionary group becomes a criminal conspiracy?

All socialists must unhesitatingly rise to the defence of the democratic rights of the WRP and oppose the witch-hunts on *Militant* and certain Labour 'lefts'. Not to do so

by Bob Pennington

the cornerstone of the Manifesto is the social contract, the brainchild of these very same bureaucrats.

'UNITY'

The outburst from the Social Democratic Alliance against 11 members of the National Executive for 'identifying themselves with the Communist cause' had been dealt with effectively. Prentice has been told by Roy Jenkins and Shirley Williams to cut out these attacks or he will lose their support.

The all-important image of 'unity' must be preserved in order to go for the activists who want more revolutionary policies. Wilson wants to deal with the revolutionaries now and come back to the Tribunites later. The SDA witch-hunt, he fears, could have the effect of uniting the Tribunites with the 'extremists' — and that is the last thing he wants.

After delivering a side swipe at the SDA, Wilson's main complaint in his Tuesday speech was 'that too many constituency parties were being dominated through apathy or infiltration by the left-wing extremists.'

To put the effective seal on their bureaucratic domination, the right-wing ensured that the more 'dangerous' and 'divisive' issues were not put to Conference. The Dulwich resolution on abortion was removed from the agenda. The York resolution on Portugal was ditched. The Transport House compositing machine also made sure that the issue of Ireland did not come before Conference.

NO STRATEGY

But all was not as it appeared on the surface. The unceremonious bundling off of Healey from the executive, and his replacement by Eric Heffer — a sacked Minister — was an indication of the disquiet of the rank and file with the present leaders. Sid Vincent, the National Union of Mineworkers' right-

wing representative, has now retired and been replaced by Emlyn Williams, who is part of the NUM left wing. Both these elections are steps forward, but the question remains — have the 'lefts' any intention of using their position to fight the present leadership?

What is glaringly apparent, and this stood out like a sore thumb at the Conference, is the total lack of any coherent strategy by the 'left' in the fight against the right wing. This is illustrated in the attitude of supporters of the *Militant*, which is the most influential of the far left currents inside the Labour Party.

Despite the fact that they had a whole series of resolutions on the economy from diverse Labour Parties, they had not put down one single resolution calling for the withdrawal of troops from Ireland. Their resolutions — many of which took formally correct positions — singularly failed to suggest any concrete action which could be taken to fight Wilson. Although taking positions to the left of the Tribunites, their solutions resolved into nothing more than one day winning a majority which would force the Government to implement 'socialist' policies.

This 'Marxian' Fabianism is disastrous. It limits the struggle simply to the narrow confines of the Constituency Labour Parties and the trade union apparatus, instead of linking the Labour Parties and the trade unions with the mass struggles of the working class.

SECTARIAN

Although they supported the York resolution against Mario Soares, they restricted their opposition to its removal from the agenda simply by trying to move the reference back of Standing Orders. They would not join a picket of the Conference calling on the delegates to refuse to hear Soares. Nor were they prepared to hold joint meetings with other organisations to try to build up a broad opposition to Soares's presence at the Conference.

What confronts the Labour 'left' is how to organise those forces which are defending living standards and jobs. It has to face up to the fact that there have been movements built around the fight to release the Shrewsbury pickets. There is a Troops Out Campaign. The issue of women's liberation and the question of the Abortion Bill have attracted thousands of women into activity. Whilst the Labour leaders are conniving with international capitalism and its catspaw Mario Soares, a campaign of support for the Portuguese revolution is growing.

But such movements and issues hardly saw

the light of day in the Conference. They are anathema to the right wing, who are determined to exclude any suggestion of independent working class activity from either Conference debate or Labour Party activity.

But if the left is to fight back it cannot afford to rely just on manoeuvres and resolutions. It has to involve itself with these social forces. It is these sections of the working class, in struggle on a whole range of issues, which constitute the elements that can be grouped together to form the basis for challenging the right-wing domination of the labour movement.

BEGINNING

Even those successful resolutions which did oppose the right wing will only gather dust in the filing cabinets at Smith Square unless a movement is built to force their implementation and to sweep away the pro-capitalist leaders who will never put them into practice. The present challenge to the right wing MPs, of which Newham is an excellent first beginning, cannot be maintained unless it wins the support of trade unionists, the homeless, the tenants in high-rented over-crowded accommodation, and women who want the right to choose.

These people can only be won over to fighting the Prentices and the Tomneys when they see in practice that the labour movement supports their struggles and is on their side against wage cuts and the dole queue.

In drawing the balance sheet to date one must record that the 'left' have completely failed to do this. Some Constituency Labour Parties, certain individual MPs, and some of the trade union leaders have taken stands on particular issues. People like Syd Bidwell and Arthur Scargill have openly come out for the removal of the Wilson leadership. But there has not been a co-ordinated campaign throughout the parliamentary, trade union and constituency left to openly challenge that leadership and its policies.

There is an urgent and pressing need for such a campaign. If it is not mounted, the working class faces defeat and demoralisation and the way will be opened up for another long period of Tory rule.

UNITED CAMPAIGN

A united campaign around the demands — No to the £6 pay limit; for a sliding scale of wages and social expenditure; for free abortion on demand; against racism and fascism; for solidarity with the Portuguese and Spanish workers; for troops out of Ireland; and for an end to all conspiracy trials and repressive legislation — this could bring together people fighting on these issues. But more than that, it could and would inspire hundreds of thousands of other workers and militants to join in that fight. The power of the British working class could be turned effectively to smashing the capitalist counter-offensive and taking a big step towards a socialist solution.

The right-wing leaders successfully stage-managed last week's Conference, ably assisted by a number of the 'left' MPs and union leaders. But the strength of that right wing rests on the shaky foundations of an ailing and chronically sick capitalism. The left forces in the labour movement can rest on the powerful undefeated forces of the working class. They have the most powerful weapon, and that weapon can remove both the Wilson leadership and the capitalist forces he represents.

The forging of working class unity in the next period around these types of demands is the most pressing task facing revolutionaries and all those other militants in the broad labour movement who put the workers' in-





7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast

On 5 October 1968, Gerry Fitt — now the leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party — was batoned by the Royal Ulster Constabulary as he stood at the head of a massive civil rights march in Derry. Mr Fitt was taken to hospital, and the RUC invaded the nationalist Bogside. From the events of that day dates the present resistance campaign of the anti-Unionist population of the Six Counties.

Seven years on, on 5 October 1975, the same Gerry Fitt could be found calling on the anti-Unionist population to give their co-operation to the so-called security forces — including the very same RUC which batoned him and hundreds more civil rights demonstrators.

Fitt's change in attitude does not derive from any success in the civil rights struggle. This 5 October there are still some 200 men interned in Long Kesh, and hundreds more men and women held in prison camps in Ireland and Britain. Indeed, Merlyn Rees has recently signed a further 23 detention orders despite his promise to end internment by Christmas.

Unemployment in Catholic areas remains about twice as high as in Protestant districts, housing conditions in the nationalist ghettos are as miserable as ever, and the anti-Unionist population of the Six Counties has been subjected to unprecedented terror by the British Army and its Loyalist allies throughout the last seven years.

Gerry Fitt, on the other hand, has come a long way since 1968. He now heads a 13-strong Convention party, as well as being a Westminster MP. He has been deputy leader of the power-sharing Executive which followed Sunningdale, and in the last few weeks he has been given the vision of becoming deputy premier in a coalition government headed by the new 'moderate' Bill Craig — the same Bill Craig who banned the Derry civil rights march of October 1968.

Not popular

Craig's turn is not exactly popular with his United Ulster Unionist Council colleagues, so Gerry had to carry the burden in the Convention debates last week. The UUUC did not make things easy for him. As Fitt's SDLP colleague Seamus Mallon rose to speak, they all walked out of the chamber. The UUUC were protesting at a speech by Mallon in which he had branded the Ulster Defence Regiment as

being in league with the Loyalist murder gangs. This really offended Gerry, who complained that the walk-out was unparliamentary behaviour and discourteous to the SDLP.

In Fitt's West Belfast constituency, however, the people had much more serious things to concern them than Gerry's Convention antics. In two incidents the Ulster Volunteer Force killed three people and injured another ten in bomb and bullet attacks. Nine of these were injured in an explosion at the Bush Bar in Leeson Street, in the heart of the nationalist Falls Road area. The Falls district is normally flooded with British Army patrols, stopping and searching cars and pedestrians. But last Thursday the British Army was nowhere to be seen.

Top-level talks

Altogether, 12 people died and more than 20 were injured in the wave of Loyalist violence last Thursday. And in a statement claiming responsibility, the UVF revealed that they had top-level talks with British civil servants only hours after their murderous exploits, and that they were given five hours warning of the outlawing of their organisation.

The UVF said that the talks had been initiated by the British Government, and claimed that they had offered to stand down and disband if the truce with the Provisionals was ended, the RUC sent into Republican areas, and the Provisional Sinn Fein and Irish Republican Socialist Party listed as illegal organisations. The Northern Ireland Office at Stormont Castle has admitted that the UVF's claims are 'in essence correct'.

In any case, the proscription does not appear to have overly concerned the UVF so far. Last Saturday its office in the Shankill Road in Belfast was still operating normally; the RUC did visit the office, but took no action. A member of the UVF in the office was quoted as saying: 'It was business as usual.'

The same day the self-proclaimed UVF chief-of-staff, Ken Gibson, walked into Ladas Drive Police Station in East Belfast where ten of his members were being held for questioning. 'I told them bluntly that I was a member of the UVF', he told reporters afterwards. But the police simply asked him to leave.

It would appear that Rees's policy that the security forces should revert to their former level of activity means immunity for the rest of the leaders of the UVF.

spiry to contravene the Incitement to Disaffection Act, and 13 of them face substantive charges (most of them relating to the possession of the leaflet 'Some Information for Discontented Soldiers') under the Incitement to Disaffection Act itself.

All fourteen either pleaded not guilty or refused to plead, some of them making political statements about the nature of the charges. When Michael Westcott pleaded 'peace in a world of war; love in a world of hate; free speech for all and an end to politically motivated trials', the judge, Justice Neil McKinnon, retorted: 'I will have to have a medical report on you.'

The trial opened with a number of

was a Weekend of Action, which began with a picket of the Northern Ireland Office and the Home Office on Saturday 27 September (where a petition with 4,000 signatures demanding that the charges be dropped was handed in), a torchlight procession on Sunday night, and a mass picket of the Old Bailey on the opening day of the trial. The Statement of Complicity with the 14, with 600 signatures, was delivered to the Home Office on Monday morning.

UNDETERRED

News came through the same weekend that four supporters of BWNIC, who had distributed 'Some Information for Discontented Soldiers' earlier in the summer at a barracks in Arbroath, had been charged in Aberdeen under the

'WE DEMAND THE RIGHT OF THE IRISH PEOPLE TO DECIDE THEIR OWN DESTINY'

Interview with MAIRE DRUMM, Vice-President of the Provisional Sinn Fein

What are the benefits of the truce?
I'm glad you called it a truce, not a ceasefire, since it is an agreement between two opposing armies, an interim period until a permanent solution. You can't see anything for it at this stage... a lot of sectarian assassinations have been carried out against the Catholic community. Before this the Republican Army was the front line between them and these assassins; but there is a time in all wars when opposing factions have to talk, and that time seemed ripe.

A lot of people were under the impression that the Republican Army called a ceasefire because they were beaten. This is untrue. They were far from being beaten. The aim of the truce is to bring about a political — a permanent — solution.

Can you outline the conditions for a permanent truce?

First a declaration of intent by the British Army to get out of this country. Not only the British Army. Some people seem to think that if only we get the soldiers out that's going to be peace. It's not. We want the British administration out of this country 'lock, stock and barrel' for all time. That is the most important thing.

Second, we want an amnesty for all political prisoners — and in that we would include Loyalist prisoners. Thirdly, we demand the right of the Irish people to decide their own destiny, their own future, the type of Government they want, without Heath sticking his teeth, Thatcher her hairdo or Wilson sticking his pipe into it. We decide ourselves. The Loyalists and Protestants have as much right to decide, the whole lot of us must come together.

Under what conditions could the truce break down?

I can only suggest what could possibly end the truce. There have been violations of it by the British, very bad violations, such as the murder of Leo Norney, the murder of Charles Irvine down in

Divis Flats, the murder of a 10-year-old child with a rubber bullet in his face — these just within the last month. If the Republican forces were not well and truly disciplined, there would probably have been a bloodbath.

The thing that would finally end the truce would be if the British said we never have any intention of getting out, we are here for all eternity.

What is the attitude of the Provisionals to the Loyalists?

We would emphasise that the war all along has been with the British administration and its satellites. It has not been with Loyalists, nor with Protestants. And Republicans do not carry out sectarian assassinations. No man has ever been executed by the Republican movement because he was a Protestant, or because he was a Loyalist.

There's been a big rise in the number of assassinations generally, and you may read in the papers that there have been 100 assassinations — 60 Catholics, 40 Protestants — but when you go through these 40 Protestants you find that a large number of them were the result of internal strife between the UDA and the UVF, some of them were shot by the British while planting bombs, and some were blown up by their own bombs — as in the case of the Miami showband.

The Republican movement is completely opposed to sectarianism, and would stop people if they thought they were going to assassinate Protestants. This is provided the Protestant was not a British soldier or RUC man. Security forces are a different thing altogether.

A Protestant was unfortunately shot along the Falls Road — Samuel Llewellyn — but we disapprove of it completely, and we would point out that this case was blown out of all proportion. While there were hundreds of Catholics assassinated, there wasn't this hue and cry, we didn't have the people lined up along the road, we didn't have them collecting for a monument for the lad.



Rory O'Brady, Sinn Fein President, greeting Maire Drumm in Dublin

International
solidarity
with BWNIC
defendants

The trial of the 14 supporters of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign opened on Mon-

Court on Tuesday); but supporters in Aberdeen were undeterred and leafleted the Army Recruiting Office there with the same leaflet. Young Liberals distributed the leaflet at a barracks in Elichfield on Saturday. Comrades in Germany distributed the leaflet to British soldiers in Hamburg, Krefeld, the Ruhr area, Werl and West Berlin, where two people were arrested but subsequently released.

In Derry in Northern Ireland, four people gave out 200 copies of the leaflet on 30 September to squaddies on the streets there (accompanied by television cameras). They were not arrested, but the RUC is forwarding the names and details to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

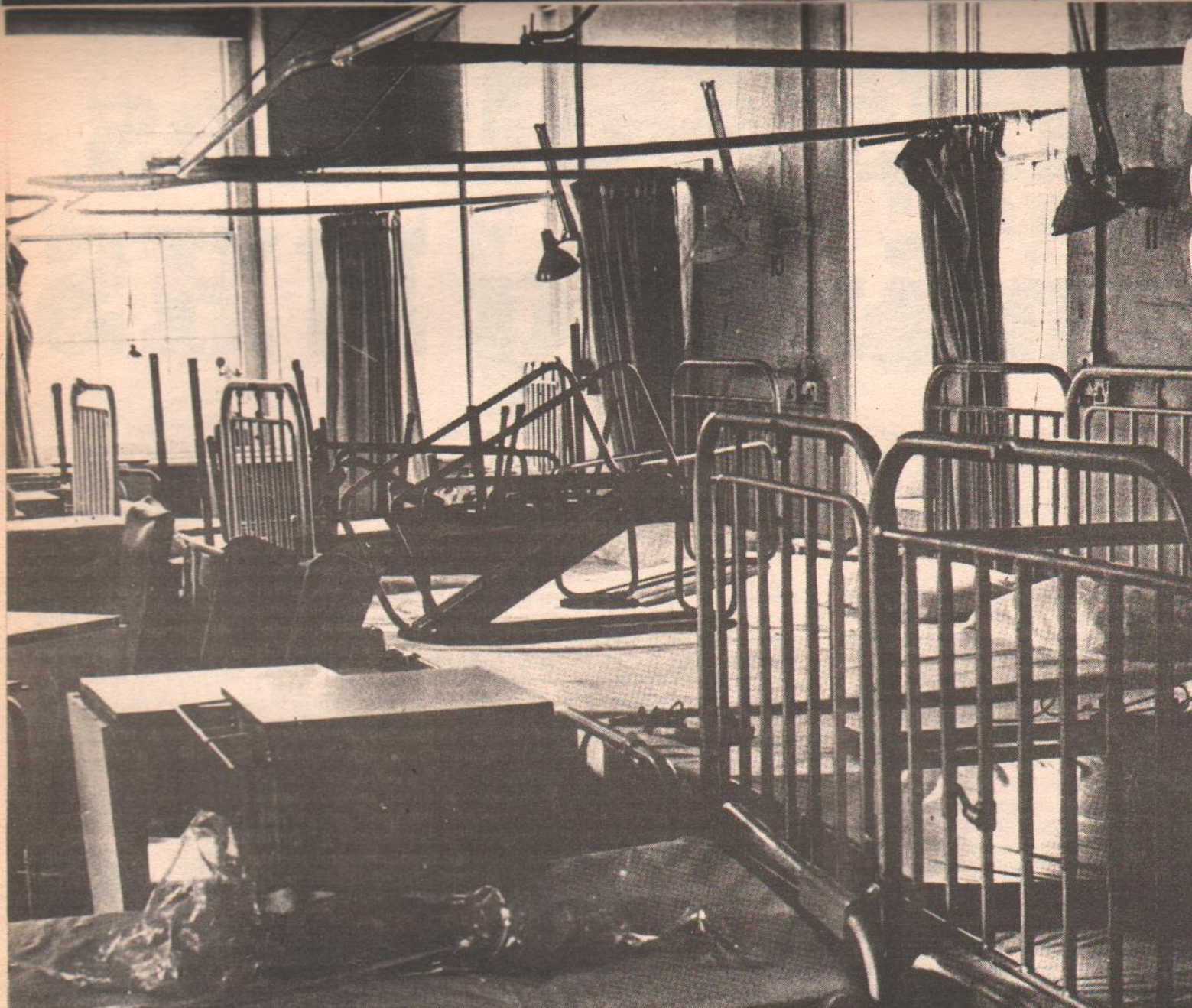
Apart from *Red Weekly*, nine other left, libertarian and pacifist papers have

the trial. Some 50,000 people are now in possession of a copy of the leaflet as a result of this.

An open letter addressed to the Attorney General demanding that the charges be dropped has been sent from the USA, signed by 39 people, including Noam Chomsky, Benjamin Spock, Allen Ginsberg, Phil Berrigan and Ramsey Clark. There have also been various pickets of embassies etc. in Germany, France, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Sweden, USA and Hawaii.

EVIDENCE

The trial was continuing this week with prosecution witnesses giving evidence. The court is being picketed and support for the picket is particularly requested all day Mondays and at lunchtime on other days. For information please tele-



MENTAL HEALTH: The Labour Government is cutting the provisions for the mentally ill and the mentally retarded in Day Centres by 50 per cent next year.

BIRMINGHAM: The NHS has cut by one third the number of heart operations at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. People in the prime of life are dying because they cannot get heart operations. Leon Abrahams, Chairman of the Division of Surgery, says: 'We have reached the stage where it has become more dangerous for some patients to be on the waiting list than to undergo major heart surgery.'

BARNSELEY: One in six patients on the waiting list of Barnsley Hospital has been waiting for more than a year.

SOUTHAMPTON: Doctors and social workers have been told that there are no more meals on wheels available for patients.

SURGERY: A survey by the DHSS of a number of waiting lists in 1971 showed that of a representative sample of 5,772 patients in six major surgical specialties 37 per cent had been waiting longer than a year, nearly 20 per cent of this sample had been waiting for more than two years, and some for four years and more. Waiting times were particularly long in non-traumatic orthopaedic surgery, with well over 60 per cent of patients waiting more than a year.

GLAMORGAN: The Area Health Authority has cut its nursing staff from 4,167 to 3,895. In November there will be 50 nurses who have passed their exams but cannot get a job because Glamorgan says it has no money to employ them.

BOURNEMOUTH: Health Authorities have admitted that because of a chronic shortage of beds and facilities, patients have died whilst waiting for hospital treatment.

FIGHT THE CUTS IN THE NHS

This conference views with concern the inadequacies of the National Health Service and calls upon the leadership of the Labour and trade union movement to pledge itself to a socialist policy for the Health Service.

Conference therefore:

- (a) rejects any cuts in the National Health Service and demands a very substantial immediate increase in health expenditure to recruit new staff, pay adequate wages, provide attractive career structures at all levels, replace outmoded buildings, and ensure the provision of an equally high standard of health service facilities throughout the United Kingdom, and believes that in future health expenditure should be linked to price and wage indices to protect the National Health Service from further cuts;
- (b) calls for a fully free National Health Service at the point of use with complete abolition of prescription, dental and other charges;
- (c) welcomes the proposed removal of private prac-

tice from the National Health Service but is concerned that it be completed rapidly and that existing part-time contracts must end. It further demands that the long-term aim of the Labour Party be the total abolition of private practice with all private medical care outside the National Health Service under Government control as a first step and the prohibition of all private patient insurance plans;

- (d) demands the public ownership of the pharmaceutical and other industries which are major suppliers to the National Health Service with compensation on the basis of need, with state monopoly over import and export of drugs and medical supplies,
- (e) demands the abolition of all nursing agencies and the rapid move by the National Health Service towards the non-use of agency staff or outside contractors for any purpose;
- (f) calls for all management bodies to be democratically elected and to include elected represent-

atives of all grades of employees within the service;

- (g) calls for an extension of occupational, preventative and rehabilitative health care schemes with a major expansion in the number of health centres;
- (h) calls for extended facilities for pregnancy testing, contraception and abortion so that they are available to all women on request free of charge, and opposes moves to restrict the availability of abortion on social grounds.

Conference, desperately alarmed at the stagnation in morale and innovation in the National Health Service and concerned at the continued erosion and constant amendment of plans for the future, calls upon the Government to publish, within one year, a major White Paper embodying a Ten Year Plan for the development of the service.

— Moved by National Union of Public Employees
— Seconded by Liverpool (Wavertree) CLP

The resolution on the National Health Service (above) carried against the executive's wishes at last week's Labour Party Conference is the latest sign — following similar resolutions at the NALGO and ASTMS conferences — of a growing awareness in the broad labour movement of the need to fight back against the attacks on the NHS.

There is no doubt that there is significant support for these demands, not just in the health service unions but right throughout the whole workers' movement. The task now is to mobilise that support and to bring it into mass action against the policies of the Labour Government.

There should be no false hopes that because the Conference has gone on record for these

demands, the Wilson Cabinet will now put them into practice. The resolution is in complete opposition to the plans of the Government.

The Labour leaders are determined to cut back on public spending — they intend to cut the NHS, not improve it. Wages, jobs and health are being sacrificed to pay for capitalism's crisis. The needs of the NHS and its working class patients are being subordinated to the interests of a bankrupt capitalism by the Labour Government.

The decision of the Labour Party Conference is nevertheless important. It can be the beginning of a campaign to defend and transform the NHS. What is now needed is for delegates to the Conference, the local Labour

Parties and the trade unions to mobilise inside the entire workers' movement for a mass campaign to smash private practice both inside and outside the NHS, and to organise in the localities and nationally against any cuts that are being made.

This involves supporting bodies like the Medical Committee Against Private Practice. MCAPP's conference this weekend 'Against The Cuts In The NHS' will attract over three hundred delegates, the overwhelming majority of them from the mass organisations of the working class. This is an example of how a serious fight can be launched to implement the resolutions on the NHS.

Of course such a conference has to broaden

its base even more widely. It has to organise local conferences and work towards a national demonstration against the cuts. In the localities it has to sink its roots into the trade union movement. It has, together with other working class organisations and individuals, to fight back wherever and whenever cuts are made, and it has to be in the forefront of a campaign to build a health service based on the needs of and controlled by the working class.

If a real united workers' movement is built up to fight on these issues, then it can begin to show the way forward not only on the question of the NHS but for the whole campaign against the anti-working class policies of the Wilson leadership.

Labour's Policies Undermining NHS

The creation of the National Health Service in 1948 was an important gain for the working class. For the first time, it brought health care within the reach of most workers. Yet the NHS has never been a beleaguered island of socialism in a sea of capitalism. It has always been dominated by the needs of capital for a healthy workforce.

This is why there still exist gravely neglected areas of health care, such as the care of women, the old, and the chronically ill. These groups either have little chance of recovery or are not central as workers in producing capitalist profits. It is also the major reason why the NHS has suffered from a chronic sickness of lack of staff, equipment and new buildings. In 1948, the Nuffield Trust estimated that the health service urgently needed 30 per cent more hospital beds. Since then, although the demand for treatment has increased every year, the number of beds has steadily declined.

The Labour Government first introduced health charges in 1951. Since then both Labour and Tories have treated the health service with varying doses of cuts in hospital building, increased health charges, and appalling pay and conditions for health workers. Indeed, it took the NHS thirteen years to build its first hospital!

However, by the late 1960s an even more stringent medicine was needed to halt the rise in health costs. From this time on, the state has been developing a clear strategy. Its purpose is to make the NHS work better and more cheaply for the capitalist class.

First, however, it was necessary to reorganise the NHS through the NHS Reorganisation Act 1973, to streamline the administrative structure and make it a more effective tool to carry out the strategy of cuts and changed priorities. Under the 1973 Act it is bodies such as the Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) and Area Health Authorities (AHAs) which are now deciding which hospital to close, which staff to make redundant, and what areas of health care will be made priorities at the expense of others.

MAIN POINTS

As the cuts are carried out, the main points of the Government's strategy are becoming clear:

- The axing of hospital building programmes.
- The concentration of facilities and resources into large district hospitals, with the systematic down-grading (closing of wards and departments such as casualty) and closure of small local hospitals. The latter usually serve working class communities, and are often especially concerned with the treatment of women or the old. District hospitals cannot adequately compensate for the loss of such health facilities.
- The shifting of the burden of care of the chronic sick and of convalescence onto working class families. This is carried out by shortening hospital stays for treatment (so that more patients can be treated in fewer beds) and by changing treatment from in-patient to out-patient regimes.
- The reduction of the staffing levels in hos-

by Colin Spencer

pitals and an increase in workloads through bonus schemes and regrading of jobs.

- The encouragement of private medicine outside the NHS. Castle's latest plan for licensing private practice at one stroke guarantees its future and doubles the number of short stay hospital beds in the private sector. This could only lead to the establishment of a private health industry in direct competition with the NHS.

The effect of these measures is to reassert more nakedly the capitalist nature of the health service. Those who are not directly needed for capitalism's workforce are especially hard-hit — in fact, one AHA has already considered plans to give productive workers open priority in treatment. Moreover, the standard of health care will begin to depend once more on the ability to pay, either via private practice or in increased health charges.

NO DOUBT

There is no doubt about the meaning of the Labour Government's policies on health. The cuts are being used as a further way to force down the living standards of the whole working class in order to shore up an ailing British capitalism. And several unions — notably those with large memberships in the NHS, such as ASTMS, NALGO, and NUPE — and now the Labour Party have all passed resolutions under the pressure of their rank and file against these cuts.

In total, these resolutions outline the immediate demands needed to roll back Wilson's attacks:

- Immediate injection of funds — at least £1000 million — to begin to restore the cuts and restart the hospital and health centre building programmes.
- Automatic increases in the NHS budget to protect it against inflation.
- Complete abolition of all private practice, both inside and outside the NHS. All private health facilities to be turned over to the NHS.
- Nationalisation of the drugs industry without compensation to end its profit-mongering and dangerous and cynical exploitation of the sick.

Other important demands for reforms in the service provided by the NHS have also been raised:

- Free abortion and contraception on demand;
- An extensive health education programme;
- A free full occupational health service to protect workers from the health hazards of work under capitalism.

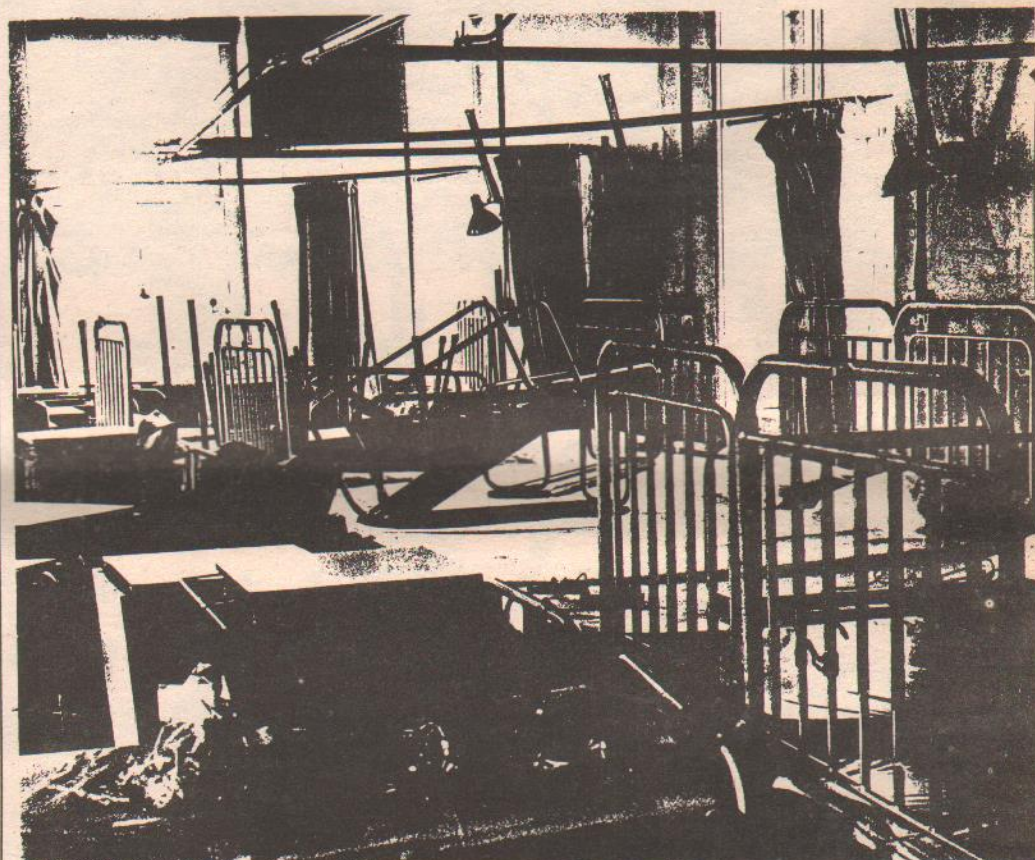
Such demands, if implemented, would remove some of the most serious gaps in the health care presently provided by the NHS. However, simple calls on the Labour Government to carry out such measures will be met with a simple response: 'There's a crisis — we've got no money.'

It is clear what the working class's reply should be. The crisis is a *capitalist* crisis, and its cost must be borne by the capitalist class. A crash building programme of hospitals and health centres is needed in every area, as part of a programme of useful public works. Such a programme would not only put to good use the materials being stockpiled by building manufacturers, but would help to soak up a good deal of the unemployment in the building industry. The funds for such a policy could be released by abolishing 'defence' expenditure and by a tax on the capitalist class.

to do both these things. Charged with finding out the effects of the cuts, how they are being carried out, and what the socialist alternative would be, such an inquiry could arm the workers' movement to expose and fight Labour's attacks.

No inquiry carried out by the state can do this job. There have been a series of such inquiries carried out — all with the aim of making the health service work better, and cheaper, for the capitalist class. The classic example is that of the McKinsey report, which resulted in the change in structure of the NHS and gave birth to the AHAs. This report was carried out by a team of management consultants!

The inquiries conducted by the state have only contributed to the present crisis in the NHS. The job of a workers' inquiry would be to work out how to make the health service meet the needs of the *working class*.



How can the labour movement best fight for these alternative policies? Resolutions are of course an essential part of any campaign, but on their own they are completely insufficient. No amount of resolution passing will stop Wilson and Co. from carrying out the cuts. These policies go hand in hand with the incomes policy, and any fight against them must therefore be part of the struggle to smash all of Wilson's anti-working class policies.

That is why attempts to democratise the bodies of the NHS (such as the AHAs) are useless. They do nothing to mobilise the labour movement — on the contrary, trade unionists on such bodies will soon find themselves taking part in the implementation of the cuts. These bodies were designed for exactly that purpose.

WORKERS' INQUIRY

Much better is to start by fighting to prevent the cuts that are already taking place in the NHS. In this way we can begin to win the workers' movement to fighting for the above socialist policies *in practice*.

Look at the way the cuts take place. A hospital is closed here, a ward is cut back there. Many more cuts take place behind the backs of the workers' movement — such as the cuts in the ambulance services, or the understaffing of hospitals through 'natural wastage'. What is *never* revealed to the working class is the full extent of the cuts and the systematic way they are being carried out.

If we are to mobilise in the class against Labour's attacks, we not only have to point the blame where it belongs, but also expose the extent of the cuts and the implications of

The state and the capitalist class would not make this easy, of course. In particular they would say: 'You should leave it to the medical profession who know about these things. Anyway, there is simply no money available.'

The workers' movement would have to demand that they **OPEN THE BOOKS** — let the workers see the plans for the health service. A workers' inquiry could not be conducted in the backrooms of Transport House, but only by waging a fight for such demands. This would mean campaigning to throw the whole weight of the workers' movement behind such an inquiry. Only by doing this would it be possible to bring the full extent of the cuts in the NHS before the gaze of the whole of the working class.

There must be a similar response to the role of the drug companies, exposing the anarchy of research and the way drugs are marketed. The best way of winning the workers' movement to fighting for the nationalisation of the drug companies, so as to *plan* the research and production of drugs, is by fighting to open their books. This again will be strenuously resisted by the capitalist class under the guise of maintaining commercial secrecy 'so as to be able to compete with other firms'. It will require working class action to win such demands, including the workers in the drug companies themselves taking hold of the books and submitting them to the workers' movement for examination. This would do far more to win the whole of the working class to the need to take control of these companies than any number of paper resolutions.

But the crisis in the NHS is not *simply* a matter of more money being needed, nor simply a matter of making some reforms. It is not possible to talk about 'putting a bit of socialism back into the health service' as Trib-



It has been the struggles of hospital workers themselves over the past few years, such as the nurses

those reforms that the NHS provided for the working class were the result of the pressure of the workers' movement, imposing those reforms on a capitalist health service, and it is those reforms that the capitalist class is now trying to cut from the NHS.

WORKERS' PLAN

Only a health service which took account of the social nature of health, which sought to find collective solutions to problems of health, and which approached health care according to the needs of the working class, could in any way be considered a socialist health service. A real assessment of the health needs of the working class would require drawing on the experience of the whole of the working class — part of which would be such policies as an occupational health service, an extensive health education programme, and free abortion facilities available for women on demand.

To implement such a socialist plan for the health service would mean breaking the power of the AHAs and similar bodies of the state, as well as the power of the consultants within the health service. To impose such a workers' plan would require the creation of a workers' state.

It is in the course of the struggles against the cuts that such a workers' plan can best be developed. Even to win the most minimal reforms it is necessary to begin to challenge the monopoly of the consultants and the bodies of the state in the NHS. Take the struggle against private practice. It was the action of healthworkers up and down the country in blacking private beds that forced Barbara Castle to take on the consultants. It will be those same healthworkers who can best enforce the banning of pay beds in the NHS.

SABOTAGE

Or take the struggle for free abortion facilities available on request under the NHS. Even under the 1967 Act, which is quite inadequate, the consultants use their power in many areas such as Birmingham to prevent abortion facilities being provided. Even if free abortion on demand became a woman's legal right, it would still be necessary for the workers' movement to organise to enforce such legislation and prevent the sabotage of the consultants.

It is out of these struggles and experiences that a workers' programme for the transformation of the NHS to meet the needs of the working class can best be forged. This is better than



Barbara Castle

a hundred and one tidy blueprints for health.

The struggle to defend the health service cannot be left to health workers alone. The IMG supports the call by the Medical Committee Against Private Practice for the creation of ACTION COMMITTEES in every locality to begin to organise the fight against the whole range of cuts in the social services, as well as the NHS. This is necessary not only because the problems of health, housing, and education are the concern of all the working class, but also because it is important that one part of the public sector, such as the NHS, is not defended at the expense of others.

Such committees will be able to campaign within the local labour movement to monitor the cuts and build a fight against them. They can begin to organise to force the the district, area and even regional health authorities to stop the cuts and reveal their immediate and long-term plans to the labour movement. Where such bodies already exist, albeit around some single issue such as the closure of a hospital, wider based action committees should not be counterposed to them, but attempts should be made to broaden their aims. It is also important that such bodies begin the process of co-ordinating their actions on a regional and national scale.

It is clear that the defence and the transformation of the NHS can only be achieved as part of a general offensive against all of Wilson's Tory policies. But a campaign by the labour movement around the kind of alternative policies outlined above can play an important part not only in defending the health care of the working class but in building the fight to rid the workers' movement of the Wilson leadership.

Workers Must Impose Their Own Solution

Wilson and Healey pulled no punches in their speeches at the Labour Party conference. They intend to continue with their policy of trying to save a decaying British capitalism by savage attacks on the living standards and jobs of the working class. The £6 wage norm, the rising spectre of mass unemployment and the cuts in public spending are inseparable. They are all part and parcel of the same policy — 'sacrifices' by the many to 'save the nation' of the few.

The Wilson Government not only inherited the Tory cuts of May and December 1973 — which totalled £1,700 million — but went still further. This January, in the White Paper on public expenditure for the next five years, the growth rates for every sector — with the exception of the police — were reduced. Education, for example, was cut back from a rate of 3.5 per cent per year to 2.7 per cent.

Having once tasted blood, Healey wasn't slow to sink his fangs in deeper. In the April budget a further £900 million of public expenditure was sucked out. And only three months later he was back for still more — the July measures mean in real terms a downward revision by 10 per cent of the January estimates. We can be sure that these will not have been the last. Healey's threat of worse yet to come is no idle boast.

The July measures hit the social services in two ways. Firstly, the workers were forced

value of new orders received for new buildings in schools, universities, health and sewerage fell by 17, 55, 25 and 49 per cent respectively.

The lack of building expansion has had a number of results. The already large number of building workers on the dole has worsened, and the stockpile of idle resources in the building trade has expanded: between 1972 and 1974 the stocks of building bricks rose from 180 million to 925 million — a 514 per cent increase. The facts speak for themselves — the resources of the labour power and raw materials exist, but the Labour Government chooses to ignore them.

Productivity

Furthermore, the drive for greater productivity within the 'welfare state' is being stepped up at the same time as the services provided are being run down. In the health service this can be seen very clearly. Between 1973 and 1974 the number of staffed beds in the National Health Service fell by 26,200 to 421,000; the waiting lists rose by 7,900 and the number of days each patient spent in hospital fell. Hence the pressure on the nursing staff and ancillary workers becomes greater, as the patients they are dealing with are invariably in a critical condition.

However the cuts in the social services do not just concern nurses, ancillaries, teachers,



to take a cut in wages via the £6 norm along with the rest of the trade union movement. The Wilson leadership particularly hoped that wage restrictions would help to lower the public sector borrowing requirement. The wage rises that these workers have won over the last few years, added to the dramatic decline in profits to finance the state sector and the sharp increase in interest rates, have caused the sector's borrowing to shoot from £1,378 million in 1971 to £6,371 million in 1974 to over £10 million in 1975. The Houghton award to teachers, for instance, contributed to a 40 per cent increase in education current expenditure for the first three months in 1975.

Cuts Apparent

Secondly, the previous cuts, together with the ceilings on public spending imposed under the Healey measures, have begun to take effect with a vengeance on future expansion — especially on building programmes. In the education field this can be seen most starkly. In the first quarter of 1973 the value of building projects started totalled £216.7 million; by 1974 that dropped dramatically to £55.8 million; and in the first three months of this year it had further plummeted to a meagre £34.5 million. These cuts have generally hit those areas of the most concern to the working class: in fact, between 1973 and 1974 the

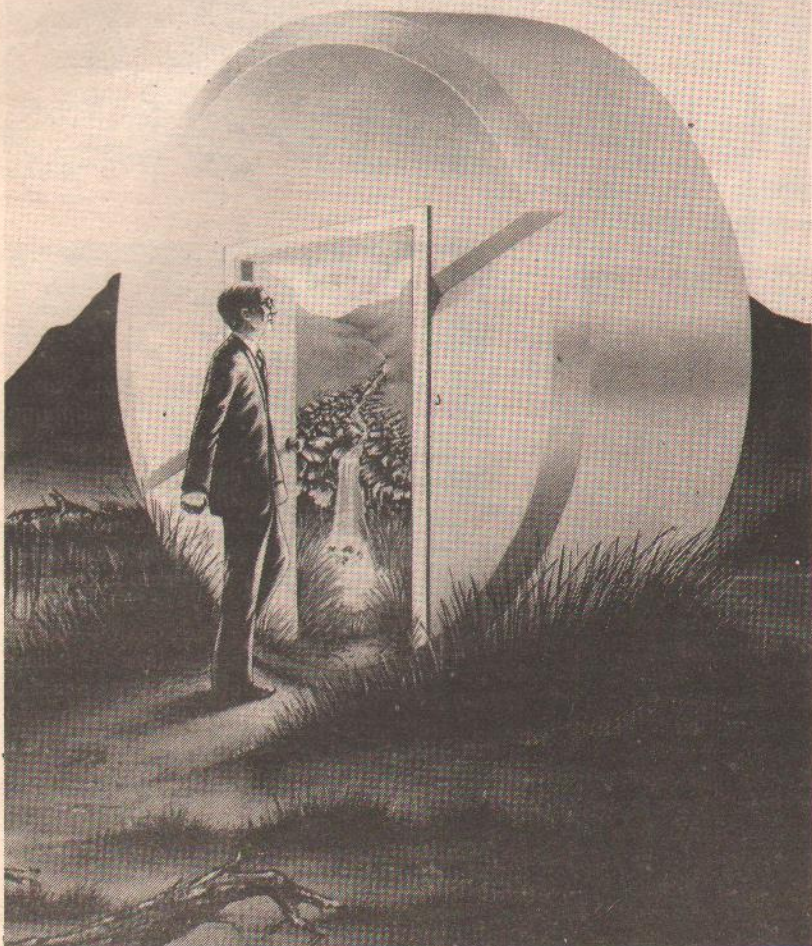
patients, or students — they affect the whole of the working class. Not only does the chopping of building programmes have repercussions throughout the economy and spell further unemployment, but these cuts are an attack on the gains the working class as a whole has made since 1945. They are another method whereby the Labour Government is stepping up its attack on the living standards of the working class.

It is necessary for the whole of the working class to organise a fight back against Wilson's Tory cuts. This means raising demands that can build a class-wide response, such as a sliding scale of wages and social spending to protect them against inflation, and a crash programme of useful public works which would not only help to restore the cuts but begin to provide jobs for the million and a quarter unemployed.

The MCAPP conference and the lobby called by the South East Region of the TUC for 21 October against the education cuts are the beginnings of a much needed response. Perhaps then the editors of *Management Today* will eat their words: 'Everyone wants better hospitals, schools, housing and local authority facilities, but several factors make it unlikely that the increase will be substantial.'

The working class certainly do want better facilities, and we intend to have them. Ric Sissons

A new way of life...



The drug companies — tranquillisers for capitalism. Rather than the benefits of scientific advance being used to improve the health of the community it is cynically tailored to control 'disturbed' people and boost the profits of the drugs companies. The problems are always private and individual, not public and social. The surreal tone of their advertising is a combination of fairyland and Brave New World. Only when the drugs industry is nationalised under workers' control will medical knowledge be pooled and resources planned to effectively serve the needs of humanity.

'For a real choice, we must also organise against the Government's attacks on the NHS'

Interview with Dr. Berry Beaumont, a delegate to the Labour Party Conference and active in the NAC



Q What kind of response did the resolution on the NHS get at the Labour Party Conference?

A There was a really good response to the demand for free contraception and abortion on request. This demand was important in the NHS resolution because women cannot have the right to choose if there are no facilities available.

Q Was there a resolution specifically about abortion?

A Yes, but no time was allocated to discuss it. Some members of the NEC did not want to discuss abortion because they were frightened that Labour MPs in seats with a large number of Catholic voters might get defeated if the Labour Party openly supported abortion.

Supporters of NAC organised a petition calling for the debate on abortion. Over 100 delegates from Constituency Labour Parties plus some MPs signed it. All the ASTMS delegation and representatives from most of the other trade unions also signed. Although we tried to challenge Standing Orders, we were unsuccessful.

Q Where does that leave us now as regards the position of Labour MPs?

A Barbara Castle said whatever Conference decided, Labour MPs would not be bound. It would be left to their 'individual conscience' on how they should vote. If Labour MPs are supposed to be representing the interests of the working class, there should be no question of allowing a free vote on an issue like abortion.

Q But will they have to vote now that it is clear the White Bill will not come before the final session of Parliament this year?

A Two things are now coming up. First, the Third Report of the Select Committee. This has caused a lot of confusion. The women Labour MPs who fought against the anti-abortionists throughout the Committee meetings, sold out and signed a unanimous restrictive Report.

The Third Report's proposals are recommendations to the Department of Health and Social Security. On 13 October, Barbara Castle has promised a statement saying whether the DHSS favours these recommendations. If the MPs don't challenge her statement, it will go through and be implemented in 42 days.

Among other things, all women will then be refused abortions unless

they have been referred by agencies and bureaux registered with the Secretary of State. Also, clinics will be limited in the numbers of 'foreign' women they can see.

Secondly, Parliament will be circulated with an order paper to reconstitute the Select Committee. If there are no MPs who protest, this will go ahead without even a discussion!

Q Why are you opposed to the Select Committee being re-constituted?

A Because it was set up as a manoeuvre. Its aim is to keep the White Bill under discussion. As a Private Member's Bill it was doomed to failure — most of these Bills fail. But by putting it into a Select Committee, it will be discussed for the life of the Committee — this lasts as long as Labour is in office.

No Select Committee, particularly one with a majority of avid anti-abortionists like Leo Abse, should be allowed to hide away in Westminster discussing White's backward ideas, when abortion is a decision for the mass of women whom it affects.

Q Does the decision to implement the restrictions in the Third Report and any future reports rest only with the MPs then?

A No! The opposite. The Trades Union Congress, the Women's TUC, and the Labour Party have all passed resolutions which make it easier for us to organise at work, in our unions, in hospitals, at colleges and in our local Labour Parties. But we have to start to campaign now — with pickets on DHSS offices on 13 October, and with a national week of action in November, using every means to warn of the dangers from the Select Committee's proposals. The MPs will only be prepared to take up the fight when they see what the consequences are if they fail to fight.

Q What kind of consequences are you talking about?

A Take what happened to Prentice, for example. We should do the same thing on this issue. In Newcastle, the papers have been reporting how the Labour Party is being split down the middle on the abortion question. Some members of the General Management Committee threatened to resign because a resolution against White's Bill was narrowly passed.

In Bolton, both East and West CLPs voted against White's Bill. But David Young, the East Bolton

MP, has consistently supported White. Bolton Labour Party members are surely wondering why Young is 'representing' them in Parliament when he is in no way bound by their views.

Even in White's constituency a letter has been written to him, criticising his action on abortion. This is a good start — but now they have to organise against him and get him replaced as an MP.

Q How can we use the NHS resolution passed by the Labour Party?

A Restrictions on a woman's right to choose just won't simply come through the manoeuvres of the Government and the Select Committee. They are also affected by every cut-back the Government carries out against the NHS.

The Government is committed to running the NHS into the ground. Many MPs piously argue against White's Bill and we'll even see some of them taking up a fight against the Select Committee. But what side are they on when the decisions are taken to cut back NHS facilities? For a real choice, we have to organise not only against the immediate threats of the proposals from the Select Committee, but also against the Labour Government's attack on the NHS.

COME TO THE N.A.C. CONFERENCE

18-19 OCTOBER 10:00 am on imperial college



ABORTION: A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE



Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)



Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)



£15,000

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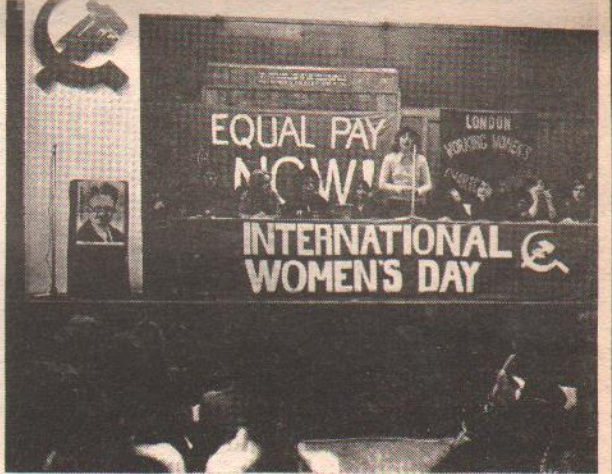


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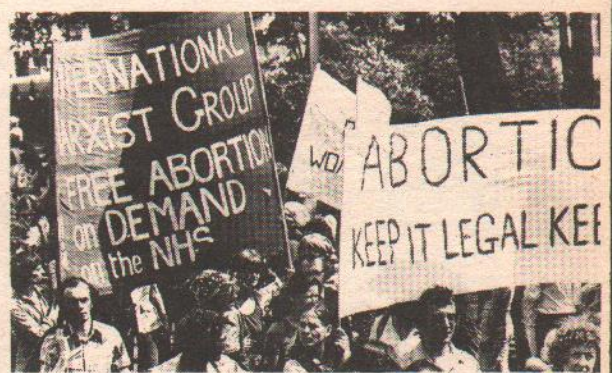


Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

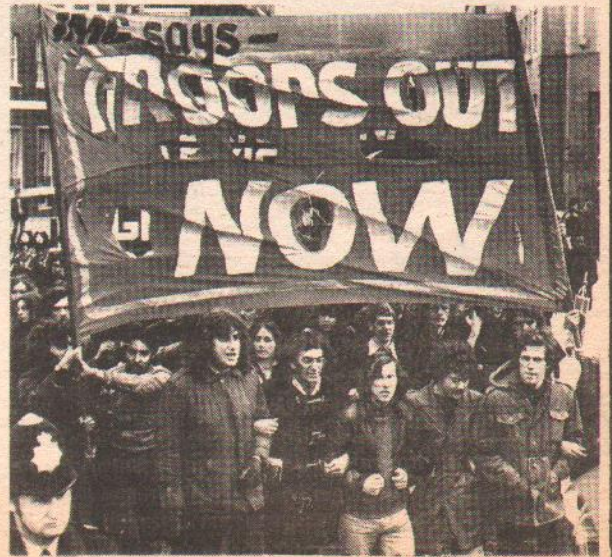
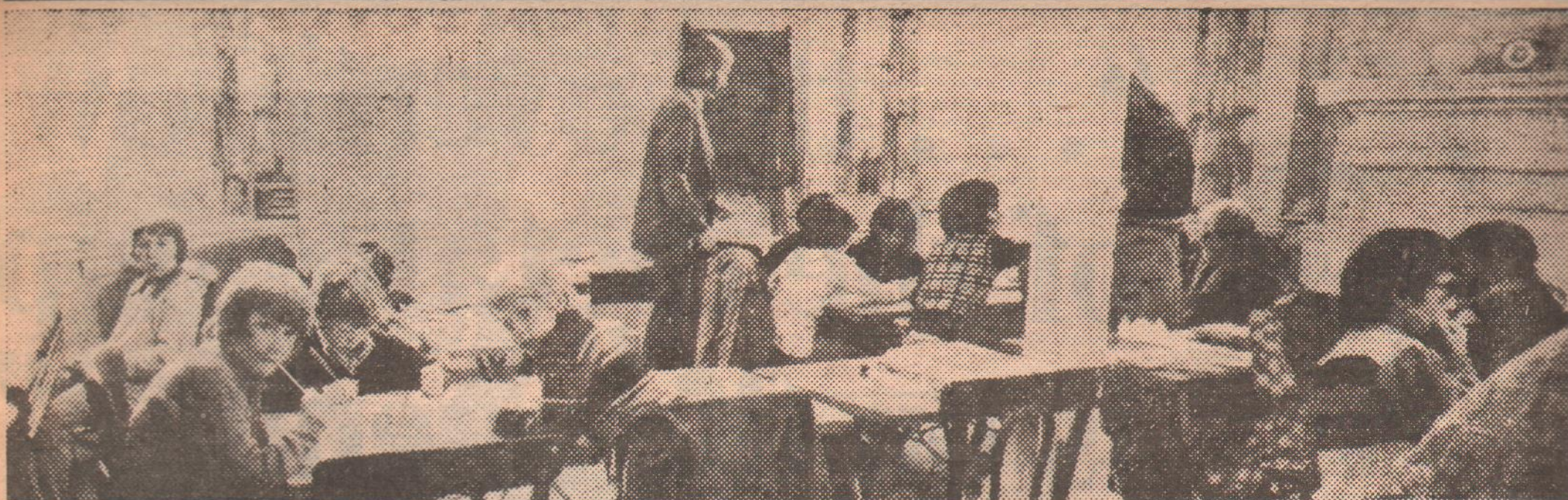


Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)



William Tyndale teachers took over a local chapel last week as a strike school for children staying away from the school being run by the ILEA to break their strike.

EDUCATION - FOR WHAT?

While Healey sharpens the axe for the next public sector cuts; while the bureaucracy of the National Union of Teachers mixes gestures of protest (outside school hours) with abject capitulation; while the 'Rank & File' grouping seeks to head teachers away from the main issues that workers face by centring its demands on class size and teaching load.....the Conference of Socialist Teachers will be meeting on 25-26 October to discuss how teachers can be organised together with other workers on demands that can throw back Wilson's efforts to make the working class pay for the crisis.

But one of the obstacles that socialist teachers now face is this: a few steps behind the cuts, a right-wing movement is developing that aims to drive a wedge between teachers and other workers, by pinning the blame for the crisis not onto Government policies of education on the cheap but onto 'left-wing' teachers. William Tyndale School is the latest example of this.

How well are teachers equipped to deal with the threat from the right? The answer is that they are seriously handicapped by their traditional 'special relationship' with the State.

Reconciliation

What this means is that teachers have taken much of the responsibility for the way learning is organised under capitalism. The Schools Council - a State body with large NUT representation - has just put out a paper on 'The Whole Curriculum 13-16' that shows very well the intended role of teachers: 'Any curriculum embodies a selection of knowledge....But that selection is bound to reflect the interests of particular power groups in our society. We believe reconciliation between these groups will not be possible unless each....makes concessions as well as laying down claims.'

This 'reconciliation' is described as an 'educational covenant' - and also as a 'social compact'! - to which teachers should commit themselves. It is not just an attempt to gloss over class differences, but is part of an effort to involve classroom teachers in the organisation of the curriculum, based on a 'consensus' of values.

It would be comforting to think that a project like this would die a quick death under the hail of blows that teachers will receive from unemployment and the cuts. Unfortunately, however, it is based on a solid tradition of teachers' collaboration with the State.

'Adaptable'

The roots of this lie in the part that advisory committees, educational civil servants and administrators, and Local Education Authorities have played in persuading capitalist governments to expand education to take in the needs of 'industry' for a better-trained, more 'flexible' and 'adaptable' workforce. This explains their support for more spending, comprehensives, and 'progressive' methods that could motivate working class children into training themselves for a place in

by Ken Jones

'technological society'.

For its part the labour movement, content with the expansion of education and the growth of comprehensives, was quite willing to hand over the organisation of learning to the experts.

The policies of the 'progressives' really came into their own during the long post-war boom, when the 'expansion' demand matched the needs and capabilities of capitalism. It was then that team and inter-disciplinary teaching, and 'child-centred' learning, came into their own as State-backed projects. These changes, it was claimed, could both 'make school more agreeable to all its members [the working class] and meet the functional requirements of society [capitalism] more effectively'.

But the circle could not be squared like this. A policy of expansion on the cheap, with few purpose-built schools, was thrown into confusion as the 'equal opportunity' offered to working class children in school was exposed as a fraud by the workings of the labour market outside. They began to use the space given them by 'progressive' methods to express resistance to the whole education process.

Failure

It is this failure which lies behind the very real 'crisis in the schools'. But since the labour movement has never had a line on education independent from the State's 'progressives', it has been completely unable to cope with this crisis.

The working class experiences the crisis - of 'violence', of learning failure - as being to its disadvantage. But 'left' teachers are mostly still wed to an outlook that uncritically defends not the workers' interests, but the projects set up by the State to fit workers' children to meet capitalism's new needs. Rather than fighting for a socialist understanding of this crisis, even the most conscious of teachers often play down its effects and tell workers that, once the cuts are reversed, the rest will be plain sailing.

The right wing has been quick to spot this weakness. In the case of William Tyndale School, there has been a line-up of 'Black Paper' supporters with right-wingers in the local Labour Party to smash progressive teachers and impose a policy of right-wing education. H



Tyndale headmaster Terry Ellis

ever old hat the educational ideas here, politically this represents a new and dangerous development. The aim is to win workers' support for policies that are a smokescreen for the cuts crisis, and thus to promote authoritarian solutions to the social crisis as a whole.

Against this, the Tyndale teach-

ers are demanding an 'independent' inquiry to clear up the affair. But this approach suffers from all the illusions foisted on teachers by their involvement with a 'progressive' wing of the State. In no way can it win the support from trade unionists which is essential to defeat the right.

Nor should the Tyndale affair be seen as a fight between the 'progressives' of the Inner London Education Authority and the Islington Labour Party. ILEA, which over the last year has tried to victimise strikers and gays, is only too willing to use William Tyndale to further repress and isolate teacher militants. It knows that success here will strengthen its hand for the coming battles over the cuts.

Abandoned

The Tyndale case exemplifies the crisis of perspective for 'progressive' teachers. Abandoned by the State, threatened with disciplinary action by a union that fully supports the right of State inspectors to pass judgement on teachers, and cut off from the labour movement, the only way forward for them is to begin to organise a fight back - initially around the call for a trade union inquiry into the witch-hunt, to open up the issues for the whole workers' movement.

It is 50 years since a Labour Party conference passed a soon-forgotten resolution calling for a workers' inquiry into education 'to determine how the present books... used in schools, and the predominant methods of teaching....foster bourgeois psychology and to how far, under a workers' administration, this might be counteracted and a proletarian attitude might be cultivated'.

Divisions

Unless the same questions are taken up again now, the way will be left open for the right wing to undermine the campaign against the cuts by deepening the divisions inside the working class. It is this question among others that will be taken up by the Conference of Socialist Teachers.

SOCIALIST TEACHERS CONFERENCE

now on 25-26 October

For further details write to: Bernard Reagan, 24 St Agnes Close, London E.9.

THURSDAY tv BBC1 9.25 DAYS OF HOPE

The Days of Hope series ended with a highpoint of the British class struggle, the 1926 General Strike. Again, surprisingly little was seen directly of the masses in action, although their advances in self-organisation and education were the major gain to be set against the defeat of the General Strike. As Ben commented: 'Ordinary people learnt to organise themselves, from scratch, in nine days - what couldn't they have done in 90 days?'

But this aspect was largely sacrificed, by Allen-Garnett-Loach for an over-extended examination of the traitorous activity of the TUC leaders - Thomas, Pugh and Citrine, unwillingly abetted by 'lefts' Purcell and Swales - who withdrew their support from the miners after nine days, despite the fact that the mine-owners still intended to press ahead with their vicious wage-cuts. This exposé, although brilliantly depicted, was heavily over-done - the repulsive class-collaboration of J.H. Thomas with the Tories and bosses was pointed out not once or twice, but repeatedly.

SORE THUMBS

The experience of the masses, who were rapidly growing in stature and confidence all over the country, was thus largely absent. The one or two scenes in the film which did illustrate this crucial facet of the situation - workers taking over a bus while under attack from mounted right-wing vigilantes or the discussion in the local Council of Action - stood out like sore thumbs

absent was any portrayal of the extreme poverty and starvation within the mining communities, which drove them to stay out for another six months - a point made in the discussion after the programme by Dai Davis, a Welsh min-



Ben played by Paul Copley

er who played Cook in the film.

Looking back on the series, it might be useful to consider to what extent the dramatist's and producer's technique worked in getting these crucial ideas across. Allen chose to use three or four characters to convey the conflicts of what he described as the 'two strands in the situation, parliamentary socialism and revolutionary socialism'; and this was particularly effective in scenes like that between Hargreaves and Sarah, where he tried to persuade her to give up her work with the local Council of Action in case it damaged his parliam-

Sarah violently rejects the male-dominated basis of their relationship, in which he sees her simply as an appendage of himself and his politics - the strike has given her the chance to realise fully her own personality, her own political views, and finally her own independence. Very vividly we see how politics is about real life, and how personal relationships can very clearly illustrate more general social relationships.

CENTRE STAGE

Far less successful, however, was the way that the social democratic misleaders, whom the series worked to expose, began to dominate the action and take over the centre of the stage. This illustrates a very real problem for Marxist dramatists, who understand - contrary to what we are taught and read - that history is ultimately made by masses, classes, and their huge social force, not by individuals who at best express, personify or respond to the pressure of large numbers of people.

For example, the main reason that the TUC leaders called off the General Strike after nine days was not their own 'naturally' traitorous personalities, but the fact that they feared the developing organs of workers' power, which threatened to take the strike out the bureaucrats' control. This was not stressed sufficiently in the programme - in that sense it was a partial failure. Nevertheless, the series still stood head and shoulders above the rest of this year's TV offerings.



“... the overthrow of the dictatorship is on the agenda !”

The following is an interview with a leader of the LCR-ETA (VI), Spanish sympathising organisation of the Fourth International, given shortly before the recent execution of five anti-fascist militants by the Spanish regime.

This brutal action, far from fulfilling its intended aim of breaking the spirit of the mass movement, touched off a new wave of mass struggle. In the Basque provinces of Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya hundreds of thousands of workers held mass factory meetings on the Monday morning after the executions and voted to join the two-day general strike called by left-wing and Basque nationalist organisations. In the key cities of Bilbao and San Sebastian the workers were joined by small shopkeepers, who shut up their shops in solidarity. Even the first and third division Bilbao football teams joined the strike, after two footballers from another team were arrested under the anti-terrorist law for wearing black armbands during a game.

Paid assassins

Mass demonstrations took place in the major Basque centres, despite ruthless repression by the dictatorship's police: six demonstrators were wounded by police who opened fire on one demonstration. But in some cases the massive display of solidarity paralysed even Franco's paid assassins.

In the small Basque town of Zarauz, home-town of murdered freedom fighter 'Txiki', 5,000 of the 15,000 inhabitants turned out for the requiem mass in his memory, turning it into a demonstration of political solidarity. Attempts by the local Guardia Civil to break up this demonstration were brushed aside by the indignant crowd. On the steps of the church Txiki's mother told the crowd: 'My son's message is to go on with the struggle of the Basque people.' She added, to enthusiastic cheers: 'Go on! Go on!' And indeed this is the message that the Basque people have drawn from the recent repressive actions of the dictatorship.

Elsewhere in the country the response was not so clear-cut. Even these new

brutal actions did not move the leadership of the Communist Party to abandon their policy of political passivity, adopted to reassure the Spanish capitalists of their 'responsibility'. As a result no important strikes took place outside of the Basque country, although a number of demonstrations were mounted — especially in Barcelona, where 5,000 attended Txiki's funeral.

Frantic effort

In a frantic effort to weather the present storm the regime was forced officially to organise mass demonstrations to denounce the 'leftist Masonic conspiracy against Spain'. But such desperate measures only serve to stress the total dead-end it finds itself in.

In order to pull this stunt off the regime has had to reaffirm its commitment to a policy of brutal repression and depend heavily on the personal magnetism of a dictator whose days are numbered. In an attempt to overcome the uneasy suspicion felt by many of its supporters that the regime cannot outlive the 83-year-old dictator, Franco's intended successor, Prince Juan Carlos, was roped into these proceedings. But the effect of this has been to destroy his last grain of credibility as a figure who might introduce 'democratic change' when he becomes king: a notion the Spanish capitalists (aided by the social democrats and Communists) have desperately been trying to sell to the Spanish working class.

Political stunt

The 'siege mentality' being sown by the Government in Spain today is just a political stunt. Over fifteen years ago Spain had to abandon its efforts to build up an independent economy and today is heavily dependent on its relations with the Common Market — something the Spanish capitalists know full well. This makes international solidarity — aimed to isolate the Spanish dictatorship politically and economically and aid those fighting for its overthrow — now more important than ever.



The Spanish Embassy in flames in Lisbon

Q. Could you explain the meaning of the recent 'anti-terrorist law' and the political context in which it was issued?

A. The most immediate reason for the passing of this law lies in the extraordinary political general strike movement of 11 June in Euzkadi [the Basque country], the general strike against the state of exception that was imposed there. The regime, whose fundamental basis is repression, applied the most brutal repressive measures it could muster, and after two months they saw the result: 100,000 strikers against the state of exception during the month of June.

This strike marked the failure of the state of exception. So the dictatorship looked for other measures. More and more, the regime's policy boils down to the utilisation of the repressive apparatus.

Nonetheless, the internal contradictions are multiplying, and today they even affect the army. For instance, opposition to the Francoist dictatorship has been publicly expressed among the officer corps. This opposition is called the Military Democratic Union. It is difficult to say how large this group is numerically (probably it's a few hundred officers), but it has a certain audience and is composed of prestigious officers.

To these contradictions within the military hierarchy has been added the development of rank-and-file organisation among the soldiers, especially in Euzkadi. The emergence of the first soldiers committees is very important.

If you consider that the military tribunals are expected to hand down about a dozen death penalties during the coming month, you can see how important it is for the dictatorship to make the army come forward as the protector of its power and as the guarantor of the action of the repressive forces. The regime is worried about the contradictions that are beginning to undermine it.

In this context, the dictatorship is seeking to use the actions of the FRAP and the ETA-V as a pretext to launch a desperate offensive against the mass movement. Repressive measures are being used on a mass scale. The right of habeas corpus has been suspended and the legal limit for detention without trial has been extended from three to ten days. And ten days of torture is a very long time. Political prisoners can no longer communicate with their lawyers.

You can see the violence of these decrees being applied at all levels. One example: a 12-year-old child was arrested by the Guardia Civil because he had telephoned a newspaper in Saragossa saying he was going to plant a bomb. He was accused of terrorism. Another example, at another level: in Pamplona in the Super-Ser factory an employer who is supposed to be a 'progressive' threatened during a meeting of workers that anyone who spoke in an assembly or mobilised would be denounced to the police as having violated the anti-terrorism laws.

Q. What is the relationship between the general strikes in Euzkadi on 28 and 29 August and the beginning of September and the preceding strikes of December 1974 and June 1975?

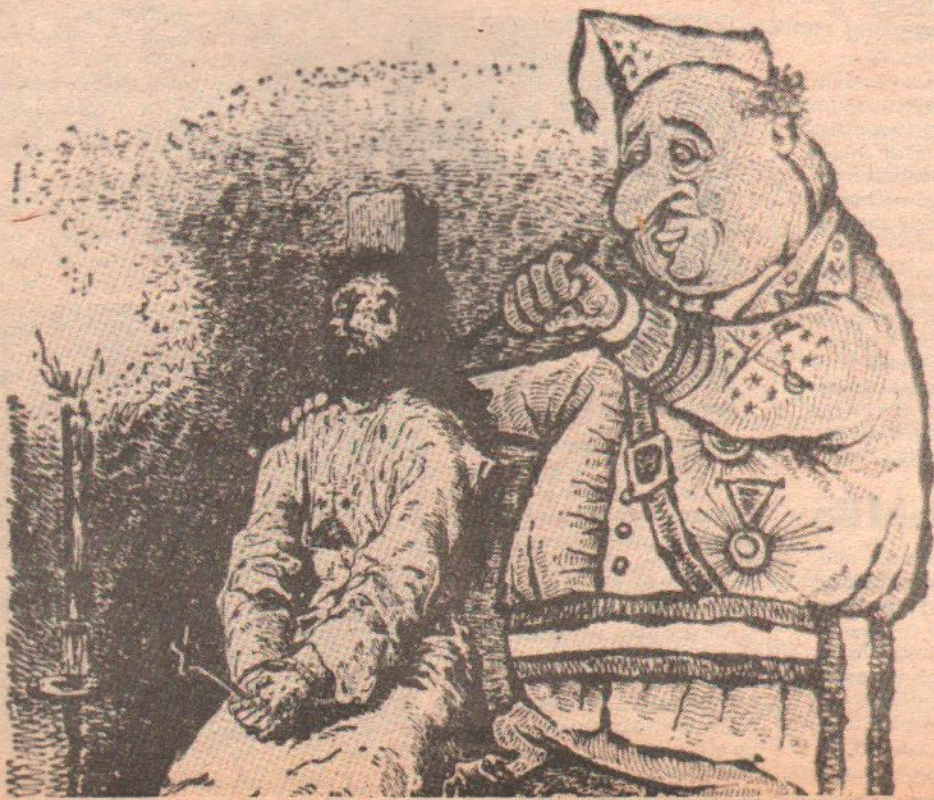
A. We have to point out that these three strike movements — December, June and August/September — developed in Euzkadi, but their influence was felt throughout the Spanish situation as a whole.

Let's make a comparison of the three strike movements. On 11 December the thing that was decisive about the political general strike (which is a rarity in the European workers' movement) was that it demonstrated that it was actually possible to hold a general strike.

Better yet, it was possible even against the will and actions of the reformists of the Spanish Communist Party, for the strike was convoked by the workers' commissions. 11 December demolished the CP argument that a general strike is an adventure, that conditions for a general strike do not yet exist, that you have to wait until the Junta Democratica [Democratic Council — a block of capitalist and workers parties established last year under the aegis of the CP] is built before engaging in such a movement.

11 June represented mass defiance of the state of exception. It was the proof that it was possible to respond throughout the whole Spanish state, even against the toughest measures of the dictatorship.

The meaning of 28 August can be summed up in three points. First, it was a protracted political general strike, the first in the post-war history of the Spanish workers' movement. It didn't happen by accident. It was the result of long preparation. Ever since 12 June the vanguard had been working in the neighbour-





hoods and factories to prepare this strike to save the lives of Garmendia and Otaegui.

The second characteristic is that it was initiated by a very broad political front of revolutionary and reformist organisations. The third characteristic is that it developed in a general situation in which the dictatorship was using all its repressive force without managing to break the movement; that is, the strike occurs on the threshold of the fall of the dictatorship.

Q. What are the main features that shaped the strike movement?

A. The highest level of struggle was reached in the provinces of Vizcaya and Guipuzcoa. The first characteristic was the very large number of strikers. There were about 150,000 on 28-29 August, about 60,000-100,000 on 1-2 September and again on 11-12 September. The second characteristic, and the most important one at bottom, is the organisation of the movement and the confidence of the masses in the vanguard.

The third characteristic, just as important, was the development of forms of self-organisation. For instance, the general strike was called by a strike committee that took the form of a united front of workers' organisations. This time, it was not the workers' commissions that played such an important role, but the united front.

Wherever there were divisions (because of the existence of workers' commissions influenced by various organisations), there was a tendency to overcome this division on the zonal or factory scale through the construction of adequate co-ordinating bodies. At Naval, for example, the big factory in Bilbao (a city of 500,000) — where there are CP workers' commissions as well as workers' commissions influenced by the far left and by the UGT, [General Union of Workers, underground Socialist Party trade union], and where in addition there is a division between temporary and permanent workers — a united committee to develop the movement was formed in order to overcome these divisions. In Valle del Urola this unity was established in the form of inter-factory committees.

Finally, we should stress the politicisation and the extreme combativity. That was expressed in many different ways. I will show you how this was shown in relation to self-defence.

At the Babcock factory in Vizcaya (4,500 workers), the workers met in an assembly, and when they tried to leave they noticed that the plant was being watched by the special police. They then took the benches in the locker rooms, armed themselves with

gasoline cans and various other instruments, and left the factory, shouting 'Charge!' The cops had to disperse and could arrest only a few workers who were at the rear of the contingent.

At Lequeitio in Vizcaya province 1,500 people in a town of 6,000 demonstrated in front of the barracks of the Guardia Civil, who hid inside and pointed their guns at the demonstrators, but remained behind the windows. That is an indication of the level of combativity of the masses.

In Algorta in Vizcaya there were five or six demonstrations of more than 1,000 people. The anti-repression committee includes 300 people on a permanent basis. Actions were undertaken and prisoners were released after having been seized by the BPS [the Political Social Brigade, one of the divisions of the political police]. Finally, and this is essential for the future, the Renteria strike committee set up a permanent self-defence committee that will prepare demonstrations, assure their defence and so on.

Q. Could you explain the reasons for the uneven development and the problems that this can pose?

A. On the scale of the whole territory of the Spanish state, the uneven development must be understood on the one hand on the basis of the historical differences in the training of the working class, the differences in the tradition and so on, and on the other hand on the basis of the forty years of Francoist dictatorship.

The essential problem in breaking through this uneven development is to initiate mass solidarity with Euzkadi. Barcelona constitutes the key point if this solidarity is to have an impact in mobilising the heavy battalions of the working class.

The CP has an especially great responsibility for the limited development of mass solidarity. But, without being too self-congratulatory, we must say that with the exception of the LCR/ETA-VI nearly all the organisations of the so-called revolutionary left have failed to develop solidarity work to the level that is required by the political conjuncture.

The problem of uneven development is tragic on two levels. In Euzkadi the mass movement may quickly begin to feel isolated and could then start to hesitate. At another level, that of the political vanguard, a feeling of powerlessness could arise in face of the inability to develop solidarity.

Finally, this problem of uneven development has to be considered in relation to the difficult general situation. In a number of regions the very high rate of unemployment

is strengthening the impact of the repression by the employers. The workers are afraid of losing their jobs. The anti-terrorist law increases the risks of solidarity action. And finally, the lack of information, which has not been counterbalanced by a systematic effort on the part of the revolutionary organisations, diminishes awareness of the level of struggle that has been attained in the Basque country and of the great defeat that this struggle already represents for the dictatorship.

Nevertheless, we have to stress that there has been progress in solidarity over the past several months. For instance, in various cities there have been vanguard demonstrations of between 100 and 1,000 people. Propaganda and agitation is going on, despite the weaknesses.

Q. Could you trace out what has been the policy of the Spanish CP?

A. First of all, I want to insist on the fact that the CP, because of its position and influence, could have played a key role in the development of solidarity. Second, there is a difference between the CP's general position and its practice during the latest mobilisations in Euzkadi. The CP is weaker in these provinces, it doesn't control the movement; and the relationship of forces with the far left is different.

The CP signed the 11-12 September general strike appeal and it pushed for the mobilisation. On 28-29 August, on the other hand, it tried to slow the movement down by systematically supporting the most right-wing positions in the Euzkadi general strike committee.

But the most important thing is that in spite of its big statements on the radio elsewhere, within the Spanish state the CP did nothing to develop solidarity. It did nothing to centralise the movement on the scale of the whole state; the only thing the CP tried to do was to grab hold of the tiger in the Basque country so as to be in a good position in case the movement really took off.

to channel the movement toward objectives of struggle that are linked to the renewal of labour contracts and that involve the trade unions; but it would be false to analyse that in a one-sided way. This type of mobilisation can combine with the sort of struggle that is now developing and may lead to a major crisis.

Q. Could you quickly trace out the main perspectives today?

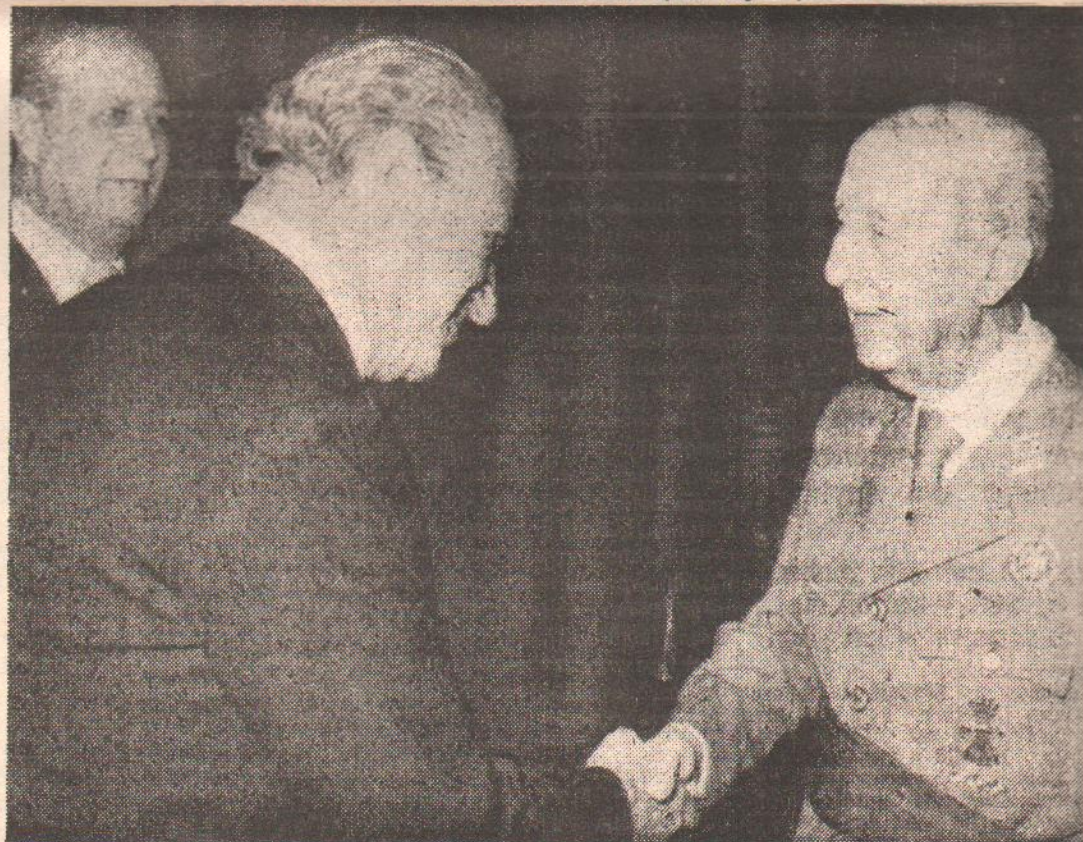
A. You have to keep in mind three essential facts about the current political situation. First, the promulgation of the anti-terrorist law and the sentences handed down against Garmendia and Otaegui and against the militants of the FRAP indicate the extreme state of crisis of Francoism. Second, this crisis is now finding expression within the army and within sectors that have up to now been tied very closely to the regime.

Third, the very rapid fall of the stock market (which necessitated an accord between the banks and the Government), like the accusations of 'cowardice and lack of patriotism' the minister of industry has made against some capitalists, reflects the growing tension in the relations between the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship. Big capital is beginning to understand that the maintenance of the dictatorship is creating a situation that is rapidly becoming explosive and is generating an impressive increase of activity and consciousness among the masses and a depreciation of the fundamental instruments of domination, especially the army.

Once again I must stress the decisive, fundamental role of the mass movement. The mass movement has taken the form of a protracted strike — with a complex and uneven development both in Euzkadi and in the Spanish state as a whole — and this shows that the overthrow of the dictatorship is on the agenda, if the movement that has developed in Euzkadi can combine with a movement throughout the territory of the Spanish state. If all this is placed within the framework of the current crisis of the regime, this combination

... only the best of company!

Above: Franco with Hitler in the 1930s; Below: He greets the Ambassador of the murderous Chilean regime. At the same Cabinet meeting at which he confirmed the death sentences on the five anti-fascist militants, Franco awarded Pinochet Spain's highest peacetime decoration.



Also, the CP took positions that can only be called scandalous; these positions were directed more to the bourgeois right than to the workers' movement. For instance, the CP declared that terrorism cannot be combatted with the methods of the dictatorship, which means implicitly that there are better ways to fight terrorism, or, for instance, came up with statements like 'We are all responsible for what is going on in the country'.

Beyond these considerations, perhaps the most important point is that neither the Junta Democrática nor the Convergencia Democrática [a similar body established under the aegis of the Social Democracy] played any role in Euzkadi. The level of the mass movement exposed the inadequacy of these types of instruments and the CP had to opt for the road of united front participation in the strike committees.

It was in Barcelona that the CP's responsibility was greatest. It did nothing. This cannot go on without raising problems within the CP. It is hard to see how the CP will be able to remain inactive for very long in the present situation. It is certainly going to try

that would place the overthrow of the regime on the agenda does not require that the level of struggle has to be uniform throughout the state before the regime is brought down.

Revolutionary Marxists must prepare to deal decisive blows against the dictatorship. We must centre our efforts on making the mass movement take a leap forward by stimulating all forms of self-organisation and by putting the emphasis on the tasks of self-defence, setting the highest objectives. Moreover, all efforts must be made to stimulate the solidarity movement throughout the state by making it go beyond the limits of the restricted mobilisation of a vanguard.

In face of this situation, the importance of international solidarity has to be stressed again and again. The mobilisations that have to be developed today to save Garmendia and Otaegui and the comrades of the FRAP who have been condemned to death will prepare the way for the even broader mobilisations that will have to be developed in solidarity with the Spanish revolution in the not so distant future.

RED WEEKLY

LEYLAND: COWLEY WORKERS ON SPEED-UP RACK

The British Leyland car complex at Cowley, Oxford, is again being used as a testing ground for Ryder's secret programme to step up the exploitation of the workforce. BLMC now wants to chop 1,100 manual and 300 staff jobs at the two main Cowley factories by Christmas this year. What makes this the most severe attack on jobs and working conditions ever seen at Cowley is that this slashing of the workforce will not be accompanied by a cutback in production but by an overall increase in production.

In the shade

The cuts in labour are to come entirely from a speeding-up of work, on a scale that puts past attacks in the shade. And the response to management's idea that this can all be achieved with voluntary redundancies - formerly seen by many workers as a 'painless' way of avoiding confrontation - has been less than enthusiastic.

Instead, the Assembly Plant Stewards have overwhelmingly adopted a policy of defending agreed manning levels throughout the factory. In order to enforce this they have voted only to accept workers in the existing surplus labour pool or from the dole as replacements for workers who take voluntary redundancy or are transferred from their departments in breach of the manning

agreements. In fact workers will refuse to do more work with less labour.

Pressure

Attempting to head off mounting pressure from the stewards that the company open its books, BLMC is proposing to reveal its 'budget' to the senior stewards to 'prove' the need for job cuts and speed-ups. The stewards are deeply sceptical about this proposal. They remember only too well that past demands for precise items of information needed to resist the firm's attacks have been met with stonewalling obstinacy.

The stewards have therefore voted that the Open the Books Committee - an elected sub-committee of the stewards - should be present at the meeting where the information is to be given. It will then meet to assess it critically and publish a report to the membership.

First steps

Again we are seeing what Labour's policies mean in relation to jobs and conditions. At Cowley the workers are taking the first steps in fighting these attacks. Next week *Red Weekly* will publish a fuller article on this issue and will draw out the lessons for other workers facing similar situations.

— by Cowley IMG —

The £500 October Fund Drive got off to a good start with £83 from London teachers, £36.91 from IMG Health Workers, £5.50 from West London IMG, £5.00 from East London IMG, £5 from a North London hospital worker, and other individual donations which helped to make a total of £140.61.

This is a good start - but only a start. This week the International Marxist Group is launching a £15,000 fund drive to help expand the paper and the apparatus of the organisation (see page 8). This means our sellers and readers must make an extra effort to reach the £500 monthly target which which we need just to keep the *Red Weekly* going at its present size.

But *Red Weekly* is an indispensable weapon in our struggle on the £6 limit, unemployment, Ireland women's liberation or solidarity with the workers' struggles in Portugal and Spain. So we ask every reader to help us to give you a better paper to work with.

Rush all donations to: 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. We need another £359.39 by the end of the month.

A GOOD START!

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JOB: ACTION DAY ON 26 NOVEMBER



Workers occupying the Norton Villiers Triumph factory in Wolverhampton picket last week's Labour Party Conference

The first opportunity for the workers' movement to strike a centralised blow for the right to work will come on 26 November. On that day the North West Council of the TUC has called for a mass lobby of Parliament against unemployment.

At a local level the fight for jobs is already on. Last week workers occupying Norton Villiers Triumph in Wolverhampton and representatives of 2,000 Plessey telecommunications workers threatened with the sack picketed the Labour Party Conference. At Balfour Darwin in Sheffield and Sumlock Anita in London workers have occupied to defend their jobs. The lobby on 26 November can provide a central focus for these struggles.

BUILD-UP

Over the last couple of weeks support for the lobby has been building up. The London building workers joint sites committee has called for a full mobilisation, and over 400 men at the Taylor Woodrow site, Queen Anne's Gate, Victoria have voted unanimous support. With the threat of 300,000 unemployed in the construction industry by this time next year, UCATT's Midland Regional Council is backing the lobby, as is the Transport & General Workers' Union No.1 region.

In the North West, Liverpool Trades Council - which is organising its own conference against unemployment this Sunday - and the No.29 A district of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions have pledged support. Amongst the Trades Councils who will be mobilising are Birmingham, Leeds, Warley, Sheffield and Brent.

In Manchester the Trades Council has called a meeting for 23 October where it will urge support for the lobby. The Manchester engineering shop stewards' quarterly has already backed the lobby and called for a campaign against unemployment.

RESISTANCE

The success of the Wilson Government in implementing wide-ranging cuts and the £6 limit has until now muted resistance to mass unemployment, which will top 1½ million by the end of the year. Wilson scored major tactical victories around the Common Market

referendum and the demoting of Tony Benn, allowing him to involve almost the entire trade union bureaucracy in the implementation of the incomes policy.

COMPLICITY

But unemployment is the issue that can blow apart this rotten complicity in implementing the Government's attacks on the working class. Even the trade union bureaucracy understood this when it endorsed the £6 limit at the TUC but made repeated calls for Government action against unemployment.

What the bureaucracy fears is that a major struggle against unemployment could well spill over into a fight against incomes policy. And

the pathetic measures to 'deal' with unemployment recently announced by Healey will do nothing to alleviate these fears.

Local conferences against unemployment and Right to Work Committees must now be built in every area and linked to a major national campaign to build support for the 26 November lobby. We don't want any more polite lobbies of Parliament, which failed to do anything to gain the release of the Shrewsbury pickets, but a massive demonstration on the streets against the policies and leadership of the Labour Government. All out on 26 November!

by JAMES DRAKE

BALFOUR DARWIN

Last week we reported the occupation against redundancies by workers at the Sheffield steel and engineering firm of Balfour Darwin. These militants are putting up the first real fight against a wave of redundancies sweeping the Sheffield working class.

The AUEW District Committee, who officially support the occupation, have circulated shop stewards committees in the area asking for financial support. But there has been no attempt to involve other workers in active support for the occupation. Mass leafleting and pickets to build support, and speaking tours of local factories, could not only take the struggle forward but help to launch a campaign throughout Sheffield against unemployment.

The Trades Council has already

passed a statement of intent on measures to fight unemployment, but the executive has done virtually nothing to support the sit-in. This means that militants must pass motions in their union branches and shop stewards' committees demanding that the AUEW District Committee and Trades Council set up a committee of delegates from factories to organise support for the Darwin workers and build a campaign against unemployment in the local labour movement.

The militants at Balfour Darwin are showing how to fight redundancies when they occur. However, with unemployment continually rising, a co-ordinated policy to tackle unemployment is needed. Local conferences of the labour movement in every area can work out just what measures and actions are necessary.

Oppose fascist rally!

On Saturday 11 October the National Front will be holding its Annual General Meeting in the Chelsea Town Hall. A mass picket has been called for 8.30 am that day which is obviously supported by the IMG.

The Communist Party has refused to support the mass picket, and has counterposed a demonstration assembling at World's End, Chelsea, at 1 pm. This has split the anti-fascist forces.

The IMG will, however, also participate in that demonstration with the aim

of convincing the marchers on the need to join the picket. We are taking this action because we believe that fascism can only be crushed as a result of a broad campaign inside the workers' movement. The forces around the CP, particularly the trade unionists, have to be involved in the anti-fascist campaign.

The building of a broad workers' united front against fascism is the key task. The NF will not be defeated simply by the forces of the revolutionary left. The task of these forces is to win over workers to mass action against fascism.