

RED WEEKLY

26 FEBRUARY

No. 139

PRICE 10p

THE ROAD TO DISASTER



The announcement of the largest ever cuts in public expenditure and the creation of 1½ million unemployed shows the burning need to recall the TUC and Labour Party conferences.

There should be no illusions about where this Government is leading the working class. All talk by Benn and the other lefts that their capitulation to Wilson is somehow keeping the Tories out, or that they will be able to pressurise the Government to change its course, is simply lies.

The one thing absolutely guaranteed to ensure the return of the Tories is a Labour Government slashing the welfare state and piling up the largest dole queues since the 1930s. The result of the Coventry

by-election is likely to show that only too clearly.

There is only one way to keep



out the Tories. That is to launch the greatest struggle seen for years with the aim of utterly defeating the policies of this Government and

removing its supporters from every level of leadership of the labour movement.

Resistance to the policies of the Wilson Government is already beginning to mount. The steel strikes and the struggle at Chrysler's Linwood factory show that there is a willingness to fight. And the Labour Movement Assembly on unemployment called for 27 March is expected to be the largest meeting of labour movement organisations on a single issue since the 1920s.

But the fight back is hamstrung at every level by the decisions foisted on the workers organisations last summer. That is why it is urgent to fight for the recall of the TUC and Labour Party conferences, so that the need to break with the Government's policies is placed squarely before the whole workers movement.

POLICIES

If the Labour lefts have plucked up enough courage to get the call for a special conference through the Labour NEC (the result was announced after we went to press), that is a big step forward. But their unwillingness to put up a real fight is known from long experience. An all-out campaign for such a conference to break with the Government and adopt different policies is what is needed above all.

Two roads face the labour movement. The first means following Wilson to disaster. The second requires a fight to defeat this bankrupt leadership and its policies at all levels. Essential first steps in such a campaign will be:

- * A vote by Labour MPs against the expenditure cuts
- * Recall the TUC and Labour Party conferences
- * National industrial action on unemployment and the cuts
- * The establishment of local action committees in every area following the Labour Movement Assembly.

COVENTRY BY-ELECTION

The Coventry North-West by-election on 4 March will give the first taste in electoral terms of what the policies of the Wilson Government are costing the working class. In the aftermath of the redundancies in Chrysler, GEC and Alfred Herbert, the cuts imposed by the local Labour Council, and Healey's latest attacks, losing the seat as the result of a massive abstention by Labour voters must be a real possibility.

This possibility can only be increased by the Labour Party's choice of candidate - Geoffrey Robinson, former 'troubleshooter' for British Leyland and managing director of Jaguar. Even many hardened Labour door-knockers are reluctant to go out and work for Robinson.

Fighting the election on Labour's record is going to be a very difficult story to sell to workers who are feeling the effects of that record more sharply all the time. But the lefts are coming to the rescue. The featured speaker at one of Robinson's mass meetings is to be... Tony Benn. Nothing could illustrate more clearly the cynical use made of these lefts as a cover for the Wilson leadership.

The task of socialists in this election is clear. Whilst calling for a Labour vote, they have to use this forum to show that there is an alternative policy to that of the Labour Government - a programme of demands on unemployment, inflation and the cuts which can defend workers against the effects of the capitalist crisis.

A second feature of the by-election is the presence of two fascist candidates, Andrew Fountaine of the National Front and Kingsley Read of the breakaway National Party. The NF is campaigning for 'British Jobs for British Workers' - a clear attempt to use genuine grievances to build support for their divisive, racist policies.

It is thus essential that particular effort is given to a campaign to explain the real roots of unemployment in the capitalist crisis and the bankruptcy of Labour's strategy, stressing the need to develop support for an ongoing fight to defend the right to work.

It is this sort of propaganda which the IMG is fighting to tie in to the united front counter-demonstration to the NF march through Coventry this Saturday.

remember?



Don't give the Tories another chance

VOTE LABOUR

... they'll introduce the same policies with ever so much more socialist rhetoric

RECALL THE TUC

health
housing
education
social services
public transport
consumers
hygiene
libraries
parks

NO CUTS

FIGHTING THE EDUCATION CUTS

Two of the three motions voted top of the agenda for the annual conference of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) at Easter call for campaigns against cuts in educational spending and in defence of

teachers' jobs. Healey's proposals to cut education by £1,000 million in the next three years underline the urgent need for teachers and the working class to act now. Fred Jarvis, Gen-

eral Secretary of the NUT, described the Government's decision to introduce the cuts as 'spitting in the face of the TUC'. Jarvis, however, had already prepared the way for this at the TUC General Council by voting against a proposal for a special conference of union executives to discuss unemployment and the economy.

proposal to make a 25 per cent increase in school meals charges in September, from 15p to 20p, with the prospect of a further rise to 30p by 1980.

linary procedures which they hope to see passed at conference.

Not all teachers have succumbed to this paralysis, however. Militants in London are working to set up a campaign group based on schools which will refuse to cover for absent staff and demand the employment of out-of-work teachers. And the 438 votes (around 15 per cent of those cast) for revolutionary candidate Hilda Kean in the elections for General Secretary of the Inner London Teachers Association show that a growing number of teachers see the need for just such a clear alternative strategy. BERNARD REGAN (Candidate for Inner London in NUT Executive elections).

Healey's proposed cuts will mean larger classes in schools, fewer teachers, no extension of the nursery building programme, retention of old dilapidated schools, 20,000 teachers unemployed, fewer places for students in higher education, etc. Their really vicious anti-working class nature is highlighted by the

The IMG candidates are stressing to all students that their fight against the Broad Left is not a case of 'more militant than thou' but a fundamental question of *policies*. It is for this reason that the IMG candidates differentiate themselves from the purely defensive 'super-militancy' being peddled by the International Socialists.

For example, the IS has consistently opposed, along with the Broad Left, the struggle for a sliding scale of grants to automatically protect students' income against the effects of inflation. They said this would be a brake on the struggle for higher grants. With the present rate of inflation and last year's grant increases anyone can see who was right on that point.

At the same time, building student-worker unity is not simply a case of students trailing along behind any working class struggle. The NUS has to fight nationally to establish joint student-trade union and labour movement action committees to fight for a *programme* to beat that crisis. An aspect of this is the IMG slate's call for a programme of public works, including education building, to meet social need and provide jobs.

Alongside the struggle for better grants, against the cuts and for wider democracy in the NUS, IMG candidates will be fighting for women's rights, against British imperialism in Ireland, and against political repression in the Soviet bloc as an integral part of their election programme.

All the candidates have a proud record of struggle in the interests of students, and *Red Weekly* will be reporting on their campaign and political programme over the coming weeks. We urge all student readers to get their college unions to back the IMG slate and invite speakers to general meetings. Speakers can be booked through the IMG Student Commission, c/o 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.

REVOLUTIONARY STUDENT RALLY
ORGANISED BY THE INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP

TARIQ ALI - THE RISE OF THE EUROPEAN REVOLUTION
JOHN ROSS - THE FIGHT FOR A REVOLUTIONARY ALTERNATIVE IN BRITAIN
+ SPEAKERS FROM - LIGA COMUNISTA INTERNACIONALISTA PORTUGUESE SYMPATHISING SECTION OF F.I. REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST GROUP (IRISH SECTION OF F.I.)
WORKSHOP TOPICS INCLUDE INDIA AND SPAIN WITH GUEST SPEAKERS

SAT. 28 FEB.
ASSEMBLY HALL, INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION, MALET ST, LONDON W.1.

TICKETS 60p from 97 Caledonian Road, N.1.

IMG Slate for student elections



STEVE FAULKNER

In the wake of Healey's fresh attacks on education spending, the International Marxist Group Student Commission announced over the weekend that it will be standing a full slate of candidates in the elections for the leadership of the National Union of Students at this Easter's Conference.

Steve Faulkner, at present President of Northern Counties College and Vice-Chairman of the Tyne-Wear Area NUS, explained why he will be standing for President: 'Students are facing a desperate situation. The Labour Government is aiming to slash the intake of students by 200,000. Twenty three per cent inflation is destroying the value of the grant - if you're lucky enough to get one.'

'Student teachers like myself face the prospect of a 15,000 long dole queue next September. Reactionary attacks are being made on the right of foreign students to stay in this country. But the Broad Left of the Communist Party and its allies, which dominates the NUS Executive, has not prepared students to fight these attacks. Before, they were buttering up Vice-Chancellors and 'progressive' big wigs in higher education who are responsible for implementing the cuts, and telling students that these people are

our allies in fighting the cuts. They have campaigned *against* the lobby of the TUC called for the day of the cuts demo - which points the way to establishing a *fighting* student-worker unity - the only way to reverse the cuts.

'The Broad Left have argued that the lobby will 'embarrass' their friends in the trade union movement. In this way they tie students to betrayers like Jack Jones.'

'The failure of the Broad Left to give real leadership to students - which must involve confronting the right-wing leadership which is leading the whole labour movement to disaster - is a major reason why some students have started to turn to reactionary politics,' added Val Coultas, an IMG member on the present NUS Executive who is standing for the Secretary's position.

'And the Broad Left has attempted to meet the threat from the right by signing joint appeals with the Federation of Conservative Students. What a joke. No wonder the right-wing Students for Representatives Policies are knocking at the door, when the Broad Left refused point blank to campaign with the rest of the left in the NUS for the extension of union democracy through the abolition of referenda and the establishment of the sovereignty of union general meetings.'



Left-right confrontation as 'moderate' students occupy NUS headquarters last week

Labour hides low pay scandal

Leading trade unions are being urged to support the publication of an independent retail price index for low paid workers and their families. This suggestion is put to the general secretaries of nine of Britain's largest unions in a letter from the Low Pay Unit. The letter points out that the Unit has for some time been critical of the Government's own Retail Price Index (RPI). A number of studies by the Unit have shown that the RPI underestimates the living costs of low paid workers and their families. Even so the Government has refused to conduct an official inquiry into the need for a separate cost of living index for the low paid. The Low Pay Unit hopes that the unions will back the construction and publication of a low wage earners index for at least a year. This, it is hoped, will be a sufficient time to persuade the Government to publish additions to the RPI.

The Unit's approach to the trade unions follows a survey, published in the latest *Low Pay Bulletin* of the way in which other European countries measure the rate of inflation. In France, for example, the Government published only one official index until very recently, but each of the main French unions produced their own. These all showed a persistently higher rate of inflation than the official index. Under this pressure the French Government has now announced that official indices will be published for different groups ranging from top managers to those on social security. In the light of the British Government's refusal to publish a special index for the low paid, the Unit suggests that 'British trade unions should perhaps follow their French counterparts in publishing regularly a separate cost of living index specifically designed to measure the impact of inflation on their lower paid members'.

POOREST HIT HARDEST

The refusal of the Labour Government to publish such an index should come as no surprise. The basis of the social contract as put forward in the Labour Manifesto and by incomes policy apologists such as Michael Foot is to protect the lower paid. The reverse is true - as figures published by the Low Paid Unit show. Its index registered an increase in living costs of the poorest ten per cent of households of 9.5 per cent over the first four months of last year. The RPI rose 7.7 per cent over that period. Between January and June 1975 the index for the poorest tenth rose 15.6 per cent compared with 14.3 per cent for the RPI. If the Government was to publish such an index officially, it would explode the whole myth of Labour's record.

The working class has to be brought into action if the cost of living is to be controlled. The trade unions should support the Low Pay Unit's request, and at the same time campaign for the setting up of local committees of housewives and trade unionists to monitor prices. It is on this basis that the cost of living index, centralised on a national basis by the labour movement, can become a weapon of the working class - providing the basis for a sliding scale of wages and benefits and a national minimum wage, protecting *all* workers.

Figures released by Age Concern underline the hypocrisy of the Government's claim to be 'helping the pensioners', and further stress the need for automatic increases in pensions and other benefits based on a special index for the low paid.

In July 1974 the Government triumphantly introduced the £10 and £16 pension. But on the basis of the Retail Price Index for January 1976, the real value of the pension, which is nominally £13.30 for a single person and £21.20 for a married couple, is now only £9.84 and £15.55 respectively. Pensioners are an additional 19p per week worse off because of the Government's decision not to pay the £10 Christmas bonus.

Since July 1974 the pension has risen by only 33 per cent, compared with the fuel and light index which has increased by 48.5 per cent, and the food index by 40.5 per cent. Electricity prices alone have increased by 42 per cent, and if the application by the Electricity Council to the Price Commission is successful, consumers could be paying 59 per cent more in July 1976 than they were two years previously. And pensioners spend proportionately twice as much of their income on fuel as the average household on which the RPI is based and proportionately 50 per cent more on food.

The last TUC Congress was marked as usual by a special plea for the pensioners from Jack Jones. Yet the pro-capitalist policies which Jones then went on to sell to the TUC are now driving many of those same pensioners to starvation and death. It's time the workers movement brought him to account.

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

health
housing
education
social services
public transport
libraries
hygiene
consumers

NO CUTS

THE MONEY MEN GET THEIR POUND OF FLESH

'A world where people pay taxes in order to meet the cost of interest on the national debt, while the standard and quality of public services ... are eroded further and further.' This was how Peter Jay of *The Times* greeted the new era ushered in by the Labour Government with the publication of its White Paper on public expenditure.

It is true. The Labour Government cannot pretend that the money chopped from the provision of social services is simply going to finance new investment to save jobs in British industry (we explode that myth on page 6). The Government raised money over the last few years by selling an enormous amount of securities to the money men. Now these parasites want their pound of flesh.

Cuts are to be made in all areas of public expenditure. But this will still not satisfy the finance houses. The amount of money due to be slashed is £3,000m. The provision for debt interest increase is £3,300m. by 1978-79 and another £1,300m. in the following year. There are yet more cuts on the way!

A further reality underlying the cuts is that they will not reduce the burden of taxation on the working class. Because the increase in debt charges wipes out the effects of the cuts, a raising of the tax threshold which could keep pace with the rate of inflation is not possible.

The cuts in health, hospitals, schools, transport and housing are the complete opposite of the Labour Manifesto pledge much touted by Tony Benn to effect a transfer of wealth and power to working people. Instead, the Government is using taxation to transfer wealth directly from working people to the financiers and other 'assisted' capitalists.

The burning need is to fight for policies which stop this flow of wealth into the pockets of the capitalists. The books of the finance houses and banks must be opened to prepare a plan for the nationalisation without compensation of these institutions under workers control.

Whose blood on the carpet?

In the middle of all the hoo-ha which surrounded the cuts, the heroes nobly came forward to accept the laurel wreaths. According to the *Daily Express*, Treasury Minister Joel Barnett talked of 'the blood spilled on my carpet'. Meanwhile Denis Healey confessed it was a 'harrowing' process. All the cuts were described by the bourgeois press as defeats for individual ministers - 'Fred Mulley is the biggest loser by a staggering £618 million in 1978/79 and 1,033 million overall', commented the *Express*.

But the real losers are not the cabinet ministers who treat the process of cuts as a matter of personal jousting. The real losers are to be found outside Whitehall.

One of the effects of the cuts will be to throw the burden of many functions such as medical after care, care of young children, provision of accommo-



Jack Jones welcomed pensioners' demonstration at TUC in Blackpool—but his support for Government policies is stabbing them in the back

The cover of the Government, that the interest paid on the national debt goes to such institutions as pension funds, must be swept away by the demand that such funds be placed under the control of the trade unions and not of the trusts, and that such pension funds are paid compensation by the Government

for increases in inflation. The vast sums made in profits by the banks can be turned to such a purpose.

Only these policies, fought for in the trade unions and Labour Party and acted on by the rank-and-file, can bring the capitalist helter-skelter to a halt.

TRIBUNE'S TRIBULATIONS

The claim by the Tribune Group that Healey's White Paper marks a watershed for the Government and is equivalent to *In Place of Strife* begs the obvious question—what are they going to do about it? Eric Heffer has provided an immediate answer. The left Labour MPs are so annoyed about this document ... that they are not going to vote against it!

The left MPs are running up an impressive track record of 'fighting opposition' to the Government's policies. They fought tooth and nail against the Chrysler deal ... and voted for it. They bitterly opposed Healey's April Budget which cut £115m. from housing, £86m.

from education and £75m. from health ... and a few even dared to abstain. Now as many as 30 MPs may apparently refrain ... from voting for the White Paper.

The argument that if the Tribunes voted against these cuts they would bring down the Government is a sham. Some of them even admit it. Brian Sedgemore MP openly stated at the recent IWC conference on the motor industry that the Tories would not let the Government go down to defeat at the present time. So will he vote against the White Paper?

ation for young couples etc. onto the family. The 25 per cent increase in the cost of school meals may be the last straw which breaks the back of large families.

Slashing cuts in the health service will automatically affect the provision of abortion and contraception facilities the right of women to control their own fertility and make rational decisions on how many children to have. For it is on women that the increased responsibility for social provision will largely bear. Women are being driven out of employment at twice the rate of men over the last year, and as their usefulness palls for capitalism, day nursery provision is being virtually ended.

For the children it will mean steadily increasing class sizes as teachers are sent down the road. 'Mixed ability' teaching in schools without adequate resources becomes a recipe for increasingly badly educated kids, who in any case face the dole queue or meaningless 'training courses' outside the school gates. Meanwhile 'liberal' school teachers think they are doing young people a favour by teaching them how to claim when they get outside.

For the old prospects are bleaker still. Despite Tony Benn's wonderful gesture in not cutting off power while winter lasts (apparently pensioners do not cook or use hot water in the sum-

mer), the effect of the cuts will be to intensify what is happening already.

Social and health workers make calls more and more infrequently. The hospitals will not open their doors to sick pensioners in case their illness takes too long to treat, while senior citizens homes either close or put up the 'Full House' sign. Is this the price of the 'unity' of which Jack Jones - 'the pensioners champion' - bragged as he emerged from the 'temperate' atmosphere of Monday's talks with Labour ministers? What words will he have for the old people these cuts will help to bury next winter?

The cuts are tearing apart the gains which the working class has won for the most oppressed sections of the population. It is their blood on the carpet not that of the Errol Flynn of the Labour left who fight with rubber swords in the corridors of power.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

As of Monday 8 March, all departments of *Red Weekly* will be situated at:

97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

The telephones, however, will remain the same:

Editorial—01-837 6954

Distribution—01-837 9987

IN FOCUS

Two years ago this week the Labour Government came to office, swept there by the victory of the miners over the Tory Government. It was the greatest political triumph for the working class since Labour's gigantic electoral victory in 1945. It was gained through four years of working class struggle against the Tory Government.

Since that victory, however, the Labour leadership has had only one refrain: Don't defend your jobs and wages against the ravages of capitalist crisis. Call off the struggle. If you fight to maintain wages you will bring down the Government. If you fight unemployment the Tories will be back. If you fight social expenditure cuts, Thatcher the milk-snatcher will return.

Two years later the results of these disastrous policies are clear for all to see. Living standards are down below the level of the three day week. At nearly 1½ million, unemployment is twice as high as the average under the Tories. The welfare state is being cut to ribbons. Every step that Wilson and Healey take brings a return of the Tories nearer. The workers who put Wilson in office will understandably feel that fighting and voting for the return of a Labour Government is a waste of effort after the sustained attacks it has made on the working class.

BIG BUSINESS DELIGHTED

Big business is delighted. 'What has happened, of course, is that we now have, to paraphrase the style of Lord Butler, the best Government we have. In other words, a Labour Government is pursuing pretty orthodox Tory economic policies.' So crowed the City Editor of the *London Evening Standard* on 13 February. At the same time these people will not hesitate to ditch the Labour Government once its policies begin to meet real opposition in the working class.

At the same time the middle classes are increasingly feeling the squeeze. With the labour movement providing no answers for a working class solution to the crisis, they will look to reaction for a lead.

The people in the best position to stop the rot, the trade union leadership, have done nothing. Instead they resolutely grovel at the feet of Wilson and Healey, conniving in their policies and policing them in the working class movement. Without the support of these betrayers, the £6 limit, mass unemployment and the huge cuts in social spending could never have been made to stick.

RIGHTEOUS ANGER

Meanwhile the 'lefts' in Parliament, despite floods of righteous anger against the 'betrayals of the Manifesto', are refusing to fight and vote against the Government's policies. They argue that such action would be 'adventurist', that it would let the Tories back in. But every day that Wilson is allowed to continue with his anti-working class policies without opposition makes a Labour defeat more certain. If the 'lefts' were serious about defending the interests of the working class, they would vote against the cuts and all other anti-working class measures, and demand and campaign for recall Labour Party and TUC Conferences to throw out the £6 limit etc. and determine the policies and leadership of the Labour Government. Massive support and action could be won in the working class for such a clear lead.

Despite the passivity of the 'lefts' and the docility of the trade union bureaucracy, the anger of the working class against the policies of this Government is beginning to assert itself. The belated 100 per cent strike against management's anti-union offensive at Chrysler's Linwood plant; the battle of steelworkers against the British Steel Corporation and their own union leadership; the mass action taken by aerospace workers against redundancies — all these show that the working class is prepared to fight when given a lead.

LABOUR MOVEMENT ASSEMBLY

The recognition of the need for centralisation of these fragmented struggles is also growing through support for such events as the Labour Movement Assembly against unemployment on 27 March. But organising a permanent labour movement opposition to the policies of the Government from this conference will involve a determined struggle against the politics of its main backers — the Labour lefts and the Communist Party. They want to restrict opposition to 'pressurising' the Government to turn over a new leaf.

The lefts must be made to fight the Government, to vote against its policies and rally support in the trade unions and Labour Party for action to back up this opposition. The Communist Party has to be prevented from turning the Labour Movement Assembly into a talking shop where they can snuggle up to the lefts. The immediate aim of the conference must

be to set a date for mass industrial action against unemployment as the first step in centralising the fight. Policies such as import controls, which aim to make a pact between British workers and their masters at the expense of foreign workers, must be rejected and the fight organised on the basis of:

- * Worksharing with no loss of pay and the immediate introduction of the 35-hour week;
- * Nationalisation under workers control of all industries threatening redundancies;
- * A programme of public works to meet social need and provide jobs, financed through the nationalisation of the banks and finance houses;
- * Opening the books to prepare a workers' plan for production which defends jobs;
- * Opposition to any form of incomes policy — for a sliding scale of wages and social expenditure to compensate automatically for inflation.

REMOVE WILSON LEADERSHIP

Another two years of hard Labour must be prevented; and these are the policies to do just that. They demand that the trade union bureaucracy which polices Wilson's policies in the labour movement be confronted. The call must go up — fight or be thrown out. There is no possibility of changing Wilson and Healey's fundamental policies without changing the people responsible for them. That is why *Red Weekly* will continue to campaign for 'the removal of the Wilson-Healey leadership' and calls on the so-called lefts in the Parliamentary Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy to do likewise.

health housing education social services
NO CUTS
 in
 health services

HEALTH SERVICE: Already cut to the bone

'Health bloody but not bowed' was the headline of the *Guardian*, apologising for the cuts in health expenditure contained in Healey's White Paper. This theme — that the NHS has come through relatively unscathed, thanks to Barbara Castle's supposed fight against cuts in health spending — has been taken up by the entire capitalist press. It has also found an echo in the workers movement — for example the Confederation of Health Service Employees said that there was some relief in the programme as it would 'obviate a serious reduction in existing services'. Now it is clearly true that the cuts in health are nowhere near as extensive as those in education, but that has little or nothing to do with the personal exploits of Barbara Castle.

The fact that the cuts in the White Paper were not even larger has little to do with Castle's efforts and a lot to do with the mounting resistance inside the labour movement to the attacks on the health service. But if this resistance is to go beyond merely 'moderating' the extent of the cuts, then now is not the time to sigh with relief like COHSE. The danger of the growth of private practice spurred by the cuts has to be recognised and fought.

This means fighting inside the workers movement for the recall of the TUC, in order to challenge the TUC leaders' collaboration with Wilson in carrying out the cuts, and prepare a united response by the whole of the movement. The main step being taken at present towards this is the 25 April demonstration called by the National Co-ordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS and supported by NALGO demanding an end to all private practice and an end to all cuts. We ask *Red Weekly* supporters to make this a central focus that can begin to build such a response inside all the bodies of the workers movement.

INADEQUATE

What the White Paper has done is to attempt to limit the effect of the cuts by making the main reduction in the capital building programme. Out of a total cut of £150 million, £80m will come off the building of new hospitals and facilities. It is hoped that by doing this the existing services will not have to be reduced. The problem is that these are already hopelessly inadequate.

The plan produced last year by the Department of Health and Social Security to re-allocate funds from so-called well-provided regions such as London and Merseyside to the less well-off regions (reckoned to be every other region in the country!) was greeted in some quarters as a great step forward.

However, the diverted resources will hardly be much help when these regions are already being forced to make drastic cuts.

'MASSIVE CUTS'

The Trent region, which is held up as an example of the poor relation in the NHS by advocates of 're-allocation', is itself predicting that it will have to make 'massive cuts' next year, in spite of the injection of re-allocated funds! At the same time, the regions which have suddenly become over-richly endowed are closing hospitals and cutting staffing levels and services for lack of money, thus making already inadequate services (Merseyside has

a waiting list for treatment of over 25,600) even worse!

Such are the bare economic bones of Labour's policy towards the NHS. But it is important to get an overview of the priorities reflected in these cuts.

Although an important gain for the working class, the NHS has always worked predominantly in the interests of the capitalist class. This class interest is embedded in the concepts of medicine propagated by the medical profession: that sickness can only be cured on an individual basis by the use of drugs and surgery, and that social factors in illness are almost negligible. This has led to a concentration on so-called acute illnesses such as cancer and heart disease at the expense of 'chronic' sickness.

ABYSMAL

Such a bias can be seen in the resources allocated to mental illness, for example. By the 1970s, over 40 per cent of all NHS beds were in mental hospitals — but only 11 per cent of consultants worked in such hospitals, and they received only 20 per cent of the current health budget. And mental patients are not the only 'Cinderellas' of the NHS. The old, the physically handicapped and women also receive an abysmal standard of care.

Such priorities in health care fit the needs of capitalism very well. The investment of resources in curing a productive worker of an 'acute' sickness comes before spending money on those who suffer from illnesses which mean they are unlikely to be useful to capital as workers.

HOW TO CUT

The clearest indication of current priorities is a document produced by the 'Medical Priorities Group' of the Oxford Area Health Authority, which lists 60 ways of making cuts. It proposes that preventative and occupational services should be reduced; that the levels of treatment of the old (geriatrics) could be drastically reduced; that outlying maternity units could be closed; that the number of abortions should be reduced; that the casualty departments in eight areas could be closed; that 'the activities of the psychiatric sector are not of the highest priority'; that all hospital family planning clinics be closed; and that the proposed new units, particularly concerned with the treatment of the old, young disabled and with the care of those with artificial kidneys should simply not be built.



Photo: DAVE EVANS (IFL)

NUPE initiated this demo not just because its members in health and local government are affected by the cuts, but also because the cuts affect the living standards of the whole labour movement. NUPE nationally is absolutely opposed to the Labour Government's policies in relation to public expenditure. The policy of the Labour Government is also contrary to the resolution moved by NUPE and passed at the 1975 Labour Party Conference. NUPE's policy is one of opposition to all redundancies in the public sector.

In Birmingham there have already been substantial cuts. There will be no new Accident Hospital, no new Children's Hospital, and no new Eye Hospital. Plans for extensions to existing hospitals have also been cancelled.

There is also a policy of leaving vacancies unfilled. On this we have a similar policy to the National Union of Teachers. Where a vacancy is left unfilled for more than a few days, our members will not cover for that person's work.

We have just had a dispute over manning levels at Moseley Hall Hospital. Here the workforce and management agreed

More than 3,000 people marched through Birmingham last Saturday on a demonstration against the cuts organised by the West Midlands TUC. The increasing anger in the working class against Healey's attacks was reflected in the size of the demonstration, the large trade union representation, and the fact that two branches of the National Union of Public Employees at the Selly Oak and Accident Hospitals voted to go on strike for the day. *Red Weekly* asked CHRIS ADAMSON, a NUPE area officer, about the demonstration and the general campaign against the cuts in Birmingham.

that there were too few ancillary workers, there was even agreement on how many more workers should be employed; but the management then turned round and said unfortunately they didn't have the money to employ more staff. We therefore organised a work to-rule, which we then escalated by blacking all dirty laundry in the South Birmingham area. Within 24 hours of the laundry black management found the necessary money.

Going back to this demo. We see this as just the start of a campaign against

the cuts. The fight-back has to be organised at two levels, local and national. Locally a lead has been given by this demo and the Birmingham Campaign Against the Cuts (BCAC), to which I am the delegate from the NUPE area committee. At a national level a fight back has to be organised against the policies of the Labour Government, an alternative programme to the cuts has to be developed.

The policy of a sliding scale of public expenditure, as was adopted by the 1975 Labour Party Conference, must be the minimum we demand. There must also be an immediate injection of cash into the NHS and the other areas of socially useful expenditure. As part of the national struggle we will be mobilising for the NCC/NALGO demo on 25 April.

Another important step that must also be taken locally and nationally is to campaign for a workers inquiry, to explain what cuts are taking place, organise a response, and develop an alternative programme.

Such plans — and there are many more examples from every area in the country — not only show the utter callousness of capitalism's attempt to solve its crisis at the expense of the working class; they also reveal the chaos which inevitably results. The NHS is short of over 70,000 nurses, but in many areas recruitment has been stopped, and nurses are even made redundant on qualifying. For example, the South Glamorgan AHA is proposing to sack at least 280 nurses in the next year (apart from almost 50 clerical workers and over 450 ancillary workers).

Such is the anarchy of capitalism that while the majority of hospital building programmes are being cut to the bone, there are 200,000 building workers unemployed and massive stock piles of bricks in the brickyards. While Concorde are built to fly executives to visit the sheiks of Bahrein, people are dying because of a lack of kidney machines.

Thus the deterioration of the NHS has already reached such a point that existing services are unable to cope effectively with the health needs of working class people. The annual increase in expenditure

of 1.5 per cent will be totally inadequate to deal with the ever increasing demand for health care — a demand fuelled by the cuts in social services, rising unemployment, and the falling standard of living of the working class.

What these cuts mean in practice — even if they are less severe than those in education — is that the deterioration of the NHS will be accentuated, whilst the slashing of the capital building programme will prevent the expansion of resources necessary to overcome this. The result of this will be a further growth in private health care, and an added stimulus to a private health sector alongside the NHS, and able to grow because of the deterioration of the NHS.

CLEAR CHOICE

The cuts in health spending may not be dramatic, but they should in no way be under-stated. The choice faced by the labour movement is posed even more sharply by the White Paper: allow the Labour Government to continue on its present course, and we face the destruction of the NHS as it is today, not to be

replaced with a health service meeting fully the health needs of the working class, but with a two-tier health service — a private health service for those that can afford it and a crippled NHS for those that cannot.

National Health

Bulletin of the National Co-ordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS

.....'a health service under the control of working people.'

.....'a health service responsive to the needs of working people.'

Bulletin of the National Co-ordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS— available price 5p plus 7p p&p from: Dr Paul Stern, 55 Bridge Lane, London NW1.

health housing education social services public transport water supply consumer hygiene libraries pure

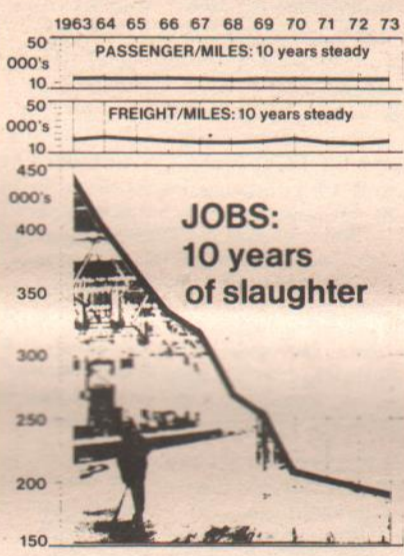


PIT JOBS: OPEN THE COAL BOOKS

Brother can you spare me a line?

'Stories which have appeared in the press in recent days about massive cuts to the rail network are a load of codswallop.' So declared Anthony Crosland to the House of Commons on 16 December 1975 as angry railway workers milled around outside protesting against the threat of rail cuts. Sid Weighell retorted that Crosland was a 'bloody liar' - and for once the General Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen was 100 per cent correct.

Healey's White Paper confirmed rail workers' worst fears, that the rail network could well be slashed from its present 11,000 miles to 4,000 by 1981. The effect on jobs will be devastating. Out of the present 265,000 workers, just 95,000 will remain. Ten years ago there were nearly 450,000 jobs on the railways (see graph) before Beeching's axe swing. The new cuts are Beechingism gone mad.



It is the Government's target figure of a cut in spending on roads and transport of £506 million by 1978-79 which makes such a possibility a probability. Already the Railways Board has been told by the Department of the Environment that investment is to be fixed at £238 million from 1978 onwards, even though £360 million a year is needed just to maintain existing services.

In addition the railway passenger subsidy has been fixed at £257 million at 1975 prices, which can only mean further huge rises in fares; and Government subsidies to railway goods services are being phased out. In the current year these are worth £62.9 million. By the time they are phased out in 1977-78 they will be worth just £14.3 million.

The 17 per cent fare increase from 28 March, following total increases of 50 per cent last year, will drive yet more passengers away from the railways. The whole rail system has been put in a vicious circle of cutbacks, increasing costs, falling traffic, leading to further cutbacks and so on.

It was not until 1968, when Labour's Transport Act removed the grosser restrictions, that the railways once again began to show an operating profit. But interest charges simply wiped these out:

	OPERATING PROFIT	INTEREST
1969	£56.2m	£41.5m
1970	£51.7m	£42.2m
1971	£30.2m	£45.6m
1972	£24.9m	£51.1m
1973	£ 5.7m	£57.3m

In addition to the crippling burden of interest payments, it is not known how much the high proportion of freight charges fixed by contract - with any price increase therefore having to be negotiated - has cost the railways. The final stupidity, of course, is that the railways have been in continual and wasteful competition with other forms of public transport and private haulage.

Five vital steps have to be taken to prevent the cuts and launch a real fight for an integrated transport policy:

1. Extend the joint committee established by the three rail unions to every depot and shunting yard, to fight the cuts through the opening of the Railways Board books to show the extent of the planned cuts and prepare a workers' alternative.
2. Build links with workers in the private haulage and passenger transport sector to campaign for a single nationalised industry under workers control.
3. The immediate cancellation of all interest charges and hidden subsidies to private industry.
4. No more fare rises. The executives of the railways and bus unions should instruct their members not to collect any increase (this has already been discussed as a possible form of action by the rail unions' executives).
5. The ten Labour MPs sponsored by the National Union of Railwaymen should be instructed to vote against Healey's White Paper or lose their sponsorship.

JAMES HURST

prepare the way for concerted national action to defend jobs. It is this that the NCB fears.

The Times (19 February) let the cat out of the bag when it wrote: 'The Coal Board would like to close a number of these pits, but is disinclined to put forward a comprehensive closure programme because of the consequent political furore.' The Times gave the lie to Gormley and the popular press by pointing out that by the third day of the overtime ban Yorkshire pits were 90 per cent in favour of the overtime ban, and overall it had 'gained rather than lost momentum'.

Conference

The second vital step of preparation is an immediate conference of area delegates to hammer out a clear common jobs policy. The Welsh and Yorkshire areas are calling for this, and although the demand was turned down by the Executive meeting, these areas should nevertheless go ahead and launch the call for such a conference.

Thirdly, to whip the wind completely out of Gormley's sails - since he is claiming that everything the miners do must be tailored to getting a good deal for coal from the Central Electricity Generating Board - the left must formulate its own plan for the whole energy industry. Scargill must be forced to turn his earlier rhetoric about an integrated national energy plan into a coherent policy for miners and all energy industry workers which defends all jobs.

Urgent

The urgent task is to prepare miners now for industrial action against any closures. The best way to expose the demagoguery of Joe Gormley and the other NUM right-wingers is to demand the opening of all the Coal Board's books to the pit committees and union nationally to expose all the closures and investment plans of the National Coal Board. Exposure of these plans would



Another useful agitprop play, with confused politics but vivid dramatic form, will be on tour in Yorkshire and Scotland in March. At present showing at London's Oval House until 29 February, Foco Novo's *Nine Days and Saltley Gates* sets out to be a dramatic comparison of the General Strike and the 1972 miners' strike. Unfortunately the theme of the play - that the mass action that closed the Saltley coke depot in 1972 was 'revenge' for the defeat of 1926 - is in itself too tenuous and banal, so that the play is weighed down from the start by political confusion. This is only partly remedied by a cast which actually conveys working class conviction, and a production which slickly and skilfully zips through its narrative.

Through almost total lack of analysis of the 1972 victory, the shorter *Saltley* scenes appear only as gratuitous and reassuring antidotes to the pessimism of the 1926 defeat. The bulk of the play is taken up with the events of May 1926, as seen through the prism of 'Filworth Trades Council'. The ideological struggles which the wider strike involved are mirrored in the debates between the revolutionaries, the leftward moving vanguard, the bureaucracy, and the openly right-wing member. But the debates are shallow, the words mere slogans.

Although this is a play with many weaknesses, it does touch squarely on most of the problems of a mass strike situation. As such it could be a vital stimulus to debates in the labour movement about similar situations to come. But that didn't happen at the Oval House - there was no discussion between actors and audience, which negates half the function of such productions. When you see it in the coming weeks, insist on a discussion, and keep on insisting - such a debate is vitally needed. Carl Gardner

OCCUPYING A CRIME!

Thinking of fighting the Government's cuts and unemployment policies by occupying your factory, sitting-in at your college, or squatting empty property? Well, the authorities have already thought of that. And if they can ram through their proposals for a new Criminal Trespass Law then these forms of struggle are going to become very much more difficult.

So far such actions have merely constituted a civil offence - meaning that the owner has to go to court (a lengthy and sometimes unsuccessful process), or that the conspiracy laws have to be invoked (and they are becoming rather discredited after the cases of the Iberian 19, the BWNIC 14, and the Iranian 21). In a situation where big struggles threaten, such measures become a very inadequate defence for the ruling class.

So it is now proposed to make every form of occupation a criminal offence. Squatting will become illegal and squatters liable to six months imprisonment. Factory occupations where the workers refuse to leave when 'ordered' or where a security guard claims that he/she was 'intimidated' by the occupiers will be broken up by the police. The spectacle of police on campuses (as at Essex and Warwick last year) will become a frequent occurrence. Demonstrations and pickets (because many of these take place on 'private' property) will be threatened.

Quite clearly the proposals represent a grave attack on the working class. But the ruling class is undoubtedly hoping that they will slip through without too much fuss because any publicity

that is given to them will concentrate on their use against squatters, relying on the campaign of lies and distortions about squatting recently organised by the gutter press.

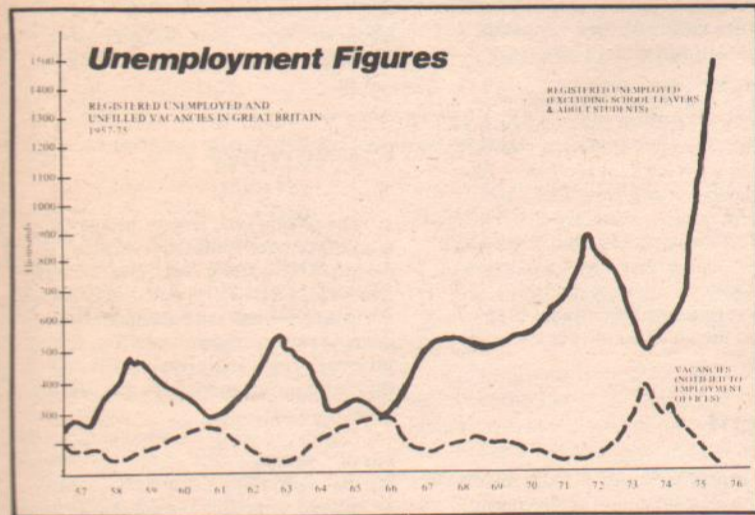
So far there has been only limited opposition to the proposals from the labour movement. The only serious fight back has been organised by the Campaign Against the Criminal Trespass Laws. As a result of their campaign, a number of trade unions have passed resolutions of total opposition to the proposals.

The first attempt to co-ordinate this opposition into action on a large scale is a demonstration in London this Saturday, 28 February. We urge all our readers to support this march, which assembles at 1.30pm at Belvedere Road, S.E.1. (Waterloo Station).



INVESTING IN UNEMPLOYMENT

Healey claims that cutting social expenditure is necessary to boost investment and restore full employment. In fact it will do just the opposite. MICK GOSLING reviews the Counter Information Services crisis report on unemployment



'Meanwhile, within total public expenditure, a higher priority is being given to expenditure which is designed to maintain or improve our industrial capability, and to give us a better chance of success as the economy picks up.'

These words from Healey's White Paper on public expenditure

sum up the Labour Government's economic strategy. The idea is to make room in the economy for more growth in industrial investment, in preparation for an 'export-led boom' as the world capitalist economy slowly turns upwards. Changing the structural distribution of resources in this way is the only means of restoring and maintain-

Bolton gives lead in jobs fight

Determined work established a broad-based jobs committee in Bolton last week. Over fifty trade unionists, including three shop stewards delegations, met in the AUEW hall for a surprisingly successful meeting - surprising because it took place in a tense atmosphere generated by threats from fascist groups and a slander campaign conducted by the local Communist Party.

The fascist threat arose after the National Front disrupted a previous organising meeting. In response thirty stewards provided workers defence for the meeting. Eight fascists were refused entry, including local National Party leader Bill Roberts, an AUEW convenor.

The Communist Party, although very weak locally, chose to denounce the meeting through the local paper and the trade union bureaucrats 'grapevine'. They tried to smear the meeting as being a front for the International Socialists group. This was despite the fact that it had been sponsored by Hawker Siddeley (Lostoek) and Thomas Ryder Machine Tools shop stewards committees, Bolton AUEW No 9 branch, and Bolton UCATT No 2 branch.

Rejected

The IS members at the meeting played directly into the CP's hands by blatantly attempting to divert all energies into building the 'Right to Work' march from Manchester to London. Equally, the Communist Party snuffed off their own

the meeting by putting forward a resolution simply to support the Labour Movement Assembly.

Both these positions were rejected - the CP proposer withdrawing his own motion - in the face of a resolution proposed by the IMG members which set out serious priorities for the formation of a local action committee. The resolution called for *solidarity campaigns with all struggles against unemployment; for building links between employed and unemployed workers; a campaign to recall the TUC to organise action on unemployment; to support local and national initiatives on unemployment, including the Labour Movement Assembly on 27 March, the Right to Work March and the demonstration against unemployment on 24 April called by the North West Region of the TUC.*

Political

The fight to establish action committees to fight on unemployment is now a directly political task. The sectarianism of groupings which boost their own 'special' project and counterpose it to all others has to be fought tooth and nail by all those in the workers movement genuinely committed to the fight for a class united front against the Wilson Government.

BOLTON IMG

Red Weekly wants to know all the details of the fight to establish local action against unemployment. Write in and

ing full employment', claims the White Paper.

This claim is a huge lie. Not only will the planned cuts have disastrous effects on the social services; the vast amounts of money designated for industrial investment, far from creating jobs, will actually destroy even more.

This is the major finding of Counter Information Services' second crisis report, *Who's Next for the Chop (the essential facts on unemployment)*, published last week. It charges that in the name of the 'regeneration of British industry', the Government is planning a *permanent unemployment economy* and that state intervention is directed towards this end.

'State intervention is no new phenomenon', says CIS, but it is now 'probably more oriented to the needs of capital than ever before. At the same time, owing to the severity of the recession and the particular weakness of the British economy, that intervention is now more decisive. Its main effect will be to speed up the process of rationalisation and concentration of production, and that can only mean fewer jobs.'

INSTRUMENTS

The chosen instruments of this policy are planning agreements and the National Enterprise Board. Far from being a step towards the opening of the books of capitalist firms to workers' inspection, the purpose of planning agreements is 'to bring the bureaucracy of the trade unions, the mandarins of government and the captains of industry together'.

The other side of the new

interventionist policy is the National Enterprise Board. This has been set up to cope with companies in which direct state intervention, through either shareholdings or long term financial support, is unavoidable. It will be getting at least £1,000 million.

As the American business magazine *Fortune* (December 1975) put it: 'The Wilson Government's programme for additional nationalisation is not based on blind socialist doctrine. The bleak truth is that most of the companies now being picked up by the state had been run into the ground by their private managers, and were in danger of going out of business.'

CASE

British Leyland is a case in point. Between 1968 and 1972 it distributed 95 per cent of the firm's profits to shareholders, keeping only 5 per cent for reinvestment. Even Lord Ryder had to conclude that this and not strikes was the main cause of British Leyland's problems.

Now that the NEB has taken over, the main aim is still profit. The difference is that the NEB is prepared to wait until 1981 to see the results of the vicious productivity drive - they call it 'rationalisation' - which is being fought out in Cowley, Longbridge, Solihull and other Leyland plants. Working class taxpayers are financing a concerted attack on their own jobs.

The CIS report estimates that on the basis of the Central Policy Review Staff's report on the motor industry, a grand total of 275,000 jobs will go in the motor and component

supplies industry by 1985 - for good. Another 20,000 will go in aerospace in the next two years.

'The Government defends its policy of shifting resources from consumption to investment by claiming that it will create more jobs. But the investment is to be used to increase the productivity of the existing industrial base. Apart from North Sea Oil, there is no new area where industrial investment is taking place to any significant degree.'

'As productivity increases, less labour is needed. The growth of productive capacity has not been enough to compensate for this, and the point was long ago reached where more labour is being expelled from production than is being re-employed. As a result the number of workers in manufacturing industry has fallen from 9,010,000 in 1964 to 7,758,800 in 1974.'

The money now being 'saved' on schools and hospitals will be used to put more people on the dole - that is what all the White Paper's verbiage about improving 'our industrial capability' amounts to. In fact, it is the massive cuts in company taxation, rising cash subsidies to the private sector, and rapidly increasing debt interest which are three of the most important factors behind the Government's deficit of £12 billion for 1975/6. But instead of attacking the vested interests of capitalism, the Wilson Government chops the social services to pay off these parasites.

STATE

And what of the existing state sector, which in the past has replaced many of the jobs lost in the private sector? The overall rise in government employment over the past 20 years 'masks the fact that the Government has been one of the greatest employers. British Rail and the National Coal Board have shed an enormous number of jobs - over 700,000 over the past 15 years.'

'For many years the prices of nationalised industry products and services were kept artificially low, mainly as a hidden subsidy to the private sector. This, together with the effects of direct subsidies in the form of fixed price contracts with major companies (these cost British Gas alone £180 million last year), resulted in massive losses.'

'The Labour Government now demands that the nationalised sector becomes 'commercially viable'. The two paths to this objective are firstly substantial price rises, and second much higher productivity from the

workforce. As the bite, demand for inevitably falls, and on the labour force. Even those areas remained stable and under pressure. Office.'

The CIS report with examples from ate and public sector its analysis - text machine tools, can nationalised industries looked at in detail dead the great invention that Wilson and H desperately peddling coming weeks in a win support for the attacks on the soc

CONTROL

All militants sh this report, which capably to one co whether in existin industry or the na sector, investment only be beneficial employed in the i is carried out und

real 'job' SC

The Labour Government with pride at the mea Healey has taken to p The real picture, how different.

Clearly no-one is going to create jobs. It should note two things in Firstly, the measures announced last months are pathetic compared to the size of the problem. Secondly, the present aim of the Government's policies is not to create permanent jobs guarantee for simply a temporary subsidy for employers. If these measures are to be anything against the overall strategy of the Government - massive cuts in social expenditure, the £5 billion - they amount to little more than a face-saving operation to the pressure off the Government's TUC bureaucrats.

A closer look at the various schemes work out in demonstrates this. They are run through two agencies: the Training and Enterprise Council, and the temporary private sector Jobs Creation Scheme.

In 1975 the Training and Enterprise Council trained 61,000 workers in the manufacturing area defined by the TSA



SOCIAL SECURITY
increase £39m (+0.4%)
TARGET* £994m

INDUSTRY
increase £492m
(+30.2%)
TARGET* £2123m

risers
services in-
squeeze
increases.
e jobs have
ming
s the Post

acked out
both the priv-
o back up
engineering,
d many
are all
kills stone
ent myth
y will be
ver the
tempt to
wingeing
services.

control. And that will demand the throwing open of the capitalists' and the Government's books to prepare a workers' plan for production which defends jobs.

* Who's Next for the Chop (the essential facts on unemployment) - 30p from Counter Information Services, 9 Poland Street, London W1, or from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1. (add 10p for p & p).

The ty behind creation' hemes

Stoke in the West to Skegness in the East and from Sheffield in the North to Stratford in the South. This 8,000 included 2,600 given craft training at the ten Skill Centres within this area, 800 trainees sponsored by their employers to attend the Skill Centres, 4,000 given an introduction to a trade in a 13-week course at a College of Further Education (some of them privately-owned) and 800 given a full training programme of 13-39 weeks at these colleges.

But of workers already on the dole the TSA only arranged for 500 to be trained at an employers' establishment (for which the employers received payment), and for 700 to be trained as HGV drivers (presumably someone in Whitehall is expecting a massive expansion of the public transport system) at another Government Agency. Of all of these, only those at the Skill Centres receive the services of a Placing Officer, who managed last year to find jobs for only 60-70 per cent within three months completion of the course. For the rest of the trainees they will only be visited by a local employment officer to point out their course, and given a form to fill in.

Sweetener

The Jobs Creation Scheme has been created with grants of £30m, £10m, and the recently announced £30m. This pitiful amount of money is at present the total Government expenditure in this field for the next 19 months.

The Government's own figures indicate that they spend £1,000 for each job created. Therefore the most optimistic effect of the Government's measures could only be to create about 70,000 jobs nationally. With nearly 1½ million workers on the dole the latest measures do not even add up to a dent in the present unemployment figures. They are simply a sweetener for Len Murray & Co.

LINDA SIMON (Secretary, Birmingham)

ABORTION SELECT COMMITTEE THROW OUT THE RUMP!

Six MPs have resigned from the parliamentary Select Committee on Abortion in protest at the moves to restrict women's rights to abortion still further. The Labour Government, however, has so far shown no signs of responding to the decisions made by the TUC and Labour Party conferences on this issue - for free abortion on demand on the NHS. Whether it changes its position will depend on how the fight is mounted within the Labour Party and the trade union movement to roll back this right-wing offensive.

The Abortion Law Reform Association is calling for an Anti-Select Committee to rebut biased evidence given to the Select Committee. This body will presumably give press statements to counter those coming from the Select Committee. But this, on its own, is not enough. A clear political fight must be waged to bring out as many people as possible to march against restrictions on women's abortion rights on 3 April.

● **DISBAND THE SELECT COMMITTEE**
The decision of the TUC and Labour Party conferences can be implemented only by the action of the working class - not through relying on a supposedly impartial parliamentary Select Committee which is in fact designed solely to restrict women's rights.

● **REMOVE MPs WHO FIGHT FOR ANTI-WORKING CLASS POLICIES**
Four Labour MPs are still sitting on the Select Committee, committed to rallying reactionary forces around the issue of abortion. They are thus responsible for perpetuating divisions within the working class around this issue - at a time when unity is of the utmost importance.

These MPs have flagrantly disregarded the policies adopted by the working class movement and must be called to account for their actions by their trade union sponsors and by their constituencies. MPs who have consistently voted in favour of restrictions on abortion must also be made accountable to the workers movement. These 'misleaders' can no longer claim to represent the interests of the working class and should be removed.

● **BOYCOTT THE SELECT COMMITTEE/FOR A WORKERS ENQUIRY**
Every organisation of the workers movement - trade unions, Labour Parties, women's groups and tenants associations - should publicly declare its refusal to submit evidence to this thoroughly discredited Select Committee. Instead it is important now that evidence of the real problem women confront in exercising their abortion rights - the lack of implementation of even the limited 1967 Act - be discussed on a national scale, to prepare for the national coordinated action necessary to deal with

these problems.
No MPs - regardless of their position on abortion - should agree to fill the vacancies on the Committee due to the resignations. Constituencies and sponsoring unions should instruct MPs to refuse to sit on the Committee.
The MPs who have resigned from this Committee must now take the lead in the fight against restrictions. They must place themselves at the head of a campaign to fight for the implementation of the TUC and Labour Party conference decisions, by:
*issuing a call for an intense cam-

paign in the working class to build the 3 April demonstration and actively participate in organising it.
*issuing a call to the workers movement to set up its own investigatory committees to look into the sabotage of the 1967 Act by reactionary gynaecologists and by the cuts in NHS facilities.
*voting against Healey's cuts, which will de facto limit NHS facilities for abortion.
*campaigning within the Parliamentary Labour Party against MPs sitting on the Select Committee as replacements.



LIVERPOOL COUNCIL AGAINST ABORTION.....AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH

A serious threat to freedom of speech has arisen in Liverpool. In May last year the Merseyside National Abortion Campaign organised a stall with leaflets, petitions and street theatre. Over 1,700 signatures were collected protesting against the introduction of restrictive legislation on abortion, as part of the national campaign against the James White Abortion (Amendment) Bill.

But a reapplication for permission to stage similar activities the following month was refused by the Liberal Chairman of the Highways and Environment Committee of Liverpool City Council, Mrs Doreen Jones. A letter written on her behalf stated that the area requested 'was provided primarily for the convenience and comfort of city centre shoppers, and on Saturdays in particular it is thronged with family groups, many with young children. That sort of milieu is not, in Mrs Jones's view an appropriate one for the type of propaganda disseminated at your exhibition on 3 May.'

Liverpool City Council met on 24 November and also voted to disallow a stand in the city centre. Since then it has

also refused to allow an International Women's Day march on the grounds that 'anything to do with women must be to do with abortion and therefore not suitable for children.'

The campaign against NAC has extended to the local Radio Merseyside. The news editor has consistently vetoed any discussion of the pro-abortion campaign, while allowing a straight plug to be given for a demonstration organised by the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children. And when it came to the Council's censorship decision, the only person interviewed was - guess who? - Doreen Jones.
Despite this massive campaign against NAC, the local campaigners have refused to be muffled. A wide campaign has been mounted in the local labour movement for NAC's right to organise, leading to a demonstration of 500 people through the city last Saturday. There will also be a mass lobby of the Council on 3 March at 1 p.m.
The experience of Liverpool shows that the whole abortion campaign raises fundamental questions about the oppression of women today - so fundamental in fact, that the authorities have to try to gag the campaign on Merseyside.

Threat to pro-abortion doctors

This Monday sees the first of a new series of deliberations by the re-established parliamentary Select Committee on abortion. Provided that a minimum of three MPs are present, the anti-abortionists on the Committee can get on with their avowed intention of further restricting women's rights to abortion. And make no mistake. James White's original proposals are on the agenda for discussion - in particular, his attempt to change the 1967 Abortion Act so that abortions will be refused to the vast number of women unable to prove that they would suffer 'grave risk' and 'serious injury' to health if they continued with their unwanted pregnancy.

Another Labour MP, Leo Abse, has also thrown in a few more ideas for good measure, such as special 'screening' procedures for women pregnant for the

first time who want an abortion. This could mean extra consultations with doctors for example, on the grounds that such women might suffer more medical risks from the abortion operation. In practice, of course, that would result in more delays and refusals.

Abse is also worried about the difficulties in bringing prosecutions against doctors who perform 'illegal' abortions. This is a view shared by his fellow SPUC supporter, Tory MP Andrew Bowden, who stated in the House: 'It is well known that it is almost impossible to get a conviction for an illegal abortion under the 1967 Act.' Abse and Bowden are not so much concerned about backstreet abortionists, whose business is boosted by every new restriction on legal abortion, as about doctors who are

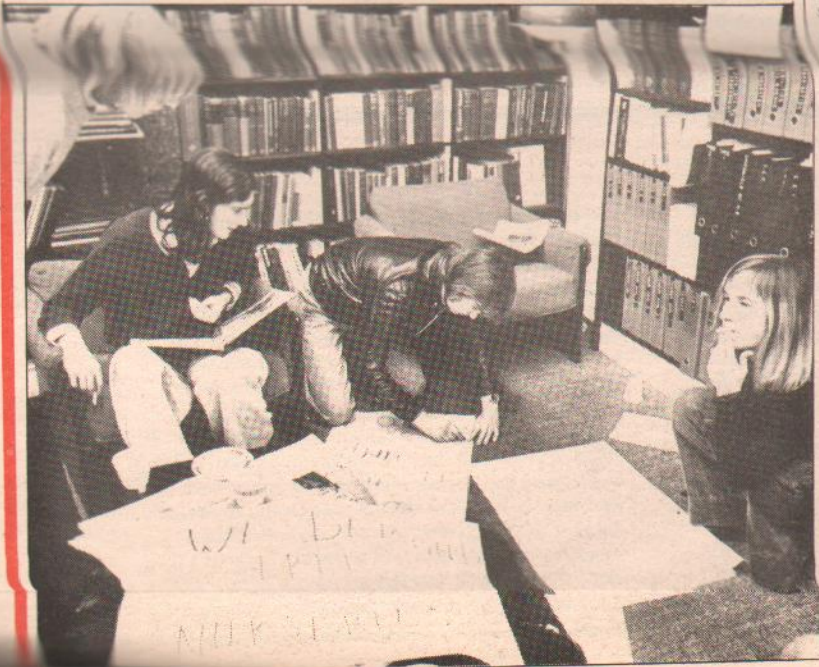
prepared to give abortion on demand. But they need not fear, because the Select Committee did its work well last year. Although almost all the restrictive measures proposed in its Third Report are now in full swing, the final two will be debated in Parliament some time within the next month. If accepted, these will allow, amongst other things, confidential details about women given abortions to be passed on by the DHSS to the General Medical Council (GMC).

As Professor Peter Huntingford has made quite clear: 'I would be unable to guarantee to any woman that information available to me at the time of consultation and operation for abortion would remain confidential. This is not in the interests of women and their health.' But even more is at stake than that, which should alert all of us to the threat to doctors like Peter Huntingford, who openly admit that they give abortion on request.

to build a strong and active campaign in support of free abortion on demand amongst the whole labour movement, in order to be in a position to defend any doctor who is threatened in this way by those who express 'concern' for women. At the same time we must continue to fight for the remedies to what concerns us about women's treatment at the hands of doctors and the NHS:

- * freely available out-patient abortion clinics and other abortion facilities in all areas on the NHS
- * incorporation of all private abortion facilities into the NHS
- * an end to all Labour's cuts in the NHS
- * removal of all those doctors who refuse to give abortions
- * training of other health workers and lay people in the simple skills needed to perform safe early abortions
- * free abortion on demand - a woman's right to choose - in law and in practice.

Berry Beaumont



ANONYMOUS

The GMC has the power to investigate in secret any complaint made to it against a doctor by any member of the public, who can even lay charges anonymously! Furnished with the evidence that could be available under this new regulation (if malicious accusations were made), the GMC would find no difficulty in proving that certain doctors had been giving abortions for 'illegal' reasons (i.e. because the woman requested it!). Such a doctor could then be forbidden to practise, perhaps for life.

No wonder the anti-abortionists think the Select Committee has been doing 'good and useful work!' The witch-hunt against these progressive doctors has already begun, led by James White in the columns of the national press.

The message is clear, the dangers are obvious. More than ever before we need



New badge available - 15p each (plus 7p p&p) from: Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1 (01-278 9526)

BULK ORDERS - reductions by request

In articles in previous issues of *Red Weekly* we have shown how the Workers Socialist League (WSL) has not fully broken with Healyism on a number of important questions of political line. However it is also clear – notably from their series of articles on the Russian Revolution and their documents in 'Trotskyism Today' – that the WSL has not consciously broken with the framework of Healyism at the level of organisational principles and theory.

While the WSL comrades have rejected the physical violence, arbitrary expulsions, characterisation of opponents as 'accomplices of the GPU', and other grosser methods of the WRP, they have not as yet broken with the theoretical roots of Healyism on organisational principles. It is evident from articles in their paper, *Socialist Press*, that they have not carried through a serious study of the theoretical and practical positions of Lenin and Trotsky on these questions. They thus fall into the error of repeating the same mistakes and revisions as Healyism – most notably in their systematic confusion of a party with a faction.

The most obvious and gross example of this comes in the article 'The Beginnings of Bolshevism' (*Socialist Press*, 14 January). This states: 'Although the Bolshevik Party did not arise until the 1903 split in Social Democracy the foundations on which it was built were laid in the preceding years.' But this is factual nonsense. No Bolshevik party was created in 1903. What was created was the Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP).

No split

Furthermore, not merely was no Bolshevik party formed at this time, but Lenin was relentlessly against any split into two parties. His struggle after 1903 was a political and ideological faction struggle against the Mensheviks and simultaneously a struggle for a unified Party against what he termed the 'anarchistic' actions of the Mensheviks, which threatened the Party with a split. Indeed Lenin, far from taking the initiative for a split in the Party, was very clear that it was the actions of the Mensheviks which threatened a split:

'The refusal of Martov to serve on the editorial board [of *Iskra*], his refusal and that of other Party writers to collaborate, the refusal of a number of persons to work on the Central Committee, and the propaganda of a boycott or passive resistance are bound to lead, even if against the wishes of Martov and his friends, to a split in the Party' (1).

Lenin declared his complete opposition to a split of the Party: 'A struggle of shades in the Party is inevitable and essential, as long as it does not lead to anarchy and splits, as long as it is confined within bounds approved by the common consent of all comrades and Party members. And our struggle against the right wing of the Party at the Congress, against Akimov and Axelrod, Martynov and Martov, in no way exceeded those bounds.' (2)

Thus Lenin carried on his campaign for a new Party congress, including Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, under a clear banner: 'We must try to find the framework within which the ideological struggle can proceed more or less normally; a new congress is needed To think that a congress could only lead to a split would mean to admit that we haven't got a party at all, that Party feeling is so poorly developed among all of us that it cannot overcome the old circle spirit Of course it is impossible to guarantee anything, but an attempt to settle the conflict in a Party manner, and to find a way out, must be made. The Majority, at any rate, does not want a split'. (3)

Clear distinction

The WSL's confusion of party and faction appears again in the same *Socialist Press* article when it states: 'Although the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democracy ended in a split, and its forces halved, it was the faction fight waged by Lenin which defended the political and organisational independence of the party against the Mensheviks.'

Everything here is confused from top to bottom. It is correctly stated that Lenin waged a faction fight. But a faction is not a party; a faction is a formation within a party. As Lenin defined it:

'A faction is an organisation within a party, united, not by its place of work, language or other objective conditions but by a particular view on party questions.' (4)

Indeed, the very terms Bolshevik faction and Menshevik faction meant that they were members of the same party. It is then ridiculous to say that the Party 'lost half its forces'. What occurred is that the faction fight within the Party revealed that the Menshevik opportunists enjoyed the support of half the Party and the Bolshevik faction half, and an intense factional struggle developed. By its formula, the article in *Socialist Press* completely removes the dialectically linked aspects of Lenin's struggle at that time – against all those who were for political and ideological conciliation and for a faction struggle; while simultaneously against those who were splitting the Party and for the unity of the Party. Lenin is transformed from a fighter for principled organisational and political positions into a crude split merchant.

This point becomes even more obvious when we look at the first real split into two parties, as opposed to two factions – in January 1912, at the Sixth Congress of the RSDLP. Not merely was this nine years after the date given in *Socialist Press*, but it is important to note that even then Lenin did not call for a political split with the Mensheviks and a division of the Party along Bolshevik/Menshevik lines,



Lenin with Martov (right, seated), later to become a leader of the Mensheviks

FACTION AND PARTY

The growing number of groups on the far left today has the effect of puzzling many militants, particularly when a number of these groups declare their support for the Transitional Programme of Leon Trotsky and their intention to 'reconstruct' the Fourth International on a world-wide basis. The road to unifying these groups under the banner of the Fourth International is beset with many obstacles, one of which is confusion over what constitutes the basis of splits and fusions. Many of these currents justify their separation from the Fourth International by invoking Lenin's name and what they assume to be his methods. However, the conception sometimes held of Lenin as an inveterate 'splitter' cannot be upheld in any serious study of Lenin's fight to establish a revolutionary party in Russia.

In many cases this wrong conception stems from the distortions peddled by the Workers Revolutionary Party led by Gerry Healy, whose main 'contribution' has been to confuse all the distinctions drawn by Lenin and Trotsky between parties, factions, tendencies, etc. Healy has established a tradition of splitting on the basis of internal organisational sectarianism and tactical questions. The group of comrades who were bureaucratically expelled from the WRP and have now formed themselves into the Workers Socialist League have yet to subject these incorrect ideas to a thorough critique. In this and subsequent articles we show what Lenin and Trotsky's position really was and explain its more general application to the problem of building a revolutionary party.

but instead for a split on organisational grounds. In line with this all factions were invited to the Congress. As Lenin pointed out:

'The Russian Organising Commission which called the present conference notified all Social Democrats of its convocation and invited to the Conference all, without a single exception, organisations of our Party; furthermore, all organisations were given an opportunity to take part in our Conference.' (5)

Furthermore, the actual split into two different parties through the expulsion of various elements did not take place because of the Mensheviks' political views but because of a rejection and violation of the organisational principles of the Party: the carrying out of acts incompatible with Party membership by these particular elements. The resolution of the Conference stated clearly:

'The former members of the Central Committee, Mikhail, Yuri and Roman, refused not only to join the Central Committee in the spring of 1910, but even to attend a single meeting to co-opt new members, and bluntly declared that they considered the very existence of the Party Central Committee to be "harmful". It was precisely after the Plenary Meeting of 1910 that the above mentioned chief publications of the liquidators, *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni*, definitely turned to liquidationism all along the line, not only "belittling (contrary to the decision of the Plenary Meeting) the importance of the illegal party", but openly renouncing it, declaring that the Party was "extinct", that the Party was already liquidated, that the idea of reviving the illegal Party was "a reactionary utopia", using the columns of legally published magazines to heap slan-

der and abuse on the illegal Party, calling upon the workers to regard the nuclei of the Party and its hierarchy as "dead", etc.

'At a time when throughout Russia the members of the Party, irrespective of factions, united to promote the immediate task of convening a Party conference, the liquidators, banded together in entirely independent small groups, split away from the local organisations even where the pro-Party Mensheviks predominated (Ekaterinoslav, Kiev) and definitely refused to maintain any Party relations with the local organisations of the RSDLP. The Conference declares that by its conduct the *Nasha Zarya* and *Dyelo Zhizni* group has definitely placed itself outside the Party.' (6)

Furthermore, so clearly did this split of the Party not arise from the political grounds of the incompatibility of Menshevism with the Party, but instead on the organisational basis of the refusal of various elements to submit to the discipline of the Party, that there was an explicit tendency of political supporters of Menshevism (the 'pro-Party Mensheviks') within the Party – a fact acknowledged in later *Socialist Press* articles, but whose significance is not grasped by the WSL.

No manoeuvre

So this was in no way some nifty manoeuvre thought up by Lenin to justify a political split on organisational grounds – which is naturally Healy's conception of Lenin as a practiser of crude *realpolitik*. On the contrary, Lenin clearly explained – and not merely on a Russian but on an international level – his position on whether Mensheviks should be within the Party at that time. When asked why liquidationism, just like Bernsteinism, could not be fought within the Party, he replied not on the grounds of their political incompatibility but on the organisational principle that the Russian Bernsteinians refused to accept the discipline of the Party:

'There are not many people among the adherents of the RSDLP capable of sincerely defending the liquidationist trend. Unfortunately there are still quite a number of people who are sincerely opposed to liquidationism, but do not understand the conditions under which the struggle against it has to be waged. Of course, they say, liquidationism is a bourgeois trend in the Social Democratic movement; but why not fight in the ranks of a single party, just as the Germans fight Bernstein?' For the Healy school this is out of the question – the Bernsteins should all have been expelled for their views even at that time. Lenin gives a totally different answer:

'Our champions of "agreement" fail to understand a very important and very simple thing: the liquidators are not only opportunists (like Bernstein and Co.); they are also trying to build a separate party of their own, they have issued the slogan that the RSDLP does not exist; they pay no heed whatsoever to the decisions of the RSDLP. That is the difference between us and "Europe".... In Europe, an opportunist guilty of one tenth of what the Petresovs, Igorevs, Besrs, Martovs, Dans and their like have done and are doing against their Party and in defiance of its decisions would not be tolerated in the ranks of the Party a single month.' (7)

Furthermore, during the earlier period when the Mensheviks were in fact participating in a correct organisational fashion in the party, and had a properly constituted majority, Lenin was so far from advocating a split that he demanded that the Bolshevik faction accept Party discipline even on such crucial questions as voting for bourgeois candidates. For example: 'After the competent bodies have decided, all of us, as members of the Party, must act as one man. A Bolshevik in Odessa must cast into the ballot box a ballot paper bearing a Cadet's name even if it sickens him.' (8)

It was only when the Mensheviks violated the discipline of the Party through anarchistic boycotts of its organisations, attempting to overturn Congress decisions through votes of the Central Committee, rejection of the authority of leading bodies, etc, that Lenin refused to accept this.

Confusion

All this of course does not mean that Lenin – as Tony Cliff, for example, would have us believe – was some sort of organisational eclectic. On the contrary, as we shall see, in 1914 Lenin carried out an absolutely ruthless, final and definitive split into two parties along strictly political, and not organisational, grounds. But what the experience prior to 1914 shows is that Lenin and later Trotsky, was absolutely clear in his distinction between a party and a faction.

Unfortunately, through their quite wrong factual account of the history of the Bolshevik Party, the WSL shows that it has as yet made no serious study on these issues. It cannot explain why Lenin formed a faction in 1903, expelled Mensheviks in 1912 on organisational and not political grounds, and only came out for a political split in the Party in 1914. Similarly, to jump ahead, it cannot say why Trotsky formed a faction in 1923, only advocated a new party in 1933, and was for example opposed to a split with Burnham and Shachtman in the Socialist Workers Party in 1940. On these questions the comrades of the WSL have not as yet consciously fought through their break with Healyism and tend to take as good coin what they received from the WRP.

(1)	Lenin	Collected Works (CW)	Vol 7, p351.
(2)	"	CW	Vol 7, p347
(3)	"	CW	Vol 34, p246
(4)	"	CW	Vol 17, p265
(5)	"	CW	Vol 17, p453
(6)	"	CW	Vol 17, p481
(7)	"	CW	Vol 17, p227
(8)	"	CW	Vol 13, p323

SOUTH AFRICA IN CRISIS

The defeat suffered by imperialism at the hands of the Angolan masses in their struggles to defend the People's Republic of Angola has been the most important event in the history of southern Africa to date: not only has it threatened the stability of imperialist economic interests, but more importantly, it has triggered off a series of political and social crises throughout the region.

The most immediate of these is that in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). Until recently the Smith regime had ample room for manoeuvre in 'negotiating a settlement' with the reformist wing of the Rhodesian African National Council (ANC) represented by Joshua Nkomo, because it could rely on the support of South Africa's Vorster and the imperialist powers.

But the increasingly hard line taken by the ultra-right of the Rhodesia Front, and the growing isolation of Nkomo as thousands of black militants flock to the side of armed struggle, have severely reduced the options open to the Smith regime. And the hardest blow of all has been the political defeat suffered by Vorster and imperialism in Angola, which effectively has made South Africa incapable of intervening in Zimbabwe directly, in turn boosting the confidence of the masses in their armed struggle.

Since US imperialism and Vorster have been rendered impotent, the only chance is for the British bourgeoisie to find some means of intervening. The possibility of an armed intervention can be more or less ruled out because of the danger that it would set off a huge domestic crisis in Britain itself, so there is only one road that can be followed: to negotiate with Smith for the return of Rhodesia to its former colonial status, enabling Britain to bring about the urgently needed peaceful 'settlement' — the establishment of a neo-colonial regime made up of a majority of the black petty bourgeoisie.

United Nations

Such a manoeuvre, if successful, would allow the intervention of a UN 'peace-keeping force' to police the interim period, and create more time for moves to isolate the more militant elements of ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) and the newly established Zimbabwe Military High Command. The neo-colonial world would, of course, be expected to play its role in giving support to these policies and in isolating ZANU militants — already Kaunda (Zambia) and Nyerere (Tanzania) have played their part in the repression of ZANU during

the last year, while both have been screaming 'blood-bath' recently in their urgent calls for the imperialists to take a hand in Zimbabwe.

The likelihood of success for these manoeuvres by Wilson on behalf of the British bourgeoisie remains small: the ultra-rights of the Rhodesia Front are unlikely to allow Smith to go back on UDI (Unilateral Declaration of Independence — 1965); moreover, vast numbers of Zimbabwe militants have been preparing themselves for years for the eventual armed confrontation, and



Cooking up a deal on the backs of the African masses—reformist ANC leader Joshua Nkomo with British Foreign Secretary James Callaghan a few weeks ago

are unlikely to back down from this stand.

Nevertheless, the danger exists that the carrot that Wilson offers may have a wider appeal to those unaware of its bitter taste: who don't realise that 'immediate majority rule' by this means will only be achieved at the expense of the masses. Compensation will be paid to the white farmers, industrialists and to the multinationals etc., assurances will be made for the safeguarding of private property, and security and safe journey will be offered to those leaving the country all paid for, of course, out of the value created by Zimbabwean labour.

It is therefore important to stress to all Zimbabwean militants the need to advance clear socialist demands today that can pave the way immediately towards socialist

revolution: Immediate majority rule! Establishment of a workers and peasants government made up of elected representatives subject to instant recall! Nationalisation of industry and capitalist farms under workers control with no compensation! Expropriation of all private property! Seizure of all foreign capital and foreign exchange!

But the political and social crisis is far from being confined simply within Zimbabwe. It has permeated the whole of southern Africa, from Zambia to the very heart of racist South Africa.

The attempts made previously by Vorster to 'bantustanise' Namibia and to set up an 'independent' government aimed at isolating SWAPO (South West African People's Organisation) have collapsed. As in Zimbabwe, Vorster and imperialism are urgently searching for a 'settlement' that will lead to a hurried relinquishing of responsibilities.

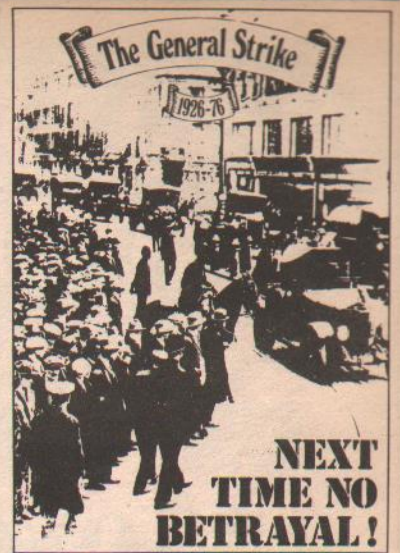
The sharpening of this crisis is reflected in the Labour Party NEC's challenge to the British Government's policy of vetoing all moves to condemn South Africa's occupation of Namibia. The NEC wants the Government to provide 'aid to SWAPO and to give no support to British companies doing

in the hearts of the international bourgeoisie.

But any attempt at 'austerity measures' by Vorster is likely to provoke widespread response from this working class. And until a satisfactory conclusion can be brought about in Zimbabwe and Namibia, the European and American bourgeoisie will remain reluctant to bail him out.

In Britain, the attempts by the Wilson Government to solve the crisis of the international capitalist class must today be fought with the broadest possible mobilisation: Against the reactionary stand of the Wilson leadership! Break all links with racist Vorster! Break all links with racist Smith! Solidarity with Zimbabwe! Solidarity with SWAPO! Solidarity with the Angolan revolution! Solidarity with the southern African revolution!

JULIUS KARANJA



New three-colour poster (chocolate, red and blue), all proceeds to IMG Fund Drive. Available shortly from most IMG branches, price 25p, or direct from General Strike Poster, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1, price 33p (inc p&p).

£15,000 FUND DRIVE

We still need nearly £7,500 in not much more than a week! That is the extent of our plight. Last week brought only £279.30. Our thanks all the same to:

Guildford IMG	7.00	Birmingham health worker	3.00
L. Hodges	3.00	R. Howard	1.00
Bristol IMG	5.00	Manchester IMG	15.00
Hemel IMG	19.30		
Reader	20.00	Leed IMG	46.00
Special sale of IMG material	150.00	Reader	10.00

The money received this week and last still enables us to take on a full-time organiser for our trade union work. Your donations have thus helped to strengthen a vital area of the IMG's intervention.

But we have still not raised enough money for our Scottish Centre. The current debate on devolution, and the fact that the cuts and unemployment will hit the Scottish working class especially hard, mean that it is vital for the IMG to build a strong centre in Scotland. We need £2,000 for a lease and office equipment, but so far we have received only £467.

Rush your donations to: Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

Area	So far rec'd	50%	Target
SCOTLAND	£467	£££	2,000
N. EAST	£197	££££££££££££££	250
YORKS	£331	£££££	1,000
LANCS	£230	££££	1,000
W. MIDLANDS	£214	££££	1,000
E. MIDLANDS	£20	£	250
WALES	£75	£££££	250
E. ANGLIA	£37	£££	250
LONDON	£600	££££££££	1,500
S. EAST	£177	££££	1,000
S. WEST	£104	££££	500
OTHER	£5015	££££££££££££££	6,000

RALLY

ERNEST MANDEL Speaking on

The European Revolution And Building the Fourth International

Order your tickets now (50p + 8½p p&p) from Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, N.1.

Fighting for Workers Power in Portugal — the REPUBLICA film

Red Star Folk Music Society singing workers songs from Co. Durham & elsewhere

Gaitas Gallegas — Playing traditional pipe music from Spain



7.30, Friday March 5th St. Pancras Assembly Rooms Bedford St. near Kings X tube Admission 50p

IMPORTANT CORRECTION

An unfortunate editing error occurred (without the knowledge of the authors) in an article in the 12 February issue of Red Weekly concerning the Workers Socialist League and those members of the Trotskyist Opposition tendency in the IMG who resigned from the IMG to join the WSL.

On several occasions reference was made to the 'Trotskyist Opposition' when this in fact should have read the 'former supporters of the Trotskyist Opposition'. In most cases the intention was obvious as the reference was coupled with quotations from the comrades' resignation letter printed in Socialist Press (14 January); nevertheless the designation used implied that this was an unacceptable public attack on a tendency within the IMG.

We therefore wish to state clearly that this was not the intention, and that the article was concerned solely with the positions of the comrades who have left the IMG and of the WSL.

-WHAT'S ON-

CAMPAIGN for Repeal of Immigration Act—ad hoc committee to organise 11 April demo meets every Friday, 7.30pm, 152 Camden High Street.

WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER Campaign national conference, 10/11 April in Coventry. Open to all bodies supporting the campaign. Discussion of perspectives, amendments to Charter, structures. Credentials from 49 Lowther Hill, London SE23 1PZ.

RED BOOKS comprehensive list of titles now available—Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Mandel, Lukacs, Novack, Cannon, Deutscher, etc. Send s.a.s. for copy to: Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

'TYNDALE and the Right-Wing Attack': Socialist Teachers Conference public meeting. Speakers: Chris Searle, Dave Lister, Ken Jones, and Brian Haddow (Tyndale teacher). Thurs 26 Feb, 7.30pm, Friends Meeting House, Euston Road.

ANTI-FASCIST COMMITTEE in Birmingham—inaugural meeting, Sun 29 Feb, 2.30pm in Digbeth Civic Hall (Lecture Room 2).

FOLK FROM CHILE—concert with Isabel Parra and Patricio Castillo, organised by Manchester CSC. Sat 28 Feb, 7.30pm, Salford University (Maxwell Hall).

'CHILE: the Continuing Struggle'—speakers at London Socialist Forum include a Chilean exile; Peter Nore of the Chile Solidarity Campaign; and a speaker from the Chile Committee for Human Rights. Tues 2 March, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1.

CRITIQUE SEMINAR: Alan Adler on 'Anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union'. Tues 2 March, 7.30pm, London School of Economics, St Clements Building, Room S418.

LOCAL LABOUR MOVEMENT Conference on Unemployment and the Cuts, at Stockwell Hall, Stockwell Park Walk, Brixton SW2 on Saturday 3 April. Creche provided. Details and delegates/visitors credentials from V Wiseman, 23 Saunders House, St Martins Estate, SW2. Organised by Lambeth Trades Council/Norwood Labour Party. Sponsored by Battersea/Wandsworth, Southwark Trades Councils and South West London Right to Work Committee.

INTRODUCING WORKERS NEWS—a new socialist paper. Monday 8 March, 7.30pm Small Hall, St Pancras Assembly Rooms, St Pancras Town Hall, Euston Road, NW1 (opposite St Pancras Station). Speakers: Harry Wicks—historical view of development of revolutionary movements since the 1930s; Roger Protz—need for a revolutionary paper; speaker on current industrial struggle against unemployment. Chairman: Jim Higgins.

FOR CHEAP, reliable IBM typesetting with fast turnaround, phone Stephanie on 01-837 6954.

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

DEFEND THE RIGHT TO Work badges—17p including postage from: Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1. Bulk rates on enquiry (01-278 9526).

GLASGOW Socialist Forums—every Thursday in the Iona Community Centre, 7.30pm.

PORTUGAL

Build the Solidarity Movement

In the last few weeks Portugal has more or less disappeared from the columns of the bourgeois press. A demonstration of several thousand calling for the release of leftist political prisoners last week was dismissed in a paragraph by the *Guardian* (21 February).

Obviously capitalism is now less worried by the situation after the events of 25-26 November, but that makes the tasks of solidarity more important, not less. Massive class confrontations remain on the agenda as despite the 'aid' world capitalism is pouring into the coffers of Portuguese capitalism, both the immediate and structural crises of the economy are still unresolved.

Under the pressure of the world recession, sections of world capitalism remain unconvinced that the Portuguese working class can be subdued more than temporarily. The multinationals continue to sabotage the economy. A recent delegation to Portugal from the Southern Region Trade Union Information Unit has spoken of the failures of both British Leyland and Massey Ferguson to send spare parts for buses and tractors which now stand idle.

Timex has locked out its workers in Portugal who have rejected the plans to enforce massive redundancies. As part of these moves the Timex management moved its stocks to the Dundee factory. Likewise the infamous ITT corporation, with factories all over Britain, is trying to bankrupt its Portuguese subsidiaries by faking its international deals - what is called 'transfer pricing'.

Firms such as Plessey, who have recently announced 2,000 redundancies in Britain, have pursued exactly the same policy in Portugal. Plessey has factories in Ilford, Chorley, Huyton, Wigan (due to be entirely closed), Speke, Beeston, Sunderland, Liverpool and the Isle of Wight. Virtually every major British firm has its finger, or in some cases its arms, in the Portuguese pie. Two hundred of the 600 foreign firms involved in Portugal are British.

Despite an impressive list of sponsors for the forthcoming solidarity conference, including Ray Buckton (ASLEF), Mick McGahey (NUM), Emlyn Williams (NUM), Ken Coates (IWC), Syd Bidwell MP, Audrey Wise MP, Joan Maynard MP, and Stan Newens MP, the Labour Government is maintaining import restrictions on Portuguese textiles and yarns. It is obvious whom the Labour Government supports in Portugal - especially when it has gone so far as to allow the National Republican Guard, who in January shot five demonstrators, to be trained in Britain. It is against reactionary moves such as these that a campaign can and must be built.

The 13 March conference, initially called by the Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class, is crucial for the building of a solidarity movement in Britain. At the last meeting of the conference organising committee, which numbered amongst its representatives delegates from the Liverpool docks and the Southern Region Trade Union Information Unit, as well as from the ICL, IS, IMG and PWCC, it was agreed to put a motion to the conference calling for a campaign around the slogans:

No to any economic sanctions!
Big Business, NATO, CIA - Hands off Portugal!

Portugal must not become another Chile!
Solidarity with the organs of popular power!

Against the repression of workers and soldiers - free the 25 November prisoners!

We urge all readers of *Red Weekly* to seek the affiliation of their trade union branch, trades council, students union, constituency Labour Party or LPYS to the Solidarity Campaign and the conference. Details and draft motions from SCPWC, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC2.

The Final Indignity

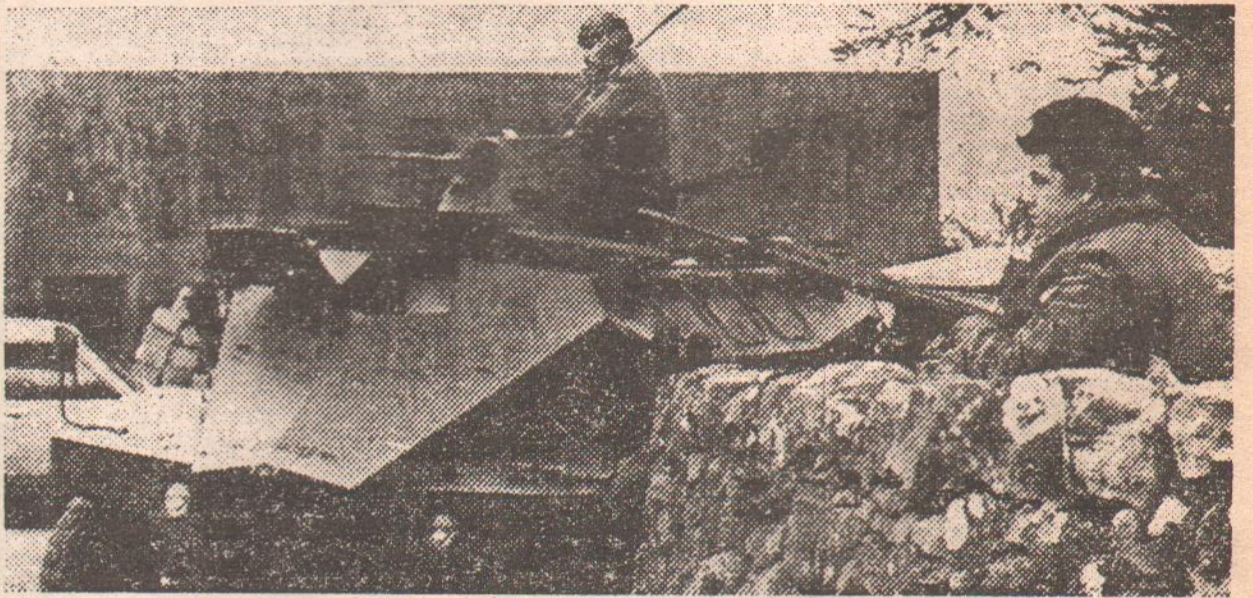
It seems that it was not enough to kill Frank Stagg. The Government of the Irish Free State had to chip in its twopenorth. So we have been treated to the disgraceful spectacle of the Irish security forces playing a game of catch with Stagg's coffin.

First we have rumours and counter-rumours about the funeral, with the

British press even going so far as to grub up supposed differences on the subject in the Stagg family itself. Next the Free State Government takes it upon itself to divert the aeroplane carrying Stagg's coffin from Dublin airport to Shannon - on the other side of Ireland. Finally we have a hurried and secretive interment of this same coffin. Even dead Republicans are app-

arently a grave threat to the Fine Gael/Labour coalition in Dublin.

Were it not so disgusting the whole affair would be faintly ludicrous. But even its bizarre aspect disappears when we realise that the celebrations included the arrest of six members of Luton Sinn Fein by the Free State police. The Sinn Fein members had simply



Irish troops guard Stagg's grave—from his relatives

NEW REPRESSIVE LAWS IN SOUTH

In 1969, following pogroms on Catholic areas in Northern Ireland by the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and pro-imperialist Protestant mobs, the then Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of the Dublic Government, Jack Lynch, moved troops to the border and announced: 'We shall not stand idly by.'

In a sense, Jack Lynch and his Fianna Fail Government did not stand idly by; they embarked on a campaign of arrests and harassment of the defenders of the Catholic ghettos, the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Not content with the wide-ranging powers of a revived (1939) war-time emergency law, further legislation was enacted.

But the importance of Republican rhetoric in Fianna Fail's electoral base, and the Republican sympathies not only of its supporters but also of elements among its public representatives, made it slightly unreliable for carrying out a policy of full collaboration with British imperialism. In the General Election of 1973, Fianna Fail was defeated by a Fine Gael/Labour coalition.

INCREASE

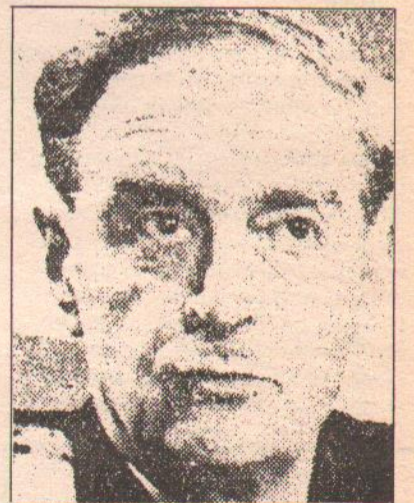
Since then, the use of non-jury courts to sentence Republicans to jail for alleged IRA membership has continued at a steady rate, the armed forces have had massive budget and manpower increases, and the police force - especially the Special Branch - has been expanded. More and more, the Free State Army has been used to back up the Garda Síochana (police force), and regular collaboration between the Free State and British 'security forces' has been developed.

Now the Dublin Government has come up with the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill which is at present before the Dail (Parliament) and is almost certain to be passed.

The provisions of the Bill are remarkably extensive. Any person who flees South after escaping from a prison camp in the North, including persons held on remand, could be charged in the South and sentenced by a non-jury Special Criminal Court to up to seven years imprisonment. All cases would be taken before the Special Criminal

done little to fight repressive laws except pass resolutions.

The Republican Movement has, ever since the rise of the struggle in the North, been reluctant to tackle the Southern state; and the opposition of the Provos to the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill has been almost exclusively restricted to articles in their paper, *An Phoblacht*. In particular, the Provos have never organised their numerically considerable base within the trade unions.

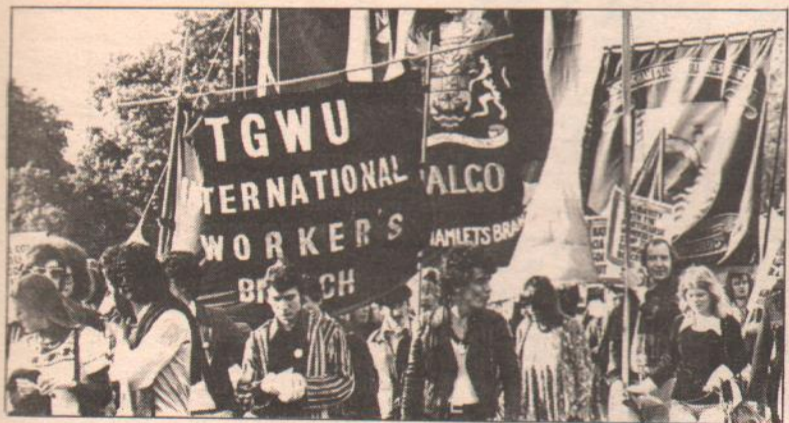


IRISH PREMIER LIAM COSGRAVE

Thus the Provos were unable to exploit a situation where unions had come out formally in opposition to the Bill and to transform for formal opposition into positive action.

The orientation of the Revolutionary Marxist Group (Irish section of the Fourth International) was twofold. Regarding the mobilisation of trade unionists as the most important factor, they attempted to get trade union bodies to sponsor a march against the Bill. In this they were successful, despite the very strong tendency of the trade union movement (shared by the Stalinist parties) to restrict itself to economic questions.

The Dublin District Council of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU - by far the largest Irish trade union) passed



Last September's demonstration—now solidarity efforts must be redoubled

BBC's Watergate?

The Director General of the BBC, Charles Curran, has rejected the appeals of the two Portuguese journalists, Jorge Ribeiro and Antonio Cartaxo, against their sacking from the BBC's External Service. Despite half-baked arguments about 'professional competence', it is obvious that the two journalists have been victimised to satisfy Tory MP Winston Churchill, who launched a campaign in the summer against 'left-wing bias'.

The reputation which the External Service has sought to build up, of being the 'unbiased voice of democratic Britain', has been badly damaged by the case. Several foreign newspapers have carried articles about the affair, and a leading member of the Portuguese Socialist Party has said that the two journalists were so fair that they did not hinder the BBC's support of the SP's aims and politics!

The BBC hates bad publicity - a phobia no doubt shared by its paymasters in the Foreign Office, and by the 'moderates' such as General Spinola who have got so much free publicity on the External Service's airwaves. So it is bad news for them, and good news for the Media Support Group of the Portuguese Solidarity Campaign, that new information has emerged which goes a long way towards proving that the BBC has been 'arranging' with Mario Soares to 'improve' the Portuguese broadcasts - and thus the SP leadership's anti-revolutionary activities.

It will be interesting to see how the BBC reacts. Will it continue protesting its complete innocence, or will it open the 'Water-gates' and challenge us to criticise? Watch this space!

John Sherman

IRELAND'S OTHER CRISIS

Part 1 The economy that never grew up

gone across to attend their comrade's funeral. But apparently Cosgrave and O'Brien consider that paying your last respects is a threat to state security. Or perhaps their attitude merely means that they are now prepared to use any excuse to stamp on the opposition to their continuing complicity with British imperialism, and their continual attacks on the rights and living standards of workers and others in the southern 26 counties of Ireland.

The economic crisis in the Free State, with unemployment running at 14 per cent, has brought the Fine Gael-Labour coalition to a state of complete panic. The sell-outs multiply daily. They've just ditched an Act granting equal pay to women - and have forced

even the capitalist bureaucrats of the EEC to protest. But above all they have grown ever more desperate for help and approval from the British Government. It was this above all that caused their treatment of Frank Stagg's body.

Socialists in Britain can do little to bring the Free State politicians responsible for this exercise in grave-robbing to book. But we can most certainly bend all our efforts to making sure that there's no imperialist policy left for them to cooperate with any more. The only response to the events of last week can be to redouble our efforts to get Britain out of Ireland: Troops out now - self determination for the Irish people!

JANICE MILLS



John Stagg is barred from his brother's coffin at Shannon Airport

7 DAYS in the 26 COUNTIES

a resolution calling for a demonstration to Leinster House (parliament buildings); a mass lobby of the Dail; and similar action by all unions affiliated to the Dublin Council of Trade Unions. This resolution was also passed by the Dublin Council of Trade Unions.

It was clear from the start that the trade union bureaucrats had little enthusiasm for the march, and even up to the last minute it looked as if they might call it off. In the event, a sufficient number had been mobilised (not by the bureaucrats, of course) to make the demonstration a success of some significance.

UNITY

The other aspect of the RMG's orientation was to attempt to forge unity in action between Republican and socialist organisations. Although the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) rejected such proposals, a 'United Campaign Against the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill' was

formed, bringing together the Irish Civil Rights Association (ICRA), People's Democracy (PD), RMG, the Socialist Workers Movement, League for a Workers Republic and others; it produced a pamphlet and held pickets and a public meeting.

Even though the Bill is likely to be passed, it is almost certain to be challenged as unconstitutional and referred to the Supreme Court, so it is by no means a dead issue. The fact of trade unionists marching against it in Dublin gives a basis for building further opposition; revolutionary socialists will be campaigning for trades councils and other such bodies to take action and to educate their memberships in relation to repressive legislation.

The Bill will mean that the Southern state has one of the toughest penal codes in Europe. International opposition to the Dublin Government's repressive legislation can provide valuable support to socialists and Republicans in their struggle in Ireland.

STEVE MacDONOGH

TOM Delegation to visit Ireland

The Troops Out Movement is organising a delegation of British trade unionists to visit Ireland in May for four days. It has already circulated hundreds of trade union branches, trades councils and Labour Party organisations asking for delegates, and has the sponsorship of a number of MPs.

The aim of this delegation is not simply to investigate the activities of British troops in the North of Ireland. Its aim is to introduce British trade unionists to a wide range of individuals and organisations in the Irish Republican and working class movements, in order that they can get a better impression of the problems - including British troops and the partition of Ireland - facing the Irish working class. The delegation is open to all those in Britain who support the right of the Irish people to self-determination, and who want to see a British withdrawal from Ireland - even though they may not agree

with the demand for 'Troops Out Now'.

The IMG extends its full political support to this initiative of the TOM, and will participate vigorously in building the delegation. In our view, this delegation could be a major step in building a movement in support of self-determination for the Irish people. It comes at a time when the latest manoeuvre of British imperialism, the power-sharing Convention, looks set for disaster, thus opening up a major debate about Britain's role in Ireland.

Not only that, but the need for British trade unionists to get answers on the Irish question becomes more urgent every day, with the growing threats of the Loyalists, the renewal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and the renewed violence of the NF against pro-Irish militants. This delegation could create a firm basis for clarifying a wider section of trade unionists about the issues involved and thereby winning them to action.

Understandably, socialists who have written on Ireland over the last few years have devoted most of their attention to the Six Counties of the North. But a real understanding, even of the North, can only come with an appreciation of the situation in Ireland as a whole.

There are a number of reasons for this - not least of which is the way the southern ruling class has been falling over backwards to aid Britain in its repression of the minority in the Six Counties. But above all it is because the economic and political development of Ireland as a whole is what motivates the long term strategy of imperialism; accordingly, it is only on the basis of an all-Ireland view that we can start to make sense of the anti-imperialist struggle.

The Irish struggle for national independence in 1918-21 brought British imperialism to the recognition that the maintenance of direct rule was a dangerous business. The 1921 treaty marked a British attempt to get out on the best possible terms. The country was partitioned and the apparatus of Orange sectarianism strengthened in the northern Six Counties that remained directly under the Crown.

Integrated

This arrangement served to keep the fairly well developed industry in the Belfast area integrated into the British economy. At the same time the Free State, while nominally independent, was effectively no more than an agricultural supplier for Britain. Trade was dominated by Britain - the treaty even going so far as to establish British naval bases in the Free State - and rents from Irish land continued to flow back to London and Birmingham in the form of annuities paid by the Dublin government.

To function as rent collector and bank clerk for the British was immensely satisfying for a section of the southern ruling class. Indeed, they fought a bloody two year civil war for the privilege.

Irish banking and finance have al-

ways chalked up their percentages by acting as middlemen in Anglo-Irish trade. The large farmers similarly saw obvious advantages in a guaranteed market for their goods. It was these two groups that provided the main political props for the pro-treaty/pro-British parties in the Free State - first Cumann na nGaedhal, and nowadays Fine Gael. However the arrangement had definite disadvantages for other sections of Irish society. The small farmers found the land annuities a crippling burden, and benefited little from trade with England. Most of their produce went to the home market - that is to say, it was sold off cheap.

Precarious

The working class was if anything in an even more precarious position. The main fields of employment remained distribution and agriculture. Wages in industry were comparatively low, and unemployment was high.

By the 1920s the spirit of Connolly and Larkin had long since departed the organisations of the Irish labour movement. The Irish Labour Party had ignored the treaty and devoted all its efforts to denouncing militarism - rather as sections of the British left today can find nothing to say about Ireland except to condemn bombing campaigns.

The attitude of the Irish Labour Party turned it into the left hand of Cumann na nGaedhal, as the latter vigorously pursued a policy of cracking down on the Republican movement. The workers themselves, usually without the trade union and Labour Party leaders, launched struggle after struggle making industrial disputes a central factor in Free State history.

Far more instructive than the whining of the social democrats was the effect of the events of the 1920s and '30s on the Republican movement. The social upsurge accompanying the struggle for national independence (of which a high point was the establishment of workers cooperatives in the dairy industries in Kerry) had already pushed sections of the Republican movement to the left. Now the Republicans came

face to face with their own ruling class.

They had only two options - to turn to the workers, or to face extinction. The conflict tore them in two, and a large left wing around the communist Peadar O'Donnell emerged as the most militant section of Republicanism. A fusion between the national struggle and the social struggle came near to reality for the first time since 1916.

In the long run, O'Donnell lost out. But his effect on Republicanism, combined of course with the prior and greater contribution of Connolly, was to make the Republican movement the most likely area for the emergence of a revolutionary strategy in the future.

The Cumann na nGaedhal regime did not only arouse the antagonism of the masses. Sections of the ruling class itself were also unhappy with the status quo.

Direct control by British finance, and the competition of British manufactures, had made life somewhat uncomfortable for the emerging southern industrialists. They inclined towards an economic policy consisting of protection in trade, industrial growth, and greater freedom from control by English capital. The new tycoons, the gombeenmen, found their political voice in the Fianna Fail party, which had started life as Cumann na Poblachta - the main political voice of the anti-treaty forces in the civil war.

Total break

In the late 1920s and early '30s its main figurehead, De Valera, and most of the apparatus broke with the Republican movement for good and all. The name of the party was changed and it rapidly transformed itself into nothing more than the voice of southern industry. However its past, and the history of its leaders, enabled Fianna Fail to win substantial numbers of working class and small farmer votes.

It was this political factor that made Fianna Fail the dominant party in the Free State from 1933 onwards. Next week we shall examine the economic policy of Fianna Fail and its consequences.



James Larkin, pre-World War One Irish labour leader, whose birth centenary is this year. Even by the 1920s his spirit had long since departed the organisations of the Irish labour movement

STOP AREILZA'S VISIT

RED WEEKLY

Last weekend in Pamplona a demonstration of over 30,000 workers demanded free trade unions and an amnesty for political prisoners. In Barcelona, striking traffic police and firemen have been put under military discipline as the only way of forcing them to return to work; while Catalan nationalists have denounced the Juan Carlos proposals for 'devolution' as derisive.

This is the reality of Spain today; but at the same time Areilza, the Spanish Foreign Minister, is touring the capitals of the Common Market countries trying to sell the new 'democratic' Francoism. On 3 March he is coming to Britain to discuss Spanish membership of the Common Market with Labour Ministers.

This gives the committee appointed at the 14 February 'Conference in Solidarity with the Workers of Spain' their first opportunity to show their real commitment to Spanish solidarity. The conference passed two resolutions demanding freedom for trade union organisation and for political prisoners. Michael Foot, speaking to a motion declaring his 'fraternal solidarity with the working people of Spain', said that he would not countenance the admission of a 'phoney democratic' Spain to the Common Market.



Minister.

Already a Committee to Stop the Areilza Visit has been formed. This body is supported by the Action Group Against Repression in Spain, the Spanish Solidarity Committee, International Marxist Group, International Socialists, International Communist League and Workers League. It is organising a rally on 1 March - the day before Areilza is due to arrive - to discuss building solidarity actions in the British workers movement, such as blacking Spanish goods, and the organisation of an immediate initiative against Areilza's visit.

We call upon the conference committee to support any actions taken against Areilza, and to demand that the Labour Government stop all negotiations with a representative of the Spanish dictatorship and break all diplomatic and trade links with Spain.

RALLY: Monday 1 March, 7.30pm
Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WCI

Areilza on his travels: above—with West German Foreign Minister Genscher; right—with French Foreign Minister Sauvagnargues. Next on his list to convince that Spain should join the Common Market is Britain's James Callaghan



Foot's silence

Barely two weeks later, Areilza is coming to London at the invitation of the Labour Government to discuss Spain's admission to the Common Market! Suddenly Mr Foot is very silent about his commitment to Spanish democracy.

As reported in last week's *Red Weekly*, the conference organisers resisted attempts by many trade union delegates to move amendments which would put some teeth into their pious resolutions. But it is now an urgent task of the solidarity movement to organise against the visit of the Spanish Foreign

cuts on the way?

Unless we get larger and more regular contributions to the Red Weekly Fighting Fund, then the cuts we'll be forced to make will leave Healey looking like an amateur. The total received this week was £15.70. That's hardly going to get us to that £500 monthly target.

Our thanks to those who did contribute: Bradford IMG, £5; York IMG, £4.50; S. Bell, £2.50; Edinburgh IMG, £2; D. Stepto, £1; IMG Media Fraction, 70p. But what about those IMG branches we mentioned last week: Birmingham, Glasgow, Manchester, Nottingham, Oxford, Sheffield? We still haven't had a penny from any of them.

Don't hold back on us, comrades - you're only holding back on yourselves. Rush that money now to: Red Weekly Fighting Fund, 182 Pentonville Road, London N1.

WHOSE DEMOCRACY?

Is it 'democratic' to kill and attack workers fighting for their rights?

For the past forty years the Spanish working class has been held in check by ferocious repression. Even after the massive blood-letting of the Civil War years, the regime had to build up a massive repressive machinery to do this work - the political police of the BPS (Political-Social Brigade), and the semi-military Civil Guard and Armed Police.

Backed up by repressive laws, special political courts and martial law dished out by the army, these forces have replied with murders, beatings and torture to every independent expression of working class struggle. As a result of the importance of their work, these forces have become a crucial part of the dictatorship - the main base of its most reactionary, die-hard wing. And behind them stands the army, which in the absence of organised political representatives of capital such as political parties, serves as the most authoritative voice of the capitalists in times of political crisis.

'COSMETIC'

The sort of 'democracy' that Spanish capitalism would turn to in the face of a rising tide of mass struggle would be one in which these forces, carefully created over the decades to serve the ruling class's needs, would be preserved. It might be necessary to do a little 'cosmetic' work on them, make them pull their horns in temporarily, but the capitalists would still need them, both to act as a final line of defence in the event of the working class struggle going 'too far', and to keep in reserve for an eventual attempt to roll back the victories of the workers movement.

For these reasons the capitalists would be vehemently opposed to any

notion that the murderers and torturers of the Franco regime should be called to account for their crimes against the working class. The responsibility for such crimes is spread throughout the repressive machinery, and the punishment of those involved would undermine the very foundations of those institutions.

DIFFERENT AIMS

The working class has very different aims in this situation. The democracy they seek is one in which all the repressive machinery that has kept the dictatorship intact for four decades would be swept away, and those responsible for criminal actions would be brought to justice before the masses.

This is not a matter of spitefulness or revenge - it is a matter of survival. For how is it possible to talk of 'democracy' when a tiny capitalist minority continues to hold in the palm of its hand all the weapons of violence? And how can any political gains be considered secure when the most determined enemies of such changes, who have resorted to the most brutal methods to prevent them coming about, still hold positions of power and influence?

This is something the Portuguese workers understood when they launched massive campaigns around the demand of 'saneamento' - the purging of all those complicit in the repressive policies of the dictatorship. This severely weakened the reactionaries and allowed the working class to win victories over them. Unfortunately, they did not succeed in abolishing the repressive police forces like the Republican Guard and the Public Security Police; they are paying the price for that failure today, when these forces are once again shooting peaceful demonstrators and attacking workers in struggle.

In Spain, the Communist Party-dominated Democratic Council and the Socialist Party-dominated Democratic Platform are again trimming their sails to the capitalist wind. While they call for reforms in the legal system, they do not take a clear stand for the abolition of all repressive laws and special courts, and say nothing at all about the dissolution of the repressive police forces. On the question of purging reactionaries they specifically oppose this - insisting that their demand for 'amnesty' would apply not only to anti-fascist fighters, but also to the enemies of the working class and democracy!

They talk only about the need for a 'professional' army that would not intervene in politics (ignoring the fact that the 'profession' of the capitalist army is precisely to intervene in the interests of capital - as did the 'professionals' of the Chilean army), and say nothing about the democratic rights of the army rank-and-file.

ABOLITION

The forces of the Fourth International in Spain base themselves firmly on the need of the working class to attack the props of capitalist dictatorship in order to conquer democratic rights and ensure their survival. They thus fight for the total abolition of all repressive laws, political courts, and special repressive forces; for the purging of reactionaries from the state machinery, and for all those guilty of crimes against the working class to be brought to popular justice; and for full democratic and political rights for the rank-and-file in the army, against capitalist military discipline, for the formation of democratic soldiers committees, and for the linking up of these bodies with the workers movement.



NAME..... SUBSCRIPTION RATES
ADDRESS..... DOMESTIC: £7 per year
..... £3.50 for six months
..... FOREIGN: £9 per year surface mail
..... £12 per year airmail

Write to RED WEEKLY (distribution), 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.