

RED WEEKLY

17 JUNE 1976

No. 155

PRICE 10p



SUPPORT BLACK SELF-DEFENCE



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

REPEAL IMMIGRATION LAWS
NO PLATFORM FOR RACISTS

*All out for National Demo
Sat 4th July 1.30 pm Speakers Corner*

Broad left splits student jobs fight

By VALERIE COULTAS (NUS Executive and IMG Student Organiser).

THE EXECUTIVE of the National Union of Students met last Sunday. It 'urged all students wishing to participate in a demonstration against the Government's policies on education, cuts and unemployment to join the demonstration organised by the London Student Organisation (LSO) on Tuesday 15 June, and the lobby of Parliament organised afterwards, where there is no local activity organised'. The Executive also reaffirmed its support for the lobby of the TUC next day. THEN THEY DECIDED TO CALL OFF THE OCCUPATIONS! Who could be surprised when London students, furious at being told to end the struggles they themselves had launched and maintained, decided to extend the occupations—to NUS headquarters!

In one fell swoop, while still pretending to implement the decisions passed by the colleges involved in the campaign at the Manchester conference on 5 June, they in fact swept them aside.

The Executive refused to support the demonstration called by the London Action Co-ordinating Committee (LACC) on the day of the TUC lobby. It lyingly suggested that because the demonstration was passing the headquarters of the National Union of Teachers and National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, this amounted to a direct 'attempt to alienate the trade union movement'.

They decided that most colleges wanted to end their occupations on 16 June. Yet only a week earlier NUS President Charles Clarke had summed up for the successful motion at the Manchester Conference which threw out a national demo on 15 June, went all out for action on 16 June, and urged the occupations to continue.

Observers from occupied colleges who hotly contested these decisions by the Executive were eventually thrown out of the meeting. Two North East London Poly delegates were told that 'if the students decided to confront the police [i.e. resist the injunction to their occupation] they would not get legal aid or political support from the NUS Executive'. This was the culmination of a week of scandalous actions on the part of the Broad Left-dominated executive.

It began on Sunday 6 June, just one day after the Manchester conference. Three Broad Left members of the Executive involved in the LSO decided

to call an LSO-organised demo — along the lines of the proposal defeated at Manchester.

Posters were circulated to London colleges, and a NUS mailing went out advertising this as a national demo. The Scottish and Welsh Executives, without consulting the colleges in their areas, supported this initiative. The NUS action desk began to volunteer information on the demo, suggesting that there was a lot of 'rank and file' feeling behind the 15th.

The final act was, so to speak, committed behind closed doors. The Executive decided, despite the clear position of the Manchester conference, that 'the current phase of occupations should end in a united manner by 16 June' and that 'the Executive will hold discussions with those unions able to continue their occupations over the summer'.

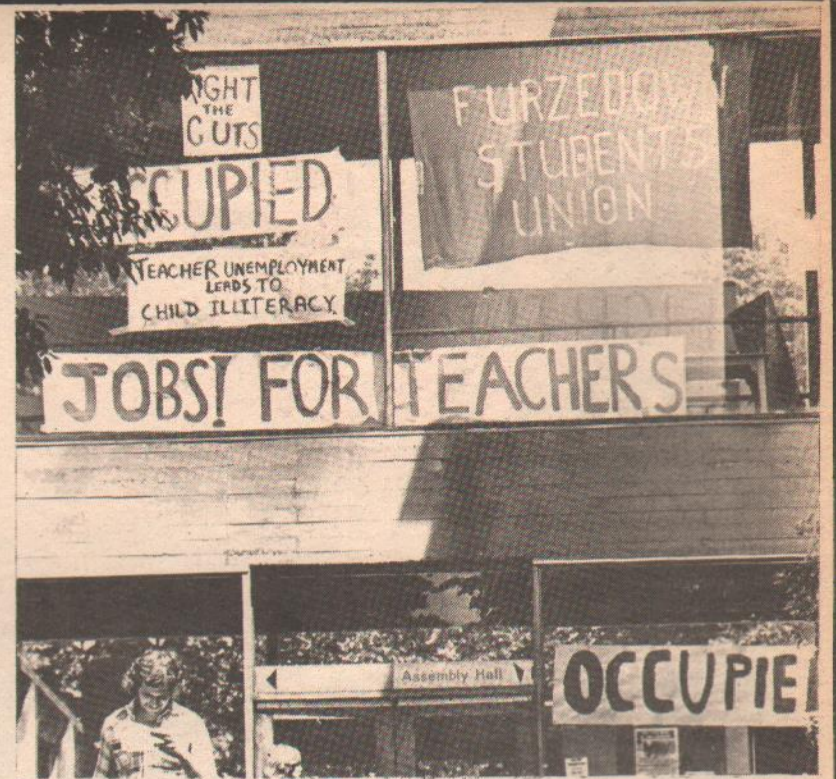
This decision will split the occupation movement between those who are weak and those who are strong. The occupations could have been developed to a new stage, however, if the Executive

had called for area and regional co-ordinating committees to convene special meetings in all the colleges taking direct action, in order to discuss how the struggle over the summer months could be organised given the difficulty of maintaining occupations in vacations.

In the North West area, for example, the students decided on a local day of action on 15 June when some colleges will come out of occupation and some will continue, with C.F. Mott College becoming the focal point for organising the campaign in the area. In this way students can unite around clear common goals, adapted to local conditions, instead of being told from above, 'It's over.'

There is only one conclusion to draw from the Executive's actions over the last few weeks. They are afraid of a mass movement of students that develops democratic forms of struggle. They are afraid of the fighting links that students have forged with teachers, lecturers, building workers and a host of others.

Above all, they are afraid of students joining with militant trade unionists to



Furzedown occupied. See story on page three.

criticise the leaders of the TUC and NUT, who refuse to take action in defence of jobs and against the cuts even when they have a clear mandate for action — the NUT on class size, the building workers' UCATT on the pay deal and 35 hour week, the TUC on cuts and unemployment.

The attacks by Charles Clarke in the press on the occupation of the Department of Education and Science; the attempts by Communist Party member and LSO secretary John Webster to spread lies about the LACC in the London trade union movement — these are the frightened actions of student 'leaders'

who, like their counterparts in the TUC, will do anything to ensure that a real fight against the policies of the Labour Government does not develop in case it embarrasses 'our friends in the trade union movement'.

Yes, a real fight does embarrass the leaders of the TUC — lefts and all, indeed CP members on many occasions. But that is because these people are afraid that mass struggle will upset their comfortable world of protest activities — not because they have any way forward for students and workers in the fight against cuts and unemployment.

Fruit and nut?

Nice to see Alf Wilshire, President of the National Union of Teachers, and Charles Clarke, NUS's answer to Biggles, getting together for a press conference on 7 June to explain their programme of 'action'. Was Alf about to be exposed by Charles demanding that the NUT implement its 1969 policy on no classes over 30 — after all, he'd been asked to by the Manchester conference?

Our thrusting leaders unnerved the assembled hacks with their daring. They would monitor the present situation and even expressed alarm about it — 111,000 classes over 35. This was the headline coverage on page 9 of the NUT's paper *The Teacher*. The student-worker unity the NUS Executive believes in was vindicated without a doubt.

But every page tells a different story. Page 1 had a two paragraph statement instructing NUT members to stay at work on 16 June and not join the lobby or demo.

The NUT leadership is taking no real action against teacher unemployment — and Communist Party members in the London Division have gone along with its opposition to action on 16 June. Instead the NUT Executive is concen-

trating its fire on teachers taking unofficial no-cover action in East London.

Unfortunately unofficial no-cover action can't provide the jobs nor the challenge to the NUT leadership that is needed. To posture — as the International Socialist-dominated NUT Rank-and-File has done — as the leadership of a no-cover campaign which can by-pass the Executive, and claim that this can provide thousands of jobs for the workless student teachers, is to invite both victimisation and defeat.

No-cover can only be a single tactic in a much broader campaign to force the NUT to implement its policy on class size and operate no-cover nationally. Trade unionists both inside and outside the schools in Tameside, Manchester, have given an example of the type of class-wide struggle needed to implement such demands, by their refusal to implement the new Tory Council's scheme to reintroduce the 11-plus and grammar schools.

A successful no-cover struggle as part of a wider class size campaign can be built by linking all NUT associations, schools and individuals into a united campaign, minimising any dangers of victimisation.

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)



LACC's picket of the DES — condemned by NUS President Charles Clarke.

The London Action Co-ordinating Committee — which is composed of delegates from at least 15 colleges taking action in the capital — has taken positive steps to combat the slanders of the Broad Left.

A meeting on 13 June rebuffed the charge of being a front for the Right to Work Campaign by passing a motion reaffirming LACC's autonomy and its full control of the arrangements for the rally

on 16 June. The poster produced by North East London Poly, which had suggested that these were joint ventures with the Right to Work Campaign, was withdrawn as giving a false impression.

LACC is now debating details of an ongoing campaign in the London area, thus taking up the responsibilities of leadership dropped by the NUS Executive.

WHAT'S ON

OPEN FORUM ON IRELAND: 'The lessons of other colonial wars, and the failure of British Government policy'. Speakers include: Pat Arrowsmith, Tariq Ali, Tony Kelly, Ken Livingstone, Tony Cliff, Eamonn McCann, Colin Sweet (BPC), Mervin Metcalfe. Organised by the Labour Movement Education. Sat 26 June, 10am, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq.

LEICESTER NAC: (1) Benefit concert, Fri 18 June, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, Vaughan Way, with Frankie Armstrong and Leicester Women's Street Theatre Group. Tickets 75p on door (50p in advance). (2) Working conference, Sun 27 June, 10am-5pm, AUEW Hall, Vaughan Way — to launch campaign for out-patient abortion clinic. Speaker: Sheila Abdullah. Creche available. Details from: J. Bruton, 35 Keythorpe St, Leicester.

NAMIBIA Support Committee presents an evening in solidarity with SWAPO: Songs for Liberation, with Peggy Seeger and Ewan McColl and traditional Irish music. Fri 2 July, 7.30pm (bar opens 7.15), Stoke Newington Town Hall, Stoke Newington Church St, N16 (73 bus). Tickets £1 (students, OAPs and claimants 60p) at door or from Namibia Support Committee, 21-25 Tabernacle St, EC2 (01-588 4342).

IS CUBA IMPERIALIST? The policies of the workers states towards Africa. Speakers: Robin Blackburn and Pat Jordan. Weds 23 June, 7.30pm, London School of Economics, St Clements Building (Room S101A). Organised by the Africa in Struggle Group.

DARLINGTON Trades Council demonstration against unemployment and closure of Middleton St George College of Education. Speakers: Ted Fletcher MP and a NUPE official. Assemble 11am, North Lodge Park, Sat 19 June.

LONDON NAC fund-raising disco. Sat 3 July, 8pm-2am, in Basement, 29 Skelton St, WC1. 50p at door.

SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT — pamphlet containing first thorough critique from a socialist perspective. 23p (inc p&p) from: Socialist Woman, 97 Caledonian Rd, N1

SOCIALIST WOMAN — new issue out now containing articles on women in Ireland, domestic labour, abortion in Eastern Europe, women and unemployment, the WWC campaign, etc. 23p (inc p&p) from: Socialist Woman, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

ROADGANG, touring socialist theatre group based in the North-East, need actor/musician from August. Equity rates. Apply in writing to: 5 Washington Terrace, North Shields, Tyne & Wear.

COME TO the Summer School for IMG members: 28 Aug-1 Sept. About £20 all in, including room and board in comfortable surroundings. Reading lists available soon. Book now as places limited! Will be held in Midlands countryside. Further details from: IMG National Centre, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

FOR CHEAP reliable IBM typesetting with fast turnaround, phone Frances, 01-837 9987.

FAST ACCURATE typist wanted to operate IBM Selectric composer — training on machine given if necessary. To start early June or early September. Phone Martin immediately on 01-837 6954.

LIFTS OFFERED in minibus to Morocco leaving 24 July. Possibility of return lift share petrol costs etc. Write Box RW6/5, 97 Caledonian Rd, London N.1.

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

At the same time more than seventy trade union branches in Coventry have asked for speakers from the occupations, with Chrysler shop stewards adding their support. In Bristol the Rolls Royce shop stewards were set to join students from Redlands on the lobby and subsequent march called by the London Action Co-ordinating Committee.

Not content with giving the campaign no leadership, the Broad Left have now moved in effect to knife it in the back. The attempt to turn the London Student Organisation/Broad Left sponsored demonstration on 15 June into a 'national' demonstration was clearly intended as the glorious finale to the mass action against unemployment and the cuts waged by the student teachers. But their pantomime involves nothing less than putting the jobs of 15,000 student teachers at risk.

forward through the summer break.

The basis for that already exists. It exists in the collective experience developed by student teachers in the struggle they have waged in recent weeks. It exists in the decisions arising out of that experience at the Manchester conference — the experience the NUS Executive has shown such contempt for.

The first and most essential thing is to develop a register at each of the colleges for unemployed students and teachers. This keeps the unemployed student teachers together as a group, a fighting force. The danger if this is not done is that the dole queue will become their 'perspective', the labour exchange their 'centre of activity'.

For the same reasons, despite the Broad Left's pronouncements, each area should look at the possibility of keeping selective occupations open through the summer — an organising focus for college and school leavers and a basis for developing general activity in the fight against unemployment.

The campaign can go forward if the links made with the trade union and labour movement in the past few weeks can be consolidated. Every college should set up a joint committee of students and trade unionists, turning the national support of the college lecturers' union NATFHE and the local assistance offered by rank and file NALGO and NUT members into ongoing activity.

LINKS

These should be action committees against the cuts — they already exist in several areas — whose job it will be to look into local government plans on public spending, establish the links between the cuts and the lengthening dole queues, and draw up concrete plans for more jobs in every area based on this information. All the lessons of mass democracy from the campaign so far — elected delegates reporting back to mass meetings and so on — should be implemented to get the maxi-

POLICE BLAMED FOR JOBS MARCH VIOLENCE

'The incident touching off the whole sequel of violence was an attempt by the police to take hold of one of the march leaders and to seize the lead banner.'

Why were 44 Right to Work Campaign marchers arrested on the final lap of their Manchester to London March on 19 March? Looking at the wider context of the march, the conclusion drawn by the Independent Trade Union Committee Inquiry into the events of 19 March is that 'an unjustified attempt to seize a march leader and grab the lead banner makes no sense unless the aim is to break up the march, discredit the marchers' cause, and stifle their protest.'

The Committee's report was published by Barnet Trades Council, who established

the inquiry on Monday 14 June. Amongst the evidence the committee took were statements from 46 witnesses, including over twenty passers-by and shop keepers who had nothing to do with the march. Its conclusions were unanimous.

INCIDENT

The incident was certainly not provoked by the marchers. As Ken Montague, Secretary of Barnet Trades Council, told the press: 'It is the police who have a case to answer - to answer to the labour movement bodies that supported the march.' Attached to the report is an agreement between the police and the organisers of the Right to Work March about the route of the march which

clearly shows that the marchers followed the agreed route.

The Committee's report continues that it has evidence which it accepts of 'excessive and indiscriminate violence by the police' during all the incidents. It lists among others 'beating up an unconscious man', 'indiscriminate use of truncheons', 'kneeing a marcher in the groin and delivering a karate chop to his neck, jumping on a man's stomach in the police station, beating with truncheons in the police station, telling a marcher in the police station to get on his knees and crawl to the cell'.

Barnet Trades Council members are well aware that the report cannot influence the individual trials of the arrested marchers. However, by putting the labour movement on the alert - the report has already been circulated to every Labour MP and General Secretary of trade unions attached to the TUC as well as to sponsors of the inquiry - it can help prevent another Shrewsbury. There the task was explaining what had really happened after the pickets were already in jail.

The report is in no doubt about the threat posed to the right to demonstrate by the attack on the march. It points out that throughout history, 'since the time of the Peterloo massacre, the Hyde Park and Trafalgar Square riots, and the unemployed meetings and marches of the 1930s, the right to protest has only been established in the face of the repressive violence of the authorities.'

Defending the 43 marchers who were eventually charged is part of the fight to retain that hard won right.



The Inquiry members were:
 Sydney Bidwell, MP
 Jack Collins, EC member National Union of Mineworkers *
 Jack Morrish, Group General Secretary, Society of Civil Servants*
 Dolly Sewell, Shop Steward, Patent Die Casting
 Chris Soutar, Convenor, Messrs Oliver Toms Ltd.
 Bryan Stanley, General Secretary, Post Office Engineering Union *
 Mike McGrath, EC member, Civil and Public Services Association *
 Ian Macdonald, Barrister; National Union of Journalists. *
 Chairman:
 Vincent Flynn, formerly General Secretary, Society of Graphical and Allied Trades*
 * Served in their personal capacity



FURZEDOWN COLLEGE, LONDON. College Principal Ms. Garvey believes in direct action - her own, that is. She once trained revolutionaries in China in the Thirties. Nowadays she prefers ripping down posters put up by student teachers occupying for jobs. That's after her attempts to get the exams cancelled and the occupation declared a fire risk failed. Indeed, the occupation called in the fire officer - who checked out the rest of the college and found six separate violations of the fire regulations by the authorities!

The Furzedown occupation has been completely solid, enforcing a total academic strike including continuous assessment with the support of the college lecturers in NATFHE, who have agreed to respect picket lines. Daily meetings with all college unions and mass meetings to which the 18-person occupation committee is responsible guarantee mass involvement.

For Ms. Garvey training revolutionaries in China was one thing, but in Furzedown

IN FOCUS

BEATING THE RETREAT

Just before the general election of February 1974 a member of the present Labour Government addressed a public meeting in Dover. The Tories were destroying the welfare state. Public spending had to be defended and extended. And where would the money come from? The speaker answered: 'We'll squeeze the money men until their pips squeak'. That speaker was Chancellor Dennis Healey.

It is his and the Labour Government's pips that have been squeezed by the money men in the last two weeks.

● In introducing the £5.3 billion loan from the central banks to the House of Commons, Healey said that 'no borrowing is involved'. The credits would be drawn 'only if needed'. Try telling that to your bank manager next time you ask for an overdraft facility! The loan is 'unconditional' for three months and may be extended for a further three. After that the International Monetary Fund will step in and demand 'sound financial policies' and a declaration of intent from the Government.

● Prime Minister Callaghan rejected demands for an early round of further public spending cuts. But £400 million of the £875m contingency reserve for public spending has been spent in the first month of the financial year (April), and all the Government has to do to enforce further cuts is to implement its cash limits on public spending.

Public spending limits were fixed on the projection of a 10 per cent inflation rate between 1975-76 and 1976-77. But the rate of inflation at the end of this year now seems certain to be still around 15-16 per cent. Higher inflation is a back-door method of implementing cuts in a situation where social service spending is not 'inflation-proofed'.

● The Price Code-embodiment of the price controls which are supposedly one of the conditions on which the TUC accepted the Healey pay deal - has been virtually ditched. Last week, Prices Secretary Shirley Williams caved in completely to the Confederation of British Industry and agreed to changes in the Code next month which will allow a substantial increase in profits. Lord Watkinson, head of the CBI, described the outcome as 'very satisfactory' - although this 'very satisfactory' outcome will not of course be announced until after the special TUC on 16 June.

● Despite its paper victory over a Tory vote of censure in the House of Commons, the Government has given no date for the reintroduction of the Aircraft and Shipbuilding Industries Bill, which would nationalise these industries. It may well have been shelved indefinitely.

Scandalous

But if the Labour Government's performance is pathetic, that of the 'lefts' is downright scandalous. After lurching about the Commons singing the Red Flag and trading insults with the Tories after winning a division on the Aircraft and Shipbuilding Industries Bill, they have done nothing to combat the Government's retreat.

NOT ONE of them even suggested that the only way to enforce nationalisation in the workers' interests would be to organise a mass campaign in the yards demanding nationalisation.

NOT ONE - when Healey presented as a victory the fact that he'd got a £5.3 bn. overdraft from the international bankers - actually demanded that the trade unions themselves organise a workers enquiry into the carefully engineered run on the pound, and that the banks and money markets be taken over. Yet even the Guardian has managed to unearth evidence that the British Steel Corporation, a nationalised industry, has been selling sterling in direct contradiction to every statement made by the Government on the pound.

NOT ONE has even started to campaign against Callaghan's statement that the new Labour Party programme which calls for more public spending is 'for the '80s'.

There is no doubt that a further wave of public spending cuts is on the way when the international bankers' loan cannot be paid back in six months time.

Empty Rhetoric

No amount of rhetoric from Callaghan and Healey about an export-led boom can hide the fact that while exporting is made easier because the pound is so cheap, British capitalism is nowhere near an industrial recovery. The key to actual expansion is industrial investment in new capital. Last year manufacturing investment fell by 15 per cent. This year it will fall again by a further 5 to 6 per cent. Compared with a figure of £2,130 million in 1970, industrial investment in 1976 will be just £1,700 at constant prices.

The Government's manoeuvres and the capitulation of the 'lefts' mean one thing for the working class. Faster-falling living standards, bigger cuts and more unemployment - for that is the only way productivity can be increased in a situation where investment is falling. That is the ransom that will be exacted from the labour movement by the leaders of the TUC on 16 June when they steamroller through acceptance of the Healey pay deal. It is the price that the working class will continue to pay until a class struggle opposition is built throughout the labour movement that can challenge the disastrous policies of this Government and throw out the traitors in the unions and Labour Party who police them.

CLASS JUSTICE

The sight of thousands of Angolans demonstrating outside the court in Luanda demanding the death sentence for 13 mercenaries on trial has shocked the British press. How can trial be 'fair' when the people who have been the mercenaries' victims dare to demand justice!

But the principle at stake is class justice. While the British press waxes indignant about legal paraphernalia, it conveniently forgets the systematic hounding, persecution and punishment to which it subjects Irish militants before they even get to the courts in Britain. In Angola the tables have been turned.

Socialists can only welcome the way the Angolan authorities have brought these paid killers to justice. And be at one with the Angolan people in demanding the death sentence lest others be tempted to go and fight imperialism's battles in the coming wars in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

DO

maximum possible involvement and commitment to the struggle.

We must not allow the Broad Left to bury the political lessons of perhaps the most important campaign ever waged by students - over the summer they can be further enriched. The major steps already taken towards developing a class-wide opposition to the Labour Government's policies can be consolidated, and the basis for a new phase of mass action in the autumn laid.

This is the kind of perspective we must look to and build for. Sylvia Renison, Area Chairperson-elect in Merseyside, has decided to approach the Merseyside and North West Areas to campaign for a national conference of all Area Coordinating Committees, Occupation Committees and NUS constituent organisations taking action to meet in Liverpool on 26 June. The idea is to debate the way forward for this campaign over the summer months. Perhaps in building for such a conference the campaign can teach the Broad Left a few lessons too.

AILEAN O'CALLAGHAN

'No alternative' trap catches NALGO delegates

'There is no alternative!' The war cry of the right wing in the labour movement echoed around the conference hall of Britain's fourth largest union, the National and Local Government Officers Association. The Executive was whipping the conference into line to support the 4½ per cent Government-TUC deal.

A motion rejecting the deal was defeated in a card vote by 380,417 to 144,361. Even so, general secretary Geoffrey Drain was obviously taken aback by the size of the opposition vote and by the subsequent success of a motion calling for a review of TUC policy, which was passed against the opposition of the platform. At a press conference afterwards he tried to reassure reporters that support was unequivocally 'unconditional'.

Heckling

Drain appeared at the conference with none of the left make-up which he occasionally uses. His keynote speech was devoted to extolling the achievements of this Labour Government. But by the time he had got to the Community Land Act he had to stop, drowned out by heckling and shouts of 'Haven't you heard of the cuts?' and 'One and a half million unemployed is most certainly an achievement'.

However, if the Executive was all over the place, so was the opposition. The main resolution putting forward opposition to the deal contained as one of its central features incomes policy! In fact the 'alternative economic strategy' contained in the motion was exactly the same as that proposed by the Executive, with the single exception that one contained opposition and the other support for the 4½ per cent deal.

The rank-and-file Nalگو Action Group, previously the principal focus for militants in the debates on incomes policy, failed to provide a political lead for the opposition. This was not unexpected. Earlier in the year they had spoken out against a proposal from Camden branch of NALGO for a special conference to discuss action on the cuts, on the bureaucratic basis that this would give the right wing in the union a chance to reverse policy already decided.

This failure to play a campaigning role in the union, and a sectarian refusal to take up actively initiatives which come from sources other than NAG itself, helps to explain the defeats suffered by the left in the recent elections — in which Will Fancy of Lewisham, the leading figure in NAG, lost his seat on the NEC.



NALGO members have shown their willingness to mount a campaign against the cuts—as in this lobby of the Greater London Council last year. But the leadership's main concern seems to be to wind it down as rapidly as possible. Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)

It has also started to bring out into the open the degeneration of the internal life of NAG. IMG members had to overcome attempts by NAG lobbyists to obstruct them physically from handing out leaflets at the conference. Only threats of resignation by members of NAG who were delegates to the conference prevented the rank and file of the union from being regaled with continuous chanting of 'sell-out' by the lobbyists, who had no leaflet of their own.

This is in the context of a situation where the right wing have got away with murder in the union. The Save Your Services Campaign, launched with such a fanfare in the press, has been run down to nothing. Rallies organised in the regions have been cancelled arbitrarily and without explanation. The official policy of the union in relation to frozen posts and the health service has been watered down or simply not implemented.

The necessity for unity of the greatest number of militants in the union around socialist policies is the best pre-condition for making sure that next year is not another wasted one for NALGO militants.

STEVE POTTER

Labour Party campaign on abortion rights?

A campaign inside the Labour Party for women's abortion rights could be launched this week from a fringe meeting organised by the Socialist Medical Association at the Labour Party Women's Conference.

Such a campaign is urgently needed as the time approaches for the report of the anti-abortion rump of the Parliamentary Select Committee (expected near the end of July), which is likely to make new restrictive proposals. In line with the changing tactics of the anti-abortionists, it is clear that these forthcoming restrictions will be veiled in claims that measures are needed to 'tidy up'

the 1967 Act 'in the interests of women'.

The anti-abortionists, including such notables as Leo Abse MP, have suddenly decided — in light of their success in pushing through restrictions last year with little political price to pay — that they are the best 'defenders' of the 1967 Act. But hopefully lessons have been learned from past experience, when the women MPs on the Select Committee who claimed to support the National Abortion Campaign succumbed to these tactics and signed their names to what they considered to be 'minor' restrictions.

Tribunal

When the National Abortion Campaign vigorously protested against any compromise, they hurriedly began collecting the needed 100 signatures to re-open the debate in Parliament. These signatures have been collected but there is little hope that the Government will give any time to re-consider these 'minor' restrictions — which have in practice been major infringements on the right of women to abortion.

The National Abortion Campaign has put out a call for intensive local campaigns to collect evidence on abortion for presentation at a National Tribunal in December. Its success will depend to an important extent on the ability to begin to involve the broadest possible forces, such as those inside the Labour Party.

This will be the best way to meet both the undoubtedly restrictive report we can expect from the Select Committee and the possibility of a further restrictive Private Member's Bill in the autumn.

Dodie Weppler

NO TO PRIVATE PRACTICE!

The private practice pushers awaited the result of the debate on the National Health Service at the NALGO conference with bated breath. It was the first test for the Campaign for Independent Medicine. And it failed.

The Campaign is sponsored by the drug monopolies, the private health care provision merchants and the British Medical Association, and has so far spent £150,000. This is peanuts to the drug companies, however, which last year spent £32 million on advertising in the UK. Most of these surplus funds were derived from the NHS. For example, Fisons pay £2,300 per ton for the raw materials for their anti-asthma drug Intal, which is then sold to the NHS for £2,800,000 a ton.

The NHS is also bled dry by private practice. Apart from siphoning off des-

perately needed staff to private hospitals, private practice inside the NHS is subsidised out of total expenditure. At New Charing Cross hospital this amounts to around £50 a week for just one bed.

It was facts like these which persuaded the conference to reaffirm union policy and reject proposals to allow private practice outside the NHS, by 843 votes to 643.

But if this is to mean anything, the NALGO leadership will have to devote more than the pitiful £500 they have so far spent on the campaign. More importantly, they have a clear responsibility to mobilise all their members in the health service to black private practice, and to implement fully proposals accepted by the National Executive Committee for a campaign against the granting of planning permission to private hospitals.

Students boycott Iranian prestige visit

Last week Iranian students in London held a series of pickets to protest against the official visit to this country of the Shah's twin sister, Ashraf. Ashraf isn't just the Shah's sister. In 1953 she played an important role in bringing about the CIA-organised military coup which put the present regime into power, and she is a symbol of the corrupt and barbaric nature of the Iranian dictatorship — she once had a journalist burnt alive in front of her in revenge for articles he had written criticising her.

Furthermore, her invitation to this country came at a time when the Iranian regime is stepping up repression enormously. Last month the Iranian police launched a series of raids on the homes of a number of militants, killing 21 of them in the space of three days.

GUN POINT

But Iran's huge oil revenues and cheap labour ensured at gun-point by the dictatorship provide a source of large profits for British capitalists. Callaghan and his Government are more concerned



Ashraf—not just a figurehead

with getting the biggest share of this loot into the pockets of British capitalists than with the repression of Iranian workers. They are thus prepared to collaborate in any way they can with the Iranian regime.

Last Saturday Ashraf visited Oxford to lay the foundation stone for a library which she is financing at Wadham College with several hundred thousand pounds out of the many millions she has robbed from the Iranian masses. In return for the money, Wadham is naming the library after her and has made her an honorary fellow of the college.

Ashraf and the Iranian regime usually prefer burning books and torturing people for reading them to building libraries. The Iranian capital, Tehran, has only five public libraries with a total of 150,000 books for a population of four million. She is having the library built at Wadham solely for the sake of prestige and propaganda, and the college authorities are helping her in this.

A packed meeting of students in Wadham the day before voted to oppose

this collaboration and to picket the college during Ashraf's visit. It also voted to boycott the facilities being built with the money donated by Ashraf. More than 300 people, including a large number of Iranian students, picketed the college entrances the following day, forcing Ashraf to enter from a building site at the back.

The initiative taken by the Wadham students is a good example of how students can concretely take up the fight against repression in Iran. At the moment the Iranian regime is trying to establish closer ties with colleges and universities all over Britain, in order to be able to send students selected on the basis of their political loyalty as well as keeping a closer watch on Iranian students in this country. Students should oppose all such links with the Iranian dictatorship and fight to pledge the NUS to take a similar stand.

For more information contact: Committee Against Repression in Iran (CARI), Box 4, 142 Drummond St., London NW1.

THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM

RED WEEKLY
SPECIAL

In the opening article of this special Red Weekly pull-out, TARIQ ALI explains what lies behind the racist upsurge, and the measures needed to combat it

The last few months have seen a new phenomenon in the industrial centres of Britain. The Asian communities have begun to wake up, with the youth in the forefront.

Unwilling to sit back passively and accept the provocations of Powell, the National Front and the police, they have fought back in Bradford, in Birmingham and even in Southall, which was once known as the most passive black community in the country. The fire-bombing of Pakistani workers' homes in Hackney, the killing of Indian students in North-East London, and finally the death of a young Sikh in Southall have acted as catalysts in the present situation.

The militancy of the Asian youth stands in sharp contrast to the complete failure of the elders of the Asian community to deal with the situation. The plethora of Indian and Pakistani welfare associations and sections of the Indian Workers Association have always answered the complaints of their younger members with the word 'patience'.

VICTORIES

For the last twelve years they have been able to maintain their grip in the communities by playing on the fear which haunts every first-generation black immigrant in Britain — the fear of police harassment, of deportation, of losing his job, of his family not being allowed to join him. The office-holders of the various associations have been able to appear as the necessary buffer between him and the forces of 'law and order'.

This is still the case, but with one important difference. The young Asians (most of them born and educated here) are now determined to break with the conservatism which has characterised their communities. They have challenged both the fascists and the police. And equally important, they have won some important victories.

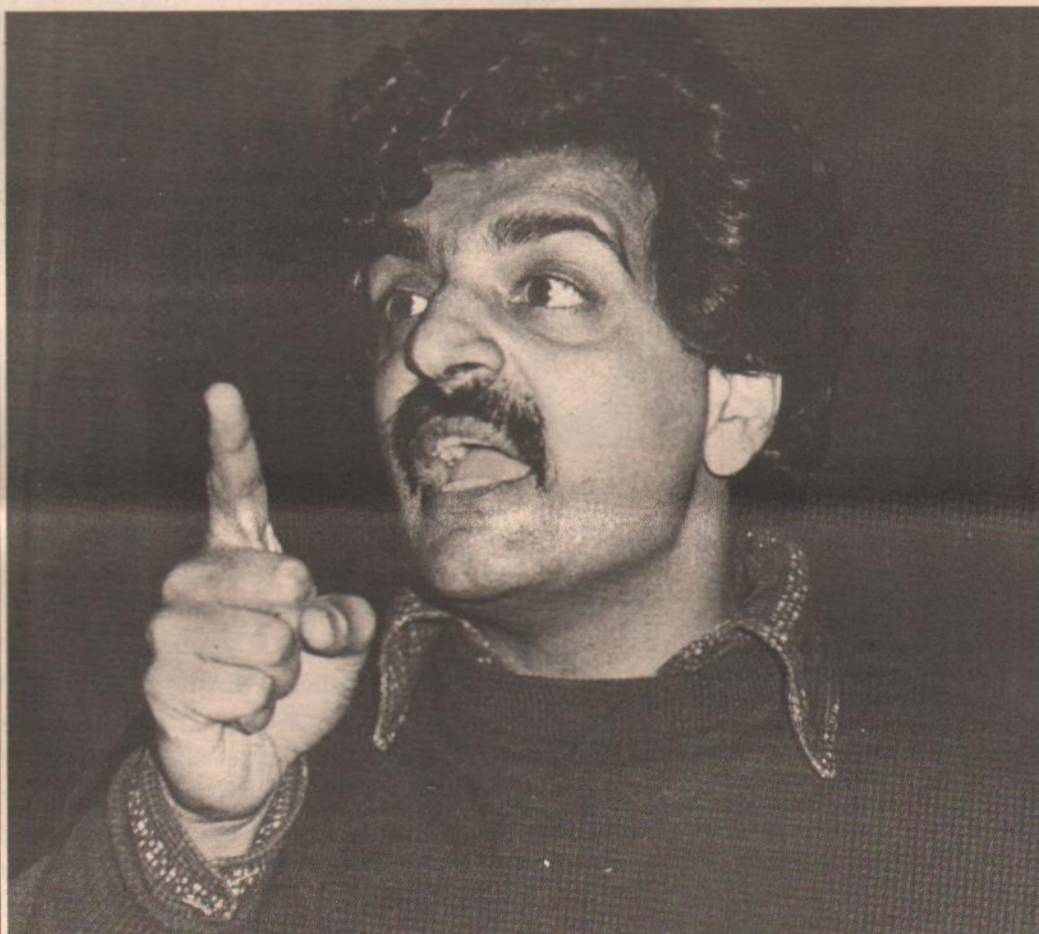
It is vital to stress that these victories have been won by taking to the streets, by extra-parliamentary actions and by going totally outside the framework of community reformism and labourism. In that sense the events of the last few months are a clear indication that things will never be the same again.

Those black militants who used to try and theorise the passivity of the Asians towards the racists and fascists in the past by stressing that 'fascism and racism are a white problem' and should therefore be dealt with by white anti-racists have received a severe reprimand in the anti-racist mobilisations of the Asians.

AND NOW?

The struggle against racism is, of necessity, a struggle which has to be waged on many fronts. All these fronts are of course inter-related, but each has its own relative independence. The first is a burning practical necessity: the need of black people to defend themselves.

All experience in Britain has shown that the police are incapable of defending the blacks. Deeply infected with racism itself, the police force — the bulk of which is in any case drawn from the most backward strata of white



HEAR TARIQ ALI SPEAK IN THE BUILD-UP TO THE 4 JULY DEMO —

Monday 21 June	Manchester	Wednesday 30 June	Coventry
	(Barnes Wallis Building, UMIST, 8pm)		(General Wolfe, Foleshill Rd, 8pm)
Wednesday 23 June	Bradford	Thursday 1 July	Bristol
Thursday 24 June	Leeds	Friday 2 July	N. London
Sunday 27 June	Birmingham	Saturday 3 July	Nottingham
Tuesday 29 June	Oxford		

Where no time or venue is given, please phone Red Weekly, 01-837 6954, for details

society — is in fact sympathetic to the demands of Enoch Powell and the National Front.

Racist attitudes in the ranks are so prevalent that few blacks have been able to stomach serving in the police force for more than a short period. All the efforts of Sir Robert Mark and the police hierarchy have been to no avail in attracting blacks to the police force — a unique tribute to the deeply ingrained racism which infects that body of men and women.

So the demand for black self-defence is neither utopian nor ultra-left. It is a necessity for the black communities — a point which has been made effectively in Southall by the comrades of the Asian Socialist Forum. It is, however, essential to stress that black self-defence can only develop from within the black communities themselves. Any effort to substitute for this could be both counter-productive and ineffective.

The second front is the fight against racism within the labour movement. As long ago as 1888, Keir Hardie seconded a resolution at the TUC demanding a halt to all immigration of unskilled workers. Today TUC leaders mouth banalities about racial justice and racial harmony — but at the same time call for the abolition of the work permit quota for foreign nationals and stricter checks on illegal immigrants. And of course they defend the racist

immigration laws.

A small fact symbolises racist attitudes in trade unions: the Transport & General Workers Union has tens of thousands of black members, but not a single black is a full-time official and there has been no dearth of applications!

The Labour Governments since 1964 have by their actions pandered to racism in an extremely blatant fashion. During the 1966 election campaign, Bob 'I'm not a racist but' Mellish, Crossman and Castle defended immigration laws equally vehemently.

There is no left/right divide in the party on the question of immigration. The left social democrats have not waged one single fight against any of the Immigration Acts, and even the Militant group, which has been active in the Labour Party for decades, has not managed to get immigration laws debated at a party conference.

At a recent informal meeting of Labour MPs with Maurice Ludmer (an anti-fascist activist from Birmingham), Phillip Whitehead MP went so far as to express the view that the recent orchestrated campaign of race hate in the press might have been inspired by none other than Callaghan! Whitehead is on the right wing of the party, but he has a relatively better position than many other Labour MPs on racism. Even so, he too supports racist immigration laws in practice.

Socialists in the trade unions must develop an active anti-racist current, supporting particularly the right of blacks to organise their own self-defence and to organise independently in defence of their interests inside the labour movement. This must be done even though it could adversely affect other activities. Recently in Blackburn, for instance, a number of shop stewards committees affiliated to the Right to Work Campaign withdrew when they discovered that the International Socialists behind it were not for 'kicking the blacks out'.

For the same reason, propaganda which blames racism exclusively on the bosses is wide of the mark. It ignores the fact that the racist poison runs deep in the British working class and an antidote can only be found if one first acknowledges this fact.

TORIES

It is simply not the case that the majority of the British ruling class have decided to play the racist card at this stage. Certainly some opportunist Tory politicians are calling for a halt to all black immigration (which is tiny in any case), and others are going a step further and floating the idea of voluntary repatriation. But they do this not because they are pawns of the CBI, but because they realise that it's a good way to win votes and further weaken Labour. And they are right.

Labour cannot outbid the Tories in racism. That is why it is in the long-term interest of the labour movement itself to mount a vigorous struggle against racism now. In the ultimate analysis a failure to do this will result in the weakening of the strength of the labour movement as a whole.

The third front of struggle has to be an increasing involvement in local and national politics by black people. There is absolutely no reason why candidates of anti-racist united fronts should not participate in local elections and in some areas in national elections. In Southall, in particular, the election of anti-racist councillors could provide a useful boost to the struggle as a whole.

UNITY

In Blackburn, Leicester and Bradford the fascists obtained an alarmingly high vote in the recent local elections. But what is really indefensible is the fact that there was no organised anti-racist intervention other than that organised by the far left groups. New probing operations in this field, too, have therefore to be carried out in the coming period.

Above all, it is vital for us to understand that the anti-racist struggle is likely to be a long and arduous one. It will require a consistent intervention by the far left groups to get the issue even debated within the labour movement.

What is needed today is unity in action of all forces opposed to the racist immigration laws in order to attempt to forge a broader unity. The International Marxist Group will be taking further initiatives in this direction in the coming period in order to ensure that the projected national demonstration on 4 July is a massive success.

** SPECIAL **

This is OUR news

Radio phone-in spots and the letters page of local newspapers are a haven for racist organisations to propagate their views. But not content with the normal facilities they offer to the racists, Tyneside's Radio Metro last week offered an exclusive studio spot to the Gateshead National Front organiser on their most important phone-in programme.

As soon as this was known, a picket rapidly assembled outside the radio station. Local and national media reported 100 militants 'laying siege' to the Metro studios. This was the product of immediate and united action by the left on Tyneside.

Called by the Tyneside Socialist Centre, support was drawn from the Newcastle Right to Work Committee (a body set up by Newcastle Trades Council), students in occupation at Northern Counties teacher training college, people who had attended an International Socialists meeting earlier in the evening, and Tyneside IMG.

'No platform for racists and fascists'; 'no poisonous attacks on the black community to be broadcast' — these were the demands presented to the directors of the radio station by the picket, which also demanded that a statement drawn up by the protesters should be broadcast. The first result of the action came immediately with

an announcement that the NF organiser had failed to appear and was reported to be 'in fear of his life.'

But the directors of Metro — one of whom is Sir John Hunter, director of the Swan Hunter shipyard — refused to allow the demonstrators' statement to be put on the air. At the same time phone calls likely to incite violence against the black community were streaming out from the studio despite previous assurances from the news editor that no such calls would be broadcast.

Incensed by this double-dealing the picket managed to occupy the studio. 'Some of my best friends are black', protested presenter James Whale when challenged on his own views on the race question. But the protesters began to conduct their own discussion after broadcasting their statement, stopping all calls with racist sentiments.

The mass audience gained by this direct action was able to hear the anti-racist militants explain how the wide coverage given by the press to the inflammatory speeches of Powell and his ilk is used to legitimise the thuggery and racial violence employed by the fascist groups. Their action has proved decisively that there is an alternative to simply wringing one's hands over the way in which the media fuels racist divisions in the working class.



Asians take to the streets in Tower Hamlets following a mass rally where every speech calling for self-defence received thunderous applause

ON THE M

THE MASSIVE DISPLAY of determination by black people and anti-racist whites in London last weekend shows the potential for building a campaign which can fight the attacks on the black community. But each step of the marches in Southall, Whitechapel, Newham and Brixton revealed the gigantic obstacles that will be put in the way of a fighting alliance between black and white workers.

The hostility of many white workers and youth shows two things: the depth of the crisis in British society produced by the attacks on living standards and jobs, which the trade union leaders assist the Labour Government in carrying out; and the mountain of racist sentiment built up over the years as a product of Britain's imperial past — the robbery and exploitation of India and Africa.

The speech by Kingsley Read of the National Party, who referred to the Southall murder as 'one down, one million to go', shows the genocidal features of the fascist groups who make the running as a result of Enoch Powell's racist campaign. Racists should be prevented from mouthing such murderous rhetoric.

It is through firm action against the racists that an alternative for the whites who follow their lead can be shown to exist. It is through such campaigns that an audience for a workers' alternative to the crisis can be gained.

But the laws which Labour and Tory Governments have introduced to deal with the 'problem' are racist in themselves. The Immigration Act seeks to put the blame for the crisis of British

capitalism of

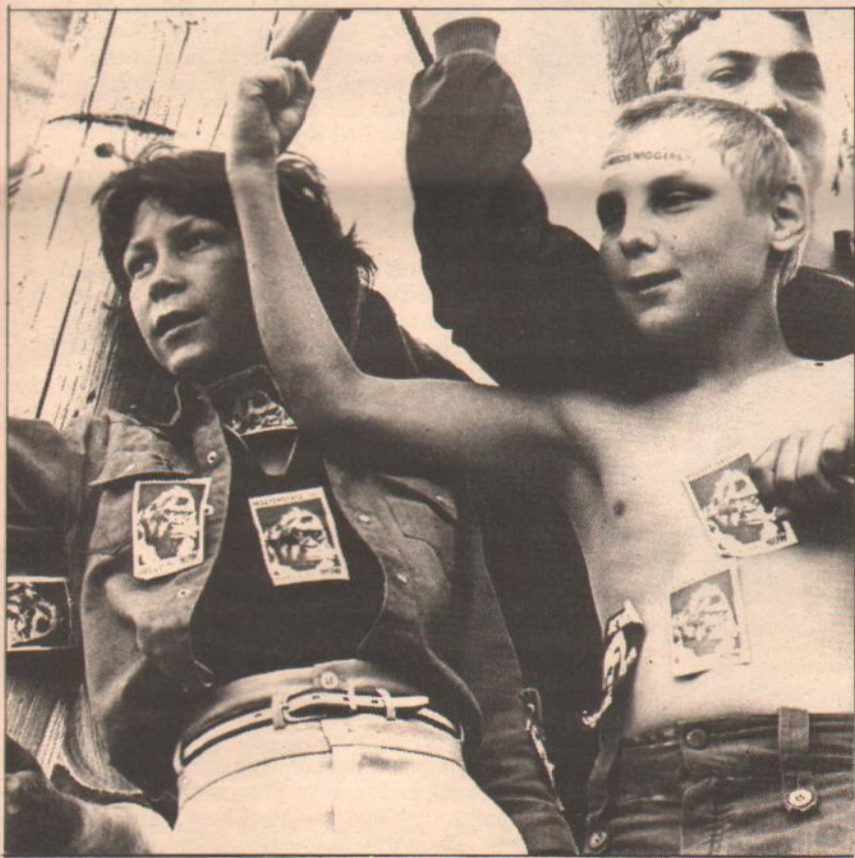
The Race
tions against
leadership of
state. The d
be seen by t
supporting i

This who
ment them,
That is why
at the centr

The way
head off the
youth shoul
sure that th
silence, and

The comm
tions and re
ment to tak
by turning o
organise the

It is cruci
the labour m
workers def



The National Party's new supporters — kids and juvenile football fans.

Mass Action

Versus Race Hate

'I have been told that I cannot refer to coloured immigrants, so you will forgive me if I refer to niggers, wogs and coons.'

The speaker was Kingsley Read, National Party leader and Blackburn town councillor. His obituary for Gurdip Chaggar? 'That was terribly unfortunate. One down, one million to go'.

This is the backdrop to a systematic pattern of racist attacks in East London, where Read was speaking last week. Last weekend, ITV's 'The London Programme', in an investigation of the attacks, came to the conclusion that they

showed all the signs of being premeditated and orchestrated.

The killing of the white youth in West Ham has had the same bucket of liberal whitewash as the deaths of Asians. All that is known about this offence (including the fact that the white boy's three brothers have been charged with affray) points to the Asian striking out in self-defence. The police persist in their nonsense that these events have no racial connection.

Tower Hamlets saw one of its biggest demonstrations since the war. Two thousand black people defied the racist terror that has resulted in an attack on

Asians nearly every night in the area over the last two months. In a rare case of police action, six white youths had been arrested on the eve of the march while driving around the area, and charged with possessing offensive weapons.

The meeting that was held in the Naz Cinema after the demonstration was stewarded by young Asians. Darcus Howe, of the Race Today collective, attacked the notion put forward by Pakistani leader Sibghat Kadri that Asians had to rely on police and Government action. Howe stressed the need for black self-defence to huge applause from the capacity audience.

Elsewhere in East London, in Newham, not far from where Kingsley Read was pouring out his venomous race-hate message, what had been planned as a demonstration against unemployment quickly took up slogans against the racist attacks and against the policies of the Labour leadership which allow racism to flourish.

The demonstration marched through an area devastated by unemployment. Figures from the East End show unem-

ployment touching 15 per cent with school leavers yet to be included. The failure to fight unemployment in the area with workers at the STC plant in Silvertown left to fight, and go down, alone and the closure of Poplar Hospital makes Newham a fertile breeding ground for racist ideas.

The march was continuously heckled and sometimes attacked. The atmosphere on the march was tense. One woman informed the marchers that they were just a lot of whites sticking up for the Paks. 'It's disgusting.'

Although the Asian contingent was small at the outset, the black contingent grew rapidly in size and spirit. Old men and young boys leapt out of their cars to join in.

The racist youth were taught a sharp lesson on this new spirit when their attempt to attack the marchers was driven back by a well organised volley of rocks from the Asian youth. For the first time in the East End, mass anti-racist marches and black self-defence have occurred. It is a strong foundation to build up a campaign to sweep the racists from the streets.

LABOR TWO- POL

'Jim Callaghan has started the campaign of the Labour Party against racism, insofar as he has spoken on the subject in recent speeches.' This was the dynamic reply given to Red Weekly when we phoned up Transport House for details of the Labour Party home policy sub-committee's decision to take 'action' on the race question.

This apology for inaction is in line with the decisions of the commi



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

MARCH!

to the backs of black workers. The Race Relations Act can and has been used to stop mobilisation, and has as its chief aim the integration of the black community into reliance on the capitalist system to which they have succeeded in this project can number of immigrant leaders who are on record as supporting migration controls. A battery of laws, and the police and courts who implement them, cannot provide an adequate defence for the black population. The call for the repeal of the immigration laws must be a central part of the campaign. The traditional community leaders have tried to discourage spontaneous militancy and self-organisation of the black community. It is the black youth who have made the difference. Killings over the last month have not been passed over in silence. They have exposed their racist character. Community leaders have told the youth to stop the mobilisation, to go to the police, the Race Relations Board, and the Government. But the youth have responded massively for the demonstrations and starting to form their own self-defence. This stand by the youth receives the support of the community as the first and necessary step towards the formation of defence squads.

OUR'S FACED POLICY

tee. Worried about the massive loss of Labour votes to the fascists in places like Leicester and Blackburn, it has decided to launch a publicity campaign against the National Front. But at the same time it also voted to call on the Labour movement not to participate in counter-demonstrations to the National Front.

trade unionists and the rank-and-file of the Labour Party. Neil Kinnock MP, for instance, a leading light in the Tribune Group, had a nasty experience last Thursday when a meeting on unemployment, called by Harrow Trades Council was disrupted by nearly 20 National Front members.

The police had to be called, and Kinnock, obviously shaken by the affair, told a somewhat astonished audience: 'We must stand up to the fascists. The rise of racism is aided by social democrats accommodating to their views. If argument fails with these people then violence may be needed. Restrictions of "liberty" have to be put in the balance with the need to stop these people.'

Perhaps Kinnock should address his remarks to Tony Benn, chairman of the home policy sub-committee, who voted to restrict the Labour Party to talk devoted to vote-catching rather than action.

LABOUR RANK AND FILE SPEAKS OUT

Interview with TOM HEWITT, secretary of Ealing/Southall Constituency Labour Party

What was the situation in Southall like before the recent events?

Well, for many years now — for fifteen years and more since the first immigrants came to this town — I think we've had a very good record of race relations. Indian and other immigrant people were very quickly assimilated into the trade union movement, they were very good trade unionists.

This was particularly the case after the Wolff strike many years ago — a situation where a rubber factory imported and exploited immigrant labour. The workers came out on a long strike. Irish workers at Wolff who came out in solidarity were offered the same credit facilities and support by Indian shopkeepers during the strike as Asian workers.

Of course, you always get backward elements in any society, and especially among older people. An example was the dispute over the Southall Labour Club.

For some time there had not been a black face seen in that club, though the club has specifically denied that there is a colour bar. They have no coloured members to the best of my knowledge. Last year, following a dispute in which some West Indian workers were refused entrance, Ealing Trades Council issued a call to boycott the club.

Our party responded by passing a resolution to vacate the premises we rented from the club forthwith. There was a hell of a struggle within the party over a period of months to try to get this implemented.

Both Southall LPYS and Hounslow Trades Council have passed resolutions supporting the right of blacks to organise in self-defence. Can you tell me how the local labour movement has responded to these local events?

If black workers feel that they are not being protected by the police, they will of necessity have to organise themselves into some form of defence organisations. But I should say that if it is black defence organisations that is divisive.

If the police do not perform their functions of protecting all people, and we are obliged to form groupings to protect ourselves, they must be made up of all sections of the working class. They must be workers defence squads, because to do it any other way is divisive and has inherent dangers.

So where does the labour movement in this area go from here?

This demonstration has shown that local

people want to live together in peace and can live together in peace. It's up to the Labour Party to fight alongside them in their struggles.

The leadership of the Labour Party nationally have failed absolutely to give a lead. Jenkins has allowed racist organisations to march through immigrant areas in Bradford and Birmingham. This is an abdication of responsibility.

If Jenkins has qualms about stamping on fascist organisations, then he should move aside for someone who doesn't have those qualms — who will stand up for the working class and actively oppose fascism.

If anything good has come of the last few weeks, it's that the complacency that has so far prevailed has been cast aside. They have no longer got a classical immigrant population that is prepared to accept being kicked around.

The kids that went to the police station, Sunday last, weren't immigrants — they were English kids, some of them born and bred here. And they are not going to be kicked around any longer. We have to rise to that, we have to pull them into our movement. We have to put the whole question on a class basis.

We are giving a lead in Southall. I hope the rest of the labour movement will follow that lead.

'Nothing would have happened without our unity and action'

Asian youth activist in Southall

We used to have really violent struggles in Southall up to 1970. There was a lot of racialism but then quite a majority of the population was white. There was trouble with the skin-heads. After that there was very little violence until 1976.

In the last two or three months, however, incidents have taken place. Gangs of white youth have come to Southall to beat up coloured people, not just the Asians. But nothing as serious as that Friday night when one of our brothers, Chaggar, died.

From there on we thought it was necessary for all the youths to get together if our so-called leaders were not prepared to do anything. We came together on the Saturday — started protesting, started gathering, outside the Victory pub where Chaggar was stabbed to death.

Then followed the action that was taken outside the police station to secure the release of those who had taken part in the action outside the Victory pub. None of these big demonstrations, the press and publicity, would have happened without that unity and action on Saturday and Sunday. If we had not taken this action it would have been just another death of a black person.

The police, community leaders, and the press insisted that it wasn't anything to do with racialism. It was just a fight and somebody was stabbed. Even when it was recognised that it was racist, we were told: 'Cool it down, everything possible is being done.'

None of our community leaders were really responsible for the action. They didn't approve of it. They only joined in when they thought that the youths might be prepared to go so far as to expose them.

This leadership has kept the true facts from our people. The number of different committees they have created have really divided our people, and that's why we have been unable to take really strong action in the past. This time the youths forced unity of all these different bodies.

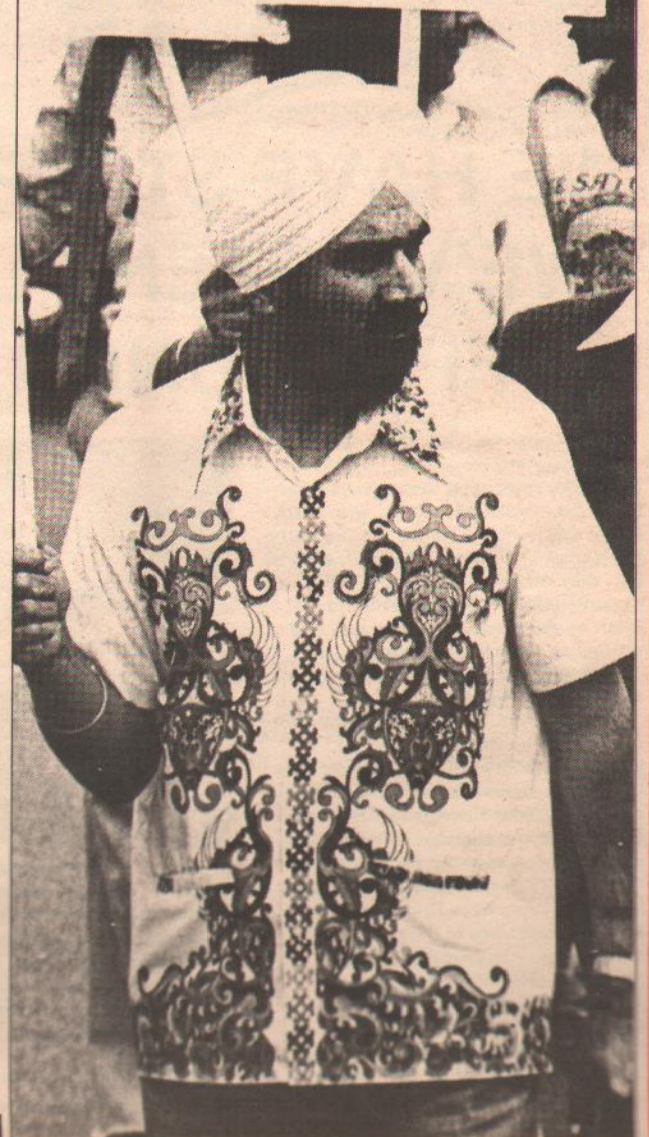
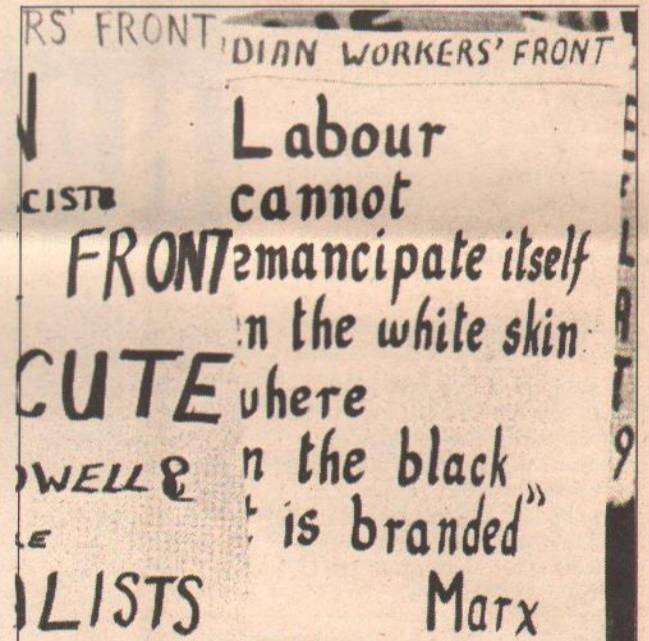
If nothing else, the death of Chaggar has united all these parties for the first time. Now there should be one committee for the community as a whole.

We've also felt it necessary to form our own Youth Association, so that we can force our leaders to listen to us. They cannot go around making decisions without us. It is about time that we youths were consulted. It is us who largely suffer from discrimination.

It's not that our parents don't suffer. But we don't want to go through the same experience as them. They accepted it. Our leaders still accept it. We won't accept it.

Most of this violence concerns the youths only. So the youths have to be consulted, not just on the local questions, but also nationally.

We are not prepared to accept as adequate the sort of protection we have had from police in the past. Either police protection gets better or we will have to — not take the law into our own hands — but we will have to do something to defend ourselves, in which ever way we think best.



The message from the Southall demo.

Last week's annual report by Sir Robert Mark, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, provided the mass media with another opportunity to publicise the worsening state of 'race relations' in Britain.

This was also the main theme of the memorandum by the Metropolitan Police to the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration, which the press sensationalised with provocative headlines like 'Violence, the police, and the facts we'd rather not face' (Daily Express), or 'New fears over race hate war' (Daily Mirror). The memo was more specific than Mark's report in that it identified West Indian youths as being the main source of group resistance to the police, stating that in twelve months 40 such incidents were recorded.

CHALLENGING

When the police say that there is a growing tendency for black youths to 'combine against police who are effecting the arrest of a black person or enforcing the law in situations which involve black people', what they mean in effect is that blacks, particularly the youths, are refusing to be passive victims of unwarranted molestation and brutalisation by racist or just generally oppressive police officers. Black youths are becoming more and more aware of their group strength in challenging the strength and authority of the police.

Both Mark and Marshall, the head of the Community Relations Branch, have been at pains to emphasise that the police are not racist in practice; in fact Mark claimed that race is of no consideration in nine out of every ten incidents involving black youths and the police. While accepting that not every member of the police is a racist, it is certainly true that the police include among their ranks a higher percentage of racists than does society as a whole - and the nature of their work means that they possess the institutional apparatus and 'legal' justification safely to translate their prejudices into action.

PERSECUTE

Examples of two such legal means which have been used to persecute blacks are the charge of affray and the Vagrancy Act of 1824. The charge of affray, introduced in 1970 and first used against blacks in the Mangrove Nine case, is defined as 'fighting to the terror of the Queen's Subject'.



STOP POLICE HARASSMENT!

All that the police in effect need to do after arresting masses of black youths is to find peace-loving citizens to give evidence that they were terrorised by the activity of black youths. However, they have been unable to get as many convictions on this charge as they would like for the simple reason that - as in the recent Swan Disco trial - terrified citizens are hard to find if there was no incident in the first place to warrant the attack by the police.

This charge is currently being used against ten of the twelve defendants charged after the Bonfire Night incident in Chapeltown, Leeds, where 200 black youths challenged the intrusion and attack by the police.

The Vagrancy Act of 1824 empowers the police to arrest 'every suspected person or reputed thief frequenting or loitering about or in any street, or any highway, or any place adjacent to a street or highway with intent to commit an

arrestable offence' (Section 6). Similar powers are given under the Metropolitan Police Acts 1829 and 1839, and the Municipal Corporations Act 1882. These antique laws have frequently been used by racist police to arrest innocent black working class people.

An important factor in the antagonistic relationship between the police and blacks stems from the very nature

of the role of the police in capitalist society. The police are the internal, physical arm of the State whose function is to maintain and protect the interests of capital. Any section of society which by its behaviour questions or threatens the status quo will confront the might of the policing arm of the State - except, of course, where the forces involved represent the interest of the ruling class.

CONFLICT

Anthony Judge, the editor of the Police Federation's journal *Police*, partly stated this conflict of class interest when he wrote in an article, 'The Police and the Coloured Community - a Police View': 'A policeman belongs to a tightly knit and insular occupation. He knows that it is his duty to maintain the rule of laws designed not only to preserve the peace, but to keep society's status quo. Students, hippies, squatters, political activists on the left, drug takers, Hell's Angels, women's libbers and the rest, all represent aims and values which are opposed to, and sometimes constitute a challenge to, the society which a policeman understands and respects.'

In this group are to be found young blacks, particularly the unemployed who inevitably find themselves at odds with capitalist society.

In his report, Mark expresses the desire for better relations between the police and the black community. Well, the recruitment of blacks into the police force or the creation of police-community relations officers is not the answer.

RAIDING

The answer partly lies in the police ceasing the only too frequent raiding of black clubs and other social venues and black homes; the racist molestation and brutalisation of individual blacks. And finally, if Mark seriously wants improved relations with blacks, then he must order his men to direct their energies towards subduing the fascist forces which are responsible for both verbal and physical attacks on blacks.

But as long as the police defend the interests of the ruling class, it is inevitable that there will be a conflict with those sections of society who say that those interests are not theirs and must be challenged and defeated in order to build a society which corresponds to the needs of the great mass of people.

Tunde Anthony

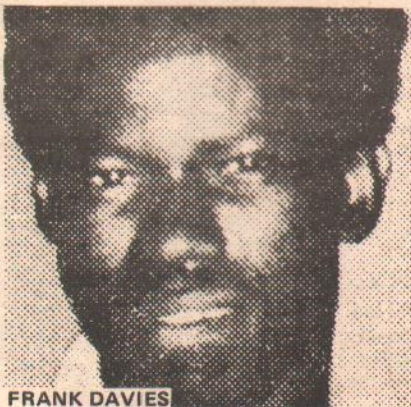


'WE HAVE STOPPED PLEADING. WE'VE BEEN PLEADING FOR FIVE HUNDRED YEARS.'

That was how the three black defendants in the Spaghetti House siege trial at the Old Bailey responded to the court when their trial opened last week. With Black Power salutes, and banners reading 'Bury fascism' and 'Freedom from police brutality', they turned their backs to the whole shabby, lying misrepresentation of the affair by the press, police and law, and refused to recognise the court.

Who are the defendants, and why are they making this protest?

Wesley Dick, Tony Munroe, and Frank Davies have all three been involved in black community politics, most notably the Marcus Garvey School for black children racially downgraded under the present education system. Wesley Dick was also involved in the Pan African Congress. Their commitment to these struggles sprang from first-hand experience of conditions in the black communities today - large-scale unemployment (twice the rate for whites, rising to 40-50 per cent amongst black youths in some cities), homelessness, discrimination in schools, and continual, increasing racist harassment by the police.



FRANK DAVIES

All this, together with the political demands issued by the three during the siege, was concealed by the police and the press at the time of the siege, and is now being concealed during the trial. This way they hope to present the final verdict as a sentence for a common crime, without political connotations or motives.

But although the authorities claim

that they want to keep politics out of the affair, their motive for doing so is itself clearly political. The racist harassment of countless young blacks (without jobs or homes because of discrimination from birth) results from a clear policy of quelling youth opposition with bullying brutality, frame-ups and heavy sentences.

So also the policy applied to these three has been clearly to isolate, discredit and deny the relevance to the case of the institutionalised discrimination and harassment which reduces young blacks to a simple struggle for survival (and hence the impasse of petty crime) under the present set-up.

The real guilt in the Spaghetti House trial lies with the racist system of exploitation, discrimination and harassment which put Dick, Munroe and Davies in the dock - and with all those who go along with it. Our task is not to mourn its victims but to fight to put an end to that system itself. Or we too will end up sharing the guilt.

Sheila Matone



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE IMG?

We have been at the forefront in mobilising against the racist upsurge, not only in the labour movement but also among the black communities (at right: special leaflets produced in Urdu and Punjabi).

If you would like to know more about our activities, fill in the form below and send it to: International Marxist Group, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

NAME

ADDRESS

Special leaflets produced in Urdu and Punjabi. Text in Urdu and Punjabi script.

7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast

The Queen's Island, home to the Belfast shipyards of Harland & Wolff, has been notorious for generations as a place where the Protestant workers are likely to turn violently against their Catholic workmates in times of communal unrest. Always a Loyalist stronghold, the shipyards have come to symbolise Orange supremacy and its stablemate, sectarian bigotry.

At no time have more than 400 Catholics been employed out of a workforce of 10,000. The shipyards are the perfect illustration of the system of patronage that has operated in favour of 'loyal' workers since the establishment of the Six County statelet — and, indeed, before that.

In the same way that Loyalist workers once viewed the link with Britain as unbreakable, so too they have always believed that the shipyards were sacred, and that the jobs of the 'loyal brethren' would always be maintained by the British Government. But developments in recent weeks have done

much to shatter this confidence.

Apart from the rapidly mounting sectarian death-toll, the foremost question in the minds of Belfast workers is now what happens when the 'Protestant shipyard for Protestant workers' goes bust? Until recently the question was 'if'; but now a claim has been made that some 5-6,000 members of the workforce will lose their jobs at the end of the summer, when the £60m put in by the Labour Government last November runs out.

Government sources have recently been hinting strongly that the original lease of life until 1978 has been dramatically curtailed, and the possibility of closure in 1976 is in the air. Such a step would at a stroke double the high unemployment rate to 20 per cent, bring commercial activity in Belfast almost to a standstill, and lead to widespread social distress.

Because the shipyards are isolated in a corner of East Belfast, many believe that their closure would produce only isolated hardship in the narrow streets of Ballymacarrett. In fact, up to

500 companies provide goods and services for ships assembled at Harland & Wolff. As the Irish Times pointed out some days ago: 'Right through the North's engineering industry, the shipyard is a valued customer.' The effect of closure, therefore, would be far from limited.

More than 700 companies have shut up shop in the Six Counties over the last five years; there are now more than 50,000 workers on the dole; and another 5,000 skilled workers will be added to the jobless total this summer with the closure of the defence establishments at Sydenham, Aldergrove and Antrim and of the Rolls Royce and STC factories. Even without massive lay-offs at the shipyards, the unemployment level in the North is expected to reach 18 per cent by next Christmas.

But is the situation at the shipyards that bad? On the surface, yes. Weekly losses have risen above the £500,000 limit, all the ships currently being built are on loss-making contracts, and the ten ships on the order books could be cancelled as their owners — firms like the Maritime Fruit Corporation — face liquidation.

In the final analysis, however, the argument is not so much whether the British Government is willing to pump more money into Harland & Wolff, but whether it can afford not to — whether it can afford politically to shut the shipyards down. With direct rule increasingly under attack from Loyalist and Republican alike, closure would inevitably precipitate a bloody political crisis which could make the last seven years look like a schoolyard brawl.

Side-by-side with the developing crisis at the 'Protestant shipyard' has

been the developing crisis of the Loyalist coalition. The latter erupted with the disclosure that the Official Unionist Party (OUP) has had a series of five 'secret' meetings with the Social Democratic & Labour Party, leading to cries of 'betrayal' from the OUP's coalition partners, Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party and Ernest Baird's UUUM.

Such rows in the Loyalist camp are nothing new, of course, and it would be foolhardy at this stage to assume that a break-up is imminent. This is particularly so given the proposals for negotiated independence apparently discussed at the OUP-SDLP talks.

Intransigent

Amongst Loyalists, independence has been much debated; and although it has never acquired mass support, it has at different times gained the enthusiasm of the Loyalist paramilitaries. Some months ago the latter held a conference to discuss the question, and have commissioned a survey to produce detailed plans. With the fears that exist amongst Loyalists that Britain is in the middle of economic withdrawal, negotiated independence must seem increasingly attractive.

But growing support for independence should not be confused with support for 'power-sharing' with the SDLP. On that the Loyalists appear as intransigent as ever.

Politics will undoubtedly remain at the centre of life in the Six Counties during the summer months, but it would be optimism indeed to think that it will not be politics by other means.

Forum on Ireland

The Troops Out Movement believes that opposition is growing within the British labour movement to the continued presence of British troops in the North of Ireland. In order to develop this opposition, the Troops Out Movement is organising a large-scale fact finding labour movement delegation to Ireland on the weekend of 18 September.

During the build up to this delegation the TOM is organising an Open Forum on Saturday 26 June at Conway Hall in London. This is to help stimulate the widest possible debate within the labour movement on a real and lasting solution to the 'Irish Question'.

Speakers invited include one of the thirteen Westminster MPs supporting the delegation and also David Thornley, the member of the Dublin Parliament recently expelled from the Irish Parliamentary Labour Party. Other speakers will include Colin Sweet of the British Peace Committee; Ken Livingstone, Lambeth Labour Councillor; Mervyn Metcalfe, Secretary of Coventry Trades Council; and Tony Kelly of Newham North-East Labour Party.

COLONIAL

The morning session (starting at 10 am) will examine lessons to be drawn from other colonial wars. For example, during the Algerian war of independence, the French Government propaganda continually misrepresented their repression as being a fight against 'barbarism'. Similarly the British Government today claims that Irish Republicans are nothing more than common criminals and thus no longer entitled to political prisoner status.

Speakers will include Tariq Ali on Algeria and British withdrawal from India, Tony Cliff on British colonialism in Palestine, writer Eamonn McCann, and pacifist Pat Arrowsmith.

There will be creche facilities available during the Forum; and afterwards there will be a social in 'The Green Man', Euston Road, from 8 — 12.00 pm.

SPANISH WORKERS TAKE ON MULTINATIONAL

Interview with worker from Massey Ferguson's Spanish subsidiary, Motor Iberica

For the past seven weeks, 3,500 workers of Motor Iberica, the Spanish subsidiary of Massey Ferguson, have been involved in a bitter struggle with their multinational bosses. Starting as part of the struggle of the Barcelona engineering workers, the Motor Iberica strike has continued alone for over a month.

The Motor Iberica workers have had to face an intense campaign of harassment by their bosses, the police and right-wing thugs. The management have so far dismissed some 1,800 workers for striking, and have been advertising their jobs in the local papers. One workers' leader at the factory has had his house fire-bombed, and another his car set on fire.

But the Motor Iberica workers have drawn strength from their own unity and the solidarity of other workers. For several weeks workers at Perkins in Madrid (also part of Massey Ferguson) have been banning overtime in support, and factories throughout the Barcelona area have collected £10,000 for the Motor Iberica workers' 'resistance fund'.

ance fund'.

One of the most important sources of strength has been the solidarity of strikers' wives and families. From the first days of the strike wives started coming along to the mass assemblies. Eventually they were admitted to the assemblies (because, the men said, it was easier than being bombarded with questions when the meetings were over), and finally the women began to organise their own assemblies.

Last week some 300 women and their children began the occupation of a local church in order to highlight the strike (which has been totally boycotted by the Spanish press) and to appeal for support.

The following is part of an interview with a member of the Workers Commission at Motor Iberica who recently visited France with a delegation seeking solidarity from Massey Ferguson workers there. He is a militant of the Liga Comunista, a Spanish sympathising organisation of the Fourth International.

Can you explain how the engineering workers' strike broke out in Barcelona?

The workers went into struggle over the problem of the provincial agreement for small and middle-sized firms, which don't have their own agreements like the big factories. They were demanding a minimum salary of 26,000 pesetas [about £50 a week]. Out of 330,000 engineering workers in the area, 180,000 took part.

Did the big factories take part?

The most militant factories in the region didn't take part for two reasons: first because of the wave of repression and sackings of last year, but above all because the CUD ('United Democratic Candidates' — shop stewards in the official Government-run 'unions', elected on an oppositional platform headed by the Spanish Communist Party), who are the dominant influence in these firms, did nothing to extend the movement.

Wherever we had militants there were assemblies with the election of delegates, but in the rest of the big factories there was a total boycott. The only big factory to go into struggle was Motor Iberica.

Why did Motor Iberica continue after the engineering strike was called off?

On 4 May, Motor Iberica decided to continue the strike alone. We have three factories in Barcelona very united with each other. The struggle has gone on to obtain the rehiring of all those sacked in recent years, and a uniform rise of 4,000 pesetas for all. During the strike 124 workers have been sacked and the strike goes on because the management won't cancel these sackings.

Morale is fantastic. For example, the wives and kids are involved in our assemblies.

Motor Iberica is part of a multinational — Massey Ferguson. This is why we have decided to send a delegation from the Motor Iberica workers' commission to France to contact the unions in the Massey Ferguson factories here.

POLICE ATTACK SINN FEIN

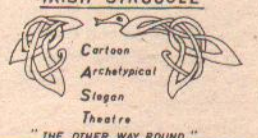
THE POLICE appear to have launched a major attack on supporters of the Provisional Sinn Fein in this country. Using the notorious Prevention of Terrorism Act, at least thirteen people have been picked up in recent weeks and held without outside access for up to seven days.

The most recent case is that of Luton factory worker Jim Reilly, who was arrested early on Tuesday 8 June. Although he has been separated for five years, the police also raided the home of his wife and young daughter. Reilly was finally released without charge after five days of constant interrogation.

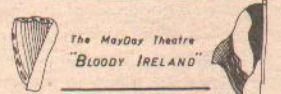
In the last eighteen months more than 1,600 people have been held under the PTA. Over 96 per cent of these were subsequently released without charge. In other words, as we have always said, the Act is chiefly an instrument for harassing Irish people as a whole.

The Trade Union Committee Against the PTA is holding a major public meeting next Thursday 24 June. Among the speakers will be Jim Reilly. The meeting starts at 7.30pm in the Willesden Junction Hotel (close to BR and tube stations). We urge our London readers to support it.

AN EVENING OF THEATRE about the IRISH STRUGGLE



"THE NON-STOP CONNOLLY CYCLE" (excerpt) by Margaretta D'Arcy & John Arden



THURSDAY 17 JUNE, 7.30-10 p.m. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1 Entrance 50p. All proceeds go towards Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland



ITALY - THE REAL

With the Italian elections on 20-21 June now only a few days away, press speculation on the 'threat' that the Italian Communist Party will enter the government has continued to mount. But what concerns the capitalists is not so much the Communist Party itself as the tremendous movement of struggles by the Italian working class which form the backdrop to the elections.

To understand the huge social struggles surrounding the

elections, *Red Weekly* interviewed ANNA LIBERA — the correspondent in Italy of the French Trotskyist daily *Rouge*. The articles below, based on this interview, bring to life the bare election statistics. They show how the demand for a Communist Party-Socialist Party government must be tied to developing the struggle and self-organisation of the working class.

WORKERS FORCE DOWN PRICES

Inflation in Italy has been almost as high as in Britain — the annual rate was still over 13 per cent in March.

In the fight against the effects of inflation, however, the Italian working class has one vast advantage over its brothers and sisters in Britain. As long ago as 1945-47, the Italian working class won automatic cost of living increases to compensate for inflation (a sliding scale of wages).

This system, in the way it is operated, doesn't give full protection against inflation — for example, the allocation of items on the price index was drawn up in 1955, so it no longer corresponds to workers' real cost of living — but it nevertheless represents a tremendous gain for the working class. In some industries particularly the metal industries, special protection has been gained for low paid workers. This has enabled Italian workers to defend themselves far better against the effect of price rises than the working class in Britain.

The defence and extension of this sliding scale of wages is going to require a real struggle, however, as the capitalists attempt more and more to take this protection away from the working class. Only a fortnight ago the head of the Bank of Italy called publicly for the ending of the sliding scale. This may well herald a new battle over the system.

But the sliding scale does not give complete protection — and of course it does not apply at all to many workers not in unions, in poorly unionised industries, and so on. In the last years, therefore, there have been a whole series of direct struggles against price increases.

INCREASES

Two years ago, in Spring 1974, there was a struggle against increases in the cost of electricity, gas, transport and other services. In Turin a movement began to spread through the city called the 'self-reduction movement', launched by the left wing of the trade union movement.

When the price increases took place the workers in the factories said that they would not pay the rises and would continue to pay the old prices. With the buses, for instance, the workers even printed tickets with the old price which they used instead. Members of the workers committees at Fiat went to the bus terminals and made propaganda for people to pay the old prices, handing out these printed tickets with the old prices.

This move was supported by workers in the transport system.



Not only did they accept the tickets printed by the 'self-reduction movement', but when people came with the new priced tickets they said that it was too much. From these developments a real mass movement started, and eventually the government had to reintroduce the old prices.

The second big example of 'self-reduction' was with the electricity prices. The workers printed the forms used to pay the bills with the old pre-increase rate. When people came to the office to pay the bills the workers gave out these cheaper forms and not the new ones, and told people to pay the old price.

On a less massive way this type of struggle has been taken up in other towns — particularly by unemployed workers. In Naples, where there is an important unemployed workers organisation of around 10,000 people, the unemployed pay no transport charges at all and do not pay any of the rates for electricity, gas and rents.

They have also developed self-defence against bailiffs who come to seize property, disconnect the services, etc. for non-payment. The workers in-

involved in these struggles were also defended by the organised workers.

MARKETS

Another type of struggle against price increases developed after the first government crisis in January. The emergency economic measures then created another massive round of price increases — in one week petrol prices went up by 50 per cent, heating oil prices by 25 per cent, and there was a 30 per cent increase in the price of meat. The workers were very badly hit, particularly by the food increases.

Some sections of the workers, particularly those under the influence of the revolutionary left, responded by setting up their own markets in the workers districts in cooperation with the peasants and farmers. Sometimes this was done right in front of the big supermarkets where the prices were high. People were able to see concretely the difference in prices and therefore the profits being made by the food distributors and supermarkets.

In Milan and Turin, where the 'Red Markets' had a real mass impact, the Metal Workers Union organised big markets on the same principle. In Florence, where there is a left-wing regional council, they were forced to undertake direct distribution from the farmers to the inhabitants. These measures of course aren't a solution in themselves, but are a very effective way of making agitation about who is responsible for inflation, and highlighting the capitalist profits in distribution.

COMMUNES

At the same time the revolutionaries have called for nationalisation of the main food manufacturers and distributors, and for the farmers and peasants communes to sell food directly to the workers and cut out the capitalist distributors. In some cases the traditional workers movement has taken up this demand. This is very important, because such a demand links the struggle at the basis to the question of a general political alternative — the formation of a left government.



SOLDIERS GO ON STRIKE

Growing cracks in the state apparatus in Italy have the imperialists seriously worried. Dissent is spreading in the judiciary, in the police, and most of all in the army. This is an immense boost to the revolutionary thrust of the working class.

The movement in the Italian army came out of the general radicalisation of 1968/69. The first episode of organised revolt took place in 1971 at the Casale Monferrato barracks near Turin. Since then the number of organised demonstrations has mushroomed, and on 4 December 1975, Italian soldiers held their first national strike.

The movement arose in protest against bad conditions. Conscripted soldiers are compelled to carry out 15 months of service. During this time they are paid miserable wages, have to be subsidised by their families, and are stationed far from home.

Another major flash point was the stringent disciplinary code of the army, which means that soldiers are frequently obliged to rise their lives in dangerous manoeuvres. To fight back against these conditions, a rank and file organisation called 'Proletarian in Uniform' (Proletari in Divisa — PID) was formed with a regular newspaper.

Chile

The events in Chile provoked a broadening of the struggle onto the terrain of trade union and political rights, involving a struggle against military laws and courts. The Italian military hierarchy cracked down. Tighter control over the soldiers was to be enforced through a new disciplinary regulation proposed by the defence minister Forlani.

The soldiers replied by holding a national assembly of democratic soldiers in Rome on 22 November 1975. Two hundred and twenty delegates participated, 60 of whom were elected by assemblies of various companies and barracks. A motion to hold a general strike was unanimously approved, and 4 December was set as the date.

On that day, for the first time in Italian history, soldiers all over the country marched in every major city against the 'attempt of the military hierarchy, of NATO and of the government to suffocate any movement aimed at the development of democracy and improved living conditions of soldiers serving in the Italian armed forces'. They also demanded the right to organise, stressing that they identified their struggle with that of the whole working class against capitalist repression.

'THREAT'



Organising the unemployed

The struggle against unemployment in Italy developed in a rather different way from that in the rest of Europe. For a start the increase in unemployment was much lower than in other countries. This was partly because at the beginning of the present economic crisis the rate of unemployment was higher than in other countries, and partly because the bosses' immediate attack was to cut wages in relation to the cost of living rather than a drive to cut jobs. At the beginning of the latest crisis, therefore, unemployment didn't appear to the workers as their chief problem.

Multinationals

During last autumn and winter, however, the offensive was stepped up by the multinationals - this attack being part of their strategy of withdrawing their investment. The Innocenti-Leyland lay-offs, which were widely reported in Britain, were part of this offensive. Imperial Typewriters also started lay-offs, and so did Harris-Moda, the textiles and clothes firm.

The general answer of the workers to this attack was to occupy the factories. Innocenti-Leyland was occupied from November to the beginning of March. In Harris-Moda, which has 70 per cent women workers, the factory was occupied for a year.

In the train of this offensive by the multinationals there followed a series of lay-offs and closures in smaller Italian firms - particularly in textiles and food. These were also met with occupations.

Innocenti

The outcome of the struggles has been rather uneven, however - largely because the Communist Party's programme rejects nationalisations and therefore doesn't give any clear goal for the workers' struggle. Thus the Innocenti struggle didn't end in the massive victory that could have been achieved. After months of struggle the factory is to stay

open with a complete change in production - for example, producing motor cycles - but while most of the jobs were saved, several hundred were lost.

Where the struggle in Italy has developed most significantly, however, is in the organisation of the unemployed. In Naples, for example, 10,000 unemployed workers are organised. This started in 1972 when unemployment was running at over 10 per cent. Committees were set up to apply pressure on the labour exchanges, which were controlled by the Christian Democrats.

In Naples the latter ate real gangsters, and they used these exchanges for electoral purposes - saying that they would give you a job if you and your family voted for the Christian Democrats. The job allocation was totally discriminatory, and jobs were never given to the workers who most needed them.

Allocate

The committees set up by the unemployed workers organised to ensure that the jobs were given to the people who most urgently needed them, and they were supported in this by the unions in the exchanges. At each exchange the committee compiles its own list of the unemployed, how long each person has been out of work, the size of the family and so on. Every month the committees allocate the available jobs according to who has been unemployed longest, has the largest family, etc. They also call demonstrations and other activities. This type of organisation is now spreading to Milan, Turin and other cities.

The next spread of the struggle came in 1973 when the city, under pressure from the unions and unemployed, created a limited public works scheme - doing useless jobs, of course. The workers formed elected committees within this scheme, whose first struggle was to oppose a move by the regional

council to end the scheme.

The committees have also started to take action for jobs. For example, in Naples they took up the case of a big private hospital which was clearly understaffed.

The unemployed workers committees made contact with the unions in the hospital and 150 unemployed workers started working in the hospital distributing food, doing porters' jobs and so on. By these means they made propaganda to show up the understaffing, how the patients were affected by this, and so on. In this way a real campaign for an increase in jobs was built.

Recognition

These types of committees at the labour exchanges and in the public works scheme developed the struggle for recognition by the official trade unions. This is particularly crucial in Italy - for example, in 1970 the fascists of the MSI were able to penetrate and take over movements of the unemployed in the South of Italy. This time the unemployed workers saw the need to unite with the employed workers.

Lotta Continua, which is one of the main groups of the revolutionary left, played a very important role in bringing forward the demand from 1973 for a separate organisation of the unemployed to take up their specific problems, but for this to be linked to the unions. They succeeded in this struggle and now call themselves Organised Unemployed: CGIL-CSIL-UIL (the initials of the three Italian trade union federations). This is a democratic structure with more than 10,000 members.

Fighting for women's rights

The organised movement of women against their oppression developed later in Italy than in other European countries. Although small women's liberation groups were set up in the early 1970s, they remained isolated. Even the divorce referendum of May 1974 saw no large involvement of women in an organised movement.

Things really began to change, however, when the campaign for a referendum on abortion was launched. This in turn sparked off a discussion in Parliament beginning last autumn. The Communist Party's line of 'historic compromise' with the Catholic Christian Democrats meant that the CP refused to fight for the right to abortion - it claimed that if the State were to pay for abortion the State should decide if a woman had an abortion, and so doctors should have the final say.

The movement on abortion started in response to the opposition of the Christian Democrats and fascists to the right to abortion and in response to the failure of the Communist Party to make any fight on this issue. National and local movements were set up to fight for the right to abortion. A national conference was held in Bologna to prepare the campaign. The first demonstration was

called on 6 December, and attracted 20,000 women. The second in April in Rome had 40,000 participants.

There are still big problems, however. Firstly, the struggle for abortion has not developed throughout the labour movement but has been confined to women's organisations. Secondly the major far left organisations have had very bad positions on it.

Avanguardia Operaia and Il Manifesto had individual women members participating in the movement but didn't support it as organisations. Lotta Continua denounced the 6 December demonstration as an attempt to divide the working class on sex lines, opposed a central campaign on abortion, and even went so far as to attack the march physically.

The size of the demonstration, however, shook the left organisations. Not merely were the numbers involved very large, but in the April demonstration the Communist Party women's organisation came out against the CP's line and participated in the march. As a result of this the revolutionary left organisations are beginning to change their line and take up the issues of women's oppression.



SQUATTING CATCHES ON

The housing crisis has been particularly severe in Italy because of the big movement of workers to the northern cities during the 1950s and 1960s. This created a shortage of accommodation which sent rents through the roof.

Finally, in the early 1970s, laws were passed stopping rent increases. In protest against this, landlords stopped renting out property until the law was repealed. But this was countered in cities such as Milan and Turin by large numbers of occupations of houses and apartments led by the extreme left.

This struggle has continued. For example, about a month ago there was a big struggle in the Via Po in Turin - one of the big avenues of the city. There were several big buildings with 40 or 50 apartments which were not rented out.

These belonged to some of the big capitalist families in Turin.

About 200 workers' families occupied the houses. A member of the far left group Avanguardia Operaia who is on the city council - a council with a Communist Party and Socialist Party majority - put down a resolution to take over the houses from the capitalists and let them out at a low rent to the families.

This is the second time such a struggle has occurred in Turin. Last year the city council was forced to pass a law taking over the houses occupied by workers' families with the support of the revolutionary left. Out of such struggles have begun to develop the Unione Inquilini (Tenants Union) which supports the house occupations.

MPLA CRACKS DOWN ON LEFT

British press attention is now riveted on the fate of the 13 captured mercenaries on trial in Luanda. Much of the reportage displays a thinly-disguised sympathy for the 'soldiers of fortune', nine of them British, who went to Angola with no motive but to kill Africans for cash.

By contrast, the British press has not issued a murmur about the fate of dozens of Angolan left-wing militants who have been arrested by the MPLA regime in recent weeks.

While preparations for the mercenary trials were underway, the biggest wave of political arrests in Luanda since Angola's independence took place. The main victims of the crack-down, in which more than 100 dissidents were arrested, were supporters of the semi-Maoist 'Communist Organisation of Angola' (OCA) and the 'Active Revolt' faction of the MPLA.

The official signal for the repression came in March from Interior Minister Nito Alves. Ordering all 'people's commissions' to be 'vigilant', he said: 'All obviously reactionary individuals - those who are known to belong to the OCA, either as advisers, writers or propagandists, or those who have up to now been passionately loyal to the Active Revolt or have shown such an attitude - will have to be immediately arrested.'

By TONY HODGES

According to the Luanda paper, *Jornal do Comercio*, Alves has called for the leaders of the Active Revolt to be sentenced to death.

No specific charges are known to have been levelled against the detainees. Their 'crime', it would seem, has been their criticisms of the political course charted by the MPLA government - particularly its agreement to allow imperialist corporations like Gulf Oil to resume their plunder of Angola's wealth.

The Rev Joaquim Pinto de Andrade, who was seized on 18 April, is the most prominent of those arrested. A founder-member of the MPLA, he was elected as the movement's honorary president in 1962. He played a central role in establishing some of the MPLA's first cells in Luanda in the late 1950s, and spent more than ten years in various Portuguese prisons. After his release, Andrade became a leader of the Active Revolt, an MPLA faction which opposed the bureaucratic charac-

ter of the Agostinho Neto leadership.

Among other Active Revolt leaders now in jail are Gentil Viana, a former adviser to Neto; Rui Castro Lopo, a former commander of the MPLA's second military regime during the liberation war; and Manuel Videira, a doctor who served on the MPLA's eastern front during the liberation war.

A statement released by the OCA on 23 April charged that the 'MPLA has arrested dozens of outstanding revolutionary militants', including members of the Secretariat of the Coordinating Body of the Neighbourhood People's Commissions of Luanda, Sirgado and Nogueira, as well as other OCA militants such as Henrique Guerra, who spent many years in Portuguese prisons. The OCA declared that 'the imprisonment of well-known nationalists and democrats belonging to the Active Revolt, who have been threatened with execution ... represents one more step in the wave of repression launched by the MPLA against revolutionists and against all Angolan democrats and patriots.'

The OCA appealed to 'all revolutionary and progressive political forces' to demand that the MPLA immediately free all the political prisoners.



RED WEEKLY

VOTE CP CALL IN PORTUGAL

A special report from DAVE WIMHURST in Oporto

On 27 June the Portuguese people will go to the polls again to vote for one of the four candidates contesting the presidency. These elections, like those for the legislative assembly in April, will be a test of strength between the bourgeoisie and the workers movement.

For the ruling class, it is essential that the future government is able to regulate and control the simmering social conflicts that are at present taking place on a whole series of issues - housing, unemployment, inflation, workers control, education, etc. From their point of view, the best result in the coming election would be a victory for General Ramalho Eanes, the bourgeoisie's favourite, in the first round - that is, with a vote of at least 51 per cent.

With such a result the Portuguese capitalists and their allies would be better placed to launch an offensive against the working class, attacking workers control, the agrarian reform, nationalisations, trade union and political freedom and the economic gains made by the workers, instead of having to rely on unemployment and inflation as an indirect means of dividing the workers. In order to prevent such an offensive, the main battle around the presidential elections at the moment is to prevent Eanes from winning in the first round and to assist the development of a united workers opposition to this project.

PROGRAMME

When the Internationalist Communist League (LCI), Portuguese sympathising organisation of the Fourth International, presented its candidate with the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), it did so on the basis of a programme that would be able to unite the workers movement against the bourgeoisie, their generals and their offensive.

The main points of this programme were - and still are - for the drawing up of a workers plan of struggle, against inflation and unemployment, through a democratic congress of the trade unions; for the development of the agrarian reform and workers control, organised by the workers commissions; for the formation of a Communist Party/Socialist Party government and for the breaking of the pact that these parties signed with the parties of the ruling class.

With the failure of the revolutionary candidate of the LCI and the PRT (see last issue of *Red Weekly* for reasons),

there remain two candidates presented by the left: Octavio Pato, from the CP, and Major Otelio Saraiva de Carvalho, supported by various far left groups - the Popular Democratic Union (UDP), the Left Socialist Movement (MES), and the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat (PRP). Neither of these candidates can provide the political independence and unity needed by the working class.

MILITARY

The main points in the programme of Octavio Pato are defence of the pact and the constitution, respect for the authority of the president, unity of the armed forces, support for the institutions of bourgeois democracy, and the subordination of the independence of the working masses to the politics of compromise and class collaboration.

Meanwhile the positions and campaign of Carvalho express the weakness and fragility of the workers movement over the past two years. Presenting himself as a 'candidate of popular power', nothing in his programme helps to strengthen in practice the existing workers and neighbourhood commissions. Not a mention is made of the necessity to organise a democratic trade union congress, to strengthen workers control, to build independent soldiers committees.

On the contrary, Carvalho calls for 'a disciplined and united armed forces' and for 'unity of the people and the Armed Forces Movement'. Pato too calls for 'an alliance with the armed forces'. Clearly the LCI cannot support the programme of either candidate.

However, while neither candidate genuinely represents the independent interests of the Portuguese workers and peasants, it is nonetheless crucial to vote against Eanes, Azevedo and the bourgeoisie. And there is one important difference between Pato and Carvalho. The former has direct links with the workers movement, while the candidature of Carvalho can only reinforce the illusions of his supporters in sections of the military. One can make a comparison with the effect on its supporters if the CP had stood Vasco Gonçalves as its candidate.

The LCI is therefore calling for a workers vote against the bourgeoisie, for Octavio Pato, while denouncing his programme and putting forward its own demands in defence of the independent interests of the working class.

HELP!

An outside contract for our typesetting and design staff has enabled us to reduce the Fighting Fund target to £1,000 by the end of June. It's just as well. We received only £28 this week, which gives us only a fortnight to raise the £318.15 to meet our target. Our thanks to those who did contribute: Manchester supporter £5, Collection at the Brunel Occupation £7, Glasgow militants £11, C. Arthur £5.

If we look at the breakdown of the Fighting Fund, it's not a pretty story in some areas. Figures are money donated since 1 April.

London	£164.25	E. Anglia	£1.90
South	£2	Yorks	£26.90
East Midlands	Nil	North West	£18.65
West Midlands	Nil	North East	£18.65
South West and		Scotland	£22.75
Wales	£17.50	Others	£383.50
Oxford	£29.40		

As we said, not a pretty story for those IMG branches in the Midlands. Apart from London, in fact, it's rather disappointing all round. So let's see the money, comrades - or pledges to raise it - in next week's post.

You know the address: Red Weekly Fighting Fund, 97 Caledonian Road, Road, London N1.



Jubilant Palestinians celebrate capture of a Syrian tank on the outskirts of Beirut last week

DEFEND THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE!

STATEMENT BY THE RED WEEKLY EDITORIAL BOARD

By invading Lebanon, the Syrian army has clearly shown its hand. The Damascus regime has decided to attack the Palestinian Resistance with the intention of muzzling it. In this it is fulfilling the deepest designs of US imperialism and the Zionist State. The Pentagon's declarations minimising the extent of the forces involved, and Israel's satisfaction that the Palestine Liberation Organisation 'will be reduced to its proper size', show just who is benefiting from the Syrian intervention.

In this situation we express our complete solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinian people. Syria's action - which threatens the very existence of this struggle - must be denounced. The demand put forward by the left-wing Lebanese forces and the Palestinian Resistance for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Syrian Army has our complete support.

In clearly taking this position, however, we do not for one moment endorse the positions of these political organisations. The present situation is the result of 14 months of civil war during which the left and the Resistance have failed to put forward an alternative policy to meet the needs of the Lebanese and Palestinian masses.

Suicidal

Thus while the population of Lebanon have been faced for years with common social problems (under-employment, appalling living conditions, etc.), no social programme which could unite Christians and Moslems, Lebanese and Palestinians has been put forward. No effort has been exerted towards a systematic politicisation of the masses.

On the contrary, the search for an alliance with the Moslem bourgeoisie has allowed them to sidestep this question. It is this which enables Kemal Jumblatt, the leader of the left, to appeal for a 'neutral' (!) military intervention by France.

By developing this suicidal approach - in which President Assad of Syria has until recently been portrayed as a friend and ally - the 'Islamoprogressive' camp has paved the way for the Syrians to intervene without provoking a mass uprising. It is now compelled to look for support to such reactionary forces as the Egyptian regime. The consequences



Egypt's President Sadat



President Assad of Syria



PLO leader Yasser Arafat

could well be disastrous.

But the Palestinian Resistance has shown an exemplary courage and determination in slowing the Syrian advance and inflicting serious casualties on its forces. It has managed to do this despite the betrayal by its so-called supporters in the Kremlin, who have armed the Syrian army and whose representative, Kosygin, was present on a state visit to Damascus when the invasion was launched.

Already the Assad regime is in crisis. Sections of its own Palestinian organisation Sa'iqah have gone over to the resistance. Mass arrests of dissidents have been carried out in Syria, and there have been reports of open demonstrations against the invasion in Damascus.

The Lebanese and Palestinian masses have only one ally in the fight against Syria's invasion: the international labour movement. We must not fail them now.



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), 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.