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SOCIAL CONTRACT CONTRACT DRAWS BLOOD

"Labour's 'social contract' is nothing more than fancy language for unconditional surrender to the capitalist offensive"

THE latest weapon in the capitalist offensive against working class living standards—Labour's 'social contract'—drew its first blood last week.

Employment Secretary Michael Foot's intervention into the AUEW National Committee strengthened the hand of the union right-wing and enabled them to call off the engineer's overtime ban and sell-out the struggle for the national engineering claim.

Veteran red-baiter (and former Labour MP) Woodrow Wyatt summed up the situation aptly in last week's *Sunday Mirror*: 'Like many a new Labour minister before him, Mr. Foot, the darling of the left, is discovering that he can get things done only with the help of the right wing moderates.'

But Foot was not alone in the camp of the Right. He was joined there, on the question of the wage claim at least, by his old friend, AUEW President Hugh Scanlon.

The Foot-Scanlon double act managed to engineer the sell-out of the national claim. But they have also shown just what an ugly kettle of fish Labour's 'social contract' really is.

The AUEW bureaucracy had long ago abandoned the demands of the national claim on shorter hours and equal pay. And, as Hugh Scanlon argued vehemently before the election, the wage demand by itself was within Phase 3. Moreover, since the wage demand was for an increase in the *basic rate*, it would have primarily benefitted the lower paid.

But this was not enough for Labour. They are intent on blocking big industrial struggles at all costs, and so Foot insisted on nothing less than total capitulation to the engineering bosses.

So much for Labour's claim that the 'social contract' will protect workers against inflation, or further the welfare of the lower paid!

It is now up to rank-and-file engineering workers to protect their living standards through the vigorous prosecution and national coordination of the fight around local claims.

The Engineers' sell-out hammers home an important object lesson: Labour's 'social contract' is nothing more than fancy language for *unconditional surrender* to the capitalist offensive.

This lesson is already being grasped by some sections of the trade union movement. Last Monday the annual conference of TASS, the AUEW's white-collar section, voted to press their pay claim despite the 'social contract.'

TASS executive member Jack Carr firmly pinned the right label on Labour's policy: 'Within a capitalist system any form of wage restraint will go against the worker and only help the employer. We are therefore opposed to the concept of the social compact, which will further erode the standard of the workers and make bigger and better profits for the ruling classes.'

This is the basis on which trade unionists must approach the coming struggles. It is the only basis on which a serious fight to protect the living standards of working people can be mounted.

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES • PETER HARRAP (Report)



Which flag for May Day?

May Day is an occasion for celebrating the great, heroic tradition of working class struggles. It is a day when the red flag—the flag of struggle—flies at its highest and proudest.

But many of those who gather around the red flag are marching under false colours. Trade union bureaucrats and the reformist leaders of the Labour Party all gather around this banner to evoke the heroic past of the workers movement and pontificate on its even greater future.

But what of the present? Where were these speechmakers when workers were actually making that history of which they like to boast? Where were they on 30 April? And where will they be on 2 May?

Huddled around a rather different flag—the white flag of class collaboration and surrender—or marching, uncomfortably perhaps, with those whose

banner is of a darker and more treacherous hue.

Those like Michael Foot and Hugh Scanlon (to say nothing of Harold Wilson, Frank Chapple or Roy Jenkins) have no allegiance to the flag of struggle. They will mount this year's May Day platform with their hands still bearing fresh stains from the sell-out of the AUEW national claim.

There are others whose talk continually has a reddish tint, but whose actions are always pale in comparison. These are the bearers of the pink flag of compromise and 'pressuring.'

For these people, like the Communist Party of Great Britain, it is never quite the right time to wave the red flag, never quite the moment to break with the bureaucrats' black and white banners and launch the struggle.

But no decisive victory has ever been won under the pink flag. The CPGB has

waved it vigorously these past few months. But the prison walls enclosing the Shrewsbury pickets have remained as firm as they were built. The hammer of the NIRC has continued to rain down on the trade union movement, and struggle after struggle has been led up the garden path by the bureaucracy.

The white flag of Scanlon and Foot could not have won the day in the AUEW if their opponents had adopted a brighter banner and pushed the workers' struggle forward, regardless of the bureaucrats' manoeuvres.

May Day is also a day of unity. But the question is what kind of unity. Unity under what flag?

Yes, we must build the broadest possible unity of the workers' movement to *smash the capitalist offensive*. But it must be unity in struggle. It must be *unity under the red flag*, not just for one day a year, but for every single day that the working class is in struggle.

CHILE DEMO: MAY 5TH 2PM-SPEAKERS CORNER-MARBLE ARCH, MARCH TO DOWNING ST.

As 5 May draws near, support for the demonstration in solidarity with the Chilean resistance continues to mount in the labour movement:

IN Coventry, the Divisional Council of AUEW/TASS, no.16 Division, has circulated all its members with details of the demonstration.

The circular quotes a recent editorial in the TASS Journal: 'There is a direct connection between our interests as workers and those of workers in Chile. The demands which are arising rightly call for: the non-recognition of the junta; the ending of all aid, financial ties and transactions to and with the new regime.' It goes on to say, 'The Divisional Council urges all members to take part... Take the family, organise a group from the office—ensure a massive Demonstration in support of Chilean workers.'

IN Birmingham, the Kings' Heath, Brandwood branch, AUEW passed a resolution saying:

'We condemn the Labour Government's sending warships and guns to the Chilean junta.

'We demand that the Labour Government honours its election pledge and severs all relations with the Chilean junta.

'We support the demonstration called on 5 May by the Ad Hoc Committee.'

THE Rushcliffe constituency Labour Party has passed a resolution of unconditional support for 'any strikes and mobilisations to prevent the supply of arms to Chile.'

THE New Malden No. 1 Branch of the AUEW passed unanimously a resolution calling for the withdrawal of economic aid and diplomatic recognition from the junta, the admission of refugees and exiles, and condemning the sale of warships to the junta. It went on to endorse the 5 May demonstration as a means of achieving these demands.

THE North London district council of the National Union of Railwaymen has urged all its members to support the 5 May demonstration.

See 'Labour & Chile' -p.4

TUC report on South Africa aims to integrate black workers

This Thursday, 2 May, the TUC has called a special meeting of presidents and secretaries of its constituent unions to consider action over its report on South Africa. RICHARD McBRIDE explains why this is unlikely to be of much help in furthering the struggle of African workers

Last October the TUC sent a delegation led by Vic (now Lord) Feather to South Africa to 'enquire into the organisation of trade unions, particularly of African workers.'

The first and obvious question is why Vorster, the South African prime minister, should receive this delegation just a few months after he had refused entry to the Parliamentary Select Committee set up by the Tory Government to investigate the below-poverty wages paid to black workers.

The answer is to be found in the history of the TUC's involvement in colonial and semi-colonial countries. It has consistently played a reactionary role, advocating class collaboration and servility to British imperialism.

The report on South Africa is no exception. Instead of tackling the problem of how to assist the struggles of black workers against the repressive regime, the report appeals directly to the interests of sections of the white ruling class:

'We urge employers to show courage and determination in providing facilities and assistance to black unions in over-

coming the many obstacles which stand in their way.

'Recognition of such trade unions at factory or company level is not unlawful and we see no reason why recognition should do anything but good to industry, industrial relations and development, and the interests of South African people in general.'

'INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS'

The concern for 'industrial progress' rather than the interests of the black population runs through the entire report. In line with this orientation, the TUC does advocate a number of progressive reforms—reforms which many South African industrialists are themselves eager to see implemented. Allowing blacks to take jobs which are reserved exclusively for whites, for example, but which there are not enough whites to fill.

The TUC has consistently argued against the involvement of trade unions in anti-imperialist struggles, and has gone so far as to point out the role it has played in assisting British rule over the African colonies.

In 1952, when British troops were massacring Kenyans struggling for

national liberation, a British trade unionist in Kenya was advising that 'a trade union is not an organisation with political aims.'

The following year, the world congress of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions expressed 'anxiety at the present situation in Kenya', hoping that 'a peaceful state of affairs will soon be re-established and that in the meantime the British government will apply a progressive policy.' It is little wonder that Vorster was prepared to entertain a TUC delegation!

The report sets out the employers' views very aptly.

'On the whole the managements tended to indicate a tolerance for unions provided they were consolidated or associated with each other, particularly between the races, in the interests of responsibility, and some said they would prefer to deal with unions rather than to have the present situation...'

The employers have been shaken by the recent massive and well organised strikes of black workers, and it has become extremely important for the regime to build up a relatively affluent layer of black workers to channel the present struggles along trade union lines.

RESPONSIBLE UNIONS

The TUC report effectively endorses this plan by encouraging the Trade Union Congress of South Africa to build up a bureaucratic

layer within the black workers' movement in order to achieve 'the growth of responsible trade unionism among African workers'. The report makes frequent references to the lack of experience and education among black trade unionists, and talks of 'a very large black labour force with very little effective voice', which is nonsense when examined in the context of the recent strikes.

Added to this are favourable remarks about the Industrial Council System, which provides a class collaborationist form of collective bargaining. The councils are composed of registered trade unions and employers, who must then ratify agreements with the Ministry of Labour.

One of the report's key proposals—that British investment in South Africa should be opposed 'unless the firms show in a practical way that they are encouraging and recognising genuinely independent trade unions for black African workers'—must therefore be taken in the context of what the TUC leadership understands as 'independence'.

In Britain at the present time, this means binding the unions with a 'social contract' to restrain wage demands. In South Africa, it means supporting the struggles of the black workers while ensuring that they in no way threaten the racist State structure which exploits and oppresses them.

Teachers eager to put the boot into Foot

Over 15,000 teachers marched on Monday to demand the payment of the London Allowance which has been frozen since 1972 and is now held up by Michael Foot, the Secretary for Employment.

The demonstration was supported by teachers in further education, who are members of ATTI, as well as hundreds of NALGO workers, who are on strike for a £400 London Allowance, school students, and even non-unionised teachers.

The size and militancy of the march indicates the extent of the crisis in London schools, where thousands of school students are sent home every day.

STRIKE VOTE

Teachers in the NUT will be voting this week and next on the form of action, they wish to take to pursue their claim. Undoubtedly there will be a strong vote for strike action, including extended action.

The problem of London schools however is not simply one of poor pay. The staff shortage and the cuts imposed by the Tory Government have a direct effect on the school situation.

It is this day-to-day problem which produced the massive action on Monday. It contrasts sharply with the NUT Executive's sell-out when it settled the teachers' pay claim within Phase 3 at the beginning of February.

Teachers, however, are not the only people facing the effects of the cuts. Ancillary workers, part-time staff, further education teachers, technical staff, school and further education students are all affected.

Other sections too will be hit, including building workers made redundant by the cut back in the building programme. What is needed is a co-ordinated fight by wide sections of the labour movement in conjunction with those workers in all the social services who are hit by these cuts.

This is the way in which the working class will be able to impose the demand on the Labour Government to reject the cuts.

JIM DONOGHUE

NALGO STRIKE SLOW TO SPREAD

Although it has rejected continuing TUC pressure to call off the London Weighting struggle, the leadership of the National And Local Government Officers association has been slow to extend the strike action in London from the original two branches out on total strike.

At this stage the plans for spreading selective strikes still only bring in a few dozen workers in a number of branches.

Last week, the Metropolitan District Council rejected by a very small margin a motion jointly proposed by Islington and Tower Hamlets branches demanding the immediate call-out of Tower Hamlets and the extension of total strike action to other branches.

This rejection followed the advice of the 'official' leadership of the campaign—the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the London Weighting Panel—who called such a plan utopian and put forward the bankrupt strategy of increasing 'pin pricks' on the Government.

Several speakers from Islington said that they must not be isolated any longer, and that the campaign had to be extended through meaningful mass strike action all over London, otherwise there was a danger of the struggle stagnating.

The union's London Weighting Panel and National Executive meeting this week must decide on a more determined plan of action. However, in the likely event of some hesitation on the part of the bureaucrats it remains for the rank-and-file to build outwards from Islington to bring in the rest of the London branches.

A. BENNETT

Computer room occupied in university strike

The service computer room at Strathclyde University, Glasgow, has been occupied, in a strike of computer staff which also affects Glasgow, Aberdeen and Stirling Universities.

The strike has been provoked by the Scottish Universities with the aim of isolating and defeating a militant section of University staff. It is part of their contribution to the cuts in higher education imposed by Tory and Labour Governments.

Negotiations around the restructuring of University staffs have been going on since 1972. The computer staff were to have been assimilated into technician grades after a general re-grading of other staffs had been completed. But attempts to negotiate a national agreement were abandoned last year, and the Scottish unions have tried to negotiate on a regional basis.

An offer was made during the three day week. Although this was poor, it was accepted after ASTMS officials argued strongly that failure to settle immediately might drag out negotiations into a period of wage freeze.

If a struggle had been pursued at that time the Universities would have been in a weaker position, and in the atmosphere of the period much greater unity with other sections in struggle could have been achieved.

The University Administrations have now reneged on their offer, broken off regional negotiations and made a series of local offers. These involve:

- * Lower rates than ever before offered
- * Separate grades from the technicians, which would isolate computer staff in any future negotiations
- * Backdating only from November 1973 instead of 1972, as originally offered.

Strike action followed a regional operators meeting last Friday. The occupation at Strathclyde will prevent scabbing by lecturers and programmers, and other unions have been asked not to cross the picket lines.

The key to success will be to win support from students and non-technical staff, and to take the fight against the attacks on higher education to broader sections of the labour movement.

JOHN BALL



Some of the nearly 2,000 demonstrators from women's liberation and socialist groups who assembled in Hyde Park on Sunday to oppose the 40,000-strong rally organised by the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, and call for free abortion on demand. In Glasgow, a 1,000-strong SPUC rally was opposed by 200 demonstrators.

Jepson - T&GWU branch calls for executive enquiry

The fight for official action in support of victimised convenor Jean Jepson continued last week despite manoeuvres by local union bureaucrats to suppress discussion of the dispute in the Hull labour movement.

Wednesday's meeting of the T&GWU branch at Hollis Brothers' timber-yard in Hull passed a resolution of support for Jepson along the lines advocated by the Armstrong's Defence Committee.

The main points in the resolution were:

- * The Region 10 Committee must instruct officials to take action in accordance with its decision of 20 March that Jean Jepson was victimised and should be reinstated;
- * The shop-floor officers at the Beverley factories of Armstrong Patents must lead a fight against the victimisation, or the Region must withdraw their credentials;
- * For a full enquiry into all aspects of the dispute at national executive level, and for a public local enquiry into its handling by Region 10 officials.

RESOLUTIONS

The need for more branch resolutions calling for the whole affair to be taken up at executive level was vividly illustrated by the Regional Committee's own meeting on Wednesday.

In spite of their judgement last month that Jepson was unjustifiably dismissed, a majority of members voted at the meeting to refuse her victimisation money on a technicality. Regional Secretary Shenton was also able to swing a majority to defeat a motion calling for executive action.

Meanwhile the weight of the T&GWU bureaucracy made itself felt at Thursday's meeting of the Hull and District Trades Council. An AUEW branch resolution demanding that the Trades Council take a stand on the principle involved in the dispute was withdrawn at the instigation of district engineering officials, who have

leaned over backwards not to embarrass their mates in the T&GWU. A similar T&GWU branch resolution was ruled out of order by the chair.

Recognising a blatant manoeuvre inspired by Secretary Shenton to put a lid on the Armstrong's dispute, a group of delegates are calling for an emergency meeting of the Trades Council to discuss the question early in May. Meanwhile the Hull docks unofficial shop stewards Committee have decided to sponsor the public meeting called by the Defence Committee to carry the campaign forward.

Support urged for Swedish dockers

Red Weekly has received the following leaflet from the Swedish section of the Fourth International, requesting solidarity with an important dock strike:

'On 24 April, the 2,700 members of the Swedish Dockers Union launched an all-out strike in thirty Swedish harbours.

The union was constituted in 1972 as a result of the exclusion of several local sections from the Transport Workers Union, which is affiliated to the national trade union confederation (LO). The Swedish Dockers Union now organises a majority of Swedish dockers and totally dominates several important harbours, including Gothenburg, Stockholm and Halsingborg.

'During the present wage-negotiations, the employers have refused to sign any agreements with the Swedish Dockers

Union, which, by its demands, its elements of workers democracy and its militancy represents a threat to the thoroughly bureaucratized leadership of the LO-unions.

'Though representing only a minority of the Swedish dockers, the Transport Workers Union claims the exclusive right to sign wage agreements in the harbours attacking the right of the Swedish Dockers Union to exist as a trade-union. The dockers of this union need all support possible—even internationally! Dockers of Europe—we therefore urge you:

'Do not handle cargoes redirected from Swedish harbours!

'Have your own trade union organisations send messages of solidarity: To Svenska Hamnarbetareförbundet, Nygatan 11, S-891 00 Ornskoldsvik, Sweden.'



Victimised steward, Alan Thornett

COWLEY: HANGING BY A THREAD

The fight to reinstate victimised shop steward Alan Thornett at BLMC Cowley continues. But it only hangs by a thread.

The press and TV have launched an unprecedented campaign against Thornett. Lies, slanders, and personal vilification have poured forth. The aim has been to provide a focus of anti-unionism for every right-winger, scab and hostile housewife.

Despite this barrage, the 150 drivers in the transport section have fought to elect their right to elect their own shop steward.

ISOLATION

Inevitably they are feeling their isolation. Each meeting shows a decline in support for continuing the strike. The company, anxious to take advantage of this, opened the plant by using a handful of scab labour. This was aimed at increasing the drivers' isolation.

The tactics of the management are, however, proving very costly. Production has never reached 50 per cent. No new supplies are entering the plant. Now BLMC is again threatening a lock-out, as from Tuesday, if the drivers do not return to work.

The most demoralising and treacherous role of all has been played by

the T&GWU national and regional officials. Thornett's is such an obvious and clear case of victimisation that official support should have been granted immediately. The management would have been forced against the wall as the plant ground to a halt.

But the T&GWU regional office has deliberately stalled. This has put further pressure on the strikers, and increased both the sense of isolation and fears of more victimisations.

THE KNIFE

Brian Mathers, secretary of T&GWU No. 5 Region, has now moved to put in the knife. Banking on the fact that many workers hold Thornett personally responsible for their being laid-off without pay, he has pulled a 'clever' stroke.

Mathers has said that he will make the strike official. This is, however, conditional on the call for official backing coming from an emergency mass branch meeting. The meeting will be attended by all those laid-off, as well as the striking drivers.

Mathers clearly expects Thornett to be defeated, enabling him to use the vote as an excuse to end the fight. This would then give BLMC the chance to threaten drivers still striking with the sack, claiming that their dispute was unofficial.

As a result, Thornett recommended to Monday's meeting a return to work pending the outcome of the special branch meeting. If the vote is lost this will constitute a big defeat for trade union organisation in the factory.

A vote in favour of Thornett means that the strike would go on with the workers expecting official recognition and there will be a real chance of winning his reinstatement.

The T&GWU bureaucracy is not alone in expecting a defeat. The company has now issued a 'promise' to protect any blackleg from 'intimidation'. Encouraged by the union's attitude, management is not only attacking the right of the workers to elect their own stewards, but is extending that attack against the closed shop.

MILITANT WOMEN

Despite the company's increasing pressure and the failure of the union to act decisively, there is a developing mood in the workforce for the defence of trade unionism. Mrs Miller's motley mob, even with the assistance of a plethora of publicity, is rapidly losing support. An initial two to three hundred housewives has dwindled to around 20.

At the same time a group of women trade unionists and Cowley



Scab cheer-leader, Mrs Miller

wives have put out leaflets in defence of Thornett and the union.

There is every indication that they are gaining support, and women from London, including militant nurses, have rallied to their support. There is every chance that Mrs Miller could now be outvoted at one of her so-called housewives' meetings.

BIG VOTE

Against this background the company continues with its intention to impose massive speed-up. The fruits of the workers' brief but costly flirtation with management may soon be gathered. A defeat can lead to a sweat-shop.

Some workers are beginning to realise what is happening. On Monday over two hundred turned up to the 5/55 branch meeting. Many of them had come to attack Thornett.

However, after hearing the facts of the case he was given an absolutely overwhelming vote of confidence. The leaders of the anti-Thornett campaign were forced into a shameful silence.

JEFF KING

ENGINEERS: National struggle must go on despite sell-out of claim

'How a storm ended in a teacup'—that was how the *Sunday Times* summed up last week's AUEW National Committee meeting in Worthing.

Certainly there were sighs of relief all round at the outcome of the meeting—at least from the Government, the employers and Hugh Scanlon.

THE STAKES

Everyone knew that what was at stake in this year's NC was a lot more than the engineers' wage rates. The possible escalation of the struggle for the engineers' wage claim was regarded as the first major challenge to the viability of Labour's 'social contract'.

Scanlon's apparently militant stance on the claim shortly before the NC might have suggested that a 'storm' was indeed brewing; especially since it was in sharp contrast to the drift to the right by the rest of the trade union bureaucracy.

But in fact Scanlon was only too willing to capitulate to the social contract. The only hitch was that he could not possibly afford to accept the employers' miserable offer, which last year he himself had described as 'derisory'.

He cannot afford to lose his 'left-wing' standing with the rank and file, if he is to exercise any control over the militants, so his price for co-operation with the Government was an offer which would allow him to back down without losing too much face.

LATEST OFFER

He got this with the employers' latest offer of £3.50 on the skilled rate this May, and a further £3.50 next May. Accordingly, he indirectly urged

the NC to accept this new offer (having only a casting vote on the NC he was not forced to take an open stand).

The gap of one year between the two rises is obviously designed to secure the 'year of industrial peace' for which Michael Foot pleaded at the NC.

But there were limits to how far the NC could move to the right. Scanlon had no alternative but to urge the NC to continue its refusal to recognise the National Industrial Relations Court, since non-recognition is the pillar on which the union leadership's 'left' reputation has rested. Scanlon's only hope now is that some legal manoeuvre will pull him out of the mess.

The settlement of the pay claim will be regarded by thousands of militants as a sell-out. And it is a set-back not only for the engineers, but for the many working class militants who were hoping that the first major blow to the 'social contract' would come from the engineers' struggle.

But a sell-out is different from a defeat in struggle. Very few militants will believe that it was necessary to accept the employers' offer. On the contrary, the fact that the employers upped their offer after such a short period of the overtime ban confirms that there was a real prospect of victory.

DOMESTIC CLAIMS

Some 75-80% of engineering workers will soon be submitting domestic claims. Their main problem will be to ensure that the full £3.50 actually finds its way into the wage packets—which is not what the employers intend. Consolidation of bonus payments into the new, increased basic rate, and similar

tricks, will be used to rob engineering workers of the full rise.

But if there is to be a real challenge to the employers, despite the national settlement, then the struggles over domestic claims must have some unifying theme and be co-ordinated nationally. The national convenors' conference, which has met in Manchester twice, should immediately be recalled to co-ordinate such action.

Whatever the specific details of any wage demands submitted locally, the convenors' conference should ensure that no section of engineering workers will be left to fight alone, as the Manchester engineers were in 1972. The very least which should be fought for by every group of engineers is a straight-forward £3.50 across the board. Furthermore, all domestic claims should incorporate the original demands of the national claim on shorter hours, longer holidays and equal pay for women.

Hugh Scanlon has come out with a phony 'radical' line of defying the sequestration threats of the Industrial Relations Court. But he offers no way of organising the struggle. These are the steps necessary to build mass action to SMASH THE NIRC:

- *For a national, indefinite strike by all engineering workers. No matter what the AUEW executive decides, this must be got underway immediately in every district.
- *For mass solidarity actions by every other group of workers: strikes, demonstrations and rallies in every area.
- *For the physical defence of AUEW property from any attempts at seizure by the courts. London Trades Councils should summon an emergency conference to get this underway in London.
- *Force the Labour Government to scrap the NIRC and block all legal proceedings under the Industrial Relations Act, pending its speedy repeal.

TERRY CRAWFORD

Union to investigate racialism in blood clinics

A special sub-committee of three doctors has been set up by a union branch to investigate the practices of Dr Tom Cleghorn, who refuses to use blood from black and Asian donors on hospital patients.

Cleghorn is director of the North London Blood Transfusion Centre, and the investigation is to be carried out by the North-West London Branch of the Medical Practitioners Union, part of ASTMS.

For nearly a year, blood donated by blacks and Asians in the area has only been used for laboratory tests. Cleghorn, who is responsible for this racist practice, attempts to justify it on scientific grounds. But neither the Department of Health, nor the directors of the other 13 transfusion centres in Britain, consider that Cleghorn's policy is necessary.

SCIENTIFIC NONSENSE

His first 'medical' explanation, about the risk of passing on sickle cell disease, is universally held by experts to be absolutely incorrect. His other statements, about the increased hepatitis risk, are not confirmed by any one else's research, but are based solely on figures which he claims to have collected himself, but has never shown to any other doctor.

Predictably, no further action has been taken up by the authorities, apart from questions by two MPs to Dr David Owen, which were not answered, and a statement from the DHSS giving the very low figures of the incidence of hepatitis in this country as a result of blood transfusions.

The regular meetings of the blood transfusion directors are always 'top secret' (to quote from a doctor who works in transfusion) and last week's meeting, when the Cleghorn case was undoubtedly discussed, was no exception. However, a doctor who has worked with Cleghorn in South London admitted there had been a previous incident when he had made an outrageous statement to the press which had had to be quickly hushed up.

Members of the NW London Branch of ASTMS/MPU who are extremely suspicious of Cleghorn's arguments, and the special sub-committee will be meeting Cleghorn shortly and demanding to see and make public his supposed scientific evidence.

OTHER UNIONS

There is certain to be activity from other unions, too. Cleghorn is much disliked at the centre in Edgeware for his 'autocratic' attitudes, and workers there have commented on his overtly racist jokes. He is anti-union, only tolerating them because it is official DHSS policy.

Already, the students unions of St Albans and Willesden Techs have put out statements of intent not to donate any more blood to Cleghorn's unit. At the United Biscuits Factory in Southall the clinic nurse has said that more than half of their donors were coloured, and she doubted that they would want to continue giving blood.

The matter was raised at Brent Trades Council last week, and many delegates said their union members were disgusted at Cleghorn's behaviour. One delegate said that he eagerly awaited the information in the MPU doctors' report, which will be available to all unions, to provide a basis for action.

But we must not rely on this, since Cleghorn may refuse to reveal his data. In that case, workers should take whatever direct action is necessary to secure the records and reveal what they contain. Meanwhile, the transfusion centre should be boycotted by all donors.

RUTH ROWLEY

TODAY IN CHILE 50,000 men and women are languishing in the prisons of the dictatorship. Many of them are subjected to tortures developed by the Gestapo and perfected in anti-insurgency training camps in the United States. Even the most minimal trappings of bourgeois democracy have been scrapped by the Chilean generals.

Yet the Labour Government—in sharp contrast to the resolution carried by the last Labour

Party conference and the speeches of many top Labour leaders—has agreed to supply frigates and submarines to this vicious, bloodstained regime.

This decision will come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the history of the Labour Party. The foreign policy of a government is, in the last analysis, an extension of its domestic policies. That is why the Labour Party, when it comes into office, always sheds whatever 'leftist' clothes it may have donned while in opposition.

This has been the case with every Labour Government, including

are selfish, depraved, dissolute and decadent. These upper classes look to the British army and the British people to protect them against the just wrath of the people who have been fighting underground against them for the past four years. We must see that this does not happen.'

That delegate was Denis Healey, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the present Government. The passage of time and the lure of office cured him rapidly of these wild fantasies.

The actual record of the Labour Party in its 'finest hour' was, in brief, as follows:

- * It carried on a struggle against the Greek anti-fascist resistance and paved the way for US intervention in 1948 to crush the local communists.

- * It carried out a brutal and vicious persecution against communist guerrillas in Malaya. It was here that the 'strategic hamlet' concept used widely by the Americans in Vietnam was first developed. British soldiers had themselves photographed with the decapitated heads of their victims lying at their feet as souvenirs. Labour minister John Strachey personally went to Malaya to congratulate the British Army.

- * It intervened in Korea under the leadership of US imperialism in order to try and defeat the recently triumphant Chinese revolution.

- * It imposed a blockade on Iran for nationalising the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. This blockade weakened the nationalist Mossadegh regime and enabled the CIA to organise a coup to restore the powers of the despotic Shah.

- * It intervened in Indonesia to hand power back to the Dutch colonialists. It did the same for the French in Saigon in 1946, where British troops massacred scores of communists.

- * It continued oppressive colonialist policies in Africa and constantly bolstered the white settler regimes in Southern and Central Africa.

Labour leaders were thus the faithful poodles of US and British imperialism. Totally subservient to capitalism at home, they became dedicated 'cold warriors' abroad and, at the same time, fostered a crude anti-communism in the British working class movement.

The policy followed by the last Labour Government is within the memory of most socialists today.

Once in power Labour's policy was no different from that of its Tory predecessor. Labour became the most servile apologist for American policy in Vietnam, their Foreign Secretary defending the State Department with an evangelical fervour rare even in the United States.

Wilson's principal contribution to the growing anti-war movement was to advise the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign to demonstrate outside the Chinese embassy. He topped this off by denying the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal permission to meet in London.

The Labour 'left' had a record that was only a little better. They completely failed to challenge Government policy, even in Parliament. The best they could do was issue appeals for both sides to come to the conference table, and for UN intervention.

In short, they engaged in every reformist, moral gesture possible, at the expense of actually expressing solidarity with the people fighting imperialism. Not a single Labour MP came out and declared openly that he was in favour of an NLF victory in South Vietnam. (It should be remembered that the peace organisations dominated by the Communist Party had a similar position, and it was only the mass explosion that grew up around the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign that dragged the CP, half reluctantly, onto the streets behind solidarity banners.)

In Africa, Wilson's Government tried desperately to appease the racist white-settler regime in Rhodesia. Only the Rhodesian stubbornness prevented a 'compromise settlement'. In Ghana British intelligence was involved

in the coup that overthrew Nkrumah. In Ireland, Callaghan, then Home Secretary, was responsible for sending in the troops to restore 'law and order'.

TODAY—CHILE

The present Labour Government has openly disregarded previous statements and pledges over Chile. But it has been forced to do so with a bit more subtlety than it adopted over Vietnam or Rhodesia.

The reason for this is that opposition to the military dictatorship in Chile is much broader and widespread than that which existed to the war in Vietnam.

Undoubtedly the growing economic and social crisis in Britain itself has done much to ensure interest throughout the trade union movement in the struggles of the Chilean workers. More important, perhaps, has been the blatant nature of the Chilean coup. Given the hold of reformist ideas in the British labour movement, it has been easier for many workers to come out against a coup which overthrew a democratically elected Government than to identify with the armed struggle of communists in Vietnam.

Moreover, the 'Chilean experiment' was long hailed by all those—both social democratic and Communist Parties—who believe in the 'Parliamentary road' to socialism. These organisations were thus forced to mount some protest against the bloody termination of this experiment by the Chilean military.

All this creates the possibility for building a solidarity movement in this country that can attract great support from within the working class movement. The destruction of the Chilean trade unions, and the systematic murder and imprisonment of leading trade unionists has already had a big impact on militants in this country.

It was for these reasons that the Labour Party leadership felt obliged to invite Allende's ambassador to Britain to address the last Labour Party conference, despite the fact that the Tories' recognition of the Junta had deprived him of any official status.

The Labour leaders, insular and chauvinist to the core, have made great play of the fact that a 'foreigner' was actually allowed to address a Labour Party Conference. After all, it was only the second time in 40 years that this had taken place! (The last time was during the Spanish Civil War, and the 'foreigner' in question the Spanish Communist Party leader 'La Pasionaria'.)

It is also because of this sentiment inside the workers' movement that Labour Party Secretary, Ron Hayward, and numerous Labour MPs have spoken out against the Government's position. The open criticism made by a member of the Government, Eric Heffer (in complete violation of the principle that members of a good bourgeois Government don't wash its dirty linen in public), shows just how strong the pressure of this sentiment is.

Heffer's statement on Chile is a valuable boost to the solidarity movement. Every Labour MP—especially those who, like Heffer's fellow-minister Judith Hart, condemned the junta while Labour was in opposition—should be compelled to speak out against the Government's present collaboration with the Chilean generals. But Heffer has made it clear that his concern is with defending the 'left flank' of Labour against 'another Vietnam'. He is afraid that the sell-out over Chile could again produce a mass movement to the left of Labour and completely beyond its control.

He remembers that it was impossible for ministers in the last Labour Government to get a hearing at any university or hold a major public meeting without being confronted by VSC militants on the question of Vietnam. Michael Foot's recent reception by supporters of the 5 May demonstration during a meeting in Colchester must have revived these nasty memories rather sharply.



FLASHBACK ON VIETNAM

Harold Wilson's statements:

It was right to issue a warning to the Tory Government not to go any further in the subordination of British policies to the United States. I believe at the moment the danger to a negotiated settlement in Asia is provided by a lunatic fringe in the American Senate. Asia, like other parts of the world, is in revolution, and what we have to learn today in this country is to march on the side of peoples in that revolution and not on the side of their oppressors.

(Daily Worker, 5 May 1964)

Will he (the Prime Minister) make it quite clear—as we asked him to make it clear in March—that we would not support any extension of this war into North Vietnam?

(Hansard, 30 June 1964)

I have said a number of times in the House, and my Right Honourable friend (the Foreign Secretary) repeated it yesterday, that we fully support the action of the United States in resisting aggression in Vietnam.

(Hansard, 25 March 1965)

If you look at the map of Chile—a long, narrow coastal strip running from North to South—you understand the real significance of the Chilean navy. It is vital to crush any internal rebellion.

the post-war Attlee Government, which had one of the largest Parliamentary majorities in history.

At the 1945 Labour Party conference which preceded the massive electoral victory, Attlee said, 'We have to have our own line and our own judgement as socialists.' A great deal was made of how a Labour Government was best suited to maintain friendly links with the USSR. A young delegate, just back from the war, spoke for many others when he declared:

'The crucial principle of our foreign policy should be to protect, assist, encourage and aid in every way the socialist revolution wherever it appears...
'The upper classes in every country

Tariq Ali

CHILE

LABOUR

FOR mass
in the streets
SMASH





STAND
OUR

action -
in the factories
Labour's sell-out



But in fact only the building of a movement that can take mass, direct action on the scale of the VSC will compel the Labour Party to reverse its policies. Taking advantage of the feeling in the workers movement, the Chile solidarity movement can mount a powerful campaign of mass demonstrations, boycotts, blacking of Chilean goods and strikes. Only then will Labour listen.

CLAY CROSS

This point must be stressed to the many Labour Party militants who will be attending the conference of local constituency Parties which has been called by the Clay Cross Labour Party for 8 June.

David Skinner, a leading member of the Clay Cross LP, stated in his message of support for the 5 May demonstration (see *Red Weekly* 48) that Chile would be high on the agenda of this conference. But the impact of this gathering on Government policy will depend on whether or not it is prepared to throw its energies into building a mass solidarity movement. Militant resolutions are all very well, but the centre of the struggle to reverse Government policy will be in the streets and in the factories.

After all, one of the most important lessons of the Clay Cross struggle is the futility of relying on the official structures of the Labour Party, and the need to take direct action.

Under no circumstances should the solidarity movement be influenced by the argument that because the Labour Government is a minority Government we must therefore avoid 'rocking the boat'. The real problem lies in the fact that the Labour Government, like all previous Labour administrations, is a bourgeois Government which bases itself on the institutions of the capitalist state and makes the defence of the existing social order the linchpin of its actions.

For that reason, the only way that the working class and other social groups can obtain even the most basic concessions is by fighting.

TASKS

Solidarity with the Chilean masses means support for all actions that aid the development of resistance in Chile. This means that the campaign has several tasks at present:

1. To isolate the junta internationally by blacking Chilean goods, preventing the sale of arms, demanding that the Government breaks all links with the Pinochet dictatorship and preparing suitable 'welcomes' for the ambassadors and representatives of the Chilean regime in Europe.

2. To organise campaigns to collect funds for those sections of the resistance which urgently need money to buy arms. Apart from collections made by the solidarity movement we should campaign for the Labour Party and the TUC to make funds available for the struggle in Chile.

3. To demand that the Labour Government opens the doors for all Chilean refugees (22 have so far been refused entry), and provides special grants for students, teachers and trade unionists, as the Swedish Government has done.

4. To constantly explain and conduct debates inside the working class movement on the relevance of Chile for our struggle here. The recent exposure of Special Branch activities, the role of British troops in Ireland, the victimisations of trade union and student militants, and the attacks on blacks, all show that Chile is not so distant. The lessons we can learn from the Chilean struggle have concrete, practical importance for all trade unionists and socialists.

5. To make the Chile Solidarity Campaign a democratic and non-exclusive body open to all those who are committed to the struggle against the military dictatorship.

The 5 May mobilisation has to be seen as only the beginning of a mass campaign of solidarity with the Chilean victims of repression.

THE FRENCH ELECTIONS

'Mitterrand-president, Mitterrand-president' was the cry which rang out nearly unanimously on the left within hours of the death of Pompidou on 2 April.

Even before he had announced the main themes of his campaign, Mitterrand's candidacy had been endorsed not only by the parties of the 'Union of the Left'—the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, and the Left Radicals—but also by both the main trade union federations—the Communist-dominated CGT and the Socialist-inclined CFDT—as well as by the small Unified Socialist Party (PSU).

Strengthened by this support, Mitterrand is now in a very good position to try his hand at the 'bonapartist' game, putting himself across as a 'president for all the French'; as a man who—in the words of Socialist Party secretary Pierre Mauroy—knows how to take up position 'in and yet at the same time above the fray'.

SEVERAL YEARS

Mitterrand's candidacy is the outcome of several years of political preparation, much of which he describes quite straightforwardly in his book, *My Share Of Truth*.

In the 1969 presidential elections, Gaston Deferre of the Socialist Party turned down any kind of agreement with the Communist Party and ran with no other support. He polled hardly any more votes than the total cast for Alain Krivine of the Communist League and Michel Rocard of the PSU.

Mitterrand learnt the lesson from this setback for the 'Third Force' policy, which aimed to skirt round the problem of the CP in order to snuggle up close to the liberal Centrists. In a country like France, where the CP exercises decisive influence, the social democrats cannot reach office without it: 'I simply recognised that the road to the Union of the Left lies through the Communist Party', writes Mitterrand.

To gain the upper hand in this alliance, the Socialist Party had to start building a base for itself both to the right and to the left of the Communist Party. In particular, it had to set about winning back at least some of its audience among white collar workers.

As Mitterrand puts it quite unambiguously, in his own inimitable style:

'Socialist democracy, if it is to be able to assert its leadership inside this new majority, must expand its audience both to the left (through the far-reaching nature of its economic programme) and to the right (through its political liberalism). Hence the importance I attach to building a political movement which can first hold its own against and then dominate the Communist Party, and finally take on by itself and within itself the role of the majority'.

COMMON PROGRAMME

It was this project which was launched with the 'renovation' of the Socialist Party and the signing of the 'common programme'; and which is being carried on today through a policy of maximum expansion.

The signing of the common programme indicated the wish of the two workers' parties to give a common response to the wish for change inside the workers' movement. This response, of course, was to be completely reformist, respecting the laws of the capitalist economy and leaving alone the bourgeois State with the futile perspective of democratising it.

It was different from the Popular Front of June 1936, however, in that this alliance did not include any substantial section of the bourgeoisie. This is not because the reformist leaderships reject such a prospect. On the contrary, this is exactly what Mitterrand would like—it is not so long since he made a public appeal to the Centrists in a speech in Vienna,

MITTERRAND:

the poverty behind the slogans

It is also implicit in the 'anti-monopoly' line of the Communist Party, which has led it to make approaches to the shopkeepers and small businessmen; and it was this line which was also at the bottom of the recent agreement between the CGT and the CGC (managerial staffs' federation).

But the political polarisation produced in the wake of Gaullism is such that neither the Socialist Party nor the Communist Party has been able to drag in more than a few ambitious riff-raff known as the Left Radicals. In spite of the weakness of the latter, however, their very pres-



ence among the signatories to the common programme is a sign of the compromises that the reformist leaderships are preparing to make in the future.

ABOVE THE FRAY

The death of Pompidou meant new presidential elections, producing such a crisis of the succession that a victory for the Union of the Left cannot be ruled out.

Mitterrand is just the man for this situation.

But in order to enlarge his electoral base, he has had to modify the common programme in favour of a more restricted and less specific platform; and he has had to take his distance from the Communist Party, while at the same time reaffirming his commitment to unity.

This has meant embarking on a particularly obvious 'bonapartist' game:

* On the left, he has taken the CFDT and the PSU into his confidence, winning their support in exchange for a few words in his speeches about self-management in the future, and the promise of a ministerial post for PSU leader Michel Rocard. Indeed, Mitterrand congratulates himself that the Socialist Party is the place where the two currents of the left come together: 'the "responsible" current of the left, that of the common programme', and 'the current for socialist self-management'.

* At the same time, Mitterrand has redoubled his pledges of moderation as far as the bourgeoisie is concerned. In an interview on the economic policy of the Union of the Left which he gave to the magazine *The News*, for instance, he said nothing at all about nationalisation. He has reduced the number of meetings with the Communist Party to the minimum necessary.

In fact, Mitterrand is trying to raise himself above the level of parties, and while he still declares his commitment to the 'grand design' of the common programme, he has launched his campaign around five basic tasks:

1. more human freedom;
2. a juster society;
3. a stronger currency;
4. greater co-operation;
5. a more involved France.

The vagueness and moderation of these 'tasks' is truly remarkable.

HEAVY LEGACY

Clearly the Communist Party is not in control of things. After having called for the joint designation of a joint candidate, and a joint discussion at least of a 'presidential charter', it has had to be content with simply supporting Mitterrand's candidacy without being able to make any suggestions of its own.

But while it is trying to prevent the common programme from being kicked under the table, it is far from suggesting its immediate implementation. Even before the death of Pompidou, CP leader Marchais—on the TV programme 'Actuel 2'—had started to talk about the 'heavy legacy' they would inherit from the bourgeoisie—the task of a president of the left in these conditions would be not to implement the common programme, but to 'create the conditions for implementing it'. The distinction is all important.

Guided by the same desire to be 'realistic', the signatories of the programme undertook before the death of Pompidou a campaign for 'five urgent measures' of a clearly minimalist nature.

These five elementary demands were addressed to the Pompidou government. Yet on 9 April, Marchais took them up in his report to the Central Committee of the Communist Party and presented them as the five social measures that would be taken by a Government of the Union of the Left. On wages in particular, these proposals are simply pathetic: — a minimum monthly wage of 1200 francs (about £23 a week), when only a fortnight ago the CGT and CFDT announced a demand for a minimum of 1500 francs (about £29 a week)!

— and then, '1200 francs for the basic 40 hours', which means that extra payment will be made for hours over and above this; but also that the parties of the left will not even demand an immediate return to a 40-hour week.

'Change the present way of life', 'change course' these exhilarating slogans contrast vividly with the poverty of what lies beneath them for the workers. [Rouge]

ONE YEAR OF Red Weekly

Today *Red Weekly* publishes its 50th edition.

From the beginning we were determined to make *Red Weekly* into a campaigning paper.

It has always been an unfortunate feature of papers on the British left that they see their role primarily as commentators. We said that there is a need for a paper that can make a serious political analysis of the developments and trends within international and British capitalism, and then use this analysis to stimulate concrete action to unite the struggles against capitalism and develop them into a fight for socialism.

Shrewsbury pickets

The arrest of the Shrewsbury workers was a dramatic illustration of the need for such an approach.

The 'flying pickets' used by the miners in 1972 won a magnificent victory. The use of mass and 'flying' pickets became contagious. That summer building workers and dockers took up the use of the 'illegal' mass picket. The ruling class offensive reeled back.

The Government met this by the direct use of their legal machine. Pickets were framed up on phony conspiracy charges. In a whole series of disputes police, backed by the Special Patrol Groups, crashed through and broke up picket lines. The ruling class, preparing for a confrontation with the trade unions, were determined to break the powerful picketing weapon.

From the very beginning *Red Weekly* campaigned for a united working class resistance to the Shrewsbury arrests. It explained that only a campaign building directly towards mass, indefinite strike action, could mobilise the forces to challenge and defeat the capitalist state. It explained that the use of the legal machinery cannot be defeated by appeals to 'fair-play' or some mystical sense of 'reasonableness'.

It put forward the need to destroy the respect for capitalist law which acts as a brake on the working class. To those who counterposed a policy of 'pressurising' the trade union leaders the paper pointed out that only a strongly organised grass-roots movement had any hope of making the union leaders act.

It was only after a number of months of almost solitary campaigning by *Red Weekly* that other much bigger political forces were forced to take up the issue. But the refusal of these forces—in particular the Communist Party—to adopt the course of action which we advocated led the Shrewsbury movement into a blind alley from which it has so far proved impossible to rescue it.

We have analysed the capitalist crisis in detail. We have shown how chronically sick and decrepit British capitalism can only solve its problems by destroying the organised strength of the working class. We

A general strike became a real, live possibility. There was an excellent chance to inflict a crushing defeat on the ruling class.

by
Jeff King

Only *Red Weekly* consistently urged this action.

The *Morning Star* plaintively called for a general election, showing the Communist Party's deep commitment to Parliament.

class centralised its offensive through its Tory Government. For this reason it was essential to unify the workers' struggles around the demand to bring down that Government. The general strike is a matter of how the working class can best use its power and bring its full strength forward to defeat the capitalist offensive, irrespective of who rules at Westminster.

That is why the paper campaigned for the active alliance of students, housewives, and other social groups within this general strike movement. This provided a basis for popularising the need for organs of working class power—the only organs which permit

roads to socialism. But one had to do more than write smug, self-congratulatory articles on how right the revolutionaries had always been.

From the beginning *Red Weekly* took up a vigorous campaign for the 'blacking' of all goods and trade with Chile. Its readers were urged to take these demands into the trade unions. They were asked to organise local committees of solidarity, and extend support for solidarity with the Chilean resistance as widely as possible.

Red Weekly explained that it was important to get the Labour and trade union leaders to act on Chile. It warned, however, that the reformist politics, and the narrow and insular interests, of these leaders meant that they could not be relied on to carry out the necessary measures of solidarity.

This is the reason why the paper became the immediate champion of the 5 May demonstration.

Drawing on the grass roots support that exists in the labour movement—and despite the opposition of the Communist Party—*Red Weekly* has been able to spearhead a real campaign around this demonstration. The strength of this campaign has now forced the CP to come out in support of the demonstration, despite its original hostility.

Towards 12 pages

Red Weekly can claim, through the initiative of the 5 May Demonstration, to have inflicted one of the most telling blows so far to Labour's fraud of the 'social contract'.

Red Weekly has fought consistently on those issues that we stated would be our central concern in that first article. It has strengthened the work of the International Marxist Group, and played a positive role in developing several key initiatives within the working class.

The growth in both scope and depth of the class struggle means that the paper will have to cover more issues and provide an even wider coverage than it did in the last year. Already eight pages are totally inadequate for our task.

By autumn we must become a 12-page paper. We must bring on more staff writers. We must make big technical improvements in the paper.

To do that requires money. We make no apologies for asking our readers to send in an immediate donation towards the new twelve page weekly.



have stressed that integrated into the social and economic crisis is an inevitable and impending mass confrontation between the classes.

General strike

It was because of this analysis that the paper made its central campaign around the general strike.

In the last days of 1973 the convergence of the miners', engineers' and railworkers' claims was laying the real basis for smashing Phase 3.

Workers Press staggered, as if in some drunken political stupor, from demands for a 'general strike to force out the Tories'. Unable to put forward a perspective beyond Parliament, it could only tag onto its demands the inspiring call for a 'Labour Government pledged to Socialist Policies.'

Unlike the other left press we do not see the general strike as a matter restricted to the fight between the working class and the Tory Government. Before the election the ruling

the working class to impose its own solution to the crisis.

Chile solidarity

In our first issue we declared that the paper would give its support to 'all anti-imperialist struggles and... attempt to develop movements of solidarity with all those forces fighting imperialism.' The military coup in Chile soon put these words to the test.

The coup was a striking—and tragic—indictment of 'new' and 'peaceful'

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What's on ?

'WARSHIPS FOR THE JUNTA, or solidarity with the Resistance?' Meeting on Chile, Friday 3 May, at 7.45 pm in Dalston Library, Dalston Lane. Speakers: Mike Knowles (sec. Hackney Trades Council—in personal capacity), Tariq Ali (IMG).

SOUTHALL RED FORUM: 'What can we learn from Chile?', Friday 3 May at 8 pm in Featherstone Road (near Dominion Cinema), Southall.

SE ESSEX RED FORUM: 'The History and Politics of the International Socialists', Wednesday 8 May, in 39 Kennel Lane, Billericay, Essex.

CHILE SOLIDARITY MEETING: Organised by Tottenham IMG and Hornsey LPYS, Friday 3 May at 8 pm in Hornsey Library, Haringey Park, NB (off Crouch End Broadway). Speakers: Robin Blackburn, Ted Corbett (ex-convenor at STCI).

PICKET OF BMA HOUSE in Tavistock Square, Monday 6 May at 4 pm by doctors and medical students—to protest about forcible feeding of six prisoners in British jails, and to demand a public statement by BMA Ethical Committee on the professional conduct of the doctors involved.

'THE STRUGGLE AGAINST RACISM and the attitude of revolutionaries'. Discussion to be led off by Tariq Ali, Monday 6 May at 7.30 pm at 1 Gresham Road, Brixton, SW9.

MAY DAY JUMBLE SALE: Saturday 4 May, 12-3 pm in Community Room, Clarence Way Estate, NW1 (corner of Kentish Town Road and Hawley Road). In aid of Red Weekly Fund Drive.

MANCHESTER GLF will be meeting Wednesday 8 May to discuss leafletting for Manchester Anti-Racism Conference, due to be held 18 May at Reynolds Theatre, University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology. Meet 8 pm in the Lower Turks Head, off Shudehill, Manchester.

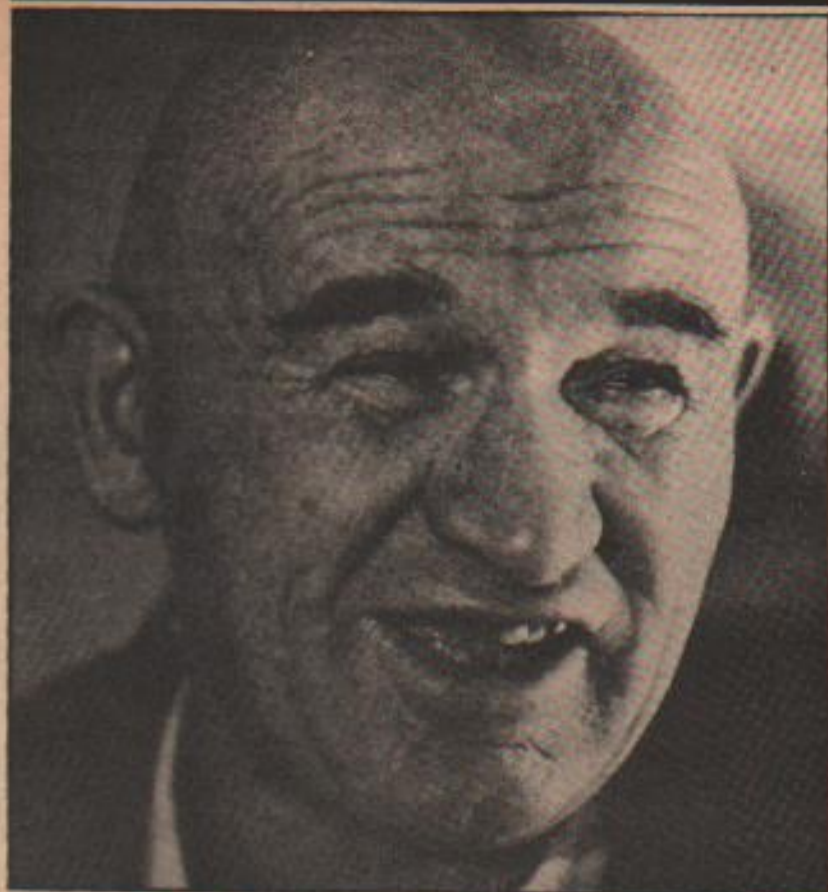
HARROW/HILLINGDON Socialist Women's Group Forum: 'History of the Women's Movement', Monday 8 May at 8 pm in Harrow Baptist Church, College Road, Harrow. Further information: Jacky, 01-204 3358.

BENGALI FRIENDS in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and *Lara* (Fourth International paper), contact: Bengali, Mulhaden, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

LIVERPOOL RED BOOKS: Revolutionary literature—Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Eastern Europe, Third World, Ireland, Women's Liberation. 81a Renshaw Street, Liverpool. Tues-Fri: 12.30-3. Sat: 11-3.

FREE IRELAND FORUM: Friday 3 May—'The British Labour Movement and Ireland', 8 pm in the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road (5 mins Kings X tube).

NOTTINGHAM RED CIRCLES: Wide-ranging series of discussions based on the politics of the Fourth International. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month at 8 pm in the Lion Hotel, Clumber Street.



A photo of Pyotr Grigorenko taken some years ago. Since 1969 he has been incarcerated in a 'mental hospital'. His revolutionary opposition to the Soviet bureaucracy was demonstrated in 1968 when he called on 'the true communists of the world . . . to sever all relations with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and declare clearly and unequivocally that they do not consider that party to be communist . . . [or] . . . the country it rules to be socialist.'

Grigorenko — the voice of revolutionary socialism in the USSR

'I am a communist, and as such I hate with all my soul organs of oppression and despotism based on a caste. The organisation created by Stalin on the advice of ministers of the USSR and today called the KGB is such an organisation.

'I do not conceal from anyone my hatred of this organisation, which I consider hostile to the people, and I will fight by all means possible for its early liquidation.'
(Letter to the Prosecutor-General of the USSR, December 1968)

The voice of revolutionary socialism is not often heard in the Soviet Union any more. However, in one place it is still possible to hear it—in the special wards of the 'mental hospitals' run by the KGB.

It is in one such 'hospital'—at Stolbovaya, near Moscow—that Pyotr Grigorenko is held. Arrested in Tashkent six months after writing his *Letter to the Prosecutor-General of the USSR* in December 1968, he was declared to be perfectly sane by local psychiatrists. The more reliable experts of the infamous Serbski Institute, however, were quickly able to discover 'paranoid disorders of a permanent nature . . . requiring forcible treatment in a special psychiatric clinic'.

It is only his unbreakable devotion to communism that has enabled Grigorenko to withstand five years of such treatment. Meanwhile, however, other real disorders have developed, resulting in two heart attacks and the formation of cataracts that threaten to leave him completely blind. But for this the torturers of the KGB have no treatment.

LENINISM

Born in 1907 in a family of poor peasants, Grigorenko became active in the organisations of the Bolshevik Party from his earliest youth. In 1931 he was sent by the Party to the Military Academy and later fought in the Far East.

After the Nazi invasion he was transferred to the western front, where he was wounded twice and decorated with five orders and six medals. Already, during the war, he was penalised by the Party for criticising the conduct of the war.

In 1963, after further sanctions had been applied, he founded the 'Union of Struggle for the Restoration of Leninism'. This group engaged in a thorough study of Lenin's writings and produced several

pamphlets dealing with workers' struggles—in particular, the riots in Novocherkassk.

In February 1964 he was arrested and spent over a year in an asylum for criminals. On his release he quickly became one of the leading figures of the opposition to the regime.

BUREAUCRACY

During the next four years, Grigorenko came to see more and more clearly that the cause of the sickness of Soviet society lay in a fundamental bureaucratic degeneration of the Party and State.

In his famous letter to the conference of Communist Parties held in Budapest in 1968 (printed in full in *Intercontinental Press*, Vol 12 No 8), he traces the historical process whereby the Soviet bureaucracy freed itself from the control of the masses and erected a massive apparatus of lies and terror to defend its positions.

Unlike many Soviet oppositionists, he knows that this has nothing in common with socialism: 'According to Marxist-Leninist theory the old mechanism for governing is supposed to be smashed and broken up and replaced by a State that is "withering away", that "will begin to wither away immediately and cannot do otherwise." . . . Instead, a State was set up that had an unprecedented degree of totalitarian control.'

Replying to those Stalinist demagogues who appeal for a closing of the ranks, Grigorenko stresses that the only basis for communist unity is 'no less than completely eliminating from communist ideology the stench of Stalinism'. He calls on 'the true communists of the world . . . to sever all relations with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and declare clearly and unequivocally that they do not consider that party to be communist and do not recognise the country that it rules to be socialist'.

Extremely valuable during this

period was Grigorenko's friendship with Alexei Kosterin, an Old Bolshevik who, Grigorenko says, turned him 'from a rebel into a fighter'. They were particularly active in defence of the national rights of the Crimean Tartars, who were deported en masse to Uzbekistan by Stalin.

Kosterin died in November 1968, and his funeral became a political demonstration of a kind not seen for decades. Watched closely by the secret police, over 400 people gathered at the cemetery to listen to 18 speakers, including several from the Tartars and other oppressed nationalities.

The reaction of the KGB was not slow in coming. Grigorenko's own flat was searched and many documents, including the funeral speeches, were seized. In Uzbekistan a group of Tartars celebrating the anniversary of Lenin's birth were attacked by the police. It was these two incidents that formed the background to his protest letter to the Prosecutor-General.

Grigorenko was finally arrested on 7 May, 1969, whilst organising the defence of leaders of the Crimean Tartars, themselves under arrest. The Brezhnev regime had decided that it could no longer tolerate the slightest open opposition, which it saw as threatening the stability of the whole bureaucratic apparatus.

SOLIDARITY

The bourgeois media that applaud Solzhenitsyn so vigorously have no interest in defending a communist militant such as Grigorenko. The broadest solidarity action by the left internationally, including the Western Communist Parties, is needed to tear Grigorenko out of the hands of Brezhnev's 'doctors'.

That is why the IMG welcomes the designation of next Tuesday, 7 May, as Grigorenko Day, and will be supporting the activities organised around this occasion.

JOE GREENWOOD

DEFEND GRIGORENKO!

Public meeting, Tues 7 May, at 7.30 pm in Conway Hall (Small Hall)
SPEAKERS: Chris Farley (Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation), Robin Blackburn (IMG) and others.

International Marxist Group

(British section of
the Fourth International)

97 Caledonian Rd.,
London N.1.



I would like more information about
the IMG and its activities

NAME

ADDRESS

South African elections

No illusions in Progressives!

No one was surprised when last week's all-white elections in South Africa returned the ruling Nationalist Party to office with an increased majority. This time it won 109 seats, to the 39 of the opposition United Party—whose policies contain only minor differences with the Nationalists.

But there was one surprise. The Progressive Party, which for 13 years has had only one MP—Mrs Helen Suzman—this time won no less than six seats.

This was only a small change, perhaps, but it may well be used as an excuse to create great illusions in the workers' movement over here. After all, doesn't this party claim to champion the rights of blacks? Doesn't its advance suggest that perhaps apartheid can be broken down peacefully after all?

INDUSTRIALISTS

The first thing to note about the Progressive Party is who it represents. The major figure behind it is the industrialist Harry Oppenheimer, who has a controlling interest in the giant Anglo-American corporation, (One of the successful Progressive Party candidates is also a director of Anglo-American, and was formerly married to Oppenheimer's daughter.)

Oppenheimer is just one of many industrialists backing the party. But their support is far from being motivated by lofty ideals. On the contrary, the policies of the Progressive Party are designed to forward their interests, by getting rid of the apartheid laws which hinder industrial expansion by limiting the employment of blacks in skilled jobs.

These policies challenge the position of Vorster's Nationalist Party, which rode to office in 1948 on a tide of support from the poor whites—the Afrikaners. The latter were encouraged to see their enemies as the even poorer blacks, and promised protection through laws which

reserved the skilled, better paid jobs for whites, controlled the movement of blacks from one area to another, and enforced a system of migratory labour. But with increasing industrialisation these laws have now become a hindrance to continued economic growth.

RESISTANCE

There are now simply not enough whites to fill the skilled jobs. Moreover, the migratory labour system means the expense of training a new batch of Africans every two years when the contract expires. Most important, the concentration of blacks in the industrial centres as one undifferentiated mass greatly increases the explosive potential of organised resistance against their exploitation and oppression.

The aim of the Progressive Party is to defuse (at least partially) this threat by building up a more privileged 'tame' black leadership who can be persuaded to limit themselves to fighting for small reforms within the system. Thus the party proposes to extend the vote to some blacks for the first time, while ensuring that the educational and income qualifications are high enough to exclude the vast majority. It also proposes to allow blacks to do skilled jobs.

Hence it can hardly be said to champion the rights of blacks. What the Progressive Party does champion is the right of the industrialists to boost their profits through a more extended exploitation of cheap black labour.

The electoral gains of the Progressive Party are thus marginal to the struggle of black people in South Africa. The way forward remains the same—building on the mass strikes which have already taken place in Natal and elsewhere, to develop the independent mass organisation of black people necessary to overthrow the racist State.

RICHARD McBRIDE

Trotsky's works published in Yugoslavia

The recent publication of *The Revolution Betrayed* in Yugoslavia represents a historic landmark: for the first time, Trotsky's classic analysis of the degeneration of the Russian revolution has been allowed to circulate openly in a bureaucratised workers' state.

The publication of *The Revolution Betrayed* completes a six-volume edition of Trotsky's works put out by the Rijeka publishing house Oktober Kersovani between spring 1972 and winter 1973. The series is edited by Predrag Vranicki, rector of the University of Zagreb since 1972 and a long-standing member of the editorial board of *Praxis*, the Zagreb philosophical journal which has been under more or less continuous fire from Party hard-liners since 1968.

In a long introduction to the first volume of the series, he gives an astonishingly honest account of Trotsky's political life and work (including the formation of the Fourth International). Drawing extensively on Deutscher's three volume biography, Vranicki, if anything goes further than Deutscher in his generally positive assessment of Trotsky's contribution to the world revolution in the years of his exile.

Insisting that 'Trotsky was a Marxist and a revolutionary to the end of his life' and that 'the Stalinist charges against him and the Left Opposition . . . [are] most perfidious and unscrupulous insinuations', Vranicki concludes that Stalin's actions dealt a grave blow to the development of

socialism in Europe.

When the first volume of the series was published in the spring of 1972, in the middle of the first wave of repression in Yugoslavia, it immediately became a best-seller—in the 'top ten' published monthly in the Zagreb paper *Vjesnik*. More remarkably, the latest volume has been enthusiastically reviewed in the semi-official journal *Nase Temе*, whose editor Stipe Suvar heads the ideological department of the Party in Croatia.

The reviewer even chides the editor for the lack of indexes, the absence of a chronology of events for the relevant years, and the failure to include a bibliography of Trotsky's works and works on Trotsky!

It is clear from recent debates in the Yugoslav press that there are deep divisions within the bureaucracy on how to deal with left critics (these are, of course, only one aspect of much more far-ranging differences). It is in this context that the decision to permit the publication of this series must be seen. It is interesting that the same Rijeka publishing house was also the first to publish Solzhenitsyn.

As in all the bureaucratised workers' states, the fight for freedom of expression is of vital interest to revolutionary Marxists. In this sense, too, the publication of Trotsky's works in Yugoslavia—despite the bureaucracy's repressive turn over the last few years—is an important political event.

PORTUGUESE CAPITALISTS TRY LIBERAL APPROACH

Red Weekly

It is still early days in Portugal. No one can yet be sure what precisely the new line-up of political forces will be, although the broad outlines are already clear.

One thing is beyond dispute. It was the continued successes of the liberation movements in Portugal's African colonies which made the overthrow of the Caetano regime inevitable.

The Portuguese workers can thank their African comrades for the new prospects which have been opened up by last Thursday's coup.

The first moves of the new junta have been to consolidate its position and win support. A 'programme of national salvation' has been announced, whose measures include the abolition of censorship, the release of political prisoners, the promise of early elections, and new rights of trade union and political association.

The fascist ANP—previously the only legal political movement—has been dissolved, and the secret police (DGS) are being rounded up and imprisoned.

All these measures are welcome. They enormously improve the con-

ditions in which the working class can organise its struggle. But the central feature of the situation must not be forgotten: the new regime simply represents an alternative strategy for the bourgeoisie. While capitalism remains, these freedoms can be revoked just as quickly as they were granted.

The 'Armed Forces Movement', which prepared the coup, acted because the old colonialist strategy had failed. After 13 years of guerrilla warfare in Angola, Guine-Bissau and Mozambique, there was still no sign of victory.

Moreover, these wars were dragging the whole Portuguese economy down with them, hitting not only these capitalists who have a direct stake in Africa, but also those looking for closer links with European big business.

It is the latter whose interests are represented by the new regime. Its leading figure, General Spínola, spelled out his intentions several months ago in his book *Portugal and the Future*.

Spínola emphasises the need for a 'political' solution to the African conflict, putting forward the idea of a 'Lusitanian commonwealth' in which Portugal and its colonies would have formally equal status.

Red Weekly

Portuguese domination would be maintained not through direct force but through the development of an embryonic African bourgeoisie tied to the interests of imperialism.

This would mean that the resources previously swallowed up by the war could be diverted towards massive investment, enabling the major commercial interests like the CUF and the Champalimaud group to compete in the EEC when Portugal loses its protected status in mid-1977.

We must be clear, therefore, that the new regime has seized power in order to impose a capitalist solution to a capitalist problem. It has no intention of simply giving in to the African liberation movements by granting them self-determination. Nor does it intend to let things get out of hand inside Portugal.

Statements like that of Socialist Party leader Mario Soares, that 'the Portuguese Army is not the Chilean Army,' can thus only disarm the

working masses and leave them at the mercy of the capitalists. The crawling of the Portuguese Communist Party—which is begging the junta to include it in the new provisional government—will have the same effect.

Much of course will depend on the attitude of the African liberation forces. FRELIMO in Mozambique and the PAIGC in Guine-Bissau are unlikely to do a deal with Spínola; but the temptation may be greater in Angola, where the Portuguese are more entrenched and the resistance is split into three separate movements.

Certainly, if Spínola is unable to impose a 'political' solution in the colonies within a fairly short period, then another crisis of massive proportions is likely to arise. It can only be adequately prepared for if the working class recognises the present regime for what it is, and takes advantage of its contradictions to organise its own independent struggle.



ERNEST MANDEL, leading member of the Fourth International, seen addressing a meeting of 250 people in Manchester last week. At this and other packed meetings in Leeds, Birmingham, London and Oxford, comrade Mandel explained the importance of the upsurge of workers' struggles in Europe in relation to the developing capitalist crisis. At each meeting, other speakers called for a massive mobilisation for the Chile demo and stressed the importance for students of the Revolutionary Students Rally on 4 May.

NOTTINGHAM STORM OVER OFFICE PLAN

A storm has blown up in Nottingham over the council's outline planning permission for a massive 140,000 sq. ft. office block, to be rented by the council for the use of its officers.

Nearly twice this amount of office space is already vacant in the city, and another half million sq. ft. is presently under construction!

Meanwhile, the provision of adequate housing for working people has been held up through lack of finance and materials. The council's rehousing programme is already 20 per cent behind schedule, and there are an estimated 8,000 slum houses, with 9,000 families on the council waiting list.

ILLEGAL HASTE

Among the old hands in the Nottingham office building pie is Colonel Siefert, the Centre Point mastermind who is the savvy architect responsible for negotiating the deal for the 140,000 sq. ft. monolith. And responsible for pushing the deal through the council's planning committee with unorthodox and illegal haste is the Labour majority.

One Labour councillor, Steve Evans,

has made repeated attempts to oppose the office block development, and to secure from the committee information about the processing of the planning applications. For this admirable interest, Evans has been expelled from the Labour group on the council.

ACTION COMMITTEE

An action committee has been formed to oppose the office block, demand that homes be built on the site, and that the details of all deals between the council and the speculators be published.

The committee was initiated by the Raleigh Street Area Residents Association, and it has been joined by a number of other tenants and residents groups, Labour Party Young Socialists, IMG, and trade union branches.

A local UCATT branch is presently considering blocking the site for the proposed offices, and a demonstration is planned for 28 May.

With all the muck now beginning to come to light in the North-East Labour strong-hold, and that is likely to be perfumed over by a parliamentary royal commission—it is extremely important that workers take action to turn offices into homes and expose the graft which brings the speculators millions.

Lesbians hold first national conference

The handiest 'smear' to use against the Women's Liberation Movement is that it is made up of 'lesbians'. Why is it thought that this charge should stop women dead in their tracks?

Those who apply the label believe they can dismiss activists in the Women's Movement merely by indicating that they do not fit in with the role laid down for them by

society.

The Women's Movement is indeed anxious to free women from a role primarily based on having kids, and challenges the definitions which society imposes on women.

Lesbians, too, reject these definitions, and last weekend three hundred lesbians attended their first ever national conference, held at Kent University. Workshops were held on lesbian mothers; lesbians in the National Union of Students; definitions of sexuality; and lesbians and the revolutionary left.

A variety of political organisations

Labour feels pressure on troops

From BOB PURDIE in Belfast

Moves to cut down the British military presence in the key Andersonstown area of West Belfast indicate a shift of policy by the Labour Government towards an increased use of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Ulster Defence Regiment, and the Free State Army, to hold the line against the IRA.

Andersonstown News reports the imminent evacuation by the British Army of its Silver City and Falls Road bus depot posts. This follows the pull-out from Casement Park a few months ago.

Signs of this trend can be seen everywhere in Belfast. Army vehicles are increasingly being re-equipped with VHF radios to replace the UHF equipment used only in the North of Ireland. It was the RUC which re-arrested escaped Republican leader Ivor Bell; they are showing their faces more often in catholic areas.

Republicans in Ardoyne told me that about two weeks ago they followed three truck-loads of troops to Aldergrove Airport—yet no units of the British Army were officially supposed to be ending their tour of duty at that time.

The Government is keeping this quiet because it is anxious not to frighten its Irish hangers-on. A unanimous squeal of anguish arose from the SDLP, the Faulkner Unionists, and the Free State Government after Roy Mason's recent 'pull the troops out' speech, which was a clear warning that Labour is being subjected to severe internal and external

Pakistani tea boy was British spy

The execution of a Pakistani tea boy by the IRA in South Armagh a fortnight ago will have jolted many on the left. But the IRA had become suspicious after he had been supplying tea and sugar to local houses. When unusually large quantities were purchased, the houses were raided by the British Army, presumably on the chance that someone might be hiding there.

The IRA simply does not carry out random murders. Its intelligence is excellent, and its discipline tight.

pressures to commit itself to a date for withdrawal.

But this scaling down of troop numbers does not mean a toning down of repression—quite the reverse. Army positions in the Ardoyne, and probably in other areas are actually being re-inforced. A smaller, but more intense military effort is probable.

Rees obviously hopes to boost recruitment to the RUC and UDR and the South-Eastern Army will step up its border patrolling. But since no substantial recruitment from catholics can be expected, the RUC and UDR can only be beefed up from the protestants. This means even less screening out of extreme loyalist elements.

At the UDR's inception in 1970 there was an attempt to exclude the worst of the old 'B' Specials. But after internment the

Remember that when the next witch-hunt blows up.

It was significant that the Irish edition of the *Daily Mirror* on 23 April placed the story on a front page, with screaming headlines, while coverage in British papers was relatively muted. Editors are evidently concerned that 'Horror' stories about Ireland are likely now to produce a 'why don't we take the troops out?' reaction, from the British public.

Remember that when they tell you that the British Army is winning,

need for troops was so great that the door was thrown wide open. UDR arms in large quantities have since found their way to the UVF and UDA.

Rees's cowardly policy will eventually lead to a crisis. Loyalists will use their position in an attempt to blackmail Labour into concessions, and this will in turn strengthen the hand of repression and reaction in Britain—as indicated by Powell's moves towards an alliance between Orangism, racism, and the yearners for Empire.

The British labour movement must demand the withdrawal of the troops from Ireland—but firmly on the basis of ending the repression, and giving self-determination to the Irish people. As the Troops Out Movement conference on 11 May will establish, this is the only way to break the trend towards repression in Britain.



Essex University student Bob Findlay, one of those arrested during picketing incidents, makes a point during last Wednesday's NUS rally there. Bob will be one of the many students from all over the country attending the IMG REVOLUTIONARY STUDENTS RALLY in London this Saturday. The rally starts at 10 am in Conway Hall and will include speakers from abroad. For final details phone 01-278 9526. Photo: EZRA NATHAN (Red Weekly)