

RED WEEKLY

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FUND DRIVE!

Well we did just scrape home last week. But it was a close call. Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen still did not get their Fund Drive quotas in, nor did Sheffield. Manchester sent in more money but are still short of their target.

We know that the postal system is in a bad way but we do not believe that it takes 28 days for a letter to get from these towns. If we are to get off on the right foot for March then these back-quotas have to be made up and soon!

The beginning of the month is always bad, as we have to pay last month's debts, so readers and branches must make sure that we get a full postal bag this week. All donations to: Fighting Fund, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

COMMON MARKET:

LABOUR 'LEFTS' OPEN DOOR FOR RACISTS

ALL THE MOST IMPORTANT SECTIONS of the British capitalist class are in favour of staying in the European Economic Community—they are prepared to lose a 'little sovereignty' to save the capitalist system.

Meanwhile the Labour Party and trade union 'lefts' have hauled up the Union Jack and rushed out to defend sovereignty, Parliament and all the other revered 'British' institutions. Instead of putting forward the need for a socialist Europe, based on planned production for social need rather than the EEC's capitalist production for profit, they make a Blimpish defence of the rotting institutions of British capitalism.

The 'lefts' have not been short of allies. As the Benns and Foots have pledged their undying devotion to British independence they have been enthusiastically applauded by the National Front, the Monday Club and Mr. Enoch Powell.

In fact the astute Mr. Powell is very keen on working with the 'left'. In Manchester he was more than disappointed when Bob Wright, AUEW candidate of the Broad Left would not share an anti-EEC platform with him because of rank-and-file pressure.

But Mr. Powell has remained undaunted. Last week in Brighton he pulled off one of his bigger coups. This time his co-speaker was Clive Jenkins, general secretary of ASTMS and a newly elected member of the TUC general council.

by **Bob Pennington**

Powell of course, as an outspoken and committed advocate of the virtues of capitalism, did not digress on the capitalist nature of the EEC. Mr. Jenkins, who fancies himself as something of a socialist—which he mainly practices on Sundays and public holidays—neglected

to explain to his audience that the purpose of the EEC was to secure the better running of European capitalism and increase the exploitation of the European working class.

But being the patriotic little gentleman, he did issue a dire warning of how Britain 'was being sacrificed to the industrial interests of the French and Germans'.

Nor did Mr. Jenkins get round to telling his audience that his platform colleague had made a speech just two days before to the Surrey Monday Club on immigration which even the *Guardian* newspaper said put Powell's 'notorious earlier efforts in the shade'.

But why should Mr. Jenkins get too hot under the collar about Powell's latest racist diatribe? After all they were both defending 'the nation'. In Croydon the night before Mr. Powell had been warning of an impending 'catastrophe, even the death of a nation' if immigrants were not repatriated in substantial numbers.

By associating with this rag-bag of racists and virulent nationalists the Labour 'left' help give credibility to these reactionary ideas in the working class movement, and provide a platform for their poison.

The need for an independent working class campaign has been ignored by these 'lefts'—because such a campaign would involve the fight for working class internationalism. This means they would have to refuse to collaborate with Powell and the NF and put forward a socialist alternative.

It is precisely because he has managed to establish an alliance on the Common Market with the Labour 'left' that Powell has once again returned to the issue of immigration and racism. His Croydon speech is neither explicable nor coincidental, but is a calculated attempt to take advantage of the platform that Clive Jenkins and company are providing for him.



Big mouth Prentice in action.

A Case of Foot & 'Big mouth' disease

REG PRENTICE, the Secretary of Education with the big mouth and the low IQ, according to cabinet colleague Michael Foot, has publicly proclaimed the death agony of the social contract.

Speaking over the weekend he claimed the miners had 'welshed' on the contract in their settlement, and that future deals of a similar nature would be the death of the contract. 'Economic illiteracy' charged Michael Foot, in a bitter counter-attack in which he was supported by Harold Wilson.

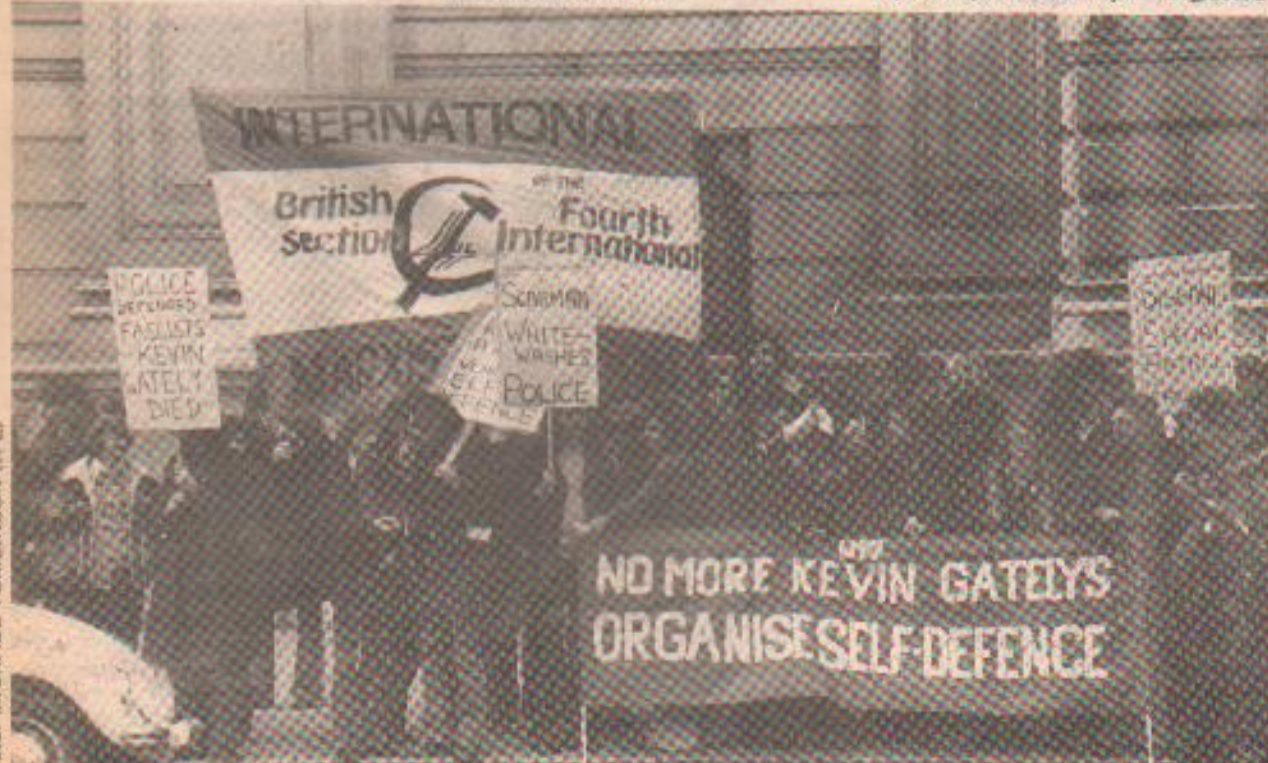
But all Prentice has done is nail his colours clearly on the mast. All sections of the Labour Government, pledged as they are to the defence of capitalism, face a choice between adopting a compulsory incomes policy or clinging to the sinking ship of the 'voluntary' social contract. Prentice, who more clearly expresses the needs of the capitalist class, has simply grasped the bull by the horns. Foot and the Labour left prefer to pretend that the crisis isn't as serious as the capitalist class maintains and put off the day of reckoning.

Meanwhile Wilson is like a juggler doing a balancing act. He realises that when leading sections of the capitalist class proclaim the social contract dead the screws will be on to implement a compulsory incomes policy and the Government will face a massive working class upsurge. So the fiction of the social contract has to be maintained for as long as possible.

Prentice in the Labour Cabinet is like a Punch and Judy show, with the two sides debating how best to make the working class pay for the crisis. While Prentice threatens a wages freeze and Healey unemployment, Foot discusses not *if*, but by how much, spending on the social services must be reduced.

Despite Foot's verbal fire, the Labour 'left' have no real answer to Prentice, because in the last analysis they, like him, put the defence of capitalism before the interests of the working class. That's why the workers' movement must combine support for all groups of workers going into struggle against the social contract, such as the railwaymen and the power workers, with preparations for an all-out fight against any attempt to impose a statutory incomes policy.

James Drake



On Saturday afternoon, 1 March, over a hundred militants of the IMG gathered outside the Home Office on Whitehall, to protest at the report of the Scarman tribunal on the incidents of June 15th at Red Lion Square. This report attempted to pin the responsibility for Kevin Gateley's death on the IMG. We deny this accusation and stand by our position of not allowing fascists and racists to speak, despite the witch-hunt atmosphere that Scarman has prepared for us by his report. (See story on page 3)

Photo: MICHAEL TOMLINSON (IFL)

***** INSIDE - WE TAKE SCARMAN TO PIECES! *****

WHAT SCARMAN DIDN'T

MENTION

.... in Hastings

Lord Scarman probably took a deep breath and felt very pleased with himself when he handed in his Report to the Home Secretary.

But on the very same day, three people were being committed to detention centre for three months each only a few miles away in the town of Hastings. The events leading up to their imprisonment show the sheer irrelevance of his conclusions.

Along with these three, six others were collectively fined hundreds of pounds, after being arrested on an anti-fascist picket in Hastings a month ago.

The picket, which was 150-strong and included students and trade unionists, was repeatedly attacked by the police. As on 15 June last year they 'defended law and order' they drove wedges into the crowd in an effort to clear the way for the fascists, and arrested anyone who stood in their way. Police 'excesses' and 'over-reactions' on this occasion included instances of Special Branch officers not going through 'all the bother' of making arrests beating up the anti-fascists instead.

The NF conducted themselves in their usual 'lawful' way. Members of the NF's 'Honour Guard' swept through both the police and the pickets and then strode up and down the picket hitting people at random. The police arrested some of them.

All this disorder, no doubt inspired by members of such violent organisations as the Labour Party and the Young Liberals, couldn't help but attract the attention of those 'members of the public' who happened to witness the

scene. In fact the police managed to arrest two Hastings youths who joined the picket after seeing the fracas from a passing bus.

As to the local magistrate, he may not possess Scarman's eloquence, but doesn't defer from his views. He made it clear that 'people had to be forced into realising that this kind of breach of the peace' would not be tolerated. In other words by setting this example, more anti-fascists are going to go to jail - or their graves - while the police and fascists get away with murder.

Defence counsel at the trial said that the charges were so preposterous that a jury would never convict, and said the magistrate was the most biased he'd ever come across.

The Hastings and Brighton anti-fascist committees are mounting a strenuous defence campaign, which is backed by Hastings NUS and the Hastings, Brighton and Crawley Trades Councils.

The judges and magistrates throughout the country must have it made absolutely clear to them that the working class movement is not going to tolerate their interpretation of 'law and order'.

Defence funds are urgently needed and should be sent to the Defence Fund, University of Sussex Student Union.



National Front fascist is escorted out after attempting to disrupt a meeting organised by Battersea & Wandsworth Trades Council

.... in Preston

Thirty thugs drawn from the whole North-West were led into the centre of Preston last Saturday by National Front Chairman, Kingsley Read.

While some of them harassed and tried to intimidate IMG and IS paper-sellers who had refused to allow fascist and racist literature to be distributed in the streets, six

thugs assaulted and beat up a member of IS when he was alone making a phone call.

This is one more in the long series of vicious attacks by the NF on socialist and trade union activists in many areas (particularly the North-West), which shows up the fascists' campaign on 'law and order' for what it really is.

The fascists had not dared show their faces much in Preston ever since last summer, when the first NF meeting here was abandoned under the pressure of a

picket of several hundred anti-fascists.

Widespread support is growing for a public meeting directed at all sections of the local labour movement - to defend socialist paper-sellers and stop the National Front.

This will lay the basis for a demonstration through the town as the first rallying point of an on-going campaign to deny the fascists any platform on the streets and smash all attempts to infiltrate the local trade union movement.

Preston IMG

.... in Wandsworth

The National Front turned up in force to an anti-racist meeting called by Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Council last week. Lord Scarman would do well to observe what followed that evening in this London suburb.

Two days before, the local NUT had organised the showing of an anti-fascist play. The NF had invaded the meeting, and because it was not well-attended, took it over to peddle their fascist ideas. When 20 NF members turned up to the Trades Council meeting, they were asked to leave straight away. They had come dressed for a fight - heavy boots and crutch guards - and when stewards started to escort them to the door they took to chairs and fists in an extremely well-organised way. The IMG photographer had his hand badly damaged.

The anti-racist meeting deeply offended everything the fascists stood for. Part of the meeting was devoted to solidarity with black workers fighting exploitation and discrimination in one of Britain's Caribbean colonies. Althea Jones of the Caribbean Solidarity Committee told an audience of 150 people of the unemployment and grinding poverty among the workers and peasants exploited by British capitalism in the West Indies, and called for the release of Caribbean freedom fighter, Desmond Trotter.

But the National Front made their allegiances perfectly clear as they left the meeting. 'Law and order', 'I'm a patriot', 'I'm English, not like some of them here' they shouted.

When the police arrived, they did their usual act. One anti-racist, who had to go to hospital, was hit (twice) by a fascist in front of one policeman. But no

fascists were charged. This is the sort of 'law and order' the NF like to see from the police.

A resolution passed at the meeting called for no platform for fascism or racism, for trade unions to organise against local fascist groups, and to investigate incidents of racism against Irish people.

It called on the Labour Council to deprive the NF of all civic facilities, and for the Government to ban any fascist marches. A mobilisation against the recent jailing of anti-fascist militants is to be organised.

Islay Fullerton

NHS no workers' control - patient dies

The cut-backs in the NHS have claimed another victim. Mrs Fedetor Rogers, a Chorley woman, died last week just a few hours after being discharged from hospital while still in a coma.

At 9.30 in the morning she had been admitted into hospital with a diabetic coma. After being given an insulin injection she was sent home. Five minutes after the ambulance men had left she started having convulsions and her husband called the ambulance again.

Desperately he asked: 'Do you have to leave her?' The ambulance men explained that they had no choice as she had been discharged.

RE-ADMITTED

Later, when it was eventually arranged that she could be re-admitted, the ambulance men said that they were expecting to come back for her as their colleagues had told them 'that a woman had been discharged when she was not fit.'

A few hours after arriving at the hospital for the second time that day Mrs Rogers died. A post-mortem examination revealed she suffered from sarcoidosis - a disease which needs cortisone to combat it. Yet she was simply given another insulin injection for her diabetes on re-admission to the hospital.

Mrs Rogers is a victim of the consultants' work to rule, and of the cut-backs in the NHS. Short of doctors and staff, plagued by the lack of beds, and lacking adequate equipment, the NHS cannot supply a proper health service to people. If this is what happens to 'urgent' cases, what about the unfortunate half a million people still on the waiting list?

But why did the ambulance men not take Mrs Rogers back when they realised

she was very ill? No doubt many of the 'junior' staff were also concerned that she was being discharged, so why did they not take action to keep her in hospital?

NO RIGHT

Unfortunately the answer is too simple. Neither the ambulance men nor the nurses have the right to challenge the decisions of the doctor who sits in supreme judgement. If the nurses had tried to do anything they would have been up before the nursing officer and given a severe warning.

The ambulance men also knew that they had no authority to challenge the doctor's decision, and that if they did they would be 'on the carpet'.

Although these workers knew from experience - and knowledge gained on the job - that Mrs Rogers was very ill, that experience could not be used. The privileges of the doctors are guarded by a rigid hierarchical structure which not only places all the decisions in their hands but makes sure that any one who challenges these decisions is subject to disciplinary action.

Mrs Rogers died because the NHS is being run-down by a Labour Government that puts the interests of capitalism above the health of the working class. She also died because of the fundamentally undemocratic way in which the health service is run.

Workers control involves more than just administering the NHS. It also involves the right of health workers to veto and overturn the decisions of the doctors when their decisions are injurious to the health and life of working class patients.

Janet Maguire

THE FACTS YOU NEED

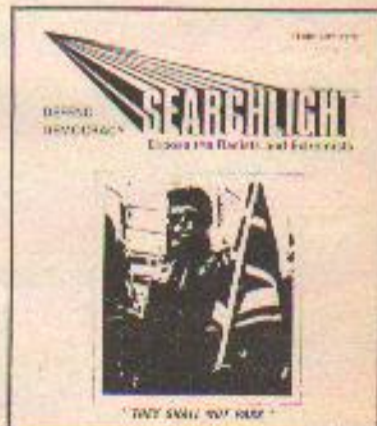
Did you know: That the former Student Organizer of the National Front was convicted of arson against a Jewish synagogue?

Did you know: That NF member Mike Passmore, who headed the NF's annual Cenotaph Parade was convicted in West Germany of handing out Nazi leaflets, and told the court he wished the Nazis had won the war?

Did you know: That a certain George Young, currently of the South Place Ethical Society which owns Conway Hall, was a member of the Monday Club and spoke for Jim Merriek's fascist outfit, the British Campaign to Stop Immigration?

Did you know: That NF members recently ran a car across the front of a bus in Manchester in an effort to hi-jack anti-fascists travelling in the bus?

Did you know: That Kingsley Read, new Chairman of the Front said: 'If the NF comes to power we will whip juvenile delinquents till the skin comes off their backs.'



If not ... and you are an anti-fascist militant, then you should take out a subscription to a new magazine, *Searchlight* - a monthly review of what the extreme right is up to in this country. The editors say: 'We hope that editors, MPs, trade unions and local anti-fascist committees will make good use of the material in the bulletin.'

Subscriptions are £2 for 12 issues (organisations £5) to A&R Publications, 21/26 Great Western Building, Livery Street, Birmingham 3.

Communist Party waves the union jack

LAST WEEK JACK WODDIS felt obliged to write a four-part series in the *Morning Star* to try and justify the CP's capitulation to nationalism the Common Market.

The fact that the CP now thinks it permissible for the working class to share its platforms with Enoch Powell (even if it still thinks the fascist National Front is 'out of bounds') must have stuck in the throats of a lot of their own militants. So along came Woddis.

'THE REAL PEOPLE'

"In essence," he writes, "we are faced with two problems. First the national question. Secondly, the parliamentary question." He then goes to incredible lengths to justify the CP's defence of British 'national sovereignty'—that is, the sovereignty of the capitalist nation state. He

platform to take the rest of their poisonous divisive ideas into the working class. By legitimising the notion of 'national sovereignty', as if all classes in Britain had something in common to defend, the CP undermines the possibility of an independent working class fight against the Common Market, and the struggle for the working class alternative to the EEC—the United Socialist States of Europe.

There is a deadly logic in the Communist Party's defence of 'national sovereignty'. It flows from the CP's belief that there is a peculiarly 'British' road to socialism based on the 'democratic traditions' of British society. *Red Weekly* readers will remember that the Communist Party of Chile told the same story before the workers' movement was drowned in blood following the military coup in

proposing in the fight against the Common Market is not a united front of workers' organisations, but collaboration with capitalist spokesmen—Liberals, Tories and even Enoch Powell. Woddis quotes Lenin's statement in *Left Wing Communism* that it is necessary to take advantage of 'every fissure', however small, in the ranks of our enemies' to justify collaboration with the class enemy. And Lenin's insistence on 'taking advantage of every possibility, however small, of gaining an ally among the masses, even though this ally be temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional' (our emphasis) is read by Woddis to include 'leading anti-Market Tories'. Since when have communists considered the Tories to be representatives of 'the masses'?

IN PRACTICE

The Communist Party's defence



Rank-and-file pressure may have forced Broad Left member of the AUEW executive Bob Wright to back down from appearing on the same platform as Enoch Powell, but that did not stop him from appearing alongside such enemies of the working class movement as businessman James Towler (far right) and Monday Club MP Richard Body (next to him) at a GBOC rally in Manchester last Sunday. This does not mean that socialists should not support Bob Wright in the elections for AUEW general secretary against arch right-winger John Boyd, whose victory would be an immense boost for the capitalist class—merely that they should be aware that in the final analysis Wright too will opt for class collaboration rather than class struggle.

Does this on the basis that the 'real' nation is not the capitalist state of the ruling class, but a mystical entity known as 'the real British people.' This category which deliberately blurs the irreconcilable conflict of the interests of the working class with all sections of the capitalist class, excludes only the big monopolies.

For Woddis it is these monopolies which are presented as the source of all attacks on the democratic rights and organisations of the working class. But in reality it is frenzied sections of small capital, ground between the millstones of capitalist competition and the mass struggle of the working class, who are the most hysterical opponents of the workers' movement. But because sections of small capital, whom the likes of Enoch Powell partly represent, oppose the Common Market, for their own reasons, the CP try to hide this fact in order to cobble together a 'united campaign' with these reactionary forces.

This position opens up big dangers for the workers' movement. Nothing suits the far right better than the CP and the Labour left fanning the flames of chauvinism

September 1973.

PARLIAMENT

The cornerstone of the CP's strategy is 'the perspective ... of transforming Parliament from being an instrument of the capitalist class into becoming an organ of the representative power of the working people, an instrument of the people's will to end capitalism and introduce Socialism. The Common Market attack on the sovereignty of Parliament means a threat to the Socialist aims of the working class.' (*Morning Star*, 27 February). Thus the Communist Party's defence of Parliament, which they admit is still a capitalist institution, against 'the faceless, soulless bureaucrats in Brussels' (*Morning Star* 25 February) is in fact a defence of their own rotten programme.

They then have the audacity to quote Lenin to justify their positions. But Lenin made absolutely clear, both in his writings and his practice, that only through smashing the capitalist state apparatus and waging the most determined fight against all forms of collaboration with the capitalist class, could the working class come to power

of national sovereignty not only confuses and misleads working class opposition to the Common Market, it undermines the ability of the working class to defend the basic rights the CP hold so dear.

An example of the CP's chauvinism in practice can be seen in its reports of the occupation against the sackings at Imperial Typewriters, Hull. The *Morning Star* is completely unable to deal with the political confusion of the workers that results from their anti-American chauvinism. The workers are blaming the loss of their jobs not on the capitalist crisis (and therefore defending them on the basis that the crisis is a capitalist crisis for which the working class will refuse to pay), but on the 'anti-British activity' of the US multinational, Litton Industries. With a union jack flying over the top of the occupied factory, the workers are claiming that 'Britain needs its own typewriter industry.'

Even at this level the argument is nonsense. A typewriter industry in Britain could not survive on the basis of the capitalist market: it could only work as part of the nationalisation of all typewriter and

IN FOCUS

SCARMAN

WE REPLY

The IMG is 'morally responsible' for Kevin Gately's death—that is the verdict of Lord Justice Scarman, making his report on the battle of Red Lion Square to Roy Jenkins last week. But Scarman did not propose a single significant change to the law. The ruling class has failed completely to use Red Lion Square as a pretext for a new legal assault on workers' rights.

In fact, faced with a mass of journalists' evidence about police behaviour, Scarman was forced to recommend that an 'independent element' be added to the procedure for investigating complaints against the police. Confronted with the ugly facts about the National Front, he even recommended that a 'radical amendment' of the Race Relations Act is needed to make it an 'effective sanction'. No wonder Scarman, and especially the press, make such a meal out of the IMG's 'moral responsibility' for Gately's death!

MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

Despite a mass of evidence showing the use of police truncheons, Scarman concludes that nobody can be legally blamed. So on what does this 'moral responsibility' hang?

On the fact that the IMG 'started the trouble'? Perhaps we should point out that the police provocatively changed the route? Or point to the unprovoked assault on us by mounted police in Theobalds Road, and by SPG men in Boswell Street? But these are not the main points.

In Scarman's own words, 'failure to respect the rights of others' was the 'reason for the violence in Red Lion Square'. So, we would ask the following questions: Were the police authorities respecting the rights of others when they failed to question the effect of the National Front march on the families of coloured immigrants in this country? Was the Government, a Government whose own social democratic colleagues were being tortured and murdered by fascists in Chile, 'respecting the rights of others', or more to the point, acting in the interests of the workers' movement, when they allowed the fascists of the National Front to drum their way through the streets?

If you are going to seriously discuss 'morality', then moral blame must rest with the Government, who flagrantly disrespected the rights of the working class majority in this country and of the racial minorities exploited here.

Perhaps our 'moral responsibility' stems from the fact that in Red Lion Square we intended to mount an 'illegal' picket? If you want to discuss the law, Lord Scarman, then we would reiterate the point we put to you in the Enquiry: Were the police and the Government applying even the existing laws against the fascists?

NO LIGHT

It is no use saying, as Scarman does, that 'there is a case for codifying our law as to public order so as to ensure that the fundamental human rights set out in the United Nations Declaration of 1948 and the European Convention of 1950 are protected by statute: and there may well be a case for re-shaping our race relations legislation: but these disorders and the way they were handled by the police, throw no light on such broad questions'.

This is to bury one's head in the sand and pretend that such 'broad questions' as the re-emergence of a fascist movement in Britain, violence against black people and trade unionists, and the role of the authorities in giving protection to fascists, aren't relevant.

But such questions won't go away. It's no use talking about whether the police were defending 'public order' on 15 June. Many have died fighting fascism and many more will do so. What the police did on that day was to encourage and assist *real* threats to the democratic liberties of the majority of the population: to allow the fascists to go unimpeded to attack and try to demoralise those forces committed to fighting fascism, and to get in some training of their own for smashing up the democratic liberties of workers and students in future.

The struggle to stop the growth of fascism in this country over the last 18 months shows one thing conclusively: we can expect nothing from the police and the courts except obstruction, repression and moral hypocrisy. The history of Germany, Italy and Chile all show the same point.

BRUSH ASIDE

The labour movement should brush aside Scarman's advice, as the ruling class job it is. They should demand that the Labour Government dismantle the Special Patrol Groups and add its voice to the growing movement to stop fascists by the only available means: mass action of the labour movement on the streets coupled with a campaign of self-defence against the police. Any attempt to further attack the anti-fascist movement by victimising the IMG should be met with the solidarity of the whole movement. These are the real 'lessons' the Labour movement should draw. We should remember: there were no Kevin Gately's at Hyde Park Corner on 7 September, when anti-fascists gathered in their thousands, properly prepared to defend themselves against provocative, violent attacks.

Britain. However the *Morning Star* has remained silent on this point, encouraging the workers' belief in the 'superiority' of being exploited by British capital as opposed to 'foreign' capital.

With good reason Woddis goes out of his way in his articles and

'slander' that Communists 'are not patriots'. It is this 'patriotism' of Her Majesty's Communist Party which encourages the road to defeat taken by the workers at Imperial Typewriters.

GUERRILLA FIGHTERS VOTE

INVESTORS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA must be a moody lot these days, as events in 'their' part of the world spin them around from glee to despair and back again.

Just last autumn an encouraging double act appeared on the African scene—as President Kaunda of Zambia and Prime Minister Vorster of white racist South Africa together proclaimed a new era of 'detente' between the black African states (who long ago abandoned any real fight against imperialism) and white racism.

RHODESIA

However before this love-knot could be finally tied the thorny question of Rhodesia had to be settled. To this end the black Rhodesian political leaders were coaxed and blackmailed into dissolving their different groups and uniting under the umbrella of the most right-wing of them—the African National Congress (ANC), and the racist Government of Ian Smith was persuaded to grudgingly make a few concessions to the 'united' black nationalists and to come to the negotiating table with them.

But before the ink was dry on this little scheme Smith and his colleagues began to back-peddle, denying that there was any possibility of majority rule being granted in the



Kaunda—new double act with Vorster

foreseeable future, and breaking many of the pledges that had been made (to free imprisoned African nationalists and allow them to engage in 'constitutional' political activity).

The situation still remains a very dangerous one. South African has realised that it may have to live with a black-ruled Rhodesia, but it wants to make sure that this takes place gradually, and under 'responsible' black leaders who will be prepared to compromise with imperialism and white racism.

Such a development also fits in with the aims of the black African governments, who have no interest in seeing real mass struggle break out

on their doorstep, and would almost certainly be accepted by the leadership of the revamped ANC. The big stumbling block so far has been the stubbornness of the Rhodesian whites.

GUERRILLAS

But there are encouraging signs that important sections of the liberation forces have seen the dangers in such a course. Evidence that ZANU guerrillas in the field have realised the

information it is possible to be sure that the ZANU guerrillas have rejected the Lusaka ceasefire call. So, while various political 'leaders' are hovering about continuing 'low-level discussions' with Smith, the fighters in the field have given their answer by showing that the struggle goes on.

Encouraging also is the latest edition of ZANU's journal, *Zimbabwe News*, received from Lusaka on 3 February. This asserts that the org-

In a long article on 'United Front and Armed Struggle in Zimbabwe' the ZANU militants implicitly reject the artificial unity imposed on them in December:

'Complete fusion of the liberation movements in Zimbabwe would have disastrous consequences on armed struggle in the country. In the first place, how can a liberation movement operating within Zimbabwe under the control of Ian Smith wage armed struggle? ...Secondly the movements that have signed the Lusaka declaration have different political backgrounds, ideological outlooks, attitudes towards national liberation in Zimbabwe. For example on the question of political settlement, ANC is on record for supporting parity or the sharing of power with white settlers. ZAPU and FROLIZI are on record for seeking gradual majority rule. They accept a transitional period. Only ZANU has said "Majority rule is not negotiable"...Given such a wide divergence of views about the liberation struggle a complete merger or fusion is out of the question.'

Outlining their principles for a united front ZANU states:

'The first principle is one of independence and initiative. By this we mean that each party must retain its organs and must have a free hand in developing its specific programme especially with respect to military operations.'

As a minimum programme for such a front it puts forward:

- the principle of immediate majority rule based on one man one vote;
- the principle of armed struggle as the primary means or form of struggle, constitutional and peaceful means of struggle being secondary.'

SOLIDARITY

These determined statements by ZANU place them in the forefront of the fight against racism and imperialism in Southern Africa—but already they are paying a price. The liberation committee of the Organisation of African Unity, which represents the black African Governments, has moved to cut off funds to all but the revamped ANC—a step designed to block any attempts at independent action, such as that of the ZANU freedom fighters. In the capital of Tanzania, Dar es Salaam, the offices of ZANU have been shut down because of their militant stand, and in Zambia moves are afoot which will probably cut ZANU off from any official assistance.

In this situation the Zimbabwean freedom fighters—and the militants of ZANU in particular—are urgently in need of international solidarity. Their fight for majority rule now is one that deserves the support of the anti-imperialist and working class movements around the world. If the present attempts to isolate them and foist a sell-out settlement on black Rhodesians (which the leaders of the new ANC are prepared to accept) come off, then the road will be clear for the ultimate sell-out—of the black population of South Africa itself. The South African Government would then be able to extend its political and economic tentacles throughout the continent on behalf of imperialism, and any hope of liberating the African people from starvation, poverty, oppression and exploitation would receive a grave set back.

John Blair

BRITISH & IRANIAN TROOPS OUT OF OMAN (Dhofar)
 9 March, Sun. 2 p.m.
DEMONSTRATION
 Ass. Horse Guards Ave., near Trafalgar Square
 To: 10 Downing St., Iranian & Omani Emb.
 Organised by: The Gulf Committee, The Iranian Students Society in GB and the Palestine-Gulf-Yemen Solidarity Committee (Confederation)

WITH THEIR GUNS

suicidal nature of a ceasefire is given by the deaths of seven South African 'policemen' since the talks. On 26 January, explosives ripped up more than half a mile of key railway line.

The 'compromisers' in the black nationalist groups have rushed to say that the only reason for these incidents is that there has not been time to inform the freedom fighters of the ceasefire: a feeble attempt to apologise for the continuation of the struggle in times when no guerilla band can be without a portable radio.

Even in the absence of specific

information cannot accept any ceasefire until a constitutional conference committed to discussing immediate transition to majority rule is convened. It describes the current 'detente' as 'nothing but imperialist machinations to wreck the revolutionary movement in Zimbabwe and indeed in the whole of Southern Africa', and asserts that 'it is armed struggle which has brought about the detente moves and it is armed struggle which will liberate Zimbabwe. Abandoning armed struggle now is tantamount to a sell-out.'

Puerto Rico—back yard of American Imperialism



Picket of US Embassy last Saturday to demand release of Puerto Rican political prisoners

LAST SATURDAY, 1 March, was the 21st anniversary of the disruption of the US Congress by the gunfire and the cry of four Puerto Ricans for an independent Puerto Rico, free from the yoke of US imperialism.

Their action brought world attention to the Puerto Rican independence struggle. Although no one was killed, three men, Rafael Cancel-Miranda, Irving Flores, and Andres Figueroa-Cordero, received 75 year sentences and the leader, Lolita Lebron, 50 years.

Today they are still in jail, along with their co-fighter Oscar Collazo, who was arrested during the nationalist revolt which met the 1950 declaration by the US Congress that Puerto Rico would henceforth be a 'Commonwealth', with 'associated statehood' with the US. The bloody suppression of this revolt led to the killing of scores of unarmed peacefully demonstrating people and the jailing of hundreds more.

COLONIAL TIES

The 'Commonwealth' solution was a means of continuing 500 years of colonial domination of Puerto Rico under the cover of introducing a few minor reforms over local government. As with Britain's ex-colonies in the Caribbean, 'associated statehood' was a formula which left all the old colonial ties intact.

Puerto Rico's economy is still totally dependent on foreign investment tied to the US market. Like the other Caribbean islands it is still basically a factory producing one or two products which it is forced to sell to imperialism at a knock-down price.

In Puerto Rico the main product is sugar, although the discovery of oil and other natural resources has recently led to a frenetic change-over to petrochem-

icals and heavy industry. To serve these industries there has always been an abundant supply of cheap labour (average wages are a third of those paid in the US) and a reserve pool of labour (there is 30% unemployment).

MILITARY BASES

This systematic exploitation has been maintained through collaboration with a series of native puppet regimes as well as direct military occupation—13% of the island is given over to US military bases. To add insult to injury, the US Government also uses Puerto Rican youth to service its war machine through compulsory military service on the islands.

After the fierce repression which crushed the nationalist movement in the early 1950s, there was no real organised opposition until the economic and social problems in Puerto Rico sharply worsened in the late 1960s as the US itself entered into crisis. Since then both the Independence and Socialist parties have growing in strength. The Puerto Rican Socialist Party (PSP) in particular is committed to a programme of struggle for economic and political self-determination within the framework of a fight for a united socialist Caribbean.

The re-emergence of the national liberation struggle has also coincided with growing militancy amongst the Puerto Rican working class. Last year there were strikes by transport workers, teachers, and public employees. In November, the National Guard were called out against striking sewage workers and 11 union leaders were jailed, which brought thousands more out in solidarity.

This repression of workers' struggles follows on from continual harassment of left-wing organisations—the special police together with reactionary groups like the Cuban Anti-Communist Liberation Front (there are 60,000 Cuban exiles in Puerto Rico) have been responsible for



The last few years have seen a steady growth in working class militancy in Puerto Rico—here workers march to demand release of 11 jailed trade union leaders

160 attacks on them in the last two years.

MIGRANT WORKERS

The other side of the colonial coin is the emigration of Puerto Rican workers to the US in search of a way out of the poverty and misery of life in Puerto Rico. But discrimination in the US means that a life of poverty as an unskilled or service worker in the American mecca is not much home. So when 20,000 people demonstrated in New York last October in solidarity with their compatriots at home, they were also fighting against the appalling conditions which face them as immigrants on the mainland.

It is around this combined struggle that the solidarity campaign launched in this country by the Committee for Puerto Rican Independence and the Caribbean

People's Solidarity Campaign must be extended. The deepening economic and social crisis in the imperialist countries has immediate repercussions in the 'Third World', since the essence of imperialism is the interlinking of the two economies in order to exploit the natural and labour resources of the colonies and ex-colonies and to ensure a captive market for consumer goods.

So when America sneezes, Puerto Rico catches a cold. But emigration from the islands to escape the symptoms only returns them to the mainland. In the end, there is no way out of this impasse of imperialism. Therefore a combined struggle against these policies and methods will confront imperialism at its roots.

Sheila Coxhead

LABOUR'S WEB OF CORRUPTION

For seventeen weeks scaffolders at the Eldon Square site in Newcastle have been on strike against victimisation for union activities. They have faced a united opposition of the full time officials of the T&GWU and UCATT, McAlpine's, the Labour Council, and the police. On 10 March, ten of their pickets will come up in court on trumped-up charges. But there must be 'no more Shrewsburies'. The ten must be defended now.

Newcastle International Marxist Group, which has been active in building support for the strike has produced this special report for *Red Weekly*. It reveals a picture of professional scabbing by the local leaderships of the building unions and a web of corruption involving the Labour Council. By contrast, the fact that the scaffolders' strike has been so solid is a tribute to their open and democratic methods of organisation.

To find out what's behind the strike, *Red Weekly* spoke to JACK WEBB (a scaffolder at the Finnegan's Old Town Hall site in Newcastle), KEITH MULLIGAN (scaffolder on the Leslie's site, Eldon Square), DAVIE DEANS (scaffolder at McAlpine's Eldon Square and member of the strike committee), EDDIE BRADY (scaffolder at McAlpine's Eldon Square and secretary of the 8/214 T&GWU branch committee), and BRIAN CHAPMAN (one of the treasurers of the strike committee).



Scaffolders Eddie Brady (left) and Davie Deans (right).

—What has been the attitude of the local Labour Council to your dispute?

DD: The attitude of the Council has been to back McAlpine's 100%. Without ever listening to our case, without ever consulting the scaffolders, they've decided to oppose us.

The whole complex is costing them £40 million and a lot of this is coming from the Council, so they have a big say in what goes on on the site. If they wished they could crack the whip and McAlpine's would come to heel tomorrow, but they've refused to do so.

—Do you think things would be better if the Council took all responsibility for building in the town?

JW: I don't know what they're thinking of when they bring these contractors in in the first place. Surely there's enough skilled men, joiners, bricklayers, scaffolders, concreters — enough skilled men in this town who would work for the Council if they would employ direct labour, which is done in other cities.

—We've heard a great deal about corruption in the Labour Party in the North-East in the last year or so, what with Dan Smith, Andy Cunningham, Poulson, etc. What do you think about that?

EB: We think it's deplorable. It's not only in the North-East, this is right throughout the country, but so far only these fellows have been found out.

Look at Reggie Maudling — he got £25,000 out of this Poulson affair, what's going to happen to him? He's in the shadow cabinet now, isn't he. Why hasn't this fellow been charged?

BC: The problem is you never know what's written in their clauses. They are always claiming money back saying no work's been done because of inclement weather, industrial disputes, etc. They can probably make more money out of that than by finishing the contract before completion date.

—What do you think of the role your union officials have played in this dispute?

JW: The trade union officials have either shut their eyes to the whole question of the strike or they just don't want to know about it at all. We tried for six days to get the union official down to this site with regard to the scab labour that has gone on. They haven't any union cards. I personally spoke to one of them and asked him if he was in a trade union. He said 'yes' so I asked him which one. He said he was in the TUC!

KM: On that point about the scabs, they came down from Ardyne Point in Scotland and got brand new cards, everything was fixed up for them. Now they've gone back to Ardyne Point and are fully paid up members of UCATT! So these blokes just run around the country breaking strikes. As far as I can gather the same thing could happen up on Ardyne Point and that's why these men might have been sent up there. I think now's the time when a firm foot has got to be put down and these professional scabs stopped.

ED: One other interesting thing is that Sueton, our trade union 'leader', has been nominated for the Executive Council of the North-East Labour Party. This might have something to do with the hostility shown to us by the local Labour Party! He told me: 'You might be able to get me out of this office, but at least when I leave this office I'll have a job to go to. Will you?' He's going to start getting into politics — dump this union mob, it's not good enough for him now!

DD: The union officials have ignored the wishes of the members all along. The point is that these officials are not elected and I'm sure if they were elected, and had to come up for re-election every one or two years, they wouldn't be taking the attitude they are now.

—Could you say something about the picketing at the Eldon Square site? How does it fit in with the question of the Shrewsbury pickets?

KM: The way that the situation relates to the Shrewsbury 2 is that at the moment we've got 10 men up in court just for standing on the picket line. After these 10 have been to court and the situation in Newcastle has cooled down a bit, the same thing might happen as happened to the Shrewsbury 2. Some lad might be in bed one night and the lawmen will come and say, 'right, you're nicked', just because they organised the picket, which anyone would do.

I think now is the time to stop these people — the police, the Government and the McAlpine's — because if they get away with it in Newcastle they'll do it all over the country.

—There are 14,000 families on the housing waiting list in Newcastle at the moment, yet the council are building projects like Eldon Square, big shopping centres, office blocks, etc. What do you think about that?

BC: Well, I think it's all wrong. I'm looking for a bigger place at the moment as I'm living in a bachelor flat with my wife. It's all wrong — houses should come before shops and offices any day. There's millions of square feet of shop and office space lying empty all over Newcastle. I would much sooner build houses.

—What about the Social Contract?

DD: The social contract isn't a social contract, it's an anti-social contract. It is intended to split workers, to knock the workers down once again over wages and conditions, and give free rein to the employers who already make huge profits at the expense of the workers.

—According to the *Evening Chronicle*, the scaffolders on Tyneside 'are now a force to be reckoned with'. If some badly organised section of workers was in struggle, would you use that weight to help them?

DD: We as building workers will come to the aid of any section of the working class in dispute with their employers. Whether it's against private or public employers, if they need our help we will give it. It's the duty of all organised workers to come to the aid of their brothers and sisters in other industries who are not as well organised as themselves, to give them moral and financial help in all their struggles.

A SORRY PICKETING RECORD

The ruling class realises that with a Labour Government in power — and from their point of view a weak Government whose 'social contract' has done little to stop the working class from launching militant wage struggles — it has to rely far more on the law, the police and the courts. Since Labour came to office not only have the Shrewsbury two remained inside but *more* attacks on pickets have taken place.

Hardly was the February election over than hordes of police waded into student pickets at Essex University, arresting 105 in two days.

Asian workers on strike for 13 weeks at Art Castings, Nuneaton, were consistently harassed. Police used the excuse of examining immigration papers to remove pickets.

—In April workers occupying the Strachan's factory were evicted by police acting in consultation with management.

On 15 June 1974 hundreds of foot and mounted police smashed into an anti-fascist demonstration in London. Kevin Gately died. The response of the Labour Government was to appoint the Scarman tribunal which whitewashed the police action and tried to make a scapegoat of the IMG.

—During the summer pickets came under police attack at Imperial Typewriters, Leicester (with the help of the National Front), and Ford's Dagenham. Even a nurses' demonstration in London was attacked!

—Police next rioted at the Windsor Park pop festival in late August. 'I

HOW TO ESCAPE FROM THE WEB

Immediate steps must be taken to guarantee the victory of the Tyneside scaffolders, and end the scabbing role of the local officials of the Transport & General Workers Union and the Labour Council.

—Support the mass picket of the court on 10 March. Militants on Tyneside should fight for token stoppages and take time off to support the mass picket.

—Resolutions should be sent to national and local offices of the T&GWU and UCATT demanding that they make the strike official. Workers must control their own organisations — all officials to be regularly elected and subject to instant recall.

—Investigate the local Labour Party and Council. For a workers' enquiry into the local Labour Party and the running of the T&GWU and UCATT, to be carried out by building workers' representatives and delegates from the local trade union movement.

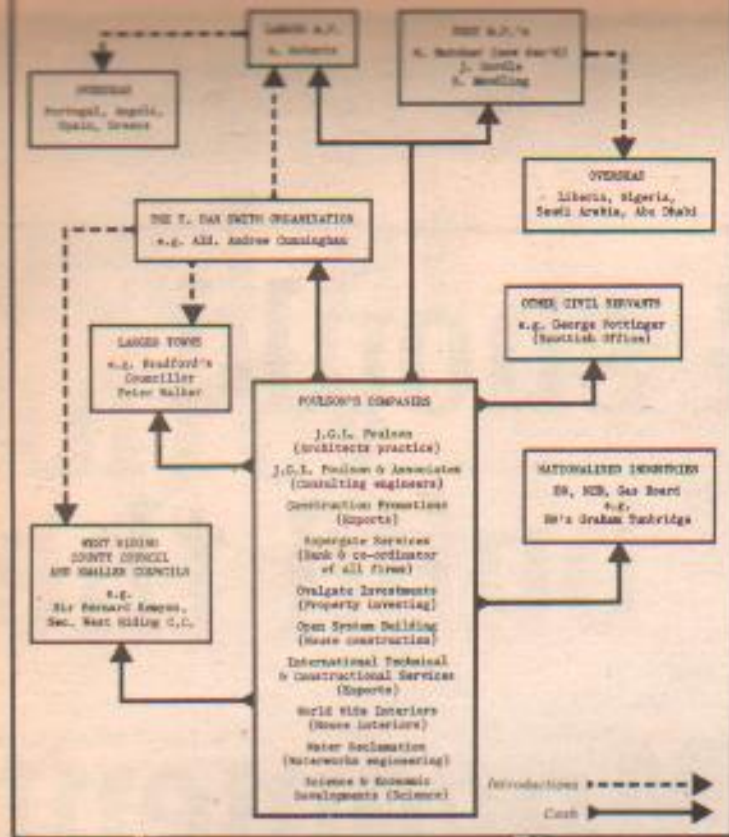
But it's not enough for workers to control their

own organisations. The vast amounts of money and resources wasted on prestige projects and lavished on property speculators must be turned to the use of the working class. Only by exerting control over building programmes can the workers movement force these changes.

—Force the Labour Council to take over all building contracts and kick out McAlpine's and their kind. No more hand-outs to the property 'developers'.

—For a useful programme of public works. Building workers should force the council to build houses, schools and welfare facilities before prestige projects. This will also provide jobs for thousands of construction workers who are on the dole because massive profits can't be made by the Whoopys and McAlpine's out of these sort of projects.

—For the nationalisation without compensation of land, the building trade and building supplies industries.



Five months ago the Shrewsbury 2 received prison sentences of three years and two years apiece for the 'crime' of organising pickets to defend the interests of their fellow workers.

One month ago a former Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Roy Hadwin, and journalist Peter Ward were each sentenced to nine months, suspended for two years, and a £600 fine. Both had been found guilty of three separate charges of corruption in connection with Newcastle boss-man and convict T. Dan Smith. Ward was the official press officer of Labour Party deputy leader, George Brown, during the General Election campaign of 1964.

When Eddie Milne, then Labour MP for Blyth, demanded an enquiry into corruption inside the North East Labour Party, he was ousted by the Labour Party machine. This contrasts with the career of Labour MP Edward Short, who received generous 'expenses' from T. Dan Smith and is now deputy leader of the Labour Party and Leader of the House of Commons. Short happens to be the MP for the area which covers the Eldon Square site.

BRAIN CHILD

The Eldon Square project was the brainchild of T. Dan Smith, who was leader of the Labour-controlled Newcastle City Council.

In 1958 Dan Smith became Chairman of Newcastle Housing Committee. His first project was the Crudens Park Flats off the Scotswood Road, which were opened by Ted Short in 1961. In March 1961 the Housing Committee decided to build three similar groups of flats, and eight building firms were invited to tender for the contract.

In December 1961 the council accepted a contract from Crudens. Dan Smith later started work for a publicity firm, JKT, which received a contract from Crudens. Because of this he resigned from the Housing Committee in May 1962, only to resume its chairmanship two months later.

Meanwhile other members of the

ending the contract. By now the Housing Committee were demanding an enquiry. But Smith cranked the Labour Party machine into action, and after a meeting of the Labour group on the Council the Housing Committee's recommendation for an enquiry was defeated by 40 votes to 18 at a Council meeting. Thus Smith was able to use his position as leader of the Labour group on the Council to prevent an enquiry into his business dealings with Crudens.

FELLED AGAIN

In the 1960s the 'open system' method of building was introduced in Britain. It involved the manufacture of housing units in factories and the assembly of pre-fabricated units on the site. On the continent it was used for low storey buildings—in Britain for skyscrapers.

The open system method was used in the construction of two blocks of flats at Felling, Tyneside. In 1967 Felling District Council—whose chairman was Poulson associate Andrew Cunningham, GMWU

Lane sustained a rent strike over the damage. Then in September 1971 a waterpipe burst flooding and ruining 24 flats.

Poulson and Cunningham's incompetence is probably the reason why their corruption was found out. More importantly, the Felling flats fiasco shows the complete inability of the North East Labour Party to solve the housing problems of the working class.



Ex-mayor Roy Hadwin—what you gain on the roundabouts.....

we are out!

are now on six weeks... pickets on McAlpine's. Their strike meeting to After the picket in the building to work but the building is a blatant for no reason ob. union organ- then we have 0 members. nes to set the and setting up

ed they faced re is the strike is defega- nisation on

's brought in most Scaffold- our wages, put the picket

ns. The union these scabs,

who were issued with cards of convenience by the T&GWU at Wood Green, London.

When the scabs arrived, all T&GWU scaffolders on Tyneside came out and staged a mass picket at McAlpine's, Eldon Square. The strike-breakers got a massive police bodyguard. On 29 January, 10 pickets were arrested on trumped-up charges of threatening behaviour, assault on the police, etc. Their case comes up on 10 March.

Despite this, Eldon Square is now completely closed down. The joiners and brick-layers walked out four weeks ago. Every major site in the area is now at a stand-still. We have widespread support from other trade unionists in the area.

A number of trade unionists in the area have set up a defence committee to raise support for the 10 arrested pickets. We are getting moral and financial support from all over the country. When the 10 pickets appear in court there will be widespread strike action on Tyneside.

McAlpine's pulled a lot of strings to get the Shrewsbury lads sent down. We believe they can do the same to us if we don't get your support.

22 February 1975.

Published by Newcastle on Tyne Scaffolders Strike Committee. Messages of support and donations to: Eddie Brady, 86 Benwell Lane, Newcastle on Tyne (phone 0632 32365).



Leader and arch-scab George Smith being picketed once again last week at the TUC, for a general strike to free the jailed Shrewsbury pickets.

an arrested youth being held down by four policemen and being kicked in the body by a fifth... Women are dragged off by their hair. Youns were kicked and beaten in the elec', wrote Iain Walker in the Sun.

Throughout August and September up to 50 police a day turned up at Wingrove & Rodgers in Liverpool in an attempt to intimidate women fighting rotten pay who were on strike for three months.

In November the judge in the rebble's case, which concerned the picketing of the office of a rack-renting landlord by tenants and squatters, ruled that picketing in an industrial disputes was illegal.

While the Labour Government

has been complicit in these attacks, the trade union bureaucracy has done nothing to fight them. It has limited the fight to free the Shrewsbury pickets to one day protest actions and pointless lobbies of Parliament.

In contrast, the Newcastle scaffolders have made clear their determination to fight the courts—they are staying out until after the trial on 10 March. A successful campaign to get the charges against the 'Newcastle Ten' dropped, and for the Kent and Yorkshire miners—who have gone on record for strike action to free the Shrewsbury pickets—to name the day to commence strike action as a first step to a general strike to free the 2, could smash the bosses' offensive against picketing.

T. Dan's expensive babies...

Supermarkets sometimes sell one or two items at a loss in order to attract shoppers. Property speculators play a similar game, but with a twist: the ratepayers cover the losses.

Since T. Dan Smith and his friends first took control of the Town Hall, Newcastle Corporation has had a policy of subsidising prestige projects in order to build up the city as a big

new office centre.

First they built the Civic Centre, 'Dan's Castle', which cost nearly £5 million. This price was grossly inflated by the expensive materials used and the luxury finish, designed to impress possible business investors.

Then Swan House was built by the corporation itself, as it was designed to run at a loss. It is now costing £68,000 a year.

On the major developments like the All Saints Office Centre and Eldon Square, the Council is heavily subsidising the land for the developers with only the hope of speculative returns in the distant future. This is the ransom that the developers require from the working people of Newcastle in order to extract their profits here instead of somewhere else!

Housing Committee resigned on the grounds that Smith had pressurised them into accepting the Crudens contract. Its provisional costing was £15,000 per block dearer than Wimpey's tender.

By 1963 Dan Smith had left JKT, and that year formed a public relations firm called CLADAN, which soon began work for Crudens. In May 1963 Keith Joseph, then Minister for Housing, turned down the Council's application for a loan sanction on the basis that the Crudens contract did not offer 'a satisfactory bargain'.

This didn't deter Edward Short. On 5 July 1963 he wrote a column in the local *Evening Chronicle* def-

prison, was a director of Poulson's Open System Building Company.

In 1966, Dan Smith had admitted that 55,000 homes were unfit for human habitation in the Northern region. The Felling flats did little to change this situation. After the 1968 disaster at Ronan Point—a building constructed on the open system method which collapsed, killing five people after a minor gas explosion—the Felling flats had to be reinforced at a cost of £570,000. Then, after being empty for 2½ years, the tenants finally moved in.

But at the Crowhurst Lane block the electricity had to be turned off because condensation was so bad. In August 1971 tenants at Nursery

The Council performed even better services for Capital & Counties, the international development group responsible for the Eldon Square development. It bought the land through compulsory purchase, considerably lessening the time and cost of buying off each owner, then leased it to C&C at a low ground rent (shop rents less C&C's 'reasonable' returns). This rent is so low that the Council will be paying out about £50,000 per year and the central Government £200,000 per year for the next 60 years to foot this loss!

The Council hopes to compensate for this by getting 35 per cent on any profits from shop rents after the scheme comes into use, in return for putting up 50 per cent of the total capital. On this basis in 1971, before the economic recession got under way, the Council hoped to break even in 23 years time. The ratepayers wouldn't get their money back for 50 years!

PRESTIGE

A £4 million prestige luxury hotel in Eldon Square was part of the redevelopment. When Trust House Forte backed out at the last moment, the Council was left holding a bill for over a £½ million in professional fees. Now it has been revealed that Capital & Counties have not raised the long term loans to finance the Eldon Square scheme, although building has been going on for three years.

For the last few months top Council bureaucrats have been in renewed negotiations with C&C. This can only result in further massive handouts to the developers to boost their profits and encourage the financiers. The alternative is the collapse of the whole programme—leaving the Labour Council holding T. Dan Smith's very expensive baby.

The 'out of date' property at Blackett Street in Newcastle, which T. Dan Smith had demolished to make way for one of his brainchild.



[The following is a small but important excerpt from the Political Resolution, The Way Forward for the IMG, submitted by Tendency 'C' to the March 1975 National Conference of the IMG. This resolution is in solidarity with the resolution, The World Political Situation and the Immediate Tasks of the Fourth International, presented by the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction to the 1974 World Congress of the Fourth International.]

LAST WEEK, RED WEEKLY PUBLISHED THE OPENING CONTRIBUTIONS FROM TWO TENDENCIES INSIDE THE INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP TO THE DISCUSSION LEADING UP TO THE ORGANISATION'S NATIONAL CONFERENCE AT THE END OF THIS MONTH. THIS WEEK WE PUBLISH A CONTRIBUTION FROM A THIRD TENDENCY TO THIS DISCUSSION.

Why the IMG should build the Troops Out Movement

Defence of the Irish revolution remains a primary task of British revolutionaries and the British labour movement. Since the new rise of the Irish struggle in the past five years, British imperialism has poured thousands of troops into Northern Ireland, incarcerated hundreds of internees in concentration camps without trial, and used repressive laws like the Emergency Provisions Act to hound the Catholic minority and the Republican movement.

Yet the British labour movement has failed to build a mass movement for the withdrawal of the troops and recognition of the right of the Irish people to determine their own affairs. The Labour Party has stood in full support of the imperialist occupation of Northern Ireland and refuses to end its bipartisanship with the Tories.

The Communist Party opposes immediate withdrawal of the troops and calls merely for their withdrawal to barracks and a policy of phased withdrawal. The workerists of the International Socialists and the Workers Revolutionary Party have consistently accorded a low priority to work in defence of the Irish revolution, placing it well below routinist economic agitation on trade union questions.

Equally inadequate has been the response of those who, by attempting to foist 'advanced' slogans like 'Victory to the IRA' on to the movement in defence of the Irish revolution, substituted 'revolutionary' phrasemongering for the hard, serious work of building a powerful and effective campaign for the immediate withdrawal of the troops.

It is of the first importance that we take stock of the full consequences of this abdication of leadership by groups claiming to be socialist or revolutionary. This massive default in leadership has had a deep impact on the course of the Irish struggle in the past six years, adding to the sense of isolation felt by the beleaguered Catholic minority in the north, giving wide room for manoeuvre to the British imperialists, and contributing in an important way to the present pronounced downturn of the struggle in the north.

DOWNTURN

This downturn, since the introduction of direct rule in 1972, has been shown by the dismantling of the no-go areas during Operation Motorman, the success of the SDLP in demobilising the Catholics and collaborating with the imperialists in promoting the Sunningdale Agreement and 'power-sharing', the passage of the Emergency Provisions Act, the end of the rent and rate strikes, and the general decline in demonstrations and other forms of mass action on the part of the Catholic masses.

British imperialism remains attached to the possibility of a new upturn of the Irish struggle. That is why the Labour Government is committed to maintaining British troops in the north in force, keeping hundreds of internees in the camps and upholding the repressive legislation.

The ebb in the nationalist struggle after 1972 and the subsequent shift in the relationship of forces towards the loyalists and British imperialism have underlined both the acute crisis of political leadership of the Irish national liberation struggle and the failure by British revolutionaries to forge a movement in the heartland of British imperialism with the power to defeat the policy of the British Government.

The weak Irish bourgeoisie and its governments in the twenty-six counties, whether Fianna Fail or Fine Gael-Labour, have consistently sought a compromise in the north that would defuse the struggle and prevent it from spreading into the south. By peddling illusions in the utopia of power-sharing, the bourgeois nationalists of the SDLP have politically disarmed and demobilised the Catholic masses. Neither the economist workerism of the Officials



The Bloody Sunday commemoration rally organised by the Troops Out Movement in London's Conway Hall on 1 February this year

nor the militarism of the Provisionals have been capable of giving a lead to the Irish masses.

The ceasefire agreement between the Provisionals and the British Government is a revelation of the total bankruptcy of the Provisional line. It is an admission by the Provisionals that their military campaign of individual terrorism has won them nothing, neither the withdrawal of the troops nor the release of the internees. The Provisionals, after negotiating a secret deal with British imperialism behind the backs of the Irish masses, have been unable to propose any superior forms and methods of struggle than the terrorist campaign which has proved such a costly failure.

TERRORISM

While unconditionally defending the Provisionals from the attacks of British imperialism, the Trotskyist movement has the responsibility to educate the vanguard in the Marxist view of individual terrorism and explain the errors made by the Provisionals. Relying as it does on the efforts of individuals or small groups, individual terrorism amounts to a rejection of the revolutionary Marxist perspective of leading the masses in action towards the socialist revolution.

Terrorist tactics must necessarily be prepared and executed by small numbers working in secrecy. Such methods separate revolutionaries from the masses and totally discount the tremendous power and resources that the movement of the masses often produces. Individual terrorism is a substitute for and hinders the process of mobilising the masses themselves into action against their oppressors.

Individual terrorism is based on a bourgeois concept of history that belittles the role of the masses and over-emphasises the role of individuals. It directs the attention of the

oppressed towards individual saviours or heroes rather than educating the masses to fight for their own liberation. Terrorism artificially substitutes the individual act for the whole historic process of class struggle in which the action of the masses leads to the conscious solution of society's problems.

Rather than uncovering the responsibility of the ruling class for all anti-social violence, terrorist acts lead to confusion over the real source of violence, lend credibility to the ruling class's pretence of desiring peace, and, as the Littlejohn and Lennon affairs so clearly show, provide a fertile field for *agents provocateurs*. The groundswell of opinion in both the six counties and the twenty-six counties for 'peace at any cost' in the wake of the Birmingham bombings and the passage of the Jenkins witch-hunt 'anti-terrorist' laws is a striking example of the confusion sown by a terrorist campaign. The 'peace' rallies sponsored by the churches drew crowds of thousands, and undoubtedly added to the pressure on the Provisionals to seek an agreement with the British Government.

'TROOPS OUT NOW'

One of the key factors underlying the present downturn of the Irish struggle is the absence of a mass revolutionary party which understands the combined character of the nationalist and socialist revolution and which has a Marxist perspective of fighting to lead the masses into struggle around anti-imperialist and democratic demands as a bridge to the Irish socialist revolution. We must give all possible assistance to the Revolutionary Marxist Group, the Irish section of the Fourth International, in its attempt to build such a mass Leninist combat party in Ireland.

The most valuable support that

we could give both the RMG and the Irish revolution as a whole would be an all-out effort to give leadership in Britain to a campaign for the immediate withdrawal of the troops. The dangers posed by the shift in the relationship of forces towards the loyalists make such a campaign an urgent necessity. The absence of a mass movement for immediate troop withdrawal has been a major factor behind the downturn in the Irish struggle, since it has given British imperialism wide room for manoeuvre and increased the sense of isolation felt by the Catholic minority in the north.

Our top priority task in the coming period must be the building of the Troops Out Movement (TOM). We must assign a large proportion of our membership to build this campaign and help win it wide support in the labour, student and other movements. We should seek to build the TOM into a massive, united-front-type coalition, on a mass action perspective, for the immediate, total and unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland, the end of internment, the freeing of the political prisoners and the repeal of the Emergency Provisions Act.

'Troops Out Now!' must be the central slogan of the TOM. It concretises our recognition of the democratic right of the Irish people to self-determination. We oppose demands like those for phased withdrawal or withdrawal to barracks which violate the right of the Irish people to determine their own affairs. British imperialism has no right to maintain any troops in Ireland for a single day, outside or inside barracks!

The 'Troops Out Now!' position strikes at the heart of imperialist policy in Ireland—the military occupation of the north—and concretises revolutionary defeatism into a demand that is understandable to British workers and one which they can act on. It provides a basis for

building the TOM into a broadly-supported united front-type coalition for mass action against the British Government. The actions already carried out by TOM indicate the tremendous potential for such a campaign.

SINGLE ISSUE

In building the TOM as a powerful single-issue campaign, we will be able to put the reformists in the CP and the Labour Party, and the workerist sects like the WRP and IS, on the spot, and force some of them to support the Irish struggle in a meaningful way.

We should seek to convince the TOM to propagandise and agitate among the British troops for support to the Irish people's right to self-determination and the immediate withdrawal of the troops from Ireland. We should popularise the concept that the British troops themselves have the democratic right to discuss, decide and act on all major political questions like Ireland which directly affect their lives.

We should aim to build the TOM as an ongoing campaign, enabling it to gather the strength and power to force the British Government to change its policy and get the troops out—or be brought down. Such a movement would begin to undermine the sense of demoralisation felt by the besieged Catholic minority in Northern Ireland.

Defence of the Irish revolution must also be carried out under our own name, through *Red Weekly*, public meetings and rallies.

DRACONIAN LAWS

A complementary task is the building of a united-front-type coalition for the immediate repeal of the Jenkins 'anti-terrorist' law. The importance of the attacks on democratic rights embodied in this legislation makes it essential that we work to build a single-issue campaign for its repeal. Such a campaign would be separate from the TOM in order to maximise the support that could be won for each. It would not cut across the TOM, but complement the TOM.

The Labour Government's introduction of draconian laws, allegedly to combat terrorism, underscores the central importance of the Irish struggle to the course of the class struggle in Britain. The struggle against this legislation and the building of a mass campaign in defence of the struggle of the Irish people for self-determination are an integral part of defending and extending democratic rights in Britain.

Active support for the liberation struggle of the Irish masses is a precondition for the defeat of the divide-and-rule tactics employed by the ruling class to maintain its class rule. There is a very modern ring to the words of Karl Marx in 1870 that it is a special task of socialists 'to awaken a consciousness in the English workers that for them the national emancipation of Ireland is no question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment, but the first condition of their own social emancipation.'

Rent-strike students meet at Surrey

DELEGATES FROM 14 COLLEGES as far apart as Edinburgh and Exeter met last Sunday at Surrey University, which is turning into a test case for the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) and indeed for the future of the whole student grants campaign.

Summonses will be issued to 320 students at Surrey next week in an attempt to break the rent strike which has been going on since the beginning of term. If the CVCP are successful here, this legal weapon will certainly be used against the other 23 colleges also on rent strike.

Surrey's rent strikers are preparing to resist the attack. While summonses can be obtained fairly easily, it will require the use of bailiffs, evictions etc for the University actually to get its money. Clearly a political fight needs to be waged to stop the implementation of the summonses. But while Surrey students are holding firm—and indeed have occupied the National Union of Students executive and the Broad Left which dominates it are doing nothing.

NUS SITS BY

Having agreed to pay the legal costs for those summoned, the NUS executive now seem happy to let the issue die. Although the CVCP understand perfectly well that a defeat at Surrey would jeopardise the whole future of rent strike actions and the grants campaign, the NUS still refuses to mount a national response. Hence the initiative of calling a conference around this issue fell on Surrey's shoulders, and the invited executive speaker did not even turn up. How-



Ten thousand students were out on the streets last Friday. But the political impact of the revolutionary left was minimal. That is why the IMG would have preferred to see a revolutionary contingent around two slogans: rebuild the grants campaign; and against the social contract

ever this certainly didn't hamper the discussion.

The conference was opened by Bernard Regan of the NUT, who spoke on the political basis for rent strike action. He emphasised that the struggle must not end up in infighting between the different sectors of education over how to share out a smaller cake, but that the Government's cuts adversely affect all sectors and must be fought as such. Only a common fight, which would for instance involve building workers made redundant by the cuts, will alter the situation.

What was needed, Regan said, was a campaign to force the Labour Government to inject funds into public sectors like education and restore education building projects. Obviously this would involve some modifications in Mr Healey's 'give to the rich' Budget.

WAY FORWARD

The conference then went on to discuss the way forward. There was general agreement that the Broad Left has proved incapable of leading the grants campaign, using demonstrations and rent strikes merely in a supporting role for negotiations with the Department of Education and the CVCP. This has led to considerable frustration and demoralisation in many colleges.

The line of the International

Socialists, grouped in NOISS, is simply the other side of the coin. They call for 'the most militant action', but unless this is taken within a political framework it will simply lead to defeats and demoralisation.

The grants campaign has to be seen as a fight on two fronts—against the Labour Government which is responsible for the cuts, and against the college authorities who implement them. While militant action has to be taken, and rent strike action will be a central thrust, this needs to be linked with joint initiatives on an area basis with those colleges without halls of residence—for instance, joint occupations of LEA offices.

TRADE UNIONISTS

Links must also be built via reciprocal support committees with

trade unionists on campus, in the hospitals, etc., who like students will be taking action to force the Government to reverse the cutbacks in public expenditure. This will provide the basis for a real worker-student alliance which does not exist simply at the level of discussions between the NUS executive and trade union bureaucrats.

Unfortunately a new leadership committed to a political programme capable of taking the grants campaign forward is unlikely to emerge at NUS conference, following NOISS's rejection of the IMG call for a common slate and platform in the elections. However the campaign continues, and the revolutionary slate adopted by the 'Open Forum' of militants in Birmingham a fortnight ago will play a crucial role in this.

Revolutionary slate to stand in student elections

Introduction

This is the platform of the Revolutionary Slate for the NUS Executive elections at Llandudno. It was discussed and decided upon at a meeting of 140 militants in Birmingham on 23 February.

Agreement with it is the basis on which our candidates stand. It is a minimum platform to try and secure the maximum possible unity of independent socialists and the organisations of the revolutionary left. We felt that this unity was vital at present if the bankrupt leadership of the Broad Left is to be effectively challenged. It is the present leadership which must bear the responsibility for the demoralisation that exists in the grants and cuts campaign and the lack of nationally organised activity in the Irish and women's campaigns.

We admit differences within the slate, but these can be voiced and argued for within it. Our candidates' manifestos accept this platform as a basis and are free to develop it further if they wish.

NUS—Crisis of Leadership

Since it was elected in February of last year, the Labour Government, faced with the militancy of the working class, has been forced to make concessions after concessions. But in the present economic crisis this situation cannot continue. Sooner or later wage restraint and further cuts in social expenditure will be necessary to make the working class and its allies pay for the crisis. We must prepare now for that offensive.

The present leadership of the NUS ref-

uses to recognise reality. Where was the Executive last term when over a hundred colleges were back in struggle after having just won a 'victory' in the grants campaign? They were still echoing the call for more 'masses' and the need for unity with trade union bureaucrats, who were themselves busy selling out their own members to preserve the precious social contract.

The central question is whether or not we accept responsibility for the inability of the ruling class to finance education adequately. The right wing inside the NUS are already saying that students, like everyone else, must tighten their belts—they are already pining a platform on issues such as Ireland, fascism and racism. In the face of this challenge the Broad Left have watered down their positions, time after time, to make them acceptable to the so-called 'moderates'.

The Defence of Students' Living Standards

After two years, the NUS has finally recognised that the fights for higher grants

and against the cutbacks are integrally linked. Last term showed that the university and college authorities are prepared to sit out token occupations at the level of the individual institution. The end of term left students confused about the lull in the class struggle, demoralised and having made no real gains. This term, despite massive rent and price rises, we have seen only limited action in the colleges, such as the 23 rent strikes, to which the Executive has not given either coordination or a lead.

If we fail to take up the challenge now, the authorities will go on the offensive to impose further increases. We need militant campaigns, coordinated at both national and area level, directed against the college and local education authorities. We should demand: No price or rent increases—for a price freeze—extend the rent freeze to student accommodation—an immediate end to discretionary awards—cash increases in the grant to £900 for all—no cutbacks or mergers at students' or workers' expense.

Further, we should link our fight with those struggling against the attacks on the health service, housing and the rest of the social services. The attacks on the 'welfare state' have implications for the entire working class. It is through an alliance in the public sector, with the backing of the entire labour movement, that we can defend the health service, education and housing.

During the course of struggles it is possible that students will be victimised. The Executive must give automatic support and launch national defence for any person victimised.

Student-Worker Solidarity

We stand for the independent initiatives and self-activity of students. We also stand for student-worker solidarity. Without independent action by the student body, no such alliance can be achieved. Such an alliance is of practical necessity if we are to avoid the isolation of the student movement and aid in smashing the social contract. We stand for unity in action. We reject the Broad Left idea that our tactics should be limited to those acceptable to trade union bureaucrats. To win support from the rank and file, students must give backing to workers in struggle by opening the Student Union facilities and by giving donations to strike funds.

NUS Women's Campaign

In the light of the recent attempts to restrict the already limited provisions of the 1967 Abortion Act, the campaign for free abortion on demand takes on added importance and urgency. The demands of the Working Women's Charter pose an active alternative to the inadequate provisions of Labour's Anti-Discrimination Bill and Equal Pay Act, and a real basis for unity between students and working women. We also recognise the need to fight sexism inside the NUS and support the right of women to organise autonomously if they wish. The ad hoc committee should be elected and recallable to the women's conference, and given the leadership of the campaign. But this does not mean that the campaign is restricted to women—it has to be taken up by all members of the NUS.

Smash fascism and racism—by any means necessary

The growth of the anti-fascist movement and the decline of the National Front in the last elections show the correctness of the 'by any means necessary' position. We will fight for the re-adoption of this clause. We will not change our positions in the face of right wing opposition—that only weakens the campaign. While the National Front may have lost votes they have been actively taking up the Irish and EEC issues to win a working class base. We oppose them on these issues and are against any cross-class meetings in the colleges.

Troops Out Now

The right have always used the Irish issue to capitalise on the chauvinism of the British labour and student movements. We must fight this with principled politics. The Labour Government has used the issue to introduce repressive legislation which can be used against any militants. We stand for Troops Out Now! An end to internment. The release of all political prisoners. Repeal of the Jenkins Laws. As in Vietnam, Aden and Czechoslovakia, so in Ireland for the right of self-determination for all the Irish people.

Soviet Dissidents

We dissociate ourselves from all those who attempt to exploit this issue to discredit the international workers' movement. As socialists we solidarise with all those struggling against the bureaucratic repression in the Soviet bloc and for workers democracy.

Democracy

We stand for a National Union that is democratic through involving its members in action. We stand for a Union that is autonomous from the college authorities and the state. We stand for the sovereignty of mass meetings and for delegates or officers to be elected, mandated and recallable to such meetings. Hence we are opposed to referenda which militate against this principle. At a national level the same should apply to the executive: thus executive meetings must be open to all members, who should have the right to speak.



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

Friday 28 February should have seen a 'picket of thousands' as the culmination of the NUS Irish campaign. The Broad Left scabbed on the campaign and called off the picket. But 100 militants picketed the Ulster Office on Friday all the same.

LABOUR PARTY SEEKS SUPPORT FOR Portuguese Socialist Party — catspaw of imperialism

Who Supports the Portuguese Socialist Party?

'The Social Democrats of western Europe should be heading for Lisbon to support Mario Soares in his efforts to contain the Communists...Senhor Soares will go into his next tussle with the Communists in better heart if he knows he is escorted in spirit by Harold Wilson and Vic Feather and Francois Mitterrand and Helmut Schmidt.'

—The Economist, Britain's leading capitalist mouthpiece, 1 February.

'Why have the European Socialists with the exception of Willy Brandt, refrained from openly supporting the struggle of Mario Soares? ...A little political imagination, in this case relatively simple, is needed to save this little neighbour of 10 million people —and with it many things in Europe.'

—L'Express, a leading French capitalist magazine, 10 February.

THE LABOUR PARTY at the request of the so-called 'Socialist International', has issued an appeal to British workers for financial assistance to the Portuguese Socialist Party (PSP).

In a circular to their members the NATSOPA Executive Council urges such contributions 'so that the Portuguese Socialist Party may continue the struggle for socialism'. But workers who donate hard-earned cash on this basis are doing so in error, for the policies and practice of the Portuguese Socialist Party have even less

to do with the 'struggle for socialism' than do the activities of the right-wing Labour 'leaders' in this country.

NO ROOTS

The Portuguese Socialist Party is not a party with long standing or deep roots in the Portuguese working class. Under the fascist dictatorship it was little more than a group of middle class, liberal intellectuals, for the most part living abroad. The fascists considered them sufficiently harmless that they they allowed their leader, Mario Soares, to return to the country and engage in open political activity during the old regime's 'lib-

eral' phase in 1969. One of their leading members, Raul Rego, was able to edit a leading capitalist daily paper under the fascists.

After the 25 April coup the Socialists were given a prominent place in the Government, precisely because the capitalists felt they could rely on them. Their leader, Mario Soares, became the Foreign Minister, and gained a reputation for his part in negotiating independence for the former Portuguese colonies. But this reputation is totally phony —Soares was nothing but a cynical front-man for the Government. When the Government was dominated by conservative elements (headed by former President Spínola) who wanted to stall independence to better protect Portugal's imperialist stake, Soares did their dirty work for them.

More recently the PSP has graduated from serving the interests of the Portuguese capitalists to being a spokesman for the views of international imperialism in Portugal. The hysterical scare-mongering Mario Soares has engaged in about the danger of 'extremist dictatorship' fits in neatly with the international propaganda of the capitalists. No wonder that PSP leaders have been warmly received by the American Government. Among the international celebrities the PSP have brought to Portugal to boost their fortunes is that renowned militant in the 'fight for socialism' —US Senator Edward Kennedy!

TREACHERY

The PSP has tried to take its treachery into the very heart of the workers' movement, sponsoring seminars for the cold-war, CIA-infiltrated trade union body, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. During the recent debate in the workers' movement on the organisation of the trade unions the PSP (in alliance with their capitalist Government colleagues, the Popular Democrats) were the main spokesmen of the interests of the capitalist class, opposing a single trade union federation and a united trade union movement.

For a time after the fall of the fascist regime a large number of workers joined the Socialist Party, partly

because its leaders were well known and partly because it was a more open organisation than the Communist Party, which was following identical, class collaborationist policies. But as the reactionary role of the PSP has developed —particularly in the trade union unity struggle (which was settled not, as the Communist Party had originally wanted, by a quiet cabinet vote, but by hundreds of thousands of workers coming out into the streets and democratic votes in all the unions) —many of these militants have broken from the PSP. At the beginning of this year one group, which gained more than one-third of the votes at the last PSP Conference and includes its most important trade unionists, walked out in disgust and established a new group, the Popular Socialist Front.

In the forthcoming elections the Socialist Party will be one of the

PSP leader Mario Soares—his hysterical scaremongering has imperialism in raptures



main hopes of the Portuguese capitalists. They hope that it and the capitalist parties to its right can gain a clear majority of the votes cast. The capitalists will then try to boot the Communist Party out of the Government, and use the prestige of the PSP to split the mass movement and draw a section of it to support the new Government, which can then get on with the job of making Portugal a safe place for capitalists to exploit workers.

The Communist Party's line of coalition with capitalist groups and encouraging the mass movement to place all its faith in the Government has completely set themselves up for such a plot. But if it succeeds it is the entire Portuguese working class which will pay the price.

No one should think that the plan to aid the PSP comes from within the workers movement —as the quotes at the head of this article show. It is the spokesmen of international capitalism who have been campaigning for such aid, which they cannot give directly without further compromising the PSP leaders.

The British workers' movement should not give one penny or one ounce of moral support for these reactionary schemes. If British workers want to aid their Portuguese brothers and sisters then they can really do so by contributing to the strike funds that are being set up by the democratic workers' committees that now exist in almost every Portuguese factory —such aid will help the Portuguese workers fight and win the coming struggles out of which the real 'struggle for socialism' must come.

Chris Balfour

Three hundred thousand workers demonstrate for trade union unity in January—the reactionary role of the PSP in arguing against this policy lost it the support of many workers, including a group who split to form the Popular Socialist Front

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***** WHAT'S ON? *****

CAMPAIGN for full land nationalisation—public meeting, Thursday 13 March at 7.30 p.m. in Friends House, Euston Road (opp. Euston Station). Speakers from UCATT, Camden CPO Committee, BRAG plus Labour councillors and MPs.

MIDDLE EAST Research Group is showing film 'To Live in Freedom' introduced by Uri Davies, Saturday 8 March at Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London, N.7., starting at 7.30 p.m.

FREE DESMOND TROTTER: Picket residence of Dominican High Commissioner, Saturday 8 March, Meet 11 a.m. at Upton Park tube.

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

CONFERENCE OF RADICAL Scholars of Soviet and East European Studies, 8/9 March in the Students' Union, Birmingham University. 'After the Revolution? Dilemmas of Progress in Soviet Russia.' Details from CRSEES, 26 Lonsdale Road, Birmingham 17.

LEEDS CONFERENCE Against Cuts in Social Expenditure, 8 March all day at Kitson College. Speakers: Joan Maynard MP, Mick O'Shea (T&G shop steward, Kings College Hospital), Geoff Fawcett (secretary Leeds Area NUT). Chairman: Terry Jacques (President Leeds AUEW). Sponsors include: Councillors Ron Sedler and Jim Roche; AUEW District Committee; Leeds Trades Council; Crabtree-Vickers AUEW Shop Stewards' Committee; NUPE No 3 branch; ATU Liaison Committee, Leeds Poly Students Union. Details from: Conference Secretary, 31 Sissons Terrace, Leeds 10

'PORTUGAL: WHICH WAY?' IMG public meeting, Tuesday 11 March at 7.30 p.m. in University of London Union, Malet Street (Room 3E). Speakers include: comrade from Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee, and Robin Blackburn.

IMG GAY GROUP: contact J. Mills, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds.

STOP THE NATIONAL FRONT— defend socialist paper sellers! Preston anti-fascist public meeting with speakers from local trade union movement, IMG and IS. 'Unicorn', North Road, Preston—Wednesday 12 March, 8 p.m.

PAMPHLET on the struggle at Kent University. Excellent value at 5p. Orders to Joanna Haynes, Keynes College, University of Kent, Canterbury.

SHEFFIELD RED CIRCLES: Every Wednesday at 7.30 p.m. in the Lion Hotel (corner of the Wicker and Nursery St.).

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BIRMINGHAM RALLY—'Against the Common Market. For a United Socialist States of Europe!' Speakers include Ernest Mandel. Thursday 1 May at 7.30 p.m. in Digbeth Civic Hall Assembly Halls. Organised by Birmingham IMG.

'THE STATE, the Law and Ireland': new pamphlet by Steve Cohen produced for Manchester NCCL—available price 20p. (plus 5p p&p) from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London, N1.

100 MEN WANTED for organising and running canteen for women's liberation conference in Manchester, 4/5/6 April 1975. Please contact John at 061-794 1389.

SEXISM AND PSYCHIATRY: meeting to initiate a campaign against sexism in the NHS and prepare for Bradford conference in April on the same issue. Speakers: Mary Mackintosh and Glynis Parry. Organised by South London GLF, Central Collegiate Building, Gordon Street, London WC1 on Monday 10 March at 8 p.m.

'THE CRISIS OF STALINISM': Stirling Marxist Discussion Group meeting with speaker Alan Freeman (Glasgow IMG), Tuesday 11 March at 7.30 pm in the Cowane Centre, Cowane Street.

BRISTOL Revolutionary Communist Group public meeting: 'The Social Contract'—speaker David Yaffe, Friday 7 March, Midland Pub, Midland Road, Old Market, 7.30.

OIL SPLASH-BACK HITS SCOTS HOMES



LAST WEEK the Labour Government announced that its Petroleum Revenue Tax on the oil monopolies operating in the North Sea would be levied at the rate of 45% — the lowest of the alternatives proposed. The smiles of the oil companies at this passport to super-profits have only been matched by the havoc unleashed by the oil boom on local facilities in Aberdeen, the major service base for North Sea development.

Most workers in Scotland look to Aberdeen as the new Mecca — a place guaranteeing high wages and high living standards. The truth is somewhat different. Aberdeen has not escaped the effects of the deepening capitalist crisis, and it too is suffering from massive cuts in social expenditure in the areas of health, education and housing. It is probably in housing that the real effects of the oil companies' operations in the North Sea

are most dramatically seen.

At the end of the 1960s the waiting list for council houses was down to virtually zero. So the Aberdeen County Council drastically cut back on the number of council houses being built — blithely ignoring the fact that the discovery of substantial gas deposits and the possibility of oil finds in the North Sea would greatly increase the working population of the area in the years to come.

by
Pat Kane

The result was that while the amount of available housing decreased, the incoming wave of workers from the depressed West of Scotland increased, and in the space of two years a huge housing shortage developed. The waiting list for council housing now stands at 4,500, and

there are an average 110-130 new applications each day. So what does the Labour-controlled Council do but grant more planning permission for office blocks!

With the points system of allocation the chances of getting one of the 1,000 new council houses built last year are slim. Just now you need 33 points to qualify for a council house, one of the highest rates in Scotland. Points are a system of assessing living conditions — and to get 33 points you have to be living in squalid conditions.

Council housing is however a little easier to get if you happen to be an incoming oil executive or priority oil worker (generally middle management levels). By arrangement with the Council, these categories require no points. In Dyce, a large housing estate on the outskirts of Aberdeen, local tenants estimate that 20% of the estate is occupied by American oil workers.

The local Labour Council's bias towards the oil monopolies is also shown in its allocation of building allotments. At present it intends to sell allotment ground to Shell UK Exploration & Production Ltd to help overcome their housing shortage. This land has curiously been described as 'unsuitable for municipal housing'.

Faced with an immediate need

tenement flats occupied by students and low-paid workers.

Faced with the combined weight of the oil monopolies and the property speculators behind these attacks on workers' living standards, the task of fighting back seems immense. Certainly it is not made any easier by 'friends' in the labour movement like the local Labour Council, which only objected to the Tory Housing (Finan-

'By not doing repairs, we are actually helping the tenant. The properties get worse and the tenant will be rehoused by the Council. This does sound contradictory, I know.' — property 'developer'.

for low-cost housing, Kincardine County Council are discussing development plans by Christian Salvensen (Properties Ltd) for the building of 2,500 executive houses seven miles outside Aberdeen. Unfortunately for the County Council planners, however, there is one small snag — most of the oil executives who would inhabit this suburban haven will have left the area by the time the development is completed in 12 years time.

SPECULATORS

But it is in the private sector that the oil 'boom' is having its most devastating effects. In the late 1960s a few property speculators, mostly from Glasgow and London, realised the possibility of making vast profits by peddling squalid houses for extortionate rents. The most vicious of these is a man named Rio Stakis.

Over the last 20 years Stakis has built up an empire worth an estimated £30 million in hotels, pubs and restaurants. Through a subsidiary, Ravenstone Securities, he has been buying up property in Aberdeen — mostly small flats — in order to develop them into hotel and office complexes. One tactic the company uses is not to carry out essential repairs to the houses and flats. The hope is that the tenants will find other accommodation so that Stakis can continue their development plans.

This was spelt out by a Stakis spokesman, David Donald, in a recent interview with *Aberdeen People's Press*, a local paper: 'By not doing repairs, Milne & Mackinnon [Ravenstone's agents] are actually helping the tenant. The properties will get worse and the tenant will be rehoused by the Council. This does sound contradictory, I know.'

SMALL FLATS

These practices are common to most property firms. Small flats which in the past have been occupied by students and low-paid workers are being bought up, renovated, and placed on the market at up to four times the previous rent. The average cost of renting a renovated flat with two bedrooms, kitchen and bathroom in Aberdeen is around £120 a month.

Another feature of the present situation is that land is being bought up by the oil monopolies and oil-related service firms for industrial redevelopment. One area of Aberdeen, Old Torry, was planned as a conservation area. But this site was of prime importance to the oil companies as it surrounded Aberdeen Docks. So under pressure from Shell the Labour Council promptly reversed its order, and the whole area, which consisted of small tenement flats, was bought by Shell for office and service area development.

At Upperkirkgate, also in Aberdeen, Taylor Woodrow Property Co and Badero (Scotland) Ltd have just bought an 11 acre site for redevelopment. The area surrounds the University and is again made up of small

cial Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1972 because it wanted to raise rents by more than the Act allowed!

Already, however, there have been the beginnings of some organised resistance in the University through squats on council property. But squatting by itself is not enough. A strategy is needed for making the oil companies pay through increased rates for the havoc they have unleashed on the social conditions of the working class. Unless a campaign is built for the establishing of a workers' enquiry into the allocation of public funds, the oil monopolies will continue to make secret deals with local government.

This fight to defend and improve social conditions in the North-East of Scotland must involve all workers in the oil-related and traditional industries, students, tenants' associations, etc. If this is not done, then migrant workers will still end up in camps described by one local trade unionist as 'the Long Kesh of the North East'; and students and low-paid workers will continue to be pawns in the hands of the property speculators and oil monopolies.

CORRECTION

NO, THE IMG HAS NOT EMBRACED STALINISM!

In the 'Sense of Our History' column, in the last issue of *Red Weekly*, an unfortunate typographical error occurred which implied that we give support to the decisions of the fifth world congress of the Third International. This is not of course the case — we base ourselves on the documents of the first four congresses of the Comintern. By the fifth congress, decisive control of the International had passed to Stalin's bureaucratic apparatus. It was in fact at this congress that the pernicious theory of 'socialism in one country' saw the light of day. Apologies for this error.

Workers start weld-in occupation



Welder Peter Jennings makes sure that management won't be able to move machinery out of the factory in a hurry

According to Government figures there are 40 men chasing every job on South Tyneside, and redundancies are still mounting. Two hundred workers have recently been paid off at Ferrograph and 90 at Alan Bradley's.

When the workers at Brooke Cylinders (formerly Jarrow Tubes) were told last Friday that the factory was closing they decided to occupy Brooke Cylinders is a subsidiary of Tube Investments Group (owners of the notorious Fine Tubes factory), as was its predecessor Jarrow Tubes. Tube Investments closed the factory in December 1974 (280 redundancies) and re-opened it as Brooke Cylinders last month, taking on 36 people. The firm is reported to have received an investment grant of £100,000 from the Government.

Red Weekly interviewed Hugh Nichol, the AUEW convenor, about the closure.

What are the reasons for the closure?

The reasons they give is the fall in the order books. In other words they blame the recession on the world market and the subsequent cutback in Tube Investment's organisation and investment.

But men were working overtime last week and there was plenty of work to keep us going. Until they open up the order books to let us examine them, until they make a full account of the situation to the workforce, we cannot accept anything they say.

What support is the occupation

getting from other workers?

Jarrow and Hebburn Trades Council are holding an emergency meeting of their executive to consider what action to take. They are also going to raise the matter with local MPs and ask them to raise it with the Government. South Shields Trades Council have done the same.

What further support are you hoping for?

Depending on what happens on Monday, we'll make strong representation to every factory on Tyneside and to every trade union organisation. We'll appeal not only for money but for any solidarity they can give

in the form of joining our pickets or taking part in the occupation.

How much have you been influenced by the example of other factory occupations?

This has been a big influence. Every day we're able to see in the papers and on TV that other workers are taking similar action. This has become an accepted tactic in the fight against the employers, especially against closures.

You are demanding that the factory be nationalised under workers control. How do you see this taking place?

Obviously Tube Investments are rather a big concern for the 30-odd workers here to take on and defeat. In the course of this campaign we hope to enlist the active support and participation not only of local MPs and union officials but also of the Government. T.I. have a long history, and particularly in the present period, of anti-trade union and anti-working class activities and treat us with utter contempt.

International Marxist Group



(British section of
the Fourth Inter-
national)

97 Caledonian Rd.,
London N.1.

I would like more information about
the IMG and its activities

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RED WEEKLY

THE MOORGATE TRAGEDY - UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

London Transport's reputation for the safest transport system in the world suffered a terrible blow last Friday 28 February.

The 8.37am tube from Drayton Park smashed through the buffers at Moorgate Station and crashed into a blind tunnel. Nearly 50 people were killed.

London Transport's reputation in no way lessens the scale of this tragedy. It is urgent that the trade unions in the transport industry set up their own enquiry to find out:

WHY there are no 'trip mechanisms' to automatically stop trains at Underground terminals, although there are trip mechanisms which trigger when a train goes past a signal at red.

WHY these mechanisms were not fitted at terminals although they

were fitted at the end of many London Transport sidings after a series of incidents when drivers crashed through buffers at Tooting and elsewhere in 1973.

WHY trains dating from 1938, like the crash train, are still in use.

Trade unionists at London Transport maintenance works have said that delays between overhauls of trains have increased in recent years due to 'economy cuts' by London Transport and staff shortages because of pay restraint. The worst staff shortages are on the Northern Line where the train crashed, and the oldest trains run between Drayton Park and Moorgate.

Whatever the final outcome of investigations into this tragedy, the transport unions must ensure that there is now a massive infusion of capital into London Transport to improve safety and staffing levels, pay and hours.



MONDAY WAS THE FIRST DAY of committal proceedings against the 14 pacifists charged under the Incitement to Disaffection Act for leafletting soldiers about the war in Ireland. This successful picket was supported by two Labour MPs, Jo Richardson (second right) and Maureen Colquhoun (right), and by the IMG and other organisations. Cambridge students supporting the campaign organised a street play, while inside a doddering court clerk repeated evidence into a tape recorder.

LABOUR CRUMBLES UNDER OIL COMPANIES' FIRE

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT's announcement last week that it was setting the rate of the new tax on the profits to be made out of North Sea Oil (the Petroleum Revenue Tax - PRT) at the absurdly low rate of 45% comes as no surprise to anyone familiar with the immense might of the oil monopolies and the spinelessness of the Labour Party reformists.

Only a few months ago, Labour was talking high and mighty about setting up a Government concern with a monopoly over all the output of the North Sea fields, taking majority holdings in all the North Sea firms, and imposing a swingeing tax on oil profits that would once more pave the streets of Whitehall with gold.

Instead we get a pathetic scheme which doesn't levy any tax at all on the oil companies (except for ordinary corporation tax, which is a tiny drop in their huge profit bucket) until they have collected their initial investment back almost twice over, and then allows them a 20% return on that (now repaid) investment until the wells run dry. Smaller 'poor' fields are to be completely exempt from the tax. This poverty is so dire that the typical small field will 'only' contribute about £250 million to the oil monopolies' coffers.

Of course the other issues in Labour's programme - control of marketing and a stake in the extraction operations - still have to be settled. But the Government's pathetic track record this time round shows just how incapable they are of facing up to the companies. A lot of huffing and puffing about 'killing the goose that lays the golden egg', and a tiny dose of economic sabotage (that pales into insignificance beside the sort of stunts that the bosses tried on in Chile and Portugal), suddenly finding new 'problems' preventing

the starting up of production, and the Government came tumbling down like a house of cards. Any bets that we are about to see a few repeat performances?

The fact is that the capitalist state is an instrument for serving the interests of the capitalist class, not undermining them. Any Government basing its policies on that state will have enough trouble trying to take over a rubber duck factory that wanted to put up a fight, much less dealing with multi-national giants like the oil monopolies.

There is only one power that can break the power of these monsters - the organised working class. Trade unionists are already involved in a big fight with the oil companies over conditions in the oil fields, the oil-related industries, and the regions they are affecting. It is important that they extend these struggles to take up the whole question of the role of these firms in the economy, and link the daily struggles to the fight for the nationalisation of the oil monopolies, and the creation of an integrated energy plan, as a key part of a planned, socialist economy.

PLANS FOR THE 23 MARCH demonstration in solidarity with the liberation struggle in Southern Africa are proceeding rapidly. Some 30 national organisations are now backing the demonstration, seven trade unions have agreed to circulate their membership about it, and conting-

ents are being organised from every part of the country to take part.

The only serious set-back so far has been the recent decision of the Labour Party National Executive not to support the demonstration because it includes the slogan 'End the Labour Government's Military

Collaboration with Apartheid'.

This decision is a scandal. Does the Labour Executive deny that such collaboration is taking place? As the organisers of the demonstration have pointed out:

The Labour Government has announced that the Sunonstown Agreement will be ended after consultation with the South African Government. However... it is clear that it will be replaced by an arrangement which will be less public, which will allow for continued military collaboration with the apartheid regime. Recent reports suggest that the Government will continue to supply spare parts for military equipment and aircraft to South Africa. This needs to be exposed as does the arrangement for joint training of South African military personnel on courses in Britain and top level exchanges between British and South African security forces.

This collaboration together with increased NATO interest and activity around the Southern African coastline poses a serious threat to the emerging independent nations of Angola and Mozambique. The strengthening of military links with South Africa is also a threat to the freedom struggle within the liberation movements of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa.

Is the Labour NEC then in favour of bolstering the white racist regime and helping it shoot black workers down in cold blood?

POLITICAL SUPPORT

If the Labour NEC is not prepared to break with this most blatant case of Labour's support for the white racist regimes, what stand are they going to take towards the Government's equally pernicious political and diplomatic support for South Africa? Are they going to back Callaghan while he helps engineer a sell-out of the struggle of Rhodesia's black majority and works to gain acceptance for the repressive South African regime throughout Africa, leaving the oppressed South African blacks to fight bare handed against the vicious apartheid system.

Such neo-imperialist stands are indeed the policy of the Labour Government. But they are in no way in the interests of the labour movement. The sickening capitulation of the NEC to these policies may leave them contentedly on the same side as the Government - but it is the side of racism and imperialism.

Many Labour Party militants and local Party organisations will be disgusted by this decision. They should express their feelings by passing resolutions denouncing the NEC's decision and committing themselves to mobilise in force for 23 March. They should show that no matter what side the Labour Government and the Party NEC is on, the workers' movement stands firmly on the side of the oppressed.

The demonstration will take place on Sunday, 23 March at 1.30pm, assembling at Hyde Park Corner. For further information, leaflets etc., contact: 23 March Mobilising Committee, 89 Charlotte Street, London, W1P 2DQ, tel 01-580-5311.

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