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## TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND

There can be no solution to the struggle in Northern Ireland until the British Army is withdrawn. The interests of British imperialism are now enmeshed in conflict with both the Catholic population and for the moment the Loyalist forces grouped around Ian Paisley. These are the key points that emerge from the present Loyalist strike.

Initiated by the United Unionist Action Council(UUAC) and led by Ian Paisley and Ernest Baird, the strike has as its central demands the reintroduction of "tougher security measures" against the IRA, and the ending of direct British rule over the area.

In practical terms this would mean the restoration of the old Stormont with all the instruments of repression—army, police and judiciary—in Loyalist hands, the reintroduction of internment and a fresh offensive against the Catholic minority.

### CONFLICT

At the moment such demands conflict with British imperialist plans for the north, and for that reason alone Labour minister Roy Mason has announced his intention of using the "security forces" to ensure the defeat of the strike.

As we go to press there have been no signs that Mason will actually break the strike.

All reports show the army are maintaining a "low profile", leaving control of the situation in the hands of the RUC.

But even if Mason does move against the Loyalists it will not be because he is acting in the interests of the Irish working class.

On the contrary it will be because imperialist interests in Ireland demand that the strike be broken.

Revolutionary socialists can give absolutely no support to RUC or army moves against the strike.

Instead, we must continue to agitate for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of troops and for the disbanding and disarming of the RUC and UDR.

At the same time we funda-



Paisley

mentally oppose the present strike, because it seeks to restore Unionist ascendancy and to trample the Catholic minority underfoot.

We call on all workers to ignore UUAC demands that they come out on strike.

But in a situation of mass intimidation by right wing paramilitary outfits like the UDA and UVF, such a call will go unheeded unless coupled with the demand that the trade union movement in Northern Ireland establish *armed defence squads* to protect workers from both Loyalist and army attacks.

By themselves these defence squads will not unite the working

class. But they can prove an important step in the formation of a principled, anti-imperialist unity of Catholic and Protestant workers.

The fight for the creation of such defence squads will necessitate a sharp political struggle.

The method and programme of the only force at present fighting British imperialism, the Provisionals, leads them to effectively abandon the Protestant workers to Loyalist reactionaries.

And leadership of the Northern Ireland trade union movement is steadfastly pro-imperialist.

### UNION LEADERS

The pro-imperialist policies of the trade union leaders was shown most graphically last Tuesday (May 3) in a statement issued by the Northern Ireland Congress of Trade Unions (NICTU) in which they called for "a very firm response from the security forces" to UDA threats.

In this they received totally unqualified support from the Stalinists of the British and Irish Communist Parties.

The political committee of the Northern Area of the Communist Party of Ireland (CPI) also issued a statement on May 3 in which they said:

"It is essential that Roy Mason stands by his pledges to maintain the workers' right to work. We demand that the roads are kept clear, that transport is available and that the factories are protected against the intimidators".

And a *Morning Star* editorial of May 4 said:

"It is up to the British authorities to act as they have talked. Intimidation by these powerful groups [i.e. UDA, etc.] demands

Cont'd page 2 Col 1.

## DEMAND HALT TO SCANLON'S PHASE 3 TALKS

Wounded, but not dead. That is the state of the TUC-government moves to impose a third round of wage control, following last week's 50-2 vote of the National committee of the AUEW.

The resolution instructs the Executive to:

"call for an immediate return to free collective bargaining at the end of the second stage of the Social Contract".

The wording is of course all-important. The motion falls far short of calling for an immediate return to free collective bargaining—or even actually mandating the AUEW to reject wage control.

Instead it calls for: "every effort to be made to have this adopted by the TUC in 1977 . . . in the event of our policy not being adopted by the TUC, the national committee instruct the executive council to recall them to decide our position."

When we remember that there is a built-in majority on the AUEW National Committee, the resolution can be clearly recognised as laying the groundwork for a completely sham fight.

AUEW leaders can now talk of opposition to wage controls. They might even vote against the Phase 3 deal at the TUC.



Scanlon

But all the while they will know they have the safety net of

a recalled National Committee, which can quietly capitulate to the "majority" decision of the TUC, now being stage managed at summer conferences.

The real feelings of these senior bureaucrats was shown *not* in the 50-2 vote for this resolution but in the earlier wafer thin 27-25 defeat for Scanlon's Phase 3 resolution, which called for "an orderly return" to free collective bargaining.

And a later amendment calling for an *immediate* return to free collective bargaining at the end of the Social Contract was *defeated* 29-23—showing clearly the continued opposition of the AUEW leadership to a fight against wage controls.

There is no doubt, however the fine print is worded, that the decision comes as a damaging setback to plans for further wage control.

### DOUBLE TALK

And it is no accident that the pressures that forced this resort to double-talk emerge most clearly in the AUEW, whose members have been at the forefront of struggles against Phase 2—most recently in the Leyland toolroom strike and the Heathrow pay dispute.

But it would be a major mistake to see this pressure as sufficient to force a return to free collective bargaining.

The working class was overwhelmingly opposed to Phase 2 of wage control—this did not deter the TUC leaders from imposing it. And brushing aside the setbacks they are now proceeding hell-bent on drawing up and enforcing a Phase 3 deal.

AUEW members must now ensure that the NC resolution is translated into action—demanding Scanlon is forced to withdraw from the TUC's Phase 3 talks.

And in other unions the fight must be stepped up to oppose all forms of wage controls and for wage claims both to catch up for eroded wage packets and to compensate wages against future inflation by linking wages to price rises as assessed by trade union committees.



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

## USA READY FOR TRADE WAR

In introducing his sweeping energy conservation programme on television last month, US President Jimmy Carter made repeated appeals to the "patriotism" and "self-sacrifice" of the American people.

The effort to meet the energy shortage would be "the moral equivalent of war".

His choice of image was more than mere rhetoric: in the long term Carter very much has war on his mind.

The energy proposals are geared to making the US less vulnerable to changes in the price and availability of imported oil.

They would involve cutting the growth in energy consumption from 4.6% to 2% per year; reducing oil imports by 2 million barrels a day (about 25%); and massively increasing the production of coal and its importance as an energy source.

At the same time, Carter has boosted future profits of the oil giants by quietly agreeing to progressive relaxation of price controls.

Less in the news but just as important are plans for intensifying the development of conventional nuclear power stations that lie behind the ban on fuels for fast-breeder reactors.

These measures will, if carried out, give the US government a freer hand, both in waging the trade wars that the economic crisis puts on the agenda, and ultimately, in carrying out sustained military adventures.

Carter has so far acted continuously in respect of import controls.

There is now heavy pressure from business on restricting imports of steel and commodities such as colour television sets from Japan.

These demands are supported, even led, by right-wing bureaucrats such as George Meany of the AFL-CIO (nearest American equivalent to the TUC).

He has thus ordered an appeal of the recent US Customs Court decision to impose duties on Japanese electronic products to offset subsidies offered by the Japanese government to that country's manufacturers.

Although protectionist measures are bound to increase, Carter seems to prefer laying a firm groundwork while giving a measured response to "dumping".

Meanwhile he has also taken an important first step towards consolidating his grip as president by the passage of a 'Reorganisation Act', which gives him sweeping powers to change the structure of government agencies, subject only to the retrospective veto of the Congress.

Carter's cry for patriotic self-sacrifice is also useful for diverting the American workers from the problems of inflation and unemployment that beset them.

It comes at a time of mounting industrial action, including a major strike by dockers and the near rejection by steel workers of a new contract in the teeth of the union's leaders.

There is now a strong lobby for increased arms spending by groups such as the Committee on the Present Danger, which recently produced a television film showing simulated Soviet attacks interspersed with speeches by Solzhenitsyn.

That group is largely financed by business interests, but one of its founder members is Lane Kirkland, Secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO.

It was also as a result of AFL-CIO pressure that three Soviet 'trade unionists', invited to the longshoremen's union conference in Seattle in April were denied entry to the US. So much for Carter's pious talk about freedom of travel!

## MAIN EVENTS

# PORTUGAL

## 3 YEARS ON

The third anniversary of the anti-fascist coup in Portugal was celebrated on 25 April, with appeals for 'discipline' and 'law and order' from right wing President Eanes and with calls for 'austerity' from reformist Prime Minister Soares.

In the days leading up to the anniversary, Soares went to Washington to plead for American participation in a \$1,500 million loan to stave off Portugal's intense economic crisis, with an inflation rate last year of 27% and a balance of trade deficit of £1,100 million.

### INCIDENT

Soares and the SP leaders blew up a minor incident of fighting between CP and SP members in a town called Salvanterra to denounce 'totalitarianism'.

Soares thus hoped to

bolster his anti-Communist and anti-working class image in the eyes of the American government and those sections of international finance capital whose support he is begging.

### 'STALINIST'

He told the Washington Press Club, an assembly not well known for the subtlety of its political analysis of such matters, that he objected to the Portuguese CP because it was 'Stalinist', and that he supported NATO because it was needed to defend the 'free world'.

Soares got his money with these speeches, but he has not necessarily got the support of the working class.

Back in Lisbon just in time for the 25 April celebration, he saw the first major military parade in the capital since fascist times.

This showed the army has returned to the old ways of bourgeois discipline and must

have pleased the middle class.

But the number of workers was small, and many more turned out on a demonstration on May Day supporting the left wing of the military including Otelo and even Costa Gomes, now seen in this light.

The SP used May Day to hold a big meeting of trade unionists in Oporto to denounce the 'totalitarian' CP who have managed to retain control of many important unions.

The bureaucratic tactics of the Stalinists may help Soares to denounce them as 'totalitarians' and to say that the land take-overs in the south are only used to set up a 'CP empire'.

However, such pretexts will not allow Soares to attack forever the living standards of the Portuguese masses and the gains of their revolution without the beginning of a fight back.



Mass demonstration against the Azevedo government.

## IRELAND... TROOPS OUT NOW

a vigorous response from the government."

This position is exactly the same as the one the Stalinists held during the UWC stoppage of 1974.

It is derived entirely from the Stalinist concept that British imperialism can play a progressive role in Ireland.

But both this strike and the one in 1974 merely highlight the fact that the British government is not going to dismantle or reform the Orange state which it itself established over 50 years ago.

The failure of the Catholic majority to achieve Civil Rights during 1968-70 shows that there can be no solution to the Northern Ireland problem within the framework of the Northern Ireland state.

Far from playing a progressive role the British government is the main prop and support of the Northern Ireland state, and has shown by its active collusion with Loyalist murder gangs that it is prepared to defend that state to the bitter end.

The Communist Party's demands in effect reduce themselves to the demand that the British government should cease to be imperialist!

The fundamental unity between imperialism and Loyalism was again revealed last week.

At the start of the strike, Roy Mason appealed, in the name of anti-IRA unity, to Paisley to call off his action.

And last Thursday, May 5, Mason presented a five-point package of tougher anti-republican

Continued From Page 1.

security measures to a deputation of power workers from the Ballylumford station.

How successful the strike will eventually be it is difficult to tell. In all probability a face-saving compromise will be hammered out—but such a compromise can be of no benefit whatsoever to either section of the working class in the north of Ireland.

Their interests can only be safeguarded by fighting for the removal of all traces of imperialism in Ireland and for the establishment of a workers' government in its place.

That struggle will only be successful if led by a revolutionary party fighting both in the North and the South on a socialist programme.

The construction of such a party is now the most pressing task facing the Irish workers.

But in England the task at hand is for trade unionists and Labour Party members to press forward with demands for the withdrawal of the imperialist army of occupation in Ireland.

This struggle is inseparable from the fight to break the reactionary Liberal-Labour coalition deal, and remove the right wing leadership of the Labour Party.

The demands must be levelled in particular at those 'left' MPs who have in the past given verbal support to the call for Troops Out of Ireland, but who now troop obligingly into the Parliamentary lobbies to vote for the Callaghan-Steel coalition.

Support for the struggle for self-determination of the Irish people is therefore part and parcel of the fight for principled leadership in the British workers' movement.



Bhutto speaking at the time of the war against Bangla Desh.

# PAKISTAN: behind Bhutto's rise

A Special Guest Article by Farooq Nawaz (Samaj)

PART ONE.

In the wake of a rising movement against the Ayub regime in 1968 his most loyal minister, faithful throughout 10 years of army rule, switched sides and became the chief spokesman of the anti-Ayub movement.

His name was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, now himself the target of a major political revolt.

Bhutto led the opposition to Ayub Khan on the basis of the most grotesque nationalist hysteria against India, which he whipped up during the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war when he was Ayub's foreign affairs minister.

It was Bhutto who made the notorious "Fight for a thousand years" speech, fanning the nationalist and chauvinist hysteria that had gripped the country.

The Tashkent peace agreement therefore came as a blow to a public who saw it as a betrayal and 'sell-out' in the face of world pressure. Ayub's propaganda had backfired.

A 'patriotic' movement, located in the cities, involving students, doctors, lawyers and other middle class elements began to take form. Bhutto denounced Ayub as a "compromiser" and became the spearhead of the movement.

Coming after ten years of intense political repression, the anti-Ayub nationalist movement inevitably took on a broader character, demanding an end to military rule and a restoration of civil liberties and democracy.

## WIDENED BASE

It quickly widened its base, winning the support of the working people. The involvement of the oppressed masses had a qualitative impact on the movement: the economic and political aspirations of the working class, began, for the first time to gain expression.

Before the movement became strong (in relation to the present upheaval it was extremely weak), the army intervened to depose Ayub, and installed another army general Yahya Khan, who promised a quick return to a democratically elected government.

However, the forces that had been triggered off during the anti-Ayub struggle, began to gather momentum.

Industrialisation had been pushed through by the Ayub regime, on the basis of the most ruthless suppression of the working class.

Strikes were made illegal, unions banned, wages remained stagnant and scores of militants were killed. The popular democratic movement, embracing the working class continued, therefore, after Ayub

had gone.

The period from 1968 up to the elections, saw growing demands by workers for job security, wage increases, better conditions and the right to organise. Strikes and factory occupations took place in almost all industrial areas.

Bhutto, who had spearheaded the nationalist/patriotic agitation, quickly latched on to the demands of this growing popular movement.

To intervene in the forthcoming elections he formed the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and raised the slogan of 'Roti, Kapra Aur Makan' (Bread, Clothing and Shelter), in a determined effort to make gains from the new social forces that had been unleashed.

## VEHICLE

Victory in the 1971 elections was crucial for Bhutto. The PPP since it had no firm class base, was merely a vehicle for Bhutto to make parliamentary gains on the basis of mass interest.

The PPP programme reflected its opportunist character. To the demands of the right for an Islamic Pakistan, Bhutto counterposed "Islamic socialism" (sic).

He offered the working class job security, wage increases and nationalisation of industry. (Bhutto knew that the weak bourgeoisie of Pakistan would not offer much resistance).

To win over the landlords and feudal elements who control the rural vote, Bhutto invited them to join his party. Many landowners who were unsuccessful in gaining the candidature of established parties joined the PPP.

Initially repelled by Bhutto's talk of land reform, they were soon reassured by the vagueness of his reform programme.

The confidence of the landowners was not misplaced. Once in power, Bhutto consolidated his rural base in the landowning class. 'Land Reform' proved to be the bogus threat that it was.

In fact the data on the present distribution of land is so embarrassing for the government, that it has banned the publication of the latest Agricultural Census.

## EVICTIONS

The only significant clause in the Land Reform policy was the granting of ownership rights to longstanding tenant farmers. In practice, it resulted in large scale evictions of tenants by the landowners.

Thus the PPP which came to power on a wave of urban unrest and working class militancy, has become the party of the big landowners and rich peasants.

In the elections this year, 80% of the PPP candidates came from

established landowner families.

It is the backing of this class and its links with the army that is keeping Bhutto in power today.

The character of the Bhutto regime became quickly apparent to its working class supporters. While tailing the mass movement and adopting its slogans, Bhutto had at the same time raised the expectations and confidence of the working people.

Putting the lid back on once in power needed at least as much repression as his predecessors had used.

In Karachi, Lyallpur and the industrial estates in Lahore, factory occupations continued.

In fact, Bhutto's electoral victory was taken as a signal for greater militancy with factory occupations awaiting legitimisation and the transition to workers' control. The workers of Karachi barricaded themselves, their housing colonies were guarded by armed workers.

Within the first few months the Bhutto regime began disarming, defusing and destroying the movement.

Troops were called, curfews imposed, hundreds of workers were gunned down, and their leaders jailed (many are still in prison) till the movement was finally crushed.

## EXPOSED

Bhutto's 'Islamic Socialism' was exposed long before the present upheavals.

But it took several years for working class organisations to recover from the body blows they had suffered in 1972-3, and to reorganise.

Bhutto's opportunism now makes it possible for him to switch from populist slogans to unashamed reaction.

"No further land reforms or nationalisations" he promised in recent weeks in an attempt to persuade the right-wing opposition alliance (PNA) to negotiate with him. (In view of Bhutto's past record this is more of a comment on the nature of the opposition parties than a reversal of policies).

The transition to an Islamic constitution and legal system would be speeded up, he claimed and drinking and gambling would be banned forthwith.

Now he has clamped down on the major cities by imposing Martial Law, and is trying to distance himself from the opposition by raising the bogey of US money and foreign intervention.

Bhutto came to power at a time when world capitalism is sinking deep into crisis. Whereas the Ayub regime could maintain a modest degree of industrialisation, Bhutto was faced with growing unemployment and soaring prices.

Unemployment has particularly hit the industrial workers. Nationalisation has neither protected them from redundancies nor from inflation.

Instead it has meant simply a change of management, from the private capitalist to the extremely corrupt bureaucracy patronised by the PPP.

The urban middle classes (particularly the lower middle class) have been squeezed by inflation to such an extent that their living standards have fallen drastically.

## CATALYST

The elections served as a catalyst to trigger off the present movement, which has three important features: it is concentrated in the urban areas; the leadership of the movement is in the hands of the PNA—a contemptible rag-bag of right-wingers, careerists and religious fanatics; and it has no programme, organised solely around the slogan "Bhutto out!"

The PNA accused Bhutto of rigging the elections and demanded his resignation.

There is no doubt that the PPP gangsters, hand in hand with the bureaucracy and police, used all forms of intimidation and corruption.

Certainly, ballot-rigging in urban areas where opposition was strongest, resulted in PPP gaining seats where they were expected to lose.

But rigging or no rigging, Bhutto would have had an overall victory because he had the big landowners on his side ensuring the massive rural vote.

The protest movement has transformed itself in stages. Initially, it was restricted to loyal supporters of the PNA. Demonstrations would start from the mosques with demonstrators, including wives and children of PNA supporters, chanting religious slogans.

## JAILED

When Bhutto jailed the leadership and unleashed the police and his PPP hooligans, other sections of the middle class—lawyers, doctors, teachers, students—joined the movement demanding civil liberties and an end to Bhutto's anti-democratic methods.

Bhutto continued to gun down nearly ten people a day.

And then for the first time the trade unions joined in, and a call for strike action resulted in a complete national stoppage.

Continued next edition.



## IN BRIEF

EL SALVADOR

**EIGHT PEOPLE WERE** killed as May Day demonstrators demanding the release of political prisoners were fired on by the police of the government fraudulently elected a few weeks ago.

FRANCE

**AS WORKERS STAGED THE** largest strikes since 1968, the fratricidal conflict within the ruling class reached new heights in a parliamentary debate on the latest installment of the "Barre Plan"—the anti-working class economic policy of the Giscard government. The Gaullists gave a vote of confidence to Premier Barre but only because to withhold it would have unleashed a full scale political crisis.

SPAIN

**ON MAY DAY 40 YEARS AGO** the smoke was still rising from the historic Basque capital of Guernica a few days after its destruction by Nazi bombers. This May Day the fascist smoke was rising again all over Spain as Spanish Trade Unions got their first taste of "legality" granted four days earlier. Police indiscriminately attacked peaceful demonstrators leaving hundreds injured.

MAURITIUS

The political crisis sharpened when the left-wing Mauritius Militant Movement (MMM) won control of three out of the five main towns in municipal elections. Since the MMM, previously unrepresented in Parliament, won a startling 30 out of 62 seats in December's general election, the two rival right-wing parties have been clinging onto power in a shaky coalition government.

SAHARA REPUBLIC

The Polisario Front last week scored a major success in its increasingly successful fight for national liberation. The war has been going on since Spain handed its old phosphate-rich colony of the Sahara to joint occupation by Morocco and Mauritania. On May 1 the Front attacked the iron ore centre killing 65 Mauritanian soldiers and abducting six French advisors. Most of the 650 French residents have since been evacuated.

# WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist organisation fighting to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class to lead the mounting opposition to the betrayals of both 'left' and right wing Labour and trade union leaders and the Communist Party, as they attempt to enforce wage control, sackings, speed-up and public service cuts.

As workers take up the struggle against these policies they are forced by the sheer weight of forces opposing them to confront political questions. Only with an understanding of the role of the labour bureaucracy and a programme to unite the broadest sections of workers in struggle can a way forward be found.

The Workers Socialist League is the only movement that sets out to do this, fighting consistently in the working class for transitional demands, which go beyond simply trade union militancy to raise the political questions to workers and prepare the forms of organisation and the knowledge necessary for the struggle for socialism.

As a result we have been at the forefront of struggles against the cuts, against wage control, for unionisation, and against redundancy. We have done more than any other tendency to fight the introduction of 'workers' participation' in industry. And we have strongly supported the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, which has set out to show the link between the reactionary policies of the Social Contract and bureaucratic dictatorship in both the unions and the Labour Party.

But our practical struggle for the continuity of the principles and method of Trotsky's Transitional Programme is in no way a task confined to Britain. It requires an attention and involvement in the struggles of the working class internationally, and the fight to reconstruct the Trotskyist Fourth International.

So there has been a consistent drive within the WSL to deepen and enrich the movement's understanding of the history and the present crisis of the Fourth International as an essential part of our initiative towards its reconstruction.

We urge all readers who agree on the need for revolutionary leadership and the demands we put forward to find out more about the WSL and join our fight in the Labour movement.



# elections: fruits of wage control

"A Blue Revolution" screeched the 'Daily Mail', in a hysteria of delight at the sweeping Tory gains in the local elections last week.

And the Mail then proceeded to outline the battery of vicious attacks on the working class which can now be expected to surge ahead in Tory-controlled local authorities covering nine out of ten people in Britain.

First off is an onslaught on council housing—selling off council property to private owners as fast as the contracts can be drawn up—and thus reducing even further the chance of thousands of young people of affording a roof over their heads.

Secondly there is talk of making parking cheaper in town centres—which is a polite way of describing swingeing cuts in public transport systems with all that means in terms of lost jobs and slashed

services for the growing number of people who cannot afford cars.

The Mail goes on to look forward to "tightening up school standards"—an end to modern teaching methods and any hope of decent education for working class youth—and "recruiting more police as part of an intensive law and order campaign"—again foreshadowing all-out attacks on workers.

## NO BASE

None of these policies have found any base of support within the workers' movement. The Tory gains are entirely due to the betrayals of the Callaghan-Steel government.

Seeing first the Labour and then the coalition government already at work along similar, though less blatant, lines, lining up a further year of crippling wage controls to slash living standards, only a dwindling band of Labour voters turned



PHOTO: Chris Davies, (Report).

Healey

out to support their traditional party.

There seems little hard evidence from such a low turn-out to prove that large numbers of former Labour voters are in fact voting Tory.

Far more likely is that Tory support has been galvanised into active ballot box crosses, while Labour voters have registered their feelings about the Callaghan-Steel coalition government by staying away from the polls.

In the Ashfield by-election, for example, Tory candidate Smith who ridiculously claimed he was supported by miners was forced to cancel his campaign tour of the mines at Bentinck Colliery after



PHOTO: Chris Davies, (Report).

Callaghan

being humiliated by the same miners who stayed away from the voting booths.

## "GRASS"

He was shouted down whenever he tried to speak. The most popular slogan of the workers was "miners eat grass"—a comment attributed to the Tory Winston Churchill when informed of the miserable living standards of miners.

But on the other hand, *Labour Weekly* spills the beans on the state of the local Labour Party, admitting that "there was little or no Party organisation there. There was only a 15% canvass and very few Party workers indeed".

The reformists' own post mortem also revealed the main cause of crushing defeat.

"There was some local feeling that an NUM candidate should have been selected, but more than this was a very strong feeling in the pits against the Government's economic policy.

The reaction of miners on the doorstep talk of Phase Three and the Social Contract bodes ill for the immediate future..."

It was this combination of often moribund or demoralised local party organisations tied to a bankrupt and treacherous policy from the coalitionists in the leadership that guaranteed a sure-fire defeat for Labour.

# EEC PLANS FOOD PRICE CHAOS



Labour's Agriculture Minister John Silkin has had to resort to barefaced lying to defend his food prices agreement with the rest of the Common Market.

It will, he claimed, increase the cost of living in Britain by only one third of one percent.

In fact there are three reasons why EEC rules and Silkin's latest deal are going to give a giant upward push to food prices in Britain over the next year.

In January 1978 comes the final stage in the equalisation of British food prices to the higher EEC price levels. This is part of Britain's phased adoption of the EEC's economic rules agreed during "renegotiation".

Those EEC food price levels were themselves raised at last month's meeting by a further 3 1/2%.

Silkin agreed also to devalue the "green pound". The "green currency" system for farm prices was set up in 1971 to stabilise food prices throughout Europe at a time when exchange rates between the European currencies began changing every day because of the international monetary crisis.

Countries whose currencies went up in value had to pay a tax to the

EEC, so their food import prices would not go down.

And those whose currencies fell in value would get a subsidy to control rises in food prices.

The system, designed to deal with small fluctuations in exchange rates, in fact operated while some currencies (especially the British pound) were enormously devalued and others (especially the West German mark) went up.

The result has been not the intended small compensatory payments but a huge semi-permanent subsidy from West Germany to Britain on all food imported to Britain from the Common Market.

It is now running at over £1 million a day.

## DEVALUE

The only way to eliminate this subsidy would be for Britain to devalue the "green pound" by as much as the real pound has been devalued since 1971 (about 40%); this would raise the price of imported food in Britain by the same 40%.

The other anti-working class EEC governments are sensitive enough to realise that this would murder the Social Contract, so their demands are less extreme.

Silkin has so far agreed to a 2.9%

devaluation (and so a 2.9% increase in imported food prices).

But there will now be pressure for more.

All these measures will put up the price of food and is likely to add at least an extra 2 1/2% onto the rate of inflation which is already rapidly approaching 20% a year.

## SUBSIDY

In "exchange" for all this Silkin got the EEC to agree to a temporary subsidy on butter in Britain which may for a few months keep its price 5p a pound below what it would have been.

It is in Silkin's interest to lie about the effects of this deal because if the truth were told, it would be one more shovel-full of earth into the grave of the Social Contract.

That is why Silkin held out for a better deal until the last possible moment—up to the point, according to the EEC Agricultural Commissioner Gunderlach, where he threatened to destroy the whole C.A.P.

And to destroy the C.A.P. virtually means the Common Market itself, since 95% of the EEC's budget and three-quarters of the time of its Council of Ministers is devoted to the agricultural

policy.

The essence of that policy is the guaranteed purchase at artificially high prices by the EEC of all farm produce.

This benefits the big agricultural capitalists who receive vast subsidies and produces high food prices in the shops which keeps down the standard of living of European workers.

The difference between the huge amount farmers produce and the smaller amount consumers can afford to buy is accumulated as surplus stocks by the EEC.

This is what causes the famous butter and meat "mountains", the wine and olive oil "lakes" and so on—all expensively stored in vast refrigerated warehouses around Europe while millions of the world's population starve.

## BEDROCK

The basic political reason for this economic insanity is that the C.A.P. was the price which the French government has always demanded for supporting the EEC.

And that is because, aside from benefiting the big agricultural capitalists, the C.A.P. keeps in business tens of thousands of small French farmers who constitute the bedrock of political support to the reactionary Gaullist regimes of the last 20 years.

The C.A.P. is producing huge contradictions between the capitalist EEC governments.

The West German government opposes it because the bulk of the multi-million pound subsidies come from West Germany.

The British Labour government has launched a verbal campaign against it because the implementation of the C.A.P. in Britain means a further sharp decline in workers' living standards and that threatens the policy of the Social Contract by intensifying opposition to wage control.

## HYPOCRITICAL

But Silkin's "campaign" against the C.A.P. is largely hypocritical since the end of the C.A.P. would mean the end of "green currencies" and West German subsidies to British food imports.

That would involve new cuts in the living standards of British workers.

But these cuts would be cuts that boosted not the profits of British capitalists (the intention of the Social Contract) but the strength of West German capital.

## WITHDREW

Clearly, the interests of workers in Britain can best be served by the immediate withdrawal of Britain from the EEC. To protect workers wages against the inevitable increase in food prices, the fight would have to be taken up for wages to be linked to the level of inflation as determined by elected trade union committees.

But the struggle to replace the EEC with a socialist United States of Europe will have to include in its programme demands to win the subsidised small farmers of Europe to the side of the working class, including provision of interest free credit for the collectivisation of small farms, through the nationalisation of the banks and credit institutions.

# TYNDALE SACKINGS

THE SIX WILLIAM TYNDALE teachers, witch-hunted by the Tory media, have now been sacked from their jobs. The NUT leadership has risen to a new level of betrayal by supporting these sackings on the grounds that the six took 'unofficial' strike action.

Following their suspension of teachers at Little Ilford School from the union for the same reason, this move throws down the gauntlet to every teacher who wants to fight education cuts and defend jobs.

The bureaucracy is ready to ensure that such teachers never teach again.

The Stalinist-dominated North London Teachers Association has made a belated protest on behalf of the Tyndale 6, having refused to support them in the past.

If this 'change of heart' is to have any meaning, a campaign must now be mounted throughout the NUT to demand that the leadership reverse its position.

Such a campaign must be directed toward the preparation of industrial action that can defend victimised teachers in the future.



Let's face it, if they could see us like this who'd vote for us?

And it is the refusal of the Labour leaders to tackle problems of unemployment, housing and social services that has ensured the basis of the increased racist vote which was collected by the fascists of the National Front.

It is conspicuous that in those areas where the Labour Party went onto the offensive against the NF, distributing propaganda which exposed the fascist, anti-union role of the Front, the fascists received markedly less support.

The struggle against fascism connects in this way with the fight throughout the labour movement for principled leadership putting forward a clear socialist programme.

This is why the local election results confirm the need to bring down the Lib-Lab coalition government and to fight for an emergency re-call Labour Party Conference to remove the Callaghan-Healey leadership and elect a new leadership.

Of course the 'left' Labour MPs, frightened for their careers, will continue to avoid this fight just as they have gone along with the coalition deal.

But the current electoral climate shows that whatever the 'lefts' might think, unless the Labour Party's political course is changed, there will be no more than a handful of Labour MPs to pick up the pieces after the next General Election.

# HEALTH STEWARDS JOIN TO FIGHT CUTS

The potential of CLASH, the Committee of London Area Stewards in the Health Service, as an instrument for fighting the cuts was shown again on May 4, when leaders of all the major fight backs in the London area over the past few months were brought together to report on and discuss their actions.

Cecilia Forrest, COHSE steward at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital reported that as a result of the work-in which has been in existence now for over six months, the hospital was still open.

The importance of the "open the books of NHS" demand adopted at the CLASH founding conference was shown when Mrs. Forrest reported that a sympathetic accountant, who had been looking at the AHA's costings for the EGA

clock picket from July 1.

Ernie Taylor (NUPE) reported on the attempt to close the Weir Maternity Hospital in South London.

Over the past few years, he said, there had been talk of moving the maternity facilities to St. Georges by 1980 or 1982.

Nevertheless, two wards had been renovated recently, only for them to be taken over by the administration for offices.

Since that time hundreds of thousands of pounds had been spent in improving the buildings for the administrators, including the landscaping of the grounds!

The last straw had come when management had taken priority for service in the canteen over the nurses and medical staff.

Now the AHA say patients will be moved out by July. The main problem, however, was that the union leadership had done nothing to fight the cuts apart from a one day protest here and there. "My members are refusing to strike on May 11, and who can blame them?" he said.

He went on to report how his full time official had spoken at a meeting building for May 11 action, by saying that 100 hospitals in London had closed.

"If I was an official I would be ashamed to stand up and say that to my members", said Taylor.

Bill Gedes, (NUPE, Hammer-smith) reported on attempts by management to victimise him by arguing that it was uneconomic to employ a baker.

A sinister development was reported by David Blane (ASTMS, Charing Cross). In his AHA there had been threats that student nurses would be sacked on qualifying.

The unions had resisted this, and management had attempted to sooth them by saying that those students on work-permits would be first to go.



PHOTO: Angela Phillips (I.P.D.)

The EGA occupation

had found that according to the AHA's records, salaries at the hospital were on average 50% above those received by the staff.

According to the records, the average wage of technicians was £6,300, whereas in fact the average was about £3,500.

The AHA records also showed consultants earning in excess of £30,000 a year, an even more preposterous overestimate, whilst included in the hospital's running costs were the salaries of 4 engineers who in fact spend less than 20% of their time at the EGA.

Whether this is an attempt by the AHA to prove how uneconomic the hospital is, or whether the excess cash has disappeared into paying for perks for the administrators is an open question, which is now being investigated.

Mrs. Forrest also appealed for support for the round-the-clock picket at the EGA, especially at bank holiday periods.

With three of the present medical registrars due to leave the hospital during June, the staff fear that the AHA will use the absence of medical care as a final excuse to remove the remaining patients.

An important repercussion of the EGA work-in was revealed by Chris Potter (NALGO) who reported the progress of the work-in at Hounslow hospital, now in its second month.

The date set for the Hounslow closure is August 31, and the JSSC have plans to start a round-the-

It has now stuck Reg Underhill (who just happens to be a hardened anti-communist witch-hunter) in charge, and raised a belated campaign to raise the fines imposed on the ex-Chairman and ex-Secretary of the Party.

## EXPULSION

If the NEC 'lefts' like Mikardo and Heffer had given one spark of leadership by asserting the right of Labour Parties to operate without interference by the court; if they had called for the expulsion of the right wingers like Lewis, then there would have been a massive response in defence of Newham in Labour Parties and trade unions throughout the country.

The courts could have been forced to take their hands off the workers' movement in the same way that they were in 1972 when the five jailed Pentonville dockers were freed by mass labour movement action.

Without such policies every Labour Party which seeks to remove a treacherous right-wing MP will find the courts used to grind down its struggle.

# PRO-PRENTICE COALITION

The situation in Newham North East Labour Party has taken a new turn.

The 'left' dominated Labour National Executive Committee has suspended all Newham's officers and taken over the running of the local party.

This unprecedented, but not unexpected act, has predictably been hailed as a 'step forward' in the Stalinist *Morning Star*.

It is nothing of the sort. Such a move can only strengthen the hopes of MP Reg Prentice that he can hold on to his career despite the

opposition of Newham North East Labour Party.

The NEC has refused to do anything until now about the situation in Newham. It has stood by whilst a Tory provocateur in the party, Julian Murray Lewis, has disrupted Newham's right to hold meetings through the use of the courts.

Far from defending the right of Labour Party members to hold meetings and organise their affairs without the permission of Tory judges, the NEC has simply watched them do their dirty work and now moves in to pick up the pieces.

# DEASON FREED

The three charges of wounding a police officer laid against Right to Work march leader John Deason formed a frame-up so flimsy that even the courts could not hold it together—that was the real meaning of the 'not guilty' verdict reached last Wednesday.

Certainly Deason's case had been widely taken up throughout the trade union movement—the large number of trade union banners on the lobby of the Old Bailey on May 4 indicated that.

But the clearly unplanned and highly embarrassing way in which the Judge was forced to stop the case almost as soon as it had begun, and direct the jury to acquit Deason was more testimony to an inadequately prepared story on the part of Sergeant Leslie McClyment, (who admitted he could not for certain identify Deason as the "assailant") than the fairness of British "justice".

With their customary opportunism, the Socialist Workers Party, the group running the "Right to Work" campaign kept tactfully silent on the line on the police peddled in recent weeks in their paper, *Socialist Worker*.

Face to face with a line of these vicious hirelings of the capitalist

state, the SWP shouted "Jail the policemen, not John Deason".

They set aside for the moment the idea that the police are just "working class lads" and dropped the implicit support for the police pay claim that has featured in their press.

But now Deason is free, we can expect the line to be resumed.



PHOTO: Socialist Worker.



PHOTO: John Starrock, (Report).

Colin Kenny, CLASH Secretary

He and several other speakers pointed out that management's policy was consistent with TUC demands for a reduction in work-permits, but that such a solution was not only racist, serving to divide trade unionists, but also enabled management to implement cuts on the one hand and speed up on the other.

Following the showing of a film on the EGA work-in, the conference discussed arrangements for May 11.

Colin Kenny, CLASH secretary proposed that CLASH should help organise morning rallies at the EGA and at Hounslow before joining the main march at Hyde Park.

Rather than just follow the main march in this political and physical route to nowhere, the committee proposed that CLASH should attempt to lead a section of the march to the TUC, to demand action from the trade union leaders in the fight against the cuts.

In this way, the day of action could be changed from a demoralising event into at least an attempt to give a political direction to the fight against the cuts.

Any shop steward in the NHS who would like further information about CLASH should write to: Colin Kenny, CLASH Secretary, Dept. of Virology, St. Mary's Medical School, Praed St., London W2.

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Paris in 1871, as Marx  
"plain workingmen for  
first time dared to infringe  
the governmental  
of their "natural  
riors", and, under circum-  
of unexampled difficul-  
performed their work  
estly, conscientiously and  
ciently".

But even before it was officially  
ared on March 28, the seeds of  
Commune's defeat had begun  
erminate. Already, in the week  
ween the assumption of power  
the Central Committee and the  
ions, an unrepeatable oppor-  
ty had been lost for a military  
ck on the disorganised  
ailles forces.

Then, during the election  
paign, more was lost. Although  
Committee of the Twenty  
ndissements, an alliance of the  
king class political forces domed  
ed by the trade unions and the  
national, produced a manifesto  
ch was in Lissagaray's words  
tinent in several points' the  
tion was largely conducted in  
s of personalities and not of  
gramme.

The Commune arrived in power  
out a clear mandate. And one  
g which was particularly absent  
a plan to present to the rest of  
nce. As Lissagaray says:

"If they had wanted to change  
revolution from a communal  
to a national one, they ought to  
e said so, boldly set forth their  
le programme and demon-  
ated to France the necessity of  
attempt".

### VACILLATED

The leaders vacillated for a  
nth before presenting any pro-  
me at all. And when it came,  
eemed to offer to the rest of  
nce not a means of unifying  
struggle on a national basis but  
ply a plan for duplicates of the  
mmune of Paris in each  
ividual municipality. Meanwhile,  
olutions in several other large  
es (Lyons, St. Etienne, Creuzot,  
seilles, Toulouse and Narbonne)  
been crushed one by one by  
ers.

Most of the measures implemen-  
by the Commune reflected  
mediate needs rather than a  
ught out programme. The pay-  
nt of debts was once again sus-  
ded and all rents due up to July  
71 were completely rescinded  
ther than delayed as they had  
n before).

Measures were taken to abolish  
vnhshops. Employers were no  
ger permitted to fine workers. In  
ticular industries reforms of  
rking conditions were enacted—  
instance, bakers were no longer  
quired to work at night.

In its later days the Commune  
s evolving plans for the system-  
c conversion of the abandoned  
ories of the capitalists to be  
verted under trade union  
ontrol into workers' co-operatives.

### FUNDAMENTAL

These co-operatives were to have  
brity in all state contracts. Plans  
re made for public works  
grammes, employment infor-  
mation centres and other measures  
assist the unemployed.

Most of these reforms emanated  
in the most revolutionary of the  
mmune's Commissions, the Com-  
mission for Labour and Exchange,  
of whose members were  
mbers of the International. Its  
d was Leo Frankel, a Hungarian,  
had been in close contact with  
rx.

Some very fundamental reforms  
ting to women's rights were  
posed by one of the best organ-  
and most consistent political  
nisations which sprang to life  
ing the Commune, the Associa-  
n of Women for the Defence of  
s and Aid to the Wounded.

This, like the Commission of  
our and Exchange, was almost  
rely led by socialist revolution-  
s.

Its principle driving force was  
Polish revolutionary, Elizabeth  
nitrieff. Her role was an example  
the generous internationalism of  
Commune in which several  
sh, Italian, Hungarian and  
ian revolutionaries played lead-  
roles and were accepted by the  
sian proletariat as their true  
rades.

The number of reforms carried  
or projected by the Commune  
markable in view of its short  
and the fact that it was in a  
ment state of war.



May 16, 1871: The official Commune ceremony at which the statue of Napoleon I in the Place Vendôme was torn down. Marx's remark of 1852 was more literally prophetic than he had in mind: "But when the Imperial mantle finally falls on the shoulders of Louis Bonaparte, the bronze statue of Napoleon will crash from the top of the Vendôme column".

Yet at the same time the leaders refrained to take those measures which might have given them the opportunity to enact their reforms.

Lissagaray once again puts the point sharply:

"The members of the Council, in their childish impetuosity, had not seen the real hostages staring them in the face—the bank, the civil register, the domains and the suitors' fund. These were the tender points by which to hold the bourgeoisie. Without risking a single man, the Commune had only to stretch out its hand and bid Versailles negotiate or commit suicide.

The timid delegates of 26 March were not the men to dare this. In allowing the Versaillesse army to march off the Central Committee had committed a heavy fault; that of the Council was incomparably more damaging. All serious rebels

have commenced by seizing upon the sinews of the enemy—the treasury. The Council of the Commune was the only revolutionary Government that refused to do so. While abolishing the budget of public worship, which was at Versailles, they bent their knees to the budget of the bourgeoisie, which was at their mercy."

### UNEQUAL

The timidity, along with the increasing administrative disorganisation of the Commune (which it tried to solve by handing its powers on May 1 to a dictatorial Committee of Public Safety), meant that the forces of the Commune were unequal to the military attack from the Versailles armies.

The indecision of the Commune had allowed Thiers to reorganise the armies and bring in soldiers

from the provinces. Bismark gave his full cooperation by releasing prisoners of war to fight for Versailles.

Paris managed to hold out until May 21. In the preceding six weeks the Commune forces had made several forays against Versailles but these were completely unsuccessful. The Versailles authorities shot hundreds of the prisoners whom they captured.

On May 21 the Versailles army breached the walls of the city and for a week the civil war waged fiercely in the streets of Paris.

Every block was tenaciously and courageously defended by the Communards—men, women and children.

The physical heroism of the working class in this week was historically unprecedented. It could only be defeated by the brute terror of Thiers' army.

During the week the Commune soldiers shot 63 hostages including the Archbishop of Paris. It was the only measure of this kind ever taken by the Commune. It has

earned the Communards the title of 'butchers' in the bourgeois histories.

On the other side the 'democratic, freedom-loving' bourgeoisie took revenge on the Commune in one of the most savage orgies of bourgeois violence in history.

Between 20,000 and 30,000 Parisians were killed in the street fighting. For every hostage killed by the Commune, the forces of reaction murdered 500 people.

### 'HUMANE'

Prisoners were taken off to concentration camps in cattle wagons. In the following three years over 13,000 were sentenced to periods of imprisonment deportation to the colonies, hard labour.

The convictions only finally ended in 1880 when a general amnesty was granted. Thiers told the National Assembly that 'the cause of justice, order and humanity has triumphed'.

This 'humane' bourgeoisie had extinguished a generation of

# FRENCH REVOLUTION 1871: YEAR OF THE PARIS COMMUNE

This article, the last of two parts dealing with the events and lessons of the Paris Commune, is the continuation of our series of articles on the revolutionary history of France which began with the 1789 Revolution. We went on to examine the Napoleonic conquests, and then to look at the processes involved in the 1848 Revolution.

By Bob Sutcliffe

"The Paris Commune of 1871 was the first, as yet weak, historic attempt of the working class to impose its supremacy. We cherish the memory of the Commune in spite of the extremely limited character of its experience, the immaturity of its participants, the confusion of its programme, the lack of unity among its leaders, the indecision of their plans, the hopeless panic of its executive organs, and the terrifying defeat fatally precipitated by all of these. We cherish in the Commune in the words of Lavrov, 'the first, though still pale, dawn of the proletarian republic'".

Leon Trotsky, *The Defence of Terrorism*, 1920.

"The multiplicity of interpretations to which the Commune has been subjected, and the multiplicity of interests which construed it in their favour, show that it was a thoroughly expansive political form, while all previous forms of government had been emphatically repressive.

Its true secret was this. It was essentially a working class government, the product of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which to work out the economic emancipation of labour...

Workingmen's Paris, with its Commune, will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators, history has already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priests will not avail to redeem them".

Karl Marx, *The Civil War in France*, Manifesto of the General Council of the International Workingmen's Association on the Paris Commune, issued 30 May 1871, two days after the final crushing of the Commune.



Trotsky

Blanc, eventually lined up wholeheartedly behind Thiers' savage vengeance. The workers learned for the first time that there was no progressive section of the bourgeoisie: that the bourgeoisie's fear of revolution was always greater than love of freedom.

These lessons about the independence of the working class and the need for permanent revolution is over 100 years old. Yet today it is still treacherously denied by the leadership of the working class in Italy and Spain and anywhere where the parties of Stalinism and reformism continue to dominate the labour movement.

The Commune also shows that the bourgeoisie has no scruples in combatting the threat of revolution and the ending of its own power.

UNPREPARED

The capitalist class permits no peaceful road to working class power today any more than it did in 1871. As Lissagaray said in condemning the National Guard for not attacking Versailles on March 18:

"The people never hold sway but for an hour, and woe to them if they are not yet ready, armed from head to foot. The elections of the 26 March were irreparable".

The streets of Chile in 1973, like those of many cities in the intervening century, were strewn with the bodies of workers because false 'revolutionary', reformist and Stalinist leaders have denied this lesson.

In Paris in 1871 the people did not lack arms, but their leaders were unprepared to use them decisively. Though the responsibility for the violence always lies with the bourgeoisie, that does not mean that the working class must use no more than defensive tactics.

Revolutionary civil war, as the Bolsheviks later realised, must be fought to the hilt. It was, as Marx commented, the 'kindheartedness' of the Commune's leaders which helped to lead to their defeat.

In Paris the working class was armed militarily; but it was still not armed politically. Not only did the Commune as a whole not have a clear political programme, neither did the main political organisations of the workers.

IDEALISTIC

Though many of the Communards were revolutionaries and socialists their demands were idealistic and owed far more to the bourgeois 'socialist' Proudhon or to the anarchist Bakunin than to Marx and Engels.

The Paris section of the International, though they played a leading role in the movement for the Commune and its running, remained more like a debating club than a disciplined revolutionary party ready to provide a clear and decisive new leadership for the working class.

When members of the International acted, it was more as individ-

uals than as members of a party.

As Engels later said, "The International did not raise a finger to make the Commune".

Nonetheless, he went on, it was 'unquestionably the spiritual child of the International' in the sense that it was the first great struggle of the independent working class against the bourgeoisie.

SOLIDARITY

What the General Council of the International could do was to organise a vast movement of solidarity with the Commune throughout Europe. Thus while Marx and Engels were not able to intervene in the struggle in Paris itself, they were able to see that its lessons were explained throughout the European labour movement.

The Paris Commune was not socialist, nor, as Marx asserted, could it possibly have been. Aside from the fact that most of the leaders who professed socialism were utopian socialists rather than Marxists, it did not occur to Marx that socialism could be established in a single nation, let alone a single city. Neither the subjective nor the objective conditions existed for the building of socialism.

The importance of the Commune is to be found not in its 'socialism' but in the fact that the workers discovered, in the course of the life and death struggle which was forced upon them, a new type of government—one which, had it been spread and preserved, could have created the form under which the transition to socialism could be effected.

democracy introduced as fully and consistently as is at all conceivable, is transformed from bourgeois into proletarian democracy; from the state (= a special force for the suppression of a particular class) into something which is no longer the state proper".

But the dictatorship of the proletariat does not consist only in this extension of democracy; it 'simultaneously... imposes a series of restrictions on the freedom of the oppressors, the exploiters, the capitalists'. The Commune, partly if not entirely through faults of its own, failed to impose those restrictions.

This, like its other deficiencies, sprang from the failures of the Commune's leadership. The absence of programme, the failure to take bold, decisive and united measures all betray the fact that a working class party organised with the objective of leading the working class to independent power had not been built.

DECISIVE CHANGE

As Trotsky wrote:

"The Paris proletariat had no such party. The bourgeois socialists who abounded in the Commune looked up to Heaven as if they awaited a miracle of an oracle. And while they were thus hesitating, the people groped and despaired because of the vacillation of some and the fantasies of others... If in September 1870 the French proletariat had been led by a centralised party of revolutionary action, the history not only of France, but of



The burning of the guillotine

France's boldest proletarian fighters. But they were unable to distinguish the political meaning of the Paris Commune.

Paris in 1871 was not the first time that the working class fought independently for its own interests. But on every previous occasion workers had fought revolutionary battles only to see the fruits of victory instantly snatched from their hands by a betrayal of the bourgeoisie claiming to be progressive.

The Commune lasted only for two months but it was the first time that the working class had continued to assert its independence to the point of establishing its own state. ... look at the Paris Commune', said Engels in 1871, 'that was the dictatorship of the proletariat'.

BALANCE SHEET

It was in drawing the balance sheet of the Commune that Marx and Engels put forward for the first time in its complete form the

revolutionary socialist analysis of the State. In demonstrating the necessity for the working class to smash the bourgeois state apparatus they showed how revolutionary socialism differed from reformism.

And by pointing to the way in which the construction of socialism required a new form of transitional state, the dictatorship of the proletariat, they differentiated revolutionary socialism clearly from anarchism.

The lesson of the Commune that the proletariat could take power independently is complemented by the lesson that it must do so if counter-revolution is to be avoided.

Though large sections of the petty bourgeoisie in Paris saw that their interests lay with the working class and joined the revolution, the political leaders of the 'progressive' republican sections of the bourgeoisie acted with unalloyed treachery towards the working class.

Despite their professions of democracy the 'left' democrats of the Versailles assembly, like Louis



Members of the Commune before the Council of War

"The setting up of [free producer] associations would put an end to the exploitation and enslavement of Labour by Capital... It would simultaneously facilitate urgently needed reforms, in both production and product relationships to include the following points:

- a) variety of work in each trade—a continually repeated manual movement damages both mind and body.
b) a reduction in working hours—physical exhaustion inevitably destroys man's spiritual qualities.
c) an end to all competition between male and female workers—their interests are identical and their solidarity is essential to the success of the final world-wide strike of labour against capital.

The association therefore wants:

- (1) Equal pay for equal hours of work.
(2) A local and international federation of various trade sections in order to ease the movement and exchange of goods by centralising the international interests of the producers. (...)

Faced by the present events, with poverty increasing at an alarming rate, and seeing the unwarranted halt in all work, it is to be feared that the women of Paris, who have become momentarily revolutionary in spirit, may as a result of the continual privation, relapse into the more or less reactionary and passive position which the social order of the past marked out for them.

That would be a disastrous step backwards which would endanger the revolutionary and international interests of the working class, thereby endangering the Commune."

Letter to the Commission of Labour and Exchange from E. Dimitrieff Secretary General, Executive Commission of the Association of Women for the Defence of Paris and Aid to the Wounded, late April or early May 1871.

The state had not, as the anarchists claimed, been destroyed. A new form of state had been discovered, the dictatorship of the proletariat, which was the starting point for the final withering away of the state.

Lenin explained in *State and Revolution*:

"The Commune, therefore, appears to have replaced the smashed state machine 'only' by fuller democracy: abolition of the standing army; all officials to be elected and subject to recall. But as a matter of fact this 'only' signifies a gigantic replacement of certain institutions by other institutions of a fundamentally different type. This is exactly a case of 'quantity being transformed into quality':

all mankind, would have taken a different direction".

Such a decisive change of direction came 47 years later when the proletariat took power in Russia.

The world war, which acted as midwife to the Russian Revolution can trace its origins back very directly to the war between France and Prussia in 1870, out of which came the Paris Commune.

But in Russia the proletariat was led by a party which had overcome the deficiencies which led to the defeat of the Parisian workers.

In both these senses therefore, the story of the Paris Commune is not merely one of heroic failure. It is a landmark on the route to the building of the objective and subjective conditions for the world socialist revolution.



# THE BATTLE FOR CHILE

A REVIEW BY RICHARD BROOKS

On the eve of the crucial 1973 congressional election an interviewer takes his microphone through two massive political rallies and asks two questions. Who is going to win? And what will happen then?

One rally is that of the right wing National Party. The demonstrators lean from cars covered in placards and guarantee a two-thirds right wing majority which will enable them to impeach Allende, the "Marxist" President, and restore "order" in Chile.

The other rally is that of Popular Unity. It is a working-class rally with songs, beer, ice cream and portraits of Allende.

Everyone here too, is certain of victory, full of gratitude for the limited benefits that Popular Frontism has brought them.

But here the question, "What will happen then?" is answered with less certainty.

The atmosphere of both rallies is festive, confident but tense. Late

on the night of the election the streets of Santiago are jammed with cars as, with a barrage of headlights and horns, the bourgeoisie celebrate what at first sight looks like a victory.

These scenes are the starting point of the three part documentary film "The Battle of Chile".

It was filmed in Chile between the April 1973 elections and the coup in September.

## CONCENTRATION CAMP

The main cameraman, Jorge Muller Silva was taken to a concentration camp in 1974 and the military junta has since then denied all knowledge of him.

One of his assistants, an Argentinian, actually films his own death.

It is a piece of film which typifies the power of the documentary as a whole, a power stemming from the intensity of the political crisis itself and the courage of a film crew caught up in that crisis.

Demonstrations, military manoeuvres, interviews with house-

wives and politicians, political meetings and even government intrigues are recorded with startling immediacy.

The film was edited and produced in Cuba and it seems likely that the technical quality of the film derives as much from this as from the qualities of the individual photographer.

The Cuban film industry, like its Russian counterpart, was born out of the revolution when the state poured finance into "the art form of the people and of the future".

But in Cuba, on the other hand, there was no sudden initial liberation of a highly educated class, less of a sudden explosion of cultural production as in the early years of the Russian Revolution, and less outright bureaucratic suppression afterwards.

The Cuban film industry was nurtured by the state for the purposes of the state.

## CHANNELLED

Creative energy has been carefully channelled. It has been allowed to grow and experiment but only within clear guidelines determined by Castro's bureaucracy.

It is for these reasons that the Cuban film industry has broken new ground not in the area of fictional film making but in that of political documentary (particularly the work of Santiago Alvarez).

Here the director can serve the state loyally while using its resources for an impressive development of technique and style.

Both the strengths and the weaknesses of the "Battle for Chile" arise from the Cuban link.

Since the coup, the ruling Castro bureaucracy, like Stalinists throughout the world, has worked hard to conceal the reasons for the massacre at the end of Allende's "Chilean road to socialism".

Any other policy would undermine the authority of the world's Communist Parties whose similar policies threaten to bring new and similar disasters.

The "Battle for Chile" is a brilliant contribution to this cover up. Its material is linked together by an anaemic 'voice over' which draws out the meaning of the events.

## LESSONS

For the author of the script the lessons to be drawn from the material concern exclusively the activities of the bourgeoisie, not those of the leaders of the workers parties.

The first film, 'The Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie', traces the various tactics used by the Chilean ruling class to undermine Allende's government after their failure to do so in the elections.

Like all Stalinists and Left Social Democrats, the scriptwriter waxes indignant at the ruling class's refusal to play by its own rules and its use of its ownership of the means of production and its control of the state machinery to subvert an elected government.

The film takes us through the armoury of the bourgeoisie: hoarding, fascist demonstrations, riots of right wing students, lock-outs, manipulation of wages struggles and finally the army.

## SELF-DEFENCE

At each stage the film shows the determined struggle of workers to combat these moves: the setting up of neighbourhood food and price boards to fight the black market, and of industrial "belts" (forms of self-defence committees).

Behind all this is the pathetic picture of Allende, attempting to use the bourgeoisie's own instruments to fight off its attacks.

Thus, when the right wing passed a constitutional amendment to prevent the expropriation of factories Allende declared the amendment illegal and took the case to a "Constitutional Court".

When the bosses paralysed road transport, workers commandeered the lorries and began organising transport themselves, but Allende objected and assured the "patriotic" bosses that "this is not a Socialist government. It is a national revolutionary government".

## ARMY PLANS

Finally, when the plans of the army to take power were plain to every Chilean child (some are interviewed in the film) when

workers and even sections of Allende's Socialist Party were calling out for arms, Allende invited into his government not only Christian Democrats but "democratic Army officers", and preached moderation to avoid "provoking" undemocratic officers.

The film cannot help but show this contradiction: the courage and self-organisation of the working class and the abject cowardice of its leadership.

## ABSENCE

What it cannot show is demonstrated crucially as an *absence*: the absence of a force capable of resolving the contradiction, of breaking the working class from its traditional leadership and directing its strength towards the defeat of the bourgeoisie.

Within the film there is explicit criticism of Allende and the Popular Unity: in particular, the long and powerful speech of a worker who demands at a public meeting that Allende mobilise the working class to defend him instead of relying on bourgeois forces who never will.

"How long," he asks, "will you tell us to wait?" The criticism, however, always places itself within the terms of Popular Unity's argument.

It presents the situation as if Allende had indeed been the



Butcher Pinochet.

champion of the working class, but had begun backsliding and making mistakes. Criticism is intended to help him change direction; it assumes that he can change direction.

The film cannot grasp or present the need for a party which sees Popular Unity as a burden on the class, the chain around its neck which must actually be cast off, before the working class can defend itself and advance its interests—because there was no party in Chile clearly fighting for this policy.

This absence, of course, cannot be presented as an image and therefore could not be shown on film; and it would be surprising if a sound-track financed by the Cuban state were to suggest that total rejection of Communist Party policy was a precondition for the working class's seizure of power. (The precondition for this in Cuba being a political revolution!)

Since nothing in the film is able to grasp the absence that is demonstrated throughout by the events which it portrays, the film takes on the shape of a classical tragedy, reconstructing a series of inevitable events.

The first film begins and the second film ends, with the destruction of the Moneda Palace: under a barrage of 20th century shells and bombs, the 19th century palace looks dignified and even heroic—but defenceless.

"The Battle for Chile" presents the Chilean working class in a similar way.



# PRESS GANG

When 'Sunday Telegraph' sends a reporter looking for a Labour Party office then its odds on that the Telegraph is on the way to defend some right wing absentee who is in danger of being kicked out or that some disaster has overtaken the Labour Party.

When Ivan Rowan set out for Kirby in Ashfield it was of course the second kind of story they were after—a triumphant tour in the wake of one of the biggest electoral upsets in recent British political history.

But the *Sunday Telegraph*, taking as it does an unequivocal class position, revealed, in a way that would have been unacceptable to the *Sunday Times* or the *Guardian* some of the real truths behind the Labour wipe-out.

After finding the headquarters with some difficulty Rowan interviewed the few people he found inside.

"The miners get stuck into the Ashfield result. On the road from Hucknall there was only one window poster for the Labour man".

"There were four lads in here. I said you've got to turn out and vote. The Tories will, they've nought else to do. But the lads wouldn't budge..."

"A young miner says: 'Labour governments have given us nothing. We've had to strike to get anything. They've given us nothing.' Another party worker says: 'I thought we'd get in with a reduced majority about 5,000 votes.'"

"But if it was just ordinary by-election apathy they would have done, wouldn't they?" asks Rowan. There was "a small silence".

"No it wasn't apathy. It was mutiny".

The *Daily Mail*, the *Socialist Worker* of the middle classes treats the 'ordinary decent etc' middle class family with the reverence that *Socialist Worker* reserves for a factory worker who has discovered that the Social Contract is not a good thing.

In a special feature headed: "How the middle classes cope with falling standards" the *Daily Mail* told a story of such hardship and suffering that only the most hard hearted comrades could have failed to reach for their handkerchiefs.

"The wife of a senior British brain surgeon is doing bed and breakfast at £3 a day to help balance the family budget.

"The incomes-squeeze has also turned him into a do-it-yourself expert, rewiring and redecorating his rambling four bedroomed house.

"Anthony Booth, 42 year old father of two who spent 15 years training for his post as a consultant neurosurgeon at Walsgrave hospital, Coventry, said yesterday:

"Mrs Susan Booth provides B and B at their £25,500 home in the village of Barford Warwickshire..."

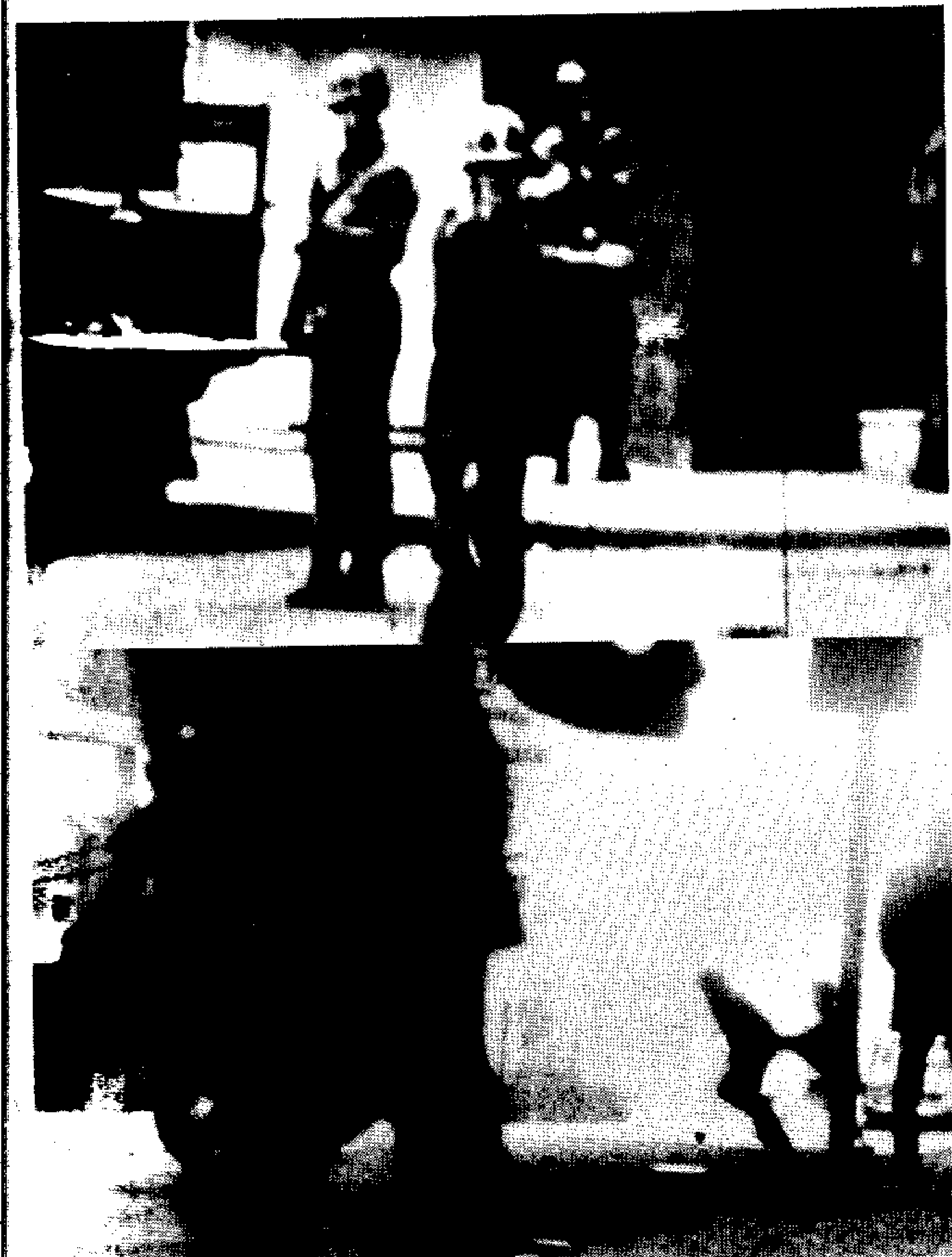
It turns out that the Booths are no longer able to leave their measly £25,500 home for annual holidays abroad. And this is because of the Social Contract.

You may have thought that was something to do with holding back the wages of the working class. Not a bit of it. Its the middle class that has really suffered. Take Mr. Booth:

"I'm now earning £9,900 a year, although my income should be £10,689.

"People like us have given a year for Britain as we were asked to do by the government but we're beginning to wonder how much longer the sacrifice will have to last!"

"A generation ago a brain surgeon in this country could have expected to sweep into his hospital car park in a Rolls, or a Jaguar, at least."



(Top) Photographer records his own death, (above) still from film



Allende with Castro



# SLL'S FIGHT FOR

# UNITY IN ACTION

Throughout the mobilisations against the Wilson government's 'In Place of Strife' White Paper in 1969, the Socialist Labour League (forerunner of the now degenerated Workers Revolutionary Party) set out to establish the best possible preparation and co-ordination of the protest strikes that were called.

For this reason they sharply criticised the Communist Party, who had refused to mobilise fully even for their own call for one day strike action on February 27.

Alan Thornett, then deputy senior steward at Morris Motors, Cowley, was quoted in the SLL's paper, the *Newsletter*, as saying that:

"We cannot afford fake campaigns. So far I haven't seen a single leaflet in Oxford for the call for a one-day stoppage on February 27 supported by the Communist Party. If this is being called without preparation then it is a dangerous fraud".

In this way the SLL was able to point to the CP's attempts to use the call for a stoppage on February 27 as a diversion - while, as the first part of this article showed, SLL members and supporters in Liverpool docks, Cowley and elsewhere fought for strike action on that day. In other words here was a genuine example of *critical support*, in which the SLL, unlike today's IMG, never sacrificed its political independence to the Stalinists.

## COMMENT

And on March 8, the *Newsletter* commented:

"The strike and demonstrations on February 27 were good as far as they went. But they were only a

## The Newsletter

# ALL OUT MAY 1 NO ANTI-UNION LAWS! WILSON MUST GO!

**Stalinists play down anti-union struggle**

**EDITORIAL**

**The Budget**

IN ORDER to stay the economic tide of stagflation and improve the standard of living of the working class, the Wilson government must... (text continues)

**Bankers worried on Euro-dollar crisis**

CENTRAL BANKS... (text continues)

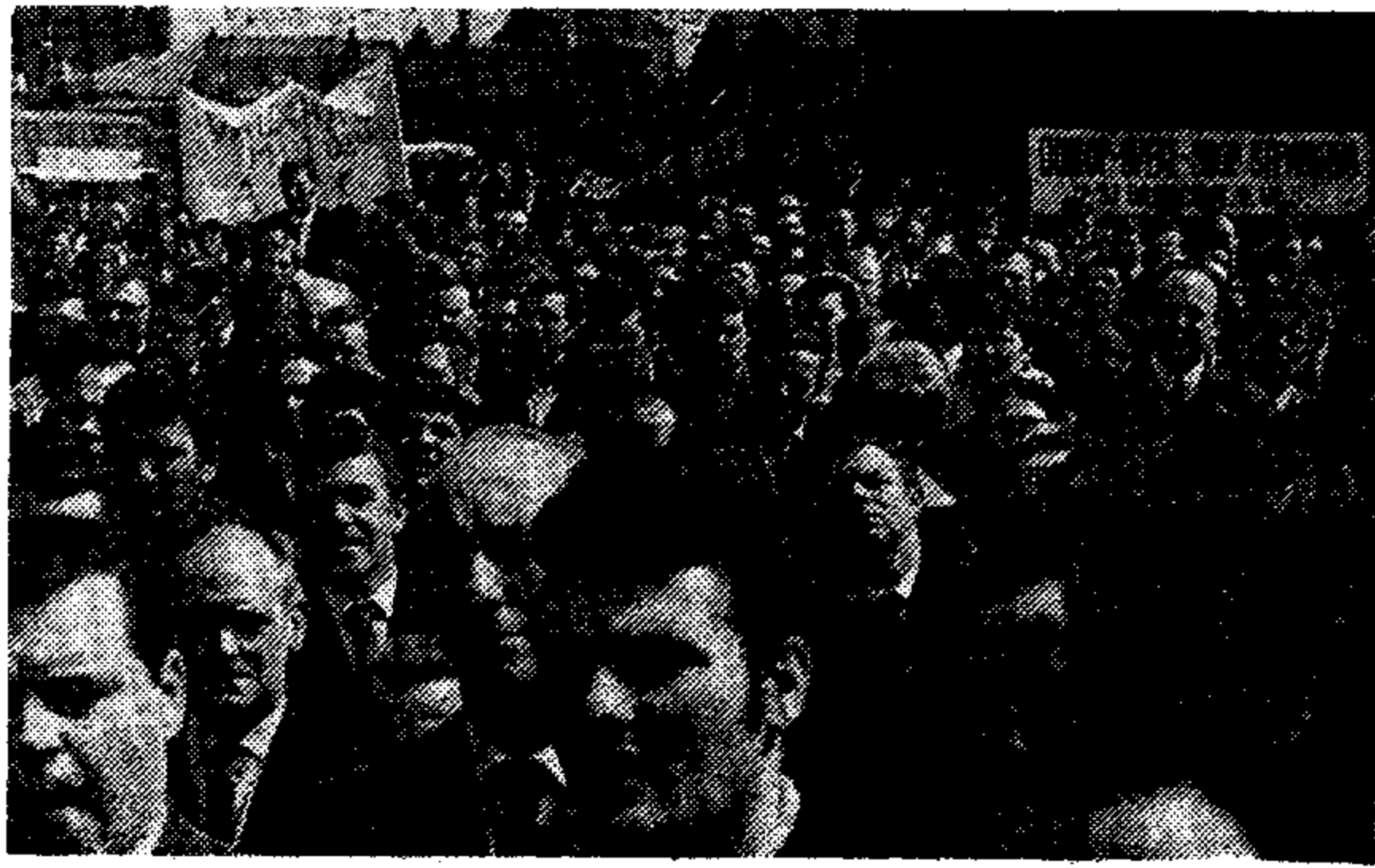
**Rail shopmen reject deal**

... (text continues)

**CHINESE WORKERS ON STRIKE**

... (text continues)

**FIGHT ANTI-UNION LAWS  
MAY DAY  
DEMONSTRATION  
SUNDAY, MAY 4**



The May Day demonstration in Liverpool

beginning. Not nearly enough work went into the preparations. These strikes were a containment of the struggle...

The Political Committee of the Socialist Labour League believes that the next stage of the fight against the anti-union laws should be a one-day strike on May 1.

We will work to make this a success, and we are open now, as always, to any suggestions which may come from the CP or others in relation to the possibility of a more suitable date being selected for the demonstration".

From then the SLL campaigned fiercely for May 1—a campaign

This is the second part of an article by Di Parkin on the leading role of the Trotskyists of the Socialist Labour League in the struggle against the Labour government's anti-union Bill, "In Place of Strife" in 1969. The article was prompted as a reply to the attempts by the International Marxist Group to falsify the record on this struggle, claiming that "The ATUA [industrial wing of the SLL] and the SLL far from leading the massive opposition to "In Place of Strife" attempted to sabotage it". (*Red Weekly*, 17.3.77, p4.). This concluding part shows that precisely the opposite was in fact the case.

which the CP did not take up until very late.

On April 15, the *Newsletter* reported that the CP had voted against a proposal that BLMC be brought out on strike in opposition to the White Paper on May 1.

## NO STRIKE CALL

The April 12 LCDTU Conference controlled by the Communist Party did not resolve or commit delegates to strike on May 1.

It merely said: "Every May Day demonstration should include a call for action against the White Paper as a central theme".

As May Day is frequently celebrated on the Sunday nearest, this could well mean more protest again and certainly is not a strike call.

In a number of major factories, the CP only 'recommended' strike

In June when 1,000 lobbied the TUC in Croydon, the CP, who had not called for strike action that day "assisted" the struggle by physically attacking the ATUA van which was leading the continued shout demanding a general strike against the anti-union laws.

The IMG turn their backs on these facts.

And at the same time we see the IMG grovel to the IS/SWP which has not a fraction of the industrial strength, let alone the political principle, embodied at that time in the SLL.

And in case anyone claims we are uncritically supporting one day strikes, let us point out that in 1969, the union leaders were professing to be opposed to the anti-union laws.

The one-day strikes were aimed at forcing the TUC bureaucracy to lead action.

And at the same time the SLL incurred the hostility of the Stalinists by clearly putting forward the call for a development to all-out general strike action to stop the legislation.

A full assessment of the SLL in this period has yet to be made. The WSL of course has criticisms of the SLL's weakness on programme, its inadequate intervention into the Vietnam movement and its maximalism.

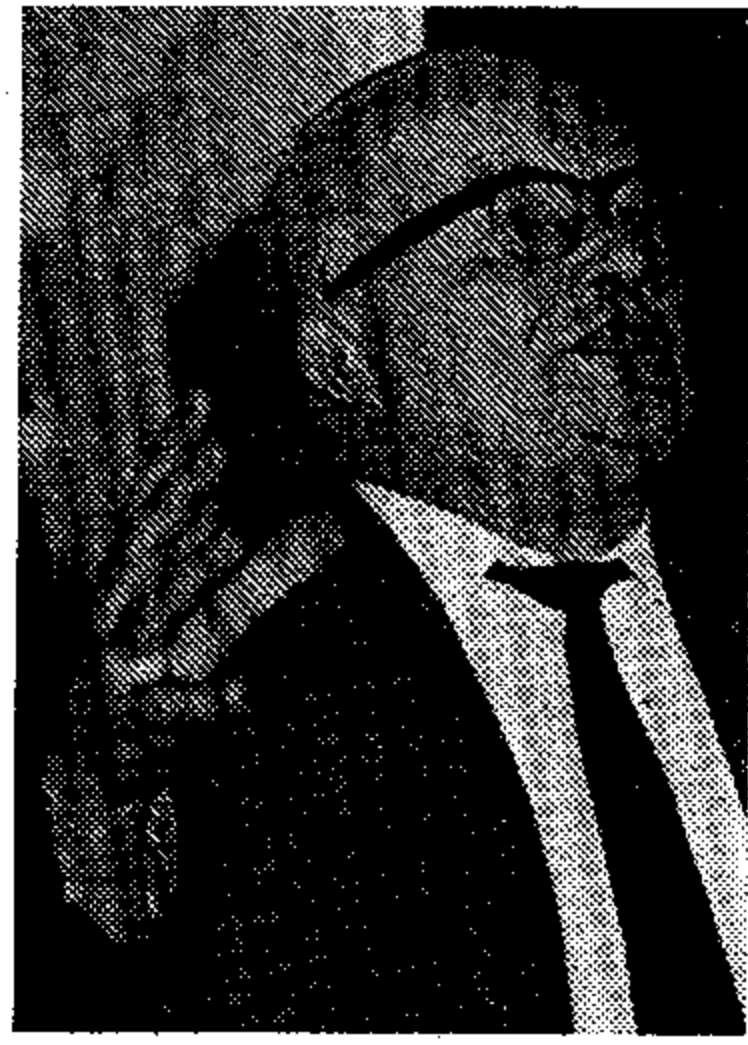
But it is nothing short of a slander for the IMG to claim the SLL sabotaged or opposed struggles they actually led in the workers movement against "In Place of Strife".

It is worth noting in conclusion the biting irony of the fact that the WRP today has found itself unable to hit back at these slanderous accusations.

This is because the Healy leadership well knows the stark contrast between the principled struggles led then by the SLL, with roots firmly sunk within the organised working class, and the degenerate petty-bourgeois sect of the WRP.

Just like their old enemies of the late 1960s, the WRP is unable to make an objective assessment of that period, or drawing the strength from those struggles.

And so it falls to the Workers Socialist League, whose founding members were expelled over two years ago from the WRP for fighting against precisely this kind of political degeneration, to draw the lessons of history for the struggles of today.



SLL National Secretary, Healy.

action—for example at Longbridge—and at Crawley in Surrey, Stalinists refused to mobilise on the grounds that there was "no support".

The CP refused also to attack Scanlon for his opposition to the May 1 strike. In other words they did not lead the call for the May 1 strike. The *Morning Star* merely latched on to "a rising tide" of strike calls, and reluctantly supported.

Despite lukewarm CP support there was a mass response. 10,000 workers struck at Morris Motors, Cowley under SLL leadership. 40,000 struck on Merseyside and 10,000 joined the demonstration.

And in London 100,000 stopped work with a demonstration of 15,000. This was a real action to shift union leaders and government.

After sixty editions of the fortnightly 'Socialist Press' a national aggregate meeting of the Workers Socialist League voted this weekend to produce the first weekly edition in October of this year.

A resolution from the WSL National Committee emphasised the fact that the limitations of fortnightly publication were now holding back the development of the League, and restricting the influence of the movement in the mounting struggles of the working class.

Workers are faced with a historic crisis of leadership. While the Labour leaders do a coalition deal with the Liberals and pave the electoral road for the return of a Tory government, the TUC bureaucrats are hell-bent on imposing a third round of wage control on the working class.

And at shop floor level a whole layer of former militants have been sucked into management roles through "workers' participation" schemes and collaboration with full-time officials.

As workers move into struggle now they fight both the employers and these treacherous "leaders". The need for a new leadership with a principled programme of struggle is continually raised.

In response to this crisis of leadership our movement has

already expanded in terms of forces and areas of work. Twelve pages of *Socialist Press* each fortnight cannot now carry the material necessary.

In particular the recent extensions of regular international coverage and political work, bringing material from Greece, Turkey, Denmark, the USA and Pakistan, demand column space not available in a fortnightly paper.

And in Britain itself the work of the movement has extended widely beyond the trade union base that initially formed the bedrock of the movement, to involve work in a wide range of unions, work amongst youth and students, and work amongst women.

To adequately follow through and develop campaigns in these varied fields the WSL needs the more up-to-the-minute coverage of a weekly publication.

The new weekly will concentrate on combining this kind of coverage with the current high standard of theoretical and educational material, along with reviews and polemical discussion articles.

But the result will certainly be a very different type of paper—more varied in content and presentation; more short, easily assimilated articles; and much more immediate coverage and impact.

A series of meetings both for WSL members and for readers will be held over the next five months

to develop discussion on the content and style of the weekly paper.

The launching of the weekly is a major project. With inflation at 20% annually, and new equipment needed, it is essential in the successful launching of the new paper to raise the resources not only to produce the first edition, but to sustain it through its first few editions.

For this reason the National Aggregate meeting voted to raise a Special Fund of £3,000 between now and October 1, specifically for the launching of the weekly *Socialist Press*.

A collection at the meeting raised £170 to start off the Fund drive over the next 20 weeks.

We call on all readers and supporters to assist us in this fight to expand and improve the paper as part of the overall development of the work of the Workers Socialist League.

Help us with the various fund raising activities we shall be organising during the summer months.

Send us a donation to the Fund for the Weekly Paper, and help us raise our £3,000 target. This is the largest target we have ever set ourselves to raise and every donation, big or small, will be gratefully received.

Socialist Press Weekly Paper Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NWS 1HR

# TARGET: A WEEKLY PAPER!





# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

## NUJ FIGHTS UNION BUSTERS

Newspaper owners have launched a major initiative against the National Union of Journalists and the growing readiness of members to fight for closed shops.

A letter marked Strictly Private and Confidential, was sent out to all Newspaper Society management calling for a special fund to protect employers who faced demands for a closed shop.

In Kettering, this struggle came to the fore after a four month strike over fringe benefits, when 60 journalists were locked out the

day after, returning to work.

They had refused to work with nine members who tried to resign and join the scab organisation, the Institute of Journalists.

The fund—made up from £100 a week for four weeks from each newspaper office—is now almost certainly being used to support the Kettering, East Midland Allied Press management.

The letter was the basis for a major response by provincial journalists to the May 5-6 24 hour national strike call.

Despite a full knowledge that 24 hour strikes in provincial papers

(most of which do not have 100% membership) will never halt the paper almost all provincial papers supported the call.

The Kettering dispute, its relation to the Newspaper Society, and the Institute of Journalists, whose existence is nurtured by employers, is of major importance to the NUJ.

The demands must be for major strike action by NUJ strong sections, the forging of links to build supporting action with the print unions and the immediate all-out blacking of the Press Association whose copy is now allowing the Kettering paper to appear.

## FIGHT PLESSEY SACKINGS

It is now clear that the union leadership at Plessey's telecommunications factory at Southwick in Sunderland is prepared to wage no fight whatsoever against the scheduled closure on 2 June.

This is shown by the mass meeting called by the shop stewards on 29 April to present the results of their feverish negotiations with Eric Varley, the Industry Secretary, and with the management of Plessey's: namely nothing.

Alex Forrest, secretary of the shop stewards joint action committee stated afterwards that no industrial action of any kind had been proposed to the members.

The need, however, is for a clear programme that includes the demand for work-sharing on full pay, an occupation to force the nationalisation of Plessey Telecommunications and to get orders for equipment from the GPO as the only alternative to "negotiated" redundancies.

1. A £15 a week increase across the board for all National Health Service workers;
2. The automatic protection of wages against inflation by increasing them weekly by the same percentage rise as that registered by the monthly Retail Price Index.
3. The immediate consolidation of the 'contract' Stages One and Two pay settlements into the basic rate;
4. The full introduction of a thirty-five hour week by the end of 1977."

The motion, however, conspicuously fails to call for strike action, as the only effective way to fight for this claim.

Unanimous backing for the motion was obtained at a branch meeting—the first quorate meeting since November 1974 (!) and the branch voted to affiliate to Leamington Trades Council, sending four delegates.

## COHSE CLAIM

A group of nurses at the Central Hospital near Warwick, mainly trainees, have produced an Open Letter to all COHSE members, signed by 21 people which explains exactly how little of the £2.50 a week members would receive after increased lodging charges and deductions and outlined policies to defend and improve nurses' pay.

Since there was no chance of putting a motion forward for COHSE's annual conference in preparation for the national wage negotiations in the NHS they were forced to support a motion from the East Birmingham branch.

This opposed the Social Contract and goes on to put four demands to constitute an immediate claim.

## Officials form committee

London health service trade union full-time officials have recently formed themselves into a committee.

The first initiative of this new committee was to call a meeting on April 29 for the full time officials, certain selected lay members, and invited representatives of the Community Health Councils.

The name chosen was the EGA. But NUPE stewards at the EGA were informed by their Divisional Officer that they would not be welcome at the meeting.

This was hardly surprising since Alan Fisher, General Secretary of NUPE was to be the main speaker.

While giving verbal support to the fight against the cuts in general Fisher refused to give any meaningful support to specific cuts fights like the EGA occupation.

As soon as the platform including 'left' MP Jo Richardson was called on to threaten all-London strike action if any attempt was made to close the EGA, the chairman, herself a full-time official, then promptly closed the meeting. Fisher and Richardson remained silent.

The meeting which was given a glorious report in the Morning Star, could only be regarded as an attempt to avoid the real issues facing health workers.



## SACKED FOR 1-DAY STRIKE

300 AUEW members at the Albion Bottle Co. in Warley have been sacked as a result of strike action on April 20.

On their return they were told that a furnace had to be repaired and work was only available for a few labourers.

The remainder would not be paid until the repairs were complete. This was in breach of agreed practice whereby all workers were paid during furnace repairs.

The workforce responded by refusing to carry out the repairs until all workers were recalled. The District Secretary, Bert Benson, then met management and recommended an agreement for a phased return.

But on investigation it became clear that the seventeen shop stewards were not included in these

plans and were to be sacked. This agreement was overwhelmingly rejected by the AUEW members.

A new deal suspending the stewards until an investigation was completed into the so-called "neglect of safety procedures" on April 20 was also overwhelmingly defeated and the strike continued.

The latest move of the right-wing bureaucrats has been to order the workers back and threaten the removal of the stewards' credentials.

Benson claims that workers from Albion Bottle "assaulted" him, and blames this on the shop stewards rather than his own actions. Management have now sacked all 300 AUEW members.

A 24-hour picket has been mounted and this is respected by all trade unionists except the foremen (TASS members), who have sided with management.

## OPEN UP JOBS TO WOMEN

Encouraged by the illusion of "equal opportunity" provided by the Sex Discrimination Act women in heavy engineering industry are beginning to break through into the sphere of traditional "men's jobs".

In British Leyland, Cowley, the 7,000 manual jobs in the Assembly Plant are still—in spite of the Act, passed 18 months ago—only open to male workers, apart from the few hundred jobs in the factory's trim shop.

This is because Leyland take all workers on the contract of "fort-night about"—alternate day and night shift working.

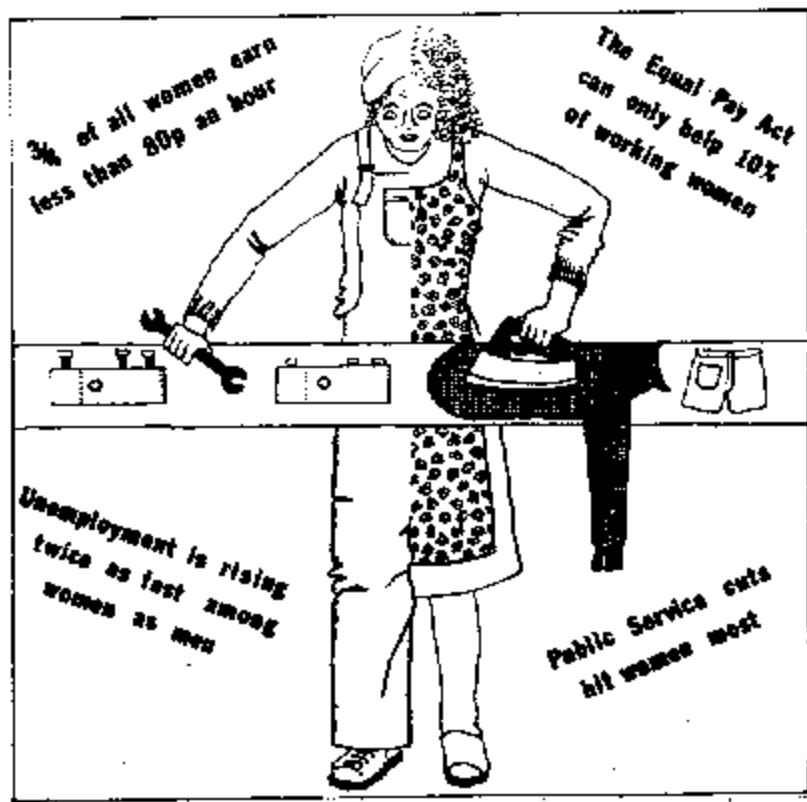
recruitment of labour is now 65% women.

Many of these women are choosing to work nights even when permanent day arrangements are available.

There are other moves in other parts of the country both in the car industry, as at Longbridge, and other, traditionally male worker heavy industries. Recently the press carried the story of the first woman applying to work at the coalface down a mine.

There can be no better way to raise the questions of women's oppression and sexist attitudes than by the entry of women themselves in force into these spheres of employment and so into the powerful engineering trade unions.

Oxford Trades Council is holding a public meeting on Friday 13 May in order to discuss and carry forward these important developments and other major questions affecting women's rights.



The leaflet being used to publicise the meeting argues:

"Demand equal job opportunity. The Sex Discrimination Act says job opportunity should be equal for men and women. But . . .

\*At Cowley there are 6,000 jobs closed to women. All the manual operators in the Assembly Plant are men, except in the trim shop.

\*Unemployment is rising twice as fast among women as among men.

\*Official figures don't register the large numbers of women out of work who do not register as unemployed.

Unemployment hits everyone. In the last three years it has doubled to record levels—worse than anything since the last war.

The arguments that 'Women work for pin money' or 'A woman's place is in the home' are used as excuses.

Most women do work outside the home—nearly all Britain's single women and nearly half of Britain's married women.

All of us, men and women, have the right to a job."

Protective legislation prevents employers putting women onto nights in factories but exemption orders can be issued if requested jointly by management and unions.

In the last few weeks women working in the Cowley trim shop have been seeking such an order so that they can apply for other jobs in the factory.

Last week a male worker took a job in the trim shop and the women workers can see that the SDA is being used to cut their job opportunities not enlarge them.

The move for an exemption order is therefore the way to open up the whole factory for women workers.

In the neighbouring Cowley body plant, where an exemption order has been issued, the weekly

## SICK PAY STRIKE

On Friday May 6, members of the AUEW, EETPU and Boilermakers' Society at Chadburns Engineering, Liverpool, walked out on a half-day strike, to be followed by an indefinite overtime ban and a policy of non-cooperation, demanding a scheme for sick pay.

The action was to some extent

provoked by the company's managing director speaking on BBC Radio Merseyside the previous night, being interviewed about the company's record profits, the highest in the company's history.

The way now to prove that the company has more than adequate funds to finance a sick pay scheme is for the shop stewards committee to demand that the books of the company are thrown open to an elected committee of trade unionists.

## TEACHERS BACKED

The Executive of the National Union of Teachers has placed the full resources of the Union behind their members in Oxfordshire.

This means that they will pay full salaries from the strike funds if strikes are called against the Tory Council's plan to make over 500 teachers redundant at the end of this term.

Amid much demagogic speechifying from officials and Executive members, teachers are urged to vote in favour of the Executive's ballot on class size action, school dinner action and strike action.

This ballot is of course designed to hold off and severely limit the action which would surely have begun to break out in the schools in

the next few weeks following the resolutions for strike action passed by local Associations before Easter.

The Executive has now taken the reins in the situation and so forestalled any activity until 13, leaving only five weeks until end of term while the ballot is carried out and negotiations take place behind the scenes.

Rumours already abound that the Tories have "miscalculated" and there is after all more money in the coffers.

Oxfordshire NUT teachers must be extremely vigilant that their "militant" Executive does not announce a "victory" over redundancies which turns out to have allowed reductions in jobs through non-replacement and non-renewal of contracts.



# HOTEL VICTORY AFTER 23 WEEKS

"Despite the fact we've won the hardest part is still to come"—the words of a worker who has had twenty three weeks to learn that the struggle for trade union rights is never over.

This was how Joseph Tosti viewed the complete victory of the Linton Lodge, Oxford, strike speaking from the platform of a WSL May Day meeting in London just two days after the management of the hotel caved in.

For 23 weeks the hotel workers struggled, not only against management but against TGWU inactivity and sabotage.

All workers who wanted reinstatement won it. Those who no longer wished to return won compensation. The TGWU has been recognised. Jo himself, against whom the management had set their stiffest resistance, is not only reinstated, he goes back as shop steward.

The strike started in November. As the long months passed some workers inevitably gave up. Just seven were left at the end to taste the fruits of victory.

Since the strikers gathered on the first

evening in an Oxford pub to hear the full time official, Geoff Hulett, declare 'war' on the hotel industry, the workers learned bitter lessons.

They learned that paper resolutions carried by the District Committee, the Regional Committee and the national trade group were the start of the fight not the finish.

The strikers confronted Jack Jones himself in his lair at Transport House and heard him say that the strikes were 'unwinnable'.

But Jo is right. The hardest part is still to come. They have to rebuild the union in the hotel, winning round workers who have been poisoned against them.

They still have to tackle the wages and conditions that made them turn to the union in the first place.

They go into that struggle with the strongest weapon—the experience and confidence that comes from overcoming obstacles every bit as big as the TGWU itself.



Scabs look on approvingly as police attack pickets

# POLICE CHARGE HOTEL LINE

Police charged on pickets outside the Randolph Hotel, Oxford, last week in a violent demonstration of solidarity between the forces of the state, Trust Houses Forte and fascist elements.

Snatch squads charged 300 demonstrators who had gathered to prevent 'Self Help' supporters carrying out their declared intention of crossing the picket line to hold a meeting on "the closed shop and trade union picketing".

As the demonstration stood firm, the police entered the hotel from the side then charged the picket from the back.

Policemen hurled themselves on demonstrators, lashing out on all sides. After an hour and a half of struggle 38 demonstrators had been arrested, the fascists had been forced into the hotel and the whole workers' struggle against Trust Houses Forte had developed to a new high point.

The object of the Dowager Lady Birdwood and her Self Help fascists was not of course to hold a meeting (for which most of the 70 or so had travelled from London) but simply to cross the picket.

THF are showing signs of extreme strain in the dispute. They have launched a press campaign costing tens of thousands of pounds to win friends and influence people with full page advertisements in national and local press.

This paid-for space—"We will continue fighting for freedom of the individual"—has been enthusiastically backed by a witchhunt throughout sections of the press against Alan Law, the TGWU Region 5 organiser.

In part this desperation has arisen through the complete and total victory after five and a half months by the workers at the Linton Lodge hotel in Oxford.

The Linton Lodge victory, the linking of THF with fascist elements, the witchhunts against Law, have caused fundamental problems for the union bureaucracy.

Law has been forced into action in opposition to Jack Jones, who had committed himself to collapsing the strikes. Blacking is now being implemented in Region 5.

Massive pickets have been raised for special occasions. Law has been forced to fight to protect his reputation in Region 5 and in doing so has shown just what effect blacking can have.

The Night Out club in Birmingham not only faces the cutting of supplies (as does the nearby Albany Hotel) but it also faces a complete ban by Equity from August.

The question is how Law will face up to the inevitable right wing backlash. Already the involvement of the National Association of Freedom is evident and injunctions are being prepared against the pickets.



The first arrest - 37 followed

Last week pickets were arrested for obstruction but the charges were later dropped.

Scabs at the club went to Transport House in London to complain about Alan Law.

On Saturday they organised an anti-Law demonstration in Birmingham. Despite a national mobilisation only 100 people took part in the march including scabs from the Randolph and Corley service station.

Representatives from Corley, claiming to be TGWU members said Alan Law was threatening their jobs.

The latest action taken by the Birmingham scabs (they call themselves the Night Out Staff Association) is to demand a statement in writing from Law that he will call off "unlawful picketing". They intend to apply for an injunction.

## VULNERABLE

Twenty four hour pickets continue to be maintained, by lorry drivers from Law's branch, at both the Night Out and the Albany Hotel.

In Sheffield where the strikers have been at the most vulnerable through the refusal of the district officials to give any backing, they nevertheless unanimously rejected the management's offer of minimal compensation to go away. A similar offer had already been rejected at Oxford.

Far from fading away the strikes at Birmingham, Sheffield and

EXPORT YEAR HAS amongst its Patrons the Duke of Kent and Jack Jones. It has amongst its sponsors the CBI and the TUC.

Export Year News—a four page boost for the international muscle of British capital carries on its front page an article headed *Hotels make big contribution to exports*.

The article goes on to promote special rate offers by THF at its hotels, the result of which is to face picket lines with the task of turning away business guests whose companies have paid in advance.

Nice work Jack.

Oxford are becoming a major test for the trade union movement.

Extended blacking is now—as it has been from the first—crucial to win the strikes. It is now criminal to withhold the full power of the TGWU against THF and its allies.

Oxford and District Trades Union Council has responded to the attacks by calling a demonstration for a date still to be fixed. This should be made the national focus of a mobilisation to fight injunctions, fascist attacks and organised scabbing.

The campaign building around THF represents a major attack on the whole working class. The hotel workers must be supported.

**WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE**  
Public Meeting  
**BIRMINGHAM**  
Support the Port Talbot Strikers!  
Break the Lib-Lab coalition  
Labour Club, Bristol Street  
Sunday May 22 at 7.45pm.

## SECRETS

In demanding the ending of the business secrets of Fleet Street the workers must also be prepared to demand that the government puts up the money for the papers to survive—this time under the direct control of the workers involved.

Not a penny in compensation must be offered to the parasites who have led Fleet Street to the brink of complete disaster. There is not a single part of the newspaper production process that the workers in the firm are incapable of controlling.

Sir James Goldsmith who would like to buy out the whole Beaverbrook group to close down the *Standard*.

Goldsmith, whose devotion to press freedom is such that he is prepared to go to the High Court to shut up *Private Eye*, would be ideally suited to join the ranks of the newspaper moguls.

So would outsider Robert Maxwell, the man the Department of Trade Inquiry into Pergamon concluded was not fit to be in control of a public company.

The *Standard* and the *News* are not alone. Only last year the *Observer* relied on US capital and redundancies on a large scale to bail it out.

What is clear is that for years wheeling and dealing has been conducted in the back rooms of Fleet Street papers.

If the *Standard* and the *News* are to survive without massive sackings there must be an all out campaign to open every nook and cranny of their files to the scrutiny of chapel committees.

# OPEN FLEET STREET BOOKS

Printers and journalists on the 'Evening Standard' and 'Evening News' are waiting to learn who is going to be their executioner.

The bewildering series of proposals and counter proposals from financiers have just one common thread. They all start from the position that up to half of the 4,000 jobs on the two papers will be axed.

Meanwhile the resentment and frustration that had journalists jostling their bosses and printers occupying the boardrooms is being turned aside.

For years rumours have abounded that the *News* or the *Standard* would close. Now Beaverbrook is prepared to sell and leave Associated Press to run the only evening paper.

It would be likely that the *Evening News* staff would be first on the chopping block since redundancy agreements make it more expensive to fire *Evening Standard* staff.

Into the confusion has stepped

# Airport blacking bites

At a mass meeting on April 27, the 4,000 striking Heathrow engineers voted to return to work on the recommendation of the shop stewards committee.

The vote had to be taken twice because the 5 negotiators were unable to convince the men that anything had been won. It was the intervention of Reg Birch, Maoist EC member of the AUEW that secured the return to work decision.

The 'settlement' itself gave the men nothing. The men were to return on the basis of 'agreements drawn up between the AUEW and British Airways management' of which the main point was that British Airways were ready to negotiate immediately on any agreed formula on shift pay which emerges from discussions between the AUEW and the wages subcommittee.

But at that point the wages sub-committee was still refusing to meet the engineers to discuss a joint shift pay claim.

As the vote was taken some of the men stormed out of the meeting shouting "Sell out".

The AUEW leadership has also agreed with British Airways management to pursue the shift pay claim within the negotiating machinery, an agreement which has met with universal hostility from the maintenance engineers.

Several days after the strike ended the wages subcommittee in an unexpected change of stance, finally agreed to a joint shift pay claim with the AUEW and a meeting of the wages subcommittee and the five negotiators took place last week to finalise the claim.

Negotiations were expected to start early this week with British Airways with a deadline for a settlement of 13 May. However, with the shop stewards still refusing to take on the Social Contract and the union leaders preparing the way for a third phase of wage controls, British Airways management could conceivably concede much of the claim safe in the knowledge that they would not have to pay it for years.

In the meantime, a number of aircraft on which maintenance work was carried out during the strike by supervisors have been 'blackened' by the engineers, who are demanding lump sum payments of £150 each in compensation for wages lost during the dispute.

British Airways management have refused to pay and have issued statements referring to a "serious situation" facing the airline as a result of the blacking.

Clearly nothing is yet settled at Heathrow but the shift pay claim will not be won until a leadership emerges which is prepared to lead a fight for the claim on the basis of destroying the Social Contract, which remains the obstacle to the men getting their money.



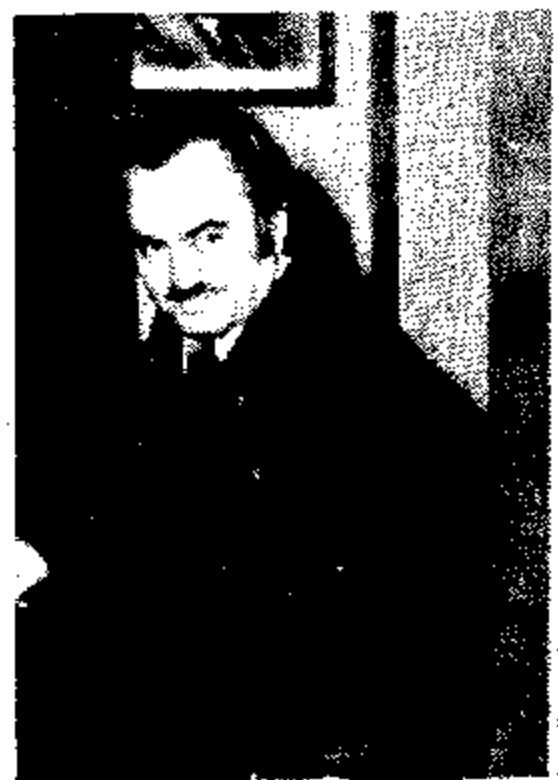
# MAY DAY SLAUGHTER IN TURKEY

36 people were killed, some 200 wounded, and 400 arrested as a massive 170,000 strong May Day rally in Istanbul ended in violence.

Both the capitalist press and the police are united in claiming that the shooting was started by Maoists whom the rally organisers—the left wing trade union confederation DISK—had refused to allow on the demonstration.

But in fact Kemal Turkler, leader of DISK, was actually inviting the Maoists to join the demonstration at the very moment the shooting started.

DISK leaders and the leader of the bourgeois RPP, Mr. Ecevit,



DISK leader Turkler both argued an alternative line—that the shooting was planned by the CIA and fascist provocateurs, and Maoist groups participated in it.

Yet an eye witness said that firing began from nearby rooftops and from the second floor of the

Intercontinental Hotel, and pointed out that police drove armoured cars into the crowd, and fired on demonstrators.

The Maoist groups for their part, only add to the confusion, blaming each other as well as the CIA, fascists, and "social fascists".

### CRISIS

But the attack must be seen as part of the political crisis in Turkey in which violence from right wing forces has been on the increase for three years.

For workers' organisations to seek now to exploit the events for their own interests can only assist the efforts of the bourgeoisie to cover this up. There must be an immediate call for a workers' inquiry into the May Day events.

Only three days earlier Ecevit himself had been stoned and shot at by fascists in an election meeting leaving 15 people wounded.

A rather shaken Ecevit later accused the rival Justice Party and National Action Party of planning the attack "in order to keep the electorate away from the polls and ensure the right wing comes to power".

### FOLLY

There is obviously truth in this statement—the fascist right does not have confidence Ecevit will take a sufficiently tough line with the working class.

But at the same time of course it would be criminal folly to accept the line of the Turkish Communist Party that bourgeois politician Ecevit represents some kind of

"democratic struggle against fascism".

The only serious struggle against fascism is one led by the working class in clear political independence from other classes and their parties.

This means at the same time a rejection of the absurd political positions of the Maoists who characterise both reformist and Stalinist movements as "social fascist" and therefore oppose any united front of workers' parties in self-defence against fascism.

The struggle for such a united front is the primary task now facing Turkish workers and connected completely with the struggle to remove the reactionary National Front ruling coalition before the June elections.



The first issue of 'International', the first openly Trotskyist bulletin to be published in Turkish. Available from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.



Police armoured car in action



Armed guard for Ecevit

## BACKING PORT TALBOT

The crucial importance of the six-week strike by electricians which has closed the giant Port Talbot steel works was stressed at a meeting in Oxford Town Hall on April 26.

The meeting was sponsored by four local union branches, the

strike committees from the two Oxford hotel disputes and organised by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement.

The 500 striking electricians were represented by four shop stewards including the chairman of the stewards committee, Viv Gear.

Opening the meeting, Alan Thornett, as chairman of one of the sponsoring branches, emphasised the importance of the Port Talbot strike in the fight against Stage 2 of the Social Contract and the importance of supporting this strike through the blacking of imported steel.

John Dinworth, the main speaker from Port Talbot stewards stressed the strength of the strike. "The members are solid and we intend to win" he told the meeting.

To enthusiastic applause he emphasised that "if winning our claim means breaking the Social Contract, then we will break the Social Contract".

The meeting was also addressed by Jo Tosti, TGWU shop steward at the Linton Lodge Hotel who had then been on strike for over five months against victimisation and

for union recognition (see P.11).

The meeting voted for the following resolution:

"That this meeting fully supports the strikes at Port Talbot and Heathrow against the Social Contract and:

1. campaigns for the national blacking of imported steel in the ports and railway stations; motions in branches to be sent to the National Port Shop Stewards committee and the unions concerned;
2. organises maximum financial support on an ongoing basis;
3. where possible will press for industrial action in support of these sectors;
4. will campaign in EETPU branches for demands to be placed on the EETPU executive to make the strike official."

At the end of the meeting £186 was raised for the Port Talbot strike fund but the Port Talbot stewards insisted that this be split equally with the Oxford Hotel Strike Committees.

We call on all readers and supporters to campaign throughout the labour movement for support for the above resolution.



A unanimous vote of the 100-strong Oxford meeting

## MAY 14—FIGHT BENYON BILL

Despite the decision of both the 1975 Labour Party conference and the TUC that women should have the right to abortion on request free on the NHS, 47 Labour MPs voted with Tory MP Benyon in February to drastically restrict this right.

Benyon's Bill threatens the very existence of the private charity sector which most women are forced to resort to because of deliberate obstruction, delay and intimidation by NHS consultants and gynaecologists and by the lack of facilities in the health service.

Furthermore the time limit for abortion would be brought down to 20 weeks and the police given carte blanche to inspect medical files and to harass both doctors and patients.

The Bill must be defeated by campaigning in the Labour Party for an end to the free vote on the question of abortion; by fighting to commit trade unions nationally to defending women's rights and to mobilise against attacks on them; and by demanding that union sponsored MPs should vote in accordance with union policy.

As part of such a campaign support must be mobilised for the demonstration called by NAC for

14 May in London.

However, the fight against Benyon's Bill must not be divorced from the fight against other cuts in the health service which the Labour government is implementing.

Local Trades Councils and trade union branches must set up committees to work out the health needs of areas and to fight for the provision of facilities to meet those needs.

This must start with the demand to open the books of the Area Health Authorities to trade union inspection to see in whose interests the health service is being run.

The demonstration assembles 14 May at Belvedere Rd. 1.30 p.m. (Waterloo) to march via Trafalgar Square to a rally in Hyde Park at 4.30pm.

## FUND

With the announcement inside this issue of the decision of a WSL National Aggregate to launch the weekly *Socialist Press* in October, and a substantial Special Fund to raise the necessary finance for such an undertaking it is essential that the fight for the Monthly Fund continues.

The April Fund finally closed at £528.57. So far this month we have received £192.67 which means that we still have a long way to go to complete the £600 target.

Don't neglect the Monthly Fund. It is essential for the day to day running of the paper.

All donations should be sent to:

Socialist Press Monthly Fund  
31, Dartmouth Park Hill,  
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**WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE**  
Education Class  
"The National Front and the Threat of Fascism."  
The Wellington, Bristol St.  
BIRMINGHAM  
Sunday May 15 at 7.45pm.

**WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE**  
Education Class.  
"Stalinism"  
The Limerick, Fryer St.  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
Tuesday May 17 at 7.45pm.

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Thursday 19 May at 7.30pm

**WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE**  
Education Class  
"Dual power and the revolutionary situation."  
Speaker: Alan Thornett.  
Sunday May 15 at 8pm.  
Lake St. Community Centre  
OXFORD