

RED WEEKLY

SOLIDARITY WITH THE PORTUGUESE WORKING CLASS

National conference—13 March

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WORKERS' REVOLT ROCKS SPAIN



Part of massive funeral for Vitoria workers murdered by police

The dictatorship in Spain has once more shown the fascist iron which lies behind the liberal facade. The fatal shooting of four workers and the wounding of dozens of others by police in Vitoria last week has been followed with the murder to another on Monday. This is the meaning of the Interior Minister's promise that 'if anyone wants a fight he will get it'.

But the strike in Vitoria last week and the strike in the entire Basque country in the North of Spain this week have deeply shaken the Spanish dictatorship, because they represent the first major reawakening of the Basque struggle since the death of Franco.

On Wednesday 3 March a general strike was called in Vitoria following weeks of growing working class action. The strike paralysed the town. The workers took to the streets with demonstrations, meetings and flying pickets. All

round the outskirts of the town, barricades were built out of overturned cars and bricks, and manned by pickets who exercised complete control over who entered and left Vitoria.

The authorities responded quickly, calling in police reinforcements from towns within a 100 mile radius — Valladolid, Logrono, Burgos, San Sebastian and Pamplona. It was these armed police and civil guards who attacked the general assembly of strikers in the church of San Francisco.

GIGANTIC RESPONSE

More than 20 tear-gas canisters were fired through the windows of the building, forcing the strikers out. At this point the police opened fire. More than 120 people were injured, 45 of them with bullet wounds. Of these, forty are still in a serious condition. Five are on the critical list. Three workers lay dead — another died

later in hospital.

The response to these killings was gigantic — half a million workers in a general strike throughout the Basque country on Monday. Shop-keepers, farmers, school students and every section of the population joined the workers. The Government's response was to order the police to open fire again, killing another striker.

But the regime is clearly scared by the tremendous struggle of the Basque workers. The Vitoria general strike, with workers taking over the entire town, shows the way forward to the active general strike which will bring down the dictatorship.

In a pathetic attempt to renew his 'liberal' image, the Interior Minister Fraga Iribarne whined that: 'We all have a responsibility in the tragedy. This sad lesson must inspire us to make a new effort to co-exist peacefully.' He even went on to visit the wounded in hospital — who promptly greeted him with cries of 'assassin' and by spitting at him. The sight of hundreds of thousands of Spanish workers on the streets sends a cold chill through the heirs of Franco.

But as the Basque and Spanish workers struggle for the release of political prisoners, the bringing to justice of the murderers of the dictatorship, and the downfall of the Francoist regime, the Labour Government in Britain continues to cooperate with the killers and hangmen.

BREAK ALL LINKS

Last week Callaghan had cosy talks with the Spanish foreign minister Areilza, while his Government's police were shooting down the workers in Vitoria. Michael Foot, who only three weeks ago presided over a so-called conference in solidarity with Spanish workers, raised not one murmur of opposition.

The workers of Spain are showing the way to deal with capitalist dictatorships. The British working class must join them in the struggle and demand:

- * An end to all talks between the Government and the Spanish dictatorship!
- * Break all diplomatic and other links with Spain!
- * Black all trade with Spain!
- * Solidarity with the Spanish and Basque workers — down with the heirs of Franco!

CIA: VITAL QUESTIONS

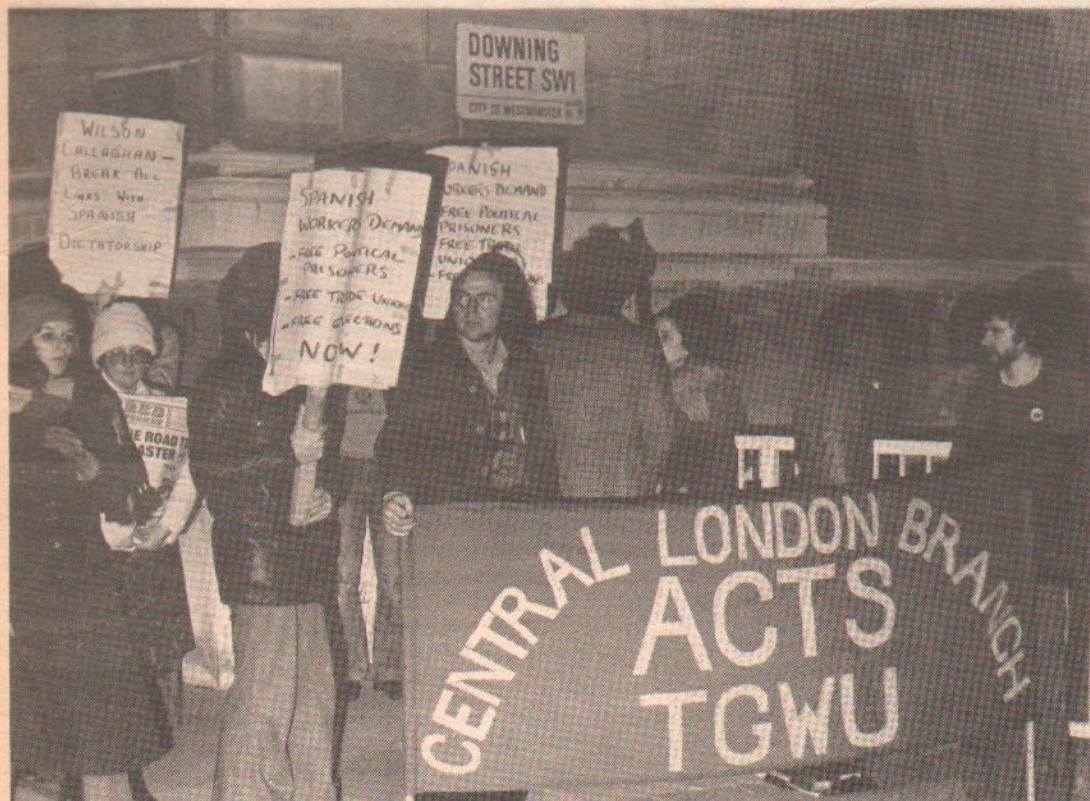
Left MPs will be raising the question of CIA activities in Britain at the first available opportunity. This was the promise made to us last week by MPs Dennis Skinner and Stan Newens, who agreed to circulate the information revealed in last week's Red Weekly amongst their colleagues and raise the issue at this week's meeting of the Tribune Group.

Sixty CIA agents were listed with their names and addresses, together with details of changes in personnel since a first run-down on CIA agents last May. High on the list of questions that must be asked is what CIA special intelligence unit officer Mark S Boerner is doing with an office, secretary and telephone in the British Ministry of Defence at Whitehall.

Previous attempts by Labour MPs to question the activities of the CIA in this country have been fobbed off by Prime Minister Harold Wilson with the reply that no member of the Cabinet has 'ministerial responsibility' for the CIA! However an Embassy spokesman confirmed last week that the British Government is in fact in possession of a full list of all CIA operatives in Britain.

Labour Party branches are also being asked to table motions to the National Executive Committee demanding that the Government reveal all links between British intelligence and the CIA and expel all CIA agents forthwith.

PAGE 11: the CIA, Sweden and what the press didn't say



Building the solidarity campaign—picket against Areilza visit on 2 March

RECALL THE TUC

THE SUCCESSFUL JOBS FIGHT AT CSL, AVONMOUTH

How we fought... and won

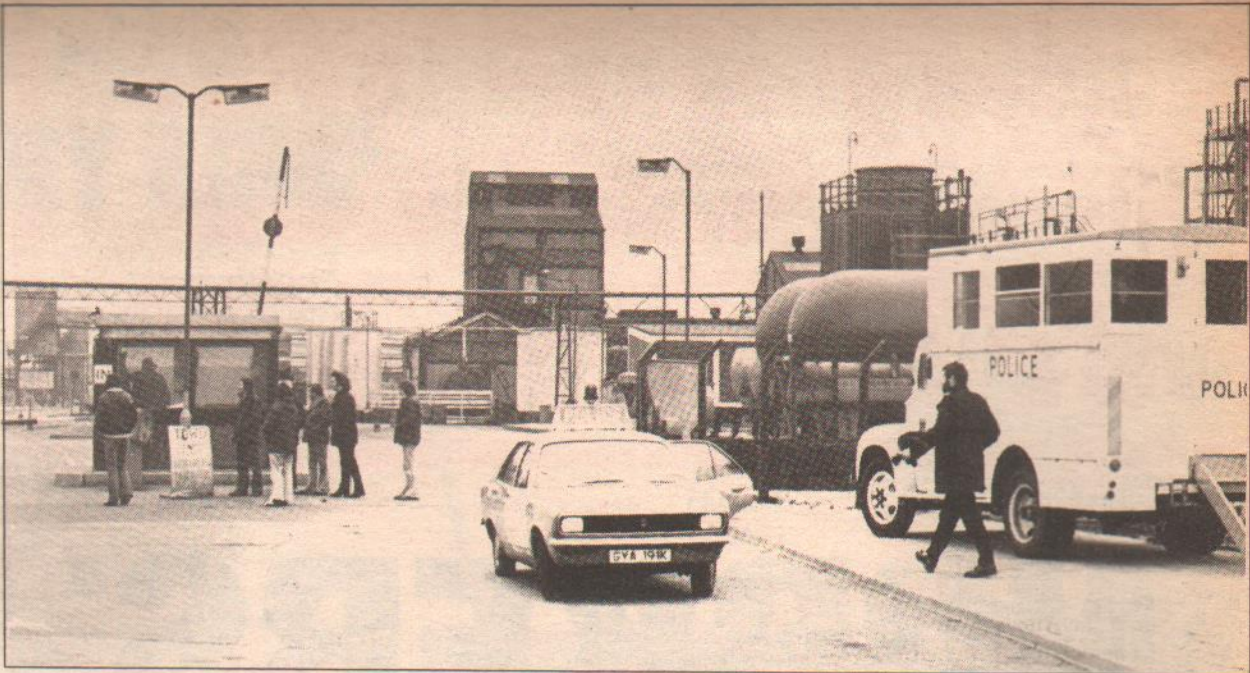


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

The 632 members of the Transport & General Workers Union at Commonwealth Smelting Ltd., Avonmouth, returned to work last week after winning a bitterly fought 17 week strike. The issue was management's refusal to take through nationally agreed procedure their plan to sack nearly a hundred workers and to transfer many others temporarily from shift to day work with a large drop in pay.

LEN WILSON, a steward at CSL, had the important task of organising the picketing during the strike. He is an Executive member of Bristol Trades Council, a delegate from his T&G branch to both the local Health and Education Cuts Committees, and a long-standing member of the Labour Party.

● What were the factors leading to the success of the strike?

Firstly the wonderful solidarity of the membership, and one has to remember that the strike went on...and on and on, but the support never dwindled. Secondly, the leadership given by the strike committee, and thirdly the way the strike was spread.

We did shut down two factories, and threatened several more.

● What role did the T&G leadership play?

There is no doubt that we had the wholehearted support of the district officer involved, and we must think ourselves lucky because they're not all of the same quality. Also it must be said that our national officer is one of the best, therefore we are doubly fortunate.

However it is only fair to say that both these people from time to time

found themselves at divergence with the union bureaucracy. They stood up against it because they understood the principles involved.

● Do you think that a support committee would have helped to bring victory sooner?

We did get an enormous amount of support, mainly financial, from a very wide area of the labour movement — from Rolls Royce, BAC, Cardiff docks; from the AUEW, EEUPTU, ASTMS, and NALGO; and from the Claimants' Union, who made sure we got everything we were entitled to from the Social Security. We also got support from Bristol Trades Council and some Labour Party wards.

We did make many contacts and had meetings with various unions, with the objective of forming a support committee. This was not to be just for the duration of the CSL strike but to be an on-going committee.

But the two people organising it

from our end were obviously mainly concerned with the day-to-day winning of the strike, and of course this type of body always takes time to set up. We have a great deal of optimism about the future of such a committee and are continuing our efforts to cement one together.

● Does this strike have any lessons for other workers struggling against redundancies?

I think it's important to get straight that the fight at CSL is not really against redundancies but for jobs. If you start talking about redundancies you end up negotiating how many redundancies there will be and how these will be achieved. If you fight for jobs, you fight for everything you've already got.

It's easy to overdramatise one's own position and attach more importance to it than is due. However many people have made the point that all Chemicals managements within the Avonmouth complex were viewing with interest the dispute at CSL.

If we had lost, other managements would have attacked their workers. Indeed the dispute may have been looked at with interest by a far larger area than Avonmouth.

● What impact do you think the success of the strike has had on the mass of CSL workers?

I believe the men have got far more confidence in themselves, and that they have learnt many lessons — the most important of which is that their only real strength is on the shop floor. I have been agreeably surprised at the amount of political self-education that has occurred because of this strike.

● You have played a very active role in the campaigns against the cuts in health and education locally. Why do

you think it is important for workers outside the public sector to participate in the local committees fighting the cuts?

It's easy to recognise the hazard to health in our factory. So we have a particular interest in the best means of defending ourselves. This would appear to me to be a health service under the control of the working class, in which there would be a free and comprehensive occupational health service under our domain, not management's.

Towards the end of the strike, after we had been out of the industrial environment for about seventeen weeks, we arranged for an independent person to carry out reflex tests and take blood samples from a good cross-section of our members, to measure the level and effects of lead poisoning. This operation will be repeated on the same men three months after they've been back at work.

We have demanded that management carry out the same tests on us. It will be interesting to compare the two sets of results.

On a broader outlook, health, education, railways, buses etc. concern us all, and all members of the labour movement should do all they can to maintain and improve these essential services. The broad labour movement should take an active part in such bodies as the local committees against the cuts in health and education.

In Bristol the South-West Regional Council of the TUC has organised an all-day public meeting against the cuts on 27 March in the Royal Infirmary. All trade union organisations in the region are being circulated about it. This indicates that the SWTUC, at least, is not aligning itself with that unholy trinity of the Government, the TUC and the CBI.

MEANWHILE ELSEWHERE IN BRISTOL BAC - more than protest action needed

Last December the Government announced a programme for massive redundancies in the British Aircraft Corporation. Out of a workforce of 14,000 engaged nationally in the production of Concorde, 2,410 have already been served with redundancy notices to take effect in May, and the Government plans a total of 7,000 redundancies by 1978.

This 'pruning', as it was described by the *Bristol Evening Post*, will affect nearly 1,200 workers at Filton (almost 20 per cent of the workforce), over 800 at Weybridge, nearly 300 at Hurn and over a hundred at Fairford. All categories of workers will be affected.

Soon after the Government announced its plan, leaders of the National Aerospace Liaison Committee, a body made up of delegates from most of the unions with members in the industry, held a meeting to decide on a campaign to fight redundancies. But so far this campaign has consisted merely of protest activities — pickets, 'symbolic' occupations, and a lobby of Parliament — to 'pressure the Government' to reverse its plans.

A leaflet issued by the NALC advertising simultaneous mass meetings at all plants spoke of the need to reject all redundancies until such time (sic) as the Government sets up the National Aircraft Corporation. Such a line can only lead the workers at BAC and Rolls-Royce (who will also inevitably be affected) up the blind alley of defeat already marked out by Chrysler and British Leyland.

Nevertheless, the present campaign has revealed the immense enthusiasm and combativity of the rank-and-file workers over the issue of jobs. The industry has a tradition of strong organisation and militancy, the latest example being a dispute among electricians and

toolroom workers at Bristol Engines Division (Rolls-Royce) over restoration of a grading differential — a demand which actually threatens the £6 limit.

The problem is how to draw such isolated struggles into the main fight for jobs. This will require an alternative programme to that of the NALC leaders, including such demands as:

- No to any redundancies, compulsory or voluntary;
- No natural wastage all those leav-

ing to be replaced;

- For work-sharing with no loss of pay — immediate introduction of a 35-hour week;
- For a ban on all overtime — raise basic rates to cover any loss of pay;
- For the NALC to call a conference of all shop stewards which can map out a plan of action for nationalisation of the industry and its conversion to socially useful production guaranteeing all jobs.



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

BAC workers on the march through London to lobby Parliament on 2 March

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

As of Saturday 13 March, all departments of *Red Weekly* will be situated at:

97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

The telephones, however, will remain the same:

Editorial—01-837 6954

Distribution—01-837 9987

TUC Bureaucrats bid to hamstring trades councils

'In no circumstances shall the Council co-operate with or subscribe to the funds of any organisation whose policies or activities are contrary to those of Congress N.B. It is mandatory to adopt the above rule.'

The quotation above is from a new rule that the TUC General Council has decreed should be adopted by all local trades councils in Great Britain. Under this *diktat* support for any initiative (like the Labour Movement Assembly on jobs) may be prohibited if the TUC leadership opposes its aims.

Before the 26 November demonstration against unemployment, the TUC sent a circular round to local trades councils and Regional TUCs banning them from supporting the lobby. In the main the ban proved ineffective, and 20,000 workers marched against the Labour Government and TUC policies. This 'threat' by the rank-and-file has so frightened the trade union bureaucrats that they have blown the whistle and are trying to change the rules.

Trades councils have often been at the centre of campaigns which have run right up against the TUC leadership — the Shrewsbury pickets defence campaign is perhaps the most notable recent example. It is with the aim of avoiding such challenges to their collaboration with the Labour Government and the employers that the TUC bureaucrats are now trying to clamp down on the independence of trades

councils. Unfortunately the past record of the trade union lefts on such 'rule book' questions suggests that this rule is likely to be accepted at some trades councils without a fight.

For instance, the *Morning Star* has up to now failed even to mention the fact that this rule exists! In the 1920s, when the original rule prohibiting trades councils from supporting the Communist Party or organisations backed up by it was introduced, the CP leadership retreated without putting up a major fight, and finally recommended acceptance.

Militants who are genuinely interested in fighting against the present sell-out policies of the TUC should vigorously oppose these rule changes, which also commit trades councils to supporting only the Labour Party. Motions should go forward to all trades councils in the country rejecting the attempts of the TUC bureaucrats to silence the rank-and-file; demanding an emergency recall conference of trades councils, preceded by a full and democratic debate in the whole movement; supporting all efforts to organise action against the anti-working class policies put forward by Wilson, Healey, Murray and Jones; and calling for a recall TUC to break with the Government's policies.

JOHN GRAHAM (delegate to Birmingham Trades Council).

Scanlon goes over to Wilson "completely and absolutely"



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

HUGH SCANLON

Hugh Scanlon's speech in Glasgow last week amounts to the most treacherous stab in the back for all those fighting the cuts. At the same time it appears to put the 'left' leadership of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers full square behind the policies of the Labour Government.

Speaking after a tour of oil plants in Scotland, Scanlon asserted with regard to the White Paper on the cuts that, 'there can be no doubt that for the Government's general strategy of recognising that Britain's economic ills can only be overcome by a viable and expanding manufacturing industry, there will have to be a reduction in some of the service and supply industries.... Obviously representatives of workers in these industries who will be affected have the duty of trying to protect their own members. I make no comment on that. That is their job.'

He concluded: 'We support the Government completely and absolutely in its general strategy.'

Scanlon is now beating the same drum as his right-wing colleague John Boyd, General Secretary of the AUEW, who has argued for years that the public sector should be cut back to fuel a recovery in industry. He fails to mention that the money 'saved' by the cuts is not for the most part going into investment in industry, but will be devoted to meeting the rocketing interest on the national debt.

Disunity is the second theme of what Scanlon had to say. The public sector unions, according to him, are morally obliged to oppose the cuts because it is their members' interests that are directly at stake. The fact that decent schools, housing, hospitals and transport and the maintenance of full employment are in the interests of his membership and the

whole of the working class doesn't bother him — the public sector unions must go it alone.

Sitting on the fence is an uncomfortable position. His Glasgow speech means that Scanlon has decided to join Jack Jones in fighting for the Government's pro-capitalist policies against the interests of the whole trade union movement.

Those in the Communist Party dominated Broad Left grouping in the AUEW must immediately dissociate themselves from Scanlon's speech by condemning it at all levels of the union. All the major leaders of the TUC have now put themselves 100 per cent behind the Government's Chequers policy 'profit first, social need last'. The TUC must be recalled to break with the Government's actions and bring the Murrays, Joneses, and Scanlons of this world to account!

AUEW ELECTIONS Blood and the Broad Left

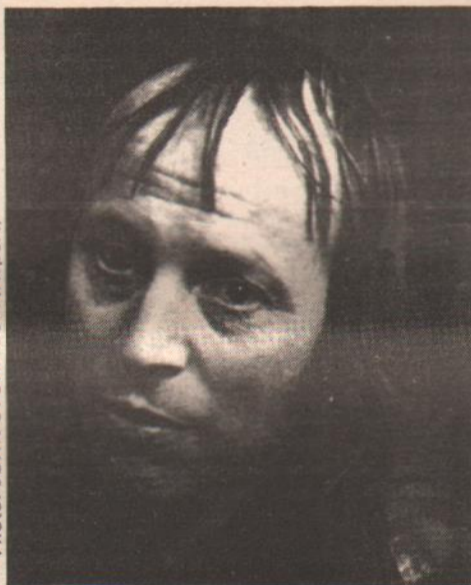


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

LEN BLOOD

This month members of the engineering section of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers will be balloting in a new round of elections for full time officials. Although none of the contests affect the Executive Committee, many of them are for important local positions like regional officers and district secretaries. There is also the election for a new Assistant General Secretary to replace the retiring Ernie Roberts.

All of these seats are being contested by right-wing candidates who can be confident of plenty of free publicity in the capitalist press and media. Unfortunately it looks as though they will score some major successes as well. Not only will they implicitly have the backing of TUC official policies — support for the £6 limit and acceptance of unemployment — but they will be helped by the absence of any real fight by the Broad Left (the Communist Party and its allies) in the AUEW, and the left wing nationally in the TUC and the Labour Party.

In none of the Broad Left manifestos, for instance, is the £6 limit even mentioned. The nearest they get to opposing the Labour Government's attempts to cut living standards is in the statement by Bob Wright (candidate for Assistant General Secretary): 'No-one would deny that the present Government is endeavouring, within the system in which we live, to bring about a control on the rapid inflation which so seriously affects our economy, but one must question whether these actions are correct or sufficient to ensure success.'

Wright leaves the rank and file guessing as to what is his attitude towards the £6 limit — it could even be read into his manifesto that the Broad Left feels that more severe wage controls are necessary! Of course they do not, but what this reflects is that the Broad Left prefer to duck out of fighting inside the AUEW against the central political attacks of the right wing.

Bankrupt policies

On unemployment the situation with the Broad Left is not much better. Although all the candidates get around to mentioning this aspect of Wilson's anti-working class policies, the only alternative they offer the membership is to fight for import controls and more money for the National Enterprise Board. Nationalisation is not even mentioned — let alone demands for workers control and the opening of the employers' accounts for inspection by the trade unions. No concrete positions are advocated at all for those members of the AUEW actually facing redundancy — presumably occupations, overtime bans, the fight for the 35 hour week, and work-sharing with no loss of pay are all too radical, as they might lead to a confrontation with the employers and the union right wing.

However the bankruptcy of the Broad Left's present policies should not prevent militants from voting for them and campaigning actively for them in the unions. The spectre of an openly right-wing dominated AUEW — supporting Wilson right down the line — is a real danger not only to the jobs and living standards of the AUEW membership but to the whole working class. 'Moderate' officials can only lead the membership to major defeats, with no prospect of any official backing for struggles that confront the employers and the Labour Government's anti-working class policies.

Alternative programme

But in supporting the candidates of the Broad Left, militants should spell out clearly the sort of alternative they want the 'left' to fight for. That is not merely the only principled way in which the Broad Left can be supported, but also the only way in which votes will be won. On their present policies the Broad Left will suffer a defeat. The fight must go forward for a vote for the Broad Left, but part of that fight must be for a clear alternative to the right wing. That must include:

- * Opposition to any form of incomes policy — for a sliding scale of wages and social expenditure to compensate automatically for inflation;
- * Opening the books to prepare a workers' plan for production which defends jobs;
- * Work-sharing with no loss of pay and the immediate introduction of the 35-hour week;
- * Nationalisation under workers control of all industries threatening redundancies.

Where revolutionary candidates are standing, such as Len Blood of the Engineers Charter for Assistant General Secretary, militants should vote for them in the first ballot. Although the Engineers Charter is a sectarian front organisation for the International Socialists with no real base in the industry, a large vote for Len Blood would be a clear vote against the vacillations and compromises of the Broad Left and against the £6 limit. Where there are no revolutionary candidates we urge militants to vote for the Broad Left but to give no support or credibility to their policies.

Only when there is a clear break with the policies of the Labour Government and a fight for a real socialist alternative will the base of the right wing be undermined for good. The present policies of the Broad Left cannot defeat the right wing. That is why it is necessary to fight for an alternative programme while supporting the Broad Left candidates against the right wing.

IN FOCUS

POUND SLUMPS, LEFTS CRUMBLE

The pound crashed through the \$2 barrier last week — a collapse faster and deeper than at any time since the formal devaluations of 1949 and 1967. The immediate effect will be to stoke up the rate of inflation through increased raw material and food prices, further cutting into the living standards of working people.

PATHETIC RESPONSE

That is the price that the Labour Government — which is not overly concerned about the slumping pound — demands for its 'export-led boom'. It is a price that the whole trade union bureaucracy are forcing their members to pay through their abject support for Wilson's anti-working class policies. They will stand by while food subsidies are eliminated and support an incomes policy which has already cut workers' living standards by six per cent.

At such a critical time the response of the 'traditional left' in the unions and Labour Party could hardly be more pathetic. Scanlon has announced his complete and absolute support for the Government's 'strategy'. The Labour lefts have quietly accepted the National Executive Committee's refusal to hold a special Labour Party conference.

LABOUR MOVEMENT ASSEMBLY

The responsibility for a nationally organised fight back against the Government's policies now rests with the Labour Movement Assembly on 27 March. But the omens for this are not good. The Assembly is the brain-child of the Communist Party, whose prime concern will be to cement their relationship with the Labour left. This will mean a conference high on verbal pyrotechnics and low on organising any action.

It will also mean the crushing of any real debate and discussion around the programme of action the conference should adopt to launch a fight throughout the labour movement against unemployment and the cuts. Instead we will be presented with the Tribune programme for import controls and 'controlled reflation': in other words, continued restraint on workers' wages and the propping up of domestic demand in the April budget just enough to 'take up the slack'. A veritable 'left-wing' export-led boom!

A foretaste of what militants can expect was given by the recent trade union 'conference in solidarity with the workers of Spain'. This became simply a bureaucratic beanfeast at which Foot, Jones and others were able to ease their troubled consciences over the defeats of the Thirties. Will the Labour Movement Assembly merely provide a similar platform for Scanlon and Clive Jenkins — whose 'support' contributes nearly half of the six million workers to be 'represented' at the Assembly.

And what of the forty or more Labour MPs backing the Assembly? Will the Assembly's organisers allow the demand that they break with the Government's policies, vote against them in Parliament, and support every struggle against them outside? Past experience of Communist Party 'democracy' can only tell us no.

BUILD THE RESISTANCE

Nevertheless the Assembly will see gathered many of the forces that can build a permanent labour movement opposition to the Labour cabinet and their supporters in the trade union bureaucracy. When Red Weekly calls for this new class struggle left wing in the labour movement, it does so in the traditions of the early Minority Movement before its sectarian degeneration. With one sixth of the present claimed membership of the Communist Party, the CP of the 1920s was able to build a National Minority Movement with supporters in every major union holding regular national conferences with representation from up to a quarter of all trade unionists. It is that sort of movement which clearly challenged the right wing for leadership that we must strive to build now.

SOLZHENITSYN

To believe the press, a latter-day God named Solzhenitsyn arrived via television last Monday night. Since his 'Panorama' appearance, in which he repeated his paranoid vision of the West endlessly yielding ground to the Soviet Union in the name of detente, the accolades have rained down unceasingly.

But who is Solzhenitsyn? What does he represent? At one time he was a great writer, the genius of a generation of dissidents whose novels — particularly *The First Circle* and *Cancer Ward* — did an enormous service to the world working class in explaining the hideous reality of Stalinist Russia. But in Solzhenitsyn's earlier books there also burnt the belief that the liberation of mankind was only possible with socialism, and the road to it lay in a return to the traditions of Lenin.

In a sense, the Stalinist bureaucracy scored its greatest victory when it succeeded in turning his voice into a stalking horse for the right wing of the ruling class of Western imperialism, who see in detente the imminent collapse of the West.

For that is what Solzhenitsyn has become. That is why he is now feted by important sections of the capitalist class, as well as becoming an icon for reactionary buffoons like Lord George-Brown. It is a development that is matched by an increasing intellectual arrogance on his part — 'only I know and understand what is happening'. Even in relation to others who have suffered the prison camps but remained revolutionary socialists, he is contemptuous.

Not only is experience the only source of valid comment on this monstrous system, he seems to be saying, but only the conclusions I draw are true. There is even a re-writing of Russian history. Suddenly pre-revolutionary Russia loses its famines, oppression and absence of the most elementary needs of life and liberty and becomes a place that 'enjoyed great freedom'.

This is a sad and terrible degeneration — and one for which the Soviet bureaucracy has much to answer. Heroically there is still another voice coming out of the labour camps, one that still argues for revolutionary socialism. It is not Solzhenitsyn, but those exiles like Leonid Plyusch who defiantly reaffirm their commitment to building communism in the Soviet Union, who point the way forward today.

APRIL 25...APRIL 25...APRIL 25

health
housing
education
social services
transport
libraries
hygiene
consumers
NO CUTS

SUPPORT MOUNTS

FOR CUTS DEMO

Wilson's victims - sick children in Newcastle

Wilson's claims to be helping the poor and underprivileged are now wearing rather thin. Some of his latest victims are sick children in the Newcastle area.

The Newcastle Area Health Authority is now planning to close the Fleming Memorial Hospital for Sick Children.

The main idea put forward is to transfer all burns cases from the Fleming to Newcastle General. All other cases would be transferred to the Sanderson Orthopaedic Hospital. At the same time the AHA proposes to transfer all paediatric and orthopaedic cases to the new Freeman Road Hospital.

However, all orthopaedic and paediatric children would be transferred to the seventh floor at Freeman Road. At Sanderson Road they are on the ground floor of a hospital with plenty of well aired rooms and with large grounds. These facilities would not be available at Freeman Road.

Expense

Furthermore, the recently built hydrotherapy pool at Sanderson would be left unused, whilst the pool at Freeman Road is not really suitable for children. Moreover, considerable expense would be incurred by visitors travelling to Freeman Road. Finally, educational facilities at Freeman Road would be way below those at Sanderson.

This situation facing sick children in Newcastle, where both medical and educational facilities will decline, is the result of the complete lack of planning inside the NHS and lack of control by the working class.

Until reorganisation of the NHS in 1973, educational facilities were the responsibility of the hospital services. With reorganisation they became the responsibility of the L.E.A. However, construction of Freeman Road started before reorganisation. No educational facilities were provided and even the bureaucrats of the L.E.A. were not consulted. Now the AHA is trying to pass the buck onto the L.E.A.

Understaffing

In most of the Area's hospitals there is huge understaffing in the maintenance department. When lifts, machinery, etc. break down, outside contractors have to be called in. This not only means long delays but also cuts the budget of the hospitals.

In this situation it is no wonder that an average of 130 nurses leave the AHA every month. Yet the AHA still claims that it is overstaffed. Hence it has made moves to reduce the nursing staff even further. At the end of last year six nurses at the Royal Victoria Infirmary were asked to resign. The Confederation of Health Service Employees claims that this was because of lack of money in the AHA.

The present state of the NHS must be of great concern to all working class people. But the only way to defeat the plans of the AHA to chop the NHS by closures, transfers and redundancies is for the working class to demand access to all secret plans of the AHA and to fight for an enquiry by the labour movement into the NHS.

Support is already starting to mount for the 25 April demonstration against cuts in the NHS and all private practice which has been called by the National Co-ordinating Committee against the Cuts in the NHS.

Not only is the National and Local Government Officers Association, the biggest white-collar union in Britain, supporting the demonstration; the National Union of Students has also sponsored it, while the London branches of the NATSOPA print union have donated £150 to the NCC and are designing and printing posters to mobilise for the demonstration. Rover Solihull T&G branch have also donated £50 to the NCC.

This is a sign of the growing rejection in the workers movement of the Labour Government's health cuts, and the impetus given by them to the growth of private practice. The Wilson Government has totally ignored the resolution passed at the last Labour Party conference (which we print below).

MAIN POLICIES

Red Weekly would not subscribe to all the policies put forward in that resolution. In particular, we would strongly oppose the idea that having health workers participate in the decisions of management would in any way aid the fight against the attacks on the health service.

Nevertheless, the main policies put forward there represent a real alternative around which a fight can be mounted against the attacks on the health service, and we would wish to unite with all those fighting for the implementation of that poli-

cy. Part of that fight is to make the 'lefts' turn their actions into words, and fight for the implementation of the Labour Party conference resolution.

This means organising in the labour movement to make the NCC demonstration a major national focus to begin this fight back. First and foremost we should demand in every locality that Labour MPs give their support to the demonstration and speak at local meetings building

by

RICH PALSER

for it. Secondly they should take part in the ad hoc committee which is being formed to organise and build that demonstration; and thirdly they should break with the Wilson Government, declaring their opposition to the cuts, and campaign within the Labour Party and the broad labour movement for the recall of the TUC and Labour Party conferences to organise a fight for the Labour Party conference resolution and its extension to the whole public sector.

The best way that the defeat suffered at the NEC two weeks ago can be reversed is for militants inside the Labour Party to fight for their CLPs and YS groups to join in building for the national demonstration with the broader labour movement, by affiliating to the local action committees fighting the cuts in the NHS and taking the campaign for the implementation of Labour Party conference policy into the local trade unions and working class organisations. These are the steps that are needed if we are to turn the lefts' words into actions.



NCC picket of the London Labour Party Regional Council demanding the implementation of conference policy on the NHS

LABOUR CONFERENCE RESOLUTION

The Conference views with concern the inadequacies of the National Health Service and calls upon the leadership of the Labour and trade union movement to pledge itself to a socialist policy for the Health Service.

Conference therefore:

(a) rejects any cuts in the National Health Service and demands a very substantial immediate increase in health expenditure to recruit new staff, pay adequate wages, provide attractive career structures at all levels, replace outmoded buildings and ensure the provision of an equally high standard of health service facilities throughout the United Kingdom; and believes that in future health expenditure should be linked to price and wage indices to protect the National Health Service from further cuts.

(b) calls for a fully free National Health Service at the point-of-use with complete abolition of prescription, dental and other charges.

(c) welcomes the proposed removal of private practice from the National Health Service but is concerned that it be completed rapidly and that existing part-time contracts must end. It further demands that the long term aim of the Labour Party be the total abolition of private practice with all private medical care outside the National Health Service under Government control as a first step and the prohibition of all private patient insurance plans.

(d) demands the public ownership of the pharmaceutical and other industries which are major suppliers to the National Health Service with compensation on the basis of need, with state monopoly over the import and export of drugs and medical supplies;

(e) demands the abolition of all nursing agencies and the rapid move by the National Health Service towards the non-use of agency staff or outside contractors for any purpose;

(f) calls for all management bodies to be democratically elected and to include elected representatives of all grades of employees within the service;

(g) calls for an extension of occupational, preventative and rehabilitative health care schemes with a major expansion in the number of health centres;

(h) calls for extended facilities for pregnancy testing, contraception and abortion so that they are available to all women on request, free of charge, and opposes moves to restrict the availability of abortion on social grounds.

Conference, desperately alarmed at the stagnation in morale and innovation in the National Health Service and concerned at the continued erosion and constant amendment of plans for the future, calls upon the Government to publish, within one year, a major White Paper embodying a Ten Year Plan for the development of the service.

Moved by

NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

Seconded by

LIVERPOOL WAREHOUSE

LONDON LABOUR SAYS Recall Conference!

The London Labour Party Regional Council last weekend resoundingly rejected cuts in the social wage. An emergency resolution from Norwood and Acton condemned the cuts in the Government's White Paper and called on the NEC to convene a special party conference. The emergency resolution came at the end of a meeting which had vigorously rejected cutbacks; nevertheless there is no doubt that the NEC will be able to ignore it unless it is campaigned for at every level of the labour movement.

Typifying this attitude of the labour bureaucrats was Barbara Castle - not in the slightest concerned at being the only speaker to support health cuts. She followed a display of left demagoguery designed to associate her with the mood of the meeting by counterposing health expenditure to other social expenditure. In this way she defended NHS cuts in the name of 'a socialist system of fair shares'. What she really supports is the capitalist system of less for everyone.

The Regional Council also came out firmly against cuts in education and the housing programme. It demanded that local authorities requisition and put to use houses empty for over six months; and that the GLC implement its manifesto pledge of low flat fares leading to free public transport. Socialists, especially in London should make use of these decisions by London Labour in order to extend the fight against the

....AND IN HEMEL

The Labour NEC's refusal to call a special Labour Party conference to take up the fight against unemployment and the cuts has been roundly condemned by Hemel Hempstead Labour Party's General Management Committee, despite opposition from Hemel's Tribune MP, Robin Corbett.

An amendment to the motion calling for selective import controls was narrowly defeated after an LPYS delegate had said that this would lead to 'a reactionary alliance of British workers and capitalists against the international workers movement, in a deliberate attempt to make the latter pay for the failure of British capitalism'.

As LPYS and other speakers pointed out, though, resolutions are only useful if they lead on to action. Only an active fight within the workers movement against the Wilson/Healey/Murray measures and the removal of the right-wing leadership can stop Labour on the road to

The SLP



Red Weekly's confusion about the Scottish Labour Party is based on two weaknesses — a failure to understand the relation between nationalism and the workers movement, and an over-ripe eagerness to support any group declaring its willingness to fight the Wilson Government.

Whether or not the socialist rhetoric of the SLP leadership is genuine is beside the point, since it is not a question of leaders but of the real political tendencies of the party. The formation of the SLP simply reflects the pressures, intensified by the crisis, of petty bourgeois nationalism — represented by the Scottish National Party — on the working class.

The Party is a split based on this nationalist current, and, despite the view of its secretary Alex Neil that the SLP only wants to 're-shape the relationship between the labour movement in Scotland and the labour movement in Britain as a whole', it weakens the unity of the British labour movement. It is clearly a break from the Labour Party, not a group within it.

Militants should not be fooled by the promise of genuine democracy because of individual membership. A party based on individual membership is not based on the organised working class, i.e. the trade union movement.

The founders of the Labour Party were well aware of the fundamental weakness of the Chartist movement: the national organisation at the top had no base in the trade union movement, only individual union members. The strength of the Labour Party lies in its roots in the trade union movement. To consider the SLP as presenting two aspects — reactionary nationalism represented in the present leadership, and a 'socialist course' in the struggle against the Wilson Government — is to ignore the real material basis of the party.

Marxists should not support parties whose interests are opposed to the labour movement as a whole, and more particularly, parties not based on the organised working class. Marxists work for the broadest unity of the working class, not to 're-shape relations' within it, around sectional interests. — E. PARKE, Finchley.

RED WEEKLY replies:

Comrade Parke starts from the vital necessity of the 'unity of the labour movement'. But that unity is never an abstract slogan, and it is obvious that at certain times the sharpest possible differentiation against the sell-outs of the existing leadership is absolutely imperative.

For us, unity is not some timeless

organisational principle but a political set of tasks to unite the working class in action against capitalism. We can see the difference between this position and that of comrade Parke when we look at the situation in Scotland.

The futility of an 'organisational' concept of unity between the Scottish and English working class is particularly dangerous. We would argue that the unity of the British working class will be considerably weakened if English workers line up with the increasingly discredited Westminster Parliament and its most cynical representatives — Wilson, Willie Ross, and Edward Short — against the democratic demand for some form of elected Assembly in Scotland.

This is not at all to 'confuse' the relationship between nationalism and the workers movement; the fight inside the labour movement for Scotland's right to self-determination would cut across the petty bourgeois separatism of the SNP and strengthen the weight of the British and Scottish labour movement inside the Scottish political arena.

Again on the SLP, comrade Parke misses the essentially political nature of working class unity. We argued from the very formation of the SLP that it should fight for the right to affiliate to the Labour Party. But that right of affiliation was blocked from the start by the right-wing clique in Keir Hardie House (Labour Party headquarters in Scotland). It is that same right-wing leadership which is directly threatening to produce massive demoralisation inside the working class, with a consequent electoral disaster for the Labour Party, due to its policies on the cuts, unemployment and the £6 limit.

Our attitude towards the SLP must be seen in terms of the threat from the right wing to that unity, for the 'broadest unity' which comrade Parke talks about will be essentially the unity in action of all sections of the labour movement — trade unions, trades councils, Labour Party branches, co-op societies, socialist organisations, etc. — against the cuts, against unemployment, against falling living standards.

In spite of their right-wing past, Sillars and Robertson of the SLP have declared their intention to vote in the House of Commons against the White Paper on the cuts. This is not to say that we have any more faith in Jim Sillars than in Eric Heffer or Dennis Canavan; but it is to say that any contribution that members of the SLP make to the resistance of the working class to the real 'splitters' — the Wilson-Healey right-wing leadership — will strengthen rather than weaken working class unity.

held on a wide variety of topics, e.g. lesbian teachers, lesbians and socialism, lesbian mothers, etc.

The conference took two important decisions. A number of amendments were proposed to the Working Women's Charter (WWC) on the question of sexual orientation, which aim to initiate discussion within both the women's movement and the labour movement as a whole.

Secondly, a resolution was passed stressing the need for links to be drawn between the whole question of female sexuality and the right of women to control their own bodies. The demands raised around the National Abortion Campaign were seen to be of vital importance, and as such the conference voted to support the 3 April demo.

The raising of new issues and new debates in the wake of the WWC and NAC campaigns is one of their most important political effects. The decisions of the Bristol lesbian conference are a useful contribution to that process. Melanie Stiassny

Bristol lesbian conference prompts wider discussion

The third national lesbian conference was held on 28-29 February in Bristol. The attendance was nearly double that at last year's conference, and workshops were



Photo: LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

Thunderous applause from a thousand strong audience greeted an appeal last Friday by Ernest Mandel, leading member of the Fourth International, for unity of the revolutionary left and the building of the Fourth International.

Mandel's appeal made in St Pancras Town Hall, was the culminating point of a massive rally organised by the International Marxist Group. The rally addressed itself to the task of building the Fourth International in the new conditions created by the beginning of the European Revolution in Portugal and Spain. The audience heard of the fifteen fold increase in the size of the Fourth International since its reunification in 1963/64. For the first time in Spain and Portugal, Trotskyism has real forces to take up the tremendous tasks posed by the developing revolutionary crises of these countries.

Mandel called for a sympathetic understanding of those groups on the far left who claim that their policy is to rebuild, re-establish or regenerate the Fourth International, but underlined the necessity to combat

those who persist in the myth that today no international centre for the organising of world revolution exists, or that any group outside the United Secretariat of the Fourth International represents such a force. As Mandel pointed out, all those who have tried to build an alternative in sectarian opposition to the Fourth International — Lambert, Healy, Lutte Ouvriere — have seen it collapse.

Following the rally, a weekend educational school of over 600 people discussed the history and development of the Fourth International in detail. Mandel, who gave the main report to the school, analysed that these problems had to be seen in the context of building the Fourth International today.

The collection taken at the rally made £1,250 which added to the receipts for tickets sold now takes the IMG Fund Drive well over its £10,000 target. Next week we will carry a full run-down on the final totals in the Fund Drive, and a future Red Weekly will also carry extracts from Ernest Mandel's speech at the rally.

Teachers' union dodges real fight

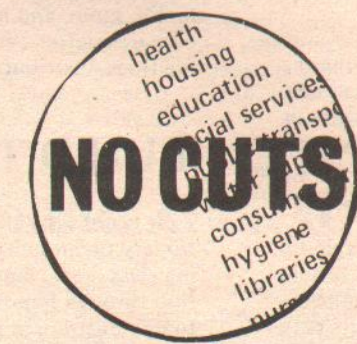
When Healey announced £1,000 million cuts in public expenditure in April 1975 (including £86m from education), the National Union of Teachers promised to fight any further cuts 'tooth and nail'. Now that the Government has announced a further £1,000m off education alone by 1980, the NUT is fumbling around looking for dentures.

The NUT's 'strategy' for fighting the cuts has consisted of pressuring local authorities to raise rates if necessary rather than make cuts in education. This not only avoids the real fight against the Labour Government's attacks, but cuts off teachers from other sections of the working class faced with the same problems.

Thus the NUT executive is left to moan in a memorandum to the union's forthcoming national conference: 'Where, one wonders, is the Government's contribution to the social contract?' Yet Fred Jarvis, its representative on the TUC General Council, voted against a motion to call a special conference of union executives on the issue as it might upset the right-wing TUC leadership!

The NUT executive has now found more upsetting things, as teachers all over the country begin to organise independently against the cuts. In London, for instance, a committee of representa-

tives from a number of schools was set up after a meeting called by Quintin Kynaston School NUT. On 20 March it is holding a lobby of the NUT to demand full employment of all teachers, and the implementation of the Inner London Teachers Association policy of full sanctions in all areas where cuts take place.



It is through such committees that a campaign of action is now being built, but this alone is not enough. These bodies should fight to take up policies in the NUT and broader labour movement which can really begin to provide a solution to the problems confronting teachers and the working class.

As part of this fight, the International Marxist Group is standing a candidate, Bernard Regan, in the Inner London

region for the NUT executive. Within the central theme of campaigning to get the NUT to fight all cuts and unemployment, we are demanding that the NUT plays a full role in the labour movement fight against the right-wing leaders by calling for a recall TUC conference, supporting all trade union initiatives such as the 25 April demonstration against the cuts, and affiliating to the Labour Party.

This also means fighting for real alternatives to defend education, including such demands as:

- the protection of wages and educational spending through automatic increases for each rise in the cost of living;
- an end to all debt charges and interest repayments;
- for a massive programme of public works, including schools, hospitals, etc, providing employment for all.

The IMG will be fighting for the NUT to stop licking the boots of the local authorities and demand instead a trade union investigation into their plans for education. There must be a struggle to make Labour local authorities place themselves behind the workers movement rather than Wilson's Tory policies.

Through taking up the fight in this way, militants in the NUT can begin to overcome the fragmentation and isolation that many teachers feel.

Portugal - 'A new cycle of str



Celebrating the overthrow of the Caetano dictatorship in April 1974

INSET: comrade Bernard of the LCI

Photo: LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

Tasks facing solidarity conference

This weekend two very different Portuguese solidarity conferences are taking place.

In Oporto the so-called 'Committee for the Defence of Democracy in Portugal' will be meeting at the invitation of Socialist Party leader Mario Soares. Social democratic leaders from all over Europe — including the prime ministers of West Germany, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, and Austria, as well as a representative of the British Labour Party — are expected to attend. Their purpose: to assess the progress of their international campaign to restore capitalist stability to Portugal.

WORKERS' STRUGGLE

But in London an entirely different kind of conference will be meeting with the aim of frustrating the capitalists' and social democratic leaders' plans and aiding the development of the workers' struggles in Portugal. This is the national delegate conference called by the Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class and sponsored by a number of trade union leaders and Labour MPs.

An organised solidarity campaign will be able to develop links between shop floor workers in Britain and workers in Portugal — links which have already begun to be developed through exchange visits between representatives of the workers commissions in Portugal and shop stewards committees in this country.

This is particularly important in the case of the multi-nationals, which draw their strength precisely from their international character. Early information, passed from a workers commission in one subsidiary to a shop stewards committee in another subsidiary can and already has in some instances enabled early action against some move by the bosses against the workers. Delegates of the bodies set up in Portugal to facilitate joint action between workers in different plants should be brought into working contact with

similar bodies in this country. Close links between such committees can have a big effect in aiding workers in all countries by monitoring and exchanging information, exchanging and developing experiences of struggle, and co-ordinating acts of solidarity.

British capitalism, together with European capitalism, has intervened at every level in Portugal to assist the right-wing forces there. The solidarity campaign must document evidence of economic manipulation, boycott and sabotage; get support from trade union and Labour Party branches; and put as much pressure as possible on the British Government to end its interference — especially through its support of the reactionary forces in Portugal and through its imposition of import controls. It must also set out with determination to redress the balance on Portugal in the flow and type of information, by fighting the bias in TV, radio, and the newspapers and by producing its own newsletters, and bulletins, holding meetings, showing films, distributing leaflets, etc.

BUILD THE CAMPAIGN

It is not only the internationalist duty of all revolutionary organisations and militants active in the working class movement to support the Portuguese revolution through building this campaign, it is also a chance to demonstrate in practice the international nature of capitalism and of revolution. Our day to day struggle against the effects of the economic crisis and against the anti-working policies of the Labour Government will be strengthened by a united campaign to co-ordinate activity and collectively learn from the Portuguese experience.

The solidarity conference takes place this Saturday, 13 March, from 10am to 6pm in Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. Observers are welcome as well as any last minute affiliations to the campaign and notification of delegates. Further information from SCPWC, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC2 (01-439 3006).

Q What has been the impact of the events of 25 November on the class struggle?

A These events marked a partial defeat for the Portuguese working class. After 25 November the vanguard was totally demoralised, but there was also a general feeling that it was necessary to respond to the attacks of the ruling class.

Now we can say that a new cycle of struggles is already beginning, and we can see a new upsurge of militancy. This shows that the working class is not completely defeated and that the Portuguese revolution has by no means ended.

Q What exemplary struggles have occurred since November?

A Since November there have been many meetings of the trade unions against the high cost of living and unemployment, as well as demonstrations for the release of anti-fascist officers.

There has also been a very important struggle against redundancies in the multinational firm of Timex, near Lisbon. For the first time in Portugal, this struggle has raised the question of the nationalisation of a multinational — which the ruling class were obviously not prepared to accept.

Now the boss has retreated, but they will certainly try to push through the redundancies after the elections, since the factory is already on a three day week.

There have also been a number of struggles against the suspension of wage negotiations by the Government, for example, that of the shop workers of Lisbon. This has been a very hard struggle and has involved violent clashes with the police.

Q What is the state of the workers commissions?

A Despite November, the organs of the working class — the trade unions and the workers commissions — have kept their strength. The workers commissions in factories running under workers management have now established a national coordinating commission.

Obviously the ruling class wants to finish with the commissions, or at least to 'legalise' them — that is, to integrate them into the capitalist system and halt their capacity to apply workers control. Thus the attacks of the ruling class against the mass organisations of the working class have primarily been directed against the workers commissions.

Q The LCI calls for a national congress of the workers commissions and democratic trade unions. Can you explain that?

A The principal problem of the Portuguese revolution is, without any doubt, the problem of the cen-

tralisation of the organs of the working class — the workers commissions and the trade unions. In calling for a national congress, we are calling for the national centralisation of the organs representing the masses, in order to elaborate a plan of action against the attacks of the ruling class.

We also say that the majority currents in these congresses must form a workers and peasants government to implement the programme decided by the congresses.

Concerning the democratic congress of all the trade unions, it is necessary to add a few points. In Portugal at the moment there is a debate within the workers movement on the question of trade union unity. The trade union movement is split between the unions which are controlled by the Com-

Interview with Central Communist League (L) of the Four

munist Party and grouped around Intersindical, and the other unions, especially white collar unions, which follow the line of the Socialist Party.

The slogan of a democratic conference of all the unions is a concretisation of our united front tactic for the unification of the trade union movement, and against the 'democratic' demagoguery of the social democrats and the bureaucratic manoeuvres of the Stalinists.

Q What is the present state of the independent soldiers movement and the Armed Forces Movement?

A It was the independent soldiers movement that was hardest hit by 25 November. The ruling class has virtually closed the barracks in Lisbon and disbanded the regiments. The soldiers committees have disappeared, and so has the SUV (Soldiers United Will Win).

Now the project of the military hierarchy is to professionalise the army — in other words, to break all possibility of an independent movement of soldiers and transform the army into a repressive force against the workers.

In this situation the AFM has practically disappeared. We in the LCI had already predicted this outcome, because we characterised the AFM as a petty bourgeois movement which had gone through a series of splits after 25 April 1974.

10p

PORTUGAL: OUR STRUGGLE

By JACKY GRAY and PAT JORDAN

SUPPORT THE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

TGWU INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' BROTHERHOOD ALCO

New IMG-pamphlet

JUST OUT! Looks at the development of the Portuguese revolutionary process in some detail and charts the way forward for the solidarity campaign. 10p plus 8p p&p from RED BOOKS, 97 Caledonian Road, N.1.

'Struggles is beginning'

Now even the bourgeoisie does not want the AFM to remain on the political scene, because it has adequate political representatives in the bourgeois parties, the PPD and the CDS.

Q What impact have the recent struggles had on the Socialist Party?

A After 25 November we have begun to see the embryo of an opposition tendency to the Soares leadership in the SP. It is still very weak, but it results from the empirical understanding of some of the SP base of the politics of its leadership during the last period, who have supported the bourgeoisie's attacks.

For example, in the last elec-

Union (UDP).

This is the strongest organisation of the far left in Portugal, and it has a different political line to the other Maoist organisations. It considers that fascism and imperialism are the 'principal enemy' and it is prepared to have unity of action with the other organisations of the far left — which the other Maoist sects refuse, as they think that all the other organisations of the far left are 'agents of social fascism', that is to say, agents of the CP.

There are also the centrist organisations, like the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat (PRP) and the Left Socialist Movement (MES). The MES was in its origins a totally heterogeneous organisation — made up of Catholics, anarchists, Luxemburgists, 'independents' and so on. Now the leadership of the

Comrade Bernard, a member of the League of the Internationalist Communist Party (Portuguese sympathising section of the Internationalist Communist Party).

For the regional leadership of the SP there were two slates — one put forward by the Soares leadership, and the other proposed by some militants at the base of the party. However, it is necessary to stress that this tendency is only just beginning and remains an empirical opposition. It doesn't question, for instance, the participation of the SP in the Sixth Government.

Q What is the present project of the Portuguese Communist Party?

A The CP has also in reality backed the attacks of the ruling class, both by participating in the class collaborationist governments and through its divisive politics. It maintains its support for the AFM, and after 25 November it has recommenced its attacks against the extreme left.

Q After November the revolutionary left has passed through a crisis. What has been its outcome?

A Within the far left the strongest current are the Maoists. Most of them are merely sects, but it is necessary to make an exception in the case of the Popular Democratic

MES wants to make the organisation 'Leninist', with democratic centralism, but this has already provoked a number of splits. I think that the MES has about a thousand members nationally.

The PRP is a militarist organisation without a clear political line. It limits its programme to the defence of socialism, to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the armed insurrection. In all the copies of its paper there is a photo of a rifle. When they sell the paper, their members shout that there are guns in the paper. This is just a small example of their militarism.

We think that the comrades of the MES and the PRP are incapable of drawing any balance sheet of 25 November. They maintain their characterisation of the SP as a party close to fascism, which merely represents a continuation of their political line before 25 November.

Both the League of Revolutionary Unity and Action (LUAR) and the Popular Socialist Front (FSP) are basically dead. The Revolutionary United Front (FUR) has also disappeared, as a result of the events of 25 November and its ultra-left political line due to the role of the centrists, notably the MES and PRP.

Q The last conference of the LCI passed a resolution for a fusion with another Trotskyist group, the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT).

A The PRT is a small organisation which exists mainly in Lisbon, in the high schools, and which supports the Fourth International. Our last national congress voted to fuse with the comrades of the PRT. Now we are preparing the possibility of a joint election campaign and other joint actions to prepare the fusion.

Q Can you explain the significance of the elections for the ruling class and how the LCI is approaching the question?

A The ruling class wants to legalise its project of an authoritarian government. We think that the results of the election will give the bourgeois parties a majority, and that the ruling class will expel the CP from the Government and attempt to establish a bonapartist regime against the workers' struggles and their present conquests.

It is for this reason that the LCI is going to participate in the forthcoming elections in all electoral districts. In this way we can help to prepare a unified response by the workers against the attacks of the ruling class. Our propaganda will centre upon the need for a united front of the working class to initiate a response to the authoritarian project of the ruling class.

Q What do you think of those in Britain, such as the CP and Tribune, who support the imposition of import controls on Portuguese goods?

A After 25 April 1974 the international bourgeoisie implemented a total boycott of the Portuguese economy. Even the so-called 'democracies' like Britain have boycotted Portuguese exports, while the multinational firms like Plessey are creating redundancies in Portugal.

We think that the position of the British CP is a totally nationalist one, which has nothing to do with proletarian internationalism. Against that we think that it is necessary to organise the broadest solidarity with the Portuguese revolution against the sabotage of the international ruling class.

In this task we have confidence in the real revolutionaries, and in particular the Fourth International, to maintain the campaign of international solidarity. As I have said, the revolution did not end on 25 November. The most important struggles are yet to come.



Samora's sabre-rattling

Last week Samora Machel, the president of Mozambique, plunged in with his own contribution to resolving the crisis in Zimbabwe. In a sabre-rattling speech, Machel declared a 'state of war' which amounted to no more than the implementation of United Nations sanctions against Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) — which to date the regime had been openly flouting! To add a touch of spice to his demagogy, he immediately instructed that a programme of building 'air-raid shelters' should be implemented.

This move is truly an 'ace' in a situation where imperialism and racist South Africa have suffered a political defeat in Angola which renders both incapable of intervening directly in Zimbabwe. Vorster's game of detente has suffered badly and for the moment the neo-colonial regimes of Africa are reluctant to touch South Africa with a barge pole (at least not openly).

The Smith regime is refusing to concede 'majority rule', while the reformist leader of the ANC (African National Council), Joshua Nkomo, grows more isolated by the day as the militant ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) builds up its strength. The danger (for the international capitalist class) of an escalation of the armed struggle grows daily. Mozambique has been used for a long time as a base for ZANU, yet this very movement could set off a series of social and political crises that would threaten not only the interests of imperialism, but also those of the present regime in Mozambique.

BUREAUCRACY

Clearly conscious of all these factors, Machel has proposed a policy that not only serves the interests of imperialism, but also ensures the continuing dominance of his bureaucratic regime.

The closing of the ports of Beira and Maputo (formerly Lourenço Marques) in Mozambique to goods from Zimbabwe has meant that there remain but two routes by which these goods may pass: through Botswana and South Africa. The closure of the Mozambique ports thus clearly brings Vorster into the picture again, since economic strangulation of the Smith regime will depend on Vorster.

As the latter has openly declared that

he is in favour of 'majority rule', he will once again be able to restore his image by applying just enough pressure to force Smith to capitulate to the 'peaceful settlement' earnestly desired by international capital; and in so doing, Vorster will once again be acclaimed by the likes of President Kaunda of Zambia as the 'bringer of peace on earth', and blind eyes can again be turned on the fate of the millions of blacks in South Africa itself.

A 'peaceful settlement' in Zimbabwe will mean the establishment of a neo-colonial regime (led no doubt by Nkomo) that is politically and economically dependent on racist South Africa. Above all it will mean an attempt to isolate and smash the large forces that today are led by ZANU and the Zimbabwe Military High Command.

Machel's sabre-rattling is aimed primarily at bringing about just such a 'peaceful settlement' in Zimbabwe, and *not* at aiding the struggles of the masses under the leadership of ZANU. Furthermore, these moves are a blatant attempt to divert attention inside Mozambique from the crisis that the regime is currently facing: only last December there was a major mutiny in the army which was brutally put down and followed by a huge purge under the banner of 'clearing corruption and evil'.

MILITANTS

Those purged were in fact militants who had been protesting against Machel's policies, and against appalling work conditions in the armed forces. Faced with growing dissent and the mounting economic crisis, Machel's plan to 'build air-raid shelters' is simply an attempt to divert the attention of the masses by erecting a 'socialist' image for the regime based on 'sacrifices' made for the struggle in Zimbabwe.

It should be noted that Machel has made no comment about the 80,000 Mozambican workers who remain in Zimbabwe, nor about the several thousands who work in South African mines in exchange for gold received by the Machel regime from Vorster. Nor has there been any explanation as to why, until last week, the regime refused to apply the sanctions against the Smith regime.

It is no surprise, therefore, that the Labour Government has been generally enthusiastic about Machel's latest moves: nor is it surprising that after nearly a year of delays, Wilson has 'now decided' to go ahead with the 'aid programme' for Mozambique!

JULIUS KARANJA



The situation in East Timor is urgent. The Timorese must be allowed to decide their own political future, free from any interference by the Indonesian military dictatorship. Just as the struggles of the people of Mozambique, Angola and Guine-Bissau weakened the dictatorship in Portugal, so the struggle of the people of East Timor can play a vital role in weakening the brutal military regime in Indonesia.

On 18-20 March a national moratorium on East Timor will be held in Australia as the culmination of an extensive three-week campaign organised around the visit of a delegation from

the Frelimo liberation movement to the major towns and cities of Australia. In conjunction with this moratorium, the British Campaign for Independent East Timor, together with the Australian Socialist Alliance, will be holding a picket outside the Indonesian Embassy, 38 Grosvenor Square, London W.1. Note the date — 18 March, from 12.30 to 2.30pm — and start organising support now.

Further details of BCJET activities, publications, etc. from: 40 Concanon Road, London S.W.2. (01-274 9308).

FACTION OR PARTY?

The 1953 split in the Fourth International

FACTION AND PARTY 3

Continuing our series on the questions posed with the emergence of the Workers Socialist League (WSL), JAMES FRANCIS looks at the organisational principles involved in the 1953 split within the world Trotskyist movement.

Lenin, and Trotsky after 1917, both taught the absolute necessity, against all forms of opportunism and conciliation, of relentless political and ideological struggle against wrong positions within the party. At the same time however they also held the position that political splits of the party, as opposed to faction fights *within* the party, become justified only with a definitive crossing of class lines in the greatest events of the class struggle.

If we approach the 1953 split from this principle then the chief *organisational* question which has to be decided is whether this was a split into two different *world parties*, into two different Internationals, or a split into two factions within *the same* International.

The implication of this question, and the basis for deciding it, are clear. To justify a split into two separate world parties on a Leninist basis, not merely must wrong theories have developed and wrong positions on questions have been taken, but these must have culminated in historic betrayals of a character qualitatively the same as those of August 1914 on the outbreak of the imperialist war or those leading to January 1933 and the coming to power of Hitler.

Furthermore, if such a decisive historic transformation had taken place, with the transfer of one party to the class camp of the counter-revolution, its future evolution was clear — just as the betrayals of the Social Democrats after 1914 and the Stalinists after 1933 grew progressively worse, then so clearly the degeneration of these new betrayers would intensify. Under these circumstances the course to be followed was precisely that of Lenin in 1914 and Trotsky in 1933 — absolute and complete break; contemptuous rejection of 'unity' with agents of another class; any 'reunification' totally out of the question; and the only attitude towards the traitors being that of merciless exposure of the deepening betrayals of those who falsely claimed the name of Trotskyists.

LAMBERT

This view is the position which has been openly held by the supporters of Lambert. Thus the British supporters of the Organising Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International write: 'Pabloism destroyed the Fourth International as a world party through an adaptation to Stalinism in 1953, when Pablo and Co supported the Kremlin against the insurrection of the East German workers.'⁽¹⁾

Apart from the fact that this is an outrageous lie — no-one in 1953 supported the Kremlin against the East German workers — this position at least has the virtue of consistency. If revisionist theories had not been merely advanced but had indeed culminated in support of counter-revolution in such a decisive event as the first attempted political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy, then a split on a principled Leninist basis into two parties could be justified. And the 'Pabloites' could then be expected to consummate this split through even deeper betrayals — as Lambert claims they have.

Healy, of course, in his central positions advanced the same conclusion — that the support for Stalinism in 1953 in East Germany, and in France in the General Strike of the same year, was the qualitative turn which was then followed by the deepening betrayals in 1956 in Hungary, 1960 on Cuba, 1964 in Ceylon, in relation to Vietnam etc. Finally, as 'revealed' in the series 'Security and the Fourth International', the revisionists degenerated to the level of accomplices and agents of imperialism, the GPU, the police etc — or more precisely, that stratum which had been GPU accomplices all along rose to unchallenged dominance.

On the other side in 1953, there were of course those who considered that at some point the US Socialist Workers Party had succumbed to American imperialism and was an organisation dominated by reformism, pacifism, the pressure of the white petty bourgeoisie, etc.

STATEMENTS

All these positions at least have the virtue of being consistent. But in contrast to this view, and despite undoubted wild statements made at the time — there is no point in disguising the fact that Cannon *did* say in 1953 that the split with Pablo was more definitive than that with Burnham and Shachtman⁽²⁾ or that Pablo wrote that 'the faction of Cannon is a group condemned by history'⁽³⁾ — the chief forces on both sides rapidly concluded that such a world historic betrayal and break from Trotskyism had not occurred.

Furthermore, despite all his lying and bluffing to the contrary, Healy is quite aware of this fact. Indeed, the definitive proof is to be found in the documents of his own organisation. Thus in January 1961 the National Committee of the Socialist Labour League (forerunner of the Workers Revolutionary Party), sent a letter to the National Committee of the SWP which declared: 'It is time to draw to a close the period in which Pabloite revisionism was considered a trend within Trotskyism'⁽⁴⁾. This position makes no sense unless at that time 'Pabloite revisionism', the line of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International, was considered a trend *within* Trotskyism.

Furthermore, as actions speak louder than words, consider what would have been the necessary course if world historic betrayals sufficient to justify not merely a faction but a new party had taken place. Under these circumstances there could be no talk

whatever of 'reunification'. It would never even have occurred to Lenin and Trotsky to even talk of, let alone propose, 'reunification' with the Social Democrats after 1914 or the Stalinists after 1933.

However this was not at all the policy pursued by Healy. When reunification between the International Secretariat and the International Committee was proposed in 1957, Healy did not oppose it on the correct grounds of principle that would have followed from his analysis of 'Pabloite revisionism'. On the contrary, he agreed to parity commissions and a whole series of things which should have been out of the question on any principled application of his position.

Even worse, in 1960 Healy invited Ernest Mandel to address the SLL summer school — the same Mandel who on Healy's analysis was a counter-revolutionary traitor. Just imagine Lenin inviting Kautsky in 1915 to a Bolshevik school, or Trotsky asking Stalin to address the Fourth International!

Furthermore, in its own inimitable way and undoubtedly without understanding the implications of what it was doing, the SLL/WRP has given further proof of this more recently. In July 1970, Healy approached the Fourth International 'for informal talks around the possibility of joint discussion centred on outstanding political differences and directed

towards the holding of a joint international conference'⁽⁵⁾. Again, on the view that the 'Pabloites' were a current outside Trotskyism who had carried out an historic betrayal of the working class, this must be counted as a vile capitulation.

Finally, in the series 'Hansen and Novack — Accomplices of the GPU' in *Workers Press*, the WRP goes even further. It discovers that there is some 'World Trotskyist Movement' which not merely must be defended against 'GPU accomplice' Hansen, but which can actually set up a commission to investigate this said 'accomplice'. But the whole concept of a 'World Trotskyist Movement' only makes sense if what is involved is *not* forces which have carried out world historic betrayals, but instead a whole number of forces which may well justify the formation of tendencies and factions but which *do not* justify the existence of different parties and a different International.

CONCLUSIONS

The problem for Healy, of course, is that if this latter position is the correct one then the appropriate organisational conclusions have to be drawn. If there have been no qualitative betrayals justifying new parties and a new International, then it is clearly the task of revolutionaries to unify these forces. If not, then what is occurring is that people are attempting to build organisations on the basis of tactical differences, analyses of particular events, theories whose class content has not been fully demonstrated in the class struggle — all of which are formulas for building a sect, but absolutely not for building a revolutionary party. Such practices have *nothing* to do with the positions of Lenin or Trotsky.

Consider, for example, Trotsky's position in the period from 1923–1933 i.e. until the Communist International had definitively shown that it had passed to the camp of counter-revolution. The Communist International was an organisation which actually *did* betray the Chinese Revolution of 1927. For much of this period Trotsky and his supporters were forced to function as a public faction of the International — not through choice but through their expulsion.

Trotsky, however, didn't accept this existence as a public faction but on the contrary demanded his faction's re-admission to the Party. Even in December 1932 he stated categorically: 'The entire responsibility for the splitting of communism lies on the Stalinist bureaucracy. The Bolshevik-Leninists are prepared, at a moment, to return to the ranks of the Comintern and to observe strict discipline in action.'⁽⁶⁾

Furthermore, as a faction and not a party, the demand which Trotsky advanced for ceasing to be a public faction was not a *political* one — such as the abandonment of the line on China or of the Third Period — but the *organisational* one of the right to put forward his faction's views within the Party. Furthermore, on this question Trotsky was quite prepared to make compromises provided the principle was established:

'We cannot refuse to criticise (Stalinist) centrism But mutual criticism, in itself unavoidable and fruitful, may have a different character, depending on the extent to which it is consciously prepared by both sides and in what organisational framework it take place. In this field, the importance of which does not require proof, the Left Opposition is prepared at any moment to come to an agreement in which it will ask for itself only the restoration of its right to fight in the common ranks'⁽⁷⁾.

DISTINCTION

Trotsky, right until the end, was absolutely rigorous in his distinction between party and faction and the conclusions which flowed from the two positions — as a faction there must be a continuous struggle for reintegration into the party, but once he defined the conditions as justifying a new party then this meant a total and complete split rejecting for all time any traitorous talk of 'reunification' with the counter-revolutionaries.

What you *can't* do, however, is to have your cake and eat it. You can't *simultaneously* maintain that there are 'Pabloite revisionists' who have historically betrayed the working class and that there is a 'World Trotskyist movement' of which they are a part. No amount of Healy pseudo-dialectic will make those two ideas match.

Unfortunately, in their theoretical supplement 'Trotskyism Today', the WSL precisely do refer both to the traitorous 'Pabloite revisionists' and to the fact that 'the USFL leadership and sections cannot be regarded in advance as having placed themselves outside the world Trotskyist movement'⁽⁸⁾. The comrades of the WSL thus show that they still have not thought through the difference between the organisational principles of Lenin and Trotsky and those of Healy. A study of these is one of the most urgent questions confronting them.

(1) *Marxist Bulletin*, Winter 1976, p 26; (2) Cannon — 'Factional Struggle and Party Leadership'; (3) Pablo — 'They Desert, We go Forward'; (4) SLL National Committee, 2 January 1961; (5) *Workers Press*, 7 July 1970; (6) Trotsky — 'The International Left Oppositionists' Tasks and Methods'; (7) Trotsky — 'We Need an Honest Inner Party Agreement'; (8) *Socialist Press*, 10 December 1975.

NEXT ISSUE:— Organisational Principles and Internal Regime.



Above: James Cannon of the Socialist Workers Party fought for the principled reunification of the Fourth International in 1963. Healy (below) perpetuated the myth of 'Pabloite revisionism'.



Proletarian Democracy and the British Communist Party

The chickens are coming home to roost. In the new conditions of the late 1960s and '70s which have witnessed a revival of Marxism on every level (a necessary product of the rise of world revolution in the late '60s), the Communist Parties are finding their Stalinist heritage somewhat irksome.

Apart from the fact that it reduces their credibility in the eyes of newly radicalised militants, they are discovering that an attitude of *total* subservience towards the Soviet Union reduces their ability to manoeuvre and impedes the development of alliances with social democratic and bourgeois parties. Recent developments in the French CP and the speech by Italian CP leader Enrico Berlinguer at the recent congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) are indications of a new trend towards establishing a clear distance from some of the practices of the Soviet leadership.

In Britain, where the political influence of the CP is very small, a similar trend is discernible. Confronted on one side by left social democracy and on the other by a predominantly Trotskyist far left, the British Communist Party is undergoing a crisis.

Resignation

The most recent manifestation of this was the resignation of their star industrial militant, Jimmy Reid, an event which itself is the symptom of a much graver malaise. The central problem which confronts the CP in Britain is to find a rationale for its independent existence, because as far as a 'strategy towards socialism' is concerned, it is virtually indistinguishable from left social democracy.

This political line hampers its effectiveness in the factories, where it does have a significant influence. Thus while its militants in general favour struggles to defend living standards, the only way of developing these struggles is to confront the union bureaucracy at every step by stimulating the development of democratically organised class struggle tendencies. But the CP's alliance with 'left' trade union bureaucrats makes this completely impossible.

There is, of course, a key difference between the CP and the left social democracy. While the latter are loyal to their own bourgeois state, the CP's loyalty is to the Soviet state and its apparatus. It is this fact which distinguishes the CPs from social democracy and imparts to their electoral victories in countries like Chile, France and Italy an objectively different dynamic. That is why the public airing of differences with the Soviet leadership is an important process which tends further to increase the existing strains within these parties.

Article

It is in this overall context that the publication of a major article, 'Socialist Democracy — Some Problems', by the former General Secretary of the British CP, John Gollan, in the January issue of *Marxism Today* has to be studied. The purpose of this text is to improve the CP's public image by distancing itself from the more outrageous obscenities perpetrated by the regime in the USSR, thus making it possible for the party to use its industrial strength in certain regions to increase its politico-electoral support.

A subsidiary purpose is clearly to make the party more habitable for the post-'68 influx of students and intellectuals, and hopefully to attract a few more.

Insofar as the Gollan article opens up a debate on fundamental questions of history, strategy and the nature of post-capitalist societies, it is welcome. A thoroughgoing debate on questions such as 'socialist democracy' can do nothing but good. However the article itself is marred by inconsistencies, factual inaccuracies and, naturally, a failure to carry out a serious analysis of the character of the ruling group in the USSR.

The excuse for the article is to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the 20th Party Congress of the CPSU, where Khrushchev shocked the world Stalinist movement by his denunciation of Stalin. John Gollan admits that his article is not 'an exhaustive analysis', but nonetheless he touches on questions of *key* importance. The problem is that he fails to resolve any of them satisfactorily.

Faithful

On the level of the history of the CPSU, Gollan defends the assessment of Stalin by the 20th Party Congress: 'He was faithful to Marxism-Leninism, and as a theorist and organiser of high calibre he led the party's fight against the Trotskyists, right-wing opportunists and bourgeois nationalists, against the intrigues of capitalists from without.'

Gollan himself comments: 'This was the basis of his great popularity and authority.' But if this great theoretician was so immensely popular, why then did he not content himself with defeating his opponents *politically* as Lenin did? Why expel them from the party and later physically liquidate them?

Gollan is in 1976 opposed to the excesses of the collectivisation programme, the purges, etc. of the 1930s. His inconsistency lies in his refusal to understand or appreciate that it was the victory of Stalin in the 1920s which made the events of the '30s inevitable. The failure to implement the Left Opposition's programme in the 1920s, by combatting the kulaks and starting the process of industrialisation, meant the horrendous repression of the entire peasantry in the '30s, from which Soviet agriculture has still not recovered.

Gollan continues to defend the orientation of 'socialism in one country' which is the cornerstone of Stalinist ideology and practice. He claims that 'the Trotskyist opposition denied the possibility of victory for socialism' in one country. He is correct, but why indict Trotsky alone? Why not Lenin, who said explicitly:

Dimensions

'The Russian proletariat cannot by its own forces *victoriously complete* the socialist revolution. But it can give the Russian revolution dimensions such as will create the most favourable conditions for it, such as will in a certain sense *begin* it. It can facilitate matters for the entrance into a decisive battle on the part of its *main* and most reliable ally, the *European* and American socialist proletariat.'

This position was further spelt out in 1924 by none other than Stalin himself in his essay *Lenin and Leninism*. Here the future dictator wrote:

'The overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a proletarian government in one country does not yet guarantee the complete victory of socialism. The main task of socialism — the *organisation of socialist production* — still remains ahead. Can this task be accomplished, can the final victory of socialism in one country be attained, without the joint efforts of the proletariat of several advanced countries? *No, this is impossible.*

Insufficient

'To overthrow the bourgeoisie, the efforts of one country are sufficient — the history of our revolution bears this out. For the final victory of socialism, *for the organisation of socialist production, the efforts of one country, particularly of such a peasant country as Russia, are insufficient.* For this the efforts of the proletarians of several advanced countries are necessary

'Such, on the whole, are the *characteristic features of the Leninist theory of proletarian revolution.*'

But Stalin was a few years later to denounce this as Trotskyism, and John Gollan in 1976 repeats this absurd slander.

Gollan also differentiates himself from Khrushchev on the question of Stalin's role in the war. Virtually every Soviet historian of note (especially Roy Medvedev) has described the complete debacle of Stalin's war policies, but Gollan defines Stalin's war speeches as being 'brilliant in their approach and analysis.' The revival of the Church, the utilisation of chauvinist themes from Russia's imperialist past, the glorification of patriotism and nationalism, were all according to Gollan justified.

Gollan again distorts Trotsky's positions on the trade union question, and on this and other questions reveals that has not read much of the literature produced by the Left Opposition. We will take these and many other questions up at a later date.

For the purposes of this article, however, we will concentrate now on the central weakness of Gollan's article. It lies in the following sentence, where Gollan after criticising the purges and the show-trials baldly states: '**They did tremendous harm, but did not and could not change the socialist and democratic basis of Soviet society.**'

A special review article by TARIQ ALI

In other words, Gollan's position on 'socialism in one country' is not just empty anti-Leninist rhetoric. He actually believes that the USSR is a *socialist* country and has a *democratic* basis. There are no fundamental flaws in Soviet society, just a few problems which can be resolved by the existing leadership with a little bit of help from its friends.

We challenge this thesis. When for half a century all power — economic, social and political — has been monopolised by the leadership of one party, when there is no real distinction between the apparatus of that party and the State, and when the masses have *no control whatsoever* over the running of the State, the government or the party, then the very least we can say is

that this is not socialism or anything remotely connected with it. It is the crystallisation of a bureaucratic caste whose very existence depends on the continued depoliticisation of the Soviet masses.

That is why Solzhenitsyn's books are not published, and why Sakharov is denounced and harassed. We agree completely with Gollan that the only effective way of dealing with reactionary critics of the ilk of Solzhenitsyn is to publish their works. Where we disagree is that his confidence in the bureaucracy to answer *Gulag Archipelago* is a trifle misplaced.

Dissidents

Furthermore, there are other dissidents whom Gollan virtually ignores. They are communist dissidents: men like Medvedev and Grigorenko; the Tatar socialist Mustafa Djemilev; the Ukrainian socialist women prisoners. How does the British CP think they should be dealt with?

Do these communist dissidents have the right to form tendencies or factions in the CPSU? Gollan replies in the negative. The reason: Lenin and the Bolshevik leadership banned factions in 1921.

But Gollan knows perfectly well that this was intended as a very temporary measure, and it is now obvious in any case that it was a wrong decision, since by that time the spinal cord of the counter-revolution had already been smashed. It is simply not serious to talk about 'socialist democracy' and deny the rights of tendencies and factions to exist in the CPSU — or for that matter in the CPGB. But even that is not sufficient.

We are for the right of other working class parties to exist and to function under the dictatorship of the proletariat. This means genuine Soviets embodying the elective principle at every level of society.

You cannot say, as Gollan does, 'that the still greater involvement of the masses of the people, as I have said, in the process of decision-making, is the major issue', and at the same time not provide any effective institutions of socialist democracy to canalise this process. The 'regular' assembly of CPSU

congresses is a bit of a joke, given the bureaucratic way in which delegates are selected and the basis on which members are recruited to the party.

The changes necessary to achieve socialist democracy will not be brought about by friendly pressure from without, but by the mass mobilisations of the workers and soldiers in the USSR itself. In 1953 in East Berlin, working class demands for democracy were crushed by Stalin's tanks. In 1956 the Hungarian insurrection led by communists was crushed by Soviet tanks. In 1968 the Czech spring was brought to a hasty conclusion by Soviet tanks.

In the Soviet Union, too, the bureaucrats will try to use the same tanks, but on home ground they will face more serious problems. It is the masses (including no doubt many thousands of members of the CPSU itself) who will overthrow the bureaucracy. Then and only then will we see the flowering of socialist democracy and a rebirth of proletarian internationalism (Gollan deals with the dissolution of the Comintern in twenty lines and is remarkably reticent on the question)* on a massive scale.

Weathermen

In a sense, the very fact that the Communist Parties in Western Europe have begun to discuss and debate these questions is a sign of the direction in which the wind is blowing. But the prognostications of Berlinguer, Marchais, and Gollan — the weathermen of the new reformism — are hopelessly wrong.

They feel the winds, but try to pre-empt the clouds which will follow and the rains they will bring by creating an artificial rain. This might help them temporarily, but in the long run it is the real rain of revolutionary Marxism which will cleanse the working class movement of Stalinism and its heritage.

* We would recommend to our readers a book by a veteran Spanish Communist expelled from the CP in 1965 — *From Comintern to Cominform*, by Fernando Claudin, Penguin. Also worth study is *Leninism Under Lenin* by Marcel Liebman. Cape.



Enrico Berlinguer, head of the Italian Communist Party, addressing the recent congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. He heads the list of Western CP leaders who want to capitulate to the ruling class in their

7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

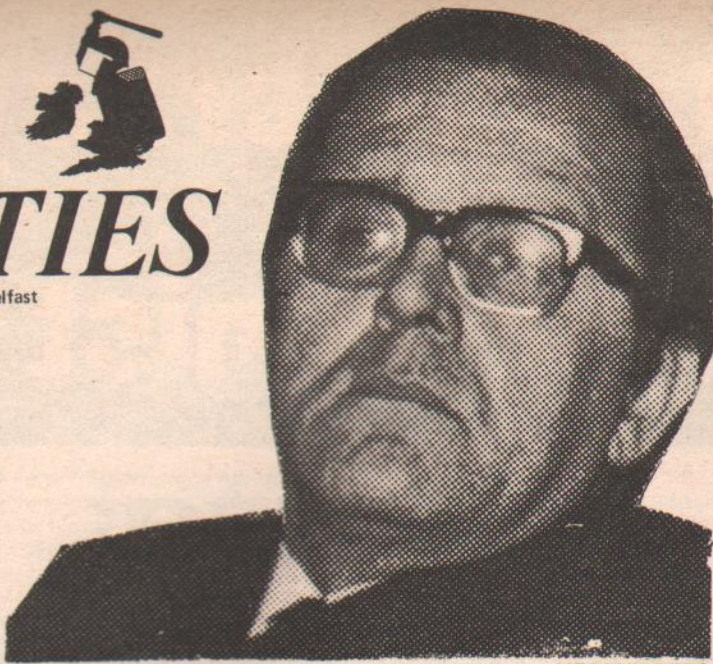
JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast

Isolation of the Republican organisations remains a dominant concern of British Imperialism in the Six Counties.

A new stage in that process has now begun. In the words of Merlyn Rees, 'those sentenced for offences committed after 1 March 1976 will be accommodated in cellular accommodation and will not be able to claim special category status'.

In other words, the political status forced from the British Tory Government in 1972 after a hunger strike by Billy McKee is to be phased out. To sweeten this pill and attempt to diffuse some of the opposition, abolition of political status is to be accompanied by the halving of sentences for all prisoners other than those serving life sentences.

Nevertheless, this latest attempt by the Labour Government to portray the conflict in the North as no longer political, but rather a series of acts of gangsterism, has already raised much angry opposition from both Republicans and Loyalists. Indeed, the 1 March deadline was heralded by the eruption of Loyalist violence throughout the North of Ireland.



MERLYN REES

However, anyone who supposes that this was a 'demonstration of Loyalist concern' could not be more mistaken. When the Loyalists take to the streets in opposition to British policy, the target for their violence very soon becomes the Catholic community. This time isolated Catholic communities such as that at Greenisland were subjected to Loyalist attacks — homes were petrol-bombed and fired upon.

In the Republican areas, protest at the changed status of prisoners has so far been mainly verbal. Most of the sentenced Republican prisoners — there are over 900 of them — are supporters of the Provisional movement, but the latter has made

no attempt to mobilise the anti-Unionist working class in solidarity with these prisoners.

This is a very serious situation. It was the failure of British imperialism to isolate the 'men and women behind the wire' which forced the introduction of political status in the first place. It would be a tragedy if this gain could be reversed without any real fight back.

Political status has played a major role in maintaining morale within the prison camps. It has allowed prisoners to associate freely and remain organised, and has facilitated educational and political discussion. Importantly, it has also allowed them more contact with

LABOUR MOVEMENT DELEGATION

The National Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland, which plans to send a plane-load of British trade unionists and Labour Party members for a four day visit to Ireland in May, is receiving growing support from wide sections of the British and Irish labour movement.

One of the latest sponsors is Arthur Latham MP, who joins seven other Labour MPs in backing the delegation. Five trades councils and many trade union branches have also agreed to be sponsors, along with well-known figures in the labour movement such as Mike Cooley, Ernie Roberts, and Lambeth councillor Ken Livingstone.

Equally impressive is the number of well-known members of the Irish trade union movement who are backing the delegation. They include Matt Merrigan and Michael Mullen, two of the most influential trade unionists in Ireland; and Phil Flynn, deputy general secretary of the Irish union for local government workers. In all, over forty leading Irish trade unionists have so far agreed to be sponsors.

This long and varied list of Irish support is particularly important, because it ensures that the delegation will meet a wide ranging and representative section of the Irish working class movement, both north and south.

The delegation is open to all who support the right of Irish self-determination, although any who do go must be genuine delegates from a labour movement body. *Red Weekly* asks all its readers to raise the question of the delegation at their trade unions, trades councils and Labour Parties.

A visit to Ireland is one of the most effective ways to counter the lies and distortions of the British press on Ireland. As the organisers of this delegation have promised an open and varied series of discussions, it could have a deep impact on attitudes to Ireland within the British working class movement.

For further details write immediately to: National Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland, 1 North End Road, London W.14.

those continuing the struggle outside — their families and comrades. These rights are now under attack.

For Merlyn Rees and the Labour Government, these rights have merely been 'privileges' handed out by a 'benign' British imperialism. It is rather a strange privilege to be thrown behind bars by the forces of occupation! Far from special category conditions being any form of privilege, they are democratic rights which should be extended to all prisoners.

Political prisoners in the North of Ireland are tried by the infamous 'Diplock Courts' in which there is no jury. In addition, Republican prisoners will benefit relatively little from the half remission of sentences, as they have in the past been given

lengthier sentences by the Loyalist-dominated judiciary. This same set of judges will undoubtedly adjust its norms of sentencing to take account of any remission introduced by the Labour Government.

Northern Ireland Minister Stanley Orme, a Tribune, has described the new measures as a 'liberalisation' of the prison system in the Six Counties. What nonsense! The Labour Government has recently announced a £50m investment programme for the Northern prison system, which includes the construction of a vast new prison complex at Meghaberry. That is a sure sign that harassment of the nationalist population will be stepped up over the coming months.

IRELAND'S OTHER CRISIS

Part 3 Making the working class pay

Last week we looked at the failure of Ireland's 'economic miracle'. The present Irish Government, a coalition between the right-wing Fine Gael and the Irish Labour Party, is taking the most desperate measures to ensure that the cost of that failure is borne by the Irish working class and the small farmers.

The world recession has meant a decline in the amount of foreign investment capital available for Ireland. The fact that the latest annual trade figures show the Free State with a record 49 per cent share of Anglo-Irish trade, for

instance, merely means that the flow of equipment and money from British industrialists is drying up — the spare capital for expansion no longer exists.

The Irish ruling class know perfectly well that their only hope for changing this situation is to chop the cost of labour to a bare minimum. Ferocious wage cuts might make foreign industrialists see a percentage in using their limited investment capacity to screw impoverished Irish workers rather than fight it out at home. And the Labour Party's presence in the coalition has provided the means of achieving this end — the National Wage Agreement.

The NWA is an annual formal deal

between the Government and amenable trade union bureaucrats. Its main function is to fix a maximum level for wages. Theoretically it has the force of law. It is the same sort of deal — but more elaborate, and with more power behind it — as the social contract and the £6 limit over here.

This strategy has come up against one big snag, however. The Irish working class aren't having any, despite what their leaders say. The first NWA was implemented more or less without complaint, but the second and third have met massive resistance. In both cases they have effectively been smashed, as

militant workers have pushed through a series of wage deals that go well outside the framework of the NWA.

At the same time the coalition has found itself in deep water over a number of other issues. In particular, it is fast becoming unable to cope with the rise in women's struggles in Ireland. An increasingly influential women's liberation movement has developed at the same time as both wages struggles and the fight for national liberation have drawn more and more women into the front line.

The role of the Catholic hierarchy, with its refusal of religious comfort to Republicans and its anti-working class propaganda, has weakened at the same time as an ideological crisis has hit the Church internationally. One upshot has been that the ideas of the women's movement have started to make headway in the Irish working class, to the extent that even the present Government has felt obliged to liberalise the almost medieval censorship and anti-contraception laws.

Equal pay for women, on the other hand, costs money. So when the question arose, the coalition first drafted a law even more ineffective than its British counterpart (it would have affected the wages of only about 30 per cent of women workers in Ireland) and then proceeded to drop it anyway. Cheap labour is the refrain that runs through the Government's actions on every issue.



Weapon

The massive unemployment in Ireland has given the coalition an extra incentive, and promises to become one of their major economic weapons. Every Government atrocity is justified in the Dail (the Irish parliament) on the grounds that it will bring more jobs.

Justin Keating, the Minister for Industry, is currently juggling the claims of a number of depressed areas (Donegal, Limerick, Waterford, Drogheda, and Cork) to receive a new lead and zinc smelting plant. Keating hopes to turn the workers in each area against the rest by this crude manoeuvre. But since the number of jobs concerned is only about 400 (there are 5,000 unemployed in Cork and 4,000 in Limerick), and the plans for the smelter will not be begun until 1977, this exercise may well go sour on him.

Irish agriculture is also in a poor state. The farming population has declined by about 10 per cent over the last decade. This has in part been caused by the gobbling up of smallholdings

and the accompanying dispossession of sitting tenants. In part it has come from lay-offs of agricultural workers. The rural poor are reappearing in Ireland.

For the Government this represents another potential explosion point. The situation is made tougher for them because the land question is linked up with the language problem. Many of the smallholders are in Irish speaking areas, and a lot of the resistance (tenants cooperatives, demonstrations against evictions) has taken place in these same areas.

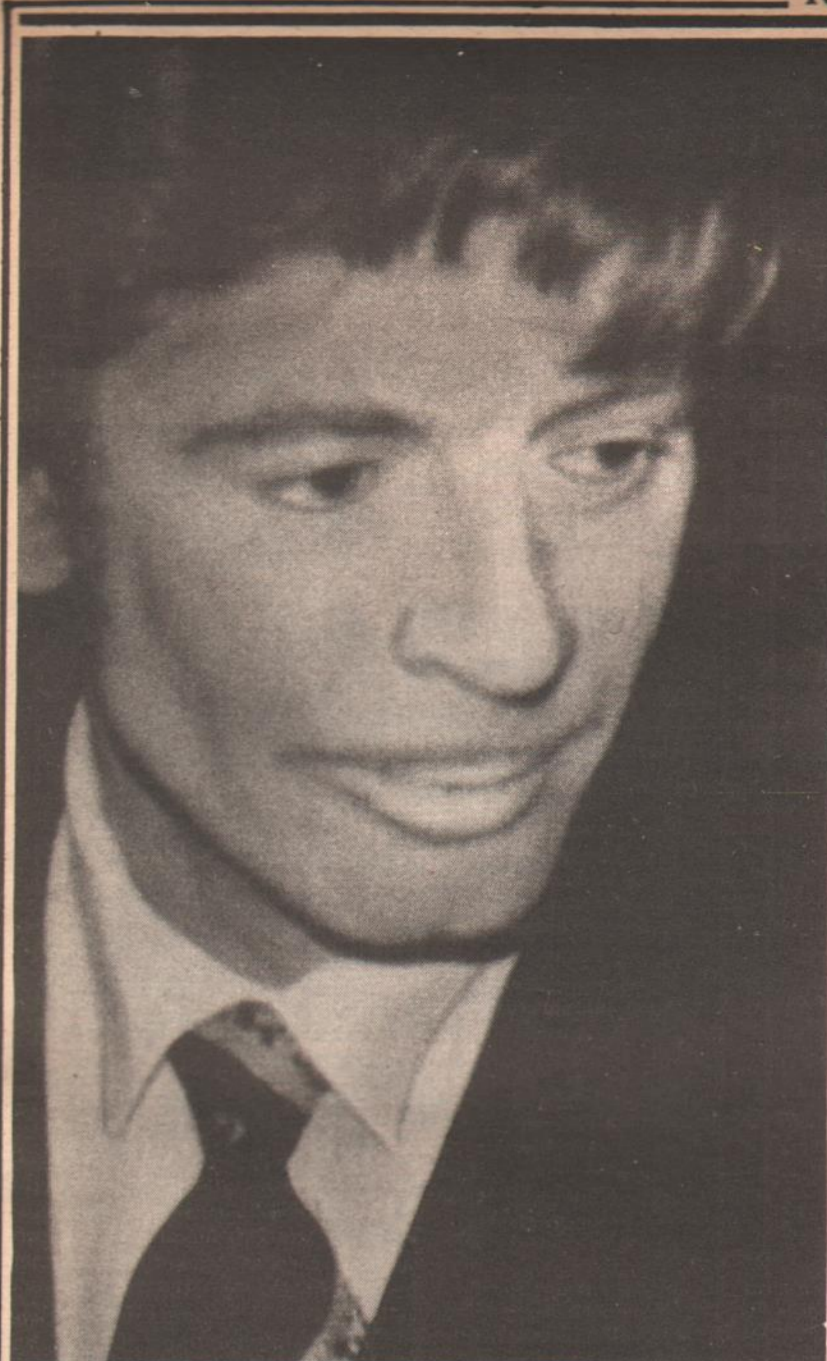
With all these problems it is not surprising that the Government has recently announced an increase in the size of its army to 20,000 — nearly doubling it. Next week we will look at the coalition's use of the troops and police and its attitude to the situation in the North, and examine the alternative strategies being put forward in the working class movement to fight the coalition.

MARTIN O'LEARY



No, it's not our author they're complaining about! Above and right: the women's movement has started to make headway in the Irish working class

ANOTHER ONE THAT GOT AWAY



BRUCE HUTCHINS

Last week Bruce Hutchins, second secretary at the US Embassy in Stockholm, made a hasty exit from Sweden. His departure coincided with revelations in the magazine *Fib-Kulturfront* that he was a CIA agent and had attempted to recruit a Kenyan freelance journalist employed by Radio Sweden for intelligence work in Angola.

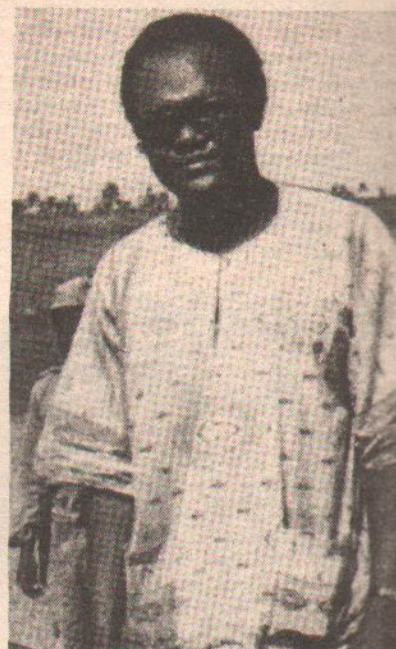
The *Fib-Kulturfront* article gave a detailed picture of US concerns in Angola and how the CIA recruits agents. The London *Evening Standard* ran the story as its main foreign news report on 4 March, but by next morning the item had mysteriously vanished from the pages of the national press despite Hutchins' rather rapid exit from Sweden.

Hutchins first made contact with Arthur Opot, the Kenyan journalist, at a tennis court in Stockholm where Opot regularly played with African diplomats. They played ball for several weeks before Hutchins finally exposed himself as a CIA man, telling Opot that they were investigating a Chinese diplomat. Opot was told he could expect good money if he joined the investigation: 'If you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours', Hutchins was reported as saying.

Just what this meant was revealed after a very thorough CIA investigation into Opot's background. Hutchins offered to obtain the release of a cousin of Opot who had been recently arrested in an East African country.

After consulting fellow journalists, Opot agreed to 'play the game' and with them work up an article on the CIA in Sweden. Opot started delivering false information on African diplomats in Sweden and the Chinese diplomat. His cousin was released, but Hutchins warned that the CIA could get him arrested again at any time.

On 19 September Opot was asked to go to Angola to collect political and military information on the MPLA government. The briefing document he was given (see extract below) is very complex and impossible for a single agent to answer, indicating that the CIA had about 15-30 agents in Angola at that time. Opot returned to Sweden with none of the required information, but despite two days questioning in a hotel room by Hutchins, he



ARTHUR OPOT

was sent to Angola a second time. His second briefing document contained questions about two Swedish journalists in Angola, making Hutchins responsible for espionage — a much graver offence. The second document also contained a revealing demand for 'proofs and details concerning any form of Russian pressure on the MPLA to agree to a compromise solution with the FNLA and UNITA'.

If Hutchins had not been sheltered by diplomatic immunity he could have been taken to court in Sweden. The offences would have been blackmail (maximum 6 years in prison), 'not allowed intelligence activity' (two years), and possibly illegal threats (two years) and espionage (six years).

As it was, he fled just in time — *Fib-Kulturfront* reported that the Swedish Foreign Department was planning to declare him 'persona non grata'. This would in effect have meant his deportation. Cord Meyer *et al* take note.

2. There is a pressing need for confirmation and details on the reported arrival in Congo (Brazzaville) and/or Angola of MIG-21 aircraft. According to some reports, MIGs were delivered to Brazzaville in early November, and press reports of 14 November quote East European sources in Luanda as saying about 400 Soviets have arrived in Luanda for the purpose of manning tanks and MIG-21s in support of MPLA.
4. Gather background info information on Leif Biureborgh. Who employs him? Is he a businessman or paid by the MPLA or by the Swedish government/Social Democratic party? Assessment of him is needed.
5. Who is the SR representative already there, who is too conservative to be permitted to visit the fronts? All info on his: bio, assessment.

Above top: extract from Opot's first briefing document demanding detailed information on Soviet military hardware. Below it the demand in briefing number two for information on Swedish journalists in Angola.

The great press cover-up

As the plane carrying the new American ambassador in Britain touched down at Heathrow Airport last Wednesday night, *Red Weekly* arranged its own sort of welcome for Mrs Anne Armstrong.

Not wanting the ambassador to be ignorant of the ant hill she will preside over, we printed the names and addresses of 60 CIA and other intelligence agents operating from the American Embassy. According to the *International Herald Tribune*, Mrs Armstrong was briefed about our report on her arrival. She was, however, unavailable for comment.

But what of our fearless reporters of the capitalist press? Mrs Armstrong's press conference was held at 8.30 in the evening, the pubs had been open three hours, and perhaps they were feeling tired. Or perhaps Fleet Street simply has more than its fair share of those 200 or so journalists recently alleged by an ex-CIA 'journalist' to be on the payroll of the 'Company'!

On 22 December 1975 Bernard Nossiter, the London correspondent of the *Washington Post*, reported that all London newspapers are at least partially staffed by writers on the payroll of the British SIS military intelligence unit. He quoted a Fleet Street editor as saying that 'more than half of that particular paper's full time staffers are on the SIS payroll'.

And what has this to do with the CIA? Well Louis Heren, deputy editor of *The Times*, wrote on 22 March 1975: 'The two agencies (the CIA and the SIS) have always closely so-operated with each other since the SIS helped to organise the CIA in the late 1940s'.

Our witty friends in Fleet Street have at best, always had an ambiguous position on CIA stories. On at least five previous occasions stories have been killed.

● **Case One:** In the spring of 1972 Richard Fletcher was commissioned by the *Sunday Times* magazine to write the final part of their 'Unofficial History of the Twentieth Century'. Fletcher agreed to do a piece on CIA attempts to infiltrate the Labour Party.

Six weeks intensive activity followed, involving many of the *Sunday Times*'s top correspondents around the world. The CIA had indeed tried to subvert the Labour Party, and the 5,000 word piece said so. The piece was vetted for libel by *Sunday Times* lawyers, art work prepared, and a final draft sent upstairs for editor Harold Evans' formal approval.

Evans immediately refused publication. When told it had been cleared for libel, he said that it was unfair and 'anyway, these are the people we support'.

● **Case Two:** In October 1974, three months prior to the publication of his *CIA Diary*, Philip Agee held a packed press conference in London. At it he listed the names and addresses of 35 CIA people operating from the US Embassy in Mexico. Barely a word appeared here, although the story was picked up in Mexico through Reuters. Within a few days the station chief and his deputy were withdrawn.

● **Case Three:** Throughout February 1975, Martin Walker of the *Guardian* worked in conjunction with *Time Out* and *Workers Press* reporters on a story to be published simultaneously on 6 March. The material was submitted to the *Guardian* news-desk on 5 March and

was being prepared for publication when Walker went to see the then editor of the *Guardian*, Alistair Hetherington.

Hetherington was the editors' champion in the great press freedom debate. But he would have nothing to do with this particular story, which was to list names and addresses together with photographs and material on how to spot your own CIA agent. So he suppressed it.

Hetherington is alleged to have told Walker in justification of his decision: 'These people are our allies; we are not in business to help the KGB'.

● **Case Four:** Last spring, after the first *Time Out* exposure, Steve Weissman — working with *Time Out* and some new information — identified over 50 CIA operatives in Britain. The story was accepted and paid for by the *Observer*. Weissman was even told that they might put it on page one and the *Observer's* overseas wire.

That was on Friday night. On Saturday morning, Weissman received a phone call saying that the *Observer's* editor didn't consider the story 'newsworthy'.

● **Case Five:** Last June *Time Out's* story exposing the Forum World Features news agency in London as a CIA front was big news in the United States. But not a word appeared in the British press.

There's an old story told to first year students of journalism, that when a dog bites a man that's not news, but when a man bites a dog that is news. The CIA appears to have been biting the British press for so long that when it's bitten back the newspaper editors do not consider it 'newsworthy'.

Mick Gosling

CIA presence courtesy of Wilson

Bill Hamilton works as the press attache at the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square. He has a job which any of our journalists would envy for its simplicity. In reply to any question about the CIA's activities and operations from the Embassy, all he has to say is 'no comment'.

'This', he said last week when questioned about *Red Weekly's* exposure of 60 CIA agents, 'is the position of the Embassy on the subject'. Members of the CIA were even less forthcoming — they put the phone down. How disappointing.

What emerged very clearly from Bill, however, is that the CIA remains in Britain courtesy of the Labour Government. He quoted a statement made by the

previous Ambassador, Elliot Richardson, on his way back to America in mid-January: 'It is a role which is concerned solely with intelligence. It is a role fully understood by the British Government, and so far as I know there is no problem created by any new CIA activity in the UK from the standpoint of the British Government.'

Further enquiries suggested that the Labour Government is in possession of a full list of all CIA operatives in Britain. This adds urgency to the demand that the Labour Government reveal these names, explain the activities of the CIA in Britain and its relation to British intelligence, and expel the CIA.

-WHAT'S ON-

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

WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER Campaign national conference, 10/11 April in Coventry. Open to all bodies supporting the campaign. Discussion of perspectives, amendments to Charter, structures. Credentials from: c/o Helen Gurdon, Flat 4, 39 Newbold Terrace East, Leamington Spa, Warwick.

PRESTON IMG public meeting: 'Fight NHS Cuts'—speaker Bob Pennington. Weds 24 March, 7.30pm, Windsor Castle Hotel, Egan St, Preston.

CRITIQUE SEMINAR: Eddy Harras on 'The Armenian National Question'. Tues 16 March, 7pm, London School of Economics (Rm S418), St Clements Building.

ARGENTINA Support Movement: London meeting chaired by Stan Thorne MP, Thurs 11 March, 7pm, at New Theatre, LSE, Houghton St, WC1. Also film, Argentinian speaker, and Christopher Roper (recently returned from Argentina).

PRESS FREEDOM: Meeting to organise campaign for labour movement conference, Weds 17 March, 7.30pm, Metropolitan pub, Farringdon Rd, London EC1.

CAMPAIGN To Free Eva Forest—public meeting Thurs 25 March, 7.30pm, Centreprise (Room 2), Kingsland High Road, near Dalston Junction.

BIRMINGHAM Engineering Voice public meeting: 'End Wage Controls'. Speakers: Ernie Roberts (Asst Gen Sec, AUEW), Derek Robinson (Convenor, Austin). Chair: Mick Rice (USSC Lucas BW3). Fri 19 March, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, Holloway Circus, Birmingham 1.

WEST LONDON NAC Benefit, Fri 12 March, 8pm—1.30am. Haringey Theatre Group play, 'A Nice Girl Like You'; Frankie Armstrong and 'The Derelicts' group; Snowjoes Disco. Acklam Hall, Acklam Rd, W10 (Ladbroke Grove tube). Admission 75p.

PORTUGAL: Big Flame meeting with Newsreel Collective's new 50 min film, 'On the side of the people'. Speakers from Big Flame. Weds 17 March, 7.30pm, Stockwell Hall, Stockwell Park Walk, Brixton, SW2. Admission free. Details 659 3895.

PORTUGAL: Big Flame meeting with film 'On the side of the people'. Speakers from Big Flame. Thurs 18 March, 7.30pm, Fulham Town Hall (opposite Fulham Broadway tube). Small Concert Hall. Details: 749 5726.

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

'AFTER THE CONVENTION—What Next?' London Socialist Forum with speaker Dave Bailey, Tues 16 March, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq.

BIG FLAME National Film Tour, March 1976: a series of public meetings with Big Flame speaker and 'On the side of the people', Newsreel Collective's new film about the struggle for working class power in Portugal, 1975-6. LEEDS, Sunday 14th, 7.30pm: Trades Club, Savile Mount, Leeds 7; BIRMINGHAM, Monday 15th, 7.30pm: The Wellington, corner Bromsgrove St/ Bristol St, city centre; COVENTRY, Tuesday 16th, 7.30pm: Lanchester Poly, city centre; S. LONDON, Wednesday 17th, 7.30pm: Stockwell Hall, Stockwell Park Walk, Brixton; W. LONDON, Thursday 18th, 7.30pm: Fulham Town Hall; WOLVERHAMPTON, Wednesday 24th, 12 noon: Polytechnic, Wulfruna St; REDDITCH, Wednesday 24th, 7.30pm: Trades & Labour Club. More meetings in the Midlands and North next month. Details from Big Flame, 217 Wavertree Road, Liverpool 7.

SEMINARS on the Kurdish struggle: 15 and 16 March, 6.30pm, Imperial College (Botany Common Room); 17 March, 6.30pm, Brunel University (Lecture Theatre C). Also Kurdish New Year party, 20 March, Imperial College Students Union.

STUDENT CONFERENCE on Ireland, sponsored by North London Poly and Middlesex Poly student unions and TOM. Any college society or union can send delegates on the basis of self-determination for the Irish people. Sessions include debate with Broad Left. Sat 27 March, 10.30am, North London Poly, Holloway Road, N7. Social in evening. Details from Paddy Prenderville, 01-328 1545.

PRO-ABORTION CAMPAIGN DEFIES PARLIAMENTARY RUMP

The anti-abortion charade in Parliament was dealt a blow last week by the decision of the National Abortion Campaign and fifteen other pro-abortion organisations – including the Socialist Medical Association and the National Union of Students – not to give evidence to the rump Select Committee on abortion. This challenge to the authority of Parliament immediately caused the matter to be referred to the Privileges Committee of the Commons, which could take action including fines and imprisonment against the organisations.

The National Abortion Campaign at once made it clear that they had nothing to hide. A statement issued at their press conference said: 'All the arguments that abortion is medically damaging have been refuted. There is no evidence that abortion is psychologically damaging.'

Dr Berry Beaumont, a member of

the NAC Steering Committee, demonstrated that the overall death rate from legal abortion in England and Wales was four per 100,000, while for early abortions (those performed in the first 13 weeks) it was as low as two per 100,000. The death rate from child birth was 11 per 100,000.

NAC will be considering proposals

to produce a workers report in counter-position to the pre-judged results of the Select Committee, which is now composed entirely of anti-abortion MPs. The NAC will be calling on representatives from the TUC and Labour Party to back a tribunal which will produce an alternative report on abortion.

The report will have to deal with the massive impact cuts in the NHS are having on abortion provision. The fight must start in the localities to gain all possible information on the impact of economies on abortion and contraception facilities. Activists should demand the opening of the books and plans of health authorities to draw up a programme of action to meet any such moves. The centralisation of these sorts of actions is a genuine need for the alternative enquiry to the Select Committee.

This move by the NAC is a positive step, counterposing the democracy of the workers movement to the fraud of a Parliamentary Committee which has no other purpose but to restrict further the limited provisions offered to women under the 1967 Abortion Act.

As to the threat posed by the high-powered Privileges Committee to take action against those who refuse to give evidence to this rump, Angela Phillips of NAC spelled it out loud and clear at the press conference: 'Let them do so on 3 April, because that is when the NAC and other forces will be marching through London. They should subpoena the whole of the National Abortion Campaign. Then they should come to Trafalgar Square, where we shall be ending

RED WEEKLY



Women on the march last Saturday to mark International Women's Day

our demonstration, and hear there the evidence that we have for them.'

The remaining four Labour MPs on the rump committee stand out like a sore thumb. Two in particular are notorious for their right-wing views on women – Leo Abse and James White, who initially launched the offensive against the provisions of the 1967 Act.

Their continued participation on the committee is in direct contradiction to the position of the whole labour movement. Both the TUC and Labour Party conferences voted for free abortion on request. The forces showing 'contempt' for the democratic process are not the NAC and their supporters, but Abse, White, Harold Wilson and the

other 108 Labour MPs who set themselves against the democratic decisions of the labour movement by voting for the recomposition of the Select Committee.

The mobilisation for the 3 April demonstration must back up the 'contempt' of the National Abortion Campaign for the privileges which the ruling class reserves for itself through its parliamentary committees. 3 April can show the answer that can be provided by the working class to defend and extend women's rights. Mass action to win free contraception and abortion on demand!

STEVE POTTER

US attack on abortion

One of the hottest issues in this year's US presidential elections could well be abortion.

Already the anti-abortion lobby has its own candidate, Ellen McCormack, who aims to pull together the opposition to a recent Supreme Court ruling which liberalised abortion laws throughout all states. As Barry Coleman reported in Monday's *Guardian*: 'Under Ellen McCormack there would be no abortion in America, none whatsoever.'

Anti-abortion groups in the US organise themselves on a state-wide basis, using names like 'Life' and 'Right to Life', and co-ordinating their efforts nationally and internationally on a more informal level. However, their international connections are most obvious when one compares the literature put out by different groups. The same photograph of a foetus has appeared in Ohio and Amsterdam on brochures that contained similar appeals against so-called 'Nazi concentration camp tactics' of killing unborn foetuses.

The posters used in Mrs. McCormack's campaign are headlined: 'This aborted baby won't keep his mother awake at night.....at least not yet.' The abortion issue in the United States is far from dead, and as the period of election campaigning picks up between now and November, there is likely to be an upsurge of anti-abortion activity using the elections as a focal point.

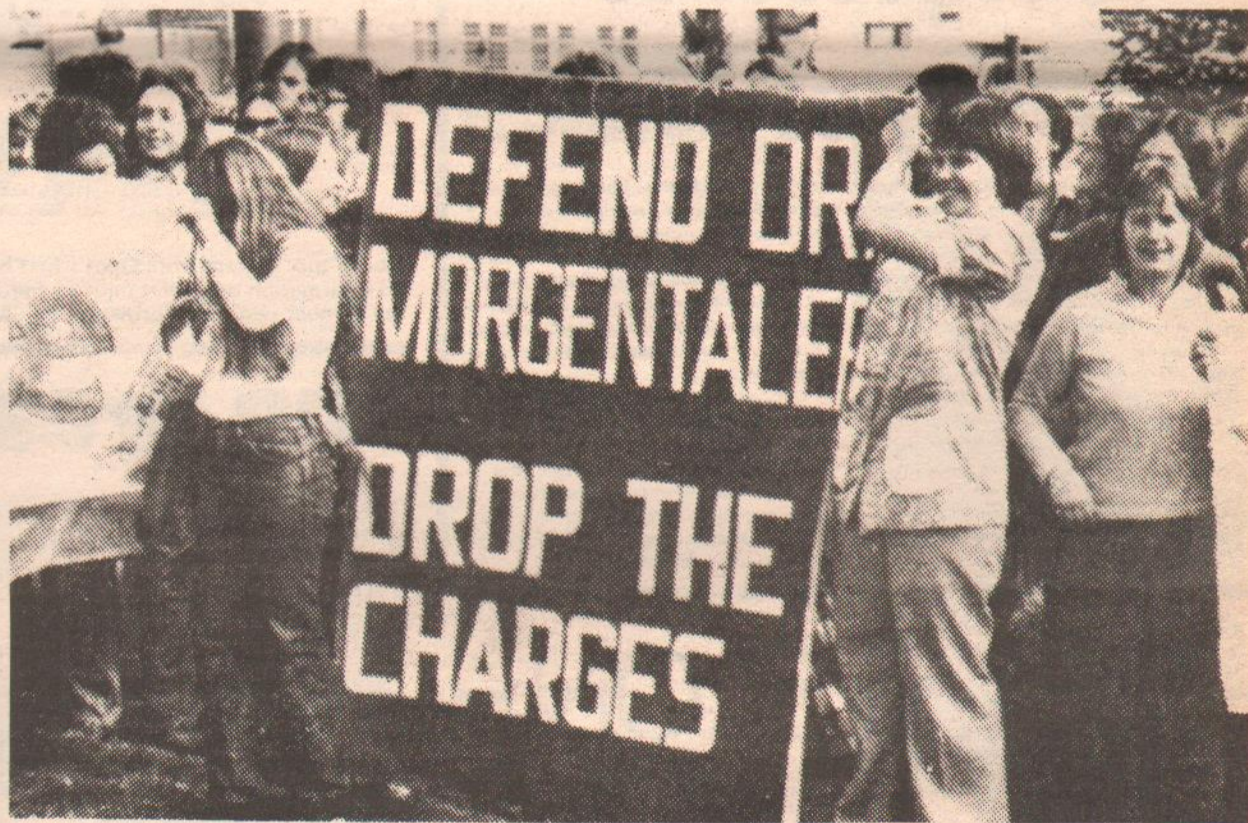
Having raised \$100,000 in 20 states – \$5,000 in each, with no single contribution greater than \$50 – Mrs. McCormack now qualifies for a matching grant from the Federal Government.



ELLEN McCORMACK

The media are creating an image for Mrs McCormack of the conventional grandmother, a devout Roman Catholic, married to a New York policeman and genuinely concerned about the plight of humanity – so concerned, in fact, that she will put decorum aside and go out and campaign for the cause of a group that cannot campaign for itself.....

It would be interesting to question Mrs McCormack on the rest of her platform. In her great concern for the preservation of human life, where would she stand on the question of provision of child care centres, on increasing state spending on unemployment payments, on providing high quality free hospital care so that the sick and injured can have decent treatment? She doesn't say. But as Coleman concluded in the *Guardian* – 'one might reasonably guess'.



Morgentaler speaks out

Dr Henry Morgentaler, the Montreal surgeon, jailed by the Canadian Government for performing illegal abortions, was released from jail on 26 January. Despite the Appeals Court's recent decision to uphold the original jury decision of 'not guilty', his battle is not finished. The Federal Justice Minister has ordered a new trial. Dr Morgentaler gave the following interview to the American Trotskyist weekly newspaper *Militant*.

What is your goal as far as the abortion laws are concerned?

My view is that abortion should not be something that is regulated by the state, that it should be a woman's individual decision, and that freedom of choice is an important issue.

A woman should have the right to control her body. She should have the right to decide whether she wants an abortion or not for an unwanted pregnancy. If she has decided she does want an abortion, the state should not interfere in any way. She should be allowed to have a safe medical abortion. It's just as simple as that.

This is basically what happened in the United States. This is not achieved overnight. It comes as a result of many groups and the feminist movement and others fighting for it.

In the United States this resulted in the Supreme Court declaring the abortion laws unconstitutional. Well, in Canada you have a different situation in the sense that the power structure is much

more based on and related to the Catholic hierarchy. That makes it harder to advance in this particular area.

What do you think is the significance of the appeals court decision in your case to uphold the jury verdict of not guilty?

The appeals court's decision is perhaps a step forward. A small step forward.

I don't think that this was a big victory. The only thing you could call a big victory is the repeal of the abortion laws, which will allow women to obtain abortions on demand; that is, when they need and want one.

A lot of work and energy are still necessary. People should remain active in the struggle. It is far from won.

FUND DRIVE Not so triumphant

There may have been a triumphant conclusion to the IMG Fund Drive (see page 5), but prospects for the Red Weekly Fighting Fund aren't half so rosy. The first week of March brought us only £24.50, so we still have a long way to go to that £500 target. Our thanks to: Glasgow IMG, £10; V. Jones, £10; Birmingham IMG, £3.50; W. Krisper, £1.

If the IMG Fund Drive showed one thing, it was the need for consistent fund-raising to build the revolutionary party and its press. Let's show we've learnt that lesson with a really big total for March. The address (please note change): Red Weekly, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.



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