

RED WEEKLY

12 JUNE 1975

No 105

PRICE 10p

ORGANISE TO SACK WILSON

With the referendum vote having gone in their favour, the campaign being run by the capitalist press to get rid of Benn has reached a new crescendo. Wilson, heartened by the success of his treacherous tactics in the EEC campaign, appears to be too scared to sack Benn completely from the Cabinet, but he will probably consign the Minister for Industry to a 'safer' post. Only the fear of a massive response from the workers' movement has so far held Wilson back.

Benn is not for the overthrow of capitalism. His policies—like the National Enterprise Board—are designed to prop up the long term interests of capitalism. Benn is merely one of a whole series of 'left' leaders, like Mitterrand in France, whose role is to safeguard the bureaucracy's position by giving it a new and more 'left' image.

These 'left' bureaucrats fear that the increasingly open and unashamed right-wing policies of Wilson will lose so much working class support that the entire bureaucracy will be discredited, resulting in a loss of electoral support which would permanently exclude them from office.

NO OPEN CALL

Benn's policies mean that he cannot even defend himself—let alone the working class. He has organised no forces inside the labour movement. He has not made an open call for the removal of Wilson from the leadership of the party. Very likely he will quietly move to some other Government post if Wilson gives him his orders. Certainly he will make no call for mass working class action to defeat Wilson's attacks.

On the surface it may appear as a squabble about who shall be Minister for Industry. But the issues that lie behind the ministerial shuffles go deeper than simply who shall do what job. Right now Wilson dare not come out openly for a formal coalition. He knows that such action would so incense the working class that his political career would be ended for good.

Instead, Wilson uses the capitalist economic crisis and the threat of a coalition to swing the trade union leaders behind a new and even more vicious Social Contract. This will not just drive down living standards, but it will bind the trade union bureaucrats even more firmly to the Government's anti-working class policies.

By presenting a 'new' Social Contract as a 'concession', compared to an immediate incomes policy or a coalition, Wilson hopes to neutralise the unions while he deals with the Labour 'left'.

INCOMES POLICY

He is well aware that a 'new' Social Contract will probably collapse within a few months. But he is banking on the hope that during that time he will have begun to demoralise the working class by unemployment and wage cuts, and that a capitulation by the Labour and trade union 'lefts' will deprive the workers' movement of an obvious opposition leadership. This will prepare the ground for the introduction of a compulsory incomes policy.

In the face of this attack the Parliamentary and trade union left signs its own death warrant by refusing to oppose the Social Contract or to fight to remove Wilson from the leadership of the Labour Party by organising forces within the working class movement against the present Govern-

ment's policies. Certainly the working class must oppose Benn's removal—not because Benn can defend the working class, but because this would simply be the opening round of an even more open war by Wilson against the working class. Victory for Wilson here would just intensify the Government's attacks still further.

Nothing decisive will be settled simply by keeping Benn as Minister for Industry. The real questions will be decided not by manoeuvres within the Labour Cabinet but by how much the working class movement organises its forces for the extra-parliamentary struggle against Wilson and his policies. The only people who will be playing a really determined role in this will be those who come out clearly for mass industrial action against the Government's anti-working class economic measures, for the maintenance of living standards

and defence of the right to work, and for the removal of the Wilson leadership of the Labour Party.

The Labour left will be playing no really determined role in the class struggle unless it stops relying mainly on parliamentary games and pressure in the corridors, and instead begins openly to organise forces for the fight. So far it has not shown the slightest intention of taking up this struggle. Instead it is the main defender of a new Social Contract and the other policies which will constitute the first stage of Wilson's stepped up offensive.

Benn must be defended against Wilson's attacks, but the future of the class struggle is much too important to be entrusted to the Labour left.

Defeat the Abortion (Amendment) Bill!

Fight for safe, legal abortion!

DEMONSTRATE — SATURDAY JUNE 21. 2pm

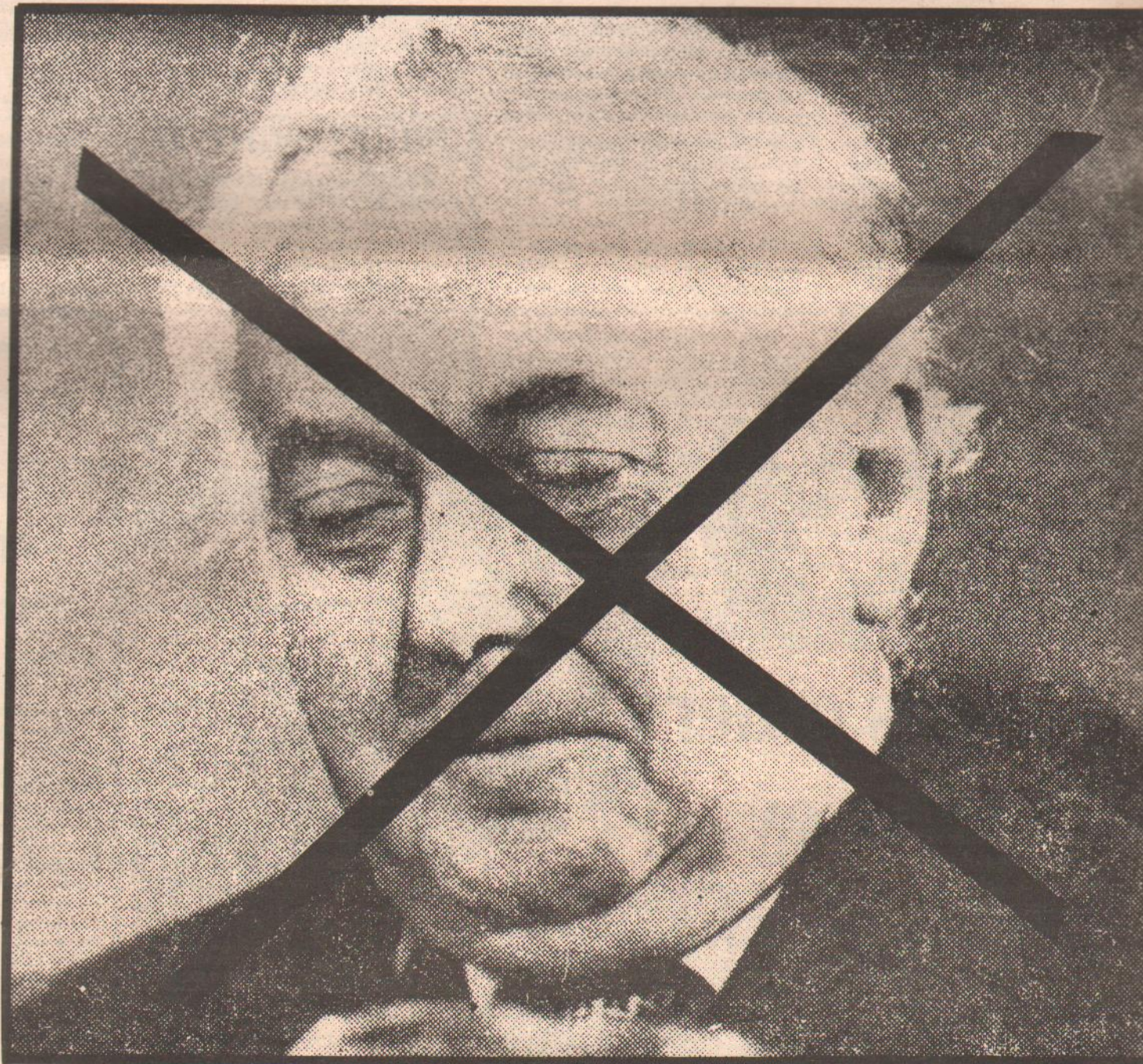
VICTORIA EMBANKMENT (Charing X tube)

MARCH TO RALLY AT SPEAKERS' CORNER 4pm

Sponsored by the ad hoc 21 June Committee.

CONTACT: National Abortion Campaign, 80 Railton Rd., SE 24.

free
contraception
and abortion
on demand



Solidarity with the railwaymen! — See page 2

RAIL STRIKE ON!

(BUT LEADERS OFF THE TRACKS)

For the first time since the 1926 General Strike, the National Union of Railwaymen is set for national strike action. The decision to call a strike from 23 June is the most devastating blow to Labour's social contract yet. Even if Sidney Weighell, the NUR's new general secretary, succeeds in his manoeuvres to get the national executive's 21-3 vote reversed, the strike threat will have provided the first national challenge to the social contract. And if the strike does take place the decaying remains of the Wilson Government's Mark 1 social contract are certain to be buried.

The decision of the NUR executive is the first sign of the coming split and eventual confrontation between the unions and the Labour Government, as the latter tries to make the working class bear the cost of the economic crisis. Every socialist and trade union militant must therefore throw their support behind the railway workers.

Resolutions of support, help with picketing to make sure goods and passenger falling stock are not moved and financial donations should flow in now from trade unionists up and down the country. The paper support already promised by the union leaderships of the dockers, miners, post office workers and transport workers has to be turned into concrete solidarity action.

VANISHING

For years railway workers have watched their living standards plummet and their jobs vanish under the right wing leadership of the union. The tribunal's so-called 27.7 per cent offer includes £4.40 threshold which are already being paid. This offer would give railmen on the lowest grade, an increase of £2.65 in new money and a new gross wage of

by **James Hurst**

£32.70. This forced even the tribunal to put forward the idea of a 'minimum earnings guarantee' of £36.70 - a grand increase of just 22.1 per cent on the existing gross wage!

In this situation the executive had no option but to reject the offer or face a mass revolt in the ranks. But they have done nothing to prepare the strike. The latest issue of the NUR's *Railway Review* doesn't even say clearly what the union will be striking for.

The opinion of most railway workers is that they will be striking for 30 per cent - just 2½ per cent more than the present offer! This is hardly likely to whip up enthusiasm for the strike. Yet the original claim sent to the tribunal was for 27.9 per cent for everybody earning up to £36 plus consolidation of the existing threshold payments - worth another 12.1 per cent.

The whole executive appears to have gone back completely on that Emergency branch meetings should

immediately pass resolutions to the national executive calling for no retreat on the full claim and for an emergency national delegate conference to co-ordinate the strike and amend the claim to defend any increase against the effects of inflation through the negotiation of a 'nil-norm' threshold deal.

One strike committee has already been established in Manchester but only for the purpose of paying strike pay. These should be established throughout the country, with the responsibility of running all aspects of the strike. If this does not occur Weighell will be able to continue his freelance sell-out operations. Since the strike decision he has continued to meet Bert Farrimond, head of the labour relations department of British Rail, and has said he will contact strike-baiter Wilson in the event of the stoppage taking place.

SHORT-SIGHTED

Weighell's campaign has been strengthened by the short-sighted decisions of the Transport Salaried Staffs Association and the locomotive union ASLEF to accept the tribunal's offer. Because differentials have been



NUR leader Sid Weighell—manoeuvring to get strike vote reversed

maintained and their members will certainly get more money out of the deal they have broken class ranks in order to defend narrow, sectoral interests.

But if British Rail succeed in clobbering the NUR then this will rebound on the jobs and living standards of booking office staff and locomen in the future. Members of ASLEF in particular should be calling on their executive to reverse its decision and launch the struggle for

a common claim with the NUR. The disunity inside the NUR and between the rail unions has certainly strengthened the hand of the Government, which doesn't want to upset its friends in industry and the City by being seen to give way to militancy. A kick in the crutch for the low-paid railway workers would get the Labour Government's hunting season for a hard line Mark 2 social contract off to a good start. We must not let that happen.

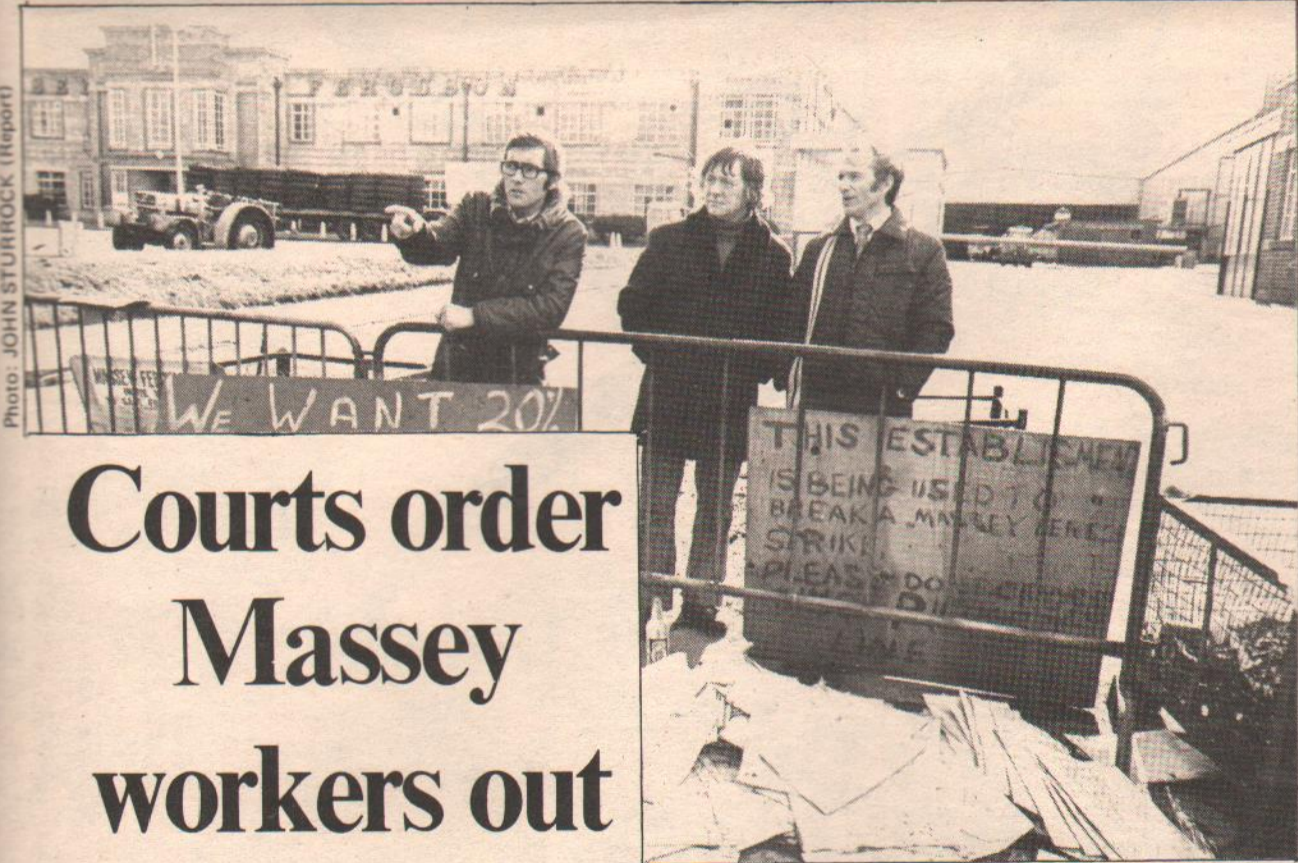


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

Courts order Massey workers out

MASSEY-FERGUSON, the multi-national tractor firm, has been granted a High Court order for the repossession of its Banner Lane, Coventry plant. The plant has been occupied and picketed for a month as part of the campaign for a substantial wage increase by 4,500 production workers at Massey's three Coventry plants.

After their own pathetic attempts to break the strike by carrying on working from local hotels, management are now using the law to do their dirty work. It took Mr Justice Chapman just five minutes to do the bosses' bidding and grant the repossession order at the hearing in chambers last Friday.

Now management will be content to wait for the union officials - who have refused to support the strike, engaged in red-baiting campaigns, and instructed the men to withdraw from the occupied plant - to get the action called off. Under pressure the engineering union stewards have now accepted an instruction to withdraw, but a final decision by all the shop stewards had not been made at the time of going to press.

Use of the state

The use of the state to attack the strike at Massey's is an attack on every trade unionist. Already writs have been used to smash a seven week long occupation against redundancies at Crosfield Electronics in North London,

as the one that sent 750 police, some armed with riot shields, charging across the campus to evict a student occupation at nearby Warwick University a few weeks ago.

If Massey's are successful in using the law to smash this occupation at one of the best organised factories in the country, the task of other workers in winning strikes and defending their jobs will be made that much harder.

Trade unionists' duty

In 1972 the might of the trade union movement defeated the might of the law and the state when hundreds of thousands of workers struck to secure the release of the Pentonville Five, imprisoned under the Industrial Relations Act. If Massey's go ahead and implement the repossession order and the workers resist, it will be the duty of every trade unionist in the country to rally to their defence in the same way as they rallied to the

STOP THIS THUGGERY NOW!

Gerry Healy
National Secretary
Workers Revolutionary Party.

Dear comrade Healy,
After a Workers Revolutionary Party public meeting in Basingstoke on 22 May, two members of the IMG were physically assaulted by members of your organisation, including M. Banda. Two comrades had newspapers forcibly taken away from them and destroyed with Banda again taking a leading part in this. The incident was obviously not an accident - during the course of the meeting M. Banda had made threats against our comrades.

The Executive Bureau of the IMG demands that the leadership of the WRP takes disciplinary measures against those in its ranks who have indulged in this hooligan behaviour (behaviour similar to that introduced by the Stalinists against the Left Opposition in its early days, and roundly denounced by Trotsky).

Because of the importance of the issues involved, and the need to eliminate violence as a method of 'settling' differences in the worker's movement, we have decided to make this letter public (together with our open letter).

We insist on an early reply giving us the details of what steps you have taken on this extremely serious matter.

Yours fraternally,
The Executive Bureau of the IMG.

Dear Comrades,
On Thursday 22 May, two members of the International Marxist Group attended a meeting of the Workers Revolutionary Party in Basingstoke. They were physically attacked by members

of the WRP and had copies of *Red Weekly* torn from their hands and ripped-up. Prominent in this attack was Mike Banda - a leading member of the WRP.

After Banda had spoken on the Common Market, the WRP chairman asked for questions. A member of the IMG then spoke about the need for organisations like the WRP and the IMG to make a united front on the Common Market. Banda's response was to unleash a flood of slanders against the IMG, accusing it of capitulating to Stalinism on issues such as the Vietnam Solidarity Committee.

After another IMG member spoke, the IMG was refused any more speaking rights. Protests to the chairman about this bureaucratic decision were of no avail and the comrades were told that as it was a WRP meeting the WRP would decide who would speak. Banda then boasted of having ejected IMG members from other WRP meetings and advised our members to leave the hall.

Later the IMG comrades started to sell *Red Weekly* outside the hall. Several members of the WRP, including Banda, then rushed at them, snatching their papers from their hands, and Banda and his colleagues started to tear up the *Red Weeklies*. In the process of trying to retain their papers our comrades were battered, sustaining extensive bruising and cuts.

The action of the WRP is scandalous. Using physical violence to prevent members of other revolutionary groups from selling their newspapers and putting forward their ideas has nothing in common with Trotskyism but belongs to the tradition of Stalinism. Using slanders instead of political discussion, and refusing to debate ideas, helps no one but the Stalinists and the reformists.

All the experience of the revolutionary movement shows that this type of hooliganism has to be stopped as soon as it raises its head. This is why we are publicising the details of this disgraceful incident and are asking other revolutionary journals to publish both this letter and the letter sent to the WRP.

We also ask that every effort is made to make these facts known to the members of the WRP, so that they can demand that their organisation takes action against the hooligans in their ranks.

-The Executive Bureau of the International Marxist Group.

Report exposes Labour's policies

THE POOR GET POORER

For the first time since the depression of the inter-war years the Government is planning *real* cuts in the living standards of the poor. In 1931 the MacDonald Government proposed an actual cut in benefits. In 1975 the Wilson Government is proposing the same package measures with one difference. Today inflation is disguising the crisis faced by Britain's poor—or one in eight of the entire population. Real cuts in benefits are planned because the November increase will not make up for the rate of inflation between now and the end of the year.

This is the major finding of a report on the Government's review of Social Security Benefits just published by the Child Poverty Action Group*. The report divides the poor into five groups. The first consists of retirement and invalidity pensioners. The second is composed of claimants dependent upon what the government calls short-term national insurance benefits. These are benefits paid to the sick and the unemployed.

LOW WAGE

The third group is of claimants who draw the long term supplementary benefit rates. This group is composed of people over retirement age together with those who are not required to register for work, but who have been drawing supplementary benefit for two years continuously. The fourth group of poor people is made up of claimants drawing the short-term supplementary benefit scale rate. The final group is composed of low wage earners and their families.

The report points out that the increases due to come into effect in November were calculated on the rate of inflation over the period August 1974 to March 1975. However, on the very day that the Secretary of

State announced the November rates the Government released figures showing that over the past three months the

	Rate in April	Increased rate in November	Value in November compared with April
Long term			
National Insurance			
Single person	11.60	13.30	11.08
Married person	18.50	21.20	17.67
Short term			
National Insurance			
Single person	9.80	11.10	9.25
Married couple	15.90	18.00	15.00
Long term			
Supplementary Benefits			
Single person	12.00	13.70	11.42
Married couple	18.85	21.55	17.96
Short term			
Supplementary Benefits			
Single person	9.60	10.90	9.10
Married couple	15.65	17.75	14.80

the annual rate of inflation had risen to over 34 per cent.

As the Budget alone will on Healey's own admission add a further 2½ per cent to the retail price index, the rate of inflation between now and November is unlikely to be less than

the rate of inflation over the last three months. So for the purpose of working out the value of benefits this November the report takes the annual rate of inflation as 34 per cent.

On this basis it finds that 'not only must the poor on benefit look forward to real cuts in their living standards, but the gap between their living standards and those of people on average wages will significantly widen, and this is true of all four groups of social security beneficiaries.'

Table One lists the value of benefits on the day that they were last increased, in April this year. It also estimates the comparative value of benefits when they are raised in November taking into account the probable effects of inflation on buying power.

.....back to this ?



'From this we can see that the Government has failed to maintain the value of benefits against rising prices.'

The same picture emerges when the value of benefits of the four groupings are measured against average earnings, estimated at £55 per week for April 1975 and £67 per week for November 1975. This information, shows a marked decline in the relative value of benefits.

The report claims one big difference between the fifth group in poverty—the low wage earner and his family—and the other groups. The cuts in living standards of the poverty wage earners—those grossing under £30 a week, the TUC minimum wage—have already come into effect.

Not surprisingly, Chancellor Healey has hit back at the Child Poverty Action Group's report. His 'anxiety' about the matter has nothing to do with the plight of the poor; he is more concerned with the damaging effect the report could have on the Wilson Government's attempt to get a new and tougher social contract.

TAX FIDDLE

'Despite the claims by the Chancellor that 400,000 low wage earners have been taken out of tax, this ignored the fact that over one million more low paid workers who were below the tax threshold when Labour came to power in February 1974 are now paying income tax. Moreover, the increased tax burden on the very poorest workers in our community has more than wiped out for most of them the increase in the family allowance which came into effect in April.'

The argument that in return for restraint on wages by the better organised sections of the working class the social services and the wages of the low paid will be improved has once again been exposed as a tissue of lies. The one thing that did give some protection against inflation to the wages of the low paid—threshold payments—has been abolished by the Labour Government.

SLIDING SCALE

The demand for 'nil-norm' thresholds, based on a working class cost-of-living index, giving automatic and complete protection against inflation to all working class incomes, in addition to normal wage bargaining, was passed at the recent Scottish Trade Union Congress. If acted on it could unite low paid and higher paid, employed and unemployed, in a common struggle against the Labour Government's attempts to cut living standards.

As the CPAG report concludes: 'A year ago the Prime Minister said that the burdens which would have to be borne during the present economic crisis would be placed on those with the broadest shoulders. Likewise when assuring the review of benefits the Secretary of State for Social Services said that it would protect the poor from the effects of inflation. Nothing could be further from the truth.'

James Drake

*The Poor and the Crisis—Child Poverty Action Group, 1 Macklin Street, London WC2B 5NH.

Setback at Chrysler

The three week-old strike by 4,000 production workers at Chrysler's Stoke, Coventry plant is over. On 4 June a mass meeting accepted a stewards' recommendation, passed by 71 to 50 at a stewards' meeting on 2 June, to return to work. But on quite what conditions they have returned remains unclear.

When the offer was originally made to Chrysler's 26,000 workers throughout the country it was accompanied by a strong threat from Peter Griffiths, industrial relations director, that if it was not accepted Chrysler workers would be 'looking at a rather bleak future, with major changes in the size and structure of the company.' In other words, if the workers took the money they also had to accept the rest of the deal scrapping plant bargaining and introducing 'worker participation'.

For Chrysler, worker participation is seen as the key to a radical increase in productivity, meaning speed-up and sackings. To get it accepted they even offered two additional £50 lump sums.

But the company's worker partic-

rejected by the mass meeting along with the £100 carrot. Moreover, the company's £8 a week 'final' offer has only been accepted by the strikers as an interim offer—the exact sum they were after—and the shop stewards have made it clear that they will continue their campaign for £15 from July.

The principle of national negotiations—which the workers fear would lead to the Ford-style negotiations which have allowed Ford pay rates to fall behind those of other car workers—has also been turned down. In fact Linwood stewards have rejected the same £8 offer because it does not give enough money towards parity with Coventry rates, while the stew-

At the 4 June meeting Transport & General Workers Union convenor Bob Morris claimed that they hoped to improve terms through local and national discussions. The large number of stewards who voted against a return reflects the scepticism that some of them hold about this promise.

But it is obvious that the Stoke struggle has simply been the first battle in the war launched by Chrysler management to get national negotiations as the first step to a national rationalisation of its plants.

The establishment of a fighting national shop stewards combine committee for all Chrysler workers—which would link up with other car workers also facing speed-up and mass sackings, and keep the whole workforce geared up for struggle through regular mass meetings on their negotiations and proposals—can defeat Chrysler's plans in the trial of strength which is developing between the company and its workers.

... or this ?



4
free
contraception
and abortion
on demand

'This is not a moral issue...it is a class question'

As the build-up for the 21 June demonstration gathers even greater support, *Red Weekly* interviews LINDA SMITH, a militant activist in the National Abortion Campaign. Linda is a member of NAC's Steering Committee and is also a member of the IMG.

clear to many people who first supported the campaign solely on the lines of opposition to the White Bill is that the 1967 Abortion Act is also restrictive and does not give women the right to choose.

NAC is against all restrictive legislation on abortion. It does not however have an official position of support for free abortion on demand. Many of its supporters — myself included — do of course support the right of women to free abortion on demand. The basis of the continuing struggle on this matter will be discussed at a national conference which NAC is organising this autumn.

Why should the workers' movement support NAC?

Women form an oppressed section within both the working class and society as a whole. The fight against capitalism does not simply take place on the wages front but has to be concerned with all the oppression and exploitation which capitalism inflicts.

Inside the workers' movement there are three main positions on this issue. Firstly there are those who say that matters like abortion 'are private questions and not the concern of the labour movement.' Then there are those who say, 'yes, it is the responsibility of the working class, but women will only be free under socialism.' This type of thinking ignores issues like abortion and falls into the trap of thinking that male workers can act on behalf of women.

My position — and that of the IMG — is that women have to learn to fight for their own liberation. By involving themselves in the struggle to control their own fertility this brings them into conflict with capitalism. Of course that does not mean that they automatically draw anti-capitalist conclusions. However, if the socialist movement supports them in this fight the divisions between men and women can be broken down and millions of women can be won over to socialism.

By taking up the fight against the abortion laws and giving its full support to women's right to choose the workers' movement can strengthen the overall struggle against capitalism. Capitalism offers women nothing



More than 500 people marched in Manchester last Saturday against the White Bill

better than a future of unplanned and unwanted pregnancies — its alternative is the butchery of the back-street abortion.

Capitalism tries to restrict the scope of women's lives and attempts to strengthen the family as a means of doing this. This is not a moral issue, as some people in the labour movement think — it is a class question. Just as the struggle for women's liberation is a class question.

The labour movement, in its own interests, must support the resolution passed at the Women's TUC in March which called for free contraception and abortion on demand provided by the National Health Service.

What does this mean in practice?

Women should not have to bear the cost of the crisis of social expenditure. It is not their responsibility that capitalism cannot function either efficiently or humanely. Capitalism is trying to cut back on the social services. It does not want to spend money on what it calls private and individual questions. The labour movement must fight these attacks. It should therefore take up the struggle for

out-patients' abortion facilities at all hospitals. It means insisting that medical people who are not doctors are trained to carry out abortions. It means full and adequate education about contraception and abortion in schools.

Local authorities should wage a massive campaign on contraception and abortion facilities. These were the recommendations made by the Lane Committee which spent three years studying the workings of the 1967 Act. The Lane Committee reported back to Parliament stressing that above all else the existing Act should not be restricted.

It is time the labour movement took seriously its own promises and took up these questions in International Women's Year.

We need to have workers' inquiries set up throughout the unions. These should find out the needs of women workers and produce concrete plans on how these needs can be met. Through the women officers in the unions and by the use of women's committees and women's caucuses, a direction can be given to the entire trade union movement on how to put into practice the policy of free contraception and abortion on demand.



Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IEL)

What is the National Abortion Campaign?

The National Abortion Campaign has on its representatives from the International Marxist Group, the Communist Party, the International Socialists, the League for Socialist Action, the National Assembly of Women, the National Union of Students, the Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign (WACC), and a series of women's groups.

When the James White Bill amending the 1967 Abortion Act was presented, there were a number of different ideas on how to fight it, reflected in various organisations.

There were the women Labour MPs. There was the Women's Right to Choose Campaign, a section of the Abortion Law Reform Association (ALRA). There was WACC. And of course there was the general women's movement.

The National Abortion Campaign was set up to go beyond the particular aims of each of these organisations. At the same time NAC has set itself the job of bringing them all together in a united campaign against the White Bill.

The aim of NAC has been to launch a national campaign against restrictive legislation on abortion and to fight for the right of women to choose. In the last four months, by turning the campaign towards the organised labour movement, the basis has been laid for a national campaign.

The activities of NAC inside the labour movement have led to a whole series of resolutions being passed opposing the Bill. Many of these resolutions have also taken up the demand for free abortion on demand.

The 21 June demonstration is mobilising support simply on the basis of opposition to restrictive legislation. But what has become

HEALTH WORKERS DEMAND B.M.A. BACK ABORTION

Doctors and medical students, together with National Abortion Campaign supporters from all over London, lobbied a meeting of the British Medical Association Council on 3 June which was discussing James White's anti-abortion Bill. Two representatives from the recent successful occupation of the BMA were eventually allowed into the meeting, and demanded that the BMA support and mobilise for the NAC demonstration on 21 June. But as IMG member Dr Berry Beaumont reported back afterwards: 'They were very concerned to oppose the Bill because of its effects on doctors' "clinical freedom", but seemed to think that demonstrating on the streets for a woman's right to abortion was just rather amusing.'

However, most other health workers don't share their views. Mass meetings have been organised by NAC activists in hospitals all over the country, and campaigns are now being waged against doctors and hospitals who refuse abortions. Contingents from twenty hospitals in London alone will be turning out on 21 June.



CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

BREED FOR PRODUCTION- SAY CAPITALISM'S DOCTORS

Dr Ronald Gordon wants to sterilise an 11-year old girl, because, he claims, she suffers from a 'congenital disease'.

Gordon is allied with the motley crew who support the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC), and the ideas of Sir Keith Joseph. What unites them is their bitter opposition to the idea that women should have the right to choose.

Socialists insist that decisions about sterilisation, abortion and contraception must rest with the woman concerned. Such ideas drive Joseph and his cohorts mad. They think these decisions should be taken by 'responsible' people — in other words those who accept the norms and values of capitalism.

right to choose

If the woman has the right to decide then the chains which bind her to the kitchen sink and domestic drudgery begin to snap. What terrifies all these so-called experts is that the moment you put a question mark over the idea that the role of women is to be wives and mothers, then a vital cornerstone of capitalism begins to crumble.

The people who want to sterilise

whose effects will almost certainly be irreversible. Despite all Gordon's claims to the contrary, only five out of every 100 sterilisation cases are reversible.

prejudice

Gordon argues that she is 'too young to be pregnant' yet in the same breath claims that she is sexually mature. Perhaps the 'safe' way would be to sterilise every 11-year old who has sexual inclinations and feelings!

Such ideas have more in common with witchcraft and prejudice than science. There is no rational basis for saying that sexual promiscuity is tied up with the illness of this young woman. This 'quack' cannot produce one single scientific or medical argument to justify sterilising this girl.

If he really cared about her problems he would recommend some form of contraception. That means that she, not he, would take the choice. Instead he capitulates before her illness and washes his hands of trying to find any cure.

What a commentary on the medical profession. They prostrate themselves before the inevitability of 'illness' and treat their patients like people without a future.

Gordon and his allies try to blame

tion rather than admit that they are a product of a capitalist system which denies the working class the most elementary rights. They prefer to sweep all this under the carpet and attach the blame to the victims of capitalism.

They viciously describe the poor, the sick, and the oppressed as unworthies. They have neither compassion, nor humanity. They view people — and women in particular — simply as objects to serve the needs of the productive forces.

What capitalism needs is a compliant, obedient nation of 'healthy' mothers. Women who do not fit into this pattern are 'useless'. Gordon has revealed what it is all about. Capitalism can offer women nothing better than being breeders. If they cannot fulfil that role, then scientists will toss them on the scrap-heap.

a denial of rights

These capitalist values have turned Dr Gordon into a pseudo, de-humanised apologist for medical progress. For his intended victim they mean humiliation, degradation and the denial of her fundamental rights as a human being.

Bob Pennington

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)



INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY BOOSTS CAMPAIGN

On 21 June delegations and representatives from various European countries will be marching on the London demonstration against the James White Abortion (Amendment) Bill. One of the speakers on the demonstration will be a woman arrested by the Italian police when they closed down the Abortion and Sterilisation Centre in Florence.

A series of back-up actions have been arranged across Europe to coincide with the 21 June demonstration. These will include pickets in Italy by the Free Abortion Campaign outside British consulates and embassies in Bologna, Turin, Pisa and Florence. In Munich, Germany, a demonstration has been called for Friday 20 June — to ensure that it takes place while the British Consulate is open. A delegation from the French Mouvement pour la Liberte de l'Avortement et de la Contraception (MLAC), will also be on the 21 June demonstration.

A national conference is being held on 21 June in Switzerland — which means that the Swiss will not be on the London demonstration. However, pro-abortion groups in Switzerland have notified the National Abortion Campaign that they have sent a letter to the Social Services Minister, Barbara Castle, protesting against restrictive measures on abortion. They will also put a resolution at their own conference supporting the 21 June demonstration; and there will be a picket of the British consulate in Lugano.

DOCTORS' DECISION

The Swiss conference will be discussing how to take forward the fight for abortion on demand. Although 50,000 signatures were collected in 1971 calling for a referendum to take abortion off the criminal law books, changes in the law left the decision in the hands of the doctors. Where Swiss cantons are

heavily dominated by Catholicism, the law is interpreted in a very restrictive way. If the doctor gives the go-ahead at all, the clause about danger to the 'health' of a woman — the grounds on which abortion will be granted — is interpreted as referring only to 'medical' health.

This has led to 50,000 back street abortions a year being performed in Switzerland — with all the dreadful consequences such as sterility, infections from desperate methods used like knitting needles, soap etc., often even resulting in the woman's death.

At an international meeting on abortion in Paris organised by MLAC on 28 April this year a call was made for actions to be held in Portugal and Italy in the summer and autumn.

PORTUGAL

In the summer, a week of action has been proposed in Portugal. This will include workshops, films, theatre groups, and the distribution of literature from different countries. This event will be important in exchanging the experiences of gains — and mistakes — made in different countries. It will also give a stimulus to the fight against women's oppression in Portugal.

The women's liberation movement is very small in Portugal. The old abortion laws have not yet been repealed, and a newly-formed campaign for abortion and contraception facilities has called for the release of all those imprisoned under old laws.

The effects of the revolutionary upsurge have had some effect on making abortions more available. Clinics and hospitals have been set up in buildings taken over by the people. Up to now these have been ignored by the authorities, but they could come under attack if support for contraception and abortion is not built up in the working class movement.

A second international demonstration is also being organised in Italy in the autumn. The first crack

in the old fascist laws — which make abortion a crime against the entire 'race' — appeared in January this year. Since then reactionary forces have waged a battle to seal the crack. The fascists have fought to have the abortion and sterilisation centres set up by the Radical Party closed.

'FREE ABORTION CAMPAIGN'

The new Free Abortion Campaign — organised to fight against moves to return to the old abortion laws, and against the present restrictions, where three million illegal abortions are performed each year with 3,000 resulting in death to the woman — will be given a big boost by a massive demonstration in Italy. Plans are being discussed for holding an international conference after the demonstration.

In view of the important victories achieved in France by MLAC, its participation in the London and Italian demonstrations is crucial. Although more liberal abortion laws have been introduced in France, cuts in hospital expenditure and the refusal of the medical profession to implement the new laws have led to some spectacular actions.

Forces from MLAC occupied an entire hospital ward for one afternoon and performed abortions using the relatively simple Karmen Method. This reactionary hospital was then forced to give the demonstrators a guarantee that two abortions a day would be performed under the new law in future.

The day after the London demonstration, Sunday 22 June, a meeting will be held in London of delegates from the various countries to discuss the Portuguese and Italian actions. The Italian action in particular could and should be used as a means of starting a debate in the international workers' movement not only on abortion, which is significant in itself, but also on how to make real the slogan for a 'United Socialist States of Europe'.

BUILD SUPPORT

Support for this demonstration should be got from every possible Labour Party, trades council, women's group and every Working Women's Charter Group. The aim should be to get a really big delegation from Britain.

The 21 June demonstration, the Portuguese week of action, and the Italian demonstration can not only extend the fight internationally on the issues of abortion and contraception, but against all the attacks which the ruling class is increasingly beginning to co-ordinate on an international scale against the workers' movement.

BEHIND RHODESIA'S BLOODY SUNDAY

The shooting down of 13 unarmed African nationalists by the Rhodesian police in Salisbury on 1 June cannot be understood in isolation but only in the light of the whole southern African system of power. The so-called rioting which the bourgeois press claims prompted the racist police to open fire can only be understood as an expression of frustration and incitement.

Of course there are political and factional differences within the supposedly re-constituted African National Council (ANC). Of course there are personality clashes in the National Executive of the ANC. The chances of a genuine reconciliation of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), led by the Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole, and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), led by Joshua Nkomo, are very slim indeed. But these alone cannot explain the so-called rioting and the behaviour of the 'exemplary' police force of the Smith regime.

Throughout the history of African nationalist organisations in the country, the Rhodesian racist regime has never failed to exploit the contradictions of these organisations and any other contradictions among the people to ban their organisations. 'Bloody Sunday' can be seen as a calculated attempt to discredit the ANC at this crucial stage of the reactionary 'detente' exercise — the brainchild of the South African Prime Minister, Mr John B. Vorster and to a lesser extent, President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia.

The urban African, more than his rural counterpart, is an extremely frustrated person. The more fortunate ones, who have actually obtained employment, are overworked, underpaid, and denied the most elementary bourgeois civil rights such as the vote and the right to organise in unions. But for many, chronic unemployment — especially of the school-leavers, who are forced to leave school due to the lack of opportunities for further education — has become part of the natural order of things.

UNORGANIZED VIOLENCE

This cumulative frustration tends to express itself in senseless unorganised violence such as rioting. The violence of African migrant labourers in the South African gold mines, which is often explained in terms of tribalism, is similarly a result of the alienation and the artificiality of the condition of life to which they are subjected. Less apparently, this frustration also makes the African population a rich recruiting ground for agents provocateurs and informers, elements responsible for inciting the people to riot.

We should note that the Smith regime wishes to sabotage the southern African detente exercise, to which it is a very reluctant party. The armed liberation struggle in Zimbabwe, led by the military wing of ZANU, the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), has been fast developing along the now classical lines of the Guinean (Bissau) and Mozambique revolutions. Vorster, the stern guardian of capitalism and racism in Africa south of the Sahara, realised that his country's military presence in Zimbabwe — in the form of the 'para-military police' — could not halt this dynamic, just as his intervention in Mozambique delayed but finally failed to defeat the revolution. He also realised that if a people's revolution triumphed in Zimbabwe, South Africa itself would be the next item on the agenda of the African Revolution.

This fear has already been justified by the enthusiasm with which the Blacks in South Africa welcomed the victory of the people of Mozambique under the leadership of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO). Of special significance was the response of the people of Soweto, to which the racist state reacted with its usual extreme violence.

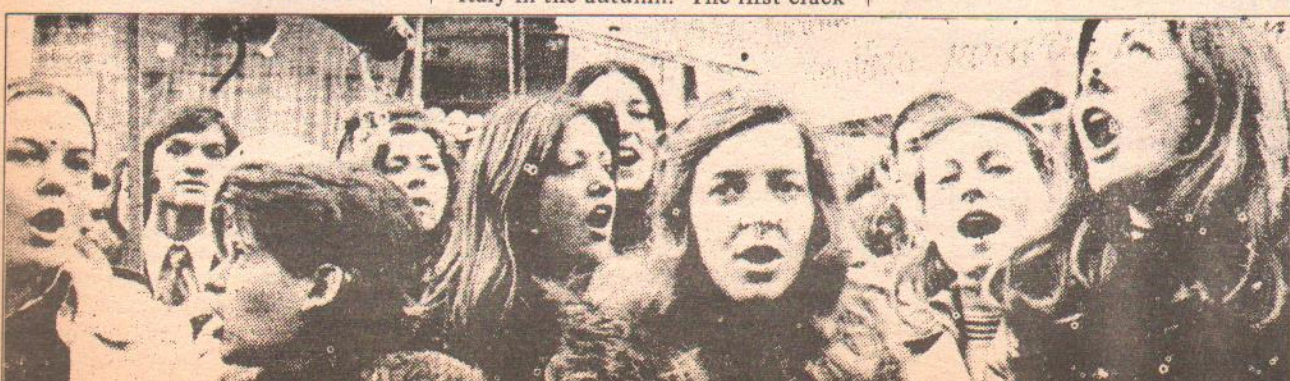
It is therefore absolutely necessary for the survival of apartheid in South Africa that the national liberation movement in Zimbabwe does not get out of hand. The recent attempts to disarm ZAPU, ZANU and the Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI) under the cover of detente were really aimed at ZANU and its army — the real vanguard in the armed struggle for liberation. This disarmament was not so much the work of Vorster as of Zambian premier Kaunda, who actually forced the leaders of ZANU to sign the Lusaka Agreement last December.

REPRESSION OF ZANU BY KAUNDA

The Zambian Government then proceeded to arrest all the ZANU militants on the pretext that they wanted to get hold of the murderers of ZANU leader Herbert Chitepo. To be sure, hundreds of men and women had died in factional struggles within ZANU and Chitepo's death was the climax of the murders. The fact is that they provided Kaunda with a very good opportunity to clamp down on and force them into the ANC fold, thus fulfilling his part of the detente exercise with Vorster.

The murderous attack by Smith's police in Salisbury last week was an attempt to take advantage of this crisis of nationalist perspectives to further demoralise the resistance. This places a particular responsibility on the international labour movement to prevent the isolation of the resistance fighters, which is the main aim of the southern African detente manoeuvres.

The Labour Government has given yet more proof of its cynical subservience to imperialist interests in this area with its announcement last Friday that it would veto a United Nations resolution to impose a mandatory arms embargo on South Africa over its occupation of Namibia (South West Africa). The answer of the labour movement must be very clear — to impose its own sanctions both by blacking all arms shipments to the racist regimes and by taking up the call by the South West African People's Organisation to black all goods from Namibia. This, together with financial and other direct assistance to the liberation fighters, can help to frustrate imperialism's latest manoeuvres and boost the struggle



WHAT'S GOING ON

THE 'REPUBLICA' AFFAIR

The Republica affair has provided the excuse for a two-fold campaign by the Socialist Party to sway public opinion. In Portugal itself, in the name of 'freedom', it has organised mass demonstrations on a scale which would have been totally beyond it a few months ago. 'We would have got even more votes if the elections had taken place now', exults SP leader Mario Soares. At an international level the indignant chorus of democrats has conveniently pushed into the background Gerald Ford's more or less open threats against Portugal.

Aside from this campaign to sway public opinion, the Republica affair poses a real and basic problem: the attitude of the workers' movement towards the means of information. But to look at it at all seriously, we must first clear up two points of fact which have been deliberately obscured in the discussion around this affair.

Firstly, Republica is not the official paper of the Socialist Party, and is not part of the militant press of the workers' movement. It is a private newspaper whose opinions today are to a great extent influenced by the Socialist Party — that is all. This little difference has certain consequences which we will go into.

Workers' commission

Furthermore, contrary to what the Socialist Party would have us believe, it was not the Communist Party which prevented the publication of the paper. It was the decision of the workers' commission, in which the influence of the CP is contested by a Maoist group, the Popular Democratic Union (UDP). One has only to note the embarrassment of the CP over the affair, and to see who has really benefited, to understand that it was not a question of the CP leadership pulling the strings.

What explanation of the conflict has been given by the workers of the Republica workers' commission? Their first argument is that it was an industrial dispute: the financial situation of the paper was getting worse, sales were falling, and their jobs were at risk. To exercise control over management decisions, they decided to elect a commission with one delegate for every 15 workers (two editorial staff, four printers, three clerical staff, two from despatch, and one messenger). But here this question overlaps with another: the workers' commission blamed the content of the newspaper for its falling sales.

This version is supported by the media-workers' and printers' unions. The former took up in its motion the theme of an industrial dispute: 'That is why the workers of Republica decided to exercise greater control over the newspaper in order to assure the non-party character of its contents and their own right to work.' They even add that the battle at Republica must be seen in the context of the battle for production, to safeguard a small undertaking.

The Socialist Party, however, has organised its campaign around the theme of 'press freedom'. But what is this 'freedom of the press' at present? Freedom of information? Not exactly. Rather, it is the freedom of the owners to maintain their hold over the means of information and communication.

Nationalise the media

That is why the struggle of the Republica workers could have fitted in so well with the general interests of the Portuguese working class. Thus we, as revolutionary communists, demand first of all the immediate nationalisation without compensation of the paper-mills, the printing works and manufacturers of printing materials, the radio and TV networks, and the news agencies. By itself that wouldn't resolve the problem of a critical and democratic information service. But it is a necessary pre-condition if the workers' and cultural organisations, the different local or labour groupings, are to have access to the means of communication to exchange their experiences and proposals; if they are to have at their disposal the necessary means to conduct the great collective debate which will be required for any democratic elaboration of an entire economic plan.

To nationalise the means of communication means only to remove them from the control of private interests. It does not mean State control of all information. This or that organisation, this or that union, this or that university or cultural grouping can keep its press on the basis of a national re-allocation of the existing facilities.

In this light the workers of a printing company or a newspaper cannot set themselves up as censors in the name of the whole working class, of which they are only a small fraction. Workers' control over the organs of information cannot justify the right of censorship, but only the right of counter-information. Thus instead of blocking publication or cutting out articles, the workers of the Republica co-ordinating commission should have demanded the simultaneous publication of their own views whenever they thought that news coverage was biased. They should also have posed publicly the question of real freedom of information and put democracy on their side.

That is our point of view — a friendly criticism, a difference of positions inside the workers' movement on a difficult question.

Post-electoral offensive

But the fight waged by the Portuguese Socialist Party is something else entirely. It has used the Republica affair to extend its post-electoral offensive: to call into question the municipal councils set up after 25 April 1974, and to challenge the trade union leaderships elected by a show of hands.

On the ground of democratic freedoms and their defence we can see that the SP and the CP are in fact two sides of the same coin. It did not take the Republica affair to set the alarm-bells ringing. We condemned at the time the decrees of June 1974 which completely restricted the freedom of the press (by introducing virtual censorship) and those of September which limited the right to strike. We condemned the banning and the repression of the Maoist groups,

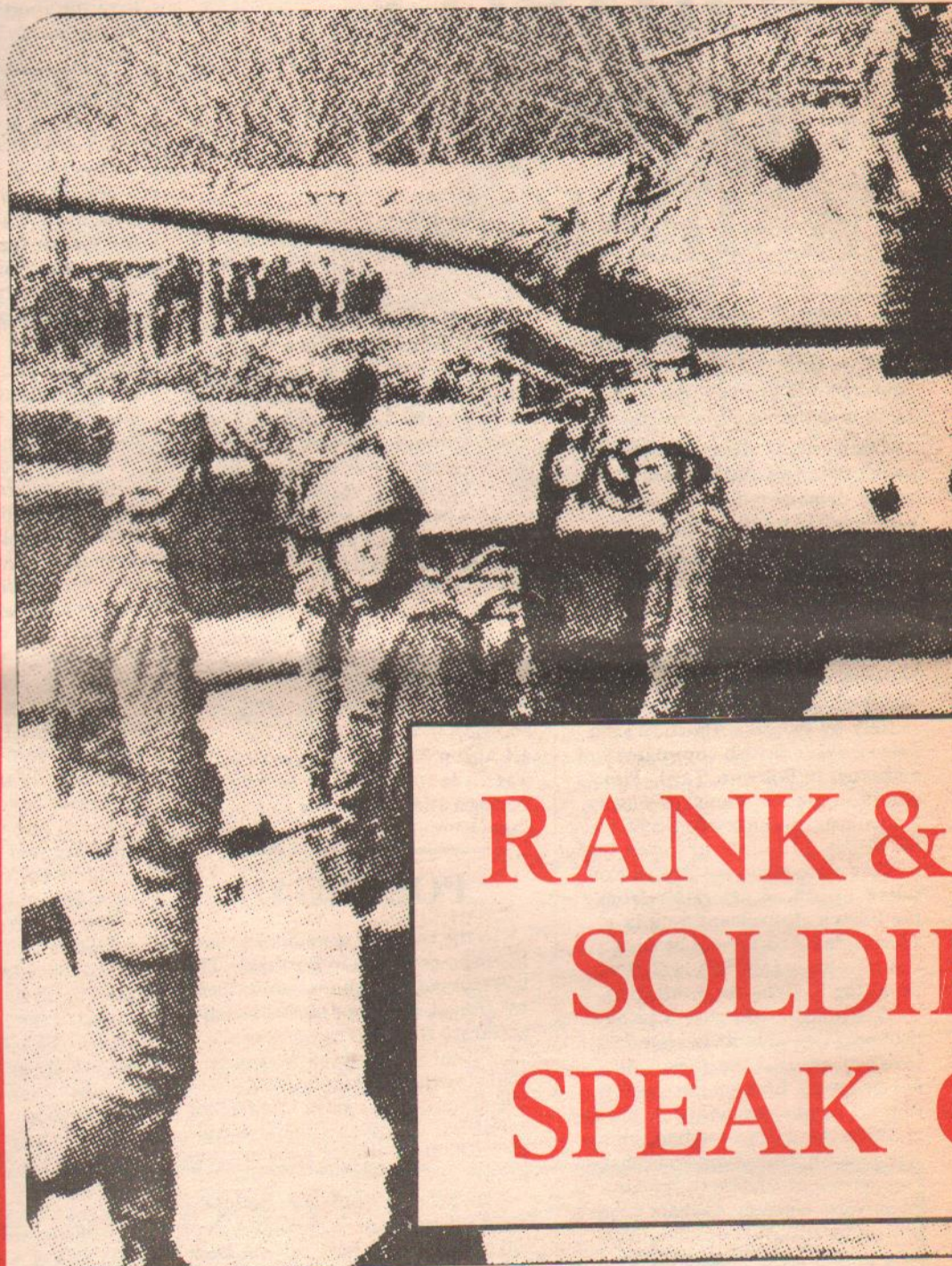
The most recent assembly of the Armed Forces Movement, meeting to discuss the next steps forward in Portugal, issued a call to 'reinforce the direct relations of the AFM with all the structures of popular participation, with a view to consolidating the alliance of the AFM and the people and overcoming partisan divisions in the common struggle of the battle for production and effective construction of socialism.'

But what the statement failed to specify was the relationship between these 'structures of popular participation' and the capitalist state — and on which it was intended that the Government should be based. This has led to a situation of continuing political crisis reflecting the ongoing struggle for dominance between capital and labour.

On the one hand, the Socialist Party, whose leadership is firmly committed to the defence of capitalism, has seized on a dispute at the newspaper Republica to raise a hue and cry about the 'Communist threat' to democracy and to warn against the

threat of a cabinet un- SAID look- utionary se- dom and r-

On the c- popular pa- tures withi- Rouge, men- below the- labour mov-



RANK & SOLDIER SPEAK

1. DISCIPLINE

Francisco: The mobilisation of the soldiers, along with the mobilisations outside the barracks (in the factories and on the land) have succeeded in imposing a relationship of forces whereby strict military discipline has been ditched in a number of barracks. Everywhere there have been purges of reactionary, Caetanist officers. The Regulation on Military Discipline, dating from the fascist period, still exists in writing but cannot be applied because the balance of forces today favours the soldiers in the barracks.

Antonio: The political rights and democratic freedoms won by the soldiers are, we feel, all too few compared with those won by the workers in the factories. When we were called up for national service we lost some if not all of the rights and freedoms we had won at our places of work.

Only through struggles inside the barracks will we really succeed in forcing the top brass to agree to our demands. An example of the demands which they have been forced to accept

through struggle the discharge of comrades who are married or have family responsibilities.

As for political rights inside the barracks, they hardly exist. If there is now a certain freedom of political discussion, it is because we imposed it, and not because the AFM granted it to us. According to the AFM, we should leave our political ideas behind when we join the army: the army cannot take sides because political differences would create anarchy in its midst.

But the struggle in the barracks has made definite progress in spite of this. The AFM claims that the soldiers are going to be enrolled nearer where they live, although that has yet to be implemented. As for the right to take part in demonstrations with the workers, that's obviously not sanctioned by the top brass. But it was possible on 1 May: the soldiers were able to take part in the procession with red flags.

Forbidden

For meetings we're forbidden to take part in uniform. But in uniform or not many soldiers have spoken at meetings and some have been jailed for taking part in political activities outside the barracks.

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Gastao: The army start- units it ha- just talked- and how i- above all v- 28 Septem- developed- the relatio- improved- port, diet-

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ON IN PORTUGAL?

dictatorship'. Faced with a threat from the SP to withdraw from the demands were met, the AFM finally backed down. DANIEL BEN— what was really going on at *Republica* (left) and explains how a revol- st policy could have exposed the SP's claim to be defending press freed the situation in the interests of the whole working class movement.

hand the ambiguity of the AFM's relationship with the 'structures of ation' has been posed most sharply by the development of such struc- army itself. In a 'round table' organised by our French sister-paper of the Portuguese Revolutionary Soldiers and Sailors Front discuss of these bodies and their relationship both to the AFM and the broad nt.



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GANISATION

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fascist terror which sur- nits after 25 April, began e so-called democratis- ht have expected, hardly t the level of the officers. result of the reaction- 28 September and March that the officers n to appeal to the sold- fending their own skins. een if you look at the e AFM assembly.

it was made up entirely of soldiers. But after 11

strations and meetings it is no thanks to the AFM, but rather a result of their own struggles.

to integrate them into its project; in a demagogic way 20 soldiers were included in the assembly. The officers still say, however, that reaction will take advantage of indiscipline to launch an attack. They say that discipline is just as fundamental as unity; they try to confuse the minimal demands and the political rights of the soldiers with so-called reactionary attempts.

Balance-sheet

Antonio: The struggle to purge reactionaries became generalised after 11 March, particularly in units where the soldiers had a tradition of struggle against reaction. We organised a meeting where we drew up a balance sheet of 11 March and how the unit had reacted to the bombardment of the comrades of RAL-1 less than a mile away. With regard to the latter this balance sheet was negative: we had failed to support

who did not inform us of what was going on. The result: five officers and the commander (the whole command) were purged.

It is obvious that the paratroopers were persuaded to attack RAL-1 because they were unorganised and lacked any political discussion: they were deceived by their reactionary commanders. We therefore reached the conclusion that the same thing could have happened to any unit and even to us if we hadn't been organised. Hence the need for the soldiers themselves to organise.

We organised a commission of democratically elected soldiers, as well as several progressive officers and sergeants, for the purpose of organising political meetings, an internal 'cultural dynamisation' programme, and also control over the orders of the commanders to prevent any repeat of the paratroopers' error.

Self-organisation

Francisco: There is an equally important example of self-organisation among the soldiers of the RIOC regiment. The day after 11 March, in a mass meeting of soldiers, there was a motion to set up a commission to exercise control over all military operations. This was agreed and two representatives were elected in each company. They were instructed, that in the event of any military operation by one or several companies they were to ascertain immediately the aim of the operation; and if necessary to alert the workers' commissions or trade unions in the area.

Abilio: Another example is the way the soldiers mobilised to demand free transport. They went in a body to make a train journey, got on without tickets, and when the inspector came along they said that they didn't have tickets and couldn't pay because they had no money. The train was held in the station while the military police were called. But when the military police arrived they declared their solidarity with the soldiers, and the train had to continue on its way.

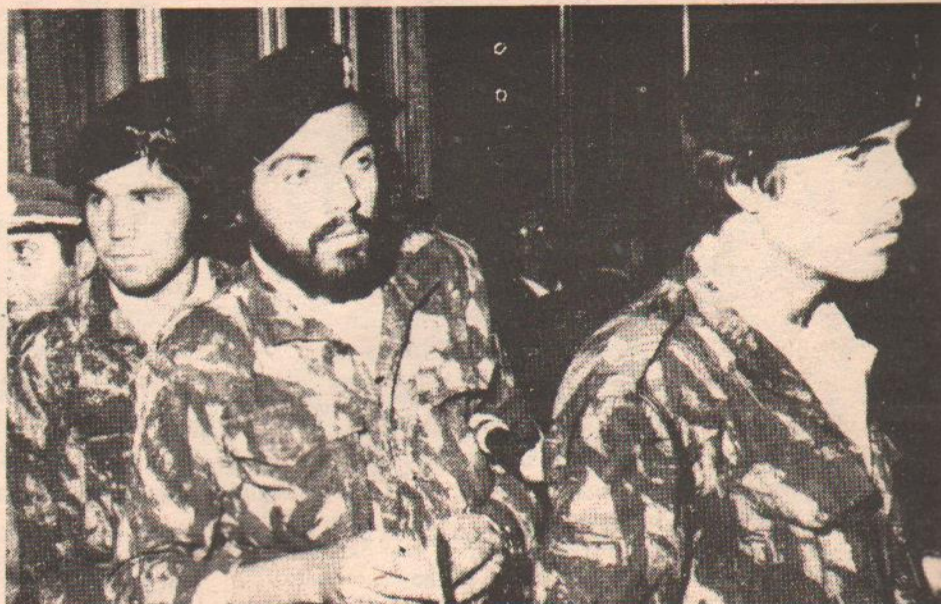
Vasco: According to a comrade in RAL-1, committees were set up after 11 March to control all operations and demand an explanation before any troops would be allowed to leave the barracks. The rooms previously reserved for the officers were opened up to all, and now one can see soldiers and officers discussing the problems of the unit together. Similarly soldiers from other units are authorised to attend meetings and hold discussions with the comrades of RAL-1 on their experiences.

3. LINKS WITH WORKERS

Gastao: It is important to stress the most advanced experiences of the alliance of the workers with the 'workers in uniform'. On 25 April and the following days there were many contacts made between the soldiers and several political and workers' organisations; later on, this alliance was cemented when the workers at the Lisnave shipyard, considered to be major stronghold of the working class, decided to organise

This was banned by the first provisional government with the agreement of the parties it included — particularly the Communist Party. The workers' response was to mobilise and march out of their workplace together. At first they were surrounded by troops from COPCON and the marines, but when the workers started shouting 'Soldiers, under your uniforms you remain workers' the soldiers moved aside and the officers were powerless in the face of this alliance.

Later there were other points of contact between soldiers and workers: on the barricades on 28 September, and



off. In the latter instance it was the police who lined up against the workers trying to prevent the congress from taking place, while the military and the soldiers rightly took the side of the masses.

There was an equally advanced experience which took place around the demonstration against imperialism, NATO and unemployment in January. This demonstration, organised by the workers' commissions in Lisbon, marched through the streets even though it had been banned by the third provisional government.

When the workers tried to march past the American Embassy, the COPCON troops who had blocked off the street were once more obliged to step aside to let the workers pass. When they got to the Ministry of Labour they were met by the soldiers of RAL-1, who raised their fists, lowered their rifles, and

shouted 'Workers, soldiers — one struggle'. **Francisco:** Another example of a workers-soldiers alliance occurred in the Cascais region when the local people took over a leisure centre used by the big capitalists at weekends. They way this centre had been run was a big fiddle—it hadn't paid any taxes for at least ten years. So the workers and local inhabitants decided to take over this pleasure centre for use as a creche.

Death-threats

But then the inhabitants started getting death threats over the phone: the big capitalists were trying to scare them into getting out. When the soldiers stationed nearby heard this news they voluntarily decided to go to defend the workers and inhabitants occupying the centre.



COMMON MARKET 'DEBATE' ~ NOT OVER YET

The EEC vote is a defeat for the working class. A 'No' vote would have threatened the economic strategy of the ruling class. The EEC—a central instrument of world imperialism—would have been weakened. The Labour Party right wing would have suffered a stinging defeat, and could only have redressed the situation by splitting from the Labour Party and joining up with the Tories and Liberals to make sure that Parliament did not implement the results of the referendum. Such open sabotage of the vote would have done more to break down reformist illusions in the working class than 50 years of socialist propaganda.

The 'yes' vote has strengthened the hand of both the ruling class and the Labour Party right wing. Not only has capitalism got a vote in favour of one of its key economic policies, but Wilson has shown that on some issues he can go over the heads of the labour movement to cajole sections of the working class into line. Obviously he will now be tempted to try similar tactics on matters like incomes policy and unemployment. Wilson now feels in a much stronger position to deal with the left wing of the unions and the Labour Party.

However it is a battle which has been lost, not a war. Although an alliance of Wilson and the ruling class managed to get a two to one national vote against the decisions of every major body in the labour movement, the campaign for a 'No' vote was fought on the most unfavourable terrain. The right wing always had a strong card to play. If Britain had come out of the EEC and remained under the domination of capitalism, the whole economy would have been thrown into a most convulsive and shattering crisis. The real choice was stark and clear — either the struggle for a socialist Britain with the aim of building a United Socialist States of Europe, or hanging on to the coat-tails of world imperialism by staying in Europe.

There is no doubt that in the short term both the British and the European working class get a few crumbs by staying in Europe, compared to any capitalist alternative outside. This is a point that the right wing drove home throughout the campaign. The 'left' had no answer, because it had no socialist alternative to Wilson's pro-capitalist policies.

•IMPERIALIST•

In the long term the economic differences for the working class of being in or out of Europe are minimal. The 'choice' is about two million unemployed or one and three quarter million unemployed. Even the tiny short-term gains that could be made would be bought at the expense of the colonial peoples, the workers' states, and the strengthening of a ruling class which is going to make even more savage attacks on working class living standards in the next economic downturn.

The miserable short-term benefits that do exist have been got at the expense of the workers, who have to accept a smaller slice of the declining economic cake. In the 1920s Trotsky explained that the loans and investments of the US imperialists helped to subsidise the bankrupt economies of Western capitalism. The grateful social democrats grabbed at these loans, seeing them as an alternative to fighting their own capitalist class. Now the same parties of social democracy — particularly their right-wing leaderships — are most enthusiastic supporters of the EEC. Because their own ruling classes are too weak to toss them the odd crumbs, they pray that the EEC will provide the occasional morsel with which to buy off the working class.

The right-wing social democrats are tied hand and foot to the capitalist system. Yesterday they looked purely to the capitalist 'nation state' to bail them out. Now they hope that a politically and economically integrated capitalist Europe will do the trick. Reformism is looking for a new base for its collaborationist politics. It thinks that the EEC provides that. Of course a real socialist campaign waged by the left would have destroyed the influence of the right. Instead the bankruptcy of the Labour and trade union 'lefts' allowed Jenkins and company to seize the initiative.

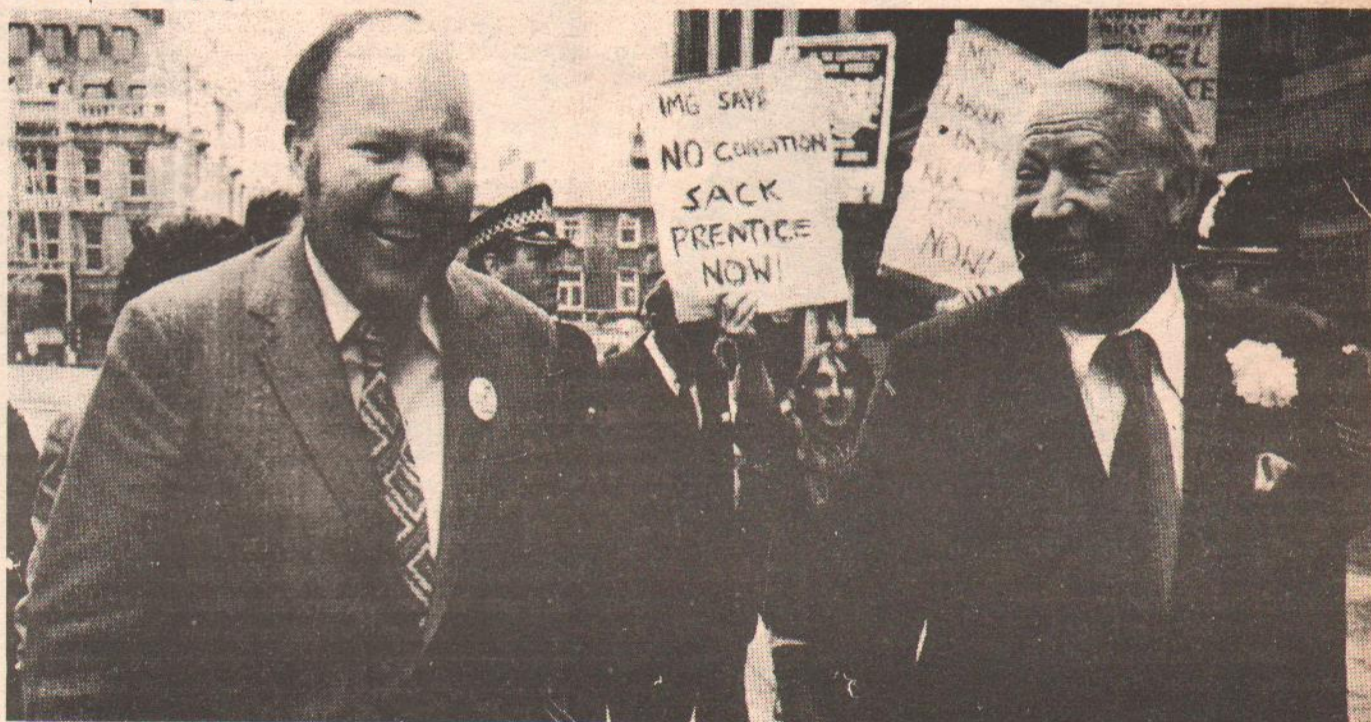
As long as the political leaders of the workers' movement remain wedded to capitalist solutions and have not won the forces of the broad workers' movement to socialist policies, then of course people will want to stay in the Common Market. This is why the pro-Marketees won the economic arguments and why the Communist Party's arguments about 'national sovereignty' fell on deaf ears. Many workers were deeply suspicious about the phoney statistics being peddled by the pro-EEC forces. But the siege economy offered by the

the Labour 'left' rightly seemed to them a most unattractive proposition, and no alternative to the crisis which the right wing were predicting if they voted 'No'.

Two conditions could have led to a majority voting 'No'. If the EEC had been on the point of disintegration — which was clearly not the case — then there would have been a 'No' majority as no-one could have expected any gains from a wreck. The second — and the most politically important one — would have been a situation where the mass of the working class was breaking from reformist solutions. As the the Labour left could not — and would not — fight on an anti-capitalist platform, a 'Yes' vote became virtually a foregone conclusion.

•RIGHT-WING•

The deterioration in the economic situation, and the reformism of the Labour left, explains why a majority has formed of the labour left, explains why a majority has been built up in favour of staying in the Market. Three years ago British capitalism appeared to offer as many crumbs — or even more — than the EEC. A vote then would almost certainly have been in favour of withdrawal. Now the British economy is declining at an alarming rate. Hardly anyone believes that British capitalism can go it alone. Arguments about 'national sovereignty' appear increasingly archaic and unreal. They were in fact the kiss of death to the anti-EEC campaign.



The attachment of certain privileged layers of the working class to the imperialist state reflects the fact that the working class has received material benefits from the imperialist policies of its own ruling class. Now that these old little Englishers see that these benefits can only be gained if their ruling class is linked to a more powerful imperialist structure they are prepared to become 'Europeans'. The call for a 'Yes' vote represented the new pull of imperialist pressures.

Ironically, the conditions which helped to account for a 'Yes' victory also account for the limited dimensions of the working class defeat. Under the present economic and social conditions — and the bankrupt leadership of the labour movement — a massive working class 'No' vote was ruled out. A majority of workers voting 'No' would have meant that the working class had taken a gigantic leap forward in its political consciousness.

It could have only done that in rebellion against its leaders and by understanding that its own interests were different from those of the capitalist class. At the same time the working class has not abandoned its struggle to defend jobs and living standards. Probably most railworkers voted 'Yes'. But that will not stop many of the same railworkers voting 'No' to Wilson's social contract and in favour of strike action in the next weeks.

Wilson has won this battle. However, the victory of the right wing cannot be really consolidated if the working class continues to fight rising unemployment, falling living standards and cuts in social expenditure.



The result of the referendum does not mean that the EEC is finished as an issue in British politics. For a time the debate will die down. But the EEC is a key link in the relation between the classes in Britain and also between the classes on a world scale. The vote of 5 June will not put an end to the class struggle. This is why it is so dangerous and incredibly stupid of the Labour 'lefts' to declare they 'accept the result of the referendum.'

•NOT THE END•

A hard-headed capitalist politician like Powell has no such illusions. He compared the referendum to Chamberlain's Munich Agreement, which would have got a mighty endorsement in 1938 if submitted to a referendum. A year later an even bigger majority would have rejected the Munich Agreement out of hand.

At the present time a majority of the working class is in favour of or indifferent to the EEC, and no significant section of the ruling class opposes it. However as the world economic situation gets worse, and as the EEC threatens to disintegrate, a strong movement can rapidly swell up within the working class demanding withdrawal from the EEC. By abjectly giving into the demands of the right wing that they accept the result of the referendum, and meekly agreeing to work within the framework of the Common Market, the Labour 'lefts' fail to prepare the working class for the future struggles to come.

Instead of the agreement by the TUC and the Labour 'lefts' to participate in the institutions of the EEC, they should be declaring openly that this result is a farce, given all the capitalist propaganda in favour of the Market and the sabotage of the workers' movement from within by traitors such as Wilson. This does not mean lightmindedly declaring

that the referendum result can simply be ignored, but it does mean maintaining an attitude of complete hostility to the Market, refusing to co-operate with or participate in any of its institutions, and seeking to reverse the referendum at the earliest possible moment.

If the working class movement does not clearly maintain a position of complete opposition to the EEC, the campaign against the Market will in future fall into the hands of the Powellites and other extreme rightists who this time round were pushed well to the sidelines. On this, as on every issue, the Labour left shows that it cannot defend the interests of the working class against even the most extreme reactionary forces of capitalist society.

For the moment the issue of the EEC passes from the centre of the political stage. But this particular struggle is very far from over.

THE EDITOR

IN FOCUS

IN FOCUS

CALLING HUSAK'S BLUFF

by

OLIVER MACDONALD

Back in the darkest days of Stalinist terror in Eastern Europe, Matyas Rakosi perfected a technique which is today being used again by Gustav Husak in Czechoslovakia. The idea was very simple. In 1950 Rakosi wanted to slash the workers' living standards but he was sufficiently acute to grasp that this would bring resistance from the working class. So, taking a tip from the Russians, he hit upon the notion of writing hundreds and hundreds of letters from workers explaining how, what with technological progress and so on, their piece-work norms were ridiculously low; so they as workers demanded that the Party increase their piece-work norms so that they would have to do more work for the same money. And after a few weeks, when the 'workers' letters' to the press had reached flood proportions, Rakosi graciously acceded to their demands for a cut in their standard of living.

For the past few weeks in Czechoslovakia, Husak's secretaries have been busy writing workers' and peasants' letters demanding repression against Dubcek and the socialist opposition. Rakosi also had another trick which Husak is using. He would give the workers a break from work to go to a meeting to demand death for whoever was up for a show trial. Resolutions would be passed demanding that the 'Titoists' and 'Trotskyites' were shot. Last month some attempts were made to organise similar meet-

ist Parties.

But the question must be asked: why did Husak need to denounce Dubcek from the country's main political platform? If a rebuff to Dubcek was necessary for international reasons, to try to put pressure on the Western CPs to keep their mouths shut, why not simply issue a sharply worded press release through the state news agency? In fact it is clear that the speech was vitally necessary for internal political reasons: after six years of jailing commun-



Sit-down demo on first anniversary of Russian invasion—same spirit survives today

ings in Prague, condemning Dubcek as a traitor.

But the results of these efforts in some of the factories show how times have changed. Reports have reached us that that workers in at least two factories replied that they would be quite prepared to denounce Dubcek as a traitor, but on one condition: that his letter to the Party leadership be distributed to them so that they could read it and see for themselves!

•'NORMALISATION'•

Things have gone very badly for the Czechoslovak regime during the last two months. Husak's six-year struggle to 'normalise' the situation has been shown to have been ineffectual. 'Normalisation' was actually a slogan designed to mean two entirely different things: for the Kremlin and the other East European regimes it was to mean that the resistance movement following the 1968 invasion had been decisively crushed; while to Western Socialists and Communists it was supposed to mean that there would be no more repression or the need for 'administrative' measures against dissidents.

Both these versions have been shown to be thoroughly false since the publication of Dubcek's letter (see *Red Weekly* for 1 and 8 May). And nothing has shown their falsehood more than the activities of the regime itself.

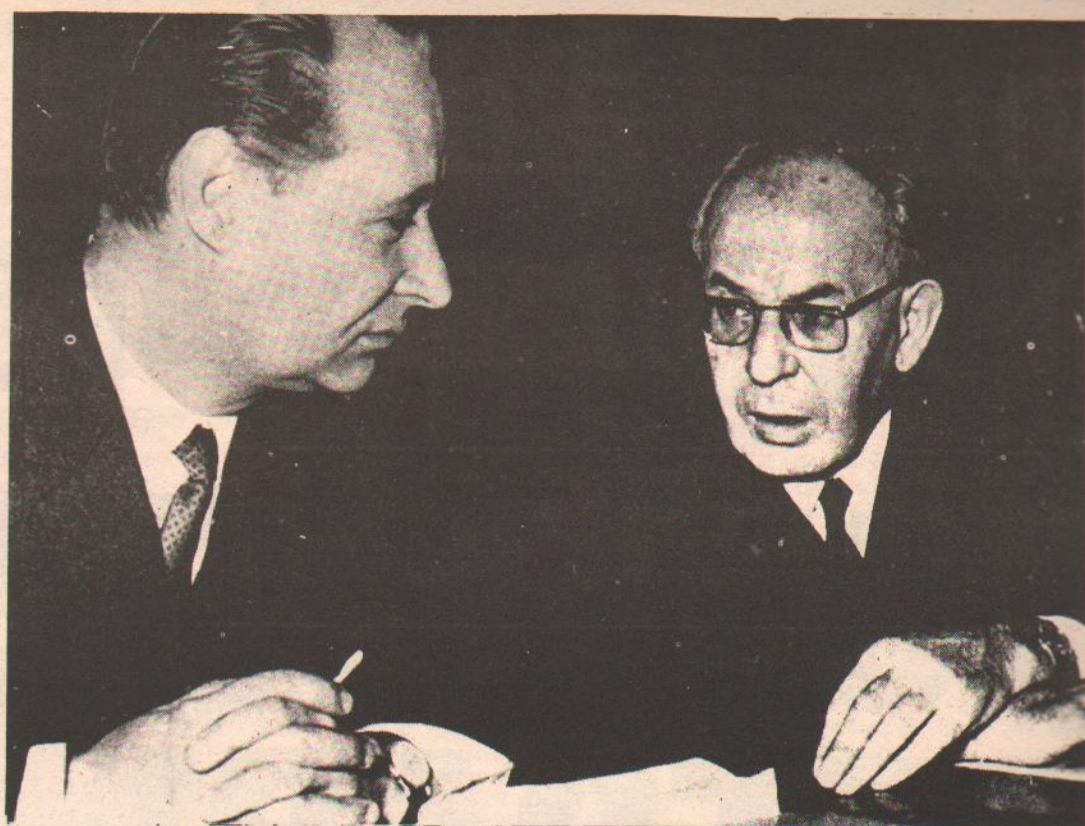
First there was Husak's violent denunciation of Dubcek to the National Assembly, calling him a traitor and threatening him with repression or exile. The speech also contained an attack on Olaf Palme, the Social-Democratic

ists and socialists and expelling half a million people from the Communist Party and throwing thousands out of work, the Party boss had to come out with such a speech in order to try to frighten the opposition and keep the regime together. The price of showing the emptiness of phrases about 'normalisation' was evidently considered worth paying.

An occasion to demonstrate that the regime was still fairly confident of its hold did nevertheless present itself with the 30th anniversary of the victory over fascism at the beginning of May. There was supposed to be an amnesty for prisoners to mark the anniversary. Of course, the regime claims that there are no political prisoners in Czechoslovakia today, only criminals. Veteran Communists like Sabata and Hubl, whose imprisonment for expressing their political opposition to the regime was opposed by the British and other Western CPs, are just common criminals in Husak's eyes, as are revolutionary socialists like Jiri Mueller and Ivan Dejmal. But by releasing these prisoners, the Government could have recouped its position to some extent by suggesting that it had nothing to fear from such people.

•SELECTIVE•

Instead, the amnesty explicitly excluded all the political prisoners. Indeed this amnesty law itself provides, albeit refracted through a police mentality, a picture of extraordinarily varied forms of social conflict. It declares exempt from



The replacement of Dubcek (left) by Husak (right) has not led to 'normalisation' — quite the reverse

socialist community, for endangering state secrets to the detriment of a socialist state, activities abroad harmful to the interests of the Republic, economic and military crimes, actions opposing an organ of the state carrying out its functions, abuse of the power of a public office, placing in danger a professional secret, illegal possession of arms, and placing in danger the moral education of the youth.'

• INSTABILITY •

The latest event in Husak's frenzy of activity over the last few weeks has been his elevation to the Presidency of the Republic. He now holds three of the four top jobs in the country: the Presidency, the General Secretaryship of the Party, and the Chairmanship of the National Assembly. This move has taken place because of the extremely unstable balance of forces within the Presidium of the Party itself — a situation where Husak is faced with people who would willingly topple him and who cannot be trusted even with the largely honorific post of the Presidency. No clearer indication could be given of the failure of the post-1968 regime to stabilise itself even at the level of the top Party leadership.

One of the great ironies of the present situation is that Husak cannot even rely on the people who put him in power, the Kremlin. During the whole period of the European Security Conference the Russians have been extremely nervous about the lack of 'normalisation' inside Czechoslovakia, and their sensitivity has never been greater than now when the Conference has reached its most delicate phase.

It was for this reason that the Kremlin established informal contacts with the Dubckites to sound out the possibility of bringing some of them back into office in order to give the regime a facelift. Brezhnev can hardly have been impressed with Husak's performance over the last few weeks, and it was a bitter blow when he failed to turn up as promised for the 30th anniversary celebrations at the beginning of May.

•'CRITICISM'•

A number of Western Communist Parties, including the CPGB, have made public statements attacking the Husak Government. On 13 May the *Morning Star* printed a statement from the Executive Committee of the Party which declared that 'dissent and political differences in Socialist states should be handled by

political and not administrative means' — the word 'administrative' is a euphemism for 'repressive'. The statement said that 'on this matter a vital principle is involved which concerns all Communist Parties', and it added that the CPGB had suggested to Husak that those arrested in 1972 for expressing political views different from those of the Czechoslovak Party leaders should be amnestied. In the words of the statement, 'the issue was not only the right to hold different views, but the legal means to express them'.

The statement goes on to demonstrate the CPGB's own thoroughly unprincipled politics and continued Stalinist commitment by declaring fatuously: 'Whatever differences may remain on particular questions, we are convinced that our solidarity will continue to grow.' In other words, while the CPGB leaders continue to make verbal statements of dislike for the crimes of Husak and the Kremlin its basic unity with them will remain and even get stronger!

The house searches and arrests inside Czechoslovakia during the last few weeks have not weakened the activity of the Socialist Opposition inside the country. The underground journals have continued to appear, clandestine meetings continue to take place, and the Dubcek letter is circulating in hundreds of copies in Prague. Experiences in the factories indicate that the political traditions of 1968 have by no means been forgotten among the working class, and indeed the regime can expect to be shaken by new denunciations in the near future.

•DAMAGING•

One of the chief targets of the secret police has been a 200 page document which carefully analyses the entire evolution of the Party since 1968. Copies of this have been seized by the police, and there is evidence that the regime thinks it has stopped the document reaching the outside world — an urgent objective since the document could be extremely damaging if it were to circulate before the scheduled meeting of European Communist Parties this year. But the police searches have been ineffective: the document is already outside the country.

It only remains to be seen whether honest militants inside the CPGB and other Western Communist Parties will take a principled stand in solidarity not with the bureaucratic dictatorship in Czechoslovakia but with the socialist opposition in that country, and strengthen defence activity in this country for the victims of Husak's repression.

WHAT'S ON

FREE DESMOND TROTTER Campaign: Picket every Friday, 4.30-6pm outside East Caribbean High Commission, Haymarket, London SW1.

HARRINGAY NAC DISCO: 8-12pm, Fri 13 June. Small lounge, Students Union, University College, Gordon Place (entrance in Gower Court), WC1. Nearest tubes: Euston, Euston Sq, Warren St. Admission 75p (50p students/claimants). Bar extn.

10th ANNIVERSARY of the Omani Revolution: public meeting Fri 13 June at 7pm in Holborn Library Hall, 32 Theobalds Rd. Speakers include Fred Halliday, Stan Newens MP, an Arab worker and an Iranian student. Also a film.

IMG SOCIALIST FORUM: 'The Labour Party—where is it going?' Tues 17 June at 7.30pm in the 'Earl Russell', 2 Pancras Road (Kings X tube).

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS public.

NEW SQUATTERS FEDERATION, as proposed at the Squatters Conventio. First meeting Sun 15 June, 7.30pm in the Bank, Tolmers Sq.

NEW IMG PAMPHLET 'Housing, Squatting and the Urban Crisis—Developments and the Way Forward'. 10p inc postage from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Rd, N1.

BIRMINGHAM ABORTION Campaign: (1) Thurs 12 June, lobby Trades Council in support of resolution from AUEW. Assemble Transport Ho., Broad St, 7pm. (2) Coaches for London demo, 21 June, leave Hall of Memory 10am. (3) Day conference on abortion, 5 July, B'ham Univ Council Chambers. For details contact: Birmingham NAC, c/o 40 Trafalgar Rd, Moseley, Birmingham 13 (021-429 1154).

IRISH FILM & MUSIC NIGHT: The Crown, Cricklewood Broadway, Sat 14

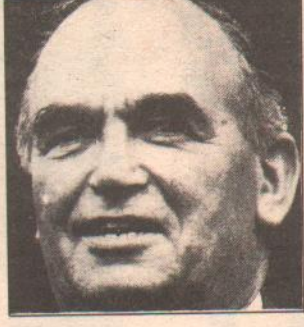
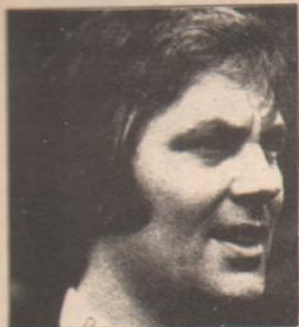
RED LADDER THEATRE wants actresses for work in touring collective based in the north, producing own material and performing to trade union and community audiences. Commitment important. Equity membership and musical ability an advantage. Applications in writing by 8 July stating (i) theatrical/playmaking/political experience (ii) reasons for interest (iii) when you can start (iv) where ad read (v) tel. no., to 58 War Crescent, London N4 (01-263 1053).

FOR CHEAP, reliable IBM Typesetting, with fast turn-around phone Carl or Martin on 01-837 9987.

SOUTH LONDON National Abortion Campaign public meeting, Friday 13 June at 7.30pm, Stockwell Hall, Brixton (junction of Stockwell Park Walk and Brixton Rd). Sneakers include Renee Short MP, Peter Huntingford (gynaecologist) and women from NAC. Details from Liz on 674-7609.

A WOMAN'S RIGHT to Choose/A Woman's Right to Know—public meeting organised by media workers against the James White Bill. Weds 18 June, 6.30pm.

Reactionaries plan 'Provisional Government'



Rogues gallery (left to right): GLEN BARR, ANDREW TYRIE, WILLIAM CRAIG, and HARRY WEST

LOYALISTS PREPARE TAKEOVER

The Loyalist forces in Northern Ireland have set up a 'provisional government' According to the Dublin *Sunday World*, the main actors in this black comedy are Glen Barr, Vanguard member and UDA negotiator in Libya; Andie Tyrie, commander of the Ulster Defence Association and supremo of the new Ulster Army Council — the joint command of all the paramilitary groups except the Ulster Volunteer Force; Bill Craig of the Vanguard Party; and Harry West, United Ulster Unionist Council leader. The only discussion now going on amongst these reactionaries is not whether but how to re-impose their ascendancy.

Craig has justified this step in the following way: 'The Ulster people must prepare to use all means necessary to maintain and defend our British heritage and way of life. If that means setting up a provisional government to govern and defend our province, then so be it'. So the cat is out of the bag. The Loyalist ultras are preparing a 'rebellion' of the kind which got them the Six County state in the first place in 1920.

CARSON

Craig's words echo those of Sir Edward Carson in 1911 when the Liberal Government was threatening to pass a Home Rule Bill for Ireland. Carson said: 'We must be prepared ...the morning that Home Rule passes, ourselves to become responsible for the government of the Protestant province of Ulster'.

Later he went on to state: 'They may tell us, if they like, that this is treason. It is not for men who have such stakes as we have at issue to trouble about the cost'. Just like these forebearers, elements like Craig are actively preparing their armed might to show exactly what they think of 'law and order' when they reckon their interests are threatened.

FIRE-POWER

Make no mistake, these 'parliamentarians' have the fire-power to back up their threats. The UUUC is inextricably bound up with the para-military organisations through the Ulster Loyalists Council — itself reinforced by last week's announcement of the formation of a united command of para-military organisations in the Ulster Army Council. This body contains on its command staff two of the UUUC's recently elected Convention members. Most other UUUC Convention members are openly linked with para-military organisations. As the *Irish Times* was forced to admit: 'The distinction between the UUUC as a purely political grouping and the Ulster Army Council as a military coalition are

— by —
**TED
COXHEAD**

course openly tolerated, not to say encouraged, by the British Army. Just one little example of this is the fact that the leader of the Red Hand Commandos, a so-called 'proscribed' organisation and on its own admission the perpetrator of some of the most despicable sectarian bombings and assassinations, has its leader under day and night protection by the British Army against death threats from the UVF.

ARMY COUNCIL

The Ulster Army Council has publicly set itself the task of recruiting 20,000 men in the next period. This is in addition to the 7,000 men in the Ulster Defence Regiment, 4,000 in the Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve, and 6,000 men in the RUC itself which, as one Loyalist politician commented, 'will not give their allegiance to a retreating Westminster Government'.

This political and military preparation aims to call the bluff of the Labour Government as was so successfully done in 1912. Then direct ties with the British Army and political support from the right wing in Britain won, after massive blood-letting, a commitment from the British Government to the installation of these elements in the driving seat of the sectarian Six County state.

PAISLEY

They want all that power handed back to them again today. There is no doubt where the British Army stands, while large sections of the Tory Party — including its official spokesman, Airey Neave — also support the demands of the Loyalists. The report back of the Convention will put this to the test.

motley crew that go to make up the self-proclaimed 'provisional government' — Dr Ian Paisley. In addition the UVF has refused to join the Ulster Army Council. These elements are projecting another alternative equally dangerous to the minority, but based on an alliance with Westminster — that of integration.

SHOOT-UPS

In this scheme, representation at Westminster would be increased, while there would be local 'power sharing' where the minority was in an overwhelming majority so long as as the RUC was able to operate its 'rule of law' and so long as the Loyalists had their hands firmly on the purse strings. The divisions within the UUUC, and the shoot-ups between the UVF and the UDA Red Hand Commando, are to be explained by this different view of how to distribute the spoils. At the



The *Sunday Times* of 8 June reveals that 'Secret British Army documents containing photographs, addresses and personal details of suspected IRA men and their families are in the hands of a para-military loyalist organisation'. Information in the documents is provided on 'Provisional suspects'. One description of a suspect not only gives his 'name, address and alleged rank in the IRA but details of where he works and his car registration number'. Very useful if the Loyalists want to plant a bomb in his car.

A further document lists the 'names and addresses of 60 detainees who were released on a certain date...'. Another document 'has the names of more than 400 detainees with the names and addresses of their visitors at the prison'.

The *Sunday Times* was given these four documents last week by a Loyalist who claimed that 'they had been handed to the para-military organisation by British soldiers.' According to the newspaper the Army's Special Investigation Branch has launched a 'major inquiry'. The *Sunday Times* claims: 'The Army is anxious that nothing mars the success of the ceasefire....'

But it is just because of the ceasefire that these documents have been given to the Loyalists. The British military have been heavily indoctrinated with anti-Catholic ideas. Many of the top brass bitterly resent the ceasefire. Their sympathies are 100 per cent with the pro-Unionist forces. They just want to get on with the job of smashing the nationalists. If the army is temporarily restricting the use of its own murder gangs, who have left a trail of mayhem and brutality behind them in the Catholic ghettos, then some of its officers have decided to compensate for the drop in the death rate by bringing in the Loyalist assassination squads. This bloody liaison between the professional killers of the British Army and the murderous hit-men of the Loyalists is the logical outcome of British imperialism's policy in Ireland. The Army can only keep the 'peace' in Ireland through terror and violence and by working in alliance with the Loyalists. The release of these documents shows once again the need to pull every single British soldier out of Ireland for good.

moment, however, the 'UDI-merchants' have the upper hand. Paisley's project is a very good reserve if that one fails.

TROOPS OUT

British workers have no interest in either of these two projects. They both depend upon the smashing of the the minority, on the denial of their democratic rights, and the continual subordination of Ireland to British imperialism. These 'solutions' are the only ones that can come out of the Constitutional Convention.

Never has it been more clear that there can be no British solution to the Irish question. The past year has seen a series of concessions to the Loyalists culminating in this Convention. Every concession has simply whetted the appetites of the Loyalists. There must be no more concessions. The Army — the bastion of the Loyalists' self-confidence; the cover for their open preparation for civil war; and the main force against the struggle and demands of the minority

— must be removed immediately.

This is the message that must be taken back to the workers movement from the TOM trade union conference. If we do this, we can play our part in consigning the UDA, UVF, and all these other relics from the past where they belong — into the dustbin of history. In 1911 Bonar Law, leader of the Tory Party, was able to say: 'I can imagine no length of resistance to which Ulster can go in which I should not be prepared to support them, and in which, in my belief, they would not be supported by the overwhelming majority of the British people.'

MASS MOVEMENT

Unfortunately the British people didn't then repudiate those words. Now we have the chance through the building of a massive movement to withdraw the troops to prepare to repudiate the similar protestations which are being prepared by today's Bonar Laws and Frank Carsons.

NALGO: WHICH WAY FORWARD?

With strike action planned by the National and Local Government Officers Association over its £10 and 15% government pay claim, *Red Weekly* talked last week to Bob Ford, Branch Secretary of Islington NALGO, about the major questions confronting the union's membership. Islington branch, with a membership of 1500, was on strike for eight weeks last year in the London Weighting dispute and played a key role in organising the struggle until it was forced back to work by the NALGO leadership.

We publish this interview in the interests of developing a debate on these questions. Next week we will print a further article by IMG NALGO members explaining our strategy for the NALGO struggle.

Now that NALGO has put forward its proposals for strike action, how do you see the fight for the claim developing?

As far as industrial action is concerned the National Local Government Committee thinking is in three directions: selective strikes, day strikes, and a rolling programme for a number of branches on total strike on an expanding basis. Personally I don't think that they will achieve the pay claim before the Government restricts wages through a pay freeze.

I think that there is only one way to achieve the claim. If there was a ballot result which answered 'yes' to the question, 'Do you support your National Executive in taking strike action without strike pay to support the claim', then the Association should call all its members out. Whether or not this is possible one can never say till the ballot takes place.

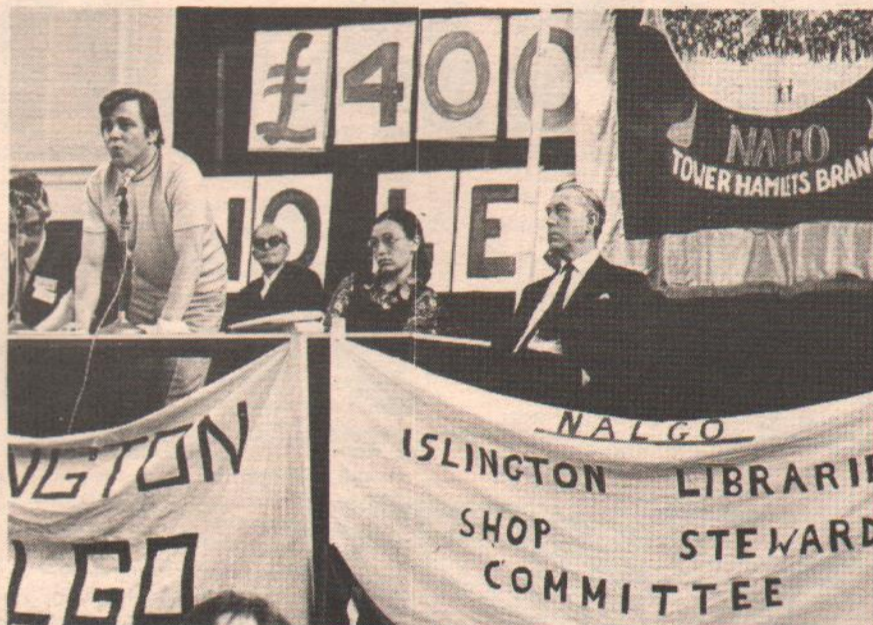
If a total strike is not the answer the membership is going to give, then some sort of action will have to be taken. There are ways in which industrial action can be made effective in order to get a better offer from the employers. On the other hand it's no use going in front of the membership and saying you have to take complete industrial action or give up.

It could well be a ploy by those who don't particularly want the membership to go into industrial action or become militant or to increase their understanding that you don't get paid what you're worth - you get paid what you fight for.

In opposition to the claim there's been a massive campaign in the press and from ministers like Crosland about the level of social services spending and the pay of local government workers. How do you see NALGO being able to counter this sort of attack?

In some ways it is very difficult to counter attacks through the media. The trade union movement has been the scapegoat for the economic crisis for the last 10 years. It's recently that the direction has changed. I think someone feels that the social services is an area which won't fight back.

The Association has the responsibility to ensure that through its own machinery it reaches the national publicity media



Bob Ford addresses a meeting during last year's strike Photo: PETER HARRAP (Report)

and uses some energy in other directions through the branches, to make sure the public are reached in the streets where they live and work

Do you agree it's necessary for the union to take up the fight against social expenditure cuts?

The union hasn't attempted really to fight the cuts as such. I don't think that it's been put over to the members that they could mean wholesale redundancies.

It's been historically a part of our branch policy that we are as much involved with the policy that dictates how we work as we are with our service conditions. Consequently we've been aware that if there is a cut-back then you have to become involved in making it as awkward as possible for any service cuts to be made, both in the interests of union

members working for the council and those who receive the services.

What sort of strategy do you think the trade union movement will have to adopt if it is to deal with the effects of inflation on living standards and social services?

The inflationary situation we're in at the moment is a disease of our economic system. As far as I'm concerned there has to be an approach which maintains real living standards. Pay claims should be based on the effects of a rise in the cost of living on everybody.

I think that you have to bring everybody to the same level now, then for every percentage rise in the cost of living there should be a flat rate given to everybody. As it stands that flat rate would have to be fairly substantial.

The employers have offered 21.7% minus the threshold paid from July to October last year on the NALGO pay claim. This means that some of the lower paid workers in the union, young clerical workers, are being offered a mere £65 a year or 9% extra.

NALGO has rejected this offer and was putting forward plans for strike action to its national conference on 9 June. The programme of action proposed includes a one-day strike with a rolling programme of branch strikes starting with 10 branches going on full strike.

This plan is clearly inadequate to win the claim. The one-day strike should be used to develop the necessary explanation of the importance of the claim and the action necessary to win it. But it is clear that only full scale national strike action by the union will show enough political and economic weight to succeed.



FORD'S STRIKE HOTTING UP

The seven week old strike of 80 doorhangers and setters in the Body Plant at Ford's Dagenham is hotting up. On 4 June the Transport & General Workers Union followed the lead of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers in finally making the strike official. The manning dispute is just part of the speed-up war that management have been waging since the end of last year in order to get a smaller, more exploited workforce throughout the Ford combine. So far the strike has halved Ford's car production and led to 65,000 other workers being locked out.

But instead of uniting the whole workforce in a common fight against the manning cuts, the plant leadership and trade union officials are still putting their major emphasis on getting management to take the dispute to arbitration. They have even written to Harold Wilson - fresh from baiting the Chrysler strikers - asking him to get the Ford Motor Company to agree to go to the Conciliation and Arbitration Service! The CAS was set up in the first place to defuse struggles. Workers can only rely on their own determination and strength to defend their interests.

To make the strike effective, the strikers themselves will have to elect a strike committee and campaign for support from other sections of the plant. Ford workers need a common jobs policy and common struggle. The last national stewards' conference failed to go beyond empty calls for nationalisation. But a national policy of work-sharing with no loss of pay is needed to counter short-time speed-up. Nationalisation will only be implemented in the workers' interests if it is prepared by the opening of all Ford's books and carried out without compensation and under the control of Ford workers themselves.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY SIT-IN

A hundred and fifty students occupied the Cambridge University Senate House on Tuesday 3 June, in support of the demand for a nursery for students and staff.

University proctors and over 60 police at once surrounded the building and attempted to isolate the occupiers. This effort to isolate and demoralise the militants as a preliminary to victimisation was defeated by a massive mobilisation of over 400 students who demonstrated outside the building in the evening in solidarity with the occupiers. Cordons were formed, and bedding, food and water were passed into the occupation.

One student trying to climb in was attacked by a proctor and dragged onto spiked railings, where his leg was badly gashed and he had to be taken to hospital. The police refused to take action against the proctor, claiming he was entitled to use 'reasonable force' to prevent 'trespassers' from entering University property.

The University's handling of the occupation was the more frantic because honorary degrees were due to be presented at a ceremony in the Senate House to General Gowon, the Nigerian military dictator, and the Queen of Denmark. In consequence, however, they were ready very rapidly to concede a written guarantee of no victimisations and to establish a working party of one-third Nursery Action Group, one-third University Staff Trade Unions and one-third University authorities to draw up plans for establishing a nursery. This was a partial victory but a significant one. Full support by the Students Union could have made possible far more extensive action and a really major victory. In face of strong state tactics both here and at Warwick and Lancaster, the broadest unity in action is vital if student struggles are to be carried forward.

LABOUR CORRUPTION

Frank McKenna was a well respected man in the North East. As the Newcastle Evening Chronicle put it: 'Who could doubt Frank McKenna? He was a practising church-goer. He had served on councils for 34 years'.

However, Frank McKenna had one small fault. He liked to help building firms do well. And for a small fee he was prepared to make sure contracts went to deserving people. Unfortunately Frank (like his mentors, political and criminal, Dan Smith and Andy Cunningham) got found out. He was found guilty of fiddling contracts for Cartton Contracts, a building firm, and jailed for a year.

All this may seem a fairly regular occurrence in the corrupt Labour Party machine in the North East. However, the most noteworthy thing about this trial is the judge - Lord Justice Mais. Trade unionists may remember his name; certainly two of them do. Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson were sentenced to three years and two years respectively by the noble judge. Their 'crime' was to organise pickets to go round sites in the Shrewsbury area during the national building strike in 1972.

The only crime committed by the Shrewsbury pickets was to fight the big building firms and try to reduce their profits. Frank McKenna, on the other hand, tried to boost the profits of the building firms. That's why he got a lighter sentence than Des and Ricky!

Red Books News!

NEW IMG PAMPHLET ON ABORTION

Free Abortion on Demand, 8p (post 5p). Assesses the political issues involved in the struggle over abortion, and explains the arguments and actions which must be developed if this fight is to be won.

ABORTION: FURTHER WEAPON

Abortion and the Catholic Church, 15p (post 5p). Two articles explaining the Catholic Church's opposition to abortion, and refuting the demagoguery of its arguments.

DISCUSSION ON CHILE

The Lessons of Chile, editor J. Gittings, 75p (post 8p). Collection of papers/discussion from 1974 Transnational Institute conference of leading European social democrats and centrists plus Chilean socialists.

MIGRANT WORKERS IN EUROPE

A Seventh Man, by Berger and Mohr, £1 (post 10p). Superbly written and illustrated examination of the exploitation of migrant workers in Europe. Reviewed in last week's Red Weekly.

PIONEER MARXIST WORK ON INDIA

The Economic Development of India, by Brian Davey, price £6.25. A Marxist analysis bringing together latest data on the economic and social development of India, and the role of British imperialism in distorting that development.

The Fourth International—What it is, what it aims at, by M Pablo, 10p (post 5p)

Fourth International (International Secretariat), Summer and Autumn issues, 1958—articles on France, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Bolivia, China, etc. by Germain, Pablo, Frank et al. 20p each (post 5p each).

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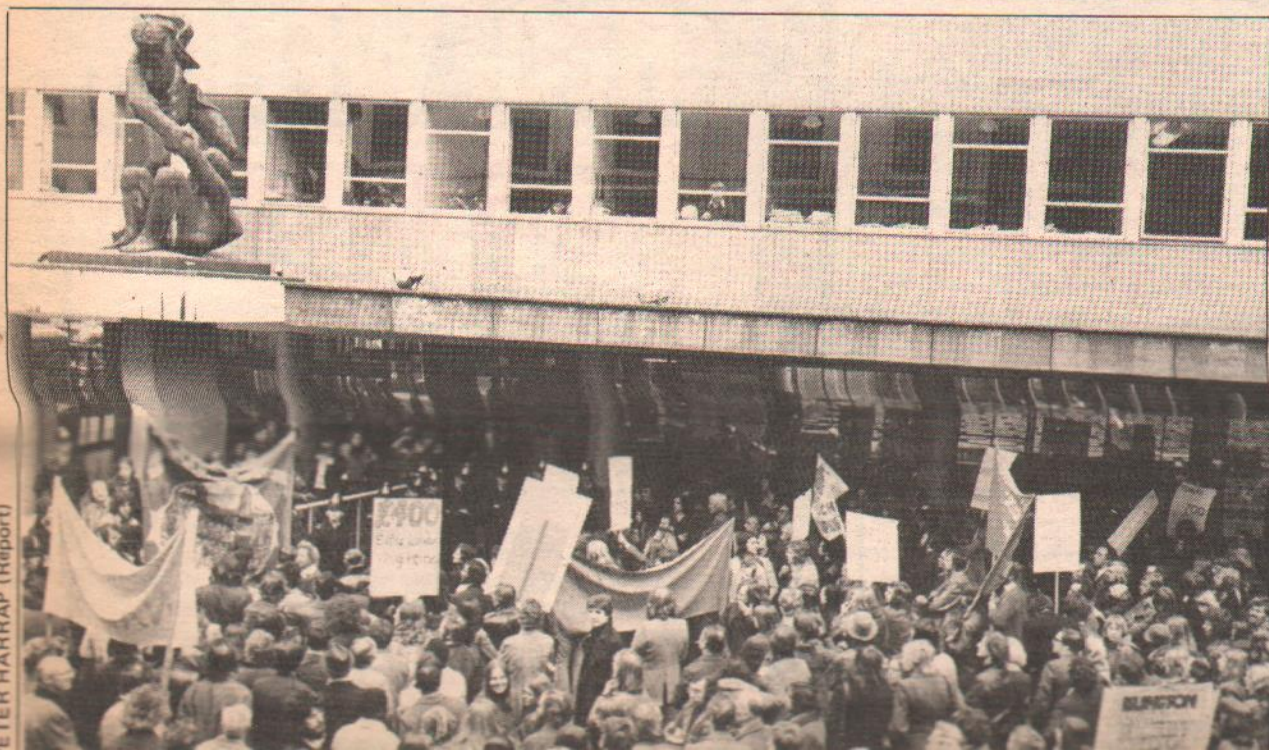
NEW ISSUE OF PLOUGH

The latest issue of the Plough, Irish paper of the Fourth International, is available containing articles on the IRSP, the Convention, Loyalism, and Women's Liberation in Ireland. 7p (post 5p), subscription £1.20 for 10 issues.

SPECIAL ISSUE OF INPRECOR

The second 60-page double issue of Inprecor on the world economic situation will be out in mid-June, containing articles by Mandel (world recession); Udry (raw materials); Langston (US economy); Gabriel (Africa); Vargas (Spain).

As a SPECIAL OFFER it will be supplied FREE to new subscribers. Subscriptions cost £7 p.a. (25 issues); otherwise the double issue can be purchased from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road.



PETER HARRAP (Report)

RED WEEKLY

DEFEAT ANTI-ABORTION BILL

free
contraception
and abortion
on demand

ALL FOR SPAIN!

Tension in Spain has been rapidly mounting with the approach of the 11 June General Strike in the Basque country. All the indications are that this strike will involve even more workers than the 200,000 who participated in the day of action last December. Revolutionary organisations such as the LCR-ETA (VI), Spanish supporters of the Fourth International, are campaigning for the June strike to be extended to the whole of Spain.

In the face of the rising workers' struggle the Franco dictatorship is falling into deeper crisis. Franco himself is already half dead, and as the *Observer* reporter in Madrid put it, even the regime was 'shocked by the appearance and obvious senility of the dictator during the state visit of President Ford'. The Government itself is tottering. There are conflicting reports saying either that the Prime Minister Arias is about to resign or that the majority of the Cabinet now believes that Franco must resign.

Meanwhile the dictatorship's insane scheme to replace Franco with a monarchy, whether led by Juan Carlos or the 'liberal' Count of Barcelona, trundles on. In fact this whole policy is a fraud - Franco won't be replaced by a king but by the beginning of a working class revolution in Spain.



But even in its death agonies the Spanish dictatorship continues to lash out in all directions. The 'state of emergency' in the Basque country has led to the imprisonment of thousands and the torturing of many hundreds of militants. Bomb attacks have been carried out by the Spanish secret police against Spanish nationalists living in France. A fascist group called the 'Guerrillas of Christ the King' has continued its assassinations of opponents of the dictatorship. New political trials have been taking place in Burgos, and the frame-up trial of Eva Forest and Antonio Duran is imminent. But none of this repression can stop the coming fall of the dictatorship.

There should be no doubt on the British left that the situation developing in Spain today will usher in the greatest events in European working class history for forty years: In Spain the working class has a far higher social weight than exists even with the militancy in Portugal. The Spanish working class has launched gigantic struggles, including town and regional general strikes, even under the dictatorship. It also has the highest level of political consciousness in Europe. The forces of the revolutionary left in Spain are stronger in relation to the reformist parties than in any other country in Europe. The downfall of the Francoist dictatorship will without doubt open up Spain to the working class revolutionary process.



More than 80 people joined a picket of the Spanish Consulate last Saturday as part of the campaign to build next Saturday's demonstration against the repression.

Even the threat of working class power in Spain - something which is going to develop in the coming period - would transform the situation in Europe and propel forward with a gigantic hand the struggle in Portugal, in Italy, in France and in every European country. The victory of the Spanish working class, the establishment of the first workers state in Western Europe, would shake the world to its foundations. In the coming weeks and months the needs of solidarity with the developing struggles in Spain will be the most important international task of European revolutionaries.

This Saturday, 14 June, the Spanish Solidarity Committee is organising a demonstration in London against the repression in Spain. *Red Weekly* in coming issues will be giving full coverage to events in Spain. It urges support for the Spanish Solidarity Committee in every area. ALL FOR SPAIN must be the call heard in the coming weeks

Support for the National Abortion Campaign (NAC) demonstration on 21 June is growing rapidly. Already 14 Constituency Labour Parties, the Labour Party Young Socialists' National Conference, the Southern Regional Council of the Labour Party, and seven Trades Councils have passed resolutions opposing James White's Abortion (Amendment) Bill and supporting the demonstration. Some 25 trade unions and individual branches are also on record as opposing White's Bill and encouraging their members to support the demonstration.

An indication of the vast support that is beginning to swell up behind the demonstration is given in a recent NAC report which lists coaches already booked from out of London as follows: 'Brighton 10 coaches, Cardiff 1, Canterbury 3, Cambridge probably 2, Derby 1, Nottingham 3-4, Sheffield 1 and a number of cars, Manchester 5, Birmingham 3 and York 1.' This is only the beginning and the numbers are likely to grow rapidly in the next ten days. A NAC press release shows the effect the campaign is having on Labour MP's - it reports: 'Many MP's who supported James White's Abortion (Amendment) Bill have changed their minds as a result of a massive campaign against restricting our current abortion laws. 'All over the country local groups are taking action to ensure that their own MP's fully understand the implications of the Bill. One MP who voted for the Bill was Mr Eddie Loyden, Labour MP for Liverpool, Garston. Mr Loyden states that he and many other MP's voted for the Bill on the

understanding that the Select Committee would be examining the findings of the Lane report on the working of the 1967 Abortion Act. Mr Loyden now says: 'If this is a wrecking Bill I will be opposed to it. My experience after speaking to people in the House is that quite a number would not have voted for the Bill except to allow Lane to be discussed by the Select Committee. I believe abortion is primarily a matter for women to decide and that all abortions should be free and on the National Health'.

Localities

In the localities a series of public meetings are being held to build the campaign and the demonstration. Last Saturday saw the beginning of a 'Week of Action' of activities, pickets and meetings. In London these have so far included a march on 7 June through Crouch End Broadway Shopping Centre and pickets on 9 June of Hackney, Whittington, Hammersmith and Charing Cross hospitals. Local NAC groups are also leafletting tubes, factories, Family Planning Centres and going round door-to-door.

Medical

From 9 to 13 June inclusive there will be nightly meetings in London. Speakers include MPs Jo Richardson, Gwyneth Dunwoody and Renee Short, as well as trade unionists and members of the medical and legal professions.

The West London Theatre Workshop have contacted NAC saying that they have a play on abortion which can be used at public meetings and rallies. They explain: 'The view that our new play takes is that the abortion campaign is not just a women's issue, but part of a struggle for a

health service which serves the interests of the working class. But the main aim in the next few weeks is to use the play to get as big a show of strength as possible at the 21 June demo....' Groups wanting the play should contact Diane Lambert, 11 Acklam Rd., W10 5RD (01-969-9348).



Joan Maynard, one of the eleven women Labour MPs supporting the NAC demo.

NAC has posters advertising the demonstration at 5p each or 50 for £1. Leaflets have been run off and are now ready. At less than cost price stickers - which are mini versions of the posters - are available for £1 per 1,000 or 50p for 500. For posters, speakers, etc. phone 01-405-4872/1977 or 01-242-6197.

Jane Groves

IN BRIEF

BIRMINGHAM: A demonstration against the James White Bill organised last Saturday by the local NAC grew from 200 to 300 as bystanders joined in on the way to a rally in Digbeth Hall. The speakers here were Renee Short (Labour MP for Wolverhampton, NE), Rose Knight (NAC) and Berry Beaumont (IMG).

MANCHESTER: More than 500 members of the women's and trade union movements marched through the main shopping area to a rally addressed by Dr Judith Gray (MPU), Liz Adams (NAC), and Betty Crawford (AUEW District Committee) last Saturday.

SHEFFIELD: Forty supporters of the abortion campaign joined the Lord Mayor's procession uninvited last Saturday. Bystanders cheered as they chanted: 'Women must decide their fate/Not the Church, not the State'.

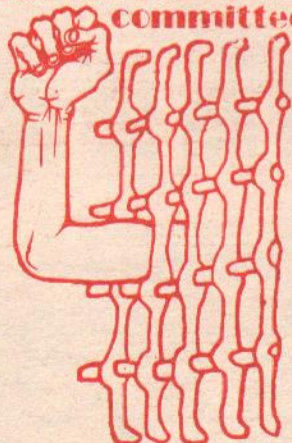
NEWCASTLE: 100 people marched through the city last Saturday to a rally addressed by Dr Klaus Bergman from the local general hospital and Antonia Gorton of NAC.

ALL-SCOTTISH WOMEN'S DEMO AGAINST JAMES WHITE BILL

Saturday 21 June, assemble Blythswood Sq, Glasgow, 2pm

For further information — phone 339-4394

spanish solidarity committee



RALLY in solidarity with the struggle against the Spanish dictatorship—Friday 13 June, 7 pm—Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, Ctee Room 7.

DEMONSTRATE—Saturday, 14 June—assemble 2 pm Speakers Corner march to Spanish Embassy

A BETTER START....

We have got off to one of our better starts this month. Donations are £100—part payment on Mandel meetings; East London £10; Bristol £8; Norwich £1.40; Hull £5.15; Doncaster reader £25; Red Books customers £4.44; SB Canterbury 60p; Diane Udall £5; Teachers £6; North London £10, and J Davidson £5. This gives us a start of £175.95.

When our other branches see this beginning we are confident that they will make every effort to drive us over the top of our £500 target. Also we ask every reader to send us a donation - no matter how small. Once we can really stabilise the Fund Drive and be sure that every month we are guaranteed to get our target and also push up the sales we will be able to start producing that 16 page paper.

So do not forget make sure you send us that essential money and begin planning now how you can get regular donations and also how you can sell those extra papers. Send all donations to 182 Pentonville Road, London N1.

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