

RED WEEKLY

ALL OUT AGAINST
THE SPANISH
DICTATORSHIP!

DEMONSTRATION - Saturday, 15th
November 1pm. SPEAKERS CORNER

Sponsors include Labour MPs Bob Edwards, Jo Richardson, Syd Bidwell, Judith Hart,
Audrey Wise and Joan Maynard; Alan Sapper (ACTT); and London Student Organisation

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NATIONALISE CHRYSLER NOW



Chrysler workers voting to defend their jobs at a mass meeting in Coventry last Friday

Chrysler UK is collapsing. The American multinational, which suffered world-wide losses of £125 million last year is demanding an equivalent ransom from the Labour Government to stay in Britain.

Even Harold Wilson is claiming that Chrysler president John Riccardo is 'pointing a gun at my head'. But it is over 25,000 Chrysler workers and 70,000 more in component firms who are standing in the line of fire. Rather than giving Chrysler management their marching orders, and taking over their assets lock, stock and barrel without a penny compensation, the Labour Government is desperately seeking a deal with the Chrysler bosses which will keep the firm in Britain - at the cost of mass redundancies.

This is just what is happening in British Leyland, where the Government is pumping in £1,000 million not to defend jobs but to create a 'viable' capitalist firm. Not content with 20,000 redundancies last year, Leyland's car-making division alone now intends cutting its workforce by another 30,000.

The debate between Wilson and Riccardo is not about how to save jobs, but about the best way to carry through mass redundancies without provoking a wave of factory occupations. Chrysler, which only bought out Rootes in the mid 1960s in order to gain a sales network in Britain, is not so concerned about this. But the Wilson/Healey clique view things differently. Chrysler may have one gun at their head, but the gun they are really terrified of

is that of Chrysler workers launching a massive fight for the right to work.

Already stewards representing the 6,000 workers at the Chrysler Linwood factory in Scotland have come out for nationalisation without compensation of the firm and for any redundancies to be met by occupation. A campaign for nationalisation without compensation based on plans drawn up by elected workers' committees opening Chrysler's books would sweep through the working class like wildfire, shattering the attempts of the Wilson Government to solve the economic crisis at the workers' expense through mass unemployment.

WORKERS' PLAN

It would prepare the way for a workers' plan for vehicle production in Britain. The bosses and the Wilson Government want to produce a smaller, more competitive car industry in Britain - intensifying the capitalist competition which already exists simply among British producers. At the same time public transport is falling apart for lack of spares and new vehicles. Car factories need to be re-equipped and re-tooled to meet these demands, rather than remaining engaged in wasteful competition with each other producing more new car models.

The threat to the jobs of 25,000 Chrysler workers is the most serious yet in the present wave of redundancies.

Chrysler workers will not simply be fighting for their own jobs; they will be engaged in a major struggle for the right to work for all the working class. If the Government wins at Chrysler, the whole struggle for jobs will be put back. Every worker has a direct interest in supporting the Chrysler fightback.

That is why the announcement at last Friday's mass meeting at the Stoke, Coventry plant by AUEW senior steward Duncan Simpson, that the Chrysler combine committee will 'wholeheartedly support' the 26 November demonstration against unemployment, is to be welcomed. He urged every single Chrysler worker to attend and fight for the right to work.

Support for the lobby is still flooding in. The largest Birmingham East AUEW shop stewards' quarterly in years voted by 407 to 3 to support the lobby. A hundred and fifty stewards at an emergency meeting called at two days' notice by the No. 20 Division of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions was unanimous in its support and will be organising a train from Birmingham. The AUEW-TASS Division No. 15 is circulating all members and factories in the Birmingham area.

Chrysler workers have now joined - with vastly more powerful forces - those occupying Balfour Darwin in Sheffield and the Personna razor blade factory in Glasgow in the front line of the fight for jobs. Solidarity with these struggles must now become the key-note of the 26 November demonstration.

ALL OUT ON NOV 26



FIGHT AGAINST THE CUTS

ROUND BRITAIN ROUND-UP

MCAPP REPORTS

A national demonstration against cuts in the NHS and for the complete banning of all private practice both inside and outside the NHS – this was one of the projects agreed at last Saturday's meeting of the National Co-ordinating Committee elected at the 11 October Conference of the Medical Committee Against Private Practice.

From the report-backs it was clear that most areas were getting local campaigns off the ground, and the Committee decided to hold a series of regional conferences throughout Britain. A date has already been set in South Wales and meetings are being called in Sheffield, Birmingham, Portsmouth and Southampton in November and December which will launch such conferences. Similar meetings are being set up in other areas.

WORKSHOP

A speaker from the Co-ordinating Committee will also be leading a workshop on the crisis in the NHS at a conference on 22 November called by the Newcastle Trades Council to discuss 'Unemployment – Wage Restraint and Public Expenditure Cuts'. Other speakers will include Mick McGahey, President of the Scottish Miners, and former Clay Cross councillor David Skinner.

A speaker from the Co-ordinating Committee will also be addressing the National Abortion Campaign rally in Trafalgar Square on 22 November.

The Committee has obtained a series of secret documents listing cuts that are being prepared behind the backs of the trade union and labour movement. It was agreed that the Committee would call a press conference on these documents and publicise this information as widely as possible in the labour movement.

COMMISSION

It was noted that the Labour Government was setting up a Royal Commission on the NHS. The Committee considered that this was nothing more than an attempt to find 'justifications' for further cuts in the NHS, and that only a Workers Enquiry could investigate the real needs of the NHS and its working class patients. The Committee agreed that it would however submit evidence on the crisis and the needs of the NHS to the Commission, which would be circulated to all bodies of the labour movement as a counterposition to the findings of the Commission.

The Committee took a report on

appeal to the trade union and labour movement. Copies of this appeal can be obtained from the Secretary, Paul Stern, 55 Bridge Lane, London N.W.11. Badges against cuts in the NHS and against private practice will also be produced, as will car stickers.

Dr Paul Stern was elected as the National Co-ordinating Committee's General Secretary, Janet Maguire was elected as Assistant Secretary and National Organiser, and Ernie Roberts was elected as the National Chairperson. Bob Pennington

the Junior Doctors' dispute and agreed that Mrs Castle should concede the doctors' demands for a 40-hour week and full rates of overtime pay. It was, however, opposed to the stand taken by many these doctors in support of private practice, and recommended that no support should be given to any such demands which had the effect of undermining the NHS even further.

In order to co-ordinate the Committee's work on a national scale it was agreed to publish a regular bulletin. The aim of the bulletin will be to win support across the whole labour movement for the demands of the Conference, and trade union branches both inside and outside the NHS will be asked to take subscriptions and bulk orders.

REPORTS

Besides carrying regular reports of local struggles, revealing information about Government cut-backs, and running a regular letters column, the bulletin will carry material on important questions such as workers' control in the NHS. The Institute of Workers Control have been asked to submit a discussion article for the second edition on this issue, which will be followed by a contribution from MCAPP.

The members of the Committee decided to circulate a fund-raising

THE CUTS CAN KILL - NEAR-DISASTER IN CAMDEN

Two babies blue with cold and four old age pensioners suffering from hypothermia – that was the result when Camden's Labour Council turned off the night heating on the Somers Town Council Estate in order to save money. Room temperatures had dropped to one degree centigrade. say tenants – in one case, in the flat of a man dying from cancer.

It was then discovered that this deadly policy was being enforced on two thirds of the Council's estates. At first the authorities attempted to deny it – a leading Labour councillor on the housing committee said it was impossible for the Council to turn off the heating. But investigations conducted by Tom Devine, Vice-Chairman of St Pancras South Labour Party, soon revealed that time switches had been specially fitted seven months previously.

The Party's Executive Committee moved rapidly to confront this lie. A motion was overwhelmingly carried which concluded: 'The EC wishes to make it absolutely clear that it regards this Council action as a scandal of the first order, which unless immediately put right, will deserve the full threat of industrial and media reaction it will receive.'

Faced with such determined opposition, an apology has now been issued by the Housing and Social Services department. Time switches will no longer be used. But the 'left' Camden Council will not get off the hook so easily. Sixty-three tenants on the Somers Town Estate are now claiming back money paid for heating which they never got.

This sordid little episode shows only too clearly that we were not exaggerating when we wrote a few weeks ago that as a result of their frenzied efforts to safeguard capitalist profits, 'Wilson and his ilk are in the most literal sense murderers of the working people'. On this occasion they were robbed of their victims. But only the most vigilant and united working class campaign against the cuts will stop them from striking again....and again....and again.

labour movement conference against the cuts and to produce a local bulletin on the crisis in the NHS. This will help to ensure that nothing goes on 'behind the backs of the workers'.

Present at the meeting were Paul Sellinman (NALGO), Dan Garvey (East Wales Secretary, British Association of Social Workers), Dr Sue Brown (Medical Practitioners Union), Ros Olivier (NUT and NAC), Dave Galligan (COHSE Branch Secretary, Heath Hospital), Michelle Connor (NUT), Mary Crofton (NUPE shop steward in a Newport hospital), Phil Cornell (IMG and Iron & Steel Trades Confederation), John Williams (AUEW No. 3 branch Cardiff), Dr Ian Chalmers (Socialist Medical Association), D.C. Davies and D. Haywood (South Wales Mineworkers Executive), M. Davies (NALGO Action Group), P. Cronin (NALGO official), Ray Perry (COHSE branch secretary), Chris Jones (NALGO Action Group).

Delegates from the Bristol area who attended the MCAPP Conference met last week to set up a steering committee in their area to build support for the decisions of the Conference.

Representatives at the meeting included workers from AUEW Rolls Royce, Imperial Smelters T&GWU, Tribune Group, MPU, NALGO, NUPE, COHSE, T&GWU hospital workers, NAC and Royal College of Nursing. The 12-person strong committee includes representatives from these unions as well as Labour Party members.

Since the meeting the South Wales NUM executive have offered to pay for all the publicity for the regional conference.

A meeting has been called by the NUPE branch at Southampton General Hospital on the cuts in the NHS. NUPE has invited all the other unions in the hospital to attend, and has also invited representatives from unions outside the health service. NUPE secretary Arthur Hill, who was a delegate to the MCAPP Conference, has suggested setting up an Action Committee in the Southampton area based on the broad trade union movement.

inning of a campaign for the following demands: renegotiation of emergency and night services; restoration of any day posts already cut; rethinking on planned cuts; and that the Council should expand services in line with the Government circular issued at the beginning of this year.

WEST MIDLANDS

Members of the National Union of Public Employees have pointed the way for other council workers in fighting redundancies. In both Birmingham and Solihull, council workers have refused to cover where councils have cut back on jobs. Now the three area committees of NUPE in the West Midlands have passed resolutions making this policy the rule for all NUPE members.

The deep impact being felt in the whole working class as a result of the cuts has been expressed in the setting up of a campaign to fight the cuts in Birmingham. The campaign, which involves both local trade unions and tenants and residents associations, will fight for: opp-

MOVEMENT AGAINST THE CUTS GROWS & GROWS

LONDON

The scandal of homes lying empty has brought a militant response from social workers all over London. In Islington, 3,000 homes lie empty. Councils have been told by the Labour Government:

'Don't demolish any more houses, improve them.' Of course, when they follow this line they are then told: 'Sorry but we can't give you any more money to improve them.' The councils – many Labour – passively accept this situation, and it is left to their employees to wage a fight.

Tower Hamlets social workers have voted not to send any more families to hostel accommodation. They have also organised demonstrations and strike action to protest against their Council's policy towards the homeless, and against the threat of disciplinary action over the action of 16 social workers who allowed a homeless family to squat in their offices rather than go to a hostel.

Social services department workers in Islington have laid down the law to their council – stop freezing job vacancies or we refuse to take on any new cases. Social workers in Newham have been angered by a proposal to cut the number of social workers during the day in order to service a night and emergency staff. A





Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

class down the river. It has shown itself to be completely cynical about defending living standards and democratic rights. It should be removed from the leadership of the labour movement. All students can support this fight by joining forces with any workers who oppose this leadership both inside and outside the Labour Party.

ISOLATED

But students still remain isolated from the labour movement. Their voice goes unheard at the conferences of the Labour Party and the TUC. If students wish to form alliances with workers they have to use all forums open to them to do this. The IMG has begun to campaign for the NUS to affiliate to the Labour Party not because it believes in gradualist solutions achieved through Parliament, but because it realises the basic need to establish political unity between students and the working class. The unemployment demonstration on 26 November is a real test case for whether or not students are willing to support workers in action. Already in many areas students are building joint mobilising committees with college workers and local Trades Councils to build mass support for the demo. Space on student coaches must be given over to the unemployed, strike action must be discussed in every college, pickets must be organised, and college facilities should be made available to trade unionists where necessary. In building for the demonstration, workers involved in local struggles should be invited to address general meetings and money should be raised to finance broad-based Right to Work committees.

IMG STUDENTS CALL FOR SUPPORT FOR DEMO ON 26th.

Students face two particular problems posed by the vicious austerity measures of the Labour Government. The cut-backs in the colleges are so enormous that students alone feel incapable of pushing them back. Students have also been faced over the past year with repression from college authorities when they do take action in the colleges against the Government's policies in education.

The Broad Left leadership of the NUS have responded to the present situation by emphasising the necessity of an alliance with the trade unions. However the Broad Left refused during the summer to prepare students to come out clearly in support of workers' struggles against the £6 norm. But despite the lack of any national publicity from this leadership for the 21 October demonstration on education cuts, students from Colleges of Further Education and teaching training colleges turned out in large numbers.

HALF-HEARTED

Students must demand that the 26 November unemployment demonstration is not taken up in the same half-hearted fashion. They must demand that both their student unions and the NUS Executive put out a clear call for strike action by students on the 26th, as well as forming a mass contingent of students on the demonstration to show students' opposition to the anti-working class policies of the Wilson Government. The Broad Left's misleadership in failing to mobilise the mass of their membership against the policies of the Government is the direct result of their unwillingness to

challenge the 'lefts' in the trade union bureaucracy and in the Labour Party in a real fight in defence of education and living standards in general.

In contrast to this, IMG students in the colleges have been fighting for demands and a strategy that can really provide a way forward. Central to such a strategy is the slogan that neither the working class or students are responsible for the present crisis, and that they should not accept cuts in their living standards to safeguard the profits of a few. Thus the IMG fights for a sliding scale of grants based on a student cost of living index monitored by prices committees of students and workers in the colleges.

BASIC THING

This is the basic thing that students must establish in the claim for a new level of the grant. This must be combined with the demand for an immediate increase in the grant to £1,200, to bring students' real living standards back to the 1962 level.

In the same way the IMG calls for cash injections into the public sector as a whole and a sliding scale of social expenditure to protect the social services from the ravages of inflation. A socially useful plan of public works, to build the hospitals and schools that are so desperately needed to provide adequate facilities for all, should be fought for by students. Such demands show that students are clearly part of a fight to defend education on a class basis and not as a special case or privileged group in society.

IMG students have been fighting for the setting up of a joint student and worker committee in North-East London Poly to open the books; they have also been fighting for joint demonstrations of students and workers in Bristol and Birmingham against the cuts. In Liverpool, Edinburgh and London, IMG students have been in the forefront of mobilising

for LPYS demonstrations on youth employment. A campaign is being launched by the IMG nationally to commit student unions to support any redundancy struggles by workers in the localities, in the way in which Newcastle students supported the Eldon Square pickets.

The present Wilson leadership of the Labour Party is selling the working

OPPOSITION

Such actions could really turn students out on the day to express their opposition to the anti-working class policies of the present Labour Government. The IMG will be continuing to fight inside the NUS for this overall alternative strategy to the present bankrupt one offered by the Broad Left. A real fight to defend education means a fight to challenge and remove the present Labour leadership itself, and mass action by students must be clearly directed towards that goal.

by the IMG Student Commission

dancies and 'natural wastage'; defence of the Government's election pledges for increased provision in the social services housing and education; etc, and to implement that part of the Labour election manifesto which calls for a real redistribution of wealth and power.

The Trades Council has also swung into action with proposals for a campaign against the closure of the Further Education College in Saltley.

WEST OF ENGLAND

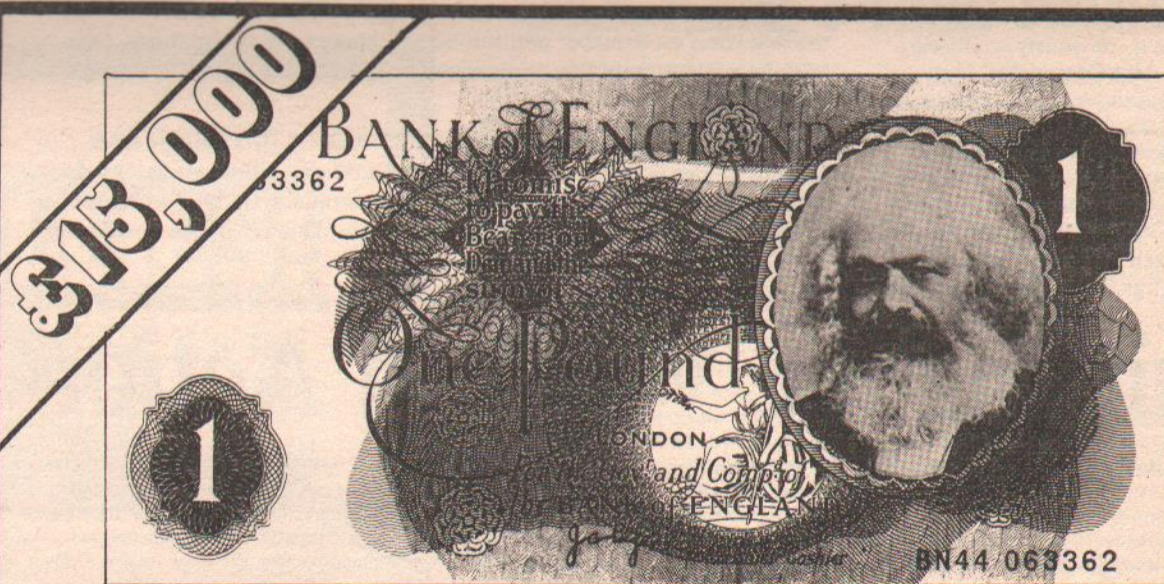
Militants in Bristol who broke through a police cordon found Avon County Council discussing whether or not to build two schools. The demonstrators immediately raised the cry: 'Build the schools, fight the cuts.'

Earlier 400 people had turned out to picket the meeting of the Tory-controlled Council to demand that police spending be cut, rather than social spending (it is estimated that the Avon and Somerset police force will overspend its budget by £688,000 in 1975-76). The call for the

and it eventually drew support from a half day strike by ATI members at Bristol Poly, tenants from the Hartcliffe estate, over 50 NALGO members in the Social Services Department, as well as from students all over the area.

The usually quiet streets of Gloucester also saw 300 trade unionists, students and parents making a strong protest against massive cuts in the education budget by the Tory-controlled Council. These will involve a 30 per cent cut in educational supplies and a reduction in teaching staff of at least 200.

This situation is common throughout the West Country. More than 1,000 students and local trade unionists who marched through Exeter last week protesting about the education cuts were told by speakers that Devon has one of the poorest pupil-teacher ratios in the country. The Conservative-controlled education authority is preparing drastic cuts in nursery and special school budgets and the school building programme, while continuing to subsidise direct grant schools



Dear Comrades,

As you will have seen in Red Weekly, the International Marxist Group is launching a £15,000 Fund Drive. This money will be used to extend the national facilities of the IMG, found a Scottish centre, and expand Red Weekly to 16 pages. The aim is to hit the £15,000 target by the end of January.

Events in Portugal and Spain have shown that socialism is once again on the agenda in Western Europe. But in Britain we have seen in the last few months the imposition of the £6 pay limit; spiralling unemployment; massive cuts in the social services; attacks on the rights of women to abortion; and the use of the Irish war to undermine the democratic liberties of the working class through the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

The capitulation of the 'left' reformist leaders in the face of these attacks once more underlines the crisis of leadership in the workers' movement. The choice will be posed in the following months as to whether the British working class participates in the European revolution. This very much depends on whether a new leadership can be forged during the fight to defend living standards and the right to work — a fight in which the British ruling class will use every method and means of splitting up and dividing the workers' movement, including playing on British chauvinism and sexism.

British working class will depend to a large extent on the efforts of revolutionaries; and this in turn will reflect the ability of the IMG to build a strong revolutionary organisation inside the working class.

To do this needs sober patient political activity, for the only real material factor we have at our disposal is our ideas. But to implement these 'ideas', to fight the weight of reformism inside the labour movement, other material factors are increasingly necessary; offices, duplicators, full-time workers, printed pamphlets. All of this costs money, and we make no apology for asking you for a large donation even though the anarchy of the capitalist economy pushes living standards downwards daily.

In Lisbon and Oporto militants of the Fourth International solved at least one of these material problems relatively easily. Given the strength of the mass mobilisations, they were able to take over empty office space from the speculators and turn it into revolutionary centres. Unfortunately the working class movement is not strong enough to solve our needs in exactly this way. However, by making a sizeable donation to the Fund Drive, we think that you will be making a real contribution to preparing for the time when such a course of action is open to the revolutionary movement. To give is a militant act.

Yours fraternally,

Brian Grogan

Please send all monies (cheques/POs made out to 'The Week') to: Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

FIGHT LABOURS ATTACKS ON ABORTION

As this session of Parliament draws to a close, James White's Abortion (Amendment) Bill is consigned to the dustbin. But the seeds of his reactionary ideas have been firmly planted in fertile soil with the Wilson Government's acceptance of the proposals made by the Select Committee which was studying White's Bill.

New restrictions on the availability of abortion — which will hit particularly hard at women seeking abortions late in pregnancy, women forced to the private sector by the inadequacies of the NHS, and foreign women — are already coming into effect. Barbara Castle, announcing these measures in the House of Commons last week, explained that they were being introduced because of the Labour Government's concern about the treatment of women in the private sector and that now 'there will be a comprehensive and effective attack on those abuses, which will be eliminated.'

UNCONVINCING

This cover-up for the Government's capitulation to the anti-abortionists doesn't look very convincing when it is followed up a few days later by a statement from Under Secretary of State Dr David Owen that a fee of £100 is considered 'acceptable' for early abortions, with a higher, undisclosed figure for later ones! He also added reassuringly that the only new legislation he wanted was to reduce the legal time limit for abortions from 28 to 24 weeks. He is obviously well aware that the Select Committee, if re-appointed, can be relied upon to follow this lead by recommending even more restrictions and lower time limits.

The decision whether or not to reconvene the Select Committee will be taken in the new session of Parliament at the end of November.

By allowing a free vote to decide whether the Select Committee should be reconvened, the Wilson leadership is paving the way for more attacks on women's rights to abortion. Their argument that the issue of abortion is one which should be left to the conscience of individual MPs cuts no ice with women who, having determined according to their individual conscience that an abortion is necessary, find themselves forced to the backstreets to get one.

The Government's refusal to acknowledge that the question of abortion is a social and political issue requiring a clear stand in favour of the working class also cuts no ice with all those labour movement representatives who voted for the successful resolutions calling for free



Five hundred supporters of the National Abortion Campaign marched through Manchester last week against restrictive legislation and in support of free abortion on demand.

abortion on request on the NHS at the TUC and Labour Party conferences.

An essential first step in the implementation of these resolutions must be a fight to force Labour to impose a three line whip on a vote by Labour MPs against the reconvening of the Select Committee. This

is the reason why NAC has called for a week of action, starting on 17 November, to oppose the re-appointment of the Select Committee.

All over the country, NAC groups are organising activities which seek to bring home very clearly the message that the responsibility of working class representatives — both in Parliament and in the leadership of the trade union movement — is to serve the interests of working class women and men. Support for NAC actions is therefore being sought from all levels of the workers' movement with resolutions and mobilisations from trade union branches, trades councils, Constituency Labour Parties, tenants' associations and women's groups.

By building the NAC campaign in this way, the groundwork is firmly laid for a united struggle against Wilson's policies, not only on the issue of abortion, but on all other issues of vital concern to the working class.

Berry Beaumont

TWO IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE 'WEEK OF ACTION' IN THE LONDON REGION

THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER — LOBBY YOUR MP IN PARLIAMENT. Hundreds of NAC supporters will be converging on the House of Commons to urge a vote against the reconvening of the Select Committee. Write to your MP in advance to let him/her know, then turn up at 2.00 or 6.00 pm to join the lobby. Women Labour MPs will also be receiving the 'abortion on demand' petition bearing thousands of signatures. Official delegations from labour movement organisations will be lobbying Wilson too.

SATURDAY 22 NOVEMBER — MASS RALLY IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE. Come along between 2.00 and 4.00 pm with banners. Speakers will include Labour MPs, trade union representatives, doctors who support abortion on demand, and well known women. Theatre groups and singers will be providing entertainment as well.

Building the Week of Action

The Leicester NAC group sets a good example of how the campaign can take forward the fight against the reconvening of the Select Committee as a step on the way to winning free abortion on demand. They are calling for a picket of local Labour MP John Marshall's surgery. This MP says he is against restrictive legislation, but he just happened to be away from Parliament when the vote was taken on James White's Bill. Leicester NAC are going to leave him in no doubt as to where he should be when it's time for him to vote against the reconvening of the Select Committee!

In many other constituencies, such as Bolton, Birmingham and Sheffield, actions are also being taken to force MPs to abide by Labour Party conference decisions on abortion. In South London, local trade unionists are participating in a picket of the AUEW headquarters — all the AUEW-sponsored MPs voted in favour of James White! The threat of losing their seats is becoming very real for many MPs, including James White himself, as pressure mounts all over the country for a vote against the Select Committee.

Those anti-abortion forces grouped around organisations such as the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) are not going to be let off the hook either. One danger lies in the credence they give to Wilson's claims that the 1967 Abortion Act is being abused. A successful picket of SPUC offices in West London last week exposed their emotional and false propaganda, and it is being followed up by further pickets in other parts of the country.

SPUC doctors under fire

SPUC doctors who refuse to provide abortion facilities in their hospitals are also under fire. In Cardiff a picket has been organised — with the support of the Trades Council, NALGO Action, and health workers — of the largest hospital in the country, the University Hospital. Two years ago, a brand new out-patient abortion clinic was built, complete with equipment but it has never been used for abortions. The gynaecologist in charge says that there is 'no need' for it — presumably because as a supporter of SPUC he thinks there is never any need for abortion!

the chief gynaecologist, Dr Hugh McLaren, is another prominent SPUC member. He opposes abortion except for mental defectives, and insists on tying it to sterilisation measures. Local NAC activists are mounting a campaign for his removal, as well as organising a petition demanding that the Area Health Authority make abortion freely available by providing the necessary out-patient units.

Fight for NHS facilities

The fight for free abortion on demand means not just a fight against the Select Committee and restrictive laws in Parliament, but also a campaign for adequate NHS facilities to provide what is already legal under the '67 Act. The 'Campaign against the Cuts in the NHS' is joining with NAC groups in many places to draw attention to the effects of Labour's cuts in social spending on abortion services.

At Charing Cross hospital in London, a picket is taking place in protest at the slashing of the budget for a new out-patient abortion clinic. Local working people at Northwick Park Hospital are demanding that some of the private facilities be turned over for use as abortion units. Demonstrations at hospitals, DHSS offices and Area Health Authority headquarters are also planned in Norwich, Tyneside, Bristol, Coventry, Sheffield, Enfield, South London, Swansea, Leicester, Birmingham and many other places.

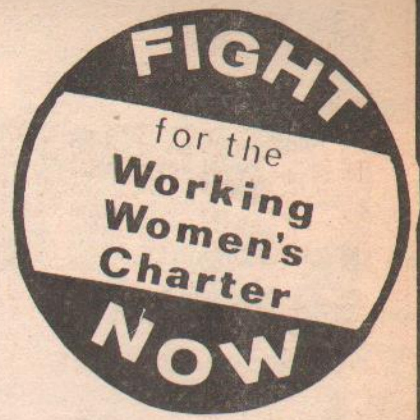
To draw together all possible supporters of NAC, and to explain the aims and actions of the NAC campaign, local public meetings, motorcades and demonstrations, rallies in shopping centres and street and housing estate meetings are being held. The culmination of the Week of Action in Scotland will be a demonstration in Edinburgh, while NAC supporters in and around London will be converging on Trafalgar Square on 22 November for a mass rally.

The success of all these activities will be measured not only by the numbers of people mobilised to take part in protests against the reconvening of the Select Committee, but by the strength of support that NAC can build in the trade union and labour movement. The fight for free abortion on demand took root in the TUC and Labour Party conference decisions. It now has to extend out to all corners of the workers' movement if



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

At a NAC meeting in Hemel Hempstead last week, Renee Short pledged to vote against the reconvening of the Select Committee, and explained how she had been individually urging sympathetic Labour MPs to do the same. However she refused to take a clear stand against the Wilson leadership's promise of a free vote on the abortion issue. But only by forcing all Labour MPs to vote on a class position can the working class be sure that their interests are represented in Parliament.



WOMEN AGAINST SOCIAL SERVICES CUTS

1975 — the year of women. Or so we were led to believe by the Labour Government when it promised women a better deal. But all women have had from this Government are the hammer blows of inflation, unemployment and welfare cuts.

The scraps of Government paper on which the Equal Pay Act and anti-discrimination proposals are written give no protection to the woman with pay so low that she's drowning in inflation, or the woman who joins 300,000 others in the dole queue (not to mention those who've given up that one and don't bother to register, or the married women who don't get benefit anyway). These Government proposals have nothing to say to the woman butchered in a backstreet abortion or the woman who can't get her children into a nursery.

BLIND EYE

For too long the working class movement has turned a blind eye to the plight of women, in a short-sighted attempt to keep men in jobs and secure the wage levels of male workers. At a time when the strongest and most united struggle is needed to smash all the vicious policies of the Wilson Government, such blindness can only divide and diffuse that strength.

Men and women workers, tenants, hospital patients and parents must unite to halt the attempts by Wilson's hatchetmen to saddle the working class with the capitalist crisis through the backdoor of attacks on women. A united stand is called for against the Labour Government's restrictions on abortion, cuts in nursery plans, closures of women's hospitals, etc.

The Working Women's Charter has been campaigning for over a year for an extension of the provisions which free women from the ties to the home, e.g. increased education opportunities, readily available abortion facilities, free nurseries, adequate maternity leave, etc. These, like many other working class gains, are in danger of being battered to death by this Labour Government.

FIGHT-BACK

In London the Working Women's Charter Committee is taking immediate steps to ensure that this assault is resisted. A conference has been called for the New Year to strengthen the fight against the social expenditure attacks, which are eating into every demand of the Charter. At a planning meeting on 25 October it was agreed that the conference discussion will centre on:—

1. The economic crisis and how it affects women at home and at work.
 2. Women workers in the public sector.
 3. Links with existing campaigns against the Labour Government's cuts, and how the specific problems of women should be taken up by these campaigns.
- Every organisation fighting the cut-backs or affected by them, and all supporters of the aims of the Working Women's Charter should throw their weight behind this conference. The next planning meeting is on 21 November at the Mother Red Cap pub, Camden Road N.W.1. (opposite Camden Town Tube) at 7 pm. All organisations are invited and encouraged to send representatives to this meeting. For further information write to WWC, 49 Lowther Hill, London



Personna workers fight on against bureaucrats' sabotage

Stewart MacLennan reports on the fight for jobs in Scotland

In their sixth week of strike action, and third week of occupation, the 320 workers at Personna Razor Blades, Hillington (near Glasgow) have been dealt the hardest blow to their struggle for jobs since the redundancies were first announced. This threat to the occupation has come from none other than the leaders of the workers' own union, the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

For two weeks now the Executive Committee of the AUEW has postponed the vital decision on official support and payment of strike money. The EC meeting of 28 October was cancelled to allow the Executive to join in a Common Market junket in Brussels; and the meeting of 4 November decided to 'defer' a decision until a 'fuller report' had been submitted by the Paisley district office.

The EC needed no such 'fuller report' a few weeks ago, however, when on the demand of general secretary John Boyd it perfunctorily reversed a decision by the Glasgow district committee to break off AUEW sponsorship of eight right wing Labour councillors who voted for the use of

troops to break the dustcart drivers' strike last March.

The present paralysis caused by the stalemate between Scanlon's 'left' and the Boyd right wing on the EC is reflected in this decision to 'defer' not merely support for the occupation, but in fact its immediate prospects of victory. And this has taken place despite the full support for Personna given by the AUEW (TASS) and the AUEW's Paisley district committee.

The entire EC is now responsible for the present situation, in which the Personna workers have had to continue one of the most important redundancy struggles in Britain by scraping the barrel of their own savings and submitting to the mercies

of the Social Security. It is no coincidence - as Boyd well knows - that the right wing in the area (part of his home base), and in the factory itself, have tried to build a 'back to work' lobby, and now argue that the prime task of the occupation leadership is to sort out 'hardship' cases and abandon their campaign for support.

TEST-CASE

However, the willingness of the AUEW Executive Committee to see the Personna occupation go down to defeat is not matched by the sentiments of the AUEW members on Clydeside. For them, as for the bosses of the multinationals, the collapse of the occupation would be a green light for mass unemployment far beyond the present local level of 9 per cent.

But how clearly stewards and convenors on Clydeside see the way ahead in this struggle is not yet clear. For example, a mass meeting of trade union delegates on unemployment in Glasgow a few weeks ago rejected a motion for strike action on 26 November proposed by Personna convenor and occupation leader Phil McBride.

Similarly the Trades Council, which has organised a train to the 26 November lobby, has to date sidestepped the question of reserving a block of seats for unemployed workers. Nor has it made any provision to ensure a mass delegation from Personna. Readers need only compare last week's strike fund total of £274 with the Trades Council's £9 per head ticket price to see that the failure to make such a provision robs the Personna workers of the chance to popularise their struggle at the mass lobby.

DEMONSTRATION

The Trades Council has nevertheless had to bow to pressure for a more active campaign against the Government's mass unemployment policies, and call a demonstration in Glasgow on 22 November. The office committee of John Brown Engineering was the first body to call for such a mass demonstration, and its

chairman Alan Rae - a member of No. 2 Divisional Council of the AUEW (TASS) - told Red Weekly:

'If the Trades Council are really serious about fighting Labour's programme of mass unemployment, they will make sure that this demonstration becomes a massive display of solidarity with the workers in occupation at Personna and their struggle for work-sharing with no loss of pay. All trade unionists should build for this demonstration with that aim in view.'

The Paisley district committee of the AUEW sponsored a mass meeting of shop stewards and convenors from the district in the canteen of the occupied factory on Monday, where proposals were put for the organisation of weekly levies to provide financial life-blood for the occupation. It is reckoned that £1,200 to £1,500 a week is required to build the occupation and the campaign of solidarity. The occupation leaders have been encouraged over the last week by decisions at several engineering plants in Glasgow to organise such levies, and by a donation of £500 from UCS.

DETERMINATION

The Personna workers prepared for the mass meeting by covering one wall of the canteen with the management briefing charts whose contents were revealed in last week's Red Weekly. Above them the shop stewards' committee has posted up the statement: 'Below is an exercise found in the conference room by the workers after the sit-in started. It makes interesting reading, and shows what life in Personna would be like if the workers gave in now.'

The determination expressed in this statement must be backed up immediately by:

- Demands by all AUEW branches, shop stewards' committees, district committees etc. for immediate official recognition.
● Organisation throughout Clydeside to ensure a massive display of support on 22 November



for the fight of the Personna workers.

● Maximum donations to the strike committee funds - send to Ruby Duncan, 27 Bowfield Crescent, Penilee, Glasgow G52 (collection sheets also available from this address).

Blacking Philip Morris

Personna Razor Blades is one of a number of British subsidiaries of the American multinational Philip Morris Inc. Among others known to the workers occupying Personna or located by Red Weekly are: (PRINTERS) Thomas Jenkins Ltd., 108 Weston Street, London S.E.1.; H.L. Vickery Ltd., Hackbridge Works, Hackbridge, Wallington, Surrey; Day & Wilkins Ltd., Finishers Ltd., and Perfect Plates Ltd., all of Mill Lane, Waddon, Croydon, Surrey; (TOBACCO) Philip Morris & Co. Ltd., Boars Head House, Thameside Industrial Estate, Factory Road, London E.16; Philip Morris Engineering Services, Artichoke Hill, The Highway, London E.1.; Godfrey Phillips Ltd., 8 Grafton Street, London W.1.; Pritchard & Burton Ltd., 132 Commercial Street, London E.1.; (GREETINGS CARDS) Celebration Arts Group Ltd., Barnards Inn, London E.C.1.; Diplomat Greeting Publishers Ltd., 366 Chiswick High Road, London W.4.

The International Marxist Group is also contacting supporters and affiliates of the Fourth International in several countries to investigate the possibility of solidarity action around Philip Morris subsidiaries. These include American Safety Razors Inc., New York, USA (Socialist Workers Party); and Marlboro' Cigarettes, Lausanne, Switzerland (Ligue Marxiste Revolutionnaire); as well as a number of factories in Spain. A militant of the Spanish section of the Fourth International, the LCR-ETA (VI), visited the occupied factory with IMG members last week while on a speaking tour of Scotland. In discussion with the Personna stewards, he promised the assistance of his organisation in locating Philip Morris subsidiaries in Spain and developing solidarity action.

- WHAT'S ON -

BRITISH WITHDRAWAL from Northern Ireland Campaign: first of a series of public meetings in Aldershot putting the case for the withdrawal of troops following police confiscation of leaflets. Meeting Sat 15 Nov, 6.30-8.30pm in small hall of Church of the Ascension, Ayling Lane, Aldershot.

BLACK COUNTRY: Warley Trades Council demo against unemployment. March from Smethwick to W. Bromwich. Assemble at 'Spendcroft', Smethwick, 2pm, 22 Nov.

BIRMINGHAM Labour Defence of the Manifesto Committee public meeting: 'Which way for the Labour Government'. Speakers Arthur Scargill and Nick Bradley. Transport Ho., Birmingham, Weds 19 Nov, 7.30pm.

UNEMPLOYED TEACHERS meeting. Thurs 20 Nov, 7.30 in Prince Albert, Wharfedale Rd, N.1. (Kings X tube). Sponsored by Socialist Teachers Conference.

LEICESTER Working Women's Charter conference, Sun 16 Nov, 2-8pm, at AUEW Hall, Vaughan Way. Speakers, workshops, street theatre plus creche and refreshments. Adm. 10p.

NURSERY CAMPAIGN-meeting to discuss the fight for better nursery provisions and against the Government cuts. Sat 23 Nov, 2pm, in Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Rd, N.7.

CRITIQUE CONFERENCE on the World Crisis and Eastern Europe. Fri & Sat, 21-22 Nov. New Hall, City University, St John St, London EC1. Fri 21 Nov, 7.30-Ernest Mandel. Sat 22 Nov: 10.30-Ivan Szelenyi; 2.30-Zhores Medvedev & Georges Haupt; 7.30-Hillel Ticktin. Fee £2.50 or £2 for Critique subscribers.

LONDON SOCIALIST FORUM: 'The Prevention of Terrorism Act'. Speakers from NCCU, BWNIC and IMG. Tues 18 Nov, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, W.1.

BIG FLAME meeting on Women's Struggles. Discussion on organising with women in London. Abortion films. Fri 14 Nov, 7.30, Rugby Tavern, Rugby St, London WC1. Women only. New issue of 'Women's Struggle Notes' on sale, or order from 7 Norland Gardens, London W11.

CENTRAL LONDON NAC public meeting, speakers: Pam

MEDIA AND ABORTION: public meeting with speakers Anna Raeburn, Angela Phillips at the Architectural Association, Bedford Sq, London WC1, Mon 17 Nov at 7.30pm. Organised by Women in Communications Industries.

PORTUGAL-Protest Against Media Distortion, Thurs 20 Nov: Picket Bush House (BBC), Strand, WC2 from 5.30-7, then rally at 7.30pm in Friends House, Euston Rd, NW1. Speakers will include 'Republica' worker.

CRITIQUE SEMINAR: Chris Goodey on 'What socialists can learn from science'. Thurs 13 Nov, 7.30pm, LSE St Clements Building (Room S117), Houghton St.

IBERIAN 19: Will anyone who was a witness to the occupation of the Iberian Airlines office on Wednesday 10 September in Regent Street, which led to the arrest of 19 people on conspiracy charges, please contact the Iberian 19 Defence Committee, c/o 3 Salisbury Court, Salisbury Avenue, London N.3.

AN EVENING with the United Farm Workers: Fri 14 Nov, 7.30pm, Friends House, Euston Rd (opp Euston stn). New film 'Fighting for our Lives' plus speakers, music, poetry and theatre. Tickets 75p from UFW, 29 Gt James St, WC1 (242 8440) or at door.

NEWCASTLE IMG educational meetings, every Thurs day at 8pm in the Bridge Hotel.

A WOMAN'S RIGHT To Choose/Free Abortion on Demand badges available from 97 Caledonian Road, London N1-10p each plus s.a.e., bulk reductions on request.

BIRMINGHAM IMG public meeting: 'Fight for the Right to Work'. Sun 23 Nov, 7.30pm, Digbeth Civic Hall.

DEFEND THE RIGHT TO WORK: North London IMG public meeting with speakers from local labour

PAGE TWO

Scottish Daily News Saturday 8 November 1975

SCOTLAND RALLIES!

Join the big city march to save News!



It's not goodbye - we will

SUPPORT was pouring in last night for a mass rally by Scottish Daily News workers in Glasgow today.

National Party, and Joe O'Neill, Industrial spokesman for the Scottish Liberal Party, Strathclyde Area Council, will give their support.



SAVE THE NEWS' MARCH and RALLY TODAY, NOV. 8th - ASSEMBLE at SDN, ALBION ST., 12.30 p.m., and march to Sauchiehall Street pedestrian precinct

INVITED SPEAKERS:

- WILLIAM WOLFE (SNP)
WILLIE HAMILTON (LAB.)
TEDDY TAYLOR (TORY)
JO GRIMOND (LIB.)

ARTISTS:

- BILLY CONNOLLY
THE GABERLUNZIE
MATT MCGINN

Page 2 of the final edition of the Scottish Daily News-plenty of tears, but little understanding of their predicament

SDN - CO-OPERATION WITH BOSSES LEADS TO MASS REDUNDANCIES

The destination of one road in the struggle against unemployment - that taken by the ex-Daily Express workers of the Scottish Daily News - was made only too apparent last Saturday with the closure of the paper. They had formed a 'workers co-operative' which sought its support in sympathetic financial backers and the demagogic promises of Benn.

The organisations of the working class were seen by the SDN leaders as a useful arena for fund-raising and general support, but not as a basis for a workers' newspaper under their control and direction. The SDN, therefore, veered according to its current backing from left Labourism to semi-reactionary populism, from a propaganda sheet for the Scottish National Party to the mouthpiece of Robert Maxwell, from radical ecstasy to 'tit-and-bum' sensationalism.

When the Labour Government turned down flat the appeal for a last-ditch loan - not much larger than a month's dole

in Scotland: the Tory hanger-and-flogger Teddy Taylor; the right-wing Labourite Willie Hamilton; the ghost of the ex-Liberal leader Jo Grimond; and the SNP Chairman William Wolfe.

To hear the funeral orations of these carpetbaggers less than 300 people marched from the SDN offices in Albion Street. Even Jimmy Reid and the assorted bishops present at an earlier rally did not turn up to administer the last rites. The take-over of the march by the SNP with banners and loud-speakers blaring the anthem of nationalist reaction 'Flower of Scotland' was so blatant that the only contingent from the labour movement, that of the Labour Party Young Socialists, correctly withdrew in disgust.

A small contingent of SDN workers are now maintaining a 'sit-in' in the Albion Street plant - the mausoleum of a struggle which based its 'co-operation' not on the co-operation and con-



MICK GOSLING
reports from
Coventry

The livelihoods of more than 25,000 Chrysler workers and 70,000 workers scattered throughout 8,000 British component firms are now endangered by the latest threats of the US multinational. With sales dwindling to a tiny 6.8 per cent of the British car market in the first nine months of this year, and a first half loss of £15.9 million following a pre-tax loss of £17.7 million in the previous year, Chrysler is threatening to shut up shop in Britain and cast tens of thousands onto the dole queue.

Despite the secrecy surrounding the talks between American chairman John Riccardo and the Wilson Government, it is clear that Chrysler is demanding at least a £100 million ransom from the Government to stay in Britain. But even if granted this money would not be used to save jobs. As with the £1,000 million being given to British Leyland, it will mean rationalisation, speed-up and mass sackings to make the firm 'viable'.

Chrysler originally took over Rootes in the mid-1960s to buy itself a sales network in Britain. A whole range of forward-looking models were abandoned on the drawing board. This

International fight needed!

Chrysler's threat to close down their British operations has once again revealed the power of the multinational firms — and the need for an international working class response to their plans.

In 1922 there were over 200 firms producing cars in the United States, Britain and Germany. By 1968 there were 23 in the capitalist world and most of these were specialist producers.

The power wielded by the multinationals is fantastic. When faced with a strike they inevitably threaten to pack up and go. That's what Chrysler did earlier this year at the time of the pay strike at the Stoke, Coventry engine plant. During the 1969 Ford strike that particular company threatened to boycott Britain as an investment outlet.

The home-based multinational, British Leyland, is the same. They are currently threatening 4,500 workers at their Italian subsidiary, Leyland-Innocenti, with closure if they do not accept 1,500 sackings — the biggest redundancies in a single Italian firm for 20 years — and a 25 per cent hike in productivity for the remainder of the workforce.

METALWORKERS

The Italian workers have responded with the threat of occupation against any redundancies and a magnificent one-day general strike of 300,000 Milan metalworkers. They say there is 'only one solution — nationalisation without compensation'. They are also seeking links with British employees of Leyland.*

Now American Chrysler workers have said that they will strike if necessary to support British Chrysler employees taking action to safeguard their jobs. Douglas Fraser, vice-president of the United Auto Workers' Union, said last week, 'the workers should not have to suffer the consequences' of the 'bad planning and poor management' of Chrysler's British division. In the fight for jobs it is urgent that these small beginnings are built upon.

One start British Leyland workers could make is to break the blockade on spare parts going to Portugal. The Lisbon bus service is being crippled for lack of spares and repairs, while Leyland is threatening to lay-off workers at the AEC Southall bus plant. Breaking the blockade would not only defend British workers' jobs but would also be a concrete act of assistance to the Portuguese revolution.

* Mr Percy Plant, Innocenti chairman commented that he did not understand why such a fuss was being made over the dismissal of a few thousand workers 'When in England 20,000 men lost their jobs at Leyland...nothing happened. Why is it so different in Italy?'

CHRYSLER OCCUPY & NATIONALISE

lies at the basis of Chrysler's problems: out-of-date models and still older equipment.

In a rapidly shrinking car market, Chrysler just cannot compete. Recently a special survey on the motor industry by the *Financial Times* (14 October) revealed that 'the consensus of opinion in the British industry is that if 1975 has been a bad year, 1976 will be even worse: the market for new cars is expected to slip from this year's level (now forecast at between 1.1m and 1.2m cars) to only just over 1m....'

Cut losses

This is why Chrysler management want to cut their losses and bolt. But so far only the Linwood stewards, with their clear demand for nationalisation without compensation and their intention to occupy and seize all the company's assets if Chrysler pull out, have rejected any responsibility for the crisis. Ex-left Jack Jopes has been busily insisting that the firm can be made 'viable' on the capitalist market, and in a hopelessly confused speech Bob Morris, T&GWU convenor at the Stoke, Coventry plant, declared to a mass meeting on 6 November: 'I've said and I'll say again, irrespective of left-wing trash, of course we accept a certain responsibility.'

This attitude is disastrous in the fight for jobs. It accepts from the start that workers are 'partly responsible' for the crisis — an argument the bosses are using everywhere to justify cutbacks in wages, working conditions and manning levels to make their firms 'viable'. All it means is that workers compete with each other and more often than not work themselves out of a job. Accepting 'part responsibility' inevitably leads to accepting redundancies. Later on in his speech Morris said as much: 'I would by hypocritical to offer you any great hope of what the future will bring.'

Approval

Unfortunately, this danger was underlined at the mass meeting by the passing of a motion which simply sort approval for the Joint Shop Stewards and Negotiating Committee 'to take any course of action we deem necessary to protect and preserve jobs' without specifying any policy or any possible tactics.

Communist Party - no answers

Eddie McCluskey is Secretary of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee at the Chrysler Stoke, Coventry plant. He is also a well known member of the Communist Party. The CP's paper, the *Morning Star* (8 November), interpreted the decision of the mass meeting as a 'vote for action' to save jobs — and so, no doubt, did the 4,000 workers at the Stoke plant. However, when *Red Weekly* asked Bro. McCluskey just what action he thought the shop stewards had in mind, he was less than forthcoming:

Q. Would you amplify what the recommendation 'to take any course of action we deem necessary to protect and preserve jobs' means?

A. No, we've got reasons for not telling you that. We will take the necessary action.

Q. That doesn't rule out actions like an occupation?

A. It certainly doesn't rule out any type of action. But the only thing is that we don't want to play our cards at the present time.

Q. Has the Shop Stewards Committee discussed

The Labour 'lefts' also accept the viability argument. Instead of fighting Wilson for the nationalisation of the whole motor industry, they end up queuing to see Varley to beg money for Chrysler.

All redundancies must be fought. Any attempt to split the Chrysler workers by sacking them a section at a time should be smashed by combine-wide action as soon as the first redundancies are announced. The Linwood stewards' decisions to occupy against redundancies must be taken up in every Chrysler plant.

No pay loss

What work is available should be calculated by elected committees of Chrysler workers and shared out amongst the whole workforce with no loss of pay. Instead of Chrysler's phoney 'worker participation' schemes — management were willing to pay their workers two lump sums of £50 to get them to take responsibility for Chrysler's crisis — management must be challenged to open their books to these elected workers' committees in the factories to reveal the causes of the crisis.

Even if Chrysler is bankrupt, it is necessary to know the extent of the crisis and the plans for investment, sales and redundancies in order to prepare for the nationalisation under workers' control of the company to defend all jobs.

In the Cowley Assembly Plant of British Leyland, management recently offered to open their books to 'prove' their case for mass redundancies — 'voluntary', of course — and speed-up. But they were rapidly slammed



Duncan Simpson

shut again when shop stewards demanded that the books should be inspected by an elected committee of workers.

The ruling class will fiercely defend 'business secrecy' because it fears that exposure of the wheeling and dealing of capitalism — its waste and cut-throat competition, will simply prove to the workers the need not for sackings but for nationalisation under workers' control. At the same time — as is happening both in Chry-



the Chrysler Linwood stewards' decision to occupy against closure?

A. Obviously we've discussed it.

Q. What was your attitude towards it?

A. Look, all I'm telling you is that we will take any action necessary to safeguard jobs.

Q. But you're not willing to disclose it?

A. We're not willing to discuss it.

This is not an idle point. There were only two speakers, both from the Shop Stewards Committee, at the mass meeting — not 'speaker after speaker' as the *Morning Star* reported. No contributions were invited from the mass of the meeting. All the majority of workers could do was put up their hands for a policy which specified no action and no policy in the fight to defend jobs.

Every workers must know exactly what he or she is fighting for and exactly what methods will be used to win the struggle. All workers must be involved in the process of discussion and decisions making.



Four thousand Chrysler workers from the Stoke, Coventry. They were told by Duncan Simpson, AUEW senior steward 'wholehearted support' for the 2 defend the right to work.

sler and British Leyland — they will put forward participation schemes in an attempt to incorporate senior stewards in the plans of management and thus leave the shop floor leaderless when confronted with mass sackings and speed-up.

The threat to the jobs of 25,000 Chrysler employees is the most serious attack on the

COVENTRY FIGHTS THE SL

They used to call it Britain's 'little Detroit' and jobs to Coventry. In the late 1960s until this was the first city of the £2,000 a year

Now, in the mid-Seventies, 16,000 are unemployed — 6.4 per cent of the total working population. The slow but steady trickle of redundancies in Coventry has turned into a flood over the last year. The 'social contract' and the £6 limit were accepted by the union leaders 'to save jobs'. Workers were told to accept short-time working as an alternative to redundancies — and then voluntary redundancies as an alternative to sackings. A thousand jobs went at Jaguar's alone. Chrysler's has now shown where such 'alternatives' lead.

Horrific

Duncan Simpson, AUEW senior steward at the Stoke engine plant, told *Red Weekly* last week: 'We've already got something like 17,000 unemployed in Coventry at this point in time, and the closure of Chrysler would mean another 20,000 on the dole queue — there's 13,000 employed at the Stoke and Ryton plants alone, and more in component industries. The effect on Coventry would be horrific.'

And Coventry is not just a 'car city'. Coventry is the centre of many of the industries that were the driving force behind the boom. Out of the war-time munitions industry came cars, radio and telecommunications (now amalgamated as GEC — the largest private employer in the town), machine tools (Wickman's and Herberts), and aircraft and aerospace (Rolls

RATIONALISE!



Engine plant attended a mass meeting on 6 November at the plant (pictured below left), of the Chrysler jobs lobby, and of their determination to

right to work in the present wave of redundancies. The fight put up by Chrysler workers and the policies they adopt will be closely watched by all those facing redundancies. Chrysler workers will not only be fighting the bosses and the Wilson Government for their own jobs — they will be engaging in a key struggle for the right to work for the whole working class. ■

TRY-NG JUMP

The long post-war boom brought cars employment was still a mere one per cent. worker.

Royce). Only 37 per cent of employment is in the service sector, compared with 65 per cent nationally. Coventry workers are concentrated in large scale manufacturing industries, and it is these industries that are bearing the brunt of the economic crisis.

Alfred Herbert aim to axe at least 900 workers. GEC is cutting back 1,100 jobs due to Gov-



Alfred Herbert workers at a recent mass meeting — looking forward to a bleak future?

ernment-sponsored cuts in Post Office orders. And the other side of the gains won by Coventry workers during the boom — when it was often simpler for employers to give in than face protracted strike action — is now making itself felt.

Coventry workers won high, often the best wages — the Coventry toolroom agreement for a long time set the pace for national negotiations in the engineering industry. They develop-



The size of Chrysler's problems. Stockpiled cars at its Coventry depot and only eleven production days left to Christmas.

'NOT A PENNY COMPENSATION'

Red Weekly asked Gerry Jones, a shop steward in the Engine Machine Shop, what he thought of Convener Bob Morris's statement at the mass meeting that it was 'left wing trash' to say that workers bore no responsibility for the crisis at Chrysler.

That's nonsense. The present crisis is part of the rationalisation policy of Chrysler International which started five years ago.

Systematically they've run down the Chrysler factories, first by sacking 600 people at Whitley (the administrative and research centre in Coventry) including designers, which made sure no British car would be designed at Whitley; then they made sure that the Cricket, which is the American version of the Avenger, was replaced by the Mitsubishi Colt which they've got a stake in; and systematically since 1972 they've run down the Hunter.

Do you think acceptance of 'participation' prepared the way for Chrysler's hard line attitude on jobs now?

It's difficult to say where it actually stands on this. It seems clear at the moment that Chrysler



Gerry Jones

are quite prepared to pull out. For instance, the cars that they produce in this country are well covered by imported cars from Chrysler-owned factories in France and Japan.

If there is a loan by the Government on the basis of keeping a few jobs and keeping Chrysler in this country at the cost of mass redundancies, then quite obviously the workers participation plans will figure as a way to implement this.

There have been attempts to play off car workers in different firms against each other. What would you like to see happen to

the motor industry?

I would like to see the complete nationalisation of the car industry in this country. But the danger as far as nationalisation is concerned is just what the senior stewards in most plants of British Leyland have fallen into.

That is they have given up the independent trade unionism they have enjoyed previously (under the system of Joint Committees) on the basis of all pulling together to produce cars, to produce profits — again at the expense of the workers.

Quite obviously as far as a nationalised car industry is concerned we would have to maintain our independent trade unionism and we would have to have workers' control, not participation.

Has there been discussion at the Stoke plant about the Linwood stewards' decision to occupy against attempted closure?

I welcome the Linwood stewards' decision. This idea was actually moved on the Joint Shop Stewards Committee this morning, but it was decided that it was politic to leave this kind of decision on tactics and the nature of the campaign we should employ to safeguard jobs to at least next Friday's shop stewards meeting.

I think this was wrong. We should actually lay out our plans as far as a campaign is concerned for complete nationalisation without a penny compensation. And the tactic to enforce this must be occupation when the redundancies are announced.

'PARTICIPATION' - round 1 to Leyland

Delighted! That's how British Leyland management must feel after their success in winning senior stewards and convenors to the 'worker participation' measures outlined in a document 'Employee participation in British Leyland Cars'.

The purpose of the document is clearly outlined in a give-away paragraph:

'Terms of reference for committees at the Department/Shop level shall be based on the principle set out in Appendix 2 which is that, while discussions of, and contributions to, the solution of wider problems is not precluded, the main task of each body in each level of the Employee Participation System is to improve the performance of the activity within which the employees who are represented in the body are employed.'

Speed-up

In simple words, this means that the main task of these bodies is to help impose speed-up on the workforce and massive reductions in manning levels. The principle referred to in Appendix 2 is even clearer: 'to seek as far as possible to reach agreement on action required while recognising that executive responsibility rests with the management.'

If the senior stewards and convenors have stooped low in signing this agreement, they are forcing the workforce to go even lower. After the complete secrecy surrounding these negotiations, large sections of the new agreement have been pasted up below the notice board in Jaguar's Coventry plant. As a Jaguar worker said to Red Weekly: 'If you have to get on your knees just to read the thing, what happens when they actually set-up these joint committees!

gner.

The first step along this road was taken at a special district meeting of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. The meeting marked the beginning of a fight back by the left. A correct position was taken to reject both compulsory and voluntary redundancies. A number of actions were also agreed, including support for the 26 November lobby of Parliament and a local stoppage and demonstration.

However, the Communist Party allowed the right wing to get off the hook on how and when such action would be organised. The heat must be put on the leadership of the CSEU to set up a Right to Work committee capable of linking workers in the engineering industry to those outside it such as the local authority workers, who have already mounted a vigorous campaign against the effects on the cuts on local expenditure.

Secondly, the right wing has hidden behind the excuse that events have taken them by surprise. The International Marxist Group in Coventry will be campaigning for all workers to carry out a thorough investigation of the affairs of their company by raising the demand that all books and advance plans of management be subject to inspection by the workforce. On this basis precise demands and tactics can be thrashed out to defend existing jobs.

COVENTRY IMG

COVENTRY IMG PUBLIC MEETING

'DEFEND THE RIGHT TO WORK'

Monday 24 November. 8.00pm
Elastic Inn (opposite Theatres 1,2 & 3)
Speaker: Tim Hall (IMG Industrial Organiser)

The consequence of all this is that two of the principal bodies of the Coventry labour movement, the district committees of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers and the Transport and General Workers Union, are dominated by the right. This leadership has consistently acted to sabotage not only any ex-

SHOWING THE WAY

A campaign for the adoption of the policy of a sliding scale of wages'. Along with opposition to all cuts and redundancies, this policy was adopted by a mass meeting of local authority manual workers in Coventry in the summer.

Since then shop stewards on Coventry Corporation have taken big steps to prepare all local authority workers in the area against the effects of the dramatic cut-backs now being proposed by the Corporation. Actions have included the building of a committee covering representatives from all sections of manual workers with the definite intention of including white collar workers as well.

Stewards have organised stoppages and demonstrations to protest about proposed reductions in manning levels on the Corporation work force; coupled with demonstrations and pickets to explain the case against the cutbacks to other workers in Coventry.

A public meeting to be organised in the near future will lay the basis for a campaign in the whole trade union movement on the importance of fighting the cuts, as well as adding the voice of manual workers to the need for a unified fight back against unemployment as a whole.

pression of class wide action by Coventry workers, but also those struggles which have taken place in individual factories — such as the strike at Chrysler, Stoke engine plant this year.

Only a common jobs policy for the whole of the Coventry working class can begin to challenge the grip of the right wing on the local labour movement. Only a policy which contains class-wide demands capable of challenging the management's right to impose their solutions on the workforce can stop the jobs slau-

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

In Part 2 of his series of articles on occupations, John Roberts looks at



THE WORKERS' CO-OPERATIVES

The UCS struggle, because of the limitations of its leadership and methods of struggle, was unable to mobilise fully its massive working class support. It could thus only achieve a partial victory in certain areas. This lesson was not lost on the most advanced workers. Since UCS the work-in has tended to be confined to relatively small concerns, or those in more conservative areas, or where the Communist Party has had an influence on the leadership.

But the work-in has a logic of its own. If after having staged a work-in the employer still refuses to reconsider the redundancies or closure, then the next step for the work force would be the apparently natural one of continuing production for themselves, to go it alone and set up a workers' co-operative. This process has taken place in a number of important cases, most of which have involved the Labour Government and in particular Tony Benn, formerly Secretary of State for Industry.

The first co-operative to attract widespread attention originated from a struggle in March 1972, when women workers at the Fakenham branch of the Norwich shoe manufacturers Sexton & Everard were all declared redundant. On the Friday after the announcement it was decided to occupy the factory and stage a work-in. Of the 45 women originally employed, about 25 joined in the occupation.

The workers in occupation made belts, handbags, etc. which were retailed voluntarily by activists of the Women's Liberation Movement. Socialist Women's Groups all over the country held support meetings, collections, and showed films to aid the work-in. Despite the opposition of the women's own union leaders, appeals to fellow trade unionists brought in large sums of money. After an 18 week work-in the women received a £3,500 donation from the Industrial Common Ownership Movement (ICOM) and decided to form a co-operative enterprise.

'ROW YOU BUGGERS'

In July 1973 Mr Richard Hicks, then general manager, outlined the philosophy of the co-operative to the *Guardian*: 'What I've tried to do', he said, 'is to create a situation where they've wanted to have a board of directors to run the business for them....there is no reason why anyone except the two women they've just elected to the board, Nancy and Ann, together with the two (ICOM) representatives should know completely the facts of the company. The co-owners are only employees and shareholders — not the management...I'm just here to say "The ship should go this way, row you buggers...."'

In September 1973, against a background of short sighted inefficiency, the management of the sole remaining British motor bike manufacturing firm, Norton Villiers Triumph (NVT), decided to close its Triumph plant at Meriden near Coventry in order to help concentrate production at its Small Heath factory in Birmingham.

LOST INITIATIVE

On 2 October a mass meeting agreed to prevent the movement of finished bikes from the factory; to establish links with other NVT work workers; to call for blacking of NVT products by the dockers; and to publish a daily bulletin. On 5 October, at a second mass meeting, it was overwhelmingly agreed to try to establish a workers' co-operative.

Initially about three-quarters of the 1,750 work force was involved in the occupation, including junior management and supervisory staff. But with the decision to set up a workers' co-operative the initiative moved away from the actions of the mass of workers on the shop floor to the lawyers, accountants, trade union officials and government bureaucrats involved in haggling over patent rights, how to raise the capital necessary to buy the factory etc.

With the Tory Government brought down by the miners' strike in February 1974, Tony Benn became Industry Secretary. The negotiations continued, and on 20 July the final decisions were announced to the 250 remaining occupants. Production was to continue with



a work force that was to rise to 600. This smaller work force was to increase its productivity by 85 per cent.

The *Financial Times* of 30 July reported the other conditions: 'The Government will have first charge on the assets of the co-operative and disposals; for making wage, salary and other payments in excess of £50 a week to any employee, director or official of the co-operative; for the declaration or payment of any dividends on the co-operative shares; and for the taking up or making of loans.'

GREAT COST.

The result of the action was to save 250 jobs — the actual number employed in August 1975 — at the cost of 1,500 jobs lost, a maximum wage well below that anywhere else in the country, increased exploitation and a drop in working conditions (an example not lost on local employers), a government monitor over every move, and control over sales outlets to remain with the original parent company.

Such co-operatives mean that workers who were by no means responsible for the economic collapse of the company agree to take responsibility for making the failing enterprise into a profitable concern.

THREAT TO UNITY

Saving the factory becomes a search for capital investment and profitability, deflecting the struggle from the politically charged fight for nationalisation to save jobs — the only 'long term' solution under capitalism. The workers themselves are forced to try to raise the capital, by appeals to the labour movement, sacrifices of savings or the lump sums paid on redundancy, appeals to the Government for loans or grants, or even by deals with individual entrepreneurs. The meaning of such a course, encouraged by Benn and other left social democrats, is that it takes the initiative out of the hands of the workforce and effectively stops the possibility of mass mobilisations which might force the Labour Government or trade union leaders to act.

But at Meriden the existence of the co-oper-

ative also posed a direct threat to workers' unity. At the end of July Eric Varley, the new Industry Secretary, stated that the British motor-bike industry would get no more government subsidies. For the NVT management this meant the opportunity to announce the closure of its secondary factory in Wolverhampton with a loss of 1,200 jobs, and a cutback of 500 jobs at its major factory at Small Heath.

On 11 August the workers at Wolverhampton began a blockade of their factory, demanding the continuation of motor-bike production there and stopping the transfer of parts necessary for continued production at Small Heath. NVT, by claiming that the blockade of the Wolverhampton workers and the competition of the Meriden co-operative posed threats to all jobs at Small Heath, effectively divided the work force. This was a particularly cynical manoeuvre since within two months the management would be calling in the receiver to its Small Heath factory.

DIVISIVE ISSUE

The workers at Small Heath picketed Meriden demanding that it cease production to protect Small Heath jobs! The workers at Meriden, because of the co-operative, saw no need to mount a joint campaign with the other workers in the motor-bike industry to protect jobs. The Wolverhampton workers, seeing the crisis of the British motor-bike industry and the worsening conditions in the co-operative, are meanwhile looking for a foreign buyer to purchase their factory.

In the given situation the co-operative became a divisive issue, cutting the ground from under the feet of those militants who had begun to raise the politically potent slogan of nationalisation of the whole motor-bike industry to protect jobs. A struggle on such a slogan would have meant a political struggle aimed at the Labour Party and Government. It would have put Benn, Wilson and the other leaders right on the spot, demanding in whose interests they governed.

Over the past few months there have been 500 redundancies at Small Heath, and another 500 were scheduled before the end of the year, leaving a workforce of about 400. But the

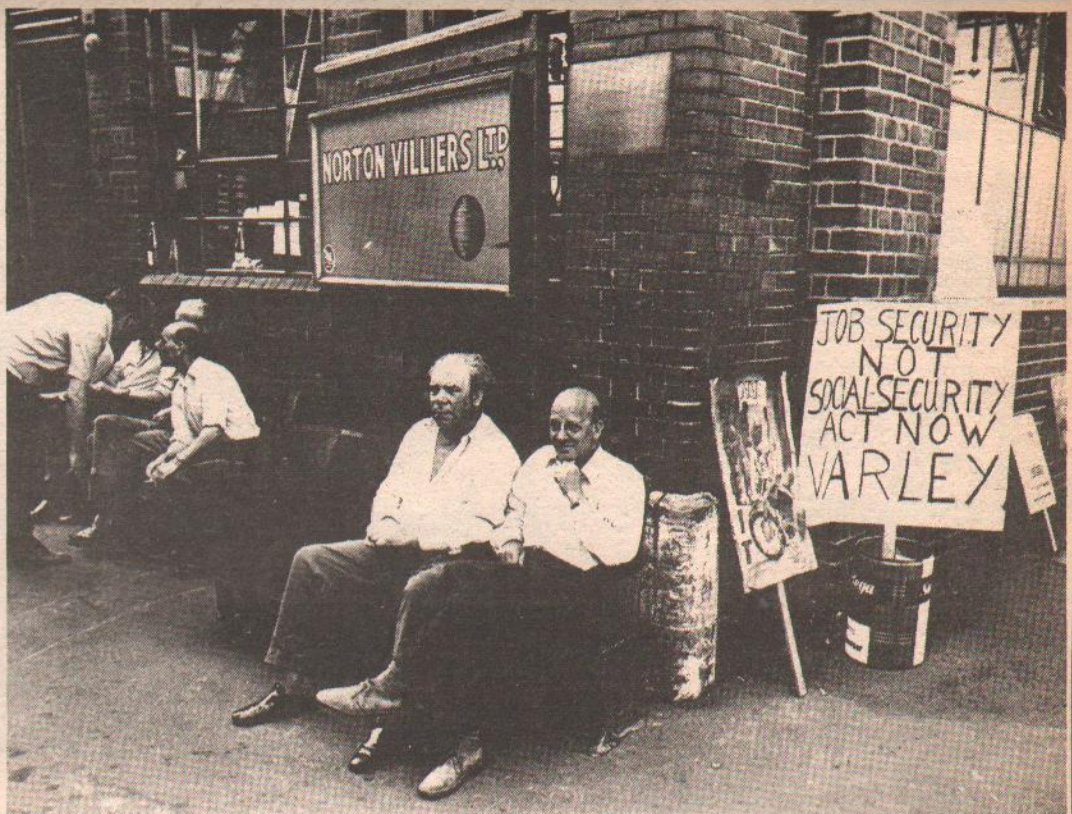


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)



calling in of the receiver on 20 October to Small Heath, together with the continuing blockade of Wolverhampton, may radicalise the workforce to struggle.

The logic of the co-operative venture was taken to its extreme in the case of the *Scottish Daily News*. In March 1974 the Beaverbrook group decided to rationalise its printing operations in Scotland. Overnight, 1,900 employees of the *Scottish Daily Express*, the *Glasgow Evening Citizen* and the *Scottish Sunday Express* were thrown out of work. One of the *Express* compositors — Allister Mackie, a Labour councillor and JP — formed an action committee with the aim of buying the plant and establishing a daily paper. The action committee developed a formula to launch a paper at a total cost of £2.4 million, half of which was to be a Government loan.

NON-INVOLVEMENT

For about a year the action committee, the Beaverbrook group and the Government were involved in negotiations. Mackie during this time was able to preserve the unity of the work force and began to gain allies who took up the co-operative cause, most notably Tony Benn. Then early this May, when negotiations seemed about to grind to a halt, Mr Robert Maxwell — former Labour MP and Chairman of Pergamon Press — emerged to offer 50p for every £1 contributed by prospective employees. In all, Maxwell contributed some £114,000 out of a total of £2 million. For this he demanded to be made Chairman of the enterprise.

An outstanding feature of the founding of the co-operative was the non-involvement of the vast majority of the workforce other than as a source of capital to the company — each prospective employee contributed at least £100 to company funds through the purchase of shares.

NO SOLUTION

Despite low wages and poor working conditions the paper was never able to become profitable. Losses were running at round £2,000 a day when the paper closed, although it was claimed that £250,000 would give the paper sufficient breathing space to become profitable.

Without exception, where the workforce has assumed responsibility for a failing enterprise through a co-operative, the rules of capitalist economics have meant increased productivity, more working hours, and



THE NEED FOR THE UNITED FRONT

In the first article in our occasional series on Social Democracy, *Red Weekly* explained why Marx, Lenin and Trotsky concluded that social democratic parties were 'bourgeois labour parties' — bourgeois parties in that their programme and role was to defend the capitalist order, but parties of the working class in that they were based not merely on individual working class supporters but on the mass organisations of the proletariat, such as the trade unions, co-operatives etc. From this working class base derived one of the particular features of these parties: while they were tied to the historic interests of capitalism, the defence of the capitalist state and the capitalist economy, they were *not* tied to the day-to-day immediate interests of the ruling class. In the second article in our series, ALAN JONES looks at Trotsky's analysis of how the specific features of the reformist parties can be used by revolutionary Marxists to pursue the policy of the *united front*.

The fundamental basis of the policy of the united front is very simple. From the fact that the reformist parties are tied to the historic interests of capitalism, revolutionary Marxists draw the conclusion that there is a need for an independent revolutionary party of the working class. As Trotsky put it:

'The task of the Communist Party is to lead the proletarian revolution.... The party can achieve this only by remaining an absolutely independent organisation with a clear programme and strict internal discipline. That is the reason why the party was bound to break ideologically and organisationally with the reformists and centrists who do not strive for the proletarian revolution, who possess neither the capacity nor the desire to prepare the masses for revolution, and who by their entire conduct thwart this work.'

But while the working class needs a separate revolutionary party, it also requires the greatest possible unity in action in the struggle against capitalism — something absolutely vital in a society where all the material power of the economy and the state is in the hands of the capitalist class, and where the indispensable weapons of the working class are numbers and organisation. As Trotsky put it in the case of Germany in the 1930s, for example:

UNITED RANKS

'To fight, the proletariat must have unity in its ranks. This holds true for partial economic conflicts, within the walls of a single factory, as well as for such 'national' political battles as the one to repel fascism.... The words in the Communist Manifesto which state that the Communists are not to be opposed to the proletariat, that they have no interests separate and apart from the proletariat as a whole, carry with them the meaning that the struggle of the party to win over the majority of the class must in no instance come into opposition with the need of the workers to keep unity within their fighting ranks.'

The problem of the united front is precisely how to fuse the simultaneous need of the working class for an independent revolutionary party *with* the need for unity in action in the struggle. The question of the united front is not merely a question of the relation between various parties of the working class, but a

unity of the working class despite the differences on political line and organisations which divide it. Thus:

'The class is not homogeneous. Its different sections arrive at class consciousness by different paths and at different times. The bourgeoisie participates actively in this process. Within the working class it creates its own institutions, or utilises those already existing, in order to oppose certain strata of workers to others. Within the proletariat several parties are active at the same time. Therefore, for the greater part of its historical journey it remains split politically. The problem of the united front originates therein.'

BASIC NEED

It is from this basic need for unity in action, and not as is sometimes thought merely to 'expose' reformist leaders or merely from relations between organisations, that the necessity of the united front policy flows. As Trotsky put it:

'The question of the united front is not at all, either in point of origin or in substance, a question of the reciprocal relations between the Communist Party parliamentary fraction and that of the Socialists, or between the Central Committees of the two parties, or between *L'Humanite* and *Le Populaire*. The problem of the united front — despite the fact that a split is inevitable in this epoch between the various political organisations basing themselves on the working class — grows out of the urgent need to secure for the working class the possibility of a united front in the struggle against capitalism.'

NOT ARTIFICIAL

Consequently:

'The tactic of the united front is not something accidental and artificial — a cunning manoeuvre — not at all; it originates, entirely and wholly, in the objective conditions governing the development of the proletariat.... the struggle of the party to win over the majority of the class must in no instance come into opposition with the need of the workers to keep unity within their fighting ranks.'

Despite the simplicity of the basic concept of the united front, there is no doubt that a whole series of errors on this question exist. The worst undoubtedly is the

to other organisations as carried out by Stalin and still practised by the CP today. For example, Trotsky notes:

'The Chinese Revolution of 1925–27 was wrecked precisely because the Comintern, under the leadership of Stalin and Bukharin, forced the Chinese Communist Party to enter into the party or the Chinese bourgeoisie, the Kuomintang, and to obey its discipline.'



Leon Trotsky

But it is also true that — particularly in Britain — a whole series of sectarian conceptions exist on the question of the united front. The most typical, shown by the Workers Revolutionary Party, is that the united front is not a weapon of struggle but a method of 'exposing' people. For this reason the proposals of the united front are not practical and related to the immediate burning issues of the day, but are merely abstract calls for the workers to 'take power', 'nationalise the monopolies', etc. Trotsky commented on this approach also, however:

'In most cases the leading organs of the Communist Party approached the reformists with an offer to join in a common struggle for radical slogans which were alien to the situation and which found no response in the masses. These proposals had the character of mechanical counterpoises itself to this need of the working class for unity in action will unfailingly be condemned in the minds of the workers.'

interpreted these proposals of the Communists as a trick to destroy the Social Democracy. In each of these instances only a purely formal, declamatory application of the united front was inaugurated.'

As opposed to this, Trotsky pointed out:

'By its very nature it [the united front] can prove fruitful only on the basis of a realistic appraisal of the situation and of the condition of the masses.'

Certainly the united front *can* expose the reformists, and their refusal and inability to fight for the needs of the working class, but this *will* only occur, and the needs of the working class be taken forward, if the proposals for action are geared to the central problems facing the workers at each point in time. Thus in Germany in the early 1930s:

'It is necessary, without any delay, to elaborate a practical system of measures — not with the aim of merely 'exposing' the Social Democracy (before the Communists) but with the aim of actual struggle against fascism. The programme of action must be strictly practical, strictly objective, to the point, without any artificial 'claims', without any reservations.'

This sectarian concept of the united front is not merely fatal for the working class. It is also useless in actually exposing the reformists and building a revolutionary party. The reason for this is clear — the *objective* need for unity in action is deeply reflected in the *consciousness* of the working class. As Trotsky pointed out:

'It is perfectly self-evident that the class life of the proletariat is not suspended during the period preparatory to the revolution. Clashes with industrialists, with the bourgeoisie, with the state power, on the initiative of one side or the other, run their due course. In these clashes — insofar as they involve the vital interests of the entire working class, or its majority, or this or that section — the working masses sense the need of unity in action, of unity in resisting the onslaught of capitalism or unity in taking the offensive against it. Any party which mechanically counterposes itself to this need of the working class for unity in action will unfailingly be condemned in the minds of the workers.'

Instead of this sectarianism:

'The party of social revolution is obliged to learn in action how to fuse together the majority of the working class, utilising to this end every opportunity for mass action that opens up. The out-lived groupings and factions are interested in preserving intact and immutable all the barriers dividing the working class into segments. We, on the other hand, have a vital stake in pulling down these barriers of conservatism and in teaching the working class to follow our example. Herein lies

Another sectarian concept of the united front which Trotsky also had to fight against is the view that while it is correct to form united fronts with rank and file reformist workers, it is impermissible to do so with the reformist leaders. This *in practice* usually rules out the possibility of the united front altogether. As Trotsky pointed out:

'Does the united front extend only to the working masses or does it include the opportunist leaders? The very posing of this question is a product of misunderstanding. If we were able simply to unite the working masses around our own banner or around our practical immediate slogans, and skip over reformist organisations, that would of course be the best thing in the world. But then the very question of the united front would not exist in its present form.'

PERMISSIBLE

It is perfectly permissible to make agreements on united front actions with reformist leaders when these are forced under the pressure of the workers to break with the day-to-day interests of capitalism. The only point is that it must be remembered that such 'allies' are unreliable allies. When they moved from hesitating reformist opposition to outright betrayal then it is necessary to break immediately with them:

'The influence of the radicalisation of the masses on the reformists is quite similar to the influence that the development of a bourgeois revolution has on the liberals. In the first stages of the mass movement the reformists move leftwards, hoping in this way to retain the leadership in their hands. But when the movement surpasses the limits of reform and demands from the leaders a clear break with the bourgeoisie, the majority of the reformists quickly change their tune. From cowardly fellow travellers of the masses they turn into strike breakers, enemies, open betrayers....

An episodic alliance with the reformists, at the moment they happen to be compelled by circumstances to make a step or half a step forward, may be unavoidable. But it must be understood beforehand that the communists are ready to break mercilessly with the reformists the moment they jump back.'

Within these limits, however, it is possible to pursue a policy of united fronts with the reformists. In our next article we will consider how Trotsky applied such a policy to the 'left' reformists in particular.

NOTES

1. *Theses on the United Front*; 2. *What Next?*; 3. *What Next?*; 4. *Theses on the United Front*; 5. *What Next?*; 6. *What Next?*; 7. *What Next?*; 8. *What Next?*; 9. *For A Workers United Front Against Fascism*; 10. *Theses on the United Front*; 11. *A letter to the Convention of the French Communist Party*; 12. *Theses on the United*

'We have seen a steady return to brutal Army harassment of the community'

SEAMUS McCUSKER, a leading member of Provisional Sinn Fein and manager of the Republican truce incident centre in the New Lodge Road, Belfast, was assassinated on 31 October — apparently as part of the current Provisional-Official feud. Shortly before his death he gave the following interview to a Red Weekly correspondent.

●What was the original reason for setting up the incident centres?

It was the British Government which wanted the centres. It was decided during negotiations between the Provisional leadership and the British Government that since the original ceasefire had broken down it was necessary to set up the incident centres in order to monitor events. The British Government saw them as having a policing role, but we saw their main function as registering complaints of violations of the ceasefire agreements, and negotiating paroles of prisoners and the release of internees. We keep in direct contact with the British Army, and the centres are run by Sinn Fein members.

●How has the role of the incident centres changed since they were initiated? Originally we registered complaints, such as of army harassment and sectarian

violence, and gave legal advice and representation. But their role has rapidly widened to deal with other problems.

●What sort of problems — do you deal with social problems, for example?

Yes, we have for a long time now taken on all types of community problems — disputes, robberies, vandalism, even alcoholism, and we also intervene in family rows. In fact we are now dealing with 80 per cent of complaints that would normally go to the RUC; in fact unofficially the RUC send people to us now. We liaise with the street committees and act on their behalf in the field of housing problems, street lighting, gas and electricity supplies etc, and we have been receiving reasonable cooperation from the local government on this.

●How successfully are you able to deal with social issues?

We are able to deal with most of the complaints successfully — for example,

in the case of house robberies or general break-ins and vandalism we receive the complaint, put the word out to our people and have often been able to find the culprit and the goods within 24 hours. We often intervene in cases of wife or child battering, and here we can play a mediatory policing role. We even have a psychiatrist who deals with cases of persistent alcoholism and general mental health.

Youths found pilfering or vandalising are sometimes fined or forced to do social work (odd jobs for the elderly) etc. I think our success can be measured in the drastic reduction of petty crime in our areas in the last few months — for example, the UDA have informed us that they have 10 times more crime and vandalism in the Loyalist areas than we do.

●Where does the financial backing and support come from for the centres?

Most of the financial aid comes from Sinn Fein, collections as well as aid from the Transport & General Workers Union. We also receive support from the medical profession, clergy and the Association for Legal Justice.

●What problems do you face in actually running the centres?

We obviously lack financial resources and have problems in manning the cen-

tres 24 hours a day, mostly because we lack suitably trained personnel. The only reason I am able to spend large amounts of time at the centres is because like most of us I exist on Social Security.

●What about the Army, and the RUC — how have they reacted to the centres?

The centres were part of the deal made with the Provisional leadership, but we knew that this concession was only a political ploy to get us to take part in the Convention elections. Until the boycott campaign there was a general lull in Army activity, but when the results of the elections were announced this flew in the face

BLOODY SUNDAY COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE

The Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee, set up to organise a national demonstration on 1 February, is now well on its way. It already has working sub-committees covering finances, sponsorship, students and publicity. Several hundred sponsorship appeals have been distributed, and readers should go all out to use these in attracting new sponsorship and support.

Maureen Colquhoun has now added her name to those of fellow MPs Joan Maynard and William Wilson as sponsors, along with Hackney Trades Council and

of Rees and they were made aware that we had gained support during that campaign.

So gradually, after the boycott, we have seen a steady return to brutal Army harassment of the community. We are dealing with many more complaints of violations every day.

●Earlier you mentioned liaising with the street committees. How do they relate to the centres — have they developed since you began?

The street committees have developed through using the centres for centralisation of information, planning and pressurising local authorities. Now almost every street has a committee, and they come to us for advice on almost every issue. We give as much help and advice as we can to the people, they trust us and we have a very good relationship with the community in general.

●Throughout the past months of the existence of the centres, would you say that support for the Provisionals has grown?

Certainly support has grown tremendously, with large numbers of people becoming actively involved. We have seen the practical successes of the workers' co-operatives in the building trade, groceries, butchers, clothiers, and garages, we have now just bought a £150,000 site for a supermarket (with planning permission), and we still have a large balance in the bank. This has been largely due to the success of the building co-operative, tendering for contracts from the Housing Executive.

There is no doubt that support for us has grown and that the people are more than willing to carry on the struggle. Our people are not tired and their spirits will never be broken. I have every confidence that the end of our struggle against British imperialism is very nearly in sight.

T&GWU 1/524 branch.

Many activities are in preparation to build as large a demonstration as possible. The first of these is the Irish Spectacular this Saturday 15 November at Central London Poly SU, Bolsover Street, London W.1. starting at 6.30pm.

If your organisation has not yet sponsored the BSCC, get it to do so and send delegates to build the mobilisation. The next meeting is on Tuesday at 7.30pm in Room 2E, University of London Union, Malet Street, W.C.1. Phone 01-278 9526 for further details.

7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast

'The departure of the Black Watch regiment from Andersonstown was regretted by no one. They have proved themselves to be a cowardly and murderous group of sectarian thugs.'

This was how the Andersonstown News commented on the departure of the Black Watch from West Belfast on Monday 27 October. There is no doubt that this comment accurately reflects the views not only of the inhabitants of Andersonstown, but of the people in every nationalist ghetto who have been subject to the occupation of the Black Watch.

This particular regiment has a notorious history in Ireland, dating back to the 'Troubles' of the 1920s. During their latest tour of occupation they excelled themselves in their harassment of the ghetto's population. It was this regiment that murdered 17 year-old Leo Norney in Turf Lodge, then raided his home and didn't even bother to inform his family that he was dead; instead they told Leo's mother that her son was missing. The soldier who pulled the trigger on Leo was shipped out of Belfast the very next day, in case he suffered the justice of the nationalist people instead of the commendation of some Tory bewigged judge.

FINE WORDS - NO ACTION

However, the Black Watch's doings in Belfast have been so well publicised that before they left it was felt necessary that there should be some genuflection before the altar of 'law and order'. Seven soldiers were arrested and questioned about 'falsification of incriminating evidence'. The press gave the arrest front page headlines, and SDLP politicians rushed into print to acclaim the impartiality of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. Most of the same papers didn't even bother to mention next day that all seven had left with their regiment and that no action was to be taken against them.

That the murderers of Leo Norney have got off scot-free has not prevented the SDLP from attempting to make all the capital they can out of the simple fact that soldiers have been asked a few questions. Indeed, according to the Andersonstown News there is evidence of SDLP/RUC connivance in the campaign to get the latter (or is it both?) back into nationalist districts. The paper reported that just before the RUC ann-

member Paddy Devlin rang newspapers giving them the identical information.

Over the last few weeks Devlin has been attempting to cast the RUC in the role of impartial upholders of the law, staunch defenders of citizen's rights, a reformed body of men and women. In this he has not been alone. A fellow SDLP member, Councillor Tom Donnelly, actually launched a recruitment campaign to get more Catholics to join the RUC.

'I have studied the RUC for several years, and have come to believe the overwhelming majority to be sincere and unbiased in the performance of their duty', he said. Where he got this belief from is hard to say, but it certainly wasn't on the Falls or in Ardoyne. Not that anyone has ever believed the RUC to discriminate on age, sex or infirmity grounds when it came to using their batons and guns.

SDLP SUPPORT FOR RUC

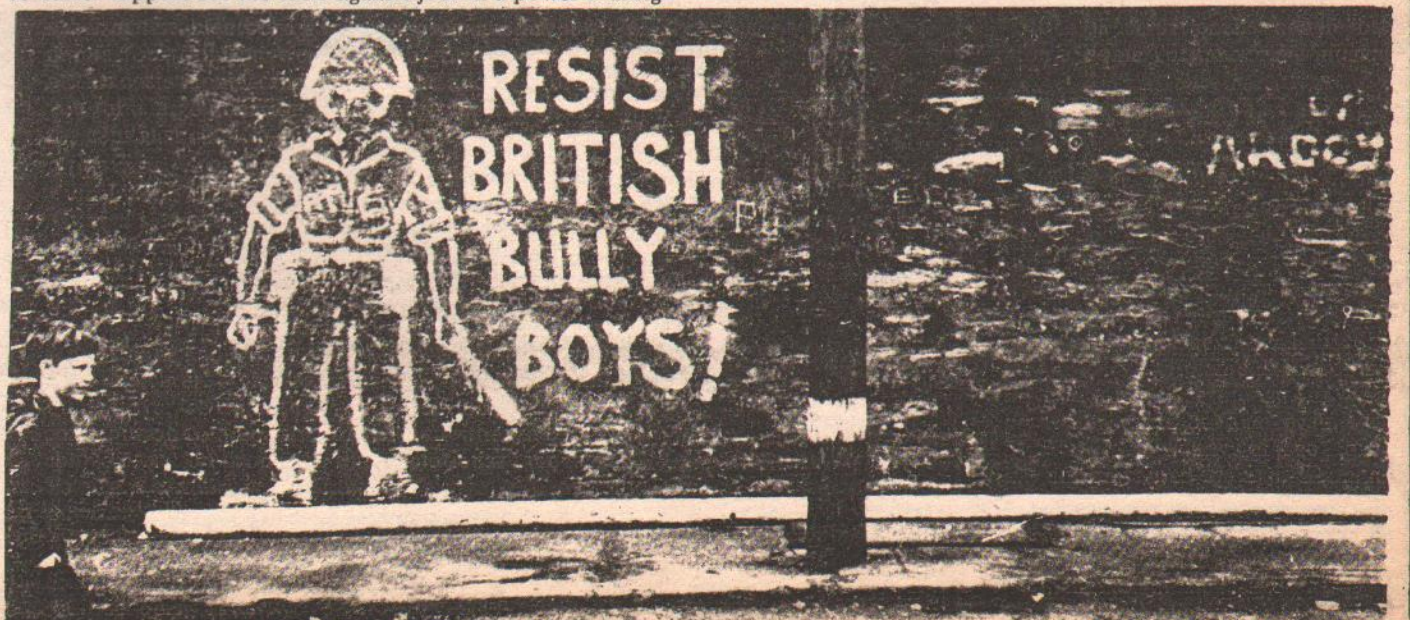
Paddy Devlin, however, has a story that is much more entertaining than Donnelly's. The bold Paddy has now revealed that for years the RUC has been battling against British Army violations of the law, attempting to stop the Army from carrying out politically-inspired detention operations. This is bound to have evoked loud guffaws from the inmates of Long Kesh, who were dragged from their beds by British soldiers only to be handed over to the RUC for 'interrogation'. But then wasn't it Paddy's old mate Sir Edmund Compton who said that brutality was only ill-treatment as long as the torturer didn't get too much pleasure out of it.

All this praise for the RUC is a build-up to the SDLP conference at the end of this month, which is expected to come out in support of the RUC. Previously SDLP policy has been to barter support for the RUC against jobs in a power-sharing

administration. But with the decline in SDLP support amongst the anti-Unionist people, the SDLP are increasingly recognising the need to get the RUC back into Catholic areas so that they can operate against Republicans and prevent the SDLP from entirely losing their influence amongst the nationalist people.

There would not be much fear of the SDLP succeeding in their campaign if it wasn't for the internecine feud that continues to rage between the Provisional and Official Republican movements. This violent conflict — which at the time of writing has already claimed five lives and resulted in the maiming of many, many more — creates precisely the context in which the SDLP are able to make headway with their collaborationist policy. When Republican shoots Republican, when the families of Republicans are intimidated from their homes by other Republicans, then both British imperialism and Loyalism become strengthened in their resolve to inflict defeat on the nationalist people. The only losers in this present feud are the nationalist working class.

The Revolutionary Marxist Group (Irish section of the Fourth International) stands totally opposed to violence as a method of resolving disputes between anti-imperialist organisations. It supports the demonstration by women supporters of the Official and Provisional movements in Short Strand last week, and echoes the call for unity against imperialism and its Loyalist allies made by a speaker at the demonstration. The RMG will be working hard in the coming weeks to advance that unity, and once again calls for the immediate cessation of the feud.



Portugal - Towards Centralisation of the struggle

The blowing up of the transmitter of the worker-controlled Radio Renascenca by para-troopers, and the pro-government Socialist Party - PPD - Angolan refugees' demonstration in Lisbon last Sunday show the continuing mobilisation of the right wing in Portugal. ANTON UDRY reports from Lisbon on the Government's preparations and the problems of organising a sufficient response by the working class.

The outbreak of the struggle of the soldiers since the beginning of September, and the emergence of a tendency towards self-organisation in the army (about a dozen barracks now have elected soldiers commissions) have rapidly accelerated the disintegration of what constituted the keystone of the project of the Sixth Government, the government of 'order' of Prime Minister Pinheiro Azevedo. But at the same time, the workers commissions, neighbourhood commissions, and popular assemblies have not experienced an analogous qualitative growth.

By definition, such a lack of synchronisation can only be temporary. Either a decisive step forward will be taken in the direction of the centralisation of the organs of workers power and the transition from a pre-revolutionary situation to a revolutionary situation will take place, or the bourgeoisie will reconstitute more or less effective instruments for imposing its own order and discipline.

NEW TACTICS

The initiatives being taken today in both opposed camps must be seen in this context. After suffering stinging failures in the first tests of strength, the Government has changed its tactics in an attempt to achieve the same objectives.

Very concrete measures are now being added to the appeals for discipline. In the air force, the sergeants are organising. After a five-day meeting, a plenary assembly of air force sergeants - convoked under the impetus of General Morais e Silva - voted a motion insisting on the necessity for 'an intransigent defence of the spirit of the MFA programme'.

The meeting also adopted a proposal to create 'disciplinary councils' composed of sergeants and members of the commands of various military units in order to 'examine disciplinary violations'.

Meanwhile a real army of civil war is in the process of being created: the AMI (Military Intervention Group). The var-

ious regiments that were initially supposed to compose this striking force refused to take part, so the general staff opted for recruiting volunteers.

The construction of this professional army has been combined with a reorganisation of the police forces (the PSP and the GNR) and a strengthening of

extension of the 'organs of popular power'.

The deepening of the economic recession and the structural crisis striking many industrial branches (textiles, clothing, shoes, shipbuilding, etc.) are stimulating a new rise of movements for workers' demands. These movements

Iberian Fund Drive

The developing crisis throughout the Iberian sub-continent poses one thing very sharply: the utter inability of the leaders of the mass reformist parties to take these struggles forward to a revolutionary conclusion.

The forces of the Fourth International in Portugal (the LCI) and Spain (the LCR-ETA/VI) are still small. But they are growing daily as more and more workers realise that they alone can provide the necessary political leader-

ship. Our Iberian Fund exists to help strengthen their efforts by providing some of the necessary material assistance.

This week the Fund stands at £246.23. Our thanks in particular to supporters at the Hull Socialist Forum who collected £15. We remind readers that stickers supporting the 'Soldiers United Will Win' (SUV) movement are still available - 10 for a minimum donation of 60p. Please send all donations to: Red Weekly (Iberia), 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

their operational potential.

The setting in motion of this project goes hand in hand with the dissolution of a large part of the units of the land army: about a third of all soldiers are going to be demobilised. In addition, many militia officers known for their militant activity have been placed on indefinite leave.

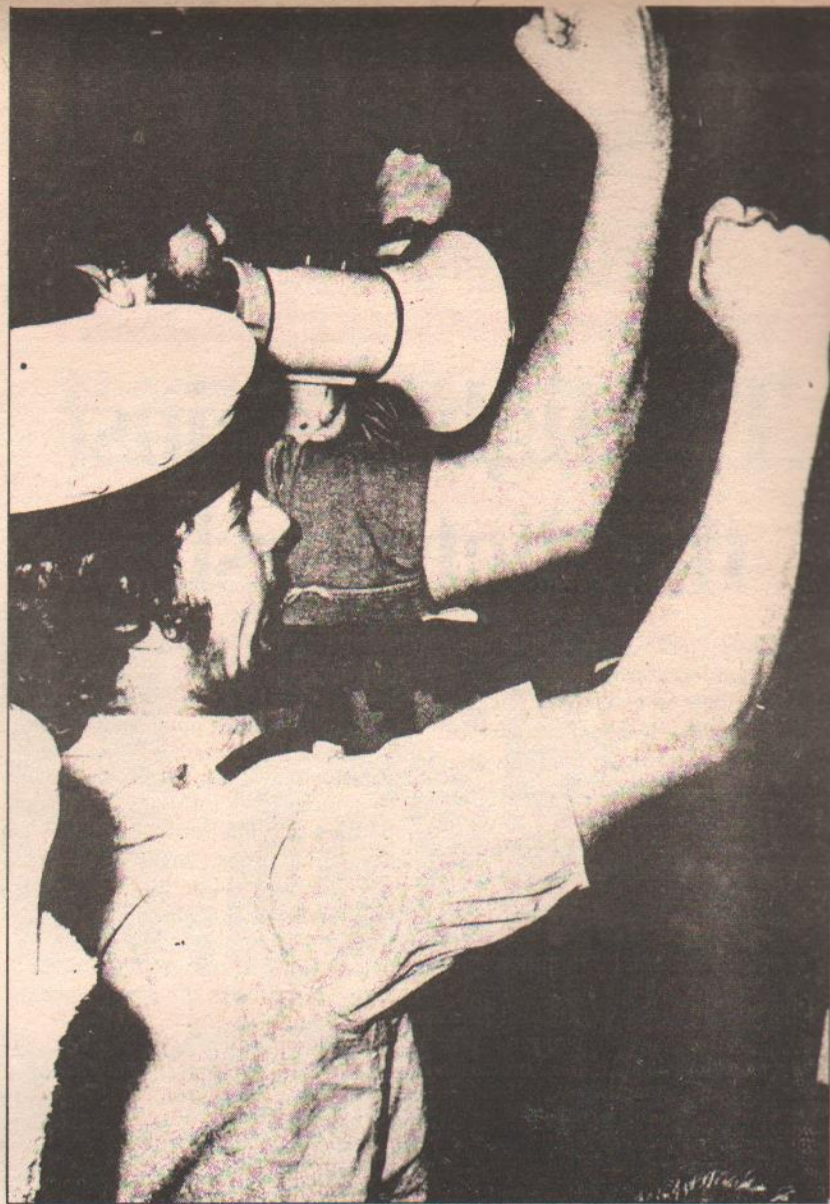
MISTAKE

While the crisis in the army is extremely deep, and while the progress of self-organisation among the soldiers is important, it would be wrong and dangerous to believe that the disintegration of the army has gone so far that the hierarchy is incapable of taking any initiatives. To be sure, the hierarchy needs time to reconstitute militarily solid elements that are worthy of confidence, but its project can fail only as a result of the capacity of the soldiers and workers to take decisive new steps in the organisation of self-defence, within the framework of the

are taking on two new characteristics.

First, they are confronting a Government that is not prepared to make many concessions. Thus, for the first time broad sectors of the working class are developing an attitude of distrust and opposition to the Government. Their politicisation is accelerating.

Second, the depth of the crisis is such that the limitation of demands for wage increases, shorter hours, or simple demands against layoffs are rapidly becoming clear. Hence there are more and more lists of demands that more or less clearly call for the nationalisation of the entire sector, branch-wide planning, and even social-



ist planning of the whole economy 'in order that the reconversion of one sector does not enter into contradiction with the reconversion of another', as was affirmed in a joint declaration by the workers of the Lisnave and Setenave shipyards.

During a general assembly of the workers commissions of the CUF company held on 4 October the following motion was passed: 'If, within one week, the governmental bodies do not take concrete measures for the solution of the grave problem of fertiliser with which the agricultural workers are confronted, the Unity Commission of the CUF will convoke a general assembly of workers to decide immediately and directly to grant the organisations of agricultural workers the fertiliser needed to advance the agrarian reform. The bills, with a discount of 30 per cent, will be sent to the nationalised bank.'

The links between the agricultural

and industrial workers are being established on a level never attained before, and the objective of the development and the centralisation of the 'organs of popular power' is becoming concretised. In fact, this is increasingly tied to the effective needs of broad layers of workers, needs that are expressed in the demands for planning, generalised workers control and so on. Further, on the basis of such demands, the objective possibility of unifying the various components of the working class is much greater.

To take advantage of this opportunity to resolve the lack of centralisation of struggle in a positive direction - that is, to stimulate a centralisation of the workers commissions, tenant commissions, popular assemblies, and soldiers commissions into a National Popular Assembly - remains the priority task of revolutionaries.

THE FIGHT AGAINST THE DICTATORSHIP

(Cont. from page 12)

above all, how to finish for good with this machine of exploitation and oppression.

DEMANDS

To advance along this road, our comrades of the LCR-ETA (VI) put forward a series of democratic slogans: liberation of the political prisoners; re-establishment of the right to strike, to meet, to organise; abolition of all censorship; separation of Church and State; dissolution of the repressive bodies; purging of the army, the administration, and the police, and punishment of the Francoist executioners; elections by proportional representation of constituent assemblies in the territory of the Spanish State; election of a national assembly for each oppressed minority to exercise freely its right to self-determination.

KEY POINTS

These are the key points for any real attack on the apparatus of the Francoist dictatorship, whatever the government and the regime which succeed it.

The most effective and fruitful means of struggling for these demands is in such a way that the working class can impose them even if the bourgeoisie won't discuss them, even if the bourgeoisie engages in a whole-hearted defence of the Francoist heritage - in other words, by means of the revolutionary general strike.

This is not to say that the overthrow of the dictatorship will necessarily take the form of such a general strike.

But to work within the perspective of a revolutionary general strike already means a series of very concrete tasks. Instead of hiding from the workers the truth about the class character of the bourgeois army so as the better to gain the approval of democratic officers, it means building and developing soldiers' committees like those linked to the workers commissions in Alava province during the last strikes in Euzkadi (the Basque country).

SELF-RELIANCE

Instead of claiming that it is possible to take over from the inside the trade union apparatus closely linked to the Francoist State, it means developing, unifying and centralising the workers commissions, the organs independent from the State which the workers have built for themselves during the years of underground struggle. Instead of relying on the generosity of this or that prince, it means developing the pickets and the other lessons of self-defence of workers' struggles. Instead of putting trust in this or that form of bourgeois domination, it means nourishing all the seeds of workers' democracy: the sovereign assemblies, the elected and recallable committees.

WORKERS' FRONT

Instead of a 'broad coalition' government going from the right to the left, as Carrillo suggests, it means a front of workers' organisations on a class programme, offering a comprehensive perspective to the peasantry

as well as to the urban petty bourgeoisie.

What matters to us about bourgeois democratic freedoms is that they create the most favourable conditions for the organisation and struggle of the workers. That is why we demand these freedoms, without in any way tying this demand to a positive proposal by the bourgeois power, whether it be a constitutional monarchy or a parliamentary republic.

It is especially dangerous to counterpose the republic to the dictatorship without going any further. For the flower of the proletariat, for the workers who remember the struggles of their class, the short-lived Republic signifies not a glorious memory but the restoration of bourgeois order throughout 1936 and the repression of the Catalan proletariat in May 1937 - the school of capitulation and defeat in the face of the fascist counter-revolution.

SOCIALISM

To the workers today, we say on the contrary: let us struggle together for the overthrow of the dictatorship, and the dismantling of its machine, but let us not start again on the sad road of yesteryear. This time we can do it, we must not stop halfway there. The 'republican stage' has already cost us too much in the past. We must not stop until we have removed the very root of the dictatorship, until we get rid of capitalist exploitation. There must be no pause, no halt between the democratic revolution and the proletarian revolution, the socialist revolution!



Noe Saude, a representative of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, was warmly greeted when he spoke at a meeting in London last week. But despite the MPLA's declaration that it was seizing power on 11 November, and the Soviet Union's announcement that it will recognise the MPLA Government, its position is now in deadly danger following the gigantic onslaught launched by the reactionary forces of the FNLA, UNITA, South Africa and Zaire. Already the strategic regions of Benguela and Lobito have fallen into the hands of reaction; Zaios troops are launching an offensive in Cabinda; while in Luanda the MPLA are heroically holding out against the FNLA.

The fall of Luanda will force the MPLA to return to simple guerilla warfare in those regions where it still maintains a base. Much will depend in the coming days on the self-activity of the neighbourhood committees - who face the threat of intense repression if the FNLA return to Luanda. The British labour movement must demand now that the Labour Government gives immediate recognition to the MPLA.

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

RED WEEKLY

The fight against the dictatorship

Although Franco undoubtedly played an important role in the evolution of the regime to which he has bequeathed his name, it would be naive to think that the existence of the dictatorship was mainly a product of his own wishes.

The death of the caudillo will behead the system. Because of this it will take on considerable political importance and play a part in changing the relationship of forces. But in no way will it do away with the profound historic and social reasons which have made the dictatorship the absolute horizon of the Spanish bourgeoisie in the course of the last thirty years.

REFORMISTS

The least significant concession to the working class threatens to rekindle conflicts which were never extinguished, and to sweep away the whole edifice of delicately balanced structures. Left to its own devices, the bourgeoisie will never opt for a democratisation whose consequences could endanger its very existence. Only a solid push by the working class can tear down the walls of the dictatorship and force open the gates to a different road.

But the reformists — whether open like the Communist Party, or more subtle — are far from reaching this obvious conclusion. They prefer to act as auxiliaries to the liberal cap-

italists, encouraging them towards new democratic efforts. In the name of a false and threadbare realism, they say that one must first break the logjam of the present situation, whatever the compromises necessary to achieve it. It's a familiar refrain: better a constitutional monarchy than an absolute monarchy; better a bourgeois republic than a military dictatorship....

The characteristic of this kind of reasoning is that it clothes a fundamental error with the appearance of truth.

What does Santiago Carrillo, general secretary of the CP, have to say today? In an interview in *Time* he prays for 'a broad coalition government of national reconciliation, which would include the forces of the right, of the centre and of the left, on the basis of re-establishing freedoms and calling Constituent elections'. He then counterposes the claim of the Count of Barcelona, Don Juan, to that of his son Juan Carlos!

PROBLEM

For the working class, the main problem today is not whether Don Juan or Juan Carlos will succeed Franco, but rather how to finish with Francoism, with its institutions, with all the aspects of the regime —

(Cont. on page 11)

BWNIC 14 MASS PICKET

There will be a mass picket of the Old Bailey on Thursday 20 November from 12 noon to 2pm in support of the 14 pacifists currently facing charges there under the Incitement to Disaffection Act. This has been organised by the Labour Movement Committee of the BWNIC Defence Campaign, and already there has been a response from trade union branches, trades councils and Constituency Labour Parties in London. A delegation of Labour MPs and trade unionists — including Maureen Colquhoun, Joan Maynard, Jo Richardson, Eddie Loyden, Arthur Latham, Ernie Roberts (AUEW) and John Miller (T&GWU) — will then

go to Downing Street to present a letter to Wilson from the picket deploring the charges against the BWNIC 14. This letter is designed to remind Wilson of his own party's opposition to the Incitement to Disaffection Act when it was first brought in, and the conference decisions of the Labour Party this year to abolish the conspiracy laws. The picket is supported by the Troops Out Movement, and has been supported from the beginning by the IMG. As the defence case is already being put in the court, this picket must be seen as the high point of the campaign to defend the 14, and to defend democratic rights.

ROCK BOTTOM?

Curiosity might have killed the cat — complacency could kill off the *Red Weekly*. Sales are going up, subs are going up, money is coming in for the IMG Appeal, but last week the *Red Weekly* Fund Drive raised only £23. Yet you have never needed *Red Weekly* so badly. On every front, internationally and here in Britain, the class war is hotting up.

Such struggles cry out for a Marxist paper that fights for revolutionary internationalism. No other paper on the British revolutionary left can fulfill that function. You cannot afford not to have our paper, which means that you must ensure that we reach our fund drive target of £500 this month. There is a lot of leeway to make up, but it is not too late. A real effort can get that vital money rolling in.

Make sure every supporter and reader is seen and asked for a donation — big or small. We are confident that you can do it. Confirm that confidence with a cheque or postal order to Red Weekly Fund Drive, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

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RIGHT WING THUGS STEP UP ATTACKS IN SPAIN

The replacement of the dying dictator Franco by Prince Juan Carlos — the great hope of 'liberal' capitalist opinion in Europe — has not made a jot of difference to the repressive attacks of the dictatorship on all expressions of political opposition. The Government has imposed the most rigorous censorship ever on the press. The police have also stepped up their attacks. In Madrid a mass assembly of students in the Science Faculty to discuss the present situation was broken up and 60 arrests were made. At the University of Seville the same thing took place, this time leading to 41 arrests.

But the most serious repressive actions have been the 'unofficial' ones taken by bands of fascist thugs. These extreme right wing groups, who operate in open collusion with the police (indeed, they are often made up of off-duty policemen), represent the most die-hard sections of the dictatorship. They aim to ensure its survival by intimidating the opposition and maintaining a state of political tension that would make any 'liberal' manoeuvres by Franco's successor impossible.

ACTIONS

Among the actions they have undertaken in the past week alone are:

* In the Basque town of Zarauz they invaded the home of Basque anti-fascist martyr 'Txiki', brutally beating his mother

by
CHRIS BALFOUR

and sister, and smashing up their furniture.

* In Valencia and Seville it was they, rather than the police, who turned up at the student assemblies and broke them up using clubs, chains, and Molotov cocktails.

* In Madrid a fascist band, armed with sub-machine guns, broke into the office of a Christian Democrat lawyer while a group of liberal lawyers were giving an interview to a Venezuelan journalist. They forced everyone to lie on the floor and brutally beat them, letting off tear gas grenades (standard police equipment in Spain) as they left.

These right-wing groups can be expected to step up their activities over the coming months as the crisis of the dictatorship grows. The class-

collaborationist schemes of the main oppositionist groups can do nothing to meet this threat, for they centre around collaboration with the state authorities who are themselves up to their necks in these right-wing plots.

Only a united front of all workers' organisations, for which revolutionaries in Spain are presently calling, can organise the sort of mass, united self-defence which is necessary to defeat this fascist thuggery.

SOLIDARITY

International workers' solidarity, too, can help to isolate these attacks. An important first step will be the national demonstration this Saturday called by the Action Group against the Repression in Spain, which assembles at Speakers Corner at 1 pm.



Spanish Sahara - the short march

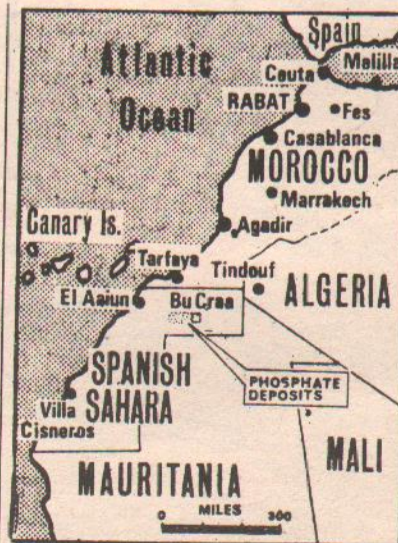
The Duke of York was upstaged last week when the feudal monarch King Hassan of Morocco marched 350,000 unemployed and seasonal workers into the Spanish Sahara — and then marched them back again! The only people to benefit from this exercise have been international capital and the tottering Francoist regime in Spain.

Faced with the increasing support being won in the Spanish Sahara by Frente Polisario, the Saharan independence movement, the Moroccan 'peace march' and subsequent withdrawal became a face-saving diversion for the Spanish regime. As for King Hassan, he merely ended up with egg all over his face.

PHOSPHATES

But the causes of the crisis remain unsolved and could erupt again, despite Hassan's mystifying claim that the marchers had 'obtained the anticipated results and attained the desired objectives' — presumably most went for the walk!

The crisis is actually about phosphates. Morocco is the world's largest producer of phosphates, supplying 40 per cent of Western Europe's phosphates. During 1973-74 Hassan succeeded in increasing the world price of phosphate from \$ 14 to \$68 per tonne by controlling output. Today prices are slumping as a result of a world phosphate surplus of 10 million tonnes and a continuing decline in demand.



It is therefore no surprise that the Hassan regime has been greedily eyeing the Bu Craa deposits across the border in the Spanish Sahara. The Bu Craa phosphate deposits are estimated at 1.7 billion tonnes — the world's largest. Control of these would effectively allow Morocco to maintain its domination of the phosphate market.

The Spanish ruling class was not alone in feeling threatened by this. The USA has also been desperately competing with Morocco for control of the phosphate market. Both also had their eyes

fixed on the safety of their military bases in the nearby Canary Islands.

Other factors were also at play. The Boumedienne regime in Algeria also had its eyes on the phosphate — and on the threat to the port of Tarfaya in Spanish Sahara which is the only export route for Algeria's iron ore mine at Tindouf. As a result of the Boumedienne regime has been overflowing with demagogic support for Polisario, and threatened to cut off gas supplies to Spain if the latter made a deal with Hassan.

REAL LOSERS

The real losers in this episode have been the 350,000 poor Moroccans who stumbled into the desert on a wave of religious fervour whipped up by the reactionary Hassan regime. This nicely averted attention away from Hassan's reactionary policies — two opposition attempts on his life have already been made — and from the growing militancy of the working class in the face of declining living standards.

International capitalism — and particularly Spain's new dictators — will be well pleased with the Moroccan withdrawal. It could well, however, pave the way for a negotiated carve-up of the Spanish Sahara. Revolutionaries worldwide must fight such moves by demanding the immediate withdrawal of Spanish troops from the Sahara and giving full support to the Frente Polisario.