

# RED WEEKLY

\*\*\* DEMONSTRATION \*\*\*

and RALLY

NO ARMS FOR APARTHEID!

ASSEMBLE Charing X Embankment

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# SLAUGHTERED!



## AVENGE THESE DEATHS

SOWETO, SOUTH AFRICA. No one had heard of it a week ago. Soweto is black, one million blacks, and blacks don't exist in South Africa.

Johannesburg does, eighteen miles away. Johannesburg is white. Soweto provides the workers to service white Johannesburg. Eighty six per cent of Soweto homes have no electricity, 93 per cent are without a shower or bath, and 97 per cent have no hot water. Fifty four per cent of Sowetans are unemployed.

Then the final straw. The racist scum who rule South Africa decided that the children must learn their lessons in the language of the master race — Afrikaans. The revolt simmered, then boiled over. And the white racists replied with the only methods they knew: repression and death.

"We didn't use rubber bullets because these make people tame to the gun", said South Africa's Justice Minister. And while the children lay dying in the dust, still more rose up to take their place. Sharpeville had cowed the black masses of South Africa for fifteen years. But Angola destroyed the myth of white supremacy. After Soweto the blacks will keep on fighting.

Our own Labour leaders voiced their 'solidarity' with the struggle. Michael Foot spoke of our 'comrades' in South Africa. Union leaders are indignant. And they do nothing.

\* Nothing to stop the flow of arms and ammunition to the white racists.

\* Nothing to stop the rising tide of racism in this country, which has already claimed the lives of three young blacks in a month.

It's all right denouncing apartheid in South Africa. But these same people, so-called 'left' leaders and all, support reactionary legislation on immigration, call for an end to all work permits for foreign workers, and call for import controls — solving 'our' problems at the expense of workers abroad. They refuse to support in any way the upsurge of black and workers' struggles against the racist offensive.

Soweto brutally revealed the real face of racism. A racism re-emerging and becoming overt in this country as the leaders of the labour movement tie the fate of the working class to a crisis-torn capitalism and refuse to fight for socialist solutions.

Racism produces the same obscenities in Britain as in South Africa. The same fascists who support the South African regime kill blacks and threaten the labour movement in this country. The labour movement must learn the lessons.

Cut all links with South Africa! Smash Enoch Powell! Drive the racists off the streets! And fight those in the labour movement who refuse to break all links with South Africa and crush the racist vermin here.

# WHY BLACK SELF DEFENCE?

THE SPIRIT OF THE POGROM has been unleashed again in Britain following the murders of black youths in the last month. It is not the first time, nor will it be the last.

The first race riots took place in 1919, in Cardiff. More than 2,500 white men went on the rampage in Bute Town, assaulting blacks and burning down lodging houses. Pistol shots were fired and one coloured seaman killed. This was followed by similar events in Manchester, Glasgow, Hull, Liverpool and London.

The number of blacks were so few that reliance on the police was the only protection available. In Liverpool 700 blacks were forced to seek sanctuary in the jail.

Sieges of black lodging houses also came thirty years later, once again in Liverpool. The impact of this riot and those which followed in Camden Town and Deptford was small. The press treated them as 'disturbances' and then, as now, strenuously denied that there were any racial overtones to the attacks.

## Notting Hill

But the race riots of 1958, first in Nottingham and then in Notting Hill, tore the veil aside. The riots in Nottingham were started by a crowd of 1,500 whites armed with razors, knives, palings and bottles, who attacked blacks at random after fights had occurred at closing time.

Mass violence then erupted in Notting Hill in West London, where there had been periodic outbreaks of 'nigger-hunting' by gangs of teddy boys. Two hundred whites went to 'flush out' the blacks by throwing petrol bombs and then attacking those who fled the flames.

The violence continued to spread. Brixton and Wolverhampton were the only black areas to escape without injury to black people. They were also the only areas that were prepared. As a West Indian leader in Wolverhampton put it: 'We were well stocked with bottles, bricks and sundries..... we were waiting for them!'

The experience of Notting Hill produced its own results. Escorts

were arranged for shift workers and vigilante groups patrolled the area in cars. This self-defence, plus the fact that the British ruling class found the riots embarrassing at a time when they still had need of migrant labour from the Caribbean (reflected in the heavy sentences passed down on the whites who were arrested) had a decisive effect. Within two months the situation had stabilised.

## Organisation

The riots marked the creation of the first all-Britain mass immigrant organisations. Following Notting Hill, the establishment of the Indian Workers Association - Great Britain and the West Indian Standing Conference (WISC) was an important step forward for a community split and divided by the national and regional considerations of their countries of origin.

They also created a 'memory' for the experiences of black immigrants in Britain. In 1964 the trail of race hatred was opened up again when the Tory candidate in Smethwick used the slogan 'If you want a nigger for your neighbour vote Labour' to defeat Labour front-bencher Patrick Gordon-Walker in the general election. This event coincided with the publication of a White Paper on Commonwealth immigrants, which established the colour bar as a definite feature of British law.

Violence against blacks spread across the country in 1965, with attempts to establish the Ku Klux Klan in Britain. The police reacted in their usual sensitive way to the new political climate, and it became clear that the immigrant community would have to rely on its own resources to resist the mounting racist tide.

## Mobilise

At a meeting of WISC in Birmingham in mid-August, a resolution was passed calling on all West Indians to mobilise themselves for self-defence against the threats of the Klan.

In his book *Black British, White British*, Dillip Hiro comments: 'Unlike 1958, when the West Indians were caught unawares, this time



Massive police protection for the parade of the National Front behind their parliamentary election candidates.

they quickly got ready to face the threat of racial violence and let it be known publicly. Consequently racial trouble was staved off.'

The Pakistani community went through a similar experience with the wave of 'paki-bashing' in London's East End. In 1969 a survey revealed that just under a quarter of all members of the Pakistani Students Federation had been attacked. The growth of self-defence particularly in the Euston and East End districts of London was the only guarantee against the continuation of the violence.

## Murder

The culmination of these incidents was the murder of Tosir Ali, whose throat was cut. On a subsequent TV programme, another Pakistani displayed his wounds from a previous attack. The next day he was taken to Leman Police Station and accused of the murder of Tosir Ali! Although he was later released, this experience had a salutary effect on the trust of the Pakistani community in the police.

The situation today differs from that previously. In the 1960s the traditional leaders of the immigrant community sometimes took a lead in the organisation of self-defence, albeit under the challenge of the groups set up in the train of the Black Power movement in the USA. But today the fight for self-defence of the black community involves a fight against the white racist, the police and the traditional leaders of the black community, who by now have been thoroughly caught up in the web of the integrationist

machinery of the Race Relations Act.

As the Institute of Race Relations pointed out in a press statement last week: 'The "voices of reason" in and out of the black community who counsel us to "keep calm" are mistaken in their hopes that by maintaining respectability fascism will be appeased. The black community is under direct attack, and the response - whether by way of self-defence committees or other commu-

nity action - must be equally direct.'

The task of organising working class defence for the black communities, uniting both black and white workers, can only be achieved if there is a fight for the right of black people to organise themselves in their own defence. Without such a fight, the slogan for black and white to unite against the racists is merely a militant cover for inaction.

S. POTTER

## CIA HITS JAMAICA

The Jamaican Government has declared a state of emergency on the island. This comes after months of gun battles, burnings and riots in Kingston, the capital, which has been under nightly curfew since 10 May. At least 70 people are known to have died.

Behind the violence are armed gangs supporting the corrupt and conservative Jamaica Labour Party - hired to break up meetings of the ruling Peoples National Party, fire the homes of its supporters, and gun down activists. The PNP has responded by revitalising the Home Guard.

That party politics in Jamaica have reached a stage of armed gang warfare cannot be explained away simply by

foreign capital.

As a result, all the fundamental and glaring problems of the economy have still to be solved. The inflation rate has only just dropped below 20 per cent. Unemployment is around 25 per cent. Strikes are increasing amongst all sections of workers, from the bauxite and alumina workers (the major industry now) to public service workers, teachers and so on.

The unrest and shootings of this year have now turned these problems into a major crisis, as foreign and home investment has been withdrawn. Tourism, an important source of revenue, has plummeted.

A general election is due in Jamaica this year. At face value, one could be persuaded to think that the over zealous JLP thugs have merely alerted the country to the economic chaos, bankruptcy and breakdown to which the PNP's 'socialism' is leading. But behind the JLP and its activities lies a far more sinister and ominous question, but one which has had an all too familiar answer many times before in the Caribbean - who pays the gunmen, whose dirty work are these hired thugs really doing?

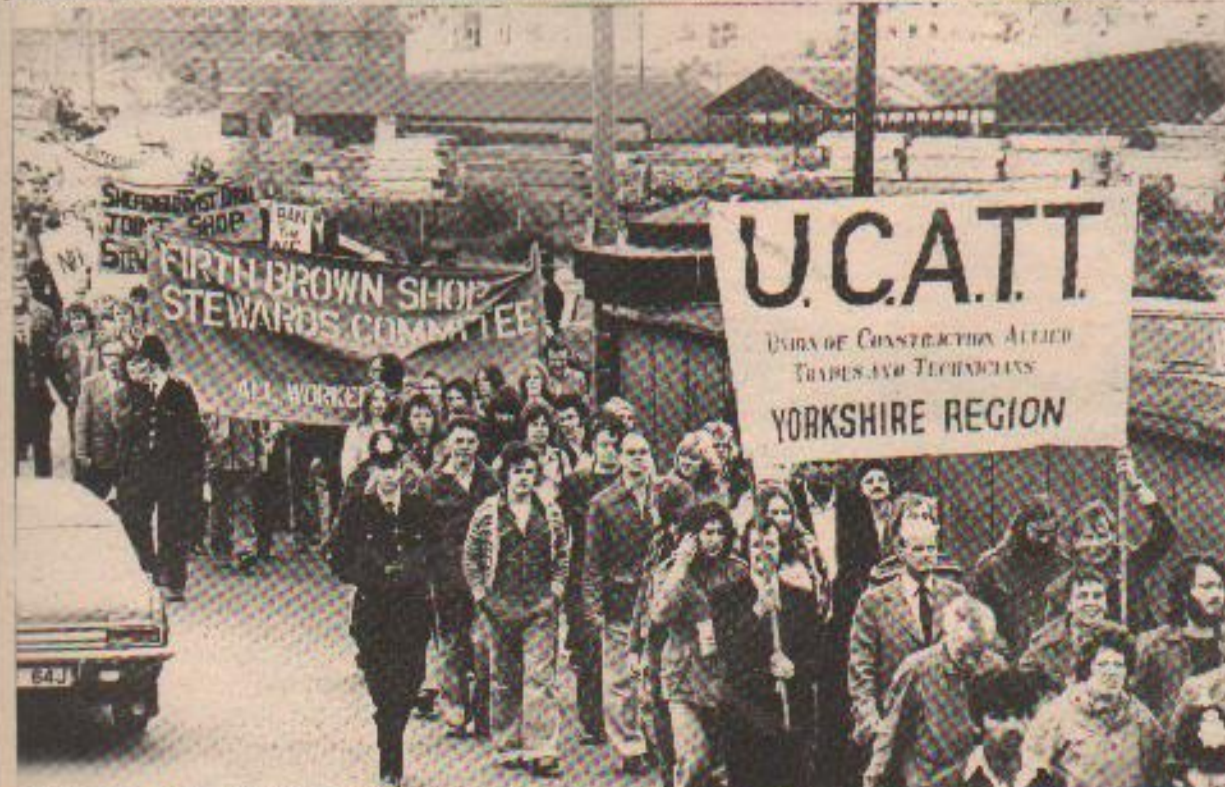
The word 'destabilisation' came into fashion to describe the activities of the CIA in bringing down the Allende regime in Chile. Now it is being used quite openly to describe the circumstances in Jamaica. As far as US imperialism is concerned, one workers state in the Caribbean - Cuba - is one too many.

Michael Manley's friendship with Castro and his nationalisations and co-operatives are nowhere near heralding a socialist revolution in Jamaica. Nevertheless, the combination of the rhetoric plus the reality of the decreasing influence of imperialism and increasing influence of Cuba and potentially the Soviet Union have alerted the US.

The well-worn ingredients of intervention and 'destabilisation' are now all present in Jamaica - from the withdrawal of investment to the attempted splitting of the ruling party to the backing of the opposition with CIA money and guns.

Whether the US succeeds in its reactionary and inevitably bloody mission depends both on the anti-imperialist forces of opposition within Jamaica and the Caribbean and on solidarity with that struggle elsewhere.

SHEILA MALONE



An anti-fascist march of 4,000 confronts the National Front menace in Rotherham. The marchers spurned the appeal of the Labour 'lefts' whose newspaper *Tribune* had urged the organisers to call it off.

# Black anger rocks apartheid

Anyone still unconvinced of the barbaric nature of racism after the past few weeks in Britain can have no excuse now with the events in South Africa. The lid of the pressure cooker that is Soweto, so long held down by the South African authorities, finally blew off with the inevitable violence and bloodshed. With over 100 people dead, hundreds injured, and further hundreds imprisoned, the comparison with the Sharpeville killings of sixteen years ago is in no way unjustified.

The issue which sparked off the violence was that of the compulsory teaching of Afrikaans — the language of the white Nationalist ruling group — to African schoolchildren in 'white' urban areas. This meant that African schoolchildren would henceforth have to master three languages: their native tribal tongue, English, and now Afrikaans.

It will come as no surprise to learn that African school hours are short, as both buildings and teachers are in short supply. Indeed, the amount of money spent per head on African education is only £18 (1974) as compared with £300 for whites. To require children to be trilingual is in any case a tall order, but in this context the result can only be the emasculation of African education.

## HEAR TARIQ ALI SPEAK on the fight against racism

- Mon 21 June **MANCHESTER** (Burnes Wallis Building, UMIST, 8pm)  
 Weds 23 June **BRADFORD** (The Star, Westgate, 7.30pm)  
 Thurs 24 June **LEEDS** (University Students Union, 1pm)  
**SHEFFIELD** (Memorial Hall, behind City Hall, 7pm)  
 Sun 27 June **BIRMINGHAM** (Digbeth Civic Hall, 7.30pm)  
 Tues 29 June **OXFORD** (Blackfriars, St Giles, 8pm)  
 Weds 30 June **COVENTRY** (General Wolfe, Foleshill Road, 8pm)  
 Thurs 1 July **BRISTOL** (phone 01-837 6954 for details)  
 Fri 2 July **N. LONDON** (Hornsey Library, Haringey Park Rd, NB, 8pm)  
 Sat 3 July **NOTTINGHAM** (International Community Centre, 61b Mansfield Road, 3pm)

Response to the meetings has been enthusiastic. In Manchester, for example, every Asian shop approached has willingly agreed to take a poster for the meeting. Three thousand handbills have been distributed in the Asian community.

A local West Indian Centre leader has agreed to speak on the platform in a personal capacity, and a local black self-defence group has been approached to assist with the stewarding of the meeting.

Pull out all the stops to campaign around the meetings and mobilise for the demonstration on 4 July!

As a consequence of this there is an appalling drop out rate: of the six million black South African children who started school between 1955 and 1968, three million had given up before they could read in any language.

Soweto itself is a township of anything up to 1,500,000 Africans, ten miles outside Johannesburg. Its facilities are to say the least minimal. Less than a third of this large city has electricity, for example — yet the biggest power station in South Africa is right next door.

Hundreds of thousands do not live in their own homes. Transport to and from Johannesburg is overcrowded and expensive. Life becomes a brutal struggle for survival — last year alone there were over seven hundred murders, over a thousand cases of rape, and over 8,000 cases of assault. This is just a brief glimpse at the life Africans suffer under apartheid. In consequence the education issue must be seen as a focus for a discontent that goes much, much deeper.

## Peaceful

The protest march of 10,000 students started peacefully with the students marching on the Pheleni school, the focal point of the struggle against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. In order to disperse the students the police threw tear gas shells at them, to which they replied with stones. Then without warning, and without first firing over their heads, the police shot into the crowd.

A senior police official is reported as saying: 'No, we fired into the crowd. It's no good firing over their heads.' From then on the violence spread. Its scope and intensity is clear proof of the deep frustration and resentment felt towards the whites by Africans. That the police murdered these Africans cannot be doubted by anyone.

These events also reflect the powerful impact of recent developments outside South Africa's borders. First in Mozambique and then in Angola the forces of white reaction have been defeated by black liberation armies — compelling a rapid retreat by the

South African military in the latter. In Zimbabwe the black guerrillas are increasingly threatening the day-to-day life of white Rhodesians.

All this has led to a fantastic growth in the self-confidence of the Africans, as witnessed in the new scope of their protests. They have begun to raise militant black power slogans, sensing the increasing weakness of the whites. On the march African students for the first time shouted 'Viva Azania' — the name given to South Africa by the black nationalists. Soweto, unlike Sharpeville, is just the beginning.

It is perhaps not entirely coincidental that the violence erupted on

The force of the arms embargo supposedly imposed by the United Nations in 1963 was highlighted only last week with the prosecution of a Jersey firm which illegally exported more than £1 million worth of parts for military equipment to South Africa. Technical Support and Services was fined a trifling £1,800 for this offence. Even more revealing, though, were the details of how the parts were obtained from the Ministry of Defence.

Mr John Chalmers, the former managing director of the firm's parent company, commented after the hearing: 'As far as I am aware ... any work we have done in relation to South Africa has been done with the blessing of the Ministry of Defence.' He was backed up by Jersey's Deputy Bailiff, who pointed out that the Ministry 'could hardly have thought the parts were being sent here to supply Jersey's army and navy'.

the eve of the visit by South African Premier Vorster to meet Dr Kissinger in West Germany. The frustration of Africans in the face of the South African regime means that they can only look outwards for help. Certainly Vorster's hopes of presenting everything as rosy under his new policy of detente have been shot to pieces with a vengeance.

## Kissinger

But while Kissinger is one important figure in the scheme of things, the involvement of the Labour Government and British capitalism in South Africa is equally significant. British investment amounts to £2,000m. — more than 60 per cent of total foreign investment. And the weapons used at Soweto were British in manufacture — part of a steady flow of military material which helps to prop up the Vorster regime.

It is therefore vital to launch a campaign demanding that Labour break all links with South Africa. If this is not done then many more Sowetos will be seen, and the Callaghan Government will be directly responsible.

Furthermore, a serious campaign in the labour movement on this question would not only help the Africans but would also begin to challenge the racism that permeates the British working class. It would throw down a challenge to the general racist stance of the Labour Government which the latter could not ignore. **SMASH THE VORSTER REGIME! LABOUR BREAK ALL LINKS! SOLIDARITY WITH THE AFRICAN REVOLUTION!**

# IN FOCUS

## AFTER THE BALL

There they were, guarded by a long line of policemen and crash barriers from several hundred demonstrators on the other side of the road. Fascists, racists? Perhaps even a Government Minister responsible for the cuts?

No, none of these, but the gentlemen of the TUC, 'our leaders', turning up for the special TUC on 16 June. Feeling somewhat more secure inside Central Hall, Westminster, these bureaucrats voted by an overwhelming majority for the Healey pay deal.

What 'deal' one might ask, because even a deal usually supposes that there are two sides to the bargain. But the Government has got everything and the unions nothing — except pie in the sky. The Department of the Environment is now unilaterally threatening to cut the rate support grant to local authorities that 'overspend' — i.e. retain essential services — this year. The child benefits scheme has been withdrawn not because it would mean taking money out of men's pay packets but because the amount of money Ministers were prepared to offer for the first child was so small it was laughable. Better nothing at all!

The TUC has fallen hook, line and sinker for the Government's strategy — but it is working people who are being dragged along on the end of the line.

And with the deal sealed up, the TUC leaders are now falling over themselves in calling for higher profits. Even the token references to maintaining the ineffectual Price Code have been dropped. 'If the Government is convinced that the employers have not been involved in a deliberate "investment strike", and that some financial easement is necessary, then a controlled revision of prices should be agreed provided that the increased profit is wholly re-directed into further investment.'

## Increased Profits

This statement came not from the Confederation of British Industry, nor from the Retailers Consortium. It came from the general secretary of the second largest union in the country, John Boyd of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, writing in the editorial column of the June issue of the union's journal. Of course, John Boyd does not argue his case openly for increased profits. What he claims is that this will increase investment and safeguard jobs.

This is simply not true. Short of nationalisation under workers control there is absolutely no guarantee that increased profits will be invested in new plant. And even if they are, it's more likely to be in strong-arm states like South Africa and Brazil where huge profits can be made on the blood and bones of a subdued labour movement.

The new moves virtually to suspend the Price Code equally reveal the total ineffectiveness of the mindless chanting by the 'left' leaders in the unions and Labour Party for 'investment'. Investment for what? Under whose control? The very same argument is now being turned against the working class to justify wage controls and higher prices. The so-called 'investment strike' was not caused by nasty unpatriotic British businessmen as the rhetoric of the lefts would have us believe. It was caused by virtue of the fact that the rate of profit is higher in other countries or in sectors of the economy like property speculation.

Yes, the working class does need investment — but on our terms. It needs a massive injection of funds into the social services to meet social need and provide jobs. It needs workers control over production so that plans for socially useful production like those drawn up by the Lucas Aerospace combine committee can not only be written but implemented. And that means tearing away the organisations of the working class from class collaboration — breaking them from the policies of the Labour Government.

## Common Struggle

The 4½ per cent rip-off has been massively confirmed. But 90,000 miners were against the pay deal, including a majority of those who actually dig coal. Big minorities opposed to the deal exist in all the major unions. In London a new focus of opposition to the cuts is emerging in the decision of Haringey's Labour Council to defy the Department of the Environment's circular on 'overspending'.

We must bring these forces together into a common struggle, advancing a workers' solution to the crisis, challenging the right wing and ex-lefts for the leadership of the movement. It won't just be the Tories that get back if the Labour Government's policies go unchallenged. The scum of society, the racists and the fascists will also rise to the surface offering their own 'radical' solutions. That is the double challenge socialists must address themselves to in the present crisis.

## Fight this sabotage

The Director of Public Prosecutions was not the only body to try to obstruct the publication of the Barnet Trades Council independent inquiry into the incidents involving the Right to Work demonstration on 19 March, which found evidence of 'excessive and indiscriminate violence by the police'. Speaking to *Red Weekly*, Trades Council president John Phillips also exposed the refusal of the TUC, the Greater London Association of Trades Councils (GLATC), and the Swansea National Trades Council Conference to help the inquiry in any way.

A letter requesting that the TUC circulate a financial appeal met with a response which was short and to the point: 'Trades councils should not have become involved with this march.' The defence of the marchers got equally short shrift at the hands of the GLATC. A smear job by some delegates — one even claiming that the Right to Work March had intimidated workers at the site of the incident, Staples Corner — meant that a motion was carried not to support the inquiry or circulate its appeal for financial help.

John Phillips then tried to raise the matter at the National Conference of Trades Councils in Swansea. It was the same old story. John Phillips was not called to the platform.

John repeated to *Red Weekly* his call for a full public inquiry into the Staples Corner event. He called for resolutions and letters calling for a public inquiry to be sent to the Rt. Hon. Roy Jenkins MP, Home Secretary, the Home Office, Whitehall, SW1. The Trades Council would also like to be notified of any such communications. Financial contributions, which are urgently needed, should be sent to Barnet Trades Council, 19 March Committee (to whom cheques are payable), c/o J R Connolly, The Broadway, West Hendon, London NW9.



Pickers outside South Africa House voice their anger against the mass murder of the Vorster regime.

# THE BRITISH ROAD IN CRISIS



'Hugh Scanlon gave Callaghan the green light to pander to big business and capitulate to them all along the line.'

Party industrial organiser) in the *Morning Star*, 16 June.

It is a rare day indeed when such a 'hero' of the left as Hugh Scanlon receives such criticism in the *Morning Star*. It is even rarer when it comes from none other than the Communist Party's industrial organiser, Bert Ramelson.

Up to now the *Morning Star* has maintained a deafening silence on the betrayals of Scanlon and other erstwhile friends like Jack Jones and Lawrence Daly. At long last, however, the depth of these betrayals has forced the CP to speak out against those whom they have uncritically supported for so long.

But no-one should expect the CP suddenly to mend its ways and lead a principled struggle against the left fakers. The CP's political strategy, embodied in the *British Road to Socialism*, remains unchanged — and that is what lies at the root of the CP's inability to counter the sell-outs of the 'lefts'.

## PRINCIPLE

The *British Road* is based on the perspective of establishing a socialist government through the building of unity with the left wing of the Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy on the basis of a broad anti-monopoly alliance. For the CP, unity with the lefts is not a question of joint action around specific issues, but a point of principle — a strategic aim which overrides all other considerations.

Despite what Ramelson says, what he *does* is another thing. No serious mobilisation was made for the day of action on 26 May. On the lobby of the TUC on 16 June, also

called from the 27 March Assembly on Unemployment attended by 3,024 delegates, the banner of the Assembly organisers — the No. 8 District of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions — was not even to be seen.

## MEEKLY

In British Leyland, CP convenors like Robinson at the Austin Longbridge plant and Nicholas at Rover are actually fighting for acceptance of worker participation and higher productivity. On every issue confronting the working class, staying 'friends' with Scanlon and Jones has been put above the interests of the working class.

Apart from some voting antics at the Engineers' National Committee, the CP has done nothing in practice to challenge Scanlon. No attempt was made to mobilise rank and file members before the conference met to ensure a vote against the pay deal.

In the toolmakers' strikes at British Leyland, which clearly had the potential to go beyond a struggle to defend differentials into a challenge to the £6 limit, the CP either opposed strike action or made every effort to confine the actions taken to the narrow sectoral question of differentials. When Scanlon summoned the strike leaders to London, the CP meekly returned with their tails

between their legs and carried out the instructions for a return to work.

The problem for the Communist Party is that *today* its leadership has to criticise the 'lefts' in order to keep its base happy. But at the same time its whole strategy rests on an alliance with these self-same traitors. What will Ramelson tell CP members in the AUEW next time they are involved in strikes against Scanlon? To continue the fight, or to return to work until 'conditions are more favourable'?

## INCAPABLE

Supporters of the *British Road to Socialism* must explain how it is possible to carry out the strategic line of that document and at the same time fight against the betrayals of the very people regarded as central to that strategy. We say that it's not possible — that to break with the policies of this Government and its supporters in the trade unions must mean breaking also with the misleaders like Jones, Scanlon and Daly who advocate them. And despite temporary ups-and-downs with Scanlon in the pages of the *Morning Star*, we believe that the CP is therefore incapable of launching an effective fight on these questions.

John Graham

## PRICES: Hugh and cry about nothing

Hugh Scanlon, President of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, likes the House of Commons. That's why he went there ten days ago to urge a meeting of Labour MPs to stand fast by price controls and so maintain the Government's side of the 4% per cent 'bargain' with the TUC.

Of course Scanlon wasn't actually concerned with defending living standards — just protecting the pay deal. He knows full well that Prices Secretary Shirley Williams has already surrendered to the Confederation of British Industry on the Price Code to allow a substantial increase in profits; he knows that subsidies on essential items like butter, cheese, tea and so on will be withdrawn.

After all, Callaghan said as much in front of Scanlon at the National Committee meeting of the AUEW (Engineering Section). And right-wing General Secretary John Boyd more or less repeated the point in the June issue of the *AUEW Journal*.

Another article in the same issue — which we presume Hugh Scanlon reads — also commented 'EEC Commission proposals to trim the monetary import subsidies on farm produce to Britain and Italy by between 2 and 4 per cent have been shelved ..... Mr Fred Peart, the British Minister of Agriculture, welcomed this decision, saying that he was glad his EEC colleagues had recognised the need to avoid measures which would raise UK food prices while the Government was seeking a new pay deal with the TUC' (our emphasis). And what about afterwards?

When Scanlon and Jones talk about a return to free collective bargaining in 1977 they do this the better to cover up the wage-cutting pay deal they are implementing now. Such talk should fool no-one.

# Now men back equal pay strike

After four weeks, the 400 women striking for equal pay at the Trico car components factory in Brentford have finally persuaded male workers in the toolroom, inspection, press shop and despatch to respect their picket line.

As part of their campaign to take their struggle into the broad labour movement, the Trico workers also decided to support last week's lobby of the special TUC on 16 June — collecting £50 for their strike fund. AUEW shop steward Betty Aiston told *Red Weekly*: 'The support from the factories in the area has been tremendous. London Airport, Firestone, United Biscuits, Hoover, AEC have all supported us. I think the reason is that this is the first major equal pay strike in the area. It's a test case.'

'We work on a payment-by-results system and are getting £5.75 to £6.50 a week less than men working at the same job. The sort of tricks the management have been pulling is to argue that we're 'not as versatile' as men, or to try on one occasion to reduce the male rate to our rate!'

## SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN WORKERS OF TRICO

Her fellow shop steward, Eileen Ward, added: 'Obviously we want a full strike from the men. We're just not getting

equal pay with the men, and all of us suffer if management get away with using us as cheap labour.'

The other thing is solidarity. We make windscreen wipers, so this week we're going to the car plants in Birmingham, and to Chrysler, Vauxhall and British Leyland. We need carworkers' support.'

On the lobby with the women was male deputy convenor John O'Neill. He told us: 'I'm out with the women. It's very important that we win this strike, as it's the first one of its kind in London.'

There are so many loopholes in the Equal Pay Act, different versions of what it means, that women will still

have to fight for equal pay. We've got men and women working side by side producing the same quantity of material and yet they're still not getting equal pay. But we're determined. We'll go on indefinitely to win equal pay.'

As Betty Aiston says, the Trico strike is in many ways a test case. And there are several things other workers can do to make sure it's a successful one:

- \* The AUEW National Committee recently passed the Working Women's Charter *unanimously*. Now's the time for AUEW members to get them to do something about women's rights.

The strike is official. Members should

call on the union leadership to organise and support blacking of Trico products throughout the motor industry. Put solidarity motions in your branch, shop stewards or district committee to this effect.

- \* Car workers should black Trico products now.

- \* All unions and organisations supporting the Working Women's Charter should back and popularise the Trico strike.

- \* Money, solidarity messages, information on blacking should be sent to: Trico Strike Fund, c/o AEU House, 1 Woodlands Road, Southall, Middlesex.

## WHAT'S ON

**LEICESTER NAC** working conference, Sun 27 June, 10am-5pm. AUEW Hall, Vauxhall Way — to launch campaign for out-patient abortion clinic. Speaker: Sheila Abdallah. Creche available.

**OPEN FORUM ON IRELAND**, Sat 26 June, Dorset Hall, Red Lion Sq. 10.30am-1pm. 'Lessons of other colonial wars', 2.45pm. 'No British Solution', 4.45pm. 'The Labour Movement Delegation', invited speakers include: Tania Ali, Pat Amis, Tony Cliff, Gerry Lawless, Ken Livingstone (Labour councillor), Eamonn McCair, Meron Margolis (Covenanter TD), Colin Sweet (SPC), Dr David Thornley (Irish Labour MP), Tony Kelly. Admission 50p.

**PREVENTION OF TORTIOUS ACT**: public meeting organised by Trade Union Committee Against the PTA, Thur 24 June, 7.30pm, Wilton Junction Hotel.

**'DIVIDE AND RULE BRITANNIA'**, new play about race, available from Broadside, 20min show, for performance indoors or out, with no special space requirements, lighting or scenery. Offered to any group, trade union etc. arranging a meeting, demonstration or picket to combat racist propaganda. For further details contact: Broadside Noble Workers Theatre, 25 Holborn House, Holborn Place, London WC1 101-730 6386.

**NAMIBIA** Support Committee presents an evening in solidarity with SWAPO. Song for Liberation, with Peggy Seeger and Ewan MacColl, and traditional folk music. Fri 2 July, 7.30pm, Theatre 2, 10, Stoke Newington Town Hall, Stoke Newington Church St, N1E 1J3 (incl). Tickets 25. Inquiries: SWAPO and co-ordinators 6044 or office of: Namibia Support Committee, 27-28 Tottenham St, EC2 0T (07-935 4342).

**LONDON NAC** fund-raising disco, Sat 3 July, 8pm-2am, at Battersea, 29 Somerset St, WC2, 50p at door.

**SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT** — pamphlet containing first thorough critique from a socialist perspective, 23c, free p&h from: Socialist Women, 27 Caledonian Rd, N1.

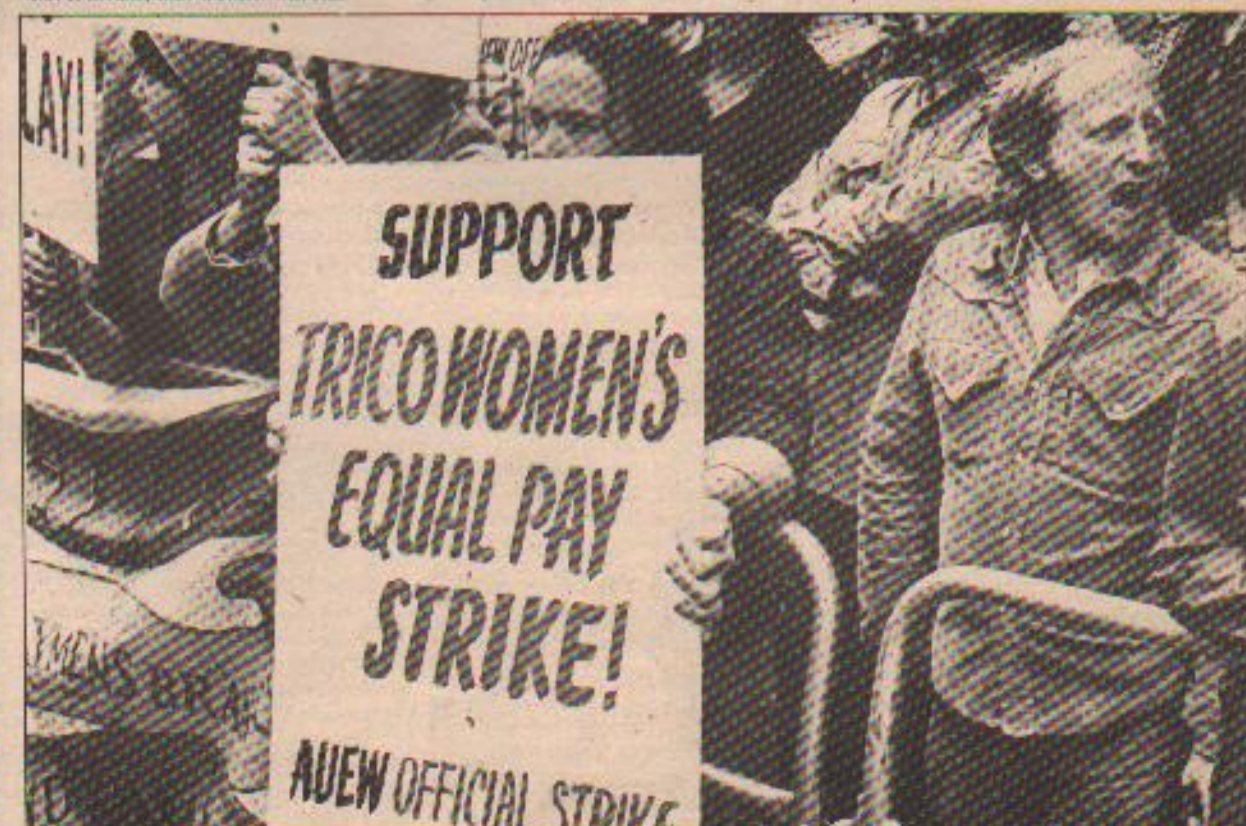
**SOCIALIST WOMAN** — new title covering working women in Ireland, domestic labour, abortion in Eastern Europe, women and unemployment, the WNC campaign, etc. 23c, free p&h from: Socialist Women, 27 Caledonian Road, London N1.

**LEFTS OFFERED** in Morocco making 24 July. Possibility of return etc. (also printed copy) at: White Box RWG/5, 97 Caledonian Rd, London N1.

**BENGALI FRIENDS** in Europe and elsewhere for Bengali books and 'Sari-Dal-Bhaji' (Fourth International paper), contact: Bengali, c/o internationalists, Box 2274, 10335 Stockholm, Sweden.

**RED BOOKS** — comprehensive list of 1981 book sale with: Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, Mao, Lukacs, Hobsbawm, Cannon, Staudacher, etc. Send for copy to: Red Books, 27 Caledonian Road, London N1.

**COME TO the Summer School** for IMG members: 20 Aug-1 Sept. About £20 all in, including room and board in comfortable surroundings. Fees include travel and food. Book now as places limited! Will be held in Mullbank Courtyard. Further details from: IMG National Centre, 27 Caledonian Road, London N1.



On the TUC lobby, 16 June, where the Trico women collected £50 for their strike fund

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

The latest attack by the Labour Government on working class living standards — its shelving of the child benefit scheme — has been hidden behind the smokescreen of an outcry against 'security leaks'.

It is clear from the reports of the Cabinet meeting which discussed this decision that it was not taken in the interests of maintaining the pay packet of the 'working man'. On the contrary, it is a means of allowing the Labour Government to wriggle out of its commitment to help ease the ravages of inflation through an extension of the present benefits offered. When this scheme was first introduced it was heralded as a *kernel* of Government strategy in the fight against poverty.

Labour took up this issue after a wave of opposition had met moves by the Tories to cease paying family allowances to women, and to incorporate them instead into a tax-credit system on the father's wages. Labour was forced to promise that not only would family allowances continue to be paid to mothers (many of whom see this as an essential part of their weekly income), but they would be increased, extended to include the first child, and made tax free.

### SHABBY

This new proposal was dubbed the 'Child Benefit Scheme', and was due to be implemented in April 1977. But although a step forward, it was still hardly adequate: the proposal called for the *withdrawal* of the child tax allowance (hence the cries about reducing the father's pay packet), although the total family income (for both one and two parent families) was to be increased through higher payments to the mother. At a time when the housekeeping receive

ed by women generally prevents them from coping adequately with the effects of inflation, this was an important point.

But while claiming to uphold this promise, the Government has instead come up (through blatant manoeuvring) with a shabby compromise: a new family allowance of £1 for the first child plus a 50p supplement for one-parent families. For tax-paying families, however, this £1 will amount to a mere 30p. A far cry from the proposed tax free £2.64 child benefit scheme that was projected a few months ago by the Labour Government!

Even more despicable than this clear attack on working class living standards are the revelations in *New Society* about how the decision was reached. The problem for the

## DODIE WEPLER explains that the real scandal isn't the revelation of Cabinet 'secrets' but the Government's shelving of the Child Benefits Scheme.

Government was straightforward — it realised that its commitment to the international bankers to cut public expenditure meant that it simply could not pay the promised amount. As David Ennals, Secretary for Social Services, bluntly put it: '... the funds were not available

to pay an acceptable rate'.

It was therefore decided to 'postpone' the scheme and instead maintain the *present* rate, adding simply £1 for the first child. This in itself posed potential problems for the Government — a hundred signatures were collected from MPs calling for the reopening of the debate as opposition mounted amongst campaigning groups outside the hallowed walls of Parliament.

But thanks to back-room manoeuvring by Michael Cocks, Chief Whip for the Government, the battleground had been prepared in advance. The Government decided to hide behind the argument that the TUC would not stand for any reduction in men's pay packets. Once again, the interests of women were pitted

by these misleaders against those of the working class as a whole.

And while the Government desperately tries to divert attention to the supposed 'security risk' involved in the leaking of its plans, it also covers up another fundamental attack on living standards. The child benefit scheme was initially planned to be such an advance that it would enable the Government to withdraw food subsidies. Needless to say, *this* part of the scheme — worth about 71p a week to a family with two children — is still going ahead.

### WOMEN

What this attack amounts to is clear. Family allowances are now valued at a lower proportion of average earnings than at any time since their introduction in 1945!

Cuts in social spending, living standards and jobs are the pillars of the Labour Government's policies. This shabby 'compromise' of £1 for the first child *minus* any food subsidies goes hand in glove with these policies.

If the leaders of the workers movement are really interested in defending the living standards of the working class, and in protecting the interests of women, they must begin to campaign now for the *retention* of the child tax allowance; for the full implementation of the child benefit scheme, ensuring that payments are automatically increased to keep up with rises in the cost of living, and for the retention and an immediate increase in food subsidies.

Only by giving a real lead in meeting the Government's attacks on such issues will the labour movement win women behind its banner.

# Fighting Inflation-French Union Style



FRENCH POSTAL WORKERS launched a massive struggle for the minimum wage based on the CFDT's own cost of living index.

In Britain it is often and correctly asserted that the official price index does not reflect the real increases in the cost of living. This is true of every capitalist country. In France, however, the trade unions and revolutionary militants have played a real role in exposing the retail price index — so much so that recent opinion polls have shown that the majority of the population of France considers the official retail price index to be wrong.

Red Weekly asked a revolutionary militant who works in the French National Institute of Social and Economic Studies (INSEE), the body which produces the official price index, to explain the development of the struggles which have taken place on this issue. The lessons for Britain — for example, the need for the unions to prepare their own price index, and the way in which the role of price committees can be linked to minimum wage demands — are clear.

**Q. What are the chief flaws of the price index in France?**

**A.** Much the same as in any country, I would think. The actual mathematics of the index are not wrong, but the basis on which it is made up doesn't correspond to the real costs and needs of the working class. Furthermore, it only reflects rises in the shops; therefore it can't keep track of all the changes which take place in production.

**Q. Can you give examples?**

**A.** A classic one was the case of a refrigerator two years ago. One year this was selling for 500 francs. Next year a 'new' model came out for 800 francs. In fact this one was exactly the same as — in fact rather worse than — the old one. But it had an automatic defroster. An automatic defroster doesn't cost anything like 100 francs, but under the system on which the price index was calculated this addition constituted a 'quality change' and not a price increase — so the real extra cost wasn't reflected in an increase in the price index.

There are many other examples of this type, but you couldn't really find out about them without workers control and supervision in the production process.

**Q. What about government manipulation of the index?**

**A.** Given the unions' vigilance over the price index the Government can't intervene in too open a way — this would be immediately exposed. However there are other more subtle ways in which it can intervene. A recent case was over the charge to change electricity meters.

This had been in the price index since the base line year of 1970. This suited the Government as this price hadn't gone up at all during this time, and therefore it helped to keep the index down. However in January 1976 the price went up by three or four times. This helped to put up the price index by 1.5 per cent in that month.

When the Minister for Finance, Fourcade, was as usual informed in advance of how much the index had gone up, he wanted to know why there was such an increase in the index and how to prevent it. This was done by taking the meter charge out of the index. After that the retail price index was recalculated from 1970 without meters. When it suited the Government this charge was included, but when it wasn't suitable it came out.

**Q. What actions have been taken concerning the index?**

**A.** As far as the workers in the Institute are concerned, we have put out leaflets to the unions exposing some of the manoeuvres — for example, we put out one on the refrigerator example. Two years ago we put out a booklet, 'Is the Price Index fixed?', which circulated widely in the unions. We are now preparing a new edition bringing it up to date.

But the unions themselves have also put forward alternatives to the official price index.

**Q. Can you give some examples?**

**A.** The largest trade union federation, the CGT, puts out its own index which more accurately shows the increase in the cost of living for workers — for example, during the period when the official cost of living index went up by 9 per cent, the CGT index went up by 14 per cent. Some workers have used this to get concessions — for example, some white collar workers in the Paris area get pay rises based on an index which is half way between the official index and the CGT index.

We're not so sure about the CGT index, however, because of the way it is calculated. We prefer the system put forward by the other trade union federation, the CFDT.

**Q. Can you explain this?**

**A.** The main point about the CFDT index is that they calculate a minimum wage on the basis of the cost of the amount of goods which a family needs to live on. This allows workers to see the real increases in the cost of living, and makes possible a real role for committees on prices in linking up with the workplaces.

We had an interesting experience of this in France when workers at the big store of Mammouth in Rennes exposed the price rises in the shop, put forward their own demands for a minimum wage and working conditions, and put out propaganda to local workers showing the real increases taking place.

This CFDT index now stands at 2,000 francs a month. There have been important struggles round the demands of this index. For instance, two years ago the postal and telephone workers went on strike for this minimum wage — which at that time stood at 1,700 francs a month.

**Q. How do you see the struggle for a real cost of living index going forward?**

**A.** The decisive thing is workers control and supervision at every level from production to the shop. It's only on that basis that you can find out the real increases. All the actions taken so far must be seen as pointing in that direction.



LEON BLUM

June, forty years ago in France, saw the country in the midst of a wave of strikes and factory occupations outside the control of the leaderships in the Socialist Party (SFIO), the Communist Party, and the latter's trade union wing, the CGT. Over two million workers participated in the seizure of the factories.

The response of CP leader Thorez came on 12 June, when he said: 'It is necessary to know when to end a strike.' The same day, the Trotskyist paper *Lutte Ouvriere* came out with the headline: 'In the factory and the street — power to the workers.'

The first occupations occurred on 26 May, following the Popular Front's sweeping electoral victory a few weeks earlier — in which the SFIO, the CP and the Radicals between them took 334 of the 618 seats. The occupations spread rapidly, to such an extent that four days later 100,000 workers were already involved. On 4 June the first Popular Front Government was formed, with SFIO leader Leon Blum at its head.



Why should the Radicals — the major bourgeois party in France, who had held governmental office for three decades — form an alliance with the two workers parties? During the early 1930s France had been rocked simultaneously by an economic crisis and a series of political scandals. One of the effects of this crisis and the devaluation of the franc was the desertion of the Radicals' petty bourgeois base to the far right — to organisations such as the Croix-de-Feu, which claimed 712,000 members.

In January 1934 a huge scandal brought down the Radical Government of Daladier. A speculator, Alexander Stavisky, with the help of two Ministers in the Government, had been profiting from false bills and bonds. Stavisky was found with a bullet in the head. For the far right the affair showed how this 'corruption' must be cured with a dose of law and order.

In responding to the actions of the right the working class was being drawn in behind the workers parties. Thus the Radicals, though still in government, found themselves squeezed on both sides. The ruling class had other things on its mind, too. Fearful of the threat that Hitler's fascist Germany posed to its interests now that the rearmament programme was underway, it needed new allies — even if that meant the Soviet Union.

## PACT

An important section of French capital led by the head of the Banks of Paris and of the Netherlands, Ernest Mercier, also saw the possibility of big orders and profits in the Soviet market. The affair was sealed in the Stalin-Laval pact of mutual aid of 2 May 1935.

Laval, then Foreign Minister, became Prime Minister the following month and immediately launched an offensive against the living standards of the working class. On 5 August workers in Toulon went on strike, to be followed in the next days by those in Brest and Tarbes. The CP denounced

the strikes as the work of 'provocateurs' which 'outrages the Tricolour'. In Toulon three workers died and many more were injured in clashes, but there was no doubt that the combativity of the working class was growing.

In the next months an electoral agreement was reached by the CP with the Radicals and the SFIO, culminating in the publication of a joint programme on 12 January 1936. While the Popular Front as a whole won the April elections, within it the decline of the Radicals was clear. They won 116 seats, representing a loss of 44 and 350,000 votes. The SFIO won an extra 45 seats, but in fact lost 53,000 votes. The CP, meanwhile, increased its vote by 706,000 and won 72 places in the Assembly as opposed to their previous ten.

Moscow, however, was none too pleased. The correspondent of *Le Temps* noted: 'The leading circles show no great enthusiasm ... they deplore the relative decline of the Radicals.' As Trotsky correctly stated at the time: 'What have the masses done? They have imposed on the Socialists and Communists a Blum Government. Is that not a vote directly against the politics of the Popular Front?'

The working class saw this result as a great victory which spurred them on to launch an even more forceful attack. The first demonstration after the election victory drew 600,000 people, but an even more significant event had already taken place.

At the firm of Breguet, in Le Havre, two workers were sacked. In response the workers occupied the plant — the first time such a tactic had ever been used in France. This factory was typical of the way the owners managed firms: it was prohibited to smoke, whistle or make trade union propaganda; but on the other hand copies of the journal of the Croix-de-Feu were distributed freely inside the works.

Within two days the workers had won the reinstatement of the two sacked men, plus two days full pay to cover lost wages due to the occupation. The repercussions of this struggle were enormous. On 26 May occupations began elsewhere, including the huge Renault plant. The first wave came to an end during the bank holiday: Whitsun weekend, but by 2 June 200,000 workers were on strike and the Renault plant had been reoccupied.



As soon as Blum took office, however, he asked the workers to be 'patient'. *Humanite*, the daily paper of the CP, meanwhile ran a banner headline: 'Discipline will ensure success'. But the workers were not in the mood for patience and discipline — they had old scores to settle with the bosses and the system that had held them under for so long.

By 7 June there were two million on strike, and the owners opened negotiations with the Blum Government. Realising the potential dangers of this revolutionary situation, the ruling class was prepared to make some rapid concessions: a 15 per cent pay increase; trade union recognition in the factories; no victimisations.

Blum and the bosses were happy,

and the unions and the workers parties proposed a return to work. Twice the delegates of the occupied factories refused — it was not enough. Finally, under immense pressure from the leaders of the SFIO and the CP, the strikes and occupations ended.

Within a week Blum passed laws that reduced the working week from 48 hours to 40 and gave two weeks holiday on full pay. Clearly the working class had won important gains, but the danger of a revolutionary challenge to the capitalist power had been headed off — as it was to be in May 1968 — by the reformist leaders.

After this partial success membership of the unions rocketed. In the engineering industry membership rose within a year from 50,000 to 775,000. The CGT, which resulted from the fusion of the CP-controlled CGT and the CGTU in March 1936, grew from less than a million to nearly five million members. The CP's membership went up from 50,000 members in 1934 to 350,000 in 1938.



But the rot had already set in. Instead of using this strength to push forward working class interests, the reformists deferred to the bourgeoisie at every turn. A small number of nationalisations (of the railways, for instance), were carried out, but when it came to dealing with the banks and the gold and money markets the CP opposed any action.

The CP's major interest became the construction of a 'front for all French people' against the menace of Hitler. The working class became increasingly misled and confused — especially when the Popular Front refused to send arms to the Republicans during the Civil War in Spain, and in fact made the first call for non-intervention at a time when Italy and Germany were pouring in supplies to the Francoists.

As a result the Popular Front governments went through a series of crises with the SFIO and the CP capitulating before the 'threat' of war. Finally, on 7 April 1938, the last Popular Front Government resigned. Daladier, leader of the Radicals, was back at the head of a new government with the backing of the conservatives.

## HEAVY PRICE

The 40-hour week was ended in the 'national interest'. Some factories were reoccupied and finally the CP called a one day general strike for 21 November. But the troops were sent in; the occupations were smashed; and the general strike collapsed before it got off the ground.

A mass exodus took place from the unions. By 1939 they had lost three million members. The concessions made by the ruling class when it had its back to the wall in June 1936 were now seized back. A heavy price was being paid by the working class for the refusal of its leaders to challenge the French capitalist system once and for all during June 1936.

# JUU

# 19

# THE POPU

Forty years ago this month the French working class launched a struggle that shook French capitalism to the core. The events of June 1936 prompted Trotsky to write an article entitled 'The French Revolution Has Begun'. And so it had, but it was to be betrayed — as the working class in Germany had been three years earlier — by the actions of the Communist Party, following the dictates of the Stalinised Third International.

Within the space of a few weeks the French CP turned full circle. It stopped denouncing the social democrats as 'social fascists' and supported the establishment of the Popular Front, including the major bourgeois party, the Radicals. Far from opposing military service, they actively supported it.

As the Italian CP today takes as its symbol the Italian



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# 36

# AR FRONT

national flag flanked by the hammer and sickle, so the French party mixed the symbol of the October revolution with the Tricolour. Why did the Stalinists led by Thorez and Duclos make such a sharp turn?

This question takes on a renewed importance today with the Italian elections (see separate article) and the development of the Union of the Left in France, which won 49 per cent of the vote in the 1974 presidential elections. Can revolutionary Marxists take the same attitude to the Union of the Left as the Trotskyists of the International Workers Party did to the Popular Front in the 1930s? Is the Union of the Left a popular front?

These are some of the questions discussed below in an assessment by PAM HURST and RIC SISSONS of the significance of the French Popular Front.

## ZIG AND ZAG

Within the space of two years the political line of the French Communist Party turned full circle. In the years between 1928 and 1934 the French Party, following the line laid down from Moscow, rejected all united fronts with the social democrats. The social democratic parties were merely the twin brother of fascism — they had to be smashed.

But as the crisis mounted in 1934 there was increasing pressure from within the class and the party for a change of line. This was reflected on 12 February when the CP was forced to back a demonstration called by the SFIO which mobilised 100,000 people and ended in repeated cries of 'unity'.

The winds of change were also blowing in the Kremlin. Stalin began to make moves to conclude a pact with French imperialism — however, that had to be prepared inside France.

The first stage was the call at the French CP's national congress in Ivry during June 1934 for an 'anti-fascist united front'. The party accepted a united front proposed by the SFIO which included a clause that both would 'refrain mutually from all attacks, insults and criticisms against one another's organisations and party members'. From a position of the wildest slanging of the social demo-

crats, the Stalinists dropped all criticism whatsoever.

Four months later Thorez extended the olive branch to the Radicals as well with a call for 'a popular front for labour, freedom and peace'. Stalin was meanwhile preparing the ground for the pact with Laval, which spoke of mutual assistance in the event of attack by Germany. When Laval visited Moscow early in May 1935, after signing the pact, he commented: 'Mr Stalin understands and fully approves the politics of national defence undertaken by France in order to maintain her armed forces at a security level.'

Two months before the pact, CP leader Thorez had reaffirmed his opposition to the two year military service and confirmed his revolutionary defeatism. The day after the pact was signed all that was forgotten. The struggle against military service was dropped, and revolutionary defeatism disappeared from the party programme. The CP became 'the party of the French nation', directed towards achieving a 'free strong and happy France.'

The right turn was complete. The basis had been laid for an agreement with the party of the bourgeoisie. The French working class were being callously betrayed in the interests of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the Soviet Union.



ENRICO BERLINGUER

The Italian elections saw the Communist Party (PCI) stating positions that it had previously only hinted at. Its manifesto, clearly written with the idea of reassuring imperialism and the Italian ruling class, announced that it was interested only in a 'broad, united coalition government of all the democratic and popular parties, including the PCI'.

This, said party leader Enrico Berlinguer at a meeting of the PCI's Central Committee, would exist for a 'few years' until the country had come out of the crisis. Berlinguer has made it clear that if a coalition of the Communist Party and the Christian Democrats is possible, he would also want the Republicans, the Social Democrats and the Liberals in the Government to give the Christian Democrats room for manoeuvre.

What would this 'Popular Front' represent? It is clear from the PCI's manifesto that it would involve an attack of the working class. Indeed, the party is almost boastful that only it, because of its domination of the working class movement, could carry such an attack through.

The PCI sees the most important task as that of regaining confidence internationally in Italian capitalism. It continually laments that Italy is the 'unstable element' in the European economy. The 'programme' that the manifesto puts forward, while dropping altogether any idea of nationalisation, therefore stresses the importance of investment — which can only be encouraged by guaranteeing the capitalists their profits and the safety of their capital.

Of course this is all dressed up in left demagoguery for the electorate. But Newsweek magazine got it in plain language from Giorgio Napolitano, 'a member of the party nine-man secretariat and its co-ordinator of economic and trade union policies'.

Napolitano 'spelled out in detail the Communists' plan for salvaging the economy. They included increasing capital investment in both the public and private sectors of the economy and curtailing imports by cutting consumption of meat and petroleum. Napolitano said soaring labour costs could be brought under control by restricting automatic cost-of-living increases.'

The PCI has also proposed some organisational changes in the name of efficiency, such as strengthening the powers of the executive. This 'reform' will meet with a good deal of support from the other parties and may well be implemented — however, it is difficult to see how the working class will benefit from this kind of 'socialism'.

Another aspect of the election manifesto is the uncondi-

# THE CP'S ITALIAN JOB

tional support it gives to NATO. Much is made of the PCI's desire to 'contribute to the development of friendly relations between the Italian Republic and the United States', while the USSR isn't even mentioned. Just in case the message wasn't quite clear enough, Berlinguer declared last week that NATO could be relied upon to prevent any danger of Soviet interference. So the PCI now presents this reactionary imperialist alliance as their protector and the upholder of 'democracy' against the nasty USSR!

The Italian papers have all been discussing the possibility that the PCI will be able to put its plans into practice. The Christian Democrats will only accept a coalition with the PCI if the strength of the parties of the working class forces them to. But if the PCI, the PSI (Italian Socialist Party) and Proletarian Democracy (the united far left slate) together win more than 50 per cent of the vote, that will pose the alternative of a government of the working class.

The line of the PCI is that the Christian Democrats must participate in any coalition that is formed. The Italian magazine L'Espresso has quoted a leading member of the PCI, Giancarlo Pajetta, as saying: 'There is no question of doubt; whether we have 49 per cent or 51 per cent we will act in exactly the same way, we will not leave the Christian Democrats out.' But if the working class parties achieve that 51 per cent, then the PCI will be under considerable pressure from its base to form a PCI-PSI government.

The reformists argue that such a government would lead to a repeat of the Chilean tragedy. This scare tactic is typical of the PCI, which would never dream of organising the working class independently to ward off such a threat. Like all reformists, they have only distrust for the independent initiative of the masses. For them, socialism is something that is brought about by parliamentary manoeuvres rather than the self-activity of the working class.

However, it is possible that if the working class parties win a majority then the PCI and the PSI could be forced into forming a government without the Christian Democrats. The Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari, Italian section of the Fourth International, have consistently denounced the flagrant class-collaboration of the reformists and have fought the election around the slogan: 'Vote Proletarian Democracy — to beat the Christian Democrat regime — for the creation of a PCI-PSI Government.'

ALAN HUDSON

## The Union of the Left

The Union of the Left in France today was born in June 1972, when the Socialist and Communist Parties signed a common programme. A few months later, the Left Radicals joined. The fact that Communists, Socialists and Radicals once again found themselves together opened a debate in the revolutionary movement over the tactics to be adopted towards this development.

The Popular Front, as a bloc of reformist and bourgeois parties, was based on a bourgeois programme of class collaboration. Reforms were only granted to the working class under massive pressure in the factories and streets.

Without a doubt the programme of the Union of the Left is also a programme of compromise and class collaboration, and as such only serves to confuse the workers movement. For example, it proposes to compensate the bosses for the limited nationalisations which it envisages. It wants to maintain the present constitution which was introduced by De Gaulle after the coup d'etat of 1958. It is quite happy about forming a left government under a right-wing president, Giscard d'Estaing.

However, the very fact that the programme contains a perspective for nationalisation as part of the struggle against the monopolies — even though this is insufficient and unclear — marks a difference from the programme of the Popular Front. Unlike that of the Popular Front, the Union of the Left programme goes in the general direction of 'anti-monopoly struggle' and in the long run, obviously through a 'democratic stage', to socialism.

The Union of the Left also plays a very different role. In 1935 the ruling class needed an alliance with the workers parties. They were worried by the threat of fascism in Germany;

a section of capital saw the possibility of a new market in the USSR; and they were confronted by a working class upsurge. Today the situation is different. Not only are the reformists unable to control the upsurge completely, but the bourgeoisie has a different project. It is not a question of integration, but of repression and breaking the working class.

Today there is no direct alliance between sections of the ruling class and the workers parties. The Radicals have been decimated and cannot be compared with the party of Daladier in 1935, which was then the major bourgeois party. The handful of Left Radicals in the Union of the Left represent nothing more than a few individuals en route to the Socialist Party.

However there is no doubt that the aim of the Union of the Left is to attract a wing of the bourgeoisie. The CP, for instance, is making a big play for the Gaullists with its accusation that Giscard is selling out 'national independence'. In certain circumstances such an alliance could become possible. But at the moment the Union of the Left is an alliance between two reformist workers parties plus some token Left Radicals.

The Union of the Left was not established to 'bar the door to fascism' as was the Popular Front. On the contrary, the SP and CP realise that the socialist revolution is on the agenda and that they must find some means of controlling the masses. They therefore propose a 'peaceful and parliamentary road to socialism'. Rather than demanding that the CP and SP break with the Left Radicals, a negligible force, revolutionary Marxists must counterpose a revolutionary road to socialism through the development and coordination of the kind of independent class action seen in the early days of June 1936.

BACK TO THE MASS MOVEMENT

THE STUDENT JOBS FIGHT

JOHN WEBSTER, Secretary of the London Student Organisation and a Broad Left supporter on the NUS Executive writes: It is saddening to read articles such as that by Val Coultas in last week's Red Weekly (17 June). Not because the article personally insults me (what 'lies' have I spread, Val?), but because it reduces an entire campaign to sectarian wrangling.

It is altogether possible that the NUS Executive, not being infallible, may make mistakes; but if it does, it does so in the belief that it is acting in the best interests of the membership, and carrying out Conference mandates. Any such mistakes cannot be analysed if, like Val, you start from the position that the Executive is full of nasty schemers, deliberately attempting to sell the student movement down the river. Let's examine one or two points in Val's article in detail:

1. The NUS Executive meeting on 13 June. This did not call off occupations. It advised occupations that could not continue over summer to end together on 16 June: where unions were strong enough to continue occupations over summer (and, realistically, there would not be many of these), the Executive would hold discussions with the local leaderships.

Val should know perfectly well that a majority of the occupations had in fact ended, or decisions taken to end, before that Executive meeting. And it is only common sense to try and get weaker occupations to end in a determined, united and simultaneous fashion, rather than have them dropping out in ones and twos, with the consequent risks of demoralisation.

Interestingly Val omits certain crucial details of that meeting. She does not, for instance, reveal that it was disrupted by members' and supporters of the International Socialists, particularly from North East London Polytechnic. (The Executive did not 'walk out' NUS - it promised to mobilise for a picket of the Polytechnic and to consider legal aid - but not automatically and in unlimited amounts. It would be totally irresponsible of the Executive to give any union a blank cheque.)

Val also does not tell Red Weekly readers that three members of the Executive - Sue Slipman, Penny Cooper and Harry Dean - were physically assaulted by these people before more responsible elements in IS quietened them down. White IS members also insulted the one black member of the Executive, Trevor Phillips, in a disgusting and racist fashion, calling him an 'Uncle Tom'.

Val should also tell Red Weekly readers that she walked out of the Executive meeting when the next item on the agenda was the future of the campaign over the summer! This behaviour shows real contempt for the delegates at NUS Conference who elected her: they presumably expected her to attend meetings rather than storm out of them.

2. The demonstrations on 15/16 June. Whether Val likes it or not, the London Students Organisation has a perfect right to call demonstrations. The Manchester meeting was of an advisory nature and not binding on NUS (although the Executive did take its advice), let alone on LSO.

LSO invited participation in its demonstration from other parts of the country and we were supported by, among others, the Scottish and Welsh NUS Executives, and the Sussex, Derby, Leeds, Bedfordshire, Cardiff, Swansea, Hereford and Worcester, Cambridge, Leicester, Wolverhampton and Nottingham NUS areas.

We never counterposed the demo on the 15th to the TUC lobby on the 16th: all our publicity material stressed both, and we made arrangements for people coming down on the 15th to stay overnight for the lobby next day. We did, however, advise people to shun the London Action Coordinating Committee's demonstration that afternoon like the plague.

That demonstration was the height of sectarianism. To march on the NUT is no way of building student-teacher unity. Like you, we reject many of the policies of the present NUT Executive, but we also recognise that the majority of teachers are far from revolutionary. Threats and ultimatums delivered to their national



The rally organised by the London Action Coordinating Committee on 16 June. Speaking is Lambeth NUT secretary John Esterson, who reported how over 200 teachers in his area has stopped work in solidarity. Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

union can only give an impression of arrogance and make the task of student unions in forging links with teachers that much more difficult.

As for the final stage of the demonstration outside NUS Headquarters, the chant of 'NUS Soabs' was merely absurd. The shouts of 'Broad Left Out!' were predictable, but, as Val well knows, it is not a crowd of a few hundred that will remove or re-elect the Broad Left on the Executive, but the normal procedures of NUS Conference.

Many Colleges of Education students who had come on the demo under the mistaken impression that it had something to do with teacher unemployment, left it in some perplexity at this point. They had not come down to yell abuse at the NUS Executive.

Doubtless IS and IMG will acclaim the demonstration as a success and grossly inflate its importance. Already IS members are boasting an attendance of '4,000'. The march was however counted at 1,300 by one of our employees, while other members of the Executive estimated it as low as 800.

3. The London Action Coordinating Committee. This body is dominated by IS. They suffered a rebuff on 13 June, as Val mentions, when the 'Right to Work' Campaign link was overturned. However, the following day this decision was more or less reversed, and the links between LACC and the 'Right to Work' Campaign were reaffirmed by 9 votes to 8, after a very heated and sectarian debate. The insistence by IS of steamrolling their politics through this committee has

resulted in a decline in support for LACC.

But why was LACC established in the first place? It was set up only a few days after the LSO Conference of 22 May had entrusted the coordination of the campaign to ULIESA (University of London Institute of Education Students Association - the body that unites colleges and departments of education throughout the capital). This was well before anyone had had time to suggest that LSO or ULIESA might be 'selling out'.

Such 'Coordinating Committees' or 'Ad Hoc Committees' are tried and tested tactics of the ultra-left. They are set up as alternatives to the already existing mass structures, and they are quite easily taken over by IS and/or IMG, because everyone else is quite content to continue working in the mass organisations, and sees no need for new, and usually very bureaucratic, bodies (LACC meetings provide illuminating examples of tedious bureaucratic wrangling).

LACC is a useless diversion: Val and her comrades should continue to fight for their politics in the mass movement. When they are defeated in the democratic forums that that movement provides, they should not try and smuggle their politics in through back doors marked 'Coordinating Committees'.

(The above letter as originally submitted also contained a section on the 14 June occupation of NUS Headquarters. This, together with several other less important sentences, had to be cut for reasons of space.)



Student teachers march past the TUC on the national demonstration on 16 June. Among the banners: C.F. Mott in Merseyside, which will stay occupied over the summer to act as a focus for a continuing campaign throughout the area.

to ending the campaign itself for these colleges.

As for the disruption of the Executive meeting by IS members, that rather pales into insignificance compared with the disruption of the campaign carried out by the NUS Executive in flagrant violation of the decisions taken at the Manchester Conference. And when I walked out of the Executive in protest at the exclusion of observers from the meeting, this was because it was patently clear that one thing that had no future in the hands of the NUS Executive was the campaign against teacher unemployment over the summer.

2. The demonstrations on 15/16 June. John Webster should ask who in the LSO initiated the demonstration on 15 June and then sought to turn it into a national demo with the support of the NUS Executive. In fact he was one of the three members of the NUS Executive who did this.

The Manchester conference voted for a local day of action on the 15th and a national day of action on the 16th. But the Broad Left-dominated Scottish and Welsh Executives immediately announced their support for the demo on the 15th without even consulting the colleges in their areas. I would ask John Webster how many of the colleges that came down for the 15th stayed over for the TUC lobby compared with those who came down that evening or overnight? That would show in practice whether the leadership of the LSO and NUS counterposed the 15th to the 16th.

As for the London Action Coordinating Committee's demonstration, that was 2,000 strong and had 75 trade unions and student unions supporting it. You yourself on radio claimed 2,000 for the LSO demo the day before, compared with a figure of 3,500 given in the Morning Star.

To march to the headquarters of the National Union of Teachers was not sectarianism. With 30,000 teachers facing unemployment, to point the finger at the leadership of a union which refuses to implement its 1969 policy on class size is precisely to raise the issue and the demand around which student-worker unity in action can be forged in the localities. For us, unlike the Broad Left, a fighting unity is necessary - not a paper unity with the trade union bureaucracy.

3. The London Action Coordinating Committee. 'What lies have I spread', you plead in your opening paragraph. Well, the claim that LACC is IS-dominated - a lie repeated in the Morning Star's report of the 16 June demo as an 'international Socialist demo' - is the biggest of them.

LACC was set up from the Southlands occupation - the first in England - to co-ordinate the occupations in London because of the lack of initiative from LSO and ULIESA. Up to 16 colleges have taken part in it since it was set up.

It is true that IS have tried to steamroller their politics through this body, but they have not been all that successful. At its 18 June meeting, strong criticisms were made of the chair's attempt to use the rally at the end of the 16 June march to build the Right to Work Campaign. To prevent this happening again, it was decided to set up an ad-hoc committee of LACC to organise any future events of a similar character, and only re-vote on resolutions in LACC where two-thirds of the delegates wish it.

Before this paper appears, LACC will also have organised at Furzedown College a conference for South West London colleges involved in the campaign, to decide on which colleges should remain in occupation and how to organise unemployed teachers. LACC is not a useless diversion, it is the leadership of the campaign in London in a situation where LSO and ULIESA have failed to provide that lead.

Finally, I find it amusing that John Webster should lecture me on observing democratic procedures in the light of his and the NUS Executive's behaviour since the Manchester Conference.

The democratic self-organisation of students through occupation committees and local and regional coordinating committees has been a major gain of the campaign so far. It is the existence of such bodies which has permitted the calling of the conference in Liverpool on 26 June to give the campaign national direction over the summer in a situation where NUS Executive has abdicated its responsibilities.

Far from us smuggling in politics through the back door, it is the NUS Executive which has done that by throwing all politics out of the window with its organisational manoeuvring since the Manchester conference.

THE MASS MOVEMENT WENT PAST YOU!

VAL COULTAS, member of the NUS Executive and the International Marxist Group's student organiser replies:

Contrary to John Webster's assertion, the International Marxist Group does not analyse the activity of the NUS Executive on the basis that it is full of nasty schemers. That may or may not be true, considering the way that certain members of the Communist Party and the Broad Left tried to sneak in a national demonstration on 15 June through the back door of the London Student Organisation. But we believe that it is the wrong politics of the CP and Broad Left which are at the root of such divisive schemes. Let us examine the points John Webster raises.

1. The NUS Executive meeting on 13 June. From the moment the occupations started, the Executive was concerned about how to end them with a big 'bang'. At the Manchester Conference I stressed that such an approach was totally schematic and apolitical.

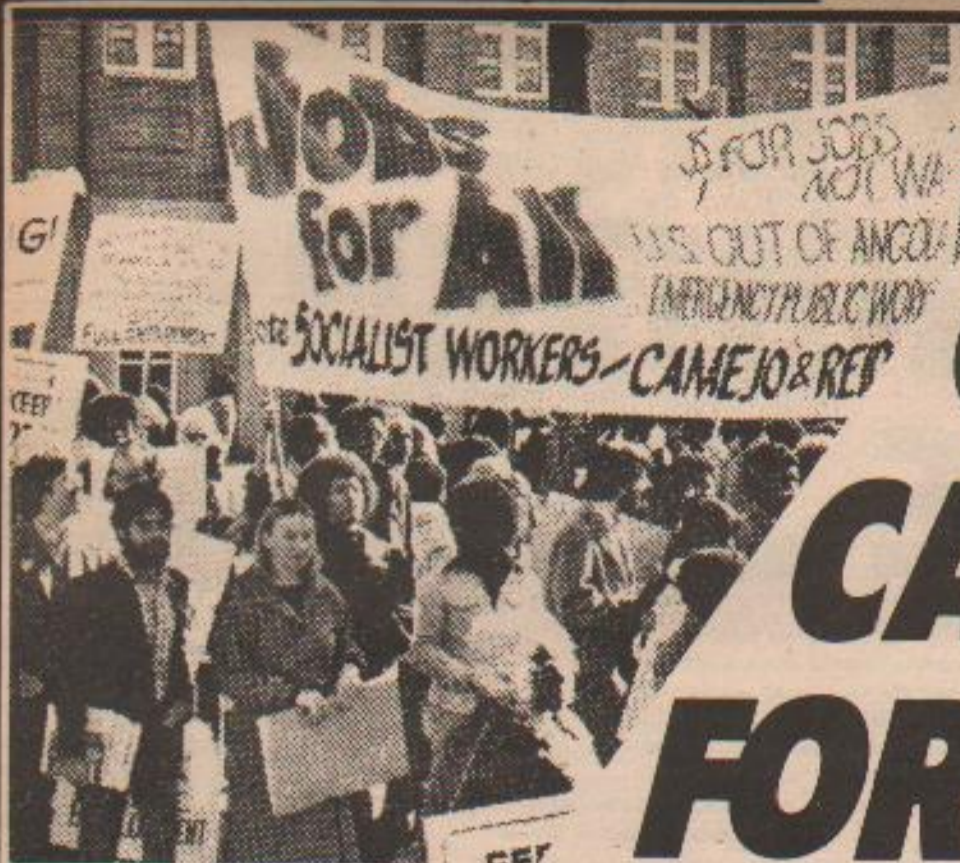
What mattered was laying the political preconditions for ending most of the occupations for the summer through building strong regional co-ordinating committees, building liaison committees with trade unionists (particularly from the teaching unions) and attempting to maintain occupations in particular localities as a focus for all students in the area. On that basis the campaign could be developed over the summer, allowing direct action to be taken in the colleges in the autumn on a higher political and organisational level.

The decision of the NUS Executive to call off the occupations on 16 June except where individual unions felt strong enough to continue them precisely reinforced the division between those who are weak and those who are strong. Most of the weaker occupations had not had the time to develop the links outlined above. Calling off the occupations without giving any perspectives on what to do was equivalent



IN CONTRAST TO  
DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS

# THE ONLY PARTY CAMPAIGNING FOR SOCIALISM



Peter Camejo, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for president of the United States, was once denounced by the former Governor of California Ronald Reagan as being 'involved in every large-scale demonstration in the state'. That was an unintentional compliment to the person and party whose sole aim in the elections is to win people to action against the capitalist system.

After all the bluster about Reagan's sweeping victory in Texas, Camejo pointed out a little-publicised fact: that only 3 per cent of the state's adult population even voted for Reagan.

Even *The Times*, in an editorial after the recent California primaries, had to admit that at best only one-third of the voting population even participated in the primary elections. The real story of the elections so far should not be written about a minority who have voted but about the majority who have not.

A look at the SWP campaign highlights some of the major political questions which go undiscussed by the bourgeois candidates. When asked in an interview why a socialist he was running for president, Camejo replied:

'We have to use every tool available to fight oppression. We use the Bill of Rights, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, the right to put out newspapers and organise meetings and protests. Using every tool includes running in elections - they're an excellent opportunity to speak out, to reach people, and to help organise.'

## Socialist

'I don't believe elections themselves will solve the problems people face. The problems will be solved when working people themselves are organised and mobilised on all levels. I see election campaigns as one way to help accomplish this.'

'I run as a socialist because the Democrats and Republicans represent the corporations. A voice must be heard that stands up for the real needs of working people, of oppressed minorities, of women.'

'The Socialist Workers Party is campaigning very hard on the concept that working people should break from the parties of the capitalist class and form their own political organisation. That the Chicano move-

ment, the black movement, the labour movement should form their own parties.'

It is precisely to bring to the fore the primary issues - such as the threat to the blacks' right to equal education, now directly under attack from Ford - that the SWP participates in the elections, using the forum provided to educate and mobilise against the racists and capitalists.

## Labour Party

Because the United States has no mass working class party, and the trade union leaderships are tied into the Democratic party machine, the main theme of the SWP is the need for class independence. It calls for the formation of a labour party, and gives support to the independent Chicano party, the Raza Unida party.

Willie Mae Reid, the vice-presidential candidate, is a black woman who as early as 1958 joined the boycott that ended segregated seating on public transport in the South. At a recent black conference attended by thousands, she used her campaign to point out the need for independent black political action in the form of a party. The idea was also voiced inside the conference, but the hold of the reformist black Democrats was still strong.

Other issues that the SWP campaign concentrates on are:

**Unemployment:** The SWP has popularised a Bill of Rights for Working People which speaks of the right to a job as a basic right of every citizen. It also demands the funding of free medical care and other social services instead of the \$100 billion dollar war budget.

Because the existing seniority

by ANITA BENNETT

rules favour those who were first employed - the white males - as against the blacks and women who have just begun to win job rights, another plank of the campaign platform is for 'No Discriminatory Lay-offs'. As well as calling for full employment for all, they carry out a campaign in the trade unions for blacks and women to maintain their hard-won positions. A substantial percentage of the membership of the SWP (almost half) is active in various trade unions.

**Busing:** On 12 June President Ford spoke of the need to 'keep busing out of the primaries'. Yet at the same time he and Attorney General Edward Levi are asking for the Supreme Court to 're-

Women: One of the major arenas of activity is in the Coalition of Labour Union Women (CLUW), whose formation inside the trade unions was a direct result of the impact of feminism on working class women. The Equal Rights

Amendment, a constitutional amendment which would make discrimination against women illegal in a whole number of fields, is under heavy attack by the right wing in a number of states which have yet to ratify the amendment.

## Mobilise

When the National Organisation of Women (NOW) called for a mass rally in Springfield, Illinois, to demand ratification of the ERA, the SWP candidate for governor, Linda Thompson, used her electoral plat-

form to mobilise women to attend the demo. This same candidate received an anonymous death threat a few days after announcing her candidacy. To date the police have taken no action on her request for a full investigation.

the *New York Times*, which also featured Camejo as presidential candidate. The SWP is seeking \$27m. in damages, and SWP attorneys went to court on 15 April asking that FBI director Clarence Kelley be held in contempt because of his false denials of FBI involvement in the burglaries.

Watergate and all the revelations which continue have contributed to a deep uneasiness amongst the American people. This distrust of government institutions is registered on many levels, not the least of which is recorded by their visible absence from the primary polls. A recent Harris poll concluded: 'Disaffection and alienation are rampant among a majority of the public'.

**International aspect:** For understandable reasons, many people outside the United States view the country as a bastion of right-wing reaction, identifying its citizens with the Government's policies.

That a movement for socialism is growing is as yet unknown.

Peter Camejo, a Latino, has been able to tour several Spanish-speaking countries - including America's oldest colony, Puerto Rico. The response on the island to a presidential candidate who identified himself with their struggle for independence was extremely good. He was interviewed widely by the press. And rather than just saying 'vote for me', he took the opportunity to protest the killing of the son of Juan Mari Bras, leader of the Puerto Rican independence movement.

Camejo also recently completed a tour in Spain where he spoke to thousands in Madrid and Barcelona. During his visit, he met with Workers Commission leader Marcelino Camacho, recently released from prison.

## Opportunity

The tour, together with that organised for Ernest Mandel, has given further impetus to the reunification of the two sympathising sections of the Fourth International in that country, the Liga Comunista and the LCR-ETA VI. And as Camejo pointed out: 'There is little doubt that if legality were established for the Trotskyists in Spain, they would become the largest Trotskyist organisations in the world'.

As the Democrats and Republicans plough ever deeper into the mire of capitalist politics, the opportunity to win a new audience for socialist ideas is being firmly seized by the Socialist Workers Party campaign. A growth in membership, as well as the establishment of the SWP as the socialist alternative, will be of benefit not only to working people in the heartland of imperialism, but also to the world movement for socialism.



FBI burglaries of the SWP offices was front page news in the States.

examine the use of busing to desegregate public schools. This is a new turning point in the fight for equal rights, and serves as proof of the importance of the issue which the primaries seek to avoid.

## Busing

The question of busing is perhaps more prominent than any other campaign issue for the SWP. The candidates throughout the country helped to build the projected mobilisation for 24 April in Boston - a mobilisation which finally had to be called off because of racist pressure and a lack of determined black leadership.

**The Fight to be on the Ballot:** For a country which lauds the democratic system, the United States Government has gone out of its way to prevent any electoral break from the two capitalist parties. This is accomplished through discriminatory ballot requirements for small parties. The SWP has run a slate in the presidential elections since 1948, yet in the state of California the SWP and other working class parties have been denied ballot status for the past 20 years.

Just this year, after a prolonged legal battle, the Government has decided to lower the ballot requirements to 100,000 signatures. The capitalist parties need only 65! So the SWP has launched a major petitioning drive to get on the ballot. In the course of petitioning here, as in other states, campaigners have an opportunity to speak in the streets to tens of thousands of people.

**The Aftermath of Watergate:** One of the fund appeals for the campaign pointed out: 'Most of what is known about the FBI's Countelpro program is a result of our law suit against the Government.' News of the more than 92 burglaries on SWP offices and campaign headquarters so far admitted made headlines in papers such as



Boston racists on the rampage. Busing has been a key issue in the SWP's campaign.

# GANDHI TIGHTENS THE SCREWS

ONE YEAR AGO, on 26 June 1975, Indira Gandhi declared a State of Emergency in India. She claimed that it was a temporary measure only, designed to curb 'reactionary elements' who were trying to subvert Indian democracy. And she was supported by the Communist Party of India (CPI), on the pretext that the 'emergency' was designed to smash the reactionary landlord class and semi-feudal elements.

At the time we predicted that the 'long term objective of Indira Congress is to use these repressive laws to maintain industrial discipline, prevent rural struggles and create better conditions for investment of native and foreign capital' (South Asia Newsletter, Vol 1, No 4). We also said that Gandhi's much publicised 20-point programme would not significantly change the living conditions of the mass of people. But today speculation is no longer necessary — her record speaks for itself.

Thousands of workers, including many CPI trade union activists, have been thrown into jail just for opposing the reduction of the annual bonus payments from 8 to 4 per cent. Strikes have been virtually banned and all known militants of working class organisations have been jailed.

Press censorship is total, and has been extended to cover speeches made in Parliament and judgements of the courts. The emergency regulations have also been used to enact constitutional amendments which prevent anyone from challenging the actions of the executive in the courts.

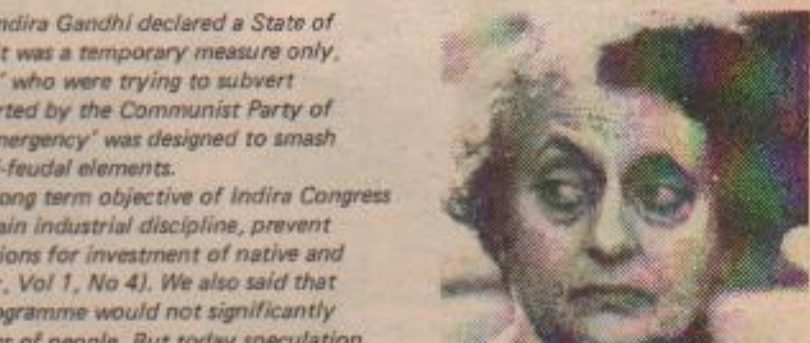
## CON-TRICK

The 20-point programme has also lost its glamour. Only two weeks ago the Labour Minister, Raghunath Reddy, announced that it was very difficult to evolve a national minimum wage for agricultural workers at the moment. Again, a government working group on the employment of children has come to the conclusion 'that it is neither feasible nor desirable (sic) to totally abolish child labour at the present stage of the country's economic development' (Economic Times, 25 May).

The proposal to abolish the rural debt has also been a con-trick. The real beneficiaries of rural credit facilities have been the rich and middle peasants.

The big monopoly houses, landlords and the rich, have generally benefited from the State of Emergency. When the Finance Minister, Mr Subramaniam, presented his Budget two months ago, he spoke at length on the need to take effective steps to prevent tax evasion. Accordingly he reduced the income tax and wealth rates and introduced lavish investment allowances to capitalist firms! Indirect taxes on luxury goods were also reduced.

The capitalists and landlords have also benefited from the industrial 'peace and discipline' brought about by the repressive laws. And the Indira regime has further relaxed planning controls and retrospectively legalised investments carried out without planning permission. Foreign capitalists too have bene-



Indira Gandhi; and (below) her son Sanjay, now organising paramilitary groups with help of fascists



fited from the emergency. The Foreign Exchange Regulations Act has been amended to facilitate foreign capital investments. And the Government has made strenuous efforts to attract British, West German and American investments.

Naturally the friendly bank of 'developing countries' — the World Bank — has responded by stating in its report to the Aid India Consortium that: 'To support the Government of India's efforts to accelerate the rate of economic growth, the aid community must continue to respond to India's need with no less vigour than was displayed during the recent crisis years' (Business Standard, 21 May).

On the political front, the Government has been successful both in dividing and weakening the bourgeois opposition parties and in paralysing the reformist parties like the CPI (Marxist). The bourgeois oppositionists — including members of the right-wing Jan Sangh — have been openly invited to join the ruling Congress party. Some have already done so.

Those who are unwilling to do so are now being coerced to form one constitutional and national opposition party, which Gandhi has declared that she will recognise. The bourgeois parties have lost no time in accepting this compromise, but Indira is not going to put all her eggs in one basket. She must also make sure that there are no more mass movements like that led by J.P. Narayan.

## APPENDAGE

Her son, Sanjay Gandhi, is now busy organising paramilitary groups for this purpose. He recently had discussions with Bal Thackeray, leader of the fascist Shiv Sena; and it was the Shiv Sena who plastered Bombay with welcoming posters when Gandhi visited the city.

The Government has also taken the initiative against the reformist workers parties. The pro-Moscow CPI is now a mere appendage of Congress; while the

CPI (Marxist), which does oppose the emergency, has confined itself to occasional declarations. Paralyzing divisions in its leadership, particularly over cooperation with rightist parties like the Jan Sangh, have left the rank-and-file confused and demoralised.

The splintered Naxalite groups have done no better. The most slavishly pro-Peking ones now argue that the most important distinction is between the pro-Soviet bourgeoisie and anti-Soviet bourgeoisie! Therefore it is necessary to join up with the anti-Soviet bourgeoisie — extreme rightist groups like the Jan Sangh and the Rashtriya Sevak Sangh — to fight 'fascist' Indira.

## BANKRUPTCY

However, a process of political clarification amongst the most advanced layers of the oppressed is slowly taking place. The bankruptcy of the Stalinist and Maoist organisations has been clearly revealed with the emergency, prompting many of their followers to seek new policies and new directions. This is borne out by the questions that are currently being debated by militants in the underground (see 'News from the Underground' in South Asia Newsletter, Vol 2, No 1).

We in Britain must solidarise with those militants in India who are the victims of Indira's repression. But more than that is needed.

Both the CPI (M) and the Naxalites in Britain seek to build solidarity movements while preserving and strengthening their disastrous multi-class alliances with Jan Sangh, etc. These opportunist blows must be fought through a campaign to build a united front of working class parties and organisations.

The Campaign for the Release of Indian Political Prisoners (CRIPP) seeks to build such a united front. All revolutionary militants should support CRIPP and join its contingent on the 27 June demonstration against the repression.

R. ROY



## ACTIONS PLANNED FOR ANNIVERSARY OF SPANISH CIVIL WAR

The fortieth anniversary of the start of the Spanish civil war will be marked by actions in solidarity with today's struggles by Spanish workers against the heirs of Franco.

An appeal distributed in the labour movement last week by the Spanish Civil War Commemoration Committee — supported by a number of left and solidarity organisations — points out that the dictatorship established after the civil war over the bodies of tens of thousands of Spanish workers is now crumbling as the working class rebuilds its strength.

'But such a seasoned and ruthless enemy will not retire peacefully: it will have to be beaten in struggle. The workers of Spain are today engaged in that struggle: massive strikes, huge demonstrations, and mass meetings are taking place all across the country in a determined fight against the dictatorship's attack on living standards, to build a united trade union movement free from state control, and to win basic democratic rights.'

The Committee proposes to make the main focus of action a mass picket of the Spanish Embassy in Belgrave Square on Saturday 17 July, starting at 2 p.m. It emphasises that it is no good relying on the

Labour Government to lead the fight against the repression in Spain. Already Callaghan has welcomed the Spanish Foreign Minister to Britain, and seems only too anxious to take the supposed 'reforming' intentions of Franco's successors at face value.

'But it is these "reformers" who, over the past months, have banned workers meetings and demonstrations, broken them up with ferocious police attacks, spilling the blood of dozens of workers on the streets, murdering eleven militants in cold blood, and jailing and torturing many workers leaders. Forty years ago the solidarity of the international workers movement played a crucial part in helping the fight of the Spanish workers against fascism. Today they need that kind of solidarity once again.'

The broadest possible sponsorship from the labour movement for the picket and other actions is needed. The Committee is now preparing posters, leaflets and other publicity material for its activities; it also offers assistance in providing information about current workers' struggles and forwarding financial aid. Further details from: Spanish Civil War Commemoration Committee, c/o Flat 12, 45 Broadwick Street, London W1.

## Portugal solidarity plans

The probable election of General Eanes as President of Portugal in the forthcoming elections is likely to lead to the formation of a Socialist Party government with some participation by the bourgeois Democrats (PPD). This will mean an escalation of attacks on the working class in order to solve the economic crisis in the interests of capitalism.

The Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class, whose National Committee met to discuss the situation earlier this month, therefore has a vital job to do in preparing for solidarity action with the workers in Portugal this autumn. Equally it must find ways of utilising the present experiences of the Portuguese working class — their experiences of workers control, direct action, and political struggle — for the enrichment of the workers movement in Britain.

Particularly important, the National Committee decided, will be the sending of delegations to Portugal — such as the recent visit by Plessey workers, who have brought back important information and understanding as a result of this exchange of experiences.

One of the most dynamic areas of struggle in Portugal now is on the land, around the question of agrarian reform and the development of agricultural co-operatives. Workers at the Lisnave shipyards are giving a day's pay a month and sending unemployed workers to help one particular co-operative in the north. They are also using the facilities of the shipyards to manufacture implements for the co-op and have donated a tractor.

The Campaign, together with a Portuguese immigrant workers' commi-

tee in this country, is taking up this example. A campaign is planned around another northern co-operative, with a raffle to buy a tractor.

There are also many more activities planned by the local solidarity groups and by the Campaign sub-committees. Further details can be obtained from the Campaign office at 12 Little Newport St., London WC2. Money is urgently needed — a drive for bankers orders has been launched, and anyone willing to commit even a small amount of money on a regular basis can obtain forms from the Campaign. Money is needed in particular to finance a poster.

Any donation, however small, can greatly assist work which will be vital not only for the Portuguese working class but for the European revolution as a whole — of which Portugal is now one of the weakest links.

# 7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast

It is rare indeed for this column to be able to report good news from the North of Ireland. But then it is even rarer for Protestant workers to take a stand in defence of the right to work of Catholic workers.

But at the Belfast timber-yard of McCue, Dick & Co., that is exactly what has happened. Two weeks ago the management of the firm called in each of the 20 Catholic workers individually and told them of a telephone call they had received instructing them to 'get the Catholics out or there will be trouble'.

The Catholic workers discussed the threat and decided to quit the yard. It was not the first time that they had been intimidated; indeed, a couple of years ago Loyalist assassins murdered two workmen in the yard. The firm is situated in the Loyalist stronghold of North Belfast, and the workers were well aware that they faced no idle threat.

But on learning of this decision, the Protestant workers organised a mass meeting next day at which a resolution was passed condemning the telephone threat and urging the

Catholics to return to their jobs. They also decided to approach their union, the Amalgamated Transport & General Workers Union, to discuss adequate defence for all the firm's employees.

In taking this stand the Protestant workers were placing themselves in no little danger from the bullyboys of the Loyalist paramilitaries. But the emphatic nature of their repudiation of intimidation forced the local Ulster Defence Association to issue a statement declaring that the Catholic workers had nothing to fear from Loyalists and appealing to them to return to work with the firm.

## DEFENCE

The stand taken by the Protestant workers has now encouraged most of the 20 Catholics to return. But they recognise that the assurances given by the UDA are totally meaningless: The UDA has become expert at denying responsibility for attacks on Catholics which it then claims under the name of its cover organisation, the Ulster Freedom (sic) Fighters. The threat to the workers remains, and they can expect reprisals in future. Like all 'good' stories from the Six Counties, this one has a sour turning. What about the issue of defence?

This is the gaping hole in the whole episode, and supporters of the Militant tendency — in Britain as well as in Ireland — should pay close attention. For here was a splendid opportunity to demonstrate the relevance of their strategic demand for a trade union-organised workers defence militia.

When the Protestant workers approached their union, it was to ask for protection by the British Army and the Royal Ulster Constabulary. Since the ATGWU agreed with this approach, they went ahead and contacted the RUC. The latter, of course, said that they were patrolling the area but could not give any guarantees for the safety of the Catholic workers (not surprising from a force which is little more than a uniformed Loyalist assassination squad!).

Nevertheless, the ATGWU and the Protestant workers were satisfied. And why not! For when it comes down to it, the trade unions in the North and the Protestant working class are incapable of waging any independent campaign against sectarianism and in defence of working class interests — as is shown by the pathetic 'Better Life for All' campaign now being so eagerly embraced by trade union bureaucrats in Britain.

In the last few months this column has reported on the dramatic decline in living standards and the galloping unemployment in the Six Counties. Yet the 'Better Life' campaign, launched at the beginning of the year, has never got beyond a petition and a few cringing 'peace' speeches outside Belfast's City (mad Tammany) Hall — of the 'don't get the wrong ideas, boys, of course Ulster must be defended' variety.

The Protestant workers at McCue, Dick & Co. must be applauded for what is undoubtedly a brave stand in the face of Loyalist intimidation. But it would be nothing short of criminal to pretend that the Catholic workers who have returned have made a wise decision — although with present unemployment and the rampant discrimination by employers, they had of course little choice.

So let us hear no prattle of ready-made formulas about workers unity and trade union defence forces (not that even Militant took it seriously enough to take up McCue, Dick & Co. in their pages). Such nonsense may sound attractive in the pages of left journals; but in the Six Counties, set against the coffins of Catholic workers murdered by Loyalist trade unionists, it is sick rhetoric.

# THE PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT It could happen to anyone - ask her!



ANNETTE MALLONEY has just turned seventeen. Before her arrest under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) two weeks ago she had never been arrested or even questioned by the police. She speaks with a broad London accent and has lived almost all her life in England.

Until two weeks ago she had never met, talked to, or associated with any 'terrorists'. But two weeks ago she did. Two weeks ago she met the Liverpool police — 'the only terrorists my daughter ever met', said Nora Malloney last week.

What happened to Annette and her boyfriend Martin Lavery more than bears Nora out. Quite simply it was frightening; a harsh and stark example of what life in England means under the PTA.

They were picked up as they stepped off the Belfast-Liverpool boat after a holiday in the north of Ireland. Martin was the first to be accosted by the plain clothes policemen. When they looked round and saw Annette with him the police told each other: 'Better have her in as well.'

They took them to the 'lock-up' at Bridewell prison where they informed Annette that she was being held under the PTA. When she asked if she could make a phone call, the police laughed and said: 'Like hell you can.' It was only because Annette managed to convince them that she needed to fix up a baby sitter for her child that they eventually agreed.

## Laughed

Even then, it was to be no ordinary phone call. The police wrote down what she had to say, and when Annette departed from the police script to inform her mother that she was being held under the PTA, the police slammed the phone down. They told her: 'You shouldn't have done that' — and then laughed.

Annette was taken to a cell in which there was a broken toilet which kept flushing and dripping. That by itself was enough to keep her awake. But there were added delights: the central heating was kept on full on a day in which temperatures outside reached the 80s; and a two hundred watt bulb was kept on constantly.

And if all that was not sufficient to keep the girl awake the police questioned her every hour for forty-eight hours. Sometimes it was only for a few minutes at a time; sometimes they just came in, asked one



Scene from a new play on the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 'The Other Way Round', performed by CAST at an evening of theatre on Ireland organised by the Troops Out Movement in London last week

question, stared at her for twenty minutes, and then left.

Annette, who suffers from asthma, did not sleep a wink during this time. 'I did not know whether it was night or day .... it seemed like a torture chamber.'

Of course she protested. But it did little good. On one occasion five policemen and one policewoman rushed into her cell, sat on her, and took her shoes off. When solicitors and her parents started phoning Bridewell, the police informed Annette: 'They shouldn't do that, they'll only get you into more trouble.' And throughout all this they kept coming back to her cell.

They asked questions straight out of the pages of 1984. When they discovered that Martin played in a folk group, they came back to Annette and asked a whole series of

weird questions. 'It's an illegal group, you know.' 'Why?' 'Because they play rebel songs.'

Martin was being subjected to similar treatment. 'You are a known terrorist!', they said. But when Martin asked them to check with his local police station in Portadown, Northern Ireland they refused. Instead they took him to a room, informing him: 'This is the room we do you over in.'

## Cynical

He too was allowed no sleep; he too was in a constant state of fear and apprehension; he too was laughed at when he asked for an explanation of why he had been picked up. Laughter, in fact, seemed the common response

among the Liverpool terrorists. When Martin and Annette asked for the names of those questioning them, cynical laughter accompanied the 'not fucking likely'.

Eventually they were released. But even then it didn't end. They were followed to the railway station and when they arrived in London, exhausted and near collapse, they were followed home.

So why did this happen to them? When Nora Malloney asked the local Hackney police to investigate, a policeman relayed what his Liverpool colleagues had told him: 'They didn't seem to be willing to co-operate so we thought we'd teach them a lesson.'

That was one reason. Another was given to Annette herself. As they were finally letting her go, one policeman said: 'You'll have to

expect this in the future.' Annette asked why. 'It's your boyfriend's background.' 'What background?' 'He's Irish.'

What happened to Martin and Annette could happen to anyone. Indeed, they were 'anyone' — one Irishman who played in an 'illegal' folk group, and a girl who 'wouldn't co-operate'. So what can be done to prevent similar occurrences?

Well, at one stage during her treatment Annette told the police that she was going to inform her MP. That too was met with a laugh — but on that occasion it was justified.

Annette's mother did try to get in touch with her local MP, one Michael O'Halloran of North Islington, but was told that he was 'not available'. When Martin's father phoned up he was given the same answer, but with a promise that the MP would phone back. He never did.

## Marches

Michael O'Halloran gained his North London seat through a whole series of dubious practices. One of these was his claim to 'represent' the local Irish community. Comments Nora Malloney: 'But he hasn't got the interests of the Irish community at heart ... he doesn't want to know.'

So other directions will be sought by those looking to fight the PTA. And again Nora Malloney speaks well: 'I didn't believe in marches, but now if there is any action that is needed, I and my daughter will be there.'

There are many things to remember about what happened to Martin Lavery and Annette Malloney, but if you can only remember one, remember that.

GEOFF BELL

# HARINGEY

# THE NEXT CLAY CROSS?

'WE WON'T CUT!' That was the message brought to a jubilant 70-strong lobby of trade unionists and tenants outside a special meeting of the ruling Labour group of councillors in the London Borough of Haringey last Sunday.

The Government is demanding that several local authorities make immediate cuts. Haringey has been singled out and told to cut £5 billion - ten per cent - off its current budget now.

But Haringey's Labour councillors have given the Government wreckers a slap in the face, announcing that they will implement the resolution of the Local Government Committee - the body which decides policy for the three constituency Labour Parties - rejecting the Government's recent circular and telling the Department of the Environment that:

\* There will be no cuts in services and capitation expenditure;

\* There will be no redundancies - the Council will continue to fill vacancies arising from resignations in the current financial year;

\* There will be no increase in council rents.

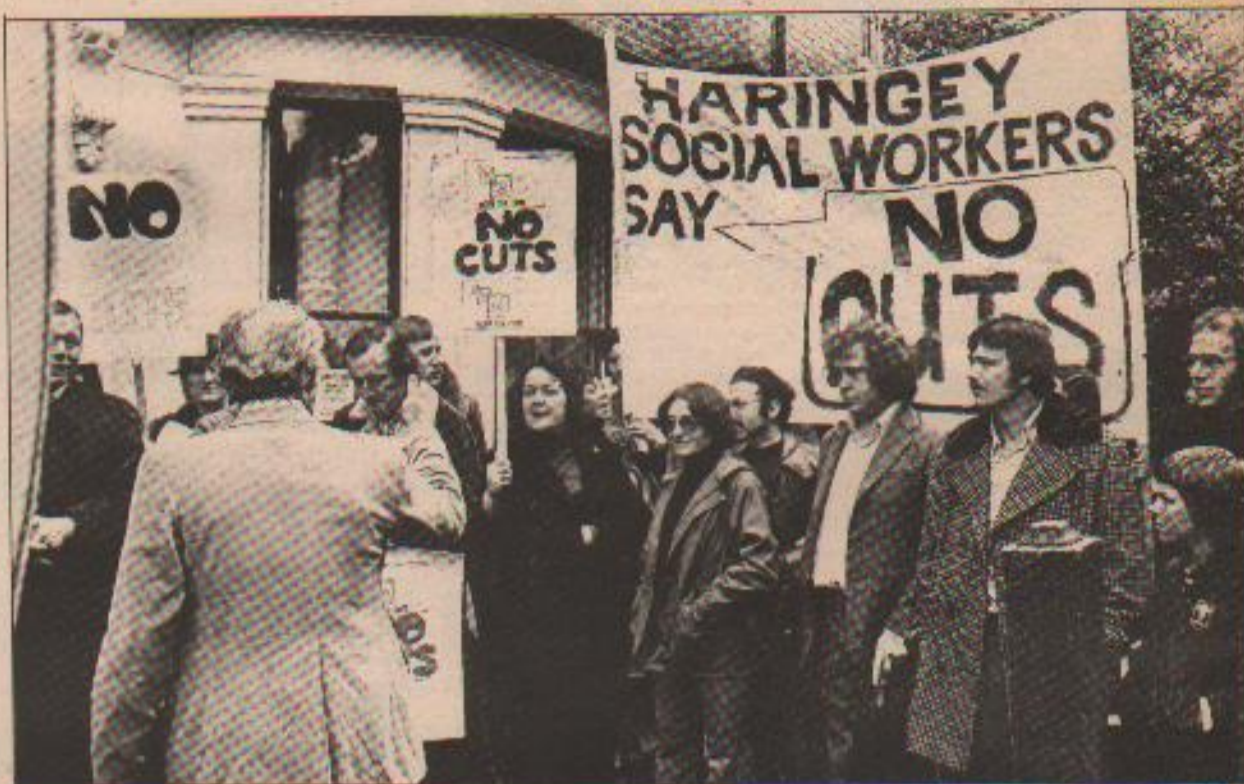
The Council says that it will consider economies in expenditure but that there will be no cuts in essential services.

The effects of the cuts would have been catastrophic. Figures as high as a 20 per cent cut in education spending had been floated - meaning either teacher redundancies while class sizes remain over 30, or the axing of the new nursery programme and the long-standing 'rising fives' scheme.

But the battle has only just begun. The Government has threatened to slash the rate support grant next year to local authorities who don't cut enough. Unless the Labour group and the Council adopt a radically different policy, that would mean levying rates that would pay for next year's increase and this year's £5 million - a rise in the rates of at least 30p in the pound.

What's needed instead is a joint campaign between all those Labour controlled councils that are under attack from the Government. Massive support for such a campaign can be won by opening the books of the local authorities to tenants and trade unionists and working with these and community groups to work out how the social services can be expanded to meet social need. That's the way to avoid isolation and hence the fate of Clay Cross.

Rex Dunn



Anti-cuts campaigners lobby the Haringey Labour group meeting last Sunday

Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)



## STUDENTS PLAN SUMMER ACTION

Students from all over the country will be meeting in Liverpool this Saturday to discuss the next steps in the campaign for teaching jobs - the movement that has been spearheading the fight against the cuts. The meeting has been called by Merseyside Area Students Association (MASA). Sylvia Renilson, MASA chairperson-elect and president of Ethel Wormald College, explained to Red Weekly why the conference is necessary:

'We're calling for a national meeting of local coordinating committees, colleges of education, and universities and polytechnics that have occupied, because the Executive of the National Union of Students has not mobilised for this campaign.'

'Clear policy was laid down at the Manchester national delegate conference on 5 June; but the Executive split the campaign by ignoring these decisions and in practice continuing to use the kind of 'special case' arguments for student teachers which we have rejected. We are, however, asking the Executive to send representatives.'

'At the conference we want to discuss the role of the NUS Executive, particularly after the Manchester conference; the policy we need now; the role of the area action committees; and whether or not we should set up a national co-ordinating committee.'

'We will also have discussion more generally on the future of the campaign, and also on some specific concerns. Not least we want to raise the whole question of the position of women students, because so few tend to register as unemployed. That's a vital part of the campaign.'

### SUMMER

Some idea of where the campaign should be going now has been given by actions already taken in the Merseyside area. One week before the Manchester conference they had already organised a meeting of all colleges in the North West area and adopted a policy very similar to the successful motion at Manchester!

Leaders from the occupations on Merseyside were down in force at the 16 June lobby of the TUC. Anne Barker, president of C.F. Mott College and deputy chairperson of MASA, told us of their plans for the campaign:

'We're continuing the occupation in C.F. Mott over the summer as a focus for the whole area. The decision was unanimous and went through the general meetings of eight colleges in the area.'

### NO COVER

'We're also deepening our campaign in the trade unions. Resolutions are going round, we've spoken to the Trades Council, and in Knowsley we have got a liaison committee with the National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Schoolmasters. Knowsley is one of the NUT's designated areas for official action on class size - they're refusing to take any classes over 35 and operating no cover for teachers absent for more than three days.'

Added Chris Hatton, president of Liverpool Polytechnic and secretary-elect of MASA: 'The NUT nationally won't back the same action in Liverpool, even though Liverpool NUT has passed a resolution supporting no cover. One of the main tasks at the 26 June conference, apart from discussing how coordinating committees can organise unemployed students, will be working out how we can direct our energies towards forcing the NUT to implement its policy on class size.'

A Stop the Cuts Committee has also just been set up in Knowsley under the impetus of the occupations. Representa-



## EGA on the brink

Workers at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital are poised to take action against the closure of this women's hospital in North London.

Although Barbara Castle promised that the EGA would not be closed unless it could be rehoused as a unit on an alternative site, the DHSS and the Area Health Authority (AHA) have been systematically running down the hospital

This was the last straw, and an angry meeting of EGA workers and many other local people last week planned out a course of action to combat the threat of closure. The COHSE branch at University College Hospital has already pledged strike action in support of the EGA workers and the AHA joint shop stewards' committee agreed last Thursday to campaign for strike action amongst with no replacement in sight. Their latest move was to close down the maternity wing of the EGA with absolutely no warning.

their members - not only to keep the EGA open, but also to demand that all services at the EGA are fully restored, that the private beds be used for NHS patients, and that an enquiry be held by trade unionists in the area as to the exact state of the EGA and the necessary requirements for its upgrading.

The EGA workers clearly cannot strike themselves as this would give the AHA an opportunity to close the hospital immediately. Some kind of occupation seems likely to be the most effective form of action, providing a focus for a campaign throughout the area.

A lot is at stake. If the EGA is kept open through militant action, this will be a beacon to the many other campaigns that have been launched against hospital closures. If the fight is lost, however, it is not just another 'cut' - as a women's hospital started by women, the closure of the EGA would mark yet another stage in the Labour Government's attack on the rights of women.

## £312 needed!

With just a week left to the end of June we need £312 to complete the £1,000 Red Weekly Fighting Fund. So far we've only had £6 in response to our appeal last week - and £1 of that came from a supporter who is being made redundant.

If that supporter can do that, then what about the rest of our readers? If every reader gave up the equivalent of just one pint of beer a week, that would treble our present total. Is that too much to ask for a paper that survives on the breadline but is vital in putting across the facts and the politics to deal with the racists and combat the disastrous policies being advanced by every section of the traditional leadership of the labour movement?

In recent weeks our staff have worked extra time in order to produce and despatch extra copies containing special supplements on the student occupations and the fight against racism. The first sold out within days. The second is going the same way. Red Weekly is getting across the ideas many militants find vital in the present situation.

But we can't do this without money. Your money. So we appeal to you, our readers, to help us once again. Take collections at every meeting you can, ask anyone who buys the paper to make a donation. And when you've read this yourself send us a contribution, however small. Every little bit counts and mounts up. So rush yours to: Red Weekly Fighting Fund, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.



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