

RED WEEKLY

WE'RE ON THE MOVE

RED WEEKLY is moving to new and better premises next week. As a result the next issue of the paper will appear on 20 April. For the time being all copy should be sent c/o Relgocrest, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1. Telephone for Editorial 01-359-8288. Distribution is still 97 Caledonian Road, London N1. Telephone 01-837-9987.

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The Message of Stechford:

STRIKE OUT THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

TWO EVENTS in the last fortnight have summed up the choices for the British working class.

★There was Labour's defeat at Stechford — a massive abstention by some Labour voters and a switch to right-wing Tory Mackay by others. Brons, the fascist candidate, got an eight per cent vote.

The only ray of hope was the 871 votes cast for mass action against the Social Contract and the beginning of the self-organisation of the Asian workers against racism.

★The 3 April conference called by the Leyland shop stewards expressed the anger in the working class. The 1700 delegates called for a day of action and a mass lobby on 20 April. But the rank and file leadership, particularly the 'left' Labourites and the Communist Party, refused even to support the Port Talbot steelworkers, let alone to fight in the trade union movement against the leaders who are scurrying to complete yet another agreement on pay policy. Both events show the need for alternative policies to the Social Contract:



Disgruntled British Leyland worker buttonholes Labour candidate Terry Davis in Stechford.

★On wages — No to any form of pay policy. Flat rate increases would compensate for the effects of Phases 1 and 2. Automatic compensation for price rises, worked out by the unions themselves, would keep wages up with inflation in the future. A national minimum wage of £50 and immediate equal pay for women would protect the lower paid workers.

★On cuts — A programme of useful public works would provide jobs for the unemployed and restore and expand the dwindling public services. All spending on the social services must rise to keep pace with inflation.

★On jobs — Existing work should be shared out between all workers with no loss of pay. The bosses of firms creating redundancies must be made to open their books to the workers. This prepares the way for the

nationalisation of these firms and industries under workers control, guaranteeing jobs for all.

These alternative policies mean the fight for an alternative leadership in the labour move-

ment — an opposition to the present leaders which fights for socialist policies and the unity of the working class against attacks on its living standards.

That should be the answer to Stechford, the capitalist budget

and the 'new deal' around Phase 3. It is the only alternative to the return of the Tories.

That's the choice. A Tory Government would mean more cuts in living standards, jobs and social services. A fight for

national strike action should be a fight for policies which put the blame for the crisis with those who made it — the ruling class. That involves building an alternative leadership to Scanlon and Jones and to those, like the Communist Party, who hang onto their coat tails.

What would such an alternative leadership do? The first task is to unite all struggles against this Government's anti-working class policies. The trade union leaders have only been prepared to pull out one section after another.

When Fisher organised the 17 November demonstration against the cuts, Scanlon said that 'industry' came before hospitals and schools.

UNITY

When the toolmakers struck Fisher rounded on them as 'muscle merchants'. The steelworkers have got the same cold shoulder from some leaders of the rank and file themselves.

The only real unity between different groups of workers is a unity in action against the betrayals of the leadership.

National strike action would be a first step in that direction.

**INSIDE:
LETTER FROM
TARIQ ALI
TO PAUL FOOT
ON THE
LESSONS OF
THE
STECHFORD
BY-ELECTION**

March against the Front

Anti-racist activity will be one of the key notes in the London International Marxist Group's campaign around the 5 May Greater London Council elections.

Anti-racist and anti-fascist committees from throughout London meeting on 3 April agreed to an appeal from the four Socialist IMG candidates for a massive counter-

demonstration through North London on 23 April.

NF internal bulletins are promising their members 'very lively activity'. Anti-racists are promising a very lively response when they try to parade their racist poison.

To demonstrate the IMG's commitment to building the broadest possible demonstration, Gerry Hedley, the

Socialist [IMG] candidate in Ealing Southall told the meeting that we would be willing to forego part of our election expenses so that local anti-racist committees could legally issue material against the Front.

A further planning meeting for the counter-demonstration, to which all anti-racist and anti-fascist committees, trade unions and political organisations are

invited to send delegates, will take place on Sunday 10 April at 2.30pm

Rally against the racists, march against the Front! Assemble 1pm Ducketts Common [opposite Turnpike Lane tube] on Saturday 23 April.

Mick Gosling, London IMG

ALL OUT ON 20 APRIL

NUT Conference

Socialist Teachers challenge Con-trick

Opposition is growing to the pledges of the right-wing leadership of the National Union of Teachers in its support for another round of the Social Contract. The annual conference of the NUT this Easter will continue to see the union's leadership substitute sniping at backward local authorities rather than tackling the Labour Government's policies.

In the last two years teachers' living standards have fallen by 20 per cent. The Labour Government has cut education spending by £1,390 billions in this time. The bureaucrats have already shown they can't be relied on. Militants at the conference must give the lead themselves — getting support for national strike action in conjunction with other public sector workers for a united fightback.

The debate on wages at the conference will be similar to that on cuts. It will centre on the Executive's arguments for a new phase of the Social Contract. So timid are the leadership that their pay claim proposals contain no figures whatsoever! They ask teachers to leave it to them to decide. Meanwhile many local union branches are calling for a break with the Social Contract, arguing that the only way to protect living standards is through wages being protected against inflation by automatic increases to keep pace with the rise in the cost of living.

Education faces a challenge from the cuts in public spending, but this is coupled with an attack on the way education is being organised, and what is being taught. The Executive of the NUT have submitted a resolution for a debate at the conference which attempts to counter these attacks. The NUT leadership's response is to argue that education would be

fine if it were only left to the teachers to sort it all out.

Socialists must reject this elitist approach, together with any attempt by the owners of industry to define education in a way which suits the bosses. A socialist strategy for education must be based on a campaign to involve the whole trade union movement in investigating the educational needs of the working class and its youth. This is



the only way to create an education system in the interests of working people.

A resolution on racialism has also been voted fourth on the agenda of the conference. The resolution argues against immigration controls and for an active campaign by the NUT in conjunction with other sectors of the trade union and labour movement against the growth of racism and fascism. Militants of the Socialist Teachers Alliance will be giving their support to this resolution. All attempts by the NUT Executive to delete it and insert a totally flabby

one in its place will also be fought by the STA.

One issue on which the left is seriously split is the proposal from the Executive to withdraw the NUT from the Women's TUC. The Socialist Workers Party members on the Executive supported the proposal. The NUT are trying to shelve any serious campaign for women's rights. And the SWP has helped the right, by refusing to fight those reactionaries who do not want a fight for women's rights on their hands.

The Socialist Teachers Alliance has campaigned for a united left at the NUT conference. So far, the SWP-controlled rank-and-file organisation has refused to cooperate with this project. Red Weekly supporters will continue their fight at the conference for a united left fight against the cuts and the Social Contract. After Stechford this becomes more urgent than ever!

BERNARD REGAN
East London NUT Conference Delegate.

Stop Press: The Socialist Teachers Alliance have informed Red Weekly that they have been approached by the Teachers Rank and File to discuss the possibility of a joint meeting at the NUT Conference.

* Socialist Teachers Alliance Public Meetings:
Friday 8 April, 8pm. 'A Review of Conference'.
Sunday 10 April, 8pm. 'The Fight Against the Cuts and the Social Contract'.
Both meetings at Seaside Library, corner of Seaside and Firlie Road.

SOCIALIST UNITY BREAKTHROUGH FOR STUDENTS

There were two types of 'unity' offered at last week's conference of the National Union of Students. One was presented by the 'historic compromise' of the Communist Party-dominated Broad Left with the Federation of Conservative Students. The other was presented by the Socialist Students Alliance, which although only formed last February, attracted spectacular support from student militants.



COLIN TALBOT

That unity was amongst those determined to resist the rightward drift of the executive and to fight for alternative socialist policies in the union.

The Broad Left/Tory alliance was most dramatically expressed in the elections when FCS delegates switched their votes to Broad Left candidates once their own had been eliminated. In all the votes for executive positions it was the FCS votes which allowed Broad Left candidates to get in. But the Tories exacted a high price for their cooperation. On issue after issue the Broad Left watered down their already tame policies in order to maintain their unity with the right.

On grant increases: The newly elected Broad Left President, Sue Slipman, welcomed the 15.5 per

cent increase as recognition by the Government of the need for student grants to keep pace with inflation. That the increase does not even cover the rise in the cost of living since the last rise, let alone cover the expected rise in the coming year, evaded Slipman's attention.

On overseas students and tuition fees: The Broad Left offered a joint resolution with the Tories which merely called for no increase in fees for self-financing students, and for universities to set up hardship funds to assist those students unable to cover the cost of the increase. The Broad Left claimed that this strategy could 'unite students'. One section of students who thought little of this 'unity' were many delegates from technical and further education colleges who viewed this cynical sell-out of their interests with mounting anger.

On Ireland: An amendment to the emergency resolution on Ireland which called for NUS support for the Free Speech on Ireland campaign, and for an end to military recruitment and research in colleges was voted down by the Broad Left Executive and its supporters. It was noticeable that they refused to talk to the motion, leaving that to a right wing delegate. At the fringe meeting on Ireland — which featured Bernadette McAliskey and Steve MacBride from the Peace People — the Broad Left were not to be seen among the 350 who attended.

The performance of the Socialist Student Alliance was in sharp contrast to this sorry procession of wheeling, dealing and capitulation. 150 delegates at the conference joined the SSA, including several members of NOISS, the student wing of the Socialist Workers Party. The SSA gained two places in the National Executive, with the election of Colin Talbot, an IMG member from Manchester, and Lewis Davis, a non-aligned socialist from Middlesborough. A member of the National Organisation of IS students, the SWP student group, was also elected onto the Executive. In six of the top eight posts, the vote for the SSA exceeded that of NOISS.

In the elections of many posts, the combined vote for the SSA and NOISS exceeded that for the Broad Left. Sadly the leadership of NOISS seemed incapable of recog-



LEWIS DAVIES

nising the potential which a greater unity between NOISS and the SSA provides.

At a meeting organised by the SSA, Liam Duffy, NOISS member from Lancaster, stated the reason NOISS would not join the SSA was that the SSA had 'no class perspective'. This was further justified by Duffy saying that NOISS, unlike SSA, was formed on the need to build 'the revolutionary party'.

While this type of sniping from the sidelines clearly damages the prospect for left socialist unity, it seems unlikely to hinder the further support the SSA will receive from student militants. Hugh Lanning, the SSA presidential candidate, said at the first SSA open meeting that he believed the conference would be remembered not for the collapse of NUS services, but the formation of the SSA.

The national conference of the alliance planned for 31 April, and the campaigns it organises in the summer will be the test of Lanning's predictions. What can be said from last week's conference is that there is no reason why Lanning should be proved wrong.

PAUL BROOKE

Stockport

The action taken by Stockport teachers against oversize classes is over.

At a general meeting of three teacher unions it was decided to suspend the sanctions which for the past 12 weeks have involved a ban on classes over 35 in primary schools and a refusal to cover for absent colleagues in secondary schools.

The background to the decision lies in recent moves by the local Tory Council which on 11 March agreed to accept a joint working party to examine the teachers' demands.

At the joint union meeting the resolution to suspend sanctions was carried by a substantial majority, largely owing to some highly dubious arguments about

'the need for teachers to show reason' and suggestions that by accepting arbitration the Tories had 'made a move of some significance'.

For their part the Tories, after a year of stonewalling, lies and distortions, favour a negotiated settlement as a 'face saver'. When confronted by other public sector workers they want to be able to say that they took on extra teachers as teachers are a 'special case'. Unfortunately for trade unionists this presents a real danger of divisions between teachers and other public sector workers.

The climbdown in Stockport reveals the weakness of the NUT leadership's policy of taking on the employers one by one, a tactic

which forces isolated struggles to the wall.

As far as Stockport is concerned, while the teachers' meeting reflected the frustrations and hostility towards Labour's cuts, it also showed that teachers are willing to fight back. However illusions in the national leaders are still strong and a way of shattering these illusions is what is, above all else, necessary.

The programme mapped out by the Socialist Teachers Alliance, for national industrial action against the cuts, opens up an alternative to the diversions of the teachers unions' bureaucracy. The task for teachers in Stockport, as for those elsewhere, is to take up the fight for such action.

JACK WILLIAMSON

Bristol

While the headmaster of Hartcliff Comprehensive School in Bristol was away attending one of the 'Great Education Debates', revolt was brewing at the school.

Three weeks ago teachers refused to supervise lunchtime meals. Some of the students, angry at the failure of the school authorities to fulfil their statutory obligation to provide free meals for some of the school's 2,000 pupils, made their way down to the offices of the Avon Education Authority and harangued the building.

The head, anxious to contain any trouble, organised year meetings of the students last Monday. The reasons for no meals being provided was explained by the

school authorities. But the next day students organised their own meetings, elected eight delegates from each year and formed a students council.

The council issued a petition which said:

'We, the pupils of Hartcliff School, wish to formally support the staff in their action against the cuts imposed by the Local Education Authority. We wish the authority to maintain existing staff-student ratios and make allowances for inflation in the school's capitation.

'If this petition is ignored we, the pupils, will take further action.'

That 'further action' is already

planned. The students are building a demonstration for Thursday 21 April when they return from the Easter vacation. They will lobby the meeting of the Resources Committee of Avonmouth Council in their demand for inflation proofing of expenditure of schools.

Support has already been promised from six other schools in the locality. Over 500 parents were expected to turn up to a meeting last Monday.

The local Socialist Teachers Alliance will be meeting shortly to plan action in support of this rapidly growing mass movement in Bristol's schools.



STEEL SPARKS FIGHT BACK

IN FOCUS

RED WEEKLY

IT IS OBVIOUS why the strike at the British Steel Corporation's Port Talbot works was one of the major issues to be raised at the Leyland conference.

The strike, and the management's and union bureaucracy's reaction to it, promises very quickly to take on the importance of the Leyland toolmakers' dispute — with one important exception: the workers involved at Port Talbot are much more open in agreeing that their strike represents a direct challenge to the Social Contract and Phase 2 of the incomes policy.

The strike came to a head last Sunday when British Steel Corporation's Port Talbot management closed down the works and locked out over 8000 workers.

The most outstanding character of the week was a gentleman by the name of Bernard Clarke. Prior to last week's meeting Clarke had been given live coverage by the local press claiming that he had a peace formula and the men should go back. When the meeting tossed out his proposals, he referred to the decision as 'a total disaster'.

Clarke was worried by the 'bad image' this sort of thing is creating for BSC. He was most concerned that if successful, this wage claim could 'snowball throughout the industry'.

Bernard Clarke is not employed by the BSC as a management consultant. He is in fact a district officer of the EPTU called in to give the union backing to the dispute. Not only did the men throw out his 'peace formula', but a motion of no confidence in him was overwhelmingly carried.

BIG STICK

As strike leader Wyn Bevan told Red Weekly, when Clarke addressed the strikers 'he made a bosses' speech and tried to wield the big stick'.

He sees the action of the Port Talbot steelworkers as a challenge to the Social Contract, albeit an indirect one. He said: 'We haven't started to ask for support yet, but we have got financial aid from EPTU at Action Rails. Obviously we want as much support as we can get'.

Wyn Bevan sums up the determination of the strikers this way: 'The mood of the men is good. They will stay out indefinitely if necessary... Our struggle is for the whole of the working class against the employers and against the union executive who are employer orientated'.

As in the Leyland cars' dispute last month, there is no support coming from officials when workers are driving a coach and horses through the Social Contract. And that is just what Port Talbot's electricians are doing. Their claim is for £10 for work on the Sinter plant. While this is a strong argument for an increase it is being used as an excuse for a full across the board increase for all the men.

Wyn Bevan and the 25-strong shop stewards committee are now making direct approaches to other trade unions throughout Britain. Send messages and resolutions to: Wyn Bevan, Convenor EPTU, 43 Hebronn Road, Clydach, Swansea

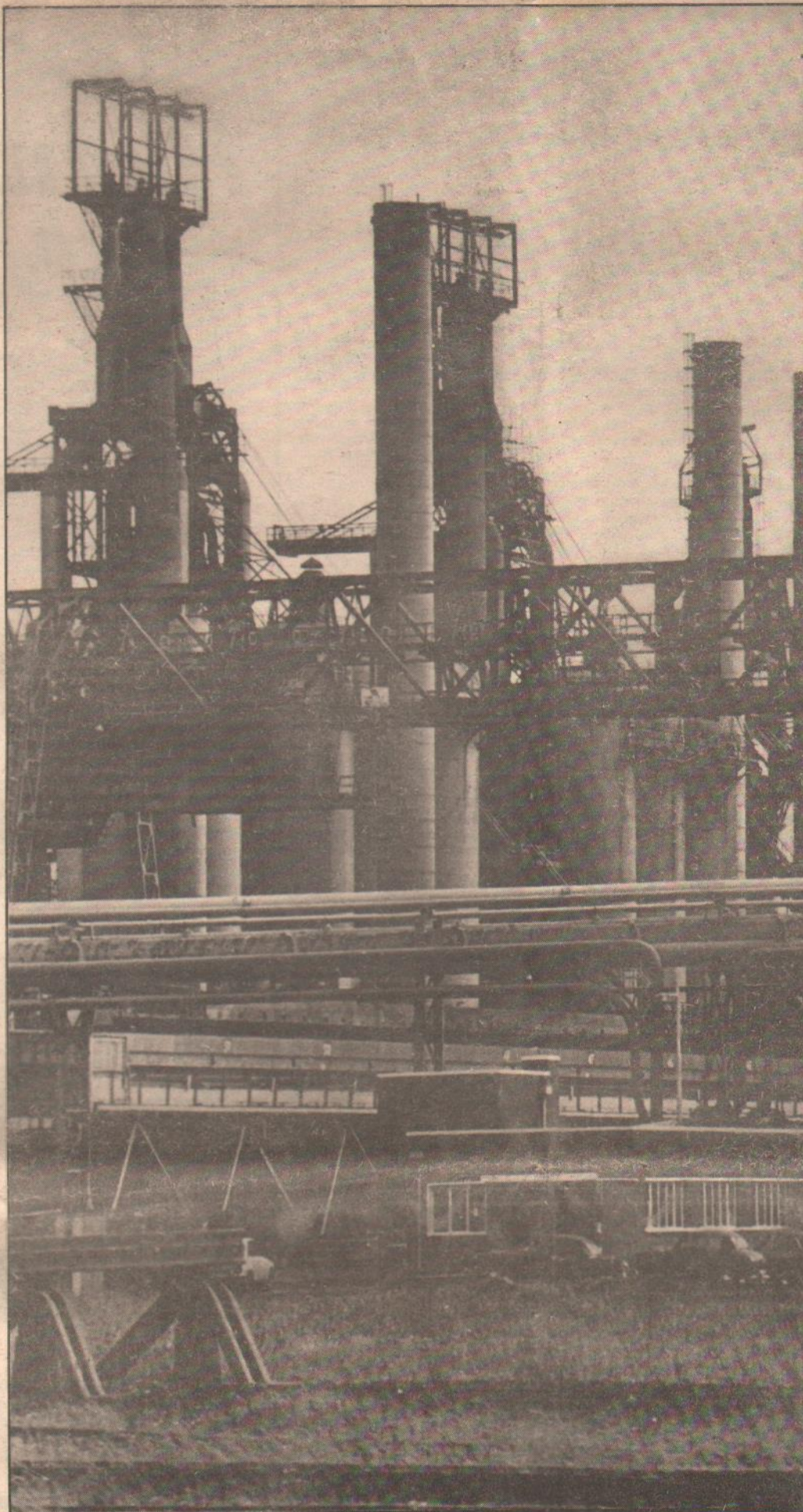


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

1700 delegates at Leyland Stewards Conference

A massive total of 1,700 delegates responded to the call of Leyland stewards last Sunday and attended the 'rank and file TUC' with the aim of campaigning 'for a return to free collective bargaining'.

Speaker after speaker at the conference, and at the fringe meeting organised at lunch time by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, expressed an angry hostility to the Social Contract, and showed a willingness to do all they could to bring it to an end.

But the conference organisers, dominated by the Communist Party, were unable to match this mood of fighting militancy. The familiar and tired theme of 'unity of the movement' was offered by speakers such as Bob Wright, Assistant General Secretary of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers. But this 'unity' precludes unity in action with those actually in struggle against

The problem with seeing the overriding need as the preservation of this sort of 'unity' was best illustrated from the convenor of the electricians union strike committee at the steel works in Port Talbot. He pointed out: 'Our Executive is not prepared to negotiate for our members and our union has disowned us. This is not a craft or sectional strike. This is a strike against the inactivity of our union leaders, and particularly against the Social Contract'.

The speaker went on to explain that their demands, as with the toolmakers, were just demands and he asked the conference to give the Port Talbot workers full support.

The organising committee, instead of putting a resolution backing the steelworkers, ignored the plea for support. Indeed platform speakers considered it more important to attack those in struggle against the betrayals of the Labour Government and the trade union bureaucracy. Platform speaker Eddie McGarry in a veiled attack on the toolroom workers argued that 'disputes in pursuit of sectional interests, backed by the Tories, cannot aid that unity'. These remarks were followed by those of Derek Robinson, the Leyland convenor, who attacked the toolroom workers for not being present. He

failure to support the toolroom workers could have contributed to their scepticism about the conference.

Rather than seeking to unite with the toolmakers or the steelworkers, the conference organisers prized unity with those who attack such workers — such as the 'lefts' on the AUEW Executive. A consequence of this type of strategy was the conference organisers' reluctance to spell out the need for strike action on 20 April, preferring instead the vagueness of 'substantial delegations to the lobby of Parliament'.

But alternatives to this hesitant approach were made to the conference. Various delegates called for local committees to mobilise for strike action on 20 April. Phil Hicks announced the decision of Coventry Rolls Royce workers to strike and Dominic Costa from No. 8 Division of ASTMS Health Advisory argued: 'If you are striking on 20 April, fighting for a minimum wage, fighting for equal pay, fighting for inflation-proof wages and across-the-board increases, that will strengthen our fight to bring public sector workers out there with you'.

The Working Women's Charter — in a statement for which they collected signatures at the confer-

equal pay, and Brent Trades Council delegate Tessa van Gelderen pointed out: 'Equal pay is not just a luxury after other demands are met, it is a demand which can forge unity of women workers with all workers to end the Social Contract'.

But these and many other proposals delegates made were unable to be voted on as the conference organisers refused to allow amendments to be put to their declaration. Instead of putting forward socialist policies, the declaration substituted a call for import controls and increased state investment. Having got this resolution through, Derek Robinson ended the conference by saying: 'We will not hesitate to meet our responsibility and call a recall conference if the situation calls for it'.

Yet already the situation permits more concrete tactics than the rather unspecific 'Day of Action'. 20 April can be turned into a day of national strike action against all aspects of the Social Contract. Local committees to organise this action can and should be established, even on the basis of the vague declaration adopted at the conference.

The obvious support that the Port Talbot workers received from conference delegates lays the basis for a campaign in support of the steel-

KICK OUT HEALEY'S BUDGET BLACKMAIL

The most telling response to Healey's budget to date has been the resounding set-back suffered by Labour in the Stechford by-election just two days after its publication. This budget marks the beginning of the hard-line sales pitch for Phase 3 of the Social Contract. And once again, Healey has tied tax concessions to the Government's policy of wage limits. His budget provides for a cut in income tax by £1990 million. But this will be offset by indirect taxation measures on petrol, road tax and tobacco which hit the working class hardest. These measures will put £180 million back into Healey's account books.

Healey has not yet revealed the exact terms of this round of wage limits he is after. His budget speech demanded 'a satisfactory' pay deal in return for £1 billion further cuts in taxes. Last year's tactics were slightly different when he immediately called for a 3 per cent limit, later adjusted to an average 4½ per cent. But the promises being used to sell this budget have the same familiar ring.

A reduction in the rate of inflation was put at the centre of the 1976 budget, with promises that it would be halved by December 1977. The single figure rate Healey promised has fared about as well as the rest of last year's budget package. Prospects on the unemployment front are not 'brighter', nor have his assurances that 'price controls must not be swept aside when an incomes policy is in operation' materialised.

DISASTROUS EFFECTS

The disastrous effects of last year's pay deal are now being experienced daily by the working class. The real income of workers has fallen by an average of £10 per week since Labour's incomes policy was introduced, as inflation soars to a rate of 22 per cent on essential items like food, while wage increases average only 12 per cent in money terms. In other words, wage restraint has been exercised by the workers' movement in return for nothing except a continuing decline in living standards. Acceptance of Phase 3, prepared by Healey's budget speech, means little other than more of the same.

If further rounds of wage-slashing deals are to be avoided, the fight-back must be organised and centralised now. The Economic Council of the TUC meets on 13 April to consider the budget. Then the stage will be set for formal negotiations with Healey. The union conferences, scheduled to begin mid-April will be an opportunity for the union leadership to see how far they can carry on with their class collaboration policies.

Last year, few limits were put on these bureaucrats. The whole deal was sewn up by 16 June following the special delegate TUC called to give its verdict on the deal. Even The Times conceded that this meeting was a formality — only one report, drawn up by the General Council, was put to the vote and all opposing resolutions were ruled out of order in advance. The union bureaucrats manoeuvred in the same way amongst their membership.

Of the unions which first came out in opposition to the pay deal last year, one after another had their policies reversed at the hands of the leadership. The building workers union, UCATT, was the first large manual union to go on record at its annual conference against incomes policy, in favour of free collective bargaining. Just one month later, an executive-inspired postal ballot reversed the decision with a mere 6½ per cent of union members participating.

POSTAL BALLOT

The leadership of the CPSA — the civil service workers' union — also resorted to a postal ballot to see if members accepted the 'exact terms of Phase 2', despite an overwhelming vote at the annual conference against an incomes policy. They didn't even dare commit themselves to the outcome, stating that the results would 'be borne in mind' by delegates attending the special TUC. The AUEW bureaucrats manoeuvred just as blatantly. Daily papers predicted a split in this amalgamated union over how Scanlon forced Phase 2 down the throats of the membership.

Militants must organise now to ensure their so-called leaders do not get a head start on the membership as they did last year. They have no mandate from the workers' movement to enter Healey's chambers. Union conferences will be called upon to endorse whatever these bureaucrats get up to. The fight against any form of Social Contract must be placed at the centre of the upcoming union conferences. Steps must be taken to organise a left wing inside the unions, prepared to fight for policies of class struggle, not class collaboration.

This means fighting for claims to immediately make up wages lost under Phase 1 and 2 and to tie all future claims to a trade union cost of living index so they can be protected from inflation.

But an alternative wages policy is not enough — measures to end unemployment, to stop the cuts in social spending, and to throw out every aspect of the Social Contract must be part of such an action programme. The by-words for union militants in the coming months are: No to any pay deal, No to any form of Social Contract.

Left challenges LPYS policies

The final agenda of this sixteenth National Conference of the LPYS includes 170 resolutions and accompanying amendments. They cover a wide range of issues, including the fight against the Social Contract, against racism and women's oppression, in solidarity with the struggles of the working class internationally.

Only a few weeks ago, the LPYS was worth headline news in the press. Every sitting right-wing Labour MP, we were told, was threatened by bands of marauding Trotskyists. There were cries by the Labour right and their supporters in the capitalist press for the 'Trotskyist hot bed' of the LPYS to be controlled one way or another.

A vicious witch-hunt was launched against Andy Bevan and the Militant supporters who make up the LPYS leadership.

In the face of the failure of the 'traditional left' to mount a serious challenge to the Callaghan leadership and its policies, a heavy responsibility is placed at the door of the YS.

It can take advantage of its position both as a youth organisation and as the only organised left wing in the Labour Party. It must put forward policies to mobilise young workers and play its part in promoting a fightback based on united mass action.

But the activity of the YS over the past year has been totally

inadequate. The 'boldest' initiative has been the launching of the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment. The Campaign has consisted in organising one national 'event', a so-called 'Assembly on Unemployment'. The Assembly was dominated by fine-sounding appeals for bold socialist policies from members of the YS leadership and a combination of left rhetoric and demands for import controls from Eric Heffer.

Only one speaker opposed to the line of Militant was allowed to address the delegates, only one woman spoke. Resolutions from YS branches proposing initiatives for the campaign were excluded. The platform itself came forward with not one proposal.

The agenda for the National Conference shows that the Militant-inspired leadership have no intention of changing from old ways. Resolution after resolution calls upon the Labour and trade union leaders to change course without stating that only mass action can reverse the Government's policies. Such resolutions make no criticism of the 'lefts' and make no demands on them.

But there is a marked increase in the number of resolutions which do map out a way forward. A clear and substantial minority of the conference has submitted resolutions which begin to challenge the 'all talk, no action'

politics of the leadership.

Sheffield Brightside calls for support for 'strike action to smash the Social Contract' and for a fight to 'remove the present right-wing leaders of the Labour Government and the TUC'.

Newcastle-Under-Lyme condemns YS representative on the Labour NEC for 'allowing his name to be used in support of a statement published in Tribune which supported the Social Contract'.

Hemel Hempstead explains that 'only national strike action can reverse the cuts, end unemployment and make up reductions in working class living standards' and lays down socialist demands as the basis for a programme of action. According to them, this is the way of organising the left wing in the labour movement around policies of 'class struggle', not class collaboration.

Wokingham criticises the National Committee for having failed to carry out last year's conference decisions on the National Health Service, to 'give full support to the National Coordinating Committee' against cuts in the NHS.

Carlton YS calls for a campaign for the 'immediate withdrawal of

British troops' from Ireland, and for 'the right of the Irish people, not British imperialism, to decide their own future'.

Yet again the YS leadership has confined the debate on women's oppression to the 'Others' category, but Vauxhall, Lewes, Brent East and Wokingham have proposals for building the National Abortion Campaign, the Working Women's Charter Campaign and the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign, and immediately building a mass movement to defeat William Benyon's reactionary anti-abortion Bill.

Candidates who stand on these sort of policies are standing for a limited number of posts, which are actually elective from the conference.

Kevin Mayes of Northampton North is standing for the position of LPYS representative on the Labour Party NEC. Vincent Moss will be contesting a post of the Conference Standing Orders Committee. Both of these candidates are supported by the Left Action newspaper which is winning growing support for its policies in the LPYS.

The future success of the LPYS lies with policies and candidates like these. They are part of the process of building a left opposition which can provide an alternative leadership to the 'talk shop politics' of the Militant.

March for Abortion Rights 14 May

Four resolutions on abortion rights are already tabled for this year's Labour Party Women's Conference. They include calls to affiliate to the growing Labour Abortion Rights Campaign. Labour women are a good example of how the appeal for support by the National Abortion Campaign at its conference earlier this month should be taken up.

NAC's public appeal pressed for the labour, women's and student movements each to take its responsibility in ensuring the largest ever turnout for the 14 May demonstration. Each of these movements have passed resolutions in support of women's abortion rights in the past.

But, paper resolutions have to be turned into action. A massive turnout on 14 May will have far more success than the parliamentary manoeuvring we have seen in the past.

We should demand that Labour MPs who support the fight for abortion rights use their influence within the labour movement to build a mass opposition to the Benyon Bill. They should do this by standing by their 1975 conference resolution and fighting for a three-line whip against Benyon's Bill. In addition, the labour movement should join forces with NAC to campaign publicly for the 14 May demonstration.

Experience shows that we have to put constant pressure on bodies like the TUC and the Labour Party bureaucrats in order that they give their active commitment to any campaign to defend abortion

rights in the face of attacks such as the Benyon Bill. Campaigning bodies should be set up in the trade unions which should organise meetings for members to decide what form of action is necessary to stop the Bill getting through Parliament. One way is to demand that union-sponsored MPs vote against the Bill or support for them will be withdrawn immediately. In such an eventuality, these MPs would squirm and claim 'individual conscience'. However, unions with policy supporting 'a woman's right to choose' should have none of this.

The open mobilising committee for 14 May has been formed to encourage activists from different trade union branches, student unions, women's groups and NAC groups to fully participate in building the demonstration. We must bring together the weight of the labour movement and the commitment of the student and women's movements.

By campaigning for the NUS to organise activities within the student movement in conjunction with college trade unions, by committing trade unions that have adopted the demands of the Working Women's Charter on a national and local level, we can build the broadest possible unity to defend women's rights. It is only in this way that we can ensure that the Benyon Bill and its backers are so soundly defeated that it will be a long time before they raise their ugly heads again.

WENDY FORREST

Hounslow workers follow EGA

The Joint Shop Stewards Committee of Hounslow Hospital has put out a call in support of a work-in at Hounslow Hospital, presently under threat of closure. The decision was taken by a unanimous vote of staff at a meeting on 8 March.

A Defence Committee was set up by Hounslow Hospital Staff as long ago as August 1976, when it became clear that extensive cuts in the area would mean 200 less beds.

The Trades Council has asked local labour movement bodies to organise pickets in the event of attempts to break the work-in, to refuse all work which would help to effect the closure, together with the blacking of any firm which agrees to carry out such work, and to send resolutions of support to MPs, the TUC, the Labour Party and the Department of Health.

In their statement, the Joint Shop Stewards Committee draw on the experience of the work-in at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital. The statement advises Hounslow staff to monitor all activity at the hospital 'so that proper public response can be speedily mustered to frustrate closure plans'.

Two consultants at the hospital — Mr. Rain and Mr. Duff — have agreed to continue to send patients to the hospital during the work-in. This agreement is crucial, as has been shown by the EGA struggle, where the vacillation of the consultants continues to be a potential source of weakness in the occupation. The EGA has shown that it is vital to ensure that the consultants put their services to the interests of the patients and workers.

This work-in will be only the second in the history of the National Health Service, according to the statement issued by the Defence Committee. And, with no let-up in



Health workers in West London occupied the meeting of the local Area Health Authority six weeks ago in defence of Hounslow Hospital and other hospitals in the area. Now a sit-in is the next step.

sight for Healey's continuing axing of social spending, the appearance of a new film, the subject of which is the EGA occupation, is timely. The film — EGA Stays OK — was made by the Newsreel Collective and was shown to Hounslow workers earlier this month.

However, the film has limitations. Firstly, the account of the EGA occupation is presented in a documentary style, suggesting that the Collective thinks that just showing an occupation in itself will encourage other workers to struggle against cuts in that particular way.

Although the film did show how the actions of the Area Health Authority could be repeated in any hospital, it did not provide any suggestions on the way forward for the struggle. Perhaps this would have helped in ensuring that the

film can be used to help organise people in the workplace.

The concentration of the film on interviews with doctors, consultants and full-time officers of the unions also weakened its impact. This, however, is perhaps a reflection of the failure of the EGA occupation to involve the mass of workers in running the hospital, let alone making a film about their struggle.

Finally, the message of the film would have been clearer had it placed more emphasis on interviews with people outside the health service as potential customers. This could have explained why the health service needs to be defended and improved through united action by patients, workers and activists who are defending the facilities under attack.

Despite these shortcomings, this

25-minute film contains several excellent interviews. One of the most striking is the interview with a West Indian catering staff worker who explains how occupation was the only way to defend the EGA and the health service. A shop steward from the Royal Free Hospital also makes a strong case for a united fightback by health workers from different hospitals.

This film is not a wash-out by any means, it just doesn't work as a documentary. EGA Stays OK, if accompanied by a speaker, could provide a useful basis for discussion to ensure that the weaknesses of the EGA occupation will not be repeated in any future action by health workers. This view was supported by the discussion it provoked amongst the staff at Hounslow Hospital.

JENNY LAZENBY

Scottish Socialist League launched

It is now over a year since the formation of the Scottish Labour Party. Jim Sillars MP was the individual who captured the headlines, but socialists from many sections of the labour movement were attracted to the prospect of a new start in Scottish working class politics.

The story of how Sillars killed these hopes is now one of the more unsavoury parts of working class history. At the 1976 Stirling conference of the SLP a vicious anti-communist witch-hunt led to Sillars expelling half the active members. Although branches throughout Scotland were flung out of the SLP the result was the opposite to the demoralisation and dispersal of the left Sillars and his friends in the media had hoped for.

Since the expulsions the left wing has been involved in a series of well organised campaign activities. In November a rally was held on the cuts which attracted approximately a hundred trade unionists. The left wing of the SLP threw its resources into building the actions called by the Scottish TUC in the same months and the public sector strike in March organised by the National Union of Public Employees.

The second conference of the

weekend of 19/20 March, was an opportunity to assess these experiences and to plan the next stage in building the organisation. Delegates were unanimous that the organisation had politically matured from the confusion and reformism of social democracy, towards the politics of revolutionary Marxism.

Recognising this, the organisation decided to begin a period of joint collaboration with the Fourth International.

The conference went on to reaffirm a clear commitment to an elected Scottish Assembly, and to campaign in the labour movement against the bankruptcy of both the Scottish Nationalist Party and the Labour Government. It decided to make the women's rights rally to be held in Glasgow on 7 May a major priority.

On the electoral front the conference made the important decision to stand candidates for the District Councils of Glasgow, Pollock, Edinburgh and Aberdeen in May, under the newly adopted title of the Scottish Socialist League.

Finally the conference committed the organisation to fighting for the fusion and regroupment of all revolutionary socialists, a process already begun in that the National Committee of the SSL includes supporters of both Red Weekly

'WHITE HEAT' burns workers



Is it possible to fight now for production in the interests of the community rather than making profits for the few? PHIL ASQUITH, AUEW/TASS member at Lucas Aerospace, Burnley says a loud 'yes'. Here he responds to our invitation for articles and debate on 'alternative technology'.

'THE WHITE HEAT of the technological revolution', which promised imminent prosperity for all, was Harold Wilson's catch phrase in the mid-sixties. As one of the most unfulfilled prophecies of this century it ranks alongside 'peace in our time', 'Mr Hitler is a reasonable man', or even the 'we will cut prices at a stroke'.

This new technology was never harnessed for the well-being of all. Instead, increasing numbers of manual and white collar workers found themselves threatened and disillusioned. The technological dream was transformed into a nightmare.

The press of the mid sixties made many predictions. Automation and technological innovation were to lead to more and cheaper commodities. The masses were to enjoy a shorter working week and more leisure time.

Quite the reverse was true for workers whose industries became automated and de-skilled. For them it was the sack and the beginning of structural unemployment. Those lucky enough to keep their jobs were coerced into a frantic working tempo and shift work. This was necessary if the new capital intensive machinery was to be fully exploited. It meant the wind of change blew straight into the pockets of shareholders.

MISUSE

Since that time — 15 years ago — misuse of technology by our capitalist society has created an ever-increasing gap. The possibilities of what technology could provide for the benefit of the community does not at all match up to what it is allowed to provide.

Today, we have a level of technology which produced Concorde. Yet people are allowed to die of hypothermia for want of cheap urban heating systems. Renal failures also cause death for want of kidney haemodialysis machines. This continues when thousands of scientists and engineers are allowed to rot in the dole queue.

There is a chronic shortage of schools, houses and hospitals today. Yet building workers are unemployed. The contradictions are endless. In our capitalist society, science and technology — which could provide a national base for a fuller existence for all — is being retarded. Contemporary capitalist society is incapable of providing an economic framework in which to organise the vast potential for social production, brought about by the last 20 years of technological advance.

INVENTION

History shows that social change has always followed invention and innovation. The present 'crisis' is a manifestation of impending social and economic change. A system which is capable of harnessing science and technology to production for social need, rather than for private profit, is on the agenda.

What has been the response of the trade unions and labour movement to these changes? The Lucas Aerospace and Defence Systems Combine Shop Stewards' Committee has produced a plan — 'Corporate Plan — an alternative strategy to recession and redundancies'.

The Combine Committee is unique in the British trade union movement. It represents on a

grew up in the late sixties as a direct result of the white heat of the technological revolution. Our members found this 'white heat' simply to be burning up their jobs. So far, the Committee has been successful in preventing direct sackings 'à la Weinstock'.

The Combine recognised in early 1974 — following the energy crisis — that a world wide contradiction in the high technology aerospace industry was imminent. The job security of our trade union members within Lucas Aerospace would be seriously affected by such a development. The proposed nationalisation — and undoubtedly, rationalisation as well — of the British Aerospace industry came with the return of the Labour Government, and its accompanying prospect of defence cuts. This

compounded the problem.

Defence cuts have been the policy of the left and most trade unions for years. But it is a measure of the bankruptcy of our political and union leaders that they have never had any proposals for alternative work.

RETENTION

When defence cuts have been made, union leaders have inevitably argued for the retention of the project itself to protect their members' jobs. Thus, our members have always been presented with the false choice between military production or the dole.

The Combine's Corporate Plan was compiled in an attempt to resolve these problems. It is a 1200

page document which provides detailed and concrete proposals for alternative work. It relies on existing facilities and skills of the workforce of this high technology industry.

It projects the manufacture of socially useful products for the benefit of the community in such areas as medical engineering, alternative energy technologies, transport and braking systems, micro processors and others.

The Plan also contains proposals for changes in methods of work. It goes beyond the philosophy of job enrichment plans such as the 'better butter from contented cows' scheme. It is based on the country's greatest asset — the skill, ingenuity and creativity of its workforce. The plan tries to break down the hier-

archical divisions between job functions and — if implemented — would allow people to work in humane conditions at a civilised tempo.

DEMOCRACY

We feel that industrial production organised along those lines would make the basis of an 'industrial democracy' more meaningful than some of the current ideas on the subject.

The development of telechric machines — proposed in the Plan — is significant here. These are mechanical extensions to the human body. They mimic the motions of the operator and can be used in dangerous environments. Labour and human skill are thus retained. They could be used in such areas as mining, fire fighting, North Sea Oil fields, etc. Structural unemployment would be countered by a need for skilled labour with human interest, if these were employed.

What has been the general response to the Corporate Plan? The media response, including the technical journals, has been highly favourable both on a national and international scale. The Combine has received masses of correspondence, TV programmes are giving coverage and a Combine delegate has been invited to visit the aircraft belt of California in America.

Lucas control management, based in Birmingham, rejected the Corporate Plan outright stating '...the only way to secure jobs is to manufacture the products which the Company is best at producing...'

Fine words! Since then, Lucas have attempted substantial compulsory redundancies at two Aerospace factories. This could be fought successfully using a mini Corporate Plan, detailing alternative work which could be undertaken on site.

In February 1977 Lucas announced 1100 'surplus to requirement' in the Birmingham, Burnley

and Liverpool Aerospace plants. This is a situation which remains, although no redundancies have yet been attempted.

The attitude of the Government, following a Combine lobby of Parliament on this surplus, will reveal its conviction to the Industrial Strategy.

Compulsory planning agreements, which were diluted to voluntary agreements, have been dismissed by Lucas. To date not one exists in British industry. In the 'great education debate', Callaghan, Williams and Varley are trying to encourage young scientists and technologists to enter manufacturing industry. But this rings hollow with Lucas attempts at sacking skilled people and with other multinationals following suit. Remember the trade-off between pay restraint and increases in the social wage? What better way to gear up industry than to produce for social need?

The Corporate Plan tries to answer problems which have faced the labour movement for a long time. These problems are fundamental to the present 'crisis'.

It is not merely an aspiration or moral assertion. They are contained in a feasible proposal backed by six volumes of closely argued technical and economic data compiled by the workers who ran the industry on a day to day basis. Trade unionists at Chrysler, BAC, CA Parsons, Vickers, Scragg are working along similar lines. It is our hope that the movement will pursue these proposals in plants throughout the country.

We will be watching closely to see if those who have spoken about this subject for so long are now willing to demonstrate their support for it — both inside and outside the House of Commons, as well as in union offices up and down the country. They can show their support by allowing us the opportunity of using our skill and ability in the interests of the community rather than to make profits for the few.

CARS - aim is workers' control



THE INTERNATIONAL drive to maintain profits in the crisis-ridden car industry has no limits. There are now 1,000 industrial 'robots' in use throughout the world — doing jobs like paint spraying, body welding and handling castings.

And, according to a newly published report sponsored by the Institute for Workers' Control entitled 'Motor Industry in Crisis', in just two years we will see a two-armed robot capable of putting together assemblies from gear boxes to mileometers. The use of these robots is just another aspect of the attempts by car companies to 'make the work process easier to control, in the interests of profit'.

The IWC report firmly situates the redundancies, attacks on manning levels, plant closures, increases in labour mobility, speed-ups of flow line and constant attempts to undermine shop floor organisation as the inevitable by-products of the international operations of the giant multinationals in their search for new markets and more profits.

The irrationality of the capitalist economy is clearly exposed by this report: 'The firms are helpless in the grip of the market. For each one to survive it must invest; yet each new investment increases

massive new overcapacity with the introduction of each new model in volume cars. "Average capacity utilisation" in Europe is at present between 60 per cent and 70 per cent. This represents an immense waste of manpower and resources.'

Contrast this with the £580 million spent by Fords on research and developments alone for its new model, the 'Fiesta', with the aim of producing 500,000 units per year from 1977 from 3 different plants in Western Europe.

Technological innovations — at the expense of working conditions and jobs — are another aspect of the irrationality of the capitalist market. Rather than using these developments in technology to relieve the work process and monotony of repetitive work in the car assembly plants, under capitalism they merely become another method in the hands of the bosses for increasing the exploitation of the workforce.

The struggles at British Leyland today are a clear confirmation of the determination of employers to turn investment into profitability. At Leyland — the management — linked up with the Labour Government and the trade union bureaucrats — are leading an assault on each and every attempt by the shop floor to defend themselves

strategy for the industry' — remains unfulfilled. It is inadequate simply to note the dangers confronting the labour movement. What is required is a strategy for workers' control over the industry.

The report does put forward positive demands for 'trade union democracy and the need to extend and consolidate lay membership control of the trade union movement at all levels, and to ensure the accountability of all officials, both national and plant, to the

rank and file'. But these demands in themselves do not provide any kind of alternative.

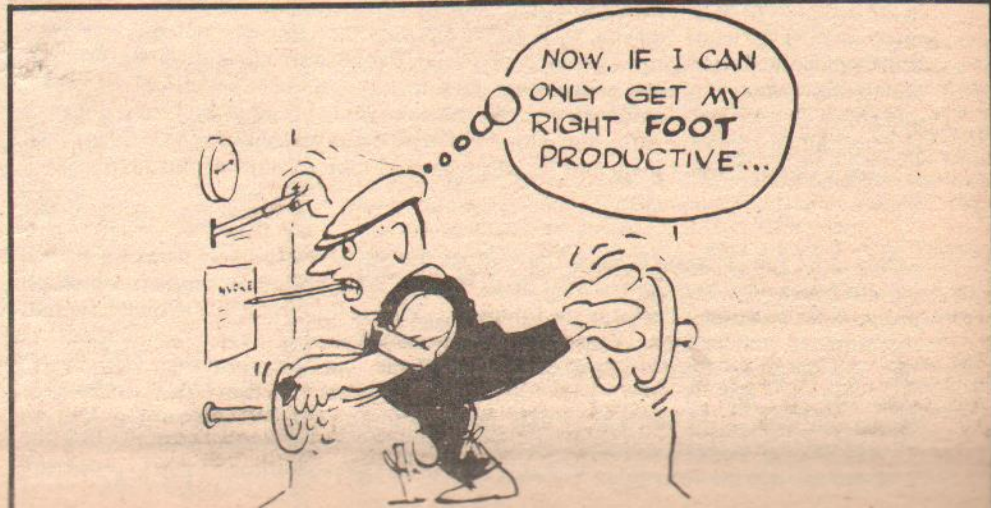
The report fails to point in the direction of the type of measures required — including demands for work sharing with no loss of pay in the face of redundancies and lay-offs, increased staffing levels to meet speed-up proposals, and opening the books to reveal the plans of the bosses.

The fight to open the bosses' plans and accounts to the work-

force is the kind of struggle that could provide an important basis in revealing the true nature of Ryder's plans. It is also one which points the way forward for the struggle for workers' control of the industry.

JOHN GRAHAM

★ The Report is available from: Jim Shutt, c/o Coventry Work shop, 40 Binley Road, Coventry.



To the Central
Committee
of the
Socialist
Workers Party

Dear Comrades,

In view of the urgency of the political situation — the Liberal-Labour pact, the Phase 3 wage controls, the demoralising impact of the Labour Government's policies, the increasing racist vote — the IMG National Committee thinks that the struggle for a united opposition to the Labour Government's policies takes on an even greater importance than before.

As part of this struggle we would propose a meeting between representatives of our two leaderships to discuss the question of participation in coming elections — particularly the next general election. We believe that Stechford shows clearly that an agreement between the IMG, the SWP and other far left organisations on elections would enable a united revolutionary intervention capable of gaining a much greater impact than any single organisation's campaign. It would also prevent the demoralising situation that could arise if revolutionary candidates run against each other.

We hope to receive a reply from you as soon as possible to enable us to discuss these issues.

Fraternally,

Brian Grogan [For the National Committee of the IMG].

SWP

INTERNATIONAL
IMG
MARXIST GROUP

THE LESSONS OF STECHFORD OPEN LETTER FROM TARIQ ALI TO PAUL FOOT

Dear Paul,

It is somewhat grotesque that I should be writing you an open letter as the latter is a device we normally reserve for individuals with whom any other form of contact is difficult. Why is it then that one has to do this? It is because despite the fact that we are both revolutionaries (albeit in different revolutionary socialist organisations) it has been impossible to communicate with each other except through opposing loudspeaker vans on the streets of Stechford. So this open letter is a response to a bizarre situation.

The by-election is now over. There are a number of points in relation to it which I would have made to you personally had we encountered each other in Stechford itself, but which now have to be made through this letter.

In the first place, I think you will probably agree that the results show us once again how Labour's right-wing policies (typified by the Social Contract, the refusal of the 'lefts' to make any fight, etc.) have created the basis for Tory victories in previously solid Labour seats. The fascists, too, are gaining more strength, spreading their poison and winning working class votes. It is not at all inconceivable that their aim of replacing the Liberals as the 'third party' in British national politics is now even closer to being realised than ever before, though on an uneven regional basis and not nationally. Nonetheless, it is a significant development to which we have to pay serious attention. We should not rule out the fascists saving a number of deposits in the next General Elections (of course under a system of proportional representation they would do considerably better).

Given this general situation it was totally incomprehensible why there were two revolutionary socialist candidates, both saying similar sorts of things as far as the masses were concerned, and both essentially competing for the same layer of voters. You know perfectly well, Paul, that the IMG, far from 'splitting the anti-racist votes' as your comrade Steve Jefferys claimed in *Socialist Worker*, has been consistently fighting for a united approach to elections. That is why we supported you in Walsall and Newcastle and that is why we urged joint discussions for a common candidate in Stechford. Our local branch is much stronger than yours, we have a modest working class implantation and we had begun campaigning in the constituency three weeks before your own candidature was announced. We did regard this as sectarian on the part of your organisation as it appeared that the main reason for catapulting yourself to Stechford was to 'defeat the IMG'. Leaving aside the stupidity of such a project in broad political terms, it was also, in my view, an act of gross irresponsibility and a misuse of your prestige, which extends far beyond the world of far-left politics. I have heard of your reluctance to have become involved in this sectarian project, and all I can say is that your own political instincts were nearer the mark than those of your leadership. Our comrades who came to two of your meetings were correct to stress this point to you. Far from our campaign aiming at attacking the SWP, as Jefferys puts it in *Socialist Worker*, we stressed the need for unity (in the context of developing a broad class struggle opposition to the policies of the Labour Government), and recognised the work which you personally have done for the anti-racist cause.

Secondly, we can both agree that the response of the Labour Party to the racist and fascist candidates put up by the Tories as in Stechford is totally inadequate. It was only in one sentence of Davis' stencilled appeal to Asian voters that he mentioned that Labour would defend immigrants. Needless to say this appeared only in Urdu so that the press wouldn't get hold of it. In effect Labour totally ignored the question of racism. In a situation where it was the central plank of the Tories and the fascists this was a disastrous decision.

Thirdly there was a great deal of apathy and cynicism on the part of large numbers of working class voters which was manifested both in discussions with our canvassers and in the abstentions at the actual poll itself. Curiously enough our canvassers, who spent many days in the white working class areas, reported that they encountered very little hostility (except from headline fascist supporters). People were anxious to talk and they almost universally expressed great dissatisfaction with Labour's policies. This unease and anger, in itself a reflection of the crisis of the capitalist system, is bound sooner or later to find an explosive reflection within the mass organisations of the working class. It cannot simply bypass them and socialists have to take account of this fact.

On a more fundamental level, we have to see the Stechford result as part of a general pattern which disproves the essential thesis of your organisation on the question of left unity. Your position is basically the following: 'We are the largest group on the far left, therefore we, and we alone, constitute either the nucleus of or in fact we ourselves are the revolutionary party (depending on whom one is speaking to); everyone else is just a sect and therefore irrelevant'. From this flows the implacable logic — the best way to fight racism is to join the SWP. Remember how we all used to laugh at Healy's pretensions in the '60s, expressed in fantasy formulas like 'the best way to help the struggle in Vietnam is to build the revolutionary party — the SLL

— and not "middle class" protest bodies such as the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign?' 'The best way to fight unemployment is to join the Right to Work marches'?

No-one doubts that you are the largest far left group and an important component of what will be in the coming years a revolutionary party, but that does not transform you into its nucleus. This fact has been reflected in elections within the National Union of Teachers, within the National Union of Students, in the Stechford by-election and no doubt tomorrow in numerous other activities. Is it not time to draw up a balance sheet from these developments? The SWP stands in the same relationship to the masses as the other major left organisations. Is it not time to understand that a united far left pole could in certain fields of activity shift the relationship of forces between us and the reformists? Already in Stechford both our organisations have individually gained more votes than the CP did the last time it stood. How does the CP explain the 'ultra-left' opponents of the parliamentary road getting more votes even in bourgeois elections than itself? The *Morning Star* is not telling the truth when it says that neither of us canvassed in the white working class areas, but in any case what is to prevent the CP from campaigning in the black areas as well and competing with us? Or is it that Asians and blacks are more responsive to 'ultra-leftism'? The point I am making is that an understanding of the united front is absolutely vital in this period. Don't follow the real sectarians who are only in favour of the 'united front' with the mass organisations and who denounce all political activity outside that framework as wrong. The struggle for the united front starts at home!

A united far left slate, in our view, would be the best possible method of maximising our political impact in the next general election. In certain exceptional cases we should back class struggle candidates who represent a real mass base and its revulsion with Labour's policies. Coalitionism as represented by Lib-Lab agreements (and further developments on the same pattern cannot be excluded) would be a further aid. In certain areas candidates belonging to other political groups (Big Flame in Liverpool is an obvious example) could also be supported. We did have big meetings in Stechford as you know full well. We involved a normally excluded section of the population in politics. But these meetings would have been larger if we had had one agreed candidate, and if both you and myself had spoken for her or him. What you must understand is this, Paul. There are thousands of militants all over the country who will not support any far left group because of the divisions and splits, and splits within splits, that characterise us as a whole. This layer of militants which exists increasingly in the working class could, however, be mobilised by united initiatives. Would that not be in the best interests of the far left as a whole? Naturally your organisation being the largest would benefit the most, but in any case what is more important is that revolutionary politics as a whole would benefit. Matters such as defending *Socialist Worker* against attacks would, both in political and material terms, be more productive from a united front approach. I would certainly be prepared to speak with you to defend *Socialist Worker* and raise money for it both on the campuses and in the black areas where your agitational material has played an extremely useful role. More importantly the defence of John Deason would be facilitated by the SWP giving even minimal information and consultation on the campaign to the rest of the far left. Surely you must realise that to collapse every political initiative into 'building our party' can in the medium term, leave alone the long term, be disastrous both for you and the far left as a whole? What is the point of sowing dragon's teeth if the final harvest is going to yield only flies which can easily be swatted? On this question you should take a leaf out of the book of our French and Spanish comrades of the LCR. Both organisations are considerably larger than yours and yet both do not make narrow party chauvinism the central thrust of their work. On the contrary, they accept their responsibilities as large revolutionary organisations and attempt to unite the forces to the left of the traditional mass organisations — and not without success.

Socialist Worker itself commented on the 'significant degree of support for the united revolutionary left, which got an average of two and a half per cent of the votes' in the French Local elections. Our joint vote in Stechford amounts to 2.4 per cent and a united campaign with a single candidate would have polled a higher percentage. The reason for our higher vote is essentially because of our united front approach.

I hope that you will discuss some of these points with your comrades. Naturally we would publish any reply by yourself, but far more important are the questions which I have raised. Just remember, Paul, that revolutionary parties are not brought into existence by arithmetical growth and recruitment, nor are old, decaying reformist parties broken by abuse, let alone by physical attacks. The historical process has revealed the complexities of such developments in the past. It no doubt has many surprises in store for all of us, but short-cuts I don't think will be among them. In comradeship,

Tariq.

Stechford- a fight for revolutionary politics

From the very beginning of the Stechford by-election campaign the IMG set itself the task of fighting for a programme that showed militants that there was an alternative to the betrayals of the Labour leaders.

Our campaign was based on building united working-class action around socialist demands. This is why we set ourselves practical tasks like organising a base inside the working-class immigrant community for an on-going anti-racist movement. Starting with a meeting of over 90 immigrant workers on 24 February, the Birmingham IMG prepared for an effective intervention on the 3000 strong Stechford anti-racist demonstration that took place two days later.

Right throughout the 20 days of the by-election period, the

The Stechford by-election result saw a swing of 17.6 per cent from Labour to the Tories. After three years of vicious anti-working class attacks by the Government that should surprise no-one.

But another response to the Government's policies was the significant rise in the revolutionary left vote. In February 1974, when the Tories were thrown out of office, the Workers Revolutionary Party candidate polled 280 votes, only just over 0.6 per cent of those cast.

Last week 871 people voted for revolutionary candidates — 2.4 per cent of the total poll. 494 votes went to Brian Heron of the International Marxist Group and 377 [1 per cent] to Paul Foot of the Socialist Workers Party.

IMG continued its anti-racist work inside both the immigrant community, and the white working class, pouring out a constant stream of propaganda in both English and Urdu. The anti-racist festival held on the last Saturday of the campaign brought together over 400 people — black and white.

On election eve, leaflets were distributed in the immigrant area announcing that Brian Heron and Tariq Ali would be calling in each street that night to do short meetings and discuss with the people. As the IMG mini-bus toured the streets, groups of Asian workers came out to meet the candidate and his supporters.

ACTIVITY

This sustained activity means that for the first time in that area there is a real chance of building a genuine anti-racist movement with mass support in the Asian community. Furthermore the absolutely overwhelming majority of the Asians are factory workers which not only strengthens the anti-racist movement inside the factories and the trade unions, but also strengthens the fight of all workers against the right-wing leaders.

In no sense did our anti-racist campaign weaken our activity in the predominantly white working class areas. From the very beginning IMG members and supporters canvassed the working class housing estates of Shard End and Bromford Bridge. Night after night teams of people knocked on doors putting forward the



policies of revolutionary socialism.

In the afternoons on the main shopping parades, groups of comrades canvassed shoppers and talked to pensioners about our policies. Over the last five days nearly every voter who had expressed their support for, or interest in, our policies was revisited. Of course many of these voters reluctantly voted Labour because of their hatred of the Tories and their fear of the return of a Tory Government.

FED UP

Often they would say: 'We are fed up with Labour. We agree with you. However we do not want to let the Tories in.' An examination of our canvass returns on the council estates shows that for every five people who generally supported our policies, only one was prepared to give a definite commitment of an IMG vote.

The existence of two revolutionary candidates had a negative effect on these voters because they saw little difference between the two programmes and they were worried that the anti-Tory vote would be split even more.

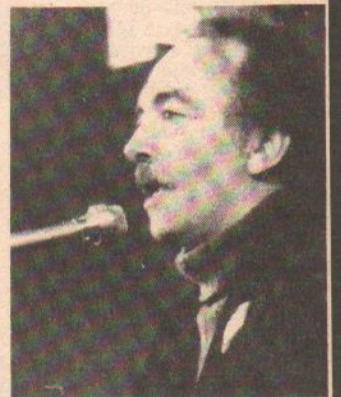
Nonetheless, despite these difficulties we got lots of new names and addresses which the Birmingham IMG will be contacting very soon so that people who are prepared to be active against the social contract and racism, and want to fight cuts in public expenditure can be brought into organised activity.

Although the Labour Party clearly had its back to the wall,

and its supporters were very depressed about the possibilities of the Tories winning, there was a marked lack of hostility from the Labour Party workers to the IMG.

Two of their supporters at the polling booths said to me: 'We want Labour to win. But we want the IMG to get a good vote. A good vote for your socialist programme will help the left wing inside the Labour Party and show the members why we need a left-wing programme.' More than one local Labour Party activist secretly admitted they were working for Davis, but voting Heron.

Stechford was more than an election campaign. It was a living practical demonstration that revolutionaries can find a response amongst ordinary working people. It showed that providing the organisation has a number of clear projects it can gain a base amongst groups of workers for genuine socialist policies and win some of those workers to the banner of revolutionary Marxism.



BOB PENNINGTON

WHAT THE LEFT SAID

Stechford was no ordinary by-election. It occurred in the wake of the toolmakers' dispute, the Lib-Lab deal, the budget. There was the prospect of Phase III. And there were two candidates of the far left and one fascist.

In other words, Stechford was a test. Not just for the parliamentary battalions, but for all who seek to politically organise, agitate, intervene. So how did the left stand the test?

★ Morning Star

The Morning Star's position was inevitable — support for the Labour Party candidate Terry Davis. The difficulty the Communist Party faced was justifying this advice. The Star of 28 March attempted this by painting Davis as 'left as possible'.

The main 'left' credential the Star could find was Davis's support for import controls, which he said was 'one of the very useful tools in planning a socialist economy'. How an economic regulator which seeks to divide workers in one country from those of another is socialist the Star doesn't elaborate on. Neither does it mention that Davis supports another form of import control — that of people. He opposes the conference policy of the Labour Party in demanding an end to all immigration controls.

On election day, the Star mentions the two candidates of the far left, who 'have been actively courting the Asian vote and had many pithy comments to make against the major parties'. But the Star reassured its readers that the far left was 'making little headway with white workers'. And of course it is the white workers who are much more important, especially if you are in favour of immigration controls as their favoured candidate Terry Davis and the CP are.

SOCIALIST PRESS ★

Socialist Press, the paper of the Workers Socialist League, makes

right winger Jenkins no confidence can be placed by workers in Davis to wage any kind of struggle for socialist policies'. Strong stuff, and stronger followed: 'The only way with such elements is to lever them out of the Labour Party through a mobilisation of working class opposition to their betrayals'.

Socialist Press was not too enthusiastic about any of the candidates, but they did not judge the SWP or the IMG as class enemies. So what was the conclusion:

'We call on our readers and supporters to vote Labour in these elections and to take up the fight within their union branches and Labour Parties for a breaking of the coalition with the Liberals, for the expulsion of the crypto-Tory right wing, and for a programme of alternative policies in opposition to those of the Callaghan-Steel government'.

Thus fight for the removal of Davis from the Labour Party but vote for him. Is this a line to launch a fight against the policies of this Government? Finally there is Socialist Worker which, unlike the rest, did stand a candidate.

Socialist Worker

On its eve of poll edition Socialist Worker did not carry one report of its campaign. The only mention was in the letters column, under correspondence from 'Steve Jefferys, Tottenham'. However as the writer in question is actually the national secretary of the SWP, this letter cannot be judged as a routine filler for the letters page.

Jefferys gets to his most interesting when he refers to the IMG:

'The International Marxist Group who are turning up to all Paul Foot's meetings in the area to attack the Socialist Workers Party, are concentrating their efforts among Asian workers, saying that the key is a big united anti-racist campaign. The SWP doesn't send anyone to the IMG meetings since the election is not a debate with them.'

'We have always played a major part in anti-racist demonstrations

forward policies on only one issue. They are, for us, about creating realistic socialist alternatives to the established parties. This is why I regret that the IMG are splitting the anti-racist votes on Thursday, and their campaign is attacking the SWP.'

A number of points need to be answered. The IMG had public meetings on racism, women's rights, the cuts and a general meeting. It had posters on racism, women's rights, the Social Contract and cuts. Red Weekly had Stechford articles on racism, housing, health, the motor industry and the Labour candidate. Socialist Worker on the other hand had only one substantive article on the campaign — on racism.

If the paper had only space for

one article, then they were absolutely correct to centre on racism; by the same standards the IMG's campaign was right to concentrate its greatest efforts on mobilising the most oppressed section of the Stechford community — the Asian workers.

As for 'attacking the SWP', the only way in which such attacks were made was to criticise the SWP for not agreeing to even discuss the possibility of a joint candidate. For, when it comes to fighting the ideas that won so much support for the National Front, the IMG does believe 'the key is a big united anti-racist campaign'. To that charge of Steve Jefferys, the IMG is proud to plead guilty.

GLC Elections, 5 May.
Ealing Southall

Vote
Hedley
Socialist (IMG)

PUBLIC MEETING:

CHAIR: **BOB SINGH**

(AJEW, TRICO, PERSONAL CAPACITY)

TARIQ ALI

(POLITICAL COMMITTEE, I.M.G.)

GERRY HEDLEY

(SOCIALIST I.M.G. CANDIDATE, EALING/SOUTHALL)

AHMED SHUJA

(EDITOR, "JID-O-JEHAD"; T+QWU, PERSONAL CAPACITY)

★ THURSDAY APRIL 14th
★ SOUTHALL TOWN HALL
7.30p.m. SOUTHALL BROADWAY
Buses 207, 208, ☆☆☆

☆ Southall BR Station.

**INTERNATIONAL
IMG
MARXIST GROUP**



FIRST IN, last out? The International Marxist Group's GLC election campaign got underway on 1 April [after 12 o'clock] when the Socialist [IMG] candidate for Islington North [centre] handed in his nomination papers at the Town Hall. With him were his election agent Mike Simpson [left], a General and Municipal Workers shop steward at the Royal Northern Hospital in the constituency, and Mick Gosling, the London organiser of the IMG.

Among Mick Sullivan's nominators is Clement Maharaj, one of the main organisers of the Islington 18 Defence Campaign. The show trial of these 18 black youths accused of conspiracy to rob persons unknown at last year's Notting Hill Carnival begins later this month.

The IMG will be marching with the campaign when it demonstrates from Highbury Magistrates Court at 12 noon on Saturday 23 April. Afterwards many demonstrators will be going to join the anti-fascist

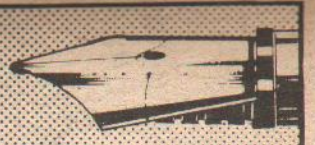
Street meetings in Southall and Islington over the weekend aroused considerable interest in the campaign. Typically people were fed up with rising prices and falling living standards and saw no way out of the current mess — something that will be reflected in the low turn-out on 5 May.

But black people particularly were aware of the rising tide of racism and the need to fight it now. With the Sunday Times [3 April] predicting that the National Front will be standing 85 candidates out of a field of 92, the IMG will be making an extra effort to develop united anti-racist activity.

With a special 4-page Socialist Manifesto already out, and 60,000 electoral addresses being produced this week, the IMG is preparing to flood the four constituencies in which it is standing with literature. And the six posters for each of the candidates will at least ensure that we have the most colourful campaign!

Any reader wanting to help the campaign should write to London

Photos: G.M. COOKSON (Red Weekly)



'The Union' & the Devolution Bill

It is regrettable that you have so far failed to spell out the practical meaning of self-determination, above all for your English readers, following the defeat of the Devolution Bill.

Your only comment has been the editorial of 3 March. This says: 'The reason the Bill had to be supported was simple. It entailed the essential core of self-determination for the people of Scotland and Wales, the right to elect their own government and decide their own policies.'

To the majority of your readers, this will reinforce the idea that self-determination is an obscure socialist duty that comes into force North of Carlisle or West of Gloucester.

In fact the defeat has direct practical consequences for the class struggle throughout the United Kingdom. It lays the basis for a split in the working class based on support for rival nationalisms.

Socialists support self-determination because failure to do so strengthens reactionary nationalism. It is indeed clear that the Bill's defeat will greatly strengthen the SNP. But it has also strengthened Unionism — i.e. British nationalism — a fact that socialists tend to ignore, because the nationalism of a dominant nation is not expressed openly except in times of crisis.

The most important aspect of Unionism is that, as well as equating the interests of workers with the interests of British capital, it defends the authority and unity of the British capitalist state. You ignore this. You say:

'It would be a mistake to see last week's vote as some example of rising English nationalism, John Bull versus little Scotia', and then:

'Clearly all parties want to sort out a situation they see as a bit of a mess. It is Margaret Thatcher who, in arguing for all-party talks, explains that "we are all committed to devolution." It is the particular form that it takes which is at issue.'

This does not help. Clearly, when the Tories say they dispute the form that devolution will take, they want a form which does not threaten the interests of their class! Thatcher's thumping victory over the pro-devolutionists and the Tory lineup against the guillotine both mean something. The defeat is not a parliamentary fluke. Instead of interpreting it, you polemicise against the 'mistaken view' that English nationalism is rising.

But English capitalists do not need to defend English national institutions when far more efficient British ones serve their interests. And these institutions are relevant both to the bill's defeat and the tasks of the working class.

Capitalism can only tackle the economic crisis on an all-British basis. The capitalists need central control over oil revenue. They need guarantees against working class outbursts in Scotland and Wales fuelled by regional grievances and stoked by nationalist mavericks. They need a centralised state and repressive apparatus.

Because of the strength of working class resistance it is not yet possible to introduce such a state. But it is still necessary. And assemblies with any legislative or executive independence will store up huge trouble for the ruling class in future: they would only be rendered safe by a full-scale



Michael Foot at the conference of the Labour Party in Scotland.

defeat of the working class.

However pathetic and grotesque are Thatcher's efforts, she is trying to construct a ruling class political bloc which will replace the Labour Government. She must strengthen all elements in society which favour a strong and centralised state and executive. She is engaged in a Unionist political offensive.

PROBLEMS

The problems she faces is that outright opposition to the Assemblies would create more problems that it would solve. It would risk uniting the whole of Scottish society against a future Tory government. The desertion of the Labour anti-devolutionists got her off the hook. She could maintain

verbal commitment combined with opposition in practice without appearing as the Bill's main saboteur. This is the meaning of the Bill's defeat.

The danger is not that English society will unite against Scottish society but that the working class on both sides of the border will become a battleground for rival capitalist ambitions. The problem is not whether to back independence or the union but how to promote the unity, independence and democratic rights of the working class. You might have begun to do this if you had distinguished between the tasks of socialists in Scotland and England.

It is true that Scottish socialists must fight for the unity of the British labour movement, and against any tendency to divide the labour movement on national

lines. It is for this reason that independence must be opposed at present.

LIMIT

There is a limit to what socialists can do in one country. Support for the SNP will ultimately be settled not just by our efforts in Scotland, but by whether English workers champion the rights of the Scots workers.

The future unity of the labour

movement lies in the hands of English socialists. They should be conducting the most vigorous possible campaign against the sabotage of the Bill, for the disciplining of the MPs responsible, for immediate binding referendum and the speediest possible elections to constituent assemblies.

Your editorial lays no clear tasks in front of English workers. It makes Canute-like warnings about the 'mistaken view' that English nationalism is rising. But precisely because capital and

capitalist rule are nationally based, they foster entrenched, reactionary chauvinism which binds British workers to their rulers and blinds them to their tasks. Unfortunately, dear comrades, Unionism does not need to rise: it is already alive and living in the heart of the labour movement!

It is this which you have forgotten. We hope future issues will show that it has been a temporary lapse.
ALAN FREEMAN
MARTIN O'LEARY
Glasgow

Beyond Longfellow Road

The report and comments on 'Goodbye Longfellow Road' [Red Weekly, 17 March] should have been the subject of a separate article. The implications of the way the media have reported the documentary are essential issues to raise and combat.

The media are beginning to argue that squatting is a quick, cheap, and therefore more effective way of dealing with homelessness than Council policies. It is vital to dispel suggestions that squatting is an acceptable way of 'solving' the 'housing crisis'. The demand should be decent housing for all. Squatting is not an end in itself.

Mick Sullivan's article on the general questions of housing failed to highlight some of the crucial aspects of the housing situation as it relates to the forthcoming Greater London Council elections.

For example:
1. Countering arguments that the GLC should devolve its housing responsibilities to local authorities. Individual Councils have differing policies and criteria of homelessness, separate waiting

pass them on to other Councils — which means in effect housing cuts.

2. Homeless people are not only attacked by the failures of housing policy but the Labour Government intends to victimise and criminalise them through the proposed Criminal Trespass Law.

By using one section of the homeless — squatters — as a smokescreen, the Labour Government intends to smash all forms of occupation and work-or sit-ins. If trade unions and the labour movement are to fight such legislation effectively, then anti-squatting myths must be exposed as part of the fight against attempts to confuse and divide the working class.

3. Combat criticisms of the 1974

Housing Act. The answer is not to stimulate and expand the private housing sector but to requisition and use the empty property which exists. There must be no compromise with private property landlords and speculators who exploit the homeless and profit by inadequate public housing expenditure. More public expenditure is needed — not less.

Apart from highlighting GLC incompetence and failures, is Mick Sullivan suggesting there is no answer until socialism?

I think it was regrettable that the statement of housing demands, published in the 'Socialist Manifesto', was not included in the Red Weekly article.
EMMA TAIT

'Support the Kurds'

In his reply to the National Union of Iraqi Students, Nigel Ward makes a number of valid points but then goes on to describe the Kurdish struggle as inspired by 'blind nationalism'. This is, to say the least, highly irresponsible.

The Kurds have been fighting for their national rights for several decades. Only fools or blind chauvinists (the leaders of the NUIS are obviously both) could see in such a sustained struggle a mere plot by the CIA.

The fact is that the Kurds have been oppressed by all regimes under which they, and not only they, have had the misfortune to live — Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran; [The case of the USSR, where there is also a substantial Kurdish population, is one about which I have unfortunately no informa-

close reliance on the Shah of Iran — it was precisely this short-sighted opportunism which led to the doubtless temporary, but nevertheless significant, setback which the Kurds suffered as a result of the non-aggression pact between Baghdad and Teheran.

If the Kurdish struggle is illegitimate because of the support it received from Iran, what about the Palestinian movement, which is heavily subsidised by every reactionary monarch and tin-pot tyrant in the Middle East?

Lastly, since the NUIS seems to specialise in pseudo-radical demagoguery [the stock-in-trade of all Third World nationalists] a few, very simple questions seem to be in order.

* Is the NUIS aware that Iraqi troops present in Jordan in Sept-

estinians? Is this what they mean when they say that the Ba'ath's aim is 'to fight imperialism and Zionism'?

* Has it been brought to the attention of the NUIS that the Tudeh [Iranian CP] offices in Baghdad were closed as a result of the Iran-Iraq accord? Does the NUIS support this reactionary measure?

* If, as they maintain, the Kurds are quite happy to remain under Iraqi rule and the unrest is due to a few 'bloodthirsty personalities' and CIA agents, why doesn't the Iraqi Government organise a referendum in the Kurdish areas?

Is it perhaps because even with all the means of 'persuasion' which are the Ba'ath's hallmark, they know they would get no more than 10 per cent of the vote?

John Deason, National Organiser of the Right to Work Campaign appears in Court on Wednesday 4 May on charges following the police attack on the march when it reached Hendon last spring.

Workers' Jubilee 1917-1977



The April Theses, the 'exploding bomb' as one Petrograd Bolshevik called them, transformed the Bolshevik Party. They charted out a completely new line of march for the Bolsheviks which set them on course for the seizure of power six months later. The impact of Lenin's arrival was summed up by a delegate to the 14 April all-Petrograd Bolshevik conference: 'Before Lenin arrived all the comrades were wandering in the dark'.

RIC SISSONS continues our series on the Russian Revolution.

The April Theses lit up the contours of the class struggle like a phosphor flare over the trenches at the front. Many leading Bolsheviks, particularly Stalin and Kamenev, blinded to the new situation, clung to outworn dogmas. Lenin spoke harshly of those Bolsheviks who could not grasp the new tasks — 'they should be consigned to the archive of "Bolshevik" pre-revolutionary antiques'.

In the second thesis, Lenin makes a concise assessment of the nature of the February revolution: 'State power in Russia has passed into the hands of a new class, namely, the bourgeoisie and landowners who had become bourgeois. To this extent the bourgeois democratic revolution in Russia is completed seizure of power by the people from below, (which) is the sole guarantee of the real success of the revolution the new bourgeois government does not deserve the confidence of the proletariat even in the sphere of internal policy, and no support of this government by the proletariat is admissible.'

UNWORTHY

Lenin's consistent position of no support to the Lvov-Miliukov-Kerensky government was spelt out again in thesis four: 'The new government is unworthy of the slightest confidence in the field of foreign policy.'

These statements contrasted sharply with those of the editors of *Pravda*, Stalin and Kamenev. The first editorial of these two old Bolsheviks, in mid March, called for support to the Provisional Government 'in so far as it struggles against reaction and counter-revolution'.

Despite the arrival of Lenin this

position was maintained. On 8 April, the day after the April Theses were published in *Pravda*, Kamenev asserted in an editorial: 'As for the general schema of Comrade Lenin, it seems to us unacceptable in that it starts from the assumption that the bourgeois democratic revolution is ended, and counts upon an immediate transformation of this revolution into a socialist revolution.'

DYNAMIC

Immediately upon his arrival Lenin grasped the dynamic of future events. In thesis five he stated:

'The main feature of our revolution is the dual power which arose in the very first days after the triumph of the revolution The Petrograd Soviet is voluntarily transferring state power to the bourgeoisie and its Provisional Government Two powers cannot exist in a state. One of them is bound to pass away.'

Six days previously Stalin made a speech accepting as its starting point the existence of the Provisional Government and the Soviets, but which came to the conclusion that:

'The roles have been divided. The Soviet has in fact taken the initiative in the revolutionary transformation And the Provisional Government has in fact taken the role of fortifier of the conquests of the revolutionary people.'

As the 'fortifier of conquests' Stalin, through *Pravda*, had demanded that the Government be pressurised into opening negotiations to end the war. Until such a time troops were to stay at the front and fight on. This attitude was the logical outcome of his

position of critical support to the Government, but was one which brought sharp condemnation from Lenin: 'To demand from the Government of the capitalists that it renounce annexations is nonsense, flagrant mockery.'

Without naming names, thesis nine of Lenin's document was clearly aimed at certain old Bolsheviks as well as the Mensheviks. 'Revolutionary defencism is the worst enemy of the further progress and success of the Russian revolution Those who have yielded on this point and have been unable to extricate themselves are lost to the revolution The slightest concession to revolutionary defencism is a betrayal of socialism, a complete renunciation of internationalism.'

It was from this standpoint that Lenin denounced the 'Appeal to the people of the whole world' made by the Petrograd Soviet on 14 March. Lenin considered it 'idle, innocent and pious', 'there isn't a word in it imbued with class consciousness.'

Stalin had welcomed its appearance. The April Theses argued that the February revolution had taken the first step to end the war, but that this could only be completed with the 'transfer of state power to the proletariat'. The imperialist war had to become a civil war.

HEROIC

Lenin recalled the heroic stand of the German revolutionary Karl Liebknecht who called on the German workers and soldiers to turn their weapons against their own government. As a minority of one Liebknecht expressed this position in the German parliament.

Lenin proposed in the April Theses that the Bolsheviks take a new name, the Communist Party. In thesis 18 Lenin scathingly de-



Soldiers raise the Red Flag outside the Kremlin in Moscow after the abdication of the Tsar.

nounced Stalin's ideas of joining hands with the Mensheviks:

'There is no need to waste many words explaining that the amalgamation of Social Democrats in Russia is out of the question. It is better to remain with one friend only, like Liebknecht, and that means remaining with the revolutionary proletariat, than to entertain even for a moment any thought of amalgamation with the

party of the Organising Committee, with Cheidze and Tseretelli.'

Lenin arrived in Petrograd politically isolated. At the Bolshevik Petrograd conference of 14 April Kamenev's position for 'watchful control' over the Provisional Government was defeated. Ten days later the All Russian party conference met. Here the 150 delegates called for 'the rapid transfer of all state power into the

hands of the Soviets.'

In the space of twenty days Lenin had won over the vast majority of the Bolsheviks to the April Theses. The last line of the April Theses had been taken to heart: 'It is time to cast off the soiled shirt and put on clean linen.'

★ Next issue — The April Days.

WHAT'S ON

Deadline: 5pm, Saturday before publication. Rates: 2p per word except for general movement events.

COVENTRY Red Weekly Tote. Winning number this week 114. Prize £4.00

WORKERS BOOKSHELF Socialist mail order book service offers wide selection of books on Marxism, Labour History, Women and international struggles. Pamphlets our speciality — over 90 titles. SAE for catalogue to Workers Bookshelf, 150 Foster Road, Trumpington, Cambridge.

OUT NOW — Workers Power No. 4. Articles including 'Party and Programme', 'Comintern Theses on Women', 'Eastern Europe', 'Ireland'. 35p available from 1a Camberwell Grove, SE5.

PENDERYN: Issue No. 5 of *Penderyn*, Welsh revolutionary socialist paper now out. Articles include John Jenkins, Emrys Roberts, Alan Llwyd. In Welsh and English. 30p single issues. Subscriptions £2.20 per year. Cymru Rydd, Cymru Sosialaidd, Cymru Gymraeg. From *Penderyn*, 18 Stryd Windsor, Ucheldir, Abertawe, Cymru.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST papers Number one — out now. Contains a full discussion of the political differences that emerged during the recent split in the RCG; articles on party-building and internationalism; Stalinism and the British Communist Party. 50p plus 13p postage from the Revolutionary Communist Tendency (RW), BM RCT London, WC1V 6XX.

ONE OR TWO people wanted for a joint mortgage in semi-communal N. London house. Contact Sue 802 0911 (10-6) or Kathy 624 9528. Will be looking for a place as soon as possible.

MODEL GERMANY. Conference on the current situation in West Germany. Organised by Campaign against Repression in West Germany. Speakers from West Germany. Background documents available from The Campaign (West Germany), 35 Wellington Street, London WC2. Send large SAE and 40p. 7 May, North London Polytechnic, Holloway Road, Islington, London N1. 10.00-6.30. Further details from the Campaign.

BIG IMG May Day Social: 30 April, Caxton House, St. Johns Way N19. 8pm-2am. Bar extension, food, band, disco. Admission £1.

'SPAIN — The Weak Link of Europe'. Speaker from LCR-ETA (VI). Spanish supporters of the Fourth International. Tuesday 19 April, Baptist Mills Centre, Horley Road, St. Werburghs (off Mina Road near M32), Bristol 2.

MARXISM & MEDIA Forums. 'Revolutionary Journalism: Help or Hindrance?' Roger Protz. Sunday 17 April, 7pm, London Film-Makers Co-op, 44 Fitzroy Road, London NW1. (Chalk

SOLIDARIDAD
 Bureau of the Central Spanish Solidarity Committee
 Bureau del Comité de Solidaridad Española

KING JUAN CARLOS SPEAKS

NO ONE CAN STOP ME ON MY ROAD TO DEMOCRACY

LEGALIZE ALL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES NOW!

Available from Spanish Solidarity c/o 108 Salisbury Rd, Cathays, Cardiff. Price 15p plus postage.

MANCHESTER International Forums: Wed 27 April, Perry Anderson on 'The Western Communist Parties'. 8pm in the Council Chamber, Barnes Wallis Building, UMIST Students Union. Adm 20p. Organised by IMG.

London Socialist Teachers Alliance Public Meeting. Weds 27 April, 7.30pm, Prince Albert pub, Wharf Dale Road, London N1.

London Socialist Teachers Alliance Public Meeting. 6 May. 'Fight the ILEA/ILTA Compulsory Transfer Agreement, Fight the Cuts'. Venue to be announced later.

BIRMINGHAM Gay Socialist Group meets first Monday in each month at Lozells Social Development Centre, 1 Finch Road, B'ham, 8pm. Tel Peace Centre, 021-643 0996.

PORTLAOISE HUNGER STRIKE — Republican prisoners imprisoned by the Southern Irish collaborationist regime are protesting over their deplorable conditions which include frequent strip searches and no communal association. The Irish Embassy, Grosvenor Place (nearest tube Hyde Park Corner) will be picketed on Sunday 3 April at 2.30pm.

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS in the British-occupied North East of Ireland in 'Block H for Horror' Long Kesh are fighting to regain the 'Political Prisoner Status' which they formerly possessed.

The republican 'prisoners of war' in this country have never had 'Political Prisoner Status'. In support of their demand for this, the Home Office (Whitehall) will be picketed at 8pm,

'In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king'

WITH THE generally low profile of the left on the question of Ireland these days and the recent wave of chauvinist hysteria surrounding the bombings and the 'show-trials', it takes considerable courage to mount an anti-British rock-opera on the subject of the Irish war.

That's what Belt and Braces Roadshow have done, taking the oddly-titled *Not As Green As Its Cabbage* round the country, from Salisbury to Skegness. They survived the trip — and they deserve to.

No easy agitprop theme for this group. And no easy form either. Tackling the cuts, unemployment or even abortion is easy meat, compared to their task. Using simply a rock-band and a handful of slides, they attempt to get inside the war in the Six Counties, without skimping on the music or totally burying the politics, and they mainly succeed.

OMISSIONS

There are omissions, which weaken their impact — no direct reference to the IRA is the most curious. But given the limitations of the form (a rock-opera about Irish politics — just dwell on that!), their achievement is considerable.

Mayday Theatre Group helped pioneer this form last year, with their confused *Urban Guerilla Rock*. Belt and Braces have capably extended it. Here the extremely well-written songs and instrumental breaks serve to underline and draw out the implications of the spoken monologues, representing the Catholic and Loyal

ist. The recurring theme is expressed in the sinister, poetic phrase: 'In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.'

The music meanwhile is overlaid and interspersed by back-projections, highlighting key points in the argument.

SKILFUL

The skilful interaction of these elements firmly puts paid to purists, like the socialist song-writer Leon Rosselson, who have argued that the electrification of music acts as a source of alienation. For him rock-music, in all its forms, cannot be used by the left. Yet here the complex, electric music is woven around terse, expressive lyrics, with not a traditional 'rebel' song in sight (strong as the temptation may have been).

On the debit side, the whole production is minimal theatrically, with much dramatic potential being missed (though the accents of Stanley McGeagh and Eileen Pollock, in the spoken interludes, are startlingly authentic). However the audacity of the concept and its bold execution, holds the show decisively together. In particular, John Fiske on lead guitar tears steel strips off many a 'super-star' and Jeni Barnett's voice has the power and accuracy of an Armalite.

This is the kind of use of modern music and artistic form which the revolutionary left needs desperately to develop, rather than relying on pale imitations of past culture, given a 'left' content. *Not As Green As Its Cabbage*, for all its faults and political weaknesses, is one of the bravest, most ambitious

fringe projects around just now.

Yet the cast of six outnumbered the audience by one the night I saw them — they deserve many, many more. They're playing the Half Moon Theatre in London's East End on April 11-13. Pack it out

every night, please. Their guts, skill and commitment will amaze.

CARL GARDNER Belt and Braces will be playing at the TACT benefit on April 17 — ring Andy on 228 2223 for details.

Imprecor

FRANCE
 THE ELECTORAL DEFEAT OF THE REGIME

Unpublished speech by Trotsky on trade unions in Russia (1922)

Latest 40-page issue includes articles on: French elections; Spain; Ethiopia; Argentina; round-up on International Women's Day mobilisations; Ukrainian worker's open letter to Brezhnev. PLUS previously unpublished speech by

Trotsky on the trade unions and the Soviet State. Price 40p plus 10p p&p from: Imprecor, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. Annual subscriptions £7 (6 months, £3.75) from same address.

World Outlook



King Soubhuza

★ Swaziland

Soubhuza II has been king of Swaziland since 1899, making him the longest reigning monarch in the world. Two weeks ago he visited a livestock exposition and chose that

occasion — for reasons best known to himself — to abolish the Parliamentary system under which the country has been governed for the 78 years of his reign. Swaziland will now be run by a system of tribal communities called 'Tinkhundla'.

★ Fascists

Which city is the new home of López Rega, founder of the Argentinian Triple A and advisor to 'Isabelita' Perón?

Which city houses the European centre of the Dina, the Chilean secret police?

Regular readers will not be surprised to discover that the answer to both is Madrid.

López Rega's bodyguards were seen drinking in a cafe in the Calle Gaztambide in Argüelles, a Madrid suburb. He has 40 million pesetas invested in property development in the tourist resort of Marbella. The Madrid residence was supposed to be a secret.

There is good reason for this. Four agents of the Argentinian junta's secret police have been seen in Barcelona, hot on López Rega's trail and apparently out to kill him. They have got cold again — they are now in France — but they will probably find him sooner or later.

According to the Montoneros guerrilla organisation in Argentina, there are some 100 secret police in Spain. Most of them are not chasing fascists but are after left-wing exiles.

Cambio 16 magazine has received information that the Dina offices are at 10, Avenida del Generalísimo, Madrid. Its operations base is near the Palacio de Congresos y Exposiciones just around the corner.

A number of documents indicate that Colonel 'Edwin' of the Chilean embassy in Madrid, generally assumed to be head of the Dina in Europe, has been centrally involved in the fascist movement in Spain.



★ Sahara

A press conference last week in the middle of the desert verified Polisario claims of victories over the Moroccan and Mauritanian armed forces.

The Polisario Front is the liberation movement fighting to defend the Sahara Democratic Republic, the former Spanish colony which was divided between Morocco and Mauritania last February. The country is rich with phosphate deposits — hence the interest displayed by its neighbours, including the Algerians who back the Polisario.

A few months ago Polisario guerrillas destroyed half the Mauritanian airforce, though, as far as we know, the other plane is still intact!

Last week the Polisario displayed 52 Mauritanian prisoners to Western journalists. All the prisoners seemed glad to be out of a war which has cost their armies large casualties. 'For me the war is over',

★ United States

The Revolutionary Marxist Committee voted at its recent National Conference to seek fusion with the Socialist Workers Party, the American supporters of the Fourth International. The RMC was previously a tendency within the International Socialists who have links with the British SWP.

The RMC has important differences with the Fourth International. For example, like the SWP in Britain, it regards the Soviet Union and the East European countries as state capitalist. Nevertheless, it regards 'unification of the Trotskyist movement as the prerequisite for a full discussion and testing in the class struggle of the differences that divide Trotskyists today'. Therefore the RMC has embarked on a period of joint work with our American comrades with a view to the fusion of the two organisations.

★ South Africa

South African defence spending increased by 21.3 per cent in the budget announced by Finance Minister Owen Horwood on 30 March.

It now stands at a record £1.1 billion, an annual spending per white head of approximately £275.

At the same time the Bantu Education Department budget was increased by 50 per cent to £78 million. That is an annual spending, per African head, of £4.87½!

French-trained Moroccan pilot explained cheerfully, 'In any case my contract runs out in two years.'

The Mauritanians were captured in a number of recent actions in which they lost a number of dead and wounded. Among them was an officer who was a veteran of the French army, having been previously captured by the Vietnamese liberation forces.

Another Mauritanian lieutenant, also French-trained, expressed surprise at the combativity of the Polisario guerrillas. Many of the Mauritanians were demoralised, principally at the racial discrimination in favour of Arabs in the army.

A number of captured weapons were displayed, mainly of American, Spanish, French and Belgian manufacture. Most were rifles but there were also machine guns, French anti-tank rockets and mortars. Some jeeps had been captured, mounted with Spanish 120mm recoilless cannon or 20mm machine guns.

ITALY - CP leaders in wage cut deal

Italian trade union leaders have negotiated a deal which will cut most workers' wages by at least £2.50 a month.

The background is familiar. Italy, the only European country where the economic crisis is sharper than in Britain, applied to the International Monetary Fund for a loan. The IMF set down conditions which, by one of those happy coincidences, were just what the Government was trying to implement anyway.

The parallel with Denis Healey's 'Letter of Intent' is not just obvious — it is deliberate.

The coincidence does not stop there. Healey's cuts could only be carried out because the leaders of the trade unions were not prepared to mount a fight. Their Italian counterparts went even further.

The Andreotti Government originally agreed with the IMF to cut real wages by removing the effects of recent rises in indirect taxation from the 'threshold basket'. This 'basket' is the index by which automatic pay rises are calculated in line with the rise in the cost of living.

These cost of living agreements have offered some protection against inflation for thirty years. But the weakness has always been that the Government's control of the index has enabled it to put up the prices of goods not included in the basket.

But this time the union leaders did Andreotti's job for him. They presented an alternative to the Government proposal which involved changing the weighting of three items in the basket — newspapers, transport and electricity. This, they proudly announced, would mean a reduction of 1½ points in the index over the coming year — a wage cut of 3,600 lira a month!

PRIVATE

When the Government introduced its austerity plan last October, Luciano Lama, member of the Communist Party (PCI) and general secretary of the CGIL union federation, took the opportunity to launch his own private campaign against the index linked increases. He claimed that they only benefitted the higher paid sections of workers and should be scrapped. It never crossed his mind that the way to help the low-paid was the extension of automatic payments to all workers, with the index under the control of the workers' organisations themselves.

Luciano Barca, a leading PCI economist who was consulted by the Government before the announcement of the austerity plan last October, explained the Party's attitude to the IMF talks: 'A negative conclusion to the negotiations, which have already taken too long, would have serious repercussions on Italy's credibility.'

But the time has passed since the

PCI could openly attack the index-linked system. Although it continues to give tacit support to the Christian Democratic Government by abstaining in the Chamber of Deputies, the growth of a militant opposition in the workers movement has forced it to undermine the indexed payments more subtly.

Even so, there is nothing too subtle about a wage cut. Already a statement by a group of rank and file trade unionists is circulating, attacking this sell-out to the Government and the international financiers and calling on the leaders to account for their actions to the membership.

ENOUGH

Recent weeks have shown that many workers have had enough of the PCI's shadowing the Government and are demanding a fight to defend their living standards. Many workers, PCI members among them, have sided with the struggle of students against the proposed Education Law and the fascist attacks.

The PCI has done its best to muddy the issues. Take Giorgio Amendola, a member of the Central Committee: 'It isn't just a matter of isolating and defeating manifestations of fascist violence, but also the political positions which are linked to them. It's not a question of good or bad faith; even among the 'squadrists' (fascists) of 1919 there were elements trained in all good faith....'

What Amendola fails to mention is that the fascists of 1919 were out to smash the organisations of the working class, while the students today are defending their organisations against those same fascists. Even some Central Committee members couldn't stomach Amendola's attack. When he was challenged, Amendola replied that 'fascism always takes on new faces'.

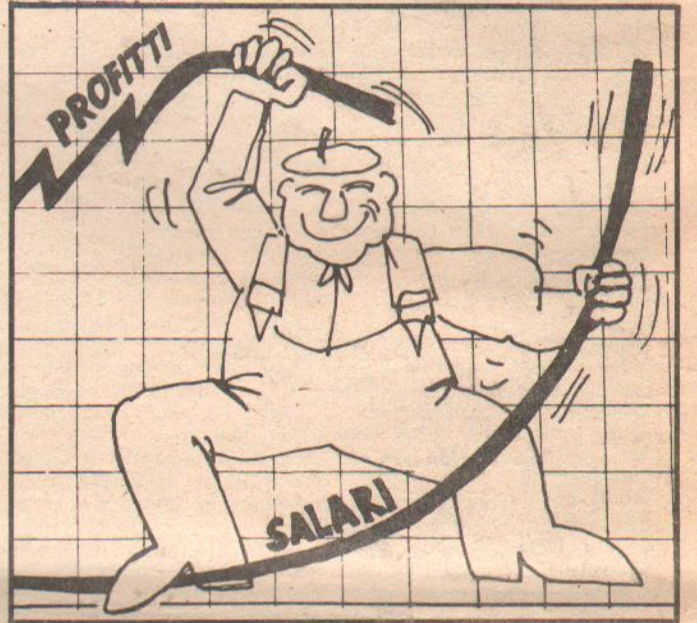
But there was not a murmur of dissent in the leadership when it came to calling a demonstration in Bologna demanding a 'return to order' or when Luciano Lama ordered an 'anti-fascist strike' against the students.

This explains why workers were only too ready to take their cue from the students in shouting Lama down at a series of meetings all over the country. But the new alternative within the student movement offers little to such workers either.

The 'autonomous' movement has managed to isolate itself from the mass of students and apparently give substance to PCI accusations of infiltration by fascists. The autonomi, resolutely opposed to the 'Establishment' (in which they include the Trotskyists) and given to dressing as Red Indians,



Prime Minister Andreotti (above) presents his wage-cutting plan. Only wage increases calculated on a workers price index provide an alternative policy.



fail to offer any political alternative.

Their opposition to any form of structure is profoundly anti-democratic. The autonomi answer to fascist attacks is nothing more political than individual reprisals or breaches of workers democracy, such as the shouting down of Lama. This is contempt for the democratic organisations of workers and students. Instead of challenging the bureaucrats of the reformist parties and unions, they avoid them.

PLATITUDES

The PCI's reply to the autonomi is a restatement of the old platitudes: the ultra-left is out to discredit the PCI as a party of government; only the historic compromise with the Christian Democrats (and support for the austerity measures) offers an alternative to the fascists.

It is no surprise that both these solutions are becoming discredited. There is a need to organise

effective defence against the fascists which remains firmly under the control of the workers and students themselves.

Already assemblies of Spanish workers, like that at the Roca factory near Barcelona, have set up defence pickets, sometimes armed, to defend their strikes and neighbourhoods. The election of defence squads reduces the possibility of irresponsible actions by individuals and increases the effectiveness of the protection.

During the present struggles a student has been killed by police. He is only the latest in a series of casualties inflicted on the Italian workers movement. Many workers are realising that the Italian police, like the Spanish, will provide no protection — indeed, the pickets will often have to protect themselves from the police.

But, equally, the cost of individual reprisals and the danger of isolation from the mass movement is high. Increasing numbers of workers and students will begin to look elsewhere for an answer.

RICHARD CARVER



Students mock union leaders during recent Rome general strike.

STORMONT'S FALL

FIVE YEARS ON

It is just five years since the fall of the Stormont 'Orange Parliament'. Its downfall brought about the shattering of the Loyalist monolith which had dominated the north of Ireland ever since the creation of the 6 County state. JOHN MAGEE, who is a regular correspondent to Red Weekly from the North, reviews events since 1972.

On 24 March 1972, the then Tory Prime Minister Edward Heath announced that the Stormont Parliament and Northern Ireland Government was being suspended and direct rule from Westminster was being restored to the six British occupied counties of Ireland after almost fifty-one years of government by the Ulster Unionist Party.

In the first few months after taking office Whitelaw released 550 internees, closed one of the internment camps at Magilligan, County Derry and announced an amnesty for those who had participated in illegal marches. According to British politicians and their 'green' imitators in Ireland, this was solid evidence that John Bull did not approve of the sectarian, repressive regime maintained by the Stormont Parliament and its paramilitary bully-boys of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Nothing is further from the truth. In every decade since the establishment of the Northern state, the Stormont regime had introduced internment against the Catholic minority. Not only did these draconian measures fail to elicit a whimper of protest from the 'democratic' MPs at Westminster, but these same MPs praised the Stormont Government for its 'firm and skilful' suppression of resistance.

Not surprisingly, five years after the introduction of direct rule the internment powers remain on the statute books and although there are no more 'internees', internment continues with unlimited detentions of Republicans, trumped-up charges which are later dropped — after the victims have spent months on remand in the very same camps which housed the internees proper.

Nor has direct rule prevented the Special Branch 'godfathers' of the RUC from indulging in the technique of torture highlighted by the BBC *Tonight* programme just a few weeks ago. It doesn't really matter either that the musicians of the Miami Showband were gunned down by members of Ulster Defence Regiment/Ulster Volunteer Force under the democratic control of the British Army and Her Majesty's Government.

BLUNDERED

Why then was Stormont suspended? This regime which had served the British capitalist class faithfully for more than five decades was no longer capable of providing a stable prop for imperialist rule. It had blundered in its handling of the civil rights agitation of the late '60s, failed to buy it off and saw it turn into an armed offensive against the very existence of the Northern state; failed with its batons, machine-guns, armoured cars, CS gas, rubber-bullets, the RUC, B-Specials and then the British Army and UDR to stop this resistance growing.

Most importantly it failed to smash the mass opposition to Stormont when Britain gave it the go-ahead to unleash naked terror

against the entire Catholic minority with the introduction of internment in August 1971 and the murder by British paratroopers of 14 Catholic civilians in Derry on what has become universally known as 'Bloody Sunday' in January 1972.

Far from smashing the opposition these measures unleashed a flood of popular resistance centring on the demand for the abolition of Stormont, and it was the scope of this resistance with up to 50,000 taking to the streets in demonstrations, the general strike and burning of the British embassy in Dublin, the swell of international support for the Irish struggle, which forced Heath's government to step in and force the resignation of Faulkner's government.

EFFECTIVE

The fall of Stormont was the single most effective blow struck against British imperialism in Ireland since the end of the War of Independence in 1921. One of the main bulwarks of imperialist rule had had to be removed, if only temporarily, and inevitably the result would be to lay the basis for fragmentation of the monolithic bloc which had dominated the Protestant parliament and Protestant state.

The loyalist monolith has fragmented into half-a-dozen or more 'parties' with a motley collection of policies. They still remain rabidly vicious and to one degree or another committed to a restored Stormont ascendancy but they appear totally divided as to how this can be achieved. Some indeed seem to regard a return to Stormont as little more than a ritual echo of a distant past. For them it would appear to be a case of 'the least said about Stormont the better.'

Thus we had the entertaining charade acted out by the Ulster Unionist Westminster MPs during the recent crisis of the Labour Government. Loud warnings were given in the backwoods of Port-



The face of Loyalism - 'rabidly vicious' but 'totally divided'.

down of the terrible fate that would befall any UUUC MP that failed to support the no-confidence motion tabled by the Tory Party. No support was to be given to the Labour Government unless it implemented the Convention Report. A three-line whip was imposed. The Labour Government refused to implement the Convention Report and limited itself to vague promises of renewed vigour in the 'security' field and a consideration of more seats for the UUC at Westminster.

Despite the three-line whip, Enoch Powell, Harold McCusker and John Carson (all UUUC MPs) abstained on the Tory motion, and UUUC leader John Molyneux reported that no action would be taken against MPs who voted according to their conscience. Though Paisley's Democratic (sic) Unionist Party has demanded that these errant MPs be brought to book, there is little reason to think that Powell & Co. will be deprived of their seats.

DISARRAY

The disarray of Loyalism has in itself brought certain benefits to the anti-imperialist struggle. Combined with the refusal of the nationalist minority to submit to any traditional 6-Counties' institution it has provided a breathing

space for the resistance to reorganise.

The fact that the Loyalists have not made any decisive advance despite the 1974 Ulster Workers Council stoppage and despite their massive election victories has left the initiative in the hands of the anti-imperialist population. It has to be recorded that the leadership of the anti-imperialist movement has consistently failed since 1972 to turn this initiative into a renewed offensive against imperialist rule.

But the Republican leadership of the struggle were unable to grasp this fact. Their perspective was still blinkered by the formal distinction that they draw between that part of Ireland which is occupied by British soldiers and that part which is held by native collaborators for British imperialism.

To have gone forward the mass movement which took to the streets and brought down Stormont would have had to be armed with a 32-Counties' strategy aimed at drawing in the entire Irish working class and its potential allies into the anti-imperialist struggle. But it was not offered so the anti-imperialist masses were left to the slick politicking of the Social and Democratic Labour Party, Conor Cruise O'Brien and the myriad of 'peace' movements which have scarred the anti-unionist ghettos ever since.

That the Republicans were unable to offer such a 32-Counties' strategy is also related to their elitist methods of struggle. For them the military exploits of the IRA were the real struggle and there was only a supportive role to be played by a mass movement in the 26-Counties, just as the mass struggle in the North was viewed as auxiliary to the armed struggle. The Republican message remained essentially — Labour must wait!

There are of course Republicans who would dispute the above criticisms. They would point to debate in the pages of *Republican News* on the need for Peoples Assemblies. They would point to the repeated declarations by Provisional spokespersons that the aim of the struggle was a socialist republic.

They would argue as *Republican News* columnist 'Solon' put it in the 26 March issue, that Republicans have '...always sought the elevation of the working class as opposed to the middle and upper class'.

TEST

But the real test of leadership lies not in the words which we put in papers and pamphlets but in the programme which we offer those militants engaged in the everyday struggle for democratic rights, in defence of political status and for the removal of the British Army and here the Republicans have been found to be sorely wanting in strategy and tactics.

There can be no doubt that the last year has witnessed a new resurgence in the militancy of the anti-unionist resistance and that this resurgence has shown the potential of developing into mass proportions. Since March 1976 when the Secretary of State, Merlyn Rees, removed political status from the Republican prisoners of war, the protests of the Relatives Action Committee have inevitably turned into actions against the British Army.

This was most marked in the establishment of barricades in August last year around the commemoration of the internment anniversary and the recent campaign of harassment undertaken by the people of Turf Lodge against the crack soldiers of the British Army's Parachute Regiment.

But rather than intervening to build solidarity with the struggle in Turf Lodge, to link up the forces

mobilised both there and by the Relatives Action Committee, to co-ordinate and generalise these struggles, the Provisionals have kept them rigidly distinct and directed their energies into pointless exemplary and punitive campaigns against prison warders and suchlike.

AIMLESS

Nor, despite all the talk of 'Peoples' Assemblies' in *Republican News*, have the Provisionals taken one specific initiative promoting the development of democratic organs of struggle in Turf Lodge, where people have been left aimlessly debating whether or not their barricades should be made permanent.

Again, when one looks at the response of the Provisional leadership to the savage effects of imperialist rule on the Catholic workers in terms of rocketing unemployment, welfare cuts, housing slashbacks, we are confronted with the same arrogance and folly. Nowhere have the Provisionals attempted to mobilise opposition on these issues, nowhere have they challenged the empty rhetoric of the Communist Party and the Officials, nowhere have they exposed the hypocrisy of the trade union bureaucrats' 'Better Life for All' campaign.

Instead the IRA has launched a campaign of assassination against individual capitalists and bosses with the naive motivation that individual members of the exploiting class are 'less expendable' to that class than the ordinary British tommies.

Socialists in Ireland have no time to weep tears for the unfortunate representatives of British imperialism who meet a sudden and violent end in Ireland, whether they are in or out of uniform. We reject totally the orchestrated wailings of British politicians, press and the CBI.

MOBLISATION

But we stand firm in the knowledge that British imperialism will not be driven out of Ireland by a war of attrition carried out by dedicated and committed Republicans against individual capitalists. Only through the mobilisation of the Irish working class, organised in its own independent organisations and under a revolutionary leadership which bases itself on the mass struggle, generalises and gives conscious expression to that struggle, but positively refrains from substituting its own activity for the activity of the masses will victory over imperialism be possible.

While the Provisionals fail to recognise this fundamental requirement they are incapable of providing effective leadership to the struggle against imperialism in Ireland. Their dedication and commitment to achieving national liberation, the many heroic actions of their militants demand the unconditional support of socialists in Britain and Ireland in their struggle against British imperialism.

But their programmatic weaknesses, their foolish methods of struggle demand also that from this position of support we do not hesitate to advance criticism when necessary.

JOHN MAGEE



Part of the 15000 crowd that demonstrated in Derry on St. Patrick's Day to demand 'Troops Out Now'.

IMG Notes

IMG International School June 4/5/6/7 For members & sympathisers. More details to follow next week. Comrades to note date for keeping free. Watch this space for further details.

National TGWU Fraction: Sunday 17 April. Details of venue to follow.

National Student Fraction: 23-24 April. In Manchester. Starts 10.30am on Saturday. Sessions include: Restructuring of Higher and Further Education; Balance sheet since September; the Socialist Students Alliance and training of new members. All student members should attend. Open also to

National NAC Fraction. Saturday 16 April. Ring Centre for details.

Womens Commission. Sunday 17 April. Ring Centre for details.

National WLM Fraction. Saturday 23 April. Ring Centre for details.

Health Commission. Saturday 30 April at National Centre.

Journalists and Organisers School. On the launching of the new paper. Sat. 16 April. All areas north of Birmingham to attend Northern School: Red Weekly Centre, 14 Piccadilly, Manchester 1, Birmingham and South to attend

St). Further details see Party Builder or phone 01-837 6954.

TERROR

RED WEEKLY

THE BRITISH CONNECTION

THIS BUILDING does not look like one of the centres of the international fascist network.

But the London office of the Universal Bank Corporation, incorporated in Anguilla, has been responsible for depositing vast sums of money in bank accounts all over the world for collection by known far right terrorists.

Nothing of this was apparent when I visited the office in Crawford Street in one of the smarter areas of London's West End. There is a large 'For Sale' notice on the corner of the building; the blinds are roughly drawn across the windows; the potted plants are dying in the foyer.

No-one is there; there is no forwarding address and the phone is left off the hook. None of the official Stock Exchange and banking directories have any record of the bank.

Only a few weeks ago Scotland Yard, acting on information from the Florentine judge Pier Luigi Vigna, arrested a number of Italians, Argentinians and other Latin Americans in connection with the bank's activities. When I spoke to a Scotland Yard officer he admitted that the arrests had taken place and that charges were being preferred. But he refused to say who was arrested and what the charges were. **So why the silence?**

COLLECTION

The Universal Bank Corporation deposited money for collection by fascists — in the Banco de Bilbao in London, the Banco Espanol in Brussels, the main office of the Banco de Alicante, the Banco Meridional and the Banco de Granada in Madrid and another unidentified bank in Malaga.

Judge Vigna's investigations and the aftermath of the discovery of the Madrid arms factory have revealed an international network financing the Fascist International. Vigna has discovered deposits in accounts in Zurich and Basle.

He also says that a list obtained from one of the most important Italian terrorists includes a number of Spanish names. Among them is Mariano Sanchez Covisa, the leaders of the Guerrilleros de Cristo Rey, and Alberto Royuela, Barcelona provincial lieutenant of the Guardia de Franco. As we reported (Red Weekly, 24 Feb-

ruary), Royuela supplied the fascists with equipment for the Montejurra massacre last May.

Vigna has strong reasons for suspecting that the Mafia is behind the financing of Italian and Spanish fascists. Certainly the links between the two countries are very close. We have already reported on the presence of Italian fascists in Spain and their role in the murders in January.

LINK

Now it appears there is a financial link as well. Elio Massagrande will be familiar to Red Weekly readers. His name is on the list of the Iberian section of the Anti-communist International Alliance, the list on which the names of Colin Jordan, David Stirling, Walter Walker and Robert Butler appear. He was in direct contact with the Greek fascist leader Kaletsis and was finally arrested after the discovery of the Madrid arms factory.

Massagrande took three gold bars from Rome to Madrid where he deposited them in a bank account in the name of José Luis Clemente Antonio, the proprietor of the 'Il Apuntamento' pizza restaurant. It is small coincidence that Stefano delle Chiaie and Salvatore Francia, two leading Italian fascists who will be equally well-known to Red Weekly readers, were employed at Il Apuntamento last year.

Each gold bar bore the inscription 'Société Générale de Metaux Precieux'. They have been traced back to a branch of the Société Générale in Nice which, last July, was robbed of money and precious metal equivalent to 680 million pesetas.

NETWORK

But the financial network extends beyond Southern Europe. The French paper L'Express claims that there is a fascist traffic

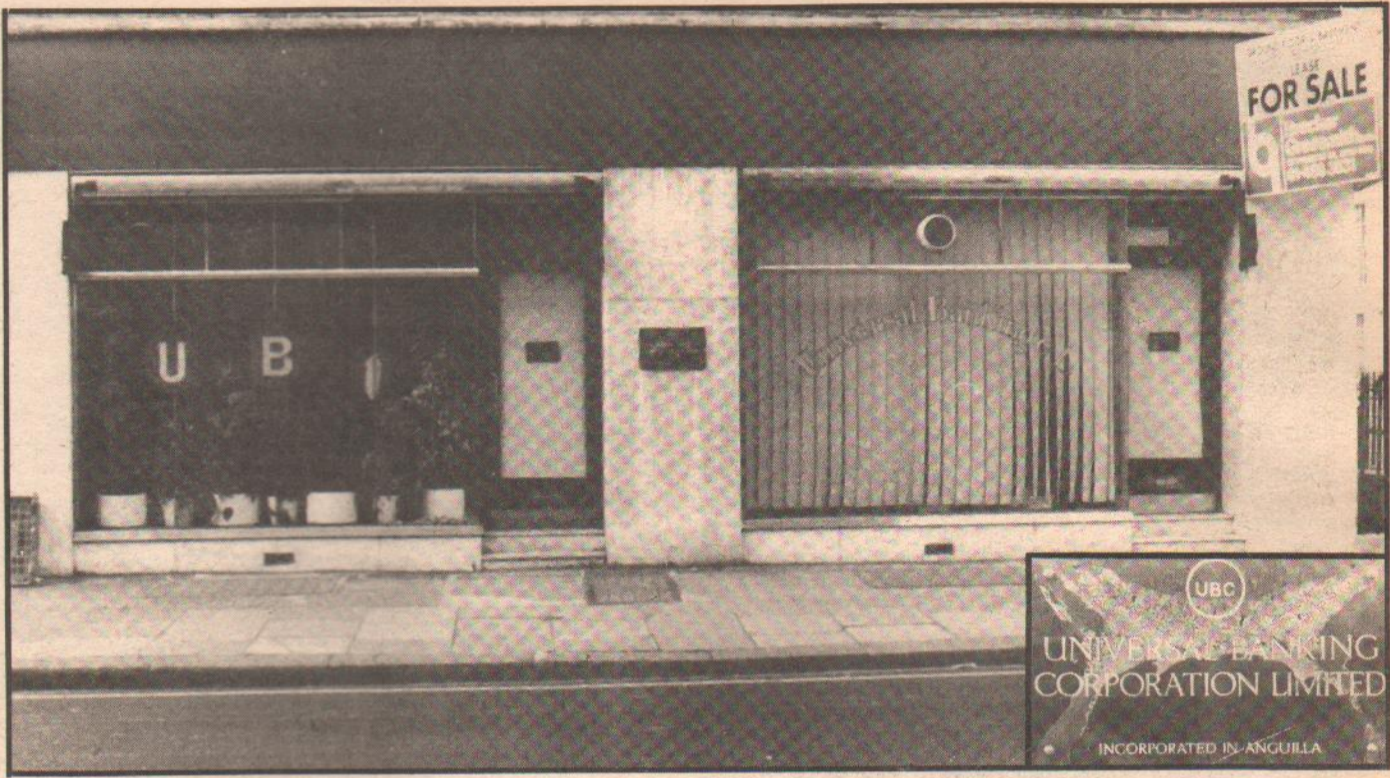


Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Red Weekly)

in arms, diamonds, drugs and gold between South Africa, Paris and Milan. The Canaries and mainland Spain are a safe staging post along the route.

It appears that much of the gold and diamonds is to pay off the mercenaries being recruited in Spain to fight the liberation movements in southern Africa. Among these are former members of the Spanish Foreign Legion and of the Portuguese secret police, PIDE, as well as Croats and other assorted international killers. The magazine Cambio 16 suggests that a Mozambican called Jorge Jardim may be the organiser of this traffic.

BADAJOS

Cambio also maintains that nearly half the gold imported into Spain enters illegally. This is mainly directed through Badajoz, near the Portuguese border, and is controlled by former PIDE members and fascists of the Portuguese ELP. Sources in Badajoz report a meeting of PIDE and ELP members in the city in late February and a regular traffic in gold bars over

the border.

The extent of the international fascist network is becoming clearer. In Spain and Italy more information is becoming available. But there are still many unanswered questions.

QUESTIONS

There is no doubt where the gold and diamonds come from, but who is the South African connection?

Why will no-one, including the police, talk about the Universal Bank Corporation?

We know about certain deposits made by the bank, but what is the full extent of its activities?

Where has this obscure Anguillan bank disappeared to? Has it ceased to exist?

Perhaps there is someone who will be very embarrassed when we know the answers to these questions.

CHRIS O'BRIEN

* See World Outlook on page 10 for more on the international fascist network.

Soweto Students Appeal

16 June 1977 will be the first anniversary of the Soweto demonstrations which were the first of a series of protests by the oppressed black people of South Africa and which continue until today.

Thousands of people have suffered at the hands of the brutal South African repressive forces since then. Hundreds have been shot dead, thousands injured and driven into exile and a countless number languish in jail.

We members of the Soweto Students Representative Council Executive Committee which organised the original demonstration call upon the progressive peoples of the world to mark this anniversary by demonstrating their solidarity with the oppressed peoples of South Africa and against all forms of support for the brutal Vorster Apartheid regime.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Tsietsi Mashinini | President of the Soweto SSRC |
| Barney Mokgatle | Secretary of the Soweto SSRC |
| Selby Semela | Treasurer of the Soweto SSRC |
| Khotso Seatsho | President of the Soweto SSRC after Tsietsi |

First endorsements include: African Students Union, The Institute of Race Relations, The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Mike Cooley [Past President TASS], Lawrence Daly [Gen. Sec. National Union of Mineworkers], Drake Koka [Gen. Sec. Black Allied Workers Union of South Africa], Ernie Roberts [Assistant Gen. Sec. Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers], Charles Clarke [NUS President 1975-1977], Sue Slipman [NUS President-elect 1977], Paul Blomfield [NUS Executive member responsible for South Africa], Anti Apartheid Movement National Committee, Bob Wright (Assistant General Secretary AUEW), Neil Kinnock (Labour MP), Bernadette McAliskey.

Further details from: Assistant Secretary, African Students Union, Flat 5, 123 Greencroft Road, London NW6.

No doubt many supporters of the IMG sampled a few, and a few more glasses of alcoholic liquid in the aftermath of the Stechford by-election. The total of 871 was one of the largest far-left votes recorded in the last couple of years, and we must admit the success of the IMG campaign, both in terms of votes and in terms of starting a fight-back to the racists of Stechford, gave particular satisfaction.

But the NF vote, and the inevitable success of the Tory candidate, bring a harsh thump of reality to our celebrations. A small, small start was made, but the real test is whether we can build on it. For what Stechford did show is that we need money if the cause of revolutionary Marxism and revolutionary unity is to progress meaningfully. The correct politics, enthusiasm and dedication were all features of our Stechford campaign.

But our small success would not have been possible without the considerable amount of money from our fund drive we allocated to the campaign. As our fund drive is already well behind its target, this has meant our aim of reaching the £15,000 we need is now even more difficult.

We need £800 a week if our target is to be reached. That, comrades, is a very serious situation. So give, give a lot and give now to IMG Fund Drive, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.

Our thanks this week to:

Nottingham IMG	£4.00
W. London party, plus J. White	£140.65
Coventry IMG	£ 20
Oxford RW supporter	£ 2
Cambridge IMG	£2.45

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