

RED WEEKLY

Trotskyism today

★ Main speaker, Alain Krivine
Editor, Rouge
Tickets 50p from
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Starts 7.30pm, Friday 29 April

INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP **RALLY** HAMMERSMITH TOWN HALL



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LABOUR POLICIES BOOST FASCISTS

And this is the face of fascism today...

FASCISM NEEDS FAILURES and bitterness to feed on. The successes of the National Front in recent by-elections, their probable gains in the coming local elections, are caused not by their successes, but by others' failures.

Principally they are caused by the failures of the traditional party of the working class in this country, the Labour Party. For the new voting support which the National Front is receiving comes from those who once voted Labour, or who normally are expected to do so.

It is Labour's failures which are boosting the National Front. To be more precise it is Labour's policies. The Labour Government is responsible for the massive growth in unemployment. It is responsible for the cut in living standards of working people. It is their policies which have caused the worsening conditions of housing, hospital treatment and education. Accordingly it is only to be expected that others will reap the seeds of bitterness which Labour have sown.

A fascist take-over of this country is not on the horizon, but one of the pre-conditions which speed the growth of fascism is here — the humiliation of the Labour Party.

That humiliation is not caused by the National Front. It is self-inflicted by the policies this Government has chosen to follow. Accordingly the fight against fascism is not just confined to the streets or to elections, it is concerned with destroying the present policies of a Government that has long ago lost the right to call itself socialist.

★ For a socialist opposition to Labour's policies!

★ For a socialist opposition to the fascists!

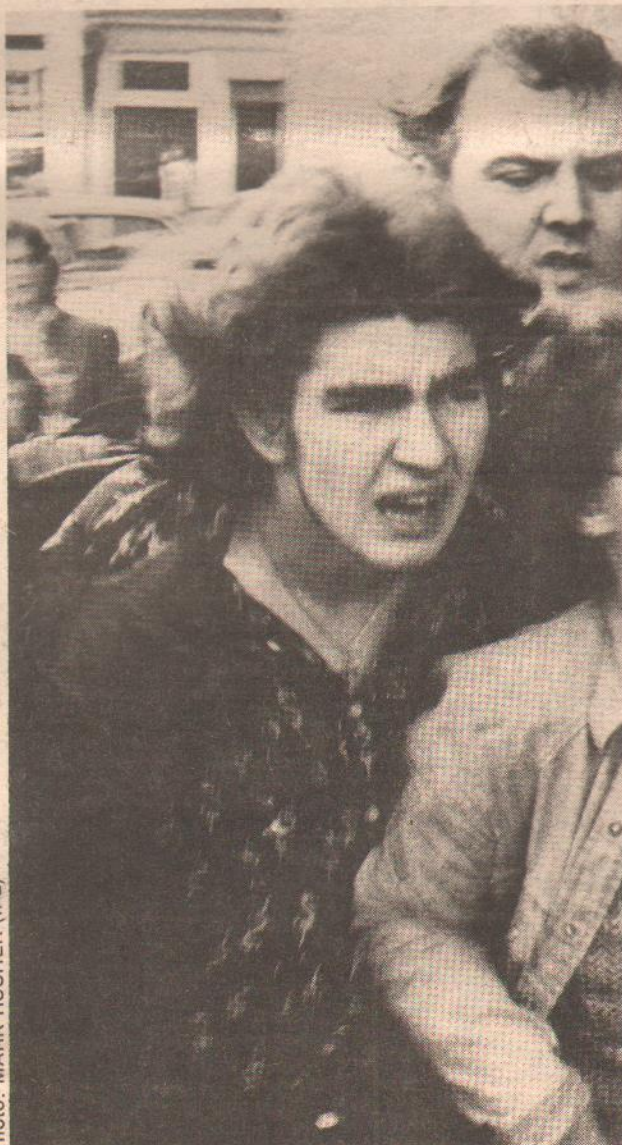


Photo: MARK RUSHER (IFL)



Photo: MARK RUSHER (IFL)

THIS is what fascism is all about. The thug pictured left is allegedly the man who stabbed the anti-fascist [right] on last Saturday's anti-National Front demonstration in Haringey, North London.

The fascist grabbed the comrade, who was walking apart from the main

demonstration with some friends, and pushed a knife into his face.

International Freelance Library photographer Mark Rusher was only able to take these two pictures before the police knocked the camera out of his hand.

★ Full story on demonstration page 6.

Port Talbot strike

THE SHADOW BOXING is coming to an end. The struggle over the future of the Social Contract has started in earnest. Three clear alternatives are being offered to working people.

The first comes from the mad axeman Denis Healey, who told the shopworkers' conference last weekend that average earnings must stay in single figures over the next year. With inflation running at 17 per cent, that alternative means a further cut in living standards — a further increase in the gap between wages and prices.

The second comes from Jack Jones, who headed the TUC side at Wednesday's meeting with the Government. Jones realises that a strict pay deal cannot now be sold to his union members. Instead he promises that the TUC will preside as a 'moderating' influence.

The third alternative is being offered by workers in struggle. Most notably by the 500 striking electricians at the Port Talbot steel works, who make no bones about the aim of their strike: to reject any limitation on wages, to reject any 'moderating influence', and to defeat Phase 3 by smashing Phase 2 — and smashing it now.

The importance of the Port Talbot strike — now in its sixth week — cannot be stated too often. As strike leader Wyn Bevan told a meeting organised by Red Weekly supporters in Bristol on 20 April: 'If we fail it will be a victory for capitalism, a victory for the CBI, and a chance for the flag of Phase 3 to fly over the rest of British industry.'

After a whistle-stop tour of Sheffield and Scunthorpe last week, the strikers heard that Len Murray had written personal letters to the branches in the area instructing them to give no support. Nonetheless they collected nearly £1,000 in the two days there. Maybe Murray should write letters to other branches.

There are other signs of support. Over 300 people turned up to a meeting to publicise the strike held in Port Talbot on Monday night. Pledges of support have come from a whole range of workers, including the Heathrow engineers (themselves on strike), the Leyland toolmakers, and the Avonmouth dockers, who have promised to raise the backing of imported steel coil with the National Docks Committee.

This is the type of backing which the Port Talbot workers need in the face of the opposition of their union leadership, the attacks on them by the press, and the demands for 'moderation' made by Jack Jones. Send resolutions of support and money to: Bill Curtis, 23 Hawthorne Ave., Balgarn Estate, Port Talbot, West Glamorgan.

All Out Against Benyon Bill 14 May

These policies will defend women in the fight-back!

THE WORKING WOMEN'S Charter Campaign have called for meetings at every forthcoming trade union conference. They hope that the meetings will be to discuss and organise around the specific problems facing women in the fight against incomes policy.

Proposals for 'kitty bargaining' at present being pushed by Government Ministers are one indication of the possible dangers of the labour movement dismissing women's needs and instead wrangling over the distribution of an ever-diminishing cake.

At the British Leyland Shop Stewards Conference on 3 April there was one striking feature — the small number of women present. Despite this a statement circulated by the Working Women's Charter received the support of 150 delegates at the Conference. The statement listed a series of demands under the theme 'For Unity Against the Social Contract — Defend Women's Rights Now'.

The demands included a number which also apply to male workers, such as those for an end to wage restraint and for pay increases which are linked to price rises. But there were others which applied specifically to women in struggle and which were aimed at making the struggle for women's rights a part of the united fight back against the Social Contract.

Here ANNE CESEK, a member of the IMG working in the Charter Campaign, explains the importance of these other demands.

★ Support For All Workers In Struggle Now.

'As well as the headline-catching disputes at Leyland, Heathrow or Port Talbot there are many others which principally involve women workers. These are often isolated from the better-organised sections of the trade union movement. Which is why when such struggles as that which broke out at Trico, or that which continues at Grunwicks break out, where a large percentage of women are involved, national support and national solidarity action is needed.'

★ Equal Pay Now, Against Low Pay, For a national minimum Wage

'The Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts were sold as the "social" side of the Social Contract. But they have had little effect on women's living conditions. The first birthday of the legislation was greeted by a widening of the gap between male and female hourly earnings from 50p to 56p.'

★ For A Woman's Right to Work

'A recent national opinion poll reported that 68 per cent of married men and 73 per cent of working wives believe that if the economic situation worsens, women should be the first to be made redundant. Employers spread this type of bigotry to their own advantage. For example, in the current hotel strikes in Oxford, management propaganda that chamber maids work only for 'pin money' has appeared in the local press as a way of trying to discredit the strike. No section of the workforce should be dispensed with, whether through cuts, sackings or pay and productivity deals.'

★ Opposition To All Grading Schemes That Discriminate Against Women

'Job evaluation and grading schemes are the usual method used to imprison women in low paid jobs. Their jobs are downgraded as a way of evading the Equal Pay legislation. But such manoeuvres



AUEW Women's Conference in session.

are beginning to be resisted. The General and Municipal Workers Union submitted a demand to the recent Women's TUC that "no account should be taken of job evaluation schemes to which independent trade unions have objections". The Society of Civil and Public Servants and the technical staff side of the engineers' union have echoed this demand, which should be extended to include the right of veto by all sections of the trade union movement to grading schemes which discriminate against women.'

★ Immediate Submission of Wage Demands that Defend the Interests of Women

'Women have waited too long for an adequate living wage. The recent wage restraint has had a particularly bad effect on low paid workers. The Trico slogan is the one to remember — "Equal Pay, No Delay". But to put such a slogan into practice it is important that as much information as possible is gathered on women's pay through trade union investi-

gations. A survey of 30 major unions in March showed that only half monitored claims for equal pay. If the trade union movement is to be made aware of the extent of the problems, organised investigations are crucial.

'There are other immediate steps that can be taken. In those areas where report back meetings from the February Rally for Women's Rights haven't been organised they should be. These could be extended to the organisation of day schools to discuss the Working Women's Charter statement. Most immediately a women's contingent for the 11 May London strike action and demonstration called by the National Union of Public Employees should be built, and solidarity with the EGA women's hospital and the Grunwick strikers should be fought for in union after union.'

* Copies of the WWC statement can be obtained from Jill Daniels, Secretary, Charter Campaign, 1a Camberwell Grove, London SE5.



WHICH WAY FORWARD FOR THE CHARTER CAMPAIGN?

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE

National Working Women's Charter Conference

21st and 22nd May 1977

at the CITY UNIVERSITY, St. John Street, London EC1

Organised by the Working Women's Charter Campaign for all groups and organisations fighting for the demands of the Charter

CPSA conference this week

Leaders force wages censure

NEXT WEEK 1,300 delegates representing 230,000 members of the Civil and Public Services Association meet in conference at Southport.

Last year's conference directed the National Executive Committee 'to oppose and campaign against any form of policies which mean unemployment, public expenditure cuts, and reduced living standards'. Within a month, however, the NEC had accepted General Secretary Ken Thomas's proposal to ballot branches on acceptance of Phase 2.

That vote was rushed through at the height of a propaganda offensive by the Government, media and union bureaucracy. CPSA members found themselves committed to accepting their next pay rise nine months before it came into effect.

This year, the overwhelming mood for rejection of the Social Contract is reflected in a motion with support from 61 branches. Supporters of a continued Contract can muster only nine branches behind their resolution. Eight motions condemn the holding of the Phase 2 ballot in June 1976.

'Future pay policy' is one of the most important items on the agenda. Composite Motion 1 brings together 25 motions, 14 of which call for automatic rises to keep pace with the cost of living. But bureaucratic manoeuvres have watered down the wording in the composite so that it merely calls for 'interim claims... to maintain and improve the standard of living'.

The reason for this chicanery becomes clear when one looks at Composite 26, put forward by the Civil Service Executive Committee. This calls for a return to the discredited Pay Research Unit, which institutionalises low pay for clerical grades. The leadership is attempting to cover its bankruptcy by removing the only possible alternative.

The NEC's record in the fight against public spending cuts is even more shabby than on pay. In September a national series of rallies to build the campaign was used instead by full-timers and NEC members to sabotage the NEC's original proposal for strike action on 17 November.

By October even a programme of limited industrial action had proved capable, in the membership's hands, of rolling back DHSS staff cuts. But now the campaign was quietly scaled down,

ment of Employment to carry the can by banning the collection of Government statistics. And when a lock-out was threatened — why, the response of the NEC was outright capitulation. The cuts campaign lay in ruins, and the union's credibility was shattered before management and membership.

The left NEC members' excuse that there was little support for the statistics ban is given the lie by a severe censure motion (Composite 1407) from 28 branches — 19 of them DoE branches. Delegates should also support motion 1437 from Manchester DoE, which calls for no confidence in the General Secretary and his deputy, Alastair Graham.

Composite 1368 demands a more militant campaign against cuts. Its demands for a total ban on overtime and work-sharing are correct, but it does not take its call for all-out public sector action beyond the 'Day of Action' much loved as a diversion by the bureaucracy. It therefore fails to reinforce the demand for a local public sector alliance but should nevertheless be supported.

Conference will decide whether the leadership remains in the hands of the Broad Left coalition or returns to one of the most reactionary right-wing cliques in the trade union movement, led by Truemed supporters and inspired by Catholic Action. But it is not possible to give support to a Broad Left slate which was drawn up by a closed caucus of NEC members, in defiance of the rejection of bureaucratic restraints on the Broad Left passed at its inaugural conference last month.

Delegates should therefore cast their votes first for the candidates supported by Redder Tape, the rank and file organisation of the union; and secondly only for those left-wingers with an open commitment to acceptance of discipline from the Broad Left conference. This means a rejection of right-wing opportunists like Pat Womersley on the BL slate, and a vote in the presidential contest for Redder Tape candidate Mike McGrath against BL candidate Len Lever.

In the election for the TUC delegation, all delegates should cast their votes for Tito Vallejo, chairperson of the union's Gibraltar branch, which has been locked out for six months by the Ministry of Defence. Such support would be a fitting rebuke to the NEC's inactivity and the disgraceful record of the TUC on this vital struggle.

Media gets message



Evening Standard drivers blockade the Daily Express building in Fleet Street demanding to know the facts behind rumours of a job-cutting merger between Associated Newspapers and Beaverbrooks. Only after Express workers had occupied the boardroom in the building was the management compelled to issue a statement.

JOURNALISTS in the NUJ attacked racism and sexism in the media and the bias and inaccuracy of Northern Ireland coverage, at their annual conference last week. But proposals for action were still confined mainly to wages and conditions rather than the more 'political' question of editorial content.

The NUJ is now committed to a planned return to free collective bargaining, lump sum pay claims of up to £30 in provincial newspapers and the inclusion of automatic compensation for inflation' in all claims. But this package means less than at first sight.

Apart from the fact, admitted by the NUJ's executive, that a 'planned' return means a distant return, few chapels in the NUJ are strong enough to fight for £30 or anything near that amount on their own. And although 'automatic compensation for inflation' sounds like the demand for a sliding scale of wages, the executive made it clear they would not press for full compensation.

strike at Kettering, which has been going on for over 20 weeks. Strike action was successfully extended to the whole of East Midlands Allied Press following a huge vote, after the executive of the NUJ had claimed that few members wanted to get involved.

But the professional white collar attitude to the political issue of press freedom and the editorial content of newspapers was starkly revealed in debates on racism and sexism.

In a debate which was unprecedented for a media union, speaker after speaker condemned material put out in her or his paper. Few journalists disagreed that the racist violence and deaths of last summer had been largely caused by racist

Action against such material suggested by the Campaign Against Racism in the Media, such as a ban on access to the media by the National Front, was rejected, however, when the spectre of 'union censorship' was raised. And the call for an end to immigration controls was defeated as 'outside journalists' authority'.

Implementation of the NUJ's Code of Conduct, however, was ratified by nearly all the delegates. 'Anyone writing racist filth should be drummed out of the union', declared one 'moderate'.

The mere fact that an NUJ conference discussed coverage of Northern Ireland shows how low is the morale and how high the frustration of journalists working there. Even violently anti-IRA speakers agreed that Army propaganda was often all the information they had to use. One BBC man from Belfast admitted that he often broadcast Army information on his own authority without checks or safeguards.

plain, that the so-called Irish problem is a British problem of our making', said one delegate. 'We can all ask for solutions, but with no discussion or analysis there will never be any.'

The true extent of the swing to the left in the NUJ suggested by the voting on pay motions will be measured shortly in the forthcoming election of a new General Secretary. Five right-wing or moderate candidates will be opposed by Journalists Charter candidate Aidan White, a journalist on the Stratford Express.

Although Journalists Charter is identified as the left in the NUJ, its usual programme of demands barely extends beyond wages and conditions. Also, under the influence of the Socialist Workers Party, the Charter has adopted a sectarian emphasis on building itself in the election. However, IMG journalists are backing White's campaign and will hope to use it to organise all NUJ members opposed to the Social Contract and

Stalinists block strike action on 20 April

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

When the Leyland Combine Committee first called for a day of action on 20 April, it was seen and supported as a day of strike action.

For thousands upon thousands of workers this was the green light for mass action to end the attacks upon living standards of the Labour Government.

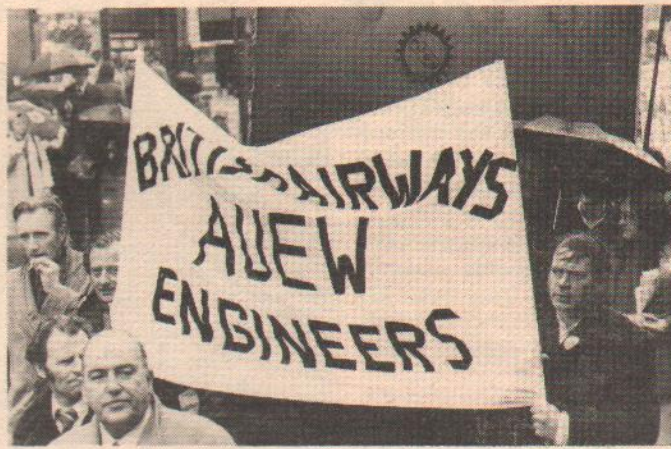
Around the country many of these workers went on strike last Wednesday — 10,000 workers in Dundee, 6,000 engineers in Sheffield, 7,000 dockers in Liverpool, workers at Trico and Acton Rails in London. But the full force of the opposition to the Social Contract was far from felt.

A mere 4,000 attended the rain-soaked 'national demonstration' in London and only a thousand marched in Glasgow. Where was this 'united movement' promised by the Leyland Combine and the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions?

Part of the answer can be seen from the 'mobilisation' by the Leyland stewards' leadership. Many Communist Party members at Leyland had argued, at least prior to the toolmakers strike, that 20 April would be a day of strike action — it doesn't matter if we accept Phase 2 increases now, because we'll be taking action to prevent any Phase 3. But once they

had decided to scab on the toolmakers strike by attacking it as 'divisive' the whole action, carefully prepared over months, started to crumble.

When Communist Party members like Derek Robinson joined with the Executive of the AUEW in attacking the toolmakers it was he who produced demoralisation and splits which prevented a united stand by British Leyland workers against the Social Contract. Once the press got hold of the turnabout and began interviewing workers like the sheet metal workers at Longbridge, who had voted to stay at work on 20 April, Robinson chose to aid the dampening of the struggle by saying that strike action was 'unlikely'. He then recommended to stewards that only delegates were sent to the London demo. Similarly at Rover Solihull, CP convenor Joe Harris ruled out of order a resolution calling for a mass meeting to discuss strike action on 20 April.



Heathrow strikers on the 'Day of Action' march in London last Wednesday. Prominent Communist Party members have denounced their strike and others against Phase 3 as 'splittist'.

With no clear call for strike action by the initiators of the day of action it is hardly surprising that large sections of workers saw a parade around London to be of little use — and were not willing to be wheeled out for yet another LCDTU protest rally in London.

The Communist Party try to absolve themselves from responsibility for the failure of the 20 April day of action by pointing at the 'splittist' strikes by other workers, like the Leyland toolroom workers and Heathrow workers.

It is because of the absence of any lead for mass action that these workers fall back upon sectional

arguments to defend their living standards. It is the fear that other workers will take their lead, and launch a struggle now to restore real wages, that leads the CP to dampening actions such as 20 April. Action must be limited to protests against Phase 3 if 'allies' like AUEW Presidential candidate Bob Wright are to be forthcoming.

20 April shows in practice the disunity achieved through this approach. The real way to united action against the Social Contract is by building unity around struggles that already exist — not by denouncing them in the name of some non-existent united campaign.

IN FOCUS

RED WEEKLY

The threat of the Front

MARTIN WEBSTER, Activities Organiser of the fascist National Front, declared earlier this month that his organisation intended to contest 318 seats in the next general election. The forthcoming local council elections have been seized upon by the Front as a dress rehearsal for the general election.

Webster explained to *The Observer* in February why the NF was out to get a full 228 candidates beyond the 90 that it put up in the October 1974 general election. Time on the air to spread the racist filth of the NF is an important factor in this decision. Webster disclosed that he had been told that without at least 300 candidates, the NF would not be given more than the five minutes they had in the last two elections.

In the forthcoming local elections the NF will be trying to extend the electoral gains made in Stechford to take one step further their hopes in replacing the Liberal Party as the third major party in Britain.

The Labour Government must take its full responsibility for any gains made by the NF at the expense of the blacks, and the working class as a whole. At a time when physical violence against blacks is on the increase, the policy of black self defence taken by last year's Labour Party Conference has been thrown out of the window.

Instead the Labour Government has reinforced the racist hysteria whipped up by the NF. Just last month the Home Office announced further harsh measures to restrict the rights of immigrants. The new rules against 'marriages of convenience' will involve blatant racial and sexual discrimination through their selective application. Gross breaches of privacy can be expected when the 'sex snoopers' arrive on the scene.

Immigration measures taken by Labour have been readily linked to the present capitalist crisis. Every aspect of racism confronted by blacks in Britain today — from the persistent racist housing policies of local councils to the discrimination which traps black workers in low paid jobs under the most abject conditions — will continue until a fight is launched for policies which do meet the needs of the working class as a whole.

The challenge to the racists on the streets with the sort of unity that was seen in London last weekend is vital to fight the fascists' drive against basic rights. But it is also necessary to challenge their campaign at the level of elections. United far left slates which can put forward the policies to meet the capitalist crisis would be a tremendous step forward. More limited steps can be taken through agreements to allocate part of the electoral expenses of the workers' parties to united front anti-racist committees' activities.

Today's capitalist crisis demands an overall socialist alternative to the racist policies pursued by the Government and the complicit inactivity of the 'lefts'. In the absence of any alternative, working class people will mistakenly look to the policies of the NF as radical solutions to the crisis. Nothing is further from the truth. Its radical policies provide solutions aimed to destroy the only defence the working class has — its collective strength in unity.

'I WANT to keep the Labour Government in office as much as anyone. But I don't want to keep them in office at the expense of the workers, but at the expense of the bosses'. So said Jack Sheldon, AUEW shop steward for the Leyland toolroom workers, speaking at a meeting of the Right to Work Campaign following the 20 April march against the Social Contract.

He went on to explain that the Leyland toolroom workers had gone back to work not because they were threatened with the sack, but because 'we have now got the struggle of uniting the whole of the trade union movement to stop any Phase 3'.

John Dunsforth, EETPU steward at Port Talbot, took up the same theme, explaining that the attempts to bolster Phase 2 were part and parcel of forcing us into Phase 3. 'We strikers have learnt what we are up against. Watch our strike. It may be one of the turning points in the fight against the Social Contract.'

Ian Morris, AUEW steward at Heathrow pointed out how the attempts to enforce the Social Contract had led to the union leaders siding with the employers. 'One reason for the red scare against Heathrow workers', he said, 'is that management and the union leaders are terrified of the breath of fresh air and democracy that has



Ian Morris, AUEW steward at Heathrow, pointed out to the meeting how attempts to enforce the Social Contract led to union leaders siding with the bosses.

gushed into the trade union movement, and which is creeping over from our union into other unions.'

Bill Taylor from Acton Rails, which had taken strike action that day, spoke out against those in the labour movement who attacked the Heathrow, Port Talbot and Leyland workers for being 'divisive' in the fight against the Social Contract.

'They spend time on our District Committee of the

AUEW analysing why these strikes aren't perfect — well I've never known a strike that was considered perfect by all those involved — but they are getting on with the job and we've got to give them full support.'

John Deason, Secretary of the Right to Work Campaign now facing court charges and possible imprisonment for campaigning for the right to work, echoed the same theme: 'The most divisive action is

that of those in the labour movement who say you should not support these strikes.'

Commenting on the march that had just taken place he said:

'Sometimes I think we should reverse the order — instead of us marching to Parliament and asking the left MPs to help, those MPs should be marching to Heathrow to say where they stand on these disputes.'

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

Scottish TUC Transport Workers delegates defy Jack Jones

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT breathed a sigh of relief last week when the Scottish TUC narrowly defeated a resolution opposing 'any incomes policy having as its aim wage regulation through interference from any source in free collective bargaining', which also demanded that pay deals should 'include protection of wages against inflation'.

The motion was defeated by 1017 votes to 967. But although the outcome of the voting demoralised many delegates, behind it lay many important changes which have taken place inside union delegations.

delegation agreed by 18-12 to support the Composite D resolution rejecting any Phase 3 incomes policy.

Jones's speech at the Scottish TUC was greeted by headlines screaming 'Jones Buries the Social Contract'. But he was very careful to explain his exact position at a press conference: 'We do not want massive demands and massive strikes to ruin the economy. We can maintain a sensible approach to free collective bargaining without a big explosion, but rigid pay policy is unrealistic.'

That this 'sensible' approach was rejected by Jones's own union

The main culprits responsible for the defeat of Composite D were the delegates from the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers. At a time when their members are in the forefront of current actions against wage restraint, the delegation accepted instructions from their leadership that last year's decision to support Phase 2 also bound them to support Phase 3.

Had the AUEW merely abstained, as the Fire Brigades Union did in a similar situation, Composite D would have been passed by a comfortable majority.

There were other, more satisfactory, conference votes. Con-

of low pay for women' and that 'industrial action by solidarity and support from the organised trade union movement can achieve equal pay'. It instructed the STUC General Council to mount a campaign for women to be paid 'the wage a man would receive if he were doing the same job'.

The Congress also voted to oppose the closure of four Scottish colleges of education, to demand Government action to restore the cuts, and to call for Scottish homosexuals to have the same rights as those in England.



SCOTLAND-CHILE MATCH 'The team will never get out'

The Scottish Trade Union Congress unanimously condemned the decision of the Scottish Football Association to go ahead with a football international against Chile in the infamous Santiago stadium this summer.

Congress heard from Pedro Cornejo of the Chilean TUC of his experience as a prisoner in the stadium when it was converted — following the overthrow of Salvador Allende's Popular Unity government — into a massive concentration camp.

'On 5 October 1973, I myself was taken prisoner and taken to the national stadium. More than 12,000 of my fellow countrymen were at that moment in that prison, in that stadium, in the galleries and changing rooms.'

'And the president of the FIFA, the international football organisation, visited the stadium to inspect it. And those of us who were prisoners there at

appeared in company with the fascist generals, we were herded off to one side to rooms apart, so Sir Stanley Rous would see a stadium that was empty and suitable to play football in.'

Other speakers pointed out the refusal of the SFA officers to meet trade unionists and Chilean refugees who had attempted to present them with evidence of the junta's atrocities inside the stadium.

In this situation, Alex Kitson remarked, speaking for the General Council:

'It is up to us as trade unionists to make sure that all harassment that can be brought to bear on the SFA will be carried out, and to make sure that if this fails the team will not get out of the country.'

* Stop the match leaflets, for distribution to football supporters, players and trade unionists, are available from the Scottish Chile Defence

The state of the Engineers Union

At the beginning of May the National Committee of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers [Engineering Section] meets in Eastbourne. The most crucial decision facing the 52 rank-and-file delegates will be whether to continue the current AUEW policy of supporting the Social Contract. Whatever the decision, it will be taken against the background of a growing wave of revolt throughout the union against the Social Contract, particularly the restrictions on living standards.

In the past two months AUEW members at British Leyland and now at Heathrow have defied Executive Council instructions to return to work despite direct appeals — from the President, Hugh Scanlon in the case of the Leyland toolmakers and from 'left' EC member Reg Birch at British Airways. It is against this growing shop-floor revolt that every vote and decision will be judged. Most particularly how the well-defined block 'left' and 'right' wings operate at National Committee.

The right-wing leaders will have a lot of explaining to do. Last year, with the welcome help of Hugh Scanlon, they succeeded in tying the union to yet another year of collaboration with the anti-working class policies of the Labour Government. Prior to the 1976 National Committee, general secretary John Boyd wrote in the AUEW Journal:

'With the continuing co-operation of the Trade Union Movement, I believe that our Labour Government will confound the economists and critics, controlling inflation and reducing unemployment over the next 12 months.'

'The economic recovery signs are obvious; let's make sure that a Tory Government does not reap the reward and enjoy the credit of the present joint Government/TUC co-operation.'

With inflation rising past 17 per cent and unemployment showing every sign of rising again, the one and a quarter million members of the AUEW have a right to know from John Boyd and his right-wing cohorts what happened to their promises and their 'signs of recovery'.

The only reason why the mem-

bership might not even bother to ask is that every member knows that there never was any intention of reducing inflation. As soon as the National Committee in 1976 had duly given the Labour Government the go-ahead to cut wages, Boyd felt free to write in the June 1976 issue of the Journal demanding that the Government relax the price code, thus *increasing inflation*.

PROFITS

'A controlled revision of prices should be agreed provided the increased profits be wholly re-directed into further investment.'

Thus overnight the Social Contract became a policy, not for 'controlling inflation and reducing unemployment' but for maximising profit margins. That British capitalism might use such profits to create jobs has the same ring of miracle-wishing as Boyd's visions of economic recovery.

However John Boyd is not the only one with a lot of explaining to do. At last year's National Committee 23 out of the 52 delegates voted against the Social Contract and 22 delegates voted for a

campaign against wage restraint.

Among those 22 were delegates representing such important industrial centres as Dundee, Lancashire, Sheffield and the South-East. Len Brindle, a convenor in British Leyland from Chorley, was quoted as stating that the membership of the AUEW would not accept another year of wage restraint. He was correct. In mass meetings, shop stewards quarterlies, branch meetings and more recently in strikes at British Leyland and Heathrow, the message is coming home loud and clear.

But the leadership of the Broad Left has done nothing to mobilise this discontent into a fight to break the Social Contract. Worse than that, where struggles have developed which have threatened the existence of the Social Contract they have lined up with the right wing.

SACKING

On the Executive both Reg Birch and Les Dixon, the two remaining 'left' members, voted with the right wing to support the sacking of the Leyland toolmakers. After the National Committee in 1976



AUEW Executive faces turbulent future from rank and file.

the Broad Left leadership packed their bags and went home for another year.

Even modest proposals like that of a lobby of the forthcoming National Committee against the Social Contract have been avoided like the plague. At the Broad Left National Conference in February the platform refused to permit a vote on such a proposal. Aside

from the odd demagogic speech by the Broad Left Presidential candidate, Bob Wright, the real role of the Broad Left leadership has been to avoid even the sniff of a real fight. If this coming year does not see a struggle by the AUEW to break out of the straitjacket of the Social Contract — regardless of what the TUC may negotiate — then the leadership of the Broad Left will bear the blame. For once they cannot claim that the rank-and-file is not ready for a fight. The only problem is that the traditional militant leadership has decided that it is not.

ELECTIONS

A high price has been paid for these failures — and not just in living standards and jobs. The Broad Left has fared badly in elections against the right, and where it has done well this has not been because of any fighting campaign. Amalgamation of the four sections seems as far away as ever, with Scanlon's and the right-wing manoeuvres to mandate the Engineering Section delegates when they attend the Amalgamated Conference later in May threatening to undermine any meaningful unity as it did last year.

It is in the balance as to whether the National Committee will vote for or against the Social Contract.

Whatever the outcome the lessons of the last year are that no confidence can be placed in those who claim to oppose it. Saying you are against incomes policy and the right wing while sacking toolmakers does not inspire confidence. Not only are new policies needed — but a new leadership must be built and that fight must be at the centre of every militant struggle in the next year.

It can be built out of the struggles of the membership — at British Leyland, at Heathrow, around such issues as the Equal Pay fight at Trico's; out of the organisation of stewards to build shop stewards combine committees; out of the elections in EC Region 3 where Jim Murray, a convenor on Tyneside, stood against the Broad Left 'official' candidate; out of the District Committee election in Birmingham East where for the first time a revolutionary socialist fought an election with broad-based backing from many factories; through the building in every area of the country of real organisations which group together militants on the basis of wanting to organise a real fight-back against the Social Contract and the right wing on the broadest possible basis of unity.

Only if these steps can begin to be taken will something positive be salvaged from the betrayals of the last three years.

Heathrow splits opened up by bureaucrats

AS WEGO TO PRESS it appears likely that the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers will make the dispute involving the Heathrow maintenance engineers official. But the damage the AUEW leadership has done to their members' cause cannot be easily repaired. Indeed the only reason the AUEW leadership is even now considering making the strike official is the hostility the maintenance workers are facing from other unions involved.

According to the AUEW Executive member in charge of the

dispute, the Maoist Reg Birch, the reason for giving official blessing to the dispute is because 'our union is now under attack from other unions'.

Certainly the whole way the AUEW leadership has handled the Heathrow dispute has laid the way open for the type of divisions which are now occurring. Every time Reg Birch has opened his mouth he seems only to have spread confusion and demoralisation among his union members.

His original criticism of the Heathrow engineers, his repeated demands that they

should return to work, has done nothing to persuade other unions of the justice of the Heathrow workers' demand that they should be paid the same rate for the job as others doing comparable work outside Heathrow.

It is hardly surprising then that when Birch spoke at Monday's mass meeting of the strikers he was loudly booed. Birch replied to the boos by proclaiming: 'I don't hear anyone booing the bosses'. Certainly no-one has heard Reg Birch boo the bosses since the beginning of the Heathrow

dispute.

It is true that the other unions at Heathrow have shown a lack of solidarity with the engineers. In many ways this is inevitable when workers believe they are forced to fight over shares of a very small cake. But there is a way out of such problems — to demand that the size of the cake itself has no limitation placed on it.

In this light the best way forward for the Heathrow engineers is to re-state their original demands and to promote their struggle as a fight against the Social Contract.

Evans in - Kitson smashed - Far left grows

A SHOUT OF GLEE from the capitalist press greeted the announcement that Moss Evans had been elected General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union, having received 46.2 per cent of the total of 753,060 votes cast.

For them it is enough that Evans can be relied upon to follow in the footsteps of Jack Jones — pursuing the policies of class collaboration such as wage controls and worker participation. Having campaigned to influence the ballot in Evans's favour for weeks, they have cause to feel satisfied.

But a closer look at the election results reveals a far less pleasing picture for the bosses.

First and foremost there is the big vote received by candidates of the far left — Tommy Riley of the Right to Work Campaign, and Alan Thornett of the Workers Socialist League and the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement. Between them they received a total vote of 38,938 — approximately 5 per cent of the total votes cast.

Along with the size of this vote, in itself not insignificant, it is necessary to take into account the difficulties facing these candidates in the election campaign.

Firstly, the fact that the national press consistently avoided making any mention of rank and file candidates in the election, bolstering instead the 'big four' full time

officials running for the post, whilst the union failed to provide even sufficient copies of the election addresses so that union members might know the platform of the rank and file candidates.

Secondly there was the problem of campaigning in a multi-industrial union covering many different types of workers, where the union gave no encouragement to candidates to campaign for their views amongst the membership.

Thirdly, the fact that there were two far left candidates undoubtedly weakened the campaigns of both.

The considerable vote for the far left candidates should not, however, be misunderstood. For many workers this was not so much a vote for revolutionary candidates as for fighting policies against the Social Contract, policies not offered by the other candidates.

It is in the disastrously low votes for the 'left' candidates such as Kitson and John Miller that the real defeats of the election can be found. John Miller received less votes than Tommy Riley alone, and Alec Kitson received less than a quarter as many votes as Evans.

It was left to Cousins, who demagogically challenged Evans from the right, to get the highest vote after Evans. The 'left' candidates, by failing to make a clear break with Jones and his support-

from those candidates, many T&G members voted for other candidates instead — some undoubtedly voting for the far left candidates, but many voting for Evans and even Cousins where they saw no clear alternative policies to the Jones leadership being offered.

Whilst the Fleet Street editors might sit back musing on their ability to help Jack Jones get 'his man' on the throne of the T&G, the left cannot afford to be complacent. The lessons of the T&G elections are clear — candidates campaigning for fighting socialist policies can win the

support of the membership and challenge the class collaborationist union leadership.

But that requires a clear break with that leadership, and organising in the union against it. The far left candidates were able to make an impact in the elections despite being little-known and having few resources.

The coming biennial conference of the T&G in the Isle of Man will be the first test of whether these forces can be kept together to fight for the mass action which is needed to defend the living standards of T&G members.

| The T&G election results: | |
|---|---------|
| Moss Evans | 349,548 |
| John Cousins | 119,241 |
| Alec Kitson | 75,395 |
| Larry Smith | 47,799 |
| Tommy Riley | 27,445 |
| John Miller | 24,701 |
| Alan Thornett | 11,493 |
| Total votes cast: 753,060 — 39.11 per cent of membership. [Other candidates results unknown]. | |

Bitter fare for striking hotel workers

HOTEL WORKERS on strike at Oxford's Randolph Hotel may find themselves without official union backing if they reject the management's latest ploy.

This was the ultimatum which came last week from Regional Committee 5 of their union, the Transport and General Workers. The TGWU leadership has apparently concluded that the strike cannot be won [not surprising, since they refuse to organise the solidarity which is needed for a

The workers may find themselves out on their own if they do not accept any offer made by the hotel's owners, Trust Houses Forte. And THF, quick to seize the opportunity, have now offered talks to be held this week.

Talks have also been offered at Oxford's other strike-bound hotel, the Linton Lodge, where continuous picketing has now forced the management to concede everything except the reinstatement of the shop steward. These are the same

similar dispute at the Night Out club in Birmingham. But the workers are determined to stay out until they win their full demands.

They desperately need financial support, however — particularly if the TGWU withdraws official backing. Union branches should push through resolutions demanding an end to the union leadership's sell-out and the blacking of THF. All donations, messages of support, etc. to: RSF, 41 Bridge Street, LLSF Botley Road, Ox-



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Photo: JOHN STURROCK (R&P)

Defend sacked Tyndale teachers!

SIX TEACHERS at William Tyndale junior school in Islington were sacked without notice by the Inner London Education Authority last Monday.

The six — headmaster Terry Ellis, Brian Haddow, Steve Felton, Dorothy McColgan, Jackie McWhirter and Sheila Green — had been summoned to a County Hall committee room at noon. An 84-page report of the Inner London Education Authority disciplinary hearing concluded that the teachers were guilty of indiscipline, inefficiency and misconduct.

They all intend to appeal. In a statement, the six described the action as 'a clear case of political victimisation'.

The sackings have been im-



Sacked teachers Brian Haddow [left] and Terry Ellis.

posed after two years of witch-hunting launched in the press by reactionaries of all sorts, like the Tory spokesman on education, Rhodes Boyson. He has for some time been waging a campaign against 'progressive' teaching methods.

Such sentiments have not

stopped at Tory backwoods-men. Last October, Prime Minister Callaghan made a speech in Oxford backing the idea that education should be tailored to the needs of industry.

The real responsibility for present educational standards

lies with the Labour Government whose present cuts mean that by September over 40,000 teachers will be unemployed. The leadership of the NUT has failed to mount any serious action against the cuts and has failed to take up the defence of the Tyndale teachers.

The six have called for strike action in their own defence. The implication of the dismissal of the five class room teachers as well as Terry Ellis is that teachers can now be sacked at will if they take strike action.

North London Teachers Association is on record as being opposed to any sackings arising from the Tyndale affair. This resolution must now be built on throughout the NUT and the labour movement for mass action to ensure the reinstatement of the six.

Socialist students plan action

IF THE TURN-OUT and the discussion at this weekend's first conference of the Socialist Students Alliance are as impressive as the list of guest speakers, the Alliance will be off to a flying start. Already a representative from the Soweto Students Council, Eamonn McCann and Tariq Ali have agreed to attend.

The outgoing president of the National Union of Students, Charles Clarke, has also recognised the importance of the event by offering to attend. He will speak on the different strategies for the student movement of the SSA and the Broad Left. So much for those who branded the SSA as a one-off electoral alliance.

The emphasis of the two day conference will be on campaigning activity. The guest speakers will not be there just for show. Their job will be to kick off discussions on perspectives around the different important issues: Ireland, Racism and Fascism, Women's Oppression and southern Africa. On the Saturday evening, several stewards from the local British Leyland factories will be there to take part in a discussion on joint action between students and workers in opposition to the Social Contract.

Colin Talbot, one of the two SSA candidates elected to the NUS Executive, told us that 'the most important task is to consolidate the gains made at the NUS conference'. He said that this will be done by organising the base that exists in the colleges around the alternative policies put forward by the SSA. An important discussion will take place on creating a national and local structure, and on regularising the production of the SSA's paper, *Socialist Student*. There will also be a major debate on the sort of democratic structures the left should be fighting for in the union.

ALTERNATIVE

The SSA is making a serious attempt to present itself as a viable alternative leadership that can turn the tide decisively against the right wing's growth in the union. It was this which attracted many militants to the SSA at NUS conference who had previously supported the Broad Left. It also helps to explain why Charles Clarke eagerly

offered to come to the SSA conference to argue the Broad Left's positions.

The SSA was keen to accept his offer, because they recognise that a democratic debate can only help to clarify the base of the Broad Left on the nature of the alternative offered by the SSA. Such confidence in their political positions and willingness to participate in democratic and open debate contrasts with the lack of democracy inside the Broad Left, where revolutionaries are quite simply excluded from participating.

IMPACT

The SSA's impact within the Broad Left has been used by NOISS, the student affiliate of the Socialist Workers Party, to argue that the SSA compromises politically with the reformists. In that way they attempt to posture as the revolutionary 'hardcore'. In public debate, however, they have justified their refusal to join the SSA on the grounds that it is not serious about the construction of a revolutionary party and thus has no class perspective.

The SSA rejects this simplistic approach. Links between students and workers will be forged through alliances in action with workers fighting the Labour Government. The programme of the SSA spells out the demands and strategy needed to achieve that sort of alliance. That is why the Leyland stewards have been invited to discuss with SSA students a common basis for action.

If this weekend conference were to involve all these socialist forces in the student movement, then it would be a powerful launching pad for a campaign that could reverse the gains of the right in the NUS. Without them the gains will be made at a slower pace. But they will still be made, because militants in the colleges are looking for practical political answers to their problems, not sectarian posturing.

Militant teachers against Con-trick

A CONFERENCE of militant teachers to discuss ways of co-ordinating the fight-back against cuts will be held in mid-June.

The conference was called by a meeting of 100 delegates during the recent conference of the National Union of Teachers. And it is certainly much needed after the victories chalked up by the 'moderates' at the conference:

- ★ rejection of a joint campaign of industrial action with other unions against the cuts;
- ★ rejection of class sizes of 30 as the criterion for action;
- ★ introduction of the postal ballot system for electing officers and conference delegates, a further restriction on union democracy.

But the narrowness of the executive's victory on some of these issues denotes a groundswell of opposition to the union's collaboration with the Social Contract policies of the Labour Government. The June conference, which is supported by both the Socialist Teachers Alliance and Rank and File, can begin to organise this into action.

Details from: Conference Convenor, 23 Kenilworth Gardens, London SE18.

has called for support for mass pickets at the EGA, Hounslow and Weir hospitals on the morning of 11 May and is building a special contingent in support of their struggles for the demonstration leaving Hyde Park in the afternoon.

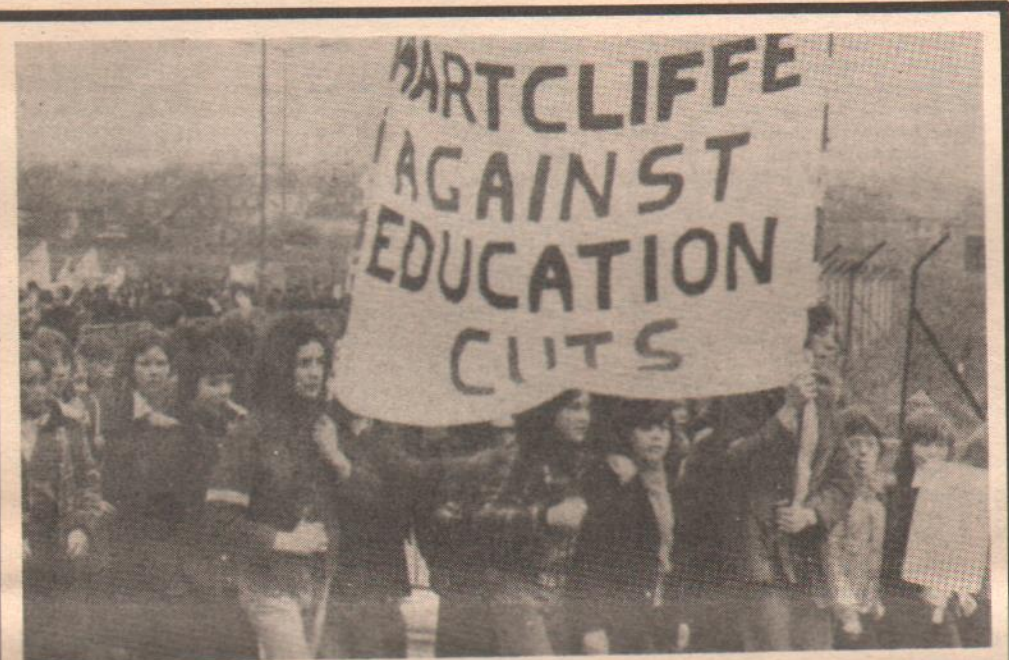
We urge all workers to support these actions. If the EGA, Hounslow and Weir workers are defeated, it will mean more than the loss of three hospitals. We already know that the executioners of the DHSS have drawn up their list. If the labour movement allows the union bureaucracy to slumber in their offices, not three but 130 out of 150 hospitals will become offices, waste-ground and fodder for the property speculators.

★ **Day of Action — Thursday 28 April**

★ **PICKET** at the Weir Hospital, Weir Road, SW 12. 8am-4.30pm.
★ **DEMONSTRATION** from Weir to St. George's, Blackshaw Road, SW17. 4.30pm.

★ **PUBLIC MEETING** Lecture Room, St George's Hospital, 8pm.

Speakers:
Ron Keating, Assistant General Secretary NUPE.



1,500 school students took to the streets of Bristol last Thursday in protest at education cuts in the area planned by the Avon Tory Council and the Labour Government.

The demonstration, organised largely by the students themselves, was supported by both teachers and parents in the area. At the end of the five mile march Tory councillor Peter Abraham, who is also a governor of one of the schools which came out, refused to meet a delegation from the demonstration, despite earlier promises that he would.

The demonstration was just one example of the rising militancy in Bristol over the cuts. 5,500 teachers in the area are presently taking 'no cover' action in protest at the education cuts, while 3 June has been named as the day of action against all aspects of the cuts by a local anti-cuts committee.

This day of action has already been backed by a number of official trade union bodies, including the Bristol TUC [trades council]. There will be a delegate conference on 11 May at Central Hall, Bristol, to plan for 3 June, at which demands for all-out strike action will be discussed.

Workers organise to save hospital

On Thursday 28 April hospital workers from six South London hospitals will be taking industrial action to save the Weir Maternity Hospital.

In a secret plan the Wandsworth and East Merton Area Health Authority has picked out the Weir Maternity Hospital as one of the hospitals they intend to close.

The NHS maternity services were singled out for massive cuts by Barbara Castle in the document 'Priorities for Health' published by the DHSS last year.

This crude attempt to dress up the cuts in the health service as a breakthrough in 'progressive' health planning. ('People before buildings' was Castle's deceitful slogan) will inevitably result in increased risks to pregnant women.

Already the UK is well down the league for safe births. The utter cynicism of the AHA bureaucrats is well shown by the fact that they plan to turn the Weir into an office block!

The AHA has instructed family

But the workers at the Weir and other hospitals in the Wandsworth area are not going to let the AHA and Health Minister David Ennals get away with this disgusting confidence trick. Following the exposure of the AHA's plans by the local Community Health Council (CHC) and the left-wing press, the health unions in Wandsworth have formed a Joint Trade Union Committee representing over 6,000 hospital workers in the area.

This committee has already made links with other workers organisations in the area, having delegates from the Wandsworth Trades Council and local government joint union committees as well as observers from the CHC.

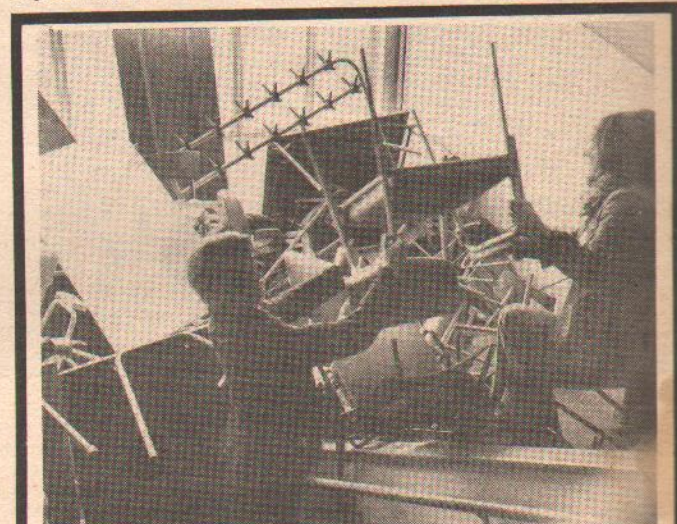
The committee has called the action on 28 April as the first step in a campaign to defend all the NHS services in the area. The workers from the Weir, South London, St Benedict's and the Bolingbroke Hospitals have decided to strike and join a mass picket outside the Weir starting at mid-day. The workers at the Nelson and Wimbledon hospitals as well

To follow the mass picket, the Joint Union Committee has organised a demonstration which will march through the Wandsworth area to St George's Hospital in Tooting for a public meeting against the NHS cuts, at 8pm.

It is actions such as these which, as the struggles to save the EGA (still preparing for the Camden & Islington AHA to attempt to remove patients and equipment) and the Hounslow hospital in West London have shown, offer a concrete way forward in the struggle against health cuts.

The fate of these three hospitals will be an acid test for the London health unions and the rest of the London labour movement in fighting the cuts in the NHS. But three isolated struggles have less chance of succeeding than an all-London campaign of action to force the DHSS to abandon all its plans for cuts.

This is the importance of the day of action called by London National Union of Public Employees on 11 May. A massive turn-out can be a step to forging a London-wide unity within the workers movement to reverse the policies of



Five students from Middlesex Polytechnic will appear before Tottenham magistrates on 9 May. The students — among them the president, Ian Cunningham, and deputy president, Alison Downie — were arrested when the Sheriff of London and 200 police evicted them from their occupation on 7 April. They have been charged

under the 1887 Sheriffs Act for resisting the Sheriff whilst he was exercising a High Court writ. The appearance before the magistrates is a preliminary hearing. The case will go to the Central Criminal Court at the Old Bailey, where the students could face up to two years imprisonment if found guilty.

DEMONSTRATE AGAINST CUTS

One-day Strike called by London NUPE. March from Hyde Park to Temple. Assemble 12.00 noon. Supported by NALGO, UCATT, CPSA, SCPS, NATFHE, Tailor and Garment Workers, S.E. TUC, GLATC.

FIGHTING RACISM

...On the Streets

Wood Green High Road, North London, was turned into a battlefield on Saturday afternoon as 3,500 anti-fascist militants confronted 1,200 police and a thousand fascists in an attempt to stop the National Front's St George's Day Parade.

The afternoon started peacefully enough with anti-fascists asserting their right to organise by defying the ban placed by local council officials and the police on Duckett's Common. After initial threats to clear the Common the police were forced by weight of numbers and the solidarity of the forces organising the Rally 'against Rac-

ism to allow it to proceed.

Unity for action had been built amongst anti-racist committees, black organisations, the local Labour Parties, trade unions and the International Marxist Group and Socialist Workers Party. Two days before the rally, the London District of the Communist Party also added their support. The

result was the largest and broadest united front of the workers movement against fascism yet seen in this country, committed to a position of 'No platform for fascists'.

Chairing the rally was Ted Knight, prospective Labour candidate for Hornsey, who told the crowd that the labour movement must not repeat the mistakes of Germany in the 1930s in dealing with the fascists. 'There the labour movement was divided and as now people said the rights of fascists to organise should be defended. We don't accept that. Fascism must be crushed in the bud, it must be denied any legitimacy.'

ANSWER

Nor was any ancient by-law going to stop anti-fascists organising. 'The police', said Tariq Ali of the International Marxist Group, 'will go to any lengths to allow the fascists to march while there will always be any number of by-laws to stop anti-fascists organising. Well, they have got their answer today as to what we think of that.'

So powerful was the momentum built up amongst the anti-racist forces that the Haringey Labour councillors, who had earlier held their own protest across the street from the Common, joined the rally on the Common despite earlier indications that they would not defy the ban. The sight of the Mayor, complete with chains, followed by the leader of the Tory group of councillors speaking from an illegal platform provided by the IMG in the form of a lorry must have come as a surprise to many!

The police, having been forced into one major concession, were preparing their attack elsewhere. Niggling incidents, such as the sealing of the only entry and exit gate to the Common by the police, took place. Three times the senior stewards appealed to the police to discuss what was happening and three times the senior police officers were nowhere to be found. Only four miles later and after a vicious, sprawling street battle did



Photo: MARK RUSHER (IFL)

the police make any effort to speak to the chief stewards — by which time one was in jail and the other three dispersed.

Despite some breakdowns in communication with the rally on the Common, a constant stream of anti-fascist demonstrators were assembling at the neck of Wood Green High Road. By the time the Front turned the corner at least 2000 must have been strung out along the busy sidewalks. What happened next took even the organisers — who knew feelings were running high since the police ban on the Common — by surprise.

A volley of smoke bombs, water bombs, eggs, flour and rotten vegetables greeted the Front's honour guard. Both they and the police were thrown into confusion by the onslaught. A concerted effort from the sidewalks to block the march at this point would probably have succeeded.

While the Front tried to gather their limited wits the police responded viciously, sending snatch squads into the crowds and using police horses to press anti-fascist demonstrators and shoppers alike against plate glass windows. Undeterred, anti-fascist militants harassed the Front march for another four miles while a further demonstration of anti-racist forces marched by another route to the school where the Front was meeting. Despite teeming rain, only after a further demonstration outside Wood Green police station did the anti-fascist forces disappear.

The organisers of the 23 April demonstration have no doubt where the blame for Saturday's violence lies. Jeremy Corbyn, agent

for Hornsey Labour Party and the person who originally received written permission to use Duckett's Common for the rally against racism, pointed out that first the police gave permission for a provocative National Front march through the large black and Cypriot area of north London; then they connived to ban a rally called to counter it; and having denied the anti-racist forces a point at which to assemble and organise, they battered them in Wood Green High Road. 'This has all the hallmarks of a police provocation from start to finish.'

Despite the large number of arrests, numbering well over 50, the organisers are optimistic. A new broad coalition of anti-fascist forces has been established which unites Labour Parties, the revolutionary left and immigrant organisations against the National Front. If this broad front can be maintained during the defence the basis could be laid for a similar movement nationally.

Furthermore, steps must be taken towards the establishment of black self defence in the area. There are already indications that black people arrested will be fitted out with offensive weapons, while a group of anti-fascists were badly beaten up by National Front thugs in a tube train late on Saturday afternoon.

Witnesses and money are urgently needed for the defence of the arrested. Write statements immediately and send them to: 23 April Demonstration Solicitors, c/o Hornsey Labour Party Rooms, London N8.



Mick Gosling, London Organiser of the IMG and one of the main organisers of Saturday's demonstration, being hauled away by the police. He will not be appearing in court this Thursday due to the fact that he cannot walk. Injuries inflicted by the police are the reason. Also among the arrested were Gerry Hedley, the Socialist [IMG] candidate in Ealing Southall in the Greater London Council elections, and the IMG's election agent for Islington North.



FIVE HUNDRED PEOPLE marched in North London last Monday in defence of the Islington 18 — young black people victimised by the police in revenge for the events at the Notting Hill Carnival last summer.

Monday was the first day of the Islington 18 court cases. They are faced with a number of charges including 'con-

FLASH POINTS

• Two black youths standing in front of Goodwin's hi-fi shop on Wood Green High Street claim they were shot at from the ranks of the NF march. Two holes pierced the plate glass windows and seven cases inside the shop were shattered. Police called to the scene denied the holes in the window came from bullets.

• Fascists armed with broken bottles and even an umbrella with spikes nailed in it viciously attacked anti-fascists in a tube train carriage following last Saturday's demonstration. The anti-fascist militants

found themselves trapped in the carriage on the Piccadilly Line between Wood Green and Turnpike Lane with about 30 National Front supporters. Several militants suffered injuries, with one requiring hospitalisation.

When the carriage reached Turnpike Lane, militants from other carriages ran to their rescue. The train was stopped and the demonstrators prevented the fascists from leaving the carriage. Police arrived on the scene to take statements from witnesses. About six fascists were taken to the police station.



SCOTTISH SOCIALISTS

Red Weekly asked the seven candidates on the Scottish Socialist League slate to explain what issues they were putting to the forefront of their campaign in the Council elections on 5 May. All the candidates were amongst the socialists undemocratically expelled from Jim Sillars' Scottish Labour Party.

'The oil boom — what a joke. BP, Shell and the big banks are making plenty out of it. But all that working people in Aberdeen have seen is rocketing house prices and anti-union cowboy employers. These are the anti-union outfits that the Scottish National Party wants to build a "new" Scotland with. Our campaign is a step in showing that any alternative to the Labour Party has to come from the left.'

election campaign in Aberdeen. The other six candidates have had just as bitter experiences about the oil boom.

Ron Cormack, a recently victimised steward in the Direct Labour Department and a candidate for Links ward in Edinburgh, was one of the 600 marchers against the closure of Robb-Caledon rig construction yard in Leith last week. 'Immediate takeover by the

for. 'For years we waited patiently for our MPs like King Murray, the local Labour MP, to do more than grovel in front of big business. But we can't afford to wait any longer.'

The same message was hammered home by the other Edinburgh candidates. Pauline Tierney, school convenor and a member of the Primary School section executive of her union, explained how the election campaign would provide an opportunity to 'say more than just "smash the Social Contract"'. We can actually explain our alternative: for a 35-hour week on the employers, open all company books to the trade unions, take over the banks and the finance houses — these are the sort of measures which working people must begin to act on now.'

Jenny Donaldson, an unemployed AUEW member and a

Red Weekly: 'The cuts in spending go hand in hand with reactionary attempts to bolster up the family. The timing of Benyon's anti-abortion bill is no surprise to us. It will be an important issue under discussion at the Womens Rights Rally in Glasgow on 7 May.'

In Falkirk, Scottish Socialist standing Dave Fowler, a young health worker who lives in, and will contest, the new housing estate of Hill Park. In stark contrast, Matt Montgomery is standing in the Kelvin ward of Maryhill Glasgow — one of Europe's worst slums.

Montgomery works at Knightswood bus garage. He was particularly concerned with Labour's sell-outs. 'Corruption, disgusting housing, larger dole queues — that's what the Labour Party means to working people'. But in working class areas, Montgomery

'When workers along the road in Partick garage decided not to collect the new fares increases, both the Labour Party and the Scottish Nationalist Party got the fright of their lives. Working people were actually taking decisions in their own hands, and breaking the legal and parliamentary rules. In our election campaign we have been explaining that direct action around socialist policies is the best way to scrap the game altogether.'

The candidates are very conscious that after decades of Labour failure a radically new political situation is opening in Scotland. Their joint manifesto supports an elected Assembly. Des Tierney explained why: 'All over Scotland, workers see devolution as some sort of solution to their problems. We have to make sure that it is the socialist movement, not the ref-

HULL FIGHT ON CUTS



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

spiry to rob' which carries a prison sentence of up to ten years. The Islington 18 Defence Committee, which has widespread support from the local black community, has made it clear that this is only the tip of the iceberg of police harassment of black people. The demonstration was supported by the International Marxist Group, the Socialist

Workers Party, the Labour Party Young Socialists, the Communist Party and the Workers Socialist League. As well as picketing the magistrates' court, the demonstration passed by Hornsey and Caledonian Road police stations — both notorious for their violent treatment of young blacks.



Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

...At the Polls

'BUSSING' IN SOUTHALL

Syd Bidwell, MP for Ealing Southall, cannot understand why the IMG is standing a candidate in the local Council elections. 'After all', he said, 'Yvonne Sieve [Labour's candidate] is right-wing on most things, but she's good on anti-racism.'

If Syd Bidwell's support for immigration controls isn't enough to dent his credentials as judge on this issue, the record of Labour's candidate is. Sieve has failed to attach any

central importance to one of the most blatant forms of racism seen in Southall today — its policy of bussing black children out to schools in other parts of the Ealing

borough. This policy — presently the subject of a court case initiated by Ealing Community Relations Council — was adopted in 1963. Its aim was to ensure that no more than 40 per cent of children in any one primary school would be 'immigrants' — that is, black. In 1968, the Council continued this tradition. It decided not to build new schools in Southall to keep pace with the rising population. Rather children would be bussed. With the cuts in education spending, Ealing Council has been most consistent, almost defiant, in carrying out this policy. The financial cost of bussing is immense. Almost £250,000 are spent each year on it. But its cost to the children and families of blacks is inestimable. Children as young as five years old are forced to catch buses at 7.30am, not to return home until 4.30pm. Bussing is one of the many

aspects of racism that the Socialist [IMG] candidate Gerry Hedley is putting to the fore of his election campaign in Southall. The local Labour Party has a paper position on bussing, but has failed to take up a campaign in the elections against racism, police harassment of black people, and the fight against the National Front, who are also standing a candidate. In contrast, Hedley's supporters organised a contingent from Southall to last Saturday's anti-fascist action in Haringey. Plans are also underway for a May Day 'Anti-Fascist Festival'. Hedley will address the Festival to explain why his policies for an end to immigration controls, for support for black self defence, and for the policy of no platform for racists and fascists provide part of a socialist alternative to the inactivity of Labour.

HILARY DRIVER

ASIAN SOCIALISTS CONTEST BIRMINGHAM SEAT

RAGHIB AHSAN, Transport and General Workers Union shop steward at Rovers in Solihull and Asian Socialist League candidate, aims to meet the racist poison being peddled by the National Front in the Salfley ward head on. He is supported in his fight by the newly-formed Asian Socialist League. The policies supported by the ASL provide a good basis for tackling the 500-odd votes received by the NF in this Birmingham ward in 1976. Ahsan explained to Red Weekly what the ASL was out to accomplish. 'Asian workers experience racism in the unions and at the workplace constantly. Daily they are subject to a torrent of racist articles and programmes in the media. They begin to feel that as

immigrants they have no rights to organise and take part in struggles. The ASL is a first step in winning Asian militants to the need for organisation. Our policies include opposition to all forms of racialism. They call for an end to immigration controls. It is fighting against the enforced division of families. The new discriminatory tax loans which prevent immigrant workers from claiming tax relief for dependants overseas is another of Labour's racist policies the ASL is out to fight. As well as standing firmly for the right to have ethnic culture and history taught in schools, the ASL has also taken a firm stand against the Social Contract. Fascists and racists put forward repatriation and other schemes to solve the capitalist crisis. To nail this lie effectively the ASL has seen from the beginning the need to have alternative, socialist, solutions to the crisis. That's why it supports a programme which can tackle the cuts, unemployment and inflation in the interests of the working class as a whole.'

★ ASL-IMG RALLY ★
Saturday, 30 April
St. Saviors School,
Alum Rock Road, Salfley.
SPEAKERS: Tariq Ali, Raghieb Ahsan, John Graham [IMG candidate for Washwood Heath], Brian Heron plus local trade union and community speakers. Music and entertainment.

ELECTION NOTES

★ BEFORE TRICO'S 21-week struggle last year, racism was rampant in the factory, according to Trico worker Bob Singh, speaker at a North London IMG election meeting last week. He explained that subscriptions had even been collected in the factory for Robert Relf. 'Since the strike these racists haven't dared show their faces'. The need to organise against all forms of racism was highlighted by the Socialist [IMG] candidate, Mick Sullivan. He called on the meeting to attend the picket at the police station in support of the Islington 18 on Saturday and to go on to the anti-fascist action in Haringey. According to Sullivan, racism against the Cypriots and Irish was also experienced daily in the area.

Clem Mahara, of the Islington 18 Defence Campaign, pointed to police harassment suffered by black youths. He gave examples where police had taken house keys from some of the defendants, to let themselves in to illegally search their rooms. ★ THE ALL-LAMBETH Anti-Racist Movement [ALARM] has produced a series of leaflets for the local Council elections. Four estates in Lambeth amongst other areas will be leafleted with the facts, figures and arguments to counter the policies of the fascists and racists. Piers Corbyn, Socialist [IMG] candidate, will be speaking — with other candidates, except the NF — to explain his programme for combatting racism at an ALARM meeting.

Two Labour Party candidates for council elections in Hull have resigned in disgust. The decision to resign was taken at a Labour candidates' meeting at the beginning of the month. Charles Brady, leading 'Godfather' of Central Hull Labour Party took up a challenge to explain why the cuts were not mentioned in Labour's manifesto. Ignoring last year's Labour Party Conference resolution on the cuts, Brady stated that 'I've been appointed dictator to look after this campaign and no candidate is going to say he is against the cuts'. A week later, the Socialists Against the Cuts campaign, which is fielding four candidates, including the two ex-Labour candidates was launched. Below SAC candidate KEITH RUSSELL explains what the new slate represents and how the campaign is being organised.

revealed his strategy for returning a Labour Council at the candidates' meeting where the resignations occurred. He explained: 'It's all a matter of psychology. You can even get people to believe lies if you want to'. Combined with their utter disregard for democracy, this stance will ensure a set-back for Labour on 5 May. The Socialists Against the Cuts Campaign was launched a week after the resignations. It got off to a poor start. A letter calling for unity amongst local left-wing groups was virtually ignored. But when it was clear that the fight for alternatives was going ahead, socialists, trade unionists and activists from the women's movement have come forward to join in. Using every means possible — leaflets, manifesto, loudspeaker — the SAC supporters are fighting to build the socialist opposition. On the doors, in the shopping

Working Women's Charter Group has put out its own SAC leaflet. It calls on women to get organised in the unions, to fight the cuts, to organise for nursery facilities and to mobilise for women's right to free abortion on demand. Support has come from all quarters. Individuals in left-wing groups, Labour Party members who refuse to canvas for their own right-wing candidates and prominent local militants including Dave Pooley, founder of Preservation of the Rights of Prisoners, will be marking their cross against SAC candidates. There will be no spectacular success. This is only the beginning to organise the growing discontent in Hull. It represents a challenge to the careerists, the manoeuvrers and the sell-out merchants of the local Labour leadership. Many workers and housewives

continue the campaign beyond the 5 May will be discussed. And a proposal will be made to stand a united left candidate in the next general election. The SAC cam-

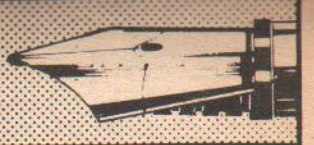
paign has laid a firm basis to continue in its efforts to reach out to a larger number of working class people ever achieved by the left to date in Hull.

SOCIALISTS AGAINST THE CUTS — HULL ELECTION MEETINGS

★ Thursday 25 April, 1.15pm, University Council Chamber.
CHAIR: Noel Hibbert [IMG]
SPEAKERS: Keith Russell [SAC Candidate], Martin Shaw [Socialist Workers Party].

★ Monday 2 May, 7.30pm, King Edward VII Pub, Anlaby Road.
SPEAKERS: The four SAC candidates: Stan Suddaby [T&GWU], Annette Fitzsimmons [T&GWU] Ed Wright [COHSE], Keith Russell [Labour Party]

'Vote for Success' is the optimistic slogan adopted by the Social Contract are 16,000 unemployed, 19 hospital units under threat of closure, and 700 County



RISK OF ECONOMISM IN ELECTIONS

Without wishing to dispel the optimism in respect of united far left slates in elections after the Stechford results I would like to raise some criticisms on the campaigns of the IMG and the SWP.

An election not only offers an opportunity to step up dramatically the struggle to organise a socialist opposition in the labour movement to the Government's policies, it further raises all the problems of political democracy in British society. Revolutionaries have to seize the opportunity to speak to tens of thousands of working class people to popularise and explain their answers to these problems.

For example, the Lords have played a central role in blocking the few positive measures put forward by the Labour Government. Revolutionaries should raise the need to fight to implement Trotsky's 'advice' to Ramsay MacDonald — for the abolition of the [unelected] House of Lords and all the trappings of the monarchy. The money saved could be used to finance a vast programme of building schools, hospitals and houses for working people.

Secondly, the judiciary has been the main instrument of attacks on black people. It has been the principal instrument in the suppression of workers' rights, most recently in the ban on the postal workers' blacking of South African mail. The fight for the election and recall of the judiciary from top to bottom, by the local community, would be seen as a credible alternative to situations like the courts' intervention to reverse comprehensivisation of schools in Tameside.

Thirdly, the role of parliamentary democracy has been highlighted by the Liberal/Labour pact and the rebellions of right wing Labour MPs. The demand for the recallability of all labour movement representatives, from MPs to local councillors, to the trade unions should again have been part of any revolutionary candidates' programme.

I don't say that such points should have been the centre of the programme. Clearly we start from the most immediate problems confronting the working class and all the oppressed. But we run the risks of economism unless we have a programme for the total transformation of British society. The elaboration of such a programme should be the principal task of any united far left slate in a general election.

As a first step I would suggest that Red Weekly follows up its excellent review of The Technology of Political Control [7 April] with articles on the development of our 'democratic monarchy' and how socialists propose to deal with its undoubted potential as the bastion of 'constitutional counter-revolution'.

REDMOND O'NEILL (Brighton)

WHO'S GOT A WRONG LINE HERE THEN? (Part 2)

Val Graham and Chris Roseblade's letter on the police (Red Weekly, 21 April) manages to avoid answering any of the points in my original article.

Half the reason for this is the schematism of their argument — the very fault for which they criticise me — and the other half is a caricatured presentation of my position. They ignore the section of my article which explained how union demands among police could sometimes be used to break down discipline and they have no comment on the empirical evidence I used of the CP's distortion of police pay rates.

In sum they offer neither alternative evidence nor an alternative method.

My starting point was the need to break down police discipline. They offer no alternative to that except some abstract struggle for democratic rights.

Comrades Graham and Roseblade, helped by Frank Serpico (!), seize upon my distinction between police and conscript soldiers as evidence of my idiocy. I had naively thought I was stating the obvious: conscripts are workers who have been forced into the service of the bourgeois state and will be returning to civilian life in a couple of years. Police, on the other hand, are volunteers with a high level of ideological training in the suppression of the political and trade union activity of the working class.

What I actually said (as opposed to Graham and Roseblade's version of my argument) was that specific demands for unionisation, pay increases and the right to strike have to be assessed by the sole criterion of the breakdown of discipline in the police. I did not oppose the right to strike in the abstract.

According to Graham and Roseblade, my criticisms of the Communist Party led me to precisely the same error — by some tangled dialectical route which,

quite honestly, completely escapes me. I apparently said (where, I don't know) that the struggle for democratic rights is the same as the democratisation of the state.

This is the nub of the problem. For Trotskyists, the struggle for democratic rights is a particular weapon in the class struggle as a whole. That is, we do not empty those rights of their class content. We are not in favour of trade union rights as a general principle but as a form of organisation which can defend the living standards of the working class as a whole. We would not, for example, support the affiliation of the Law Society (or, more seriously, the Royal College of Nursing) to the TUC.

Roseblade and Graham, however, seem to support democratic rights for cops regardless of their impact on the discipline of the force. One sentence gives them away: 'According to that logic we might just as well oppose political rights for soldiers on the grounds that they'd all join the NF'.

Of course we do support political rights for soldiers against the bourgeois state. But we are opposed to the extension of democratic freedoms to fascist organisations and we fight for the workers organisations to curtail those freedoms. Inadvertently, perhaps, the comrades have hit upon the example which exposes the weakness of their catch-all support for democratic rights.

Apparently my line is a static one. I supposedly ignore the dynamic created by the struggle for union rights and put the onus on individual cops to join unions. Perhaps I did not make myself clear, but I suspect the comrades are wilfully missing the point. I was advocating the right of unions to campaign for membership inside the police.

There is a serious criticism to be made of this position, but it is the opposite of Graham and Roseblade's: the potentially disastrous consequences of allowing police — the paid agents of the state — into labour movement meetings. So enthusiastic are the comrades on the democratic potential of the cops that they are untroubled by such small matters.

Finally, the problem I was trying to raise was that simple trade unionism was inadequate to break down the police. I raised the problem of police houses, which are part of the real wage of a police officer. We would clearly be opposed to their continuance — I assume Graham and Roseblade agree since they don't say otherwise — but no trade union would ever argue for a real wage cut for its members.

I readily admit that my article was schematic but it did attempt to raise this sort of practical problem. Graham and Roseblade prefer to hide behind a string of platitudes about democratic rights without once mentioning specific police struggles or the particular problems which police unions would face.

'Since when have Trotskyists opposed democratic rights for police ...?', they ask. Since Trotsky, in fact, comrades! The upsurge of police militancy in Western Europe in recent years has forced the Fourth International to re-evaluate that traditional Trotskyist position. My article was intended as a contribution to such a re-evaluation. But Trotsky, with his insistence that cops are not 'workers in uniform', still has a lot to teach us.

RICHARD CARVER [London]

Movie Disasters

Those frequenting the cinema and not hampered in their choice of what to see by the prejudice that films ought to be very serious, slow-moving, uneventful and/or unstructured, won't have failed to notice the recent phenomenon of the 'disaster' movie. This involves a group or crowd of people in some typically modern setting in which the social routines usual to it are suddenly upset by freak accident, natural calamity or criminal lunacy.

by NORMAN GERAS

produced the ultimate of realistic effects by bringing the house down on top of the audience viewing the earthquake. Ordinary commercial considerations may suffice to explain, too, why there has not yet been a 'cinema-disaster' movie showing, say, some unsuspecting audience suddenly invaded by deadly spiders.

In any case, the latest in this series of disaster, *Two-Minute Warning* (Director, Larry Pearce), now on general release, concerns a sniper occupying an impregnable vantage point on the tower of a football stadium who begins to fire into a capacity crowd watching the closing minutes of an important game. Despite the best efforts of the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team, called in after the sniper has been spotted on TV cameras, he wreaks havoc before being himself dispatched. There is panic, screaming, a lot of running away and trampling underfoot. Many people die.

More subtle than this is that the random shots of the sniper conspire to produce a wonderful pattern of death. Amongst the spectators we know, the pick-pocket and the gambler are killed

while the priest goes unscathed. The family, a married couple and two small children, come out all right in the end after she has been slightly wounded during his absence. Two young people, seen engaging in an obviously healthy flirtation, likewise survive after he rescues her from what could have been a nasty fall. But a middle-aged car salesman who has been living out of wedlock with a woman for years is struck down seconds after he finally (alas too late!) proposes marriage to her.

In *Towering Inferno* too, virtually the first people to burn are

Robert Wagner and his secretary, illicitly making love. In *Earthquake*, Charlton Heston chooses certain death trying to rescue the wife (Ava Gardner) he hates, rather than staying with the other woman he loves. In death he is, simultaneously, punished for infidelity and united with his true companion.

Through the most frightful disasters, the important institutions do remain intact, smiled on by both Nature and Fortune. God really does seem to be on the side of the bourgeoisie. Which is probably just as well.



THE RIGHTS OF FOOTBALL FANS

In the past you have been quick to expose moves to strengthen the state at the expense of the working class, so I'm surprised that you failed to devote even a couple of lines to the recent attacks on Manchester United and Chelsea football fans.

By banning fans from travelling to away matches, by decree, an awesome step has been taken. Legally these fans have as much, if not more right to travel to matches as the labour movement has to picket. Who knows what will come under

attack next?

Fans are an easy target, we get it from both sides. Our parents [and their generation] think we are thugs and the clubs only want our money and our voices. In that situation we are a target for any copper who wants to fill up his arrest book.

If you are serious about fighting the strengthening of the state, at least take up this issue and its implications and expose it, even if you don't stand with us on the terraces.

A Norwich City Fan (Yes we do exist)

WHAT'S ON

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

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

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.

WORLD REVOLUTION Public Forum. The Middle East: The Peace of the Grave — Nationalism or Class Struggle — War or Revolution. 2.30pm Saturday 30 April. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

MAYDAY PARTY in benefit of the National Abortion Campaign. Live band 'Termite Hotel'. Real ale and disco. 8.30 till 1.30. Saturday 30 April at the Waterloo Action Centre, 14 Baylis Road, London SE1. 75 pence. Enjoy yourself for a Woman's Right to Choose.

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE May Day meeting, 5pm, the Kenilworth Hotel, Great Russell Street, London (opposite TUC). Speakers include Alan Thornett and a speaker on the situation in Turkey.

ACTSS Legal Workers Branch on 13 May at 7pm at Transport and General Workers Union Headquarters, 203 North Gower Street, near Warren Street tube station. All workers in solicitors' offices welcome.

WEST LONDON NAC Public Meeting: 'Defeat Benyon's Bill', Monday 2 May, Westway Luncheon Club, next to Ladbrooke Grove tube station. 7.30pm. Speakers: Germaine Greer, Professor Peter Huntingford, Kate Truscott (COHSE). Play by Pirate Jenny Bouncing Back with Benyon.

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.

SOCIALIST STUDENTS ALLIANCE National Conference. Saturday 30 April/Sunday 1 May. Ring Andy Housley on Birmingham 021-454-5184 for details. Guest speakers include Tariq Ali, Eamonn McCann and Soweto student leaders.

STUDENT MOVEMENT Campaign on Ireland. Open conference sponsored by Middlesex Polytechnic SU. Sunday 15 May. Conference starts at 11.00am.

INTERNATIONAL Communist League Public Meeting. 'A Programme for Workers' Power'. Speaker: Martin Thomas. 8pm Thursday 28 April. TU Club, Minster Street, Reading.

'STALINISM' a school organised by Brighton IMG. 7/8 May, Sussex University. Registration 50p. Comprehensive documentation for school 60p. Registration and reading £1. Further details all available from: 'Weekend School', 16 Dean St., Brighton. Tel: 0273-202780.

NORTH WEST Gay Weekend. 7/8 May in Oldham welcomes all gay women and men. For details ring 061-624 1010, or 061-682 7468, or Littleborough 70488.

'THE CRISIS and the struggle for a vanguard party: Speaker Frank Richards. Friday 6 May, 7.30pm. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. First public meeting of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency.

SOUTHAMPTON Red Weekly May Day Social. Thursday 28 April — live group and disco — 'The Anchor', East Street. Start 8pm. Admission 40p at door.

'ZIMBABWE' — Who are the Real

STUDENTS- A DUBIOUS ALLIANCE

So, according to Hugh (yes I'm still a student) Lanning, arch opportunist and SSA presidential candidate, the last NUS Conference will 'not be remembered for the collapse of NUS Services'; nor presumably for the underhand dealings of the Broad Left, who were only able to maintain control of the National Union of Students through Tory support, but he announced (with unintentional hilarity) that it would 'be remembered for the formation of the SSA'.

A somewhat remarkable claim when one considers the short existence of the organisation: 'It's formation is long overdue'. Last year we saw a national campaign of teacher training college occupations, this year we have seen overseas students occupy against their discriminatory fee increases, and finally, the beginnings of a

The National Organisation of International Socialist Societies played a major role in all these struggles. But it seems we had to wait conveniently for a date nearer the NUS Conference before the SSA emerged. Rather than supporting principled student revolutionaries with proven militant records representing real college based organisation, the tired old hacks of the IMG welcomed this 'new alliance' so they could have another go at getting on the NUS Executive.

Just exactly what does 'a militant alternative' mean? — Alternative to what? — the Broad Left? — the FCS? or NOISS? Paul Brooke curtly dismissed the criticism of comrade Duffy (Lancaster NOISS) without providing an answer — 'the SSA has no class perspective' — this still holds

body affiliated to the SWP, a working class organisation with growing support in the labour movement.

Although the SSA has adopted nine-tenths of NOISS programme (while still maintaining centrist aspirations for Scottish devolution) the preamble to this (under the section 'A New Alliance') merely boils down to a revitalised, left Broad Left: 'The SSA is a broad grouping of socialist students ... It is why we will fight for unity with supporters of the BL ... who reject moves by the NUS leadership to drop the union's 'no platform' position, and the undemocratic nature of the BL machine.'

We are all in favour of unity in action, however it is not surprising that we are unwilling to commit ourselves to 'unity' in the form of a dubious 'alliance' with has-been and/or aspiring bureaucrats from the IMG.

At best the SSA might serve as some kind of 'clearing house' for those who will eventually commit themselves to real revolutionary politics.

Warwick University International Socialists Society.

* It is unfortunate that the comrades find it necessary to mix the real class and political criti-

IMG Notes

National WLM Fraction. Saturday 30 April, 10.30am-5.30pm. At Red Books, 182 Pentonville Road, London N1. Nearest tube Kings Cross. Pooled fare will operate.

National Health Commission. Saturday 30 April. At National Centre.

National NALGO Fraction. Saturday 30 April, 11am. At National Centre.

National WWCC Fraction. Saturday 7 May. Further details to follow.

School on Eastern Europe. Sat/Sun 7/8 May. In London.

S. Africa Campaign Caucus. Sunday 15 May. At National Centre.

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

National Branch Organisers Aggregate. Saturday 18 June. Further details to follow.

'Labour Focus on Eastern Europe.' The IMG has purchased a bulk order of this journal, so all IMG branch orders should be sent to: Relgocrest, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.

IMG International Bulletin. No. 1 of this new bulletin is just out — for IMG members and sympathisers. Includes

By the Red Weekly Editorial Board

THURSDAY 9 JUNE is the date set for the launching of a new left paper — Socialist Challenge, a sixteen page weekly. The aim of the new paper will be two-fold. Firstly to campaign for a new left wing in the labour movement that bases itself on the policies of class struggle rather than the class collaboration beloved by the present 'left leaders'. Secondly, to overcome the sectarian fragmentation of the far left in the fight to build a unified revolutionary organisation in Britain.

The campaign for the new paper has been initiated by the International Marxist Group, which for a year and a half has campaigned consistently for these two vital objectives. It is for this reason that Red Weekly will cease publication with its 200th issue and throw all its technical and journalistic resources behind the new journal.

Because we want Socialist Challenge to reflect the central tasks and debates confronting the working class, we will give space in its columns to individual militants, organisations and campaigns to express their views in a way normally denied them.

POLEMICAL

We are confident that the many militants who may not necessarily agree with each and every one of the policies of Socialist Challenge will nevertheless see the need for an open, non-sectarian polemical paper. A sixteen page paper will allow two pages of letters and room for regular columns to guest writers.

Socialist Challenge will be committed to continuing the

Socialist Challenge

fight to overcome the fragmentation of the far left today. It will seek to promote united front policies which can strengthen the impact of revolutionaries in the workers' movement. 'Forum' columns in the new paper will seek out debate with other left organisations in an unrelenting fight for a principled re-groupment of the revolutionary left.

The fight won't be confined to the printed word in the 'Forum' columns. Several organisations on the left have already been approached to consider what concrete measures they are prepared to take in launching Socialist Challenge.

The extra four pages of the new paper will have regular coverage on cultural and social events and issues. It will also make possible extensive reporting and analysis on developments in the international class struggle, including particularly Spain and southern Africa. In Eastern Europe, the crisis of Stalinism has reached new heights with the recent emergence of organised oppositions — however initial — in Poland, East Germany and Czechoslovakia. A regular column on the struggle for democratic rights in the deformed workers' states will bring vital lessons to bear on the British workers' movement.

The campaign to launch it will be formally set in motion at the Trotskyism Today Rally at Hammersmith Town Hall on 29 April. The month of May will be devoted to strenuous efforts in seeking active support for and involvement in the new paper.

MEETINGS

Militants in every major town and city throughout the country will be approached to appear on the platform of local meetings to launch the paper. They will be joined by a comrade from the Political Committee of the International Marxist Group as well as a member of the LCR in Spain. Militants attending the meetings will be asked to publicly support the aims of Socialist Challenge, to financially back their support, to write for the paper, to mobilise for actions endorsed by it, and to sell the paper. A pre-publication sample of Socialist Challenge will appear in mid-May.

RALLY

A national rally on the revolutionary press the weekend before 9 June will be addressed by leading members of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. At the rally, the new editor of Social-

ist Challenge will be introduced and given the opportunity to explain why Socialist Challenge meets the needs of the class struggle today.

Today the conditions exist for Trotskyist forces to break out of the isolation they have suffered in past periods. Socialist Challenge will be an attempt to ensure that every opportunity is seized to spread the ideas of Trotskyism and to organise around policies of class struggle.

The choice is yours. The new paper will put the challenge to you. If you support its aims — or even if you are willing to explain why you disagree — mark the following dates on your calendar and take the opportunity to be convinced of why Socialist Challenge is vital.

Next week: interview with Alain Krivine, editor of the French Trotskyist daily Rouge.

- * LEEDS Friday 6 May
* SHEFFIELD Sunday 8 May
* GLASGOW Sunday 15 May
* EDINBURGH Monday 16 May
* NEWCASTLE Tuesday 17 May
* HULL Wednesday 18 May
* BIRMINGHAM Thursday 19 May
* WORCESTER Friday 20 May
* COVENTRY Friday 20 May
* NOTTINGHAM/LEICESTER Sunday 22 May
* OXFORD Monday 23 May
* BRISTOL Tuesday 24 May
* SWANSEA Wednesday 25 May
* CARDIFF Thursday 26 May
* READING Friday 27 May
* MANCHESTER Sunday 29 May
* SOUTHAMPTON Tuesday 31 May
* BRIGHTON Wednesday 1 June
* CANTERBURY Thursday 2 June

[Note: If you live in the North West keep the following dates free: 9-12 May. Further details in next week's Red Weekly].

World Outlook

★ Pakistan

One way or another the Bhutto regime in Pakistan looks finished.

As we go to press a general strike continues to paralyse the country. Martial law has been declared in the three major cities of Lahore, Karachi and Hyderabad and a curfew imposed in other large towns. Workers in essential services have been told to report to work under the threat of summary court martial, carrying penalties from five years imprisonment to the death sentence.

The army has banned all trade union activity in Lahore and another layer of the opposition leadership has been arrested.

Over 200 are reckoned to have died in political violence since the rigged elections early in March. The shooting of demonstrators and supposed curfew-breakers by the army last week represents a new pattern. Bhutto's strong arm is no longer the armed thugs of his Pakistan People's Party but the armed forces themselves.

But that creates problems for him. The more he devolves power to the generals, the less need they will see for his continuing as Prime Minister. Now that Bhutto has lost the support of large sections of the petty bourgeoisie and organised labour he looks far less stable than before the elections. At the moment there is no obvious military candidate to take over the Government. But there are plenty of butchers.

★ Italy

Italian demonstrators may be shot. That was the message of Interior Minister Francesco Cossiga after the death of a policeman during a demonstration last week.

There is no evidence to identify who fired the fatal shot but the Government has used the incident as the occasion for further repression. People carrying guns or Molotov cocktails will be seen as armed

wing Government. The electorate gave its view of the PCI's class collaborationist policies in the municipal elections last week. The party's vote dropped by 10 per cent. Workers who gave the PCI its highest ever vote in the legislative elections last June have withdrawn their support.

Far from the massive social transformation promised, the PCI has acted as the Government's policeman in inflicting attacks on working class living standards. It is significant that, although the governing Christian Democrats made some gains, the main beneficiaries of the lost PCI vote were smaller workers organisations like the Socialist Party.

The ultra-left in the student movement is certainly isolating itself from the mass of students by its adventurist and undemocratic methods. Isolated attacks on policemen offer no way forward for the struggle against the new educational law or against the advances of the far right.

But the ban on demonstrations and the threat of police violence is an attack on the rights of the workers and student movement as a whole. The job of the workers organisations is not to sit back making approving noises but to fight the build-up of state repression.

★ Greece

An Amnesty International report, on the tenth anniversary of the military coup in Greece, reveals that many of the dictatorship's torturers have been allowed to get away scot-free.

Comparing Greece to Portugal, where there has been a similar failure to bring such criminals to justice, the report highlights the reluctance of the new bourgeois democratic regimes to deal decisively with those responsible for the death and mutilation of tens of thousands of workers. Many of the torturers remain in the employment of the secret police.

Coup leader George Papadopoulos and his accomplices were condemned to death but quickly had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment. When Guardian reporter George Coates visited Korydallos prison where they are held he got a surprise.

Each cell has piped music and an adjoining bathroom. On the anniversary of the coup the prisoners had chicken for lunch. 'The chicken was not for the anniversary', explained the prison governor. 'That is what the prisoners get every Thursday.'

None of Papadopoulos's victims was ever treated like that.

★ Catalonia

Building workers in Catalonia have been on strike since 29 March. They are demanding a substantial increase in the minimum wage and challenging the Government's cost of living index. They argue that the index must be drawn up by the workers organisations themselves.

A fortnight ago 8,000 workers packed into the San Andrés football stadium to decide the future of the strike. Members of the strike committee representing the PSUC, the Catalan Communist Party, argued for a return to work. They were opposed by speakers from the MC (Maoist) and the LCR (Fourth International), the leaders of the 'unitary current' in the Workers Commissions.

After the speeches a vote was taken. Two hands were raised in support of the PSUC motion! The rest voted to carry on with the strike.



FRANCESCO COSSIGA

insurgents against the state and dealt with accordingly.

All the major parties have greeted the measure with approval, though the Communist Party (PCI) was disappointed that Cossiga had banned all demonstrations until the end of May. No doubt they intended to hold a demonstration condemning the killing as they did in Bologna last month.

'The workers united are mobilised against criminal subversion', announced l'Unita, the PCI daily paper. 'Criminal subversion', incidentally, is anything which upsets the PCI's cosy relationship with the right-

rouge

Paper of the Ligue Communiste Revolutionnaire, French Section of the Fourth International.

In the past year Rouge has become a daily paper and a central weapon in the struggle against the austerity plans and the capitulations of the Union of the Left. In particular we have been able to win revolutionary unity in the municipal elections — a first step in the fight for a unified revolutionary organisation. We send May Day greetings to Red Weekly and wish every success to Socialist Challenge in the same struggle.

PODER OBRERO

Paper of the Liga Obrera Comunista and the Comandos Camilistas [Colombia]. The launching of Poder Obrero last year was a big step towards the fusion of our two organisations and Espartaco

under the banner of the Fourth International. This May Day we wish our British comrades success in their struggle for a unified revolutionary organisation.

COMBATE

Paper of the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria, a Spanish sympathising organisation of the Fourth International.

We send our revolutionary greetings to Red Weekly, the most consistent fighter for solidarity with the working class of the Spanish state in the British labour movement. Recently, as a result of the considerable growth of our organisation in the workers movement, we have made considerable advances in our paper. We welcome the launching of Socialist Challenge as a similar advance by our British comrades.

THE MILITANT

Paper of the Socialist Workers Party, US supporters of the Fourth International. Comradely May Day greetings to Red Weekly — and to Socialist Challenge in its fight for the unification of the Trotskyist organisations.

DIRECT ACTION

Paper of the Socialist Workers Party, Australian sympathising organisation of the Fourth International. We send revolutionary May Day greetings to Red Weekly and its readers: and best wishes for the success of Socialist Challenge.

luta proletária

Paper of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista, Portuguese sympathising organisation of the Fourth International.

We take the opportunity of this day of international working class solidarity to thank Red Weekly and its readers for their financial assistance to our paper over the last three years. Revolutionary greetings.

bandiera rossa

Paper of the Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari, Italian Section of the Fourth International. Communist greetings to Red Weekly and its supporters on May Day 1977.

Internationalen

MAY DAY GREETINGS

MAY DAY SOCIAL Saturday 30 April Caxton House, St Johns Way, N19. bands — discos —

Zimbabwe Week of Action 9-14 May Activities will include pickets of local offices of Shell/ BP on 13 May. Shell/ BP has provided the Smith regime with oil.

MAYDAY GREETINGS FROM 5/ 293 Branch T&GWU, Cowley Assembly Plant END THE SOCIAL CONTRACT NOW!

BATTERSEA & WANDSWORTH TRADES COUNCIL sends fraternal greetings to fellow trade unionists END THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

Zaire: Pygmy powers arm dictatorship



The British press has tried to milk the Zaire war for its humour. And it hasn't been difficult.

Mobutu demands that cans of Coca-Cola be included in his military supplies. The US refuses [presumably on the grounds that they're only sending 'non-lethal' supplies]. So Mobutu goes ahead and fiddles the books and buys the Coke anyway.

Meanwhile the Moroccans have been pushed out of the limelight by the 'elite' pygmy bowmen with their poisoned arrows. The idea of pygmies marching through the jungle swigging Coke was too good to miss. And what they dip their arrows in is anyone's guess.

But, make no mistake, things are serious. The Congo National Liberation Front (FNLC) forces have been driven back by the Moroccans. Despite the allegations of captured Katangans it seems unlikely that the Cubans — for whom the Moroccans are supposedly a counterbalance — have played any part in the fighting. Certainly the US State Department

does not think so.

The Zaire army's record — its desertions and technical blundering — shows that it could not have fought the FNLC on its own. French President Giscard has sought backing for French intervention from the EEC and the Senegal conference of French-speaking African countries. No one was very impressed with his chest-beating but he got the backing he wanted.

Victory, however, will not be so easy. Opposition to Mobutu is widespread and a prolonged guerilla war is predicted. French imperialism doesn't have a good record in such situations. Its recent

colonial wars — in Indo-China and Algeria — have ended in disaster.

France and Belgium are the pygmies of the imperialist world. Apart from economic considerations, their present junketings are meant to show a reluctant electorate at home that they are giants.

Even the real giant — the United States — has been playing it careful. It has learnt lessons from Indochina that Giscard has forgotten. The Carter administration is happy to give the CIA a free hand in recruiting mercenaries but it is committed to neo-colonialism in southern Africa. At the moment it will back Mobutu to the hilt but it will let go of him like a shot if a more favourable candidate presents himself.

But that will be no solution for the people of Zaire. History has shown the readiness of the imperialist powers to shift their allegiances from the secessionist Tshombe to the centralist Mobutu. Mobutu must go, certainly. But so must his imperialist paymasters.

Mobutu's reign of repression

A FEW WEEKS ago troops stationed at Ludumbashi, in Shaba province, threatened to desert because they had received no wages or provisions. So the Zaire army shipped in 1,560 sandwiches from a nearby hotel.

The episode shows — in a small way — why the Mobutu dictatorship has been unable to sort out its problems: a fall in copper exports and prices, corruption at all levels of the state machine and demoralisation in the armed forces. Mobutu's only reliable troops — apart from the pygmy bowmen — are the paratroops. The Americans hinted that he might send the paratroops to the front after the failure of other regiments — aid consignments included large supplies of parachutes! But Mobutu could not send them for fear of leaving himself unprotected.

Mobutu has long been imperialism's man. With the CIA he played a part in handing over radical nationalist Patrice Lumumba to be murdered by Moïse Tshombe's Katangan secessionists. The Katangans were backed by the Belgians as a means of keeping the mineral rich province in imperialist hands.

With Lumumba out of the way and Mobutu in power, secession was no longer needed. Belgian companies have a free hand in the copper mines of Kolwezi and a 40 per cent share in Gecamines, the state mining company.

It is ironic that the imperialist intervention should now centre on the need to keep Zaire intact and prevent Katangan secession. The irony is sharpened when you consider Mobutu's backing for FLEC, the Front for the Liberation of the Cabinda Enclave. FLEC is a tatty right-wing bunch, devoted to the secession of an oil-rich province of Angola.

Mobutu could only consolidate his rule by repression — and that is how he has continued in power. The atrocities of Uganda's Amin (himself out in power by imper-

lar regime hardly merits a comment.

Imperialist interest in Zaire continues to rest on its phenomenal mineral wealth — copper, cobalt, industrial diamonds and many other raw materials. To that has been added the need to prevent the construction of a 'red belt' across southern Africa — in other words to stop the progress of the liberation movements. Mobutu's backing for the FNLA and FLEC in Angola and his commitment of regular troops during the civil war last year show his willingness to fall in line with that scheme.

But a fall in copper exports in the early 1970s has weakened the regime. Mobutu's 'Zaireanisation' policy was meant to play off one section of imperialism against another. Many Belgian companies were 'nationalised' while both US and French imperialism were allowed to gain a foothold. But the fall in copper prices meant that a number of projects for the development of the mining industries went by the board.

At the same time the advances of the MPLA in Angola closed down the Benguela railway which used to carry an overwhelming proportion of the mineral exports from Shaba province (the former Katanga). Increased shipping costs added to the regime's economic problems.

The Ludumbashi episode and the unreliability of the troops suggests that the crisis has penetrated to the heart of the repressive machinery. The uprising of the Congo National Liberation Front (FNLC) in Shaba brought this to a head — hence the need to draft in imperialist troops.

The FNLC was formed out of the Katangan secessionist movement of the early '60s. The Belgian backed 'gendarmes' fled to Angola where they cooperated with the Portuguese in putting down the liberation movements. But when the MPLA made gains after the fall of the Portuguese dictatorship in 1974 they switched sides. The

history we may be allowed a little scepticism.

It is also unclear how much support the FNLC has in Shaba. But mass opposition to Mobutu runs high. More than a decade of brutality and economic crisis has made sure that Mobutu and his mercenaries will get little help from the people of Zaire.

Dr Owen's African Practice

LAST WEEK imperialism once more sent its 'flying doctor' to the southern African hot-spot. But this time the hard-bitten features of Dr. Kissinger were replaced by the well-scrubbed youth of Doctor Owen.

The Owen mission got a nod and a wink from a wide range of opinion, all the way from the 'Marxist' presidents of Mozambique and Angola to the white racist bosses Smith and Vorster.

But this success was not due, as the British press would have us believe, to the Foreign Secretary's bewitching bedside manner. Rather it was the timing of his moves, which come at a point when the rise of anti-imperialist sentiment is worrying all those who have a stake in keeping the status quo.

Imperialism is worried about the threat raised by a defeat of the Smith regime in a popular liberation struggle involving a greater mobilisation and radicalisation of

the oppressed African masses. Thus the Americans are prepared to play a central part in Owen's scheme to the degree of jointly underwriting the plan for a future constitutional conference and making Vice-President Mondale directly responsible for working out the administration's African policy.

Similarly the 'front-line' states are concerned about their inability to work out a way of making the Smith regime go back on its intransigence. This is forcing the Zimbabwean nationalists to insist on a tougher policy and place greater emphasis on the armed struggle, which jeopardises the ability of the front-line regimes to keep control of the guerilla forces.

The growing pressure on the front-line states will either expose their unwillingness to take the anti-imperialist struggle forward seriously or draw them into the conflict. This would drain off the limited resources of their crisis-

ridden economies and give birth to a radical mass movement on the fringes of, and even within, their own borders. This would challenge their accommodation to imperialism.

The white racist states are becoming more and more aware that they are stuck in a dead-end. They are eager to find room for manoeuvre. This explains the willingness not just of Vorster and Smith but of the latter's right wing Rhodesian Front Party to give a cautious preliminary nod to Owen's proposals.

The proposals aim to skip the controversial preliminaries for the transfer of power from white racist to black majority rule and instead to solve the problem of the future constitution. The idea is that it will be easier to reach agreement on these long-term plans which will make it possible to isolate the 'extremists' on both sides and secure a 'moderate' majority ready to compromise on the immediate measures needed to get the plan off the ground.

Any such scheme must involve concessions to preserve the material privileges of the white minority. As Owen put it in Parliament, to '... encourage the minority white population to stay and contribute to the country's future!'

GUARANTEES

But this will mean some political guarantees: possibly a postponement of a fully equal franchise (which Owen has conspicuously stopped referring to), white ministers in the post-independence Government, irrespective of the vote they get, and even the presence of British troops. Owen hinted at this in Parliament: 'There is no intention of the British Government to commit troops in any major sense'.

The future of the Owen proposals is unclear. It will depend in part on whether the Smith regime's seemingly positive attitude is simply a manoeuvre to gain time or whether it represents a serious bid to work out a deal with imperialism to maintain the essentials of white privilege against the black masses.

At the same time it is unclear how the nationalists will respond to the proposals. The attitude of the front-line states, who appear to look at them as a useful way out of their dilemma, may be crucial.



Wounded Zimbabwean liberation fighter in a Mozambique hospital.

SOUTH AFRICAN TROTSKYIST SPEAKS OUT

This interview is with a South African Trotskyist who has been active in the black liberation struggle since the early 1950s. It was given to Intercontinental Press correspondent Jim Atkinson in Lusaka, Zambia, in April.

A full version will appear in the forthcoming issue of Africa in Struggle [No. 5]. Here, for reasons of space, we print only those sections dealing with the nature of the new opposition groups and the need for a revolutionary Marxist party. We believe that such a debate must be opened across the spectrum of the South African movement.

• What is your opinion of the rise of the black consciousness movement?

This is a very important question for revolutionaries in South Africa and throughout the world. The black power/consciousness movement, first of all, was born at a time when the traditionally known movements in the country had either been beaten into submission and their leaderships imprisoned or been driven into exile. This left a vacuum where the people did not have any independent organisations of their own.

In this particular era the representatives of the big liberal bourgeoisie took over the scene. The Progressive Party of Oppenheimer and Suzman came in. So did the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS), a white liberal student organisation.

But, with the deepening of the oppression, the people had to develop their own organisations to fight back. It was in these circumstances that the black power movement sprung up. It is an extremely significant move in the political situation in the country.

It is not just that it touched those aspects of life that are characteristically associated with the oppression of the people, but for the first time in the history of the country you found a number of organisations which broke the bars between the three main black groups in the country: the Africans, the so-called 'Coloureds' and the Indians. They accepted anybody who belonged to these three groups as a black person.

Now this is a great achievement

have tried to bridge the gap between the three groups but have made very serious mistakes by maintaining racial structures within the oppressed people.

Another factor is that this movement has touched layers who were never significantly touched before. That is, it touched an urban population — and the dynamic of mass mobilisations

the mass movement has never been found in South Africa before. It is therefore very significant and revolutionaries can work in the movement, educate its cadres and join up with them to upturn the whole social and economic structure of South Africa.

• What is the significance of the slogan of 'black power'?

the black people in South Africa are oppressed and exploited. Not only are they the most exploited people in the country but their exploitation has put them in a crucial position on the revolutionary process. So, if one talks of real revolution, it is essential that this section is activated first and foremost. The other group, the white workers, will only be able to move

As British and Irish Governments clash in Strasbourg

IT'S DOG EAT DOG

A CASE of dog eat dog. That is the best way to describe the legal tussle that is drawing to its close in Strasbourg where the Southern Irish Government is accusing the British of torture, ill-treatment and discrimination at the European Court of Human Rights.

The biggest surprise of the whole affair has been the apparent willingness of the Irish Government to carry through its accusations against Britain's handling of internment. Certainly it is difficult for the Coalition Irish Government to drop the charges as they were initiated by its Fianna Fail predecessors. To drop the charges at this late stage could have damaging electoral consequences for the coalition parties.

DISCONTINUE

The Irish Government on the other hand has repeatedly attempted to offer ways in which Britain can end the whole embarrassing affair. The Irish Attorney General has stated that if Britain either prosecutes those responsible for the torture of the internees or passes a Bill of Rights for the

North of Ireland they would discontinue the charges.

All this the British press has ignored in its treatment of the Strasbourg hearings. Instead they have fumed at the Irish Government for providing 'propaganda' for the Soviet Union and pointed to the recent record of the Irish Government in its treatment of political prisoners.

The treatment of Republican prisoners by the Irish Government is every bit as scandalous as Britain's record. In Portlaoise maximum security prison Republican prisoners are strip searched, denied visits, denied access to their lawyers, refused reading and craft facilities and are forced to spend long periods in solitary confinement.

The Portlaoise hunger strike which ended last week was in protest against these conditions, and although the Irish Government is claiming an unqualified victory over the hunger strikers it does seem that at least the strip searches will be discontinued in Portlaoise.

What has particularly embarrassed the Irish Government's charges at Strasbourg are the allegations recently printed in the *Irish Times* about police torture of Republican

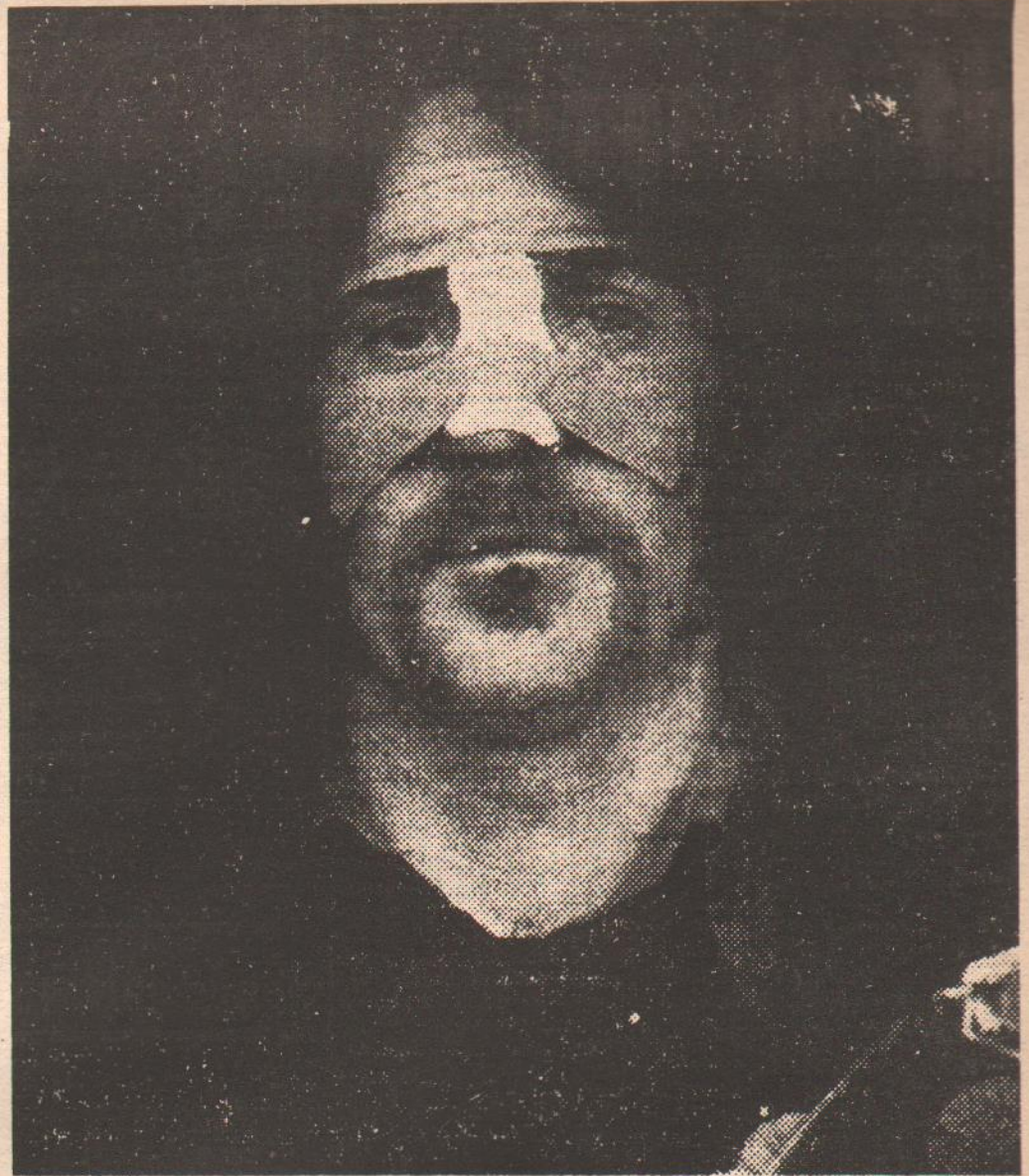
suspects. Several of the case histories describe the use of some of the five sensory deprivation techniques practised by Britain that the European Court has already denounced as torture.

There is an account of four Tipperary men held by the police in January this year. They told the *Irish Times* that their ill-treatment began when detectives from Dublin, members of the 'heavy gang', arrived to take over their interrogation. The men were punched, kicked and pulled by the hair. They were deprived of sleep and lost track of time by being kept in rooms with the blinds drawn and electric lights on day and night.

They were told by the police: 'We will break you mentally and physically on the seventh hour of the seventh day; that's when they all break'.

The treatment was such that one of the men attempted suicide by jumping through a window rather than sign a false statement.

So it is not surprising that the British press have given as wide a publicity to these allegations as the Soviet Union is alleged to be giving to the Strasbourg hearings. After all the only defence Britain has against the charges being laid against them is that the accusers are as guilty as the accused.



Thomas Connors, the man who attempted suicide at the Cahir Garda station rather than sign a false confession.

Students Ireland Campaign

The British Government has been highly embarrassed by the exposure at the European Court of its torture and repression in Northern Ireland. And now the Student Movement Campaign on Ireland [SMCOI] plans activity to expose the continued use of repression by the British Army in Ireland and to build the protest against Britain's Irish crimes.

The launching pad will be the SMCOI's conference on 15 May at Middlesex Polytechnic. SMCOI supporters at Southampton Uni-

versity have organised a week of action from 2-7 May as part of the build-up, and other colleges wishing for speakers can now obtain

them through the SMCOI Speakers Bureau (see below). Bernadette McAliskey will be speaking at London colleges in the week before the conference.

That there is support in the student movement for a campaign against British Army repression in Ireland was demonstrated at the recent National Union of Students (NUS) conference. Three hundred and fifty delegates packed a debate on Ireland organised by the SMCOI and featuring Bernadette McAliskey and the Peace People. It was the largest fringe meeting of the conference.

RESOLUTION

The SMCOI resolution put to conference called on the NUS to 'launch a campaign against torture and repression.... As part of this campaign, investigate charges that torture as charged at the Human Rights Court is still continuing.'

The SMCOI could lay the groundwork for this by calling for an International Tribunal on Britain's Crimes in Ireland.

A tribunal on Ireland, organised around the theme of repression, could take evidence on issues including torture, political prisoners, suppression of free speech, and police brutality. What's more, it could involve students throughout Britain — building local support on and off campus.

To build massive support in Britain for the demand 'Troops Out Now' it is necessary to expose the role of those troops, to crack the illusion still dominant in the British labour and student movements that the Army is playing a 'progressive role' in Ireland.

Students wishing to build the SMCOI conference should contact Von McClary at the Enfield Site of Middlesex Poly, through the Students' Union (tel: 01-804 1958). Speakers Bureau requests should be made through McClary.

STATEMENT ON TOM

The following statement is concerned with recent developments in the Troops Out Movement, and divisions within that movement. The IMG endorses the statement:

'As supporters of the right of the Irish people as a whole to self-determination we all believe that the building of a mass movement for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland can play a vital role in support of the freedom struggle of the Irish people.

'With the renewed upsurge of the struggle in Ireland it is urgent to hold a broad conference to plan activities in Britain to achieve this aim. In the past the Troops Out Movement has played a central role in co-ordinating the building of a movement for troop withdrawal. However, the TOM has been plagued by internal problems and is now unable to meet the challenge of the upsurge in Ireland or to take advantage of the revived interest in Britain of building this movement.

'The inadequacies of the TOM were typified at the National Delegate Conference of 23 April which was organised in such a way as to block maximum participation from activists. This would have led in effect to TOM

becoming a small London-based committee.

'As a result of this, seven of the ten TOM branches present decided that the best course of action would be to withdraw from the meeting to organise a new discussion about the best way to build a mass movement for the withdrawal of troops from Ireland.

'A planning committee was set up to organise a conference in London on 25 & 26 June. We appeal to all TOM branches, individuals and organisations which support the demands "Troops out now, self-determination for the Irish people as a whole", to support this conference where all participants will have full speaking and voting rights. Messages of support, resolutions and enquiries should be sent to:

Troops Out Conference, c/o Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

'The first meeting of the conference planning committee will take place on Saturday 7 May. All individuals and organisations interested in attending should contact the above address.'

This statement is supported by the following TOM branches: West London, East London, Merseyside, Colchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Hemel Hempstead.

• Is it possible for the apartheid system to be dismantled within capitalism?

I don't see how you can abolish apartheid while maintaining the capitalist system in South Africa, simply because the dynamic inter-connection between capitalist exploitation and national oppression is so deep that you cannot solve the problem of national oppression without solving the problem of economic exploitation.

What I am trying to say is that the solution of the basic political problems, that is the bourgeois-democratic problems in South Africa, must of necessity go through a socialist revolution. Also the achievement of socialist construction in the country cannot be carried out without solving the democratic problems facing the black people.

• How can South African militants best advance the struggle against apartheid and capitalism?

There are two basic questions. One is that you have an oppressed people which has thrown up a number of organisations which seek to abolish national oppression. The second question is that these organisations are in reality organisations which, in classical terms, seek to accommodate black people within the capitalist structure in the country.

But, as I said earlier, we cannot solve the question of national oppression in South Africa without solving the question of economic exploitation. This means that, as a revolutionary, I must support the national liberation movement as a whole unconditionally.

And since you have various

including the numerous new organisations which have been born as a result of the activities of the black consciousness movement, revolutionaries must address themselves to these movements and see to it that these movements are welded together under the banner of a broad national liberation front where there will be no organisation which will seek to destroy the identity of other organisations.

At the same time, it would be very dangerous simply to strengthen these organisations without creating a special organisation which should be in a position to pose the demands for a real social revolution in the country.

Historically there is no other class capable of carrying out such a gigantic task except the working class itself. And if the working class is going to be in a position to take leadership, it must have its own independent organisation there to fight for the class interests of the workers and to see that democratic rights which are denied to the broad body of oppressed people are met.

Revolutionaries who seek to organise the revolutionary party in South Africa (or elsewhere in the world) must seek association with the only tendency that is representative of real Marxism on a world scale. The Fourth International is that organisation.

Revolutionaries in South Africa will have to build the various organs of the Fourth International simply because it is the only organisation capable of offering such vast experience acquired over a long period of time. The same cannot be said, I believe, of any other organisation in the world

Workers' Jubilee 1917-1977

On 26 April the Provisional Government met and declared that the Government must be enlarged to include 'those active creative forces of the country which have not yet participated in it'. In other words they wanted representatives of the Soviets. The most fervent advocates of this new Government coalition of class forces was the ruling class, backed by the allied powers.

For different and confused reasons large sections of the worker and peasant masses favoured a Government which included Soviet representatives. They had an idea that one, two, three, many Keren-skys in the Government would mean less places for the likes of Lvov, Guchkov and Miliukov. After, in fact, the new coalition had been established the first all-Russian peasant conference

ment. The Mensheviks, initially, showed a certain hesitancy. They feared, correctly, that their presence in the corridors of the Mariinsky Palace would open the door to the Bolsheviks to seize the leadership of the masses in the Soviet. They were right, it did.

On 1 May the Executive Committee of the Soviet voted by 41 votes to 18, with 3 abstentions, for its entry into the Government. The votes cast against the proposal came from the benches of the Bolsheviks and the left wing in the Mensheviks, led by Martov.

The Petrograd Soviet, meeting four days later in plenary session, endorsed the coalition. The opposition around the Bolsheviks mustered around a hundred delegates. The new Government was formed the same day. Of the 15

Revolutionaries, two Mensheviks and two independents.

In its declaration of intent the coalition Government made its rationale for existence all too plain — 'for defensive and offensive activity to prevent the possible defeat of Russia and her allies'. Here, clearly written, was why the imperialist allies and the ruling class inside Russia, argued so desperately for the inclusion of the Soviet representatives. Buchanan, the British ambassador, wrote of the coalition:

'The last, and almost the only, hope for salvation of the military situation on that front.'

The mere fact that the representatives of the Soviets were now a minority within the Provisional Government in no way inspired the soldiers to fight. The troops want-

Palace coalition to put an end to the imperialist bloodshed, not continue it.

Kerensky and the Mensheviks hoped, in the words of the new Minister of War, that 'the Soviets will die a natural death'. They felt that their entry into the Government would make the self-organisation of the workers and peasants redundant. The new coalition Government, trying to unite two contending classes in a situation of growing political and social crisis, found itself impotent in the face of world historic events. The Mariinsky Palace became a centre for double deals, double standards and double talk.

TROTSKY

Earlier than the leaders of the Bolsheviks, Trotsky had recognised the importance of the Soviets. In 1905 he had been chairman of the first Petrograd Soviet. He too, in 1905: *Results and Prospects*, had understood that the problems the workers and peasants faced could only be solved through the socialist revolution. On 4 May Trotsky returned from exile to Petrograd. The future leader, with Lenin, of the revolution, was now back on Russian soil.

ALL OUT ON 14 MAY.

FIGHT BENYON'S ANTI-ABORTION BILL

It is now less than three weeks to the date of the vital demonstration against Benyon's anti-abortion Bill. But support is still growing for the demonstration called by the National Abortion Campaign. Benyon's Bill — which could reduce legal abortion in Britain by up to a half — is shortly to go into Standing Committee for amendment, and could return for a final vote in Parliament anytime between July and December this year.

The anti-abortion organisation SPUC is trying to ensure that even more restrictive clauses are put into the Bill, and are pressuring the Labour Government to make space available in the Parliamentary timetable for the Bill to get through all its stages before the end of the session.

The mass lobby of MPs called by SPUC for 17 May, where they anticipate an attendance of 10,000 or more, is further evidence of their serious intentions to force women into unwilling motherhood, or into the hands of dangerous backstreet abortionists.

But opponents of Benyon's Bill have not been idle. Every community health council, Area Health Authority, medical organisation and abortion advisory clinic which has sent their views on the Bill to the DHSS has come out firmly

against it.

Sponsors of the 14 May demonstration include the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign, NUS, Doctors for Women's Choice on Abortion, Working Women's Charter Campaign, Women in

Media, Co-ordinating Committee in Defence of the 1967 Act (with over 30 member organisations), SWP and IMG, and trade unions, women's groups and prominent individuals.

The National Planning Meeting of NAC held last Saturday heard how the local groups were mobilising contingents to come down to the demonstration. Public meetings will be taking place in over 20 towns and cities in the next two weeks, with extensive petitioning and leafletting in shopping centres, housing estates, factories and hos-

LABOUR ABORTION RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

First National Conference to be held on 15 May 1977 at FTAT Hall (ex-NUFTO Hall), 14 Jockeys Fields, Holborn WC1 (nearest tubes: Holborn or Chancery Lane). 10.00am-5pm.

Conference will be chaired by Millie Miller MP and Jo Richardson MP. Creche provided.

Open to all members of the Labour Party who support LARC's aims.

For further details contact Conference Organiser: Astrid Lever, 57 Trinity Road, London N2.

RED WEEKLY

censure action against Cox.

In neighbouring South East London, a local demonstration will be held this week, supported by several trade unions.

In Cardiff, Heath Hospital workers are meeting to plan a campaign for the opening of their brand new out-patient abortion clinic, which has lain idle for 3 years due to the reactionary ideas of the consultant concerned.

A well-attended debate between NAC and LIFE, organised by the Leeds CHCs, who support abortion rights, has helped to ensure that the 3 coaches booked from Leeds will come down to the demo full up. The attempts by the Labour Life anti-abortion group to reverse local party policy in places like Hackney and Leicester has backfired in their faces, and has encouraged discussions and activity in support of 14 May.

The NUS Women's Committee is organising a speaking tour in colleges and campuses, and Lon-

don students have undertaken to plaster the capital with mobilising posters.

But the planning meeting also discussed the serious financial situation of the campaign which needs to find £1,000 immediately in order to be able to continue. Support for the demonstration should be combined with a donation.

★ Demonstration assembles 14 May, 1.30 Belvedere Road [Waterloo] to march via Trafalgar Square to a rally in Hyde Park at 4.30. Speakers from the British and international abortion campaigns, doctors, labour movement and MPs. Entertainment from singers and theatre groups. Children's van provided. Bring your banners. Further details, and all donations, to NAC, 30 Camden Road, NW1. [Tel: 01-485 4303]. Plenty of posters, leaflets and stickers still available.

DEFEND JOHN DEASON

RED WEEKLY urges its readers to attend the picket of the Old Bailey on 4 May in defence of John Deason.

The facts of the Deason case are by now well known in the labour movement.

• Deason is secretary of the Right to Work Campaign, whose march in March 1976 ended in violence when the police attacked the marchers at Staples Corner, North London.

• 43 marchers have already been charged with offences arising from the police attacks, but the most serious charge has been kept for Deason himself — grievous bodily harm with intent. A long prison sentence could be the result if he is found guilty.

• An independent enquiry into the events at Staples Corner, conducted by Barnet Trades Council, completely exonerated the Right to Work marchers from any responsibility for the violence. Instead they pointed the finger of guilt at the police.

• Already 42 marchers have appeared in court, 17 were acquitted, 24 received fines or suspended sentences and one, Mike Lynch, was

jailed for three months.

It is these facts which have made the Deason case a major cause for many trade unionists. The 6 Shrewsbury building workers jailed by the Tory Government have made their own personal appeal in support of Deason. Now, over a hundred trade union bodies have voted to send delegations to picket the Old Bailey on 4 May. These include 27 branches of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, 10 branches of the building workers' union UCATT, 12 trades councils and 11 shopstewards committees.

It is important to stress that the Right to Work Campaign is organising a picket throughout John Deason's trial, and not just on the opening day of it, so if you are not able to be there on 4 May attend on one of the following days.

Defend John Deason!
No more Shrewsburies!
Defend the Right to Fight for the Right to Work!
Picket the Old Bailey on Wednesday 4 May, beginning at 9.30am, and on each succeeding day.



Abortion rights supporters confront anti-abortionist William Benyon.

Photo: JOHN STURROCK [Report]



JOHN DEASON [centre] on last September's London Right to Work march.

Swoop on Palestinian Students

NOBODY KNOWS who killed Qadi Abdullah Admed al Hajri. The former Prime Minister of North Yemen was shot in his car in London earlier this month.

Despite blind press speculation over who was responsible the police confidently claim to have identified the killer — perhaps a relative of one of the many political opponents publicly executed during al Hajri's bloody rule.

But this positive identification has not stopped the police taking the opportunity to harass the Arab population in Britain — in a small way continuing al Hajri's work.

Two members of the General Union of Palestinian Students executive were recently detained for questioning. The only reason was their political activity.

In Portsmouth a woman complained that an Arab living in her street was behaving 'suspiciously'. Though the man had no history of political activity his race was enough for the police to intervene. They arrived at his house with police dogs, car lights flashing and sirens wailing. The man was not at home.

That gave the cops a moment for reflection. They went home empty-handed.



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BUILD THE REVOLUTIONARY PRESS

AS WE PREPARE for the launching of our new paper, Socialist Challenge, we have heard news of a great step forward for Combate, the paper of the LCR, Spanish sympathising organisation of the Fourth International.

For a long time Combate was produced on stencils, selling over 10,000 copies each issue. Now it is a full-sized, printed, 8-page paper. And still it is produced illegally inside

that it has a circulation of over 30,000. That does not include the circulation of the LCR papers in the Basque, Catalan and Gallician languages. Combate has launched an appeal for funds to make the paper weekly. The only other left-wing weekly in Spain is Mundo Obrero, the paper of the Communist Party.

The importance of the newspaper to revolutionary organisations will be one of the main themes of the

day. Krivine is editor of the French Trotskyist daily paper Rouge.

The rally will formally announce the launching of Socialist Challenge. Our new paper, like Combate and Rouge, has particular political tasks. Socialist Challenge will be arguing for a united class struggle opposition to lead the fight back against the attacks of the ruling class and the betrayals of the labour leaders.

discussion and polemic on the practical and theoretical questions facing the left. In the spirit of this paper the rally will take plenty of open discussion from the floor.

The paper has these important tasks to carry out and we are determined that it shall not fail for lack of funds. We appeal to all comrades to dig deep into their pockets and donate generously to our fund drive.

Send all contributions to 97