



SMASH THE TORIES ON ALL FRONTS

ALLOUT WITH THE MINERS

The decision of the Tory Government to call a general election in no way alters the central importance of the miners' strike for the struggle to bring down the Tory Government and defend working class living standards.

On the contrary, the calling of the election is an open admission by the Tories that they are unable to defeat the working class on the industrial front, and should be a clear sign to the working class that it is here that the Tories' weak spot lies.

The miners are now the spearhead of the struggle against the Tory Government, and the watchword of every working class militant must be: *All Out With The Miners*.

Every measure possible must be taken to place the resources of the entire labour movement at the disposal of the miners. All movements of power to industry—whether oil or coal, by road or by rail—should be blocked. Information should be systematically gathered about fuel stocks and the movement of power supplies. Accommodation and other facilities should be made available for flying pickets, and picketing pools set up to mobilise all those sympathetic to the miners' cause to strengthen the picket lines against scab drivers or police attack.

Of course, it is necessary to smash the Tories on all fronts; at the polls as well as on the picket lines and in the streets. The defeat of the Tories in the elections and the return of a Labour Government would generate a feeling of unity and a sense of confidence throughout the entire working class, stimulating the mass struggle.

But how is this to be done? The most effective way is by actions that expose the weakness of the Tory Government and inspire the working

class movement with a sense of unity and power. Again the watchword is *All Out With The Miners*.

But here it has an additional meaning. The best way of supporting the miners and the most effective way of defeating the Tories is for every group of workers to seize on the present situation and go into struggle alongside the miners, on the basis of their own demands.

The full force of these mass struggles must be thrown against the Tories. Miners' flying pickets should be dispatched throughout the country, not just to ensure effective picketing of power station and coal depots, but to carry the message of the miners' struggle against the Tories to every working man and woman.

The pickets should organise mass leafletting, factory gate meetings, public meetings and demonstrations. Miners' wives can play a crucial role here by leafletting and picketing at shopping centres and housing estates, discussing with other women the problems they have in common under the Tory Government—prices, housing, social services.

Such actions would do more to weaken the Tories in one day than all the Labour Party door-knockers will achieve over the next two weeks.

In every locality the labour movement should immediately set up anti-Tory Conferences to organise solidarity with the miners' strike, take up the campaign in defence of the Shrewsbury workers, coordinate the stepping up of local struggles, and begin a mass campaign against the Tories. This should include, mass meetings, strikes, demonstrations, and occupations—especially on the day of the election itself.

The preparation of a *general strike* remains a central objective for working class militants. If such a strike were today in progress there would be no debate as to the fate of the Tories in the election—they would be resoundingly defeated. If the Tories, because of the mis-leadership of the right-wing trade union and Labour leaders, were to win the election then a general strike to bring down the Government would, more clearly than ever, be the only means by which the working class could defend its interests.

If a Labour Government is returned it will try to take over the reins of capitalist rule from the Tories. But only socialist measures can protect working class interests from the crisis of British capitalism. A general strike will be necessary to implement such measures—the expropriation of the big firms, the setting up of workers' control, the establishment of workers' regulations of prices—against the opposition of the ruling class, and to back up the demand that the Labour Government adds its seal of approval to such measures.

The only way to prepare for a real working class victory is by carrying the mass struggle forward.

IMG TO FIELD 3 CANDIDATES

The IMG is running three candidates in the general election.

Tariq Ali, well known activist on Vietnam and revolutionary journalist, will be standing as candidate for Attercliffe, Sheffield.

Bob Purdie, an ex-shop steward at Singers, Clydebank who has played a central role in developing a solidarity movement with the Irish struggle, will be standing in Queensbank, Glasgow.

John Ross, the IMG candidate for Newham, East London, is a member of the ATTI, and a member of the IMG's National Committee.

As we go to press, no announcement has been made as to whether Dolours Price or one of the other Irish political prisoners will stand as Republican candidate for West Belfast. If one of the prisoners is put forward, the IMG will support that candidate.

We stand in parliamentary elections in order to gain a platform from which to put forward our policies for the working class struggle. These policies are designed to step up the extra-parliamentary struggles so that organs of working class power can arise which will be able to brush parliament aside.

We call for a vote for Labour, where no revolutionary candidate is standing, because a victory for Labour would increase the combativity of the workers.

But a vote for revolutionary candidates will be the clearest call of all for escalating the struggle, against the scabbing of the parliamentarians. The epitome of such a scab is Reg Prentice, whom John Ross will be fighting in Newham.

We call on all revolutionaries, whatever tendency they support, to

support our candidates in these elections. Not because we are asking every revolutionary to endorse all the policies of the IMG but because we believe that a large turnout for a revolutionary candidate will make it clear that a revolutionary alternative exists in British politics. Similarly we will call for a vote for other candidates of the revolutionary left even where we have differences with them on particular issues.

For this reason, we regard as regrettable the decision of the Workers Revolutionary Party to stand Vanessa Redgrave against us in Newham, following the prior announcement of the IMG candidature. Their announced position that they will call for a vote for Labour Party candidates against IMG candidates will help no one except the reformists.

Every week we appeal to our readers to send us money for the Red Weekly Fund Drive. This week, we appeal for funds to back the IMG election campaign. This is one of the most urgent appeals we have yet made. Send donations immediately to IMG Election Fund, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1



John Ross—standing against Reg Prentice

MORE PICKETS JAILED

Three more Shrewsbury pickets have now been jailed. George Murray, William Pierce, and Thomas Williams have been given six months each for unlawful assembly and affray in the second round of trials. Five other men were found guilty of unlawful assembly and received four month sentences suspended for two years.

Freeing the Shrewsbury pickets and putting a stop to these trials is a key part of the defence of pickets, along with the creation of picketing pools and the defence of miners' pickets. The Government has now had pickets sent to jail twice. It is time to put a stop to this once and for all.

On Tuesday, the first three Shrewsbury men are to appeal against conviction, but the latest Shrewsbury sentences do not encourage optimism about the success of their appeal.

These vicious attacks have only been possible because the working class movement has so far failed to respond with extended strike action to the jailing of the Shrewsbury Three at Christmas, on charges of conspiracy, unlawful assem-

bly, and affray.

Pledges of strike action are now urgent. Joint shop stewards committees in the building industry should set a date for indefinite strike action in their localities as the best way to set a national building strike in motion. The NUM should immediately raise the demand for the release of the Three as one of the demands of its present strike, as suggested by Jack Collins of the Kent area NUM executive.

Labour Party organisations should argue strongly for industrial action and repudiate any attempt by Labour or union bureaucrats to call off or postpone struggle for the sake of Labour at the polls.

A decisive and determined response is needed if this latest attack on picketing is not to open wide the door to further jailings by whichever capitalist government is elected on 28 February.

Lobby of the Law Courts: Tuesday, 19 February. Assemble 1 p.m., Euston Station to march to the Law Courts in the Strand.

FREEZE PRICES NOT WAGES!

"This election is not about the miners, not about the militants, not about the power of the unions... We are determined to give you the chance to decide this election on the real issues", said Mr. Wilson.

In Wilson's view, the key issues in the election are those such as prices and rents, not the unions. In fact, so irrelevant is the power of the unions that Wilson has managed to persuade ASLEF to call off their industrial action, and has condemned the miners' strike as a 'tragedy'.

Prices, rents, housing, and the EEC are key issues in the election. The rise of food prices by over 50 per cent and the rise of all other prices by one-third since 1970, is obviously crucial. But in the name of the 'real issues', Wilson has managed to do during the election, what Heath failed to do by threatening one: start to demobilise the industrial struggle.

Wilson has scabbed on the miners in the name of "political" issues like prices, that is issues which should be sorted out, according to Wilson, by Parliament and Whitehall. Yet it is precisely the power of the unions, denounced by Wilson as a 'non-issue', which is being used in the struggle against price inflation.

HOARDING INQUIRY

For example, workers at a Glasgow warehouse are involved right now in a struggle to reduce the price of one of the commodities — lentils — handled by their employer, Allied Suppliers.

The workers accused the boss of holding back stocks to drive up the price and make

a killing. By backing deliveries until the bosses agree to reduce the price and submit to an inquiry, the workers are using the power of the unions to deal with one of the 'real issues' in the election. Their example should be followed by workers everywhere.

By DAVE BAILEY

Ironically, these workers have a better programme for struggle than Wilson. Nowhere in Labour's election manifesto are price reductions proposed. It does not even promise a price freeze! All it calls for is 'strict price control on key services and commodities'. This is what the trade union militants at Allied Suppliers would call dodging the 'real issue'.

The Nottingham Campaign Against Rising Prices, which includes women trade unionists and housewives among its supporters, has started to organise pickets of shops. A picket of Marks & Spencer achieved a small price reduction on one item. A small gain. But the campaign has served to mobilise people to start taking direct action on prices.

The campaign doesn't see the miners strike as a non-issue. With a view to extended action, it has made contact with some of the miners' wives in the nearby village of Calverton, where during the last miners' strike, a boycott succeeded in reducing prices in the local shops. The slogan of the Campaign is 'freeze prices, not wages'.

The NUM should reply to Wilson's attacks on the miners by using its resources to send out teams of miners' wives to shopping centres across the country. Miners' wives, traditionally

loyal to the unions, can help to win housewives away from the Tories by showing how the working class can take action on prices. Wilson's attacks only serve to drive many housewives further into the hands of the Tories by reinforcing Heath's argument that

bashing the unions is the way to deal with rising prices.

Like a good social-democrat, Wilson believes that the power of the working class should be subordinate to the rule of law established by Parliament. The miners threaten Phase 3, a law established by this holy institution, and no doubt they will break many others in the struggle on the picket line. So the miners are condemned.

This shows Wilson is not just a scab, but a complete ass as well. For how is it possible to take any really effective action against the capitalists over prices, without using the organised power of the workers in defiance of Parliamentary laws?

Suppose for the sake of argument a new Labour government *did* impose a price freeze out of extreme necessity. The capitalists would find many openings for breaking the law or for economic sabotage, such as profiteering, asset stripping, speculation, and financial swindles of all kinds. The Civil Service, the tax inspectors, and the Bank of England are not going to put a stop to this.

Only by using the power of the workers to investigate all the financial affairs of companies could such devices even be exposed. And as workers at Allied Suppliers have

shown, signs saying 'Private Property — No Trespassers' have to be ignored!

In the sort of economic crisis now on its way, punishing offenders through the capitalist courts will be costly and largely fruitless. The workers would have to 'take the law into their own hands' — that is develop their own organs of coercion to exercise workers control over the bosses and the bankers.

The Labour Party will not contemplate such 'anarchy'. It tries to control prices while respecting the laws of private property established by Westminster and defended by the courts and the police. It proposes 'selective subsidies' to stabilise food prices, and nationalisation of several profitable industries to influence the prices of other items.

But handouts to farmers will not raise the productivity of labour on the farms, and buying up a few monopolies on the stock market will only raise taxes.

EXPROPRIATE!

Instead of mucking around, the Labour Party should expropriate the capitalists. Then real price control would be possible. But to Parliamentarians like Wilson this is 'stealing'. Only workers who have learned in struggle not to give two hoots for laws which are anti-working class will be capable of seizing the capitalists' property, the first step to running the industry according to a plan.

Far from being a non-issue, the organised power of the working class, which Wilson finds so embarrassing, is the only means to getting anything done at all!

That is why this election is about the miners and the power of the unions.

'Troops Out' conference to be held 4 May

Saturday 4 May was chosen as the provisional date for a conference on repression and the role of British troops in Ireland by the Troops Out Movement at a meeting in Warwick last weekend.

Forty delegates from TOM groups and supporters, in London, Birmingham, Nottingham, Manchester, Oxford and other areas met to discuss the future of the campaign. Following a general discussion on the role of individual groups, plans were laid for the co-ordination of this role, a week-end school for sympathisers, the conference on the role of the Army, publication of a paper to be called *Tom-Tom*, plus a monthly bulletin for members, and an anti-recruitment campaign in schools.

The May conference, to be held in London, will be preceded by a campaign to secure signatures on a petition calling on the labour movement to break the consensus with the Tories on this question and demand the withdrawal of all British troops from Ireland.

A campaign is to be conducted by TOM to secure sponsorships for the conference from organisations like trade union branches, socialist societies, women's groups, black groups, squatters, community organisations, Labour Party and LPYS branches, and political groups.

Further details about the conference can be obtained from: Alistair Renwick, 28 Lammas Park Road, Faling, London W5

'Have the Provisionals advanced the struggle for national liberation and socialism?' — PUBLIC FORUM at University of Warwick, Wednesday 20 February at 7.30 pm. Speakers from Sinn Fein, IMG, Clann, CP, IS

Public sector surrenders halted by NALGO

The wave of public sector surrenders to Phase Three has at last been halted, at least for the time being. The executives of the teachers, gasmen, hospital workers, and local authority manual workers have generously handed over their members as hostages to Heath's pay policy, but the local government officers section of the NALGO executive has dug in its heels.

It decided last weekend to submit a pay claim for increases of 20 to 26 per cent, backed up by a programme of industrial action in support of its London allowance claim. This will begin on 25 February and involve an overtime ban in six London boroughs. NALGO are ignoring the effect on the administration of the election on 28 February.

FIGHT REVIVED

This is the most dramatic among a number of signs that the miners' strike is beginning to revive the fight for other sectors of workers who thought themselves defeated.

Last week, over a hundred teacher militants picketed the meeting of the NUT executive which signed a 7 per cent settlement, and on 4 February a meeting of the Edinburgh Gas Branch No. 11 passed a vote of censure



Hospital workers' march last year — 'the experience of groups like these was that isolated struggles by those without hefty industrial weight are doomed to failure'

on the GMWU executive for settling the gasmen's claim under Phase Three.

The gasmen's branch, in which several unions are represented, also called for a joint regional conference of shop stewards to discuss the fight for the full claim, and asked branch secretaries in the area to seek members' opinions on the settlement. Finally, a resolution supporting the miners' struggle was passed.

OPEN TO MILITANCY

The members of the NALGO executive are open to the militancy of the rank and file because as local government managers they are fed up with the mountain of administrative problems thrown up by local government workers continually switching posts within the service to maintain living standards.

The claim was foreshadowed in a pamphlet entitled 'Pay strategy for the future', published two months ago. It detailed the deterioration in the salaries of local government officers relative to other groups, and condemned a Phase Three settlement as useless. The pamphlet noted that the Fire Brigades Union had won 19 per cent without mentioning however, that this

was achieved by the unofficial action of the Glasgow firemen.

The pamphlet declares: "The correct lesson to draw from these developments is obviously that militancy pays and that if local government officers are not prepared to take industrial action to help themselves no one will do anything for them... The only hope that local government officers' pay can be improved will be if sufficient individual unions succeed in making nonsense of Phase Three."

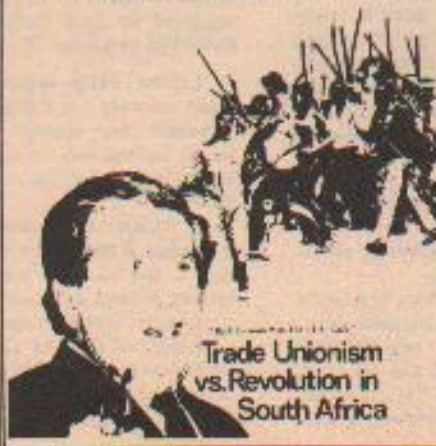
This last sentence might almost have been lifted from *Red Weekly*! Almost, because the NALGO policy in fact amounts to unions going it alone. Yet the experience of groups such as hospital workers and gasmen in 1973 was that isolated struggles by those without hefty industrial weight are doomed to failure. And the 'special case' approach is even designed to ensure this isolation.

The leaderships of all these public sector workers should take these lessons into account. They should take steps to ensure the maximum coordination of these struggles and link up, by solidarity actions, with the miners' struggle and other sections moving into opposition to Phase Three.

RICHARD BRINSLEY

Race Today

Black Explosion In Schools Cont.
Exclusive Eye Witness in Grenada
Asian Workers In Struggles
The Old Order in Guyana
The Institute of Race Relations Story



Trade Unionism vs. Revolution in South Africa

"...Having abolished the colour bar, the black workers, guided by a leadership schooled in scientific socialism will proceed to conquer the commanding heights of the economy and place the means of production under public ownership. The revolution can succeed only as a socialist revolution...."

KEN JORDAAN contributes a major feature article in this month's RACE TODAY on the much bally-hoed visit of the T.U.C. to South Africa. Read it in the March issue.

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Made for cringing class collaboration

The Labour Party leaders are sending their supporters into battle with both hands tied behind their backs by trying to fight an entirely traditional Labour campaign in the midst of an unprecedented class confrontation.

While Heath provides confident class leadership, Wilson mumbles about the relativities report and the need for the nation as a whole to pull together. Of course some capitalists have lately had second thoughts about Heath's tough and uncompromising stance; but the vigorous political expression of ruling class interests often diverges from the individual attitudes of members of that class. Meanwhile, Wilson and the Labour leaders seek to make themselves the spokesmen for the more timid and vacillating layers of the bourgeoisie.

The only way Labour could win a convincing victory in the present election would be to make the miners' strike, and the launching of mass struggle on every front, the heart of the campaign. Such an approach is quite alien to Labour's whole electoralist and reformist conception of politics—moreover it would threaten their own bureaucratic hold over the labour movement. Wilson and the politics he represents are a recipe for demobilisation and defeat for the working class.

Labour's manifesto is a charter for cringing class collaboration. It is full of such stirring appeals as the following:

'The sooner Labour gets the chance to heal the savage wounds inflicted upon our society in recent years, and to turn the hopes and exertions of our people in a new direction, the better for the nation as a whole... The Labour Party is proud of the contribution we made to the nation's salvation at critical times in our history, and it is in the same mood that we approach the interlocking crises'.

Patriotic cant of this sort is complemented by complete vagueness as to the real nature and roots of the present crisis. In the old days social democrats might distinguish themselves from the run of bourgeois politicians by a certain leftish talk, using the language of class warfare while avoiding its reality. Today it is the Tory politicians who talk about 'capitalism' and its problems. The class struggle and the swing to recession throughout the capitalist world are beginning to call in question the nature of capitalist society as a whole. But all Labour can propose is 'measures for transforming British

industry into a responsible economic system'.

Very little even of Labour's conference rhetoric has survived, save for the bare assertion that the programme will 'bring about a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families'.

If this was really to be Labour's goal then its campaign and its whole relation to the class struggle should reflect the fact. It should openly support and encourage every working class struggle; it should take up every issue affecting the living conditions of working people in mass campaigns. It should follow the example of the Clay Cross councillors and use its great resources and its positions in local government to combat the effects of capitalist crisis and build a workers' movement that could implement socialist solutions. The expropriation of the large capitalist firms, the implementation of workers control over production, the building of a rational, planned socialist economy must be prepared for. This can only be done by a massive movement *outside Parliament* that challenges both the immediate power of the capitalist class and the operation of the capitalist state machine.

If the leaders of the working class movement fail to pose a socialist solution to all the symptoms of capitalist crisis, then the more consistent capitalist politicians will call their bluff. This is why Heath can openly taunt Wilson for representing no alternative to the established order.

The working class now faces a combined assault on its living standards and on its forms of organisation. All workers' organisations should unite to support the miners as the spearhead of a generalised offensive against Phase 3 and all incomes policies under capitalism. Equally they should unite in support of the jailed Shrewsbury pickets.

Yet most local Labour Parties are doing their best to pretend that the class struggle does not exist. There are some exceptions—for example the Greenwich Labour Party which helped to organise a demonstration in support of the miners last Saturday—but generally strikes, pickets, and any sign of mass struggle are being treated by Labour as an embarrassment. The shameful abandonment of the Clay Cross councillors by the Labour Party nationally is the most notorious example of this.

The only time that Labour's national leadership is to be heard on such issues is in their calls for 'moderation'. Indeed, the only occasion



A contingent of miners from the Betteshanger Colliery marched through Greenwich and Charlton last Saturday, leading several hundred people from local trade unions and organisations of the labour movement. Among those represented on the march were Greenwich Labour Party, which had organised the demonstration, Greenwich Tenants' Committee, Greenwich CP, S.E. London IMG, Woolwich IS, and WRP.

At the concluding rally, Terry Harrison from Betteshanger spoke about the miners' claim and the picketing laws, saying that if any miner was imprisoned under these laws, the miners would remain on strike until their release.

Jimmy Hill, a local GMWU shop steward, pledged full support for the miners, saying that theirs was a fight to defeat the Tory Government. Guy Barnett, MP for Greenwich, made an empty electioneering speech without mentioning the need for solidarity with the miners to defeat Phase Three, or the Labour Party's position on picketing laws.

A positive feature of the rally, however, was the call made for all organisations present to attend a meeting, sponsored by the local trades council, for the following Tuesday at which it is hoped to set up a local miners' solidarity committee to work for support and solidarity actions in the area.

on which they have shown vigour or alertness in responding to developments in the class struggle was in their vicious attacks on miners' leader Mick McGahey. McGahey had committed the unforgivable sin of questioning the state power of the ruling class—something which every social democrat holds dear to his heart.

The Parliamentary Labour Party seems bent upon bringing about its own defeat—either at the polls or in Government. A Labour victory in the election is more likely to stimulate the mass struggle of the working class than a Tory victory—that is why the IMG calls for a vote for the Labour Party. But the only way to work for a working class victory, on the electoral front and on all other fronts, is by pushing forward all the mass struggles in which workers are presently engaged.

To this end anti-Tory conferences should be organised in every area to coordinate the struggle against the Government: to work out practical measures of solidarity with the miners,

to step up local struggles against Phase 3 and the 3-day week, to launch a massive campaign to free the jailed Shrewsbury workers and smash the anti-picket laws, to plan a campaign of mass and industrial action around the election. The attacks on the working class organisations, raging inflation, the Housing Finance Act, the imprisonment and force-feeding of Irish militants, the cutbacks in social and educational expenditure, all constitute more than enough dry tinder for a mass political conflagration.

It is around these issues that united action must be built. Such a mass campaign could defeat the Tories at the polls and on the picket lines, despite the sabotaging work of the Labour leadership. It would also serve to prepare the way for carrying these struggles to a victorious conclusion, no matter what Government emerges after the election.

Strikers' benefits - DHSS already on the attack

In the Tory election programme it is proposed that strikers' families will not be able to receive social security benefits. The capitalist press tells us that Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, is not at all happy with this idea. Why is this?

Are we to suppose that Sir Keith is a philanthropic friend of the working class? This is unlikely when one considers that he has his finger deep in the pie of Bovis, a building firm which draws heavily from lump labour.

In order to understand Joseph's position, it is necessary to understand precisely what is at issue in this proposal. Supplementary benefits are essentially a subsistence income paid to those who, in the government's view, cannot realise an income (temporarily or permanently) above what is considered a subsistence level.

If a man is on strike and not drawing strike pay, and his family has no other source of income, then clearly his family will be living below this notional subsistence level. Even if strike pay is being received, this is usually below the subsistence level defined by the social security for the family.

Therefore, it has been argued in the past, his family should receive social security—equivalent to rent plus the rates for dependants. However, it was mainly due to the intervention of the Claimants' Unions that strikers became aware of this source of income. Furthermore, the CUs pointed out that there was a ruling by which the individual striker would be eligible for social security.

This ruling, Section 13 of the 1971 Social

Security Act, says that in an emergency, assessed at the discretion of the manager of the local social security office, anyone is allowed to obtain some income, regardless of how that emergency arose. The SS is not supposed to let anyone starve. Thus, the CUs argued, even single strikers could obtain social security benefits.

During the 1972 miners' strike, and particularly during the builders' strike of 1972, the CUs and the trade unions launched a combined offensive on the social security offices, demanding money, including section 13 payments for single strikers.

This caught the DHSS by surprise, and led to a large number of payments being made which kept the building strike going for at least three weeks longer than would otherwise have been the case. It was the building strike which immediately led to right-wing Tories demanding that social security payments be stopped to strikers and their families.

What Sir Keith Joseph understood, but not the CUs or the right-wing of the Tory Party, was that the DHSS machinery was an integral part of the bourgeois state in the sense that it would respond to directives from the top even if these contravened the rules. Thus the experience of the hospital strike was the reverse of that of the builders' strike.

The hospital ancillary workers received no strike pay and many of them came to the CUs for help. This time the social security offices were prepared for the onslaught. They presented the hospital workers with an official leaflet coded SB2, containing a pack of lies. The offices refused to make any emergency

payments, and gave, at the most, a tiny fraction of the benefits due to dependants.

This was in complete breach of the 1965 and '71 Social Security Acts, but it was clear that this State agency had decided not to play according to its own rules.

Sir Keith Joseph does not care for the new ruling quite simply because he does not need it. His department is prepared to act as if this was the ruling anyway.

For Joseph there is an added reason for not making the present situation legally explicit. If he is to take any action on the proposals of the Fisher Report on the 'abuse' of the social security system, and bring in new legislation on social security in general, he does not want a movement growing up in the trade unions which is aware of the function of the DHSS.

But if the Tories succeed in winning over wavering sections of society to the idea that it is right for strikers to be starved back to work—even if this is already the actuality of the situa-

tion—it will be an extremely important ideological victory for the ruling class.

It is crucial for the labour movement to take up this question. We must, however, be careful about the grounds on which opposition is based. The temptation to argue that 'the Tories are attacking the family' must be resolutely resisted.

As it happens, the contrary is the case. The family acts as a fetter on the class struggle as a whole, and the trade union struggle in particular. The wife of the striker, oppressed and isolated in the home, has a tendency to oppose her husband's action as the going gets rough.

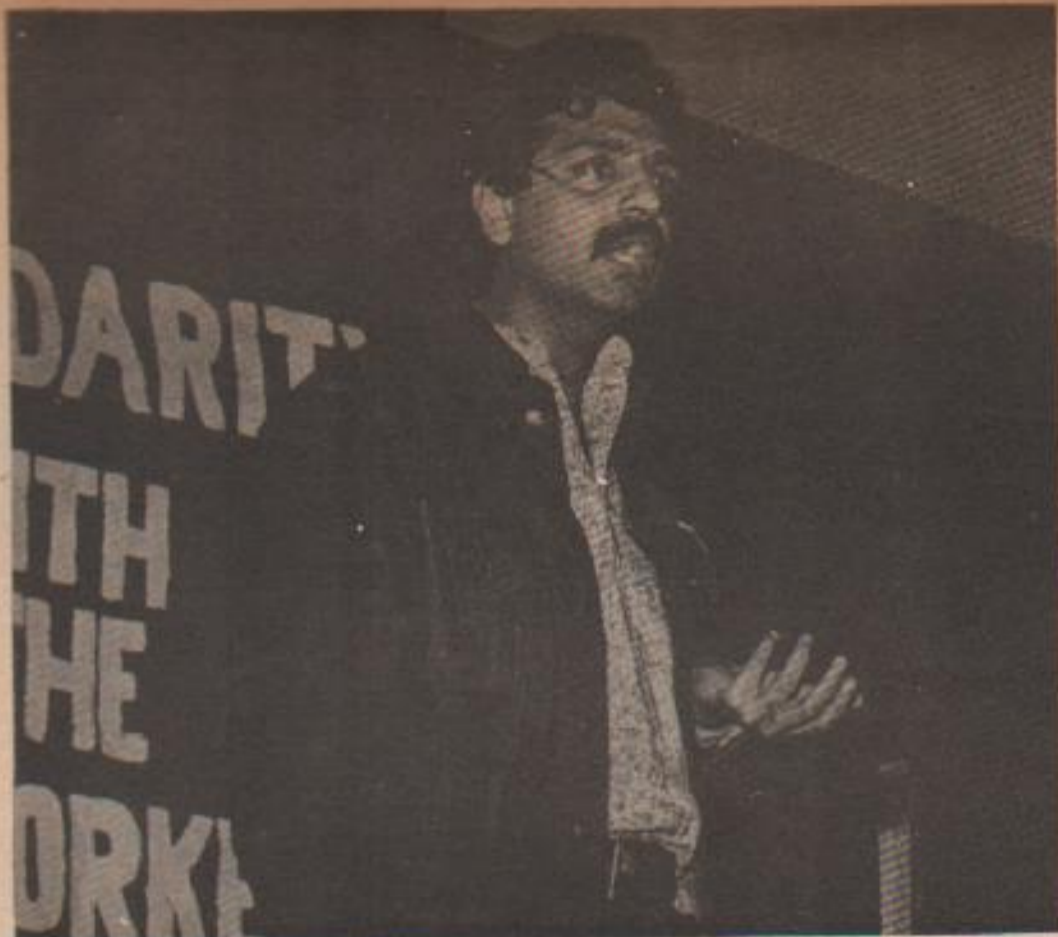
If she receives social security benefits, for herself and her children, this tendency will not be so intense. Thus the blockage of social security strikers and their families exacerbates the reactionary influence of the family on the development of the struggle.

SPIKE HENRY

Socialist Woman to picket SPUC meeting

The Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC), an organisation dedicated to preserving the family and maintaining the subordinate position of women in society, is opening a new branch in Harrow on Tuesday, 19 February. The meeting, to be held at the Victoria Hall, Sheepcote Road, beginning at 7 pm, will be picketed by the Harrow and Hillingdon Socialist Woman Group.

SPUC held a 10,000-strong rally in London last November, when 300 demonstrators turned up at short notice to oppose its campaign for the restriction of the already restricted Abortion Law. Since then, SPUC has formed another half dozen local groups. The current issue of *Socialist Woman* has a feature on 'SPUC: The ideology of reaction'. See the 'What's On' column for details.



TARIQ ALI — IMG candidate in Sheffield, Attercliffe

Red Weekly: Why are you standing in the election?

TARIQ ALI: First let us get it quite clear that none of us is standing as individuals. We are all standing because the organisation of which we are members, the International Marxist Group, has decided that standing in the election is a useful way of getting across its ideas for dealing with the present crisis.

RW: Do you think this election will solve anything? Do you expect to get many votes?

JOHN ROSS: We don't have any illusions that elections decide fundamental questions. We are standing in this election as a way of getting our politics over to the largest possible audience. The last few years have shown beyond doubt that it is the struggle outside Parliament which is the key one. The last Labour government, for example, increased unemployment, attacked the unions, passed racist laws, sent troops into the North of Ireland. But the struggle outside Parliament won the great victories of the 1972 miners' strike, the Freeing of the Pentonville Five, the strike of the Glasgow firemen. One of the main points we want to get over in our campaign is precisely that the struggle outside Parliament is the crucial one and it must be continued against whatever government is elected.

As for votes, we know we won't get many votes. It will take many more struggles before the mass of the working class becomes convinced of the need for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. But we do think every vote cast for us will be a very significant vote. It will be a clear vote for the continuation of the struggle regardless of which party is elected, and a clear vote against the reformist leaders of the Labour party. The few hundred militants who will support this position now will become tens of thousands in the years to come.

RW: What do you think are the key issues which face the working class in this election and in the months to come?

JOHN ROSS: We see the crucial issues as solidarity with the miners and the other workers now in struggle, the issues of prices and wages, unemployment, the struggle to defend the trade unions, how to organise for the struggle, the defence of picketing, the struggle for the liberation of women, the issue of racism, the question of the development of the strong state, the issue of Ireland, the war in Vietnam and the question of how we are to go forward to socialism.

RW: Taking these points one by one, what is your position on the miners and the other strikes?

TARIQ ALI: We have been campaigning for months for total victory in the struggle against Phase 3. We stand for complete solidarity with the miners, for a miners-engineers-railwaymen's alliance and for a general strike. We think these struggles must be won through mass picketing and mass action. This is a key point in the platform we are standing on in the election.

RW: What about prices and wages?

BOB PURDIE: We stand for the defence of all working class incomes against inflation. There should be automatic wage increases for increases in the cost of living. This demand has already been won in Belgium, for example. As for the 7% threshold in the Government's Phase 3 proposals, we demand that the threshold be reduced to a nil norm and is extended to the whole of the working class so that every increase in prices leads to a wage increase. We also demand that all welfare benefits and grants increase automatically with price increases, and we work for the organisation of claimants to gain their rights under the social security. We are for a total freeze on all rent increases and the non-implementation and abolition of the Housing Finance Act. We also campaign for a national minimum wage of £30, for pensions to be raised to 80% of the average industrial wage. On prices we demand that local organisations of the working class be given power to stop price increases, we call for industrial action to be taken against price increases, as has already taken place in Thornliebank warehouse in Scotland, and we fight for the construction of a real workers' cost of living index to replace the biased official one. We are also totally opposed to the unions accepting any incomes policy under capitalism, as this is simply used as a device for keeping down the wages of the working class. We support the decisions of the ASTMS national conference and the AUEW national committee to refuse to accept an incomes policy under any government.

RW: And unemployment?

BOB PURDIE: Unemployment is one of the worst effects of capitalism. It is a total waste of the productive forces of society. No section of the working class must be allowed to suffer as a consequence of unemployment. The whole burden must be placed on the employing class. In the case of threats to lay off individual groups of workers, we call for a fight for work sharing with no loss of pay. We fight for the reduction of the working week to 30 hours

IMG election CARR MASS S FORW

Our three candidates in the general election
ROSS — explain the main positions the I
IMG manifesto, in the form of a special b

with full pay so as to share work. We also call for work or full pay. If capitalism cannot employ a worker, it must nevertheless continue to pay him full wages. We call for the nationalisation without compensation of any firm depriving workers of work.

reversal of their convictions and an end to the trials.

RW: What is your position on racism and immigration?

TARIQ ALI: Racism is at present the most powerful of all threats to the united struggle c

RW: How do you believe the trade unions can best be defended against government attacks?

TARIQ ALI: In the long run the unions can only be protected by the revolutionary struggle against capitalism. The crucial struggle now is for the independence of the unions from the state. This means the complete ending of the Industrial Relations Act and all anti-union legislation, no acceptance of incomes policy and no talks with the Government on incomes policy. Until this task can be carried out we call for boycott of the National Industrial Relations Court, non-registration of unions and no use of the machinery of the Act.

RW: What forms of organisation do you think should be used in the struggle in the coming months?

JOHN ROSS: The most important thing is that every step is taken to ensure the widest possible participation in the struggle. That, for example, was decisive in the miners' strike in 1972. This can only be achieved on a wide scale if those actually engaged in the struggle take the decisions on the running and demands of the struggle. This means, in particular, the election of strike committees in struggle, regular mass meetings of workers in struggle, local, regional and national meetings of shop stewards to prepare strikes. This must be coupled with a campaign for union democracy: for the election, with right of recall, of all union officials, and for no union official to be paid more than the average wage of the workers he represents. Students and tenants must also be organised in support of the struggles of the working class. In order to unite all these forces locally we call for the establishment in every area of action committees and Councils of Action. On the question of picketing we are for the self-defence of pickets, and the use of the tactic of the flying pickets. We believe that an essential part of the defence of the right to picket is the campaign for the release of the three building workers imprisoned at Shrewsbury, the



BOB PURDIE — IMG candidate in Glasgow.

candidates say

BY THE STRUGGLE FORWARD

— TARIQ ALI, BOB PURDIE and JOHN ROSS will be fighting for in the elections. The full roadsheet, will be available from next Monday.

the working class. The racism which unfortunately already exists in the working class is being strengthened and fostered by racist politicians of all parties, and by the fascist National Front in particular. As part of the struggle against racism we call for the ending of all immigration restrictions and for the organisation of the black community for self-defence and for its organisation within the trade unions to fight for its interests. We are for driving the racists and fascists off the streets and preventing them organising.



spark

RW: What demands do you fight for in the struggle for the liberation of women?

JOHN ROSS: The real liberation of women can only come after the destruction of capitalism—and even then there will still be a long struggle in the newly formed workers' state. In the struggle towards this, however, we call for equal pay for women now, for free abortion and contraception on demand, for free 24 hour nurseries, and for equal job and education opportunities for women. We support all the struggles of the women's liberation movement.

RW: What is your position on Ireland and the struggle of the IRA?

BOB PURDIE: We are for the total withdrawal of British troops from Ireland. We demand self-determination for Ireland. We call for the immediate release of all Irish political prisoners. We completely solidarise with the struggle of the IRA against the British army, although we think its politics are inadequate for the needs of the struggle in Ireland.

RW: And on Vietnam?

TARIQ ALI: We are for total solidarity until the final victory of the Vietnamese liberation forces.

RW: What about the strong state and the continuous moves to undermine bourgeois democratic rights?

JOHN ROSS: We oppose in particular the racist laws such as the Immigration Act, the Aliens Act and the Pakistan Act, and the 1875 Conspiracy Act, which was used to imprison the Shrewsbury Three. The forces of the capitalist state are the deadly enemy of the working class in struggle, so we are in favour of the dismantling of the army and the police force and its replacement by an armed workers militia. We work towards this goal by fighting for full trade union and political rights in the army, an end to all joint army-police manoeuvres, the abolition of special repressive police forces like the Special Patrol Groups, and the establishment

JOHN ROSS — IMG candidate in London, Newham North-East

of self-defence forces to protect workers' organisations and picket lines from attack by right-wing thugs or the police.

RW: How do you believe the working class can go forward towards socialism?

TARIQ ALI: The first and most important thing to understand is that the working class can never achieve socialism through Parliament or the capitalist state. Any government which attempted to base itself only on the capitalist state and introduce socialism would be completely smashed by the ruling class. This would be done in the first place by economic sabotage, as in Chile, or as happened in Britain when the 1945-51 Labour government tried to nationalise the steel industry. If this were insufficient to discredit or topple the government then the ruling class would not hesitate to overthrow the government by force. We have already seen this happen in Spain, Greece, Chile and many other countries. The essential thing in the struggle for socialism is that it can only be achieved by the mass mobilisation and organisation of the working class, independently of the capitalist state and employing class. This means, for example, that nationalisation cannot be carried through on a wide scale simply by Acts of Parliament—the workers must be prepared and organised to take over the firms from below. Any government, even one with the best intentions in the world, would be economically forced into carrying out anti-working class policies if it were not in a position to take control of the economy in this way. This would also require the arming of the working class against the inevitable violence of the capitalists, and the disarming of the forces of the capitalist state—the police, the army, etc.

RW: What is your view on the relation between elections and the broad class struggle?

BOB PURDIE: As we have already said, the decisive struggle is that outside Parliament—the mass struggle. We judge elections from the point of view of the mass struggle, not in terms of the Parliamentary game. Thus, where there is no revolutionary candidate, we call for a vote for the Labour Party. We don't do this because we place any reliance whatever on the reformist Labour leaders to defend the interests of the working class, but because of the effect the outcome of the election will have on the mass struggle. A victory for the Tories would be seen by the mass of the working class as a defeat, and would lead to a decrease in the confidence and combativity of the working class. A victory for the Labour party, on the other hand, would be seen as a victory and would increase confidence and combativity. We therefore put forward the slogan 'Vote Labour but rely only on your own struggles'. By the same reasoning we also call for a vote for the candidates of the revolutionary left where they are standing, rather than the Labour Party, even though we know that the revolutionary left cannot as yet defeat the Tories at the polls—a vote for a candidate standing for

the revolutionary left is the clearest call of all in favour of continuing the struggle, no matter what Government is returned at the election.

As for Parliamentary elections themselves, we explain that they are a fraud. Members of Parliament are elected for five years, those who elect them have no right to recall MPs, and they are elected on an arbitrary geographical basis which has no relationship to the great units of production where the working class is organised. Real power lies in the capitalist state and the economy, not in Parliament.

This election is particularly fraudulent. It is simply an attempt by Heath to defeat the working class through a political manoeuvre—something which he has been unable to do in the open class struggle. We only stand in these elections because they provide us with a platform for putting forward our political ideas.

A socialist democracy will not be based on Parliament, but on real workers' elections, on the democracy of workers councils. This is the long-term solution we fight for. You can already see the beginnings of such workers' democracy in things like the mass shop stewards' meetings held in the AUEW to organise the last protest against the Industrial Relations Act, the mass miners' meeting which dealt with the scabbing of right-wing official Frank Smith in Leicestershire, elected strike committees, and the Councils of Action formed during the 1926 general strike.

We only participate in Parliamentary elections because we are not yet strong enough to brush them aside and replace them with workers elections, and we try to participate in Parliamentary elections by *working class means*—by calling for strikes, demonstrations and occupations during the election.

RW: And after the election?

JOHN ROSS: No matter whether a Tory or Labour Government is elected, they will continue the attacks on the working class dictated by capitalism. But the means to end the capitalist offensive are already being forged in the struggle. In Britain, the crisis of capitalist society is propelling the working class towards a general strike or similar confrontation, no matter what government is in office. It is above all this for which we try to prepare the working class.

If the Tory Party is returned we will call for the first aim of the general strike to be the overthrow of this government, and in the struggle to do this the way can be opened to socialism. If such a struggle takes place when Labour is in office, we will call for such a general strike to impose a programme of socialist measures from below. In any case, of one thing we can be certain. None of the most important questions will be decided at this election.

The really decisive events will be the mass struggles outside Parliament which will take place before, during and after these elections. It is success in the strike struggle, in the combat against racism and fascism, in the armed struggle against British imperialism in Ireland, in the struggle of women for their liberation, in the struggle against the repressive acts of the strong state,

BUILD IMG STUDENT RALLY

In the present period of intense social upsurge the task of revolutionary student militants amounts to more than rallying student support behind the struggles of the working class: it must include the development of the struggles in which students are directly involved to their full revolutionary potential—as part of the struggle for socialism.

It is within this perspective that the IMG has sought to further the struggle of students over the past period—against cutbacks in higher education, against Government attacks on student union autonomy, against the erosion of students' living standards, etc. Of course a permanent solution to student problems can only be created by the working class taking up the demands of students. But these demands will only be seen as key social questions if students themselves are engaged in determined struggles around them. Only on that basis can an alliance be built with workers in struggle.

In Britain, there has recently been large scale participation of students in fierce resistance to the ruling class policy of 'education on the cheap'. We can expect these struggles to increase. But the crucial problem remains unsolved—how to carry all these struggles forward.

The present student leadership—the NUS executive—has no idea of how to do this. Its strategy of 'protest politics'—of calling students out on 'one-off' demonstrations, of making negotiations with the Government the 'focus' for the mass struggle—is a total failure.

The question is now urgently posed of building an alternative, revolutionary leadership which can advance the immediate struggles against the Government and build powerful links between students' struggles and the struggles of the working class. We believe that the IMG has a central part to play in the creation of such a leadership. Our 'programme of action', on which we will be standing in the April NUS elections, makes clear the lines along which such leadership must be built.

REVOLUTIONARY POLE

The essential step at present is to strengthen the revolutionary pole within the student movement. This involves more than building the



The willingness of students to struggle in defence of their living standards was shown by the massive turnout for last Friday's national grants demonstration.

With over 40,000 participating, it was the largest and most militant student demonstration for many years. And coming just 24 hours

before the start of the miners' strike, one of the key slogans taken up by large sections was 'Victory to the Miners', together with 'Raise the grants, smash the freeze, bring the Tories to their knees!'. It was therefore a setback that the NUS leadership refused to support the call by the IMG and many colleges to take the demonstra-

tion on to the National Coal Board headquarters after the rally in Hyde Park.

IMG, for the strength of a revolutionary group is determined not only by its size, but by the forces which it can mobilise for struggle, by the pressure it can bring on other groups to join the struggle, and by what sections look to it for leadership.

At this very moment many student activists are looking for political solutions which the NUS leadership cannot provide. As a move

towards filling this gap the IMG is organising a rally next month with the aim of grouping together student militants from all parts of the country to exchange experiences and discuss the lessons of recent struggles, and to discuss the way forward.

In the following weeks *Red Weekly* will carry a series of articles analysing in more detail

the contribution students have made to the struggle for socialism around the world.

If you are interested in helping us build the influence of the IMG and strengthen the revolutionary pole in the student field, and want to participate in the rally and the discussions leading up to it, contact your local IMG branch or write to Student Commission, IMG, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.



Dear Comrades

Two days before the miners were due to vote in a secret ballot on strike action, Mrs Jill Knight, MP, made it known to millions of people that 'social security should not be made available to wives and children, because it allowed the enemies of the state to go on strike.'

Because this has been uttered by a hateful and ridiculous woman who is regarded by most people as a Tory extremist, we are likely to dismiss it as unworthy of comment. Therein lies the danger. For once the public accept that those who exercise their lawful right to strike are 'Enemies of the State', they are not going to enquire too deeply into the means used to break them.

This is a version of the dehumanising techniques used to condition military recruits to the grisly business of killing and maiming other human beings—they are induced to look on their victims as different, not fully human, just 'Huns', 'Japs', 'chinks' or 'wogs'.

In civilian society, in order to turn the public against a certain section of the population, they again dehumanise them. Only the names change—now they are 'immigrants', 'coloureds', 'militants', 'extremists', 'terrorists' or 'Enemies of the State'.

Let us not forget that at this moment prison authorities are forcibly feeding two young sisters, Marion and Dolours Price. The authorities have of late resurrected this barbarous practice—condemned throughout the world—to break the spirit of political prisoners on hunger strike. Given Tory statements to the effect that virtually every strike is 'politically motivated', we can be certain that any jailed picket who has the courage to continue his protest behind prison walls would be faced with the same revolting treatment.

With a few honourable exceptions, we citizens of what we sincerely like to think is the most humane country in the world have allowed this to continue without a murmur of protest. Does not this display of indifference give the Tories ample reason to believe that such barbarity can, if necessary, be inflicted on trade unionists, provided that they can first be labelled 'Enemies of the State'?

'Tory Freedom Works'. No doubt you are familiar with this General Election slogan. And, by and large, it is true. We have given them the freedom to erode our living standards, and erode our cherished reputation for humanity in the eyes of our European colleagues. We have given them freedom to imprison our pickets and to imprison without trial over 1000 of our citizens in Northern Ireland, Freedom to contravene human rights, by force feeding in England and by the use of the noise machine torture in Northern Ireland.

We have had to suffer the dishonour of being 'included in a recent television programme entitled '1973—Year of the Torturer'. Before it is too late, let us protest and challenge each and every attempt to dehumanise and degrade our fellow citizens. Let us be careful lest we are reduced to the old refrain of the German people, after they had allowed their masters to deal with the 'Enemies of the State'—'We did not know'.

Michael Walsh
APEX

Dear Comrades

I would like to draw your attention to some confusing references in an article in the 18 January *Red Weekly* entitled 'National Front mobilises for anti-Common Market demo'.

1. The article states 'it is important to point out to the working class movement the growing links between the fascists and the extreme right.' As, in the past, the terms 'fascist' and 'extreme right' have both been justifiably applied to the National Front in the pages of *Red Weekly*, this is rather confusing. In this case the phenomenon being described is the growing liaison between the distinctly fascist NF and several other groupings, often under the individual leadership of fascist elements, but essentially composed of dissident petty-bourgeois newly driven from Tory Party allegiance by the impact of EEC membership and other Tory policies on their traditionally comfortable living standards. These formations, many affiliated to the National Council of Anti-Common Market Organisations referred to in the article, are to the right of the Conservative Party, but have yet to embrace fully the ruthless fascist aim of constructing a mass movement designed ultimately to smash working class organisations. They are not 'combat' organisations of this type.

2. The anti-fascist campaign organised against the NF in the Hove by-election did succeed in 'pinning the fascist label firmly on the NF' as the article points out. However, it must immediately be added that anti-fascist struggle is never a matter of 'labels' alone. The NF has developed a series of arguments to deny their fascist character, mostly pathetic by nature, but enough in many situations to allow them to continue their agitation on key social issues such as housing and employment opportunities. It is this agitation, generally racialist at base, which must be countered by anti-fascists to avoid workers being deceived by it. The Hove campaign, as well as labelling the NF quite

correctly as fascist, did attempt to raise the question of the fascists' social programme and agitation.

Communist Greetings,
Tom Cameron.

Dear Sir

It is evident from comments in the most recent edition of *Red Weekly* that you agree at least in part with Mr Mick McGahey's position as regards the miners' dispute.

I read last week in a Conservative newspaper that if the government meets the miners' demands and the strike is called off, Mr McGahey will immediately put in a new wages claim and call for a new strike in order to bring down the Tories.

Of course I have no proof whether or not these are really his policies, but if the allegation is true I would like to know what your views about it are. If the miners' claim were granted and they felt they had obtained a fair wage deal they would be unlikely to listen to a plea for immediate new industrial action, especially if their families had suffered hardship during the strike. This could mean that Mr McGahey would be discredited and would lose all his support from the ordinary rank and file.

Yours truly,
A prospective student of politics,
London

Editor's Reply:

As our correspondent is aware, capitalist newspapers are not a reliable source of information.

What Mick McGahey did say, at a time when the Tory Government was offering the miners promises for a better deal in the future if they accepted Phase 3 for the present, was that the miners should fight for the full claim now and then put in for another rise for next year as well.

On this we agree with him. Miners have been fed on promises by successive capitalist Governments for far too long. We believe that every group of workers has the right to expect a regular and substantial increase in their standard of living. The crisis-ridden economy of British capitalism cannot afford that—indeed, it has to try and cut back on existing living standards. Then it is capitalism which must go to the wall, not workers' living standards, for a socialist organisation of production could guarantee every worker's family a decent living standard.

McGahey, rather than calling for the miners to bring down the Tory Government, has insisted that the strike is only over higher wages. The Communist Party, to which McGahey belongs, has always said that the only way to remove the Tories is through an election. The International Marxist Group has been alone on the left in urging that the miners' strike be turned into a general strike to bring down the Government, because we feel that this is the best way to unite all the different struggles in which sections of the working class are involved and win a major victory for the entire class.

WHAT'S ON

LONDON RED FORUM: Every Tuesday at 8 pm in the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road (15 mins Kings X tube). This week (19 February): 'The Permanent Revolution'.

SOCIALIST WOMAN: New Spring issue out now. Articles include General Strike, SPUC, Equal Pay, etc. Orders to: 21 Highview Road, College Road, Harrow Weald, Middlesex. Price 10p plus 3p p&p. 10% off on orders for 10 or more copies, sent post free.

'NATIONALISATION OR EXPROPRIATION?' pamphlet translated from original by ex-Ligue Communiste, French section of the Fourth International. Copies still available from: Alex Stein, c/o 72 Cambridge Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham. All profits to Red Weekly Fund Drive.

BENGALI FRIENDS in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and Lari (Fourth International paper) contact: Bengali, Mullvaden, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

'THE WAY FORWARD': Public meeting, Sunday 17 February at 2.30 pm in AUEW House, Cross St., Preston. Speakers: P. Heathfield (Derbyshire NUM), Dave Jackson (Shrewsbury Defence Committee), Len Brindle (AUEW NC and convenor, Leyland Motors). Organised by Preston Liaison Committee.

NOTTINGHAM RED CIRCLES: Wide-ranging series of discussions based on the politics of the Fourth International. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month at 8 pm in the Lion Hotel, Clumber Street.

EIGHT WOMEN ON TRIAL: Arrested 13 January and charged with threatening behaviour, obstruction, assault, actual bodily harm after being refused drinks in a pub. Come to Marylebone Magistrates' Court at 10 am on 27 Feb and demonstrate your support. Also money needed for defence fund—send to: St Johns Wood Defence Fund, c/o Womens Liberation Workshop, 38 Earham Street, London WC2.

EDINBURGH SOCIALIST FORUM: 'Fighting Inflation'—what practical steps can trade unionists, housewives and students take against rising prices? Tuesday 26 February at 7.30 pm in the Trades Council, Picardy Place (top of Leith Walk).

INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE: Public meeting—Philip Braithwaite speaks on his recent visit to North Vietnam, together with colour film. Monday 18 February at 7.30 pm in Room C018, Clarendon Building, London School of Economics.

Lip CP attacks workers for not settling sooner

A fortnight ago, after more than nine months of struggle, the workers of the Lip watch factory in Besancon in eastern France finally agreed to accept a compromise solution.

The vote for acceptance was overwhelming—609 to 3, with 10 abstentions. But despite this apparent unanimity, the vote had hardly been counted before the arguments broke out. To the fore in this outburst were the national and local representatives of the French Communist Party (PCF) and the trade union federation which it dominates, the CGT. Accusing the local leaders of the Socialist-inclined CFDT federation of 'ultra-leftism which has now turned into opportunism', they claimed that the new plan

was substantially inferior to the earlier 'Giraud plan' in October, which they had supported but which had been overwhelmingly rejected by the workers' general assembly on the initiative of the CFDT leaders.

Whether the new plan is in fact inferior to the Giraud plan is debatable, to say the least. It is certainly an unsatisfactory compromise. But to understand why the Lip workers were forced to accept it, one has to look no further than the attitude of... the CGT and the Communist Party!

EXTENDING THE STRUGGLE

Right from the beginning of their struggle,



Right from the beginning, the Lip workers attempted to forge links with other struggles — at the ORTF, Cerisay, Pasteur, etc. — but these efforts were constantly sabotaged by the bureaucrats

the Lip workers were well aware that they could not expect to win on their own. Indeed, all their tactics were aimed precisely at extending and popularising their struggle. It was the poster campaigns, the factory gate meetings, the local demonstrations and the establishment of support committees which provided the solid basis of support in the area for the occupation and defence of the factory in June.

From there, the workers went a stage further. By restarting production—in defiance of the law—in order to finance the continuation and expansion of their struggle, they pioneered a tactic which found an immediate response among tens and hundreds of thousands of workers. And the sale of the watches thus produced provided them with the opportunity of taking the lessons of their struggle to every corner of France as well as beyond.

It was not long before the importance of such methods of struggle was to be overwhelmingly demonstrated. On Tuesday 14 August, at 6.00 am, three thousand riot police moved in and expelled the workers from the factory. Within hours the whole region was at a standstill. In other parts of France wildcat strikes erupted by the dozen. Whole sections of workers—like the train drivers—voted for limited strike action at once as a beginning. All the workers' movement awaited was a co-ordinated plan of action from their leaders to throw the Government back. But such a plan never came.

BUREAUCRATS RETREAT

Instead, there followed simply a series of 'invitations' to take 'all such initiatives as will permit the development of action at places of work and in the localities', ie a series of protest actions with no perspective offered for organising to make them effective. Behind this attitude lay a real fear of the reformist bureaucrats that things were getting out of control—after all, the workers had openly declared that: 'It is not only the management of Lip that has been challenged, but the whole employing class.'

So, rather than taking every measure necessary to extend the struggle and involve new groups of workers around their own demands, the reformist bureaucrats—with the CGT to the fore—instead did their best to hold it back. 'It is not a question of mindlessly copying forms of struggle which, while positive in a given situation, could prove to be not so good, and even detrimental, in other cases', declared CGT leaders. Indeed, the 'major lesson' of Lip, according to Etienne Fajon of the PCF, was that it showed the correctness of the Union of the Left's 'common programme' put forward in the last elections. As for action, well, they had a very clear position on this, too. 'It is necessary to act, without losing an instant', wrote Raymond Gelly in the PCF newspaper *L'Humanite*. 'It is a question of negotiating. Nothing more, nothing less.'

The Giraud plan provided the perfect opportunity for the PCF and the CGT finally to call off all support for the struggle. Having done their best to sabotage such solidarity actions as the Paris rally on 7 September and the phenomenally successful 'march on Besancon' on 29 September, they then proceeded to use every conceivable manoeuvre to persuade the workers to end the strike—such as calling for a secret ballot in an effort to weaken the workers' collective solidarity. But all this was to no avail—on 12 October, the general assembly of all the workers voted by 626 to 174 to reject the Giraud plan, and the talks were broken off.

STRUGGLE SABOTAGED

The Giraud plan would have involved not only 169 redundancies, but also the lowering of wage levels and the splitting up of the factory into its component parts, thus weakening union organisation of the plant as a whole. The workers—fully aware that the outcome of any talks would be dependent on the balance of forces in the broad class struggle outside—

decided that a possibility existed for forcing a better deal.

Immediately they launched new projects—including the 'six hours with Lip' meetings in all the major cities—aimed at strengthening the impact of the lessons of their struggle. They also attempted to forge meaningful links for united action with workers in other redundancy struggles, such as that at the Larousse publishing house. But the effect of these initiatives was largely lost as a result of the boycotting and sabotaging activities of the bureaucrats—in particular, the CGT. It is these 'leaders'—now pointing the finger with such indignation at the workers—who carry the overriding responsibility for the present situation.

NEW COMPROMISE

It is true that in some respects the new compromise is inferior to the Giraud plan. It only guarantees just over 300 jobs, for instance, with the re-employment of the rest of the work-force dependent on good results for the firm. As our French sister-paper *Rouge* has pointed out, this is virtually equivalent to a 'no-strike clause', since any industrial action will be said to harm the prospects of expanding the work-force. But on the other hand, the new deal does 'guarantee' to retain the previous wage levels and to maintain the factory as one plant.

What is written down on paper is not necessarily what will be carried out, though. The experience of Briant's is still fresh in the memory of many British workers, for instance. The immediate struggle may be over—but the workers are still left with the question of how they will enforce the terms of the agreement and even fight to improve it by attempting to change the balance of forces in their favour.

WORKERS' CONTROL

This means maintaining the present mechanisms of workers' control and ensuring that all decisions continue to be subject to mass meetings of all the workers involved. Obviously this is weakened if only some workers are re-employed, with the re-employment of the rest depending on the good behaviour of the former. And as the rest are going to be paid to undergo retraining courses in the meantime anyway, it has been suggested that they should demand the immediate re-employment of the whole work-force, with the work being shared out at no loss of pay—in other words, a sliding scale of hours.

However it seems unlikely that the workers' leaders are prepared to launch any kind of struggle around this demand. But even so, there are many ways in which the workers' position can still be strengthened. Most important is the need to maintain collective solidarity through regular mass meetings involving the rest of the workers as well as those who have been re-employed. Moreover, the workers must establish that it is they and not the management who will decide who is to be re-employed first—with priority going to those who have been foremost in the struggle. At the same time it is clearly necessary to elect a 'control committee', subject to immediate recall, which can supervise the details of this, prepare further proposals, etc. This is particularly important because of the way in which the last set of negotiations were conducted by the union delegates, without any real involvement of the mass of workers until the final vote.

It is clear that while the strike itself has ended, the struggle at Lip is still far from over. Already the events of the last nine months have inspired tens of thousands of workers to follow the example of Lip in developing some of the most advanced tactics ever seen in working class struggles. Now the Lip workers have the further opportunity of writing new pages in the history of workers' control. Their slogan 'Lip for all, all for Lip' still remains as valid as ever.

JOHN MARSTON

Hungarian campaign against 'New Left'

Of all the Eastern European countries, Hungary is the one most often quoted as an example—in both the Western Communist and the bourgeois press.

The first, looking for a model of socialism less hideous than that of the Soviet Union, has boasted about this land of democratic freedoms. As for the bourgeois press, striving to show the convergence between socialism and capitalism, it has enthusiastically underlined the evolution of the country towards the conditions of a market economy. But the facts are now increasingly calling both these conceptions into question.

Of major importance in this development has been the recent trial of Miklos Haraszti, a 28-year old poet given an 8-month suspended sentence for the illegal distribution of a manuscript describing his experience as a worker in the 'Red Star' factory. The manuscript, called *Piece Rates*, is a detailed report in which the author vigorously attacks the system of work and the mode of payment in Hungarian factories, describing them as 'non-socialist' methods. It was, in fact, originally commissioned by a Hungarian publishing house, but censorship prevented its publication, and when Haraszti gave it to friends to read he was prosecuted as a result.

EFFECTS OF REFORMS

On the face of it, an 8-month sentence seems very mild. But the case takes on a much wider importance at a time when the consequences of the recent economic reforms are now beginning to be felt by the working class. A certain techno-bureaucratic layer has benefited directly from these reforms, and enjoys a steadily improving standard of living. But for the working class the reforms have meant wage stagnation coupled with increases in basic food prices, rents, and the cost of services.

These developments have produced consider-

able discontent among the workers—to such an extent that a section of the top Party bureaucracy is thinking about curbing the full application of the reforms. The fear of a working class explosion, similar to that of 1970 in Poland, cannot be far from their minds.

In such a situation, it is not surprising that many young Hungarian intellectuals—who did not go through the demoralising experience of defeat in 1956—have supported Haraszti, and appeared as witnesses in his case. Together they form part of a new layer of young people who were radicalised at university by the Vietnam war. Haraszti, for instance, was a member of the solidarity committee with Vietnam, soon dissolved because of its 'non-orthodox' positions. Later he played a prominent role in several politico-literary events after being expelled from university, and suffered constant police harassment as a result. Then, unable to publish, he became a factory worker, and wrote what is now the cause of his present troubles.

HUGE CAMPAIGN

Haraszti's trial shows just how sensitive the ruling bureaucracy is under the skin. A huge campaign against the 'New Left' is today underway, with long articles in the press and hastily manufactured judgments in the courts. Almost all the leaders of the Institute of Sociology have already been expelled for 'deviationism'; now a group of workers and students in Pecs is supposedly being tried for 'subversionism'.

The aim of this campaign is clear: to prevent at all costs a coming together of the intelligentsia and working class militants in what could be a revolutionary explosion. Thus the conviction of Haraszti is an indicator for the future as well as a warning. It remains to be seen whether the warning will be heeded by those to whom it is directed, or if on the contrary it will only stiffen the determination of the young intelligentsia to ask further embarrassing questions about the way the present system functions.



International Marxist Group
(British Section of the Fourth International)
97 Caledonian Road,
London N.1.
I would like more information about the IMG and its activities.

NAME

ADDRESS

Free Ireland Forum
Alistair Rowick on 'The Role of the Troops Out Movement', Friday 15 February at 8.00 pm in the General Pictou pub, Caledonian Road (5 mins Kings X tube)

EFFECTIVE PICKETING IS CENTRAL TO VICTORY. BACK PAGE EXAMINES THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Red Weekly

Military help for police

Assistance from the army and a refusal to reveal picket-busting plans to local councils are two of the most recent developments in police preparations for attacks on miners' pickets.

In West Yorkshire, Chief Inspector John Williams has revealed that the army will be providing military transport for police flying squads. 'The use of military transport would enable the specially trained men to be taken to the scene of any trouble when and where it may arise,' Williams said.

Mid-Anglia's Chief Constable, F. Drayton Porter, announced on Thursday that the 800 men on his force would be completing 'refresher courses in crowd control' in time for the beginning of the miners' strike.

But the plans for all police and army anti-picket manoeuvres are evidently considered to be an unsuitable subject for scrutiny by local council police watch committees.

On 6 February, Birmingham Councilor George Evans, T&GWU automotive district secretary, raised the issue of Scotland Yard's recently formed intelligence unit to co-ordinate anti-picketing flying squads.

He told the council: 'If these flying squads of extra police move in and wait for the pickets to arrive, it will create a confrontation situation... This is highly provocative.'

However, when he asked for the matter to be referred to the watch committee, Chief Constable Sir Derrick Capper of the West Mercia police announced:

'Anything about mutual aid by police is not within the terms of this committee and I will say nothing more about this matter.'

'If we had mass pickets we could have stopped the lot today'

Once again miners' pickets are at the Saltley coke depot in Birmingham. The NUM leadership's restriction of pickets to six meant that the picketing got off to a poor start, with many lorries crossing the line. Since then the pickets have been reinforced, and local T&G official Alan Law and two AUEW shop stewards have joined the line. Scab drivers are being told that they will lose their T&G cards and be subject to a £10 fine.

The following is an interview with Brian Davies, a face worker from Merthyr Tydfil on the Saltley picket line:

What do you think of Gormley's suggestion that the strike should be called off because of the election?

Well, after a 13 week overtime ban the men were ready to go. You can't expect solidarity to keep up over the election, and, of course, all the effects of the overtime ban would have been lost. I reckon Gormley could get the boot after the strike. My lodge sent in a motion condemning his statement.

What about the Labour Party, have they got the solution to the miners' problems?

When they were in, things were no better. They haven't said they support the miners, in fact I went to a public meeting the other night where a Labour Party speaker had the nerve to suggest we accept the present offer.

NUM LEADERS FALL FOR RED SCARE TRAP

Last week's *Sunday Mail* carried a vicious red-baiting attack on the International Marxist Group, and other organisations of the revolutionary left, based on allegations about their supposed plans for taking part in miners' pickets.

What the *Mail* puts forward as a statement from an IMG spokesman is nothing less than a lying distortion, in the 'best' traditions of British capitalist journalism. This latest attack is only part of a torrent of propaganda that the capitalist press has been churning out over the past weeks in an attempt to isolate the miners' struggle and turn rank-and-file miners against the militants of the revolutionary left, who are among their most dedicated and hard-working supporters.

These frenzied attacks reveal the deep-seated fears of the ruling class. They are afraid of miners' pickets, they are terrified of the prospect that the miners' struggle might draw in other sections of the working class, and they are worried that the revolutionary left might contribute to such a development and, in the process, extend the influence of revolutionary ideas among the working class.

What is the *real* position of the International Marxist Group on miners' pickets? In our opinion *effective picketing* is central to the victory of the strike. The 1972 strike showed that one of the most powerful weapons which the miners have is their ability to choke off supplies of power to capitalist industry, mainly through picketing the power stations.

The experience of the 1972 strike also shows that only mass pickets can halt lorries. Already the weakness of the six-man picket line has been exposed at the Saltley Coke Depot.

The NUM leadership uses the excuse that mass pickets are not needed

because they have support from the transport unions. But many lorry drivers are not union members, and in an industry as badly organised as road haulage many union members are more afraid of their boss.

This should be the ABC of picketing. Why then have the NUM leaders tried to ignore it? Because they have capitulated before this red-baiting.

We feel that this decision is a very serious error. But it is not one that will hold up in practice. Rank-and-file miners will not be content to act as road markers for scab lorries. When the picket lines grow, as they must, the police will try to intimidate

pickets and put the boot in. Under these circumstances the miners on the picket lines will turn for help wherever they can get it. And we intend to strain every muscle to make sure that they get that help.

Yes, we will join the picket miners' picket lines—at the invitation of the workers on the line, to give them whatever help they need to win their struggle. We are firm believers in workers' democracy. We do not believe that the organisation and conduct of a picket should be determined by us, or any organisation of the revolutionary left (although we have our own ideas on these questions which we will put forward). But neither do we think that these decisions should be made by a few full-time trade union officials. These decisions must be made by those who will have to shoulder the consequences—the workers on the picket lines.

It is easy to predict what will happen in the weeks ahead. Just as in 1972, the struggle will develop and first hundreds, then thousands, and then tens of thousands of workers, students, and others sympathetic to the miners' cause will join their comrades from the pits on the picket lines. The press will scream about 'infiltrators' and 'violent plots', and a few bureaucrats will mutter from behind the safety of their desks about 'certain people who have nothing to do with the National Union of Miners having been seen on the picket lines.'

But those who are actually engaged in the struggle will treat such pathetic statements with the laughter and contempt they deserve: for they will be involved in building the fighting unity that can bring a Government to its knees and win a massive victory for their class.

'WOMEN AGAINST THE TORIES'
Conference Sunday 17 February, 10.30-5.30. Imperial College Students Union, Prince Consort Road, London SW7
Organised by London IMG

ESSEX STUDENTS BACK MINERS AGAIN

Essex University students have pledged their full support to the miners in the present strike and offered facilities and assistance to miners pickets operating in the area.

The Student General Meeting which took place on Tuesday (12 February), went on to affirm its belief that solidarity with the miners' struggle was the best way of strengthening the students' fight for improved grants. An action committee was set up to prepare a campaign of action, which will include a public rally on 'The Miners' Strike and the Fight Against Phase 3', to which a miner, a railwayman, and a spokesman of the Shrewsbury building workers' defence committee will be invited.

The Essex students also decided to step up their struggle against attempts by the University administration to victimise students involved in activity around the grants campaign, and are planning a 'day of action' during the week in which disciplinary hearings directed against students involved in last year's occupation start. This will include pickets and canteen boycotts. The meeting instructed the students' union to stress the demand that the administration and the vice-chancellor should refuse to implement Government policy which acts against the interests of students.

Essex students, with the backing of the National Union of Students, are organising a national anti-victimisation conference for 16 March. Moves towards organising practical solidarity with the miners have also been taken

Coventry, and the University of East Anglia in Norwich.

At Warwick over 300 students attended a mass meeting on Monday addressed by Warwickshire miners, and decided to set up a support committee which is receiving full backing and financial support from the students' union.

At Norwich an emergency meeting of

the students' union on Tuesday voted by a large majority for a motion that stated: 'This union unconditionally supports the NUM in its struggle against the Government.' They decided to send a message of solidarity to the NUM executive, invite a member of the executive to give a public lecture for a fee of £250, and to set up a support committee to organise local assistance for the miners' struggle.

'Lash Labour' call on Irish issue

Supporters of the Irish struggle in Britain were told by a Labour Councilor last Thursday to 'lash the Labour Party' during the election.

Councilor Paddy O'Connor, the Deputy Chief Whip of the Labour Party on the Greater London Council, was addressing a public meeting organised by the Irish Political Hostages Campaign in London's Conway Hall. Speaking with some emotion, he told the meeting that every Labour candidate should be asked to state his or her position on the hunger strikers and on the Irish struggle.

Cyril Casack, the well-known Irish actor, said the demand by the prisoners to serve their sentences in the North of Ireland was 'on all levels a reasonable one'; and Irish International and Charlton Athletic soccer-player, Eamonn Dunphy, said he was grateful for the chance to express support for the political prisoners, and attacked the 'political criminals' at Westminster.

Brian Rose-Smith of the Haldane Soci-

ety (a group of left-wing lawyers) referred to the trials of picketing building workers at Shrewsbury, saying: 'The confrontation between the miners and the Tories differs only slightly from the confrontation between the oppressed minority in the North of Ireland and the State. It is the difference between Winchester and Shrewsbury.' Other speakers at the meeting included journalist Eamonn McCann and trained psychiatrist Dr Dominic Costa.

The meeting passed a resolution supporting the call made by the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union to the British TUC, for the British labour movement to back the demands of the political prisoners.

This week the Finchley Garage (London) branch of the T&GWU passed a resolution condemning the barbarism involved in the force-feeding, while the shop stewards committee at University College Hospital, London, has called for the prisoners to be transferred to Northern Ireland.

BOB PURDIE

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