

Red Weekly

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YORKS MINERS SAY -

'ALL OUT FOR NURSES'

The Yorkshire Area Council of the National Union of Miners is calling on its members to mount a one-day strike in solidarity with the nurses pay struggle.

Ballots will be held across the Yorkshire coalfield in the next few weeks on this recommendation, and if successful a date will then be set for the strike.

The Yorkshire miners' action should serve as an example for the entire workers' movement. The nurses are a key sector of workers, providing an essential social service, but their pay and conditions are absolutely atrocious.

For years they have been taught that they are not workers but members of a 'profession', and that their first responsibility is to their patients. But increasingly nurses are coming to see through such arguments, which are only excuses to pay them miserable wages and squeeze the maximum amount of work out of them.

Nurses can see that those who lecture them on responsibility to their patients are the very same people who cut back on the money available for the health service, allow overcrowding of health facilities, and are responsible for dangerous staff shortages.

Nurses are fed up. They are waging a militant struggle for their demands, despite the opposition of the Labour Government and the reluctance of the trade union leaders.

The Labour Government has offered them nothing except an 'inquiry'. This may take months, during which time spiralling prices will continue to eat into the nurses

tiny paypackets. No substantial gains will be won from the Labour Government except by mass action.

But there are limits beyond which nurses' industrial action cannot go without hurting the patients, most of whom are working people.

It is up to the labour movement to see that the nurses are not caught in the horrible dilemma of having to choose between their patients immediate well-being and an effective fight for decent wages and a better health service. All trade unionists must show that they are prepared, on behalf of the nurses, to take whatever action is necessary to force the Government to act.

When the Yorkshire NUM sets its date for strike action, workers throughout the country, especially miners in other areas, should plan to join them. Every trade unionist should strike and demonstrate to show the Government that they are behind the nurses, and to serve notice that trade unionists will act again, even more forcefully, if the Government does not meet the nurses' demands.

A blow struck for the nurses is a blow for the entire working class: it is a blow against low pay, for a better health service for working people, and against the 'social contract' and any form of wage restraint.



HUNGER STRIKE VICTORY

TORY MPs can lash themselves into a frenzy over 'IRA style' uniforms in London, but the concessions granted to the Price sisters, Hugh Feeney and Gerry Kelly, are a major victory for the campaign on behalf of Republican prisoners in British jails.

In essence they have been given political status, and a promise of return to the North of Ireland in the next few months. There can be little doubt that without these concessions they would have died on hunger strike.

Their lives were saved, not by the 'humane' Roy Jenkins, but by the mass upsurge of solidarity which followed the death of Michael Gaughan. The fact that the streets of Kilburn, London's main Irish area, were packed with thousands of people last Friday night, paying homage to the little-known Gaughan, made it clear that the death of one or both of the Price sisters would have created mass outrage.

One permanent victory has been won - it is difficult to see any future Home Secretary permitting force feeding. A six-month campaign clearly established the brutality of this form of torture. But without the unbelievable courage of the prisoners in refusing to give up their hunger strike, and the tragic death of Michael Gaughan, the campaign would never have succeeded.

A turning point was the protest by a group of doctors, which probably influenced the decision of the prison doctors to stop the force-feeding. Red Week-

ly is proud to report that a key part in this initiative was played by members and sympathisers of the IMG in the medical profession.

Wilson and Jenkins must have watched in distress as, despite the ending of the hunger strike and the pouring rain, five thousand people marched in the Irish Political Hostages Campaign demonstration last Sunday. Maureen Maguire, the secretary of the IPHC, made it clear that the campaign would continue to fight for all of the Irish political prisoners now in British jails, including Pat Arrowsmith, an Englishwoman imprisoned for her opposition to the British Army in Ireland.

The significance of this militant demonstration was expressed by Will Rees of Coventry IMG. Speaking at the rally, he said: 'The knowledge that there will be mass demonstrations in solidarity with the prisoners is the only guarantee they have that their demands will be granted, and keep Jenkins from making these concessions conditional on the IRA de-escalating the freedom struggle in the North of Ireland.'



Threshold fight spreads

STRUGGLES to win threshold pay rises for those workers who have not already negotiated them continue to break out across the country.

Last week another important group took a step towards winning this bare minimum of protection from inflation, when the Building and Civil Engineering Joint Board agreed on an initial £1.20 rise for 1 million building workers. However further rises will not be forthcoming automatically, but must be negotiated month-by-month.

Workers at the Coventry engineering firm of Wickman have done significantly better. They returned to work after the management conceded the £1.20 now due, and agreed to grant further rises automatically until the end of August, when the deal will be reviewed.

BREAKTHROUGH
A significant breakthrough has come at the Coventry Jaguar works, where management had been insisting on the official British Leyland policy that no threshold payouts were to be negotiated. Workers pointed to a management promise, made as part of their Phase 3 settlement, that applications for threshold rises would be 'sympathetically con-

sidered. Food with the prospect of industrial action, management sympathy began to flow, and the rise has now been conceded.

On Tyneside, the Swan Hunter shipyards face industrial action as a result of management's refusal to meet the demands of 5000 unskilled workers for threshold cash. The dispute could rapidly spread to the entire workforce, none of whom have threshold protection.

Workers at Plessey Telecommunications in Beeston, Nottinghamshire, have occupied the factory in their fight for a threshold agreement. Mel Read, ASTMS branch secretary at the factory and a member of the occupation committee, told Red Weekly about their fight:

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Victory for right-wing at Cowley

in line for a facelift

THE ELECTION of former Socialist Labour League member Reg Parsons as senior steward for the Assembly Plant at the British Leyland factory at Oxford has been given an enthusiastic greeting by the capitalist press.

A rapturous *Guardian* trumpeted: 'Ballot clinches BLMC triumph'. *The Times* crowed: 'British Leyland has won a notable "test case" in support of its view that it is entitled to withdraw recognition and facilities from senior stewards whom it believes to be abusing their positions.'

DEFEAT

The election results read:

Thornett - 407

Fryer - 824

Parsons - 1881

Parsons was the candidate of the T&GWU bureaucracy, and the right wing at Cowley, and received the benevolent approval of the company. His election signals the end of the first round of the company's offensive and registers a severe defeat for the trade unions.

Since Christmas the company has broken most of the factory agreements. A speed-up has been imposed on the assembly line workers and the deputy senior steward, Alan Thornett, has been victimised. Now a right-wing leadership has been elected.

This week the night shift on the *Maxi* has been abolished. There are strong rumours that cuts will be made on the production of the *Marina*. At the Longbridge factory in Birmingham, BLMC has just announced cuts in the *Allegro*, their latest model which was launched only last year.

At Cowley there is already a pool of several hundred 'surplus workers'. The management is hardly likely to go on paying them £42 a week to dig weeds for very long! Already the company is using the threat of redundancies to cow the rest of the workforce into accepting speed-up



ALAN THORNETT (left) lost to right-winger REG PARSONS (right)

Although the capitalist press has been quick to see the significance of Parsons' victory, one daily paper saw things in a different light.

'Leyland recognises Alan Thornett' was the headline in *Workers Press*. It went on to say: 'Thornett's victimisation failed because of the patient and principled fight by workers in the plant, particularly in the Transport Department, to make the union officially take up the case.'

SELL OUT

We would not detract at all from the stand of the Transport men in defence of Thornett. They held out for over three weeks in face of a vicious witchhunt, the mobilisation of workers' wives against their strike, a sell out by the union bureaucracy, and the scabbing of their fellow workers. But Thornett's eventual recognition as a transport steward was a concession by the company to the union bureaucrats in return for the carving up of the left-wing leadership and the strong 5/55 TGWU branch which is based on the Assembly Plant.

Workers Press failed to mention that Thornett was not reinstated as deputy senior steward and was barred from such a post in future. They made only passing mention

of the most important outcome of the whole affair - the company has got rid of senior steward Bob Fryer, removed Thornett from his deputy senior stewards' post, and Tim O'Sullivan, another WRP member, from his post as senior steward on the night shift.

What are the crucial lessons of this defeat? The sabotage of the TGWU bureaucracy cannot be underestimated. The company had such a feeble case and the Transport men gave Thornett such excellent backing that TGWU national organiser, Moss Evans, had no alternative but to call for official action if Thornett was not recognised as transport steward.

The company were mainly concerned to get rid of Thornett as deputy senior over one post they knew that they would find it hard to maintain their case on the other.

PRETEXTS

Evans then used a series of pretexts to delay official action. Meanwhile the TGWU Regional Committee did the company's job for them.

In a flagrant abuse of the terms of the enquiry which had been set up to investigate the company's complaints against Thornett, their report recommended the splitting of 5/55 branch and new direct elections for

the senior stewards.

Normally the senior stewards have been elected by the shop stewards' committee. The aim was to cash in on the unpopularity of the plant leadership in the wake of recent defeats and establish a tight hold for the union bureaucracy.

The report was railroaded through a special meeting of the Regional Committee, where hundreds of complaints against the union branch from a few disgruntled members were treated as gospel. Serious charges levelled against senior steward Bob Fryer were blandly accepted. Fryer was given no chance to see the charges beforehand, or to reply to them.

The election offered a stark choice - a militant leadership or a class collaborationist leadership in the pockets of the union bureaucrats. *Workers Press* at first engaged in false bravado declaring: 'The senior stewards are not worried by such an election.' Then, showing utter, gross irresponsibility to the interests of the workforce, Thornett ran against Fryer for the senior steward's post.

Fryer had been senior steward for the last 15 years, and had worked closely with the WRP. Thornett's move prevented the militants from presenting a united face to the shop floor, virtually guaranteeing Parsons' victory.

The WRP elevated recent tactical disagreements with Fryer into issues of 'principle'. In a crude attempt to justify their splitting of the militant vote they tried to stander Fryer's candidature by alleging that he was in league with Parsons. Had Thornett stood for his former position as deputy senior steward and backed Fryer for senior steward both might have got in.

Now the leadership is decimated. The vote was above all one of no confidence in the undemocratic methods of the WRP leaders in the plant.

With threatened redundancies on the way and more speed-up attempts by the management inevitable, the need now is to re-unite the militants in the factory around clear policies to meet these management attacks. A failure to do this will open up the way for further attacks.

COWLEY IMG

MORE WORKERS JOIN IMPERIAL STRIKE

MORE WORKERS have joined the strike at Imperial Typewriters, Leicester and well over 600 are now actively involved.

The Imperial factory at Hull is on a four day week and production at Leicester has fallen dramatically. The key Model 80 Department at Leicester has very large orders to fill and many of the non-strikers have been moved in to keep production up. By the morning of Thursday 5 June, only 29 typewriters were being produced in the first four hours, as opposed to the normal rate of 150.

Management and local Transport and General Workers Union officials are feverishly trying to pretend that all is well. They repeatedly claim that only 400 workers are on strike out of a work-

force of 1600. But counts of workers leaving both Leicester factories show a maximum of 400 still at work. The disparity is accounted for by large numbers of workers, both black and white, leaving to work elsewhere, and a mystery epidemic that has made 150 workers too 'ill' to work.

George Bromley, the T&G district secretary, has used the figures to argue that only a small minority of workers is involved in the dispute, and it cannot, therefore, be made official. Bromley gleefully announced that union headquarters had told him that the action would not receive official backing.

The spotlight is now on the T&G regional enquiry. Reg Weaver, convenor and secretary of 5/221 branch, has been trying to make some propaganda points. His hand-picked shop-stewards committee has deplored the 'violence' of the

pickets and 'the vicious written and verbal attacks on Reg Weaver and George Bromley.'

Rumours suggest that Weaver is at long last contemplating holding a branch meeting - but in the works canteen where no strikers can attend!

The police have been turning up in massive strength to intimidate the pickets and to attempt to stop appeals to those inside, who have been joining the strike every day. On several occasions the police have driven all pickets, together with any other Asians around, away from the factory and back into the Highfields ghetto.

Disquieting features have emerged over the enquiry. The Strike Committee has been given virtually no information and were only officially informed on Thursday 5 June, three days after the papers had got the news.

It becomes increasingly important that resolutions of support are passed and collections are made for the strikers, many of whom are in financial distress due to the attitude of the Social Security. The demonstration in Leicester on Sunday 16 June should become a rallying point for all those who want to stop a sellout by the union bureaucracy and strike a major blow against racism in the trade unions.

ANDREW JENKINS

Send all monies and resolutions to:
Imperial Strike Committee
24 Garfield Street, Leicester.

The demonstration is at 2 pm on Sunday 16 June, assembling at Spinney Hill Park, Leicester.

NALGO executive capitulates

The executive of the National and Local Government Officers Association (NALGO) voted last Sunday 35-28 to drop all action over the union's London Weighting Claim.

This follows a recommendation from the white collar union local government negotiators, the National Joint Council Staff Side, who accepted a deal offered by the employers a week ago. This deal only commits the employers to negotiation on 1 July on London Weighting (after the publication of the Pay Board report), the backdating of the agreement if the report allows it, and the opening of negotiations on the union's National Pay Claim.

NALGO's leaders have laid the ground for a complete sell-out on both claims by stopping the strike action in London. Even the threat of a national overtime ban and one-day strike was hurriedly called off when the first sight of this deal came up. The bureaucrats have not yet set a date for the return to work - this they hope to do next Friday (14 June). The reason for this delay is that several branch delegates to NALGO's annual conference, being held this week at Brighton, will be putting forward an emergency motion calling on the conference to reject any return to work by those local

government and electricity workers now on strike. The bureaucrats will want to feel out the response to this motion before deciding whether to lead a rapid retreat or play for a little more time.

The collapse of the official leadership betrays the same indolence and hesitancy with which they have organised the campaign. Although there are still many pockets of militancy in the various localities involved in the London struggle, even after Islington was forced back, there is still no effective organisation capable of overcoming the fragmentation of the action. The action committee, set up from the Islington-organised meeting a week ago, met again last Friday but mainly concerned itself with the emergency motion to the conference, not on organising and spreading the strikes. Several branches are organising a demonstration at Brighton.

But the lack of an all-London organising force will limit the effect of this.

Time is running out. To defeat the executive's sell-out, not only must the union conference reject the employers' deal, but also, more importantly, militants in London and the rest of the country must fight for the most effective answer to the employers and the Labour Government - widespread and escalating strike action for both claims.

ALAN BENNET



NALGO members demonstrate for London weighting claim in Hammersmith - collapse of official leadership means that time is now running out

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AFTER SUNNINGDALE - WHAT?

Labour's Northern Ireland Minister Merlyn Rees, while firmly rejecting the various quack remedies offered in the Commons last week, did not manage to answer this question.

In fact, one of the reasons for holding the debate so soon after the collapse of the Northern Ireland Executive was probably that no-one could expect a clear answer, and the awesome vacuum which is left could more easily be hidden. It was also an attempt to counter the open split in the Labour Party over troop withdrawal, and rescue Tory-Labour 'bi-partisanship', by making the Government's position clear.

One sentence from Rees's speech is especially significant: 'The Government of the province had been in the hands of one political party for fifty years, and there had developed... a fundamental split between two communities - one perpetually in government, and one politically excluded.'

MIDDLE CLASS

This is taken, almost word for word, from the Cameron Report into the October 1968 riot in Derry, which first warned the British Government that the Civil Rights movement represented a powerful new political force and that they had better try to do a deal with the catholic middle class to head it off.

Of course the view that the divisions in the North of Ireland stem from a lack of access to Governmental powers by catholics is facile. The Tory Government found it expedient, from the summer of 1970, to concentrate on smashing catholic resistance. They hoped in this way to eliminate the Republican challenge, minimise protestant opposition, and keep the Army from being caught in the cross-fire from both sides of the divide.

But the successful resistance of the catholics forced Westminster to move towards power-sharing without ensuring the support of the protestants, although they did not let up on the military campaign against the catholics.

So it was not just five months of power-sharing which collapsed, but a strategy going back over five years. Small wonder that the best Rees could come up with last week was four months of direct rule.

Four months is not an arbitrary period, it takes the Government through to September, and probably the threshold of a general election.

By which time Labour will hope to have a neatly packaged 'solution' to offer the voters.

This solution must give some perspective for a pull-out of the troops. How seriously Rees takes this can be judged from the fact that the present garrison is being run down to 15,000, the lowest figure since Operation Motorman in July 1972.

PREDICTION

No precise prediction can be made about this 'solution'. The claims of the various interest groups are by now so mutually contradictory that it is impossible to satisfy all of them. But the principle objectives will be to get as many of the troops as possible out as fast as possible, without appearing to suffer a military defeat.

The most likely direction they will take would be to try to make an accommodation with the loyalists. The 'Ulsterisation' of the war could achieve stability by the old and trusted method - 'Croppie' (catholic) lie down'. Not only could the British Army march out with drums beating, but they would leave the Union Jack still flying over Belfast City Hall.

No doubt British imperialism's sometime allies in the SDLP and the

Free State Government would squeal with protest but Westminster found them useless in stopping the IRA, and a positive hindrance in dealing with the loyalist revolt.

So come September, Rees will probably propose something which looks like a variation on Sunningdale, but which restores a good-sized lump of the protestant ascendancy.

In responding, the IRA will see no reason to alter the basic concept of their strategy. They know that they cannot defeat the British Army militarily, but they can disrupt British imperialism's timetable for stabilisation.

The Army is caught in a scissors - the longer it stays, the more urgently it needs to get out. The Republicans hope to force the British Government into paying a price for getting out, which would dismantle imperialist domination over Ireland to such an extent that a united and independent Ireland can be established.

INADEQUATE

Revolutionary Marxists will consider this strategy inadequate because it does not tackle the native class interests in Ireland, which are linked with British imperialism; does not link

the working class struggle in the South with the catholic resistance in the North; and does not prepare for the class confrontation with native capitalism which will become more and more important as British imperialism is less able to intervene directly in Ireland.

Nevertheless if it is possible for the IRA to disrupt a British deal, this will open up new possibilities for the development of the struggle, and their fight must continue to have our solidarity.

For revolutionaries in Britain effective solidarity means stepping up the pressure for withdrawal of the troops.

The collapse of Sunningdale has put this demand at the centre of the political stage. If by the end of the summer the Troops Out Movement is large and growing, with support at every level of the Labour Party and trade unions, the Government's room for manoeuvre will be drastically limited. And the TOM's opposition to the repressive actions of the security forces will be seen as a 'stab-in-the-back', and contribute to demoralisation in the Army.

The task and time-scale is clear. Let us proceed with all possible speed. BOB PURDIE



The role of the IMG in building the Irish solidarity movement in Britain was recognised at last Friday's funeral procession when representatives of the IMG were asked to take their turn in carrying the coffin of hunger-striker Michael Gaughan through the streets of Kilburn.

Stop the fascists!

1 LESSONS OF EUROPE

AFTER THE BRESCIA BOMBINGS in Italy, in which six people died and many more were horribly mutilated, there aren't many Italian workers who believe that fascists can be stopped by allowing free speech. And after five years of fascist bombings, for which so few fascists have been prosecuted, there can't be many who believe that the capitalist police can be depended on to break them up.

But such simple truths seem too difficult for the National Union of Students Executive to grasp, as it goes ahead with its proposal to exclude disruption of ultra-right meetings, in the implementation of its anti-fascist and anti-racist policy.

Perhaps these people don't believe that violence against their opponents is necessary for the growth of fascist organisations, and that the fascists and their activities play a significant role in the class struggle, despite their small forces? Let us examine the record, not of Hitler and Mussolini forty years ago, but of Western Europe now.

In 1969 four bombs exploded in the Bank of Agriculture in Milan, Italy, killing 16 people. Several anarchists were arrested and held for over four years without trial. Today even the bourgeois press says that these bombs were actually planted by the neo-fascists.

The object of these outrages was discovered from captured docu-

ments of the MSI (Italian Social Movement), the largest fascist organisation in Italy. The Milan bombings occurred after the massive strikes during the 'Hot Autumn' of 1969, and were supposed to provoke the dissolution of parliament and bring about a military coup.

By creating panic, uncertainty, and fears of 'anarchists', the bombs also allowed the Government to shift to the right and to launch repression against the left without provoking a mass reaction. Two fascist bomb outrages in April, occurring only three days before a bill was due to be debated in the Chamber of Deputies calling for the disarming of the police, created such an atmosphere that the bill had to be dropped.

Fascists in France and Britain provide another sort of service for the State.

The bosses of the car plants in France where huge numbers of immigrant workers are employed, pay large sums of money to the goon squads of the reactionary union, the CFT, and give support to the (formerly) banned Ordre Nouveau, which has one of its strongest bases of support among white car workers. A fascist cell in the factory is able to spy on immigrant workers, pick out the 'troublemakers', and mete out rough 'justice.' How much more efficient than the average policeman!

Unless we want these sort of developments to spread to this country, the fascists must be stopped now - before they get more support and finance from big business.

Tom Cameron

2 BRITISH THUGS FLEX THEIR MUSCLES

AT a National Front meeting in Canterbury last week police protected the fascists as strong-arm stewards kicked and punched their way through 300 demonstrators into the hall. Ten anti-fascists were arrested.

Demonstrators who got into the hall were attacked with six feet long metal bars and wooden clubs. Police watching passively explained: 'There is no breach of the law being committed.'

However the meeting, which was supposed to put the NF on the political map in Kent, was a big flop. A few dozen fascists, instead of the expected 200, were left licking their wounds, after the demonstrators gave as good as they got.

The anti-fascists later picketed the police station with the slogan: 'Police defend the Fascists! Release our comrades now!' The picket was kept up until all those arrested were released.

The demonstration was a sharp rebuff to those who maintain that fascists should be allowed free speech leaving it up to the law to prevent right wing excesses. As John McGeown, President of Kent University Students Union told *Red Weekly*:

'Anybody who relies on the police, the courts and reasonable argument, to deal with fascist activities should have been here today, to find out who the State supports when there is a fight.'

In Leeds an ad-hoc committee has been set up to combat a particularly vicious local fascist group called the National Democratic Freedom Movement, which has openly called for violence against blacks, gays and Jews.

On 1 June about 90 supporters of the ad-hoc committee marched to a

NATIONAL FRONT
50 Pawsers Road, Croydon, Surrey.
01-684-3730

For the attention of all Branches
TO BE READ IN FULL AT NEXT BRANCH MEETING

It has become necessary to repudiate the suggestions, lies and rumours being spread that I have misused or stolen money collected for the General Election fund. These rumours, being spread by God knows whom, that the £1,250 collected by the Midland branches has gone astray and that the money has ended up in my pocket. Let it be known that I will take anybody that is connected with this vile campaign to court. Meanwhile the Chairman urges branches to take the strongest disciplinary measures against anybody found giving currency to the above lies.

It has come to the notice of Party Head Quarters that some Populist elements within the Party are bent on a change of policy for the sake of votes. They are blaming Party H.Q. and myself for the apparent lack of success in the General Election. This is precisely what 'they' want. One word for this sort of view is compromise, a better word is sabotage. We should not trim our sails to Populist demands. Who needs the middle ground? The problem of immigration is of race, not of numbers. We are completely against the Common Market. No compromise. Any compromise and we will be committing sabotage to our own cause.

This sort of personal attack on me and on the Head Quarters is repudiated by the Chairman and myself. This can only give aid to our enemies. The newer members of our party do not realise the extent of their power and their ruthless determination to destroy us by any means.

signed: Martin Webster

local hotel where the NDFM were supposed to be having a disco. They found that the booking had been cancelled. The manager agreed after discussing with the committee not to allow the hotel to be used by the fascists in future.

On Saturday 8 June, Leeds University Union leafleted the town centre shopping precinct with anti-NDFM leaflets. Suddenly the fascists staged an appearance. They told the leafleters that 'they were going to get the lads to effect a citizens arrest,' and went off.

At this point the police arrived and started harassing a girl from the GLF. They were joined by the NDFM thugs who pointed out gay militant Martin O'Leary to the police, and then a transvestite who they claimed had abused and

threatened them.

As the left began to square up to the NDFM their 'leaders' decided to leave. The police then decided that giving out leaflets constituted an obstruction. Two CP militants who disputed the legality of this were promptly arrested.

The attitude of the Leeds police to the fascists was succinctly expressed by one copper who said: 'Well, they [the NDFM] may be Nazis. But they are an improvement on you lot. At least they don't break the law.' The Leeds police, famous for its black bashing activities, certainly knows which law it is there to defend.

STOP THE NATIONAL FRONT | SMASH ALL RACIST LAWS! A counter-demonstration against that planned by the National Front. Saturday 15 June, assemble 1.00 pm at Charing Cross Embankment. Supported by IMG, IS, CP, Liberation.

THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM AND FASCISM. Public meeting with speakers Jack Collins (Kent Area NUM), Tariq Ali (IMG), Maurice Ludmer (NCTUAR) Duncan Hallas (IS). Fri 14 June, 8 pm, Institute of Education, Malet St, W.C.1.

PORTUGAL

WHY THE COUP?

IN A MATTER OF HOURS, on the night of 25 April, the ruthlessly efficient, dictatorial regime which has dominated Portugal for more than 40 years was swept away. The Government was toppled in a neat, surgical operation carried out by the army, with the Portuguese masses appearing on the streets only after the job was all over. How could such a dramatic change take place so rapidly and with such little resistance?

There is only one explanation — almost the entire Portuguese ruling class was convinced of the need for a major change in State policy, and had come to the conclusion that the removal of the Caetano Government and the dismantling of the old regime was the only means to obtain it.

CAPITALIST EUROPE

For the past decade the development of the Portuguese economy has been closely tied up with the growth of exports to capitalist Europe, and the establishment of foreign plants — mostly by European companies — in Portugal itself.

Portugal was a founding member of the free trade bloc, EFTA (European Free Trade Association), set up in 1960 by those European states who remained outside the Common Market (Britain, the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland and Austria).

When many of these countries — including Portugal's biggest customer, Britain — decided to join the Common Market, Portugal had no choice but to seek a special free trade agreement with the EEC. This it finally accomplished in 1972.

The importance of trade with Europe can be gauged from the fact that last year the EEC (including its recent recruits from EFTA) bought more than 45% of Portugal's exports, and supplied a similar proportion of her imports. Altogether, more than 55% of Portugal's foreign trade is with capitalist Europe.

At the same time, many big international monopolies have been setting up branches in Portugal, either to produce for the domestic market (e.g. car assembly plants) or to produce for export (electric appliances, electronic components).

For these reasons the 'European connection' has become of overriding importance for the Portuguese capitalists in recent years, overshadowing the historic ties with the African colonies.

COLONIES

The colonies are still economically very important. They absorb a share of Portugal's exports out of all proportion to their place in the world economy (about 15% last year) and are a crucial overseas market for Portugal's manufacturing industry. At the same time, they are major suppliers of raw materials for Portugal's industries: the main exporting industry of Portugal, textiles, depends very heavily on raw cotton from Mozambique, for example.

This classical sort of colonial re-

lationship between Portugal and her African territories — importing raw materials and exporting manufactured goods — has carried with it dangerous consequences. The brutal methods of exploitation needed to implement such a policy sparked off widespread resistance among the native population, and by the mid-60's Portugal found herself tied up in a major foreign military campaign, embracing every one of her major overseas possessions (Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau).

This war, which has been raging for more than 10 years, began to devour an ever growing share of Portugal's limited resources. The financing of the war now eats up about 50% of total Government spending, and more than 7% of the total production of the economy. This is more than half as much as Portuguese businessmen invest in total each year.

The toll in terms of manpower has been even greater. The army — with about 200,000 men — is almost the same size as the British army, in a country with less than one-seventh the population. Moreover there are estimated to be some 100,000 draft dodgers in exile in Europe.

DRAIN

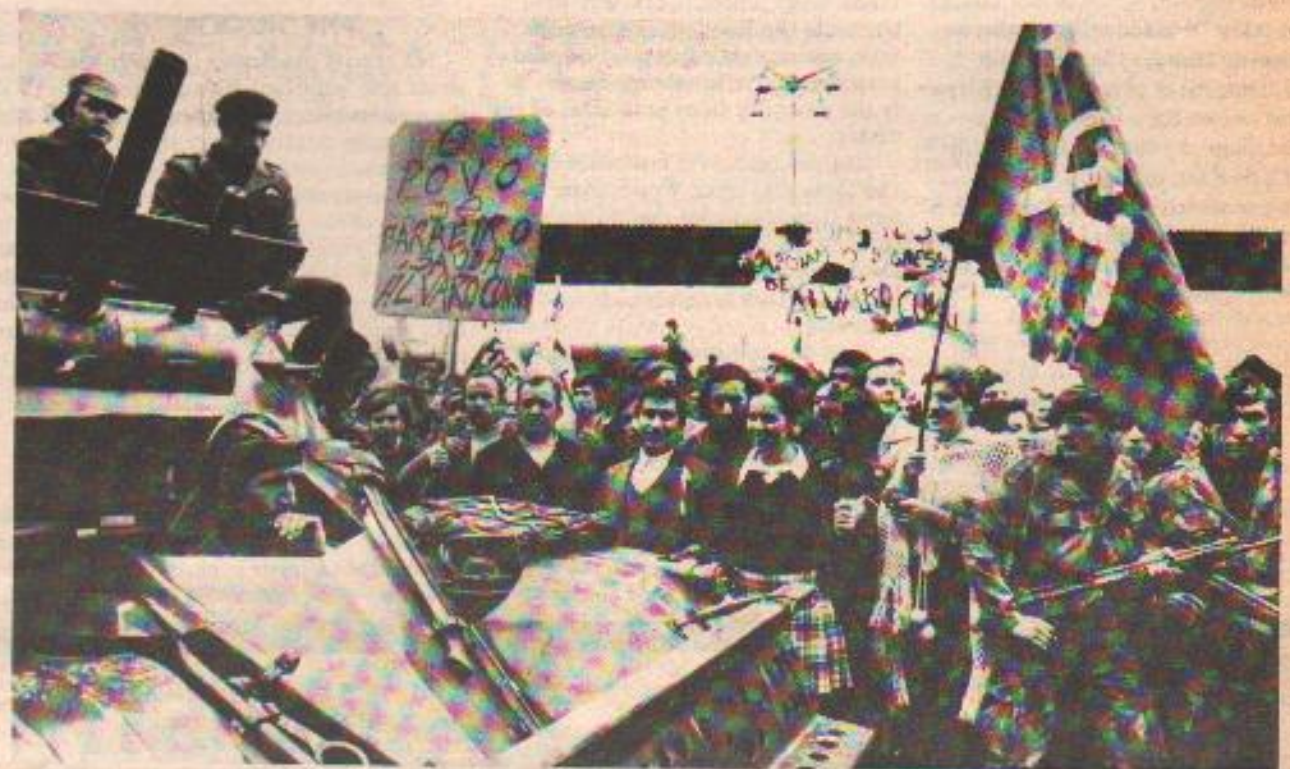
The impact of this on a country whose industrial working class is only about 1 million strong is only too obvious. The drain on manpower created by the wars, combined with the haemorrhage of mass immigration (there are estimated to be about 1.5 million Portuguese immigrant workers in Europe: one-third of the total Portuguese working class, and probably a majority of the industrial proletariat), has produced a very serious labour shortage in the country. This has become a major problem for the development of capitalist industry.

The Portuguese capitalists might have been prepared to bear these burdens if they were guaranteed secure 'accession to the colonies in exchange. But the opposite was the case.

Imperialism long ago discovered the technique of 'neo-colonialism' — granting formal independence while continuing economic domination of exploited countries. But the continuation of the colonial wars meant that the possibility of adopting such a strategy — based as it must be on a deal with a section of the native middle class — was becoming more and more remote. The entire African population was being driven into the arms of the liberation movements, who in turn were being radicalised by the ruthless and uncompromising stand of Portuguese colonialism.

Moreover the principal argument against a neo-colonial strategy — Portugal's inability to compete in the open market with the major imperialist powers — was being undermined by the European ambitions of Portugal's capitalists.

It was impossible for Portugal to seek closer economic ties with Europe and at the same time jealously guard her colonial backyard against



There was a big welcome for Communist Party leader Alvaro Cunhal when he returned from exile after the coup — but now the CP has come out openly against mass actions by the working class (branding those who take this course as 'fascist tools'), and has dropped its demand for a freely-elected constituent assembly in favour of the junta's vague promise of elections 'within a year'

fellow European capitalists. It was clearly going to be necessary to open the colonies to foreign economic interests. What the Portuguese capitalists had to aim for was a deal with the other imperialists, trading their expertise and established position for a guaranteed share of the total takings from joint imperialist exploitation. But no such deal could be carried through if Portugal was being forced out of the colonies at gun point.

CHANGE

For that reason almost all sections of the Portuguese capitalist class have been in agreement for some time that a change of strategy towards greater liberalisation at home, greater political independence for the colonies, and an end to the colonial wars is needed to consummate Portugal's marriage with European capitalism and Western imperialism.

This view has been held by capitalists with major African interests. Indeed, most of the major industrial concerns have their feet firmly planted in both continents.

Two of the staunchest backers of the coup — the giant CUF and Champalimaud monopolies — both have extensive African interests. CUF not only owns one tenth of all private capital in Portugal, but is the virtual sole proprietor of the economy of Guinea-Bissau as well.

The problem the capitalists faced was how to bring these changes about. The Portuguese workers' movement, despite the difficult conditions under which it had to operate, had already revealed its fighting ability on more than one occasion. Moreover it would be a shame to do away with the machinery of the old regime entirely — it could still play a useful role in defending the monopolies' interests.

So the first efforts of the capitalists were directed at stimulating 'liberal' trends within the fascist machine. The illness and retirement of that machine's architect, Salazar, in 1968 gave them their opportunity. With their support Marcello Caetano, a close associate of Salazar, but a representative of the old regime's 'liberal' wing (he had, for example, resigned his post as Dean at Coimbra University in the 1960's in protest at the brutal suppression of student demonstrations), became Prime Minister.

He did his best to carry out the monopolies' programme. The democratic opposition was allowed greater freedom to operate; the political police (the infamous PIDE) were renamed and brought under tighter control; moves were made to stimulate foreign investment, develop industry and grant greater autonomy to the colonies.

TROUBLE

But this plan ran into trouble very rapidly. On the one hand the workers' movement seized the new opportunities to step up their struggle, made more necessary than ever by the spiralling rate of inflation. On the other, die-hard reactionary forces, based in the heart of the old fascist machine on which Caetano depended — the upper reaches of the army, the political police, the ruling political party — began to rattle their sabres ominously.

By 1970 Caetano was busy liquidating his little 'liberal' experiment. The free elections of trade union leaders which had been permitted were all overturned, the most liberal members of the Government were purged and others resigned in protest. Repression on an even larger scale was unleashed against the workers'

movement and the opposition.

For the Portuguese monopolists this was a crucial object lesson. It was clear that no successful reform could be carried through from within the fascist machine. The problem was what force *outside the machine* could they turn to for the job?

The democratic opposition was just a hodge-podge of liberal intellectuals. The Communist Party was the only real political force in the country. A political campaign of opposition to the Government would draw the masses into the struggle, and threaten to push the struggle well beyond the modest aim of the monopolies.

Little wonder, then, that their eyes should stray to the army. There they found a welcome sight in the form of General Spínola, a man who shared their views, who had considerable prestige and influence throughout the army — which was already riddled by discontent and political ferment — but who had proved his ability in the colonies as a ruthless defender of capitalist and imperialist rule. Truly they had found their saviour!

It was this combination of discontent within the lower ranks of professional army officers — organised in the Movement of the Armed Forces — the political prestige of General Spínola, and the solid backing of the most important Portuguese capitalists that gave the military coup its rapid and easy victory.

Faced with such a combination Caetano had no desire to try and clutch on to the reins of power, and with his surrender the cause of the 'old guard' seemed doomed. The reactionary forces simply crumbled into dust, and scuttled off to wait for another day.

PROSPECTS FOR SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

THROUGHOUT EUROPE.

the hammer blow of the miners' strike, the referendum. In France the candidate with a big vote for the revolutionary

the mass movement set off by the failure to the defeat of capitalism since

SOCIALISM OR BARBARISM?

THE OVERTHROW of the Caetano Government unleashed forces totally beyond the control of all those who had masterminded the military coup.

The capitalists and Spínola had decided, when they plumped for the coup, to try and ride the crest of the mass movement, granting whatever concessions were necessary to head off the movement and lead it into a blind alley. But it is unlikely that they were prepared for the tidal wave of working class mass action that broke around them.

All across the country workers began to put forward their demands, and strikes and occupations sprung up in every industry. Students and teachers took over the running of the universities. Mass demonstrations united workers and students with rank-and-file soldiers and sailors in the streets.

SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

Once again the spirit of socialist revolution has appeared to haunt the European capitalist class, for many of the conditions for the destruction of capitalist class rule are present in Portugal to a greater degree than the continent has seen for many years:

1. The coup and the new political freedoms that it brought have inspired the masses with expectations of a transformation in their standard of living.

2. The ability of the ruling class to meet the demands of the masses is strictly limited. The need to keep wages down in order to encourage foreign investors and preserve the competitiveness of Portuguese industry against European rivals will prevent any continuing flow of concessions.

3. The working class has a strong sense of its own strength and a determination to fight. It is rapidly building the organisations necessary to lead such a fight: free trade unions, factory committees, even national workers' assemblies in some industries (e.g. the railways).

4. The freshness of these workers' organisations means that there is no established bureaucracy which can readily rely on the machinery of the workers' own organisations to divide and defuse the struggle.

5. The close relationship between the struggle for economic improvements and for political gains has pushed the workers into fighting for wide-ranging demands that pose the question of who rules.

6. The old State machine has been discredited and weakened by its close association with the fascist order. Workers in almost every Government department have raised the demand for the purging of top officials, workers have on several occasions imposed their control over the mass media (print-workers in Lisbon recently forced the resignation of the manager and editor of the capital's largest daily and one former Catholic radio station is virtually under workers' management), and demands for the sacking of managers

closely associated with the old regime abound.

7. Mass pressure has forced the disbanding of all the specialised machinery of repression and 'public order' — the political police, the riot police and the fascist militia.

8. The main prop of the capitalist state — the armed forces — is, from the ruling class's point of view, unreliable. It is infected with political ideas and riddled with political divisions.

ARMED FORCES

The politicisation of the armed forces is one of the most important features of the Portuguese upheaval. At the top are the generals who make up the junta that stands behind the Government. They are politically conservative, and reliable supporters of capitalist rule.

Then come the professional officers — the backbone of the Movement of the Armed Forces. They are liberal democrats, but quite capable of moving sharply to the right and into the same camp as their generals as the mass struggle mounts.

Next there are the conscript officers, often former students doing their compulsory military service, and influenced by the left. Because of the colonial wars they actually make up a majority of army officers.

Finally there are the rank-and-file. Those in the army are mostly conscripts and are very open to influence from the workers' movement. The sailors reflect the strong 'opponentist' political tradition of the navy, and have been in the forefront of mass actions alongside the people and the round-up of the former political police.

In the name of maintaining unity, the Portuguese Communist Party advises the Portuguese workers to have faith in the army as a whole. Their leader, Alvaro Cunhal, recently had these words of wisdom to offer: 'As opposed to the Chilean army, the Portuguese army is in its majority progressive. This allows us to look on the future with confidence.'

Cunhal is undoubtedly correct. But what he fails to mention is that the progressive majority of the army is mostly at the bottom, and the reactionary minority at the top. By talking about unity with the army as a whole the CP leaves the rank-and-file and the left-wing officers in the hands of their reactionary superiors, and ties its own hands when it comes to campaigning politically among the rank-and-file and stimulating their independent self-organisation through soldiers committees, etc.

It is worth recalling that the Chilean CP also taught that their army was 'in its majority' trustworthy. And indeed when the Popular Unity Government took power the majority faction in the armed forces were the liberals who wanted to bide their time and see what the new Government got up to. This faction was led by a general called Pinochet.

OBSTACLES

There are two big obstacles to the development of the socialist revolution in Portugal. The first is the participation of the main working class political parties — the Communist Party and the Socialist Party — in the Government.

The Portuguese CP is applying a new brand of miracle politics — it is forging an 'anti-monopoly alliance' with the monopolies themselves as its principal ally! The CP has come out openly against further mass actions by the working class (branding those who take this course as 'fascist tools'), and is counselling against further wage demands on the grounds that they will help the monopolies by driving their smaller competitors out of business.

That this argument can be put forward in what is probably the most monopolised capitalist economy in the world (and it does seem unlikely that the giant Lisnave shipyards need the help of their workers to drive small backyard workshops out of the market for 500,000 ton super-tankers) just goes to show how desperate the CP is to rationalise their class collaborationism. It is more than coincidence that wage restraint is the principal economic need of the monopolies at the moment.

In its haste to preserve the 'democratic gains' by snuggling up to the monopolists the CP has even forgotten how to be consistent democrats. Its long-standing demand for a freely-elected constituent assembly has gone by the boards, in favour of the junta's vague promise of elections 'within a year'.

The CP is proving to be an even more reliable ally than the monopolists could ever have dreamed. By holding back on the demand for elections — which would expose the majority of the present Government as nothing more than the personal agents of a tiny handful of capitalists — the CP is giving the ruling class every opportunity to forge a new set of capitalist political tools to replace the discredited fascist ones, and reassert its control over the crucial instruments of class rule — the army and the mass media.

COLONIAL QUESTION

The CP is playing the same role on the colonial question. The Government wants protracted negotiations with the colonies. Its aim is to squeeze out important concessions — like the abandonment of the strategically important Cape Verde islands to NATO by the Guinea liberation fighters — that can be used as bargaining counters with imperialism. It is also manoeuvring for political arrangements that are the most favourable for the maintenance of a 'neo-colonial' imperialist stranglehold over the colonies.

A mass campaign in Portugal against the colonial wars and for the immediate return of Portuguese soldiers would be a powerful blow to imperialism and the political strategy

of the Portuguese monopolies. It would also provide an important political issue around which the struggles of the workers' movement, the students, the thousands of deserters, and the rank-and-file of the armed forces could be united. It would step up the politicisation of the army and deal a crushing blow to the capitalists' plans to 'restore authority'.

But such a course would clearly jeopardise the CP's 'anti-monopoly alliance' with the monopolies. So there has not been a critical peep out of the CP's leaders about the Government's colonial policy. They have done nothing to encourage a mass movement against the wars, and instead have devoted all their energies to attacking and smearing the organisations of the revolutionary left who are trying to build such a movement.

TRAGEDY — OR CRIME?

All this would be tragic if it had happened say ten years ago. It would mean that the CP was throwing away an opportunity to overturn capitalist class rule and instead bolstering up the flagging capitalist State, as it did across Western Europe after the Second World War. Now, as then, the likely upshot would be the expulsion of the CP from the Government in a few months and the restoration of 'normal' capitalist democracy, based upon a coalition of conservative capitalist parties.

But it is not ten years ago. Today the CP's course is not just tragic, but dangerously criminal.

As they themselves never tire of pointing out, Portugal is in a very different economic situation. The growing crisis of the world capitalist economy will make things even worse, as hundreds of thousands of immigrant workers are sent home, swelling the ranks of the unemployed in Portugal and cutting off the economy's most important source of foreign exchange.

Intensified capitalist competition for declining markets will put the squeeze on Portuguese industries at home, in the colonies (or former colonies) and abroad.

But these problems cannot be solved, as the Portuguese CP claims, by the workers tightening their belts and making sacrifices on behalf of capitalist profits. A crisis of the sort looming over Portugal can only be dealt with by a workers' state which has all the means at its disposal to overcome the anarchy of capitalist production and create a planned economy.

CRISIS

In the absence of such a transformation of Portuguese society, a social and economic crisis will rock the country making any 'normal' or 'democratic' form of capitalist class rule impossible. The only alternative to the socialist road is the barbarism of a military bloodbath and the imposition of another dictatorial regime, on the Chilean model.

The Portuguese Communist and Socialist leaders, by failing to lead the working class in the struggle for power, have become Judas goats leading the masses to the slaughter.

This serves to highlight the second great obstacle to the socialist revolution in Portugal — the absence of a revolutionary party capable of developing the mass struggle and seizing the leadership of the mass movement from the hands of the reformists and Stalinists.

The International Communist League (LCI — Portuguese sympathising organisation of the Fourth International) is a young organisation with very limited forces. But through its efforts to develop a mass movement against the colonial wars, its uncompromising agitation for the immediate election of a constituent assembly, its propagation of factory committees and workers' control in industry, it can rapidly become a force to be reckoned with. In close cooperation with other currents on the revolutionary left, it can begin to offer the Portuguese masses an alternative to the slippery slopes of class collaborationism.

But time is short. The efforts of the international revolutionary movement must be placed behind the heroic struggle of the LCI and other Portuguese revolutionaries to turn the tide. We must work together to make Portugal the first bridgehead of socialism in Western Europe.

Appeal for Trotskyist weekly

Revolutionaries in Portugal are faced with enormous opportunities and tasks; but they have pitifully few resources. The Portuguese Trotskyists of the LCI see the production of a weekly newspaper as a key step to enable them to intervene amongst a mass audience. Nowhere in Europe will the ideas of revolutionary marxism find such a receptive audience.

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International has issued an appeal for members and sympathisers of the world Trotskyist movement to come to the aid of the LCI, and raise the money required to launch a weekly paper in Portugal.

Rush donations to: RED WEEKLY (LCI), 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

CLAY CROSS CONFERENCE CAUGHT IN LABOUR TRAP!

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

LAST SATURDAY'S conference called by the Clay Cross Labour Party clearly showed two things. First, what a huge gap exists between the political impact which developments in the Labour Party have on the working class and the very limited ability which the Labour left has at present to organise any independent forces. Second, that any socialist strategy which is based simply on developments in the Labour party is doomed to failure.

Hundreds of thousands, probably millions, of workers support the struggle of Clay Cross council. Every militant in the working class movement has heard of the struggle of Clay Cross. The issue could still touch off a crisis in the Labour Party that will be of national significance.

But if we compare the political impact of Clay Cross with the forces organised by their conference, what a difference exists. The 200 Constituency Labour Parties, 150 LPYS, and 200 Trade Union branches registered at the conference is tiny compared to the political impact of Clay Cross.

Even more remarkable was the lack of independent forces. From the voting it appeared that there were only around 60 delegates, less than 20% of the conference, who were not members of one revolutionary organisation or another.

FAILURE

But of course even a small initial number can be sufficient if a clear position exists on how to go forward. Unfortunately, that did not exist, and that is why the conference itself, although not necessarily what may come later over the Clay Cross struggle, must be considered a failure.

The most remarkable thing about the conference, ensured by its domination by the 'Militant' current, was its lack of relation to the struggle which is actually being waged by the masses. To judge from Militant's intervention at the conference you would hardly have guessed that a vital national struggle for nurses' pay is going on, that NALGO and other sections of workers have been in struggle to protect their wages against inflation, that a reactionary general strike has taken place in Ireland which threatens to shift the whole balance of British politics, that a systematic attack on picketing is being carried on by the police, or that fascist and racist organisations are stepping up their activity to an unprecedented degree.

For every word said by Militant on these struggles, a thousand words must have been said on the structure of the NEC of the Labour Party, Labour MPs' salaries and so on. No policy was forthcoming, except for a few calls for resolution passing, on how to challenge the grip of the reformists in the present struggles involving tens or even hundreds of thousands of workers. The sole amendment allowed to the resolution from Clay Cross was for a recall Emergency Labour Party conference. This avoided all the questions on how to challenge the reformists in the mass struggles which are actually taking place at present, but was a tiny step forward. However, despite support from the Clay Cross delegates, Militant successfully urged its rejection.

FARCE

The orientation of Militant became almost farcical on certain questions. For example, the resolution Militant supported on Chile did not even mention that a demonstration was being held in September, or the existence of the Chile Solidarity Campaign, which has already helped in the blacking campaign and organised in May a demonstration of 10,000 on Chile!

The result of such policies is that the conference cannot reach beyond the Labour Party to draw in the many new, fresh forces which have taken part in the big struggles and strikes of the last six years.

Despite all these limitations was the conference important? Was it correct for the revolutionary left to have intervened? The answer is undoubtedly yes.

Despite the huge organisational decline of the Labour party and its left, developments in the Labour party still



Andy Bevan — Clay Cross Conference chairman, busy helping bog proceedings down in 'Militant's' labourist politics.

have an echo inside the working class which goes far beyond anything the revolutionary left can produce. The chance to use developments in the Labour Party as a sounding board for revolutionary ideas is a very important one. We must confront the politics of Labour MPs and leading 'lefts' —

people whose political message goes well beyond the bounds of the Labour Party.

The conference could have given a fighting lead on such important questions as solidarity with the nurses' struggle, the fight to get British troops out of Ireland, and

the campaign against British support for the Chilean junta. Unfortunately almost all these opportunities were lost because of the bureaucratic methods and bankrupt politics of the Militant current.

ALAN JONES

'Can Socialism come through Parliament?' by Roger Kline. Published by the International Socialists, 10p.

Review IS LABOUR REALLY IRRELEVANT?



This recent pamphlet of the International Socialists says some right and many wrong things about Parliament.

What it is most notable for however is drawing out the logical conclusions of IS's position on the Labour Party, how reformism maintains its grip over the working class, and therefore, how revolutionaries can break that grip.

The central conclusion of Kline on the Labour Party is that in a period of mass struggle, most of all in a revolutionary situation, the Labour Party is irrelevant. He says 'it is not so much that the Labour party is "left" or "right" in such a situation as that it is irrelevant in such a situation' (p18 — there are many other such passages).

LINE OF DEFENCE

A slight moment's thought shows that this view is nonsense. In a really mass upsurge — most of all in a revolutionary situation — the Labour Party, far from becoming irrelevant, would occupy the centre of the stage. History, not to mention political common sense, shows that the bigger the upheaval of the working class the more the Labour Party will be the last and most powerful political line of defence of the ruling class.

The road to working class defeat in a revolutionary situation is never signposted by men shouting 'long live capitalist exploitation' or 'Forward to military dictatorship', but by the seductive tones of 'A peaceful road to socialism' and 'Democracy and Parliament'. Far from the Labour Party being irrelevant, it will be the central political problem which revolutionaries and the working class will have to overcome.

The reason why Kline and the IS get in such a mess, forgetting elementary revolutionary facts which 'in abstract' they understand perfectly well, is because they do not understand the difference between the organisational hold of the Labour Party over the working class and the ideological and political hold of labourism.

This is shown perfectly when Kline tries to explain to us why the Labour Party is irrelevant in a mass upsurge. He simply gives us a whole series of facts about the organisational decline of the Labour Party eg. 'Active membership of the Labour Party declines' (p17)

Of course it is important to understand the organisational decline of the Labour party. But this organisational decline is not at all the same thing as the ideological hold of labourism over the working class. The Labour Party has never exercised its domination simply through its activists, or even by the far more powerful weapon of the trade union bureaucracy. These people

do not hold back the working class by purely organisational means, or even by personal 'credibility'.

The reality is that when the labourist speaks on the 'national interest', on 'democracy', and all too often on questions like race, he is cutting with the grain of the working class consciousness. When the revolutionary puts forward his ideas he is cutting against the grain. Every word of the labourist finds an echo in the minds of millions. Most words of the revolutionary meet a brick wall. It is a tenet of Leninism, something IS says it adheres to, that only the combination of an extraordinarily powerful upsurge of the masses and a revolutionary party with deep roots in the working class, can shake off the mound of ideological and political rubbish from the past and make a revolution possible. Revolutionaries completely deny that this task can be accomplished simply by propaganda.

Once this is understood then it is clear that in the greatest of working class upsurges, right up to the revolution itself, all the rubbish of the past will weigh down on the working class. It is this fact, not the few thousands of activists, which gives the real power to the Labour Party. The working class does not go around saying 'it is great to be exploited' or 'capitalism is marvellous'. But, unfortunately, they do believe in 'the nation', that 'things can only get slowly better', 'avoid extremism', and the million and one other things that make up labourism.

NOT SUPERFICIAL

These concepts are not something superficial but something which millions of workers, including millions who have never been in the Labour Party, have absorbed and been conditioned by since the first moments of their conscious existence. This power, this is qualitatively stronger at the present than the organisational hold of the Labour Party over working class militants. This power is not destroyed just because workers may follow CP members or revolutionaries in trade union struggles.

Rosa Luxemburg — ask her whether social democracy is irrelevant in periods of mass struggle! At the height of an insurrectionary situation, in 1918, in which workers all over Germany had begun to build organs of an alternative workers' state, the German equivalent of our Labour Party was elected to the government. It then proceeded to physically demobilise and smash workers' self-organisation, using the bourgeois army to attack workers and assassinate revolutionary leaders such as Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. The dangers in IS's mis-assessment of the Labour Party in Britain, prior to periods of mass upsurge are obvious!

But as well as understanding the difference between the organisational hold of the Labour Party and the ideological and political hold of labourism, we also have to understand the relation between the two. It was the organisation of the Labour Party which above all structured and reinforced the grip of a particular ideology over the working class. The Labour Party has gone very far to the right within that framework, but it has not qualitatively broken with it. It remains a reformist, (more precisely, bourgeois) party of the working class, within the framework of a labourism from which the working class has not broken.

The Labour Party may continue to decline organisationally — although even that is by no means certain, as we could rapidly find out if someone like Benn walked out of the Government. But the Labour Party, be it 'left', 'right', or upside down, will never be irrelevant. IS are just deluding themselves, trying concretely to give a justification of syndicalist type politics, if they think otherwise.

JOHN MARSHALL

WHAT'S ON

'GAY LIBERATION': Reformism and Revolution', by Martine O'Leary, published by Isophila pamphlets. In what was originally a paper for LSE Gay Culture Society, Martine O'Leary demolishes the various reformist currents in the gay liberation movement, and argues that the GLF should link itself with the revolutionary struggle for socialism. Available from RED BOOKS, 87 Caledonian Road, London N1 — 10p plus postage (10% discount on 10 or more copies).

CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE BYELAWS: Public meeting at the Friends Centre, Brighton 8 pm on Tuesday 18 June. Speakers: Dave Ward (Crawley Trades Council, IS); Brian Heron (IMG National Organiser).

BRIGHTON Chile Solidarity Committee: public meeting with Mike Cooley (AUEW/TASS), Monday 7 June at 8 pm in the Stanford Arms pub, near Preston Circus.

'THE STRUGGLE IN IRELAND': Birmingham IMG public meeting with speaker Bob Purdie, Wednesday 19 June at 7.30 pm in Wellington pub, corner of Bristol and Bromsgrove.

KILBURN IMG RED CIRCLE: 'Labour's Social Contract', Wednesday 19 June at 7.30 pm in Flat 7, 36 Canfield Gardens, NW6 (Finchley Road tube). All welcome.

IMPERIAL TYPEWRITERS: The full story of this important strike, plus an analysis of its political significance, is in the July issue of Race Today. Also, struggles in the Car Factories, the Catering Trade, and Yorkshire Carpets, plus reports from India and Dominica. Price 15p from left bookshops or £2 annual subscription from 184 King's Cross Road, London WC1.

NEWCASTLE IMG public meeting: Jean Japson, T&G convenor, Armstrong's engineering factory, speaks on her fight against victimisation. Friday 21 June, 8 pm in the Bridge Hotel, Newcastle.

LONDON WORKERS' FIGHT meeting: Terry Liddle (Committee to Devend Ivan Dryuba and Vyacheslav Chornovil) on 'Repression and Unrest in the Ukraine'. Sunday 23 June, 7.30 pm, 'Golden Lion', Britannia St., near Kings Cross.

'PRIVATE GAIN AND PUBLIC DUTY': public meeting with Eddie Milne, MP, and Brian Simister (EC member, Nottingham Trades Council), Thursday 13 June at 8 pm in the Lion Hotel, Clumber Street, Nottingham. Meeting arranged by 'Friends of the Nottingham East Constituency Labour Party'. BENGALI FRIENDS in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and *Lahari* (Fourth International paper), contact: Bengali, Mulvadén, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

LIVERPOOL RED BOOKS: Revolutionary literature — Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Eastern Europe, Third World, Ireland, Women's Liberation. B1a Renshaw Street, Liverpool. Tues-Fri: 12.30-3. Sat: 11-3.

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.

IMG GAY GROUP: Contact J. Mills, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, for further information.

LONDON RED FORUMS: New series dealing with basic questions of Marxist theory. Every Tuesday at 8 pm in 'General Picton', Caledonian Road (5 mins Kings X tube).

CRITIQUE SEMINAR: 'The position of women in the USSR' — by Geoff Barker (lecturer in Soviet Studies, Birmingham University). What are the differences between the position of women in the USSR and those in the capitalist West? How can the failures in the USSR be avoided in a socialist Britain? These and other questions will be discussed — Friday 14 June, 7.30 pm in Room S175, St Clement's Building, London School of Economics.

'PORTUGAL: Get out of Africa now!' Public meeting, Thursday 13 June, 8 pm in Workers Music Association, 1 All Saints Road, London W11. Speakers include Hilary Weinwright and Tony Gifford. Sponsored by CFMAG, Westminster IMG, N, Kensington CP, Kensington LPYS, W London A-AM.

GAY MARXIST CONFERENCE: 22.23 June in Council Chamber, Birmingham University Union at 10 am. For further details, contact J. Alexander, Birmingham University Gay Liberation Society, Guild of Students, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT.

WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER: Public meeting organised by Birmingham WLM to form action committee, Thursday 20 June, 7.30 pm in Digbeth Civic Hall, Creche provided.

THE ISRAELI-SYRIAN ACCORD

In the years following the 1967 war, the Israeli ruling classes steadfastly refused to negotiate with the Arab regimes.

As a result of their defeat the latter found themselves in a very weak position, and the Palestinian resistance — despite its mistakes — appeared to the Arab masses as the only force leading the struggle against the Zionists.

The Arab ruling classes had lost face and were unable to get the two 'super-powers' to exert sufficient pressure to force an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.

It was to break out of this situation that the Arab and Syrian regimes went to war last October. They were able to launch this political operation thanks to the weapons and equipment freely provided by the USSR.

COMPLEX POLICIES

American and Soviet policies in this area have become rather complex. The USSR has tried for a number of years to weave itself a privileged relationship with the bourgeois nationalist regimes of Egypt and Syria. To do this it has multiplied the number of its arms deliveries (ultra-modern aircraft, SAM missiles, sophisticated tanks, etc), trained military cadres, reorganised the army destroyed in June 1967, and so on.

A fortnight ago, on Friday 31 May, Kissinger's diplomatic circus finally achieved its desired result with the signing of the Israeli-Syrian separation agreement. Like the earlier Israeli-Egyptian agreement at Kilometre 101, this marks a new stage in the Middle East confrontation.

The present agreement deals solely with the disengagement of the conflicting military forces. It establishes a buffer zone policed by a United Nations force of 1250 soldiers, together with zones on each side where the amount of armaments is strictly limited.

What does this agreement mean for the future of the area? Below we look at how it reflects the policy of peaceful co-existence, and how alternative perspectives for struggle can be developed.

The aim of this policy is hardly to defend the just cause of the Palestinians, but rather to establish Soviet economic and strategic influence in this key area. Furthermore, it allows the Soviet bureaucracy to adopt an anti-imperialist image at very little risk to itself. After all, the regimes which it arms are a guarantee that all revolutionary developments in the area will be brought under control.

These aims of the Kremlin have met with indifferent success, however. The new close relationship between the US and Egypt shows just how difficult it is for the Soviet bureaucracy to establish lasting ties with regimes which are fundamentally reactionary.

Until recently the US relied entirely on Israel to safeguard imperialist interests in the area. By massively arming and financing the Zionist State they provided themselves with an efficient policeman to deal with any revolutionary

uprisings.

But this policy drove the nationalist regimes back against the wall. The anti-Zionist, anti-imperialist pressure of the Arab masses was becoming too strong. As a result, imperialist economic interests, mainly in oil, were becoming increasingly threatened.

The confirmation of Saudi Arabia as a leading counter-revolutionary force, and the liquidation by President Sadat of Egypt of his inheritance from Nasser (special relationship with the USSR), enabled the US to widen its basis of support.

These developments reinforced the desire of both the US and the USSR to reach a rapid solution within the framework of 'peaceful co-existence'.

NO LASTING SUCCESS

But in the Middle East — as in the other flashpoints of the world — the chances of a lasting success for peace-

ful co-existence are nil. The solutions worked out by the US and the USSR to maintain the status quo founder every time on the revolutionary upheaval of the oppressed masses. The war in Indochina has been a setback to their hopes, and any 'solution' in Palestine will meet the same fate.

It is true, of course, that the level of organisation and consciousness of the masses in the Middle East is far from historical reasons lower than that of the Indochinese fighters. But their deep anti-imperialist consciousness and their desire to regain their territory will never be snuffed out by some signatures at the bottom of a sheet of paper. This fact is so obvious that the Arab regimes have been obliged to give verbal guarantees about the demands of the Palestinian people.

However, the Syrian regime signed the agreement at Geneva, the place

where the 'peace negotiations' are being held. At the same moment the new Israeli prime minister, General Rabin, was declaring: 'Israel will not negotiate at Geneva with representative of terrorist organisations, whether they be participants or simply observers.'

STAGE-MANAGED

We do not of course say that the Palestinian organisations should take part in the Geneva talks. These talks are being stage-managed by imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy with the hope of reaching an agreement at the expense of the Palestinian people. We can nevertheless note the cynicism of the Zionist leaders, who declare quite openly that the Palestinian people can't even have a say in the matter.

The Palestinian people still have a long way to go in their march to win back their rights. The Syrian regime, which had acquired a bit of prestige in recent months, has shown again with this agreement that it will not lead this struggle.

Only the Arab masses — hardened in the anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist struggle — together with the Palestinian resistance will be able to overthrow the Zionist State and subdue the interests of imperialism, the bureaucracy, and the Arab nationalist regimes.

Right wing thugs kill Argentine Trotskyists

A WAVE of violent attacks on the Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST — Socialist Workers Party, a sympathising organisation of the Fourth International) reached a climax on 30 May with the murder of three of its trade union militants.

It was 12.30 am when a gang of 15 right-wing thugs, using walkie-talkies and armed with machine guns, clubs, and other weapons, burst into the Pacheco headquarters of the PST in the northern zone of the capital, Buenos Aires. They beat up most of the twenty or so people present, and then dragged six of them outside and bundled them into waiting cars.

Three of the captives, all women, were released after further beatings. But the other three — two metalworkers, Antonio Moses and Oscar Dalmacio Mesa, and a textile worker, Mario Sida, — were found dead by the roadside several hours later.

These murders came just three weeks after another PST member, Inosencio Fernandez, had been gunned down and killed in the same area of the city. Like Moses and Mesa, Fernandez was an activist in the metalworkers' union.

'SOCIAL PACT'

The PST comrades are the latest victims of the war of repression which has been waged by Peron ever since his return to the country a year ago. At first this was mainly directed at members of the urban guerrilla groups; but it has now, as predicted, been extended to militants in the trade unions opposed to the Government's 'Social Pact'.

The 'Social Pact' has become increasingly important to Peron as a means for keeping wages down and thus attracting imperialist investment. Indeed, one of the reasons for the 'mini-coup' in Cordoba in March — when police took over the city and kicked out the left-wing governor and his deputy — was that the authorities had allowed the bus drivers to smash through this incomes policy by granting them a 40% wage increase.

The PST has been in the leadership of the struggle to defend the workers' standard of living through the formation of an opposition 'class struggle tendency' in the trade union movement. This fight against the bureaucracy has recently won some successes — notably

in a militant strike by metalworkers in the Rosario suburb of Villa Constitución.

As a result the PST has more and more become a major target for the gangster-like methods of the Peronist bureaucrats. The murder of Moses, Mesa and Sida on 30 May was the tenth violent attack on PST members and premises in recent months.

WORK STOPPAGES

These repressive moves have not been allowed to go unchallenged, however. Work stoppages in several factories were reported when news of the 30 May assassinations became known, and there were also strikes in several local secondary schools.

There was also a big reaction among students at the University of Buenos Aires — two thousand of them attended a meeting that night in solidarity with the PST.

The PST is now trying to broaden the campaign against repression, and has appealed for international solidarity. Messages should be sent to: Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores, 24 de Noviembre 225, Capital Federal, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

INDOCHINA NOTES

CAMBODIA

Police and soldiers of Lon Nol's army fought a pitched battle in Phnom Penh on Tuesday 4 June with over 1,500 students and teachers.

The latter had occupied a school in the city, and were holding the regime's Education Minister and his deputy hostage against the release of five students arrested the week before. Both hostages were killed in the battle, along with four students.

The battle was the latest incident in a campaign by students and teachers which began over a wage demand but has since developed in explicit political opposition to Lon Nol (although their enthusiasm for Son Sann, a pro-US liberal, illustrates their confusion).

At this rate Lon Nol may soon find himself crushed between the insurgents outside and the opposition within, especially if the Red Khmers attempt to forge real links with the urban dissidents.

VIETNAM

The National Liberation Front are keeping up their offensive on the town of Ben Cat, on Saigon's northern defensive perimeter. South Vietnamese forces finally managed

to retake An Diem, another town nearby, after a week's heavy fighting in which most of the town and surrounding settlements were destroyed.

Elsewhere in the area, Bien Hoa airbase has been under heavy bombardment for nearly two weeks, and a Korean ship in the Mekong River was blown up by NLF sappers only six miles from Saigon.

The NLF activity is not aimed, as yet, at Saigon itself. The purpose of these attacks is to tie up vast numbers of Thieu's army and prevent them from attacking the liberated zones, as well as giving the NLF very important military trophies.

Most importantly, however, it emphasises to the population the extreme weakness of the Thieu regime and the likelihood of its impending collapse.

LAOS

Almost exactly 10 years after their first open intervention in Laos, the last US army personnel left the capital, Vientiane, a week ago. Only Embassy staff and numerous CIA operatives are now left.

The last of the 9,000 Thai mercenaries — who formed the backbone of the reactionary regime — left a week earlier.

This leaves the insurgent Pathet Lao with the strongest armed force in the country. It remains to be seen what advantage they will draw from it.

DAVID JOHNSON

Allende supporters go on trial

For some time now the Chilean junta has been using military court martials to try its political prisoners. These trials have been taking place all over Chile, and the local commanders in each area are empowered to pass the death sentence.

Two series of trials are of particular importance to the junta. The first is its massive show-trial of 57 members of the Air Force and 10 civilians which began in the middle of April. This trial — unlike the others — has been open to the press and has been attended by newsmen from all over the world.

'ILLEGAL' REGIME

The defendants are all charged with offences said to have been committed before the coup. The prosecution's argument is that the Allende government behaved unconstitutionally and was therefore 'illegal'. Consequently all those who supported it in any way can be accused of supporting an 'illegal' regime, passing national secrets to the 'enemy', etc. In five cases the prosecution has asked for the death sentence.

No witnesses are presented by the prosecution. Instead, it relies on the signed confessions which have been obtained from all 67 defendants. Of course these have all been obtained under torture. One defence lawyer who dared to protest that his five clients had only



Supporters of the Chile Solidarity Campaign picket the Chile copper corporation (CODELCO) offices in London last Friday in protest at the European tour of the junta's Minister of Mines, Arturo Yovana.

signed as a result of 'maltreatment' by the authorities was promptly banned from further participation in the court, and is now being disbarred.

SHOW OF STRENGTH

A minor element in the trials has been the junta's attempt to demonstrate that it goes through 'normal' judicial procedures. This has been necessary both because of the massive world solidarity movement against the junta and also in order to steal the clothes of the internal Christian Democratic opposition, who have been making much of the need to try the prisoners arrested after the coup.

However it is clear from the way in which the trials have been openly staged with complete disregard for the elementary 'rights' of the defendants that this is not their main purpose. What the junta intends to show by these trials is that it is in complete control of the country.

It is certain that this message will not be missed by capitalists all over the world when they are considering where to place their investments. The junta aims to show that Chile can guarantee the sort of social stability and repression that can be relied on to yield very high profits for a considerable period of time.

The junta also wants to make sure that this message is not missed by the workers in Chile. In particular — by setting the precedent that the Allende government was 'illegal' and that therefore even the most minor act of support for the Popular Unity during its three years in government was also illegal — the junta has gained a powerful weapon of intimidation. Now any worker can presumably be tried for attend-

ing Popular Unity demonstrations, public meetings or any other minor action of this sort.

CORVALAN TRIAL

The second important series of trials involves many of the prominent leaders of the Popular Unity government. In contrast to the Air Force trials, these are to be closed, and their opening date is shrouded in secrecy.

Among those to be tried are Luis Corvalan, General Secretary of the Communist Party, and at least five other ex-ministers of the Popular Unity government.

It is not clear whether the trials have opened yet, though some reports suggest that they began last Friday, 7 June. The charges have also not been announced, though it is likely that Corvalan and his ministerial colleagues will be charged with treason.

It is vital that the world solidarity campaign takes up both these series of political trials and demands the immediate release of all political prisoners. Such actions are particularly important as the junta is clearly using the events to tighten still further its grip on the Chilean workers.

In Britain the Chile Solidarity Campaign must organise a whole series of protest actions to denounce these trials. In addition, the 'backing' actions that have already been taken should be extended to cover other areas of trade with Chile, such as copper. It is by steps such as this that concrete solidarity can be won for the struggle of the Chilean workers and peasants against the junta.

GERRY CORBY

MUST FIGHT ON!

The Triennial review of grants announced by the Government last month in no way meets the demands of the National Union of Students grants campaign. The main rate of grant was raised, but in real terms it remains below the 1962 level. Discrimination against married women is maintained. Discretionary awards are retained. And the means test is not abolished.

The winning of a 25% increase in the basic level, inadequate as it is, represents a partial victory. But those students in colleges who took direct action to gain real concessions won price freezes, blocked rent rises, and received subsidies for accommodation, books and creche facilities - a much more substantial success.

Harold Wilson recognised these facts when commenting upon the award. He stated that one reason for the £120 was the subsidies forced out of the college authorities by local direct action.

While the Labour Government may give concessions with its left hand, it takes them back with its right. As in the health service, so in education, the £180 million chopped by Tony Barber, last December, has not been replaced. Recently the Government announced a massive deferment of college building affecting teaching, housing, social and recreational facilities.

It is with those who like nurses and teachers, are struggling against Labour's policies of health and education on the cheap, that students should forge united action.

These policies, implemented by Vice Chancellors and Principals (the Broad Left's 'Friends'), are already biting. The authorities now claim that with the grant increase they can put up prices and rents. At Sussex University they want to raise rents by £1.20 per week and prices by 12½%. Next term is bound to

see many students again homeless. If the NUS is serious about defending students' standard of living then action must be planned and organised now. Decisions have to be taken at this Saturday's NUS conference. Students cannot wait, as

ESSEX VICTORY

Halford Hewitt, the last of the three students expelled by the administration at Essex has been re-instated.

With the earlier re-instatements of IMG members Will Rich and Ronnie Munck, this is a complete vindication of the militant tactics used at Essex.

However it is not the end of the struggle. The 104 students arrested on the picket line in March appear in court on 24 June. The charges against them range from obstruction to unlawful assembly - the charge for which the Shrewsbury pickets were imprisoned.

Essex Students Union has called on all students and trade unionists to join the mass picket outside the court on 24 June. This will defend the right of workers and students to picket, and will strengthen the fight against the Government's cut-back in education spending.

Information about the pickets is available from: *The President, Students Union, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex. Phone: 0206 44144*

the Broad Left suggest, until the November conference for a lead.

In every college demands should be raised for:

A freeze on campus prices and rents.

No redundancies of college workers. Student facilities to match intake. Housing for all students.

Preparations need to be made for next term. Direct action - refectory boycotts, occupations, demonstrations, refusal to pay price rises - has to be organised to back these demands.

But this deals with only one side of the coin. Inflation is eating away at the grant. With the present rate of inflation the grant increase will disappear in just over a year. Workers have been fighting for threshold agreements to gain some protection against inflation all over the country. Students should likewise demand that for every rise in students' cost of living they will receive an automatic grant increase - a sliding scale of grants.

To fight for and win a sliding scale of grants does not stop students campaigning for the abolition of all discretionary awards or for a higher grant. Quite the opposite - it puts them in a better position by defending present gains. The sliding scale is a springboard for further action.

A sliding scale of grants can unite all students in the grants campaign. To fight for just the abolition of discretionary awards or merely for a higher grant will weaken and split the number of students supporting the campaign.

The Labour Government's award must be protected by a sliding scale against inflation. At the same time the grants campaign must continue and be extended until all the demands are met in full.

Action taken locally must be both in support of the national demands but also to win demands in the colleges against price and rent rises, and all such education price and rent rises, and all such 'education on the cheap' policies. Such a strategy for it alone offers the possibility of gaining real concessions for students.

Action committees can unify nurses' struggle

THE FIGHT of the nurses and other hospital workers has placed them in the front line of the fight against the social compact.

The intensity of their struggle has taken the powers that be by surprise. From Barbara Castle at her well-paid ministerial post down to the bureaucracies of the unions and the Edwardian satraps of the Royal College of Nursing, there has been a reaction akin to horror at this unprecedented militancy.

Nurses Action Committees have shot up in innumerable hospitals throughout Britain. These committees are an expression of the nurses' determination to fight for their claim and show the need for organising the struggle in a coherent way.

The aim of these committees must be to unite all nurses. There are 12 bodies represented on the Whitley Council, all competing in the hospitals for members. Cooperation between these bodies is almost nil, hence the urgent need for unifying Action Committees. The Committees are the only bodies that can unite these diverse forces and at the same time

involve other hospital workers. Furthermore, the Action Committees can, and in many areas are, effectively being used to get support for the nurses' claim from other workers.

The Action Committees provide an excellent opportunity to involve members of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and many nurses not yet in trade unions in direct action.

Despite the presence of NUPE, COHSE and the GMWU, large numbers of nurses are not members of trade unions. The low pay and poor conditions has not exactly been a boost to the unions' prestige. Nurses have also had drummed into their heads that they are not workers, but members of a 'profession'.

It would be criminal to ignore these nurses. Involving them in the Action Committees and winning them to play an active role in the struggle to win the claim, is the best way to win them to trade union membership. Moreover, they will be won to the union on a basis of struggle.

The Action Committees, by the role they play in the present dispute, can also give a big impetus to the growth of a strong joint-shop stewards' committee in the hospitals.

THRESHOLDS

(Continued from Page 1.)

All ten trade unions at Plessey agreed to submit a joint claim covering threshold agreements at the beginning of 1974, and to take joint action in pursuit of this. Plessey insisted on an agreement giving 40p for every 1% rise in the Retail Price Index above 7%, up to a limit of 4%, which would not be re-negotiable.

All the trade unions, except APEX which accepted the original offer, stuck out for an open-ended, re-negotiable threshold agreement, with greater increases for every rise in the Price Index.

The nine trade unions, representing white-collar, skilled and hourly-paid workers, have organised joint action. On Thursday 80 warehouse workers came out on strike, and on Friday the management responded by laying off the remaining 4,000 workers.

Over the weekend the trade unions advised their members to turn up for work on Monday as normal. About 3,500 turned up, and the occupation began, with continual shifts of 500 workers around the clock.

Plessey workers at Poole, Towcester, and Titchfield are pushing similar claims. However workers at the Liverpool factory have just agreed to the company's terms. National support for our action is therefore urgently needed.

UNITY

The difficulty with the present disputes is that they are localized and fragmented. It is a revealing comment on the trade union 'leaders' that, with few exceptions, they have made no effort to launch a coordinated struggle for such an elementary and necessary demand.

Rank-and-file militants will be working in the weeks ahead to give as much unity to the struggle as possible: by waging a campaign inside the unions demanding that the bureaucrats act, by building united action by all unions in the workplace, and by organising joint meetings and conferences of workers' representatives on the local and regional

level. But equally important is the fight inside this year's union conferences to ensure a united struggle in the autumn and winter by every trade unionist in the country for full protection of wages against inflation.

This will be an important opportunity to extend the existing threshold agreements, which are totally inadequate to protect wages against rising prices. Any effective threshold scheme must at least have the following provisions:

1. It must provide automatic increases as the cost-of-living moves up: there must be no monthly 'negotiations' or periodic reviews.
2. The threshold must move up as long as prices do: there must be no 'ceiling'.
3. It must from now on be a 'nil norm' threshold: there must be no fixing of a new threshold level, in place of the 7% that has already been passed, before further rises will again be forthcoming.
4. Threshold rises must be incorporated into basic wage rates, providing protection for all earnings - bonus and overtime included.
5. The amount of the threshold rises must be more than the present miserable sum: they must be sufficient to provide full compensation for rising prices, allowing for such things as increased taxes.

Demands such as this, coupled with a campaign to force the Government to provide similar protection for all forms of state benefits (dole, social security, pensions, grants), could unite the entire working class and many other sections of the population in a common struggle.

Every union conference should be flooded with resolutions calling for such a programme of demands to be put forward, and for the preparation of a campaign of mass and industrial action - up to and including a general strike, if necessary - to win them.

Carl Owen

FUND DRIVE

What a tremendous response to our appeal last week!

No less than £100.70 has arrived in the post, including £40 from Coventry IMG, £20 from 'a veteran Scottish Marxist', £18 from Norwich IMG, and £5 from Hull IMG. That makes a grand total so far for June of

£127.84

Remember - we need £300 just to keep going, but if we can get £400 that will really set us on the way to getting a 12-page paper by the autumn.

Help us to achieve that target - send off some money today, to: Red Weekly Fund Drive, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.

DEMONSTRATE - Sunday 16 June

Full support to the African liberation movements - FRELIMO, MPLA, PAIGC

Total independence from Portugal now

Solidarity with the Portuguese people

Assemble 2.00 pm Speakers Corner, march to Trafalgar Square. Speakers from FRELIMO, British labour movement, and Portuguese trade unionist.

Jointly organised by Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea, and Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee.

Information and publicity from: 12/13 Little Newport Street, London WC2 7JJ (tel: 01-734 9541)



Supporters of the Provisional IRA marching in Kilburn last Friday in Michael Gaughan's funeral procession. Their action has really got the bourgeois press and the Tories frothing at the mouth, but what is more important are the specific threats by right-wing hyenas such as John Biggs-Davison and Jill Knight, to use the 1936 Public Order Act against the 'uniformed' Republicans. This Act was originally passed to attempt to stop the fascists, led by Oswald Mosley. It was hailed by the Labour Party as the 'solution' to the problem of fascism (which of course it wasn't - only workers' anti-fascist mobilisations proved to be any solution). What is interesting is that the Act has been used on several occasions since - mainly against the left! Once more there is the threat to use it against revolutionaries - and we've still got fascism!

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