

RED WEEKLY

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NO ACTION FROM UCATT BUREAUCRATS

STRIKE NOW FOR SHREWSBURY LADS

IN THE GRASS ROOTS OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT there is deep and bitter resentment at the decision of the capitalist state to send the Shrewsbury 2 back to jail.

The right-wing trade union leaders are a little less concerned. Despite the failure of the feeble campaign that they mounted during the trials, and their failure to do anything at all after the vicious sentences were handed down, all they do now is offer less of the same.

On Tuesday UCATT's national executive met. But all George Smith could offer, speaking on behalf of the union executive to the joint London UCATT/TGWU rally gathered outside, was an 'appeal' to Roy Jenkins, a call for an emergency meeting of the TUC General Council, and a lobby of parliament.

An emergency meeting of the TUC General Council could be an excellent move - providing that UCATT had called its members out on indefinite strike and was demanding that the TUC brought out the rest of the trade union movement in support.

A TUC delegation to meet Jenkins, backed by such action, would be meaningful; and a massive lobby of Parliament to punch the point home might then be serving a purpose.

But Jenkins is not going to be moved by 'reasoned' argument, nor are the ladies and gentlemen at Westminster. Jenkins has been Home Secretary since February and he has not lifted one solitary finger to help the Shrewsbury brothers. Nor in that time has the Parliamentary Labour Party done anything about these imprisoned workers.

There is only one type of action, that will get Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson out of prison - strike action by a massive section of the working class.

Workers all over the country have been taking action in support of the Shrewsbury 2. In London on Tuesday some 30 sites stopped work to support the rally. In Liverpool more than 1000 building workers are out demanding the release of Warren

and Tomlinson. There have been one-day stoppages in Scotland. According to reports a number of sites in Manchester have voted to take indefinite strike action from Monday.

Nor is the anger about the men's imprisonment restricted to the building trade. The executive of the printworkers' union NATSOPA has 'deplored the action' of the High Court and demanded their release. Workers at Hammersmith Hospital have decided to picket Wormwood Scrubs where the two men are jailed.

But UCATT and the TGWU have offered no lead to the striking workers. Their friendly chats with Jenkins will come to no more than a glass of sherry with our 'liberal' Home Secretary and a bland refusal by him to intervene.

If Warren and Tomlinson are to be got out of jail this means that the rank-and-file have got to act. The building workers on strike should start despatching flying pickets to every site in Britain with the aim of bringing out every worker in the building industry.

Other workers should set up support committees in every town and district. These committees must have as their number one priority to spread the strikes into every factory and workplace possible.

Unless this action is taken, and taken soon, these two brothers will stay in jail. The ruling class will then feel more confident to use their courts and their police against striking workers and the workers will feel less confident in their ability to challenge the employers and their laws.



A mass meeting of building workers in Liverpool on Monday. They voted to remain on strike in solidarity with the Shrewsbury 2. The bureaucrats will not offer a lead - it is militant sections like this who must give leadership to the struggle by setting up action committees, and sending out flying pickets to bring out other workers.

How we freed the Pentonville 5

IN AUGUST 1972 THE TORY GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO USE the Industrial Relations Act and send five dockers to Pentonville prison. The response of the working class movement sent the Tory government reeling.

The rank-and-file asserted its strength and massive demonstrations began to arrive outside Pentonville prison demanding that the Five be freed. The movement swept the country as important sections of the major trade unions marched out of work in solidarity with the Five.

Printworkers and teachers joined the strike as did hosts of other union members. Confronted with this massive show of strength the police simply gave up trying to prevent mass picketing of the prison. The workers at the Briant printing works who were occupying the factory in protest against threatened redundancies began to use the plant machinery to produce posters and other material to aid the struggle to free the Five.

Every new act of solidarity inspired workers in other industries to take action. As the movement spread like wild fire the TUC General Council met to discuss the issue. Scared that the movement might develop into a general strike from below, the worthies of the General Council called for a one-day

general strike in support of the Five.

The Tory government decided that even a 24-hour general strike was full of dangerous potential, given the explosive situation.

So a previously unheard of character known as the 'Official Solicitor' was dug out from some musty room and he appealed to a higher court to free the Five. The court issued an immediate order releasing the dockers.

There was no talk of 'conspiracy' or 'deterrents' when the ruling class saw workers on the move.

That is why the ruling class handled the Shrewsbury trial in a different way. They did not use the Industrial Relations Act because they knew of the mass hatred that existed against it. Instead they used an 'ordinary' court of law.

The trial was deliberately prolonged and dragged out.

To divide the workers some of the building workers were just given suspended sentences while others were singled out as 'ring leaders' and sent down.

The failure of the building workers union (UCATT) and other unions to organise immediate strike action weakened the solidarity movement with the victimised workers. The Communist Party argued for restricting the struggle to token strikes and calls on the Union Executive to act. No mass movement was built that could organise strike action.

As a result, 'Lord Justice' Widgery felt free to uphold these scandalous sentences.

It is not pleas for justice that move the capitalist judges. The arrogant upholders of the capitalist law only give justice to victimised workers when the mass movement of the working class forces them to do so.

The freeing of the Pentonville Five showed the way to get justice. A movement like Pentonville must be built which will force the Labour Government to free Warren and Tomlinson and do away with the laws under which they were jailed.

FORCE LABOUR TO -

- free the 2
- end all anti-picket laws

Photo: Peter Harrap (Report)

Photo: John Shorrocks (Report)

Scapegoat Ward sent down for life

Judith Ward's trial is over. The verdict: life imprisonment.

Having failed to uncover the organisation behind the bombings which have shaken London for nearly two years, the police and the judiciary have found a scapegoat and sent her to the slaughter.

A mentally disturbed woman has been sacrificed to show how efficient the British police are. What a victory for 'British justice'!

One thing has not altered right from the start: the prosecution have not presented a single piece of solid evidence to prove that Judith Ward ever had any connection with the IRA or ever carried out any bombing.

Their two best hopes have each in turn been crushed. An expert witness for the defence has testified that the explosive tests used by the police are so sensitive that they will detect the residue of nitro-glycerine carried on a shoe that has trodden on explosion debris. And even so, a positive reaction can be given by more than fifteen other substances!

PATENT NONSENSE

The other main prop of the prosecution's case has been Ward's own evidence. They were handicapped from the start by the fact that they could only use a small part of her confessions because the rest was such patent nonsense. As the trial progressed, however, even what was left appeared increasingly contradictory, and when she came on to the witness stand, the case just fell apart.

The court heard of her 'marriage' to IRA officer Michael McVerry — of which no record can be found — of her false accusations against prominent Sinn Fein member Brendan Magill, of her 'confession' — which not even the prosecution has been able to use — to having planted the M62 bomb; and yet it was expected to believe a story pieced together from odd details mentioned in these elaborate fictions.

The improbability of her final version was implicitly acknowledged by the British Government on 23 October, the day that Marlene Coyle (whom the Crown claims was one of the 'real bombers') was freed by a Dublin court. Considering that this is supposed to be the 'gravest charge, short of treason, that has ever been known', the government might at least have asked for her extradition!

This was only one of the factors that the jury were not allowed to take into account. The real substance of this trial was the one thing that could never be mentioned in court — the situation in Ireland and the fear of the British Government that it is being forced into an intolerable situation by the growing demand in Britain for the withdrawal of the army.

The reaction to this has been an outburst of hysterical propaganda — much of it aimed against the International Marxist Group — designed to split the growing movement against the British presence in Ireland. There has been endless speculation about the role of left-wing groups in bombings in Britain. All of this provides a useful wedge to drive between the revolutionary left and the growing numbers inside the labour movement who are beginning to understand the real meaning of British rule in Ireland.

In this situation, the trial of Judith Ward poses forcefully the question of solidarity. The Provi-

nitians have dissociated themselves from her, presumably because of the countless false statements she has made incriminating them. But the context of the trial shows that this is not just a matter of the crucifixion of an isolated individual. The state intends to strike through her at the groups it wishes to silence.

In previous issues we have discussed the systematic harassment of Sinn Fein in Britain.

We are now beginning to see how this campaign will extend, moving first against weak and isolated groups of even individuals — like Judith Ward — in order to gather strength and confidence for further attacks. For this reason the labour movement must demand an end to judicial farces like that at Wakefield, while recognising that the conditions that make them possible will only end with the ending of British rule in Ireland.

Maurice Beckett

ARMY DESERTERS MOUNT UP

'They had so much training before they went to Ireland in how to be brutal and how to react to people in Ireland. When he came home, he was quite brutal to my son and myself.'

— Betty Mitcham, wife of deserter Ray Mitcham

As the war in Ireland continues the number of desertions from the British army increases. There have been 787 deserters from the army since the troops were sent in 1969.

If one considers that the British army is not a conscript force, the figures are quite remarkable. Small wonder, then, that the army top brass and the Government are getting increasingly worried as more and more soldiers start thinking about how to get out.

The decision by the BBC programme *Midweek* to interview three deserters, Kevin Cadwallader, Ray Mitcham, and Dick O'Leary, last week must have caused considerable irritation in military quarters. The viciousness with which all those who try to agitate politically among soldiers is another sign of the Government jitters about the

situation in the army. Pat Arrow-smith was jailed for 18 months for distributing a leaflet to soldiers. Since then 14 other pacifists have been charged with conspiracy to incitement for handing out a similar leaflet at army camps, with further charges expected.

Students at the London School of Economics are now planning a public meeting in defence of both the Shrewsbury 2 and the 14 pacifists, which will demand the ending of all conspiracy laws.

A picket has also been planned outside Bow Street Magistrates Court at 10am on 20 November to coincide with the opening of the trial of the 14. All donations to: PO Box 123, Peace News, 8 Elm Avenue, Notts.

Pete Webster

ATTACK ON SOUTH SHIELDS ANTI-FASCIST

The Secretary of South Shields Trades Council, Bernard Appleton, had his face slashed by a man with a razor in a back lane in South Shields last Sunday night.

This attack follows about 100 phone calls threatening Bernard and his family. The President of South Shields Trades Council, Jim Rowson, has commented:

'This appears to be a disgraceful piece of political thuggery, which makes life in South Shields nastier than before'. He said he believed the attack could be politically motivated.

This attack in South Shields follows the humiliating defeat that the National Front suffered there in the general election, when their vote dropped from almost 2,000 to a pathetic 700. This was mainly due to the activities of the local anti-fascist committee, which the Trades Council supported. The history of the threats to Bro. Appleton goes back to the time of the fight against the Tories' Fair Rent Act.



Bernard Appleton after the attack

The Trades Council fought bitterly against the implementation of the Act, but the local Labour council, like all the others in the country except Clay Cross, capitulated and implemented the Act. As a result, relations between the Trades Council and the right wing of the local Labour Party became extremely hostile, with some Trades Council members resigning from the Party.

One of the leading right wingers in the Labour Party was Harry Donkin, a former councillor. Donkin was involved in an incident in the Labour Party rooms with members of the Trades Council, including Appleton, over the use of a duplicator for Trades Council leaflets. Donkin attempted to order the Trades Council members out of the Labour rooms, despite the fact that many of them were Labour Party members.

After statements were made at the next meeting of the Trades Council attacking Donkin's actions, Donkin issued writs against members of the Trades Council, and against the Newcastle *Journal*, which reported the meeting. The writs were never brought to court.



Donkin has since left the Labour Party and found his real political home the National Front. At the count in South Shields on general election night, Appleton was 'trailed on' by members of the Front. Donkin was seen to point out Appleton to members of the Front, and Appleton was warned by a number of people, including Tories and Liberals, to be careful as the Front were planning something against him. Appleton had to leave the count in the company of a number of his friends for protection.

Donkin is a Justice of the Peace and sits on the magistrates bench in South Shields. The local anti-fascist committee is planning to picket the courts when Donkin is sitting.

They will be demanding his removal because of his membership of a fascist organisation. They will be asking whether black people in South Shields can expect a fair hearing from Donkin when he is a member of an organisation that has a racist policy of re-patriation of coloured immigrants. They will also be asking what sort of hearing fascists who attack trade unionists will enjoy.

Appeal to support anti-fascist conference

'Recent events, such as the tragic death of Kevin Gately and the Imperial Typewriters dispute in Leicester, have highlighted the growing threat of Racism and Fascism in this country. Trade Unionists are today faced with mounting inflation, bankruptcies and the threat of redundancies. These are the conditions which provide the breeding ground for Racist and Fascist organisations.

'We believe that Racism and Fascism are a serious, perhaps the most serious threat to the organised Labour Movement.

'We believe that the conference called for November 23rd, can and will provide a valuable step forward in the fight against Racism and Fascism. It will provide not only much of the information and arguments needed in the fight against Racism and Fascism, but will give impetus and direction to an organised response to this threat.

'We urge all Trade Unionists to attend the conference called jointly by the Coventry Trades Council and Warwick Students Union on Saturday, November 23rd at Warwick University.

'Details are available from Ken Hulme, The Secretary, Coventry Trades Council, 12, Barras Court, Heath Road, Coventry.

Signatures include: A. Wise M.P. (Cov. S.W.); A. Wilson M.P. (Cov. S.E.); P. Higgs (AUEW Rolls Royce); E. McCluskey (T&GWU Chrysler); W. Warrman (NUMSCH & DE); N. Evans (T&GWU District Organiser); D. Oatridge (TASS President of Trades Council); J. Hovey (Father of Sean Hovey); V. Clements (Coventry Community Relations Officer); and 15 Labour councillors.

IN THE SCHOOLS...

NF LEADER PICKETED

The headmaster of Latymer School may not be a fascist sympathiser, but he nonetheless invited the fascist leader Martin Webster to address the Sixth Form at his school on Monday.

The incident would have passed without comment, however, had not the National Union of School Students (NUSS) mounted an effective picket of the school last Monday. Over a hundred people turned up, and many students from inside the school came out and expressed support for the picket.

A number of them who joined the picket were forced back in by teachers though, who threatened 'severe punishments' unless they obeyed and 'went back to class. Six students who refused to obey were physically dragged into school by two coppers.

MARCH AGAINST CUTS



Last Sunday's demo called by the NUSS to protest against the proposed cuts in education drew less than 250 school students and only 20 teachers.

This in itself is a reflection of the bureaucratic way in which the NUSS seeks to organise events of this nature. Instead of building action committees in the schools, and linking these up with teachers and trade unionists, the NUSS leadership merely wants to parrot the actions of the TUC.

The NUSS president (a CP member), for instance, moved a resolution at a conference on educational spending the weekend before the demo which supported the Social Contract. Given this attitude it is hardly surprising that the most militant core of school students cannot be mobilised by NUSS.

We must demand that more money is put into education; that more schools are built; that teachers are paid more; and that there are more facilities. We should also demand that all 16-year-old students receive full grants with threshold clauses attached.

LABOUR IN SOUTH AFRICAN SHAMBLES

Wilson's well-publicised rebuke to the three Ministers who were cheeky enough to vote for Labour Party policy on South Africa at a recent NEC meeting underlines Labour's traditional servility to British imperialism and its interests.

It was Britain's veto together with those of the US & France which prevented the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations and thus sought to sustain the racist regime in a period of upheavals on its borders. Neither the veto nor the fact that it was exercised by a Labour Government should surprise us.

IMPERIALISM

Traditionally Labour's role in the third world has not been determined by the needs of the oppressed masses in Asia, Africa and Latin America, but by the global interests of British imperialism. Thus in the 1945-51 period, the Labour Government helped to maintain the colonial stranglehold over Black Africa, and Labour Colonial Secretaries behaved in the best Tory fashion.

It was Labour that paved the way for the massacres in Kenya and the creation of the Central African Federation. It was Labour that appeased white racists and allowed South Africa to dominate South-West Africa.

It was the Labour Government of 1964-70 which attempted to do a deal with the white settler regime of Ian Smith in Rhodesia over the heads of the black people of that country.



Sharpeville massacre of Africans, 1960 — Labour's policies ally them with the white racists responsible for this.

Only Smith's obstinacy prevented the marriage from being consummated.

The recent moves by the majority of member states of the UN Security Council to expel South Africa were of key importance — not because the expulsion would have brought Vorster and the racist structure down, but because it would have further isolated the regime at a time when it is trying desperately to improve its image internally and externally.

The reason for this is basically the overthrow of fascism in Portugal and its consequences in Africa. The existence of a FRELIMO government in Mozambique has in itself started a few tremors in Cape Town and Johannesburg. There have recently been several demonstrations of soli-

arity with FRELIMO composed almost exclusively of young blacks.

And at this time the British Labour Government, true to its role as defender of Britain's imperialist interests, kicks the black people of South Africa in the teeth by exercising its veto. Even the Australian Labour Government voted in favour of kicking South Africa out, as did most other countries where social democrats are in office.

PROGRAMME

The Labour Party programme states: 'The next Labour Government will withdraw from all relationships resulting from the Simonstown "Agreements" and all military exchanges, visits and technical arrangements will be terminated'. Apart from the fact that all this has been so far openly violated, how does it justify keeping South Africa in the United Nations?

Rumour now has it that the Government is going to try and diplomatically wriggle out of the Simonstown agreement. If this is true, the opposition of the Labour lefts, coupled with the severe criticism by the Labour Party NEC, was undoubtedly a major factor in the Government's decision.

But this is only a very small concession — and has yet to be carried out. Fear of the wrath of the left and the party rank-and-file was not enough to prevent the Government casting its vote at the UN to rescue South Africa.

It will take a great deal more to force the Government to end all military and diplomatic support for South Africa, and more still to force any decisive move against the economic support, in the form of trade and investment, furnished by British capitalism to the South African racists.

A real break with pro-imperialist policies in Africa can only be brought about if the labour movement displays such massive and determined opposition to the Government's actions, that it has no choice but to change course.

The seriousness of Wilson's 'left' critics within the Cabinet and in Transport House can be tested by whether or not they assist in the organisation of mass action that can force the Government to:

- *Scrap the Simonstown agreement and end all military aid to South Africa.
- *End all diplomatic support for South Africa.
- *End all British trade with, and investment in, the white racist regime.

TARIQ ALI

Labour leaders lay it on the line

It has been said of the Labour Party that of all political parties claiming socialism as their aim, it has always been one of the most dogmatic — not about socialism, but about the Parliamentary system.

One thing is certain — every single leader of the Labour Party has been absolutely determined to see that the Parliamentary Labour Party and Labour Ministers remain completely out of the control of the movement which got them into office.

Here is the sorry record:



'In the House of Commons the membership of the party decide their own policy without interference from the Executive or any outside authority' — Keir Hardie, 1907.

'The Parliamentary Party were not going to take their instructions from any outside body unless they agreed with them' — Ramsey MacDonald, 1928.

'Neither by decision of the annual party conference nor by any provision in the party constitution in the Parliamentary Labour Party answerable to, or under the direction of, the National Executive' — Clement Attlee, 1945.

'It is not in dispute that the vast majority of Labour Members of Parliament are utterly opposed to unilateralism and neutralism. So what do you expect them to

do...I do not believe that Labour Members of Parliament are prepared to act as time-servers' — Hugh Gaitskell, after the 1960 Labour Conference decided to support unilateral nuclear disarmament.



'The Parliamentary Labour Party is not bound automatically to accept any conference decision. And when a Labour government is in power, it is well understood that no conference decision can be binding upon it' — Harold Wilson, 1964.

The great heroes of the Labour left have been little better when in office either: 'It is quite impossible for a conference of 1,100 people, even if it were constitutionally proper, to determine the order in which the Parliamentary Labour Party introduces legislation into the House of Commons' — Aneurin Bevan, 1947

IN FOCUS

Labour's crisis and workers' democracy

Harold Wilson's decision to 'carpet' three Labour Ministers for attacking Government policy on South Africa at the recent meeting of Labour's National Executive has already raised a storm of protest inside the working class movement.

The policy of the Labour Government on South Africa is yet another cynical betrayal of the decisions of the workers' movement.

It raises once again the age-old question of who is supreme in the Labour Party — the NEC and the National Conference or the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Government.

The Labour left has protested against Wilson's act, but they cannot stand up effectively to Wilson because of their totally useless position on Parliament.

According to the ruling class, Parliament is the most wonderful democratic institution which has ever existed. The reality, of course, is completely different. Parliament is organised in such a way as to prevent the working class exercising any sort of political control over the capitalist state.

Parliamentary elections are too infrequent for workers to exercise control of their 'representatives'. These 'representatives' are in no way accountable if they go against the interests and decisions of the working class.

Elections are not based around places of work, where the working class is united and organised, but on an arbitrary geographical basis.

The result is, in Lenin's words, that the main purpose of Parliamentary elections is to decide who will misrule us for the next five years.

Even an ordinary trade union branch or shop stewards' committee, let alone a democratic strike committee or similar organisation, is a thousand times more democratic than Parliament. This is why the working class, whenever it has moved to take up decisive questions, has gone far beyond Parliamentary 'democracy'. The soviets in Russia, the Councils of Action in the 1926 General Strike in Britain, and the *cordones* in Chile are all examples of this. Such bodies are the beginning of a real, workers' democracy.

One of the most important ways in which the Parliamentary system stops the working class from exercising its political power is through the doctrine that MPs, once elected, are no longer responsible to the working class that elects them, or to the organisations of the working class that make their election possible.

This principle is fiercely defended by all members of the ruling class. Leading Tory politician, Lord Hailsham, to take just one example, has hysterically denounced the simple proposal that the Parliamentary Labour Party should be bound by Labour Party Conference decisions. 'Never since the days of Cromwell has a single force in this country constituted a more formidable menace to political liberty' was his comment. What would he have to say about real workers' democracy?

Capitalist politicians are terrified by the prospect that the working class might gain even a semblance of control over its representatives. The ruling class relies heavily on the Wilsons of this world, once they get into office, to betray all the promises they have made to the working class and to violate every democratic decision and interest of the workers' movement. Any change in this situation would have calamitous consequences for the ruling class.

For the same reasons, a break with this whole insidious system of 'Parliamentary responsibility' is vital for the working class.

Any and every MP elected through the power of the workers' movement — including Government ministers — must be responsible to the movement. It is the duty of every MP to violate decisions of the Parliamentary Labour Party or the Government which go against the decisions and interests of the working class.

This raises a whole series of issues which go far beyond the question of the relation of the Labour Party conference and NEC to the Parliamentary Party and the Government. How, for example, is responsibility and accountability of Labour MPs to be ensured. Obviously, it is useless simply relying on them not to break their promises for five years. There must be a system whereby they can be recalled and replaced if they go against working class decisions. But that is contrary to the whole system of Parliamentary democracy.

Similarly, who is to take the decisions on what policies MPs should be carrying out? Obviously, the Labour Party conference is far more democratic than the Parliamentary Labour Party. But neither the Labour Party, nor even the unions, extend to the whole of the working class. To develop really democratic working class decisions, local democratic organisations of the working class movement on the Council of Action or Soviet model are necessary.

In the dispute over who makes decisions in the Labour Party militants should be unequivocally for the supremacy of the Party conference and the NEC over the Parliamentary Party and the Government. You can't have it both ways. *Either* you are for the Parliamentary system, with all that this entails, *or* you are for the democracy of the working class organisations — which means going beyond the Parliamentary system, and taking up the struggle for workers' councils.

The only people who can really fight for workers' democracy — both inside and outside the Labour Party — are those who are prepared to fight for the replacement of the Parliamentary system with the democracy of workers' councils. And that involves a fight for revolutionary policies, not 'left' Labour waffling.



ARGENTINA — CRISIS DEEPENS

The political crisis in Argentina is getting steadily worse.

A major development has been the formation of the AAA (Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance), which has unleashed a wave of white terror — murdering working class leaders such as Atilio Lopez (ex-deputy governor of Córdoba), and radical lawyers such as Silvio Frondizi, among others. This new body has been closely connected with the police and the army.

Last Friday, 1 November, the federal police chief, Alberto Villar — who was behind much of the white terror — was arrested by a group of young Peronist revolutionaries. The AAA's strategy is to coordinate many key revolutionary groups active in the AAA.

SELF-DEFENCE

The impulse of revolutionary Marxists has been to push for the formation of workers self-defence bodies. As the Liga Comunista (formerly the Red Fraction of the FRT, and a sympathising organisation of the Fourth International) said recently: 'To unite forces to confront the white terror means not

only the formation of self-defence organisations, but also means organising and taking forward the mobilisation of vast sectors around each working class demand so as to defeat the ultimate objectives of this campaign of terror and intimidation'.

Another centre of the crisis — the University of Buenos Aires — has however been marked by a setback for the mass movement. Massive repression was unleashed against the students who had occupied the University, and 370 of them have been jailed. This move has effectively prevented the regroupment of the student body around the Peronist guerrilla group, the *Montoneros*, who have now openly declared against the Government of Isabel Peron.

The revolutionary left is now proposing a coherent 'plan of struggle' to fight the take-over of the University by the Government and to break the repression unleashed on the campus. The road is now open for the regroupment of forces around a Revolutionary Current which is emerging at this moment.

CAR WORKERS

The main workers' struggles of

the past period have been those of the Córdoba car workers and the Tucuman sugar workers. After four months of struggle the Córdoba car workers have been split by a series of manoeuvres and now face a difficult situation with their union SMATA taken over by state trustees. Its Córdoba leaders have been jailed.

Even though the IKA-Renault workers are back at their jobs, the car workers are now regrouping in order to win back control of their union from the bureaucracy, and a new mobilisation seems likely in the near future.

The strike of the Tucuman sugar workers against a 'rationalisation' of the sugar industry imposed by the military dictatorship of Onganía in the late 1960's has brought out many general lessons, and its full effect has still not been felt. The demands, apart from a wage increase, centre around the re-opening of the closed sugar mills and other measures to increase employment in this depressed region.

The Government has already put state trustees into the sugar workers union, FOTIA, and launched a violent police repression. But this has only served to reinforce the unity of the sugar workers and has drawn new layers, such as the students, into the struggle.

CO-ORDINATION

Such recent upsurges in the mass movement have shown the need for co-ordination of the fight against the Government, and to this purpose a National Assembly of Unions in Struggle was held in mid-September. In spite of the repression directed against this move, a national co-ordinating body is being formed which will ensure the unity of the militant unions. Our comrades of the Liga Comunista are pressing for the involvement of even wider forces and the formation also of local co-ordinating bodies.

Two of the main elements

being fought for within this emerging campaign are the sliding scale of wages — which will protect workers from the roaring inflation — and workers democracy — a powerful weapon against the Peronist bureaucracy which now has a strangle-hold on most unions.

It is these moves towards uniting the militant sections of the workers movement which have broken from Peronist ideology, together with the building of workers self-defence organisations and the defence of the guerrilla movement, which are crucial for a successful solution to the present crisis. Absolutely nothing will be gained by the workers' movement from the 'multi-sectoral conferences' which the government is busily calling to combat 'violent terrorism, subversion and ideological extremism', and which are nothing but a cover to legitimise a further rapid escalation of the repression.

Juan Sosa

BRITAIN'S SECRET WAR

The following press statement has been put out by the Gulf Committee:

Since the beginning of October, British and Iranian forces have been engaged in a ferocious offensive against the liberated areas of Dhofar in the southern province of Oman. Beginning on 1 October, several thousand crack counter-insurgency troops have been thrown into the Western part of Dhofar, where they have been supported by jets of the Iranian, Omani and British air forces, by Iranian helicopter gunships, by columns of armoured cars, and by naval forces shelling the land from the sea.

Since its inception in 1965, the Dhofar War has been characterised by a brutal and indiscriminate counter-insurgency policy on the part of the Sultan of Oman and of his British backers. Villages are being burnt down, wells blown up, crops set on fire, herds strafed from the air. Many political prisoners in the Sultanate have been tortured and numerous others have been shot.

Despite considerable alterations in some aspects of government policy in Oman, these criminal practices have continued and have, in recent years, intensified. The latest Anglo-Iranian onslaught is reportedly more severe than any previously seen, not only in its military aspects but also in its assault on the livelihood of the civilian population.

The Sultan is supported by over 1,000 British military personnel, whose presence Whitehall tries to conceal, and by up to 11,000 Iranian troops. The Shah of Iran, not content with executing hundreds and imprisoning tens of thousands of his own people, is now using his new-found power to bolster repression in neighbouring states. And, despite reports that some Iranian troops have left Oman — reports that are designed only to deflect the criticism of some Arab states — Iranian troops still play a front-line role in this war.

The People's Front for the Liberation of Oman have stated their aims: that all foreign troops should be withdrawn; all political prisoners should be released; political parties should be allowed to operate; and the autocratic powers of the Sultan should be ended.

This latest offensive confirms that official British policy, far from altering, is to intensify the war against Oman's people. The silence which surrounds British involvement must be ended. Last June a group of Labour Members of Parliament wrote to *The Times* calling for a withdrawal of British personnel from Oman in the context of the current Defence Review. The Omani people must be free to decide their own future, and all British and other foreign forces should be immediately withdrawn.

The Gulf Committee can be contacted at 6 Endsleigh Street, London W.C.1

Peking plays ping pong with Phnom Penh

Last week the Labour Government vetoed a resolution expelling South Africa from the United Nations. Next on the agenda is a resolution calling for the recognition of the Sihanouk Government in Cambodia, and the expulsion of the puppet Lon Nol regime. There are already indications that Labour will be balling out the reactionaries again.

Here DAVID JOHNSON looks at the situation on the ground, and explains why the liberation forces have so far been unable to win a clear-cut military victory.

In Cambodia there is a stalemate which is a direct result of the politics of 'detente' pursued by both Peking and Moscow.

The last few months have seen an increasingly monotonous pattern: heavy fighting around the capital, Phnom Penh; the Red Khmers capture a few small towns from Lon Nol's army, only to lose a few others. Recently they are reported to have lost the psychologically important city of Angkor Wat, which houses the old temples.

Lon Nol maintains his regime by relying largely on US support in

both the financial and military sense. American planes and 'advisers' have been prominent in recent fighting.

Inside the capital itself, havoc is being wrought by widespread disease, malnutrition, corruption and growing political opposition. Only the last is dealt with — by being viciously crushed.

Lon Nol's conscript army, which contains hundreds of children, is so demoralised that hardly a week goes by without desertions of whole battalions and even mutinies.

The real tragedy is that the liberation forces, the National United

Front of Cambodia (FUNK), have neither the arms nor the resources to dislodge this over-ripe apple from the tree with a well-aimed shaft. And while China has resumed aid in limited quantities, the liberation forces are still too weak to launch a sustained offensive without overstretching themselves.

This weakness is an important factor in the bargaining which takes place between Peking and Washington. No doubt Kissinger's next halt in Peking will see more pressure being applied and inducements offered to compel the FUNK to negotiate with Lon Nol.

However the likely fall of Thieu and the subsequent strengthening of the NLF in Southern Vietnam could act as a tremendous boost for the FUNK, particularly if this enables the NLF and North Vietnam to lend a helping hand.

David Johnson

Italy — Doctor Kissinger takes sick man's pulse

CP PREPARES SPANISH OMELETTE

As the old Spanish dictator Franco continues to cling on to life, the forces of the extreme right are steadily strengthening their positions in the Government.

A recent reshuffle has seen the departure of some well-known 'liberals' and until the senile Generalissimo puts his second foot in the grave, one can expect them to stay out.

RIGHT TURN

Meanwhile the Secretary-General of the underground Spanish Communist Party (PCE), Santiago Carillo, has in recent months made two important decisions.

The first was to send a delegation to Moscow to repair the breach with the Kremlin bureaucrats. Both Carillo and the legendary 'Pasionaria', Dolores Ibaruri, were part of the delegation, and a joint statement was issued pledging eternal friendship, mutual solidarity, belief in peaceful co-existence, etc. The resumption of friendly relations between Carillo and Moscow marks the end of the former's mild flirtation with Peking.

...AND AGAIN

Fresh from the impact of Moscow, and hoping for a post in a government of national unity following the death of Franco, Carillo hastened to assure the Spanish capitalists that he was prepared to collaborate with anyone and especially the 'civilised right-wing'.

The 'democratic junta' he envisages would include, according to himself, 'working class forces, popular forces from all the regions of Spain, and also the right — including the Spanish monarchists'.

To underline the class nature of this alliance, Carillo then went on to stress the need to win over sections of the right such as 'the bankers and the big industrialists'.

As in Italy and Portugal, so in Spain the CP imagines that by moving rightwards it can prevent a victory of reaction and win some time. However moves to the right only disarm the masses against reaction, particularly when the CP cannot explain for what precise purpose they would like to 'gain more time'.

REPRESSION CONTINUES

As the PCE prepares itself for office many of the people it would collaborate with are busy repressing the left organisations, including the LCR-ETA(VI), a Spanish sympathising organisation of the Fourth International. Recent statements by the Spanish Trotskyists have denied allegations in the press claiming that they were involved in bombing actions and plans to free prisoners by

commando-type raids.

The repression being carried out by the Franco dictatorship is designed precisely to demoralise and smash the organisations of the revolutionary left. The revolutionary left in Spain is much larger than in Portugal, and sections of it have led important mass struggles. The aim of the repression is to paralyse them in the period of legality which everyone is expecting in the very near future.

What makes Carillo's reformism all the more bankrupt is the fact that the Spanish working class movement has over the last four years experienced an important revival. Growing militancy has given rise to an impressive series of struggles which have intermingled with openly political actions such as the campaign to defend the Basque militants condemned in the 1970 Burgos trials.

Virtually the entire country has been affected by the struggles over the last few years, and red flags have been out on the streets again for the first time since the Civil War. It is those who have marched behind them who provide us with a glimpse of the socialist future rather than the sordid manoeuvrings which Carillo and his band carry on behind the backs of the Spanish proletariat.



Workers' self-defence seemed rather more sensible than an 'historical compromise' with the right-wing after fascists planted a bomb in a trade union rally in the town of Brescia earlier this year, killing and wounding many workers.

The sickest man of European capital, Italy, is not getting any better. The Italian ruling class now confronts its 36th post war governmental crisis. Beneath this instability there lurks the spectre of Italian fascism.

Not only does Italy have the largest fascist movement in Europe (the MSI), but even more dangerous are the links which already exist between the MSI and important sections of the state apparatus. The MSI and its militants are today acting as the extra-parliamentary outriders of the strong state.

PLOTTERS THICKEN

The recent arrest of General Vito Miceli, who was head of Italy's Secret Service till last July, has brought matters to a head. Miceli has been arrested on charges of 'political conspiracy' relating to an attempted coup d'état in December 1970.

The plot took in a whole

section of Secret Service officers as well as elements in the army and police, and one of its leaders was the fascist Prince Valerio Borghese. A number of those involved were also members of the MSI, and they carried out a series of bombings including that of a Milan bank in 1969, which was then presented as an action by 'left-wing extremists'.

This led to the arrest of a number of revolutionary militants, while the Secret Service deliberately fed the Minister of the Interior, Giulio Andreotti, with false information.

Last Sunday saw warrants being issued against 21 other plotters, who were involved in a plan to seize and hold hostage the President, Giovanni Leone, and carry out selective sabotage throughout the country. The plan also included the assassination of leading CP members and even certain elements in the leadership of the Christian Democratic Party.

It has also emerged that many fascists who were arrested in 1970 while carrying out actions in preparation for the coup were let off by the courts because of the protection they enjoyed from the Secret Service. The details of this were published in the Italian

weekly *L'Espresso* in June of this year.

ENTER KISSINGER

The arrest of General Miceli has undoubtedly created a stir in the upper ranks of the armed services. The *Guardian* of 4 November described the military as being 'shocked and outraged by the arrest'. But it is obvious that far from solving matters the arrest will create more dissension, and there will be many more officers who will now be prepared to discuss how to deal with the politicians.

It is equally obvious that Henry Kissinger is not visiting Rome because he has nothing better to do. The State Department's anxieties in relation to capitalist Europe are well known, and are reflected in the fact that they are even unhappy about the election of a Labour Government in Britain. We can be sure that Kissinger, the bearer of 'goodwill', will insist that under no circumstances should the Christian Democrats accept the Italian Communist Party in the Government.

THE STRONG STATE

The answer of the Italian CP to the growing threat of a strong state in Italy with army and NATO backing, is to offer a 'historic compromise' to the Christian Democrats.

In other words, the CP says to the Italian ruling class: 'We know the crisis is severe, but we dominate the trade-unions and without us you have no hope of a solution. Why not, in that case, let us share power with the Christian Democrats and restore stability in Italy? As for socialism, we know that it is a long way away and we know what happens to those like Allende who try to go too fast.'

It is a tempting proposition for the Italian capitalists, but they also know the risks involved. Apart from the outcry from Kissinger that would greet the inclusion of CP ministers, there is also the problem of the army and NATO — not to mention the rising working class expectations if the CP took office, and the reaction when the CP carried on in the same old way.

The regroupment of the Italian far left which is taking place today could then become a real pole of attraction for sections of the CP's base.

THE ONLY ROAD

The best way of preventing the establishment of a strong state is to prepare and mobilise the masses. The CP could do this quite easily if it wanted to, but its political line is strictly governed by its addiction to parliamentarism and gradualism.

Organising the masses independently of the state is only a serious proposition if you have a strategy for destroying that state. The CP does not, and it will discover that however far to the right it moves it will not be able to restore stability for long.

Joan Stott



CP leader Berlinguer — offers tempting deal to Italian capitalists.

WHAT'S ON

LATE-NIGHT PARTY after the London Red Weekly Rally, organised by Camden IMG. Have a good time and boost the Fund Drive still further! Food, drink, music, raffles, etc. — all at the Bank, Tolmers Square, N.W.1. (near Euston Station) from 11pm, Friday 8 November. Tickets 25p. Transport home provided.

BRENT Working Women's Charter campaign is holding its first conference on Sunday 10 November from 2-6pm at the Trades Council Hall (Apollo Club), 375 Willesden High Road. Speakers from the Charter Campaign, Trades Council, Tenants' Associations; Red Ladder Theatre Group with play on women's oppression; crèche facilities. For further details ring Ingrid Falconer, 278 9526 (day) or Christine Coates, 450 7751 (evening).

'WHICH WAY FOR LABOUR?' — Preston IMG public meeting, Thursday 7 November at 8pm at Waterloo, Friergate, Preston.

INDEPENDENT North (Slington Housing Aid Centre) needs worker with political consciousness for campaigns and/or research and/or case work. Details 01-272 9445. Closing date 1 December.

LONDON RED FORUMS: Every Tuesday at 8pm in the General

Picton pub, Caledonian Road (King's X tube), Tuesday 12 November: 'Repression and Capitalist Society'.

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

'BRITISH LEYLAND — An Economic Report', pamphlet on the background to the present crisis inside BLMC. 10p per copy, send cash with order to: 72 Cambridge Road, King's Heath, Birmingham.

'BLOW FOR BLOW': the film plus speaker Dodie Wepler on the Working Women's Charter campaign — Lewisham IMG public meeting, Tuesday 12 November at 7.15pm (Film 7.45) in Goldsmiths College, Lewisham Way, New Cross.

Celebrate the anniversary of the Russian revolution
Red Weekly Rally
CONWAY HALL
FRIDAY 8th NOVEMBER
Speakers include
Alain Krivine John Ross Tariq Ali

The first issue of *Morice Diboure!* (Struggle for a Socialist Mauritius) a bulletin analysing both the problems confronted by Mauritian socialists at home and by Mauritian workers in Britain has just been published.

The bulletin, which is produced by the 'Groupement Revolutionnaire de l'Ile Maurice' (GRIM), begins to take up the weaknesses of the Mauritian Militant Movement which has up till now dominated the left on the island. Copies are available from: G.R.I.M., c/o 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

In the corridors fantastic clashes take place. All are armed to the teeth. Lifted hands hold revolvers. Hand-grenades hang from belts. But nobody shoots and nobody throws a grenade. For they and their enemy are so mixed together that they cannot drag themselves apart. Never mind: the fate of the palace is already decided.

Workers, sailors, soldiers are pushing up from outside in chains and groups, flinging the junkers from the barricades, bursting through the courts, stumbling into the junkers on the staircase, crowding them back, toppling them over, driving them upstairs. Another wave comes on behind. The square pours into the court. The court pours into the palace and floods up and down stairways and through corridors...The junkers at the last guarded doors are disarmed. The victors burst into the room of the ministers.

So Trotsky, in his *History of the Russian Revolution*, described the scene which took place 57 years ago this week, when the symbol of Russian autocracy and oppression, the Winter Palace, was captured by the Russian peasants and workers, as the socialist October revolution triumphed.

Fifty seven years is a long time, and Russia is a long way away — why is that victory so important to us today in a country very different from the Russia of that age?

The great historical significance of the October revolution, which is still vivid today, was that a section of humanity, in the shape of the Russian workers, consciously took hold of history by the scruff of the neck and put it on a new path.

For millions of years, the human race has been the object of history, victim of the blind forces of nature and the economic law of class societies. Now, for a brief time, men and women took their destinies into their own hands and became the drivers of history, not its helpless passengers.

DEAD WEIGHT

Of course, the dead weight of history came again to rest heavily on the shoulders of the Soviet state, as its isolation from revolutions elsewhere led it to falter and turn from its original ideas and aims. One cannot take control of history and build socialism within the boundaries of one out-dated nation state — especially one as impoverished and underdeveloped as Russia.

However the first faltering steps were taken in revolutionary Russia. And those gains, those

examples, those vital lessons for the workers of the world, have not been lost or surpassed even to this day.

What was Russia like then? Most of the country was agricultural, with an oppressed peasantry starving for land and kept in check by an out-dated nobility. It was a backward, primitive country.

by
Carl Gardner

However in the cities — particularly in Petrograd, Moscow and the coal-rich areas in the south — there were pockets of extremely intensive, highly mechanised industry. These areas had produced a small, but highly organised and class-conscious, working class.

The factories in which they worked were almost totally the product of foreign imperialist investment by France, Great Britain and the USA. As a result, the Russian economy was run almost entirely in the interests of foreign capitalists.

Lastly, and very important, we can draw the first main lesson of the revolution. Trotsky explained this in his famous theory of the 'permanent revolution', and Lenin expounded it in his *April Theses*, written on his return to Russia after the February revolution. Their conclusion was that all the problems which Russia faced (and which underdeveloped countries face today) — peasants without land, lack of democracy or civil rights,



INSPECTING THE BRITISH-TRAINED RUSSIAN TANK CORPS: GENERAL DENIKIN.

The British ruling-class was proud of its intervention against the Russian workers, as pictures from the *Illustrated London News* shows. Denikin was a major White Russian leader, who was eventually defeated by Trotsky's Red Army.



Workers in occupied factory, Russia, 1917.

When the workers took history the seeds of the

foreign domination of the economy — can only be solved within the framework of the struggle for socialism. This struggle must be led by the minority working class, in alliance with the vast masses of the poor peasantry.

In countries dominated by imperialism, there is no possibility of a 'democratic', capitalist stage of development, such as the North American and European powers have experienced.

LIBERALISED

During the February mass upsurge against Tsardom, because of the weakness and unpreparedness of the revolutionaries, middle-class and capitalist parties were thrown to the fore. They believed that Russia could be liberalised and develop its own native capitalist industry, within a stable parliamentary democracy, and that workers should do nothing which might endanger that.

Lenin quickly realised that these capitalist parties were completely incapable of solving the problems of the masses, or breaking with imperialism and the bureaucratic state which defended it. They would only have thrown Russia even more firmly into the jaws of European capital. Only by struggling against all those who defended the private ownership of capital could the workers and peasants effectively tackle their problems.

SOVIETS

During February, soviets were thrown up all over Russia. They were the genuine organs of workers' self-organisation, and constituted an alternative 'dual power', parallel to the power of the capitalist state, and increasingly able to take over its functions. Such bodies had first arisen during the 1905 revolution, and the workers were able to call on that valuable experience.

The bourgeois liberal parties, and the Provisional Government led by Kerensky, feared these bodies and wanted a Constituent Assembly (Parliament) to be the only seat of power. But the workers realised that only the soviets could decide the outcome of events, not idle parliamentary chatter.

At first the Bolsheviks were in a minority in the soviets. But by promoting the most intense debate inside the soviets, about the actions, slogans and

policies needed to solve the urgent, practical needs of the masses, they won a majority within six months.

The main conclusion which Lenin and the Bolsheviks had drawn from 1905 and the early months of 1917 was the need for the soviets to become real organs of workers power, independent of the bourgeoisie and its state. The Bolshevik slogan 'All power to the Soviets' meant precisely that.

As for the armed forces, carrying on where they left off in 1905, the Bolsheviks waged ceaseless agitation inside the ranks, urging them to join the side of the working class. They also advanced demands concerning democratic rights inside the army.

DEMORALISED

Their task was made much easier by the fact that Russia was up to its neck in a stinking, barbaric war which had totally demoralised the troops. The soldiers were of peasant origin, and wanted nothing more than to return home to a small plot of land. The Bolsheviks, through the soviets, convinced these soldiers that they could achieve their hopes through uniting with the working class. At the same time, the soviets represented an alternative power that could defend the soldiers from the threats of the bourgeois state.

It was largely the successful work that the Bolsheviks did in the army, plus the fact that they promoted the arming and self-defence of the working class through the soviets, which resulted in the success of the October revolution — with a minimum of bloodshed.

'BREAD, PEACE, LAND'

The deceptively simple slogan 'Bread, Peace and Land' summed up the immediate, effective programme of the revolution. For these demands could not be solved, other than by the total overthrow of capitalism, and the establishment of a workers' state. Capitalism in Russia could not offer bread to the hungry, peace to the soldiers or land to the peasants. It was as simple as that.

Within the soviets, even before October, steps were being taken to reorganise production and



Kerensky: '...completely incapable of solving the problems of the masses or breaking with imperialism.'

'HANDS'

The Western imperialist powers responded to the October revolution by doing everything in their power to strangle the infant Soviet republic. Its very existence was an incitement to the workers of every country to strike a similar blow against the ruling class.

Starting in May of 1918, these former allies of the Tsarist dictatorship began to mount a massive military intervention against the revolution.

Britain was among the first to step in, seizing the Northern port of Murmansk in June 1918. At the height of the foreign intervention, no less than 14 capitalist powers had armies on Russian territory.

The first move by the British

Workers

by uff neck

work out new political and economic policies in order to meet the needs of the masses. In the cities, factories were requisitioned, transport re-allocated and food distribution strictly regulated. In the countryside, peasant soviets occupied and divided up the land without waiting for any official edict. As the workers themselves became involved in the planning and reorganisation of society, they realised that they would have to go all the way — that there was a direct link between solving the immediate problems of their own poverty and the building of a future society, planned and organised by the workers, for the workers.

MAXIMUM ENERGY

It is true that the Russian revolution has degenerated, and that democracy and workers' organisation of the economy have been lost. Nevertheless the lessons remain, the example shines out. That was a time when the maximum energy, creativity and democracy of the working class, consciously striving for a socialist goal, changed the face of history and placed the possibility of socialist revolution on the agenda on a world scale. By learning those lessons, we can make that possibility a reality once again.

'HANDS OFF RUSSIA!'

working class to put an end to this state of affairs took place at the beginning of 1919, when a 'Hands Off Russia' committee was formed in London shop stewards. Similar committees sprung up across the country and in September a national committee was set up under the sponsorship of a number of leading trade unionists. The 'Hands off Russia' committees campaigned steadfastly for industrial action to end the intervention. In April 1919, at a special joint Labour Party-TUC conference on foreign affairs, the Yorkshire miners successfully moved a resolution which called for an end to military intervention in Russia.

It was repeated at June's Labour Party conference, when a Triple Alliance-sponsored resolution calling

The first Russian revolution, which overthrew the Tsarist dictatorship in March 1917, had an electric effect on British workers. As Aneurin Bevan recalled 35 years later: 'I remember the miners, when they heard that the Tsarist Tyranny had been overthrown, rushing to meet each other in the streets with tears streaming down their cheeks, shaking hands and saying: "At last it has happened!"'

Almost as soon as news of the revolution was received, mass meetings took place to greet it, including one of

sands of miners, engineers, transport workers, railwaymen, and the rest are represented here through their trade union lodges. We want these men to go back to their constituents and convince them to use the power that lies in their hands to give or withhold their labour in the place where wealth is produced.

'Parliament will do nothing for you... If you are really sincere in sending greetings to Russia, I say to you: "Go thou and do likewise!"'

Despite Williams' stirring words, the Provisional Committee elected by the Convention had no agreed idea as to what part the Councils would play in

'AT LAST IT'S HAPPENED'

12,000 in London's Albert Hall. Out of these meetings grew the most important gathering to be directly inspired by the revolution — the great Leeds Convention, called by the United Socialist Council (a joint body of the main socialist organisations).

A total of 1,150 delegates gathered in Leeds on 3 June 1917.

The most important decision came with the almost unanimous adoption of the fourth resolution, calling for the establishment in 'every town, urban and rural district of Councils of Workmen and Soldiers' delegates', to implement the Convention's policy.

If this decision had really been carried into effect, and there had been a clear understanding among the delegates as to what Soviets really were, Britain might be a very different sort of place today. For the following months saw the class struggle across Europe reach its height, as the workers' and soldiers' councils in Russia became the foundation of the world's first socialist Government, and the end of the war touched off a massive wave in every European country — including Britain — of working class militancy.

But the Leeds Convention had been an uneasy alliance of revolutionaries, sincere working class militants, and dyed-in-the-wool reformists.

Among the few who fully understood the resolution, was the revolutionary transport workers' leader, Robert Williams. As he told the delegates:

'The resolution, if it means anything at all, means...the dictatorship of the proletariat. Today hundreds and thou-

the workers' movement. Before the year was out the reformists gained the upper hand and forced a resolution through the Committee limiting the councils' role to 'propaganda'.

This guaranteed that they could not play a leading part in the big workers struggles, and prevented the emergence of an organised workers' power out of these struggles.

This Britain's 'soviets' were still-born, betrayed by those reformist mis-leaders who were to wreak havoc in the workers' movement for the next 20 years, and whose spiritual offspring still plague us today.

HOW THE SOVIETS WORKED

John Reed's eye-witness report

There is today in Moscow and throughout all the cities and towns of the Russian land a highly complex political structure, which is upheld by the vast majority of the people and which is functioning as well as any newborn popular government ever functioned...

The Soviet state is based upon the Soviets — or Councils — of Workers and Peasants' Soviets.... [which are] based directly upon the workers in the factories and the peasants in the fields...

The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which was in operation when I was in Russia, may serve as an example...

It consisted of about 1200 deputies, and in normal circumstances held a plenary session every two weeks. In the meantime, it elected a Central Executive Committee of 110 members, based upon party proportionality...

Elections of delegates are based on proportional representation, which means that the political parties are represented in exact proportion to the number of voters in the whole city! And it is political parties and programmes which are voted for — not candidates... Also, the delegates are not elected for any particular term, but are subject to recall at any time.

No political body more sensitive and responsive to the popular will was ever invented. And this was necessary, for in time of revolution, the popular will changes with great rapidity. For example, during the first week of December, 1917, there were parades and demonstrations in favour of the Constituent Assembly — that is to say, against the Soviet power. One of these parades was fired on by some irresponsible Red Guards, and several people killed.

The reaction to this stupid violence was immediate. Within twelve hours the complexion of the Petrograd Soviet changed. More than a dozen Bolshevik deputies were withdrawn, and replaced by Mensheviks. And it was three weeks before public sentiment subsided — before the Mensheviks were one by one retired and the Bolsheviks sent back.

At least twice a year delegates are elected from all over Russia to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

This body, consisting of about two thousand delegates, meets in the capital in the form of a great soviet, and settles upon the essentials of national policy. It elects a Central Executive Committee... which invites delegates from the central committees of all democratic organisations...

It consists of about three hundred and fifty persons. Between All-Russian Congresses, it is in supreme authority, but it must not act outside the lines laid down by the last Congress, and is strictly responsible

RECOMMENDED READING:

History of the Russian Revolution — Leon Trotsky (£1.50p)
Ten Days that Shook the World — John Reed (45p)
The Russian Revolution — Max Eastman (£1.25p)
Year One of the Russian Revolution — Victor Serge (£3.95p)
Lessons of October — Trotsky (60p)
History of the Bolshevik Party — Grigori Zinoviev (£1.50p)
British Labour & the Russian Revolution (Leeds Convention, 1917)

Available from RED BOOKS, 97, Caledonian Road, London N1

'HANDS OFF' ROUND TWO

In 1920 the capitalist powers made another attempt to crush Soviet Russia, this time by inciting Poland to invade.

But British workers were no more prepared to accept this than they were direct military intervention. In the vanguard were London's dockers, who had been thoroughly educated by the 'Hands off Russia' Committee's propaganda.

The dockers realised that military supplies were being sent to Poland from the port of London, and resolved to put a stop to it. On 10 May, London dockers refused to load a ship, the *Jolly George*, with munitions for Poland. A week later, the Dockers' Union conference voted to black all munitions destined for use against Russia.

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POLISH OFFENSIVE

In late July and early August, the Polish offensive was broken by the Red Army and the Poles driven back to the very gates of Warsaw. The British Government began to prepare for a showdown.

But the workers' movement was already preparing its reply. Huge demonstrations took place in every city over the weekend of 8 and 9 August — on the Monday the TUC Parliamentary Committee (forerunner of today's General Council), the Labour Party Executive and the Parliamentary Labour Party held a joint meeting.

They declared that 'the whole industrial power of the organised workers will be used to defeat this war', established a national Council of Action to this end, and convened a representative labour movement conference for 13 August.

The National Labour Conference, when it met, gave the Council of Action authority 'to call for any and

every form of withdrawal of labour which circumstances may require' and called for the establishment of local Councils of Action in every area. The working class responded by setting up some 350 Councils of Action in the following days.

Faced with such determined opposition the Government could not continue with its schemes, and rapidly retreated from its more warlike positions.

International class solidarity had won the day, and once more the working class had triumphed through 'direct action'.



British military intervention: troops marching through Vladivostok, 1919.

Throughout May, the 'Hands off Russia' Committee continued to push for a campaign of industrial action. As they said: 'Mere pious resolutions won't force the hand of the Government, but resolutions backed by industrial action will.'

At the end of May the Triple Alliance called for a special TUC to deal with both the Polish war and British military operations in Ireland, which were then at their height. Three weeks later the Miners' Executive called on 'the organised workers to refuse to manufacture or transport munitions of war for Ireland or Poland'.

in all its acts to the next Congress...

Also the workers of Russia have fashioned their necessities and the demands of life an economic organisation which is evolving into a true industrial democracy...

Along about the first part of June began the more or less conscious campaign of the entire bourgeoisie to halt the revolution, and break down the democratic organisations...

The army was disorganised, supplies and munitions and food diverted from it, and actual positions betrayed to the Germans — like Riga; in the country the peasants were persuaded to hoard their grain, and provoked to disorders, which gave them an excuse to the Cossacks to 'restore peace'; and in industry, more important than all, the machinery and operation of the factories themselves were sabotaged, transportation was still further wrecked, and the coal mines, metal mines and sources of raw materials damaged as much as possible...

This the workers were forced to resist. The Factory Shop Committee sprang up and took charge...

The owners attempted to falsify the books, to conceal orders; the Factory Shop Committee was forced to find out ways to control the books. The owners tried to strip the works — so the committee had to rule that nothing should go in or out of the plant without permission.

When the factory was going to close down for lack of fuel, raw material, or orders, the Factory Shop Committee had to send men half across Russia to the mines, or down into the Caucasus for oil, to Crimea for cotton; and agents had to be sent out by the workers to sell the product.

So it was that all over Russia the workers were getting the necessary education in the fundamentals of industrial production, and even distribution, so that when the November Revolution came they could take their places in the machinery of workers' control.

It was in June, 1917, that the first meeting of delegates from the shop committees was held... In the political world the Bolsheviks were reiterating that no socialist had any right to participate in a coalition government with the bourgeoisie.

The meeting of shop committee delegates put itself on record as taking the same attitude toward industry. In other words, the employing class and the workers have no interests in common; no class-conscious worker can be a member of an arbitration or conciliation board except to acquaint the employers with the demands of the workers. Industrial production must be absolutely controlled by the workers.

MINERS DIG AWAY AT SOCIAL CONTRACT



Cracks in

The British educational system is an unholy mess. Schools are short of teachers, buildings are falling down, local authorities are going bankrupt. People are asking 'what is happening in education?'

Like all other sectors, education is being hit by inflation. Education estimates for this year allowed for a 7.5 per cent rate of inflation. In fact it has soared beyond 17 per cent.

A report to the Inner London Education Authority's development sub-committee reveals that costs approved for new buildings in June this year have since gone up another 10 per cent. A flat-roofed classroom estimated at £26,000 in June was costing £29,000 by August.

The Labour Government and its Education Minister, Roy Prentice, have refused to restore the cuts. Apart from a grant of £31 million to replace buildings which have nearly fallen down, Labour has stuck in the knife.

FORECAST
In August there was a 40 per cent cut in teacher training places in Inner London alone. The 1972 White Paper forecast that this year there would be 750,000 places in Higher Education - this has now been chopped to 600,000. By 1981 the Department of Education and Science plans to reduce its teaching force from 510,000 to 488,000.

BORROW
It is not just building costs which are rocketing. In order to carry out any building programme, the local authorities have to borrow money - often in competition with commercial concerns - at extravagant rates of interest. For every £1,000 borrowed, they have to pay at least £100 yearly interest.

After teachers' pay, debt charges are the largest single item on a local authority's budget, and they have gone up by a staggering 50 per cent since 1972-73.

Dr Eric Briault, education officer of the Inner London Education Authority, talks about a 'hard financial climate'. What he really means is that the Authority is heading for the brokers.

Briault admits that London's education system needs £105 million added on to its present budget, just to keep up with inflation and meet any pay increases that might come out of the Houghton Inquiry.

The much vaunted nursery school programme has also been hard hit. In the coming year London planned to provide 2000 places. Now that figure has been halved.

Another way the local authorities try to save money is by feeding the school children on 'kosp' which is a fibre yarn flavoured to taste like meat. This will make a lot of money for Courtaulds, who concocted the monstrosity, but its nutritious value is rather doubtful.

The cuts in education are not simply restricted to school children and teachers. Even 'off-building' which is financed by the sale of unused schools - is facing cuts.

Straight from the horse's mouth!

The Government's policy is to "divide and rule"—to divide the NUM politically over the productivity issue and to divide it industrially by concentrating a considerable amount of a miners' wage packet, and therefore his potential militancy in the pits and individual coalfields. In this way the national solidarity of the NUM would be broken and the chance of it once again being able to challenge and defeat a Government would be considerably reduced.

Now the risk is that the row over the productivity issue could, by provoking an early basic pay claim, cause the type of national confrontation between the miners and the Government which Labour's Ministers have been anxious to avoid ever since the last miners' strike led them back into power at the expense of the Conservatives last February.

Financial Times,
Monday 4th November



The 14 to 12 vote of the National Union of Mineworkers' executive to recommend non-acceptance of the Coal Board's productivity deal has created consternation in the ruling class and amongst the Labour right wing.

The NCB chief negotiator Mr N. Siddall said he was 'bloody staggered'. Derek Ezra, chairman of the NCB, talked about the two sides - miners and management - 'heading for another clash on wages'.

After Gormley's references to Communist Party influence and the comments of Len Clarke, right-wing president of the Nottinghamshire miners, that 'the Communists and the Marxists have no intention of having an agreement' the press gleefully jumped on the red-baiting bandwagon.

REJECTING

The *Sunday Times* in a long editorial hoped that the miners would 'have little difficulty in rejecting the advice of their executive and accepting the Board's proposals'. The *Financial Times* bluntly admits that: 'The Government's policy is to divide and rule' and rejection of the deal would 'maintain the national cohesion and strength which the miners have built up...'

Ben Ford, Labour MP for Bradford North speaking for Labour's right wing, denounced Arthur Scargill, the Yorkshire miners' leader. He said his 'industrial actions are dictated by his political beliefs.' Ford in his witchhunting diatribe, ignores the fact that Scargill has the unanimous support of the recently held Yorkshire Miners' Council.

Scargill has correctly denounced the social contract. 'Living in a capitalist society one has to appr-

In 1972 and again in 1974 the miners, by the use of their united strength, showed the rest of the working class how to deal with wage freeze policies.

Once again the miners are in the forefront of the struggle. A powerful thrust from the miners can blow the social contract sky high. It will show to all the other sections of the working class that the only effective way to defend living standards is by the use of their own strength, not by reliance on Labour's class collaborationist policies.

AT STAKE

Varley, the Labour Minister of Energy, will try to blackmail the miners by threatening that the £20 million being allocated for

contract is not simply a struggle for higher wages; it also involves providing a socialist alternative to the capitalist solutions put forward by the Labour leaders.

WORKERS' PLAN

The left wing in the NUM must raise the issue of a workers' plan for all sections of the energy industry. They should be calling for a meeting of the unions in all the various sectors of that industry so that such a plan can be worked out. An inquiry should be instituted by the trade unions into the needs of the industry.

The unions must demand the nationalisation of all privately owned sectors of the energy industry and that the accounts of every sector be opened up to the inspection of the workers.

The NUM left wing have begun a serious fight against the social contract, but to win that fight they must go beyond the confines of wages and fight Labour's pro-capitalist plans at every level.

The right, in alliance with the capitalist press and the Coal Board are waging a mighty campaign to force the deal down the throats of the miners. They know what is at stake. To achieve their ends they will pull every trick in the book. The NUM left will be hounded and attacked. The deal will be lied about and tarted up to try and sell it to the labour force.

The left must launch a counter-offensive by going into the right-wing dominated coalfields and challenging the 'moderates' head on, and winning their members to a fighting policy.

Other trade unionists must give Wilson and Ezra a sharp warning by telling them that in the event of another miners' strike the full resources of the working class will be mobilised to make sure it succeeds.

Bob Pennington



A full delegation of Yorkshire miners were down last week to urge the executive to reject the productivity deal.

eciate that you don't get better wages and conditions by being patriotic'. Scargill and the other militants are absolutely correct to use industrial action to fight Labour's social contract. The political aim of the social contract is to tie the working class to the bankrupt, inflation-wrecked economy of British capitalism. If that happens then working class living standards will be driven down by the employers and state.

research into the coal industry will be withheld unless the miners play ball and accept the deal.

Varley knows that this is the weak flank of the left on the NUM executive. Miners are worried about the future of the coal industry. The working class is concerned about the energy crisis. Even if there is no miners' strike this winter there is still a strong possibility of electricity cuts.

The fight against the the social



The most devastating single blow to the education system was the Tory Government's cuts in education expenditure made in December 1973, which totalled a cool £182 million. The cuts read like a World War One casualty list.

- London: 31 primary schools abandoned.
- Avon: 215 teaching posts left unfilled.
- Buckinghamshire: nursery programme cut from £241,500 to £50,000.
- Durham: school replacement programme cancelled.
- East Sussex: fees in Colleges of Further Education to go up 25 per cent.
- Hampshire: entire nursery programme postponed.
- Lancs and Isle of Wight: extension of Xmas holidays to save money on light, fuel etc.
- Leicester: £1 million off repairs and maintenance.
- Oxfordshire: £159,000 off books, stationery, etc.

As the entire building programme has fallen apart this means those 120,000 building workers now unemployed have little chance of getting jobs.

The old decrepit schools will now have to be kept in use. Three hundred of Inner London's 870 primary schools were built before 1930, but there is little or no chance of them being replaced. Children need new schools. Building workers need jobs. But school building is cut and both suffer.

Women will be really hard hit by the cuts. As inflation erodes family incomes, more and more wives are forced to try to get jobs. The drastic reductions in the nursery school programme mean that for many of these women this becomes an impossibility. They will be forced to pay through the nose for private nursery facilities - if they can find any - or seek jobs where they can work in

the classroom wall

Fight the cuts

The turmoil and crisis in the education system revealed in Bernard Regan's article flows from the crisis of British capitalism. There is no simple solution to that crisis—certainly there is no solution which teachers alone can provide.

However the struggles now being waged by teachers can open the way for building a wider movement within the working class, to fight not simply in defence of present educational standards but towards a socialist educational system.

It is the working class which pays for the broken down educational system, and under the social contract they will be expected to soft peddle on wage claims allegedly to finance Labour's social programme.

When teachers fight the cuts, they need the support of the organised workers' movement. They are waging that fight not simply in their own interests but on behalf of the entire working class.

When local authorities claim that there is no money to repair, improve, or build new schools, the trade union movement must insist that the local Council impose an 'educational levy' on all capitalist firms in the area to provide that money.

The crippling interest rates prevent local authorities maintaining, never mind improving the education system. No interest should be paid on outstanding debts and all repayments ceased so that the educational needs of the working class can be met in full.

Unless teachers are paid a wage that enables them to combat inflation, then there will be a steady drain away from the schools. The already inadequate educational standards will drop even further. This is why

the trade union movement must fight alongside teachers for improved wages and for the smashing of the social contract.

There is an appalling shortage of schools; others are in the process of falling down, while others could last for many years with proper repair work. The Labour Government claims that there is insufficient money to carry out the necessary work. At the same time it is planning to dole out thousands of millions of pounds to subsidise gangs of bankrupt capitalists.

It is a ludicrous situation. Teachers, in alliance with other workers in the public sector, should campaign for a programme of re-building and for the nationalisation of the building industry, so that the resources of that industry could be turned towards re-building in education, health and public housing.

During the nurses' pay dispute significant sections of the working class took solidarity action on behalf of the nurses. That action undoubtedly screwed more out of the Labour Government and the Halsey Inquiry than they originally intended to give.

On many university campuses students are now waging a bitter and determined struggle against the cut-backs. Correctly they have said that they are not prepared to accept the burden of the capitalist crisis. In some universities the students have made contact with groups of local workers, to show how their fight is connected with the overall interests of the working class.

These practical examples show the way forward for the teachers. The widest possible alliance must be built in the public sector and in the broad trade union movement against all cuts in social expenditure.

the evenings or do low-paid work at home.

In the education system, women will be the first to get sacked to pay for the cutbacks. Women workers who do all the drudge jobs in the kitchens and do the low-paid jobs in clerical administration will be the first to get sacked. Berkshire and Leeds are already laying off ancillary staff and clerical assistants.

The private sector, however does not need to feel too worried. When Tory Minister Barber introduced his £182 million cutback he did not touch one penny of the

Even the 'progressives' call for nothing more than a policy which attempts to halt the present decline.

The Norfolk local authority say they will be short of 15,000 places by 1978. They claim they need £2 million just to put roofs over the heads of the pupils who will be at school.

Children will be housed more and more in rickety old buildings—some constructed in the 19th century—while others will be housed in the 'temporary' so-called 'mobile classrooms' which are becoming a permanent feature of the school landscape.

In Sheffield 100 teachers are expected to resign this year — and no replacements are likely to be taken on. But is the local authority worried? Not on your life. They are hailing it as a nifty way to save £80,000.

Only another £220,000 to go, they are gleefully shouting. Reports of a local authority murder squad being set up to eliminate a further 300 teachers have been hotly denied. 'We have no such plans at present', said an official spokesman.

public money which pays for the education of the children of the rich. Direct grant schools now get an increase of 11 per cent on top of their central government grant. Naturally Mr Prentice has kept up this policy of looking after the over-pampered children of the capitalist class.

Like the National Health Service, the education system is paid for out of the pockets of the working class. The Poulsons look to the public sector as a lucrative means of making a 'quick killing'. The rapacious building firms gerry-build schools without any thought of safety. In the last few months at least 800 schools have had to be inspected because builders used cheap quick-setting concrete instead of proper materials. At Sir John Cass School in East London the roof fell in five minutes after the teacher got the pupils out of the swimming pool! A further 200 school roofs have been found to need immediate attention. At a conservative estimate, it would take £100 million just to make the present schools safe.

Governments—whether Tory or Labour—have not been concerned with improving education. All they argue about is the size of the cuts.

Little wonder that this crisis has had such serious effects on the workforce. Less people are applying to train as teachers—recent applications are down by 12 per cent. In some areas the fall in applicants is even more serious. The Council for Educational Advance has reported that there are 25 per cent fewer applications from science graduates to train as teachers, and 32 per cent fewer chemistry graduates have applied this

Schoolkids in Coventry, it seems, have been asked to bring their own paper to school. Supplies of this precious commodity are beyond the means of the impoverished Coventry schools, and it is possible that existing stocks may run out altogether by Easter of next year.

Well, there's always the bog walls. And kids in one Barnsley school are just a short step away from that — their head has them doing their exercises on the school's toilet paper.

Who said capitalism was a 'paper tiger'?

year. Some schools science subjects are being removed from the timetable. In one East London school, maths is now optional for the 14-plus age range.

A survey of 104 local authorities in England and Wales shows that 61 of them have teacher shortages in specific subject categories; 46 in maths and 40 in technical and craft subjects.

COMPETE

Many of the worst teacher shortages are in fields which directly compete with industry. Industrial



concerns often offer better paid posts to science graduates—posts which they find it difficult to refuse in a situation of soaring living costs. The 'incomes policies' of both governments have had a dramatic effect on teachers' and other public sector employees' living standards.

The value of a teacher's starting salary has dropped by 15 per cent since the beginning of the year. Teachers need a £300 increase just to get

back the living standard they enjoyed in 1968.

The effects of poor pay are devastating. Teachers, particularly in the city centres, are constantly changing schools to get promotion. The teacher turnover in the London Borough of Brent is now 30 per cent, while in Ealing, Haringey and Harrow it averages 25 per cent.

At every level the capitalist crisis is tearing apart the educational system.

BERNARD REGAN

Public sector workers hold the key

The crisis in education and the other social services needs a response by the whole of the working class, because it is the whole of the working class who are being affected, and only the use of their power can deal with this crisis.

But the workers who are most directly involved — teachers and hospital workers for example — have an especially important role to play. By fighting back to improve their pay and conditions and by showing to the rest of the working class how the cuts in social expenditure affect everyone, public sector workers can lead the way for the whole movement.

The struggles in these sectors are a harbinger of what many groups of workers will face in the near future — low pay, cuts in living standards, deterioration in working conditions, redundancies, etc. The problems which these struggles pose for socialists is how these workers can develop a united offensive to the attacks of the employers and the state.

DELEGATES

In London and Scotland teachers have organised in Action Committees to fight for increased wages. The Action Committees have been composed of delegates elected by each school and directly accountable to their schools.

During the strikes in June and July, the London Teachers Action Committee mobilised over 1,000 teachers and won the majority of teachers to its side. It was able to turn the tables on the executive because it took as its starting point the democratic organisation of the struggle and the involvement of the mass of teachers.

It had such an impact that teachers initially hostile to it were won over to acknowledging the leading role it played in that fight. They did so not simply because of its size, but because they saw it was a body they could directly affect and participate in.

Both the Scottish and London Action Committees have a potential to take on tasks far greater than just organising strikes. George Kerevan, a Scottish teacher, in an interview with *Red Weekly* outlined the way in which action committees could monitor the education system. He explained:

'Teachers in the class rooms of every school could oversee the working of the education system on a day-to-day basis. The action committees could use this information to win to their side other trade unionists and parents to build a united campaign.'

The pattern in all cases is one of piecemeal attacks on the education system. The Action Committees clearly could begin to draw up a full picture of the consequences and effects of the cuts to show trade unionists the real depth of the crisis.

The crisis in the education system directly affects many other groups of workers. This means they too should be involved in joint action

committees.

In Leeds members of the IMG are attempting to set up a conference of teachers, trade unionists and students in order to examine the cuts and work out a plan of action which can unite all of these groups to fight back.

Already there are signs that the fight back is on the way. In July there was a half-day strike of teachers in Leeds which forced the local authority to hold back its plans to decimate the building programme. Some new building is going ahead — but six schools have had to be closed because of faulty construction. The local authority has had to pay out extra cash to transport children from one school to another and it will have to fork out money to replace these dangerous buildings.

Students from Park Lane Further Education College showed the kind of response necessary when they occupied the Leeds Education Authority offices and forced the authority to pay grants they had threatened to cut.

SPREADING

The Leeds local authority, alarmed at the prospect of a counter-attack, are aiming to move the cuts away from education on to the other sectors. They are threatening house improvement grants, council house maintenance, youth clubs, nurseries and other less 'obvious' areas. They hope that spreading the effects of the cuts, particularly among weakly organised workers, will minimise the possibilities of a fight back.

The first task must be to organise a public sector alliance of employees affected by these cutbacks. This must be the first stage to winning support among wider sections of the trade union movement to launch a campaign in the whole of the working class against cuts in the social services.

In London the first redundancies could fall on the weakly organised ancillary staff. The action committees, using their organised strength, could lead the fight in defence of technicians, cooks, school helpers, etc who face this threat. They could also lead a fight to increase the number of nursery places available.

The action committees in Scotland are beginning to look beyond the fight for a £15 flat rate increase. They are discussing how they can continue and extend the fight to improve the Scottish education system. The action committees can begin to lay the basis for a full workers' enquiry which will organise the whole labour movement against the cutbacks in educational spending.

The attacks on education, however, are only part of the offensive against working class living standards. The next steps must be to link up the workers in health, local government, housing and education to develop a united response.

Hilda Kean

Reviews....



TV viewers cop it

It is a reflection of the social crisis in the advanced capitalist countries that the television channels are becoming increasingly obsessed with 'law and order'. Of late the small screen has been virtually flooded with series glorifying policemen and private investigators.

British police, Dutch CID and American private dicks have become the staple diet on which the masses are fed at least four days a week. And there is also *Police 5*, where viewers are encouraged to help trace criminals (how long before political 'criminals' are added to the list?).

As television began to revolutionise the field of mass communications the ruling class immediately perceived its importance in shaping consciousness. Bourgeois ideology (the ideas and institutions used by the capitalist class to maintain its control over society) had a field day.

It is particularly in the sphere of publicising and glorifying the police force that the approach can be seen in its crudest and most blatant form. The policeman has become the modern hero of the TV channels.

FROM DIXON...

The moralising, holier-than-thou Sgt. Dixon of *Dock Green* has disappeared. This completely unreal character (an adult version of the Mr Plod of Enid Blyton's books) became a cause of general merriment, and the satirists finally drove him off the screen.

Z Cars was the direct opposite of *Dixon of Dock Green*: we were now given coppers who lived in the real world, went through ordinary emotions, but uncovered the villains at the same time. Dixon had given way to Barlow, Watts, Lynch and Fancy Smith. The moral of the *Z Car* copper was that in a nasty world a cop couldn't be nice all the time.

The success of *Z Cars* and its offspring such as *Softly, Softly* are symbolised by the fact that their characters became overnight celebrities. They performed opening ceremonies to open new supermarkets and theatres, and were invited to school prize-givings.

Thus even in their real lives they were meant to reflect their television characters. Of course even in the world of make believe, rank and hierarchy count most: it is not the police constable who is the celebrity but the Chief Superintendent!

... TO KOJAK

Even more insidious is the private army approach of most of the American equivalents: Cannon and Banacek are private investigators; Ironside is both private and public; while Sergeant Columbo and Lieutenant Kojak are both 'honest cops' in a sea of corruption.

Could it be that such American programmes are shown to frighten the viewers into accepting anything the British police does or else...?

What is the function of these programmes? Elwyn Jones - who wrote most of the scripts - is perfectly honest. His aim is 'to preserve law and order'. Since those who do this are essentially the police, they have to be built up into demi-gods and heroes. The repressive apparatus of the capitalist state has to be made totally acceptable to the masses.

It is not an accident that the police

employ a number of special PR advisers whose main task is to establish a liaison with the scriptwriters and producers of these programmes and offer them all available 'assistance'. Any script which is not totally adulatory and attempts to take reality into account is carefully vetted and, if the police so desire, suitably modified.

Increasingly the policemen complain about the 'restraints' and 'limits' under which they have to operate while the 'villains' are their own masters. Numerous programmes have painted in glowing colours the special 'instincts' of individual policemen who drag suspects in on nothing more than an instinctive suspicion, and are then rewarded by discovering that they are guilty of some crime or other or can be made to confess that they are. The brave copper has uncovered a potential hijacker, bomber or murderer. The public can sleep that night in peace.

This continuous cover-up job for the police is never criticised in the capitalist press, which operates under real constraints and limits! A recent TV review programme, *In Vision*, saw William Hardcastle (the cold warrior from the *World at One*) chairing a discussion on the TV copper, but naturally all that the guests present did was to indulge in an orgy of self-congratulations. No representative of the groups which regularly suffer at the hands of the police was present.

HARASSMENT

Not a single programme has shown the harassment suffered by blacks and

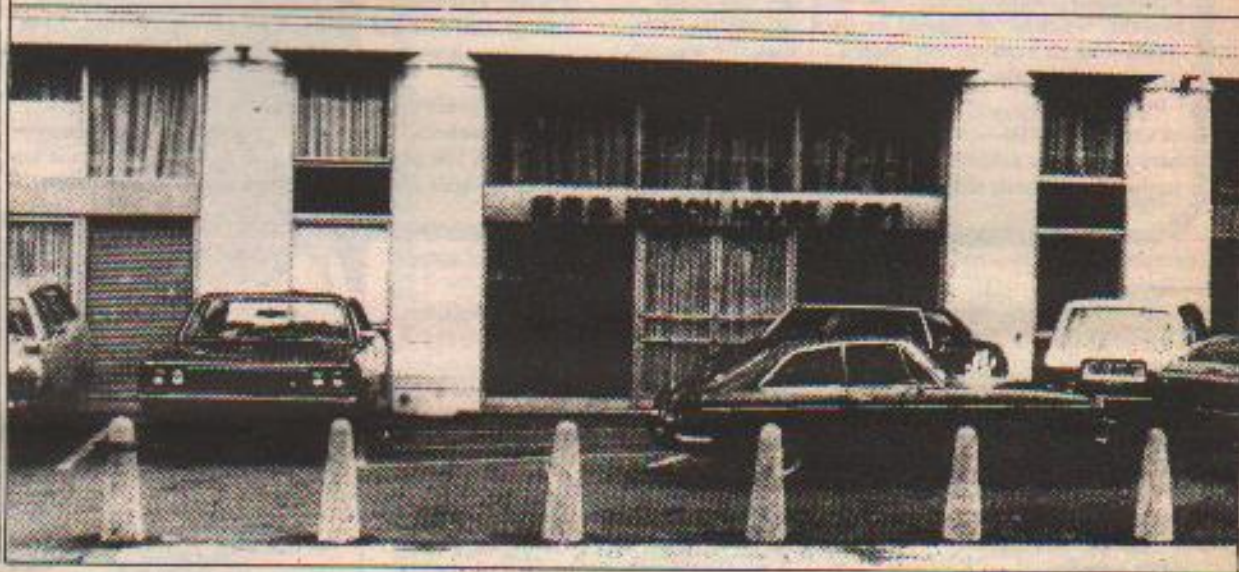
Irish people in Britain. Surely PC (now Sergeant) Pulley who 'instinctively' arrested scores of blacks in Notting Hill deserved the odd mention, as did the cop who hounded the Nigerian David Oluwale to his death a few years ago in Leeds?

These programmes do not show any of this as they do not show the strikers on picket-lines who are 'moved aside' by the police or arrested to allow seabs into factories. No, these themes are avoided like the plague, as are the growing instances of police corruption and links with the vice gangsters.

Why don't the programmes ever mention a survey (kept out of the press) circulated privately about five years ago which revealed that of all criminals arrested the largest single grouping amongst them was ex-coppers.

Reality never finds a place on the small screen. The TV coppers continue to live in their dream world and we are expected to believe that that is how things really are. Fortunately fewer and fewer people do. C. Howard

The 'European Research Office' of the US Army in London's Marylebone Road. Much of the US Department of Defence's sponsored research in British universities - currently 65 agreements worth \$662,000 - is arranged and monitored from here.



LETTERS

Red Weekly and the Charter

I would like to make three points about *Red Weekly* and the Working Women's Charter (WWC) campaign.

1. I was surprised to see the SEI sell-out featured in *Red Weekly* 73 at the expense of any but a passing comment on the successful Wingrove & Roger's strike. I recognise that the exemplary form of action by the SEI women and the support the WWC was able to mount are very important to publicise, but that the Wingrove & Roger's women won because the men came out too was also important.

The point I'm making is that *Red Weekly* - often lapses into the quite right but comparatively easy job of slugging off the bureaucracy - at the expense of expounding what seems to me the most distinctive and attractive feature of the IMG, i.e. to generalise key successful actions and ways of organisation, which are winning struggles now and will be essential if the working class is to win the huge struggles to come.

I feel sure that the misunderstandings of and hostility to the IMG that whistle from every corner, often based on a view of what the IMG was, would be tempered were the line in the European Perspectives Document (*International*, Vol. 11, no. 4) more clearly spelled out in the context of actual struggles. (Which is not to say I'm shouting

'Join IMG'. Quite the opposite.)

2. At a time of crucial importance for the Charter campaign, when in several cities there are already crises in Charter groups and doubts whether the Charter is any use at all, *Red Weekly* must try to change its coverage on the Charter. I'd like to bring your attention to action around the recent sexist Wills strike in Bristol, which resulted in 4,000 women being laid off. The Charter group leafleted the factory; because two Wills stewards were involved in the Charter, three other women came to a WWC meeting. It was decided to call a meeting of Wills women laid off. Well over 150 came and the Charter (especially nurseries) was discussed, among other things. But the dispute had been settled and Wills was back to work next day, so it wasn't possible to coordinate any further action.

Nothing much, but an important example (a) that it's feasible for a WWC group to orient to a factory struggle; (b) that the connection between work and home was made; and that one way to overcome the problem of reaching women at home is to raise the Charter with the more accessible women, i.e. trade unionists. They are also women at home, they know other women in the area; and often women from a factory will live in the same area.

Study war no more

This new CND pamphlet is an exposure of military involvement in British universities and colleges. It summarises the extent and nature of this involvement, provides a list of specific projects funded by the military, and briefly examines the political implications to be drawn from this information.

Between them, the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the US Department of Defence, and NATO invest over £2 million annually in British university science projects and fellowships. This money buys academic expertise to supplement their own research work. In addition, MoD conducts various public relations exercises in the universities, which stimulate graduate recruitment and also help in a general way to promote military influence.

As Zoe Fairbairns says: 'Today's weapons were yesterday's "fundamental" MoD-sponsored research.' Academics and students who co-operate with the military are helping to develop technology which will be used by British and American imperialism in such places as Northern Ireland, Vietnam, and perhaps even closer to home.

The pamphlet looks at the changing role of the army in the mid-1970s, as indicated by the 'exercises' at Heathrow, the threatened use of soldiers as strike-breakers, and the much-quoted works by military theorists like Kitson and

ways of fighting the 'coercion from within'. If we consider the involvement of military agencies in the universities in this context, we can see that a campaign to drive them out is part of the general struggle against the drift towards a strong state in Britain.

Zoe Fairbairns gives some ideas on how to launch such a campaign. 'The first weapon is information', she says, and so the major part of the pamphlet is a list of no less than 65 British universities and colleges, giving details of their connections with the military.

Students at City University, for example, might be surprised to discover from this list that 50 per cent of students enrolled for the Systems and Management degree are Royal Navy officers. Some of them will be taking part in a project which 'involves contriving a dynamic model to represent the economic politics and conflict of a state with a common economy but distinct populations, eg. South Africa, Cyprus, and Ulster'.

There are plenty of other examples like this, together with advice on how to find out more about a particular university's military research.

The pamphlet concludes with a section on 'What To Do', where we are reminded that it is official NUS policy to oppose this type of research, and that the executive is mandated to support action against it at a local level. A Science for People group has already been set up at Brunel University to find out what the £10,784 annual grant from MoD is used for, and what action to take. Workers and students at other campuses should follow their initiative, and use every means possible to throw the military out.

Karen Cartwright

What the Bristol WWC can do now is to follow up and extend these initial factory contacts by going to see and discussing with these and other women at home. But the Charter is flexible... and the *Red Weekly* and the IMG must be careful of being doctrinaire. But it can present and explain examples.

3. The two points above lead on to a general observation that *Red Weekly*'s coverage of the Charter these last six months has been very weak. Starting with an appallingly laid-out and unimaginative written centrespread; then the nadir

ignorant squabbles between IS and IMG (ignorant of the class struggle); then a failure to report on the impact the Imperial Typewriters strike was having on the women's home lives (and this connection is the great feature of the WWC); and the total absence of features on the advanced struggles continental women ILIP, banks in France, squatters in Italy, etc. have been involved in.

I would be delighted if you could publish this letter and comment on the general thrust of the article. — JO RAY Bristol.

What is this 'workers' solution'?

Time and again the IMG stresses that the present crisis of British imperialism is not just an economic and political crisis, but is also a crisis within society.

Disturbing, then, is the persistent failure of *Red Weekly* to look into the structures of society affected by this crisis. The majority of occasions when it is taken up is in conjunction with political campaigns and economic struggles.

Articles on Imperial Typewriters and the Health Service did raise important questions about the role of women and the general welfare of the class. However there is a distinct lack of revolutionary propaganda on questions such as the family, education, leisure-time activities, and so on.

There is no denying that these problems can only finally be solved within the framework of a workers' state. But that isn't to say that they shouldn't be examined before then, and answers put forward now.

These problems are as real to working class militants as are the problems of trade union struggle. And anyway, your readership has a right to know what you're intending to replace state structures with. Why not some concrete examples from the workers' states, and from history?

We are offering a solution to the problems of capitalism—is it too much to hope that we can tell workers what we think it is?— L. GEORGE, Bristol

Llanwern workers steel themselves for struggle

Sixteen hundred craftsmen went on official strike at the Llanwern steel works last Sunday. The workers, all employed on maintenance, gave the British Steel Corporation 14 days strike notice on 18 October.

The decision to take strike action which could eventually bring the whole production workforce of 4000 to a standstill—was taken at a mass meeting addressed by local full-time officials of the AUEW, EEPTU, ASB and UCATT.

The Spencer works—scene of the present strike—is a 2½ miles long industrial city where 'trade unions have never been accepted, but simply tolerated' according to Emlyn Davies, the EEPTU convenor at the works.

Other workers bitterly complain that although the plant was nationalised in 1967 the same conditions and the same attitudes of management remain. As a recently published Llanwern joint BSC trade-union inquiry comments, there is a 'virtual lack of personal communication between men and management'. Many of the workers consider safety is 'non-existent', and 'conditions are totally deplorable'.

In the plant there is an ever-widening gap between staff and workers' pay. There is a constantly increasing ratio of staff to workers. There is deep resentment at management's refusal to observe negotiation procedures. Workers are angry at the state of suspensions, sackings and victimisations.

IMPOSSIBLE

Over the past 13 years the tonnage bonus, considered an integral part of earnings, has proved impossible to achieve. To get a living wage workers have had to work excessive overtime.

The craftsmen have had a single works-wide agreement since 1963. BSC have now arbitrarily decided to abandon this. Their intention is to impose a measured work incentive scheme as part of the Llanwern Scheme C. Scheme C is a BSC £90 million expansion programme which includes the recently completed blast furnace which BSC claim will increase production from 2 million ingot-tons a year to 3.8 million.

The EEPTU convenor Emlyn Davies explained: 'If we keep our agreement signed in 1963 and Scheme C is as productive as BSC claim then we will begin to earn a living wage based on our agreement.'

'This is why BSC want to terminate the agreement and introduce a work measured incentive scheme in its place.'

REJECTED

BSC are obviously trying to blame the threatened closure on the strikers. Ray Dinham, who is the Boilermakers' convenor, said: 'The management have rejected our offer to provide safety measures only. They are only interested in measures that would let them keep normal production going—this we are not prepared to allow'.

Roland Davies, AUEW member and secretary of the strike committee, said: 'The craftsmen's battle is on behalf of 100,000 steelworkers in the industry.'

'The management's fear is that if they concede the craftsmen's claim at Llanwern this will have repercussions amongst the blastfurnace men.'

'This struggle will affect future negotiations at Llanwern, Redcar and the whole of the steel industry.'

Scottish teachers back Action Committee

The strikes of the Scottish teachers for a £15 a week flat rate increase continue.

On Thursday 31 October 5,000 teachers demonstrated in Edinburgh and 3,000 attended a meeting in the city's Usher Hall, in support of the claim.

On 4 November Glasgow teachers started a series of selected regional strikes under the direction of the West of Scotland Teachers' Group.

SWELL

The movement in support of the claim is having a big effect on the Educational Institute of Scotland—the main teachers' union. The EIS are now calling for a lump sum payment of £300 to be paid to teachers before Xmas. This would represent a payment of about £10 a week for each teacher.

The EIS originally called for a percentage increase, but under the pressure of the mass movement has now been forced to call for a flat interim award of £300 for all teachers.

The Scottish School Masters have now changed their demand to the flat £15 a week increase and have officially recognised the Action Committee. The SSM have

stated they will call out their members when the Action Committee call strikes.

The SSM has also joined with the Action Committee, in calling on the EIS to hold a joint meeting of the three bodies to make the £15 claim official.

Meanwhile, Labour's Scottish Minister, Ross, has shown how well he understands the situation in education by writing a letter to all Scottish headmasters in which he says there is 'no unrest among Scottish teachers' and that there is 'no educational crisis'. Enraged headmasters have been ringing up the Action Committee leaders and saying: 'after this letter we will be bringing our schools out.'

Seven Action Committees now exist in Scotland, all of which are growing in strength and militancy. The West of Scotland Action Committee has called for all-out strike action from 21 November. The East of Scotland Action Committee has decided to intensify strike action by having mid-week three-day strikes and seeking to get wider support in the trade union movement.

SPARKED

What has sparked the demand for the increase is the anger of teachers at the manoeuvres of the Government who earlier this year promised teachers a full review of their wages. The Government set up the Houghton Committee to make this review and promised that any award would be back-dated to May. But it seems unlikely that its full report will be published before early 1975.

Meanwhile in England and Wales, the EIS counterpart, the NUT, has submitted a claim which will greatly widen the existing differentials amongst teachers. This is the continuation of the NUT policy which has led to the high turnover in teachers, 18 per cent of whom change jobs just to keep their heads above the financial whirlpool of inflation.

The growth of the Scottish teachers' strike wave and the emergence of the Action Committees should be flashing the go-ahead sign to teachers in England and Wales. By adding their weight to the struggle now being waged in Scotland, English and Welsh teachers could force the Government against the wall.

EXTEND

In England and Wales the obvious task is to extend support for the Scottish teachers by setting up support committees, collecting cash and working towards solidarity actions. In London, the Teachers' Action Committee should be reconvened to work out a plan of action on how to support the struggle in Scotland and win a £15 flat rate increase for all teachers—north and south.

Bernard Regan

Leicester stewards call for occupations

A meeting of 200 Leicester engineering shop stewards agreed last Thursday, 31 October, to call for factory occupations to fight lay-offs and redundancies.

The shop-stewards were meeting in a situation where one factory, Stibbe's, has already shut down, making thousands of workers unemployed.

Shop-stewards from G.E.C. Whetstone criticised the Stibbe's workers for not fighting back. 'There will be no jobs down the road', one of them pointed out. 'The only way is to fight when redundancies are threatened'.

In Whetstone GEC stewards have mounted a picket to implement a wage rise and job security. All the stewards agreed to hold mass meetings in their respective factories to recommend this form of action to their members. When someone questioned a shop steward and raised the point of occupations being against the law, he got an immediate reply: 'Yes, but we'll have the factory'.

The *Leicester Mercury*, the local rag, which specialises in publishing scare stories related to black workers and publicising National Front activities, wrote: 'The shop stewards should put their faith in the law of the land and not contemplate industrial piracy'.

This from a paper which is opposed to all strikes, except when they are mounted against black workers. The best answer to this sort of rubbish has already been given by the AUEW shop-stewards. After all, 'the law of the land' does not help workers who face redundancies. And in any case factory occupations under workers control are the most effective way of struggling for nationalisation of all bankrupt companies.

Morale at Llanwern is high. The workers have now put up a 24-hour picket and are confident of their ability to win.

The next steps are the organising of flying pickets to the other steel mills, the organising of daily mass meetings so that the maximum number of workers can be drawn into the struggle, and the extension of the dispute right through Britain's steel industry.

John Connor



TYNESIDE DRIVERS THREATEN STRIKE

The victory of the Scottish lorry drivers has started the ball rolling elsewhere. Five thousand in the North East have now threatened strike action unless they are given an average increase of £6.50 a week to bring them into line with the new wages won by the Scottish drivers.

The decision to go on strike from 10 November unless the bosses pay up was taken by a mass meeting in Newcastle last Sunday. One of the T&G's regional organisers, Harry Burnstone, told the Newcastle press that in his

view the strike would have to take place unless the demands were met.

A strike could have a devastating effect on industry in the North, since it would put an embargo on the transport of raw materials to factories and finished products out of them. The only exception made in Scotland was to allow arms to be transported to Northern Ireland, which reflected the strength of Orangism in Scotland. Socialists must argue that no such exceptions are made in Tyneside.

The road haulage firms are split on how to deal with the impending strike. Eleven firms have already agreed to pay the new rate, but some smaller firms have argued that the new claim, if conceded, would drive them out of business.

Since most of the firms will simply increase road haulage costs, the increase will finally find its way down to the shops. That is why the demand has to be raised for the government to nationalise the road haulage industry, which was denationalised by the Tories in 1951.

SUGAR WORKERS BITTER

SUGAR WORKERS across the country are planning a massive campaign of industrial action against the Government's sugar policy. They are concerned that the recent deal worked out with the Common Market in Brussels may threaten their jobs.

The workers at Tate & Lyle's Silvertown plant in East London, which produces over 50 per cent of the firm's total sugar output, have been refusing to allow any sugar to leave the factory since Monday. This could produce an even worse sugar shortage in shops in Southern England within a week.

The sugar workers' national committee has called for a 3-day total stoppage to coincide with the Labour Party conference later this month. This call has been endorsed by a mass meeting of 2,000 workers at Tate and Lyle's Liverpool plant. The meeting also decided to impose an overtime ban during the two weeks following the strike.

These are very important actions—the first directly political strikes that have been launched since the fall of the Tory Government.

The Tate and Lyle workers are right to fight for their jobs, and they are right that British working people should not have to pay higher prices for sugar just to suit the needs of the capitalists' Common Market.

But they cannot hope to win this fight by harking back to the 'good old days' when British industry was built on cheap supplies of raw materials from the

super-exploited lands of the so-called 'Commonwealth'. The workers of these countries also have a right to decent wages and living conditions, and want to develop their own industries and not remain at the beck-and-call of big imperialist powers. These are aims which British workers should support.

Whether in or out of the Common Market, and no matter what paper deals are signed, every section of industry will be threatened by the economic upheavals that are sweeping the capitalist world.

Sugar workers cannot hope to protect their industry from this danger. They must put forward and fight for demands that can be understood and supported by other groups of workers, both in Britain and abroad, and unite with them in a common struggle.

The world economic crisis is produced by the capitalists' system, and they must be made to pay for its problems.

The sugar workers should fight for guarantees of job security from their employers, no matter what happens in the industry, and should link this with the fight against increases in the price of this essential item of working class consumption.

In this way the advanced form of struggle they have adopted can be combined with advanced aims, and provide a lead for the whole workers' movement.

* No redundancies in the sugar industry.
* No increase in sugar prices.
* Nationalise the sugar companies under workers' control and with full guarantees for all jobs if they fail to meet either of these demands.

* No to the capitalists' Common Market.

International Marxist Group



(British section of the Fourth International)

97 Caledonian Rd., London N.1.

I would like more information about the IMG and its activities

NAME

ADDRESS

Sussex students give lead in fight against cuts

Sussex University students have stepped up their campaign in defence of their living standards, and in so doing have given a lead to all students as the NUS week of action approaches.

The occupation of the University has been extended to the whole of the administration building, except those offices dealing with campus workers' pay. Approaches are being made to the local TGWU to help with picketing the University entrances.

The students have been driven to these tactics by the continuing decline in their living standards and the obstinacy of the authorities in refusing to budge an inch on the students' demands for the dropping of a proposed 28 per cent rent increase, the removal of a 12½ per cent price rise, and for the full registration of all students.

The occupation has continued to draw in support, with over 1500 students signing a petition backing the action. Active support is being maintained through daily mass meetings, with a committee elected and recallable to them.

Every delegation sent to negotiate with the authorities or to explain the case to trade union branches has to report back in full to the mass meetings. It is in this way that all students involved can participate and control the decisions and future tactics of the campaign.

But it is the solidarity of the working class that will prove decisive. Both NALGO and ASTMS—who have already clashed with the University over pay—have offered support, while the chairwoman of the NALGO branch has spoken in the occupation and has been around with the students asking her members to allow them to take over.

Students are not the only section of society to have been hit by the crisis in the social services. For this reason shop stewards from NUPE, in the local hospital, and UCATT have been to address the mass meetings.

The students also give practical support to local busworkers launching one day rotating strikes over pay and manning—they sent a message of support, invited a busman to speak, and collected £12 for strike funds.

To help strengthen these links a demonstration has been called for Saturday, 9 November in Brighton on the town's housing crisis. Both students and tenants realise that the problem must not be solved at the others' expense. Whitehawk, Manor Farm and East Brighton tenants have sent the occupation a telegram of support.

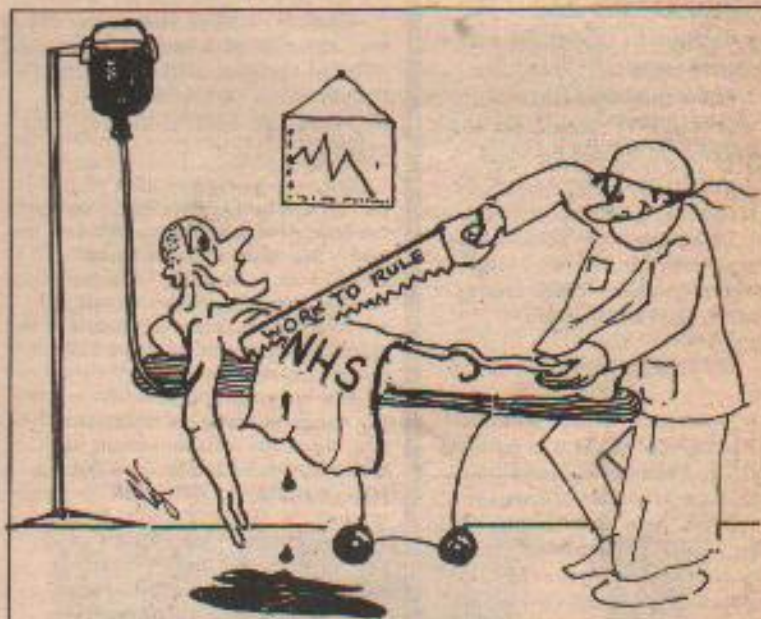
The lessons of the Sussex struggle are crucial to students all over the country. It is for this reason that the occupation made the call for a national delegate conference on the cutbacks in education spending and how to fight them—to be held on the weekend of 23-24 November.

This meeting—coming a week before the NUS conference—gives students an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences of this term's activities, and to prepare for the fight in the future, particularly when the rent freeze ends in January. The fight against the cuts is a national affair, and this meeting will give militants in the colleges the chance to make sure that it really is.

Rick Sissons

RED WEEKLY

'Let NHS collapse' — say consultants



The pampered, well-heeled consultants who leech on the National Health Service have started a work-to-rule.

This action is being taken against Labour's proposals to phase out pay-beds in the NHS.

Rowland Cowley, a leader of the consultants—who represent nine per cent of the country's doctors—made no bones about the motives behind their action. He says: 'What Mrs. Castle doesn't realise is that doctors are so angry and resentful that they are now prepared to allow the hospital service to collapse rather than accept another serious erosion of their standard of living.'

In August consultants in the north-east—the area where Cowley practises—signed a petition during the technicians' dispute declaring 'patients were at risk.'

Now their patients' lives—particularly their working class NHS patients' lives—can go to hell because the consultants' incomes are at risk.

PIOUS

All the pious and hypocritical mouthing of the consultants stops when they realise that they can no longer line their pockets at the expense of the sick and infirm. Life for these people is not worth living if you cannot sell a place in the queue.

The conservative British Medical Association is a little coy about supporting the ban. This year's wave of bans of private patients instituted by the rank-and-file health workers has rocked the medical establishment.

The more sophisticated BMA members would prefer a back-stage deal with the pliant Mrs Castle rather than unleash a movement inside the NUS that puts a complete ban on all

private patients. Only the intervention of Mrs. Castle at the Charing Cross Hospital private patients' dispute stopped that movement spreading. Her promise to 'phase out all private beds in this parliamentary session' has acted as a brake on militant action against pay-beds.

The BMA hopes to use the time gained to screw concessions from the Government such as big compensatory pay rises for those consultants who will lose incomes from private patients. They also want to win the right for consultants to have private patients outside the NHS.

TO HEEL

The work-to-rule consultants can and must be brought to heel. Health workers should refuse to let them use any facilities in the NHS for the private patients. An embargo should be put on pay-beds: X-ray equipment should be denied to them; porters should refuse to move their patients; nurses should refuse to give them any attention and they should not be allowed any food.

One arrogant consultant in London threatened: 'Instead of five minutes per patient we will give 35 minutes per patient as we are ethically entitled to do. Of course it will bring the hospital service to a standstill...' Junior doctors and others opposed to the consultants should start to organise an alternative service now for NHS patients who are being made to suffer because of the consultants' actions.

The consultants have upped the stakes. They can only be defeated by the NHS workers who must now go forward to impose a complete national blacking on all pay beds and insist on the ending of private practice inside and outside the NHS.

Jeff King

immediately. Trevor Hallett, district administrator of the Kirkcaldy Area Health Authority responsible for the Storthes Hall Hospital claims, 'This is a national issue, not a local one... No payments can be made until the Whitley Council reaches agreement.'

The underpaid nurses did not exactly break the wages record when they got their latest pay award. Now they are expected to calmly wait while inflation eats away at their back-pay. In Birmingham and Huddersfield the threatened action of the nurses shows the way forward. The Whitley Council will only cease their sedate deliberations when they are faced with militant action. If other nurses follow these leads the back-pay will arrive a good deal more quickly.



Photo: PETER HARRAP (Report)

BIG STEP FORWARD FOR GAY MOVEMENT

More than three thousand people took part in a gay rights demonstration in London last Saturday. This was a big step forward for the gay movement—never before have so many people in Britain been prepared to come out openly in support of gay rights.

Homosexuality is still completely illegal in Scotland and Ireland. Elsewhere, it is still often illegal—for instance if you are under 21. Police harassment of gay people is, if any-

thing, on the increase.

Gays still face victimisation at work if they come out as openly homosexual—in particular, this is a problem for gay teachers. Oppression of gays is bound up with the whole role of the family, as a pillar of capitalist society. But changes in the law are not simply irrelevant, and a coherent campaign on the question of law reform can provide the basis for fighting particular cases of police harassment,

victimisation at work, or fascist attacks on the gay movement—and for fighting the sort of ideas on sexuality that reinforce the oppression of gays.

A campaign of this sort cannot simply be based on gay organisations working on their own and certainly not on a strategy of lobbying MPs and 'influential' gays. If Saturday's demonstration is to be more than a flash in the pan, then the question of gay rights must be taken up more widely in the labour movement.

From this point of view, it was particularly unfortunate that there were no trade union, Labour Party or revolutionary left banners in Trafalgar Square last Saturday.

FUND DRIVE

A bit of a slow week for the Fund Drive. But our thanks to J. Duveen—£25, S. Rutherford—£20, Coventry IMG—£10, Kingston IMG—£7, and others.

Meanwhile, if you are in London on Friday evening come to the Red Weekly Rally with films and speakers from the Fourth International. We are hoping to give the Fund Drive a big boost then.

Rush all you can afford to: Red Weekly Fund Drive, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

STOP THE TORTURE IN CHILE!

Chile Solidarity Campaign and Chile Committee for Human Rights picket to protest the arrest of President A. Lende's sister and the barbaric torture of Bautista Van Schouwen, Gustavo Ruiz, and Gerardo Molina and his family.

Embassy, 12 Devonshire Street, London W.1. — Friday 8 November, from 12.30—2.00 p.m.

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