

RED WEEKLY

13 FEBRUARY 1975

No 88

PRICE 8p

Smash Private Practice

support the RALLY & PICKET called by the Medical Committee
Against Private Practice

SATURDAY - 22 FEBRUARY - 2.00 pm

Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2

Outside Royal College of Surgeons

Speakers include: Sid Bidwell, MP; Brian Nicholson (TGWU); Jack Collins (NUM); Steve Johnson (NALGO); Bob Pennington (IMG); S. Ludlam (IS).

FOOT WIELDS THE AXE

MASSACRE AT EBBW VALE

When the ruling class want to stick a knife in the working class they like nothing better than getting some social democrat to do the job for them. And there was no better assassin for the Ebbw Vale massacre than Michael Foot, that tired old liberal dressed up as 'left'.

Before departing for the rigours of Hampstead and the hard slog at the Ministry of Employment, Foot told demonstrating steelworkers: 'You have to show some guts in this kind of situation'.

For 4,600 workers threatened with the sack - with another 4,000 affected in their wake - Foot's exhortations about needing guts has a hollow and cynical ring. Workers' denunciations of him as a 'Judas' and a 'traitor', and demands he should 'get out' were appropriate and justified.

But more than fury and anger is needed to defeat the plans of Foot and the Labour Government to close down steel making at Ebbw Vale. Nor will simple demands for nationalisation suffice - after all Ebbw Vale is already a nationalised concern.

BURNING WAY

The Ebbw Vale closures reveal in a burning way the need for a working class strategy to defend jobs. To rely on the Labour Government to provide a solution is futile - after all the person who defends the sackings is the Labour MP for Ebbw Vale, Labour's Minister of Employment and a fervent advocate of the social 'conrick'.

The first step to take is to occupy the works and to put all the machinery and equipment under the control of the workforce. That is the best and most effective base to start arguing from.

Up to now all the action and the decisions have rested solely in the hands of the works' council. No mass meetings have yet been organised. This situation must be remedied immediately. If a real fight is to take place against the sackings then the entire workforce must be involved. They must be convinced on what steps have to be taken to fight the sackings; their ideas for conducting the struggle have to be harnessed,

by
**Bob
Pennington**

and above all the control of the fight must be placed in the hands of the whole workforce.

A solidarity campaign must be mounted throughout the steel industry. Plans are already in existence for 6,000 jobs disappearing at Shotton by 1980, East Moors at Cardiff will close by 1980 at the latest, the South Teesside Cleveland coke ovens, sinter plant and blast furnace are to shut down by 1978. Other closures are scheduled for Hartlepool and Shelton Bar at Stoke.

Llanwern, which is taking over the work now done at Ebbw Vale, is already on a three-day week. Today the axe hangs over Ebbw Vale, tomorrow it will swing right over the whole British steel industry. This is why Ebbw Vale must become the focus of a national fight against redundancies.

FORGE LINKS

The Ebbw Vale workers must also try and forge links with the miners who will also be affected by the closure of the plant. The part of the Ebbw Vale plant that is being closed - steel rolling - is dependent on coal. The tin plate side of the operation which is being kept does not require coal.

These closures have revealed that nationalisation alone is not enough to guarantee jobs. The demand for workers' control takes on a practical

reality. This means elected committees of workers deciding what hours should be worked, how the labour force should be organised, and exercising the right to scrutinise all decisions of management.

The fight of the steelworkers must be for a guarantee that there will be

no redundancies, and that all work must be shared on the basis of a reduced working week with no loss of pay.

Ebbw Vale is not just about a struggle in steel. It is central to the fight of all the working class in smashing rising unemployment.



Workers at BSC's Shelton works near Stoke built a stainless steel statue of a steelworker to commemorate their fight against redundancies. But they are still going to lose 800 jobs. The workers at Ebbw Vale have come out even worse. Lucky talismen are all very well but only a united national struggle will defeat BSC's plans and prevent further attacks at mass sackings.

Put not your
faith in graven
images...

New Provo Ceasefire

THE PROVISIONAL IRA has called an open ended ceasefire in Ireland - but all the causes for the anti-unionist minority taking up the gun in self-defence remain.

The dismantling of the Orange state, the smashing of the loyalists, and the destruction of British imperialism throughout Ireland, all remain to be done. The nationalist minority has not been bludgeoned into accepting a renewed Protestant ascendancy - the ceasefire is not the end of the struggle, but a halt in the war.

The Provisional's tactics during the ceasefire negotiations has increased the confusion among the anti-unionist population. Seamus Loughran, Provisional Sinn Fein leader in the North, presented the wheeling and dealing of Rees' side-kicks as 'a God-send to our people. This speaks a great deal for the representatives of Sinn Fein and the British Government'.

This is nonsense. The only agreements in the interests of the Irish people that the Labour Government will be forced to abide by will be those enforced by the political and military vigilance of the Irish people themselves.

continued on page 2

FROM THE HORSES' MOUTH.....

A NEW VOICE has recently been raised to point out that the Common Market is a thoroughly capitalist institution, designed only to serve the interests of the European capitalist class.

This argument comes from someone who should certainly know - the Belgian foreign minister, Renaat van Elslande.

In reply to a question in the Belgian parliament, van Elslande said that there could be no question of Portugal joining the EEC until it had become a 'genuine democracy'.

By this the honourable gentleman did not mean that he wanted to first see a thoroughgoing purge of fascist supporters from all aspects of Portuguese political life. He meant that only a country totally committed to the preservation of the capitalist social order could be allowed across the threshold of the Common Market. As he put it: 'It is obvious that we cannot have anything to do with a country which has replaced a right-wing dictatorship with a left-wing dictatorship.'

FUND DRIVE

As usual the Red Weekly is nearly skint. Ten days have gone by in February and all we have in the Fund Drive is £57.39. That gives us just 18 days to raise £350 which is the minimum needed to make sure that the paper comes out.

One of the readers suggested a special appeal to our wealthy readers like Tory MP Eldon Griffiths. However, financial masochism is not a normal deviation amongst such people and they are reluctant to subsidise their own expropriation.

Although the IMG always gets the biggest police contingent on demonstrations, and earns the police more overtime

than most, we also doubt if the coppers will be prepared to divvy up a slice of their overtime pay.

Tory MPs, business folk, and Special Branch narks who read the paper are only interested in trying to find out where they are going to get clobbered next.

So, reluctantly, we have reached the conclusion that it's only you - the ordinary readers - who will provide the money. But do remember it's getting urgent. Squeeze every penny you can together and rush it in now to: Red Weekly, 182 Pentonville Road, London, N.1.

INSIDE - 4-PAGE SPECIAL ON THE FIGHT AGAINST SACKINGS

Sick society jails its victim

Last week, Justice May sentenced Paulette Whitfield to two years in jail for taking another woman's child.

Papers like the *Sun* and *Mirror* waxed indignant about this sentence. Heart-throb specialist Marjorie Proops of the *Mirror* wrote, 'most right-thinking citizens will be shocked and appalled at the punishing sentence imposed on Mrs. Whitfield, who is clearly more sick than criminal.'

The *Sun* asked: 'In the name of pity, how is that [the sentence] supposed to help this sad mixed-up girl, who so desperately wanted a child?'

NOT ILL

Paulette is not ill or mentally disturbed. She has simply taken seriously the myths peddled by hacks like Marjorie Proops that the role of women in capitalist society is to be a wife and mother. Reacting to her educational background, the media and the family, Paulette has realised that to become a 'whole' woman in this mentally sick, male-dominated, class society, she has to measure up to the capitalist ethic of motherhood.

Because class society needs to reproduce its labour force it needs the 'stable' family. Women are assigned to the role of being reproducers and the whole process is wrapped up in mystical nonsense about the hallowed maternal feelings of motherhood.

Capitalism sees the job of women as to rear children and look after the bread-winner. The work of the housewife is not seen as 'real work' but as an act of 'love' for the family. When she is working outside the home this is seen as being secondary to her main



YOU REALIZE OF COURSE THAT HAD THE MOTHER OF THE STOLEN CHILD BEEN PROPERLY MARRIED, I WOULD HAVE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO GIVE YOU LIFE.



task and therefore not warranting equal pay and conditions with men.

Paulette and her husband could not produce a child in the 'natural way'. The pressures of the family, the effect of traditional values of parenthood on her husband and the distorted values of personal relations—which decrees women shall be mothers—made her take the action she did.

MARRIAGE

Perhaps it was not a coincidence that she took the child of an unmarried mother. Capitalism preaches that children should be the products of marriage. The recent ravings of Keith Joseph were made to bolster that idea. Maybe Paulette took this 'morality' at its face value and decided it was correct to put the child in a family unit.

Although the *Mirror* and *Sun* whine about the sentence Justice May knew

what he was doing. In a time of social crisis all the institutions of capitalist society begin to crack apart. The ruling class and their representatives are desperate to screw the lid down. They are determined to crush any deviations from the accepted norms by the so-called anti-social elements.

A MYTH

Under capitalism wealth is restricted to a small minority. Fulfilled motherhood is a myth. The values peddled by May and his class are beyond the reach of the Paulettes of this world. Because she accepted their standards she tried to solve her problems on their terms. But she was on the wrong side of the class fence and when she was 'caught' the very people who had given her those values were the ones who sent her to jail.

Val Jones and Bob Pennington



Over a thousand people marched in London last Friday to protest about MP James White's Private Members' Bill to restrict the 1967 Abortion Act. The demonstration, organised by the London Coordinating Committee of the Working Womens' Charter, was followed by a meeting at the Central Hall, Westminster, where a packed audience heard speakers from Brent Working Womens' Charter Campaign, the Abortion Law Reform Association, and the Medical Committee Against Private Practice.

CEASE FIRE cont. from front page

No matter what concessions Merlyn Rees has promised the Provisionals, his basic aim remains to fudge up some loyalist coalition out of the Constitutional Convention. Any sugar on this bitter pill will only be there to prevent an upsurge in the South, which the quisling government in Dublin could not control when Britain hands over the the loyalists.

Rees' most recent Green Paper, which discusses the various forms of government that might come out of the Convention, doesn't even mention the once-famous 'power sharing' and 'Irish dimension' on

which hopes of a lasting solution were meant to hang. Meanwhile, the United Ulster Unionist Council (UUUC), the Loyalist parliamentary coalition, is now demanding the same control over local councils, including housing and the social services, the Orange forces had before 1968. Furthermore, the paramilitary thugs of the Protestant Ulster Volunteer Force have threatened a 'coup' if it doesn't get its share of the spoils from the UUUC.

William Craig, leader of the loyalist 'Vanguard' has put their position very

clearly: 'If the British government has made a deal with the Provisionals, then that is a matter for them, but it will not be binding on a future government in the North. We do not trust the Provisionals, and we in the UUUC will have no agreement with them.' Craig is also insisting that the British forces hunt down all Provisional supporters.

It is now even more vital for socialists in Britain to campaign against the 'solutions' being cooked up by British imperialism and for the withdrawal of British troops.

Brian Grogan

NF thugs go into action

OVER 100 TRADE UNIONISTS and students rallied to a picket called by Hastings Labour Party to protest against a meeting held in the town by the National Front on 31 January. Police repeatedly ploughed through

the pickets to clear a way for the fascists.

The most significant development occurred when a coach-load of NF thugs arrived from London. Apparently they were members of

the 'Honour Guard' that the old-style Nazis, Tyndall and Webster, have grouped around themselves to turn the NF away from its so-called 'populist' leanings. At a word they swept through the pickets and a double rank of police. Having done this they beat to the ground a group of Young Liberals and Labour Party members who had been allowed to peacefully picket the doors. The police then completed this 'job' by throwing the pickets into the road. Eight anti-fascists were arrested and taken into the hall, where they were badly manhandled by police and fascists before being charged.

The emergence of the well-trained 'Honour Guard', marking the return of at least a section of the NF to the established fascist tradition of open thuggery, makes more urgent the need for anti-fascists to prepare proper self-defence.

A defence campaign is being arranged for the arrested, all of whom were photographed and fingerprinted. The most encouraging event of the evening was the large number of youths who joined the battle on the side of the anti-fascists after initially attacking them for being against 'free speech'.

Stockport protest over deal with South Africa

INDIGNATION IS MOUNTING in the labour movement at the Government's decision to give the 'green light' for plans to build a power station in the South African-occupied territory of Namibia ('South West Africa').

Just last December Labour Foreign Secretary Callaghan, speaking in the House of Commons, referred to South Africa's occupation of Namibia as 'unlawful'. Yet when the 'Friends of Namibia' group in Britain wrote to Hawker Siddeley protesting at the deal they had just made with the South African Government, they were informed that the scheme had been cleared by the office of Labour trade minister

Peter Shore, a fact later confirmed by his office.

A meeting to protest at the Hawker Siddeley contract is being organised in Stockport, site of the Mifloas Blackstock factory which is due to build diesel engines for the project.

The meeting will take place at Our Lady Social Centre, Flint Street (nr. Greek Street) Shaw Heath, Stockport, at 8 p.m. on Friday 21 February. Speakers will include Joan Lester, MP; Peter Kaljavi, representative of the Namibian liberation group SWAPO; Andrew Bennet, MP for Stockport North; and John Broome, member of the Stockport Trades Council.

Further details about the meetings and the campaign against the Hawker Siddeley contract in Stockport can be obtained from: Ian Cooney—tel: 061-427-3952.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



FOURTH INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC MEETING
Friday Feb. 28 7.30pm
Conway Hall,
Red Lion Square WC 1
Speakers include women from Ireland, France, Belgium, Italy, Spain etc.



Labour's Creation of Terror Act

ANYONE who is still sceptical about the serious dangers to the workers' movement posed by Labour's 'Prevention of Terrorism' Act should have been in Bristol over the past few weeks.

A number of very nasty incidents there show exactly the sort of reactionary, anti-Irish climate that this piece of repressive legislation breeds.

*James Flynn, chairman of the local branch of Clann na hEireann, and Brendan Phelan, secretary of the branch, were both arrested and served with exclusion orders under the Act. Flynn was deported to Belfast—where the authorities did not think that the evidence against him was sufficient to warrant internment. Phelan has appealed and is still in prison.

*After a picket of Horfield Prison in solidarity with Flynn organised by local socialists and Republicans, one of the pickets—George Anderson—was sacked from his job at Spillers Grain Refinery because of pressure from his 'fellow' workers.

*Charlie Horton, shop steward at the factory, executive member of the

Bristol Trades Council, and secretary of his trade union branch, was denounced by the local National Front because of his support for Anderson. The NF managed to get enough support in the factory to have Horton ousted as steward, although support from other factories prevented his removal as branch secretary.

*Danny Ryan, Bristol based national organiser of Clann, was also shipped to Dublin under the Act. Immediately afterwards his daughter, also a Republican, was victimised at the technical college she attends.

Of course this little 'reign of terror' engineered by the local police, Special Branch and the fascists is not confined to Bristol. In Bletchley a shop steward and long standing member of the local trades council, who has lived in this country for 24 years, has been jailed and threatened with deportation.

Meanwhile, charges of breach of the peace, obstruction, using abusive language and attempting to rescue a prisoner, were found 'not proven' against defendants Peter Campbell and Stewart MacLennan in Glasgow on 31

January. Campbell and MacLennan, both IMG militants and building workers, were arrested last May Day in Glasgow at the direction of Special Branch officers as a large crowd prevented police harassment of Clann na hEireann paper sellers. The charges were dismissed because police evidence was so contradictory.

Harassment against Republican sympathisers has been continuing in Glasgow, just last week three Irishmen were arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for allegedly distributing posters soliciting support for the IRA.

As Stewart MacLennan said after his trial 'In my particular case the police forgot to do their 'homework' on their evidence beforehand. But the only way to stop the persecution of Republican sympathisers in this country and the increasing harassment of working class militants, whether through the imprisonment of the Shrewsbury pickets or the attempted deportation of Franco Caprino, is to fight to remove the Prevention of Terrorism Act from the statute book along with all other anti-working class legislation.'

'Open letter': For Workers' Campaign Against EEC



The opening meeting of the 'Get Britain Out Campaign' in Bristol just over two weeks ago, which saw local Labour MPs rubbing shoulders with Liberal and right-wing Tory politicians, highlighted the need for a workers' campaign against the EEC, independent of all these political representatives of the capitalist class.

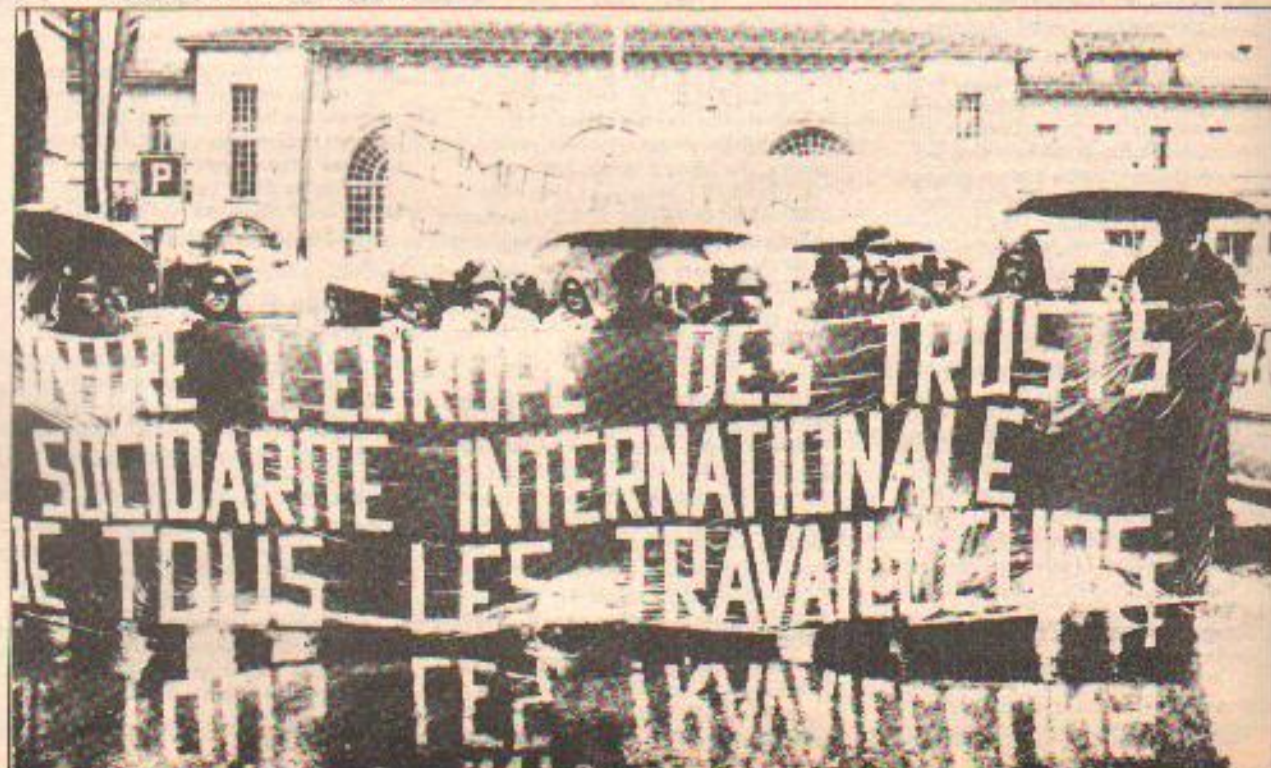
The Bristol IMG has taken the initiative of circulating an Open Letter in the local labour movement calling for such a campaign. So far the response to the letter has been good, and excellent prospects exist for taking this question up throughout the Bristol workers' movement.

OPEN LETTER TO THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

We, the undersigned, call for the withdrawal of Britain from the EEC. We reject the arguments based on the 'sovereignty' of Parliament, 'the British people' and all 'little Englander' notions. The Industrial Relations Act, the Anti-Terrorist Laws, Housing Finance Act and the continued imprisonment of the Shrewsbury 2 are recent attacks emanating from Parliament on the 'sovereignty' of the working class and trade union movement. The alleged 'Golden Age' of British Imperialism was also the age of mass poverty. The working class movement alone can provide the answer to the present crisis—workers not only in Britain but also in France, Germany, Portugal and so on.

The EEC is not in the interests of the workers of any of these countries. We therefore call for a united campaign of socialists, trade unionists and workers against the EEC. We reject attempts by certain trade union leaders and Labour MPs to join forces with right wing Tories, Enoch Powell and the fascist National Front in a united campaign. Such a campaign can only confuse the working class and therefore aid the pro-Marketisers. We call for local and national conferences of trade unionists to begin a campaign amongst the working class to ensure a massive 'NO' in the forthcoming referendum.

Against the Common Market — fine. But what weapons should the workers' movement fight with? The chauvinism of reactionary groups like the National Front (above), or international working class solidarity (below)?



IN FOCUS

Behind the Tory leadership crisis

The in-fighting over the leadership of the Tory Party has thrown into relief the political crisis racking the ruling class in Britain. Brought to a head by the humiliating defeat the Tory Government suffered at the hands of the miners last year, it was rammed down their throats in the October election when the Tories polled their lowest percentage of the poll this century.

The ousting of the Tory Government in February 1974 was the defeat of a whole strategy of the ruling class. The Heath Government had been concerned to re-orient Government economic policy in the interests of British-based industrial capital and away from finance capital, which had achieved a dominant position in the hey-day of the now fallen Empire. It intended, however, to carry through this reorganisation while holding together the traditional power bloc on which the Tory Party was based. This was a combination of finance capital, small capital, and a land-owning clique to which domestic-based industrial capital was subordinated. Thus, for Heath's strategy to succeed, he had to harness the old ruling class bloc behind the weight of industrial capital in a successful onslaught on the trade unions. This strategy was reflected in the turn away from the 'special relationship' with the United States—in which Britain still posed as an imperial power—towards the Common Market as the European powerhouse of industrial capitalism.

On the home front the Heath Government had some early successes: the seven-week long postal workers strike was smashed; unemployment hit the million mark as industry 'rationalised', and 'lame-ducks' went to the wall. For 18 months Heath refused to talk with the trade union leaders over the smallest detail of incomes policy. By inflicting a savage economic defeat on the working class he hoped to create the conditions which would allow the re-alignment of forces inside the ruling class in favour of industrial capital.

In this the Tory Government fatally miscalculated. The British working class is socially and organisationally the strongest in the world, and there are no significant 'middle class' groups on which the capitalist class can rely for mass support. Only on the basis of a prior political defeat of the working class would it have been possible to solve the economic crisis at the workers' expense and carry through the transfer of power inside the ruling class to industrial capitalism without disrupting the traditional political bloc.

From the moment the working class began to fight back—the occupation of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders, the flying pickets of the '72 miners' strike, the mass strikes to free the Pentonville five—the writing was on the wall, and not only for the Tory Government. It staggered through another two years, succeeding in imposing an incomes policy on more weakly organised groups of workers, but it was no match for the miners.

The traditional power bloc of the ruling class went in all directions, and the Tory Party split wide open, unable to solve its leadership crisis.

In the leadership stakes it isn't simply Heath's neck which is on the block. That in itself would have caused little weeping in capitalist circles. But Thatcher would be an economic disaster for industrial capital if she ever got to the position where she could carry through the policy of her economic mentor, Keith Joseph: massive deflation of the economy to benefit small capital, which is hardest hit by inflation, and finance capital, worried by the huge trade deficit.

This is why leading capitalist circles, such as the *Economist*, the magazine of big industrial capital, plus large sections of the press, eventually rallied so furiously to Heath's side. Heath at least represented their interests; he was prepared to accept relatively high inflation and would continue to pursue an 'incomes policy' solution, even though it implied a head-on clash with the working class.

The fall of Heath has left his wing of the Party scurrying about like rats as they try to cobble together an anti-Thatcher alliance in the hope of defeating her in the third round. But in their eagerness to dump Heath they may have over-reached themselves.

This political crisis of the ruling class has vital consequences for the working class. It means that at the present time the ruling class has no ready-made political instruments at its disposal. The decisive section of the ruling class—industrial capital—will be forced in the short term to look to the Labour Government to solve the economic crisis which confronts British capitalism. This pressure will give added weight to the most right-wing elements within the cabinet and party bureaucracy. As it comes into conflict with opposite pressures from the rank and file, both inside and outside the party, an explosive crisis will be generated inside the Labour Party as well. The first step to resolving this in the interests of the working class is the fight to smash the present policies of the Labour Government and, above all, the Social Contract.

PERU: RIGHT WING BACKS ANTI-JUNTA RIOTS



LAST WEEK'S RIOTING in the Peruvian capital of Lima, in which over 100 people died, appears to have been staged by the right-wing opposition in an attempt to provoke a split in General Juan Velasco's reformist military Government.

Looters, and possibly some far left elements, joined in after what seems to have been a pre-arranged response by the right to the Govern-

ment's suppression of a sit-in strike by the civil police.

Peru's traditional right has been on the rampage since last June when, following a major split among the armed forces over the question of the press—the first since they seized power in October 1968—the conservative navy minister was forced out of office. At the same time, the main capitalist opposition party, Popular Action, was banned by the regime. During three days of violent demonstrations at the end of July, the right showed itself in force in the capital for the first time, foreshadowing the events of last week.

CIA

The rightist opposition has almost certainly been receiving aid from the CIA for some time, and, ever since the Chilean coup, the Governments of Chile, Brazil and Bolivia have been threatening to form a 'continental anti-Marxist bloc', the main victim of which would be the Peruvian Government. The fact that the Government has now been led to display on the streets of the capital a degree of force previously reserved for repressing students, striking miners, and other rebellious workers, will undoubtedly strengthen the hand of the reactionaries at home and abroad.

Were it not for the menacing international line-up, the junta would be quite secure in the short term. The Government's present policies are reforms designed primarily to benefit the most important sections of the capitalist class. Although powerful, those capitalist interests which have been injured during the last six years by these reforms are in a minority.

The junta's economic strategy is to revamp Peruvian capitalism by backing the big monopolies, especially those firms geared to producing consumer durables and manufactured goods for exports, and by increasing the role of the state in 'basic' industries. This is being achieved at the expense of the traditional capitalist interests tied up with agricultural and mineral exports.

COMPENSATION

The Velasco regime has constantly reaffirmed its basic commitment to capitalism by paying generous compensation to the owners of property scheduled for nationalisation. Early last year it concluded an agreement with the US Government which represented a 'total and definitive solution' of all outstanding disputes over compensation and related issues. A total of £60 million was handed over to Nixon's special envoy to be distri-

buted to the big US firms in exchange for their antiquated and run-down installations in Peru. This payment has fully restored Peru's credit-worthiness with imperialist financial institutions and serves as a reminder of the hollow ness of the regime's claims to be an 'anti-imperialist' force.

These pretensions date from the highly popular expropriation of the International Petroleum Company back in 1968 and the land reform of 1969 which brought real benefits to some sections of the peasantry and agricultural labourers. These measures gave the regime a distinctly 'leftist' appearance at first, reinforced by the enthusiastic acclaim it was given by the local Communist Party and the Cuban Government.

Despite the events of last week, the Peruvian regime stands out as a relatively stable capitalist government in a region where such things are none too common. The main reason for this stability so far has been its ability to carry out reforms whilst containing, coopting or repressing the mass movement of workers and peasants.

NOT DECEIVED

But, despite the efforts of the CP and the numerous left-wing intellectuals who are on the Government's payroll, the workers have not been deceived by Velasco's demagogic claim that the new Peru will be 'neither capitalist nor communist.' The corporatist SINAMOS has had limited success, and strikes have been increasingly frequent since November 1973, when a confrontation between the Government and the teachers' union over trade union rights paralysed three cities for a week.

In rural areas, where 75 per cent of the population stand to gain nothing from the land reform, land occupations have become normal. Rural unions controlled both by the main capitalist opposition party APRA and by the far left were able to impose a partial boycott of the recent congress of the paternalist National Agrarian Confederation.

Not least important, inflation is now running at over 30 per cent, hitting food prices especially hard, at a time when the junta is running out of room for manoeuvre. In these circumstances (the Government may well turn towards a more systematic use of repression against the workers' movement and an all-out offensive against the independent unions. The partial success of last week's challenge by the right will tend to encourage a move in this direction.

Bob Johnson

Call for continuing Caribbean solidarity

A call for an ongoing solidarity campaign to defend all victims of repression in the Caribbean was made from the platform at a meeting of over 100 people in London last Sunday.

Althea Lecointe (Jones) speaking for the present Campaign for the Release of Desmond Trotter, the black militant sentenced to death in Dominica, called on trade unionists and all members of the labour movement and left prepared to actively take up the issue to attend a preliminary organising meeting this Friday (at 37 Tollington Park, N.4, at 8 p.m.).

Other speakers outlined the background to Desmond's case, contrasting the mass poverty and unemployment in Dominica with the enormous profits extracted from the island by multi-national companies. Cadbury-Schweppes, for instance, whose subsidiary Roses (lime juice) together with van Geest dominates the Dominican economy, made a cool £349 million in 1972, enabling its 18 top directors to receive salaries totalling £264,000 a year between them. In contrast, the annual income of estate workers in Dominica can be as low as £34. Neither do Cadbury's workers in Britain see much of this money on average wages of around £27 a week.

All this points to the common class exploitation of the workers here and in the Caribbean, and the need for class solidarity between them.

However, such solidarity must not take the form simply of words—something which neither Maurice Styles, from the Post Office Workers' Union, and Labour MP Jock Stallard seem to have understood, since both of them failed to take up the crucial point of how these links of international class solidarity are to be formed and built.

It was not until Althea Lecointe's speech that we got an analysis of the historical development (or rather underdevelopment) of the Caribbean as Europe, America and Canada's food basket and source of cheap raw materials. From this, she pointed out the consequences for the Caribbean peoples of poverty and unemployment, their growing resistance, the heading off of movements both by

direct intervention from the imperialist powers and through the native puppet bourgeois leaderships.

She also outlined the consequences of immigration policies which cynically use West Indians forced to leave the Caribbean through lack of work, as cheap labour for the so-called 'mother' countries. For West Indians, this means facing discrimination at all levels as soon as they set foot in these countries.

This real 'out of the frying pan, into the fire' situation for West Indians has forged them into experiencing the international imperialist and neo-colonial link-up in a particularly direct and extreme way. Organisation here and resistance in the Caribbean therefore have a common and fundamental starting point: that all 'finkering' with the web of imperialism—its economic exploitation, political domination and its consequent racist ideology—

is out.

When Desmond Trotter joined the struggle for liberation in Dominica, he not only took on the puppet regime of Patrick John, but challenged the whole neo-colonialist set-up in the Caribbean and the imperialist powers who have exploited and oppressed its peoples for 400 years. It is with this challenge that we must unite in a solidarity movement of the workers in Britain, for the immediate release of Desmond Trotter, the defence of all victims of repression in the Caribbean, the repeal of all repressive legislation, disbandment of the special police, and for an end to imperialist involvement in the Caribbean and to the neo-colonialist repressive regimes.



Althea Lecointe explains continuing nature of repression in Caribbean

***** WHAT'S ON? *****

SEXISM AND EDUCATION Conference: Saturday 1 March at Nottingham Teachers Centre, Cranmer Street, Nottingham. Workshops include: women and the teaching unions; non-sexist books and teaching materials; gay oppression and education; Working Women's Charter; sex education. Creche and accommodation available. Registration, including discussion papers, 50p (postal orders, etc. payable to T. Pamplini from 18 Corporation Oaks, Nottingham).

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'NATIONALISATION and Workers Control — the Crisis in the Car Industry.' Birmingham IMG public meeting, with speakers Bob Pennington (IMG National Secretary) and IMG carworker from Cowley. Sunday 2 March at 7.30 p.m. in Digbeth Civic Hall, Lecture Theatre 11.

BENGLI FRIENDS in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and *Shani Dal Biplab* (Fourth International paper) contact: Bengali, c/o Internationalen, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

MAYDAY THEATRE'S new anti-fascist play, 'The Adventures of Jack Boot', exposes the myths of everyday life which are the breeding ground for fascism. Discussion after each performance. At Unity Theatre, NW1, on 14, 15 and 16 February, at 7.45, admission 50p. Or contact 223 3419 to book it for your organisation — tour begins 18 February.

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

LEEDS CONFERENCE Against Cuts in Social Expenditure, 8 March all day at Kitson College. Speakers: Joan Maynard MP, Mick O'Shea (T&G shop steward, Kings College Hospital), Geoff Fawcett (secretary Leeds Area NUT). Chairman: Terry Jacques (President Leeds AUEW). Sponsors include: Councillors Ron Sedler and Jim Roche; AUEW District Committee; Leeds Trades Council; Crabtree-Vickers AUEW Shop Stewards' Committee; NUPE No 3 branch; ATTI Liaison Committee, Leeds Poly Students Union. Details from: Conference Secretary, 31 Sissons Terrace, Leeds 10

'SEXISM, SEXUALITY and Class Struggle' — a new pamphlet looking into the crisis in relations between men and women. Includes interview with French women bank workers after their strike last year. Published by Bristol IMG for Red Weekly Fund Drive. Send to K. Kong Corp., c/o Villa Road, London, SW9. 15p single copy, £1 for 10 — inc p & p

WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER Campaign — the London Co-ordinating Committee is holding a general meeting to report on its activities, discuss plans for future work, and hear what Charter groups in London are doing. Saturday 15 February at 2 p.m., University of London Union, Malet Street (Room 2D). Everybody welcome. Please bring reports from your Charter group.

CALGACUS: The Scottish review of politics, current affairs, history and the arts now available. Single issue 40p plus 15p postage and packaging. Annual sub (six issues) £3. Available from West Highland Publishing Company, Breckish, Isle of Skye.

SHEFFIELD RED CIRCLES: Every Wednesday at 7.30 p.m. in the Lion Hotel (corner of the Wicker and Nursery St.).

'THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION': Public meeting organised by Imperial College Persian Society, Monday 17 February at 7 p.m. in Room 542, Mechanical Engineering Department, Imperial College, London, SW7.

AGAINST PRIVATE PRACTICE and the consultants' work-to-rule — picket and rally, Saturday 22 February, 2 p.m. at Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2 outside Royal College of Surgeons. Speakers include Sid Bidwell MP, Brian Nicholson (T&GWU), Jack Collins (NUM), Steve Johnson (NALGD), Bob Pennington (IMG), S Ludlam (ISI).

LATIN AMERICAN conference at Birmingham University Students Union. Saturday 15 February: 'The present problems of the Brazilian dictatorship' 10 a.m.; 'The Mexican presidential elections' 2 p.m. Sunday 16 February: 'The Popular Unity Government in Chile' 10.30 a.m.; 'Chile—the way forward' 2.30 p.m. Accommodation provided.

DAY CONFERENCE: 'Socialist Perspectives on Ireland.' Saturday 15 February, 10 a.m. Speakers: Bob Purdie, Paddy Prenderville, Mervin Metcalfe, Gary Lawless. Chelsea College Soc. Sec., Manresa Rd., SW3 — 01-352 6421 (ext. 109). Organised with the help of TOM.

RED LADDER THEATRE is expanding. Wanted: 1. Actors/Actresses (Equity members preferable) for work in a non-hierarchical touring company, producing its own material and performing for predominantly labour movement audiences. Ability to play instrumentalist an advantage. 2. Administrator/Organiser — labour movement experience, ability to negotiate bookings in labour movement context, all helpful, but also a willingness to participate in other areas of the work (except performance) important. Applications for both jobs in writing by the end of February stating (i) theatrical/administrative and political experience (ii) reasons for interest in this work (iii) when you can start (iv) ability to move out of London to the North by the summer (v) where address was read (vi) telephone number if possible, to 58 Wray Crescent, London N4 (tel. 01-263 10531). All work Equity rates £30 p.w.

UNEMPLOYMENT



Employment Secretary Michael Foot, once the darling of the Labour left, is not having a happy new year. Nor are the steelworkers at the axed Ebbw Vale works in his constituency. Last Friday 6000 of them shouted him down at a mass meeting during a 24-hour protest strike against the phasing out of their works, where half the workforce are due to lose their jobs by 1978.

Mr Foot and the Labour Government have no answer to their problems. Foot told the steelworkers that they had to be 'realistic' and understand that the British Steel Corporation was not going to alter its plans for the industry.

At the same time his colleague—Chancellor Denis Healey—has been waving the sword of mass unemployment over the heads of the working class, threatening the worst if workers refuse to abide by the social contract and take a cut in their living standards.

The attitude of the Labour Government is easy to explain. First they want to put right the problems of capitalism, so that they can then throw a few more crumbs from the table to the working class. Meanwhile jobs are cut, living standards decline and the welfare state crumbles. This is the inevitable result of any policy which seeks a solution to the economic crisis within the framework of the capitalist system.

The working class cannot afford such solutions. The latest unemployment figures available—December 1974—show almost $\frac{1}{2}$ million out of work—an increase of 120,000 in one month. About 150,000 of these are concentrated in the construction industry alone.

Since then Imperial Typewriters has announced 3000 redundancies at its Hull and Leicester factories and a rash of smaller closures have taken place. On 3 February, 420 workers out of a total of 700 at Texas Instruments, Plymouth, were declared redundant with less than half an hour's notice!

But the crisis doesn't just hit workers by creating

outright unemployment. Between November and December the number of workers on short-time more than doubled—from 81,000 to 170,000. Much of this was centred in the vehicle industry where, as early as the week ending 19 October, 18,200 workers were on short time, losing a total of almost $\frac{1}{2}$ million hours between them—an average of 27 hours per worker for the week.

Unemployment has hit some regions like a ton of bricks. In November unemployment nationally was running at a rate of 2.7 per cent but in the North West and Wales it was 3.7 per cent, in Scotland 3.9 per cent, and in the North 4.6 per cent. On Merseyside almost 50,000 workers found themselves without jobs—6 per cent of the workforce.

By this winter, for the second time in recent years, unemployment will pass the million mark. Last time the fight-back was begun by the militancy displayed by the workers who occupied Upper Clyde Shipbuilders in the summer of 1971. This forced the Tory Government to 'rethink' its 'lame-duck' policy whereby whole areas of unprofitable industry were driven to the wall.

Since then workers at IPD, Kirkby have twice occupied to save their jobs. Meanwhile the car giants cannot simply introduce large scale redundancies but have to resort to short time and lay-offs because they fear a wave of factory occupations would hit them.

But if militancy and gut-rejection of unemployment has so far held back the flood by itself, it will not be enough. It is not just a few workers here and there and one or two small unprofitable firms which are now in trouble, but whole sections of industry. Right-wing Labour hack, Brian Walden MP, was actually right when he said that the British car industry can only survive with a much smaller, competitive set up: therefore there must be large-scale closures—if you accept the framework of the capitalist system.

This is the nub of the problem: workers have fought

hard to defend their jobs and living standards but as yet have not begun working out solutions to the crisis which go beyond stop-gap measures in their own plant or industry. Even the left-wing of the Labour Party, tail-ended by the Communist Party, only offers verbal opposition to the Government's policy, combined with dream-world alternatives based on the mistaken belief that the present crisis isn't as serious as the bosses make out. That is why this *Red Weekly* 'Special' gives particular attention to the need for a *working class solution* to the problem of unemployment.

Unemployment is an international problem—and so is the fight against it. British workers can learn a lot from their comrades in other countries.

Although small-scale by comparison to some of the occupations that have taken place in Britain, the struggle launched by 86 workers at the Piron factory in France is *politically* far more advanced. The workers have explicitly stated that they bear no responsibility for the capitalist crisis. They are fighting in defence of their jobs and for workers' control over production, regardless of who manages the factory, and are attempting to link their fight directly with that of other workers fighting unemployment in the area.

In Belgium glassworkers are demanding a shorter working week with no loss of pay under the direction of workers' committees, in reply to the bosses' attempts to carry out sackings, and aim to extend this fight on an international scale. The story of both these important struggles is told inside.

As our final article argues, the defence of jobs can—indeed, to be successful—*must*—be turned into an offensive for *workers' control over production*. Only by planting this seed in the struggles of today, can we tomorrow reap the harvest of a planned, socialist economy: the only solution to the capitalist crisis.

1. THE DAY THEY SACKED THE BOSSES!

Nearly a thousand people live in Bretoncelles, a small French town in Normandy. But no less than 1,500 crammed into the municipal hall for a meeting on Sunday, 19 January. From all over the region, they had come to pledge their support for the fight of 86 workers at the local Piron factory to protect their jobs.

Piron is a small engineering works which sub-contracts for the motor industry - mainly Renault, Simca (Chrysler-France), and Citroen. But as British workers are learning to their cost - when the car industry sneezes, its sub-contractors catch double pneumonia. And there's plenty of it about in France today.

Two months ago the workers at Piron turned up one day to find that there was no heating because the factory had run out of fuel. After a conf-

antly, they discussed how they would be paid during the struggle, and decided not to maintain the old differentials - 'we're all indispensable' - but to give 'to each according to his needs'.

They stressed, however, that they were not going to fall into the trap of setting up a workers' co-operative: 'It's not self-management. It's not co-management. It's simply workers' control'. Piron could appoint anyone he liked to run the factory; but 'we demand the right to check on the running whenever its consequences - no matter the cause - appear to threaten the factory and the workforce.'

What they were saying amounted to this: 'We refuse to carry the cost of your crisis, the capitalist crisis. We're not overly concerned as to what solution you come up with - nationalisation, another boss - to keep the factory open and guarantee our jobs. But be sure that

Furthermore, legal action was pending to force the workers out of the factory. A new tactic was needed. And on 7 January the paper *Quest-France* published the following statement from the struggle committee.

'An action group made up of workers from Bretoncelles, with a view to guaranteeing their means of existence against the closure, has decided to put in a safe place a quantity of components mainly belonging to Renault and CEPEM. These components will be handed back if the factory is kept open and employment guaranteed.'

They had smuggled ten tons of components out of the factory as ransom for their jobs!

OCCUPIED

The same day police intervention was threatened and the workers decided to leave the factory peacefully. But they were not downhearted - next morning they occupied the town hall instead. 'You say it's a public building', they told the police. 'That's all right - we are the public'.

Meanwhile the local officials of the CFDT union federation - to which most of the Piron workers belong - came to plead with them to return their ransom. After all, according to bourgeois legality it was not their property. But the workers were rather more interested in workers' legality - the right to defend their interests by any means open to them. The officials left empty-handed.

On 9 January, however, the Piron workers decided to change their quarters again, and - with the grudging agreement of the council - moved into the municipal hall. Then began the work of turning interest into active support, showing the relevance of their own struggle to other workers faced with the same threat of unemployment.

CUT-PRICE

Already by the beginning of January a couple of support committees had been set up in the nearby towns, while the local peasants were supplying cut-price provisions. Ten days later the number of support committees - formed by trade unionists in various industries together with representatives of political groups - had grown to more than 15. A central meeting was held with delegates from each, and it was decided to organise, along with the struggle committee, a mass rally at Bretoncelles on 19 January.

The rally was a huge success. Confident of widespread support, the mass meeting of Piron workers the following morning then took a vital and unprecedented decision: *to work actively towards the co-ordination of all struggles against unemployment in the region.*

A special 'liaison' commission was elected and at once checked through the newspapers to see which factories were already affected. Four were noted, and next morning teams set off to leaflet them. Drawing the lessons of Piron the text concluded:

'We denounce the chronic inability of the capitalist system to satisfy our elementary needs. The workers of Bretoncelles want to make contact with you - we must co-ordinate our struggles. The victory of the workers depends on it.'

RESPONSE

The response from one factory - Radiac in Briare, occupied since October - was immediately favourable. The others wanted time to think it over. But next day came news of 75 redundancies at a fifth factory, Fils Lastex in Conde. They agreed at once to link their struggle to those of Piron and Radiac. The first concrete steps had been taken towards building a united struggle against unemployment in the region.

HOW TO FIGHT IT

MARTIN METZ
struggles now
employment in
which are rich
ish labour mov

& how to stab the workers

Amidst all these unprecedented moves to turn a small, defensive struggle into an offensive struggle against the capitalist system which has produced this crisis, there has been one consistently sour note - from the French Communist Party.

Scared out of their wits that the workers in struggle might establish their own solution to the crisis rather than wait patiently for the 'Union of the Left' (the electoral alliance of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party) to win a majority in parliament, no slander or manoeuvre has been too low for them in their efforts to discredit the Piron workers.

Among other things, the latter have been accused in a press statement by the (trap district committee of the U.G.T. - the union federation controlled by the Communist Party - of 'playing the game of the big bourgeoisie'. This statement 'warned the workers and people against any appeal... coming from so-called support committees', and went on to note that 'throughout the Piron affair there have appeared irresponsible outside agitators of various origins, chiefly and in particular to the big bourgeoisie'.

Seldom can the logic of the CP's 'anti-monopoly alliance' have been expressed more clearly. If your main aim is to reach an alliance with the small-to-medium capitalists against

the big capitalists, then your main aim must be a 'pro-

The response by a mass meeting of workers... For a factory and of support committees, is a good sign in the struggle.

In addition, have been sent involvement in have also been workers is being (the paper of the section of the

but such groups still been unaffiliated members from own eyes, and



Workers at Piron - work went on as usual, but without the boss

ronation in the office of the boss, Mr Piron senior, they were told that he was filing a petition for bankruptcy.

For the moment they went back to work, but then one of the workers noticed a lorry loaded up with machinery and about to leave the factory. The workers seized the lorry and then went to see Piron again. 'Withdraw your bankruptcy petition and guarantee our hours and wages, and you can have your machinery back', they told him. But he refused, so the workers prepared to fight in earnest, setting up a struggle committee to represent all the workers - unionised, non-unionised and managerial staff.

The next day, 13 December, Piron announced that he was suspending the payment of wages. The response of the struggle committee was immediate: 'Faced with the cynicism and uselessness of the bosses... the workers have decided to get rid of the Piron, father and son from the factory.' They had sacked the bosses!

PUBLICITY

For the time being, however, they carried on production. They did this not because they believed they could run the factory in their own interests under capitalism, but as a means of advancing their struggle. It won enormous publicity for them in the local and national press, and by finishing off some uncompleted orders they got money to put towards their wages.

They also used this opportunity to challenge in practice the whole capitalist organisation of work, and hint at how it could be organised in a different type of society. Showing that the workers could do perfectly well without the boss - though not the other way round - they decided to cut down the inhuman work-rate, and to ban night-working. Most import-

we'll make it so hot for you that you'll have no alternative but to come up with a solution. What's more, we also intend to establish our own means of control over the running of the factory to make sure that no decisions are taken which could harm our interests.'

And as a first step towards this, a mass meeting elected four of their number - subject to immediate recall - to look into all aspects of the financial management. This 'financial control' commission took its place alongside others already established to popularise the struggle, organise fund-raising, etc.



But the continuation of production was only a short-term tactic aimed at winning publicity and support for their struggle. While the Lip workers could finance their struggle for months by making and selling watches to the general public, the market for car components is much more limited - and the car giants were only prepared to buy on terms which would cripple the ability of the workers to continue the struggle.



W

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WARD looks at two
waged against un-
rance and Belgium
lessons for the Brit-
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any revolt by workers against the
reviously exploitative they may be
in the interests of the big bourgeoisie?
Piron workers, unanimously approved
very much to the point:
at can be "hoped" for is to divide the
CGT is above all the militants in the
The composition of these "so-called"
which militants of the CGT play a major
guarantee for us of the necessary unity
the bourgeoisie...
of committees of the Communist Party
from head office warning them off
led by an extreme leftist'. Rumours
spread that money sent to the Piron
to produce leaflets advertising *Rouge*
Revolutionary Communist League, French
International).
ies and outright sectarianism have
to deter a number of local CP
ing to believe the evidence of their
an active role in the support committees.

they have in the last instance remain-
ed isolated and defensive because of
their reliance on 'pure trade union'
solidarity.
Support is demanded—and general-
ly given—but any criticism or advice
as to tactics is treated as 'none of
your business'. Small wonder then,
that many have ended in defeat and
none has succeeded in posing even the
beginnings of a class-wide workers'
solution to the crisis.

AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

The Piron experience, whatever its
final outcome, has already demonstrat-
ed one crucial element for any broad
offensive against unemployment—that
the fullest discussion and criticism in
the working class movement is needed
on how to fight that struggle and how
to apply and develop its methods
more generally.
Even if we learn only that from
Piron, we will have opened up a whole
new world of struggle in the fight ag-
ainst unemployment today.



Gilly workers man the gates to the factory: no doubt who is in control here

TEN FACTORIES to be closed
down within a year. That was the
ambitious target that the giant
French-based multi-national comp-
any BSN recently set for itself.
But it counted without the work-
ers at the Gilly plant of its Belgian
glass-making subsidiary, Glaverbel.
Glaverbel-Gilly has been a thorn in
BSN's side since the day the multi-
national took over Glaverbel in 1972.
For the new bosses were confronted
by a newly elected workers' leader-
ship organised around a class struggle
bulletin 'The New Defence'. The in-
coming convenor was Andre Henry
—a leading member of the Revolu-
tionary Workers' League (LRT—Bel-
gian section of the Fourth Internation-
al.

The workers' first taste of struggle
was not long delayed. In February
1973 the multi-national bosses de-
cided to victimise this new leadership
before its influence could spread. Im-
agine their horror when the workers
responded by launching an immediate
occupation-strike. The struggle was
led by an elected strike committee re-
sponsible to mass meetings of the work-
ers. Within a week, the bosses crum-
bled.

The value of workers' democracy
had been well and truly shown. But
another lesson for the future had al-
so been learned. In the general strike
of 1960-61, the workers had simply
walked out, leaving the furnaces to
cool. As a result management was able
to lay them off for six months on
the pretext of repairing the machinery.

ALTERNATIVE

This time the workers hit on an al-
ternative—to carry on production, but
to produce glass of non-standard speci-
fications which would therefore be
unsaleable. The first steps towards
workers control had been taken.

The experience of this brief occu-
pation-strike was soon to bear rich
fruits. The glassworkers began to pre-
pare for their 1974 pay claim. Once ag-
ain the bosses tried to get in first by
sacking a militant at the Multipane fac-
tory.

This time the response was absolut-
ely electrifying. More than ten factor-
ies were occupied in early May, most-
ly with their own strike committees;
and for the first time in Belgium since
1932 a regional strike committee,
chaired by Andre Henry, was establish-
ed to co-ordinate the workers' offen-
sive. After three weeks of struggle the
bosses once more had no alternative
but to give way on all the strikers' de-
mands.

So when BSN announced massive
redundancies at its Glaverbel factories
in November—as part of a general
scheme to 'rationalise' its glass-making
activities, also involving closures in
Germany, France and Italy—the work-
ers were in a good position to launch
their own counter-attack.

A control committee elected at the
the Gilly plant rapidly produced facts
and figures for an 'open letter' to BSN-
Glaverbel exposing the multi-national's
manoeuvres for all to see. They reveal-
ed how rather than reinvesting its pro-

fits from glass-making in new technol-
ogical processes, BSN was systemat-
ically siphoning them all into another
side of its operations: food products.
Between 1971 and 1973 the food pro-
ducts sector as a percentage of the
whole grew from 34% to 52%, while
glass-making declined from 43% to
35%.
They also showed how BSN had
ruthlessly stepped up the exploitation
of its workers in this drive for short-
term profits. Through natural wastage
the size of the whole Glaverbel work-

Belgian TUC) to the establishment of
a Regional Action Committee, which
called the first of a series of demon-
strations in Gilly just before Christmas.
Soon after Christmas came further
details of the proposed redundancies.
Surprise, surprise, BSN announced
that the Gilly plant, with 600 jobs,
was to be closed completely as from
31 January. Get rid of the militant
Gilly workers, they figured, and we
can soon deal with the rest. Perhaps
—but the problem was how to get rid
of the Gilly workers.

2. FIGHTING THE MULTINATIONALS - IT CAN BE DONE

force had been allowed to drop by
14.2% in less than three years, while
the work-rate had been increased to
such an extent that the average pro-
ductivity per worker had risen by 30%
in the last year alone.

As a result the 'control committee'
were able to show how the Glaverbel
redundancies were closely connected
with BSN's closure of glass-making fac-
ories in other countries, and the need
to wage a united fight around this
question. They also projected that
BSN might well be aiming to divest
itself of its whole glass-making sector
now, and hinted that the British firm
Pilkington's might be possible buyers.

Armed with this information, the
Glaverbel workers began the campaign
to save their jobs. Their first success
was to win the agreement of the Char-
leroi area leadership of the General Fed-
eration of Belgian Workers (FGTB—

Hardly had the impending closure
been announced than an occupation
committee was set up to make sure
that the bosses didn't get up to any
tricks like sabotaging the machinery.
Then the shop stewards went to see
the local leaders of the FGFB and de-
manded that an extraordinary area
conference of delegates from all af-
filiated sections be convened at once
to discuss the struggle.

The bureaucrats agreed, the stew-
ards reported back to a mass meeting
and confident now of widespread lo-
cal backing, the Gilly workers voted
on 15 January for an all-out strike.

Their demands were the following:

- *No redundancies, no rationalisation
- *Installation of the float glass process at Gilly to guarantee work not only in the factory but also for the 4,000 workers in manufacturing supplied by Gilly
- *Nationalisation of Glaverbel under work-

ers.
It is nearly 90 years now since the
first initiative to co-ordinate glasswork-
ers' action on an international scale—a
conference of delegates from Britain,
France, Belgium, Italy and the USA—
was organised by the Knights of Lab-
our, American exponents of industri-
al unionism. On that occasion trade union
organisation was still weak, and the
employers combined to smash it.

Today, however, the working class
movement has never been stronger.
By their action the Gilly workers have
laid the basis for an international fight
in defence of jobs. Against the at-
tempts by the capitalists to reinforce
their rule through such European-wide
institutions as the Common Market,
the Belgian glass workers are now pos-
ing an alternative—a workers' solution
to the capitalist crisis through co-ordin-
ated international action.



Gilly workers discuss the next step in their struggle: workers' democracy in action

ers' control with no compensation if BSN
refuses to guarantee jobs and install a float
glass line
*A reduction in the working week to 36
hours or less with no loss of pay.

SMASH UNEMPLOYMENT

by Mick Gosling

TONY BENN MUST OFTEN FEEL HE IS THE NEW SAVIOUR. AS CLOSURES increase, and unemployment grows the number of deputations of local MPs, full-time union officials and shop stewards' committees visiting his office has increased from a trickle to a flood.

Their plea is always the same—'save our jobs'. So far Meriden, the Scottish Daily News and Kirkby Manufacturing and Engineering Company Limited (formerly IPD) have begun their long and painful conversion into workers' co-operatives. Now the workers of Imperial Typewriters are demanding action to save over 3,000 jobs at its Hull and Leicester factories.

When Benn's Industry Bill becomes law, with its provisions to dispense £1,000 million of state aid, the queues of desperate workers and bankrupt businessmen will grow longer.

For the first time since the heady days of the workers' occupation of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders in the summer of 1971, the problem of unemployment and how to fight it is becoming a central question in the workers' movement.

The response of the Labour left has been limited to a verbal attack on unemployment by the 77 MPs who are members of the Tribune group. However, their campaign for an 'entirely new' economic strategy to defeat unemployment accepts the argument of the social contract that workers may have to accept a fall in the real value of wages in order to protect jobs and other aspects of living standards. This argument has also been accepted by the 'leaders' of the TUC.

VAGUE TALK

Despite their vague talk of turning the social contract into a 'Socialist Contract', the Tribunes are unable to provide any solution on how to combat unemployment. Such a solution requires the sort of anti-capitalist plan which would not only bring them into head-on collision with the Labour Government's social contract, but also with the institutions of capitalist rule like Parliament and the state machine.

Chancellor Healey's next budget will probably contain a series of deflationary measures which will further increase unemployment, but Tribune's opposition will remain at the level of verbal protest.

Relying on local 'left' MPs and full-time union officials to take action against closures is the road to disaster. At Imperial Typewriters these people failed to even get their projected lobby of parliament off the ground. With only a few days to redundancy plans going into operation things look grim. The first step to fight closures is the immediate occupation of the factories. If anything is likely to screw money out of government departments it is mass militant action, not pressure politics and pleas for mercy.

Occupations are a central method of struggle in fighting unemployment. They can prevent the movement of valuable machinery, give access to the company's books for trade union inspection, and provide a militant focus from which to campaign for solidarity action throughout the labour movement. By involving the mass of workers and operating through democratically elected strike committees, occupations unite the workers involved in the most effective method of struggle against factory closure.

BIG FAILING

A big failing of the recent national meeting of 400 British Leyland shop stewards, which voted for nationalisation along with confused ideas of 'workers' participation' was the lack of report-backs to mass meetings in the plants. This allowed the Labour right-wing, headed by Harold Wilson

himself, to intervene over the heads of the shop stewards. Wilson threatened shopfloor workers that unless they cut out strikes to defend work practices and union strength, then mass redundancies would follow. For an effective fight against redundancies the full involvement of workers in working out policy and action at all levels is essential.

Every time a closure is announced a united chorus of 'nationalise it' goes up from the Tribune group leftwards. This demand is so popular because although it appears extremely militant it has always been a part of social democratic ideology. 'Workers

class, it should make the cash available to make sure that they are run in the interests of the working class, and not the capitalists who, complaining bitterly about £4 million being given to the workers' co-ops, receive £2 million a day in state hand-outs.

When the Ryder Commission reports it will probably recommend that at least £50 million or more of state aid be given to prop up British Leyland's crumbling fortunes, while at the same time insisting on lower staffing levels, speed-up and the wholesale chopping of the workforce. Opposing hand-outs to private industry, trade unionists should demand the nationalisation of all firms declaring redundancies with guarantees of no loss of jobs—this to be enforced by the workers.

No compensation should be paid to the former owners. Compensation just increases the power of the capitalist class by giving its members money to invest in more profitable sections of the economy. Such money should

practice in the present struggles, through workers control.

Take a relatively simple problem like 'no job-loss' guarantees. Who enforces it—the workers or the management? The shop stewards should not only keep watch on the management but carry out their own work study in order to lighten the load of various jobs, force the management to take on extra labour and reduce the number of unemployed outside the factory. This would also allow a permanent reduction in the length of the working week and the abolition of night- and shift-working except in industries where the workers considered this impossible.

In factories and industries already hit by short-time working—a thinly disguised form of unemployment—the stewards should make their own calculations of the amount of work available and divide it up amongst the workforce with no loss of pay. For the unemployed the demand should be 'work or full maintenance'

as many workers. This is a productivity-increase of 80 per cent! The workers have also agreed to end 'restrictive practices', end the piece-work system and have paid back their redundancy money.

What the workers had refused to concede to the previous boss, and fought several militant strikes over before the closure was first announced has now been eagerly conceded.

Secondly, if the workers' co-ops flop completely this could demoralise workers about the possibility of controlling their working lives and discredit the idea of workers' control. What if the workers at Imperial Typewriters established a workers' co-operative and found that the bottom really had dropped out of the world typewriter market? Similarly, car workers know very well that it is the world slump in the car market which is at the root of the present crisis in the British car industry.

Given this the position of the Communist Party on the crisis in British Leyland is a scandal. A recent issue of the *Morning Star* (3/2/75) called for complete nationalisation under workers participation: 'Overall responsibility for policy and planning should be invested in a single committee which comprises: representatives of the BLMC workforce; delegates from the official trade union movement; government nominees and a strong voice from the local community.'

This is quite like the 'troika' system that operated in industry in the Soviet Union after the revolution. But what the *Morning Star* 'forgot' was that capitalism had been overthrown in the Soviet Union, whereas British Leyland will still be operating in the capitalist market, even if it is completely nationalised.

The CP policy, if adopted, would lead carworkers to making the rope for their own necks. What is true for carworkers is true for workers throughout industry. Even where a market still exists the products produced are often of no use to workers now, or would only be necessary in an adapted form under a planned, socialist economy.

In an industry like cars, where pollution and wastage of energy resources are important questions, the first moves must be taken by national stewards' meetings to draw up an overall plan to use the machinery and the workers' skills in socially useful ways. Workers' control over production must be used not only to defend jobs, but also to put the resources of industry at the service of the working class.

With 150,000 construction workers on the dole and the NHS, the education system, and the social services falling apart for lack of facilities and staff, a valuable programme of public works could be initiated by Labour councils in agreement with the unions involved.

Where money is not available the Labour Government should be forced to use state cash to finance projects which are clearly in the interests of the working class. As an alternative to the anarchy of capitalism, schools, houses and hospitals could be built with the resources available in a socially useful way, instead of giving more state hand-outs to bankrupt capitalist firms in the false belief that this maintains employment.

The imposition of such a workers' solution to the capitalist crisis would both combat unemployment and defend living standards. It would also unite the whole class and open the way for the future planned, socialist society.



control' is religiously tagged on to it by the International Socialists and the Workers Revolutionary Party in the belief that the magical incantation of this formula gives it added meaning. Meanwhile, they appeal to us to come and join the party. Unfortunately the working class can't wait until these gentlemen finish building the correct 'political leadership' before it starts to defend its jobs.

By itself nationalisation does not imply a break from the anarchy of the capitalist market towards a planned economy. Hence both reformists and revolutionaries can call for it.

The ruling class was willing for important areas of the economy to be nationalised after the Second World War when it was no longer possible for private industry to make a profit out of coal and railways. Private industry was thus guaranteed the continuation of energy and transport at cheap prices.

DIFFERENT MATTER

Bankrupt firms are a different matter. We demand nationalisation of all firms declaring redundancies not because it is better for the capitalists' state rather than private firms to run certain industries, but to guarantee jobs.

The Labour Government must nationalise these firms and, seeing it was elected on the votes of the working

class, it should make the cash available to make sure that they are run in the interests of the working class, and not the capitalists who, complaining bitterly about £4 million being given to the workers' co-ops, receive £2 million a day in state hand-outs.

When the Ryder Commission reports it will probably recommend that at least £50 million or more of state aid be given to prop up British Leyland's crumbling fortunes, while at the same time insisting on lower staffing levels, speed-up and the wholesale chopping of the workforce. Opposing hand-outs to private industry, trade unionists should demand the nationalisation of all firms declaring redundancies with guarantees of no loss of jobs—this to be enforced by the workers.

WORKERS' CONTROL

Workers' control over production is the key link in this process. It is not just super-militant trade unionism as the International Socialists suggest. Recently (*Socialist Worker* in an article headlined 'What Nationalisation Means,' 8/2/75) they wrote 'the successful day-to-day struggle to resist management attempts to change work practices and reduce manning levels, would give workers a greater deal of control than the [workers'] co-operatives ever could. Workers' control is thus presented by IS as a purely defensive reaction to management attacks. It boils down to saying—after nationalisation, trade unionism as usual.

It is not enough to launch arguments and ideas, as IS suggest, for an alternative to the anarchy of capitalist production. The seeds of this alternative have to be sown in

—capitalism created the crisis and capitalism can pay for it.

CO-OPS

It is only by putting across an active, offensive concept of workers' control, as opposed to defensive measures that remain at the level of militant trade unionism, that it is possible to cut across the illusory appeal of workers' co-operatives.

These have caught the imagination of many trade unionists because they appear to offer working people control over the major part of their everyday life. It is perfectly true that you can run factories without the bosses. But no matter what happens inside the factory, outside it will still have to compete on the same capitalist market which sends firms bankrupt in the first place.

This will give rise to two results. In the first place the drive to compete on the capitalist market will re-assert itself inside the factory. This is what has happened at NVT Meriden, where the projected workforce of the co-operative is 800, less than half of the original 1750 strong labour force.

While in occupation the workers carried out modifications on the major product, the Triumph Bonneville 750 'twin', to allow sales on the American market. Production will be 24,000 bikes a year—nearly the old production figures—but with half

FOR WORKERS' CONTROL!

Spain-where trade unionism is a crime

SOMETIME THIS WEEK the Spanish courts are due to hear the appeal of ten workers' leaders against the vicious prison sentences that were meted out to them fifteen months ago.

Imprisoned in the notorious Carabanchel prison in Madrid since June 1972 (the Spanish dictatorship took almost 18 months to bring them to trial), the Carabanchel Ten are presently serving prison sentences ranging from 12 to 20 years.

The only crime of which they have been convicted is trade unionism. In Spain the only 'unions' which are permitted are phony state-run bodies designed to obstruct genuine working class struggle. Any attempt at independent organisation is dealt with by the police, judges and jailers of the dictatorship.

Despite this repressive regime, the struggles of Spanish workers have been mounting over the past few years, until today Spain has one of the highest strike rates in the world — in a country where almost all strikes are illegal!

This resistance would not have been possible were it not for the workers' commissions — permanent



Glasgow demonstration in support of the 'Carabanchel Ten': the British workers' movement must take up their cause

organisations created by the workers themselves to lead and coordinate their struggles. The 'Carabanchel Ten' were accused of taking part in the proceedings of the General Coordinating Committee of the Workers' Commissions.

They came up for trial in Decem-

ber 1973 in the wake of the assassination of Spain's Prime Minister, Carrero Blanco, which was followed by a big repressive drive by the dictatorship against the workers' movement. Their sentences were part of that attack.

But today the situation is very

different — it is the workers' movement which is on the offensive. The past few months have been an almost unbroken period of industrial struggle over both material and political demands. Throughout the Basque region hundreds of thousands of workers have taken up the cause of the political prisoners in the dictatorship's jails, many of whom are on hunger strike demanding an immediate amnesty for them all. Despite the personal risk involved, almost a quarter of a million Spaniards have signed a petition in solidarity with the political prisoners, and calling for an immediate amnesty.

FERMENT

This ferment is affecting all sorts of different social groups. Just last week, Madrid's theatres were shut down as actors and actresses went on strike to back up demands that they be allowed to freely elect their own trade union representatives (a demand raised earlier this year by striking Barcelona car workers). Just prior to that, some 500 civil servants — including several top officials — presented a petition to the Government calling for political reforms.

However, there are several signs that the regime is launching a new repressive drive, directed particularly against the revolutionary left. This may be in preparation for the granting of some political concessions, which the dictatorship does not want its left-wing opponents to take advantage of. Two of a group of left wing independent militants arrested at the end of last year — building workers' leader Antonio Duran and women's movement activist Eva Forest — are reported to be coming to trial shortly on a totally trumped-up charge of having been involved in the Carrero Blanco assassination. The public prosecutor has apparently demanded the death sentence twice over for them!

The case of the Carabanchel Ten, and that of Forest and Duran — along with that of all Spanish political prisoners — must be taken up by the workers' movement in this country as it was last Saturday in Glasgow when Spanish militants, socialists, and trade unionists marched in support of the Carabanchel Ten.

The Exterior Delegation of the Workers' Commissions in London has asked for letters and petitions in support of the 'Carabanchel Ten' to be sent to the Supreme Court or the Spanish Embassy. These can be sent to: President of the Supreme Court, Palacio de Justicia, Plaza de las Salinas, Madrid, Spain; or The Ambassador, Spanish Embassy, 24 Belgrave Square, London SW1

In the London area, solidarity with Spanish political prisoners is being organised by the Spanish Solidarity Committee (SSC) which can be contacted through Sue Fox, Secretary SSC, Students Union.

Portuguese workers defy CP, march for jobs

LAST FRIDAY more than 10,000 workers demonstrated in the Portuguese capital of Lisbon against rising unemployment and Portugal's involvement in the imperialist NATO alliance.

The demonstration took place at a time when NATO forces were engaged in joint manoeuvres with the Portuguese military, and the Government had placed a ban on all demonstrations.

The demonstrators marched through the city centre of Lisbon, bearing slogans such as 'Unemployment — no; the right to work — yes', 'Overtime — no; reduced hours — yes', 'Against redundancies — unity of the working class', 'No to unemployment — down with capitalism', 'Death to capitalism — out with imperialism' and 'Out with NATO — national independence'.

At one point the demonstrators found their way blocked by an armoured column of the army's security force, but after discussion with the column's commander the demonstration was allowed to continue on its way.

Taking part in the demonstration were workers from more than forty Lisbon factories, and representatives from a number of revolutionary socialist organisations, including the International Communist League, Portuguese sympathising organisation of the Fourth International.

The call for the demonstration came initially from the workers in an electrical engineering multi-national, EFACED-INEL, who have been carrying on a militant and highly organised fight against redundancies in their firm since last July. At the end of January the EFACED-INEL workers' bulletin published an editorial complaining that the two demonstrations planned for 31 January by the Communist Party and the Socialist Party (which did not take place anyway because of a Government ban)

Este jornal é dos trabalhadores!! Nunca pertenceu a minorias ou grupos, nunca pertenceu!! A tua colaboração é absolutamente necessária. A tua experiência e tua consciência de trabalhador aquilo que sabes do tempo de que vivemos — o jornal precisa disso tudo e espera... No momento em que a notícia se cobre com a capa da democracia e recomeça a desferir os seus golpes, um jornal aberto a todos os trabalhadores, e a todos os instrumentos de educação e de união entre eles.

jornal da greve 32
(suspensa) dos trabalhadores da Efaced/Inel Lisboa 11-11-74

Participa activamente na discussão dos artigos do jornal!!!

Plenário na "Voz do Operário."

Weekly bulletin produced by the EFACED-INEL workers: they issued call for action

were not taking up the main problems affecting workers.

They condemned the organisers of both demonstrations as being just concerned with 'the conquest of places in the state apparatus... in order to better serve capital', and reported that a number of rank-and-file workers' commissions were calling a demonstration against 'unemployment and its origin in the capitalist system'. They urged the immediate formation of 'committees in every factory which can, through wall newspapers, expose all redundancies, all deterioration in living standards, all the misery and all the oppression which the bourgeoisie impose on the workers'.

The big response which the call from these workers received throughout the Lisbon working class shows that an increasing number of Portuguese workers are determined to take action to tackle their problems, and indicates that there is a real possibility that future struggles will be united and coordinated on a much broader scale than has happened previously.

It shows that an important section of workers are beginning to strike out independently of the Communist Party (who had nothing to do with this demonstration), even though the CP have recently taken something of a left turn, at least talking about the Portuguese proletariat being 'ready for socialism', even though they are not doing anything about it.

The demonstration also shows just how weak the capitalist state machine has become in Portugal: the ruling class is unable to place any serious barrier in the way of the mass struggle. It is this which makes the final fact even more important — the growing ability of sections of the revolutionary left to link up with the most militant workers and give their political ideas some real mass force.

We can now expect all the hysterical screams about 'civil war' and 'communist takeover' to double in volume as the international ruling class gets a whiff of what is, for them, a real disaster — the possibility of a workers' takeover.

A Sense of Our History

16 FEBRUARY, 1848: The Communist Manifesto, written by Marx and Engels, was first published. This seminal work of the world workers' movement was drafted for the Communist League Congress of the same year, which never took place because of the outbreak of revolution across Europe.

In this manifesto, all the main elements of Marxist thought were brought together in a simple, popularised form: the theory of the state — 'The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie'; international division of labour — 'The bourgeoisie has through its exploitation of the world market given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country; and the necessary growth of the proletariat as the next revolutionary class — 'Not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons — the modern working class — the proletarians.'

The second main advance of this revolutionary manifesto was its evolution of a theory of the revolutionary party as the international generator of revolutionary knowledge, and the centralising focus of working class interests on a world scale. Lastly the manifesto stressed the necessary internationalism of the working class, its common interests, in the famous slogan which has struck fear into the ruling class of the world wherever it has been acted upon: 'Workers of the World Unite!'

13 FEBRUARY, 1839: The first manifesto of the Chartist Convention was issued which demanded Universal Suffrage (one man, one vote) for the people of Britain plus other radical reforms of Parliament. This Charter and the unsuccessful ten-year struggle for its acceptance was one of the most exemplary periods of near-revolutionary struggle of the British working class.

In 1832, the workers had been betrayed by the Whigs, a bourgeois party whose Reform Bill of that year solved none of the workers' problems. As a result, the Chartist movement was an independent working class movement, which organised itself around petitions initially but then went on to more offensive forms of action. 1839 saw the first phase of mass rallies, processions and threatened insurrection, interspersed with increasing attacks by the army and frequent arrests of leaders — ending in defeat.

During the next two years it reorganised in an industrial context, with mass strikes across the North of England — at that time in the grip of a periodic slump. This strike movement for the demands of the Charter was also defeated. But Chartistism was still not smashed and the campaign was resurrected in 1847-8, only to be brutally and finally defeated in a reign of terror inflicted by a ruling class fearful of the revolutionary developments all over Europe in that year.

But the heroism, the example and the lessons live on of this, the first national independent political movement of the working class in the whole of Europe.

18 FEBRUARY, 1961: The Committee of 100 started the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, which was the first sustained movement of direct action in Britain since the 1930s. Four thousand people surrounded the Ministry of Defence, adopting a policy of civil disobedience, and 828 were carried away by the police to be fined £1 each.

The CND, although extra-parliamentary, showed the intense debate going on inside the Labour Party at that time over the issue between the right and left. During the early '60s the campaign mobilised thousands of people in its marches from London to the Weapons Research Centre at Aldermaston, and though its narrow, almost apolitical character led to its demise in the changed conditions of the middle '60s, it gave many of today's political activists their first taste of mass mobilisation.

IS STUDENTS REPLY TO CALL FOR OPEN FORUM

A month ago *Red Weekly* published the text of an 'Open Letter' issued by IMG students to all revolutionaries and militants in the student movement. This proposed that an Open Forum be held in Birmingham on 23 February to discuss how to develop an effective, working unity among the groups and individuals who see the need for a new leadership in the National Union of Students.

A reply to this initiative from the student organisation of the International Socialists, the National Organisation of IS Societies (NOISS) has now been received by the IMG. It is printed below together with our comments.

REPLY TO THE CALL FOR AN OPEN FORUM.....

We welcome the proposals put forward by the IMG to the NOISS for a degree of unity. It is important that unnecessary splits in the revolutionary left which can be exploited by either the Broad Left or the right are avoided.

Unity at all costs however, is not something we can support but rather leave to the Communist Party. We understand the call for an open forum to be another attempt to found a broad student organisation, whose principal platform is opposition to the majority on the NUS Executive and the Broad Left. Unfortunately all previous attempts have been dismal failures in seriously challenging the Broad Left and in relating to the mass of students. There is no reason to suppose that a fresh attempt will overcome any of the problems.

The specific proposals put forward are a joint slate for the NUS elections and a revolutionary contingent on NUS demonstrations.

As regards the letter, we feel that this would be a mistake. The job of revolutionaries is to intervene within the contingents from their own colleges and not to separate themselves from those open to their ideas. Whilst we support this idea for demonstrations for which political organisations are the main force (Ireland, Anti-Fascist), we oppose it for NUS demonstrations in the same way we oppose the idea for demos with largely Trade Union delegations (the recent Shrewsbury demo).

We are also opposed to a joint slate for the NUS elections, and believe it represents a misunderstanding of how revolutionaries should operate in the

student movement. For us the key is work amongst rank and file students in the colleges. This cannot be done on simply an anti-Broad Left basis as you suggest. Revolutionaries must try and involve a periphery in political activity and intervene in student struggles. This necessitates work not just around NUS since it is a small minority who are remotely interested in NUS elections, but in propaganda and agitation on a whole range of issues.

But this is not sufficient. We need to relate student disputes to the class struggle. This cannot be done by resolutions nor by declarations of intent. The link has to be provided to a living organisation inside the working class.

That is why ninety IS Societies exist in every sector of education. In a non-sectarian atmosphere we attempt to win students to revolutionary politics and involve them in activities of the IS Societies and the local IS branches.

A joint slate at a national level which was not represented at base would be a fundamental mistake. We are only interested in winning elections in as far as they represent our real strength in the colleges. Anything else is a substitute for the vital task of fighting for our ideas amongst rank and file students. Those elected would not be answerable. That is why we will fight the NUS elections as members of NOISS.

We therefore reject the proposal for this anti-Broad Left alliance. We do not feel that it will benefit any tendency nor the left as a whole. We welcome discussion on resolutions and specific campaigns at national and local level. In particular on the campaigns around Ireland and repression in Eastern Europe, and resolutions for the Easter conference we

are willing to discuss with the IMG and any individual socialists in order to achieve the maximum useful unity.

IMG STUDENT COMMISSION REPLY TO THE NOISS

Our proposals for joint discussions between the organisations of the revolutionary left and any independent socialist students are not based on a conception of 'unity at all costs' nor do we see it as an 'attempt to found a broad student organisation'.

We, like the IS, see that unity around a full programme for students is not at present possible because many differences

exist amongst revolutionary students. The proposals we make take this into account.

We are proposing a single revolutionary slate at the Llandudno NUS conference and a revolutionary contingent on the next national NUS demonstration. These specific proposals are put at this time because of the totally inadequate response of the Broad Left leadership to the needs of students who are attempting to defend their living standards during the present severe economic and social crisis.

Despite the failings of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Students Unions (LCDSU) it did show that if revolutionary students unite around specific initiatives it is possible to make a big impact on the mass of students. The most outstanding example was in 1972 when the LCDSU led five thousand students, from a NUS demonstration to the National Coal Board in solidarity with the miners strike.

The function of a revolutionary contingent would be to organise similar actions. We agree with the IS that this is a tactical question depending upon the impact it makes upon the mass

ment won last year, management will then be able to screen the men they want to re-hire and control the rate at which this is done. If they succeed the rule will of course be 'scabs first - militants never'.

There is another problem: after a break of four weeks men may lose continuity of employment and the employer his legal liability to make future redundancy payments covering previous employment. This gives bosses a marked preference for those employees who have worked the shortest time with the firm. The casualisation of the industry will greatly strengthen the hand of management in the new negotiations on which so much depends. While they are unlikely to achieve their full aims they will have succeeded to the extent that their ability to break workers' continuity of employment goes unchallenged.

This single example shows that a workers' solution cannot be reached plant by plant. Workers must combine to impose their demands on the industry as a whole. The manoeuvres of Bredero-Price show the necessity of workers having direct access to company books and contracting information at all times, and the need for link-ups through combine committees and to utilise this information in defence of jobs and union organisation and to improve conditions. The workers must begin to organise the industry if they are not to be disorganised by it. Only through such organisation can the demand for full nationalisation of the industry under workers control be given force, and a real fight to smash the oil monopolies' power be launched.

Edinburgh IMG

of students. It is precisely the favourable situation that exists for revolutionaries inside the colleges that makes such a move possible today. For it is only by waging a systematic campaign for support at a local level that a national revolutionary contingent would have any chance of success.

When we look at the recent events in the colleges we see that much joint work has been undertaken. In all the outstanding struggles revolutionary students have played a leading role - Essex, Kent, Birmingham, Leeds, etc. IS, IMG and independent socialist students have supported basic action programmes that differ completely with the strategy and tactics of the Communist Party. In many colleges - for example, Oxford, Sussex, and Warwick - joint candidates have been stood for local student union elections. At national conferences IS and IMG students have jointly argued for 'troops out of Ireland', 'no platform for fascists by any means', and for a militant policy to oppose victimisations.

We are suggesting that a joint slate nationally would be represented at the base and would back up the leadership revolutionary students have provided locally.

The unity we are proposing is specific and principled. We think there is, or could be, agreement on the grants and cuts campaign; Ireland; Soviet dissidents; and opposition to the social contract. We would not impose demands like the sliding scale of grants on such a platform. Likewise we would not expect the IS to project that students can only relate to working class struggles through the IS.

Although we have differences with Hugh Lanning, a member of the NUS executive who recently left NOISS, we echo his words when he wrote that he was 'convinced that there are many student union militants and independent socialists who are looking for an organisation that will effectively challenge the Broad Left from a principled left position.'

We think a principled basis for unity exists. We think the situation inside the NUS objectively calls for such unity. We would ask the NOISS to reconsider their position and attend the Open Forum so the foundations for a revolutionary alternative inside the NUS can be laid.

Oiling the social contract

AT THE END of January oil pipe firm Bredero-Price (UK) paid off the whole workforce at its plant in Leith, Edinburgh. Work is not expected to resume until March.

News of management's intention was given to stewards on 17 January, when they were told that the company had no contracts and work would cease with the contract for a British Gas Corporation pipeline then due for completion. Union officials were invited to inspect the plant's books and confirm that it was in fact running at a loss.

In the face of the general cutback and transfer of orders abroad which is affecting the whole industry, this announcement may have seemed just another sad chapter in the Scottish 'oil bonanza'. When news of these redundancies broke, several MPs offered support for the plant and promised they would take action to bring work to Leith. A 3-party action group was formed and a number of letters were quickly sent to the shop-stewards expressing sympathy. The stewards have not heard of any further actions - nor will they since they are now on the dole.

QUESTIONS

Meanwhile back at the empty plant, there are some questions that need attending to. Bredero's virtually identical pipe-coating plants at Immingham (near Grimsby) and in Holland have full order books and are working to full capacity. It is no coincidence that both these plants have appalling undermanning and safety records, and both are weakly organised.

While the union at Immingham is

the GMWU, the Leith workers joined the TGWU, which the dockers they worked with were already in. After the usual compulsory struggle for union recognition, they succeeded in gaining 'concessions' on manning, safety, redundancies and - significantly - raised their basic rate from a previous steady 46p per hour to 89p per hour inside two years. Many of these benefits won by militant action at Leith then had to be conceded to the other plants - particularly the rises in wages.

Moreover, the company has still to be paid for both their main contracts of last year (BGS and Occidental). Once these are entered into the books there is no question of the plant running at a loss (or, we bet, of invitations to inspect the books). Nor was there any necessity for redundancies, since work-sharing could easily have been instituted with Immingham, as happened in reverse last year when Leith was stretched beyond capacity. It is not a question of finding work for an ailing firm, but simply allocating the company's present hefty work-load and doing the same with all future contracts.

BREAK

The fact is that management wanted a break. Where last year's lay-offs failed they hope this year's pay-off will succeed. Work will begin on a new gas contract when the management feel confident that the present union shop-floor organisation has been effectively broken. Since the contract of employment recognising the T&G ends on 17 February, and the T&G organise on a factory basis, union negotiating rights will be up for grabs and the G&M will be in there hoping to manage the new 'American-style' contract which management want to enforce. Despite the lay-off agree-



SHREWSBURY: UP THE GARDEN PATH AGAIN

Only 150 delegates were at Liverpool for the third conference called by the city Trades Council on Shrewsbury.

Delegates at the last conference in Liverpool numbered over 800. After the 14 January demonstration, the biggest ever held on Shrewsbury, the conference this weekend was a set back in the campaign.

The Communist Party, the main force behind the conference and the strongest group on the conference floor wanted this meeting to rubber stamp their ideas.

COBBLED

The resolution, cobbled together by the Trades Council EC only minutes before the conference began was forced through ruthlessly. The chair spoke four times against the amendment calling for support for the Wigan Building workers' march. He did not allow supporters of the amendment to reply to discussion.

Again the Communist Party were content to organise a jamboree, insulting militants by telling them the only thing they were allowed to do was vote for or against some pre-ordained recipe for the Shrewsbury campaign.

And what did they serve up? The resolution (passed overwhelmingly) congratulated the TUC for organising the national lobby of Parliament on 14 January - almost two years after the proceedings were started against the original 24 defendants.

It also decided to support the lobby of the TUC General Council on 26 February as the first step in the campaign to get the TUC to call a day of national concerted strike action and if necessary, indefinite action to release the pickets. Nobody explained that to get the TUC to back strike

action meant showing to them that unless they moved they would be swept aside by a movement already taking action.

Delegates were not reminded that when the Pentonville dockers were released, all the TUC could do was call a one-day General Strike when

every militant was bitter then about the Industrial Relations Act. The miners had already shown the way by punching a hole through the Tory incomes' policy. When the dockers were jailed there was already a well of anger that made workers respond immediately as the strikes

at a low ebb. This is because resolutions like the one in Liverpool, have shown no way forward except the utopian and impractical idea that even one day strike action will be enough to free the lads.

Thousands of workers who have been out on one-day protests have had enough. They realise the only way is to set a date irrespective of the TUC. One delegate from Wallasey UCATT suggested 28 February. A campaign for the miners areas who have backed strike action to endorse this date could put the most powerful section of the movement in the lead of the campaign.

But this was too much for the Com- SAM BOYD



Wigan Action Committee March in support of Shrewsbury 2: see p.12 for full story

the action was more or less over. It never needed to take place. The dockers were released.

The trade union officials and CP members who spoke at Liverpool went out of their way to say there was no comparison between the freeing of the Five and the fight to free the Shrewsbury 2. They said

began to spread.

It is true that Shrewsbury, even when it had been taken up by the unions, (nearly a year after the arrests) had less impact amongst militants. But the fact has to be explained why for all the hopes raised by the TUC backing the 14 January lobby, the movement to free the pickets remains

Workers must take action NOW to defend the NHS

Hospital consultants are continuing their work-to-rule in many areas of the country, in support of their demand for a new contract allowing them unlimited private practice.

This work-to-rule is further lowering the standard of health care for the working class.

In the last six weeks, the number of Ear, Nose and Throat out-patient appointments has dropped by an incredible 80 per cent. In one city in the South-West, 2,000 appointments in all specialities have been postponed, in Crewe the waiting list has built up to seven months, and in some places, lists are so long that no date at all can be given for an appointment!

Overall, a quarter of a million patients have had appointments deferred or cancelled. In-patient treatment is also being reduced, and women are suffering particularly with a 40 per cent drop in gynaecological operations, and up to eight years waiting time for 'non-urgent' surgery.

All is not well amongst the consultants. In spite of the boasts of the BMA Council and the Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association, claiming near-total support among their members, cracks are beginning to appear.

The HCSA and BMA are losing members and there is talk of dropping the fight for private practice inside the National Health Service and going for a big pay award instead.

But the leaders of the BMA and HCSA are those consultants who have waxed far from private practice in large cities like London. These are the people who have the real say in the BMA and the HCSA.

In 1945, the leaders of the BMA continued to fight against the setting up of the NHS, although a survey of its members

Labour's proposals.

These cracks in the edifice of the medical profession are no reason for complacency. As in 1946, the present Labour Government is still making concession after concession. Already the 1974 Labour Party Conference decision not to allow part-time consultants in the NHS has been overturned. No steps have yet been taken to 'phase-out pay beds' and indeed Barbara Castle has told the Secretary of the BMA that it would still be possible to discuss future arrange-



DEFEND THE NHS
Smash Private Practice NOW!

IMG pamphlet of the Health Service. Available from: Red Books, 97 Caledonian Rd., London, N1. 15p (inc. p&pt)

ments for private practice in the NHS.

NOT SLOW

Private medical enterprises have not been slow to take advantage of Labour's long delay in removing private beds from the NHS. Plans for new hospital building are going ahead all over the country. Some Labour councillors have threatened to oppose these moves on political grounds, but BUPA says 'even if we are faced with a lot of political filibustering, we shall probably return to our hotel concession

way in some London Boroughs (Hammersmith, Westminster).

In the face of the consultants' action the response of the Labour Party and union bureaucracy has been abysmal. Although it is TUC policy to oppose private practice both inside and outside the NHS, the TUC has done nothing. In fact the American Medical Group has boasted that 'a large union' is thinking of investing funds in a £3 million private hospital they are planning to build in Westminster!

The Labour Government and trade union bureaucracy has no solution to the crisis in the health service and the work-to-rule by the consultants. They are content to watch the creation of a two-tier health service: fine for the rich who can afford private fees, and a lousy run-down NHS for the working class.

In Westminster, Labour councillors have made a call for a ban on all expansions of private clinics in central London. But the Tory majority on the council will go ahead to consider planning permission for new private facilities on the 'merit of individual applications'.

If the Labour councillors are serious about fighting the growth of private practice, they should start now with a campaign to mobilise the local Labour movement to put an embargo on the building of private clinics and hospitals.

ACTION COMMITTEE

It has been left to health workers and other trade unionists to fight to defend the NHS. The Hammersmith Joint Shop Stewards Committee has called for an All London Action Committee of health workers from hospitals taking action against private practice in the London area. Initiatives such as this can break the tyranny of the consultants within the NHS.

Health workers alone cannot win this struggle. All sections of the working class movement must now begin to build a campaign to defend the NHS against the blows of the capitalist crisis. As a first step in this, we must work to build support for the London demonstration on 22 February. The demonstration has already got the support of Sid Bidwell MP, Ernie Roberts (AUEW), Brian Nicholson (IGWU), Jack Collins (NUM), Harrow and Westminster Trades Councils, and

A LONDON SCHOOLTEACHER has been sacked because he is homosexual.

John Warburton was a teacher at St. Marylebone C of E Secondary School. He was active in the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE). Then he was spotted on a CHE law reform demo by pupils from his school. Of course, he faced a great deal of ribbing from his class. He responded to this by trying to explain homosexuality and open up a discussion with his pupils.

The most sensible and helpful thing to do, you might think. But not the Inner London Education Authority.

They called John in and demanded that he give an undertaking never to discuss homosexuality with pupils again. Even if the education authorities are in favour of ignorance, gay activists aren't. So John refused to give the undertaking. The upshot is that he is now jobless and has been blacklisted by the ILEA.

This disgraceful piece of discrimination is not an isolated happening. The hounding of homosexual workers goes on all the time. Just now Jill 'hang 'em high' Knight has put

questions in the House of Commons about the presence of homosexuals in the social services. It is clearly her intention to launch a witch-hunt, which would add to the isolation of gay people involved and split a work force that is bearing the brunt of the crisis in the 'welfare state'.

Unfortunately, cases of discrimination against gay workers are rarely fought. Often the people concerned are too easily frightened into submission. Far too often in cases like this the trade union movement succumbs to a fit of embarrassment.

In John Warburton's case this is not going to happen. The gay group inside the NUT are taking the matter up, and all its London members are writing to the ILEA, insisting on their right to discuss homosexuality in the class-room. This action must be taken up by the whole workers' movement, and it must be supported.

But one action on its own is not enough. This open witch-hunting can only be fought if the whole issue of the oppression of gay people gets a real airing in the trade union movement.

A big step in this direction will be the Conference of Gay Working People which is taking place on 10-11 May at Leeds Polytechnic. This meeting needs the most wide ranging support: contact the organisers via Martin O'Leary, 32 Hartley Grove, Leeds 6.

Gay teacher victimised

TEACHERS UNDER ATTACK

The National Union of Teachers' Executive is collaborating with the Inner London Education Authority in victimising militant teachers.

Five teachers a South Hackney Comprehensive have been brought before the school governors on the instructions of the ILEA for taking time off work to support the TUC-backed Shrewsbury pickets demonstration and lobby of Parliament. The five have 95 per cent support from the rest of the staff in their school, but the NUT Executive Finance and General Purposes sub-committee has voted 14 to 3 against giving them support - a decision ratified by the full Executive 35 to 5.

The latter even went as far as writing to the ILEA to tell them that the action was unofficial - despite the fact that the TUC had issued a circular to all member unions calling for support for the lobby.

The Executive has also voted 38 to 2 against defending two teachers in Westminster who took part in a one-day strike against the Houghton report on teachers' pay. The two were also brought before the governors on the instructions of the ILEA.

The ILEA desperately wants to stamp out any independent activity amongst teachers so that it can implement further education cuts without opposition. For Eric Briant, Chief Education Officer of the ILEA, political activity is all right in your own time - so long as you don't engage in activity at school to defend the education system.

The NUT Executive - including Communist Party member Max Morris - is in a similar position. Militant teachers have been a pain in the side for them, making it more difficult to sell-out on salaries and kow-tow to the Labour Government's education cuts. Getting rid of the lefties is more important for them than defending the education of working class kids.

An ad hoc Defence Committee has been formed by the teachers' union.

er London school. Its first meeting is on Thursday 13 February, at 7.30 p.m. at the Prince Albert Pub, Wharfedale Road, London N.1.

Meanwhile motions should be passed through school associations demanding that the ILEA drop all charges, insisting that the NUT Executive gives full support to the victimised teachers, and pledging schools to indefinite strike action in the case of any of these teachers not being reinstated.

Bernard Regan and Jon Duvert

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

RED WEEKLY

Wigan must be a lead not a sectarian jaunt

by Bob Gordon

HOME SECRETARY Roy Jenkins has moved Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson to closed prisons.

Jenkins can do this because he knows that the trade union leaders and the left MPs have no intention of organising national strike action to free the Shrewsbury 2.

Unlike the trade union leaders and the left MPs, Jenkins knows that the jailing of the Shrewsbury 2 was not some blemish on an otherwise healthy body of the British legal system. It was done by the ruling class to maintain law and order.

LAW AND ORDER

The Labour Government is also determined to maintain law and order. They know that it is a vital weapon in the fight to save capitalism. This is why Jenkins will not release the pickets and when the pickets refuse to accept the rules of the capitalist prison system he cracks down on them.

As the days of Warren and Tomlinson's prison sentences drag by, the official campaign has reached a dead-end. The choices are clear - national strike, or useless protests to an adamant defender of capitalist law. As no action is being prepared to give these protests any muscle, Jenkins can afford to show his contempt by inflicting even harsher punishment on the Shrewsbury 2.

The march of the Wigan Builders' Action Committee provides a last-gasp chance for developing national strike action. By making a direct appeal to the trade union movement and by cutting across the restrictive barriers erected by the bureaucracy and the CP it could set in motion a new movement around Shrewsbury.

This is the reason why all the forces of the revolutionary left have to give all-out support to the march. This means getting the maximum financial support and making sure that in every town which the march goes through there is a real campaign to get sympathetic strikes.

The force behind the march are not going to welcome such action. The Workers Revolutionary Party which is the organising political force of the march are using the campaign in a cynical way: to simply attract recruits to their own organisations by exposing the betrayals of the Shrewsbury pickets by the Communist Party and the Labour left.

CRUDE

In Liverpool they told sellers of the Red Weekly they could not sell the paper on the March. At the same time they were openly pushing the Workers Press - the paper of the WRP. Their refusal to give an interview to the Red Weekly on the march contrasts with their policy of giving regular

interviews to the Workers Press. This is nothing more than a crude way to try and present the WRP as the only group that is fighting on Shrewsbury.

At a time when the trade union bureaucracy and the stalinists are joining forces to keep the Shrewsbury campaign within the confines of protest politics this is scandalous. Neither the WRP, the IMG, nor the International Socialists - at this stage - on their own can defeat the combined forces of the bureaucracy and the CP. A united front of the revolutionary left may be able to swing the situation around towards a real campaign to fight the Labour Government and win these workers' release.

ABSTAIN

The IS refuse to try and impose a united front on the WRP and thereby abstain on the struggle. The WRP see Shrewsbury as a party building stunt and manoeuvre to keep the campaign under their organisational control. Those policies play into the hands of the bureaucracy.

Again the IMG reiterates - only national strike action can free the imprisoned workers. To get such strike action demands the unity of the entire revolutionary left.

For report of Liverpool Conference see p.11

REPORT FROM LIVERPOOL

As members of the Liverpool IMG we gave our support to the march of the Wigan Builders' Action Committee, because we believe that it can be one of the ways to develop national strike action to get the Shrewsbury 2 out of jail.

The behavior of the Workers Revolutionary Party on this march however does not help to build a unified movement to get national strike action, but in fact is designed to split that movement.

On Sunday 2 February the All Trade Union Alliance - the trade-union arm of the WRP, called a meeting to welcome the marchers. When we tried to sell our paper at the end of the meeting we were physically prevented from doing so, although Keep Left and the Workers Press were sold throughout the meeting.

When the march left Liverpool Pierhead

NO SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR COPPERS

Maybe there are still some people around who believe that the main job of the police is to catch the big-time crime operators. Sir Robert Mark, Metropolitan Police Commissioner does not subscribe to that naive view.

In his annual report for 1972 he explained that one of the main problems facing the police was dealing with 'Public Order, viz. the handling of political or Mark listed this second only after manpower shortages.

The police force heartily endorse Mark's point of view. Political actions directed against the state and private property

are equally clear on the main functions of the police. Although both the Tories and Labour have been attacking the 'Welfare State' pleading money shortages none of them have skimped on police expenditure.

The provisional estimate of total expenditure on police services in England and Wales for 1973-74 totalled £507,200,000 which was 19 per cent higher than the fig-

England and Wales alone from 12,900 to 32,400.

Jenkins has assured the police that money is being made available to recruit a further 1,000 police this year and has said that if more are recruited within 'authorised establishments' he will make sure that the money is found.

Most of the expansion is directed towards anti-trade union activity and spying on the left-wing organisations. In 1972 a special anti-picketing squad was set up at Scotland Yard. Although this was a brain-child of the Tories, Labour has kept it going.

The Special Patrol Group which is often armed, concerns itself very much with industrial disputes and, according to the Metropolitan Commissioner's Report for 1973, 'At various times has acted as a reserve at demonstrations at which militant elements were thought likely to cause disorder and, in particular, assisted local police in connection with protected industrial disputes involving dockers and the building workers.

BUGGED

The Special Branch spends massive amounts of money, time and resources infiltrating left-wing organisations and works closely with the employers during strikes. It was certainly not the grumblers who bugged the headquarters of the British Communist Party!

The ruling class, assisted by the Labour Government know very well they want to use their police force. They do not see the main job of the police as going to meet and ladies across the road. In fact, if the police do carry out that job the old ladies should check their handbag afterwards.

The role of the police is clear - its task is to defend capitalism. Their actions at Shrewsbury, in Newcastle and during the docks and miners' strikes prove that conclusively.

Jeff King



challenge the function of the police in capitalist society. This is why they are much more vindictive and hostile to striking workers than they are to the moguls of crime.

DOING TIME

Recently 300 coppers have resigned from the force - rather hurriedly. Twenty of their more 'unlucky' mates are doing time. Another 20 are awaiting trial. Forty-five more are suspended from duty.

Many of that motley crew were involved in rackets such as drugs, prostitution, and bending evidence for indicted 'offenders' who could afford to buy their way out of trouble. The Krays, the Richardsons, the Tibbs and the Humphreys being firm believers in the ethos of capitalism were never averse to buying off coppers, MPs and other public spirited servants.

Workers fighting the system have an understandable aversion to such practices and are not considered by the police to be a particularly remunerative source of income. Nor do people like the Shrewsbury pickets have the connections with the establishment enjoyed by McAlpine's, Paulson and the Kray brothers. Not many pickets get their picture taken with Robert Boothby, or wine and dine the local police commissioners.

Home Secretaries - of both the parties -

are for 1972-3.

Workers might get harangued on the need to observe the social contract, but this obviously does not apply to the police. The pay rise which came into effect in September last year, together with sixth threshold payments and London weighting means the pay of a newly appointed London policeman is 52 per cent higher than the year before.

Labour MP Brian Walden might talk about there being too many care workers and the need for factory closures. But there is no sign of an economy drive in the police force. The strength of Britain's police force rose from 90,000 in 1963 to 112,400 by 1973. The civilian support staff in the same period has increased in

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