

RED WEEKLY

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Troops out of Glasgow!

The decision of the Labour Government and the Labour-controlled Glasgow Corporation to send in troops to break the nine week old unofficial strike of Glasgow dustcart drivers is an open act of class betrayal. This decision must be smashed by the organised strength and solidarity of the working class.

THESE TROOPS ARE SCABS. THEY ARE BEING SENT IN NOT TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF THE PEOPLE OF GLASGOW BUT THE HEALTH OF THE CAPITALIST CLASS.

In recent months Glasgow has been the scene of many militant unofficial strikes, nine in the public sector alone. Corporation electricians are also on strike at the present time. It was the leader of the Corporation Conservative Group who described Glasgow as 'the anvil for Scotland and the United Kingdom on which organised labour in the public services has struck hammer blow after hammer blow' (*Glasgow Herald*, 17 March).

It is to smash this militancy that the Labour Government and Corporation is sending in the troops. If it was seriously concerned about the health hazards of 70,000 tons of rubbish in the streets it would have paid the dustcart drivers the fiver they are demanding nine weeks ago.

It would also be pouring massive amounts of money into Glasgow's decaying public services. It would be carrying out a crash building programme to pull down the tenement buildings which have been a health hazard, a fire hazard and an eye-sore for nearer ninety years than nine weeks.

The Labour Government's action serves warning that if the kid gloves of the social contract fail to allow the trade union bureaucracy to smash strikes and to control the workers' fight for better living standards, then they will be removed to reveal the iron fist of the capitalist state. By picking on an isolated group of workers like the dustcart drivers and using the hypocritical excuse of 'health hazards' the Labour leaders want to accustom the workers movement to the use of troops in industrial disputes.

The fact that the leaders of the labour movement in Britain have

campaign of terror, assassination and mass murder by the British army in the North of Ireland, and have failed to condemn the joint police army exercises at Heathrow Airport, has opened the way for this.

Mass working class action must be mobilised against the use of troops in Glasgow. John Reidford, Secretary of Glasgow Trades Council, has said: 'If there are strikes, and I'm certain there will be, they will be spontaneous and natural sympathy crystallised into direct action.'

The General Secretary of the Scottish TUC, James Milne, has stated that 'the use of troops could lead to a spate of sympathy strikes.' Not only 'could' this happen, but the Scottish TUC and Glasgow Trades Council should make sure that it *does* happen and that workers stay out till the troops get out.

SCAB LABOUR

Ten Labour Councillors and three Labour MPs for Glasgow, including Hurry Selby, MP for Govan, have also opposed troops going in. They should now help to organise mass pickets by Glasgow workers when the troops move to shift the rubbish, and leaflet the soldiers to explain that they are being used as scab labour.

All workers in the public sector in Glasgow should come out on immediate strike against the Corporation and the Labour Government. Benn, Foot and the Labour 'lefts' should oppose the measure in the Cabinet and come out in public opposition to the sending in of troops. Resolutions of support and financial donations must flood in to the dustcart drivers from all areas of the labour movement. Labour MPs should be picketed to demand they oppose the use of troops, and action demanded from the TUC.

If the dustcart men are beaten, the Labour Government will have been allowed to establish the precedent of hammering public sector struggles through the use of troops. This will be the first step to their wider use against the working class as the capitalist crisis deepens. Archie Hood, the leader of the dustcart drivers, has called on workers throughout Britain to support their struggle. The labour movement must ensure that they get



COUP CRUSHED, RIGHT ROUTED!

ONCE AGAIN the Portuguese working class has displayed its tremendous ability to beat back the forces of reaction and smash all attempts by the capitalists to set up the sort of 'law and order' regime that would guarantee the future of capitalist exploitation in Portugal.

For the second time since the coup which overthrew a half-century of fascist rule on 25 April 1974 the forces of reaction have tried to impose their will on the Portuguese people, and for the second time these schemes have been blocked by the fighting unity of the Portuguese working class.

VICTORY

This historic victory has given the Portuguese working class a new determination to remake Portuguese society in their own image, a new confidence in their ability to carry out this task, and a new strength with which to do it. At the same time their capitalist enemies are left in total disarray.

Seen from the point of view of the creativity and combativity of the working class there is little to prevent Portugal becoming the site of the first socialist revolution in Western Europe. But there are still many obstacles standing in the way of this prospect.

Despite the involvement of rank and file soldiers in struggle alongside the workers, the army remains organised as an instrument of the capitalist state, subject to the capitalist military hierarchy and 'chain of command': that is the main reason why rank and file soldiers could be fooled into taking part in such a desperate and reactionary coup. The Armed Forces Movement, the leading force in the Government, is still a part of this capitalist institution and while it has refused to go along with the reactionary political schemes of the capitalists it is not, in its majority, prepared to break with the capitalist system.

While the most important and

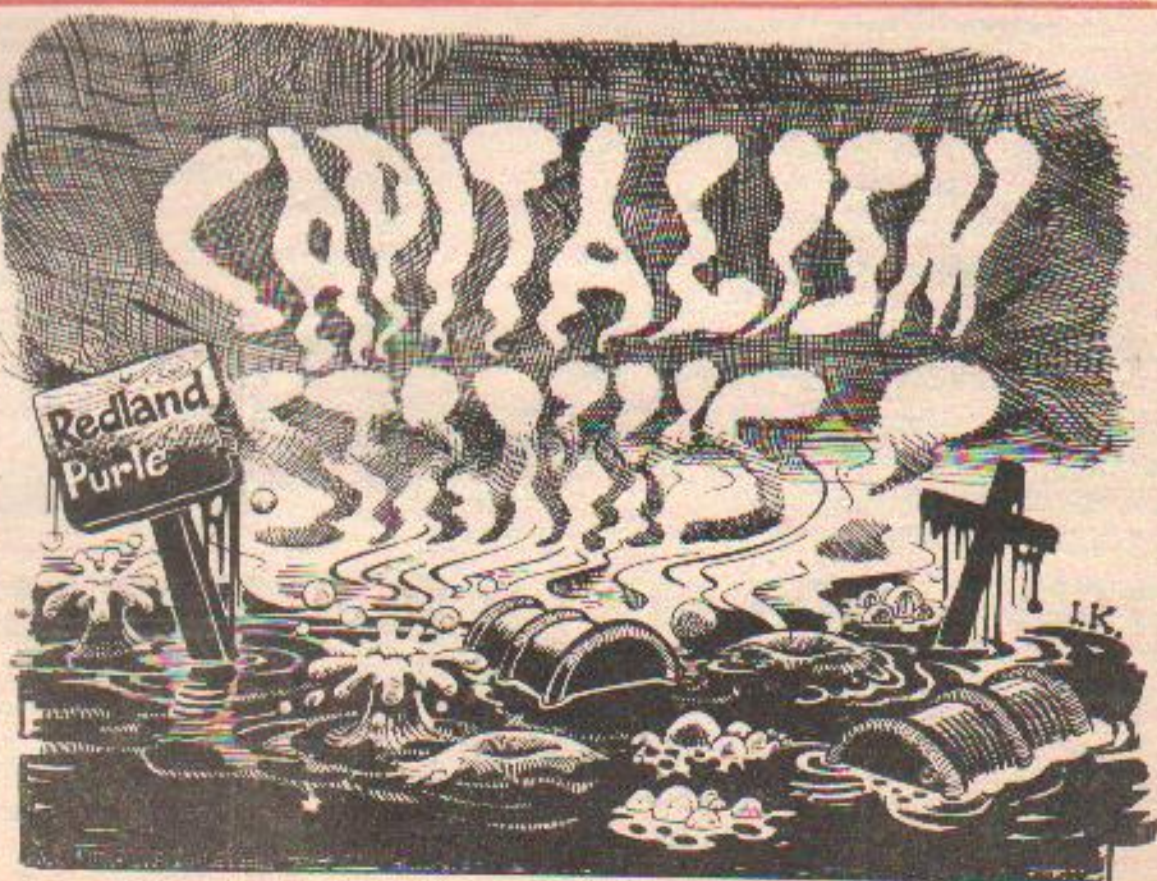
influential political organisation in the mass movement, the Portuguese Communist Party, has taken important steps to mobilise the workers against the reactionary threat, it is not prepared to lead a fight for socialism. Even after such a devastating victory as the present one, the spokesmen of the Communist Party do not have a word to say about socialism, but are trying to limit the mass movement to 'consolidating democracy'.

The decision of the Government to nationalise the banks — due to the almost universal demand for forthright action against the big monopolies and the insistence of the bank workers themselves that the banks be taken over — has given the state tremendous economic power, since the banks are at the centre of a vast monopoly empire that controls the bulk of Portuguese industry. But state control is not socialism. The question remains *whose* state is in control, and in *whose* interests is it managing the economy.

WORKERS STATE

The present state machine is a capitalist state, and can only run the economy according to the laws of capitalism, even if a number of individual big capitalists are rotting in its prisons. Socialism can only be built on the basis of control by a new state machine based on the organised power of the working class — a workers' state.

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On 13 March 1975 a lorry driver died from poisonous fumes at the Redland Purle owned chemical tip at Pitsea, Essex. The Labour Government has not closed the tip. Meanwhile it is hypocritically claiming that the use of troops in the Glasgow dustcart drivers' strike is necessary because of 'health hazards'. Capitalism stinks - so does the Labour Government.

The Portuguese bank workers have shown that they understand this fact when they insist that the nationalisation of the banks must be based on workers' control—on systematic supervision of the banks' affairs by democratic workers' committees. Such a set-up would give the working class the essential information and authority that could be used to work out its own plans for the economy. However the coordination and implementation of such a plan could only be carried out if the working class was united and organised on all levels—from the workplace and neighbourhood through to the national level—with democratic workers committees running affairs at all these levels. In other words it requires the creation of a system of soviets.

In order to defend the workers' organisations against all reactionary attacks it is necessary that the hierarchical structure of the capitalist army be destroyed and that the masses in the army—the vast majority of whom are rank-and-file soldiers—are organised through their own democratic bodies and integrated along with workers' soviets into the soviet system.

At the same time the workers must have their own armed militias under the control of the soviets, whose responsibility it must be to preserve 'order'—working class order—rather than the specialised police force of the capitalist state.

ELEMENTS

Many of the elements for such developments exist in Portugal today. In all the most important factories the workforce is united and organised through democratic factory committees, based on democratic general assemblies of the workers. Some moves have been made to coordinate these bodies on the regional level: in Lisbon, for example, there is an 'Inter-Factory Council' that links up 43 factory committees in the region, and organised a massive demonstration of 80,000 in the city against unemployment (despite a Government ban and opposition from the Communist Party and the trade union federation).

Similar democratic bodies exist in many working class neighbourhoods, and in a number of areas mass assemblies have taken place at the instigation of the Communist Party (often gathering more than 1500 people in towns with a population of less than 50,000) to discuss all the economic and social problems of the area, electing standing committees to carry on their work. While the Communist Party has seen these as little more than 'study groups' or 'advisory bodies', they could become the basis of real workers' power in the localities.

In literally hundreds of factories across the country the factory committees have imposed forms of workers control, acting promptly to prevent any undermining of their interests and watching the bosses like hawks to make sure they don't get away

with any sort of economic sabotage. In many factories the workers have already locked out the bosses because of their malpractices, and in some the workers have even started-up production themselves to provide the material means to continue the struggle.

SELF-DEFENCE

The mass mobilisations against the reactionary threat have given thousands of workers practical experience of organising their own self-defence. In the recent upsurge many workers obtained arms from the military (although they were taken back after the danger was past). At the same time the various police forces (one of which was centrally implicated in the attempted coup) are thoroughly discredited with the mass of the population. The demand for an armed workers' militia would have tremendous popular appeal. After all, what better way to guarantee the defeat of reaction than an armed people?

Inside the army the upheaval has brought rank-and-file soldiers closer than ever before to the vanguard of the workers' movement. In some of the most politically involved units the military hierarchy (which the Armed Forces Movement steadfastly upholds) has started to break down, with mass meetings of all ranks being held to issue statements and appeals about the current situation. The attempted coup shows the serious dangers in the lack of organisation of the ranks: reactionaries continue to hold important positions among the officers, and the military hierarchy allows them to manipulate ordinary soldiers for their own political aims. Once more, what better way to seal the road to reaction than by replacing control by military hierarchy with control by workers' democracy?

In the coming months Portugal will face many problems: the shock waves of the world capitalist crisis, and the reactionary conspiracies of international capitalism and home-grown reactionaries alike. But the situation will not stand still: it must either go forward to the creation of a genuine workers' power as the basis for a socialist revolution, or it will slide backwards into moribund capitalism and the resurgence of reaction. That is the choice facing the Portuguese working class. It is up to the forces of the revolutionary left in Portugal to build the sort of organisation—a party such as that which led the Russian working class forward to victory in 1917—that can make Portugal the harbinger of a Red Europe.

THE ROAD TO WORKERS' POWER IN PORTUGAL



Paratroopers leave the scene of their attempted attack on a barracks, demoralised by the mass popular resistance they met

The coup the masses foiled

ON THE MORNING OF 11 MARCH the latest attempt by the reactionary forces in Portugal to roll back the victories rung up by the working class since 25 April began.

The plot was a simple one: a battalion of paratroopers, supported by an air force unit, was to attack the headquarters of one of the most important and left-wing army units—Light Artillery Regiment No. 1 (RAL 1) stationed near the Lisbon airport; this move was to be the spark that would set off a full scale counter-revolutionary offensive.

Plans were laid for right-wingers to assume control of the main armed police force, the Republican National Guard (GNR). It was then expected that other right-wing officers, encouraged by these early advances, would declare for the insurgents and mobilise the soldiers under their command against the Government. This would then be followed by a mobilisation of civilian reactionaries, who have been keeping their heads down but their powder dry since their ignominious defeat last September.

Everything went according to plan. Planes and helicopters struck their appointed targets according to schedule at 11:45 am. The paratroopers then promptly moved into the breach, while at the headquarters of the GNR right-wing officers assumed command and used the GNR radio to announce their take-over.

But six hours later the whole revolt was over, and its mastermind, former

President Spínola, was fleeing for the safety of fascist Spain with his fellow plotters. What went wrong?

The plotters—as capitalist plotters are wont to do—left one thing out of their calculations: the actions of the Portuguese masses.

PEOPLE TO THE STREETS

As soon as the news of the attack on RAL 1 broke across the country, offices, shipyards, houses, and schools were emptied as the people took to the streets. Some were responding to the call of the Communist Party-controlled Portuguese Democratic Movement and the Intersindical trade union federation, others acting spontaneously on the basis of the lessons they had learned in September.

The paratroopers were just getting down to their armed assault on RAL 1 when they suddenly found themselves surrounded by a crowd who had come to the defence of the besieged soldiers. These unarmed civilians harangued the insurgents, blocked their passage, and obstructed their attempts to shoot. Repeated threats by the paratroopers failed to deter the crowd.

After more than an hour of this hissing the paratroopers became totally demoralised and agreed to talk to representatives of RAL 1. They explained that they had been led to believe that RAL 1 was the centre of a revolutionary plot to assassinate 1000 military and 500 civilian leaders; but, after much political discussion with both the RAL 1 spokesman and the surrounding crowd, they agreed to call off their attack.

Meanwhile the reactionaries' radio broadcast from GNR headquarters brought a prompt reply—but not the one they had expected. Within minutes the building was surrounded by thousands of demonstrators chanting anti-fascist slogans. Soon the crowd became so numerous that the building was sealed as tight as a drum. When GNR men tried to drive the crowd back they were greeted with chants of 'Shoot if you dare, shoot if you dare'.

After more than two hours of this humiliation two armoured cars succeeded in driving away from the headquarters—carrying the leaders of the coup in the GNR away from the scene of their defeat.

Meanwhile in every major city and town in the country, workers were on the march. Some besieged the local army

units and demanded to know what side they were on, thus making it impossible for local commanders to quietly go over to the insurgents. Others went to the barracks to receive guns from sympathetic soldiers, and mount armed patrols, while still others, armed only with iron bars or their bare hands, threw up road blocks and searched all vehicles, blocking any possibility of civilian reactionaries mobilising.

Thus each single strand in the plotters' bloody plan was promptly cut by the action of the masses, and Spínola and his henchmen were left to helplessly watch the sand trickle through their fingers.

'SHOOT FASCISTS NOW'

— say soldiers

A general assembly of RAL 1, the army unit which bore the brunt of the reactionary attack on 11 March, adopted the following resolution:

'We demand the immediate shooting of all fascists, whether or not they are soldiers, whether or not they are generals. The criminal fascist attack launched this morning against the soldiers and military personnel of RAL 1 demonstrates that neither purges nor retirement into the reserves are enough to stop fascist and reactionary officers in the pay of the capitalists and imperialists preparing a counter-revolution to crush our popular revolutionary movement in blood.'

They add that the 'criminal attack on RAL 1' is part of 'the repression which has been unleashed on the working class and the Portuguese people', and close by saying: 'The soldiers are the sons of the people. The soldiers and all anti-fascist military personnel will always know how to turn their arms against the bourgeoisie and against the reactionary officers and place them on the side of the people.'

A mass assembly of all members of army unit RE 1 (soldiers, sergeants and officers) on 12 March, adopted a motion hailing 'the heroic and revolutionary resistance of our comrades of RAL 1 in the face of reactionary forces in the service of capitalism' and 'the firm position of comrades in other units, as well as the popular masses, in blocking reaction'. It backed 'the comrades of RAL 1 in demanding the immediate shooting of those responsible for spilling our blood' and demanded 'an effective purging of the units, through the active participation of all soldiers, in a form that will permit a real democratisation of the military structures.'

They end with the slogans: 'Popular revolutionary vigilance', 'Our legality is revolutionary', 'Shoot them now', 'Death to fascism', 'Death to capitalism', and 'In the service of the exploited classes we will win.'



All over Portugal workers are setting up check-points like this to make sure no reactionaries pass through without their knowledge

RED ALERT OVER PORTUGAL

THE INTERNATIONAL RULING CLASS is not going to take events like those now going on in Portugal lying down. It has long been a standing rule of capitalist thinking that whatever might happen elsewhere in the world, Western Europe is sacrosanct territory for capitalism.

The prospect of the Portuguese working class taking matters into their own hands is therefore likely

to be met with an even more ferocious campaign of slander and conspiracy than was the upsurge of the Chilean workers and peasants under the Allende Government.

One sign that the more class-conscious spokesmen of this country's capitalists are already moving in this direction came with Monday's *Daily Express*. There, no less a person than John Ellison, Foreign Editor of the

Express, pontificates at length on the dangers of the Portuguese virus, and proposes a possible cure.

The policy he calls for is a swift and ruthless action:

'The dominoes in southern Europe are all set up. If the first is to fall in Portugal, there is no telling where the line might end... Britain takes about 23 per cent of Portugal's total exports... The new regime in Lisbon is even more vulnerable over its econ-

omy than the Allende Government was in Chile... It might be much easier (and a good deal less painful all round) to clip Lisbon's revolutionary ardour now than face the irrevocable consequences of NATO's collapse in Southern Europe.'

The British workers' movement must take Ellison's exhortations to his capitalist clientele as a flashing red light—it must put us on alert to act decisively whenever the international ruling class begins its coordinated offensive to block our Portuguese comrades' struggle for an end to capitalist tyranny and exploitation.

TODAY'S DUSTMAN.... TOMORROW'S BUTCHER?

THE BRITISH ARMY has a long history of murder and repression in Ireland, Aden, Cyprus, Malaya and many other colonies. Its use as a strike-breaking force is less well known. It was, however, frequently used against strikers before the First World War and employed on a massive scale in the 1926 General Strike.

Most people were until recently under the impression that such uses were a thing of the past. In fact, in Europe at present such developments are increasing and not decreasing.

Even in Britain the decision of the Labour Government to send troops to break the Glasgow dustcart drivers' strike is the third major row in less than 18 months over the use of the army against trade union struggles. In the previous two cases, against the Glasgow firemen's strike and in the row over Mick McGahey's call for the possible leafleting of troops should they be used in the 1974 miners' strike, the Labour leaders either sat on the sidelines or made verbal attacks on McGahey.

Now the Labour leaders are right in the driver's seat using troops against the British working class. It is not a new experience. In 1945 the Labour Government sent in the army to break a go-slow in the Surrey docks only five days after it was elected.

EYE TO FUTURE

The danger posed by Labour's support for the use of troops against strikes goes far further than simply strike-breaking. At the present time, of course, the army has neither the intentions nor the means to launch a military coup in Britain. However it does have its eye on what may be necessary in the future. This was the meaning of Heath's infamous speech at the United Nations in which he said that 'civil war and not international war' would be the main problem of the 1970s.

This is also the purpose behind the appointment of Brigadier Frank Kitson, the top specialist in 'counter-insurgency', as head of the School of Infantry Training. He has absolutely no doubt at all what he wants to achieve. Kitson wrote in his book *Low Intensity Operations* that it was necessary to set up forces of 'specialist individuals and units within the army to enable essen-

by
Roger Smith

tial civil services to be maintained in the event of civilians being unable or unwilling to maintain them.

This flowed from his analysis that: 'If a genuine and serious grievance arose such as might result from a significant drop in the standard of living, all those who now dissipate their protest over a wide variety of causes might concentrate their efforts and produce a situation beyond the power of the police to handle. Should this happen the army would be required to restore the position rapidly.'

The problem for the Kitsons of the ruling class is that at present any widespread use of the army in Britain would lead to an enormous response from the working class. It is for this reason that the army has to play 'softly, softly, catchee monkey'. If tanks were sent careering through the streets of London there would be outrage. But if they can be used against 'terrorists', 'the Irish', 'health hazards' and so on, without the working class reacting, then the thin end of the wedge will have been put in.

IRELAND

The most important wedge by far is in the north of Ireland. Under both Labour and Tory Governments the army has been allowed and encouraged to carry on a reign of terror against the nationalist population in which every trick from torture and secret assassinations to 'limited massacres' (a tactic advocated by Kitson) has been used. This betrayal of the working class by the leadership of the Labour Party has wreaked its

toll not merely in Ireland, but in the acceptance of such things by the British working class. What is being done now in Ireland is merely the bloody dress rehearsal for what might be needed later in Britain.

In Britain itself more subtle tactics are needed. One is the recent 'recruiting' advertising campaign in which the role of the army in maintaining 'internal order' was stressed. More significant still are the repeated army exercises at Heathrow and other airports. These aim, on a really dramatic scale, to get the population used to seeing the army working with the police and to accept it as 'normal'.

A military coup is definitely not an immediate danger in Britain, but the working class has to oppose the use of the army in any dispute right from the start.

HELPS RIGHT WING

But instead of carrying out this task Labour actually helps the most right wing forces in society by itself using the army against the working class struggle. The Labour leaders provide an active cover for every would-be Chilean general or Greek colonel. Their action is like that of a convict helping the hangman to erect the gallows. It has to be stopped. In the long run the standing army must be dissolved by the revolutionary action of the working class and a workers militia set up to establish and defend a workers' state.

Now the working class has to fight to defend itself against the use of troops for strike-breaking, and troops for strike-breaking, and their future use as armed soldiers against the working class, by demanding:

- *No use of the army in industrial disputes.
- *Full trade union and political rights in the army.
- *Trade union leafleting of and fraternisation with soldiers used against strikes.
- *United industrial action to force the Labour Government to withdraw the troops.



This is the man the army chose to lead the troops into battle against the mutinous muck in Glasgow - Brigadier D.B. Riddell Webster. While the troops are shovelling the garbage in Glasgow, the Labour Party will have to think of new uses for the army, to keep them busy. London docks.....?

Labour do the dirty

The Labour Government have taken a cold calculated decision to break the strike of the Glasgow dustcart drivers.

After the Glasgow City Council had voted by 84 votes to 10 to ask for Government aid, Mr. Willie Ross, Labour's Scottish Secretary, promised troops would move in by Wednesday 19 March to start moving the 70,000 tons of rubbish which have piled up as a result of the nine weeks' strike.

HAZARD

Ross claims that the troops are only being moved in to remove 'a health hazard'. He conveniently ignores the fact that if a health hazard existed it is because the Labour-controlled Glasgow City Council has refused to meet the drivers' demand for a £5 a week extra payment to holders of heavy goods licences. This would give the dustcart drivers parity with other drivers holding an HGV licence - Liverpool dustcart drivers are also out on strike for the same claim.

Not only has the Glasgow Council refused to meet this demand but it has failed to even start negotiations on the workers' demands.

DESPERATE

The Labour Council is desperate

to resolve the dispute. However, they are not interested - or more precisely they are incapable of finding a solution. The spate of strikes which have swept through Glasgow in the public sector are a result of the breakdown of capitalism. They show the total inability of the capitalist system to maintain even the most basic social services needed to run the city.

Unless the workers responsible for maintaining these services can earn a wage that protects them against the ravages of the capitalist crisis then not only will the NHS and education fall apart but the whole system of public services will disintegrate.

NOT SECTORAL

This is why the dustcart men are not fighting some lone sectoral battle. It is for this reason that the attempts of the Labour Government and their allies in the Glasgow Council - be they Labour Party members, Tories or members of the Scottish Nationalist Party - have to be fought right down the line.

When the Government considered using troops to break the strike of the Tower Hamlets dustmen in 1970 all the borough's manual workers stopped work. That put a stop to the Government's plans. A similar step is needed in Glasgow. Bob Pennington

LCDTU - the waiting game

THIS SATURDAY SEES THE FIRST MEETING OF THE LIAISON Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions for many months. Up to now, the LCDTU has been little more than a 'caucus' for the industrial militants of the Communist Party.

It met periodically to deliver the latest line in the struggle against the Tories. But the political control of the LCDTU has always remained firmly in the hands of the CP and that meant the LCDTU could never organise anything except the occasional 'pressure' campaign to get those worthy gentlemen like Scanlon and Jones to organise the struggle.

The LCDTU has been left waiting for a lead from the trade union 'lefts' like Scanlon and Jones. Scanlon never organised anything against the Tories' incomes policies. The LCDTU organised nothing either. Under this Labour Government, Scanlon has done nothing to fight the social contract. And whatever happened to Jack Jones? The 'inactivity' of the 'lefts' ensured that the LCDTU did likewise.

The CP have not been inactive under Labour. Since October, they have been in the front line organising opposition to the jailing of the Shrewsbury 2. But again, they have delivered the movement bound hand and foot to the TUC. Everything organised from the local areas has been concentrated on getting the TUC to move on the issue. Instead of drawing the real lessons from the Freeing of the Five Dockers, that the trade union leaders

will only act when an independent and powerful movement is already underway and threatening to engulf them, the line of the CP has demoralised the mass movement on Shrewsbury.

As a result, the pickets are still in jail. The possibility that existed for the working class to demonstrate to itself and the ruling class the strength of its own organisations by freeing the pickets with mass action, has been all but thrown away. Such a movement would not only free the pickets but serve the workers' movement well in its preparations to confront the employers, their state and the policies of this Labour Government in the months ahead.

(Cont. on back page.)

CRISIS IN THE WELFARE STATE - a workers' solution.

A pamphlet produced by the Leeds branch of the IMG

10p + 5p p & p (10 or more post free).

John Coleman, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds 2.

Stop NF beating ban

Islington Labour Council has banned the NF from using the Town Hall. Now the NF are defying their decision by holding a mass picket of the Council meeting next week. Don't let them beat the ban!

Support the counter-rally called by Islington Trades Council at Islington Town Hall, 6 pm March 25th!

Supported by North London Teachers Association, Islington anti-fascist committee, IS and IMG.

To win the strike and defeat the Government's use of troops the following actions are needed:

- No return to work until the full demand is met.
- Immediate strike by all Corporation workers.
- The emergency meeting of Glasgow Trades Council being held on Wednesday 19 March to call for a strike of all Glasgow workers.
- The Trades Council to convene a meeting of all Glasgow shop stewards and elect a strike committee.
- The Trades Council to hold mass meetings of workers throughout Glasgow to organise support for the strike.
- Mass pickets to be put up around all the rubbish dumps.
- Collections to be taken in union branches, jobs etc. throughout Britain to support the strike.
- Delegations of workers to lobby Labour MPs and councillors to demand they support the strike and oppose the Government's use of troops.
- Steps to be taken to mobilise the full weight of the labour movement against the use of troops.

JOHN GOLLAN STEPS DOWN AS COMMUNIST PARTY LEADER

AFTER 19 YEARS of presiding over a declining party, dwindling election votes and waning influence, the British Communist Party have pensioned off General Secretary John Gollan so that he can 'lecture and write'.

When Gollan took over in 1956 from an ageing and rather discredited Harry Pollitt—who on his 54 trips to the USSR never noticed Stalin's 'excesses'—he was supposed to pull the Party round. The effect of Khrushchev's revelations at the 20th Party Congress about the Stalin regime, together with the Russian invasion of Hungary, had caused the CPGB to lose 10,000 members in just over a year.

Gollan did not succeed. Party membership has declined by a steady six per cent every year since—except for a brief spurt upwards in 1971-73. In the October 1974 election the CP polled a mere 17,426 votes, which is something of a debacle for an organisation committed to the parliamentary road.

DISCONTENT

For some years now the Gollan leadership has caused disquiet and discontent in the ranks. At the 1971 Congress, members could not help noting that the Young Communist League membership had dropped from 5,642 to 3,200, and that the sales of the *Morning Star* were stuck at 50,000 (about 40 per cent of these go to Eastern Europe). Most of the CP's factory branches had disappeared.

The *Guardian* wrote on 27 October of that year: 'It is known that

NEW BOTTLES - OLD WINE



The unacceptable faces of Stalinism: (left to right) Bert Ramelson, Gordon McLennan, Irene Swan, John Gollan and David Cook

the party's leaders are concerned about the loss of both youth and trade union militants to Marxist groups on the far left. The oppositional currents, however, made no progress. The militants who wanted a more revolutionary programme got disillusioned and left, joining either the Trotskyists or the small Maoist groups. Others fell into inactivity.

The right-wing of the CP remained impotent, disheartened by the poor election showing and bewildered that the leaders could not

make a 'clean break' from Moscow.

The CP remained under the domination of the Stalinist wing. The alliance of Gollan and Ramelson remained intact. Both had been trained in the Moscow school. Gollan had graduated through the YCL and had been schooled in the Popular Front of alliances with 'progressive Tories'. He had supported the Moscow Trials, played the role of a social patriot during the war, sung his hosannas to Stalin, and defended the crushing of the Hungarian Revolution by Russian tanks and troops.

Ramelson fought in Spain, where he received the favourable attention of the Soviet Secret Police for his violence against 'Anarcho-Trotskyists' and his justification of the murder of POUM leader Andres Nin by Stalin's assassins. Ramelson also defended the executions at Stalin's behest of the prominent CPers Rajk in Hungary, Slansky in Czechoslovakia, and Kostov in Bulgaria. All three have now been posthumously rehabilitated.

Ramelson, like Gollan and the newly appointed General Secretary,

Gordon McLennan, naturally supported the Russian invasion of Hungary.

But as last week's reshuffle shows fissures are appearing in the leadership. They are not, however, divisions between the left and the right, nor do they represent a struggle between Stalinists and anti-Stalinists. What the changes in the CP leadership do reveal is the impossibility of effectively carrying out the CP line in Britain.

SUBORDINATES

The aim of the CPGB is to build an alliance between itself and 'left' social democracy. But despite its industrial base the CP does not have the strength to impose its demands on the left social democratic leaders. It can only secure such alliances when it subordinates both its own programme and any movement it leads to the aims set by the left MPs or the union bureaucrats.

The CP leaders, for instance, are not in favour of the Shrewsbury 2 staying in jail. However the price of using their industrial base to organise a real independent campaign involving indefinite strike action to get their release would be an all-out confrontation with the left bureaucrats.

Since it is these bureaucrats that the CP has set itself the task of winning to its programme of unity, it is therefore reduced to pleading with them to take action and has to oppose the revolutionary left, sections of its own rank and file, and independent militants who support strike action.

The problem of the CP's strategy becomes sharper still when Labour is in office. It is one thing pushing the line of maximum unity when the Tories are in Government. When Labour are the Government and the 'lefts' like Scanlon and Jones line up behind the social contract, the slogan takes on a rather hollow ring. Of course there is a growing discontent at the base of social democracy, but the CP's strategy is turned towards the leadership and this prevents it from taking advantage of the crisis inside social democracy.

The Party's erstwhile allies are meanwhile busily distancing themselves from militant action whilst in the ranks those workers to whom the CP hope to appeal are becoming more and more dissatisfied and seeking alternative solutions. The act of balancing between these two forces has caused more than one political hernia in the CP leadership.

GUARANTEED

Gollan's policy has been to concentrate almost solely on building unity within the political structure—such as joint campaigns on the EEC, etc.—and restricting industrial initiatives to those guaranteed to get the support of the union bureaucracy.

Ramelson, McLennan and the new national organiser Dave Cook are in favour of more independent initiatives in order to widen the Party's base, particularly in industry. But their strategy is placed firmly in the context of the *British Road to Socialism* and its insistence on achieving socialism through a parliamentary majority.

Like Gollan their crisis is irresolvable. A mass reformist party already exists in Britain. Simply adding a dash of militancy to parliamentary politics is not going to dislodge the Labour Party. Maybe the CP's bottles are new, but the wine is still the same third-rate vintage.

Jeff King

Lancaster occupation - a test case

'I WANT AN END to this nonsense for ever. The students have been given their last chance.'

The words are those of Charles Carter, the Vice-Chancellor at Lancaster University and a leading light in the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and College Principals. He knows the national implications of his moves to victimise students on rent strike, and his action to try to smash the student occupation. The NUS Executive sadly do not.

The 'last chance at Lancaster' sit-

uation exploded after a student on rent strike was refused a hardship grant. The Students Union had made it clear from the start that any moves to victimise rent strikers would meet with a swift rebuff. Two weeks ago, 300 students occupied the main administration building, including the holy of holies—Carter's office. He was not amused.

If the students were not out in two hours, he said, they would all be excluded from the University. But they are still there at the time of writing, because in those two hours one thousand names were col-

lected for a petition accepting responsibility for the occupation.

SPLITTING TACTICS

Carter's tactics are clear—split the occupation off from the rest of the campus. To do this he has to raise the stakes. So he has put the college workers on two-thirds pay, on the pretext that the students are holding documents vital to wage calculations. The students have offered to allow staff in to collect the documents. The administration refuse because by not paying full wages they hope to break any links between the campus trade unions and

students. Then on the day of a national demonstration, supported by over a thousands students, the bar was closed. Last weekend the library shut.

Isolate, divide and rule is Carter's motto. If he succeeds, workers and students at Lancaster can expect no mercy in the face of future education cutbacks. Higher prices and rents, low wages and lay-offs will be their reward.

However, nationally, in the present state of the grants campaign, Lancaster is of great importance. For along with Essex, where first year rent strikers are not being allowed to sit their examinations, and Surrey, where a threat of legal action still hangs over the head of the rent strike, Lancaster is a test case for the grants campaign.

TEST CASE

A victory at these colleges for the authorities would not only demoralise other rent strikes, but would spur on college authorities up and down the country to launch similar victimisations. While the rent strike may be just one tactic of the grants campaign, in reality it is the only tactic that is being applied today. A defeat for the rent strikes would therefore be a severe blow for the grants campaign as a whole.

In this light the behaviour of the Communist Party-dominated NUS executive is all the more disgraceful. They have not organised and coordinated national activity in the rent strikes this term. Because the rent strike is a tactic they feel its protagonists can be sacrificed on the altar of pressure politics. At Sussex, which has the third biggest rent strike, they recently proposed to wind it up. Thankfully, the only people supporting that call were the CP themselves!

The watchword of the NUS now has on the contrary to be for the national defence and extension of the rent strikes, which in turn means for the national defence and extension of the grants campaign.

Rick Sissons

Nurseries demo - NUS scabs

Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)

Nearly 100 people marched through London last Friday, 14 March, demanding 'free nurseries—for the right to work and the right to study'. The police, however, refused the demonstrators the right to picket.

The march was organised by the London Student Women's Action Group (SWAG), an organisation made up of all London college women's groups. After Pam Calder from the technical teachers union, ATTI, at the South Bank Polytechnic had given a short speech of support to a rally in Lincoln's Inn Fields, the demonstrators set off to the Department of Education and Science to picket for nurseries in all colleges and to hand in a statement supporting their demands.

Marching were a number of London college women's groups, IMG, the London Student Organisation, Working Women's Charter supporters, and Brent Nursery Campaign. The picket, however, was sabotaged by the police who forced the demonstrators into the road about 15 feet away from the doors of the DES, making it impossible to mount an effective picket.

Free nursery facilities are an integral part of the struggle against women's oppression, whether the question is taken up in the colleges or locally. With the existing education cuts and general cuts in social expenditure, the first thing that many local authorities and colleges are cutting back are nurseries, women's hospitals and other social services used by women. In this context it is vital that the present campaigns to defend and extend these facilities are stepped up, and linked to the general



Students on the march for 'free nurseries—for the right to work and study'

fight against the cuts and against the social contract.

Conspicuous by their absence from the demonstration were the leadership of the National Union of Students, who had earlier given verbal support for this important initiative. This is in line with the present policy of the Communist Party-dominated NUS Executive of consistently scabbing on any struggles around the question of women's oppression, whether it be the NUS Women's Campaign or the Working Women's Charter. In fact even

their usual left-wing demagoguery has ceased to pour out of their Endsleigh Street headquarters and they have refused to call a national NUS Women's Conference.

Because of this SWAG has decided to organise a national conference for all college women's groups and activists around the NUS Campaign and the Working Women's Charter on 3 May at Queen Mary College in London. For further information write to: Jenny Beale, Institute of Education, Malet Street, London WC1 Elaine Cooper

CHILE SOLIDARITY

3,000 march in Liverpool

NEARLY 3,000 PEOPLE marched through the centre of Liverpool last Saturday in solidarity with the Chilean resistance.

The demonstration, organised by the Chile Solidarity Campaign, took place just three weeks after an important victory had been won with the refusal of the Labour Government to attend the Club of Paris negotiations on the junta's foreign debt. The junta has had to respond by asking for the

Club of Paris talks to be postponed for an indefinite period.

This is undoubtedly a serious blow for the military regime, whose economic credibility is becoming increasingly thin. But the Labour Government did not take this action out of some new-found feeling of international solidarity. They were quite happy to engage in the same talks a year ago. What has changed, of course, is that the campaign of solidarity with the Chilean resistance has

forced them into a tight spot on this issue.

FRIGATE

That there has been no real change of heart by the Labour Government can be seen by a number of recent events. In the very same week that the withdrawal from the Club of Paris talks was announced, the leading pro-junta paper in Chile, *El Mercurio*, carried an article announcing the handing over of one of the British-made frigates to the Chilean navy.

This warship had of course been sent with the express consent of the Labour Government. There are still two submarines at the Scott Lithgow shipyards near Glasgow which are also destined for the junta.

Meanwhile, at the UN Commission on Human Rights—which the Government presumably thinks is sufficiently far away for its goings-on to escape the attention of the British labour movement—Britain was busy putting forward a motion on Chile which made the astounding claim that the Chilean junta was becoming more liberal and that a delegation should be sent to ascertain the precise extent of this liberalisation.

Fortunately even the UN Commission could not fall for such a blatant move, and the final resolution decided simply to send an investigatory delegation and deleted all reference to this supposed 'liberalisation'.

DIPLOMATIC LINKS

The fact is that as the economic and political crisis of the junta gets worse, so its repression of the Chilean workers and peasants is becoming ever more intense. Particularly serious



Part of Saturday's mass rally in Liverpool in solidarity with the Chilean resistance

Farce of South African 'detente'



On the picket line on Wednesday 12 March outside the South African Embassy in support of demands for the release of those now being tried under the notorious 'Terrorism Act' for organising a rally in support of FRELIMO last year

'DETENTE' is the key word in Southern Africa today. It was only three months ago that South Africa's Prime Minister Vorster made his famous statement: 'I say: give South Africa six months chance by not making our road harder than it is already...you will be surprised where we will stand then.'

Assumed by most, including top South African Government Ministers, to mean that apartheid was to be given a face-lift, this brought instant reaction from, amongst others, President Kaunda of Zambia, who hailed Vorster's speech as the 'Voice of Reason'. Within a matter of days, however, Vorster felt compelled to enlighten the world that what he meant was that he would use the six months to try and make a deal with black Africa over Rhodesia and Namibia ('South West Africa').

This farcical manoeuvre called 'detente' was made necessary by the victory of the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies. The task of preventing guerilla movements from moving into Rhodesia and South Africa has now become impossible, since Angola and Mozambique will no longer play the role of cooperative buffer states. Moreover, the prospect of fighting a war against liberation movements with an increasingly militant black working class inside South Africa itself is not a happy one for Vorster. Still fresh in his memory is the large demonstration by blacks in Durban in support of FRELIMO last year (the organisers of which are currently being brought to trial under the repressive 'Terrorism Act').

CAPITALISTS

In addition to these two factors Vorster is also coming under pressure from the South African capitalists. They have no obsession with a particular form of rule—as long as it keeps the flow of cheap black labour coming. For some time now they have been pressing the ruling Nationalist Party to 'liberalise' the notorious apartheid system. The problem as far as they are concerned is that the racist policies of South Africa are so infamous that the Governments of the black African states dare not consider opening up political relations with South Africa. This prevents

South Africa from extending its tentacles over the rest of the continent.

Also worrying to the capitalists is the fact that the South African and Rhodesian regimes rely on a small base of white support, with the mass of blacks suffering under the repressive racist policies being staunchly opposed to them. These regimes thus have to rely on open oppression to survive, which means that the whole structure is very fragile and places in jeopardy the survival of capitalism in southern Africa.

FACE-LIFT

A face-lift for apartheid is not entirely out of the question, but Vorster has little room for manoeuvre.

On the one hand, 'detente' cannot succeed unless it is accompanied by reforms in South Africa. The ability of black Governments to make any sort of deal with Vorster is very much dependent on their ability to persuade the black masses under their rule that the problem of racist oppression in southern Africa is being dealt with.

On the other hand, the Rhodesian whites will not willingly make any concessions on their privileged position unless it is clear that refusal to comply would mean the end of South Africa's military and economic support. The right wing of the Nationalist Party is already making ominous grumblings about Vorster's policy towards Rhodesia. If Vorster was to make an ultimatum to Smith it would very likely result in open conflict within the Nationalist Party, possible leading to a split.

In the coming crisis this dilemma for South Africa's whites will be of central importance, and various political parties could well split along these lines. But it is absolutely clear that whatever party is in power—whether the Nationalist Party or some new 'moderate' party—neither exploitation nor racist oppression is going to be changed. The South African mines and capitalist industries are always going to need cheap black labour and any capitalist Government is going to do whatever is needed to make sure they get it.

Apartheid is not going to be undermined by polite chats and diplomatic manoeuvres, but by the struggle of South Africa's black masses against white racism and the entire capitalist system on which it is based and which it serves so well.

B'ham AUEW denounces blacking retreat

The retreat by the Executive Committee of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers on the question of blacking work for the military junta in Chile has not gone unchallenged by militants in the Union. The following resolution taking it up was recently passed by Birmingham AUEW District Committee:

'This District Committee notes that the black on Hawker Hunter engines destined for the Chilean junta's airforce has been lifted. This blacking action by our members at East Kilbride represented the most important single act of solidarity with the workers and peasants in Chile.'

'This District Committee therefore demands an explanation from the Executive Committee as to why the black has been lifted and clarification on present

AUEW policy on blacking trade with Chile, as it would appear that there has been a retreat by the EC on this question since the original policy was adopted at the beginning of last year. In particular, this District Committee requests that the EC make a report on the activities of the Divisional Organiser for the East Kilbride area over this matter and the text of any decisions taken by the EC on this same matter.'

Moving the resolution, an IMG member from the Rover car plant in Birmingham pointed out that: 'The EC has retreated all down the line on this question. They have failed to counter the activities of John Boyd, the right-wing divisional organiser for the area, and in fact have, in

part, played along with his attempts to stop the black.'

'This is especially serious when we consider the importance of the black as a concrete act of support for the workers and peasants in Chile, as opposed to all the liberal mouthings that tend to surround this question today.'

This action is an important step in beginning to break down the isolation in which the militants unofficially continue the black at East Kilbride currently find themselves. It is important that other trade unionists—particularly in the AUEW—now take up this incident and help to revitalise the campaign nationally for a black on all trade with the Chilean junta. John Graham (Birmingham AUEW)

RHODESIA

If at first you don't succeed frame, frame again

Last week the leader of the militant ZANU wing of the Rhodesian black nationalists, Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole, was arrested by the white racist regime and charged with conspiring to murder other leading nationalist politicians.

This blatant frame-up was a crude attempt to split the nationalist movement and weaken the militants. But it backfired, with no section of the nationalists accepting Smith's charges. The Government then either had to retreat and release Sithole, or press ahead and force even the more moderate nationalist leaders to drop the illusion of 'negotiating' any meaningful agreement with the racist regime.

This week Smith laid his cards firmly on the table. Unable to make the original

charges stick without cooperation by moderate nationalists, he has slapped on a whole new set, including being 'President of ZANU, an unlawful organisation'. The basic content of Smith's allegations is that Sithole tried to prevent ZANU and its guerilla organisation from coming under the thumb of the moderates and capitulating to white racism.

This latest step by Smith is a clear statement that his manoeuvres around a 'negotiated settlement' have come to an end. They spell the virtual inevitability of a breakdown of the much-vaunted 'detente', and the beginning of a new wave of struggle for the liberation of Rhodesia from white rule.

The British workers' movement should rally to the defence of Sithole, and do everything in its power to aid the just struggle of the Rhodesian black masses to free their country. In particular this means

fighting the scandalous political role of the Labour Government, which has provided political and diplomatic support for the manoeuvres of Smith and his racist buddy, Vorster of South Africa.

The demonstration which will take place on 23 March against Labour Government complicity with the white racists and in support of the liberation movements must be just the beginning of a continuing campaign of solidarity.

VICTORY TO THE NAMIBIAN PEOPLE!

Public meeting with speaker Moses Garoeb (Administrative Sec., SWAPO) 7.30 pm, Thursday 20 March in Co-op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Organized by Namibia Support C'ttee

SPAIN: THE EXPLOSION



The aftermath of the bomb that removed former Prime Minister Carrero Blanco from the scene

The notorious 'Guardia Civil' on the march

THE IBERIAN PENINSULA is in the centre of revolutionary struggle in Europe. It is not only in Portugal that the working class are beginning to take their fate into their own hands: in Spain as well, the rotten dictatorship of General Francisco Franco is being shaken to its very foundations by the growing power and determination of the workers' movement.

The present regime in Spain was born out of the bitter international class struggles of the pre-war years. The Civil War which swept Spain from 1936 to 1939 represented the high point in the resistance of the European proletariat to the reactionary offensive of the European ruling class. On the one side the International Brigades rallied the cream of the workers' movement from Europe and North America to the defence of the Spanish Republic, while on the other fascist Italy and Nazi Germany poured men, arms and supplies to underwrite their protegee General Franco. Once the Spanish workers' resistance had been smashed the bloody conflagration of the Second World War, which broke out within six months, became inevitable.

After the end of the war the fate of Franco and his regime seemed very insecure. After all, the Spanish dictatorship had been spawned by the fascist powers, had promptly joined their 'anti-Comintern Pact', and, while formally neutral during the war, had rendered them considerable assistance. Millions of workers, who had been persuaded to fight on behalf of their ruling classes on the pretext that this was a 'crusade against fascism', naturally expected Franco to be dealt with in the same way as Hitler and Mussolini.

ALLY

However they were wrong. The European ruling class had already demonstrated what side they were on in the fight between fascism and the workers' movement during the Spanish Civil War, when they maintained a policy of 'non-intervention' that starved the Republic of essential

war materials while Franco's forces were generously supplied by their fascist backers. Now the capitalist powers, under the leadership of American imperialism, were forming up for a political fight with the workers' states of Russia, Eastern Europe and China. What better ally could they seek than Franco's Spain, whose army and state had been forged in the fight against 'the evil of communism'.

So after a few years token penitence, Spain was progressively re-admitted to the capitalist 'family of nations'. In 1950, after the outbreak of the Korean War, the United Nations lifted their censure of the Spanish regime which had instructed UN members to break all links with the regime. Loans began to flow into the country from American banks, and the US military began to develop relations with 'the only general who ever completely defeated the Commu-

nists', as one American politician described Franco. Finally, in 1953 the security of the Spanish dictatorship was established with a ten year treaty of economic assistance and military cooperation with the United States.

The dictatorship had been born on the blood and bones of the Spanish working class, and now proceeded to build itself up on their sweat. The long overdue reconstruction of the economy (total production didn't reach the pre-Civil War level until 1953) was carried out through the ruthless exploitation of the working class. In the fifteen years from 1940-1955 prices soared in Spain by 240%, but wages were only allowed to rise by 100%, cutting the purchasing power of the average workers' wages almost in half.

FAT

The Spanish capitalists grew fat from this exploitation. While workers' wage increases were almost entirely paid for out of the increased productivity of their labour, the capitalists were able to boost profits freely by putting up prices. As a result, after a decade of such 'reconstruction', the Spanish economy was able to open itself up to trade and investment ties with the rest of Europe, and attain a rate of economic growth comparable to the best on the continent.

This 'achievement' was, of course, based on the misery of the vast majority of Spanish people, but it made

profound changes in the set-up of Spanish society. At the time of the Civil War - and for many years after - Spain was a predominantly agricultural country, made up for the most part of small farmers and agricultural labourers. But by 1965 there were more workers in industry than peasants and labourers on the land, and these industrial workers, increasingly concentrated in large industrial enterprises, were producing almost half the country's wealth.

At the same time, the capitalists overcame many of their previous differences, based on the different interests of particular regions or economic sectors. Now they became united under the leadership of the big capitalist monopolists who control Spain's financial institutions, and through them the major industries. This band of capitalist robbers is thoroughly devoted to the dictatorship, whose efficient and ruthless repression of the working class made Spain such a wonderful place - for capitalists.

The first effect of these changes was temporarily to strengthen the dictatorship, but in the long run they have been digging its grave. For they have produced a working class that is larger, more concentrated, and more economically powerful than ever before. At the same time they have laid the basis for a polarisation of social struggles in Spain between the regime and its capitalist backers on the one hand, and the mass of Spanish people (workers, students, small

farmers and small shopkeepers) under the leadership of the industrial working class, on the other. The present upheavals sweeping the country are the first signs of just such a polarisation.

WORKERS' COMMISSIONS

The Spanish working class will be no mean opponent for the capitalists and the state to take on, despite the immense repressive machine they have at their disposal. For over a decade now the Spanish workers' movement has been patiently rebuilding its organisations, despite the repression. In the late

by BRIAN S...

1950s and early 1960s, spontaneous illegal strike waves forced the Government to abandon their iron grip on wages and won substantial increases in real wages. Out of these struggles, from early 1962 onwards, were born the 'workers commissions'. These are rank-and-file committees which unite and organise the workers' struggle at the factory, local, regional, and recently even the national level.

Despite the fact that they are illegal (in 1973, 10 militants charged with nothing more than being members of the national coordinating body of the workers' commissions, were given long jail sentences, although the state was forced to re-

prisoners and the fight for their release plays in developing the fight against the dictatorship in Spain. Throughout the recent upheavals - mass occupations, strikes and mass demonstrations - the cause of the political prisoners has been taken up by the workers in struggle. The general strike movement that swept the Basque country in mid-December, involving more than a quarter of a million workers, placed the demand for an amnesty for all political prisoners in the centre of their fight.

Throughout the months of October, November and December last year, the political prisoners showed they could still take part in the struggle even from the depths of Franco's jails by launching hunger strikes that won massive sympathy across the country and paved the way for this massive solidarity.

Recently, an open letter smuggled from the political prisoners in Madrid's infamous Carabanchel prison calls on 'the working class and the rest of the popular masses and all workers' organisations and parties and... the international proletariat and anti-fascist movement to fight for the release of all anti-

From the depth of Franco's dungeons

THOUSANDS OF SPANISH MILITANTS are today rotting in Franco's jails, serving vicious sentences and subject to the most barbarous conditions.

There is nothing new in this fact: for almost four decades worker and student militants have been systematically murdered, tortured and imprisoned by the dictatorship.

A recent pamphlet put out in Madrid gives graphic examples of the way in which the political opponents of the regime are 'dealt with'. A number of militants of the Communist Party of Spain (Marxist-Leninist) are on trial under various charges, including 'illegal association', 'participation in a non-peaceful demonstration', 'possession of illegal material, propaganda'. The prosecution is

demanding that they be sent to jail for 15 years for these 'crimes'.

TORTURE

The tortures to which they have been subjected speak for themselves: 'Jesus Diaz Gomez... on the first day of his detention several thugs of the secret police spent six hours beating him up, causing haematuria [bleeding when he urinates]... on two occasions he was subjected to half hour sessions of electric shocks with intermittent changes and progressive raising of the voltage. On one occasion, because of the brutality of his torturers, he threw himself towards a window but was dragged back...

In the present period of upsurge it is particularly important for the international workers' movement to understand the part that political



Spanish Solidarity Committee picket of Spanish consulate in London last week

IS NEAR



out Spain as a whole.

The only political group which does have the sort of influence necessary to sound the death-knell of the dictatorship is the Spanish Communist Party.

However the Communist Party is not interested in organising a workers' offensive - it is too busy trying to woo maverick capitalists to join its 'Junta Democrática' (Democratic Council).

RECONCILIATION

Since the 1950s the Communist Party has preached a policy of 'national reconciliation' - that the different sides that took part in the Civil War should forget the differences (and the 600,000 corpses) that lie between them and get together to work for a 'democratic' Spain. Quite conveniently, in the process of arguing that everyone else should forget about the Civil War, the Communist Party is also able to 'forget' about the fact that this same policy of subordinating the working class and its allies to the political tastes of supposedly 'democratic' capitalists that was the main reason for the victory of the fascists in the first place.

RESPONSIBLE

In their eagerness to prove to the capitalists how 'responsible' they are the Communist Party have given the 'Junta Democrática' a programme that would leave untouched a big slice of the present regime, including much of its repressive machinery, and do nothing about the material problems that are worrying the mass of the Spanish people.

Despite all this 'moderation', no significant group of Spanish capitalists has shown the slightest interest in uniting with the 'Junta Democrática'. The reason is simple - as we have already pointed out they are quite pleased with the basic set-up of the present regime, even if some might want to adopt a 'liberal' turn to try and derail the present struggles.

PIPE DREAM

The 'Junta Democrática' is a class-collaborationist pipe dream. But the Communist Party is quite prepared to block the *real* way forward in order to promote it. Last year, for example, they were talking about organising a national general strike against the dictatorship. Even though they were only proposing a united protest strike, and not the beginning of a real struggle for power, they promptly scrapped the plan when it looked as if certain currents of 'liberal' cap-

italist opinion would be upset by it.

They have even *opposed* certain mass struggles - such as December's general strike in the Basque country - for much the same reason.

The current struggles show that the end of the dictatorship is drawing ever closer - but it is only the might of the Spanish workers that can do the job. And when they do launch a concerted offensive it will not simply be for the sort of cardboard democracy that the Communist Party is proposing, but for a workers democracy - and a *socialist Spain*.

After being arrested, along with other militants, on the trumped-up charge of being involved in the Cafe Rolando bombing, Forest and Duran are now being brought to trial and threatened with execution on the even phonier accusation that they took part in the assassination of Carrero Blanco.

It is vital that the international workers' movement take up the call from the Carabanchel prison and organise the widest possible solidarity to prevent these militants falling into the hands of Franco's executioners. An international campaign in their defence is already mounting in Europe. Here in Britain it is urgent that trade union bodies, student unions, and women's groups throw their full weight behind the campaign for the release of Forest, Duran, their comrades, and *all* the political prisoners of the Spanish dictatorship.

FREE Forest and Duran
FREE all political prisoners
STOP the assassination of worker and student militants
STOP the torture and repression
DOWN with the Spanish Dictatorship.



Spain's Prime Minister Arias Navarro - in the shadow of Franco.

The master's voice ..

Nowhere has the growing working class challenge to the Franco regime been expressed more clearly than in the recent upsurge of general strike proportions in the Basque province of Navarre.

It started in mid-November at a single factory, Super Ser in Pamplona. After a number of mass meetings the workers' commissions called a strike around a platform of unifying demands with a deadline for the bosses to meet it of 25 November.

Came the day and nothing was settled. So the workers moved to extend the strike, not as a matter of simple solidarity with Super Ser but calling on workers in other factories to come out themselves for the same platform of demands. Soon there were 29 factories on strike, and the one-day general strike in the Basque provinces on 11 December in support of political prisoners boosted militancy further.

DEMANDS EXTENDED

The bosses had already replied to the workers' action by closing down some factories and fining or sacking nearly 1,500 workers, while the police had played their part by arresting a number of strikers. So it was decided to extend the common platform of demands to include the release of all those arrested, that all fines be cancelled or paid by the bosses, that all those sacked be reinstated unconditionally, and that the workers be paid



Spanish CP Secretary, Santiago Carillo

But the police and civil guards had a different idea, letting fly with tear gas and rubber bullets when the demonstrators refused to disperse. Machine gun nests had also been set up in case things got out of hand. However the marchers managed to retreat in an orderly manner under cover of a hail of stones organised by a detachment of about 300 workers.

BARRICADES

The stakes had been raised. Barricades began to go up not only in Pamplona but in the surrounding villages. Police cars were stoned wherever they appeared. More factories, including the giant Motor-Iberica car factory whose struggle set off a general strike in June 1973, were brought to a halt as a series of flying pickets toured the area. Police attempts to seal off the centre of the town collapsed when hundreds of workers broke through a cordon and marched through the streets.

Support continued to grow. Students in the law, commerce, philosophy and science faculties joined the strikers, and 30 priests began a hunger strike in support of the workers' demands. The stoppages also began to spread through the rest of the province, including the major towns of Tudela in the south and Estella to the west.

The only answer of the authorities was to step up the repression. Another demonstration to the potash mine was met with mass arrests. But again the only effect of these tactics was to stiffen the workers' militancy. An increasing number of factories were electing strike committees responsible to regular mass meetings, and the central co-ordinating committee was enlarged to include their representatives, as well as delegates from the student assemblies and tenants' associations.

CONCESSIONS

By Monday 20 January it was clear that the bosses were prepared to make substantial concessions in order to get production going again. The police had been told to avoid any more clashes. At some factories, like Bendiberica, victimised workers had already been reinstated and most of the other demands met. So the leadership of the workers' commissions decided to recommend a temporary return to work as a tactical move pending a full announcement of the bosses' concessions.

But it was a return to work which signified a further consolidation of working class forces in the area against the Franco regime. This was summarised in a balance sheet drawn up at a mass meeting of the Irenasa workers which noted (1) that the experience of elected strike committees was an important gain for future struggles; (2) that they would not relax their vigilance during the return to work; (3) the necessity of co-ordinating future struggles with those taking place in the rest of Spain in order to confront the dictatorship at the level of the state.

General strike hits Navarre

for the time during which their factories remained closed.

At the same time the organisation of the struggle was developed. Apart from regular mass meetings in all the factories, central meetings were held in the town involving not just the strikers but also students and the population in general. These became a means of spreading information and drawing together solidarity. A parallel development was the establishment of a central co-ordinating committee of representatives from the workers' commissions in all the striking factories.

But January came and still the bosses showed no signs of yielding. New tactics were needed. The idea of widespread occupations was put forward. But they ran up against the preventive measures taken by the police. The workers at Inpesa, for instance, three times occupied their factory and three times were thrown out by the police.

MINE OCCUPIED

But where there's a will there's a way - and the potash miners of Potasas found it. All the main pit entrances to their mine were barred by the para-military civil guards; but one largely disused pit was still open. So the miners went down this entrance and made their way to the main pits through connecting galleries. 'We've got plenty of dynamite, and if you try to evict us we'll blow the whole place up', they warned the civil guards. The hint was taken.

This occupation of the potash mine became one of the main focuses of the ongoing struggle. Communication was maintained with those down the pit by means of radio telephones. And when a mass meeting of 6,000 workers on the outskirts of Pamplona decided to organise an immediate demonstration in support of moves to extend the struggle towards a general strike, the mine was its natural destination.

spanish solidarity committee

public meeting
conway hall
friday 21 march 7.00pm
speakers from amnesty
labour movement & S.S.C.

these on appeal last month), the workers' commissions now have tremendous potential power. It is large to them that Spain, a country where strikes are in practice ill-legal, has one of the highest strike rates in Europe.

What is needed for a decisive showdown with the regime, as the Spanish members of the Fourth International have been arguing for several years, is revolutionary leadership that can lead the workers' commissions, to generalise all the local and regional struggles of the working class into a general strike for the downfall

COCK

dictatorship. Such an offensive will draw in the mass of students, farmers, agricultural labourers, wives and small traders, isolate the dictatorship and the capitalist class and bring the regime crashing

at the moment, despite the tremulous partial struggles taking place, the political force is yet able to play a part. The revolutionary left - especially the supporters of the Fourth International - have been able to play a part in the leadership of important regional struggles, like the general strike of 300,000 workers in the Basque provinces in December last year. But they do not yet have the political influence to do this through-

out militants, and in particular those at present on trial for the bombing of the Cafe Rolando, and the assassination of [Prime Minister] Carrero Blanco.

These trials - which involve the militants Eva Forest and Antonio Duran, along with others - which now provide a central focus for solidarity struggles inside Spain itself and throughout Europe.

Spanish dictatorship is now caught between two stools. On the one hand it needs to present a more liberal image to the rest of Europe in order to win acceptance into the Common Market. This was reflected in reduced sentences which the 'militants' of the 'militant 10', leaders of the ill-fated workers' commissions, received on their recent appeal. On the other hand it wants to serve a warning to the rising tide of mass opposition to the Spanish state is still ready to use the most bloody means of repression. It is to use the trial of Forest

Martin
Meteyard

Build the

abortion campaign

The following is a second excerpt from the Political Resolution The Way Forward for the IMG, submitted by Tendency 'C' to the March 1975 National Conference of the IMG. This resolution is in solidarity with the resolution, The World Political Situation and the Immediate Tasks of the Fourth International, presented by the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction to the 1974 World Congress of the Fourth International.

One of the clearest symptoms of the worldwide capitalist crisis has been the growing revolt by women against their oppression as a sex in all three sectors of the world revolution. The development of the women's liberation movement today advances the class struggle, strengthens its forces, and enhances the prospects for the socialist revolution.

The oppression of women has its origins in the passage from pre-class to class society and the development of the patriarchal family. The family is the institution of class society which determines and maintains the specific character of the oppression of women as a sex.

The family is a mechanism by which the ruling class throws the responsibility for children onto individual parents rather than on society as a whole. It is a means for passing on property ownership from one generation to the next and so ensuring the inheritance rights of the bourgeoisie. It is a mechanism for the reproduction of human labour power in which women are fundamentally reduced to a reproductive role. It is a mechanism for the super-exploitation of women as wage workers.

Because of the myth that women's role is in the home, the family system provides capitalism with an exceptionally flexible source of labour which can be drawn into the labour force or sent back into the home with fewer social consequences than any other component of the reserve army of labour. Capitalism has a built-in mechanism for perpetuating the employment of women in unskilled jobs, unequal pay rates and deep divisions within the working class itself along sex lines.

PILLAR OF CAPITALISM

The patriarchal family is a powerful ideological pillar of class society, a repressive and conservatising structure which fosters the possessive and competitive attitudes necessary to the perpetuation of class society. It forces women into economic, legal, social and emotional dependence on men and helps to isolate women from political and trade union activity. It encourages male workers to think they can be 'king' in their own home.

The family isolates and disguises the violent and personal relationships that exist under capitalism, including extreme physical violence. Any movement which challenges the oppression of women and reveals the nature of the family must play a vital and powerful part in the class struggle as a whole.

Control of reproduction is essential for the maintenance of the capitalist state. Even more than economic discrimination and fundamental to its justification is the idea that women's natural and most important function is motherhood. This ideology is backed up by the repressive apparatus of the state and its institutions which denies a woman the right to control her own reproductive functions. In this way the state controls a woman's life.

For this reason, and because of the growth of the youth and women's movements generally, abortion is emerging internationally as a major question for the women's movement. Massive demonstrations in France, Canada, the US, Switzerland, Ger-

many, Italy, Belgium, Scandinavia, Australia and other countries have shown the potential of the abortion question to bring masses of women into struggle. The repeated attempts

scandal of thousands of back-street abortions. We should call for the extension of the law to give women the full right to choose.

The slogan 'the right to choose' encapsulates the essence of the struggle for abortion on demand. It points out that only the woman should have the right to choose whether she has an abortion or not. The state, the church, the medical profession and the male sex have no right whatever to influence or affect her decision. We should build a movement to demand that the principle of a woman's right to choose be incorporated into legislation concerning abortion. It is such



'Our class struggle methods are geared to awakening the initiatives of the masses of women, to bring them together in action against the state. This will help to destroy their domestic isolation, their lack of confidence in their own abilities, intelligence, independence and strength. We aim to show that class exploitation is the root of women's oppression and its elimination the only road to liberation.'

by the forces of reaction to prevent women from gaining control over their own bodies, and even to roll back the limited gains won so far, likewise illustrate the recognition by the state of the implications of women controlling their own bodies.

In Britain a campaign for the right to free abortion on demand and against the reactionaries' attempts to restrict the 1967 Abortion Act is urgent. The right of a woman to decide for herself if and when to have a child is a fundamental precondition for her liberation. As long as she is denied this right she does not control the most basic factor determining her life. Science has made it possible for women to have this control. The denial of safe, efficient birth control and abortion are therefore among the most brutal aspects of women's oppression today, and especially for working class women who are most often the victims of the abortion racketeers.

'RIGHT TO CHOOSE'

The 1967 Abortion Act does not guarantee the right of a woman to choose whether or not to have an abortion. Doctors, not women, have the decision-making power, leading to a marked variation in the availability of abortions in different parts of the country and the continued

a fundamental prerequisite for women's liberation that it would be a necessary provision in the constitution of a healthy workers' state. Outlawing abortion was one of the first moves of the Soviet Government under Stalin.

While fighting for the extension of the 1967 Abortion Act to guarantee a woman's right to choose, we must also defend at all costs the gains of the 1967 Act from the attacks coming from SPUC, LIFE, and other reactionary groups, including many Labour MPs. We must defend the existing gains from the attacks posed by the White Bill and the Select Committee set up by the Labour Government to investigate the 'misuse' of the 1967 Act.

The work carried out by the Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign (WACC), the opportunities created by the launching of the 'Right to Choose' campaign of the Abortion Law Reform Association (ALRA), the counter-mobilisations to the SPUC marches, and the rallies of hundreds of women in protest against the White Bill show that the basis exists for building an effective, national action campaign for the right to abortion on demand. Already there are forces ready and mobilised for such a single issue

campaign: a meeting of over 400 women chaired by a member of the IMG voted to set up an ad-hoc abortion committee; in Scotland, the Scottish-wide women's movement has recently voted to focus its energies on the issue of abortion.

We should build WACC, an independent women's organisation which includes activists who share our perspective of mass mobilisations and action. This is a single issue campaign which has been formed because of the recognition by women that it is possible to mobilise thousands of women in action around the demand for a woman's right to choose. In this way we would force the reformist leaders of ALRA into the campaign. The building of a national campaign must be made a priority in the immediate period and the necessary forces must be assigned to carry out this work.

LABOUR MOVEMENT

We should seek to take the abortion campaign into the labour movement. Working class women are the main victims of the reactionary restriction on the right to abortion. In the process of fighting for labour support for the abortion campaign, the trade union and Labour Party

class society. The fight for the liberation of women is thus inseparable from the struggle to abolish capitalism, so giving the women's liberation movement its objectively anti-capitalist thrust and dynamic. We recognise that because women are oppressed as a sex by class society, and because the proletariat is exploited as a class by capitalism both as a common enemy.

Women can become a powerful ally of the working class in the struggle to overthrow capitalism. The women's liberation movement has already helped to undermine the grip of reactionary bourgeois ideology on women and the class as a whole. Feminist consciousness has grown and is seen as a force to be reckoned with by the mass media and the state. Resentment against their oppression as women has been the starting point in the radicalisation of large numbers of petit-bourgeois women, whose support the working class must win.

ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

Key to the building of a powerful women's movement is the role of Trotskyist leadership. Because the women's movement is not dominated by a reactionary, entrenched bureaucracy, it offers us great opportunity to give leadership and recruit women. The Fourth International is in a particularly strong position to give leadership because of the international character of the oppression of women.

It is through our method of struggling for a series of interlocking immediate, democratic and transitional demands — including free safe abortion on demand; free safe contraception for every woman; 24-hour free child care facilities; equal pay for equal work, and equal job and educational opportunities — that the masses of women will come to understand the inter-relationship of their oppression as a sex and the need for a socialist revolution.

Trotskyists advance proletarian methods of mass mobilisations and action in order to win women's demands. Our class struggle methods are geared to awakening the initiatives of the masses of women, to bring them together in action against the state. This will help to destroy their domestic isolation, their lack of confidence in their own abilities, intelligence, independence and strength. We aim to show that class exploitation is the root of women's oppression and its elimination the only road to liberation. Given the relatively small size of our forces today we should utilise the single issue united-front-type tactic.

While there is a growing interest in women's liberation, there has been a downturn in activity by women and a fragmentation and dispersal of the women's liberation forces. This is due in great part to the default in revolutionary leadership.

The Working Women's Charter contains largely correct demands, but it has failed to put the labour bureaucracy on the spot, because it has allowed them to pass resolutions without forcing them into action in defence of women's rights. The tendency in Charter groups throughout the country is for women to eventually select one or two issues for action; Trades Councils have remained relatively inactive. The Trades Union Congress (TUC), under pressure from the Government and backward workers, proposes to eliminate entirely abortion from its 'new' Charter. Our aim must be to encourage women who have come around the Working Women's Charter to build the single-issue abortion campaign.

It is by implementing the method outlined here that we will aid women in the struggle for liberation and win women militants to the IMG.

WHY WE CALL FOR

It was Marx who first pointed out that a nation will never be free while it oppresses another. This is graphically true for British workers in relation to Ireland today.

On the one hand, we see the north of Ireland being used as a kind of laboratory in which to develop new repressive techniques for possible future use against workers here. The police/army manoeuvres at Heathrow and elsewhere, and now the use of troops in Glasgow, are clearly steps in this direction.

On the other hand we see anti-Irish chauvinism being whipped up in an attempt to split the working class even further on a question on which it has always been backward, and so destroy its ability to fight against the effects of the capitalist crisis. The dangers here have already been illustrated by the lack of resistance to the Prevention of Terrorism Act, passed in the wake of the hysteria after the Birmingham bombings although its provisions could be used to severely hamper trade union activities in future.

Finally, there are the antics of Powell, who is currently trying to build himself a base amongst the most reactionary sections of the Protestant population in the north of Ireland with which he can intervene in British politics at a later stage.

Hence we say that the building of a powerful movement within the British working class against the presence of British troops in Ireland, and for their immediate removal on the grounds that only the Irish have the right to determine their own future, would be a massive blow to the preparations of the ruling class not only in Ireland but in Britain itself. Such a movement would enormously strengthen the hand of British workers as they prepare to go into the gigantic class battles which are impending.

But there are militants in the British labour and student movement—notably supporters of the Communist Party—who have a different conception of our tasks. What do they propose?

BILL OF RIGHTS

Let us look, for instance, at what Chris Myant wrote in the CP's paper, the *Morning Star*, on 24 October last year. The essential key to the solution of the problems in Ireland, he said, is 'the concept of a Bill of Rights, a Bill backed by the power of the British labour movement in struggle alongside the people of Northern Ireland.'

For Myant, the importance of such a Bill lies in the fact that 'it is an active proposal, not a passive one which accepts the existence of the present power structure in the North, a structure based on sectarianism and the paramilitary strength of the right.' He goes on: 'If the troops were simply to be removed and the British Government were to wash its hands of the issue, then the extreme right would have a clear field of fire to slaughter its enemies...'

There is an essential contradiction here. Myant correctly acknowledges that the system created by British imperialism in the north of Ireland is sectarian. But then he goes on to complain that if the imperialist army—whose presence helps to prop up that system—were 'simply to be removed' then there would be a blood-

bath. What is missing, of course, is any recognition of the fact that it is the presence of those troops which, by continuing to boost the confidence of the Loyalists while at the same time wearing down the anti-Unionist resistance to their sectarian attacks, is actually preparing the way for a bloodbath.

This omission is the more remarkable in that the pages of the *Star* itself have been full of examples of incidents where the Loyalists have used the presence of the troops in a very direct way. Numerous assassinations have taken place under the eyes of British soldiers in observation posts, and despite the huge ramps placed in the road the Loyalist thugs have found no obstacles to their getaway.

'DEMOCRACY'

But back to the Bill of Rights—a truly amazing conception. 'Not only must British imperialism be forced out of Ireland' writes Myant, 'but at the same time imperialism's stooges must have the carpet swept from under their feet. A Bill of Rights provides just the basis for that. It must form the centre of the campaign in support of democracy in the north.'



The scope of this envisaged Bill is gigantic. It would range from outlawing discrimination in all fields of life, to ending internment without trial, to safeguarding the right of all to campaign in democratic elections. Myant concludes: 'That may sound little [sic!] but it is enough to crack the machinery of repression and discrimination which is the cause of the crisis.' But how, you may ask, is such a Bill to be enforced?

It is here that we begin to see what role the CP has in mind for the troops it has withdrawn to barracks in its celebrated Bill. But let Chris Myant explain:

'And when the violence does come, the British labour movement must be prepared to use every ounce of its strength to force the army

command to use its military power in defence of democracy and not to cocoon Labour ministers in a web of reactionary policies.'

This really is like asking jockey to carry the horse. Throughout the whole period from 1968 to the present—and especially in its reaction to the Loyalist general strike last May—the army command has made it perfectly clear where it stands on the Irish issue. These people can be relied on to take the same attitude as their forebears did at the Curragh when

about forcing the army to defend democracy were 'the most reformist statement I have read in a left newspaper for a long time.'

On this question, at least, Colin Sweet is right. The line of the CP utterly confuses the real nature of imperialism. It suggests that imperialism is merely another policy of the Government, which can be changed by passing a Bill. On the contrary, imperialism—as Lenin explained—is a total system of economic, political and cultural domination. It is

they mutinied against Home Rule.

Now Chris Myant wants us to ask this army of imperialism to stop being imperialist for a little while and make sure that a Bill of Rights is implemented. The mind boggles at the thought of British imperialism abolishing itself as far as Ireland is concerned by passing an Act through its own Parliament and then making sure that its self-imposed abolition is carried through by its very own army!

IMPERIALISM

No wonder that the frustrations and tensions caused by these policies have burst into the pages of the *Morning Star* itself. On 9 December last year Colin Sweet—who heads the CP-backed British Peace Committee—wrote a letter to the paper in which he said the ideas expressed by Myant

not a system that can be smashed simply by building a campaign for democracy and against internment.

Why does internment exist in the north of Ireland? It exists because in trying to overcome their economic, political and social problems the Catholic population kept smashing up against the barriers of the sectarian Orange statelet. As a consequence the artificial—imperialist—division of the country presented itself to them in very graphic terms. The national struggle became inextricably linked with all the struggles of the Catholic population.

Internment and all the other horrors of the last five years stem from this. Yes, fight in the British working class against internment, but see how it is inextricably linked to the present-



ce of British troops in Ireland as the guarantors of British imperialism.

LOYALISTS STRENGTHENED

Hence, it is useless for militants in Britain to call for declarations of intent and phased withdrawals. The troops will only be withdrawn because of the fight in Britain and Ireland against them, or if British imperialism is able to hand over to its old and trusted ally, the Loyalists.

It is true that the British ruling class is falling back on its old ally reluctantly. The original intention was to hand the whole works over to the Dublin Government to act as a policeman for British imperialism. But to do this they had to make alterations in the north. These changes contributed to the first upsurges of the anti-Unionist minority, and the later backlash of the Unionists. The British ruling class now has little choice but to embark once again on a policy of concessions to the Loyalists.

Between now and the date for any phased withdrawal the British ruling class will do its utmost to strengthen this ally. This much has been evident since the Loyalist general strike. The longer British imperialism and its army remains, the stronger will be the Loyalist forces and the worse it will be for the Catholics.

In one sense, the Labour Government has already made a declaration of intent on leaving Ireland. The army will pull out when the Government figures that the Loyalists can handle the situation for themselves. In that situation we really can start talking about a bloodbath.

TROOPS OUT NOW!

As far as the International Marxist Group is concerned, a crucial lesson should have been learned from the last years. This is that the stronger the self-defence of the Catholics, the weaker the Loyalists and the quicker British troops are got out, then the more hopeful the prospects for the future.

All these tasks are concentrated in Britain in the need to build a real movement for the immediate withdrawal of troops. That is why we see it as a priority task to build for the IOM demonstration on 6 April, and the TOM Labour Movement Conference on 24 May. The latter, in particular, will have a vital role to play in cutting through the many misconceptions and errors like those outlined above which presently surround the issue of Ireland.

***** What's On? *****

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

FOR CHEAP, reliable IBM Typesetting with fast turn-around phone Carl or Martin on 01-837 9987.

BIRMINGHAM RALLY—'Against the Common Market, For a United Socialist States of Europe!' Speakers include Ernest Mandel. Thursday 1 May at 7.30pm in Digbeth Civic Hall Assembly Hall. Organised by Birmingham IMG.

'THE STATE, the Law and Ireland': new pamphlet by Steve Cohen produced for Manchester NCCL—available price 20p (plus 5p p&P) from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

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

ANTI-FASCIST COMMITTEE in South Shields have information that the National Front may be organising a demonstration on Good Friday in South Shields. Phone South Shields 65062 for details of possible counter-mobilisation.

SHEFFIELD RED CIRCLES: Every Wednesday at 7.30pm in the Lion Hotel, corner of the Wicker and Nursery St.

100 MEN WANTED for organising and running cliche for women's liberation conference in Manchester, 4/5/6 April 1975. Please contact John at 061-794 1389.

CIA AND BRITAIN: Public meeting arranged by North London Anarchist Worker Association, Tues. 25 March, 8am, Roebuck pub (corner Tottenham Court Rd and Mable St), Tube: Warren St or Goadge St.

LEEDS IMG public meeting on 'The Crisis—Why the Labour Government can't help'. Speaker from Eldon Square scaffolders' strike, and Tim Hall (IMG Political Committee). Wednesday 26 March at 8 pm in the Trades Club, Saville Mount, Leeds.

FIGHT THE LUMPI! Free the Shrewsbury 21! Support the Mitcham building workers' picket! Come and see Broadside's 'The Big Lump', Combine's 'Shrewsbury Show', Speakers Alan Tattam, Jack Henry, Carl Cooper, Monday 24 March at 8 pm in Oval House, 54 Kennington Oval, SE11 (nearest tube Oval).

PAMPHLET on the struggle at Kent University. Excellent value at 5p. Orders to Joanna Haynes, Keynes College, University of Kent, Canterbury.

'THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL': Stirling Marxist Discussion Group meeting with speaker Roland Sheret. Tues 25 March at 7.30pm in the Cowane Centre, Cowane Street.

WANTED by Up Against the Law; names and numbers of policemen involved in prosecutions over Red Lion Square. Call, write or ring UPAL at 68 York Way, London, N.1. 101-837 4194.

How the ruling class is using the abortion issue

Last week the Women's Conference of the TUC voted overwhelmingly to back abortion on demand and free contraception. This important move comes at a time when even the present, very limited right to abortion is under attack. JANICE MILLS looks at the debate over abortion and spells out why the whole workers' movement must take a clear stand on this question.

WHY IS ABORTION such a 'controversial issue'? Is it because the Catholic church has been checking the rule book and has declared against abortion? Hardly — the real reasons are more down to earth.

An important clue was given by the consultants' work to rule. The first service they axed was abortion. That's important because of what the run down in the health service (and other social services) means.

gay teacher has been victimised — for discussing homosexuality in the classroom. Talk about decency and motherhood and rantings about the decline and fall of the Roman empire no longer come from the right wing lunatic fringe only but also from respectable bourgeois politicians like Keith Joseph as they attempt to explain why it is a good thing that the health and education services are being axed.

They're starting to tie it all together.



Judith Gray of ASTMS (Medical Practitioners' Union) moving the motion for abortion on demand which was overwhelmingly passed by the Women's TUC last week

The ruling class can't afford to foot the welfare bill any more. They are looking out for a return to the pre-1945 situation when all these social jobs (care of children, care of the elderly, care of the sick and so on) were carried out by the workers themselves. That meant most of all by working class women. Social services were carried out at home.

The consultants in their half conscious way have recognised this. For them 'abortion is not an important operation'. Tell that to a housewife in a low income household burdened down with washing, cooking, cleaning — and children.

But the consultants were just reacting in a sleepy way. There are far clearer minds around. They understand that if the working class is going to be made to pay for the crisis of social expenditure then that means increasing the repression of women and tying them even more firmly to their tasks in the home. That is why right wingers in the Tory party and fascists like the National Front are against abortion. They want to extend control over women in order to make them the pack horses of the social services. Defence of the right to abortion is now more than ever before a vital task of the left.

PROBLEMS

However the ruling class have some problems. They are very political people. They want support for all their ideas, not just a few of them. Up to now the most important representatives of capitalism have ignored the abortion issue. Organisations like SPUC, powerful and dangerous as they are, have a serious disadvantage. They are single issue organisations. They have only one idea. The bourgeoisie prefers something better than that.

Now however there are better chances for the ruling class. A lot of different issues are coming up at once. Jill Knight is trying to start an anti-gay crusade in the social services (she has demanded the removal of homosexuals from social service jobs). A

ether. They can make it relate to what is actually happening to people in their own day-to-day lives. And the SPUCs, the Mary Whitehouses and Lord Longfords of this world have given them a base. Literally thousands of people doped by the stupidities of religion can be mobilised in defence of the family, and against the interests of women. Thousands of people are ready to accept homosexuals as scapegoats for the failure of capitalism.

SPELT OUT

The one missing ingredient has now been given to them by James White. He has spelt it out that there are people in the labour movement quite ready to back a reactionary attack over sexual matters. He has indicated the possibility of organising workers against abortion and for the family, against the interests of working class women and against the interests of the whole working class. It is not an accident that he has picked on the abortion issue. Control of child birth is the single most important issue in the freeing of women. More than anything else it is their function as child bearers that keeps women tied to the home and therefore keeps them oppressed.

The ruling class are only starting to experiment with their new opportunities. But they are beginning to understand that workers can be mobilised on sexual issues. That, as in the Manchester SEI strike, male workers can be used against women workers. That ideas about the family and decency can be used to confuse and split the working class just as much as racist and nationalist prejudices. They are only starting, but the opposition on this issue should have got underway long since.

If the left thinks that women's liberation is just about equal pay, it is in for a rude awakening. If backward ideas on women and the family go unchallenged in the workers' movement then it will start to dig its own grave. If we are not to be defeated tomorrow then we must fight today.

FOR THE STEELWORKERS of Ebbw Vale, April is drawing close. It brings with it the British Steel Corporation's 'promise' of 300 redundancies — the first of 4,600.

The initial sound and fury has passed. The dust raised by the one-day strike and demonstration has settled. Neither sound nor fury, however, have moved Foot and the Labour Government from their plans to scrap the steelworks. Now, with some demoralisation setting in, all eyes are turned to the Works Council to give a lead.

But the Works Councils are treading water like mad. Their demand for no redundancies remains, but they have no strategy to achieve it.

NOT NEW

The dilemma is now new. The main steel union, the Iron & Steel Trades Confederation — still generally known by its old name of BISAKTA — is bedevilled by a history of craft narrowness and right-wing leadership.

The works at Ebbw Vale, a labour stronghold, were built in the 1930s to provide cheap sheet metal for the booming British car industry. This has partly cushioned the steelworkers from the ups and down which afflicted other sectors of the steel industry. Whilst the men at Llanwern and Port Talbot have had to fight to defend their jobs and living standards, despite the backsliding of BISAKTA, Ebbw's labour relations were boasted as the best in the country. In other words there was no tradition of struggle.

By 1968, the writing on the wall became clear — Ebbw Vale was for the axe. The workers began to look for a way to stop the closure. The Works Council adopted a policy of no closure without alternative employment. But a split between craft and production representatives came in 1973. The craft delegates put the emphasis on 'alternative employment' and getting guarantees from BSC and the Labour Party. The production representatives pointed out that such guarantees were not forthcoming and neither were any new jobs.

For many workers the argument meant little. Steel is the foundation of Ebbw and the surrounding communities. There is no chance of any large scale new industries moving in. Ebbw Vale is far too cut off in terms of geography and transport facilities to make it attractive to private capital. Recognition that steelmaking is the only future for working people in the area has made no closure and no redundancies the demand.

A successful fight against closure demands the independent action of the Ebbw workers and the community itself. Refusing to accept closure was the first shaky step in this direction. Steelworkers are saying that steelmaking must stay and the Labour Government must invest in the works, starting with £1 million to re-line the furnaces.

The second step is to move from

the formulation of such class demands to a strategy which can impose them through class strength. An occupation of the works, both rolling and tinning sections, is vital. It would secure machinery, keep the furnaces in working order, and provide a base from which to organise further actions.

OCCUPATION

There has been talk of a work-in, but it would be impossible to guarantee supplies of iron and steel. The finished steel and tinplate would also have to be sold on the capitalist market in competition with BSC and foreign producers. In the same way, straightforward strike action would give BSC the opportunity to threaten closure of all the furnaces two years ahead of schedule, as strike action would put them beyond repair.

An occupation is the only way. It stops a major part of BSC's tinplate output and stops steel output at a time when maximum production is needed from the Ebbw works due to the re-lining of a furnace at Llanwern. Keeping the furnaces in working order without giving the bosses any production provides a powerful base from which to demand a Government re-investment programme. By establish-

all steel works and all workers faced with short-time and redundancy in South Wales.

The steel industry in South Wales faces a bleak future. Llanwern and Port Talbot, the main producing and rolling mills, are likely to be on short-time by the end of March. Four-day production and one-day maintenance and cleaning has been operating at Llanwern since January. The secondary and finishing plants of Whiteheads and Orb, Newport, and Tostre and Velindre near Swansea, all have similar cuts in orders. At Panteg works, output of stainless steel has been cut back by 50 per cent. East Moors, Cardiff, faces both cuts in orders and the threat of the axe in 1980. Furthermore, BSC has also announced its intention to 'discuss' with the steel unions the suspension of the guaranteed week.

FOCUS

Ebbw can become a focus for opposition to BSC's plans. Proposals for a common jobs policy, for the regional implementation of work-sharing, would find a ready response among fellow steelworkers. A lead in creating workers control in a nationalised industry would quickly lead to workers demanding that the Labour

... at the crossroads

Government nationalise all firms creating redundancies.

Such a struggle demands the greatest possible involvement of all workers to achieve its ends. But the Works Councils at Ebbw Vale have not yet called mass meetings to discuss the way forward. Shop meetings on all shifts should be convened now to work out the alternatives as a preliminary to an extraordinary mass meeting of all craft and production workers to vote on what strategy to follow and to elect a special struggle committee.

Links with other steelworkers can be built through the all-Britain action committee of works representatives. This committee can endorse the strategy of Ebbw workers in both words and action by arranging a special meeting for them at all steelworks, distributing leaflets popularising their demands, and agitating for national strike action prior to the April redundancies.

Regional conferences and regional jobs policies against short-time and redundancies involving delegates from all factories affected could also provide a massive boost to the steelworkers who are now in the front-line of the struggle for jobs.

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Newport IMG

EBBW VALE



FIGHT UNEMPLOYMENT NOW

As the economic crisis deepens the kid glove is coming off the iron fist of the social contract. Troops are moving in to smash the dustcart drivers' strike in Glasgow. The Government is firmly drawing the wage guidelines of the social contract against the power workers.

But the social contract has largely failed to cut back the living standards of the working class. Now the Government is looking for stronger medicine. With the budget just a few weeks away, both the Bank of England and the influential National Institute of Economic and Social Research have told Chancellor Healey that unemployment is his main weapon in curbing wages.

At a time when 790,000 are already out of work, with nearly 250,000 more on short-time, the Bank of England is calling for a deflationary budget which would accelerate unemployment. Meanwhile the NIESR speculates on 'whether

unemployment (has) to be kept permanently high. The answer has to be affirmative unless one way or another the unemployment itself brings about lasting changes in attitudes.' Its call for a 'broadly neutral budget' would still send unemployment over the 1 million mark by 1976 at the latest.

Unable to implement any tough incomes policy because of the massive confrontation this would provoke with the trade unions, the Labour Government is prepared to act like a latter-day Canute, hoping that steadily rising unemployment will produce the goods for the ruling class without provoking a mass response from Labour's base in the working class.

The Labour left has no answer to this other than calling for policies of full employment and claiming the crisis isn't as bad as the capitalists make out. Meanwhile 300 workers at Crosfield's Electronics in North London, 200 white collar

workers at Hoover's headquarters in Perivale, West London, and 225 at Thorn Electrical in Hull were among those issued with redundancy notices last week. They join 3200 workers from Imperial Typewriters, and thousands employed by the multi-national Plessey and in the slumping textile and steel industries, whose jobs are also under attack.

What is desperately needed in this situation is a class-wide fight for nationalisation to save jobs — without compensation being given to bankrupt capitalists — and for work-sharing without loss of pay in factories threatened with redundancies and short-time. The latter can be implemented by shop stewards monitoring the amount of work available and dividing it accordingly. But the TUC provides no lead. In fact they accept the Labour Government's argument that living standards must fall or unemployment will rise.

OCCUPATION SAVES JOBS

At Brooke Cylinders (formerly Jarrow Tubes) on Tyneside, the workforce of 36 have won an important victory in the fight against unemployment, in an area where 40 workers are chasing every available job.

When the closure of the factory was announced on 28 February, the workers immediately occupied the plant — which had been closed in December 1974 with 280 redundancies and re-opened only last month with the present staffing level.

Faced with quick militant action and the support the occupation received from the local labour movement, including South Shields Trades Council which placed its banner on the gate of the occupation, the management of this subsidiary of Tube Investments were forced to capitulate.

Occupations have a vital role to play in the fight against unemployment. They can prevent the movement of valuable machinery, give access to the company's books for trade union inspection (which the workers at Brooke Cylinders demanded), and provide a militant focus from which to campaign for solidarity action in the labour movement.

The workers at Brooke Cylinders are remaining on their guard, though. 'We are pleased that we have achieved what we set out to do in the short term', said Hugh Nichol, the AUEW convenor at the works. 'But naturally', he added, 'we only see this as round one.'



NO CONCORD AT CONCORDE — Workers at British Aircraft Corporation factories at Weybridge, Surrey and Hurn Airport near Christchurch are occupying their factories in pursuit of wage claims. The workers at Hurn want £55 basic, while at Weybridge they want a £3 basic wage increase and cost of living rises on a monthly basis. This is one of the most determined struggles for automatic compensation for inflation launched to date.

Port bosses in the dock

LONDON DOCKERS have launched a determined fight for jobs and are entering their third week of strike action. Since 1967 employment in the docks has slumped from 51,000 to 34,000 jobs. And in the East End generally, unemployment is running at 9 per cent.

Many jobs have disappeared because multi-national firms such as Vestey's have closed their riverside wharves only to open up cold stores and container bases outside the Docks Labour Scheme. In this way they have evaded the restrictions on hiring which the Scheme lays down, and can avoid paying the wages and providing the good conditions and job security that dockers have won over years of struggle.

London dockers are now calling on the National Port Shop Stewards Committee, which ran the 1972 dispute during which the 'Pentonville Five' were jailed, to organise national strike action to defend jobs.

The dockers have ignored the plea of IGWU 'leader' Jack Jones for a return to work, and are rightly sceptical about yet another government report on the docks and Labour's nationalisation plans. The Jones-Aldington report that was foisted upon them in 1972 has led to the loss of a further 5,000 jobs.

Jones has been aided by the press in his campaign to present the dockers as 'gangsters' who ate out to steal the jobs of the warehouse workers and lorry drivers employed in ports outside the Docks Labour Scheme. In fact, when

the Cobham Farm container base within the Scheme in 1972, the men at the depot retained their jobs and received an £11 a week pay rise and a 10 hour reduction in the working week into the bargain.

At the same time Jack Jones has failed to mention that the transport bosses of the Road Haulage Association have been paying lorry drivers to set up counter-pickets to those of the dockers.

However there are serious weaknesses in the dockers' fight. They have failed to make it absolutely clear to the men in the container depots outside the Docks

Labour Scheme that they are not simply after their jobs. This has allowed the bosses to make these men their stooges.

The next step for the dockers, rather than simply demanding the re-definition of what constitutes dock work and the bringing of all docks and wharves within the Docks Labour Scheme, must be the demand for work-sharing with no loss of pay amongst all workers employed on the docks — including those who are at present outside the Scheme — against any attempt by the dock bosses to introduce redundancies. In this way the dockers will save jobs not only for themselves but for the whole working class.

Cars: against short-time

With thousands of jobs already disappearing in the car industry, a further 2,000 workers, this time at Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port plant, accepted voluntary redundancies last week.

This comes hard on the heels of the introduction of short-time working at all Ford's plants — the last of the big car firms to be hit. Meanwhile the American multi-national, Chrysler, has threatened to stop all investment in Britain unless Industry Secretary Tony Benn gives firm guarantees of future profits.

But at the same time Chrysler shop stewards at the Linwood plant in Scotland have taken a decision which opens the road to a very different solution to the crisis in the motor industry. They have decided to approach stewards' organisations at British Leyland, Ford and Vauxhall to gain support for a national conference of senior stewards to discuss the crisis.

The engine plant and foundry joint shop stewards

short time, have also called for a national combine stewards' conference to prepare a united fight on pay and job protection.

These moves can be the first steps in uniting all car workers against short-time working, and in preparing a trade union plan to combat the crisis racking the international capitalist car industry. Short-time, the thin end of the wedge for future redundancies, must be smashed by stewards' organisations monitoring the amount of work available in the plants and sharing it between the whole workforce with no loss of pay.

The initiative of the Chrysler stewards must be seized as the first move towards a campaign by the union plant leaderships for the nationalisation without compensation of the entire motor industry. Only by imposing this workers' solution to the crisis can car-workers defend their jobs and living standards, and put the cost of the crisis in the motor industry where

by
Mick Gosling

UNION LEADERS SCAB

Little can be expected from the trade union bureaucracy in the fight to defend jobs in the car industry if the record of the AUEW in the strike at BLMC's Castle Bromwich works is anything to go by.

The 600 striking toolroom workers, who have been out for six weeks in pursuit of a £12.75 a week rise are continuing to resist attempts to force a return to work. The claim was originally submitted

in October, but BLMC have consistently refused to hold meaningful talks. Their present offer is less than half what the toolroom workers are demanding.

The workers have also had to contend with the full-time officials in the AUEW. Twice they have refused orders to return to work from the Executive Committee, and are being supported in this stand by the Birmingham AUEW East District Committee.

BLMC are refusing to discuss the claim unless there is a return to work, and the Executive Committee, backed by Len Murray in a speech in Birmingham on 6 March, are arguing that the official negotiating procedure has not yet been fully exhausted. However it was the management who provoked the strike in the first place by refusing to use this machinery?

The desire of the AUEW bureaucracy for a return to work has little to do with the interests of the toolroom workers. It is an attempt to 'keep the lads quiet' while Sir Don Ryder is busy investigating the future of British Leyland. Rumours are circulating even in the House of Commons that Ryder may demand 30,000 redundancies.

Little trust can be put in the union officials to resist the inevitably anti-working class proposals that Ryder will come up with to make BLMC a viable capitalist concern, if they cannot even bring themselves to support the Castle Bromwich workers in the struggle to

Who gets the divi at the Co-op?

TONY BENN, meanwhile, has been busy applauding the 'great and epic' struggle of the workers at NVT Meriden, whose plan for a workers' co-operative, after 18 months of struggle, may succeed eventually in saving 700 to 800 of the original 1,700 jobs.

The paper of the Communist Party, the *Morning Star*, in an article headlined "'Happiest factory" gets down to work at last', reported this uncritically. It's worth looking at just who benefits from co-operatives.

It is undoubtedly true that the struggle waged at NVT Meriden saved some jobs which would otherwise have gone. But at what a cost! Unpaid modifications were carried out on the Triumph Bonneville 750 'twin' during the occupation to allow sales on the American market. A productivity increase of around 80 per cent is forecast, and workers have agreed to end 'restrictive practices', and the piecework system, and pay back redundancy money.

The bikes produced will still be marketed by NVT for at least the next 27 months, while the workers must pay £3.9 million for the machinery and repay the bulk of a £1.95 million government loan over the next 15 years. No wage rises, even cost of living increases, can be given without permission of the ministry. One person who certainly has benefited is Dennis Poore, who was paid £4.9 million by the Tories to take over the firm and another £4.2 million by Tony Benn to sell it back.

Meanwhile the workers at Meriden (now called Synova Ltd) have been working up to fifteen hours a day during the first week of production without tea breaks or overtime pay. Some of them may have saved their jobs — but with the help of Benn and the Labour Government they have been made to pay with interest the capitalist class's price.

Westminster workers defend NHS beds

At the Westminster Hospital in London the administration is closing down 38 out of 1,000 health service beds over Easter. They claim that this is being done to allow for nurses' holidays and for structural alterations to a ward.

JAMIE MORRIS, secretary of the NUPE branch at the Westminster, talked to JANET MAGUIRE about the action against this decision proposed by his members.

'The hospital administration have closed down 38 NHS beds until Easter. This is because the nurses are due for an extra holiday following the Halesbury report. We therefore want 10 of the 44 private beds in the Westminster to be turned over to the NHS until the 38 beds are made available again.

The porters, domestics and the maintenance workers are all supporting the ban. We are having a branch meeting today (17 March) when we will decide whether to put up a picket line to prevent food and services getting through to the private patients. We will probably set up an action committee to

co-ordinate the action with mass meetings daily.

The majority of our members are women. They are very militant and we have 100 per cent support from them.

None of the nursing staff are supporting us. It is a very class conscious hospital, the nurses are told that they are Westminster nurses.

We have got a lot of immigrant workers who are worried about their work permits. They have been threatened before about having their visas withdrawn—although management have said that there will be no victimisations. There are some junior doctors who have

said that they agree with what we are doing and would like to see pay beds go. However they are afraid to give support to our action for fear of their consultants.

The private wing is staffed entirely by agency nurses except for the sister and staff nurse who work for the NHS.

I think private hospitals should be banned by the Government or where they are in existence then they should be taken over for the NHS.

We are going to contact other hospitals for support action, and we are going to ask for a speaker from a hospital where there is a private practice ban in progress.

We will also contact MCAPP (the Medical Committee Against Private Practice) to give us advice on how to organise our struggle.

Consultants declare: 'War to the death'

'War to the death if need be' is the rallying cry of the 5,000-strong Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association. By that they mean the death of the National Health Service patients.

Stepping up their campaign against the Government's proposals to phase out private beds from the NHS and eventually restrict consultants' rights to use what time they want to work for private medicine, the HCSA are saying they will close a hospital at the risk of patients dying unless the Government 'gets the message' and gives them better contracts of work.

This blatant attack on the health of NHS patients is wrapped up in hypocritical phrases about ensuring that there are 'proper standards of care in all hospitals'. John Stewart, a member of the HCSA executive, says their action could 'inconvenience patients'. Re-assuringly he tells people: 'But it is an inconvenience in their interests'.

RISK

As Stewart admits: 'We have no doubt that there is always a risk of patients dying.' Which is rather inconvenient for the patients! Naturally Mr. Stewart has no thought of imposing such little inconveniences on the private patients—good businessmen try not to bite the hand that feeds them.

Stewart sees the Castle proposals—mild and conciliatory as they are—as undermining the right of the medical professions, particularly the consultants, to sell their services to the highest bidder. The shortages in the NHS and its chronic crisis of finance to him is something to be used to defend and hang on to those privileges.

Health workers must ensure that the attacks of the HCSA consultants are beaten back. Meetings should be held in every hospital and members of the HCSA should be told that any of their actions which lead to any closures or cut-backs against NHS patients will be met with an immediate embargo on all their private patients. Emergency services should be organised to combat the effect of

the HCSA ban and the support of junior doctors and sympathetic consultants should be mobilised to counter the actions of the HCSA.

NOT ACCEPT

Health workers must not however accept the burden of the capitalist crisis which the Labour Government is prepared to impose on the NHS.

As long as there is a chronic shortage of finance, as long as private practice exists both inside and outside the NHS, and as long as the doctors are permitted to run the NHS to suit their own financial and administrative needs, the crisis will continue to worsen.

These are the reasons why the broad working class movement must throw its weight behind the action of those health workers who are fighting private practice and struggling to develop a genuine health service which serves the needs of the entire working class.

Only by the workers' movement taking action to force the Labour Government to make adequate funds available to the NHS can a start be made in creating a real health service.

Bob Gordon



Jamie Morris, branch secretary of NUPE at Westminster Hospital

But, of course, the CP are not interested in achieving that sort of workers' unity against the ruling class. For them, it's more important to get 'unity' with the Labour and trade union 'lefts'. On Shrewsbury they've managed to do this. And because these very people are not interested in preparing the struggle of the mass of

workers against this Labour Government, but want to bottle it up in Parliament and mere talk about changing the law and the face of the Home Secretary, the pickets remain firmly behind locked doors.

LCDTU - Cont. from p.3

Not only that. The employers and the state are encouraged by the ineffectiveness of the movement over Shrewsbury. Already under Labour we've seen pickets under attack at Art Castings, Wingrove and Rogers in Liverpool, Intex in Manchester and now in the last weeks in Newcastle, where scab/folders who had been on strike for over 10 weeks have had their pickets smashed, and are now awaiting trial under charges which include Section 5 of the Public Order Act—a criminal law introduced to curb fascists in the '30s but only ever used against working class struggles.

What has the CP to say about this new 'Shrewsbury'? How will it urge the LCDTU to campaign in support of the Eldon Square pickets? Perhaps the answer lies in the pages of the *Morning Star* in recent weeks which has had little or no coverage on this latest attack on democratic rights.

TASKS

As inflation soars and unemployment goes over the million mark, the tasks of a body such as the LCDTU have never been clearer. Although dominated by the politics of the CP which depend on clinging to the coat-tails of the 'lefts', the LCDTU is the most powerful rank and file body in the workers' movement. If it adopted a programme of struggle for socialist measures against the immediate problems facing the working class, it could give a lead to hundreds of thousands of workers.

On this page, *Red Weekly* publishes the sort of programme we think would be adequate for the task of organising effective unity in the working class. The LCDTU will either measure up to these tasks or will write another page in its inglorious history.

Sam Boyd

OUR PROGRAMME FOR THE LCDTU

The working class is facing two major threats under this Labour Government. First, its living standards are being attacked by the Social Contract. Unemployment is growing and cuts in public spending mounting. Second, democratic rights are being attacked by the state assault on pickets, by Britain's entry into the capitalist EEC and the growth of the extreme right who feed off Britain's imperialist war in Ireland with their chauvinist propaganda.

The LCDTU therefore calls on all bodies of the labour movement to:

1. Oppose any form of incomes policy under capitalism. Organise industrial solidarity with all workers fighting to smash the Social Contract and in defence of the Social Services.
2. Campaign for industrial solidarity with all workers, such as those at BAC, fighting for nil-norm threshold pay increases, as the first step to a sliding scale of wages and state benefits covering all workers.
3. Occupy property of all firms threatening or declaring redundancies and demand their nationalisation, without compensation and under workers' control.
4. Campaign for the TUC (and if they refuse, the NUM) to set a date for national strike action to free the Shrewsbury 2 and get the charges against the Eldon Square pickets dropped.
5. Campaign throughout the trade union movement to promote, within the anti-EEC campaign, solidarity action between workers in Britain and workers in Europe. For joint trade union links at all levels.
6. To support the Troops Out Movement Trade Union Conference on Ireland, taking place on 24 May 1975.
7. To oppose the use of troops as a strike-breaking force against the Glasgow dustcart drivers and organise national support for this struggle.



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