

Workers' ACTION

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May Day protest denounces war drive

"Workers of the world unite, Down with Carter's war-drive" chanted 150 demonstrators outside the US Embassy on May Day.

The "Hands off Iran" picket, initiated by Socialist Organiser, took place straight after the London May Day march and was backed by the march organisers — the London Co-Op Political Committee — and by the Communist Party, Socialist Workers' Party, Confederation of Iranian Students National Union and the Association of Kurdish Students Abroad.

At the US Embassy the London Labour Party Chairman Arthur Latham and Socialist Organiser Editorial Board member Andrew Hornung handed in a letter of protest against the US intervention in Iran and its war build-up.

The protest letter was signed by 8 Labour MPs, Jo Richardson, Stuart Holland, Ernie Roberts, Frank Allaun, Martin Flannery, Ron Leighton, Stan Newens, and Reg Race; 9 members of the CPSA National Executive; two members of the NUJ National Executive; and Gerry Cohen, London District Secretary of the Communist Party.

As the picket ended the demonstrators joined together in singing the *Internationale* — in Farsi, Turkish, and English.

NIK BARSTOW



THE TORIES and the bosses are campaigning to wreck the TUC Day of Action on May 14th. They must not succeed.

Express Newspaper bosses have taken 3 print unions and the NUJ to court seeking an injunction against them for breach of contract. They claim that simply circulating the union membership information of the recommendation to strike on May 14th is unlawful.

Margaret Thatcher gave open encouragement to the union-bashers, declaring that no legal protection over 'breach of contract' applied to May 14th. In British law, the right to strike takes the form of laws protecting strikers from 'breach of contract' rules which would otherwise outlaw them all. Thatcher insisted that this right to strike applies only to 'trade disputes' and May 14 is not a trade dispute.

A Tory MP has called on the Attorney-General to prosecute TUC leaders for 'inciting breach of contract'. A travel company is planning to sue the National Union of Railwaymen. And the Institute of Directors is calling on employers to sue the unions for damages.

Fired by arrogance, these people see any effective political protest by working people as a crime. In the Employment Bill they want to go further and narrow down the legal right to industrial action so that trade union solidarity is unlawful even in battles over wages and conditions.

ALL OUT MAY 14th

A big turn-out on May 14 is vital to show the bosses and the Tories that the working class will not be gagged and will not be tied hand and foot as they wish.

The steelworkers gave the Tories a shock. Now they fear that a big demonstration of working class solidarity on the 14th could boost workers' confidence and will to fight so as to make Tory policies unworkable.

The major obstacle to beating down the Tories' arrogance is the feebleness of the trade union leaders. They are scared, too — scared of the Tories and the courts, and fearful of the mobilisation of the rank and file. If there is a poor turn-out on May 14, many of them will privately be very relieved. They will have an ideal excuse to negotiate and collaborate openly with the Tories.

The print union SOGAT is instructing its members to strike. But it is the only one. Many other unions that are calling for or recommending strike action are leaving loopholes.

For example, the Fire Brigades Union has called for its members to cover only emergency services — except those members who normally work only on non-emergency services (fire prevention work and so on) are being told to stay at work.

Just as importantly, union leaders have made very little effort to explain the case for the strike to workers, many of whom are sceptical or confused.

Many think there is no point in striking because the unions are disunited: why should they lose a day's pay if most other people are

staying at work. The union leaders have done nothing to argue against this defeatism.

The National Union of Teachers, one of the unions hit hardest by the Tory cuts, is 'recommending' half-day strikes. But it has put out no leaflets... and you can see why when the NUT leaders talk about the Day of Action being 'non-political'.

Some NUT branches, like Brent in North West London, have voted for all-day strikes. But the second largest teachers' union, the NAS/UWT, has instructed its members to do the work of

NUT members on strike. The major industrial unions, the AUEW and the TGWU, have given very little support. AUEW District Committees in some areas have been just sending questionnaires to shop stewards asking: what are you doing? Some sections of the TGWU have called for strike action, but not the union as a whole.

So the turn-out on the 14th depends almost entirely on what militants can organise at local level. The leaders will not lead against the Tories... so the rank and file must.

The Embassy raid: the open questions

AS THE SMOKE drifts away from the wrecked Iranian embassy in London, the media are full of acclaim for the success of the SAS/police raid. But some awkward questions remain.

In the first radio reports, the explosions in the embassy just before 7.30pm on Monday 5th were announced as being the work of the hostage-takers, and in fact as being the immediate reason for the SAS raid. That made little sense, since it was also reported that a white flag had been waved from the embassy after the first explosion.

In Tuesday's papers, the explosions were reported without saying who caused them — but it was made clear that the explosions came AFTER the SAS attack started. The explosions must have been the work of the SAS. Why the concealment?

Now the immediate reason for the SAS raid is stated as the killing of two hostages. That the hostage-takers killed one hostage is clear: a body was bundled out of the embassy about 7pm. But the evidence for them killing a second is unclear. Can we be sure that the second death was not caused by the SAS? And who was responsible for two hostages being seriously injured? Why the ambiguous and contradictory reports about the

number of hostages dead [first just two, then no-one knows how many more]? Is the SAS trying to hide something about how many lives its attack cost?

Radio people reporting live from the SAS raid described it as a 'disastrous' ending to the siege — and said that the police around the embassy were visibly shocked. Does that fit in with minimum force being used?

Also unclear are the talks between police and hostage-takers that led up to the raid. The hostage-takers' most recent demand was for three Arab ambassadors to act as

intermediaries — hardly an outrageous demand, if every attempt was really being made to end the siege with minimum violence. The demand was not granted. Why not? What other demands were not granted?

The hostage-takers described themselves as Iranians from the southern, Arab-populated province of Khuzestan, and demanded autonomy for Khuzestan and the release of 91 political prisoners in Iran. The cause of autonomy for Khuzestan is a just one, and in that sense the ferociously Persian-chauvinist and repressive regime of Khomeiny

continued on p.8

FUND

We are on the way to meeting our first £300 a month target by the closing date of May 13th — if we keep it up.

By the last issue we had £73.15, and since then we have received:

Cardiff.....	£14
Coventry.....	£1.40
Glasgow.....	£3
Haringey.....	£15
Islington.....	£15
Llanelli.....	£5
Sheffield.....	£18
Stoke.....	£20
plus monthly bankers' orders to our fund.....	£54.50
Total this week.....	£145.90
Total so far.....	£219.05

So over the next week we must get £80.95. Send to WA, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD. Cheques payable to 'Workers' Action'.

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Bourgeois leaders resign from Nicaraguan junta

"THE ISSUE boils down to whether the Sandinistas will allow other elements to participate... so far they have shown schizophrenic tendencies", said a Western diplomat in Nicaragua shortly after two non-Sandinista members of the country's 5-man ruling junta resigned within 72 hours of each other in late April.

Violeta Chamorro, owner of the country's leading bourgeois newspaper, resigned, citing 'ill health'. Soon after, Alfonso Robelo, a businessman and leader of the bourgeois Nicaragua Democratic Movement, also resigned, in protest at the Sandinistas' plans about the Council of State. This Council, due to be the main government body apart from the Junta itself, will have 47 rather than 33 seats, but Robelo's party will have only one.

According to Robelo, "The essential basis of the country's political unity has been broken,

and the changes in the composition of the Council of State show all the signs of a totalitarian project".

The real content of Robelo's complaint is not democracy in general (he never worried himself about the junta not being elected, or conservative forces being grossly over-represented in it through himself and Chamorro), but class interest. Behind the dispute lie economic conflicts.

Despite the regime's attempt to reassure capitalist concerns, large sections of industry and finance have all but collapsed due to lack of investment, and some have been nationalised. The Economist described the process: "The banks and foreign trade went in August; insurance in October; mining in November. This has made private investors nervous so that privately-owned cotton fields are going unplanted, and the government is threatening to take

US: Hands off!

AS THE clashes become sharper between the Sandinistas and the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie, the chances increase of US military intervention, directly or by proxy.

Despite the obvious risks an intervention would pose for the US, President Carter just might be persuaded to take a chance, in order to back up the words of his adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski: 'Do not scoff at American power'.

Socialists must be ready to raise immediate and effective protest in solidarity with the people of Nicaragua.

them over".

Meanwhile international capitalist opinion has shifted more firmly against the Nicaraguan regime — though the Economist was cautious. "The evidence from Nicaragua is still mixed, though it seems to be tilting the wrong way. Is the hope of checking the slide towards becoming a Cuba a sufficient justification for the West's policy of continuing to send aid to Nicaragua? For the moment, yes".

But in early April a US promise of \$75 million aid to Nicaragua was finally blocked after four months' debate in Congress. The immediate result was to spur the Sandinistas into sending a top-level delegation to Eastern Europe to ask for aid, in mid-April.

The amounts offered from East European countries have not been disclosed, but unofficial estimates include figures of \$20 million from Czechoslovakia and \$30 million from

East Germany. The price of this support was evident when communiqués were put out during the visit implicitly granting Nicaragua's endorsement for the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.

These moves, and the large amount of aid already received from Cuba (there are 1,200 Cuban teachers, 800 medical workers, and large numbers of technicians in the country), have frightened bourgeois elements in the junta, and led them to try to organise more independently of the Sandinistas.

The Sandinistas themselves, however, have still not fundamentally shifted from the programme of 'national reconstruction' over the heads and on the backs of the working class. Attempts to hold down wages and stifle strikes, and repression against leftists, have also figured prominently in recent months.

NIK BARSTOW

Letter: The Left and 'troops out now'

Dear Comrades,

I am writing to report on the first conference of the Labour Committee on Ireland. The Conference was attended by about 100 people from 43 CLPs and was called in order to discuss activity on Ireland in the Labour Party.

The organisers of the conference focused narrowly on passing resolutions supporting British withdrawal from Ireland — at an unspecified date — through Labour Party bodies and conferences and trying to get a resolution to the Party Conference. No other activity was proposed by the organisers other than fundraising. They wanted to keep the campaign as limited as possible so as to attract allies who would be prepared to cooperate in putting resolutions for withdrawal to Party bodies.

Vague

The conference in fact adopted a different position. A Socialist Press supporter proposed a motion that the campaign should adopt a policy of "Troops Out Now". Workers' Action supporters argued in support of this as well as proposing that support for the H Block prisoners and opposition to the Prevention of Terrorism Act should be added to the demands of the campaign.

Both these proposals were adopted by a considerable majority of the conference. But Socialist Challenge supporters abstained on the question of whether the LCI should demand "Troops Out Now". While the organisers of the conference, who clearly opposed the "Troops Out Now" resolution, these comrades initially put forward a vague formula to satisfy everyone and then withdrew it only in order to abstain on the crucial issue of whether the LCI should adopt a clear policy and then fight for it in the movement of whether it should be a loose 'pressure group'. Apparently the Socialist Challenge comrades were caught between the prospects of a large, broad movement and one that would have at least a minimal political basis for campaigning [though in reality the choice is not between these two alternatives].

Major

They did however propose a series of meetings for the LCI to organise in cooperation with the Troops Out Movement. The meetings were also agreed by the Conference.

The LCI must take on a far more activity-oriented approach if Ireland is to become a major issue in the Labour Party. It is not enough, though it is vital, to fight to pass resolutions. We need meetings, campaigns and demonstrations on the Prevention of Terrorism Act, H Block and 'Troops Out Now': these should be the focus for local activity.

Fraternally, John Blundy

TURKEY, CHILE: May Day under military terror

A TEN-YEAR old boy was shot dead by police as they attacked tens of thousands of workers on a May Day demonstration in the southern Turkish city of Antalya. Five people were wounded in the shooting (including two police), and over two hundred were arrested.

In Istanbul, the head of the militant left wing trade union confederation, DISK, was arrested the night before May Day.

In the Mediterranean city of Mersin, one of the few places in the country where May Day celebrations were not banned, the deputy head of DISK, Riza Guvin, was arrested immediately after he gave a speech to a workers' rally in which he called on the government to resign.

The present government in Turkey is an extremely right-wing one, led by the veteran bourgeois politician Suleyman Demirel.

Since coming to power last December, his government has unleashed a massive attack on the trade union rights of Turkish workers. It has freely used the police and the army to smash demonstrations, strikes, and factory occupations. And it is out to slash the living standards of the working class, with far-reaching economic measures which the international capitalists, the banks and the IMF insisted on as conditions for credit.

Although the government banned the May Day celebrations in most of the country's large cities, such as Istanbul and Ankara [the Ecevit government did the same last year], the militancy of the working class and their utter determination not to bear the cost of the bosses' crisis was shown by the huge May Day rally in Mersin. After the ban, DISK switched the national focus for May Day to this city, and despite its great distance from many of the more important industrial centres, tens of thousands of workers showed up.

Last year, under similar conditions of martial law and state imposed terror, over one hundred thousand workers attended the May Day celebrations in the Aegean city of Izmir.

In the Chilean capital of Santiago, the police arrested hundreds of people who were handing out leaflets and trying to organise for May Day. They also arrested seven Italian labour leaders who had arrived in Chile at the invitation of local trade unions. The repression was aimed to stop any move to celebrate May Day and thus to assert that the Chilean workers are still fighting, despite 6½ years of military terror.

ALEXIS CARRAS

750,000 WORKERS LOCKED OUT

Sweden shuts down

SWEDISH workers are now battling with their employers in the largest wave of strikes and lock-outs for 70 years.

The action started with strikes in the public sector over pay. On Tuesday 29th, after parallel meetings of the private and public sector unions with their employers, the public sector voted to continue their strikes: the pay offer had been increased only from 2.4% to 2.8%, while inflation is running at 8% in Sweden.

The private sector unions voted for selective strikes and overtime bans.

The bosses answered by locking out 750,000 workers. Most major manufacturing industry is now shut down, and the bosses are threatening to continue the lock-out until May 18th.

Planes are grounded because air traffic controllers are striking. The Stockholm metro is at a standstill. Buses are delayed. Nothing is being loaded at ports, and ferries to and from Sweden have all stopped.

Telecommunication workers want to cut off the cæ remaining news broadcast.

Hospital workers are out, apart from emergency services. Bakeries have closed. 4,000 teachers are on strike, and many schools are shut.

People are queuing outside shops in the mornings, and it is hard to get milk and bread. Transport workers say they will block all oil from entering the country (80% of Sweden's supply comes from abroad), and the breweries will also be shut from Friday 9th.

Finance Minister Gosta Bohman has announced severe public sector cut-

backs, and the Social-Democratic opposition has called on the right-wing coalition government to resign.

Sweden's collective bargaining mechanism, which provides for all claims to be settled in a single 'wage round' each year, has often been seen as a model by politicians and economists who would like a similar system in Britain to bring more order into the class struggle. Now that same mechanism is becoming a weapon in the class struggle against the Swedish bosses.

JOHN MACDONALD

US WELCOMES CUBAN REFUGEES, EXCLUDES HAITIANS

The campaign against Cuba

THE NICARAGUAN revolution is only months old, El Salvador is moving towards civil war, and revolt against imperialism is growing elsewhere in the Caribbean.

But in Cuba at least 10,000 people have voted with their feet to leave the country for the USA.

Since many in the Caribbean see Cuba as the prime example of resistance to imperialism, the refugee exodus is being played for all it's worth by the pro-American mass media.

CRITICS

Most Cubans living in the USA arrived there soon after 1959-60 as the Castroite movement consolidated an anti-capitalist revolution. Since then there has been a trickle of exiles but no big rush to leave. Why the sudden increase?

Whatever criticisms there are to be made of the Cuban deformed workers' state, it cannot be equated with East Germany, for example. Although it is not seriously subject to any organised democratic control or accountability — there are no workers' councils, the 'Communist Party of Cuba' is not a party but a bureaucratic machine — the Castro leadership enjoys, even today, real mass support, quite unlike the Stalinist bureaucrats of E. Europe and China.

There is relatively light repression of the critics of the regime, and the Cuban

government does not stop people leaving the country. The problem with getting out of Cuba, for those who want to, is not exit permission from Cuba, but entry permission from another country. The advantage of taking boats to Miami without legal formalities is that they can then get welcomed in the US as brave refugees from 'communism', and avoid trouble with US immigration controls.

There is no convincing reason to suppose the Cuban government has actively encouraged the exodus. Although pro-government demonstrations in Havana may call for 'getting rid of the worms', the regime does not like the bad publicity. The economy has entered a bad patch, but the regime is not going to solve this by exporting people 'surplus to requirements'.

So who are the new emigrants? Are they 'loafers', 'spongers', 'gangsters' and 'people who wear too much make-up' as the Cuban bureaucrats say?

The Cubans wanting to go into exile are not a clearly identifiable specific group like Soviet Jews. It is doubtful whether very many can be classified as 'dissidents' of whatever political persuasion, either.

For the overwhelming majority the reasons for leaving are purely economic ones.

Cuba is a siege economy. Since the 1960 transform-

ation, it has been economically blockaded by the United States and most Latin American countries. Its economy is largely dependent on the single crop of sugar and it relies on Soviet aid for survival. Rationing has been a daily feature of Cuban life for two decades.

DEMAND

In most of the deformed and degenerated workers' states there exists a strong demand for the consumer goods that the economy cannot or will not produce. This demand is in varying degrees satisfied through the black market.

In Cuba, however, we cannot expect this black market to be as sizeable as in Poland or Hungary for example.

And since 1973 however consumer dissatisfaction in Cuba has grown.

The Castro regime attempted in the '70s to negotiate an end to the economic blockade with the USA. These negotiations resulted in an end to refuge for plane hijackers in Havana, an agreement to release Cubans involved in counter-revolutionary activity and permission for Cuban exiles from the USA to visit their relatives in Cuba.

Although the US ended detente prospects when Cuba sent troops to Angola and Ethiopia in late 1975, visits of Cuban exiles to Cuba continue to this day. These Cuban visitors have encour-

aged envy for the 'good life' in the USA. For anti-communist Cubans, it often is a 'good life': unlike Puerto Ricans or Mexicans, they can expect the best treatment in the USA.

The tightening-up in rationing as a result of bad sugar harvests and increased blockade pressure has added to this. So has the government announcement that employment levels in the economy (especially those of women) will have to be reduced.

The US has also made a new effort to welcome Cubans to its shores. The US approach is shown up as completely hypocritical when we consider the plight of those fleeing from a truly tyrannical regime in Haiti. Hundreds of Haitians have been taken boats to the USA.

Unlike the Cubans, however, the Haitians have been sent back because the US Government does not consider them 'political' refugees.

In part, however, the refugee problem also arises from the lack of workers' democracy in Cuba. The Cuban government probably has more mass support than almost any other in the world, but the masses are denied a say in important decision making.

Only the establishment of workers' democracy in Cuba, through political revolution, can ensure that the orchestrated imperialist propaganda campaign falls on deaf ears.

BASH HARDY

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NEW LABOUR COUNCILS MUST DEFY CUTS

IN ELECTIONS for the district councils in England and Scotland on May 1st, Labour took over almost all the district councils in the large English cities and in Scotland.

The Scottish Nationalists were virtually wiped out and Labour also gained control of Bradford, Leeds, Kirklees, Birmingham, Oxford and a number of councils in the North West and West Midlands. The results represented a 5% swing to Labour since the general election.

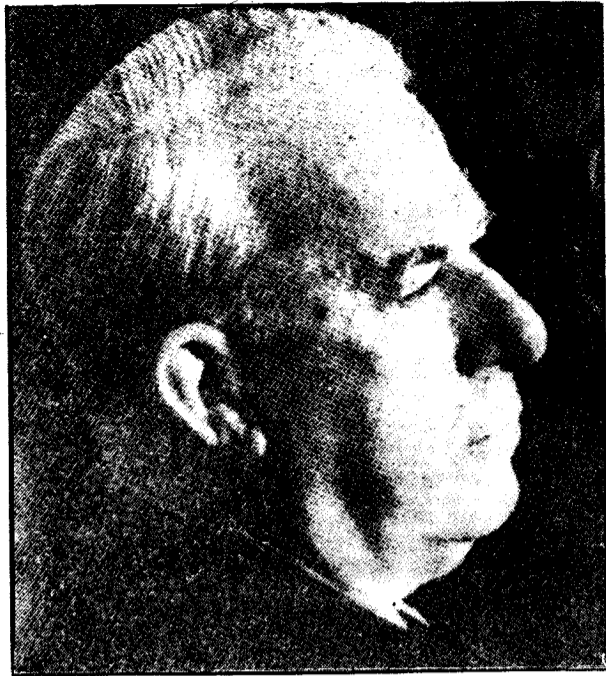
Now the new Labour councils must commit themselves to fighting the Tories and restoring all Tory cuts. Hattersley has simply repeated his view that they should use "every legal means at their disposal", which is a recipe for any fight collapsing as soon as the Tories pass new laws through Parliament.

The councils must be prepared to take the Tories on even if they have to break Heseltine's laws.

Heseltine had hoped that high rate rises would drive voters back to the Tories as a reaction against "overspending" councils. But the Tories lost Preston where they had cut spending and the rates and Labour won complete control of Wolverhampton which had a very high rate rise under a minority Labour council.

This does not mean that Labour councils can rely on rate rises in order to avoid cuts — Heseltine is determined to cut their central grants if they do — or that rate rises are any less of a cut in working class living standards. But it shows that working class voters are not prepared to swallow the Tory line about the virtues of scrapping social services and returning to a free market with supposedly lower taxes.

BRUCE ROBINSON



A snip at the price

LAST WEEK the Tory Government appointed Ian McGregor as the new boss of British Steel, paying merchant bankers Lazards Freres up to £2 million as a 'transfer fee' for him. Industry Minister Keith Joseph defended the pay-out by saying steelworkers would "feel flattered" that no expense was spared to get the 'right man'. ANDREW HORNUNG outlines what steelworkers might really think about it...

"Ay lad, as a steelworker, you must be chuffed about that McGregor bloke. Outstanding, they say he is. Going to save the Steel Corporation millions that that idiot Villiers is losing.

"Good job they're giving Villiers the push. Too old, I shouldn't wonder. Sixty-seven, isn't he?"

"Shouldn't have had him in the first place. I mean, what the hell did a merchant banker know about steel? Rubbish, he is. Goodness knows what the blokes were like that they turned down before they chose that one. Must've been bad.

"Yes, McGregor's the man. 'The most outstanding man I've ever seen'. That's what Sir Keith says, and he should know; he saw a couple before he had a look at Mac the Money-maker.

"Of course they turned the job down, so he wasn't exactly first choice. Third or

fourth choice, actually. Perhaps they thought of him because, you see, he was considered and turned down when they appointed Villiers.

"Lucky for us the most outstanding bloke was third or fourth down the line. Only goes to show you've got to shop around. Don't buy the first thing you're shown.

"I don't think £2 million is too much to pay that firm he's leaving. Lizard Flairs or whatever it's called. It's a bargain really.

"I mean, think how much money we'll save when he cuts an extra few thousand steelworkers off the workforce. Chuffed, you should be, as a steelworker, right chuffed".

The Tory blitz...

JUNIOR Minister John Biffen summed up the Tories' programme as "three years of unparalleled austerity". And that's one promise they're keeping.

Last November the Child Poverty Action Group estimated that Tory social policies — dearer school meals and bus fares, increased rents and VAT, social benefits allowed to lag behind inflation — would cost the average family £14 a week (while the Tories' famous tax cuts would save that family only £2). There have been more cuts announced since.

And the effect of the cuts cannot just be counted in money. Prescription charges at £1 from December

mean not just extra expense, but many people not getting the medicine they need. Closed-down hospitals and hospital units mean people dying because the medical care is not available.

Tory policies threaten whole working class communities — like the steel-making areas of South Wales Wales — with the bleak misery of mass unemployment.

52,000 jobs are already due to go in steel. With the new BSC boss, Ian McGregor, more are threatened. As the *Financial Times* put it, "It is not a question of how many can survive the holocaust."

The steelworkers are

only one of the groups picked out by the Tories as the first targets for their axe.

BL workers have had a 5% pay rise (a 15% cut in real wages) and 92 pages of strings imposed. Tens of thousands of jobs are threatened there, too. And the workers are constantly told: fight back and we'll shut the lot down.

Workers resisting the 92-page document are menaced with the sack and last November BL's leading convenor, Derek Robinson, was sacked for speaking out against the bosses' plans.

The Tories want to ban trade union solidarity on picket lines. They want to make picketing anywhere but at your own place of work

unlawful — which means you could have an injunction against you or be sued for damages for picketing your boss's other factories, for going on a flying picket, for joining a mass picket like Grunwick, or just going down the road to express support for workers at a neighbouring factory. Most blacking or solidarity strikes would also be unlawful.

New and even more sordid and racist rules have been brought in on immigration. If black women want their husbands to join them in Britain, they have to go through degrading efforts to prove the marriage is 'genuine'. Women's rights are threatened too, with Tory attacks on maternity leave

and the likelihood of new Tory efforts to restrict abortion rights.

While the Tories hammer the working class, they hand out money lavishly to the police, the war machine, and to the rich through tax cuts. The average company director's family is more than £60 a week better off through Tory social policies. The Tories have given full backing to the US-organised war drive, and eagerly welcome the medium range NATO nuclear missiles to be stationed in Britain.

It's no good waiting and hoping that a Labour government in four years' time will undo the Tory damage. Show your protest on May 14th.

...and how to fight it

A ONE DAY strike by itself will not stop the Tories. It can help build up the confidence and feeling of strength necessary for a fight which really will stop them.

If May 14 is a flop, the TUC leaders will want to use that as an excuse for giving up any real resistance to the Tories in order to just haggle with them over details. We must fight for a mass turn-out — and a loud demand that the TUC and the Labour leaders should break collaboration with the Tories.

The movement should demand the Parliamentary Labour leaders start a campaign of Parliamentary obstruction, and pledge themselves clearly to complete repeal of the Employment Bill and restoration of all Tory cuts when they return to office.

The TUC leaders must break off their cosy chats with the Tories in the National Economic Development Council and dozens of other governmental and industrial 'participation' bodies — and stop the talks on the anti-union Employment Bill.

And the labour movement should insist that Labour councils defy the

Tory cuts, mobilising local workers and tenants to back up the defiance.

Waiting for the next General Election will not help. If the Tories succeed in pushing through their assault on the working class — especially if they succeed with not much of a battle — that will not turn people to the left. It will cause demoralisation and a decline of the labour movement.

The labour movement must beat back the Tories now — and direct industrial action is the way to do that. Waiting for a general strike should not be accepted as an excuse for avoiding battle by individual unions, factories, communities or Labour councils.

Subject

But, as the Wales TUC saw when it planned action against the steel closures, a General Strike is what we need to pull together the partial fightbacks into a mighty power.

Militants should organise for a General Strike as the answer to cuts, closures, and anti-union laws —

turning the labour movement away from class collaboration and gearing it up for class war.

In 1972, the mere threat of a general strike forced the Tories quickly to free five dockers jailed under the Industrial Relations Act, and to give up the idea of using the Act in serious industrial conflicts. A general strike now could certainly force the Tories to back down on anti-union laws, on the cuts, on industrial closures — or on all three.

Even if the general strike did not develop as far as the French strike of May-June 1968 and put workers' power directly on the agenda, such a defeat could well drive the Tories from office.

If the Tories stayed in office, or if a Callaghan-type Labour government, not subject to any real control by the labour movement, replaced them, then the Government would quickly counter-attack after such a general strike. To avoid struggle now for fear of that future backlash would be a sure recipe for abject defeat.

But we must prepare for that backlash too —

which means fighting to gear the labour movement to a positive political programme, not just a defensive perspective of checking the Tory onslaught. In any case, this is not just a preparation for future dangers. It is an essential part of mobilising the working class now.

Slump

The slump of 1974-6 stunned the labour movement into industrial passivity. The slump now developing could do the same — unless workers see a clear working-class answer to the crisis, and one that they can fight for immediately.

Automatic protection of wages against inflation, work-sharing under workers' control — without loss of pay, restoration and extension of social services, nationalisation without compensation of banks and major companies, immediate withdrawal from Ireland, equal rights for women and scrapping of immigration controls, are key social measures.

We can start fighting for some of them factory by factory, area by area — but

for serious progress on these social measures we need to fight for a government to carry them out centrally.

That could only be a government based on the labour movement — and not a government like previous Labour governments, cooperating peacefully with the conservative institutions of the capitalist state.

Even for a Parliament-based government to make a serious start on such policies, the House of Lords and Monarchy would have to be abolished, the civil service hierarchy broken up, the professional army and the police disbanded and replaced by defence and law and order organised directly by the working class communities.

A more minimal and 'realistic' programme would not be realistic at all — unless we believe that crisis-ridden Britain can go on indefinitely with the Labour movement just fending off the bosses' biggest attacks without ever going out to win its own positive demands.

So militants must fight for the Labour Party and the labour movement to break with the bourg-

oisie, to restructure and reorient itself, and to form a government which takes serious measures against capitalist power — a Workers' Government.

The restructuring and reorientation of the labour movement is vital for this — for a Government which confines itself to Parliamentary politics, and is not controlled by and linked to workers' organisations in the factories and communities, cannot be a real Workers' Government. Even if well-meaning it cannot have the power to take on established interests. Thus we must fight for the Labour Party and trade unions to be transformed so that millions are drawn into active participation, and the rank and file has real control over the leadership.

The openly pro-capitalist right wing will bitterly oppose this fight to transform the labour movement, using any organisational means they can. So the left wing needs to organise, set itself clear aims, and resolve to fight for those aims whatever the consequences, without being scared by right wing threats.

Carter's raid on Iran could easily have dragged the US — and the rest of the world — into war. A limited assault could easily become a major conflict, even a nuclear conflict. Here ANDREW HORNUNG reviews SIDESHOW by William Shawcross*, a brilliantly detailed account of how, after Kennedy and Johnson had dragged America into a full-scale war in Vietnam and Laos, Nixon dragged the US into a new war in Cambodia.

TEN YEARS AGO, on April 30 1970, President Nixon went on television to announce that the US had begun bombing and ground operations in Cambodia. The US, said Nixon, had "scrupulously respected" the neutrality of Cambodia for the last five years. The attack was "not for the purpose of expanding the war into Cambodia, but for the purpose of ending the war in Vietnam".

The US government's intention, claimed Nixon, was to destroy the North Vietnamese bases, the sanctuaries, inside Cambodia from which North Vietnamese troops were attacking South Vietnam. The bombing was therefore not an attack on Cambodian neutrality, but an attempt to rescue it, it was "to defend Cambodia's neutrality and not for the purpose of making it an active belligerent on one side or the other".



The sole target was the sanctuary bases, "the headquarters of the entire Communist military operation in South Vietnam." This action, Nixon assured the millions of viewers unexpectedly taken into the Head of State's confidence, would protect American lives in Vietnam. It was, moreover, a decision that had been carefully thought out — "there has been a great deal of discussion about the decision I have made" — and would restore American credibility in parts of the world "where only the power of the US deters aggression."

The specifics were soon lost in the remainder of the speech's forest of conservative clichés about campus anarchy, America's proud history without defeat, the forces of totalitarianism and the attack on free institutions from within.

There was hardly a word of truth in the entire speech. Nixon had in fact ordered the bombing of the "sanctuaries" thirteen months before, and even these raids were not the first incursions into Cambodian territory by US forces or those under direct American control. So much for the "scrupulous respect" of Cambodia's neutrality.



Far from defending that neutrality with the raids of the "sanctuaries", the US had knowingly and deliberately destroyed it. The first phase of bombing — operation "Menu" in March 1969 — had ultimately led to the fall of the Cambodian government headed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk. One year to the day after the first of these bombing raids, the US helped General Lon Nol and Prince Sirik Matik overthrow Prince Sihanouk precisely in order to make Cambodia "an active belligerent". And the new round of raids was the first step in a now systematic drive to commit Cambodia to a war on behalf of the US and directed by the US.

Certainly the North Viet-

namese-National Liberation Front forces were using the border areas as bases from which to operate in South Vietnam, but it was not true that these bases were the sole targets: Nixon himself admitted that the raids were an attempt to boost American credibility — a rationale that went way beyond the question of "sanctuaries".

In any case, Nixon had been repeatedly told by Secretary of Defence Melvin Laird that the "key control centre" that Nixon imagined had been established in the forests of the border area — a sort of jungle Pentagon — simply did not exist. Nixon refused to believe it.

The claim that there had been "a great deal of discussion" was an even bigger lie. Unless of course long discussion between Nixon and his close friends Attorney General John Mitchell and businessman Bebe Rebozo count. When the Secretaries of State and Defence, William Rogers and Melvin Laird, were consulted they were shocked. Not one Congressional Committee was consulted, although constitutionally only Congress can authorise a war, and when they found out a number of Kissinger's staff resigned.



To accusations that the invasion was incompatible with the Nixon Doctrine that the US would seek to minimise its role and concentrate on helping other nations to equip themselves to undertake their own defence against "communism", Kissinger replied, "We wrote the goddam Nixon Doctrine, we can change it!" Kissinger closed the meeting of his staff by reminding them threateningly that "We are all the President's men".

The administration insisted that Operation Shoemaker which had now been announced was not an invasion, but only an incursion. To match such literary cosmetics, the White House asked the Justice Department to perform a legal face-lift on American law. Assistant Attorney General William Rehnquist — later to be elevated to the Supreme Court by Nixon — was given the task of working out a legal justification for invading a neutral nation without even the authority of Congress. To do that Rehnquist too was forced to fabricate evidence: his quotations from a recent legal case were falsifications of the original.

Lloyd "Mike" Rives, chargé d'affaires at the US mission in Cambodia, only found out about the invasion by listening to Nixon's speech on the Voice of America broadcast. He dashed to tell Lon Nol who, in a state of panic, could do nothing but denounce the invasion as a violation of his country's territorial integrity.

Here is a perfect picture of American democracy in the throttling hands of Richard Nixon: an amalgam of ignorant egomania, merciless bullying, boundless deceit and cynical populism. The picture is painted

in great detail by the journalist William Shawcross in his brilliant book 'Sideshow' subtitled "Kissinger, Nixon and the destruction of Cambodia".

Shawcross's book is like those Breughel paintings of peasants playing, feasting or hunting — every corner of the canvas is bright with telling details that illuminate the central subject. The complex interplay of home and foreign policy, the dialectic of personal ambitions, moods and impulses, institutional structures, group and class interests, historical and geographic factors — all these are painstakingly documented to describe how the US was dragged into war in Cambodia. In particular, the book documents the relationship between the destruction of Cambodia and the abuses of executive power revealed by the Watergate scandal.

If Nixon seemed to be a man devoid of deep emotions, he had simply inexhaustible reserves of self-pity. He continually saw himself as a man who was wronged, misunderstood and doomed to walk alone to greatness. Earlier in April 1970 he had been given a preview of the George C.



Kent State University: four students died when the army fired on anti-war demonstrators.

Scott film "Patton", later he saw it a second time. To his associates he seemed moved by what he saw as a great man who understood how to lead but was misunderstood by the public. After seeing the film, he seemed even more determined to press for the toughest measures.

When his April 30 announcement was followed by protests, particularly among university students, his rage was obvious. He cursed "bums blowing up campuses", lectured his aides on how "you have to electrify people with bold decisions. Bold decisions make history. Like Teddy Roosevelt charging up San Juan Hill — a small event but traumatic" and stunned his listeners with shouts of "Let's go blow the hell out of them!"

At Kent State University, as elsewhere, there were demonstrations and an attack on the Reserve Officers' Training Corps building. Governor James Rhodes would show these demonstrators. "They're worse than the Brownshirts and the Communist element and also the nightriders and the vigilantes. They're the worst type of people we have in America". Nixon and Agnew had said that such people were to be "eradicated"

THEY MON

CAMBODIA AND NIXON'S SECRET

and Rhodes agreed. He ordered the National Guard onto the campus. Next day the Guard shot fifteen students, killing four. The Cambodian outrage just wouldn't stay in Asia and it just wouldn't stick to the television screens: it forced itself directly onto the American people, determining political relationships at home as well as abroad.

The most persistent casualty of the war was Congress. Emory Coblentz Swank, US Ambassador to Cambodia from 1970 to 1973 later acknowledged the mountain of lies that protected Nixon's Cambodian policy. "I think", he said, "it can only be explained on the basis of the extreme sensitivity of our mission, and Washington itself, to Congressional criticism. The whole history of the US in Cambodia is of conflict between the legislature and the executive. It was one of the tragedies of the situation. We were always trying to work between them."

The most substantial defect of Shawcross's book, in fact, is that he gives no hint as to why Congress should have become 'difficult'. Was it only that it had a Democratic majority while there was a Republican President?

Nixon's insistence on secrecy was not simply a result of his obsessively secretive manner and near-paranoid fears: it was a reflection of the fact that he could not be sure, even with his huge electoral majority later, that Congress was behind him. The dependability of an overwhelming conservative consensus in the country reflected in a tame and supportive Congress had gone. Nixon was forced either to reflect the popular mood and its albeit distorted reflection in the legislature or deny it and conceal his actions from the voters and their representatives.

The extent of this process of concealment did not become clear until the Watergate revelations. Yet the Watergate break-in itself was a direct product of this cloak-and-dagger statesmanship.



The first decision to invade the Cambodian border areas was taken fourteen months before — Operation Shoemaker, just a month after Nixon's election on a platform of winding down the war. The strike was code-named "Breakfast". The declared aim of the air-strike was to destroy the

enemy's operations centre — yes, the same aim as was announced over a year later for Shoemaker and branded chimerical by Defence Secretary Laird.

From the outset, the strictest secrecy surrounded the operation. General



Wheeler cabled General Abrams on how to keep the whole thing secret. The pilots of the B-52s would not be told what they were bombing, they would only be told that their co-ordinates would be changed while in flight.

"In the event press inquiries are received following the execution of the Breakfast plan as to whether or not US B-52s have struck in Cambodia, US spokesmen will confirm that B-52s did strike on routine missions adjacent to the Cambodian border but state that he has no details and will look into this question."

Ground control had the most detailed instructions on how to cover up what was going on. The Supervisor of the radar crews was ordered to "gather up every scrap of paper and tape with which the bombing had been plotted and lock them in his desk until daybreak", Shawcross details. "Only then (his superiors were afraid that pieces of paper might be dropped in the dark) was he to take the documents to an incinerator behind the hut and carefully burn them. He was then to call a Saigon number he had been given — it was at Strategic Air Command and Advanced Echelon — in order to tell the unidentified man who answered the telephone that 'the ball game is over'.

The normal post-strike reports from the radar site were filled out with the co-ordinates of a South Vietnamese cover target and sent, in the ordinary way, to Saigon by security mail. The night's mission over Cambodia entered the records as having taken place in Vietnam. The bombing was not merely concealed; the official, secret records showed that it had never happened."

This procedure violated Article 107 of the Military Code of Justice and carried the punishment of a court martial. Later, in Congressional hearings, many officers would perjure themselves and others stay dumb to protect themselves as well

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The Daniel were told to go into Cambodia and pick up interrogation one team were told that anyone still (after the would be so: we would h walk over ar the arm to the Half the returned. T evacuated under heavy tation of th awesome in Vietnamese prepared. In of discipline Boone team r mission. "I court-martial argued, "fo violate the Cambodia."

The "Breakfast" were followed "Snack", "I ert" and "S codenames areas of what as Operatio the next fo 3,630 B-52 r over Camboc secrecy, as owed by O The Secreta Force didn't of Staff of A know, and n Committees v In 1968, a Washington had said, "secrecy can exclude from decisions all theoretically carrying it c election of appointment the informal the official structures a command terised the Johnson term by the forma new system. And sitting at of these vario many of the chairmanship subject to I was Henry Ki

A week after the first "Breakfast" raid, a New York Times correspondent picked up the information that General Abrams had requested an air attack on the Cambodian border areas and published it. The White House went spare. Kissinger phoned J Edgar Hoover at the FBI and demanded that the correspondent be investigated and that the source of the leak be found. Kissinger himself suspected one of his aides, Morton Halperin, whom he had known at Harvard. He told Halperin that he didn't think he was the source but Hoover did and so he ought voluntarily to be removed from the list of those receiving classified material.



Halperin agreed with some reluctance, that same afternoon the FBI on Kissinger's suggestion placed a wire-tap on Halperin's home. This wire tap, which was followed by others, broke the law. Soon the administration would break even more laws in order to plug the leaks and discredit critics.

To secrecy was added stupidity. The US Special Forces had for some time — again secretly and illegally — been operating across the

WAR- GERS

WAR AGAINST CONGRESS

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fast" raids by "Lunch", ner", "Dess- per" — the the target became known Menu. For teen months s were flown in complete enu was foll- ration Patio. of the Air ow, the Chief Force didn't Congressional e informed. rding to the st, Kissinger e only way e kept is to e making of ose who are harged with . With the on and the f Kissinger, y-passing of government chain of at charac- Kennedy and was replaced rection of a committees. e cross roads committees, under his or at least instruction, inger.

Further to enforce secrecy, Kissinger and Nixon discouraged links between their staffs and journalists. Kissinger told his staff that he alone would leak information to the press and that they were not to talk to reporters — except those from *Time* magazine who were doing a cover story on him. Kissinger kept most journalists sweet with flattery, but where he was unsure this would work, as with *Sunday Times* correspondent Henry Brandon, he had their phones tapped and their rooms bugged.

The logic was inexorable: in order to gain power by evading Congress control, the top government leaders had to increase control over their own personnel and those they came into contact with. One of the few checks on this "Gestapo mentality", to quote the Chairman of the Select Committee on

hold of secret National Security Council material.

Kissinger himself used transcripts to great effect. A one-time speechwriter William Safire described how Kissinger would complain to someone about the "perfidy of his arch rival, Secretary of State Rogers. Henry then edited a transcript, changing words to reflect stronger support of the President by Kissinger, and sent the revised version along to Haldeman."

Secrecy between departmental rivals became so absurd that when General Theodore Metaxis, head of the Military Equipment Delivery Team in Cambodia between 1970 and 1971 wished to cable Washington or Hawaii, he would have the material flown first to Saigon so as to avoid its contents

CIA Director Helms encouraged Nixon's appetite for war prior to the invasion by telling him that the North Vietnamese were threatening Phnom Penh. This was completely false, though the effect of the bombing once started did drive North Vietnamese troops further away from the old border areas towards the capital. At the same time Helms withheld from Nixon the CIA-commissioned report that argued that even a huge commitment by the US in Cambodia would ultimately fail to stop its being used by the North Vietnamese.

Evading the least control, each department made sure it got in on the act. As Shawcross points out, "Once the Navy, the Air Force and the Army were involved, they all made sure they stayed. Although the convoy protection (along the Me-

above all Nixon and Kissinger — were at war with Congress. Every time another Congress stipulation had to be evaded, another web of secrecy had to be spun, another set of lies told and another barrier to control set up.



Melvin Laird's objections to Nixon's warmongering were usually short-lived: he started off dovish and soon started giving cover to the worst hawks. His instructions to military chiefs at the time of Operation Shoemaker were almost exactly the same as Kennedy's at the time of the Bay of Pigs invasion attempt on Cuba: make sure the first ones in are not Americans. Perhaps he actually believed the operation would be, as he instructed, largely a South Vietnamese affair with some US back-up. Soon he reported that in the Fish Hook area there were 12,000 US troops and only 6,000 ARVN (South Vietnamese).

On May 11 1970 Congress approved the Cooper-Church amendment. This outlawed the introduction of any troops into Cambodia after June 30 that year, forbade the provision of American advisers to Cambodian forces and prohibited all air operations in direct support of Cambodian forces. All these stipulations were circumvented.

The chief loophole was that the amendment could only refer to US troops; it couldn't stop US troop leaders using other nation's troops. Thus South Vietnamese and Thai troops were brought into Cambodia in place of US ones. The Cambodian government also organised convoys of recruits to go over the border into Vietnam where they were trained by the US — the

within limits to juggle with allocations. Now the White House applied for Supplemental aid. With each request there came a new set of falsehoods as to aims and as to the record so far.

From the beginning of 1971, the White House developed a new ploy: the Military Equipment Delivery Team. According to Congressional rules, whenever large amounts of aid are given, a team to monitor "end-use" should be dispatched. This team, of course, grew. Soon the military were insisting that the government should choose between its "low profile" stance (insisted on by Laird in his Department of Defence instructions) and proper end-use monitoring. Laird gave way again, giving the military the green light to be on the battlefield... to monitor "end-use". It was easy to avoid giving orders to Cambodians: you simply gave them to a Thai or South Vietnamese intermediary and he gave the orders to the Cambodian commander. Instruction was also disguised as information about proper end use... lest the aid be wasted.



The armed forces, having got the bit between their teeth and encouraged like hounds to Kissinger's bugles of war, insisted on more and more raids. Laird, again less bellicose, resisted but soon gave in by proposing a concession: a banking system would operate — if a raid was not made, those who didn't make it had one raid in hand which they could use later. That way the White House and Pentagon could relate more flexibly to Congress — easing up when things got hot, only to go into higher gear later.

In 1973, as the Watergate revelations hardened the attitude of Congress even further towards Nixon, it was joined by the Senate in trying to cut off all funds for Nixon's war drive. In spite of there being a clear majority in both Houses, Nixon refused to obey and vetoed the decision. Capitol Hill recognised that it could not muster the force to beat Nixon although his action was clearly illegal. And as both parties had prominent leaders who might be compromised by any impeachment proceedings based on his conduct of the Cambodian war, a compromise was agreed on. Nixon could go on bombing Cambodia for another month and a half "to produce the ceasefire he and Kissinger claimed was within their grasp". Finally, a senate refusal to finance the war adequately did force a run-down, though not its end.

But the damage had been done. The vaunted "democratic process" of the US was revealed to be a thicket of secrecy, impenetrable even to the elected representatives of "the people". The apparatus of state, instead of being a smooth-running machine was a battlefield of contending interests where the first victim was the myth of "national interest".

But if American political life had been subjected to a considerable corrosion in the process, that of Cambodia had been consumed in a holocaust.

Next week:
the rape of
Cambodia

Sideshow Kissinger, Nixon and the destruction of Cambodia, Fontana paperback, £1.95.

JUNE 22: ALL OUT AGAINST THE WAR DRIVE

ON JUNE 22nd the Labour Party will hold a London march and rally under the slogans: No to Cruise Missiles, No Nuclear Replacement for Polaris, No Increase in Defence Spending.

The question of war is also a central part of the document from the Labour Party NEC for the May 31st Special Conference.

"A third world war", says the document, "would destroy civilisation as we know it, and the danger of its breaking out is growing alarmingly... the arms race must be halted, war hysteria dispelled."

"The Labour Party opposes the manufacture and deployment of Cruise missiles and the neutron bomb and refuses to permit their deployment in Britain by the United States or any other country."

The fear of an impending outbreak of war is growing among workers, with Carter's Iranian fiasco and super-power sabre-rattling. The huge boost Thatcher gave to military spending and the repeated pay rises for soldiers are part of the same drive to military confrontation.

Within the far-left there is widespread complacency. Like good coin being driven out by bad, the will to campaign against war has been weakened by years of seeing Stalinists, bishops, some MPs and assorted do-good-do-nothing liberals attending pointless "Peace and Progress" conferences, and hearing the world's worst warmongers claim to be all of them champions of "peace".

Whatever the specific goals and alliances of a future world war, some things are clear. Any such war would be a war by imperialism to dominate the world, not to free it. The working class, whose taxes buy guns when they should be buying food, housing and social services, and whose lives will pay for any imperialist victory, has no interest in such a war. Only our enemies, the capitalist class, stand to gain from the plunder and rape of other countries.

Moreover, any world war is likely to be a nuclear war. It is likely to wipe out human civilisation. Even the ruling class — the only class well equipped with shelters — will suffer in its drive for profit.

There can be no general peace and no general disarmament under capitalism. There is no point kidding people with phrases that disarm them more than they disarm the warmongers. The enemy is capitalism itself.

But the labour movement can and must rally our class now to stop the imperialist war drive. We should back the June 22nd rally and call for: No Cruise missiles, unilateral nuclear disarmament, withdrawal from NATO, and Millions for hospitals, not a penny for the 'defence' of imperialism.

We should make these demands heard later in the year at the Labour Party conference and fight to force a future Labour government to carry them out.



Presidential Campaign Activities, was inter-departmental rivalry: J Edgar Hoover, no opponent of wire-taps himself, often managed to quash new wire-tap plans that would have broken his near-monopoly of such activities.

Wire-taps were by no means used exclusively against "outsiders". As William Rogers was considered by Kissinger and Nixon too dovish, his principal aides were bugged. Nor did Kissinger escape being a victim: the Joint Chiefs of Staff spied on him; Admiral Robinson had a Navy Yeoman put in Kissinger's office and entourage to try to get

being seen by Ambassador Swank who operated from the same building.

But it seems that Kissinger had few secrets from his patron Nelson Rockefeller whose presidential campaign he had supported before going over to Nixon after Rockefeller's defeat.

Instead of the popular control bourgeois democracy claims to embody through the parliamentary system, the chief executives operated just like the capitalists whose system they represented: personal and "corporate" or departmental interests vied for dominance. Hoover certainly wasn't the only one. For instance,

(kong) was meant to be short-term, it expanded along with every other American effort in Cambodia. Even after the river widened with the summer flooding and became safer for the convoys, air attacks over it were extended again and again." The armed forces, the air force in particular, were simply trying to justify their own existence. As William Colby of the CIA explained when asked why the bombing of Cambodia was so ferocious after the Paris Peace agreement, he bluntly replied, "Cambodia was then the only game in town".

All the while, the White House and the military —

Cooper-Church amendment did not forbid that.

Despite the ban on air operations, the Air Force used its false accounting system with the result that Cambodia became virtually a free fire zone.

Where the Cooper-Church amendment failed some members of Congress hoped that Congress's hand on the purse strings would help control the military — that, at least, is the theory of it. At first the White House evaded financial accounting by using the right of Presidential determination, the President's right

FIGHT FOR A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT

Fight for Trade Union Democracy

6. We pose the tasks of claiming for working class politics the movement the working class has built and sustained. As part of that, we pose the struggle to democratise the trade unions, to break the power of the bureaucracy, which means building a rank and file movement in the trade unions.

- All officials should be elected and subject to constant recall.
- All full time officials should be paid the average wage in their industry.
- Union policy-making bodies should be comprised of elected lay-officers only.
- Election addresses to be circulated unaltered for candidates for all elected positions in the unions.
- Any educational qualifications for union office should be abolished.
- No member to be disqualified from holding office on political grounds (other than fascist activity).
- Full minutes and voting records of policy-making bodies should be circulated.
- No political censorship of union journals.
- National delegate conferences should be held annually.
- Standing Orders committees should be made up of elected lay members.
- No branch block voting.
- Appeals Committees should be comprised of elected lay members only.
- No secret negotiations.
- Every stage of negotiation should be subject to rank and file ratification at mass meetings.
- Mass meeting should never be presented with package deals unless each part of the deal has been voted on separately by the meeting beforehand.
- Voting in the unions to be at workplace meetings, and not by postal ballots.
- All strikes in support of trade union principle, work conditions or wages to be made official.
- Dispute benefit to be raised by levy of the entire membership when necessary.
- Support for the right of trade unionists to enforce closed shops.
- Opposition to the check-off system.
- Opposition to employer-policed 'agency shops'.
- Support of the right of trade unionists to discipline fellow workers who flout democratic decisions.
- Access to job waiting lists by shop stewards' committees. Waiting lists to be on the basis, first applied first employed.
- Opposition to any 'managerial policing' by shop stewards. No participation in management committees intended to keep shop stewards off the shop floor for long periods.
- Shop stewards to hold regular report-back meetings. Insistence on allocated time for such meetings, especially where there is shift working.
- Union branch meetings to be at the workplace and in work time if possible. If not, creche facilities to be provided to make sure women workers can attend.
- Full equality for women in the trade unions. Positive discrimination to ensure real equality. Support for the right to form women's caucuses.
- No discrimination against black or immigrant workers in the unions. Positive discrimination to ensure real equality. Support for the right to form black caucuses.
- Campaigns to recruit immigrant workers to trade unions (using leaflets in the immigrants' own languages).
- Automatic endorsement of industrial action by black and immigrant workers whether they are in the majority or not.
- A purge of open racists from all positions in the labour movement.
- Full trade union rights for young workers, including the right to strike. Formation of youth committees.
- Establishment of effective Joint Shop Stewards' Committees, on a plant, combine, and international basis.
- Develop links between unions. Expand trades councils to include representation from the unemployed, tenants and students, and, most important, direct representation from factory committees and other shop floor organisations.
- Unionisation of the unemployed with full rights within the unions.
- Rights of members to criticise union policy.
- Right of members to meet unofficially and visit other branches.
- Right of members to communicate with the press.
- Right of members to write, circularise and/or sell political literature.
- Right of appeal direct to Appeals Court.

General Strike and the Workers' Government Slogan

7. The workers' government slogan would probably be an irreplaceable slogan in a general strike for the strike move-

The final part of an article arguing that socialists should raise the political slogan for the Labour Party and the labour movement to break with the bourgeoisie, to reorient and restructure themselves and to form a workers' government.

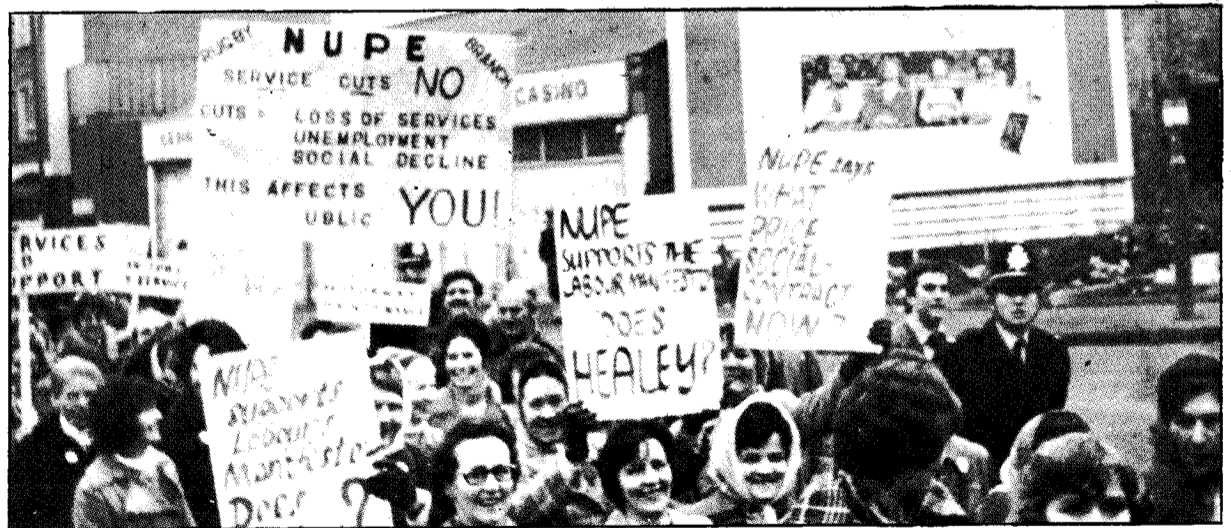
ment to realise even part of its potential. While it would be schematic and premature to call for a general strike to achieve a workers' government now, the parallel propaganda for both general strike and workers' government prepares the ground for a future linking of the two slogans. The workers' government slogan allows socialists to relate to the existing movement, and would do so all the more in a situation of much more advanced and developed mobilisation and struggle.

In no sense do we understand the workers' government demand as an alternative to working-class militancy and direct action. On the contrary, it is an instrument of such action.

Organise the Revolutionary Left

8. We limit ourselves neither to hope nor speculation, but pose as a central task the work of winning broad working class forces in the Labour Party and the trade unions to revolutionary Marxist politics. We must bind and organise those militants into a solid force in the Labour Party and trade unions, to fight for these politics and perspectives against both the open bourgeois agents and the bureaucrats of the labour movement — and also against the inevitable vacillations and betrayals of some who now travel a stretch of the road in common with us. We know and say that the struggle can never be confined to what the Labour and trade union bureaucracy will be willing to accept.

9. Socialists can bend under the pressure of the weight



In 1974-9 trade unionists protested about the Labour Government riding roughshod over the labour movement. Next time we need not just protest, but effective control by the movement over our leaders.

and inertia of the labour movement either in the direction of accommodating to it and accepting its apparent limits, or by a 'rejection' of that movement and a retreat to sectarianism.

The major forces of the revolutionary left, until then part of the Labour Party, made that sectarian retreat in disgust with the Wilson government of the late 1960s. The disgust was justified, the retreat was not. We fight both forms of capitulation and instead offer the perspective of struggle for workers' government on the basis of a labour movement transformed in the struggle for it.

Hatred of the Labour Party because of its record and its leaders is the natural first untutored response of young people setting out to fight for socialism. But the attitude to the struggle within the political labour movement of the leaders of the Socialist Workers' Party (for example), is nothing other than crude pseudo-revolutionary sectarianism. We must fight to eradicate such crippling sectarianism, which has been a dominant tradition of British Marxism from the Social Democratic Federation through the early Communist Party and the Revolutionary Communist Party to the SWP.

In the Transitional Programme Trotsky wrote: "Sectarian attempts to build or preserve small 'revolutionary' unions, as a second edition of the party, signify in actuality the re-

nouncing of the struggle for leadership of the working class. It is necessary to establish this firm rule: self-isolation of the capitulationist variety from mass trade unions, which is tantamount to a betrayal of the revolution, is incompatible with membership of the Fourth International".

All proportions guarded, and keeping in mind the differences between trade unions and the Labour Party (which is the trade unions in politics), the attitude of the SWP and its various shadows and splinters to the struggle in the Labour Party is exactly of the capitulationist variety. (We don't dispute the justice of their denunciations of Labour's record). The complete collapse of the SWP at election time into uncritical lesser-evilism illustrates it dramatically. (Paul Foot: 'I am a strong Labour supporter for three weeks').

There is nothing revolutionary about abandoning the political wing of the organised labour movement to bourgeois agents, naive or shamming semi-leftists, and the passive sectarians around *Militant*. It is a largely voluntary self-exclusion, and voluntary surrender of the political labour movement to the reformists, that is, to the people who will lead it to destruction.

To shun the fight within the political wing of the labour movement and to pretend (except during elections) that an airtight barrier exists between the reformist unions and the reformist Labour Party, is less than serious working class politics. It confines the largest revolutionary organisation to nothing other than limited trade union politics and abstract socialist propaganda as its answer to the crisis the working class faces.

If the political labour movement were the tightly policed preserve of the right wing, then there might be no alternative to the SWP's tactics. In the actual situation there is now substantial freedom for Marxist work within the political wing of the labour movement.

For all its braggadocio, the perspectives of the SWP are immensely pessimistic. If it is actually necessary to rebuild the labour movement from the ground up (as distinct from renovating and reorienting it), if the movement is, as Paul Foot said at the recent debate with Benn, rotting, then it is a perspective of decades, and inevitably we face defeat in the coming struggles. *Even if a case could be made for such an expectation on the basis of calculation, to coldly and without a struggle accept it in advance would be the most criminal defeatism.*

To rule out the chances of renovating the labour movement is to rule out in advance a struggle by the small forces of Trotskyism to orientate the workers' movement — even at the last minute for a struggle. Defeatism and capitulatory moods are a crime — even when dressed up and disguised as self-righteous denunciation of social democracy where it needs to be denounced.

Trotsky and the Labour Party in Britain

10. To the pedantically-minded who ask 'Do you think the revolutionaries can take over the whole Labour Party', we say that it is the wrong question. Do they themselves think that the whole of the trade unions can be won for revolutionary politics without divisions and splits?

We say we will prosecute the fight and organise the left as vigorously as possible — and then we will see. We say to the left of the labour movement: 'Fight for a programme that answers the needs of the class now. If you fight we can win. And we must fight to win whatever the organisational consequences, or whatever rearrangements or realignments will be entailed'.

When the SWP and others denounce the idea that the Labour Party can be made an instrument of socialist change, we explain that they are actually doubting that the working class can be in the period ahead. Can the trade unions be

such an instrument? Can the class itself? If so, does that not mean action through the Labour Party, with the necessary reorganisations and replacements?

In the near future, if the working class and unions can be instruments of socialist change, that means that something must be done about the Labour Party, which at present is a dominant force for bourgeois politics in the working class movement. The SWP policy of ignoring it is not revolutionary politics. We need not just ABC propaganda that Labour has been bad in office, but also to know what to do about it.

We must bring the experience of the Marxist movement on the question to bear. Can we reform or take over the Labour Party? Trotsky showed how this was the wrong question in the 1920's, when he put forward the following general or algebraic perspective:

'At the present moment, the Communist Party is extremely small. In the last elections it had altogether 53,000 votes — a figure which, when compared with the 5½ million votes of the Labour Party, might seem distressing if we did not understand the logic of the political evolution of England.

by
Stephen Corbishley

AT THE 1980 conference of the white-collar civil service union CPSA next week, the two major issues will be withdrawal from the Pay Research Unit system of pay bargaining and election of full time officials.

The two issues are linked. The civil service trade unions have had a comparability-based pay system since 1955, and a withdrawal from this PRU system will be a blow to the power of the full time bureaucrats to control pay negotiations.

Tactic

On PRU, there are two motions: one initiated by *Militant* supporters, which has the soft option of calling another conference and deciding later, and a harder one backed by the Communist Party, which calls for immediate notice of withdrawal. The automatic consequence of the stronger motion would be preparation for a fight with the Tories over pay in 1981.

The 'soft' tactic of *Militant* is only one more indication of their rightward shift within CPSA, as they feel the pressure from the trade union bureaucrats to take a more 'realistic' line.

Conference will hear a call for an examination and report-back on election of full time officers. This formula is backed by the Broad Left, despite stated Broad Left policy for annual election of full time officers and despite the efforts of branches to bring forward constitutional amendments to enable annual election.

But even the weak motion has met vehement resistance from the fight, some *Tribune* supporters and the full-timers themselves (through the APEX Branch at CPSA HQ). At the height of the

CPSA rank and file takes on power of full-timers

NEC election campaign, the APEX Branch was allowed to circulate a statement to all branches which attacked those calling for the election of full time officers i.e. the left-wing candidates.

This CPSA Conference will also debate Ireland for the first time ever. The motion is a *Militant*-backed one, praising the role of the trade unions in the North of Ireland calling for socialism and evading the issues of the Border and British troops. It will be supported by the CPSA NEC majority made up of the CP, *Militant*, the 'Moderates' and *Tribune* supporters and it will get strong backing from the right wing Labour General Secretary Ken Thomas.

Similar strange alliances have been the hallmark of the last year on the CPSA National Executive, where the Broad Left has had a large majority. When the cuts campaign started the strategy was spelled out by a coalition of Ken Thomas, Kevin Roddy (*Militant*), and Peter Coltman (CP). CPSA members were suspended en masse at Department of National Savings Glasgow and it was the same alliance that insisted on a retreat. In fact a secret meeting was held prior to the NEC and the precise approach to DNS Glasgow being sent back to work was jointly worked out by Ken Thomas, Kevin Roddy, Terry Adams, and Peter Coltman.

The other big debates will be around affiliation to the Labour Party and whether to take money from the state

for secret ballot, as provided for in the Employment Bill.

Already the rag bag of Tories, Liberals and right-wing Labourite fans of Frank Chapple, who make up the 'Moderates' group in the CPSA has clearly indicated its intention to get money from the Government for elections and electioneering. The integrity of the CPSA as a trade union will thus be under challenge — because the State is our employer!

The new NEC is being elected before conference, under a new electoral system, pushed through last year by the leftwing Campaign for Union Democracy. Each member who attends a workplace meeting in worktime has the right to cast a vote.

The consequences for this year's election are still uncertain, but first indicators show a majority for the Right wing on the 1980-1 NEC.

Alliance

An article in a recent issue of *Militant* attacked the new voting system and claimed that it arose from 'an alliance of the ultra-left and the right wing'. In fact the Campaign for Union Democracy included the CP (hardly ultra-left) but *not* the right wing.

More importantly, *Militant* defends the previous undemocratic and corrupt system of block voting just on the basis that a left wing NEC got elected. Left wing victories on such a basis are empty victories. Anyway, the

system had kept the right wing in power for 28 out of 32 years.

The left favour a democratic voting system that involves masses of members and thus lays the basis for a left wing NEC with real support amongst the membership. But the *Militant* polemic also hides the fact that their own position on the NEC has been so untenable that they have had to resort to alliances which contradict their formal politics.

If the left loses ground in the NEC elections, *Militant* will claim a bad voting system is to blame. The real reasons are different.

The Broad Left is paying the price for starting a militant cuts campaign and then failing to follow it through. The campaign was allowed to collapse when the employers suspended dozens of workers. Overtime bans were lifted, and the ban on 'out of grade' working (i.e. substitution and temporary promotion) was withdrawn.

The Broad Left will also lose some votes to the candidates of the SWP-backed Redder Tape group. More crucially, the fact that all Redder Tape's 'Rank and File' candidates are members of the SWP illustrates its self-imposed isolation.

The Redder Tape campaign was decided on as a gut reaction against the NEC sell-out over the Glasgow National Savings suspensions, but a more serious option for Redder Tape would be to give support to the Broad Left against

the left either in the NEC elections or in conference votes, will easily be lost if no serious effort is made to develop the Broad Left or the best element within it into a grouping orientated to rank and file action and forearmed against repeats of the failures of the Broad Left NEC of 1979-80.

The task is to build a rank and file movement of Civil Service trade unionists, which has a hard core of socialists but is capable of drawing into action many other activists. The existence of Redder Tape as an SWP front will be a block to this development, unless they can reassess their approach to the CPSA Broad Left and to methods of building a rank and file movement. By self-isolation they can only give a boost to the growth of the reformist-orientated, pro-bureaucratic approach of those who favour an electoral machine rather than rank and file organisation for struggle.

WORKERS' ACTION

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FIGHT FOR A WORKERS' GOVERNMENT

"To imagine that the Communists in the course of subsequent decades will increase step by step, acquiring at each new parliamentary election a few tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of votes more, would be a radical misunderstanding of the development of the future.

"Of course, during a certain comparatively prolonged period, communism will develop rather slowly, but then there will ensue an ineluctable crisis: *the Communists will occupy the position in the Labour Party which is now held by the Independents.* [The Independent Labour Party, a loose left-reformist party formed in 1893 which became one of the constituent parts of the Labour Party at its founding, had the leading role in the Labour Party in the 1920s].

"What is needed in order to bring this about? The general answer is quite clear. The Independent Labour Party owes its unprecedented boom to the fact that it enabled the working class to create a third party, i.e. its own party. The last elections show with what enthusiasm the English workers regard the instrument created by them. But a party is not an end in itself, the workers expect from it action and results..." (Where is Britain going?, 1925)

In the same book Trotsky also discussed the 'pessimistic' perspective for Britain, that which actually came to pass — that the working class would 'go to school', for decades, to Labourism.

Now we have reached the end of an entire cycle of working class history, culminating with the self-evident bankruptcy of reformism but with the Labour Party still in almost monopolistic control of mainstream working class politics.

The remarkable thing is that the Labour Party remains a relatively flexible and open political expression of the politics of generalised trade unionism. In the last seven years, a wide range of repressive bureaucratic rules and usages have been scrapped, and (to an as yet limited extent) the Labour Party has been shaken up by the class struggles of the last 14 or 15 years. The possibilities for revolutionary propaganda within the Labour Party and in the general class struggle without having to forfeit membership and activity in the Labour Party are not now qualitatively less than when Lenin advised the Communist Party in 1920 to affiliate to the Labour Party on condition that they were still able to make revolutionary propaganda and struggle against the leaders.

Revolutionaries have yet to win the right to affiliate to the Labour Party. We do have the right of individual membership and in practice the right of political factions. The experiment of the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory in the 1979 election demonstrated what the situation now is and how it should be developed. Four CLPs adopted a

whole platform of class-struggle politics — including open criticism of the Labour leadership and government, and an open statement of the need to prepare to fight it. A parallel election campaign was organised within the Labour Party campaign. The experience is best compared to that in the early 20's when a number of Communists stood for Parliament with their own politics but under the Labour umbrella (although the Labour Party conference had rejected CP affiliation).

We cannot know how long this situation will last. A strong right wing victory at the next Labour Party conference and after might seriously change it. And we cannot now follow Trotsky literally and speak of an affiliated revolutionary party assuming the leading role within the existing structures of a loosely organised trade union party. But it is an essential part of fighting the class struggle in society that we try to gain the victory for class struggle politics in the political wing of the movement. *Workers' Action* must bring the experience of Marxists in the '20s to the labour movement, and make widely known the experience of the SCLV.

... and in the USA

We should also make widely known the political position, developed by Trotsky and his comrades in the late '30s in favour of calling on the US trade unions to form a Labour Party. The political method they used has an essential lesson to teach British revolutionaries.

The tremendous working class movement for industrial unionism which created the CIO utilised revolutionary tactics like the sit-in strike. Nevertheless the new unions were immediately bureaucratized and engaged in class collaboration. Some of the leaders of the movement, like the Mine-workers' president John L. Lewis, were died-in-the-wool bureaucrats.

The Trotskyists advocated that this movement should create a broad trade union party on the general structural model of the British Labour Party. Knowing the strength of the bureaucrats, they still proposed that the trade union engage in politics. Politically it was an algebraic formula: if the trade unions as they were turned to politics the possibility of a counter-revolutionary reformist party being consolidated was a real one. The Trotskyists orientated towards fighting against that, and towards fighting for their own politics within a Labour Party. They build and recruited to their own small party: part of the work of doing that was a

responsible, objective, non-sectarian perspective for the labour movement and locating the work of the Trotskyist movement within that.

This correct and necessary approach to the work of politically developing the labour movement in America says a lot about the sectarian politics of those who voluntarily exclude themselves from the discussions and struggles in the existing political party of the trade unions in Britain — a movement that has already gone through a massive exposure of the bankruptcy of reformism.

The tasks of Marxists

11. We fight for an end to the bans and proscriptions and for the right of organisations like the Communist Party and SWP to affiliate to the political wing of the labour movement. We call on revolutionaries to come and help us with the fight to lift the bans and proscriptions.

12. We pose as a central task of the period ahead the creation of unity of the forces of revolutionary Marxism around this perspective of a serious and realistic orientation to the political and trade union wings of the labour movement, and to the work of organising the forces of Marxism within the only mass labour movement which exists in this country.

In the last 14 years there has been an eruption of sectarianism and neo-syndicalism rooted in the disorientation and collapse of the old Trotskyists movement (the Socialist Labour League) in 1962-4; the bitter experience of Labour in office (1964-70 and 74-79); and above all, the sheer inexperience and impressionism of the thousands of young people who became revolutionaries in the late '60s and early '70s. For them, gut feeling of hostility to the politics of Wilson and Callaghan was the beginning of a political wisdom — we must help them go beyond the mere beginning.

The result of the revolutionaries' failures has been to leave the political wing of the movement to the right wing and to tendencies like *Militant* who took to a non-class struggle abstract socialist preaching as a refuge from the problem of fighting the right-wing and the bureaucracy.

Nevertheless, there is now quite a large number of people who have some revolutionary ideas and even a revolutionary culture of sorts who have broken from reformism. They could be an enormous haven for the struggle in the Labour Party. The work of reorienting some, at least, of those forces is a necessary part of the work of transforming the labour movement.

WORKERS' ACTION

The Embassy raid: the open questions

continued from p.1

bears the responsibility for all the violence in London.

There are, however, strong suspicions that the hostage-takers must have been connected with or organised by the Ba'athist regime of Iraq, which has moved recently towards close alliance with the USA, which is conducting a border conflict with Iran, and which has seized upon the issue of Khuzestan [which

they, like the hostage-takers, call Arabistan] as a weapon against Iran. The Ba'athists are well organised in Britain, and have been responsible for several attacks on left-wing Iraqi students.

The most alarming question raised by the embassy raid is, however, what would have happened at the Tehran embassy if the US raiding forces had reached their target 1½ weeks ago.

The SAS were operating in a friendly environment, with all the time and facilities they

wanted to organise their forces and their hardware. The US forces would have had to rush into a hostile city and quickly out again.



The SAS were raiding a relatively small, compact building. From police surveillance, they reportedly knew exactly which rooms the hostages and hostage-takers were in. They only had 5 host-

age-takers to deal with.

The US forces would be dealing with a large embassy compound, without even knowing which BUILDINGS the hostages were in, and many more hostage-takers.

And yet — or so we are told — the SAS operation, with minimum violence, cost five hostage-takers killed, two hostages seriously injured, and the embassy destroyed. Who can believe that the US raid could have ended other than in massive destruction and bloodshed?

Defence campaign for March 9 arrest

AS THE steelworkers' contingent marched up Piccadilly on the TUC demonstration of 9th March, a policeman attempted to take away a collection bucket from a steelworker. This provocative action resulted in a scuffle between the police and a number of marchers.

Three marchers ended up being arrested — in a highly brutal manner — and one EETPU member now faces fairly serious charges of assault, evidence which in the face of evidence from a number of eye witnesses, are totally unjustified.

The case is being heard at Highbury Magistrates' Court, notorious for its high rate of conviction and low rate of legal aid. It is proving an expensive business, especially as witnesses come from all over the country. A Defence Committee is therefore calling for support from the labour movement — especially financial support.

The Defence Committee was set up on the initiative, and with the support, of a number of London EETPU branches, and also has the support of Southwark and Wandsworth Trades Councils, Southwark Peckham Labour Party, and the Greater London Association of Trades Councils.

Please send donations either to Tom Pilfold, EETPU, 15 Abberville Road, Clapham London SW4, or to Sean Geraghty, c/o Marx Memorial Library, Clerkenwell Green, London EC4.

Locked-out printers need solidarity

NATIONAL Graphical Association members have been locked out by the provincial newspaper bosses (the Newspaper Society) and the commercial printers (BPF, British Printing Industries Federation) for two weeks.

The claim of the skilled workers in the NGA is for £80 for a 37½ hour week. Printworkers had been taking selective action over the previous four weeks, fighting for the claim, when the bosses decided to lock them out.

BLACKED

Most provincial newspapers are not appearing because of support from the NUJ and SLADE who have refused to co-operate in the production of blacked newspapers or to cross NGA picket lines.

The managements have been trying to produce papers themselves, taking over the printers work. There have been particularly violent scenes on the picket lines at the Wolverhampton Express and Star. 33 pickets were arrested last week and another four at the Bradford Telegraph and Argus.

In Portsmouth 40 printers occupied the press room of the Portsmouth News, the local evening paper and successfully prevented the bosses producing the paper — though the bosses are now claiming machines were damaged.

Another issue, as well as the pay claim, is that the dispute is being used by the bosses as an excuse to introduce new technology equipment that would result in many print workers losing their jobs.

NUJ members have been sacked for supporting the

print workers and the NGA has given a commitment that even if their dispute is settled they will not go back until the NUJ members have been reinstated. The NUJ is also in dispute with the newspaper bosses over a

wage claim and the 1300 journalists sacked by IPC.

The feeling among NGA members is that though the bosses are weakening — the Birmingham Post and Mail is the first major provincial newspaper to reinstate NGA



33 pickets have been arrested in Wolverhampton

members — it could still take another six weeks to win. So solidarity action from journalists and other workers in the printing industry is essential.

Support for the pickets and the NGA members who have been arrested must come from the whole of the labour movement.

LOCKOUT

The print workers struggle is not just about pay but also about who runs the newspapers and the printing industry. The bosses have with the lockout, gone onto a full-scale offensive to show that they control it, but the battle about the introduction and use of new technology must be won so that the workers benefit rather than losing by the new machinery.

JO THWAITES

NUR Exec revolt ends with a whimper

AFTER boastfully declaring that British Rail's first pay offer had brought railway workers out of the Dark Ages, union leader Sid Weighell was brought back to reality with a bump when the National Union of Railwaymen Executive threw the offer back in his face.

The union's claim was for a substantial increase in pay, a 35-hour week and a minimum of 4 weeks annual leave. We were offered a 16% rise with 4% more in June, 4 weeks holiday after 2 years service and a 39 hour week from November 1981.

But the new-found militancy of the NUR leadership moves in mysterious ways. Now they have accepted a revised offer from BR, and it leaves us with nothing more in our pay packets.

We get 20% now instead of in June. That means an extra £17.76 on minimum earnings [which is what most railworkers get]. But since the agreement now starts on May 5th instead of April 21st, we have lost two weeks of the original 16%. That way we lose £17.76. So each cancels the other out.

But that's not all. In return for this new agreement, the NUR Executive has agreed to enter into talks on a 'better use' of the workforce, in a programme which is to be agreed by May 31st. It has already accepted productivity deals in the freight, parcels and administrative services.

Cutting

Talks on the 'better use' of the work force basically mean talks on how to trim the workforce by BR's proposed figure of 15,000 to 30,000 jobs.

For too long the rail unions have been considered a pushover. Undoubtedly, without the steelworkers' fight, the offer would have been much worse. But the real fight for wages, conditions and jobs will only be won despite the leadership of the NUR.

It is their unwillingness to take up any real struggle for improvement which has left railway workers so miserably paid and overworked. Many railway workers are forced to work a 7-day week and often 12-hour shifts to make a living wage.

In 1979 railway workers worked an average 51.5 hours a week [according to BR figures], while management refused to take on extra workers.

In the last few months there has been talk of cutting the rail network still further, knocking out thousands of jobs. For this to be resisted, we cannot rely on our leadership which sat back while thousands were sacked by Beeching.

If the leadership refuses to fight the productivity agreements, then we have to fight for a leadership which will.

DAVE LUNTS
ROB DAWBER



MAY 14 DAY OF ACTION

• Socialist Organiser has produced a model leaflet to mobilise for the Day of Action: copies are available from 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.

• Women's Fightback has produced a printed leaflet specifically 'Calling all Women'. Bulk orders can be got from 41 Ellington St, London N7 (£10 per 1,000 sent by train, £8 per 1,000 collected).

• Women's Fightback has also produced an Open Letter to trade unionists, calling on them to drop sexist slogans (30p per 50 copies) and a poster, 'First Lady puts women last' (20p per 10).

• We hope Workers' Action readers will use this material to organise for the Day of Action: and that they will make their voice heard and make sure of extra sales of WA at the marches and rallies on the 14th.

• Please also send in reports on the May Day turn-out in your area, so we can do an informed round-up in WA. (To PO Box 135, London N1 0DD; post reports first class on the Thursday to reach us in good time).

OPPOSING THE WAR DRIVE

• The Labour Party has called

a demonstration for June 22 in London, round the slogans: No Cruise missiles in Britain, no successor to Polaris, no increase in arms spending. WA will be backing moves to organise a contingent for that demonstration with the demands: unilateral nuclear disarmament now, get out of NATO. We hope readers will start now mobilising support in Labour Parties, trade union branches, and LPYSs.

• A model resolution has been drawn up: "This utterly condemns the recent US military raid in Iran. It was one more attempt by US imperialism to directly intervene in Iranian affairs, and it threatened to push the whole world to the brink of a nuclear holocaust.

"The driving force behind the raid was both to restore the prestige of US imperialism and consolidate the re-election prospects of Carter. For that, Carter risked unleashing a chain of events that could lead to the destruction of mankind. The claim for humanitarian concern is hypocrisy. If that concern existed the US would have ensured that the bloodstained Shah, who was brought to power and ruled with US help, was returned to Iran for trial.

"This, therefore, resolves: a) to support action taken to protest at the US raid and the threat of war it brings, b) to demand that Cabagnan,

Activists' Diary

the Shadow Cabinet and the other Labour leaders break from the coat-tails of Carter and Thatcher, condemn the US military raid and the present war drives, oppose the Cruise missiles, and demand immediate withdrawal from NATO;

c) to move an emergency resolution at the Labour Party Special conference along the above lines".

BLACK FREEDOM MARCH

The Asian Youth Movement (Bradford), which initiated this march, is calling for:

• March Support Committees, especially on the route of the march from Bradford to London.

• Resolutions of support: "This body recognises that the Black Freedom March is an important initiative in the fight against racism. This body undertakes to sponsor the march, to make a donation, to participate in a support committee, and to mobilise for the mass demonstration in London on Saturday July 19" (at the end of the march).

More information: Asian Youth Movement Bradford, 266 Lumb Lane, Bradford 8. Tel: Bradford 499310.

WOMEN'S FIGHTBACK CONFERENCE

The second conference of Women's Fightback will decide policy and plans for action. It is on June 21st in Birmingham, and is open to activists in the labour movement and women's movement. (Men will not be excluded, but the organisers are asking for the conference to be overwhelmingly

women). Registration £2 (£1 unwaged), and details, from 41 Ellington St, London N7. (Cheques payable to Fightback for Women's Rights).

SOCIALIST ORGANISER TRADE UNIONISTS' CONFERENCE

Socialist Organiser is calling a conference on Saturday 24 May for socialist trade unionists, particularly Labour Party members. The conference will concentrate on four themes:

• The Labour Party and the trade unions. The block vote.

• Labour Party workplace branches.

• A campaign for affiliation of trade unions to the Labour Party.

• Fighting the Tories — organising in the workplace against the Tories' Employment Bill, the cuts and other attacks.

At Caxton House, St John's Way, London N19, 11am to 5pm; open to all trade unionists.

Registration fee £1: further details and background material from John Bloxam, 5 Stamford Hill, London N16.

LUTTE OUVRIERE FETE

Each year the fete organised by the French revolution organisation Lutte Ouvrière, at Mériel, near Paris, attracts thousands of people. Dozens of socialist groups from many countries will have stalls there.

Several WA supporters will be going over for this year's fete, on May 24-25-26, and running a stall. If you want to go, contact Simon Temple, c/o WA, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD.