

FURY AT FORDS

DESPERATE moves to sell out the Ford pay claim were rebuffed at plant level throughout the country.

In plant after plant the stewards' committees defied their leaders' recommendation to accept the Company's three-year deal; they called for rejection in a national ballot on Wednesday 3 February.

Anger was particularly directed at Mike Murphy, T & GWU national officer for his role in capitulating to Ford's demands.

When talks reached deadlock on Thursday 28 January Murphy had called for an all-out strike starting on Monday 1 February.

But the very next day he asked for another meeting on Sunday 31

January. At that meeting Ford offered a slight change in the deal.

There were then two votes at the Fords National Joint Negotiating Committee.

The first rejected the 'improved' offer and confirmed the strike.

Then Murphy broke ranks and declared that in spite of this vote he would be making a press statement that the T & GWU was recommending acceptance of the deal and demanding a new ballot.

Halewood conveners, Ritchie Rowlands, Bill Broderick and Joe McNally called for the vote to be taken again

● Continued on page sixteen.



Pickets at Charing Cross hospital

DON'T LET NURSES FIGHT ALONE

GENERAL STRIKE ON BUDGET DAY

THE MAGNIFICENT support for the nurses' strike throughout Britain last week poses a burning question. How can the gathering uprising to defend the health service against Thatcher be carried forward to victory?

Two issues are becoming clear to many nurses and their army of supporters.

● The trade union leaders are trying desperately to limit this struggle. They will 'support' with easy words whatever action is taken from below but they refuse to mobilise the strength of the movement to give real united backing to the nurses in their battle with the Thatcher government.

● Neil Kinnock and his

BY THE EDITOR

supporters at the head of the Labour Party have already stabbed the nurses in the back. At the last meeting of the National Executive — Labour's top committee — they threw out Tony Benn's call for full backing for all strikes in defence of the NHS.

While the nurses strike was building up these gentlemen have spent their time trying to drive out the left from the

Party.

Nurses and all those millions who sympathise with their struggle to preserve a decent health service can have no confidence in such leaders.

The TUC is hoping to do to the nurses what they did to the miners in 1984-1985: leave them to fight alone in the hope they will be defeated.

They must not succeed.

● What must be done?

● Workers Press calls for the biggest campaign throughout the working class movement for a general strike on budget day, 15 March.

This must not be turned into a tame 'protest' but become the start of a campaign in every section of the labour move-

ment for united industrial action to bring the Tory government down.

● Lobby the TUC when it meets on 24 February to force the union leaders to take up this demand and lead the movement for the bringing down of the Tory government. If they refuse they must be kicked out of their jobs and replaced with leaders who will fight on an issue that concerns not only nurses but future lives of millions of ordinary people in this country.

● FOR A GENERAL STRIKE ON BUDGET DAY!

● DEFEND THE NHS! BRING DOWN THE TORIES!

AN 800 strong rally of striking nurses and other hospital staff at Charing Cross hospital in west London has backed the call for a general strike on budget day, 15 March.

A meeting will be held this coming Wednesday, 10 February, to win support for this call amongst trade unions and other organisations throughout the area.

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Inside this week

- More NHS News — pages 2,3,4,5
- Camden — page 10
- Ireland — pages 8-9
- African debt crisis — page 15

Workers Press

A matter of life and death

THE mounting strike movement amongst nurses and others working in the health service is not just about the rotten pay and conditions that exist throughout much of the NHS.

The struggle to defend the health service concerns not only those working for the NHS but also all those millions whose very life depends on a decent service available to all in need.

It is this service that Thatcher has set out to destroy.

Those few who can afford to pay for proper medical treatment will get it. Those who can't will have to put up with second class treatment or none at all, left in pain and misery or allowed to die.

Thatcher has similar plans for education and the mining industry. The coal industry is to be cut down to size, production concentrated on the most efficient pits — and the industry then sold to sharks in the City of London as a profitable, going concern.

Education as a national service is to be abolished. Many schools, especially those in the inner cities, will be reduced to dustbins — places where the children of the most deprived sections of the population can be dumped and given no education worth speaking of. The children of the well to do will be sent to schools that have opted out of the state system, sustained by contributions from parents.

Thatcher's plans to sell off the best council houses, forcing thousands to live on deteriorating slum estates, is well advanced. Her attack on council housing is part of her aim to wipe out those vital council services on which the lives of millions of the poorest depend for their very existence.

The question is: what lies behind this drive to destroy the welfare state and break up the nationalised industries?

After 1945 a number of industries — including coal, railways, electricity and gas supply — were nationalised. In most cases these industries were so run down that only the state could finance their re-generation. Despite much bitter denunciation at the time of nationalisation, the Tories left these industries largely untouched during their periods of office in the 1950s and 1960s.

The same Labour government that carried through a series of nationalisation measures, in 1948 also brought the health service into being. The educational system was also reformed in a way that opened up to working class children the possibility of an academic education.

These measures were a reflection of the period of renewed expansion of capital in the postwar period, after first the interwar slump and then the war had destroyed large amounts of capital and laid much industry, especially in central Europe, to waste. Capitalism needed a sound



Nurses picketing at the Maudsley hospital, South London

infrastructure — a transport system and a cheap and efficient supply of fuel and power — if it was to take advantage of these possibilities for renewed expansion.

Despite its reformist and Stalinist leadership, the working class was able to take advantage of these conditions and win reforms for which it had fought bitterly throughout the inter-war and war years.

The very opposite conditions now exist. Large parts of British industry have collapsed. Despite Tory boasts, the British economy has been kept afloat only by revenues raised from state assets as well as from North Sea oil — a resource that will soon run out.

The chronic sickness of British capitalism reflects a growing crisis for world capitalism. It also indicates the weakened state of British capitalism — with no substantial empire to fall back on and dominated by parasites in the City interested in one thing alone: quick profits.

In these conditions, the ruling class has no need for an expanding, educated and healthy working class. Quite the contrary. It finds the growing number of 'non-productive' elderly people, the tens of thousands of youth who have no prospect of work, the sick and infirm an intolerable burden. For Thatcher, they count for nothing, for they can make no profit for the crisis-torn system she represents.

Need no longer counts in deciding who gets treatment, who gets a house, who gets a home help or a visit from the midwife. Hard cash will decide these issues. Those who can pay will survive. Those who cannot will go to the wall.

That is why those thousands of nurses who battled last Wednesday with the police were battling for each and every one of us. That is why their fight is our fight. That is why the nurses' struggle has captured the hearts and minds of millions of ordinary people.

It is the same with teachers fighting the Baker privatisation bill. They are not fighting just for their own jobs and conditions, important though these are. They are fighting for

the right of every working class child to a decent education and a decent start in life.

The blunt fact is that in Thatcher's Britain, the state can no longer guarantee the health, the education and the housing needs of millions of people. It cannot even get them safely to work, as the King's Cross tragedy has shown.

The struggle for the defence of the NHS is the single most important question since the miners' strike facing the working class and large sections of the middle class.

Indeed the nurses have started out where the miners left off, as millions watching TV on Wednesday saw.

The lessons of that strike must now be grasped by the nurses and all their growing number of supporters.

For over a year the miners fought pitched battles with a specially trained military style police force, assembled in the tert years following the defeat of the Heath government at the hands of the miners in 1974. The miners were driven back to work, not because they lacked courage, but because the leaders of the working class conspired to isolate the miners in the hope of imposing a crushing defeat on them.

These cowardly leaders must not be allowed to do to the nurses what they did to the miners.

We say again: the nurses fight is a life and death question. It is a struggle that demands and deserves the support of every ordinary person in the country.

The widest support for the struggle must be organised. Support groups along the lines that sustained the miners in their fight must be extended and created. Committees must be formed in every hospital and they must campaign for the widest support throughout the working class movement.

The TUC and labour leaders must be told loud and clear: either organise this fight against Thatcher and mobilise the strength of the working class to bring this government down, or get out of the way and make room for a new leadership that will take the fight to defend the NHS right through to a conclusion.

COALFIELD STRUGGLE CONTINUES

Miners back Scargill on UDM Axe falls on Welsh pits

THE National Union of Mineworkers' delegate conference last week backed Arthur Scargill's call to have no truck with the Tory-backed Union of Democratic Miners. Voting 64 to 47, pit delegates overturned the recommendation of the Executive to sit down with UDM representatives in the industry's conciliation machinery.

They also threw out overwhelmingly a motion from north Derbyshire and south Wales, which wanted to agree to the UDM negotiating at pits where it has the majority of members.

By 57 votes to 52, the conference defeated a Yorkshire motion to step up the overtime ban, which has been in operation since last October. Instead, a ballot is to be held to decide whether

the action should go on.

However, this issue is far less significant. Miners are well aware that the overtime ban has been largely ineffective, and the pursuance of the wage claim will require much more direct action than that.

In line with the vote to re-elect Scargill last month, the desperate efforts of the right-wing and the Euro-Stalinists to moderate the policies of the NUM have been held in check.

Meanwhile, British Coal is preparing to answer the industrial action by the pit deputies' union NACODS. After a 90 percent vote in a ballot, the deputies closed down the entire industry last Monday.

Now, the BC board is threatening to sack them and train new men to do their work. The UDM, of course, volunteered at once. When they returned to work on Tuesday, deputies received

letters from management, telling them they faced the sack if they continued with their action, and presenting them with new rosters, including compulsory week-end working.

As a result, many were sent home again for refusing to carry out statutory safety checks, and some pits were closed again on Tuesday. The NACODS men did not strike alongside the NUM in 1984-5, so that their present action represents a powerful shift.

Like the moves in the NUM, the action of the deputies reflects a growing awareness that the Tories are intent on transforming the entire industry into a small high-tech enterprise with seven-day working.

The members of both unions are making it plain that they will not allow this to happen.

OVER 1,500 mining jobs have been axed with the closure of another two pits in South Wales.

Lady Windsor — Abercynon Colliery in Ynysybwl — and Abernant Colliery near Ponterdawe, are to be shut down.

This will bring the number of pits to close since the strike to 17, leaving just 11 pits open.

A near 60 per cent job loss in the coal field has occurred, with the figures going from nearly 20,000 miners prior to the strike to an expected 8,000 jobs remaining in the industry.

Lady Windsor's last review was in the autumn with the ridiculous production target set by British Coal,

given the geological problems the pit was facing.

Abernant was reviewed last summer. The pit has massive high quality anthracite reserves but it too has geological problems.

Neither pit is exhausted and the 840 jobs at Lady Windsor and 620 jobs at Abernant will be sacrificed at the economic altar of British Coal.

The NUM negotiators spent a very short time in the final review meeting with British Coal over the future of the two pits. Des Dutfield, president of the South Wales miners commented afterward that there must be some reaction to what is happening in the coal industry from both the TUC and the Labour Party.

24 hour backing for nurses

FRICKLEY miners were 'picketed out' last Wednesday by striking nurses seeking support for their struggle. The nurses were told to return and picket the night shift and the miners would make it a 24 hour stoppage in support of their fight.

NHS DAY OF ACTION

PENSIONERS BACK PICKET

Nurses at the Maudsley Psychiatric Hospital in South London came out on strike a day before other London hospitals. The picket was dominated by chanting nurses who received a big response from the tooting horns of passing traffic while their ranks were swelled by representatives from local trades councils and members of the Southwark Pensioners Action Committee.

Staff nurse Deborah Watkins, speaking for the nurses on the picket line told Workers Press:

'This is not just a wages issue. We believe passionately in the NHS. Everyone has a right to equal health care. People should not be punished because they're ill. Mrs Thatcher has proved that the health service is not safe in her hands.'

'She has systematically destroyed it.'

'The privatisation of sections of the health service was a disaster. At this hospital the ancillary work has been privatised and the service is appalling.'

'Now more of this work is done by nurses.'

'We have to do cleaning. The wards are filthy, meals are not always ready on time, there is not always adequate food for the patients. That affects our job and patient care.'

'I think that all health workers should be directly employed by the NHS in order to work towards the same end: good health care for the patients.'

'We will be supporting Kings College Hospital tomorrow (a large general hospital just across the road) and if it has to happen again we will be out a second and third time. We will fight until we get a result.'

Local full-time COHSE office, Brian Lynch, told Workers Press why Maudsley had come out a day before the rest of London:

'We were the first nurses to ballot for strike action and we picked February 2.'

'Other hospitals then decided to come out along with us. The whole thing was so spontaneous that we could not even get the day right. Consequently it is really going to be three days of action because some hospitals are also coming out on the 4th.'

'What has lit the fire of this dispute is the offer of less than £1 London weighting and the attack on the nurses' special duty payments, both coming at the same time as an announcement that the

chancellor had £7,000 million that he did not know what to do with.

'He wanted to give tax cuts instead of giving us proper London weighting for living in this, the dearest capital in the world.'

'The health service as a whole is at stake here. If you do not pay people a decent wage they will not do the job.'

'That is why 60 nurses every single week are leaving the NHS.'

'We are now doing the work of colleagues who have left because they are fed up with the health service.'

'If the health service does not get better treatment as a result of this action I can guarantee that there will be more action. I can see 1988 being the year of the health dispute.'

A member of the Pensioners Action Committee said:

'What is happening to the health service affects not just the nurses but the whole nation.'

Another pensioner said: 'Of course it affects pensioners because pensioners are more conscious of health than younger people.'

'We are much more at risk than the rest of the population.'

'The whole attitude of this government is to look after those who have got it and take it away from those who have nothing.'

'Look what they have done with pensions over the years. When the Tories came in pensions were linked to both wages and the rate of inflation.'

'If we still had that now we would be £8 a week better off.'

'A Private health service will be better for the city of London. The likes of BUPA are not there to provide a service. They are there to make a profit. And insurance does not cover things that affect pensioners.'

'It does not cover chronic illness, the ongoing illnesses that pensioners suffer from.'



Pensioners supporting the hospital workers at the Maudsley on 2 February

Wales call for one-day strike

BY TRAVIS GOULD

AFTER lagging behind events in Manchester, Scotland and London, strike action and protests in the Health Service are building up rapidly in South Wales fuelled by the latest pay offer.

Nurses at three hospitals in Bridgend, Glanrhyd, Parc and Pen-y-fai have already made a call for a 24-hour strike on St David's Day (1 March) which has received popular and widespread support from a large number of hospitals throughout the whole of Wales.

The call came from a meeting of the hospitals' NUPE, COHSE and RCN unions last week and will be balloted in individual branches.

Strike action and protests took place in a variety of forms in line with the national action on 3 February.

Two-hour strikes were carried out in hospitals in Llanelli and Carmarthen, protest rallies and demonstrations were held at the Royal Gwent hospital, Newport, the Neville Hall hospital in Abergaveny and at five hospitals in the Rhondda. From West Glamorgan

hospitals nurses lobbied the Tory headquarters in Swansea.

At the Prince Charles hospital, Merthyr Tydfil, NUPE secretary Alan Pugh was confident there would be a massive response to the call for industrial action on St David's Day. The only reason the Prince Charles hospital did not take action on 3 February was the pace of developments which meant 'we were unable to provide the necessary patient care in time', Pugh told Workers Press.

Actions throughout the whole of Wales expressed the deep feelings of all hospital workers over the attacks on the NHS and great anger over the Tory government's plans to keep the service under-funded, to privatise the most lucrative areas and to put out to competitive tender the not so lucrative areas like gardening, maintenance, portering and domestics.

The whole trade union movement in Wales should rally round the health service on St David's Day. Miners, steel workers, engineers and transport workers in particular must join the nurses' one-day stoppage.

● More reports pages 4,5

WORKERS PRESS JANUARY FUND

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We did not quite make the £2,000 for our January fund. Let's overcome the deficit in February.

The future of Workers Press depends on the untiring efforts of members of the Workers Revolutionary Party and its supporters to sell it and collect regular sums for the monthly fund.

But we know that there are new forces coming into struggle as the Tories, forced by the economic and financial crisis, deal even harder blows at the basic rights of millions of people.

Nurses and other NHS workers are going into battle on the shoulders of the miners' strike of 1984/85. Scenes in London as mounted police barred striking nurses from reaching Parliament are reminiscent of the miners' pickets.

We pledge that Workers Press will campaign for the maximum support for this struggle, and we are anxious that our readers will send in letters and comments so that we can have the most widespread discussion. Send all donations for our fund to:

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COLLECTION of this fund is very slow indeed. We have received £62.48 in the last week. We urgently need you to send in donations yourself and collect from supporters of Workers Press for the important work to organise an international conference of Trotskyists.

Send donations to: WRP Special Fund, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS

Martin Casey

Martin Casey, whose tragic death on Monday 1 February came after a long and painful illness, will be remembered by comrades and friends in Glasgow as a stubborn fighter for his political principles.

Born and brought up in Clydebank, Martin joined the Workers Revolutionary Party in Easterhouse in 1976, and kept fighting for his revolutionary beliefs from then on. He was instrumental in recruiting other comrades on that vast housing scheme, and when the WRP stood an election candidate there in 1979 Martin was the agent.

It was the building and refurbishing work done by Martin, and other unemployed com-

rades from Easterhouse, which made possible the opening of the Hope Street Book Centre — which meant that Trotskyist and other left-wing literature banned from the Communist Party's shop was easily obtainable in Glasgow for the first time.

A year ago, Martin gave active support to the Caterpillar occupation which re-awakened the fight against unemployment on Clydeside. But then he became too ill to continue political activity.

The Workers Revolutionary Party* extends its condolences to Martin's wife Helen, and daughters Sharon and Patricia.

NHS DAY OF ACTION



Health workers gathered in their thousands in Trafalgar Square to protest the NHS cuts before making several attempts to reach 10 Downing Street.

MANCHESTER

Ancoats. . . again

THE PEOPLE of Ancoats last week re-occupied their closed local casualty department. The round the clock sit-in started a year to the day after their original occupation which lasted eight months.

The action ended four months ago when the area health authority gave an assurance that some form of clinic would re-open in place of the closed down casualty department.

Jean Greg explained why they had decided to re-occupy:

'Since we withdrew we've been active. The health authority formed a working party but we're not satisfied. They're now using the casualty room as a store room. We were promised it would be top priority that locals would have something here.

'Now, 12 months on we've got nothing. We are being told to wait until March when the working party reports but now look at the rest of the hospitals. We started it all here. Everything we warned about has come. Now everyone has got to do what we're doing. Fight the cuts; occupy against closures. We need bodies here. We need people to come and support us.'

Pat Mason, another of the

local residents, added: 'We go to the working party and all we're getting is promises after promises. A community clinic! We want a 24-hour service. We want a doctor and a nurse. We want people to come to do stitches, to do head injuries. You name it, this is what we want in Ancoats. Not to take it all back. All it is now is a store-room and we don't think that is fair.'

As the occupation began to settle back in, organising the rota and the tea-urn, a delegation came from the health authority and hospital administration and while trying to persuade the sit-in that their action was unnecessary, they only confirmed the occupiers' fears.

Mike Brown, from the health authority, explained that the working party would need until the beginning of March to cost out various proposals but that as yet nothing had actually been decided.

As Pat Mason then asked him: 'And what if they all cost too much?'

ABERDEEN

'Hotheads' fight for hospital

BY PAT CARLOS

CLEANING AND catering workers at Cornhill and Kingseat Psychiatric hospital in Aberdeen staged a 24 hour unofficial strike on 3 February. Longserving staff responded to the threat of privatisation by putting up picket lines at all gates and were given the treatment.

They got cheery toots from junior managers, support from tradesmen, brickbats from Michael Forsyth, (Scottish health minister) who said 'They are irresponsible hotheads' and condemnation from unit managers and Labour party member Jim Kiddie who appeared on

Grampian TV deploring the fact that the health board got no warning of the strike.

A General and Municipal Workers Union (GMBATU) steward told Workers Press 'Let's see what they all do later on.'

At a recent combined meeting of hospital staff the issues of pay and privatisation were kept separate by trade union officials, making it difficult for one section of NHS workers to support another officially.

At the same time as the National Health Service strike, P & O ferry services to the Northern Isles of Orkney and Shetland stopped in an apparently separate but very well-timed strike over pay called by the local NUS.

Matthew's fight

TINY Matthew Collier captured headlines across the country a month ago when his parents took Birmingham Health Authority to court in a desperate bid to get a crucial heart operation.

more seriously ill is that in their weakened state they have much less chance of surviving the strain of the operation, or of recovering afterwards.

David Barber lived through his operation, but died shortly afterwards.

Charitable offers of thousands of pounds were made to enable Matthew's working class parents to go private, as Margaret Thatcher has advised us all to do.

Finally, because of the nation-wide publicity, Matthew was moved up the waiting list and had his operation a few weeks ago.

He is now back on the critical list, in intensive care, and the life of this frail little boy once more hangs by a thread.

When Tony Newton, Tory health minister, gazes soulfully into the eyes of the TV interviewer and says sorrowfully that the nurses are harming patients by coming out on strike for a day, he has not only got hold of the wrong end of the stick, he may find it coming down on his own back.

At the age of four he weighed only 26 pounds, the weight of a child half his age. On Christmas day he was too weak to play with his presents, and has spent most of his short life asleep, exhausted by the mere effort to breathe.

Birmingham Children's Hospital was unable to operate because of the shortage of trained nurses. In the normal course of events, it was stated, Matthew would only get his operation, like six week old David Barber, if his condition deteriorated critically.

The problem with waiting until these children become

Strikes & demos

IN MANCHESTER most hospitals are planning protests and strikes on 10 and 19 February. At Prestwich Hospital, however, NUPE members took strike action last Wednesday.

Both nurses and ancillary staff picketed the main gates all morning, receiving continuous hoots of support from passing drivers. They were joined on the picket by women from the Ancoats hospital sit-in and Tony Lowe from the engineers strike at Senior Colman.

Anne Whittington, a staff nurse on nights, who has worked at Prestwich for 11 years, told Workers Press:

'We are striking to support our colleagues in London to draw attention to the crisis in the NHS.'

'This is just the beginning. I hope the unions can co-ordinate our actions. More days like this must be taken. We are having a vigil on 10 February, and a twenty-four hour strike on 19 February.'

Asked about the rights and wrongs of striking and the Labour Party executive's decision not to support strike action, Anne said, 'What can

I say? It's a poor show. We know we have to strike because it's been so long that we've had promises.

'The unions will always provide emergency cover but people have had enough.

'Nothing will happen otherwise. The only pay claim that was ever settled properly was the one just before the general election.

'I support the Ancoats occupation, I want to see this campaign involving the whole public, everyone.'

On 10 February the Hulme tenants are organising a demonstration to St Mary's hospital to support the pickets there. The march will be leaving Hulme at 11.30 a.m.

● On Friday, 19 February, Manchester Health Shop Stewards Committees are holding a demonstration from All Saints, Oxford Road at 11 a.m., marching to the town hall.



Some of the large and aggressive police presence mobilised against the hospital workers on their march last Wednesday

NHS DAY OF ACTION

London nurses march. . .

CENTRAL London was brought to a standstill last Wednesday as thousands of nurses and their supporters marched spontaneously down Whitehall in an effort to get into Downing Street.

In scenes reminiscent of the miners' strike, nurses chanting 'here we go, here we go' clashed with mounted police who had been rushed hurriedly to the scene.

Later the same evening some 1,000 nurses, other health workers and their supporters crowded into the Camden Centre for an enthusiastic rally in support of the nurses' fight. A Charing Cross nurse who called for a general strike on budget day was greeted with great enthusiasm.

'Catastrophic deterioration'

MYRA HEALEY, a COHSE steward from St. Thomas' spoke of the crisis point her hospital had reached.

'Tests are being cut back in the Microbiology department because of cost, and because of vacancies.

'The management is deliberately taking six months to fill the vacancies to save money. The staff of the catering department is down by 42 per cent, and they don't just cater for patients as well. Management are now dishing out meals to the patients.

'I have worked at St. Thomas' for 10 years, and over the last 18 months I have seen a catastrophic deterioration.

'Thatcher is now proposing selling the laboratories to private industry. That means the private tests will be done first. They have already privatised the cleaning and the place is filthy. If it goes on like this for another 18 months we just won't have a health service.'

'It's a vocation'

DEIDRE BYRNE, a first year nurse and NUPE member on the picket line at St. George's Hospital in London said:

'We need every nurse to put on their uniform and go up to 10 Downing street, regardless of their union. We should fill the streets.

'The young nurses don't know enough about the union — I was like that until a few months ago. At first I wanted to abstain from voting for a strike and then I realised that this was the only way, after listening to people who have been in the service for years who are so fed up they are even thinking of taking up voluntary missionary work.

'It's not so much the pay as the vocation. As a first year nurse working on a ward I am supposed to have complete supervision which we don't get because of the shortages of staff.

'On the wards at the moment we are having one trained sister, one student and one first year nurse. The sister has to do all the administration, check all the drugs, answer the phones and supervise us at the same time. We end up being thrown in at the deep end looking after 29 patients on our own with all the fear of having something go wrong.

'The whole health service should be coming out. We should give a few months warning and then the army should come and do the work — We've got enough military to cover all the patients. In Ireland you have to pay £10 every time you go to casualty, and a doctor's fee is £15. People just can't afford it.'



Postal workers on strike supporting the nurses on a picket line in the East End of London

LEICESTER

Hoot if you support us!

HOSPITAL WORKERS in Leicester mounted strong pickets at three of the main hospitals in the city. At the Royal Infirmary placards saying 'Hoot if you support us!' were greeted by a

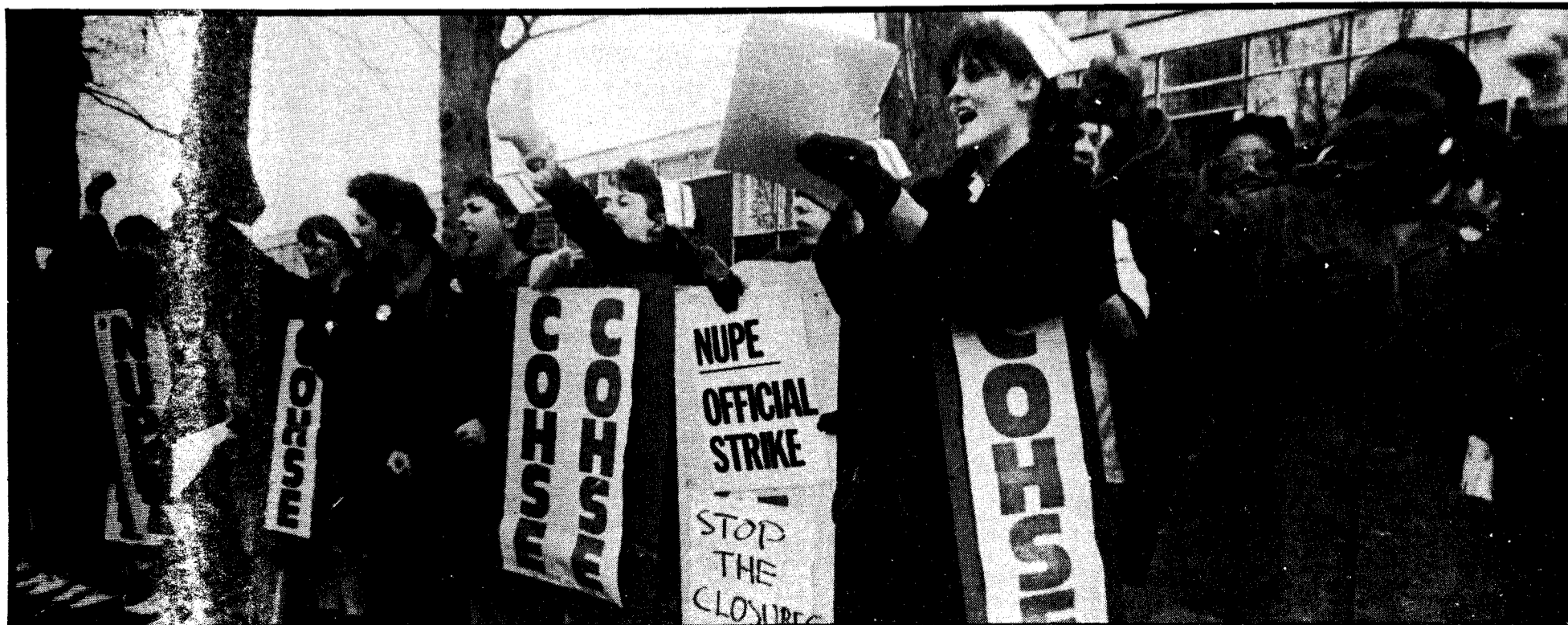
BY PAUL HENDERSON

cacophony of horns in the morning rush hour.

Feelings about the action were so strong that NUPE stewards reported great difficulty in getting their

members to maintain emergency cover.

A rally and demonstration of 500 took place at lunchtime resulting in one of the biggest gatherings seen in the city centre for many months.



A confident contingent of nurses on the picket line at Charing Cross hospital

Zionists kidnap children

RIGHT-wing Zionist settlers have reportedly kidnapped as many as 30 Palestinian children from Daheisha refugee camp, according to reports reaching the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

PLO spokesman Abu Cherif said a gang of settlers had forced their way into Daheisha, between Bethlehem and Jerusalem, and taken the children, some 12 or under, to an unknown destination.

In Anabta village, near Tulqarm, two young men were shot dead and many more injured when Israeli troops attacked a demonstration last Monday. At least fifteen people were reported injured in Nablus when troops opened fire.

More shootings were reported from Ain Beit al-Ma refugee camp and from



Kidnap victims? The confidence of kids like these Daheisha boys has been a constant thorn in the side of the Zionist settlers. Now reports claim 30 Daheisha youngsters may have been taken away.

Jenin. The entire city of Nablus, with 100,000 inhabitants, was placed under curfew last weekend.

Troops were said to be going around the city arresting dozens of youth. All reporters had been banned from the area.

JEWISH PROTESTS

THE Palestinian people's uprising against Israeli occupation has started to awaken a smaller, but nevertheless significant, revolt in another quarter.

Voices are being raised in several Jewish communities in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere, condemning Israeli repression, and calling for recognition of Palestinian rights.

● In Paris, about 150 Jewish protesters demonstrated outside the Israeli embassy on 20 January, with slogans including 'Evacuation des territoires occupés!' and 'Negotiation avec le peuple Palestinien'.

Police intervened when an altercation developed with a smaller crowd of right-wingers demonstrating support for Israel.

The same day, an advertisement calling on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories appeared in 'Le Monde', signed by 211 people, many of them well-known personalities in France's Jewish cultural life.

In Brussels, a statement issued by the Union des Progressistes Juifs de Belgique (UPJB) on 19 December declared that as 'an organisation born out of the Jewish resistance to the (Nazi) occupiers', the UPJB 'rebels against the murderous repression in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, territories occupied by Israel'.

In London, about 160 people attended a meeting with PLO representative Feisal Aweidha, organised by the Jewish Socialists' Group on 26 January. The PLO's speaker urged Jews to 'help Israel make peace. Help the Jews to survive in peace. Don't create another ghetto in Israel for the Jews,' he warned.

At the 'Establishment' level, the Board of Deputies of British Jews has condemned its own foreign affairs chairperson, Mrs. June Jacobs, for criticising Israeli military repression.

Israeli ambassador Yehuda Avner, who said in December that he wanted tougher action against Palestinians, has admitted to receiving letters from Jews expressing 'a sense of shock' over what was happening. But he praised the Board of Deputies' solid support for the Israeli government.

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

This 'meant a great deal for the morale of the community, and for the morale of Israel, and was a signal to Whitehall,' the Israeli ambassador said.

One deputy who supported Mrs. Jacobs, Colin Shindler, complained the Board of Deputies, like the Zionist Federation, had become a mouthpiece for the official Israeli line. If the embassy decided black was white, 'that's what the Board will then say.'

Rabbi Michael Rosen attacked the Israeli army's shooting of civilians, the Shin Bet (secret service) use of perjury and torture, and the 'fascistic' language used by Israeli Defence Minister Rabin in saying his forces would crush the Palestinians with 'strength, force, and beatings'.

From Iran, it was reported that a rabbi had deplored Israeli repression in occupied Palestine, during a meeting in Qum attended by 1,000 members of the Iranian Jewish Society.

In the United States, about 90 Jews in Seattle signed a statement on 9 January, calling on Israel to negotiate with the PLO, and demanding the US halt aid to Israel while the repression continues. Committees to oppose Israeli occupation and repression have been formed in San Francisco and New York.

Rabbi Alexander M. Shindler, of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, calling for a negotiated end to Israeli occupation, warned in December that 'The status quo sows the seeds of endless conflicts.'

'There comes a certain point beyond which you don't go,' said American Jewish Committee executive director Bert Gold. 'Using brute force evokes other times and places when it was used against us.'

When truth's a casualty

FORMER Israeli broadcasting chief Yossi Lapid says if army censors don't stop interfering with reports from the occupied territories he'll 'have to listen to PLO radio' to find out what's going on.

A new station, 'Voice of al-Kuds' (Jerusalem) has come on the air with news, patriotic Palestinian songs, accurate up-to-date information on casualties in the popular uprising, and warnings to named collaborators. A Hebrew-speaking announcer has urged Israeli soldiers to quit the occupied territory.

Israeli media workers' are starting to taste what Palestinian journalists are used to. On 25 December, Army Central Region commander General Mitzna ordered the arrest of Zohar Melamed — the correspondent for the armed forces' broadcasting service. The general had previously tried to have him sacked, because of his reports from the occupied territories.

Military police followed Melamed to Bethlehem where he was covering a

story. They took him back to Jerusalem police headquarters where he was held for several hours.

Israeli journalists have expressed concern at discrepancies between official Army reports and information from other sources, including conscripts.

'Davar' correspondent Tali Selinger said there were eye-witness reports of deaths which were not listed in official reports.

Following their South African counterparts, the military have been banning reporters from entering some areas. It was also reported by Israeli press photographers that as soon as they began taking pictures in some places, soldiers approached with pre-signed orders declaring the entire towns or area a 'closed military zone'.

Stalin's prosecutor 'had ordered Lenin's arrest'

STALIN'S infamous chief prosecutor Andrei Vyshinsky, who used to end his Moscow Trials courtroom speeches with the cry 'Shoot the Mad Dogs!', tried once to have Lenin arrested, according to a Moscow journal.

Vyshinsky, 'handpicked by Stalin to be the blood-soaked director of the purge trials', was 'a monster whose claws still defile our criminal procedure and legal system,' says an article in the 27 January 'Literaturnaya Gazeta'.

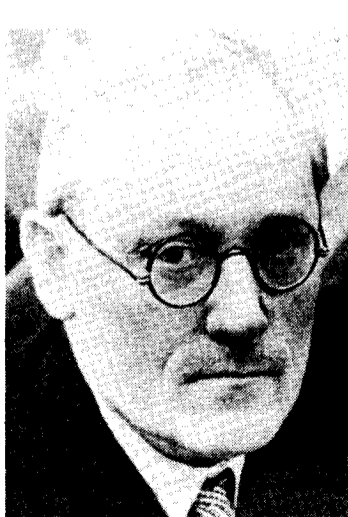
It is well-known that before the October Revolution, Vyshinsky was a Menshevik. He joined them in 1905, left the workers' movement in 1907, and re-emerged as a right-wing Menshevik in 1917. He remained a leading Menshevik until 1920.

In his 1936 'Red Book' on the Moscow Trials,

Trotsky's son Leon Sedov remarked on the fact that 'the Menshevik Vyshinsky' was now prosecuting Zinoviev, Kamenev and other old Bolsheviks.

Sedov also pointed out 'There is a gaping hole in his official biography between 1907 and 1920.' As a right-wing Menshevik active after the February revolution Vyshinsky was 'a frenzied enemy of Bolshevism and the October Revolution', Sedov said.

According to 'Literaturnaya



VYSHINSKY — 'a monster'

naya Gazeta', Vyshinsky was not just active politically. The journal says that as a law official in the provisional government he personally signed an order for the arrest of Lenin as a 'German spy'.

The Soviet journal goes on to make a similar point to Sedov's, saying:

'And 20 years after signing this order for Lenin's arrest, during the purge trials Vyshinsky was to accuse

Lenin's closest allies of plotting to do away with Lenin.'

Vyshinsky's barbarous language of abuse was notorious. The petty-bourgeois provincial lawyer made good let himself rip denouncing Bolshevik revolutionary and former Comintern head Bukharin as 'half-fox, half-pig'. He denounced alleged supporters of Trotsky as 'a stinking heap of human debris'.

'In Vyshinsky's trials, naked political banditry went hand-in-hand with well-honed legal skill, and hysterical pathos was mixed with forensic legal precision,' 'Literaturnaya Gazeta' says.

The article says Vyshinsky introduced the method still used in the Soviet legal system, whereby the accused is made to hand-write his or her confession, at the dictation of the prosecutor.

It also blames Stalin's prosecutor for introducing the rule under which Soviet attorneys are not obliged to read out in open court any claims by the accused that they were tortured, or that their confession was improperly obtained.

Vyshinsky was later author of the standard Soviet textbook on criminal trial procedure. From 1949-53 he was Soviet Foreign Minister and UN delegate.

State link with right-wing terror

BELGIAN Justice Minister Jean Gol has found it necessary to declare there are no 'precise, verifiable facts' to back allegations that state security forces were involved in a campaign to destabilise the country.

The denial came after a former gendarme, arrested in connection with a series of terrorist incidents, claimed they were part of a plot involving the gendarmerie and armed forces.

The trial of six people, accused of taking part in armed raids on supermarkets from 1983-4 in which 28 people were killed, was halted recently after a gun used in the raids was found at the home of a former policeman.

BY PIERRE DUMONT

robbers seemed keener on killing people than on the money. There was also talk about the way the gang always managed to evade roadblocks.

According to Beijer, there were links between the security forces and Right-wing extremists. The ex-gendarme says elements in the gendarmerie and military had been concerned that cuts in Belgium's defence budget would make it the 'weak link' in NATO.

The allegation of state forces' involvement makes the Brabant massacres sound like the neo-fascist bomb outrages in Italy. The NATO-angle begs the question of an American, CIA connection, such as there was in the Italian destabilisation campaigns and the Greek colonels' coup.

Although Justice Minister Gol has insisted nothing is proven, he is taking the allegations seriously. All members of the security forces have been ordered to sign a sworn declaration that they had no dealings with Beijer or others involved in the Brabant massacre.

At the time of the raids, people remarked that the

Ruhr mine jobs fight



RUHR coalminers, on the march last year to defend jobs, are facing a further threat — and their union has accepted the plan.

Ruhrkohle AG, with 70 per cent of West German coal production, decided to cut production by 10 million tonnes a year by 1995.

The union leadership has agreed with management plans although this will mean the loss of 25,000 jobs in the industry.

Unemployment is already bad in the Ruhr area, and steelworkers are fighting a plan by Krupp to axe 5,000 jobs at the Rheinhausen steel plant.

On the stage of history

THE LATEST play of the popular Soviet dramatist Mikhail Shatrov concerns a subject which must surely never have been seen before on the Russian stage. The play is called 'On and On and On' and is an anti-Stalinist production emerging out of the rising tide of Glasnost in Soviet cultural life.

It is now coming under a series of public attacks for its attempt to grapple honestly with the role of Trotsky. Trotsky introduces himself in the play when the curtain rises:

'I joined the revolutionary movement in 1896 at the age of 17. I participated in the second congress of the party. I joined the Mensheviks which cost me 15 years of polemic with Lenin. In 1905 I was one of the organisers of the first Russian revolution. Arrested, sentenced and condemned to exile for life to Siberia, I escaped and went abroad.

'In 1917, after February, I came back. I thought that I could learn something from the revolution, but it turned out that there weren't enough teachers and it was finally up to me to teach the revolution. In August I rejoined the Bolshevik party. At the sixth congress I was elected a member of the Central Committee. After October, as people's commissar for Foreign Affairs... profound differences led to an opposition between me and Lenin on essential questions, theoretical and political, which he called my 'non-bolshevism'.

'More profound differences with Stalin and the party led to my expulsion from the country: that also is true. My activities overseas in the creation of the Fourth International in opposition to the Third are not an invention. All that took place. I am a soldier of the world revolution and I

BY BRONWEN HANDYSIDE

present myself without faltering before the tribunal of posterity.

'Only, something which never existed, and never could exist, which I reject with scorn, is the secret police. I never had any contact with the secret police except, sorry, one which was single and unique... (a silence). On the 20th of August 1940, in my home, in my office, I was mortally wounded with an ice-pick by someone called Jackson... The diabolical emotion of vengeance was triumphant'.

The play depicts Lenin as making a crucial mistake in allowing Stalin to succeed him in the party leadership. It quotes Rosa Luxemburg saying that any revolution which fails to honour free speech, free press, free elections and free trade unions is doomed to slow death by bureaucracy.

An editorial in Pravda has attacked the play saying that its mixture of fact and fiction 'damage the moral atmosphere of society'. In the play Stalin says in reply to Trotsky 'Punishment is not vengeance, punishment is always just. We the Bolsheviks were always morally correct.' Plus ça change...



Bukharin

Bukharin praised

BOLSHEVIK leader Nicolai Bukharin, a victim of Stalin's purge trials executed 50 years ago, appeared a step nearer rehabilitation this week, with publication in the Soviet journal 'Kommunist' of his eulogy at the funeral of Lenin.

Bukharin was mentioned favourably by Gorbachev during the celebrations last year of the October Revolution, and in December the official newspaper 'Izvestia' ran an article on him in its weekly supplement.

American professor Stephen Cohen, author of 'Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution', invited to lecture in Moscow last month, has remarked on Gorbachev's interest in Bukharin's policies.

Poet Yevgeni Yevtushenko has published a poem, 'Bukharin's Widow', attacking the Stalin purges, ranking Bukharin alongside Lenin, and praising the murdered communist's widow, whom he met last June, for having preserved his testament.

Ecuador voters ditch Tories

VOTERS in Ecuador have rejected the Thatcher-like free market capitalist policies of the pro-US Cordero government.

In the first round of presidential elections last week, in which about 3.5 million of the South American country's 4.6 million electorate voted, Social Democrat Rodrigo Borja took first place.

Government-backed contender Duran Ballen came third, behind a populist candidate, Abdalla Bucaram.

President Leon Febres Cordero's Social Christian government came in promising 'bread, homes and jobs', but now inflation is running ten per cent ahead of wages, and nearly half the working population are under-employed or jobless.

The 1986 collapse in oil prices, and the destruction last March in an earthquake of the Trans-Andean pipeline, might not be the government's fault; but Febres Cordero's free-market Toryism did bring sharp devaluation and soaring interest rates.

Since Febres Cordero took power in 1984, there was also a big increase in reported violations of human rights. Interior Minister Luis Robles was forced to resign after allegations of torture, killings and arbitrary arrest by state forces.

There have been threatening noises from the military as the voters went to the polls. Right-wing officers have indicated that if Bucaram, a demagogue with a strong following in the slums, was to win, they might intervene before the second round poll on 8 May.

Military rebel Frank Vargas came close behind Duran Ballen in last week's elections.

Polish strikes

POLISH port city of Gdansk, birthplace of Solidarity unions, saw a march by several thousand workers last week against new price and rent increases. In Wroclaw, workers in five major plants set up strike committees.

Waldheim mystery

YUGOSLAV archivists were last week unable to locate an original document linking Austrian president Waldheim to World War II crimes. The West German magazine 'Der Spiegel' had printed a photocopy of a letter from Croat fascist Ante Pavelic saying Waldheim wanted 4,000 Yugoslavs sent to concentration camps in 1942.

London firm strikebreaks against Palestinians

LONDON — based European Manpower Services plc, a company which recruits nurses and engineers for work abroad, has undertaken to provide labour to break strikes by Palestinian workers.

Company boss Ephraim Barsam says he has sent 600 workers already, and applied to the Israeli Ministry of Labour for 10,000 work permits. They are being recruited from Portugal, Cyprus, the Far East and Britain.

Last month, oranges were not picked, and heaps of rubbish accumulated in Tel Aviv streets because, as the city council lamented, less than 30 per cent of its West Bank workers had arrived, and from the Gaza Strip none came at all. ('Yediot Ahranot', 15 January).

On 14 January, Minister of Labour Moshe Ketzav issued permits for 550 harvest workers to come in from South Lebanon, because so many Palestinian workers were at home under curfew. He also appealed to the Education Ministry to draft high school pupils into harvest work.

A study in 'Yediot Ahranot',

cent of all workers in the construction industry came from the occupied territories, and one in six of all farmworkers.

'Anyone believing we can import 50,000 foreign building workers within a reasonably short time is deluding himself,' writer Sever Plotzker warned.

'We are not suggesting that we replace the Arab workforce,' EMS boss Barsam told a 'Jewish Chronicle' reporter (29 January). 'We wouldn't do that. It would be irresponsible and create other problems.'

'There is a need to send workers to fill part of the demand created by the Arab strike, without causing a political dilemma.'

World Brief

Turkish torture protest

FAMILIES of Turkish prisoners have handed the Grand National Assembly (parliament) a 26,000-signature petition calling for an end to torture.

The Prisoners' Families' Mutual Aid Association call for an end to indiscriminate beatings, chainings and blindfoldings, and demands a parliamentary commission to review prison conditions.

The association demands an end to the State Security Courts, set up after the 1980 military coup, and release of political detainees.

Protesters out, others warned

POLISH police last week released all but one of 50 people arrested for demonstrating outside the Romanian embassy in solidarity with arrested strikers at Brasov, Romania.

Meanwhile, Solidarity leaders were summoned to meet Polish authorities on Tuesday, and warned there would be legal consequences if they opposed new 40 per cent food price and 100 per cent rent increases.

Agent killed

FRENCHMAN Jacques Meurant, killed in Christian East Beirut last week by two gunmen, who also escaped with a document file he was carrying, was a top secret agent, it was revealed.

Meurant, shot in the neck by two men armed with machine pistols who drove up as he sat in his car, was deputy chief of the Lebanon desk in France's Direction Generale des Services Extérieurs (DGSE).

Bofors' Bonus

SWEDISH arms company Bofors paid almost £30 million in secret bribes to win a £750 million contract in India, according to the 'Indian Express'.

Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and the Bofors company had repeatedly denied reports of illicit payments, but the 'Indian Express' (2 February) lists amounts, account numbers, and codenamed payees or companies. An Indian-Swedish joint parliamentary commission is due to report on 22 February.

Crime pays

A **CHINESE** bureaucrat involved in an illegal import racket that brought in 89,000 cars, 250,000 video machines and nearly three million televisions has been made deputy mayor of Canton.

The official press said former Hainan Island senior Party official Lei Yu had learnt from his 'mistakes'. Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang recently announced new plans for opening China to foreign trade and investment, through Canton and Hainan Island.



Banner on the Bloody Sunday march calling for justice for the Birmingham Six

7,000

SEVEN thousand people marched through north London last Saturday, on the sixteenth anniversary of Bloody Sunday, demanding British withdrawal from Ireland.

Trades councils including Hammersmith-Fulham and Oxford, together with teachers, council employees and other unions, joined the march.

Irish workers turned out in force behind the banners of the Irish in Britain Representation Group and 'Troops Out'. Three Republican bands from Scotland were there, and contingents from political groups included the Labour Committee on Ireland, Revolutionary Communist Party, Socialist Workers

Party and Workers Revolutionary Party (Workers Press).

The crowd was swelled by an angry reaction to the British state's go-ahead for 'shoot-to-kill', and the rejection of the Birmingham Six appeal.

'I believe, without one per cent of doubt, that each and every member of this cabinet not to take action against those who ordered the "shoot-to-kill" policy have made themselves accomplices to murder,' Ken Livingstone MP told a rally afterwards.

Sued

Livingstone — who was at the rally with Labour MPs Jeremy Corbyn and Diane Abbott — said he would not be sued for the statement, because that would enable him to subpoena RUC officers in court.

'No representative of Ireland could ever send an Irish Republican to this country for "British justice" without betraying every fibre of Irish nationhood,' he said.

Derry Sinn Fein councillor Mitchel McLaughlin reminded the rally that Bloody Sunday had been 'planned at the highest level' by the British state; they had hoped it would 'stifle the will for freedom' but it had failed.

McLaughlin compared state repression in the six counties to the growing threat by Thatcher to miners, nurses, Asians and blacks — and called for unity of the Irish people and British workers against the 'evils of Thatcherism'.

'Britain has offered nothing to Ireland but permanent repression,' he said. British withdrawal would be achieved 'through negotiations, based on Republican generosity and a new British pragmatism, or by prolonged people's struggle.'

A speech on behalf of the United Campaign Against Plastic Bullets was made by Emma Groves, the Belfast

They need this...

'justice'

BY SIMON PIRANI

THE RAW nerve, touched by the Tory decision not to prosecute police who operated the 'shoot-to-kill' policy, was wrenched out by the roots when the Birmingham Six appeal was rejected.

After the Appeal Court judgement, both Tory and Labour MPs pleaded with Home Secretary Douglas Hurd to grant the six men a royal pardon, i.e., to free them with all awkward questions left unanswered.

Hurd could not do it — because to free the six would be an admission that the police were vicious thugs who beat confessions out of them and that the original trial was a blatant state-organised frame-up. To free the six would undermine the Prevention of Terrorism Act; it would weaken, however slightly, the intimidatory threat of instantaneous deportation or imprisonment on trumped-up charges facing every Irish person in Britain who becomes politically active. It would undermine their lordships' point that because the Birmingham Six mixed with Republicans, their guilt was virtually proven.

'This is a black day for British justice', cried labour MP Chris Mullin. (The racist fanatics of 'The Sun' said Mullin's statement was 'worthy of a Falls Road Fenian', and that the six should probably have been 'strung up' long ago).

Mullin's tireless efforts to expose the frame-up must be praised. But his naivete about 'British justice' is pathetic. The judgement paraded that capitalist 'justice' in all its pomp and circumstance.

What else does 'British justice' mean, if not the punishment of the Irish people for the 'crime' of fighting to rid themselves from imperialist rule? What else does it mean than the jailing of innocent workers, in order to terrify others into submission?

The 'shoot-to-kill' controversy underlines the same point. John Stalker, too, saw an infringement of 'British justice' — in the assassinations organised by the MI5 and the RUC. This was no infringement, but a central plank of British policy — and when the RUC got caught, it was continued by the army, with the killing of two IRA volunteers at Derry in December 1984, three in Strabane in January 1985 and eight at Loughgall in April 1987.

There is deep unease in the ruling class about the ramshackle regime of terror in the north of Ireland. So much so that Stalker's memoirs are being serialised by the 'Daily Express' — who are certainly more bothered about increasing their circulation than about noble liberal principles, but who no doubt sense the disquiet of their middle-class readers at the RUC's Guatemalan-death-squad style.

Imagine the eyebrows raised in Surbiton, when they read that Sir John Hermon, entertaining a visiting Deputy Chief Constable (no less!), showed him details of his mother's catholic family background written on the back of a cigarette packet!

But Surbiton needs the killing fields of Armagh; Whitehall needs the torture chambers at Castlereagh barracks; Thatcher's 'people's capitalism' needs the blood-soaked military occupation of the six counties — to try and stifle working-class and nationalist struggles which threaten to strike powerful blows at the British capitalist state.

Labour and trades union leaders who prattle on about Thatcher's 'share-owning democracy' (Norman Willis was doing this again last week), always try to ignore this gory brutality on which it depends. We have to adapt to it, they say, and recognise the 'new reality'. How nice, if we could only have it without the nasty bits.

The 'shoot-to-kill' and Birmingham Six decisions showed that the 'nasty bits' are essential to capitalism. That is why every time the Labour leaders come to power, dedicated to preserving capitalism, they have to preserve the bloody occupation of the six counties and everything that goes with it.

It was the last Labour government

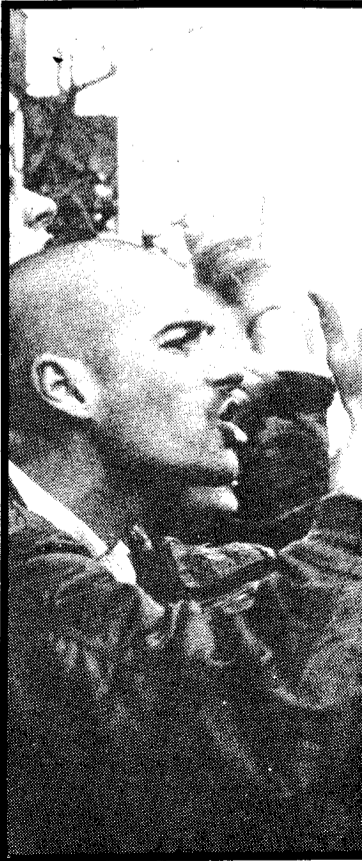
that introduced the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The one before sent troops to Ireland in the first place. They carried on with the torture and murder where the Tories left off.

The British working class must drive these leaders from its ranks. Its own interests can only be served by joining together with the Irish people in the struggle against Thatcher — as Sinn Fein councillor Mitchell McLaughlin correctly pointed out at last week's 'Bloody Sunday' rally. This means British workers standing unequivocally for British withdrawal, and Irish self-determination.

A central part of this fight must be the organisation of a labour movement enquiry into the activities of the MI5, MI6 and RUC in the north of Ireland — which, in the mid-70s, assumed the dual purpose of 'destabilising' a Labour government and attempting to smash the IRA.



Some comrades fear that such an enquiry would be a fruitless exercise, which would only tell us what we already know about British imperialist violence. But the organised working class movement must take up these questions, as a movement. Enquiring in to the workings of the state is essential, if we are to fight it and the pro-imperialist Labour leaders who defend it.



National Front members, safe behind

SAY 'TROOPS OUT'



The Rising Phoenix Republican Flute Band from Edinburgh, ready to march



Ken Livingstone MP, speaking at the rally, accused cabinet ministers of being 'accomplices to murder'

woman who was shot in the face with a plastic bullet during an army invasion of her housing estate. The soldier who permanently blinded Mrs Groves from a distance of eight yards has never been prosecuted.

Moving

The rally fell silent for the equally moving speech by Eileen Kelly, mother of schoolgirl Carol-Anne who was killed by a plastic bullet while walking home after buying a bottle of milk.

● The Workers Revolutionary Party (Workers Press) held a successful social after the march, at the Abbey Community Centre in Kilburn. The guests of honour were the James Connolly Republican Flute Band from Govan, Glasgow. They entertained our guests, as did a Kurdish musician.

Campaigns decided

MORE than 100 people resolved to step up campaigns for British withdrawal from Ireland, and in support of Republican prisoners, at a Bloody Sunday commemoration meeting in Glasgow last Wednesday.

The meeting, organised by the Clydeside Troops Out Movement, Republican Band Alliance and the Glasgow Republican Prisoners of War Committee, began with a minute's silent tribute to those who died on Bloody Sunday and during the liberation struggle.

'A resistance which cannot and will not be beaten down' had built up in the six counties since Bloody Sunday, Martin O'Leary of Clydeside Troops Out Movement told the meeting.

Republican Bands' representative Josie O'Kane said: 'The only solution to England's Irish problem is to evict England from every corner of Ireland, and this will only happen with the victory of the IRA.'

Eddie Caughey of the Republican prisoners' support committee in Birmingham said that the demand for repatriation of the prisoners to Irish jails was 'not a deviation from the main issues.' Of the 34 prisoners in English jails, 21 were serving life sentences, and all were frequently subject to beatings, solitary confinement and other forms of intimidation.

'The British don't just want a pint of blood and a

pound of flesh; they want to remove the flesh and dispose of it. Their object is to crush the prisoners and intimidate the Irish people, but this will fail.'

Simon Pirani, chairing the meeting, stressed that the responsibility of British socialists was to fight for Irish self-determination, and in particular to oppose the Labour leaders 'who had as much Irish blood on their hands as the Tories'.

Greeting

The meeting resolved to send messages of greeting to Republican prisoners, and also to send a solidarity message to the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

In discussion from the floor, proposals were made about further campaigning. The issue of strip-searching was mentioned, and the need to fight for a labour movement enquiry into the 'shoot-to-kill' policy and other undercover state operations by British imperialism. It was also agreed to organise demonstrations at English jails.

DERRY MARCH

IN Derry the march was nearly 6,000 strong.

For the first time the organisers had applied for permission and this was given.

The spirited march began at the Creggan shops and wound its way down into the Bogside with RUC and British army forces hardly to be seen anywhere.

Wakefield picket

The members of the Irish Republican POW Campaign (Britain) invite all supportive organisations and people to join with us at our annual commemoration outside Wakefield prison on February 7 at 1.30 pm, to honour courageous Freedom Fighter Volunteer Frank Stagg, who died at that prison on hunger-strike after 62 agonising days, in his fight against prison conditions and repatriation to prison in Ireland.

Conditions at Wakefield have changed little since Frank Stagg died there almost 12 years ago, with the prison maintaining the reputation of the harshest regime for Irish political prisoners of all the British prisons.

But it must also be said that every Irish political prisoner who passed through the vicious system in Wakefield since Frank Stagg's death has demonstrated their indomitable fighting spirit and calibre by the manner in which they have sustained the battle against the lackeys at Wakefield, determined to inflict the most inhuman treatment against the POWs, and extended to their families and friends with restrictive visiting conditions.

At present Noel Gibson is in 'solitary confinement': one week after arriving at Wakefield last September he was dumped in 'solitary' for an 'offence' he couldn't have committed.

Noel could be deliberately held in 'solitary' indefinitely awaiting the completion of the police investigation concerning forensic tests arising from the claim that Noel placed an incendiary device in a book from the prison library and returned it to the library.

Billy Armstrong is also in Wakefield following a 28 day 'lie down' at Durham, from where he was removed in mid December last year. A

visit from Billy's mother, aged and handicapped by arthritis did not take place, because Billy was totally opposed to his mother having to endure the horrible treatment of being strip-searched.

Join us on February 7 in our salute to the courageous Freedom Fighter Frank Stagg, and all our martyrs, and to protest at the 'special'

treatment inflicted upon Irish Republican Prisoners in English prisons.

With us in unity, demand the right of Irish Republican Prisoners to Repatriation Now.

Together in Struggle,

Beir bua agus Tioc faidh ar la,

Irish Republican POW Campaign (Britain).

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN
HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ
LIAM BAKER, 20-year sentence, 464984.
JAMES BENNETT, 20-year sentence, 464989.
PETER JORDAN, 15-year sentence, H22338.
EDDIE BUTLER, Life sentence, 338637.
ROBERT CUNNINGHAM, 20-year sentence, 131877.
GERRY CUNNINGHAM, 20-year sentence, 132016.
JOHN MCCOMB, 17-year sentence, B51715.
HUGH DOHERTY, Life sentence, 338636.
VINCE DONNELLY, Life sentence, 274064.

MAIDSTONE
HM Prison County Road, Maidstone, Kent
SHAUN McSHANE, B75898
DONAL CRAIG, 4-year sentence, L40579.

PARKHURST
HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX
PATRICK HACKETT, 20-year sentence, 342603.
PAUL NORNEY, Life sentence, 863532.
TOMMY QUIGLEY, Life sentence, 69204.
PETER SHERRY, Life sentence, B75880.

WAKEFIELD
HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks, WF2 9AG
NATALINO VELLA, 15-year sentence, B71644.
NOEL GIBSON, Life sentence, 879225.
WILLIAM ARMSTRONG, Life sentence, 119085.

ALBANY
HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS
MARTIN BRADY, Life sentence, 119087.
HARRY DUGGAN, Life sentence, 338638.
BILLY GRIMES, 10-year sentence, 78647.
SEAN KINSELLA, Life sentence, 758661.

GARTREE
HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP
RONNIE McCARTNEY, Life sentence, 463799.
STEPHEN NORDONE, Life sentence, 758663.
JOE O'CONNELL, Life sentence, 338635.
PATRICK McLAUGHLIN, 30-year sentence.
ROY WALSH, Life sentence, 119083.

FRANKLAND
HM Prison Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham
BRENDAN DOWD, Life sentence, 758662.

PAUL HOLMES, Life sentence, 119034.
CON McFADDEN, 20-year sentence, 130662.
MICHAEL J McKENNEY, 16-year sentence, L46486.
EDDIE O'NEILL, 20-year sentence, 135722.

LEICESTER
HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ
PAUL KAVANAGH, Life sentence, 1888.
GERARD McDONNELL, Life sentence, B75882.
BRIAN KEENAN, 21-year sentence, B26380.
PATRICK McGEE, Life sentence, B75881.

DURHAM
HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert Street, Durham.
MARTINA ANDERSON, Life sentence, D25134.
ELLA O'DWYER, Life sentence, D25135.

REMAND PRISONERS: BRIXTON
HM Prison, Jebb Avenue, Brixton, London SW2 5XF.
LIAM McCOTTER, LB83693
PATRICK McLAUGHLIN, LB83694.
LIAM QUINN, 49930

INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:

CAROLE RICHARDSON, 290719, HM Prison Styl, Wilmslow, Cheshire
PATRICK ARMSTRONG, HM Prison Gartree.
G (DANNY) McNAMEE, 25-year sentence, L48616, HM Prison, Parkhurst
PATRICK McLAUGHLIN, 30-year sentence, HM Prison, Gartree
GERARD CONLON, 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin.
PAUL HILL, 462778, HM Prison Long Lartin.
JUDITH WARD, HM Prison Durham.
HUGH CALLAGHAN, 509499, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
JOHN WALKER, 509494, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
BILLY POWER, 509498, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
GERARD HUNTER, 509495, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
RICHARD McILKENNY, 509497, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison, Wormwood Scrubs.
Wormwood Scrubs, Ducane Rd, London, W12 OAE.

They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

We thank An Cumann Cabhrach, British section, for supplying and updating this information.



cordons, screaming abuse

NO CARE FOR CARERS

TORY CLAIMS that long-stay patients can be cared for in the community are totally contradicted by the terrible plight of existing home carers today.

A current shock report from the Women's Cooperative Guild on provision for carers in England and Wales finds that back-up from local health authorities and social service departments is mostly minimal and in many cases non-existent.

A carer is someone who devotes time to looking after an elderly or chronically sick companion or relative. Three out of four are women and in total there are possibly 2 million.

However, because no adequate records are kept and support is sporadic, this may be a million short of the true figure.

The report explains that while it is not uncommon to find a 65 year-old woman taking care of her 87 year-old mother, there are also school children looking after sick parents, middle-aged couples caring for handicapped offspring in their 30s, and all age groups tending the terminally ill.

It is also not rare to find elderly disabled couples looking after each other or a multiple of disablements and handicapped people in the same family.

Carers are subject to enormous stress — financial, physical and psychological.

They frequently forego career and job opportunities which often means reduced pension prospects.

They often miss out on marriage and

partnerships while concentrating on their nursing tasks. Their own health deteriorates as dependence grows when the condition of those they support worsens.

Elderly or disabled dependents have to be lifted, resulting in back trouble for many carers. Senile or mentally disturbed relatives have not only to be fed and cleaned up like babies — although they may be heavily-built adults — they also have to be watched almost second by second in case they endanger themselves or others.

Strains on family relationships are colossal and many break up.

With the approach of old age, those looking after younger dependents worry incessantly about what will happen to their charges when they are gone.

One thing all carers have in common, they are all saving the state huge amounts which would otherwise have to be spent on professional or institutional care.

The Tory government takes their support wholly for granted: it treats them with contempt and actually penalises and hinders their work by undermining and withholding vital services.

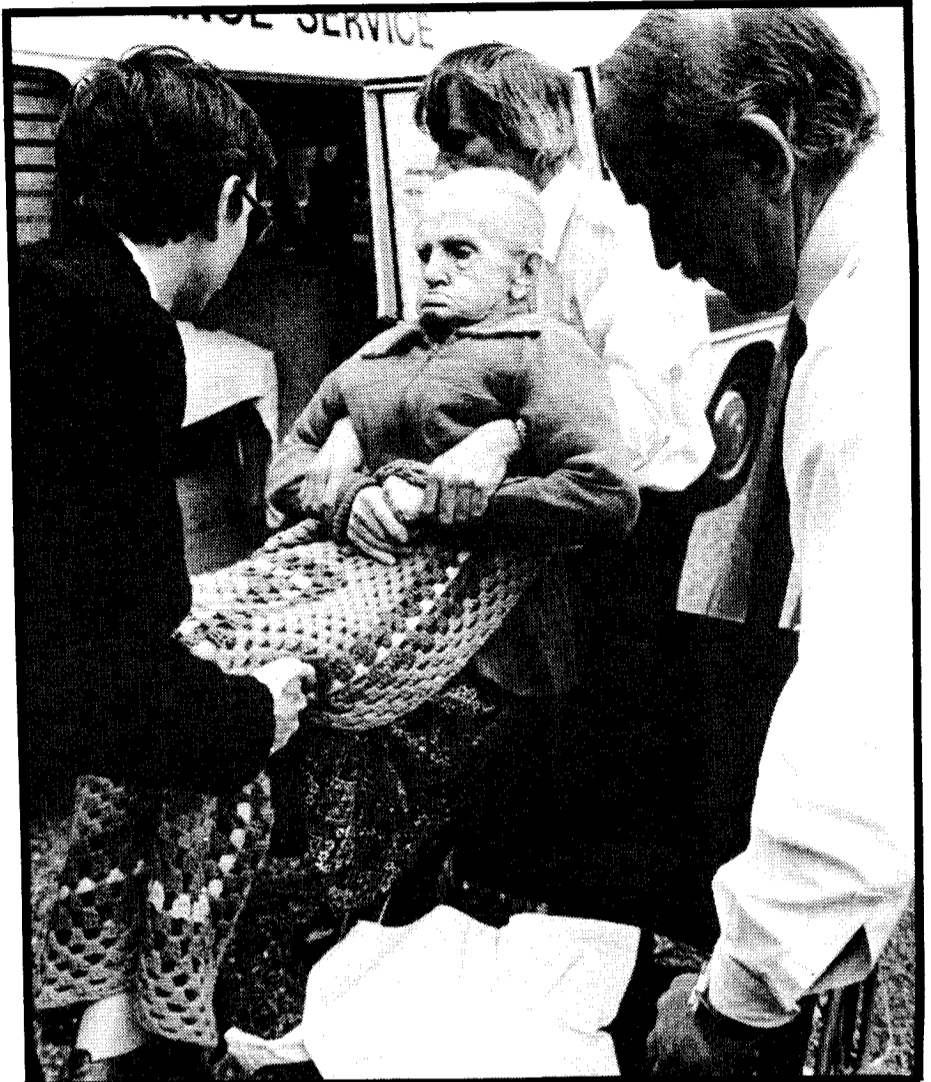
Rate-capping and health authority cuts, and consequent lack of cash for the voluntary sector, are leading to closure of day centres for the elderly, home help and meals-on-wheels cuts and the elimination of laundry services.

In late 1986 the Cooperative Women's Guild sent out a questionnaire to all health authorities and social service departments in England and Wales to find out what level of service is provided for carers and what check is kept on them.

Out of the 107 health authorities replying, 28 provided no schemes for carers or their dependents and only 18.9 per cent kept comprehensive records of their problems and needs.

Of 55 social service departments replying, eight provided no scheme and only 16.7 per cent kept full records.

The great majority of respondents provided only one scheme — mainly respite support to give carers a rest.



Elderly patients were forcibly removed from their hospital wards when St. Benedict's hospital, South London, was closed in 1982

There were 103 schemes of this type.

There are at least 45 possible scheme types — ranging from respite care, home helps and laundry services to shopping help, a sitting service, telephone helpline, alarm schemes, advice packs, training schemes and various types of day centres and nursing support.

This story tells all about the Tory concern for 'community care', in its

present form no more than a method of destroying expensive residential care and closing homes and hospitals — to give away to their property speculator friends — by dumping inmates on their relatives or on the street.

● 'People Who Care' a report on carer provision in England and Wales for the Cooperative Women's Guild by Iris Webb, £3 incl. p&p, from 342 Hoe Street, London E17 9PX



The Tories plans to place the burden of caring onto the 'community', but this will vastly increase the misery of millions of carers whose plight is already ignored

By Bernard Franks

FIGHTING THE CUTS

'We'll expose this council' say engineers

SEVENTY-ONE Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU) members are on all-out strike in Lambeth against cuts. They are the first group of local government workers to take the plunge. Sylvester Smart, convenor, and Brian Gard, steward spoke to Workers Press about the politics of the strike.

'We are going to expose this council in this dispute. People have got to be aware that this administration will go to any lengths to carry out Tory policy. They are openly saying that the trade unions in Lambeth won't fight. They are taking the path of least resistance in fighting us and not the government.'

Weak

'The hardest struggle here is not against the council but against a weak trade union leadership which is prepared to make compromises and keep Linda Bellos in power. She is able to carry out cuts because they refuse to mobilise their members. They are now demanding that the council provide vehicles to carry out services — if necessary they are insisting that the council bring in outside hired vehicles.'



AEU picket line outside Kennington depot in Lambeth

'The dispute is absolutely nothing to do with pay, as some papers have said. We were locked out for refusing to make cuts. The deputy leader of the council said we could have everything we wanted if we agreed to cut ten posts off our establishment.'

'The vote to strike was unanimous, the ballot we held after three days was unanimous, and the compromise offered by management was unanimously rejected. I would rather be sacked than compromise now, and once the council starts along the road of lock-

ing people out, believe me, the next stage is sackings.'

'When we were standing on the picket line management called the police who came and then left, saying that we were the most well behaved pickets they had ever seen. As the vehicles were being driven out we were pointing the unroad-worthy ones out to the coppers saying 'What about that one?' They ignored it until one came along with no windscreen wipers whereupon the copper said 'I've had enough, I'll have to go in and talk to your management.'

The agreement that the

council signed and betrayed was an agreement which meant that manual workers would get the same conditions of service as white collar workers, thus remedying one of the greatest inequalities between different sections of local government workers.

Lambeth council then reneged completely on that agreement, as it has done with 52 other agreements signed before it was realised how big a budget gap there was going to be. It is now the most ludicrous hypocrisy for Lambeth council to call itself an 'Equal Opportunities Employer'.

LABOURITES VOTE FOR £30m CUTS MANCHESTER

MANCHESTER'S Labour Council, elected on a manifesto of 'Defending Jobs — Defending Services', has voted £30 million cuts.

Graham Stringer, 'left' leader of the council, had asked God's policeman James Anderton to protect the meeting and the town hall was ringed by police, with more inside patrolling every floor with dogs.

As students from various community colleges demonstrated outside, the Lady Mayoress opened the meeting with prayers — the first for the Good Lord to ensure that any decision made was okay; the second to bless the people of the city and save them from poverty and pestilence.

And then into the cuts. Not even 'Spitting Images' could beat that for satire!

The Labour council with a 43 majority has turned its guns on the Manchester working class, covering its betrayal with mountains of anti-Tory rhetoric, and freely usurping the nurses to back their cause.

In order to try and avoid an expected £110 million shortfall in April they have cut £30 million, frozen recruitment and put up rents.

The cuts mean: 4,000 job losses; 1,700 axed from teaching and other posts at schools and colleges; the closure of four old peoples' homes and five day centres, two convalescent homes and 15 family group homes; a 30 per cent cut in town clerk's administration and central administration of social services and planning; cuts in council controlled theatres; review of other projects, such as new mini town halls in different neighbourhoods.

The Liberals moved a 'no cuts' motion and taunted the Labourites about the collapse of their policy. They also pointed a finger at a 'left' councillor who had spoken on the 'Militant' organised lobby outside, calling for a campaign against the cuts, and then

voting for them.

The NALGO leadership had threatened strike action because they had not been consulted over the cuts and then accepted a promise that they would not be involved in helping to organise the cuts. In fact the entire union leadership is collaborating with the plans to slash services.

The simple message from councillors was: 'We will not lead a fight against Thatcher. She cannot be beaten.'

But Manchester's hospitals and communities are alive with militancy, meetings to fight attacks on the NHS are taking place and demonstrations, pickets and strikes are being planned.

In Hulme packed meetings are taking place discussing how to fight the proposed privatisation of a council estate.

Tenants discuss their strategy to fight the Tories, with barricades if necessary, but a Labour councillor advises them to ask the government for more money as the council can do nothing.

Tenants faced with privatisation and rent increases; council employees faced with sackings; people faced with cutbacks in services must unite to fight this council.

Every councillor who stood on a 'no cuts' platform and now supports the cuts must be forced to resign.

As was shown at the tenants' meeting that voted unanimously to demonstrate to support the nurses, this fight against the council must be linked with the defence of the NHS.

Parents in schools lobby TOWER HAMLETS

OVER 150 parents and their supporters lobbied a full council meeting at Bethnal Green town hall on 27 January.

The lobby was originally called by PAGE (Parents' Action Group for Education in Tower Hamlets) and was supported by Tower Hamlets Trades Council, ELTA (East London Teachers Association) and Tower Hamlets Workers Support Group.

They stood outside in the pouring rain for about an hour listening to speakers including Michael Finn (parent member of PAGE) and John Rees (Tower Hamlets Workers Support Group) in opposition to the clear intention of the Liberal majority (of only two) to opt out of ILEA control of education, should Education Minister Kenneth Baker and the Tories offer them a sufficient bribe to do so.

As the 'Big Red Band' entertained the lobby, a small group of police pushed and jostled people off the steps. One parent with her child later complained she had tripped and fallen.

At 7p.m. about 50 people crowded into the public gallery after attempting to lobby some of the Liberals entering the meeting.

The Labour Group had expected education to be on the agenda. Instead, a presentation of certificates to representatives of local businesses for health and safety standards was followed by a Liberal motion opposing Clause 28 of the Tory Local Government Bill which attacks the right of lesbians and gay men to use funds from local authorities to 'promote homosexuality or publish material for the promotion of homosexuality'.

Councillor Eric Flanders (Liberal) was attacked by Phil Maxwell (Labour) for hypocritically supporting such a motion.

He said that this was the first time the Liberals had opposed any Tory policies from the council chambers and that it had been introduced to prevent any discussion of their intentions with regard to education.

He proposed an amendment recognising the role of ILEA in promoting 'equal opportunities' and supporting any further efforts by ILEA in this field and promising support for all gay comrades in their struggle against this Bill.

This was greeted by tumultuous applause from the public gallery where parents continually jeered and heckled the Liberals as they refused to debate the amendment or accept a petition of 2,257 signatures opposing opting out.

After two warnings from the chair, the police were called to clear the public gallery.

Before the police arrived parents decided to leave in an orderly fashion of their own accord.

PAGE is holding a further meeting at 7.30p.m. at the Globetown Community Centre, Bullards Place, London E2 on Thursday, 11 February.

RELEASE JAILED MINERS

SOUTH WALES Harborough, Leicester.

DEAN HANCOCK: Oakdale - Eight year sentence. Gartree Prison, nr Market Harborough, Leicester.

RUSSELL SHANKLAND: Taff Merthyr - Eight year sentence. Gartree Prison, Market

DURHAM

MICHAEL STEPHENSON: Wearmouth - Three year sentence from June 1986. RF8756 HM Prison Acklington, Morpeth, Northumbria.

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

Basic Principles of Marxism

Six Lectures at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC 1.

Friday, February 5, 1988, at 7.30.

The Crash of '88.

WHAT are the implications of the financial and economic crisis for the working class?

Thursday, February 11, 1988, at 7.30.

What is Revolution?

MARX understood the revolutionary transformation of society as expressing the conflict between the advance of the forces of production developed by human beings and the social relations between them.

Thursday, February 18, 1988, at 7.30.

What is Capitalism?

WHY does the social system under which the working class is exploited appear to some people to be in line with 'human nature'? How does this system operate, and how will it be destroyed?

Friday, February 26, 1988, at 7.30.

The State and Revolution

HOW does the state exercise power over the working class? Can that power be broken? What will take its place?

Friday, March 4, 1988, at 7.30.

The Russian Revolution, Stalinism and Trotskyism.

SEVENTY years ago, the Russian workers, led by the Bolsheviks, overthrew Tsarism and capitalism, and the world socialist revolution began. The rise of a bureaucracy within the Soviet state led to the betrayal of the revolution, but not its destruction.

Thursday, March 10, 1988, at 7.30.

The Fourth International Today.

FIFTY years ago, Trotsky led those who fought to continue the work to prepare the world revolution in the foundation of the Fourth International, World Party of Socialist Revolution. After decades of crisis, the time has come for the re-founding of the FI.

READING:

Cliff Slaughter, *Marx and Marxism*

Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

Marx, *Wage Labour and Capital*

Lenin, *The State and Revolution*

Trotsky, *The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International*

LETTERS

Please send your letters to Workers' Press, PO Box 745, London SW9 7QS. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial Board. Letters may be cut for reasons of space.

No demands

THE Editor of Workers Press (23 January) calls for the defence of the NHS and a campaign to bring down the Tory government.

In the article he/she calls for the opening of the books of the NHS, nationalisation without compensation of the drug companies under workers' control, occupation of hospitals, wards and departments under threat of closure, and demands that the TUC be made to lead the struggle and to call a national strike by health service workers.

Nothing, however, is said about putting demands on Labour Party leaders.

It is not enough to demand that the TUC calls a national strike as part of a campaign to bring down the Tory government.

This strike must be linked with a call on the Labour Party in parliament to 'Demand the resignation of the Tory government'.

This is necessary for two reasons:

First, the Tories had no mandate to attack the NHS — 'The NHS is safe in our hands'.

The Labour Party therefore has a right to demand resignations.

Second, this would pull the middle class (who are prepared to give up tax concessions to defend the NHS) over to the side of the working class behind the Labour leaders.

A Labour government forced into office against its will by the power of the working class would have no option but to defend the NHS in the immediate period after the election (of course the pressure of the world capitalist crisis would soon force the Labour government itself to attack the NHS).

We should warn that this Labour government would betray. Then it would be necessary to make the demands for opening the NHS books and for the nationalising without compensation of the drug companies under workers' control, and for the occupation of hospitals.

If the struggle to defend the NHS is not continued against the betrayal of the Labour government the support of the middle class will be lost.

The Workers Press article leaves out the actual living struggle to develop leadership and to develop the consciousness of the working class of its own power and its role as the only class capable of overthrowing capitalism.

P. Maginnis
Liverpool WRP

Issue evaded

DAVE TEMPLE'S letter (Workers Press 30 January) evades the issue raised in Norah Wilde's letter by misrepresenting what she says.

At no stage did she argue that clarification of our differences with Scargill meant we should not fight to secure a Scargill victory.

She actually says 'in fighting alongside workers we urge miners to place demands on Scargill whilst fighting for his re-election' (Workers Press 23 January) and why?

For reasons comrade Dave conspicuously avoids. Namely that, in contrast to Scargill, as Trotskyists we are fighting at all times for the political independence of the working class.

The theoretical and practical reasoning behind placing demands on Scargill outlined in comrade Norah's letter, and with which I agree, should be theoretically challenged by comrade Dave.

Comrade Dave says, 'If you are engaged every day

in a fight for every vote for Scargill, if you are down a pit arguing to win over dissenting miners, if you are aware how crucial every vote is, the last thing you consider is emphasising your differences'.

One thing I share with comrade Dave is we have both worked in industry for many years.

I hope neither of us would argue that Trotskyists should keep their politics a secret.

Miners would not be astonished to find the Workers Revolutionary Party had political views different to Scargill's.

What is at stake here is not isolation from the working class, as comrade Dave's letter would have us believe, but his two stage approach — first we uncritically support Scargill's re-election and afterwards 'we debate our differences with him'.

This method has nothing to do with dialectical materialism but everything to do with Stalinist i.e. bourgeois methodology.

Comrade Dave's method is entirely at one with his uncritical support for the left Stalinist Arthur Scargill.

Our tactics, as consistent Trotskyists, are guided by Marxist theory embodied in the permanent revolution. This means above all fighting for the political independence of the working class and at no time subordinating the class, including miners, to the reactionary limitations of the left sections of the bureaucracy.

Nowhere does comrade Norah say: 'The more furious the opposition of the capitalist state the more appropriate the time to express our differences.'

She stresses it is the election, which no one denies is in the midst of furious opposition from the capitalist state, which is the appropriate time. Not have an academic debate when the election is over and the 'horse has bolted'.

In any case furious opposition from the capitalist state is with us continuously these days. Perhaps we should never raise differences then.

I look forward to comrade Dave's replies.

Richard Goldstein
North London WRP

Scargill's Election

COMRADE Dave Temple's recent comment rightly supporting Scargill's re-election was argued from an adaptationist standpoint and not that of consistent Trotskyism. (Workers Press 30 January)

Noting that 'the year long strike did not halt the decline of the British coal industry, nor could it have done', he failed to ask why this was the case. Instead he wrongly asserted that only the police stood between 'labour and capital' when in fact the entire strike was mediated and isolated by the trade union and Labour Party bureaucracies, including that of the NUM.

'Arthur Scargill did not betray the movement,' said comrade Dave, 'but responded to it and refused to compromise with the state.' But 'compromise' was the essence of the militant form of his response.

At no time did he launch, in conflict with these bureaucracies, a campaign to bring down the Tories through uniting all sections of workers using their own class methods. Yet without such a strategy it was, and remains, impossible for miners and workers to begin to resolve their enormously pressing problems. Scargill

however proceeded otherwise.

That is why, in strategically subordinating miners' and workers' political independence to imperialist bureaucratic agencies, he contributed as a left-Stalinist to the betrayal of the miners strike.

Waving a 'spotless banner' over Scargill's role, comrade Dave did the same in relation to the role of the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) during the miners strike. 'We Trotskyists battle(d) alongside him. We did not declare, as the mounted police charged us, 'just a minute Arthur...you have rejected the theory of permanent revolution.'

He forgets that our practise is guided by a Marxist analysis of (world) developments based on the perspective of permanent revolution, in which we fight at all times for the political independence of the (world) working class. He also forgets that before 1985, we (never mind Scargill!) abandoned in practise, Marxism and the theory of permanent revolution. Opportunist adaptation to sections of the trade union and Labour Party bureaucracy was only one of the consequences, alongside sectarian opposition to the miners support groups.

Post-split (in the WRP) historical accounting has already confirmed these matters. Yet in retreating from this position, comrade Dave returns to 'yesterday's' opportunism in order to justify today's adaptation. Under the pressure of the left reformist Stalinist bureaucracy, the same phenomenon of opportunist adaptation takes place today, side by side with a sectarian blocking of the miners' struggle for political independence.

Joined once again by comrade Geoff Pilling in evading the true role of Scargill, in his article 'privatisation and the capitalist crisis', comrade Geoff merely remarks: 'Only a revolutionary programme and revolutionary leadership will be able to answer the new situation facing miners' etc (Workers Press 16 January).

In failing to clarify miners' immediate tasks in the immediate class struggle including the miners' presidential election, the question of leadership was reduced to an abstraction, blocking workers' struggle for political independence. And this is nothing but a form of sectarianism.

Concretely, programmatic demands (as part of our programme) must be placed upon Scargill in the course of defending the progressive content of his leadership and opposing the right-wing etc. (See Norah Wilde letter, 23 January).

Only in this way is it possible to fight in this case, for the political independence of miners, expose Scargill's reactionary limitations in the class struggle, and contribute to clearing the ground for party building and development of our programme.

Norah Wilde WRP

Poll tax tactics

THE implementation of the Tories' proposed Community Tax (Poll Tax) in Scotland is receiving indignation from members of the working class community concerned about rising rents and reduced benefit entitlements.

Despite this, the Labour administration of Tayside Regional Council is prepared to spend up to £12 million on office accommodation, necessary, following agreement on implementing the Poll Tax, on all aspects in-

cluding billing, collection, accounting and recovery of arrears.

In view of this, the Regional Department has also struck an agreement with the three District Councils in the area, insisting that they be responsible for collecting the charge from their own local people.

Scottish National Party controlled Angus District Council agreed to collect and administer the Poll Tax but claimed the Regional Council would remove £200,000 income support to the District used for collection of the present rates, and that Angus residents travel to Dundee to pay the hated tax, if a decision with the Labour mandate was not reached.

At a meeting of Tayside Regional Council a ridiculous argument broke out between bureaucrats in Labour and SNP groups about who should be responsible for collecting the Poll Tax.

Raymond Mennie challenged two members of the SNP group to declare their intentions not to pay the tax and said that a mass campaign of opposition to the Poll Tax could only be initiated by people taking a decision to withhold payments.

While the Nationalists failed the non-payment challenge, the leader of the Labour administration, Chris Ward could only ask that the working class wait for changes when the legislation reached the House of Lords.

Consider that before Christmas Dundee District Leader Tom McDonald told a meeting of the Dundee Labour Party that the Council would not co-operate with the Region regarding collection of the Poll Tax.

Clearly a change in tactics was employed and the words 'non co-operation with registration officers' used to convenience the position of the Stalinists willing to seek electoral gain out of their own insignificant campaign of opposition.

Lawrence Morton
Dundee Labour Party

Differences

COMRADE Erol Refik (Workers Press 30 January) obviously has very deep differences with my article on Gorbachev's speech on the Russian Revolution.

He declares that it 'covers up more and more questions about the Soviet Union, the evolution of degenerated Workers States, and their relationship with the world imperialist system'.

Will comrade Erol, then, please do some uncovering and let us know what he believes is the correct position on these questions?

One can hardly say he did that, in the string of statements he submitted in his letter. Their connection with my article and even the very meaning of some of them, were a little obscure.

One did gather, however, that he objected quite vehemently to the opening sentence of the article:

'Gorbachev's speech on the anniversary of the Russian Revolution was a fraudulent attempt to use revolutionary traditions for the building of a counter revolutionary front with imperialism.'

Presumably he believes that Gorbachev is building a revolutionary front with imperialism.

Is that the case? Or does he believe that the negotiations between the imperialists and the bureaucracy have no class significance?

Let me ask him about the main conclusions of the article: Does he agree that, as the article said, 'it is most significant that Gorbachev had to spend several para-

graphs in distorting the position of Trotsky and denouncing it'?

Would he agree that this is because, as the article said:

'in the economic crisis that the bureaucracy faces; with the rising demands for the truth about the past; with the course of the bureaucracy meaning increasing clashes with the working class we can expect Trotsky and Trotskyism to come under more vicious attack?'

Does he agree that Gorbachev 'uses history and "theory" as did Stalin — as a justification for his present policies which are an empirical reaction to present situations?'

Would he concur that: 'The bureaucrats are a parasitic growth on the Soviet Union; their power and privileges contradict the revolutionary principles of the leaders and masses who brought about the Russian Revolution, they are a conservative philistine opposite to all the turbulent movements driven to change the world in this revolutionary epoch. But to legitimise themselves they must place themselves in a continuity from the Russian Revolution. Their lying is therefore a profound necessity?'

Does he agree with the final paragraph which declares the bureaucracy is 'weakening state control and introducing greater inequality?'

And, in relation to that, does he agree that Trotsky and the Fourth International provides a 'record and programme of struggle against bureaucratic privileges, inequality and political oppression?'

Perhaps in the process of enlightening us on his answers to these conclusions of the article he will also throw some light on the concluding sentences of his letter.

He writes that my article introduced 'many of the same definitions of the Soviet Union as the Maoist movement'. What definitions?

He writes: 'To make an analysis of ideology or an adjustment to political reality in concepts instead of analysing political history and putting forward revolutionary strategy and tactics is playing with concepts and catch-words'.

What is that all about? And what is its relationship with my article?

Perhaps comrade Erol is saying that we should not play with concepts and catch-words to cover up an inability to deal with concrete questions and that we should give proof and be specific when we make assertions.

If so, an immediate answer springs to mind: physician heal thyself!

Bill Hunter

Accusations

I REFER to Erol Refik's letter in last week's Workers Press (30 January) in which Bill Hunter and Nahuel Moreno are accused of supporting the 'two camp' theory relating to the Soviet bureaucracy.

Having read Bill's article in the previous week's paper, I cannot personally see anything wrong with it.

Bill merely puts forward the position that Gorbachev in his speech on the occasion of the anniversary of the Russian Revolution has abandoned Marxism as a living theory to be used as a tool to defeat capitalism world-wide in favour of pragmatism for the sake of protecting the bureaucracy by doing deals with the deadly enemy of the working class, the capitalist class.

In fact, Marx in elaborating the theory that the class

struggle inevitably leads to the seizure of power by the working class has nothing but a 'two camp' theory.

In Marx's case you have the camp that exists out of 'surplus value' or simply profit — the capitalist class — and you have the working class who live by, and only by, wages or as Marx says variable capital.

In developing Marxism, Marx had one goal, and that was to arrive at a tool, in the form of a body of theory, that would ensure the political independence of the working class. This independence would mean that no deals would be done with the capitalists that would be against the interests of the international working class.

Finally it is most regrettable that Nahuel Moreno is brought into what is essentially, on Erol's part, an armchair argument.

The LIT, Moreno's movement, in its work in the mass movement in South America has been able to give the working class an independent and international perspective.

Hence a couple of weeks ago that most 'respected' of bourgeois journals, the 'Financial Times', reported that the Argentine MAS was responsible for organising, along with the Communist Party, an important strike crippling a major civil engineering project constructing a hydro-electric dam which when completed will light up most of Argentina well into the next century.

Peter Windeler
Manchester

A compliment

I HAVE enjoyed reading your last half-dozen issues immensely.

You have succeeded in producing an interesting/informative (and organising??) paper.

And obviously, it's great to see that Peter Fryer is still churning out such good stuff... interestingly, the last time I ever saw him (I think) was in Grosvenor Square just a few minutes after he'd been thrown over that hedge!!!

To get to the point. If you have amongst your members any individuals who are in NATFHE I'd be interested if they'd drop me a note — especially any living in the SE.

That's my union — I don't really do anything (indeed its like living in a desert!) and I'd be happy to at least have contact with 'somebody'...

Bob Potter

Reply to Pirani

ONCE again comrade Pirani misses the point in his reply to my letter (Workers Press 30 January).

In reply he jumps to the defence of Trotsky against what he sees as a Stalinist slander and thereby fails to recognise the true content of my letter. Let me reassure comrade Pirani that I am not a Stalinist having fought them all my life.

Furthermore, I do not consider that Trotsky underestimated the revolutionary role of the peasantry; like Lenin he was fully cognisant of the peasantry's revolutionary potential and of their objective reactionary nature, and thereby the necessity for the

Personal Column

Peter Fryer

New readers start here

If this is the first issue of Workers Press you've ever read, these words are specially for you.

You may be a nurse, a hospital porter, a hospital cleaner, or a seafarer. This week you may be finding yourself, perhaps for the first time in your life, in the thick of 'industrial action'. And even if you're not on strike this week, you soon may be.

You've probably noticed how the press are beginning to play the card they always play sooner or later when workers start fighting back: the witch-hunt card. Last weekend's 'Sunday Times' was an instructive example of this.

Under the scare headline 'Nurses "bullied" by hard-left', it ran a nonsensical witch-hunting article, full of assertions but empty of facts, alleging that nurses are being 'duped' and 'intimidated' by left-wingers, that there has been a campaign of 'harassment and abuse' against Royal College of Nursing members.

The 'Sunday Times' has close contacts with Margaret Thatcher's 10 Downing Street staff of professional manipulators of the press. And Thatcher is clearly desperate both to 'divide and rule', and to 'prove' that hospital workers' anger has been whipped up by unscrupulous 'hard-left' agitators.

What rubbish this is! The cleverest and most persuasive 'agitator' can't force people to go into a struggle against their will: not hospital workers, or seafarers, or pit deputies, or anyone else.

People take strike action when they're bitterly angry about the way they've been treated and see no other weapon available to them.

On the other hand, when people start to

struggle they often start learning very quickly. They learn who their friends are and who their enemies are. They learn who is telling them the truth and who is feeding them lies.

The paper you hold in your hand is a workers' paper. In the present rising wave of resistance to the Thatcher government, the first duty of a workers' paper is to tell the truth about what is happening, and about your part in it.

We are witnessing an upsurge of working-class anger. People have had enough, and they are hitting back at the Thatcher government. They are defending the National Health Service, and they are defending their jobs and their living standards.

There is no limit to what this upsurge can accomplish. It has the power to bring Thatcher and her government to their knees. It has the power to toss them into history's dustbin at last.

To be precise, you have that power. You and millions like you. Provided you act together.

These dreaded left-wingers, militants, and agitators are workers like yourself. But they are workers who recognise the power the working class possesses when it stands united, and who urge the coordination of sectional struggles into one invincible tide.

And this is the main message that Workers Press has for you who are reading it for the first time: that you and millions like you can win your fight, provided you remain united and determined to fight to the finish.

But we go further than that. We also try to spread an understanding of the desperate crisis that grips the society we live in — so that, as more and more people are coming to realise, this society is now ripe for fundamental change.

Not least, we try to spread a vision of the new society that will replace the present one, and to show that only the working class in struggle can lead the way to the achievement of that new society.

We aren't out to bully or intimidate anyone, but to convince. Our aim is to make you and your workmates conscious of your own tremendous strength, and to

show you how that strength can be best and most effectively used.

Birth of the boogie

READERS interested in music didn't, I hope, miss last Sunday evening's 'South Bank Show' devoted to that exhilarating and enduring style of piano blues known as boogie woogie.

It was a lively, lovely hour, and I only had two minor complaints. First, that there was no mention of two of the greatest pianists in this genre: the incomparable Jimmy Yancey, the Chicagoan who reputedly taught Meade 'Lux' Lewis and Albert Ammons; and Arthur 'Montana' Taylor from Indianapolis.

My second complaint isn't really about this enjoyable programme itself. The boogie style, in which the pianist plays a repeated bass figure with the left hand while weaving treble arabesques with the right, was said at one point to have possibly originated in east Texas logging camps in the 1920s.

This suggestion was confidently retailed as gospel in every piece of newspaper pre-publicity. Yet there's a lot of evidence to show that what later came to be called boogie was already going strong, in Texas and elsewhere, much earlier than the 1920s.

As we were told right at the beginning, the venerable ragtime pianist Eubie Blake remembered how, at the age of 13, he heard a boogie pianist called William Turk in Baltimore. That was in 1896. According to Blake, 'he had a left hand like God' and played a 'walking bass' with it.

The songster Huddie Leadbetter (Leadbelly) was listening to boogie pianists in Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1901. And the pianist Jelly Roll Morton had similar recollections of New Orleans and elsewhere in the early 1900s, and left

convincing recorded reconstructions of what some of those early boogie pianists sounded like.

A 'walking bass' is featured in 'New Orleans Hop Scap Blues', which the Houston pianist George W. Thomas is known to have been playing by 1911.

Thomas's February 1923 recording of 'The Rocks', which includes the first boogie bass figures ever recorded, has just been reissued for the first time on Document DLP513, along with equally intriguing pieces by the obscure Q. Roscoe Snowden and the elegant Memphis pianist Blind Clyde Church.

Those who enjoyed Sunday's programme and would like to drink deeper of this refreshing spring will find much on this disc to delight them.

Hunting the gremlin

A TIREDSOME gremlin played havoc with this column last week, leaving one paragraph so garbled that it didn't make sense, and a trail of minor errors.

The third paragraph after the headline 'Peeping Bill' should have read as follows:

'The other kind is of much more general interest. It consists of police publications for internal use. I don't know which of these the BL currently receives and which away beyond readers' reach; but I do know that it has always received, but now no longer tucks away, the "Police Journal".'

The other mistakes, though galling to the perfectionist, were comparatively trivial.

It's clearly not of major importance that the Glasgow weavers' banner in fact read 'Scotland Free or a Desert', though the archaic spelling does convey a little breath of the past and thus help history come alive.

As for the extract from Alexander Rodger's 'The Rising': as most readers probably realised, he wrote it as verse and it should have been so printed.

LETTERS

international revolution to ensure the Russian development of a healthy socialist revolution to counteract the evolving anti-socialist nature of a numerically superior peasant mass.

However, the matter does not rest there on an abstract theoretical plane. Whereas Trotsky, prior to 1917 led a tendency that organisationally sought to conciliate the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, Lenin struggled to build, theoretically and organisationally, a revolutionary Party of a specific type — a vanguard party of professional revolutionaries to lead a socialist revolution. As such Lenin and the Bolsheviks had to deal in practical revolutionary politics.

One problem confronting Lenin was how to utilise the diverse anti-autocracy anti-bourgeois forces that were severely limited in their revolutionary scope to feed the objectively historical purpose of Bolshevism, that of overthrowing the feudal-capitalist system and establishing workers' power, without merging with and becoming part, albeit a 'left' part, of these reactionary forces as did the Mensheviks.

This was the essence of my letter, which comrade Pirani did not even touch upon and is most important as this problem, in a different form, confronts all revolutionaries today.

All the revolutionary organisations of the left seek to expose the labourites and Stalinists of both 'left' and right and to establish the leadership of a revolutionary communist organisation over the masses.

The question is how do we

on the one hand synchronise our revolutionary forces with the struggles and force of a militant but restricted reformist movement, and on the other hand destroy the reformist and centrist influence and leadership and establish the hegemony of the Marxist Leninist party?

The answer of Lenin and the Bolsheviks to this problem was to consistently support independent working class action and projecting at all times a line of struggle, in policy and programme that demanded class action that went beyond the limited scope of the reformist leadership.

Lenin never supported in any manner or form the existing reformist/centrist leadership of the masses; this was the history of the struggle to break from Menshevism and develop the independent revolutionary party even though the Bolsheviks at times were a small minority compared with the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries. Never was the defeatist theory or excuse put forward — we are too small and weak to influence the struggle therefore we must critically support the existing all-powerful, mass supported reformist leadership; to do so means limiting the scope of ones own revolutionary forces to that of the reformist leadership; it means an ideological merger with reformism and a renunciation of the independent revolutionary class struggle.

At all times the Bolsheviks sought to establish their hegemony over the masses (even when weak and numerically small — for that is how they grew) through supporting and leading forward the

most militant and energetic strata of the masses, which would, and did, draw into the revolutionary orbit the backward and majority sections of the workers and peasants.

The Bolshevik party was built as a dialectical product of precisely this revolutionary struggle — built over a period of several decades in the process of struggle.

The history of Bolshevik tactics is encapsulated in Lenin's policy of 1917 when he attacked the critical supporters of the Kerensky government (Stalin) declaring that to support Kerensky, even though it was a democratic government being attacked militarily by right wing reactionaries, would be 'unprincipled'.

Lenin declared that the Bolsheviks and their supporters would still fight Kornilov, but as an independent class force which would take the struggle beyond the limited bourgeois democratic aims of Kerensky to that of the socialist revolution.

By such tactics of marching separate from Kerensky, as an independent force with revolutionary objectives, but striking with Kerensky's forces against military reaction, the Bolsheviks were able both to smash the immediate superior threat of military dictatorship in unison with the reformist masses and at the same time expose the reformist Kerensky, Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries winning their supporters to the revolution.

Trotsky, to his credit, at that time, supported Lenin as opposed to Stalin and co. who gave critical support to the Kerensky government.

I now look forward to com-

rade Pirani's reply to the true contents of my letter.

Tom Cowan

Health service crisis

THE health service crisis raises the question of socialist revolution. Only the overthrow of the capitalist state can guarantee a health service capable of meeting the needs of the working class.

The international crisis of capitalism determines that the Tories must destroy the welfare state to maintain profits.

The nurses' action is not merely for wages but in defence of the whole health service.

Modern technology has produced equipment capable of saving lives but funds are not available for their use, yet international capitalists make huge profits on drugs and equipment.

Thatcher's 'full review of NHS funding' and her advice to take out private insurance schemes is a prelude to the privatisation of the NHS as a whole.

The massive support given to health workers puts them in the forefront of the struggle against Thatcher. This must be turned into concrete action. They must not stand alone.

The crucial factor is leadership. A deafening silence has come from the TUC and Kinnock has shown his support for the state by refusing to support the industrial action. NUPE and COHSE are

not leading — they are trailing behind their members' spontaneous action; the RCN may be forced to concede a secret ballot on the right to strike.

My three month old son has spent most of his life as a patient of Queen Mary's Children's Hospital, Carshalton, Surrey. It is due to be closed in the early 1990s and the land sold off to property speculators. It is to be 'replaced' by two wards built in the car park of nearby St Heliers Hospital.

A nurse told me many wards have already been closed: by 1990 there will be very little left to fight for.

Marxists must give leadership by putting forward a programme to mobilise the strength of the working class in defence of the health service. Workers' Press has failed so far to do this.

Last week's front page (30 January) 'Strike for the NHS' called for support for health workers but gave no lead as to how this was to be achieved.

The article ended by calling on Tony Benn to challenge Kinnock for the leadership of the Labour Party. This, in my opinion, was an evasion; only a revolutionary leadership is capable of leading a successful struggle for the health service.

Bernard Franks in 'Thatcher's Waterloo' went no further in giving a lead.

This week's nurses' strike can only be the first shot in the struggle to defeat Thatcher's plans for health. Every hospital must prepare for this struggle.

NHS defence committees must be elected consisting of nurses, doctors and ancil-

lary workers. These committees must draw in support from the local community, patients, relatives, trades councils, representatives of other striking workers — to draw the struggles together.

To organise the struggle, these defence committees must elect area committees and a national health defence committee.

This type of organisation would be able to mobilise the support of the whole working class. It would be strong enough to be independent of the TUC bureaucracy and would constitute dual power within the NHS.

As the struggle develops, the health workers will feel the full weight and violence of the state as did the miners and the print workers before them. They will be faced with the necessity of demanding the TUC call a general strike. The NHS is the hard-won property of the working class and must be defended as such.

John Holmes, Croydon

EDITOR'S REQUEST

Workers Press wishes to have the most widespread discussion on the National Health Service crisis. We invite readers and especially nurses and other NHS workers as well as all other workers in struggle to write a letter for publication on our Letters page.

ROBSON'S CHOICE

Class kills

HORIZON (BBC2) could not have transmitted a more timely or thought provoking programme than last Monday's **Death of the Working Classes**. (It will be repeated on Sunday at 1.10p.m.)

It postulated that if babies of unskilled workers had the same death rate as babies of professional parents, 3,500 babies a year born in Britain today would not die.

The shocking statistics presented in Hilary Henson's meticulously researched programme show that there is a direct correlation between material deprivation and ill health; between poverty and mortality. If you are a member of the working class you are twice as likely to die than if you are a member of the middle class. If you live in the north you are more likely to suffer ill health than if you live in the south.

The younger you are 'the more effectively does class kill'. Working class children run four times the risk of accidental death, for example.

The computer-run statistical analysis carried out at OPCS, based on birth, marriage and especially death

certificates, shows that the patterns of disease match occupation and class. But the matching is rather crude because they have excluded women from the survey, and the unemployed and old age pensioners are also excluded by virtue of the fact that they have no occupation.

Despite this weakness the general trend is unmistakable. They divide their subjects into six main classes: Professional; managerial, skilled (sub-divided into manual and non-manual); partly skilled and unskilled.

In the case of every known disease but one, the death rate is at least 20 per cent higher among the unskilled than it is among the professional or managerial classes. That goes for lung cancer, heart attacks and strokes. The single exception to the rule is malignant melanoma. You are much more likely to die of this disease if you are a member of the professional or managerial class. Malignant melanoma is caused by too much sunbathing.

It has also been established that chronic unemployment affects the health and life expectancy not only of the traditional bread winner, but of the entire family, especially the wife.

What the programme stressed was that the gap between the classes is not closing, as one might have supposed, after thirty years

of National Health Service care, but is actually widening.

In a week that saw nurses all over Britain defying government attempts to smash the health service and demanding free medical care for all, it would be churlish not to recognise that declining hospital standards are partly responsible for these shocking statistics. But the real culprit is the under-financed welfare state as a whole, of which the NHS is only a part.

To arrest the present trend, let alone reverse it, massive amounts of public money would have to be spent across a broad spectrum of social welfare. The virtually unknown **Black Report** published in 1980 acknowledged the connection between class and mortality and made concrete proposals. They were dismissed as 'extravagant' by Secretary of State for Social Services, Patrick Jenkin.

The report called for an urgent increase in child benefit — **the Tories cut child benefit**. The Report called for better quality free school meals — **the Tories abandoned nutritional standards and raised charges**. These are just two of many examples that could be given.

Sir Douglas Black, former president of the Royal College of Physicians, in whose name the Report was published, explained that the



Down and out

problem was the result of an accumulation of disadvantages that accompany poverty: bad housing, bad education, exposure to infection, no good play areas for children, cheap diet, etc. The only solution was to 'go to a classless society, so to speak'.

An independent medical survey of civil service personnel, using different criteria, came up with similar answers: the lower the job, the higher the death rate. Messengers, for example, were more likely to die than administrators by a factor of three.

In health, as in wealth, class lines are clearly drawn.

Saturday, at 2.10p.m. (BBC2), the Hollywood landmark **Gone with the Wind**. At 3p.m. (Radio 4), Trevor Howard in **Goose with Pepper**. At 3.55p.m. (Radio 3), Wagner's **Parsifal**. At 10.15p.m. (BBC2), Jean-Pierre Melville's excellent thriller, **Bob le Flambeur**.

On Sunday, at 7.35a.m. (Radio 3), Piano Concerto No. 4 in **Schnabel's Beethoven Concertos**. At 1.10p.m. (BBC2), **Death of the Working Classes**, a repeat of the Horizon programme reviewed above. At 4.15p.m. (Radio 3), piano music in **Celebrity Recital**. At 4.35p.m. (BBC2), **Music in Camera** features Benjamin Britten's Third String Quartet. At 5.05p.m. (BBC2), **arts Review**. At 6.30p.m. (BBC2), **The Money Programme** looks at US finance and attempts to explain how the October stock market crash occurred. At 8.10p.m. (BBC2), a documentary about the channel tunnel, **Underground to Europe**. At 8.45p.m. (C4), fifth in the series **Ten Great Writers**, **Thomas Mann's 'The Magic**

Mountain'. At 9.55p.m. (C4), Robert Aldrich's thriller **Hush . . . Hush, Sweet Charlotte**. At 10p.m. (BBC2), Misha Williams film for TV **Border**.

On Monday, at 12.25p.m. (Radio 4), part-three of **The Lady in the Lake**. At 7.40p.m. (BBC2), **Barry Douglas** plays Chopin. At 7.45p.m. (Radio 4), Arthur Miller's New World tragedy, **The Golden Years**. At 8.19p.m. (BBC2), **The Green-**

6p.m. (BBC2), the children's classic, **Swallows and Amazons**. Also at 6p.m. (C4), life in Mongolia in **Drums of Asia**. At 10p.m. (BBC1), Colin McDonald's play, **The Dun-roamin' Rising**.

On Wednesday, at 11a.m. (Radio 4), part-four of **The Year of Dreams**. At 4.05p.m. (Radio 4), **File on Four** investigates what the Tories are doing to the Welfare State. At 10.30p.m. (C4), part-three of **Porterhouse Blue**.

HOSPITAL WATCH

Live broadcasts from three major Liverpool hospitals.
Monday — 10.10p.m. (BBC1)
Tuesday — 9.30p.m. (BBC1)

Wednesday — 9.30p.m. (BBC1)
Thursday — 9.30p.m. (BBC1)
Friday — 10.25p.m. (BBC1)

house Effect, a Horizon documentary about fundamental changes in the earth's climate. At 9.30p.m. (BBC1), **Panorama** investigates massive frauds in the exchange of Common Market goods. At 11p.m. (C4), Egyptian director Youssef Chamine's acclaimed **Cairo Central Station**.

On Tuesday, at 10a.m. (Radio 4), **Medicine Now**. At 12.25p.m. (Radio 4), part-five of **The Spy Who Came In from the Cold**. At 1.05p.m. (Radio 3), Mendelssohn and Dvorak in **St. David's Hall Lunchtime Recital**. At 3.30p.m. (Radio 3), recordings of **Jacqueline du Pre**. At

On Thursday, at 2p.m. (Radio 3), the five-act opera **L'Orfeo**, with music by Monteverdi. At 8.30p.m. (C4), **Equinox** looks at the new high-speed train in **Running to Time**. At 9.30p.m. (C4), Wim Wender's captivating film, **Paris, Texas**, contains a superb central performance by Harry Dean Stanton and outstanding photography by Bobby Muller. At 9.50p.m. (Radio 4), **Music in Our Time**.

On Friday, at 10.55p.m. (BBC1), the film **The Seduction of Joe Tynan**. At 12p.m. (C4), Maurice Pialat's lively film, **Police**.

Tom Scott Robson



Nastassia Kinsky in Wim Wenders 'Paris, Texas'.

Fire alarms 'daily' on tube

TWO London underground stations were evacuated on Wednesday as fire broke out. At Clapham Common on the Northern Line, firemen wearing breathing apparatus investigated the cause of smoke coming from the tunnel.

And Warren Street, also on the Northern Line, was closed to passengers when smoke was seen coming from a generator on one of

the escalators.

London fire brigade say that this is nothing unusual. They answer emergency fire calls on the underground every day.

But London Regional Transport is still arguing that the King's Cross inferno of November 18 might have been caused deliberately.

'I do not conceal the very serious concern of LRT that

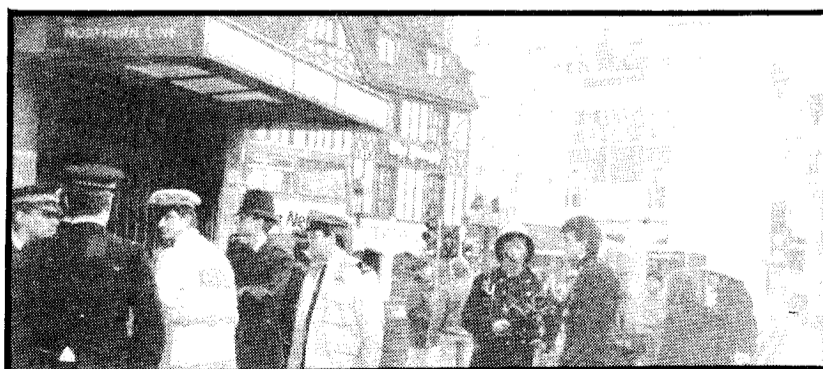
an arsonist may be at large with a predilection for starting fires on the underground', LRT counsel Lionel Read, QC told the public inquiry into the disaster last week.

Roger Henderson, QC, counsel to the inquiry, was not convinced. He reported that investigators had found a grease layer over an inch thick on the escalator track

where the fire appears to have started when a lighted match fell on to it.

The talk of arson is designed to divert attention from the real issue. LRT has been cutting staff and expenditure on tube stations, and this is the context in which safety standards have fallen to danger levels.

That is why 31 people died on November 18.



Firemen outside Clapham Common Tube station in South London after a fire broke out last week

LISTINGS

PICKET DURHAM PRISON! Stop strip searches! End British torture! On international women's day **Sunday March 13, 1 pm**. Organised by the Irish Republican POW campaign committee.

NON-STOP PICKET OF SOUTH AFRICA HOUSE For the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners in South Africa. For sanctions against the racist South African government. Outside South Africa House, Trafalgar Square. Organised by City of London Anti-Apartheid.

BULLETIN OF THE IRISH HUNGER STRIKE COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE (BIRMINGHAM) Now available on subscription: £2 per year (3 issues incl. pp). From: Tioctaidh Ar La c/o IHSCC, PO Box 540, Sparkhill, Birmingham, B11

CURRENT CONTROVERSIES IN EVOLUTION A series of 10 lectures. Starting **Thursday 14 January 7pm**. £1 (includes light refreshments). Lecturer Mike Howgate. Venue Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London, WC1.

FRANK STAGG COMMEMORATION. Wakefield Prison **Sunday, 7th February at 1.30pm**.

VALENTINE'S EVE SOCIAL. Organised by Tower Hamlets Hackney and East London Workers' Revolutionary Party. **Saturday February 13**. From 8 o'clock. Venue, 169 Leytonstone Road, Stratford, E15. Adm. £2. Unwaged OAP £1. Proceeds for the special fund for international work.

JUMBLE SALE. Saturday 6 February 2pm. Bryant Street Church Hall, Bryant St, Stratford, E15. Refreshments, tombola. Tower Hamlets and East London WRP.

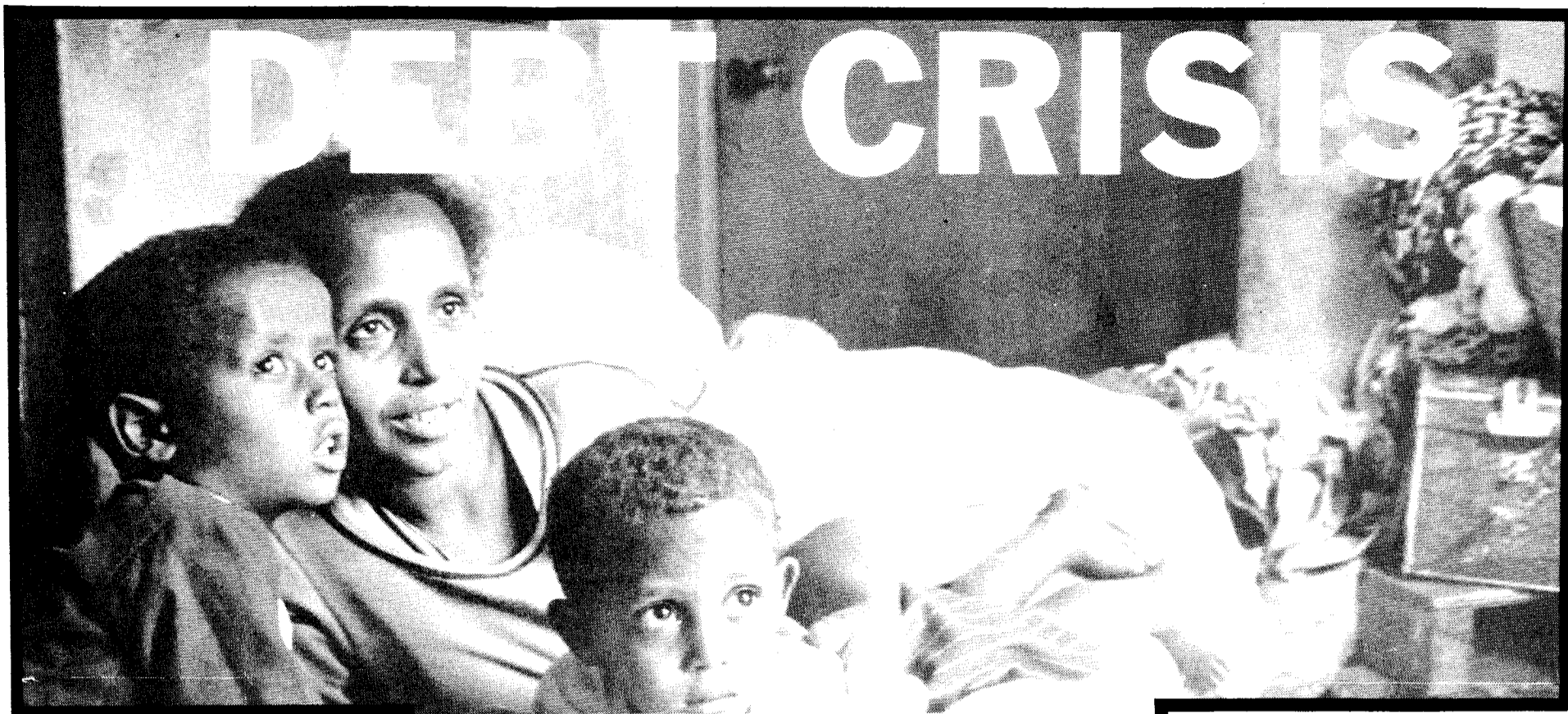
PUBLIC MEETING! Labour campaign for Lesbian and Gay rights, **Monday 8 February 7.30 pm**. Highfields Community Centre, Melbourne Road, Leicester. Meeting theme 'Lesbians and Gays fighting the backlash'. Further information contact Marie Critchley 0533 550946.

PALESTINE OCCUPATION — 1948 — 1967 — 1988. Public meeting organised by the Labour movement campaign for Palestine with speakers from the British and Palestinian labour movements. **Monday 15 February 7.30 pm**. Conway Hall, Red Lion square, London WC1.

RALLY. Friday 5 Feb 5.30pm 'The Sharpsville 6 must not hang!'. Rally on the Non - Stop Picket of the South African Embassy, Trafalgar Sq. Organized by City of London Anti - Apartheid Group. For further information phone (01) 837 6050.

RALLY. 'White Australia has a black history - No to all apartheid.' **Friday 12 February 5.30pm**. Rally in support of the Aboriginal people of Australia on the Non - Stop picket of the South African Embassy, Trafalgar Sq. Organized by City - London Anti - Apartheid Group. For further information phone (01) 837 6050.

BENEFIT. For the dependants of Colin 'Colm' Maguire Republican Socialist and Former INLA volunteer. Died 10 October 1987. **Crown and Castle Dalston Junction, Hackney**. Music Jacket Potatoes and support. **Feb 6. 8pm till late. Admission £2**



DEBT CRISIS

AFRICA

BY EROL REFIK

1987 was the year of the debt crisis for Africa. The debts of African countries — second only in scale to the Latin American debts — are becoming more and more significant for world capitalism and for those involved in revolutionary struggle against it.

The total foreign debt of the 109 developing countries climbed to \$1.19 billion last year, 6.25 per cent up on the 1986 total of \$1.12 billion. Much of the increase was in Africa.

In Zaire, for example, the external debt now totals \$5.3 billion. The ratio of debt service to Gross National Product was 35 per cent in 1983 and rose to 46 per cent by 1985. Debt service took 70 per cent of the budget in 1985-6 and this proportion is rising.

The world debt tables, published by the World Bank last month, show that the developing countries' foreign debts are now roughly double the 1981 figure of \$498 billion.

As the figures grew, so did the political reaction in African countries by the working class, peasantry and by the various governments.

At the end of November, a special Organisation of African Unity (OAU) conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, discussed the debt crisis.

Their demands included a 10-year moratorium on all debt service payments for Africa; re-scheduling of older debts to include 10 years' grace; re-payments to be spaced over fifty years at zero interest rate; partial debt servicing in real currency.

The conference also decided to stage a further international conference on African debt this year.

There has also been reac-

tion from workers and ordinary people: protest marches about the debt have been staged in many African countries. In November 1987, after negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Sudanese government faced a revolt by students and poor people; it replied by shooting demonstrators dead and closing schools.

Imperialism's answer to Africa has been negative, particularly from the United States and Britain. Recently, the US rejected the policy of lower interest rates for African debt repayments.

The World Bank's policy regarding Africa is similar to its attitude to other developing countries: the restriction of industrialisation, the consequent opening of internal markets to imperialist trusts and the privatisation of 'public sector' industries. The freezing of wages, removal of subsidies on staple food and fertilisers, and devaluation of national currencies, are other means by which the debt has been screwed out of the poverty-stricken masses.

The World Bank has aimed to integrate the developing countries into the imperialist system, under the control of the advanced capitalist countries, above all the US.

The Bank has promoted IMF policies which have led African governments into vast indebtedness to the imperialists. In addition it has pressed for the privatisation of state enterprises, and one effect of this is to wear down the political influence of petty-bourgeois sections who in

many African countries play an important role in the state.

Privatisation, in particular, is of tremendous significance in African countries from Angola to the Sudan, and we want to emphasise this.

From 1920, the bureaucracy and state apparatus played an important role in many developing countries: in Turkey and some of the Arab countries the state directed and organised industrialisation. On the one hand they took part in the creation of a national bourgeoisie, which they support, and which has a very close relationship with imperialism.

Compete

However once they arrived at the limits of their industrialisation, they have to compete with imperialist countries and other developing countries for their own capitalist aims.

On the other hand in countries like Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan the petit-bourgeois bureaucratic sector played a very important role within the historical process and built a close relationship with the degenerate and deformed workers states.

They also declared themselves 'anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist' countries. IMF-enforced privatisation has a clear meaning. Imperialist companies will share in the profits from 'public sectors', and thus work closely

together with the state and bureaucracy to control political developments.

On the other hand, privatisation aims to ensure the indirect exploitation of people. However we must remember the past experiences of Taylorism and Fordism. The main aims of Taylorism and Fordism were to break the influence and strength of the politically advanced workers in the factories. In Europe the worker's councils movement was born in the struggle against Taylorism and Fordism.

Today the protagonists of privatisation try to show that the capitalist system and its manifestations of poverty, starvation, homelessness, epidemics and unemployment is a natural reality. They want to sweep away the legacy of their historical gains from the consciousness of the masses.

This IMF policy spells disaster for the working class, for the poverty-stricken masses, and for the economies of the African countries. The consequences are:

- **Permanent devaluation.** The Ugandan currency was devalued 180 times between 1981 and 1985, from 80 schillings to the \$1400 schillings to the \$. Zaire is another of the IMF's so-called success stories; its currency was devalued by over 1000 per cent, from one £Zaire being worth \$1.00 in 1978, to being worth \$0.0077 now. Inflation is rising: it was 23 per cent in 1985 and 47 per cent in 1986.

- **Unemployment.** Sudan, for example, has 30-40 per cent unemployment and Nigeria has about three million jobless.

- **Permanent reduction of real wages.** In Somalia, real wages fell by about 90 per cent between 1970 and 1980; in 1982 real wages were 17 per cent of their 1975 level. In Uganda, wages have fallen to less than 43 per cent of their 1985 level, while real wages have also been reduced by producer prices increasing by 15 times, as compared with wages going up two-and-a-half times over.

In Zaire, real salaries in the public sector are now less than 10 per cent of the 1975 level.

- **The political result of the IMF agreement with the developing countries is the compulsory suppression of the defensive actions and struggles of the proletariat and other sections of the masses.** As a result, many different kinds of militaristic, brutal regimes were spawned from Chile to Sudan. National governments used every method against the struggles of the masses within their policy of collaboration with the IMF and imperialism.

TODAY thousands upon thousands of people — workers, peasants, women and children — in Africa have been facing stark starvation and malnutrition, as a result of IMF policies.

Many of the African governments, while making protests at the OAU, want to force the working class to

pay the bill for all this: the IMF supports them, even the most brutally authoritarian regimes.

The working class will have to adopt many tactics against the IMF onslaught. The demand for non-payment of the external debt must be raised; so must the demand for workers' control of the economy.

In the face of this evidence, some left movements, particularly Stalinism, attempt to describe the world as divided into two camps. One called imperialist, and one called anti-imperialist. That is incorrect, and this kind of description means that all conflicts between classes are seen as conflicts between 'people' and 'imperialism', outside of the framework of the class struggle. As a result of this form of characterisation by the Stalinists and their fellow travellers, the counter-revolutionary role of the national bourgeoisie is glossed over.

Despite the attacks made by the national bourgeoisies on imperialist countries, they actually combine to attack the working class of their countries and to oppress all working class parties.

We need to assure the independence of the working class from the policies of the bourgeoisie in the developing countries — particularly as they often claim to be carrying the anti-imperialist flag, and use socialist slogans and terminology to try and maintain their control of the struggle.

The development of independent class policies, and a struggle against every type of class conciliation, is important.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

WOMEN DELEGATES from around the country met in Leeds on 9 January to plan International Women's Day Action in solidarity with Ella O'Dwyer/Ni Dhuibhir and Martina Anderson/Nic Aindrea, two Irish Republican political prisoners held in Durham prison.

The meeting called by the Irish Republican POW campaign (Britain) who invited all concerned groups and individual women to attend, resolved to hold a picket of the prison, 1 pm Sunday March 13. Both women and men are invited to express their support for the two women POWs, and abhorrence of the continuation of strip searching, by taking part.

There is no justification for strip searching on security grounds — well over 4,000 'strips' of Irish Republican women have turned up nothing of note. The practice, which began in Armagh 5 years ago has been opposed by campaigners, including psychiatrists who have likened it to rape.

The use of this form of sexual torture, clearly aimed at breaking the spirit of a prisoner, has been extended to all women in struggle against the British state.

In their first year of detention in Brixton prison Ella and Martina endured 691 strips between them.

On International Women's Day each year since Governor Thomas Murtagh introduced strip searching in Armagh Gaol (November 1982), protesters have picketed prisons where Irish Republican Women Political prisoners are subjected to this torture, to express solidarity with the women within and to demand an end to the vicious practice. Since Ella and Martina's

incarceration in English gaols, March 8th has been marked by vigils at Brixton (1986) and at Durham (1987), where they are now held on life sentences for conspiracy in the inhuman conditions of H-wing. Ella stated: 'We've been sentenced to life imprisonment. Does that mean a life sentence of sexual torture?'

The Irish Republican POW Campaign urges all concerned groups and individuals to support and participate fully in the planned picket — further details available co PO Box 540, Sparkhill, Birmingham B11 4AU.

ACTION

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

Please send me information about the Workers Revolutionary Party.

Name date

Address

Trade Union Age (if under 21)

SEND TO:
Secretary to the Central Committee
PO Box 735, London SW9
7QS

CAMDEN

ON THE BRINK

STRIKE POSTPONED AT ELEVENTH HOUR

AN all-out strike of Camden's Nalgo members was delayed at the eleventh hour last week when the council suspended for 72 hours its threat to sack most of the union's 5,000 members.

BY OUR LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
CORRESPONDENT

The strike decision had been taken following the third letter from Camden's chief executive, attempting to get Nalgo members to agree to new 'Compulsory Re-deployment/Work Re-allocation Procedures'.

A mass meeting of members re-affirmed their decision that the letter be withdrawn, not simply suspended. But it agreed to postpone strike action pending negotiations.

The new procedure would give management total control over the workforce with the right to move workers into any job. Every Nalgo member has been written to individually in an attempt to intimidate and

frighten them into signing it.

Only a tiny minority have signed the two previous letters.

In this third letter the chief executive, on behalf of the Labour council threatens: 'If you do not accept, the legal advice is that the council will have no option but to issue a notice terminating your existing contract. . . .'

Nalgo members have voted against the principle of compulsory re-deployment at five successive meetings.

Redeployment

The union branch officers have consistently offered to re-negotiate existing voluntary re-deployment procedures. But, as branch secretary David Eggmore pointed out at the meeting which voted for strike action, 'There is no precedent for

threatening 5,500 people with the sack to get changes in procedures which might affect 150 people.'

Behind this unprecedented and provocative attack on Nalgo is the Tories' need to break trade union resistance to massive cuts in local authority jobs and services.

Support

With the support of the Labour Party leadership, the majority of Camden's Labour councillors have turned on the workforce and working class communities instead of organising a fight against Thatcher.

The racist policy of issuing travel warrants, back to their countries of origin, to homeless Irish and Bengali families was the sharpest expression of Labour's capitulation to Thatcher in Camden.

Now these same Labour councillors are using Rupert Murdoch tactics to smash trade unionism in the borough.

The battle over compulsory re-deployment is the battle to preserve independent fighting trade unions. Camden's Nalgo members must be supported by all organisations in the labour and trade union movement.



Time to defy govt.



Fords workers lobby the sell out talks

● FORDS FURY

Cont. from page 1

and AEU leader, James Airlie, withdrew instructions to AEU delegates to vote against.

The second vote went 25 to 18 to accept the deal, with a number of abstentions including Airlie and T & GWU official Steve Hart and Jack Adams (all three leading members of the Communist Party).

Murphy then told the press that the strike was off and began singing the praises of the three-year efficiency deal which he had previously condemned.

The response in the plants was immediate with stoppages, walk-outs, work-to-rules and overtime bans being imposed in protest at the attempted sell-out.

The Dagenham PTA plant night shift walked out until the ballot took

place.

88 per cent of the 32,000 Ford workers have already voted for industrial action so a rejection of the latest amended offer should be quickly followed by strike action.

As the growing opposition to the sell-out became obvious, Murphy began complaining to the Tory press.

He is quoted as saying: 'I understand a number of shop stewards are recommending rejection and I believe someone is mischief-making. Somebody at Dagenham is trying to sabotage the deal — I don't know who and I don't know why.'

Demands for Murphy's resignation have been growing as his role in the sell-out has become known.