

RED WEEKLY

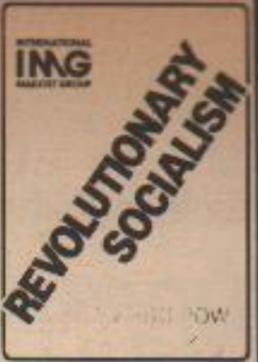
12 May 1977

No. 198

Price 10p

OUT NOW! A new IMG pamphlet which pinpoints the nature of the crisis, exposes the bankruptcy of the capitalist system which produced it, and puts forward a revolutionary socialist programme for action.

This pamphlet will be the basis for an open debate on the way forward in the first eight issues of Socialist Challenge. Price 25p plus 10p p&p. Five or more copies post free (cash with order). All orders to Reigocrest, 328/9 Upper Street, London N1.



THE REAL MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

The leaders of the seven richest capitalist countries met in London last weekend to discuss how to stay rich and capitalist.

Fleet Street dubbed them 'The Magnificent Seven'.

The only thing magnificent about Carter, Callaghan and the rest of the gang was the wine they drank, the food they ate, the cars they were driven in.

They ended up by pledging to fight unemployment, just as the Labour Government and the trade union leaderships once promised the Social Contract would solve unemployment, end inflation, bring higher pay, and provide decent social services. The capitalist leaders talked, promised, lied.

Others are prepared to act. Here are the real 'magnificent seven':

- ★ The Steelworkers of Port Talbot — out for seven weeks in defence of a decent wage.
- ★ The Grunwick Strikers — out for ten months for the right to belong to a union, and against low pay for women and immigrants.
- ★ The Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital Workers — in occupation for six months in defence of jobs and a decent health service.

- ★ The Workers at the Randolph Hotel, Oxford — on strike 11 months.
- ★ The Workers at the Grosvenor Hotel, Sheffield — on strike 23 weeks.
- ★ The Workers at Night Out nightclub, Birmingham — on strike 23 weeks — out against Trust Houses Forte for the right to organise unions, against victimisation.
- ★ Journalists at Kettering — on strike 23 weeks, against scab labour, for union rights.

These are the real people who represent the interests of working people, not the likes of Jim Callaghan whose right-wing policies last week resulted in disastrous election results for Labour, with an avalanche of Tory victories and the growth of the fascist National Front.

The striker and occupiers have also outlined the alternative to the policies of Labour and the answer to the threat of Thatcher:

- An end to the Social Contract — as the Port Talbot workers have said — stop Phase 3 by smashing Phase 2.
- Occupy in defence of jobs — like the EGA workers.
- Struggle against racism, against low pay — follow the example at Grunwick.

And by mobilising support for these struggles, by organising solidarity, the real answer to the capitalist offensive can be built — the unity of those struggles, the building of a socialist opposition.

The workers at
 Port Talbot
 ..
 Grunwicks
 ..
 EGA
 ..
 Randolph Hotel
 ..
 Grosvenor Hotel
 ..
 Night Out Club
 ..
 Kettering

£8,157 raised, £6,843 to go!

First Stechford, now London, Birmingham and Hull. There is no doubt that the IMG has provided an important platform for revolutionary politics in these elections. The gains these election campaigns have made have done their part in boosting our fund drive.

Many of the Red Weekly supporters who have contributed to this week's total of £718.00 have been involved in the elections. But of course running the campaigns cost money.

We believe it was worth it — as the only revolutionary candidates to challenge the fascists

in the local elections in England. But we now need to recoup all we have spent.

We need a lot more as well. The launching of the new 16 page revolutionary newspaper, Socialist Challenge, will be a heavy drain on resources. Again, we believe it is worth it — the class struggle in Britain cries out for the type of paper Socialist Challenge will be — an open, non-sectarian paper, campaigning for the building of a united left opposition to Labour's betrayals.

But good intentions are not enough — we need money to turn them into reality. So if you

think challenging the National Front and the right-wing Labour Government are important, give money to those who are doing so in practice. Give generously to the Fund Drive, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1. All cheques should be made payable to 'The Week'.

Our thanks this week go to:
 RW Supporters S. Wales £10.00
 Nottingham IMG £34.00
 PT £2.80
 Bradford IMG £23.20
 Coventry IMG £10.00
 Cardiff IMG £30.00
 Bath IMG £10.00
 PH £5.00
 TR £50.00

VR	£50.00
AT	£30.00
GL	£25.00
RP	£200.00
MD & JS	£120.00
JM	£40.00
DW	£15.00
SP	£20.00
TS	£12.00
MC	£10.00
FB	£20.00
Total this week	£718.00
Grand Total	£8,157.93

The Socialist Challenge Tour has got off to a good start. Meetings have been held in Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield and

Manchester. The Leeds meeting attracted over 50 people.

A school organised by the local branch of the IMG after the meeting brought three new recruits, including one shop steward.

In Sheffield four speakers Tariq Ali, Bob Pennington and a comrade of the Spanish section of the Fourth International were joined by Steve Bond of the Big Flame group, who explained to the 40-strong meeting his organisation's support for the project of the new paper.

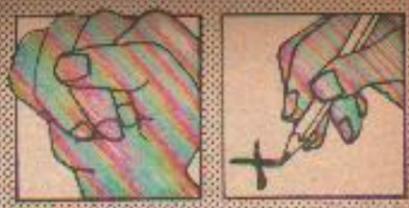
- ★ WORCESTER Fri 20 May
- ★ NOTTS: LEICESTER Sun 22 May

- ★ OXFORD Mon 23 May
- ★ CARDIFF Tues 24 May
- ★ SWANSEA Wed 25 May
- ★ BRISTOL Thurs 26 May
- ★ READING/ BASINGSTOKE Fri 27 May
- ★ M'CR Sun 28 May
- ★ LIVERPOOL Mon 30 May
- ★ B'OTON Tues 31 May
- ★ BOLTON Wed 1 June
- ★ BRIGHTON Wed 1 June
- ★ CANTERBURY Wed 1 June
- ★ LONDON Fri 3 June

For details of all meetings, phone 01-278 8526.

All Out Against Benyon Bill 14 May

Election Action



LONDON: Labour disaster IMG campaigners plan future action

Labour was hammered out of sight in the London GLC elections, thanks to the failure of the Labour Party to mount any challenge to the anti-working class policies of the Government. The Communist Party's vote was also down. One ray of sunshine in the elections — in the face of an all-out electoral effort by the National Front — was the support won in the campaigns mounted by the four Socialist (IMG) candidates.

All of the seats contested by the Socialist (IMG) candidates were held by Labour. In Bethnal Green and Bow, Claire Weingarten polled 354 votes — even more than the 'Abolish the GLC' candidate who had been given a free one-page plug in the *Evening Standard* on the eve of the poll.

Weingarten's campaign was winning increasing support from the Bengali community. Particularly in the area around Brick Lane, the immigrant population has been subject to violent racist attacks spearheaded by the National Front and the British Movement. Supporters in the campaign helped local Bengalis in successfully routing the fascists from the streets the weekend before polling. Campaigners are now mapping out how best to continue their efforts to promote black self-defence and to ward off the inroads being made by the fascists in the East End.

In both these areas, candidates have called on supporters to step up the fight against the closures of local hospitals — the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in North London — and the Weir Maternity Hospital in the South. According to Mick Sullivan, all-out strike action by London public sector workers on 11 May, NUPE's Day of Action, will be the next step in this fight. On this, he has agreement from hospital workers at the Whittington and Royal Northern who

Hornsey seat — where the local Labour Party played a major role in the mobilisations against the Front on 23 April — the fascists got an even lower vote of 826.

And in Lambeth Central — where the All-Lambeth Anti-Racist Movement has been active — their vote was 760. This is a couple of hundred more than the combined vote of the fascist candidates in the Angell ward by-election (for only one-fifth of the constituency) a few months ago.

SOUTHALL

IMG candidate Gerry Hedley in Southall won 996 votes — an impressive 3.2 per cent poll of the votes. His vote was nearly double the highest Communist vote anywhere in London. The Labour candidate — Yvonne Sieve — was nowhere to be seen when the fight against racism was being organised. Local MP Syd Bidwell was fresh from covering himself in glory at the London Labour Party conference where he successfully moved the amendment deleting 'No immigration controls' from the composite anti-racist resolution.

In contrast, Hedley supporters have mapped out their activity in the months to come. First on the list is the action organised when Powell visits neighbouring Hounslow in the near future. Second, is the proposal for a commemorative action on the anniversary of the date when Gurdip Chaggar — the Southall Asian youth — was killed last summer.

MICK GOSLING



SUPPORT

In contrast, Mick Sullivan in Islington North and Piers Corbyn in Lambeth Central organised campaigns in areas where the West Indian community in these constituencies traditionally vote solid Labour. Sullivan was able to win support from many left Labour supporters, sickened with the right wing policies and gangster machine in their local party. His 2.7 per cent of the vote compares equally to that polled by the Communist candidate in neighboring Islington South where the CP received 380 votes. This was down from the CP's 581 votes in the last GLC elections.

produced special campaign leaflets for Sullivan.

One thing is clear from both the Islington North and Lambeth Central results — the impact which the vigorous anti-racist campaign has had in reducing the NF vote. For example, the three Islington seats, all held with a few hundred votes by Labour, are almost identical in size and social composition. In Islington South, the NF gained 1453 votes; in Central, 1274; and in North only 871. In the neighbouring



Singer Jack Jones appears at Night Out club in Birmingham. With a strong picket line like this, trade union boss Jack Jones will never make his appearance!

Support to strikers in Brum campaign

RAGHIB AHSAN, IMG member and Asian Socialist League candidate in the Birmingham County Council elections, polled a magnificent 11 per cent of the vote. He forced the fascists into fourth place and his policies won six times the electoral support that the Communist Party's reformist policies could muster

JOHN GRAHAM, IMG candidate in the Washwood Heath ward did just as well. He polled a strong 5 per cent of the vote.

The outcome of these local campaigns indicates what an openly organised effort can achieve. Just take last week's efforts as an example. Every day was filled with active campaigning and organising the fightback against Labour's betrayals.

One worker new to the campaign even sacrificed going to the Aston Villa match — the first he had missed for three years — so that he could join in the daily canvassing and street meetings! In addition, two local struggles for trade union recognition were given full support by militants in the campaign.

The strong pickets mounted by the Night Out club strikers every Saturday evening have been supported by campaigners. Last Saturday Rover Southall worker Pat Hickey — a militant of the IMG — was arrested by police on the picket line, along with a wo-

man striker. Both were charged with behaviour causing a breach of the peace and fined £30. Efforts like these united pickets have helped to force the blacking of all coaches carrying customers to the club, as well as the blacking of all fuel supplies.

The strike at Southall sanitary towel factory is the second local struggle which got full backing from the campaign. Printing facilities were turned over to strikers when 35 drivers and distribution workers walked out, demanding full recognition for the Transport and General Workers Union.

The workers had left the retail workers' union, USDAW, in disgust at the inactivity of the union leadership. John Toogood, local USDAW official, is known as John 'Nogood'.

It's not hard to see why. He claimed that USDAW had a closed shop agreement with

management. The union members found it strange they had never heard of this deal until they joined the TGWU.

Both IMG members standing in the elections have given their active support on the picket line. They have endorsed the decision of the 200 workers — who are mainly Asians — to stay out on official strike until their demands are met.

The impact of the election campaign in Birmingham will not disappear now that polling is finished. The Asian Socialist League has a firm basis with 50 members. New members are joining daily. Workers at Southall's have declared their support for the ASL.

And the International Marxist Group has been able to reach out and debate with working class militants it has never been in contact with previously.

The day before polling Ahsan was recognised in the street by two local white workers. They asked if he was the Socialist candidate. And they gave £2 towards the campaign, because they supported its policies. It is this kind of widespread support which shows the possibility of smashing the 'solution' provided by the National Front.

ANTI-FASCIST CAMPAIGN ANTI-

London: 23 April Committee

Judith Cook's article in *Labour Weekly* came under heavy attack at an organising meeting for the campaign to defend the anti-fascist militants arrested on 23 April. Cook's article — 'Peace Marchers Who Went to War' — admits that the NF is a nasty, fascist organisation. But her conclusions are useless. She wails, 'What did it achieve?' She would have got her answer from Sunday's organising meeting.

The Chairperson of Haringey Trades Council reported that the executive meeting following the action was the most positive he could remember. Bambos Stylianou of the Cypriot Defence Campaign outlined the steps his organisation was taking around the issue in the Cypriot community.

Alan Watts, the engineering convenor at MK Electronics explained how the confrontation had sparked off an intense debate about the nature of the NF on the factory floor. Further shop stewards in North London will be circulated with a letter from the Campaign to win support.

Student unions have also joined the campaign. Kev Skinner — co-ordinator for the campaign — reported that £340 had been raised towards the expected £3-4,000 legal costs. Tottenham magistrates have denied legal aid to all defendants, but in Hampstead have awarded it to

Student Union bodies. This can be obtained from: 23 April Defence Fund, c/o Hornsey Labour Party, 28 Middle Lane, London N8. MICK GOSLING

Leicester

ONE HUNDRED and twenty activists rallied in Leicester on May Day at an event organised by the Anti-Racist Committee. The main message that came across from the speakers was the need to speak out and organise against racism and against the fascist National Front. To this end, a picket of Leicester's NF printing premises was announced.

The rally had speakers and support from Leicester's women's group, the Indian Workers Association, Leicester South Labour Party and the Trades Council. Music was provided by local groups.

Phil Winstone — a Red Weekly supporter — spoke on the need for solidarity with the Irish struggle. This was backed up with a showing of the film 'Ireland Behind the Wire'.

Newcastle

THE NEWCASTLE Socialist Centre has been the focus of a persistent campaign of violence during the last month. Bricks have been thrown through the

turned up to work to find NF stickers plastered on the broken window. She has also been subject to physical threats while at work. In one case, men who entered the shop threatened to burn down the Centre — with her in it.

It is not hard to see why fascists have pinpointed the Socialist Centre. It has been able to organise an effective anti-fascist campaign in the area, including in Sunderland where the NF fielded 4 candidates. Anderson, one of the NF candidates, went so far as to threaten Socialist Centre activists that he would sue them. He argued their activity was 'materially affecting the outcome of his votes'. In fact, the 20,000 leaflets and posters distributed by the Socialist Centre accomplished just that — the NF vote was lower than expected.

The response from the labour movement to these attacks has been solid. Both Sunderland and Newcastle Trades Councils have condemned them. Now local militants, including several Trades Council executive members, have organised a rota to defend the Centre. The campaign against the NF is continuing — drawing in activists from the IMG, the Workers League, Labour Party, Jewish students and the local Liberal Party.

London

footsteps of the Hornsey Journal with the clear anti-fascist message of their front cover last week. The whole page is devoted to facts and figures about why local readers should reject a vote for the fascists.

Based on the election propaganda the journalists received, they drew one firm conclusion — the National Front provides no solution. The real issues, the real problems and the real solutions are ignored in the hounding of the scapegoat. According to the lead

799 votes for 'Socialists against Cuts'

The 799 votes polled by the four Socialists Against the Cuts candidates in the Humberston County Council elections shows what unity amongst socialists can begin to achieve, according to Maggie Blagdon.

She is an executive member of the Hull Trades Council, chairperson of its Women's Subcommittee and an active supporter of the Working Women's Charter Campaign. But it was the lively response SAC canvassers got when arguing for their policies for women's rights on issues such as abortion and equal pay to which Blagdon attached special importance.

SAC candidate for the Beverly/Botanic ward selected by the local Working Women's Charter group — Annette Fitzsimmons — got 202 votes. In the same ward, Eddie Wright — member of the health workers union COHSE — polled 181. Stan Suddaby stood in the Bramshill/Stoneserry ward. He is a building worker shop steward who got 175 votes in a place where there was a 17 per cent swing from Labour to the Tories. In Newland/Avenue ward,

The SAC campaign is barely a month old. But its month has been filled with activity. Throughout the campaign 15,000 manifestos were produced. 20,000 leaflets and 1,000 posters were distributed. And a lot of hard political experience was gained when supporters hammered away against the treacherous policies of the Labour Government and its cohorts in Humberston. They stressed the need for a fightback and spelt out that without it, the Tories would certainly be returned.

It will be left to militants — like those who support SAC — to prove to workers who are the real fighters against the cuts and unemployment. And with an average poll of 2.5 per cent, SAC showed that there are working class people beginning to look for alternative policies to those of the Labour leaders of today.

The SAC campaign has also announced its plans to stand in the general election. But it will be ready to ensure that the NF makes no headway in the coming months.

A proposal will be considered by the campaign to produce a specific anti-fascist leaflet. As Keith Russell told *Red Weekly*, 'It's no use waiting for the fascists to start making inroads

Photo: SKIP BALL (Red Weekly)

The Left and the Elections: Opportunities missed

WITH THE exception of the International Marxist Group, the Workers' League and the Big Flame group, the British far left failed to measure up to its responsibilities in the County Council elections.

The SWP, alongside the rest of the far left, also were unable to grasp the national significance of these elections. Because of this, the reformist policies of the Communist Party were not effectively challenged.

One of the most significant features about the votes gained by Socialist [IMG] candidates is the comparison with the electoral results of the Communist candidates.

Unlike the IMG, the CP stands candidates in elections because it thinks that socialism can be brought through parliament and parliamentary action. Central to the programme of the Communist Party is the need for a Left Labour-Communist Party alliance to legislate socialism. The CP argued this point of view in their election propaganda.

As the national election agent of the CP put it: Communist Councillors 'would strengthen the overall struggle for the change in Labour government policy so urgently needed to prevent the return of a Tory government and to deliver a blow against racist candidates'.

Socialist [IMG] candidates on the other hand stood against relying on parliamentary methods. They saw the need to use elections to boost extra-parliamentary mass actions and to help build a socialist left wing in the labour movement committed to this method of struggle.

The Socialist [IMG] candidates compared favourably with the CP. Their four candidates polled just less than 2,000 votes. The

CP's 24 candidates polled a mere 8,442. In Lambeth Central, where there was a direct electoral confrontation, Piers Corbyn gained more votes than the CP. In Birmingham, the results were even less favourable for the CP. In the Salfley ward, where the Asian Socialist League fielded a candidate on the same platform as the IMG, the CP's vote was down to 102 in comparison to the ASL's 620.

The CP tried every dirty trick in the book to pull votes away from the ASL. In a CP leaflet

written in Urdu, the familiar cry appeared that the ASL was splitting the working class along race lines. It even argued the ASL was 'reinforcing the National Front propaganda that "Asians were taking over".'

Far from the intervention of the ASL adding votes to the NF and Tory candidates as the CP declared, the NF vote was only 331. In no other place in the entire country did the CP come anywhere near to even matching the NF vote. The CP statement after the elections that the 'level of our votes continues to be unsatisfactory' is the understatement of the year!

What the Salfley elections demonstrate is that a united far left state in the elections could have dealt a serious blow to the reformist policies of the CP. A united campaign would have had



Successful joint election rally with IMG candidate John Graham and ASL candidate Raghb Ahsan.

the resources to put up at least as many candidates as the CP. And with all the activities of the far left an important impact would have been made inside the base of the unions, the factories and the colleges.

SECTARIANISM

But the County elections indicated a sharpening sectarianism of the SWP. Although the SWP sees the need to stand in elections whilst making propaganda against parliament, its general sectarianism came home to roost in its attitude to the elections. Its overriding concern in contesting elections is the number of recruits it can achieve. Assessing that few recruits would be forthcoming from local elections, it didn't field any candidates.

In one of the few public statements about its attitude to local elections, the SWP issued a leaflet in Birmingham where the call for a Labour vote was made. Their slogan was 'Vote Labour to keep out the Nazis and the Tories'. In every area where the IMG stood, SWP members failed to cast their votes for the candidates.

Socialists today must be firm in their support for the return of Labour Councils and a Labour Government. But the burning task today is the need to build a socialist left wing. The SWP argued this point in the parliamentary elections.

But their refusal to participate in the local elections or even to call for a vote for revolutionary candidates in the local elections has made the fight for such an opposition more difficult.

IN FOCUS

RED WEEKLY

Labour's policies responsible for defeat

The Council elections held in 54 counties in England and Wales last Thursday, and those in 18 Scottish counties two days earlier, assumed a character of national political importance. In contrast to previous county elections, the polls were high. The 15 million voters — a 43 per cent poll — was the largest turnout in County elections since the war.

Labour proved utterly unable to hold on to more than a mere 4 counties in England and Wales, and the same number in Scotland. Its crushing defeat at County Council level is a clear rejection of the anti-working class measures pursued by the Government.

It is also a rejection of Labour Councils who have failed to mount any significant challenge to these national policies. Hull is a case in point where prospective Councillors were instructed to refrain from mentioning the cuts, despite Labour Conference decisions to the contrary. This stance has been matched by the inactivity of the 'left' leaders in the trade union movement.

SAVAGE COURSE

The election results are not a comment on the Lib-Lab pact. They reflect the persistent savage course followed by the Labour Government and its supporters at every level of the labour movement long before the Liberals entered the scene. There can be no clearer sign that the policies of the Government and those who support them are bringing back the Tories.

The responsibility for the inroads made by the fascist National Front lies at Labour's doorstep. In London, the NF vote went up 15 per cent. It topped its projected poll of 100,000 votes by 20 per cent. In 32 seats it emerged as a third party. The fascists used the County elections as a dress rehearsal for the general election. Labour 'leaders' failed the test miserably.

An important factor in the reduction of the NF vote where it occurred — in Leicester, Bradford and parts of London — was the independent activity of anti-fascists who refused to wait for Labour 'leaders' and mounted vigorous campaigns of their own.

In Scotland, the Scottish National Party achieved its goal of emerging as a credible alternative in time for the general election. It gained 98 seats, in comparison to the 121 lost by Labour and the 35 gained by the Tories. Its most spectacular gains were in working class areas.

ANTI-DEVOLUTIONISTS

Labour's anti-devolutionists hoped to defeat the SNP with simple-minded anti-nationalism. But to halt its advance and unite the working class, more than anti-nationalist rhetoric is needed. A socialist opposition throughout Britain must show that it will respect the political demands for self-determination which are the concern of young SNP workers, as well as demonstrating the practical values of unity between English and Scots workers. Labour has been incapable of responding to this sentiment and has left the door open to the divisive policies of the SNP.

The gain made by the Tories will take its toll on the living standards and the confidence of the working class. Labour's national Tory policies have laid the basis for the offensive about to be unleashed at the Council level. To date, the fightback has focused on local and County Councils only insofar as these bodies have been in the hands of Tories. The demonstrations against the cuts in Buckinghamshire and the grammar school issue in Thameside are two examples.

Now, the Labour-inspired cuts in facilities will be accompanied by a direct assault on the jobs and wages of the Council workers. Already newly elected Tories have expressed the urgent need to tackle the 70 per cent budget allocations ear-marked for wages. And calls for closing direct works departments to contract the work out to private firms — 'at the cheaper, more competitive prices' of lump labour — will soon become the norm.

The County elections did represent a trial run of the general elections. The campaigns of the IMG (Socialist) candidates indicated that significant numbers of working class people are sick to death with Labour's betrayals. The powerful, independent action which is vital needs to be strengthened in the coming months. It must be transformed into a socialist opposition at every level of the labour movement.

One important factor in developing such an organised left wing would be a united revolutionary intervention in the general elections. Sectarianism in the revolutionary left can strengthen none but those hoping to gain by the real threats levied by the Tories, the National Front and the Labour right wing itself.

Struggle central for Scottish Socialists

Scottish Socialist League candidates fought the County Council elections campaigning hard against Labour's record and the divisive policies of the SNP. Their results were promising for a group which has been in existence for only a few months. Ian Grant — contesting in a straight fight with Labour in Aberdeen — received a splendid 17.3 per cent of the vote. His vote is one indication of the scope of the growing opposition to Labour's policies. An average of over 2 per cent was polled by the other six SSL candidates.

In every area where Scottish Socialist candidates stood, the campaign has been stepped up since polling day. Candidates

and their supporters are lending their full weight to the many struggles which are now being fought throughout Scotland. They are in a good position to continue this activity because it was central to their successful election campaign.

Glasgow candidates and supporters are concentrating on Wednesday's follow-up meeting from the Women's Rights Rally held on 7 May. At the top of the agenda is solidarity with the 400

Laird Portch workers on strike for equal pay. Matt Montgomery told Red Weekly that Scottish Socialists will be campaigning for full picket support from students and trade unionists at Wednesday night's meeting.

In Edinburgh, candidates have called for a joint campaign for two factories under threat of redundancies. At Robb Caledon's 237 redundancies have been declared to date. MP Kauffman has informed workers

more will come, following the firm's 'Nationalisation' on 1 July. 200 jobs are also on the block at Parsons and Cables. In view of the utter inactivity of the engineering and electrician union leaderships, the SSL's call for a united campaign throughout the labour movement is especially vital.

In Aberdeen, trade unionists who were active in the campaign hope to work with other militants in organising a Scottish conference on democracy in the labour movement. Many militants first contacted through the election campaign will be approached to support this Conference, scheduled for mid-June.

TROTSKYIST VOTES IN THE LOCAL ELECTIONS

LONDON Socialist (IMG) Candidates

Bethnal Green & Bow

Sir Ashley Bramall (Lab) 8,084
J. Ranelagh (Cons) 3,080
W. Castleton (NF) 2,811
C. Weingarten (IMG) 354
G. Lewis (GLCA) 345

* Weingarten received 2.4 per cent of the vote.

Islington North

L. Bondy (Lab) 6,092
J. Sayeed (Cons) 5,428
G. Southern (NF) 871
P. O'Brien (Lib) 538
M. Sullivan (IMG) 361

* Sullivan received 2.5 per cent of the vote.

Lambeth Central

A.L. Grieves (Lab) 7,155
R. Hettar (Cons) 5,485
K. Mott (NF) 780
W.A. Bennett (Lib) 652
P. Corbyn (IMG) 219
S. Hope (Comm) 204
H.G. Baldwin (SPGB) 101
W.G. Books (DMRHO) 51

* Corbyn received 1.5 per cent of the vote.

Southall

Y. Sieva (Lab) 13,330
R. Schindler (Cons) 12,417
K. Stevens (Lib) 2,094
B. Franklin (NF) 1,872
G. Hadley (IMG) 996

* Hadley received 3.2 per cent of the vote.

BIRMINGHAM Candidates

Washwood Heath

Tory 2,839
Labour 2,458
National Front 464
IMG, John Graham 306

* Graham received 5 per cent of the vote.

Salfley

Labour 2,415
Tory 1,981
Asian Socialist League, Ahsan Raghb 620
National Front 331
Communist Party 102

* Ahsan received 11.4 per cent of the vote.

Scottish Socialist League Candidates

Falkirk — Ward 1

J. Archibald (SNP) 876
J. Hamilton (Lab) 724
W. Whyte (Ind) 497
D. Fowler (SSL) 49

* Fowler received 2.3 per cent of the vote.

Aberdeen — Castlehill

A. Collie (Lab) 658
I. Grant (SSL) 140

* Grant received 17.3 per cent of the vote.

Edinburgh — Bonnington

J.W. Karr (Lab) 428
C. Martin (Cons) 353
F.T. Chalmers (SNP) 322
D. Tierney (SSL) 40

* Tierney received 3.4 per cent of the vote.

Edinburgh — Harbour

J. Hastie (Lab) 995
T. McCarron (SNP) 621
C. Lotten (Cons) 461
J. Donaldson (SSL) 58

* Donaldson received 2.8 per cent of the vote.

Edinburgh — Links

C. Waugh (Cons) 1,227
A.M. Black (Lab) 536
G.R. Williamson (SNP) 519
G. McGuire (Lib) 363
R.A. Cormack (SSL) 29

* Cormack received 1.1 per cent of the vote.

Edinburgh — Lorne

A. Burton (Lab) 1,170
J. Hanson (Cons) 907
R. Ward (SNP) 752
P. Tierney (SSL) 43

* Tierney received 1.6 per cent of the vote.

Glasgow — Kelvin

G. Rennie (Cons) 881
J.P. Ross (Lab) 811
C. Petrie (SNP) 461
W.M. Hutchison (Ind Cons) 173
M.K. Montgomery (SSL) 32

* Montgomery received 1.6 per cent of the vote.

INSIDE THE UNIONS

Southport Conference shows militancy of rank and file but Right take over CPSA

Last week the Civil and Public Services Association fell once again under the control of the right. The new National Executive Committee majority are no ordinary right wingers. They include avowed Tories and Trumid and Catholic Action supporters. Their return to power was accompanied by a massively financed campaign of red baiting propaganda.

Present throughout to orchestrate this lavish circus was Bob Matthews, formerly CPSA's Assistant Secretary, now a Trumid full-timer.

The chief blame, however, for the return of the right must go to the outgoing Broad Left leadership. They retreated on the crucial issues of pay and cuts, and, faced with the task of building the left in the union, organised too little and too late.

Contradictory forces at work were demonstrated within hours of the opening of the main conference. Whilst employing militant demagoguery against Phase 3, General Secretary Ken Thomas argued for a return to the Pay Research System which ties wage rises to a pre-determined mean of wage rises in similar white collar sectors. Although this accommodation to Phase 3 was endorsed, the total 70,000 votes in opposition to Pay Research was twice as high as two years ago. This clear expression of increased militancy in the ranks was tempered by the results of the Presidential ballot. The Broad Left nominee, Len Lever, held the post with a margin of less than 3,500 out of 195,000 votes against the extreme right-wing candidate Kate Losinka. The vote for Redder Tape candidate Mike McGrath at 12,500 was slightly reduced from last year.

GAINS

Elections to the NEC on the following day produced a right wing majority of 14 against 11 Broad Left and one Redder Tape. Massive increases in votes were recorded by militant left wingers. Mike McGrath gained 11,000 votes; a similar increase for Communist John Luppion on to the NEC; Pam Adams who led opposition to attempts to sell out



LEN LEVER

the Gibraltar lock-out gained 20,000 votes and soared 19 places in the ballot.

Right wing passengers on the Broad Left list like Lever saw their 'reputations' as vote getters destroyed. Others like Pat Womersley, who ran on the right wing list in the DHSS section lost 22,000 votes and declared her allegiance to the 'moderates' two days later.

The key decisions of conference reinforced the contradictions of the opening day. On Wednesday right-wing opposition to the closed shop was rebuffed, but in favour of a post-entry as opposed to a pre-entry system. Thursday brought a disgraceful betrayal of the 6-month long Gibraltar lock-out. Militant action was rejected in favour of a token one-day protest.

Yet, Friday saw the NEC censured by a large majority for its sell-out of the statistics ban in the Department of Employment.

The overwhelming rejection of Phase 3 the same day can only be seen in the light of the earlier decision on Pay Research.

SECRET

The right wing have taken power in a year in which they did not want it. At October's Rules Revision Conference they will seek to shore up their position through the introduction of individual secret ballots.

The most encouraging outcome of conference was the emergence of an alliance of the militant left which fought hard and in a principled way on several key issues. The building of the left must be carried forward immediately throughout the union.



Eyeball to eyeball. Wyn Bevan [centre] and fellow Port Talbot strike committee members confront Frank Chapple [right, back to camera], at EETPU headquarters in London last Monday.

PORT TALBOT CONFRONTS CHAPPLE'S 'DEMOCRACY'

NO-ONE in any way familiar with the past practice of the EETPU leadership can be surprised at its executive's instruction to its members at Port Talbot steelworks to go back to work, nor at their attempt to intimidate the strike leadership by threatening that they are in breach of union rules for continuing their action.

Frank Chapple, General Secretary of the EETPU, is notorious for using red-baiting to avoid defending his own policies before the membership. Just one example is his 'personal letter' to Scottish Local Authority electricians of February 1975, which said that they were being used as 'pawns in vicious political games' and called on them to 'reject the extremists and return to work'.

But it is Chapple and his supporters on the EETPU executive who are playing a vicious political game.

For it is Chapple who is the supporter of vicious anti-working class policies — having supported Labour's wage freeze of 1966, the Tory incomes policy, and now wage cuts under

the Social Contract.

It was Chapple who in November of last year called for a 'substantial pruning in public spending'.

It was Chapple who argued against the TUC policy of non-cooperation with the Tories' Industrial Relations Act. And, not surprisingly, it was his fellow executive 'moderate' Tom Breakwell who called the Shrewsbury pickets 'hooligans' and refused to support them.

When sections of the membership refuse to accept these attacks on working people Chapple and his fellow EETPU 'moderates' respond by red-baiting and attacks on union democracy.

In 1961 Chapple teamed up with the right wing in the union

to win a High Court ruling of ballot-rigging against the then Communist Party leadership of the union. Since then, Chapple has presented himself as the defender of democracy in the union. But under his regime election of full-time members of the union has been replaced by selection by an executive sub-committee — at the head of which sits Chapple.

The executive of lay members which had been elected every two years has been replaced by an executive of full-timers elected every five years.

The Final Appeal Committee, through which members could appeal against executive decisions has been abolished and a 'Disciplinary Committee' of five

rules mean that Chapple himself does not now face another election until retirement in 1986.

The ban on Communist Party members holding office in the union is the most important aspect of this witch-hunt against any attempts of the left to organise against his leadership of the union. In March of this year the executive passed a report, by 7 votes to 4, accusing the Communist Party of 'outside interference' in the last General Secretary elections.

The purpose of this report is nothing more than an attempt to stifle the right to organise against the leadership of the union, preparing the way for further attacks on union democracy at November's rules revision conference.

An essential part of the fight against the right wing policies of the union leadership is the fight for union democracy. And this means fighting for the right to organise in the union.

DEBATE

Far from leading to 'manipulation' openly organised groupings in the union can only strengthen union democracy, by allowing the clear presentation of different political positions before the membership, and allowing the maximum organised debate of the issues amongst the membership.

Winning this right to organise means defeating the likes of Chapple, who denies the left the right to organise, whilst his own campaigns are organised for him — through the articles in the capitalist press like the 'voting guide' of the *Daily Mail*, which advised members as to who were the 'moderate' and 'extremist' candidates in the 1975 executive elections.

But the first step towards defeating the right wing leadership of the EETPU must be to make sure that the Port Talbot EETPU members now on strike are not left isolated.

A campaign of support for them must be launched by militants in the EETPU, demanding that the union leadership withdraw their instruction to return to work and make the strike official now.

NALGO leadership elections in Wales

FOUR THOUSAND members of the local government workers' union, NALGO, cast their votes for Red Weekly supporter Erica Barnett in the South Wales District annual elections for the National Executive Council.

She came runner-up to the three sitting members, led by Glyn Phillips, the right-wing President of NALGO and chairman of the Wales TUC.

All of the sitting members retained their usual number of votes of around 7000. Barnett pushed two other long-standing candidates to fifth and sixth place. The increased poll indicates that Barnett's

votes came mainly from members who did not vote last year.

Barnett's programme included opposition to the Social Contract, to all social spending cuts, and to unemployment. She called for a public sector alliance and argued the case for an automatic increase in wages in line with inflation. The fight for women's rights and for more democracy in NALGO were central to her election campaign.

Throughout the campaign, Barnett appealed to members who supported her policies to begin to organise around them, arguing that good policies on paper were not sufficient.

dent.

Barnett's candidature was the first of its kind in the South Wales NEC elections. Her decision to stand was particularly vital this year. The 'socialist' candidates of past years failed to put forward even a viewpoint on the burning issues of the day, including the Social Contract. Barnett's campaign shows that when class-struggle policies are fought for, there is a ready response from significant numbers of militants. Now this vote must be transformed into united action.



ERICA BARNETT

and London

* The failure of the left in the National and Local Government Officers Association to fight the cuts and the Social Contract is behind the right wing victory in the London district elections to the union's National Executive Committee.

Responsibility lies with the 'Broad Left' alliance of left social democratic and Communist Party bureaucrats. Many London members have shown, through local actions and their support for the 17 November anti-cuts demonstration, that they want an alternative to the policies of the Labour leadership. But it hasn't come from the Broad Left.

They have failed to unite the left London-wide, sold out their own branches' resolutions against the Social Contract at the union's Special Conference in January and refused to speak out against the NEC's right-wing resolution at the conference.

It was pure accident that the

solitary left-wing proposal for an overtime ban — an action which has gone disastrously badly in the absence of an all-out fight against the cuts.

So it has been easy for the right wing to take advantage of members' disillusionment with the 'left' leaders to get all eight candidates in London onto the NEC. Five hundred votes was the nearest the Broad Left and the NALGO Action Group came to an NEC place. The NAG campaign for its separate slate was almost non-existent. It insisted on support for the Right to Work Campaign as part of the electoral campaign — thus giving the reformists their excuse to split from NAG — and then failed to mention the Right to Work Campaign in most of the election addresses!

Members of the IMG in London NALGO are putting out a call to all those who support a socialist alternative to the policies of the bureaucracy to meet on 4 June. More details next week.

NUT bosses block strike

The NUT executive overwhelmingly rejected a strike call from North London teachers at its meeting on Saturday in defiance of the sacked William Tyndale teachers.

An 84-page report prepared by the Labour-controlled Inner London Education Authority had found the teachers guilty of failing to 'resume their duties' and of disobeying an instruction to 'desist from action leading to children not attending' school whilst on strike.

This was the response of the union executive after the teachers had been the victims of a two-year witch-hunt against their supposedly incompetent teaching methods.

But North London Teachers

Association called for the reinstatement of the six Tyndale teachers, suspended and threatened with the sack for taking strike action.

But other associations and school branches must pass similar motions and campaign for a reversal of the executive's decision.

In addition, the Tyndale campaign urgently needs money. Holland Park school NUT members are donating £1 each month, and this example should be followed.

* Money and messages of support should be sent to T. Ellis, 32 Clifton Court, Biggerstaff Street, London N4.



ABOLISH THE MONARCHY BADGES — in red, white and blue: available from 97 Caledonian Road, London N1. 15p plus p&p. Bulk orders of 20 or more 10p each.



40 ARRESTED AS FASCISTS SHOW THEIR HAND

'Operation X' was the name that Lady Birdwood and her 'Self Help' association gave their plans to break the picket lines at the Randolph Hotel in Oxford last Friday.

The strikers and the Anti-Fascist Committee had another name for it, though. Lady Birdwood is well known for her connections with the NF and her anti-union activities.

Friday's confrontation, in which 40 demonstrators, including 12 Trades Council delegates, were arrested was no isolated incident. Violence on the picket has been on the increase. Last week the Daily

Express printed a major article attacking the Transport and General Workers Union over the strikes. And on Saturday John Gourier of the NAFF held a rally for scabs at the Night Out Club in

Birmingham. Clearly Trust Houses Forte have prepared their forces well.

The Union District Organiser, Geoff Hulett, didn't want to be associated with anti-fascist struggles. He tried to call off the picket. But the strikers and some 200 supporters thought differently. A mass picket was organised to meet the fascist provocation.

Birdwood's expensively produced leaflet for the occasion boasted of 'legal means' to break the picket. And, sure enough,

when the size of the response became clear, about 50 police arrived to drive the demonstrators out of the Hotel entrance and to make way for Birdwood and her handful of fascists.

LINKS

Not since the war have a management in dispute forged such clear links with a fascist organisation to break a strike. Trust Houses calculated a campaign of intimidation, aided by the

BBC's vicious attack on the demonstrators is one that workers and socialists ignore at their peril.

Yet TGWU official Hulett did just that. Apparently one fights fascists by running away! This is exactly what the fascists want. The strikers, with better knowledge of how to fight, ignored his instructions and turned up.

STRIKERS

And the resolve of the strikers has only been hardened by the bosses' tactics. These workers need the support of trades unionists throughout the country more than ever. Already plans are in hand for a demonstration of

solidarity on Saturday 21 May in Oxford, and Red Weekly urges all its readers in the Midlands to attend.

But it will take national action to beat both the savage attacks of the company and the backsliding of the TGWU bureaucracy. We must redouble the campaign to black THF nationally. We must show them that such intimidation does not pay.

* A defence fund for the arrested pickets has been set up. We are going to need a lot of money. Send contributions care of: Oxford Anti-fascist Committee, 44b Princes Street, Oxford.

DEFEND THE TRUST HOUSES FORTY



WEST LONDON PLANS SCHOOL CLOSURES

By Betty Hunter, NUT Rep., Lavender Hill School, President, Wandsworth NUT.

The predictions are that West Lavender's school population will be reduced by a third in 1982. Less children in school is a golden opportunity for improving education by fixing a higher ratio of staff to pupils. But this opportunity the Education Authorities refuse to take. Instead they plan to close schools and reduce the number of teachers.

Lavender Hill School is the first to be threatened with closure and teachers there have launched a campaign against the threatened redundancies and the compulsory transfers.

Such transfers are already becoming common place in London, and are seen as a softening up process for the threatened redundancies — 473 teachers in London are already facing transfer. A national agreement between the National Union of Teachers and the Local Education Authorities was meant to safeguard against the effects of such transfers, but a local agreement negotiated with the Inner London Education Authority offers the most minimal guarantees, and none at all on salaries.

It was in response to this situation that the Socialist Teachers Alliance organised a public meeting in London last week at which it was agreed to co-ordinate all schools who are opposed to transfers. The organisation of this campaign was initially undertaken by Lavender Hill School.

FIGHTBACK

The fightback against transfers and closures must be undertaken in a positive way, demanding reduced class size, improved pupil teacher ratios and forms of entry in secondary schools to be reduced from 30 to 25.

They can be linked to other more general policies aimed at fighting the education cuts such as no cover, no dinner duties and guaranteed preparation and marking times.

This campaign should not be limited to those schools taking action now but broadened to support a more general response to the closures and transfers.

* Motions in support of Lavender Hill School should be sent to the Action Committee, Lavender Hill School, Amies Street, London SW11.



C.A. Person apprentices give a fitting welcome to Callaghan and President Carter in Newcastle last week. 1500 workers have been declared redundant at the Turbine Generator factory as a direct result of the Government's refusal to order the completion of Drax B Power station in Yorkshire.

3,500 Midlands' building workers brought Birmingham city centre to a standstill last month. They were demonstrating against the planned closure of the construction department in Birmingham by the Tory controlled council.

Over 400 jobs are at stake if the cuts go ahead, and with unemployment among building workers already high in the city it is not surprising that building workers in Birmingham's housing department went on strike for the day. They were joined on the demonstration by workers from Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Coventry, Walsall and else-

BUILDING AGAINST CUTS IN BRUM

and other social services. Housing programmes in the city have been cut by 25 per cent and the Eye, Accident and General Hospitals urgently need replacing.

Against this background of the Labour Government's cuts, the Tory council have now decided to close down the housing construction department entirely — despite making a profit of £178,000 last year. The real concern for the local Tories is that direct labour schemes can cut into the massive profits of private construction companies,

announced that local government workers had declared that if the direct labour department was closed they would refuse to process any of the accounts dealing with the contractors taken on by the council.

Workers at the National Exhibition Centre pledged strike action if the Tory building cuts are implemented. Faced with this type of resistance the Tory Birmingham Post screamed, 'This is the language of naked force — of dictatorship in fact'.

ted. As a start this means building a day of action by all local government workers to reverse the cuts.

Already the building workers' union UCATT is considering calling for a stoppage in June. There is also an obvious need for UCATT to implement a decision taken at its last conference to organise a national meeting of all local authority stewards. With Labour cutting nationally and the Tories cutting locally, the need for such a meeting and the organisation of a co-

SCHOOL STUDENTS:- LEEDS' POLICE GAG FAILS

On 29 April two people were tried at Leeds Magistrates Court for giving out leaflets to the pupils of the City of Leeds High School. They were arrested on 18 February, held over for six hours, then had their homes raided without warrants, their solicitor was denied access to them for about two hours, and one of them was interrogated by the Special Branch.

They were charged with distributing leaflets of 'an abusive and insulting nature' that were 'likely to cause a breach of the peace', under Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1936.

The leaflets questioned some of the school's rules and pointed out the existence of the National Union of School Students. It also gave some examples of school students' collective action.

At the Court there was a picket of about 30 people in support of the two defendants, and the Public Gallery was packed.

The case was dismissed by the Stipendiary Magistrate, Loy, without any evidence being given. The prosecuting solicitor, Pollard, gave a speech arguing that the leaflet would insult 'any teacher'. This is the paragraph upon which

his argument was based: 'In South Africa and Zimbabwe ("Rhodesia"), where black people are kept on their knees by white racist rulers, black school students have been rising in revolt in the last few months. They have refused to go to school, and have been out on the streets fighting their racist rulers.'

'Only two weeks ago, 400 African schoolkids went (of their own free will) across the border from Zimbabwe to train to become Freedom Fighters. They have the power and the will to win their country for their people and to build a new world.'

'There are lots of people who have decided that they're not just going to accept what they're told, and who have decided to do something about it.'

'As long as we think things can't change, then things won't change. When we realise we can change the world, then we will.'

He argued that the above paragraph means that the school teachers treat their pupils in the same way as racist teachers and the regimes in southern Africa treat blacks.

The magistrate said that the leaflet might be 'deplorable', but it couldn't be called insulting or abusive behaviour, so the case was dismissed.

SCOTTISH EQUAL PAY STRIKES

SIX EQUAL PAY strikers from the Laird Portch factory in East Kilbride appealed for support at the successful Scottish Rally for Women's Rights in Glasgow last Saturday. Over a hundred activists present pledged their active support on the picket line and a donation of £30 was collected.

The women — members of the Tailors and Garment Workers Union — first raised their demand for equal pay in December 1975. Ellen Micklin — convenor at the factory — said that unskilled men earn £43 a week, while women receive a wage of £33.10. Laird Portch bosses have tried to impose their own grading scheme on the union. At the end of last month, the women walked out in disgust at their bosses' sabotage of the Equal Pay Act.

The Laird Portch workers are not alone. Three factories in East Kilbride have been out for several weeks. Women at the Sunbeam factory returned to work on Monday following a settlement reached through ACAS, the state's arbitration

ending increased bonus payments. Women at Hayward Tyler are still striking against redundancies.

Workers from all three factories rallied to hear speakers following an enthusiastic march through East Kilbride last Thursday. Kenny MacMillan, secretary of the East Kilbride Trades Council argued that the women were not just up against incompetent bosses, but were fighting against a system which used their labour for profit.

Ellen Micklin explained how every knitwear factory was being contacted to help in the struggle. Both speakers firmly rejected relying on equal pay legislation. Ms Micklin said that even the union leaders could not be trusted. What was needed was a rank and file fight, and support from the labour movement as a whole.

DODIE WEPPLER

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)



THE ORANGE STRIKE FOR PRIVILEGE

Article by Geoff Bell, Photograph

The Unionist Action Committee's strike in the North of Ireland was NOT the total political failure that the British media have made it out to be.

Even before the strike began, Northern Ireland Secretary Roy Mason had flown over 2,000 extra troops to the 6 Counties. He had assured the Loyalist population that they would not be used against the strike but were being brought into counter 'any advantage the Provisional IRA might take of the situation'.

And Mason kept his word. On the opening days of the stoppage the troops were completely absent from the hardline Loyalist areas of the Shankill, Sandy Row and East Belfast.

On the Catholic Falls Road they paraded as normal.

That was one political victory for the strikers.

But the most important victory came on Thursday night when Mason met the shop stewards of the Ballylumford power station. Already the workers had voted in support of the tougher security measures demanded by Paisley and the rest of the bigots on the Unionist Action Council. They came to Mason seeing what he would give them, and the Northern Ireland Secretary was only too

glad to oblige.

In a statement following the meeting Mason promised:

* The Royal Ulster Constabulary would be built up to a strength of 6,500;

* The RUC would be provided with more modern weapons, equipment and vehicles;

* The Ulster Defence Regiment full-time strength would be increased to 1,800 and further increases are being considered;

* The laws dealing with 'terrorist' offences would be reviewed;

* Increased emphasis would be placed on 'covert techniques' in 'combatting terrorism';

* The number of security forces involved in SAS-type operations 'has been doubled and this trend will continue'.

So for all Mason's swaggering talk about 'standing up' to the Loyalist thugs, by the third day of the stoppage he had already gone a long way to meeting one of the main demands of Paisley's strikers — increased repression of the Catholic community.

By the third day of the strike as well it had become patently obvious that the type of repression now earmarked for the Catholic ghettos would not get within shooting distance of the Loyalist strikers. An incident in Sandy Row on the second day of the strike illustrates this.

Loyalists had blocked a number of streets leading into the city centre. When the RUC arrived on the scene they went up to the picket lines and chatted freely. It was only when the television cameras arrived that those blocking the road were ever-so-gently directed to the pavement. As the newsreader on Northern Ireland BBC television said, commenting on the first day of the strike, the police kept a 'low profile'.

Certainly as the strike went on and the Action Council did not get the support they had expected the RUC got a bit more daring. But even then it was only after they themselves had been assaulted that the encounters got a bit ugly.

The reason for this 'low profile' policy was clear. The

addition to their usual partisanship to the Loyalists they did not want to do anything which would cause a reaction against the 'security forces'. When the Army go into Catholic areas they don't worry about such things, but the Belfast Loyalists are considered a much more

'On the opening days of the stoppage the troops were completely absent from the hardline Loyalist areas of the Shankill, Sandy Row and East Belfast. On the Catholic Falls Road they paraded as normal.'

sensitive breed.

It was obvious why the British Government were concerned about over-reacting. All the Unionist opponents of the strike had one thing in common; they

all shared Paisley's plea for 'increased security'. The Chairperson of the Northern Ireland Chamber of Trades while attacking the strike said: 'I don't think the security forces are heavy enough on the ground'.

Harry West, leader of the Official Unionist Party, who opposed to the strike, blustered: 'We all demand the basic right to live in peace and safety and shall not rest until we have gained this throughout Ulster'.

Sandy Scott, shop steward at Harland and Wolfe shipyards, said on television: 'I share many of the worries about the security situation'.

Indeed, the leadership of the Northern Ireland Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions joined in talks with the Chamber of Commerce and the Official Unionist Party to hammer out joint 'security' propo-

sals to put to Mason. The alliance of Northern Irish trade union leaders with the Unionist Party is nothing new, but joining in talks about 'increased security' when repression in the Catholic ghettos is as high as it has been for a long time is a particularly scandalous capitulation.

So far as Paisley's calls for a step up in 'security measures' goes, there was little difference between the Action Council, Mason, West and the Northern Irish trade union leaders. There was more disagreement in bringing back Stormont, the Action Council's other demand. But again this was not a great political disagreement, it was simply the issue of whether, no matter how successful the strike was, the British Government would agree to such a demand.

Whilst Unionist ideology is very keen on destroying things — be it a 'power sharing' executive or the Catholic community — when it comes to constructing something they inevitably fall out amongst themselves.

They fell out as well over the tactic of the general strike. This

was the main criticism the Unionist opponents had of the Action Council. It was not the ends they objected to, but the methods. As the *Unionist News Letter* said on the second day of the stoppage, 'even though many people do not agree with the form of the protest, a vast majority agree with what they complain about'.

For the 'vast majority' real 'vast majority of Protestants'.

The main issue the Unionist

'While Unionist ideology is very keen on destroying things — be it a "power sharing" executive or the Catholic community — when they come to constructing something they inevitably fall out amongst themselves.'

opponents of the strike took it was 'intimidation'. Certainly many shops and pubs were closed from fear of what would happen to them if they did not close. According to a shopkeeper in East Belfast: 'The just came round and told me to close', and a bar manageress in East Belfast reported: 'I got

PEACE PEOPLE IN PIECES

IT'S STRANGE that the darlings of the British media, the Peace People, have not been given wide coverage by the Fleet Street editors, or for that matter by their other supporters, the Morning Star. But the obvious reason for this lack of interest is that there have only been embarrassments to report.

In the build up to the stoppage the Peace People said they were 'ready to mobilise rallies and other demonstrations of public feeling'.

This was followed by Betty Williams, one of the big three Peace People, calling upon the Northern population to 'stand firm' against the strikers.

Ms Williams conveyed this advice through a cable from an hotel in California.

Then on Saturday 7 May the Peace People held their promised rally in the centre of



PROVISIONALS 'READY'

THE FOLLOWING interview was given to Red Weekly by a spokesperson for the Provisional Republican Movement in Belfast on the third day of the stoppage. While Red Weekly believes the statements on the outcome if the Loyalists won show a dangerous complacency, we publish this interview as a gesture of our solidarity with those who will bear the brunt of any Loyalist or British 'security' offensive.

'Basically it is a fight between the British and Loyalists about how best to defeat the Republican Movement. The Loyalists favour a short term strategy, the British a long term one. The whole thing places the British in a bad position; they don't want the big military drive the Loyalists want. They prefer to move slowly and surely into the Republican areas.'

'Our efforts are concentrated on providing for our own people. We have 20 centres throughout the town which contain food, fuel, baby

the Brits can concentrate on Republican areas. They can show they have got rid of the extreme right and then step up the repression against us. It would also make it easier for them to win a power-sharing executive — the SDLP would find it less embarrassing to join if the British had got rid of Paisley.'

'If it developed to where the Loyalists did take control, we would be on the doorstep of civil war. In many ways that could be good for Irish politics. The British would come off worse. We're not worried which way it goes. We are the threat and the Brits know that. If they intensify the struggle, so will we, but it is British strategy which is in crisis and if the Loyalists win, well it's not a situation we would run away from.'

'We can meet any situation that develops for our survival, at the moment we are capable of meeting any threat — Loyalist or British. The Brits will never beat the IRA. Every day

WITNESS REPORT

phone call saying they knew where I lived and where my staff lived.'

But it was not simply a case of mass intimidation. Nor is it correct to say the strike did not have significant support — especially in the traditional hardline areas of Belfast. There the Loyalists wandered around in groups, stood on street corners, and made their feelings known.

'We want the IRA defeated and out of this country. If they don't give us protection we'll do it ourselves... maybe there's some good Catholics who don't support the IRA, but they don't throw them out of their homes.'

This type of sentiment was expressed often in the first four days of the strike. To imagine the whole thing was run by Paisley and a few fellow fanatics is not the case. Most of the Protestant-dominated factories in West Belfast closed in the first few days. In Larne, the entire port was closed, in Portadown, in the words of the *News Letter*, 'trade, industry and commerce were at a virtual standstill.'

In Banbridge the town was at a standstill. There, even the Chamber of Commerce backed the action, saying 'the strike's

effect on the economy would be nothing compared to the effects of the campaign of terror'.

All this, and more, was not due to 'intimidation' — it says something about those who gave the strike the most support — the Protestant working class in the UDA.

Even if they didn't support the tactic of the strike the 'vast majority', to use the words of

'The most obvious reactionaries may or may not have been chastened by their call for a general strike, but the most important thing to remember is that there are many other reactionaries queuing up to take their place.'

the *News Letter*, supported its reactionary aims. The reason for the demand for the bringing back of Stormont was, according to one striker, 'Because we are in a majority, and that way we would rule the country and do what we want'.

Considering the countless number of sectarian assassinations the UDA have been involved in over the last couple of years, considering the mas-

sive repression the 'Protestant Parliament' was engaged in during its existence, it takes little imagination to see what that particular picket meant when he said 'we could do what we want'.

So, while the Loyalist strike may have changed the balance of forces within the Unionist camp, the essential aim of the Unionists — 'unhindered majority rule' — remains the same. And the consequences of that rule have similarly not changed — all Unionists back what Paisley is after, when it comes to 'security measures'.

As for the British troops, their essential role has been confirmed by the strike — they remained in the background throughout, except in the city centre and the Catholic areas where they were on duty to fight 'terrorism'. They are there to defeat the uprising of the Catholic people and its call for real majority rule — for the right of Irish people as a whole to rule themselves.

The most obvious reactionaries may or may not have been chastened by their call for a general strike, but the most important thing to remember is that there are many other reactionaries queuing up to take their place.

COMING CONFERENCES ON IRELAND

THIS WEEK sees the first of a number of initiatives on Ireland taking place in Britain, designed to take positive steps to intervene on the side of the oppressed Northern minority.

A Student Conference on Ireland will be held this Sunday, 15 May, at the Trent Park site of the Middlesex Polytechnic starting at 11.30am [nearest tube Oakwood]. Bernadette McAlliskey [Devlin] will be a guest speaker. The sponsors of the conference, the Student Movement Campaign on Ireland, see the conference as

planning activity to expose the continued use of the British Army in Ireland. All student readers of Red Weekly are urged to attend this important venture. For more details phone Von McClary, 01-8041958.

On the same day the Trade Union Committee Against the Prevention of Terrorism Act are holding a conference on the PTA at Hammersmith Town Hall, starting at 4pm. For more details phone 01-266 9833.

For 28/29 May the British Peace Committee have organised a delegate conference on

'British involvement in Ireland and the consequences of British withdrawal'. Six Labour MPs are sponsoring this conference, details of which can be obtained from BPC, 84 Claverton Street, London SW1V 3AX.

Finally the Troops Out Conference will take place on 2/3 July. This initiative is open to all individuals and groups who support the demands of 'Troops out now, self-determination for the Irish people as a whole. Details from Troops Out Conference, c/o Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

by Graeme Cookson [Red Weekly]



The hardline loyalist Shankill Road on the first day of the stoppage — and no troops in sight.



The night before the strike: police searchlight from a helicopter



The Catholic Falls Road on the third day of the stoppage, and the



The TUC chat freely to UDA strikers blocking the streets near the hardline loyalist Sandy Row — on the third day of the strike — an



Is Bhutto finished?



BHUTTO

Red Weekly (28 April) expressed a rather optimistic view about Pakistan. It's true that Bhutto looks far less stable than before the elections, but his regime is far from being finished one way or the other. It 'looked' finished to Red Weekly for two main reasons: Bhutto losing his popular support and his reliance on the Army.

But the particular nature of the Pakistan National Alliance's anti-

Bhutto movement and the attitude of the Left towards it was not taken into account.

The first few weeks of the PNA's movement found the Left throughout the country (with the exception of a section of the banned pro-Moscow National Awami Party) totally indecisive and inactive on the political scene. Three attitudes were expressed:

1. The PNA should be supported for its anti-Government positions.
2. The PNA is fighting on a purely religious basis, so it should be opposed in the interests of Bhutto.
3. Neither of them can be supported, for both are fighting for their own interests and are anti-worker and peasants.

When the movement grew it became more and more a fight between Islam and socialism. All socialist elements, in and out of the labour movement, are well aware of the consequences of a fanatic rightist government. It is obvious that all leftist elements can be physically extinguished, simply by declaring themselves anti-Islam and anti-Pakistan.

This factor goes into Bhutto's favour and guarantees an overall tilt towards him in the absence of an independent workers' political party. His position is decisively stronger when it was made public that PNA's anti-Bhutto movement was supported and sponsored by America.

Bhutto's public appearances on May Day and PNA's expected big rally flopping mean he is again 'People's leader' and is in a far stronger position to negotiate with the PNA. After his meeting with Pir Pirago and other PNA leaders it seems obvious that Bhutto will remain in office, while making certain concessions to the PNA, like making changes in the present National Assembly and setting up a new Election Commission.

The only hope of getting Bhutto out of power lies in the presence of a strong left-wing political party. There are signs that such a party is in the making with the formation of the Frontier Democratic Front and Mubashir Hasan's 'intended' left-wing party.

The class character and positions of these organisations are a different matter. But these are the only organisations which are expected to pose a left opposition to Bhutto's People's Party and the PNA.

As for the role of the Generals, they too need a diplomat and a 'People's leader' to safeguard their interests in Pakistan. The PNA leadership does not have a single politician who can qualify for that, hence the Generals' publicly expressed loyalty to the Bhutto regime.

AYISHA HAIDER [Preston]
* See page 10.

Southall Bussing

THE ARTICLE on bussing in Southall by Hilary Driver (Red Weekly, 28 April) was fair enough in highlighting the racism that exists in schools in Ealing, but it missed out on some of the most sinister and dangerous aspects of bussing.

I have had direct experience of this problem having worked as a teacher in Ealing. The thing about bussing is the effect that it has on the kids themselves. The effect of bussing kids out to other schools led to resentment by the white kids and also made them regard the school as 'theirs' and being 'invaded' by 'outsiders'.

The consequences of this were that at many schools there was very bad racial violence and the forces of 'law and order' having to be called in to protect the black kids. (Of course this didn't work as the Ealing police are notorious for their racism.)

With a situation of such racial violence, the fact that the kids had to wait for buses (often for up to an hour) meant that they were very easy targets for ambushes by racist thugs.

In turn, the racial violence meant that Asian kids were let out of school half an hour earlier in order to prevent trouble.

This meant that these kids were then seen as privileged and great-er justification was given for the racial violence.

Bussing is more than just an enforced long journey just because you are black. It is carte blanche for racial thuggery and

Pygmies

THE MILKING of the Zaire war for its humour seems not to be confined only to the bourgeois press, but Red Weekly (26 April) seems also to be claiming its fair share with regard to the intervention of the 'pygmies'.

However, I should like to raise the question of the use of the term 'pygmies' in relation to the relative strengths today of French and Belgian imperialism. For myself, the term 'pygmy' in this way has always reflected the underlying racist ideology of bourgeois social anthropologists who use the term to describe also the 'Negroid peoples of Africa and S.E. Asia, remarkable for their short stature... (who)... live in the Ituri forest region of the Congo basin, while those of Asia, Negro-Ides, include the Semang (Malaya), the Aeta (Philippines), and the Ayome (New Guinea)...' (Penguin Encyclopedia, 1965, 'Pygmies' page 491).

The common insinuation of the use of this term is not only that of the small stature of these people, but also their inferiority.

While I would accept that France and Belgium today may be both small and inferior imperialist powers, the use of the term 'pygmy' to describe them, I feel, smells of racist connotations. I hope that Red Weekly will, in future, exercise a little more care in the use of terms such as these.

JULIUS KARANJA [London]

A SERIOUS discussion of the role of the pygmy bowmen in Zaire would bring out the real tragedy of their situation. No sooner have these people from a tribal hunting-gathering culture come into contact with the capitalist world than they are manipulated and exploited by a ruthless dictatorship which uses them to fight in its repressive wars.

DICK ABERNETHY [Oxford]

* We have received a number of letters on this point. We agree and will try to make sure that it doesn't happen in the future.

IMG Notes

National Anti-Racist Caucus. Sunday 15 May, 10am. At National Centre. Pooled fans.

S. Africa Campaign Caucus. Sunday 22 May, 2pm. At National Centre.

IMG International School. 4/5/6/7 June. For members and sympathisers. More details to follow. Comrades to note date for keeping free. Watch this space for further details.

National Branch Organisers Aggregate. Date changed to Saturday 25 June. Further details to follow.

IMG International Bulletin, No. 1 of this new bulletin is just out — for IMG members and sympathisers. Includes Rousset on Vietnamese CP & the Colonial Revolution. Branch orders at 5p each to International Bureau, National Centre.

Letter from

BIG FLAME

to the

SWP

TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

Dear Comrades,

We in Big Flame have decided to write you this letter, because we were seriously concerned about the standing of two revolutionary candidates in the recent Stechford by-elections. We also wanted to raise with you the whole question of participation of revolutionaries in national and local elections. Of course we will welcome a reply to this letter.

Let's start with our position in Stechford. As you know, Big Flame supported the International Marxist Group (IMG)

candidate — Brian Heron. We would have liked to see only one candidate there, representing class struggle and a real socialist alternative. But this did not happen — and we felt we had to make a choice. We did not support Brian Heron because we think that politically we are nearer to the IMG than the SWP. We did it for two reasons:

1. We knew that the IMG had approached you several times about the possibility of standing a joint candidate. But you had refused even to talk about this. We considered this attitude dangerously sectarian and non-productive especially in relation to the confusion that it would have raised among the Stechford

working class.

2. We thought that the IMG were extremely open in their campaign. Their candidate, Brian Heron, besides being an experienced member of their organisation, is a local shop-steward in the BLMC Longbridge plant, actively involved in the struggle. Their platform was open to other revolutionary organisations (like Big Flame), to Asian groups and organisations, etc. Their campaign drew the support of shop-steward committees, one local prominent member of the Communist Party and two prominent members of the Labour Party district committee. As Brian Heron said: 'We are running this campaign to illustrate what a class struggle candidate could be like — to encourage the process'.

Big Flame's general position on elections has a lot of similarities with yours. Taken for granted that, as revolutionaries, we see the real changes in society taking place outside parliament, we share your view that revolutionaries must stand candidates in the next elections — i.e. must use elections in a tactical sense. Why?

Because of the nature of the policies of the Labour Government and the necessity to give hundreds, thousands of militants a focus, a rallying point. This is especially true in a period like this, when after a low ebb in class struggle the fight back is beginning to take place.

Like you, we believe that elections can be an effective propaganda weapon. But that does not mean that the number of votes is irrelevant.

In order to make an effective propaganda, we must also show that we have a considerable strength. Just think of the very demoralising effect which last year's General Elections in Italy had on the comrades of the revolutionary left. There, the campaign went incredibly well, but the joint slate got only 3.5 per cent of the votes, when

everybody, including the ruling class, was predicting 3.5 per cent.

Finally we think that the standing of revolutionary candidates is an important weapon to counter the growing strength and influence that the National Front and other fascists are gaining.

That's why we are proposing to you and other forces the possibility of fighting for the formation of a 'class struggle' slate. But we'll come to this later.

In our opinion the outcome of the Stechford by-election shows us that there is a possibility for revolutionaries to get good results in elections in this period, both in terms of campaign and in terms of votes. But this fact certainly wasn't helped by the fact that two revolutionary candidates were standing. How many working class people were asking all of us during the campaign: 'Why aren't you united?' Honestly we did not have an answer. We can certainly say that the total vote obtained by the IMG and the SWP (871 — 2.7 per cent) would have been considerably higher had you come to an agreement.

Furthermore you should ask yourselves why your candidate got less votes than that of the IMG, an organisation which is much smaller and less influential than yours. The answer to this question lies in the different nature of the two campaigns, again pointing out the usefulness of the idea of class struggle candidates.

We would like you to think seriously about these points, unless you really believe that you are, on your own, the only revolutionary tendency in this country; or that the process of building the revolutionary party in Britain, a long and complicated process, can be reduced to increasing the size of the SWP.

Which leads us to some concrete proposals. As far as we are concerned, the electoral campaign for the next general election has already started. Our priority at this stage is the fight for the formation of a 'class struggle' slate — opposed to Labour's capitalist policies. It would include revolutionary organisations, local shop-steward committees, rank & file bodies, women's groups, black organisations, claimants groups. As well as non-aligned individuals, prominent intellectuals etc. Its programme, one of action, would be discussed and negotiated among all these forces, taking into account their relative weight and importance in the areas where we would stand. Our greatest hope is that the SWP, the single largest revolutionary organisation, would take part in the formation of this slate.

Just think of the rejoicing and enthusiasm which has been created all over Europe by the recent success of a joint revolutionary slate in the local elections in France.

We will welcome a reply and invite you to discuss these matters further.

The National Secretariat
Big Flame

This letter was sent by the far left group, Big Flame on 25.4.77. To date they have received no reply. We are printing it as a way of continuing the discussion on the need for a united far left intervention into elections — eds.

Photo: G.M. COOKSON (Red Weekly)



IMG candidate Brian Heron canvasses in Stechford.

Students and Revolutionaries

THE COMRADES of the Warwick International Socialist Society ask of the Socialist Students Alliance (Letters, Red Weekly, 21 April).

'Just what does a militant alternative mean?'

We should start from where 'real' revolutionaries start; with the objective situation facing students and workers. As a central part of its overall attack on the working class and its allies the Labour Government is, on behalf of the British bourgeoisie, cutting education to shreds.

To this attack both students and workers have to respond. Everyone agrees. The question is — how? The class perspective, the only perspective that can offer a solution favourable to students and workers is one which links the struggles of students as a mass to the mass struggle of the working class.

and comrade Duffy of Lancashire NOISS determines whether or not you have a 'class perspective' — how many SWP members you know!

Some months ago NOISS had a better position. Then they called for unity with the National Union of Students and 'for a campaigning union' which gave rise to hopes that NOISS understood the need to win the mass of students through their own mass organisation to the banner of class struggle politics.

Their latest positions seem to indicate that they have ditched this position, because if it's true that there isn't a single worker in the SSA, it is also true that there isn't one in the NUS either and the logic is again... 'Fuck the NUS' and join NOISS. That is not called 'commitment to real revolution'.

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For the information of the Warwick comrades, SSA members not only played leading roles in the colleges in both the campaigns they mentioned (and some face criminal charges as a result) but also in a number such as the NUS Women's Campaign, the National Abortion Campaign and the Student Movement Campaign on Ireland where NOISS have yet to be seen.

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Socialist Challenge

Editor explains its tasks

Red Weekly and the International Marxist Group will be throwing as many technical resources as possible into the launching of a new paper on 9 June. TARIQ ALI, the editor of the new Socialist Challenge explains the thinking behind it.

Socialist Challenge is being launched at a time when working class politics in Britain are at the crossroads. The co-existence of a Labour government and a grave economic and social crisis has created a contradictory political situation. On the one hand a Labour government carrying out reactionary Tory policies at the behest of British and international capital has bred disillusionment and despair within sections of the working class.

This is reflected in the cynical response by workers to Labour in the Workington and Ashfield by-elections and in last week's local elections. Feeling betrayed and desperate, some workers are moving rapidly to the extreme right as the increase in votes for the fascist National Front indicates. Racism and sexism is widespread. It is the existence of these divisions in the working class which makes a fight back more difficult.

VANGUARD

But the existence of a crisis has opened the road for breaking the classic British reformist distinction between politics (what happens in parliament) and economic struggles (confined to the factories). Today politics and economics are intertwined as never before. Every strike which challenges the Social Contract creates a political crisis for the Labour government.

It is this feature of contemporary British politics which offers revolutionary socialists enormous opportunities.

There is a polarisation taking place within the organised labour movement. The votes obtained by far-left candidates in the T&GWU elections (nearly 40,000) illustrate this fact.

There exists a vanguard in the workers movement which is prepared to struggle against the needs of the capitalist system and the roadblocks erected by the

Labour and trades union leaderships.

But there are tens of thousands of militants who are prepared to participate in and even unleash important class struggles against the line of the reformist leaders who are not at the moment prepared to join any of the existing, far left organisations. While this does indicate a certain political backwardness on their part — a backwardness related to the influence of syndicalist ideas in British working class politics — it is also related to the negative experience of the far left in Britain.

SOUR

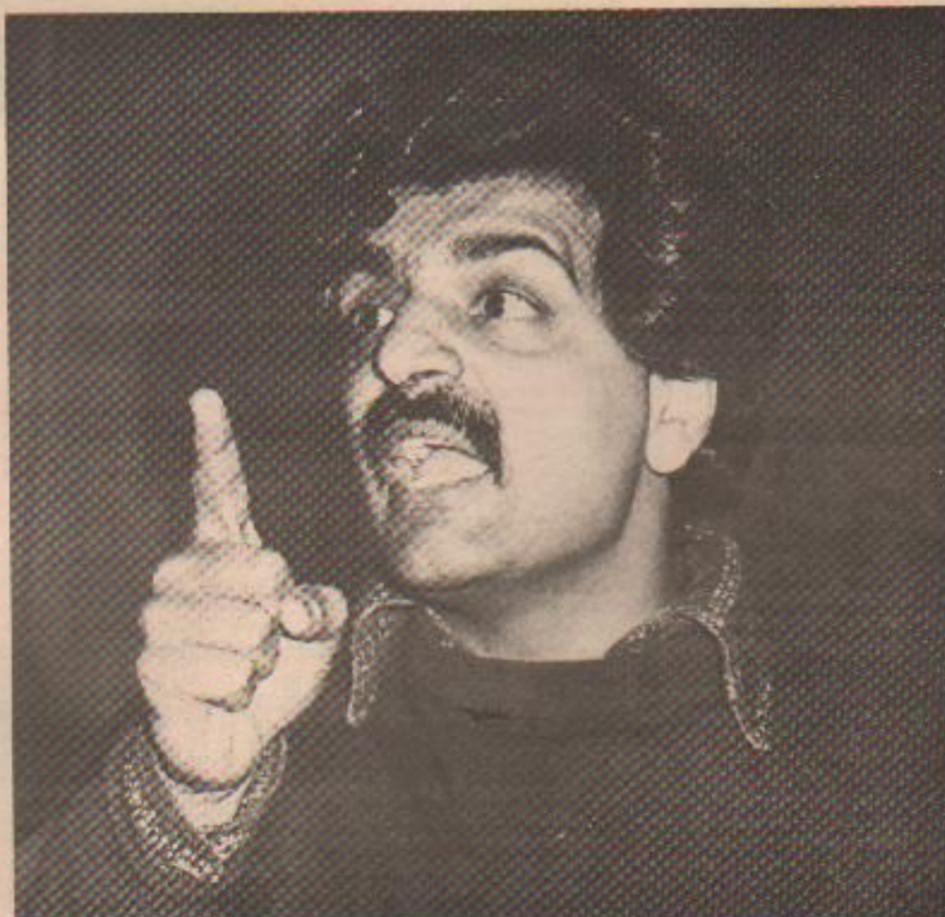
The largest British revolutionary left groups in the fifties and sixties left a sour taste in the mouths of many working class militants. These organisations were not built around the great questions of programme facing the working class internationally and in Britain, but on questions of tactics.

Disagreements over tactics led to splits and expulsions from these organisations. Suppression of internal democracy, the political life within these organisations and the political education of their cadre was the result.

Socialist Challenge will fight for a new relationship between the far left and the vanguard workers. By campaigning for a unified revolutionary organisation we will be trying to establish a correct and principled basis for the building of a revolutionary party in this country. This is a task which we think no one group or organisation will achieve simply through their own growth.

URGENT

It should be obvious that in this situation the struggle for unity in action of the revolutionary left against all species of reformism acquires an immediacy. It is not something which is correct in the abstract. It is something which is needed ur-



gently if we are to make a qualitative leap in this period.

A starting point for such a unity should be a fight to construct class struggle tendencies in the trade unions: to unite all those forces prepared to resist and launch a counter-offensive

against class-collaborationism, which is embodied in the concordat agreed to by the Labour government and the TUC.

These tendencies should be non-exclusive in character. Their aim should not be to act as fronts for one group or the other but to

help build a mass current responsive to revolutionary socialist politics. It is only the conscious building of such a current which will be able to sustain the growth and development of a real revolutionary party in the coming years.

A common fight on this front, coupled with united campaigns against racism and sexism and British involvement in Ireland would be the first vital steps towards forging a unified revolutionary organisation in this country.

Socialist Challenge is the vehicle through which we will fight for the achievement of these political tasks. It will be a paper reflecting the views of the IMG, but our aim is to make it into something much broader both in terms of its political and cultural coverage. That is why we will open our pages to political groups, non-aligned militants, intellectuals, women's liberation and gay organisations, tenants committees, black groups, etc., who have no other channel of communication.

FOCUS

In other words we will give our battle for unity a concrete focus by attempting to involve both other groups and individual journalists working on other journals such as *The Leveler*.

Our aim is to break out of the narrow confines of far-left politics and produce a newspaper which can serve the needs of thousands of militants not involved directly with any political organisation. The large votes gained by the fascists in local elections make this a vital task. Narrow party chauvinism has to be combated.

This will mean a different sort of newspaper from *Red Weekly* and it is something which will not take place overnight. But it is something which we will struggle to achieve.

TARIQ ALI

WHAT'S ON

AGITBIT DIARY: This poster diary is available for use by all progressive and alternative groups. 500 copies posted throughout London. Copy in by 20th of the month previously. For rates and further details contact AGITBIT, 31 Regent Rd., London N4. Phone 272 3810.

IRAN Bulletin of the Committee Against Repression in Iran (just out), 5p plus postage, or £1 for 6 issues from CARJ, Box 4, Rising Free, 182 Upper St., London N1.

MAY 28, A Socialist Festival of Music. Over a hundred musicians will be taking part including Carol Grimes, Red Square, Henry Cow, People Liberation Music. Tickets available in advance at £1.50. Postal Orders to Battersea Arts Centre, and sent to May 28 Bookings, Battersea Arts Centre, Lavender Hill, London SW11.

SOCIALIST TEACHERS Alliance meeting, Wed 18 May, 7.30pm at Prince Albert pub, Whitechapel Rd., London E1 (near Kings Cross station). A discussion on the campaign to defend the Tyndale teachers and an assessment of the compulsory transfer situation.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST Group public meeting, 'The Need for a Vanguard Party Today: Lenin and the Bolshevik Party', Speaker David Yaffe, Adm 20p. Tues 17 May, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, 7.30pm. Meeting based on the article in *Revolutionary Communist* No 6.

LONDON SPARTACIST Group public meeting: 'The Transitional Programme and the Post-War Economy' by Judith Hunter, Fri 13 May, 7.30pm. The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Rd, W1 (Warren St. tube).

INTERNATIONAL FORUM on Women's Struggles, 13 May, 7.30pm. Old Theatre, LSE. Women internationally meet to discuss their struggles as women and socialists.

BURNLEY 'The Social Contract and Unity of the Left' — Joint Workers League/IMG public meeting, 7.30pm, Tues 24 May. The Old Red Lion pub, corner Manchester Rd/Burnley High St, Burnley. Speakers Rob Pooley (NUT) and Liverpool Workers League, Davy Jones (IMG National Committee).

OUTCOME: magazine of the NUS Gay Liberation Campaign's North West Region, 20p (inc. p&st) from Lancaster University Gay Soc, c/o Students Union, University of Lancaster, Bailrigg, Lancaster. For more information on the campaign, speakers, etc. contact Brian Windley, 9 Fern Bank, Lancaster. Tel: Lanc. 89906.

MARXISM AND MEDIA Forum, 'The Mass Media in Socialist Society', Speaker Tariq Ali, Sunday 15 May, 7.00pm. London Film-makers Co-op, 44 Fitzroy Road, London NW1. (Chalk Farm tube or Primrose Hill BR).

RUSKIN History Workshop 1977, 'History of Rank and File Movements', 21/22 May. Tickets for weekend £2.50 from History Workshop Collective, Ruskin College, Walton St., Oxford. Further details phone Gordon Williams (0865 53716).

RELEASE Political Prisoners in Southern Africa. A one day conference at Ruskin College, Oxford on Sat 14 May. Conference discussion and Workshops on South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia by ex-political prisoners and freedom fighters. Registration fee £1. Full details from Ruskin Kitson Committee, Ruskin College, Oxford or Oxford Anti-Apartheid Group, 105 Cardigan St., Oxford (tel: 0865 53755).

REMEMBER SOWETO! 16 June 1978. Demonstrate 18 June 1977, in London. Assemble Speakers Corner, 1.00pm. Rally Bulling Top County Hall, 3.00pm. Called by National Union of Students, supported by the National Union of School Students and the Anti-Apartheid movement. Contact NUS International Dep., 3 Endsleigh St., London WC1. 01-387 1277 for details and publicity material.

ACTSS Legal Workers Branch on 13 May at 7pm at Transport & General Workers Union Headquarters, 200 North Gower St., near Warren St tube station. All workers in solicitors' offices welcome.

ZIMBABWE — Who are the Real Terrorists? Public meeting organised by Southampton Anti-Apartheid Group — speakers from Zimbabwe, St. Matthews Church Hall, 7.30pm, 11 May.

MANCHESTER International Forum, 'On Regroupment: For a United Revolutionary Party', Speaker Brian Grogan (IMG National Secretary), Wed 16 May, 8pm. Council Chamber, Bemas Wells Building, University of Manchester Institute of Science & Technology Students Union. Adm 20p. Organised by IMG.

COVENTRY Debate on 'The British Road to Socialism', Speakers from the Communist Party and the International Marxist Group, Fri 10 June, 7.30pm. Room D14, Lanchester Poly.

HALF MOON Theatre requires Press/Publicity Officer. Write to 27 Alle St., E1 crring 480-8455.

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST League public meeting, Sun 15 May, 7.30pm at the Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, (nearest tube Warren Street) with Harry Luckwell speaking on 'The Labour Party — Bosses or Workers Party?'

Advertisement

WORKERS SAY NO TO THE SHAH

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by T. JALIL

foreword by Bob Wright
(Asst. Gen. Sec. AUEW)

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World Outlook



Helmeted Japanese Trotskyists confront police.

★ Japan

The 12-year struggle to stop the opening of Tokyo's new international airport at Sanrizuka is reaching a climax. Last week police demolished two steel towers at the end of the runway, built in 1971 and 1972 to stop planes using the airport.

The construction of the airport began in 1965. The whole time the peasants in the area have resisted the forced expropriation of their land with the help of workers and students from Tokyo itself. The airport has been the scene of many battles between police and demonstrators in which a number of people have been killed.

One of the largest demonstrations came on 17 April this year when 23,000 peasants, workers and students fought with police. The next day police made a number of raids

on the local offices of the Kyosendo, the youth organisation of the Japanese section of the Fourth International, which has been prominent throughout the Sanrizuka struggle.

Prime Minister Takedo Fukuda has decided to finish the airport by the end of the year — hence the new offensive against the Sanrizuka peasants. But a number of problems remain. For example, blocking by the rail union and the closing of an oil pipeline by the local population has left the airport without fuel, while opponents of the noise and pollution of the new airport have added their voices to the protest.

Despite this latest victory for Fukuda the struggle is far from over.

Already a mass demonstration against the demolition of the two towers has led to the most violent and prolonged battle with the police for some years.

★ Spain

There will be four far left electoral platforms in the Spanish general elections in June, all of them illegal. Two of the Maoist organisations, the PTE and ORT, are fielding separate slates. A group of other similar organisations, headed by the MC (Communist Movement), is supporting a United and Popular Candidature.

Three other organisations — the LCR (Spanish sympathising section of the Fourth International), AC (Communist Action) and OIC (Communist Left Organisation), both of whom have had links with the Socialist Workers Party in Britain — have launched a Workers United Front slate. Against the United and Popular Candidature they argue the need for a national agreement between parties on the need for a revolutionary alternative to the reformist parties.

A full-length article on revolutionaries and the Spanish elections, which was to have appeared this week, will be in the next issue of Red Weekly.

★ Sahara

In the aftermath of the raid by the Polisario Sahara Liberation fighters on the Mauritanian mining town of Zouerate there has been raised the threat of further French military intervention in Africa.

Two French people were killed in the raid and another six taken off by the guerrillas. Many of the French technicians in Zouerate have chosen to return to France. Mauritania and Morocco, with implicit French backing, split the former Spanish colony of Western Sahara between them in February last year, in open defiance of the wishes of the country's inhabitants.

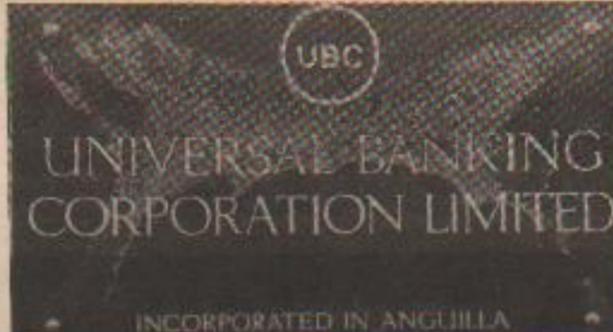
The French Government has come out with the same bluster which has marked its intervention in Zaire, accusing the guerrillas of being 'Algerian mercenaries' — which, since they were Spanish-speaking, seems unlikely!

France has a major responsibility in continuing to deny the Saharan people their right to independence. It is the country's mineral wealth which it, like everyone else, has its eyes on.

Mauritania is a typically pathetic ally of French imperialism. One of the poorest countries in Africa, it has a military spending of 80 per cent of its annual budget. Although its war against the Polisario is unwinnable, President Ould Daddah is committed to returning the 'straying Saharan brothers' to Mauritania. Since the errant Saharans clearly have other ideas fighting will continue 'whatever the cost'.

Judging by the raid on Zouerate — 135 Mauritanian casualties, two aircraft destroyed and the power station put out of action — the cost to Mauritania will continue to be high.

Beyond the fringe...



'LAST WEEKEND Scotland Yard's Serious Crimes Squad, operating jointly with the Fraud Squad, made a series of arrests in connection with international fraud offences. This is part of the campaign to implement Section 31 of the Companies Act 1976, which is designed to impose more stringent conditions on fringe banks.

Under previous law any bank registered overseas — even ones whose business would not fall into usual banking categories — was allowed to set up in Britain without the approval of the Department of Trade or the Bank of England. This means that fly-by-nights were not even obliged to register the names of their directors.

We have already reported on the shady business of the Universal Banking Corporation of Craw-

ford Street, London. Scotland Yard have made a number of arrests on charges of conspiracy to defraud the public by publishing a false balance sheet. The men charged are Mario d'Agnolo, Fernando Delaboz, Jean Mamed Karim, Andrew Brian Pritchard, Gino Scalandra, Samy Wagner, Roberto Loioni (or Loyola) and Philip Dews. D'Agnolo was also allegedly found in possession of forged banknotes and Loioni/Loyola charged with handling

stolen cheques.

But UBC also deposited money for collection by fascists in the Banco de Bilbao in London, the Banco Espanol in Brussels, the main office of the Banco de Alicante, the Banco Meridional and the Banco de Granada in Madrid and an unnamed bank in Malaga.

Until charges are preferred against those most recently arrested, we are not able to reveal any names. Whether these arrests are tied in with operations similar to those of UBC cannot be said with certainty. The police refused to comment on early reports that arms smuggling and kidnapping were involved.

A reliable source informs me that the investigations centred on the International Commerce Bank of 60, Pall Mall. It is not possible to say who owns ICB but it is apparently 'carrying on the business of Maritime Bank', a company of equally obscure origins based in Buckingham Palace Road, which closed down last year.

ICB, like the Maritime Bank and the Universal Banking Corporation, is registered in Anguilla.

A company called Bear Securities acts as bankers for ICB. Bear

Securities was bought by a Yorkshire consultant called James Maude, acting on behalf of a small Swiss group known at first as Cosema SA and later as Magica Corvina SA. The owners of this company are undisclosed, but despite Bank of England refusal to grant permission for the bank to deal even in non-resident sterling accounts it was able to continue operations without DoT permission.

Maude at first claimed that ICB was owned by 'Anguillian interests', but later by 'Americans'. Irvine Benjamin, of Benjamin and Benjamin, solicitors to ICB's purchaser, confirmed a list of three directors. He said that Pier Luigi Torri, who had run Maritime Bank, was neither a director nor a shareholder of the new company.

All this is extremely irregular and a thorn in the side of the bigger, 'respectable' banks. But we cannot, of course, claim that these businesses have UBC's connections with financing fascist terrorism.

After charges are made against those arrested we may begin to be able to clear up some of the obvious questions which need answering.

CHRIS O'BRIEN

Bhutto totters

Javed Hussein writes from Pakistan:

The city of Lahore was once again the focus of serious clashes between demonstrators opposed to Bhutto and the repressive forces. Troops opened fire on a demonstration and wounded 40 people, several of whom have since died. This brings the total death toll of people killed over the last two and a half months to nearly 400.



Police attack demonstration in Karachi.

CRISIS IN PAKISTAN
Speakers: Tariq Ali & others
Southall Town Hall
Saturday 14 May
6.00pm

In the hottest centres of confrontation: Lahore, Karachi, Lyallpur the extreme right-wing Jamaat-i-Islami and its religious divines have been providing the political and organisational shock-troops for the opposition demonstrations. Their slogans are: 'Islam Yes, Socialism No', 'Implement Islamic Laws', etc.

The early demands related to civil liberties have given way to a more ideological debate between 'Islam' and 'Socialism'. Bhutto is portrayed as a 'socialist' because of the large-scale nationalisations which his regime inaugurated.

In the border provinces of NWFP and Baluchistan, the movement is still secular and concentrates on the demand for new elections, civil liberties, etc., though even here cheap and sordid appeals to religion are not unknown. In this situation socialists have to say to both Bhutto and the PNA (Pakistan National Alliance — the umbrella organisation of the opposition parties):

'We cannot support either of your houses, both of which are infected with a cancerous plague. We fight for the interests of our own house which harbours the oppressed in town and countryside and whose interests are alien to all you gentlemen'.

STRUGGLE

Thus independent working class forces should be opposing the repression and utilising their own methods of struggle: factory occupations, creation of workers' defence guards and demands for the right to strike, for trade union freedoms, for the right to distribute socialist propaganda, for the release of all political prisoners, for the withdrawal of troops from Baluchistan are some of the demands which should be raised.

At the time of writing Bhutto is engaged in discussions with the opposition leaders in Sibala, where they are under arrest. The tactical ineptitude of the latter

was revealed sharply in the fiasco of the so-called 'long march' to Rawalpindi to besiege Bhutto's house. Bhutto had the capital sealed off by police and army units and the march fizzled out.

ARMY

On the political front Bhutto has made ominous moves, some of them analogous to Chile. He has had the old butcher of Dacca, General Tikka Khan, elected to the Upper House as a PPP Senator, and reports indicate that he will be placed in charge of the important Defence Ministry. It is an attempt to keep the army at bay, but having used it to quell the recent disturbances, Bhutto might well have sharpened its appetite for more direct political power. Certainly the young colonels and majors are not averse to political discussions in the army messes.

The decapitation of the Pakistani state by the establishment of Bangladesh has posed severe problems for the Pakistan ruling class. The latter presides over a truncated and moth-eaten republic which has the largest debt of any semi-colonial country.

A continuing crisis could well bring into question the future existence of the country as a totally separate entity. A forced confederation with India or with Iran and Afghanistan? Which would preserve the 'stability of the region'? No answers to these questions have yet been finalised, but if Bhutto fell they would be posed somewhat sharply.

In a curious fashion all the protagonists of the political struggles in Pakistan are aware of this fact. Bhutto, the PNA and the Army know what is at stake is the existing boundaries of South Asia. Their inability to unite reflects a political death-wish, in itself a reflection of the irrational basis on which Pakistan was established in the first place.

3 May 1977

Workers' Jubilee 1917-1977



Trotsky joins Bolsheviks

TROTSKY's first speech to the Petrograd Soviet after his arrival on 4 May caused a stir. A contemporary wrote 'Rumours were going round to the effect that he was worse than Lenin.' At that time Trotsky was still a member of the Mezhrayonka (Inter-Borough Organisation). RIC SISSONS continues our series on one jubilee that

On 10 May Lenin, Zinoviev and Kamenev met Trotsky to discuss the fusion of the Mezhrayonka and the Bolsheviks. These talks had been underway since the February revolution. The Mezhrayonka, founded in 1913, numbered at most 3,000 members, based in a few workers districts of Petrograd, included some seasoned political agitators and organisers. Among their ranks stood Lunacharsky, Ryazanov, Mannilsky, Pokrovsky, Yoffe, Uritsky and Volodarsky. People of such experience would prove to be invaluable to the Bolshevik Party. No principled differences existed between the two organisations.

In their public meetings the Mezhrayonka were continually asked why they were not in the Bolshevik Party. At this time Lenin also hoped to regroup the internationalist left wing of the Mensheviks, led by Martov, who voted with the Bolsheviks against the Soviet participating in the coalition government.

These, dispersed with the 'outward dogma' of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, in favour of the seizure of state power by the working class.

This was essentially the position Trotsky had held since the publication in 1906 of *Results and Prospects*. Trotsky argued that the Russian bourgeoisie was stillborn due to the dominance of foreign capital in industry and the economic role the state had played. Nevertheless the imposition of modern capitalist techniques within Russian industry created a concentrated, militant, proletariat. 11 years before the 1917 revolution, Trotsky argued the working class would complete the tasks of the bourgeois revolution and carry this through to a successful socialist revolution. Having recognised that the revolution would occur first in the backward east rather than the west, Trotsky drew the conclusion that the new workers state could only survive with the extension of the revolution to

tion on the question of building the party and now dropped the idea of the fusion of the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks. Lenin proposed that the Mezhrayonka join the Bolshevik party, with representatives on the Pravda editorial board and the Central Committee. Trotsky did not agree, preferring a formal fusion and a new organisation. He stated — 'I cannot describe myself as a Bolshevik. It is undesirable to stick to the old labels.' Lenin put down the failure of the unity talks to the 'ambition' of Trotsky.

Trotsky only briefly held to this opinion of opposing the fusion. A few days later he met Gorky and the editors of *New Life*. Gorky's paper was influential among the left Mensheviks. This meeting convinced Trotsky of the need to join the Bolsheviks. The two parties merged at the 6th Congress of the Bolshevik Party held in July. Trotsky and Uritsky became members of the Central Committee.

Trotsky finally had found his way into the ranks of the Bolshevik Party. Under the guidance of



TROTSKY

and peasantry to the socialist revolution.

RIC SISSONS

Derg's hands dyed deepest red

The 'revolutionary' Ethiopian military dictatorship murdered hundreds of workers and students last week.

The details of the incidents and the numbers killed are still far from clear. The *Ethiopian Herald* proudly announced the execution of 282 'counter-revolutionaries' while an East German news agency preferred to report that they had been 'rendered harmless'.

The leader of the ruling military council, the Derg, Mengistu Haile Miriam, claimed that he would crush opposition 'with the might of the masses'.

But it was force of arms rather than mass strength which count-

ed. And many of the arms came from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. 45,000 small arms have arrived from Eastern Europe in the past week, mainly AK47 assault rifles to replace the Derg's obsolete US supplies. The American guns will be handed to the 'peasant army' for its assault on the Eritrean nationalists.

Which guns killed the hundreds of young people whose mutilated bodies lie in open graves along the road to Addis Ababa to Asmara we cannot tell. But the role of the workers states in propping up one of the most brutal regimes in Africa is despicable.

Even 'revolutionary' Cuba can hardly restrain its excitement at Mengistu's daring deeds. When Fidel Castro visited Addis last month the Cuban Communist Party's paper, *Granma*, carried a page-long photo feature and the text of a joint statement by Castro and Mengistu.

Earlier in the year, when Mengistu 'rendered harmless' his rivals in the Derg, *Granma's* staff writers had an attack of verbal diarrhoea. Forty-one very wide column inches were devoted to the successes of the 'victorious socialist revolution'.

We are told, for example, how the Derg 'announced profound and positive changes in the socio-economic structure of the country'. Radical phrases cover up the fact that the Derg is struggling to stabilise a capitalist economy in Ethiopia.

Most barefaced is *Granma's* echo of the Derg's claim to have recognised the democratic rights of 'various nationalities, particularly the Eritreans'. It is the struggle of the oppressed nationalities, particularly the Eritreans, which is the Derg's weakest link and most undermines their claim to the 'might of the masses'.

Behind last week's massacre lie the hundreds of defeats inflicted

on the army in Eritrea, the mass desertions and the towns fallen to the guerilla organisations. In the major cities it is the strength of the opposition workers parties, particularly the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party, which forces the Derg to further repression and to replenish its military hardware.

As for the Soviet Union and its allies, their interest could hardly be more cynical. Their attachment to the Derg is dictated by a series of economic and strategic motives, among which is a wish to extend their access to the Red Sea. The Derg's highly principled espousal of Djiboutian independence and its rather less principled crushing of Eritrean nationalism are not unconnected with the fact that these provide the country's two major Red Sea outlets.

There has been a switch in alignments on the African side of the Red Sea in recent months. The Americans have tried to maintain

relations with the Derg while backing the Eritreans as an alternative. Now that the Derg has decided to put all its eggs in the Russian basket the US will no doubt step up aid to the oppositionists, particularly the right-wing Ethiopian Democratic Union, and to their backers in the Sudan.

So Derg allegations of CIA involvement are almost certainly true. But this, and the unsavoury character of many of the opposition parties, do not determine the attitude of revolutionary socialists. The only way to kick out the CIA and the imperialists is to support the workers' and students' struggle against the military regime and the democratic rights of the oppressed nationalities.

'Marxist-Leninist' hot air from the Derg will not frighten off the Americans. Only the Ethiopian people can do that.

CHRIS O'BRIEN

Eritrean autonomy may be on the way — courtesy of the Derg!

The Derg has made a mistake in its first sortie into great power diplomacy. It cut its links with the United States before it has arrived at any firm deal with the Soviet Union.

The problem is that the USSR's Red Sea ally since 1969 has been Somalia, which is watching the Soviet-Ethiopian talks with some trepidation. The USSR is now in a position to impose on the Derg an arrangement which will both suit its own purposes and not upset the Somalis.

The main points of the Ethiopian proposals are believed to be:

* Cession of the Ogaden region of Ethiopia to Somalia.

* Joint Ethiopian-Somalian guarantees of the independence of the former French colony of Djibouti, which is due next month.

* Soviet support for the Eritrean Liberation Front, to facilitate a negotiated autonomy which would maintain Ethiopian access to the Eritrean Red Sea ports.

Even these proposals are not acceptable to Somalia and the EPLF so the Derg may have to go even further to keep Soviet backing.



A militant picket was mounted in London to protest the Ethiopian murders last week.

Photo: LAURENCE SPANHAM (FPL)

'Front Line' states Back seat drivers

THE CONTINUING political deadlock over the situation in Zimbabwe is, as we pointed out two weeks ago, worrying everyone affected by what happens in southern Africa. So once again the initiative seems to lie with imperialism, this time represented by the Labour Government, who are rapidly getting together another scheme in place of the discredited one cooked up by Kissinger last year.

What of the real or supposed 'anti-imperialist' forces in the area? ROY ALEXANDER reports on how they are responding to the challenge.

The 'front-line states' have a habit of filling in the gap that comes with every political stalemate by a lot of militant talk and even some limited moves towards stepping up the armed struggle. But in reality these regimes are not prepared to see the growth of a real popular war against white racism in the sub-continent, with the threat it would involve to their already enfeebled economies, the political stability of their regimes and their relationships with imperialism and imperialist capital.

The 'front-line states' continually place their hopes on an imperialist-engineered settlement. If there are any doubts on

all the militant talk evaporated and Owen had the blessing of the front-line Presidents to go off to Salisbury and arrange yet another round of talks with the racists — even though the indications are that his scheme will involve important concessions to the white population.

A tougher line has been forthcoming from the 'Patriotic Front', led by Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe, who denounce the idea of further talks and stress the need to defeat the Smith regime in struggle. But this has to be seen in context. Nkomo is a veteran opportunist who has shared the approach of the front-line states for many years, and was a key participant in the Geneva talks farce. His difficulty is that he has put his political eggs in the basket of the guerilla struggle and is afraid that an early political initiative will strengthen the hand of his main political opponent — Bishop Muzorewa of the African National Congress (ANC).

In the wake of Geneva, Muzorewa applied the alternate tactic of applying internal political pressure on the Smith regime. Nkomo's fear is heightened by the fact that Owen has insisted on the participation of Muzorewa in future talks and the front-line states have expressed their willingness to dump their protégé in order to meet the imperialists' wishes.

of treacherous. His aim is to project himself as the most 'responsible' leader in the eyes of imperialism and the racists and his main political demand has been the holding of a referendum among Rhodesia's blacks to choose a 'leader' — a move which can have no other purpose than to promote his personal ambitions.

It should be said, however, that if Muzorewa's methods are treacherous and should be denounced as such, his aim is no different than that of Nkomo, who is simply seeking to ride to power on the backs of the guerillas.

Moreover, Muzorewa's manoeuvres are actually assisted by the sectarianism of the Patriotic Front. Muzorewa has an important following inside Zimbabwe, particularly in the urban areas. By refusing point-blank cooperation with him or his organisation, the other liberation groups simply make it easier for him to get away with his treachery.

A systematic campaign by the organisations involved in the guerilla struggle for an alliance with the Muzorewa ANC on the basis of a joint struggle for immediate majority rule and simultaneous political mobilisation in the cities would put Muzorewa on the spot. He would either have to agree — in which case he would be rendered useless to Smith and the imperialists —

There is a tragic lack of understanding of the type of 'unity' that is needed among the Zimbabwe liberation movements. It is not just a formal unity of organisations or leaders — the type promoted by the Organisation of African Unity and the front-line states to simplify their object of better controlling the liberation groups — but a fighting unity around a common programme of immediate political aims and methods of struggle.

This does not necessitate the fusion of organisations that may differ over long-range political aims; and it is the only way to escape the problem of personal conflicts and leadership rivalries which has plagued the African liberation struggle throughout its history.

The left in Britain has a major responsibility to mobilise support for the Zimbabwe freedom fighters, and to mount political actions in this country against the manoeuvres of British imperialism and its agents. But we must express our solidarity with all those groups struggling against the white racist regime and not reproduce within our ranks the divisive and fruitless splits that exist in Zimbabwe.

Of course, that does not preclude our material aid being channelled primarily to those who most need it and will most

Zimbabwe Week of Action

Thursday 12 May:
8.00-7.00pm. Picket: Foreign Office. 'End hangings in Rhodesia. Protest against all forms of oppression. Support for liberation movement.'
Public Meeting, 7.30pm. Westminster Central Hall. 'Zimbabwe: What Now?' Film and speakers.
[Before the meeting an exhibition, 'Mozambique-Zimbabwe: One Struggle' will be opened for press and public viewing.]

Friday 13 May:
SHELL/BP Pickets. [Organised by Zimbabwe Ad-hoc Campaign.]

Venues listed below. Phone 01-607 1270 for additional pickets.

Lunchtime
London: Shell-Max House, Strand BP Picket Victoria Street

Aberdeen: Altens Farm Road, Nigg.
Birmingham: Alpha Tower,

Saturday 14 May:
'To a Free Zimbabwe', Poetry reading by the Zimbabwean poet, Mudereri Kadhani, who has published 'Quarantine Rhythms'. Films — refugee camps in Mozambique. Literature — on Zimbabwe in particular from a wide variety of organisations. Poster displays and sales.
Discussion — with members of the liberation movement.

Organised by Zimbabwe Ad-Hoc Campaign

China links arms with imperialists

The invasion of Zaire's Shaba region by Soviet-paid mercenaries has aroused strong indignation and resistance from the Zairean people.

According to the *Peking Review*, (1 April 1977), that is.

While *Red Weekly* has analysed the situation in Zaire from an anti-imperialist viewpoint, clearly showing the reactionary nature of the Mobutu regime, China's official news agencies have issued a stream of glowing reports on Mobutu's 'achievements'. This includes the infliction of 'heavy losses' on the 'occupiers of Kasaji' by Zairean planes. Aerial bombing is not noted as a very discriminating weapon when used on towns, no matter whose hands they are in.

A Voice of America broadcast on 27 April reports that the Chinese are promising further 'positive help' to Mobutu, in addition to past deliveries of military equipment, food and other aid.

In part China is seizing an opportunity to link up with the considerable number of 'pro-Western' OAU members who support Mobutu — Morocco, Nigeria, Mauritania, for example. However, the deeper reason lies in China's overwhelming foreign policy consideration — opposition to the Soviet Union at all costs, and irrespective of the needs of the oppressed and exploited peoples involved.

Hence the Peking view that the Soviet Union 'massacred local residents' and destroyed two liberation movements in Angola, which is not a 'noose around the necks' and 'under the iron heel of the Soviet Union'.

Nor is Peking more perspicacious in the North of the African continent. In the past year we have seen the Egyptian masses rise up against the deterioration of their living standards,

resulting from Sadat's total subservience to US imperialism. But for *Peking Review*, 'over the past year the Egyptian people have continued their heroic struggle against Soviet social-imperialist pressure'.

Red Weekly has not been slow in making its own criticisms of the Soviet Union. But this is rather different from equating Cuban troops in Angola with the Portuguese imperialists, as if nothing had changed but the name of the occupying power. Or from describing the pauperisation of the Egyptian masses and the destruction of the gains of the Nasser period by western capitalism as 'the Egyptian people's heroic act of defending state independence and national dignity'.

Times would seem to have changed. In 1957 Chairman Mao wrote of the Hungarian revolution of 1956: 'The counter-revolutionary rebellion ... was a case of reactionaries inside a socialist country in league with the imperialists' (the quotation is still in the 'Little Red Book' given to visitors to China).

But then again — if Mao evaluated foreign events by the light of China's diplomatic manoeuvres, why shouldn't Chairman Hua?

PICKET ZAIRE EMBASSY

Imperialist Troops Out of Zaire

Down with Mobutu!

Called by the African Students Union (London).
Friday 20 May, 12.30—2.00.
at 58 Knightsbridge, SW1.

For further details contact:
ASU Asst. Sec. 01-328 5217.

I would like information about the

INTERNATIONAL INING MARXIST GROUP

Fill in the form below and send it to: National Secretary, International Marxist Group, 97 Caledonian Road, London N1.

Name

Address

MARCH AGAINST BENYON

This Saturday thousands will march in London against the Benyon anti-abortion Bill, and for a woman's right to choose. Red Weekly has put out a call to all its readers to join the demonstration against the vicious Bill which seeks to halve the number of legal abortions in this country.

WENDY FORREST examines the attacks on abortion rights and charts the fight back.

The Benyon Bill is the spearhead of the attempts to force women back into their 'natural' role of wives and mothers. This campaign is being waged very seriously by the bands of reactionaries and bigots who make up the anti-abortion movement. They are now organising their campaign in the trade union movement. Following the emergence of Labour Life we are now presented with glossy brochures from Trade Union Life and Catholic Action who are campaigning to reverse the policy of pro-abortion unions.

If that isn't enough the effects of Labour's cuts in the NHS are already doing the work of the SPUC brigade. Many of the existing facilities for abortion have been axed while plans for day-care clinics, making abortion

a far simpler and easier operation have been shelved.

The threatened closure in London of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital, where facilities for 400 abortions have already been withdrawn, and the Weir Maternity Hospital are part of a pattern which recurs throughout the country.

SUCCESS

But the fightback organised by NAC groups, together with health unions and cuts committees has had some success.

In both Leeds and Edinburgh the Community Health Councils have been won to opposition to the Benyon Bill and for a full implementation of the 1967 Act. Waltham Forest NAC has com-

mitted its Area Health Authority to spending £12,000 on abortion facilities.

As to the fight within the unions, it is clear that the trade union bureaucracy is happier to let the pro-abortion resolutions passed at the TUC and several national conferences gather dust in their files than fight for those policies.

Such a fightback would include the blacking of SPUC literature and speakers in schools by the National Union of Teachers and the National Association of Teachers in Further Education, a campaign against the publication of anti-abortion mythology by the media unions and an investigation by the health unions into the allegiance of consultants who control abortion policy.

One important job of any such investigation would be to expose racist practices by doctors and consultants. Some doctors, while denying abortion to white women, force black women to have abortions and insist they are sterilised.

To promote pro-abortion activity in the unions NAC is setting up a trade union liaison committee. Its first aim is to encourage the legal departments of sympathetic unions to help in the drafting of the NAC Model Bill which aims at guaranteeing women full legal control over their fertility.

The legislation which NAC seeks will reflect the experience of the women's movement and the fight for fertility control. Unlike the Abortion Law

Reform Association who are proposing a compromise bill, it will not offer MPs any ready-made restrictions on a woman's choice.

The overwhelming vote of support for this Saturday's demo at the National Women's Liberation Conference and the large attendance for the NAC workshop at the London Socialism and Feminist workshop on sexuality show that the abortion struggle is still recognised as an important campaign of the women's movement.

But there have been criticisms made by many women over NAC's methods of campaigning which must be discussed out. The support of the WLM is fundamental to the abortion struggle, just as the success of this struggle is central to the fight against

women's oppression.

The fight for full abortion rights will not be won by politely lobbying Parliament and pleading for concessions from backward MPs. The abortion movement does not yet have the strength to go into an all-out fight for the type of legislation that is needed, but the various initiatives and campaigns, being organised by NAC, LARC and the Women's Liberation Movement are out to change this balance of forces.

By pulling the weight of the labour movement behind a fight for the policies on which NAC legislation will be based, the conditions which have forced the abortion movement onto the defensive can be radically altered.

LABOUR ACTION

THE BENYON BILL is being discussed in Parliament while the Labour Government is in office. This is despite the fact that Labour Party policy — as decided at its conference — is for abortion on request.

But by refusing to take a clear stand in defence of the minimal rights contained in the 1967 Abortion Act that Labour Government has in practice sided with the anti-abortion crusaders.

It is to fight this sort of capitulation that the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign was formed. LARC, which holds its first conference this weekend

demands that every Labour MP must vote in line with the party's policy.

This means an end to the free vote which elevates the mystical workings of MPs' conscience both above the right of women to control their bodies and the democratic accountability of MPs to the Labour Party conference.

The importance of fighting for LARC's demands was illustrated by the behaviour of Labour MPs over the second reading of the Benyon Bill. 46 voted with the Bill and over a third didn't even turn up for the debate on the

second reading. Following a call from South West London NAC the Wadden branch of the electricians union censured a local EETPU sponsored MP over his blatant defiance of TUC and Labour Party policy.

* Last Saturday over 60 supporters of the National Abortion Campaign and Women's Voice lobbied Cox's 'surgery'. After initially refusing to see representatives of the lobbyers, he eventually told the lobbyers that his position was a matter between himself and his conscience.

PLANNING ACTION

If the Benyon Bill fails to get back for a third reading it will be a fluke of parliamentary procedure and not a political defeat of the anti-abortionists. The threat of further moves to roll back the limited gains already made remain. This is why the National Abortion Campaign has plans for continuing activity to defend and extend a woman's right to choose. These include:

* 25 June — as a contrast to the ruling class jubilee of that week NAC is holding a day of action focussing on the local campaigns which have been set up to fight for adequate abortion facilities under the NHS.

* 29 October — NAC's next national demonstration, to be held in Birmingham. Birmingham has been chosen as it is one of the sharpest examples of the control which the medical hierarchy can exercise over the abortion policy of local hospitals. Professor McClaren is the head gynaecologist in the city, which means that he effectively controls the abortion policy in Birmingham. McClaren is also a leading

light in the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child. The result is that only 20 per cent of abortions in Birmingham are carried out under the NHS.

* Regional Workshops — NAC is organising a series of regional workshops to discuss its methods of campaigning and the relationship between the campaign and the Women's Liberation Movement. The workshops will also provide a forum to debate the content of pro-abortion legislation bills with other pro-abortion groups.

* Conference — early next year NAC is to hold a conference of all bodies supporting a woman's right to choose. At the conference firm decisions will be made on the type of legislation which can best guarantee women full legal control over their own fertility.

* Money — all these activities, and this week's demonstration need money. All Red Weekly readers are asked to contribute as generously as they can to NAC funds. Send cheques, postal orders, etc to NAC, 30 Camden Road, London NW1.

LABOUR ABORTION RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

First National Conference to be held on 15 May 1977 at FTAT Hall (ex-NUFTO Hall), 14 Jockeys Fields, Holborn WC1 (nearest tubes: Holborn or Chancery Lane). 10.00am-5pm.

Conference will be chaired by Millie Miller MP and Jo Richardson MP. Creche provided.

Open to all members of the Labour Party who support LARC's aims.

* For further details contact Conference Organiser: Astrid Lever, 57 Trinity Road, London N2.

Deason: 'A case to answer.'

Last Wednesday John Deason, secretary of the Right To Work Campaign was acquitted of all charges arising out of the first Right to Work march way back in March 1976. Deason had been charged with grievous bodily harm, actual bodily harm and police assault, but Judge James Miskin stopped the trial on the grounds that there was no case to answer.

As far as the charges against Deason went, that there was 'no case to answer' was evident last year when an independent trade union enquiry by Barnet Trades Council concluded that it was police violence, and not that of the marchers, which had led to Deason being charged.

But for Judge Miskin while the pathetic nature of police evidence left him no other choice than to end the trial, he was still determined to get his pound of flesh. He ordered the police to investigate what he called a probable serious contempt of court by demonstrators outside the Old Bailey who had been handing out leaflets on the Deason frame-up.

So the Right to Work witch-hunt may not be over yet, but the real 'case to answer' is the way that the police have handled the Right to Work trials. Mike Lynch has just finished serving a three-month sentence arising out of the frame-ups and 24 other marchers received fines and suspended sentences.

The Deason case was a typical example of the type of evidence the police have offered throughout. They produced as evidence a loud hailer with a dent in it, which they claimed Deason had used to assault a policeman.

But photographic evidence showed Deason carrying the loud hailer after the incident, and it illustrated there was no dent in it.

It is because of 'evidence' such as this that the Right to Work Campaign has called for a public inquiry into the events at Hendon 'where the police attacked 80 unemployed workers and arrested 43 of them'.



Anna Deason, John Deason, and a supporter outside the Old Bailey after charges were dropped against him. (above). Ricky Tomlinson, Shawsbury building worker, addresses a 2000 strong demonstration in solidarity with Deason last Wednesday in photograph below.



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