

LABOUR - NO RETREAT!

BY BOB REEVES
(Norwood CLP)

The air is thick with Tory denunciations of Labour. They never give up for one moment, hounding, harassing and sniping at the Labour Government. All their energies are poured into pressing Labour to jettison its programme. If the capitalist press is not engaged in slinging mud at the movement it is howling about the "extremism" of the Trade Unions.

Big Business and their Tory friends are embarked upon a conspiracy to discredit Labour and frustrate the aspirations of the working class.

But their fear of an open confrontation - an election in which all the issues could be thrashed out - shows the brave Tory hounds as "toothless bulldogs". The power of the Labour Movement was shown two weeks ago by the AUEW.

By lifting its finger, the organised workers' movement can send the bosses scuttling in fear. If the Labour leaders were to mobilise this strength and conduct a real campaign proposing bold socialist measures to solve the problems of the workers, then the power of the rich would be crushed. The bosses' conspiracy could be thwarted.

Unfortunately the opposite is the case. On nearly every issue, the Labour Government has beat a retreat even from the mild proposals of the manifesto. In an attempt to ingratiate themselves with the "leaders" of industry, the bosses of the CBI, they have sought to convince them that they

don't really mean to tamper with their wealth and power. But to no avail. Even after Denis Healey assured the CBI that "the Government has no intention of destroying the private sector" (Times 15/4/74) the CBI were not convinced. In the words of Ian Mikardo:

"The mandarins of the CBI picked up his olive branch and threw it straight back in his face ... The only thing Mr Healey could have said to please them would have been that he was ready to resign". (Financial Times 18/5/74).

No amount of conciliation will satisfy the capitalists, it will only

Speaking at a Conference on European purchasing organised by the Financial Times, Tony Benn said "Our policy will only work if those upon whose co-operation its success depends want it to work."

He spoke about "extensive consultation" throughout industry (with the capitalists) but, in case there was any doubt, the Financial Times reporter got the message ... "Mr Benn made it clear ... the planning proposals will be somewhat different from those outlined in the Manifesto". (18/5/74).

But this retreat from Labour's programme will not satisfy the capitalists' desire for a Government of their own class. The more that Labour retreats under their pressure the more will they plot and prepare to bring it down under conditions favourable to themselves.

NO CONCESSIONS TO TORIES! CALL ELECTION!

give them further courage to demand more. The scandalous way the Building Societies, having begged for Government assistance, promptly lent out their cheap loans on the open market at higher interest thus netting themselves a big profit, shows their flagrant contempt for the Labour Government's measures of "control over capitalism".

Instead of standing up to the power of the capitalists, Tony Benn, against whom Big Business waged a savage campaign in the election, has retreated.

While he has criticised private industry for its grabbing of £2 million a day for the past four years in Government subsidies yet totally failing to invest sufficiently, he has held out another "olive branch".

The whole Labour Movement must be roused to fight. The Government must break with capitalist policies. The Tories bluff must be called with an outright campaign for an election to give Labour a huge majority. Fought on the basis of a clear socialist programme, the end of Toryism would be in sight.

- * Break with capitalist policies!
- * Call an election!
- * Smash Toryism!
- * Take over the banks, land and monopolies under workers' control and management!
- * Compensate the bosses only according to need!

HOSPITAL WORKERS FIGHT ON

By DEREK BLUMM
(Leeds CLP)

Some hospital workers who were attending a Yorkshire Conference in order to try and arouse interest for their wage demands spoke to Militant. They were Bro Rose, who is a nursing steward from Doncaster and Bro H Snodgrass who is Chairman of Doncaster's Hospital Branch.

Bro Rose told me that up to the 1st April the only overtime payment that they received was for Saturday afternoon and Sunday which was paid at time and one quarter. From 1st April they received payment for Saturday morning at time and one fifth and this rate is also used when calculating bank holiday working although there will be no lieu days for working bank holidays therefore no real reward for foregoing their holidays.

Bro Snodgrass said that the recent pay award favours those

£4,000, which of course excludes most nurses. The rise that nurses got, he felt, was not worth picking up, when inflation had been taken into account. He also felt that there was an awful amount of waste going on in the present method of training because of the isolation of administrators from what is actually required on the wards (see Militant 204).

Both of the Brothers agreed that there should be a living wage for hospital workers, and that the recent rise of militancy within the nursing profession was a direct result of this grievance coming to a head. The lack of adequate pay, they felt, was undermining the whole system and

causing a crisis in staffing because they couldn't get people to take the jobs at that rate of pay. Not only that but hospital workers were sometimes worried sick themselves by the state of affairs.

At this moment an Operating Theatre Technician from Leeds Infirmary interjected and showed me his payslips from two previous weeks, and asked how on earth a man with a family could manage to live on £19 take-home pay for one week and £21.50 for the other?

They felt that only good could come from the nurses becoming more militant and fighting for a decent wage.

NORTHERN IRELAND



TRADE UNION DEFENCE FORCE ONLY ANSWER TO CRISIS

Over the past few days Northern Ireland has been paralysed by a so-called "Constitutional stoppage" organised by the Protestant Ultras through the "Ulster Workers' Council".

It is clear that the strike is against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of trade unionists of both religions. It has only been enforced by mass intimidation organised by the UDA and other paramilitary groups, as graphically outlined by the Irish Times on Friday 17 May:-

"At Mallusk, fighting started when pickets attacked dayshift workers coming out of the Michelin factory ... A shop steward said that most of the dayshift had turned up for work on Wednesday but that most men on both shifts had stayed at home. Workers at the factory were warned that any cars left in

the car park after 7 pm would be burned."

It should be stressed that this "strike" is more a "lock-out" enforced by the Ultras. The workers themselves have had no chance to discuss the question and come to a decision in factory meetings and union branch meetings. The Ulster Workers' Council is entirely controlled from the top, with no means for the Protestant workers to take decisions through it.

There were vicious attacks on the "Back to Work" marched on Tuesday 21st May. Len Murray, General Secretary of the TUC, was spat at and the 400 or so trade unionists who tried to march ran a gauntlet of eggs, tomatoes and pieces of metal.

The standpoint of the leaders is seen from Sammy Doyle, spokesman of the UDA, who is reported to have been "pleased with what happened in Dublin," referring to the ghastly bombing last week killing over 25 people.

This latest round of violence and intimidation comes after 6 years of murders and maimings. Over 1000 have been killed since 1969. But this is nothing to the holocaust of sectarian, religious civil war which hangs over the heads of the workers of Northern Ireland.

Since January six Catholic building workers have been murdered. The recent shooting of two workers in cold blood on a site is an awesome sign of what could come in the next months!

For the blood that has flowed in Northern Ireland, the British ruling class must bear the main responsibility. They created the religious divisions to keep the workers apart. They fed the Protestant workers on a diet of sectarianism, teaching them to despise and fear the Catholics and look with horror at any prospect of a United Ireland.

Under modern conditions British capitalism would like to see some kind of United Ireland as no longer is the partition of the country in

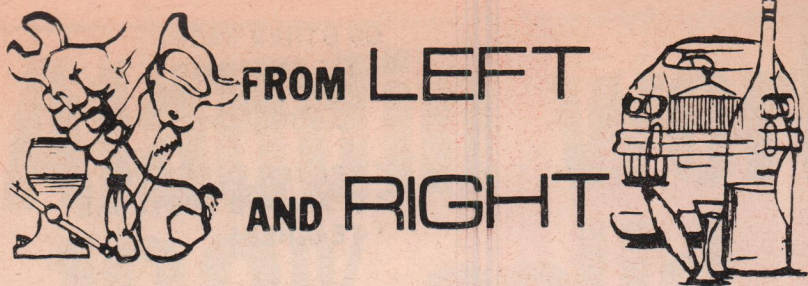
BRISTOL MILITANT PUBLIC MEETING "SUPPORT NURSES FIGHT"

Hear: DAVE JAMES
(Chairman, Barrow Hospital branch, NUPE)

NICK BRADLEY
(Young Socialist)
elected member to NEC of Labour Party
Sunday 2 June 7.30 pm
Old England Pub,
Bath Buildings,
Montpelier
(Off Stokes Croft)

HACKNEY LPYS "SUPPORT THE NURSES"

Hear: SYLVIA PRENTICE
(Nurse, NALGO Branch Sec)
MARISA SILVERMAN
(Hammersmith LPYS, a Health Service worker)
Tuesday 28 May 7.30 pm
The Pembury Tavern
(Junction Amhurst Road and Dalston Lane)



COMMON MARKET IN DISARRAY

The vital job for Marxists is to be able to predict the way in which capitalism will develop. When these predictions are made they have often been ignored or scorned by our opponents. Now we are more and more seeing those predictions being echoed by the strategists of capitalism themselves. For example:

"The Common Market is a joint Capitalist endeavour, where the countries have pooled their resources together as a customs union and banded together against the powers outside the Common Market ... in the long run the vested interests of the capitalist class, in particular of Germany, France and Italy will come to the fore ... When it is a question of sharing out a growing market, capitalist gangsters can always reach a compromise. When it is a question of a declining market and who is to bear the burdens of such a decline, the thieves fall out over a division of a smaller booty". (A Socialist Answer to the EEC, 1971 *Militant* pamphlet).

"Under the economic and monetary pressure built up by the Arab use of the oil weapon, the countries of the EEC are reverting to the kind of economic nationalism that has proved so bankrupt in the past ... If the EEC does collapse, then France and Germany upon whose reconciliation the whole pattern of post-war Europe rests, would be left staring into each others eyes ... The energy crisis calls for a strengthening of international co-operation. In fact there is every sign of more competition and less co-operation, with the spoils going to the strongest". (Frank Giles, *Sunday Times*, May 12th 1974)

ANOTHER ENQUIRY?

"Senior Scotland Yard men were accused last night of running their own pornographic bookshops in the West End" (*Daily Express* 13/5/74)

Rusty Humphries, wife of the jailed "ex-king of Soho" claimed that her husband had set two senior policemen in their own bookshop business, renting them the shops at low rents and in different names. This was to enable him to keep in business.

She alleged that one senior man from the yard had taken £85,000 in bribes over a number of years and that an average of £500 a week was paid out to keep his pornographic book shops going without interference.

At a time when the air is thick with accusations of corruption among leaders of the labour movement, the capitalist press, although reporting this, have made hardly a comment. No demands for enquiries or commissions! No breast-beating and moralising! What a contrast with the pillorying of the Labour Movement!

Perhaps, with their propagandas about the "Law", too much publicity about police corruption might set off too many questions in workers' minds.

£10,000 A YEAR DEBS

In case any readers of the *Militant* hadn't noticed, "The Season" is with us. What season? Why, the mad social whirl of coming-out balls, picnics and fashionable horse races.

Despite the howls of anguish from the rich after the budget, according to William Hickey of the *Daily Express*, more than ever is being spent by the rich on extravaganzas for their young.

"Launching a girl can cost, as I shall explain, up to £10,000. Yet 200 are coming out this summer - 50 more than any year since 1968". (*Daily Express* 15/5/74).

A coming out ball for 400 at a London Hotel costs in the region of £6000 - £10 a head for food and drink, as much as many working class families spend in a week! For a really ambitious girl, to "do the rest of the season" could cost another £8,000 or more. That includes small items such as: £3 a week for hairdressing; £35 a week for a small furnished flat for a tired Debutante to rest in after dances and parties; £18 a week for clothes.

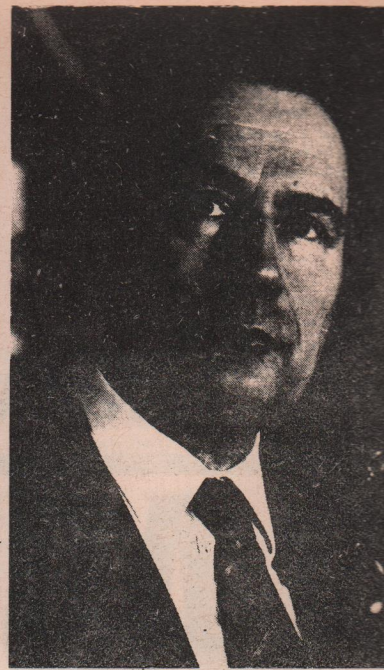
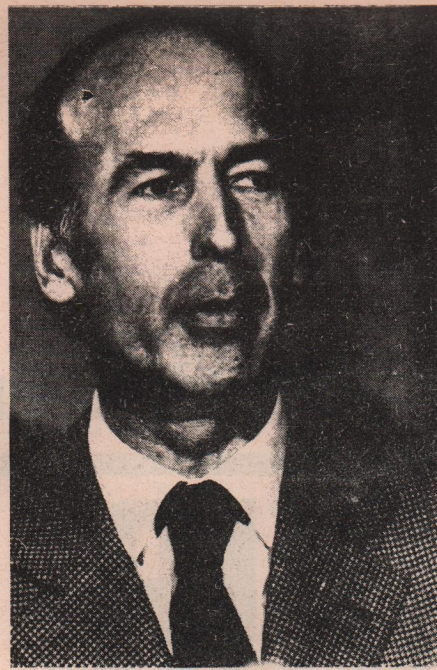
Still, in these trying times, as one Deb's mother told the *Express's* highly paid sycophants: "We may as well spend now. It will be worth less tomorrow".

RECORD VOTE FOR FRENCH LEFT

LYNN WALSH
(Ardwick Labour Party)

By a hair's breadth, Giscard d'Estaing, the candidate of the Right, has scraped home to the Presidency. Mitterrand, candidate of the United Left, just failed to grasp victory. With less than two percent between the candidates (50.7% to 49.3%) the "Grande Bourgeoisie" will heave a big sigh of relief, while the high hopes of the workers and young people are bitterly disappointed.

Despite the narrow defeat of Mitterrand, the election result indicates the continuation of a powerful swing to the Left in France. Presidential elections, with their personal element, are traditionally much less favourable to the Left in France than the Parliamentary elections. Added to this, the make-up of the electorate does not favour the



GISCARD & MITTERRAND

first time for several years must rest with the leadership of the Left, no one else.

The parties of the Right naturally played on the middle class's and elderly people's fears of social upheaval. At the same time they demagogically tried to reassure the electorate that reform and social progress would be speeded up. Everything is not perfect, we know (was the message), but we will carry out the necessary reforms much better than Mitterrand and his dangerous Communist allies.

Mitterrand, instead of boldly answering this cynical demagoguery, exposing the rotten record of both the Gaullists and d'Estaing, fought a mainly defensive campaign. Mitterrand and the Left leaders failed to arouse sufficient enthusiasm, to inspire sufficient confidence in bold

fails to secure the support of a the potential supporters of the Left.

Enthusiastic crowds of 5 thousand, 10 thousand, 15 thousand and more turned out to Mitterrand's meeting. In some cases they waited several hours, singing the Internationale etc, because Mitterrand had been delayed. But they were not treated to a bold elaboration of the Common Programme, which despite its limitations, represents a big step forward for the French Left. Instead they were presented with a watered down version, hedged about with emasculating qualifications.

"Our programme is modest because it only includes the nationalisation of 9 firms, and of course the total control of credit. All the rest is the private sector

BUT MITTERRAND'S POLICIES FAIL TO WIN!

Left, to say the least.

Most importantly, the 18 to 21 year olds are still denied the vote. All commentators are agreed that if the youth had been able to vote, Mitterrand would now be president of France.

On the other hand, because of decades of an almost static birth-rate and the effects of two world wars, there are an exceptional number of elderly spinsters and widows. There are also more small farmers and small shop-keepers in France than most other European countries.

These people, who are as dust on the economic and social scales of production, weigh like lead on the electoral balance, voting mostly for the right.

Chaban-Delmas, the Gaullist candidate who received a derisory 15% of the votes in the first round, threw his weight behind d'Estaing in the second round. Jobert, the champion of Chastity and defender of the small shopkeepers, naturally supported him, despite the shopkeepers' hostility to d'Estaing's policies as Finance Minister.

Jean-Jaques Servan-Schreiber, the Radical leader, also urged Radicals to vote for d'Estaing. All joined in the well-known chorus "reds in the bed", a vote for Mitterrand is a vote for chaos", etc.

One cannot blame the Right for appearing in their true colours. The responsibility for the failure of the United Left to seize the victory that was within its grasp for the

socialist policies among the big battalions of the working class to ensure that they would draw along with them the necessary support from other sections.

Paradoxically, Giscard d'Estaing appeared to be more liberal with his promises of social reforms than Mitterrand! The leaders of the Left appeared to be more concerned to assure people (in reality to assure Big Business) of its "moderation" and "reasonableness". This report from the *Financial Times* French correspondent is typical (16 May): "M Giscard d'Estaing is stressing his commitment to social justice and daily adding to the somewhat vague reforming promises he made at the start of the campaign.

"On the Left, the Communist leader M Georges Marchais, today made yet another effort to quell the fears of a Communist controlled Government, which could still tip the scales against the Union of the Left at the final moment".

But in the event, there was no last-minute panic defection of supporters from the Left. On the contrary, the close result showed that a dynamic Socialist campaign could have easily tipped the scales in the other direction. As always, a timid campaign fails to "reassure the right" and also

and it will be respected ..."

(Mitterrand 13 April). This issue of nationalisation insofar as it was discussed, was allowed to become bogged down in wrangles about the amount and method of compensation, rather than the necessity of nationalisation for controlling and planning the economy.

Even more seriously, Mitterrand continually warned that the reforms in the Common Programme might have to be postponed because of "difficulties" in the economy. These reforms would have to be implemented in a staggered fashion. Wages would have to be "harmonised" (limited) to match (reduced) growth in production. Mitterrand spelt out that slower growth meant "less production, therefore less to distribute. This implied sad sacrifices for a programmes".

This is as good as saying that the reforms in the Common Programme are merely window dressing and that the leaders of the Left have no real solutions to the social and economic problems of French capitalist society. Mitterrand's programme suffers from the same disease of which it pretends to be the cure!

Similarly, on issues of foreign policy, Mitterrand and the leaders of the Communist Party attempted to woo "floating" Gaullist voters with demagoguery about an "Independent France" standing up to United States domination. They completely failed to pose a Socialist alternative.

The futility of trying to appeal to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

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(recently returned from a visit to Ceylon)

CHRIS RODRIGO
(Lanka Socialist League)
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SPANISH BOSSES FEAR REVOLUTION

The capitalist press in Britain has drawn a veil of silence over the repercussions in neighbouring Spain of the revolution in Portugal. Having seen the explosion of mass discontent which has followed the overthrow of Caetano, it is as if they dare not contemplate what would follow the end of the Franco regime.

But a remarkable article in the *New York Times*, reprinted in the *Irish Times* (13/5/74) shows in detail the electrifying effect of the Portuguese events in Spain. It says ... "Not since the Allies defeated Hitler have the Spaniards been so seized with the drama of a foreign event, and with its conceivable application to themselves".

A lawyer commented to the *Times* reporter ... "It is the number one political topic". Even the Government controlled press it seems have been affected ... "At *Nuevo Diario* ... the editorial staff voted overwhelmingly to strike in protest against the altering by the management of articles from Portugal. The management reportedly backed down".

Significantly ... "General Manuel Diaz Alegria, chief of the High General Staff and a reputed liberal has been receiving monacles in the mail (the symbol of Spinoza)". "Revolution starts from the top" wrote Karl Marx. The ruling class feels the rumbling of discontent beneath its feet and searches for a way out.

One faction advocates greater repression - another section concessions. This split amongst the ruling class has been evident for some time, but the Portuguese revolution has enormously sharpened these divisions.

The "liberal" capitalists are frantically urging some kind of compromise with the gathering opposition ... "(they) argue that the failure of the Portuguese Prime Minister ... Caetano to



General Alegria.

democratise his regime led to the coup. In Spain they say a similar failure could lead to an upheaval far less amiable".

The delicate expression "less amiable", reflects the understanding by the capitalists that the regime sits on a powder keg.

"we don't have much time, not five years, maybe not five months".

Much more so than in Portugal a line of blood is drawn between the Spanish working class and Franco dictatorship. One million workers and peasants died in the Spanish Civil War.

The reckoning with the butcher Franco and the system which spawned him will be deep going and more drastic even than in Portugal. Nor will any loosening of the screw pacify the workers. On the contrary, it will only embolden them.

The replacement of Franco by some "liberal" General like Alegria cannot guarantee a "cold" transition to "democracy". In Italy in 1943 just the announcement on the radio that Mussolini had been replaced by Badoglio, another member of the Fascist Grand Council, was sufficient

for millions of workers to come out onto the streets and smash the Fascists.

In Portugal, a similar announcement of the overthrow of Caetano set in motion the revolutionary wave. The replacement of Franco by some other figure would lead to similar consequences in Spain.

The extreme right wing therefore "maintain that it was Dr Caetano's failure to be hard that allowed the situation to get out of hand". A member of this faction remarked in horror to the *Times* reporter ...

"Imagine - they have put the police in the cells used by the political prisoners!"

He probably realises that would be his fate in the event of the overthrow of the regime! This faction is urging that the workers should be given a diet of lead. But police or army terror will only recoil on them in the present situation in Spain.

The opposition of the workers has moved from the stage of local to regional general strikes. The shooting of workers in Madrid or Barcelona would in all probability lead to a national General Strike. The Franco regime would be incapable of withstanding such a movement. The Caetano regime collapsed ignominiously, like an inflated balloon which is pricked. Only a handful of secret policemen were prepared to fight for it - and then only to save their own skins.

The social basis of the Franco regime has disappeared. The police and army - upon which the regime rests - will also prove to be unreliable props at a decisive moment.

An explosive period is opening up in Spain. One official, with devastating realism outlined the situation facing the regime ... "We must move quickly. We don't have much time. Not five years. Maybe not five months"!!

If the leaders of the workers' organisations were to be imbued with one tenth of the understanding and urgency of the representatives of the capitalists, Spain would stand on the eve of a revolution not just to put an end to Franco but to capitalism as well. In Portugal the Communist Party leadership acts as a break on the revolution, so also do the leaders of the Socialist Party.

In Spain also they serve up the warmed-over demands for a Popular Front or "Liberty Pact" with the liberal capitalists - a programme which has resulted in nothing but disasters for the working class in Spain and elsewhere. The occupations of the factories and the land, the strikes etc which have taken place in Portugal will be repeated on a grandiose scale in Spain. The capitalists can only retrieve the situation by pushing to power a Popular Front - "a strike-breaking conspiracy" in the words of Leon Trotsky.

But this in turn will provoke a crisis in the ranks of the workers organisations with the workers seeking a revolutionary road and Marxist programme. A period of revolution and counter-revolution has opened up on the Iberian peninsula.

In the historic May Day in Lisbon, the Portuguese and Spanish workers joined hands with members of the Spanish underground participating in the demonstration. It cannot now be long before Franco is overthrown and the revolution in Spain links up with the revolution in Portugal. When that happens the possibility of a new chapter of socialist victories could open for Europe and the world.

BY PETER TAAFFE

SUPPORT CLAY CROSS CONFERENCE

DEFEND LABOUR COUNCILLORS

The District Auditor responsible for collecting the fines levied under the Tory Housing Finance Act, from the original 11 Clay Cross Councillors, has, in his own words, "delivered an ultimatum" to them.

They have been given seven days from May 16th to pay up, otherwise he will take action to seize the money. He might have problems as the 11 councillors have pointed out before, they haven't any assets to sequester! Nevertheless, under the Tory legislation, the court can order the money to be taken directly from their wages.

It is an outright scandal that under a Labour Government, the Tory state and court officials can carry on enforcing penalties on those who, more than many others, stood out for the principles on which they were elected.

Only a couple of weeks ago, the engineering workers put paid to Judge Donaldson's tricks. If any action is taken against the Clay Cross 11 a massive response from the movement must defend them. Labour must immediately and retrospectively repeal the Housing Finance Act and all penalties under it must be rescinded.

There is now only two weeks to go to the national conference convened by the Clay Cross Labour Party. All these questions will be discussed. Every Labour Party and Trade Union should appoint delegates. The rank and file of the movement must press for Labour to sweep away the remnants of the Tories with socialist measures.

Over the last week we have dealt with nearly 100 applications for credentials for from 2 to 4 delegates each. They have come from the length and breadth of the country, from a wide cross section of the movement: mainly CLPs, LPYS branches, a few tenants' associations. It looks like the delegations from the union branches are now beginning to come in too.

Everything seems set now for a massive and representative conference. Write for details to:

John Dunn,
101, Pencroft Drive,
Clay Cross
Derbyshire

or

Charlie Bunting
7 Lynam Close,
Clay Cross
Derbyshire.

PORTUGAL - WORKERS CONFRONT CAPITALISTS

BY BOB LABI

(LPYS National Committee)

The strikes in Portugal are a clear sign that the working class will no longer tolerate a continuation of the old conditions. Their already low wages have been fast eroded by rapid inflation: 6% in February of this year alone.

200,000 textile workers threatened strike action for higher pay, Nurses in a Lisbon hospital laid plans for action to improve their £20 a month pay. More than 8,000 workers occupied one of the largest shipyards in the world:-

"The Lisnave yard is Portugal's biggest single employer and one of its most important industrial complexes. It has the reputation of being one of the best payers, but the workers are demanding rises amounting to 50% from about £80 a month to £120 as well as shorter hours and better working conditions". (Times 17/5/74).

An Observer reporter (19/5/74)



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WORLD INFLATION-DISINFLATION OF CAPITALIST SYSTEM

In the last year there has been an explosion of world prices throughout the capitalist world. The "English sickness" of inflation and slow growth has spread to all the twenty two members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (the rich countries' economic research club).

The average annual rate of price rises in the twelve months to February 1974 was 12% and in the last three months the average annual rate has reached 16%. Moreover this is no longer due to exceptional rises in food prices for that index has risen more slowly than the full index. These dramatic rises have contributed to the political explosions that have erupted in the countries they affect, eg big strikes in Japan (inflation 35%), Germany (8%), Greece (33%), Spain (18%) and now a coup in Portugal (20-25%).

But if you were to believe Heath and the Tories and even Shirley Williams, Labour's watchdog on prices, the recent increases are exceptional and temporary. More specifically, they are mainly due to external effects, outside of the control of mere mortals, ie they are "Acts of God".

Food price rises were due to the failure of harvests in Russia, freak monsoons in India, cold winds on the coast of Peru ruining the fishmeal crop, and of course the totally unforeseen Middle East war, which has driven up oil prices.

Now it is true that all of these things happened last year. But, it does not follow that major price rises can be completely attributed to these "natural disasters". Much more relevant is the response of the capitalist market system of production for profit to the vagaries of nature.

During the last two years world wheat prices have tripled, soya beans, beef and animal feed prices have doubled.

But are these increases explained by natural causes? According to A Simantor, the OECD Director for Agriculture, in the last year there has been no increase in food production, while there has been a decline in fishmeal output - the main constituent of animal feed - but that "part of the increase in world prices for farm products (as well as for other primary products) merely reflects the general depreciation of currencies. Purchases made as a hedge against monetary uncertainty may also have played a role" (OECD Observer February 1974)

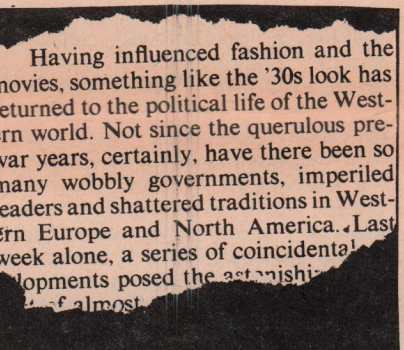
In addition the rise in prices of land and the sharp increase in the cost of borrowing money (the discount rates of the 14 leading Western nations have risen from 4.8% to 6.6% in a year) have also added to costs. Simantor reveals more when he says: "Even for farm products which were in such abundant supply that their prices might have declined, prevailing agricultural policies prevented anything more than a certain stabilisation of prices". The agricultural policies that Simantor refers to are two-fold.

countries, which remain under the grip of landowner cliques, which makes agricultural production highly unstable and restricted, and very vulnerable to natural disaster, so creating conditions for sharp fluctuations, in price and frenzied speculation.

Secondly in the world market, the American economy has an enormous weight. Despite its relative decline vis a vis West Germany and Japan it is still the mightiest capitalist power in the world, with its huge productive capacity and internal market and its control over land, assets and industry in many areas of the world.

On top, the power of the Chicago grain markets is immense. The *Sunday Times* (12/5/74) recently revealed their dealings and showed that Continental Grain Company handles 25% of the world's grain shipments; Cargil

Inflation undermines capitalist stability.



Time Magazine 20/5/74

Incorporated controls a further 25% and Bunge Corp controls 20%. With "smaller" companies like Cook and Co, all but a small proportion of world shipments are dominated by a handful of monopolies based in North America.

Clearly price movements and other developments in the US market give a direct lead to world price movements. In conditions which feed inflation and speculation, the movements on the grain markets of Chicago affect enormously the prices of food throughout the world.

The shortages of 1972 and the massive purchases by the Russian Government from these American grain companies dug the fertile ground for the massive "take-off" of food prices since then.

Last year, given the increasing economic difficulties facing US capitalism and the needs of the Nixon Government to slash expenditure, the US Government ended its \$4000 million a year subsidy to US farmers that was paid to keep 60 million acres of farm-land fallow so that stocks did not overflow! Now this policy has ended, the stocks have disappeared and prices have been further boosted. So there are plenty of man-

products - in 1973, Simantor listed currency depreciation, speculation, land prices, credit costs, and agricultural policy - all products of the capitalist system.

For behind the simple words "speculation" and "currency depreciation" are hidden the real causes of world inflation. Investment money has been pouring into Chicago's commodity markets over the last two years as the owners of idle money-capital apply themselves to the new field of quick return.

In fact, the turnover on the Chicago futures market is \$200,000 million a year which is more than the total turnover of all the stock markets of the world!

And who are the speculators in the food which must feed the population of the world? None other than the international grain companies themselves. By buying large quantities of grain on contracts which guarantee delivery at some future date at a pre-set price, these companies have steadily forced grain prices up way beyond any increase that could be attributed to poor harvests.

This form of speculation is by no means restricted to food. Bunker Hunt, the controller of the largest family fortune in the world bringing in \$1 million a day, has engaged in futures speculation in silver. In the past two years, starting with the purchase of 20 million ozs at \$3 an ounce, he now controls one tenth of all the world's available silver and has forced up the price to \$6.24 - a paper profit of \$250 million at the stroke of a pen.

This extreme right-wing Texan oil millionaire, who demands that Nixon send in US troops when Libya nationalised his oil assets, has created the conditions for massive rises in the costs of all photographic, electrical and other industries who use large quantities of silver in production.

Such speculation in the Chicago market is so rife that the *Economist* recently exclaimed that "commodity speculation has become the new hobby of international money" (April 20th, 1974).

That British companies are not averse to the same procedures was neatly exposed when Rowntree Macintosh burnt their fingers in speculating in cocoa to depress the price of their main raw material.

In Rubber also, a major reason for sharp price increases must also be laid at the door of speculation for in the last two years production has stayed 10% above existing demand and yet the price of rubber has doubled!

And it is no wonder that a mere 4% drop in world cereal production in 1972 caused prices to treble. When we consider the "energy

on "greedy oil sheikhs" in the Middle East. In 1973, the US oil companies had an average increase in profits of 53%. For years they had engaged in the policy of fixed prices, combined production ventures, and demands for import controls on cheaper foreign imports. Profits were kept in producing countries where taxes were lower, and now the Middle East war provided a new bonanza.

One company raised profits by 266% in one year! The oil companies deliberately stockpiled oil while consumers were starved of energy. At the beginning of 1973, the companies held 36,300 million barrels in reserve - enough to last the US for eleven years!

None of this was released until prices rose to their new levels, which increased the value of these stocks by \$100,000 million.

No wonder Dr Khume, Secretary General of OPEC - the oil-producing countries organisation - complained of the blame for high prices being placed on them. He estimated that oil companies were making \$4 a barrel on crude oil which would go a long way to explain Royal Dutch Shell's increase in net income from £281 million in 1972 to £730 million in 1973, and BP's rise by 310%.

Commenting on the role of the oil companies during the recent energy crisis, Albert Berschette of the European Commission said: "we will find there has been a deliberate sharing-out of the market, consultation on prices, and an abuse of a dominant position". Even this "Act of God" has been used to the benefit of a few capitalist combines.

But speculation and profit-making under capitalism can only take place if there are forces at work already providing the momentum for world inflation.

PAPER MONEY

These forces exist within the capitalist system of production itself. While total profits or surplus value extracted from the working class has grown during the past three decades of unparalleled capitalist growth, the rate of profit on capital invested has steadily declined in all the major Western economies.

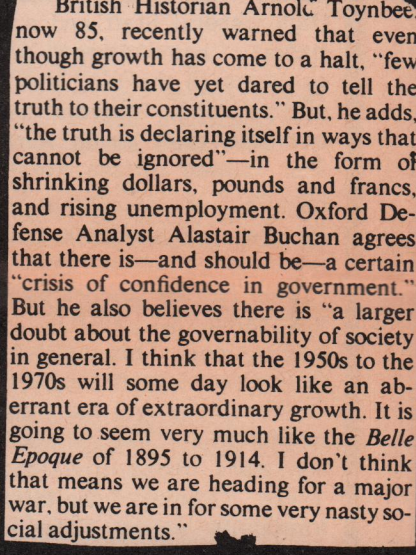
This decline has not been uniform in all countries however. It is the very uneven yet combined development of capitalism which produces the contradictions within it. US Imperialism, which was the strongest power after the war, has seen its relative productive dominance whittled away by the growing economic power of Germany and Japan. In 1970, West Germany had a greater share of world

advantage in the fifties to invest heavily in European industry, using the dollar, which under the Bretton Woods agreement of 1944 had been established as the world's trading currency linked to gold.

In the early post-war years, the USA had a balance of trade surplus with war ravaged Europe which could make up the deficit caused by these investments. But the recovery of European capitalism plus the enormous drain caused by the military expenditure as American capitalism took on the role of "policeman of the world" soon reversed this. It was only its enormous political and military might in the world which enabled it to continue to run colossal balance of trade deficits.

So investments were backed up by a drain on the gold reserves at Fort Knox. This was as good as real commodities, for historically under capitalism gold has been recognised as universally exchangeable for goods, its value

"Nasty Social Adjustments" Ahead.



Time Magazine 20/5/74

determined by the cost of producing it. However reserves in the US plummeted from \$16,000 million in 1962 to \$9,659 million in 1973, while Europe's gold reserves rose from \$14,887 million to \$21,050 million.

US capitalism increasingly relied on payments in paper dollars, not backed up by gold or an export surplus, to pay for investment or military expenditure.

This was nothing but a gigantic swindle. For paper dollars do not contain any real value, they are merely promises to pay in real values of gold or commodities.

This paper currency, therefore, did not represent capital in either its commodity or money form. It was fictitious capital; paper money not backed up with production or goods or gold.

To take a simple example. If the amount of paper currency is doubled without a corresponding increase in production or sufficient gold reserves to cover it, then prices will double - the value represented by those notes is halved.

Yet US capitalists were able to use almost unlimited amounts of paper dollars to buy up plant and industry in Europe because of the dollar's position as an international currency. The result was to create a massive increase in demand which could not be met by an increase in supply of commodities.

EASE EM

dollar deposits made by the receivers of US purchases, creating a market for investment and speculation called the Eurodollar market, which has reached the size of \$100,000 million.

International companies and even governments would buy and sell these dollars according to the strength of individual national currencies, producing large movements of "hot money" across national boundaries. When Germany was forced to "float" the Mark in May 1971, \$1000-million flooded into German banks in the space of one hour!

This tremendous boost to demand caused by investment of paper dollars is compounded with the massive military expenditure on a world scale which in no way increases real values for productive investment, but merely adds to demand in another form of fictitious capital. As a result prices are forced up and paper currencies are less and less desirable to hold.

It is this 30 year old policy of a massive production of fictitious capital that is at the root of the present sickness of world inflation.

HEDGE AGAINST INFLATION

In the growing uncertainty, capitalists increasingly look for a "hedge against inflation" in anything but paper money, and in doing so only add a further twist to the inflationary process. Thus investors have been turning to land, art objects, antiques, postage stamps and most important for its economic effects, metals and farm produce. Under these conditions, speculation has doubled and trebled and more the prices of many of these items.

Gold is now so much in demand that its price on the free market has reached \$175 an ounce compared to its "official" price of \$42.

With hardly an exception, all the major capitalist nations have pursued inflationary policies by deficit financing. In order to pay for their massive Government expenditures, increasing at a much faster rate than production itself, they have covered up the deficit in the budget by printing paper money with all the inflationary consequences which that has.

The very failure of capitalist production to expand steadily and evenly when faced with the barrier of declining profit rates adds to the problem of inflation and exacerbates the process, but now an inflation alongside rising unemployment and stagnation of growth.

The only solution to inflation under capitalism is massive deflation or slump, and that is the real danger that faces capitalist production in the next period as each capitalist class attempts to protect its share of world markets with trade barriers.

For the working class, inflation or deflation is no solution. Both mean that workers pay for the crisis of the capitalists. But it is clear that natural disasters cannot be blamed for every price rise in the family budget. It is the unplanned anarchic nature of capitalism that is the real cause of inflation.

Only a socialist economy on a world scale can effectively meet with any difficulties created by nature, and also remove the lunacies of an economic system that leaves and will continue to leave over two thirds of the world starving, and most of the other third deprived of the fruits of modern production.

BY BOB MCKEE

NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS CONFERENCE Fight schools crisis with socialist policies!

The Conference of the National Union of Teachers met recently at Eastbourne at a crucial moment for the Education system in Britain. At no time since the 1930s has state education faced such grave threats. Poor salaries and working conditions are forcing many teachers to leave inner city schools. Half-hearted or fraudulent re-organisation schemes are sabotaging real comprehensive schooling.

Frequent lack of planning for the raising of the school-leaving age has created widespread frustration among pupils and staff. But the greatest threat of all, coming at a time when educational expenditure needs to be dramatically increased, is the monstrous cuts of £182 million in Government spending on education.

This cut, of a savagery not seen since the war, undermines the struggle for better standards. While hundreds of classrooms are overcrowded, thousands of school buildings are shoddy and deteriorating and tens of thousands of children are denied a full education. The cuts will drastically worsen things.

A mood of bitterness is spreading among teachers, clearly seen at the NUT Conference in the decision to stage a half-day strike in London to be followed by a referendum among London teachers over the length of later sustained strike action. It was seen in the motions that local branches had chosen as priority debates and in the voting and speeches during Conference itself.

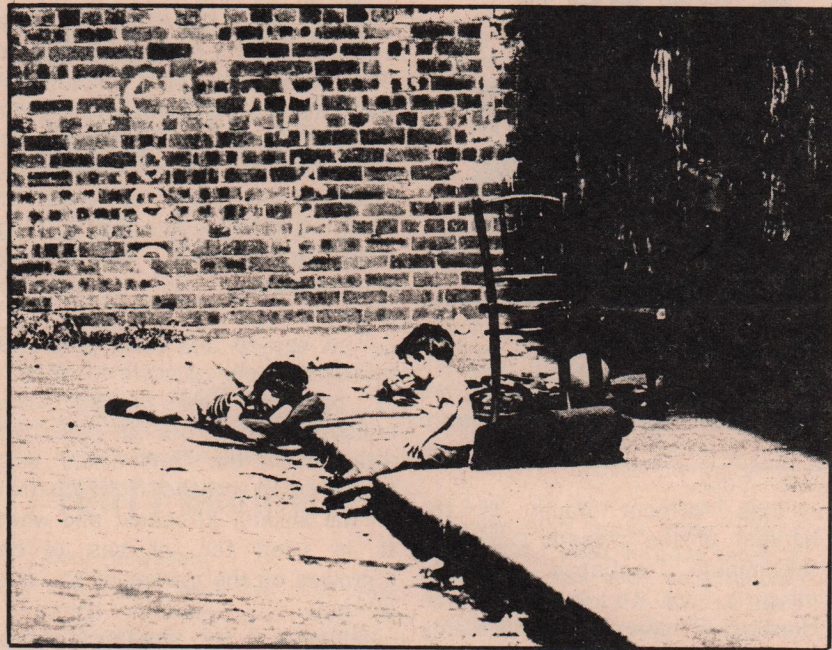
The motions on "Contract of Service" and "Facilities for Union Representatives" showed an increased recognition by teachers that they are a part of the working class, rather than a "profession". The tiny majority on a card vote for an Executive amendment to the "Teacher Participation" motions and the rejection of the Executive amendment on "Facilities for Union Representatives" despite energetic speeches from the platform, demonstrates a growing dissatisfaction and scepticism with the behaviour of the Executive over the past year.

This was also shown by the election of 2 members of the left-wing Rank and File group to the NUT Executive.

Yet the conference delegates stood up after the speech by the retiring General Secretary Ted Britton and gave him an enthusiastic standing ovation.

Britton made a clever speech. He attacked the cuts in education spending, showing how the cuts would worsen conditions. He attacked the Government's device of sending wage claims to fake "arbitration". He attacked a society which encouraged "private ostentation in the midst of public squalor", the lavishing of society's great wealth on office blocks for profit while schools are allowed to rot in neglect.

The country, he said, is rich but



For many children conditions like these provide their first schooling!

its resources are used wrongly. But Britton did not draw the obvious conclusion; that if we, the workers, are to have a decent education system, we must take power from the small, selfish group of rich who let the rest of society suffer while their profits amass.

Instead he pretended that the "Social Contract" was some new way of preventing the rich "abusing" their power. He said that the Social Contract was about "the morality" of our society, that it was a "conscious decision by the community" to decide where different groups should stand in the incomes hierarchy. So teachers and other workers in weaker unions, who "do not want to be forced to the wall by the industrially powerful", can rely on the Social Contract to protect their interests.

BY GEOFF LITTLEJOHN (NUT)

With his denunciation of the speculators still ringing in their ears, the delegates actually got up and clapped.

Reg Prentice, the Secretary of State for Education spoke, at first almost in a "Marxist" way, by outlining the deep economic crisis of the country!! He mentioned the huge £1470 million balance of payments deficit worsening during January and February.

He mentioned the inflation of 13% warning that worse was to come. It was, he said, the most serious situation Britain had ever

faced in peace-time. And what was his conclusion? Was it that if the money, to maintain even present educational standards is to be found, society must be radically changed, the chaos of capitalism finally abolished?

Not at all. He declared that he was a committed social democrat and would rather make no promises than easy promises!

As for the "Social Contract" which according to Britton, is to protect us, he refused to give any pledge at all on the pressing case of the London Allowance and then proceeded to launch an attack on militancy.

He announced, with an arrogance reminiscent of Edward Heath, that he was not the man to yield to pressure, that "I reserve the right to tell teachers when I think they are being damn silly".

Thus the "social contract" is being used to cheat teachers, and education, of its most elementary requirements. Surely the miserable offers to the nurses, teachers, local government workers, and other industrially weak sections of the trade unions, by both the last Tory Government and now by the Labour Government, demonstrate that they have nothing to gain from these "contracts"!

Even worse, the reasons given by Britton for its acceptance, can only drive a wedge between teachers and their real allies, the "industrially powerful workers"!

A bitter struggle faces the teachers. But the attitude of the Executive is uncertain.

For example, the ex-President, the

Communist Party member, Max Morris, attacked from the platform, militant young teachers "who hadn't been in the profession for ten minutes". He attacked viciously the "Rank and File" group, calling their resolution on salaries (voted by the local associations as the top priority motion) as "vacuous slogans" and "windy phrase-mongering" and insulted their paper as a "comic paper".

He declared that it would be infantile to demand that the Labour Government act immediately to carry out its programme. Morris is supposed to be on the left of the NUT Executive!

But it is clear that to combat those attitudes, the tactics of the Rank and File group are inadequate. It does call for the absolutely vital linking of the NUT struggle with the struggle of other workers, such as that which NALGO is engaged upon. But it is not enough just to denounce low pay, shocking conditions, the divisive salary scales or incomes policies.

This does not effectively combat the poison that Britton successfully spread on the nature of the "social contract". The enthusiastic applause of the delegates showed that they were aware of the injustice of society and the limits of industrial action alone in maintaining educational standards. They were looking for a political answer. The ideas of Britton and Prentice must be fought with a socialist programme.

A one day strike to mobilise the membership should be organised by the NUT. But the success of this and further all-out action can only be assured if we also prepare politically by consistently explaining that improvements in education can only be maintained by bitter struggle against the whole system.

British capitalism, now in crisis, will run education into the ground, unless the Labour Movement prevents such a catastrophe. A bold socialist policy from the Labour Government could speedily reverse education's decline and in doing so win to its side the bulk of teachers.

Workers do need a "social contract" to overcome the economic crisis, but not a social contract which preserves capitalism and so forces workers to accept the ravages of inflation. We need a different "social contract" in which workers agree to act to sweep away immediately the rotting, diseased body of capitalism, to take over now all the great bloated monopolies and to lay the basis of a socialist society.

LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS- NATIONAL COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

"This NC declares that, since the defeat of the Tories at the General Election on February 28th, the bosses' press has carried out a sustained campaign designed to damage and besmirch the Labour Government. It is in this context that the "corruption scandals" have been splashed across the front pages.

"We should be clear that even if no 'corruption' existed in the upper echelons of the Labour Party, reports alleging it would be manufactured by the press - just as the fictitious Zinoviev letter was 'exposed' by the bosses' press in 1924. As far as we are concerned, as socialists, however, the tragedy of the present situation is that, by their life-style and close connections with Big Business, a whole layer of Labour leaders at local and national level play into the hands of the capitalist class and lay themselves open to all kinds of 'corruption' charges.

"We support the call put forward

We do this in order to make clear that the Party itself should take responsibility for ordering its own affairs; we reject the view that the Party should content itself with presenting evidence to a "Royal Commission" and the fraud squad - agencies which are fundamentally opposed to the Labour Movement.

"In fact, this entire episode raises the question of the need for a properly constituted Control Commission procedure, under the control of Party Conference and consisting of ordinary Party members, elected by the membership, to stand guard over the conduct of Party leaders, public representatives, MPs and officials at all levels.

"Any Party enquiry into alleged corruption in the North East should similarly consist of ordinary Party members and the enquiry's terms of reference should not be based on the 'legalities' of the rich man's law but on the much more demanding principles and precepts of the working class movement itself.

reality be dealt with by any number of 'enquiries'. What we are talking about is the need for the regeneration of the entire Labour Movement and a rectifying of the situation where, over the last 25 years, when the illusions of the 'affluent society' and 'class harmony' prevailed, a whole layer of leaders who were totally divorced from the realities of working class life, pushed their way to the fore in Labour politics.

"The need exists for a political campaign to be waged in the ranks of the Party for the election of MPs, public representatives and officials who will fight for real socialist policies, ie for the election of committed class fighters who, in our view, should come overwhelmingly from working class backgrounds and who will really serve their class.

This campaign should go hand in hand with the fight for the election of all officials, the right of instant recall over officials, councillors and MPs by the bodies which elected them, and the payment of Labour MPs of the same wage as that of the average industrial worker, plus legitimate expenses, to be vetted by the movement. The remainder of the

implementation of these demands would, of necessity, eliminate self seeking from Labour politics and safeguard all Labour MPs against accusations of corruption.

"In addition, this NC wishes to make its position clear on the issue surrounding the refusal of Blyth CLP to re-adopt Eddie Milne as its candidate for MP at the last election. It is our belief that Milne was not refused re-adoption because of any alleged "fight against corruption" - which was largely an issue seized upon demagogically in order to beat the Blyth Labour Party with - but because of a whole history of poor relationships between the CLP and its MP.

"In Blyth, as elsewhere, the LPYS fights for the election of socialists and class fighters as MPs. It should go on record that, at the selection meeting in Blyth, the LPYS delegates voted neither for Milne nor for the adopted candidate, but for a Marxist candidate. However when defeated on this issue, they accepted the position that, in those circumstances, it was necessary to fight for the election of the Labour candidate"

TORIES CRUSHED IN SCOTTISH ELECTIONS

Overall, the results of last week's local elections in Scotland marked a landslide for the Labour Party and a crushing defeat for both the Tories and the Liberals. Labour won 171 of the seats on the new Regional Councils, the Tories 115 and the Liberals 11. Independents won 113 and the Scottish National Party 18.

In the four City Districts (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen) the voting was even more decisive - Labour 135 seats, Tories 82, Liberals, 5, Independents 3 and SNP 1.

These overall figures however hide the really devastating victory for Labour in the West of Scotland. In the Strathclyde Region, which contains half the population of Scotland, Labour won 71 seats to the Tories' 21, the Liberals' 2 and the SNP's 5. In the City of Glasgow, Labour won 55 seats to the Tories' 17, with no other party winning a single seat.

These figures spell out the fact that Toryism has been decisively rejected. In the main working class areas, voters have remained solidly behind their traditional party. The Liberals, the junior party of Big Business, has been annihilated and the "Tartan Tories" of the SNP thrown back. This victory, however, has been totally underplayed in the capitalist press nationally.

Euphoria on the part of the Labour leaders would be entirely misplaced, however. The voting in certain areas spelt out a warning to both the new Labour Councils and the Labour Government - that unless they are prepared to carry through, without compromise, policies in the interests of the workers and their families, then in protest workers will either abstain or turn, along with middle class voters, to one or other of the bosses' parties.

One example is Dundee, one of the most working class towns in Britain. There, the scandal of the alleged property speculating activities of the Labour Lord Provost, was undoubtedly the reason why Labour only just scraped through with 22 seats, to the Tories' 18 and the Independents 3.

Another was Clydebank, a citadel of working class militancy, where Labour this time failed to gain outright control. Their five councillors will have to share power with four Scottish Nationalists and one Tory.

This without doubt is the harvest of the present Council's last-minute collapse in its struggle not to implement the Housing Finance Act. It was only the two SNP members who voted for continued non-implementation, an opportunist move of course since they knew they would be defeated; but this Party's gains are a sign to the Labour leaders that even workers will turn to these political charlatans if they see no concrete benefit from a Labour administration.

The opportunism of the SNP was most clearly shown in the conduct of one SNP candidate who was a Labour member of the present council, but switched parties when he failed to win a nomination as a Labour candidate. Yet he was able to defeat one of the leaders of the rents battle, Labour Councillor Betty Brown.

BY PAT CRAVEN

(Queens Park CLP)

The other chief figure in that battle, former UCS shop steward and Communist Party member Jimmy Reid, paid the price for his role in the climb-down by coming bottom of the poll.

The votes for the SNP generally, spell out the same lesson. The main reason why they did worse than in the General Election was that the Tories regained ground in the country areas, where most of the SNP MPs came from. In last week's elections it was in the traditionally Labour areas that they did well.

In the new town of Cumbernauld, they now control, with a 7-3 majority over Labour, and they are the biggest party in the new town of East Kilbride, with 7 seats to Labour's 5 and the Tories' 2.

Although they won no seats in Glasgow, it was significant that in nearly all the safest Labour seats they pushed the Tories into third place. A typical example is Cowcaddens, where Labour got 2119, SNP 1289 and the Tory

There is a warning to the new Labour councillors - if workers see rents going up again, if rates continue to rise, if the overcrowding and teacher shortage in the schools are not solved, if transport is not improved and fares kept down, then the empty demagoguery of the SNP, the party of Scottish businessmen such as Sir Hugh Fraser, owner of both Glasgow's newspapers and several of the city's stores will attract protest votes.

These problems will never be solved at local level. The experience of London has proved that "two-tier" Local Government is no more able to cope with them than the old system. Indeed, in some ways it is worse, by removing decisions even further from ordinary people and giving more power to the vast bureaucracies of full-time officials.

The key to all these problems facing the new councils is money, to pay for new houses, new schools, etc. This is supplied either from the Government who thereby can impose rigid control on the amount allocated and what it is used for, or has to be borrowed on the market at 12-15% interest.

Glasgow, for instance, has just borrowed 200 million dollars from American and European banks, on which the interest is estimated to be 12%, that means 24 million dollars to be paid back in interest alone every year!

Militant has published numerous figures showing how, in council after council, a huge proportion of the rent goes in paying off the moneylenders. The only way out of the crisis lies with the Labour Government at national level taking over the banks and other moneylenders, along with the major industries, so that the resources can be made available to provide decent homes, schools and other amenities.

Instead of fostering illusions that these can be provided by the new structure of local government, or by their own expertise, the Labour leaders on the new Regional and District Councils, should be using their position to mobilise a campaign, involving the whole Labour Movement, to commit the Labour Government to carry out the necessary socialist policies. The alternative is inevitable failure and the erosion of support for the Labour Party.

The proof of this was shown in Clay Cross. Because the councillors there were prepared to defy the Tory Government and refuse to put up the rents, even to the point of being debarred from holding office and being heavily fined and surcharged, they kept and increased the support of working class voters.

When the Clay Cross Labour Party's "second eleven" stood for election they were overwhelmingly returned, pledged to carry on the same fight. That should be the model for all the new Labour controlled Scottish authorities.

PORTUGAL

FROM PAGE 3



Workers and soldiers fraternise in Lisbon.

the great industrial district across the Tagus ... the average wage is £50 a month. Most of Barreiro's industry, its shipping, forms the Mello family's empire, hugely rich, formerly vastly influential. Its workers are on strike".

Thus within a few weeks, the mass movement which swept away the old, rotted fascist regime, now exposes cracks within the much heralded "national unity" of the Portuguese people.

This upsurge of militancy in the last few days demonstrates the incompatibility of interest between the big banking and industrial combines linked to the landlords, and the mass of workers and peasants.

If the workers' leaders had one tenth of the revolutionary spirit of the workers then the isolated and demoralised capitalists of Portugal could be pushed aside. A workers' Government with the support of the rank and file soldiers and sailors and the peasants and labourers from the countryside could be installed.

But instead the energies of the workers are being channelled behind the Provisional Government of Spínola. With three Socialist Ministers and two Communists. It is a "Popular Front" alliance between the workers' Parties and representatives of classes with fundamental and opposing interests. Far from it being an advance in the direction of Socialism, as portrayed by the Morning Star, it is the only hope for the Portuguese capitalists.

They have calculated that, in the teeth of the storm provoked when the "Captain's Movement" of younger officers overthrew the Caetano regime, to openly confront the movement of the workers would be impossible. It would further stoke the fires of revolution. The working class conscripts of the army and navy would be unreliable. They have had to turn to the leaders of the workers to hold the line for them.

"The industrial unrest will provide an important test for the Communists in the new Government. The Minister of Labour, Senhor Avelino Goncalves, is a Communist and it is now his responsibility to get the strikers back to work. If he succeeds it would enhance the reputation which the party is trying to establish for moderation and responsibility ...

"The Communists have already achieved one significant success in helping to prevent a strike by steel workers which could have quickly brought the country to a halt". (Times 17/5/74).

In this situation the rosy picture presented by the Morning Star can only do disservice to the workers' movement. General Spínola, described by African insurgents as a "man of smiles and blood", has been presented as the new saviour of the working class. Not a word of warning of the dangers ahead posed by such "allies" is printed in the journals of the CP.

On Friday 17 May, the day when

the news of the strikes and occupations was widely reported in the British capitalist press, not one word of this appeared in the Star. Only the appointment of the new Provisional Government, was reported and that without criticism of its capitalist policies.

On the following day, a hint of what was happening and of how it was approached by the Portuguese CP leaders appeared:

"Yet another task was the fight against right wing opportunism as well as the fight against leftism which expresses itself in impatience that does not take into account the relationship of forces in Portugal and which also expresses itself in divisive actions playing into the hands of reaction". (Morning Star 18/5/74).

Say what you mean! Behind the "Marxist" phrases is a clear attempt to hide the fact that the Communist and Socialist Party leaders are being used as fire hoses on the working class. They are the front-line strike-breakers in the interests of a spurious "class unity".

The same tired old bogey of the danger of imminent reaction is brought out to justify their policy. But, if you take account of the relationship of forces, at the present time, it should be abundantly clear that the fascists have been shattered. The secret police and open collaborators of the old regime slink around fearful for their safety. The truth is that the forces of reaction, for the moment, have been isolated. The great mass of rank and file soldiers and sailors are openly on the side of the workers.

It was not any collaboration with "liberal" capitalists, technocrats and army officers which swept the fascists away, but the bold movement of the masses. It is the very workers who are striking to insist on the removal of fascist managers and others who are the guarantee against reaction. Yet they are accused of "impatience"!

If ever there was a time when the working class could have quickly moved towards taking power, it was in the last few weeks in Portugal!

The truth is the very opposite of the arguments of the Star. It is its policies which will lead to demoralisation and the possibility of reaction regrouping its forces. Clashes between the workers and the capitalists are inevitable. If the Provisional Government is used to defend the interests of capitalism with the workers' leaders pushed into the firing line, then the inevitable betrayal of the initial hopes will lead to disillusionment and prepare the ground, in the long run, for a new movement of reaction.

A clear break with the capitalist Provisional Government and the independent mobilisation of the workers around clear socialist demands is the only way to sweep away the dangers of reaction!

SOLIDARITY WINS AT COVENTRY CLIMAX

On Thursday 9 May the management called the convenors and officials to a meeting and provided a peace formula to bring about a settlement for the machine shop's dispute. This was accepted by a meeting of the machine shop on Friday morning.

It included throwing out the time and motion studies and scrapping the pay system where we had 12 rates of pay on the shop floor. We

now have 3, skilled £50.50 a week, semi-skilled £49, unskilled £48.50. This means an increase for most workers of £5.08.

This has been won because of complete solidarity on the shop floor: the marvellous support of the transport and truck drivers inside the factory who were laid off because they refused to cross the picket line or touch anything that did cross the line: and mainly because of the

fantastic job the pickets did, 75% of whom were young workers under 21. One of the convenors said he hoped those workers would carry on the good union work. It is now up to us to back up these hopes, and this is being done by organising meetings of the young workers in and outside the factory and getting them to come to LPYS meetings (some of them already do and the majority buy Militant and Left).

The reason for these young workers doing so much on the picket line (some did 6 hours a day for 12 days including Saturday and Sunday, most did 5 hour shifts) is because they feel they are being used by management as cheap labour. They only get 55% of the wage of an older worker. They are shoved around from machine to machine.

They are seriously considering asking the unions to be allowed

representatives on the Shop Stewards Committee. In fact they are going to push for all the demands in the "Charter for Young Workers" of the LPYS.

BY STEVE FERGUSON

(TGWU Coventry Climax)

FRANCE

FROM PAGE 2

the "middle ground" and reassure the Right, was revealed in one, almost comic, episode. Marchais and other Communist Party leaders had been repeatedly reassuring the press that they were completely independent from Moscow.

Then the press had a scoop: the Russian Ambassador paying an ostentatious visit to one of the candidates - M Giscard d'Estaing! As to the significance of this visit to the favourite candidate, you can draw your own conclusions. Even Marchais was obliged to criticise it as a "blunder".

What now, with Giscard d'Estaing as President of France? One thing is clear, he will not preside over a period of social harmony and peace. Even the most optimistic commentators point out that the President's 7 year term is an eternity in the present climate. The enormous strike wave that was sweeping France before the election was a pointer to the future.

However hard Giscard has tried to cultivate the image of a progressive reformer, the reality is very different. In the first round of the election, Chaban Delmas and the Gaullists themselves clearly exposed Giscard as the leader of the "well varnished right", and a hardened reactionary.

Chaban Delmas told how Giscard had, as Finance Minister, blocked many of the post-1968 reforms designed to calm the social tensions. Giscard's policies have always been openly and systematically in the interests of the big monopolies and banks, which is why they support him so energetically.

Some of the less well publicised aspects of Giscard's election campaign are the ominous warning for the future months. On 14 May the Times' correspondent in France reported the following at one of his meetings:

"When a small group of young left-wing supporters tried to shout

"Mitterand-President" they were instantly bundled out of the marquee in which the meeting was held. Outside I found one of the would-be hecklers being repeatedly kicked by five or six toughs, detailed to keep "order" at the meeting. He finally picked himself up, bleeding at the face, and left. A policeman had stood by impassively throughout".

"Such strong-arm tactics go badly with M Giscard d'Estaing's liberal image. Yet they have featured at several of his meetings during this campaign".

"At the end of last night's meeting a journalist from a local news agency who had photographed the incident was set on by more toughs. He was given attention at a hospital and today his agency and a local branch of the journalists' union protested.

"Le Monde reported recently that the security men for the Giscard campaign had been recruited from among extreme right-wing elements, former supporters of the OAS and Ordre Nouveau, dissolved by the French Government last year.

The leaders of the United Left and the two big Trade Union Federations have already served warning on Giscard that he must keep his promises or there will be trouble. The growth rate is expected to slow down even more, inflation to accelerate, unemployment to double by the end of the year. There will be trouble. Enormous movements of the workers are an inevitability.

What the elections, and the defeat of the Left shows, is the need for socialist strategy and tactics to harness the power of the Labour Movement and direct it towards a Socialist Society. The period when capitalism could be managed, let alone managed in the interests of social reform, has gone for good.



STOP ALL SUPPLIES TO CHILE

Dear Comrades,

Over the last few months we have heard and read of the need to uphold the law. Many Labour leaders, notably the Home Secretary, have pontificated on

this subject in the press and television and at meetings. The issues in question are usually events that took place during the term of the last Government - Clay Cross, Shrewsbury pickets and the struggle of the AUEW against the class-biased NIRC.

Little is said of the businessmen and speculators who have still not declared their excessive profits as required under the Counter Inflation Act.

However there is one issue that stands out as a classic in the art of double-standards: this is the issue of violent opposition to law and order.

The Labour leaders, in common with most clear-thinking people, abhor the sectarian murders in North East Ireland and rightly condemn the sale of arms to these criminal groups who murder innocent people to promote their own perverse political aims.

International help is sought to trace the profiteers who arm these groups. What a curious dilemma must face Mr Callaghan when, on the one hand he is condemning the suppliers of these arms and on the other he is authorising the sale of weapons to the butchers of the Chilean working class. These murderers,

in volume of deaths alone, make the IRA, UDA and UFF look like rank amateurs.

On the point of law and order, these same butchers illegally took control at gunpoint of the government of Chile. So how do our champions of the law reconcile their commitment to defeat the killers in North East Ireland with their support of the killers in Chile?

The argument that we must fulfil our contracts is a non-issue. We have no contract with the illegal junta in Chile. The contract was made with the democratically elected Government. By supplying arms and continuing to recognise the butchers as the legal government, the Labour Government is supporting a fascist dictatorship and the overthrow of democracy by force of arms.

The path to follow is clear. The Government must stop all supplies to Chile. Withdraw recognition of the illegal junta. Assist and encourage the workers of Chile to fight for the return to democracy.

Yours fraternally
G McMANUS
(London SE 11)

FORTY HOUR WEEK

Dear Comrades,

It may well be that those union members who read this will conjure up in their minds a picture of an old fashioned trade unionist, a bit of a square, a bit naive, behind the times etc.

Whatever description they apply will be right - I am. I was taught that the struggle for a basic wage and a forty hour week within five days was the most certain and reliable way of ensuring a higher standard of living and the best educational method both in the industrial and the political sense of teaching our members the need to wage a continuous struggle towards this goal.

We accepted the fact that once the guaranteed week and a high basic wage were won and established the employers would have a harder task to muck us about than to reduce or curtail overtime.

That is why I fought for a regular high basic wage with a guaranteed week in good times or bad, that was until trade unions' thinking tended to become more interested and ready to accept earnings rather than basic wages.

The employers knew this only too well, for hardly any of them forget to offer plenty of overtime in their advertisements for labour. They know that in those industries where the basic wage is low that without being able to offer plenty of overtime they could not keep to their existing labour force.

On the other hand many of our people in their search for a higher standard of living will leave one job for another, not always because the new job may offer higher wages and better conditions but to gain greater opportunities for higher earnings through overtime. Unfortunately so deep has the acceptance of the necessity for overtime, because of the low basic wages, become, that in such cases the

unions have to face and fight a good deal of unpopularity from their members and employers.

In the light of this, one is surely entitled to ask how has the thinking of the trade union movement been turned upside down in this way? Why has the harder form of struggle for higher basic wages been rejected in favour of the easier demands for more overtime and improved overtime rates?

How has it become possible for trade union negotiators to accept from an employer as an answer to a wage increase application that the total earnings of his workforce show that the application was unjustified?

If we knew the answers to those questions we might also know what has happened to the age old trade union struggle for the forty hour week and the demand for more leisure time.

Yours fraternally
TGWU SHOP STEWARD
(Region 5, IMI, Birmingham)

GOOD WEEK - KEEP IT UP!

Largely thanks to the outstanding efforts of our supporters in Tyneside, Liverpool and Brighton combined with smaller donations, we were able to raise £263.31 this week. This is over a £100 improvement on last week. This brings us much nearer to the weekly target we have set ourselves of £350 a week which is necessary in order to reach £15,000 at the end of the year.

The latter is too close for comfort. We are left with just over seven months in which to raise over £11,000. This means that next week it is crucial that we reach the £350, and best of all pass it.

The victory of the Engineers over the NIRC, the fact that the formerly reticent nurses have moved into action, prove once again the tremendous potential power which the working class movement possesses. This has been established beyond doubt. But the most important fight of all still has a long way to go and

that is the fight for Marxist ideas in the Labour Movement.

Militant is the key factor in this struggle and everyone who supports this fight has a duty to support us in every way possible. The donations we receive from our readers are the life blood of the Militant. It is these which have allowed us to make revolutionary changes in the design and content of the paper.

The only way to guarantee that we continue to improve is to send in as big a donation as you can afford immediately.

Thanks to the following for their donations:

Taunton LPYS 50p Tyneside £97.63
Brighton £60.50 Kent £4
Bradford £5.10 G Physick (Kirkby) £2
Erdington LPYS £2 Bristol £1
Manchester £16.15
Alan McAskill (London) £1
Ealing Marxist Discussion Group £1.72
Wirral £9.35 Rutherglen LPYS £3
Basildon 50p Glasgow £5
Liverpool £33
Coventry £10
and others ...

TEMPORARY WORKERS

Dear Comrades,

Although I agree with most of the points raised in the letter about "Temps" from Doreen Ancombe (issue 206) there are a couple of points I feel need bringing out more strongly.

Doreen suggests that "Temps" should have their own trade union. I think that if temps did have their own union it would be smashed because temps are always at the mercy of the agencies - Doreen pointed out in her letter that agencies need not find a temp a job if she or he shows any signs of militancy and it is for that reason alone, a union for just temps would collapse as soon as it is formed.

Surely it is better for temps to join the appropriate union, eg APEX (Association of Profes-

sional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staffs) for clerical workers and the appropriate industrial unions for the temp manual workers.

I am a temporary clerk, working for such an agency and I am also a member of my local APEX branch. Although APEX hasn't actually gone out and campaigned on the case against temp agencies, if enough temps joined the union, we would be able to put the case and then be able to get something done.

I personally think temp agencies should be taken over and incorporated into the Labour Exchanges to provide temporary employment, such as holiday relief work, seasonal work etc for those who require it. The only way that the Labour Exchanges could be run in the interests of the workers and not big business is if they are under the control of the Trade Unions.

This should also be followed up with the demand of £35 for 35 hours. After all, most temps are under 21, like myself, and if they were employed on a permanent basis, they wouldn't get the full rate until they are 21. Temp agencies pay you according to the type of work you do, not your age or experience. That is why they are so attractive to young workers.

So, a young clerical worker of 18 could be earning £18.50 per week in a temp job (which isn't exactly a living wage) whereas she would only get about £14 in a permanent job for the same work.

We should therefore fight for the full rate at 18, a demand laid down in the LPYS Charter for Young Workers.

Yours fraternally
SUE JONES
(Moss Side LPYS, Manchester)

CHILE

Dear Comrades,

At the LPYS Conference, in the Militant and throughout the YS there has been a lot of talk about the necessity for solidarity with the Chilean people. As correctly pointed out in Militant the lessons for the international working class to be derived from the Chile coup are immense and very important for the Labour Movement. Having read the excellent material produced by Militant and the LPYS we have come to the conclusion that the need for all Marxists to show unity with the Chilean people is a vital task in our struggle for world socialism.

Yet, when a massive demonstration is called in the heart of London for this very purpose, only a few LPYS branches turn out to show their solidarity with the downtrodden people of Chile. In comparison with the numbers from other "left" groups, the LPYS representation was minuscule and a total

support for the Chilean working class, it turned out to show the YS a mere pinprick in the side of IS and IMG who completely outnumbered us. All LPYS branches, and especially Militant supporters, in London should have been present at this march and we hope that next time there is a mass demonstration against the military regime in Chile it will also be a demonstration of LPYS solidarity with the people of Chile. Yours fraternally
TOTTENHAM LPYS

RACIALIST LAWS

Dear Comrades,

During a debate on racialism at the Southampton Labour Party Young Socialists meeting on 7/5/74, the following resolution was passed unanimously:

"We, the Southampton LPYS, whilst recognising that the Labour Government have already repealed the vicious retrospective section of the Tory racial laws, they should now immediately repeal the whole of the 1971 Immigration Act".

GLAXO

Dear Comrades,

The branch below has been trying to organise the local plant owned by Eschmann Bros and Walsh Ltd, a Glaxo subsidiary. We have been hampered in this because the plant is in eight separate but adjacent buildings, classified as separate factories by the management who are, on this basis restricting contact between the factories.

Whilst organising locally means of countering this, we would be grateful if any of your readers can send in information about wages and conditions in any Glaxo subsidiaries in their area and the names and addresses of shop stewards.

Please send any information to:

John Twelftree
2 Park Crescent,
Worthing
Yours fraternally
JOHN TWELFTREE

AREA	Received	PERCENTAGE OF TARGET RAISED	TARGET
LONDON	664.52	190%	3000
SUSSEX	275.25	78%	1000
LIVERPOOL	167.52	48%	900
NORTH EAST	255.58	73%	900
WEST YORKS	86.80	25%	900
SCOTLAND	179.64	51%	750
WEST WALES	247.30	71%	650
MANCHESTER	82.38	24%	600
HAMPSHIRE	59.74	18%	550
BIRMINGHAM	71.69	21%	550
WIRRAL	79.35	23%	500
ESSEX	93.78	27%	400
EAST YORKS	68.50	20%	400
LEICESTER	200.00	57%	400
COVENTRY	83.08	24%	300
IRELAND	26.00	8%	300
NOTTINGHAM	130.27	37%	250
OXFORDSHIRE	40.69	12%	250
EAST WALES	14.80	4%	250
BRISTOL	78.88	23%	250
KENT	10.13	3%	200
GLOUCESTERSHIRE	7.00	2%	200
SHEFFIELD	5.34	1%	200
DEVON	19.80	6%	100
HERTFORDSHIRE	6.00	2%	100
LANCASHIRE	13.17	4%	100
OTHERS & NATIONAL EVENTS	942.07	27%	1250
TOTAL	3903.00		

Aladdin workers 100% solid

By ALAN WOODS
(Swansea CLP)

For the past six weeks, the workers of the Aladdin plant at Pontardawe near Swansea, have been on strike. Behind this dispute lies a story of management provocation which would be hard to equal in any part of the country.

The history of Aladdin over the last two years has been one of strife. Following the attempt of management to introduce BSI ratings under a productivity agreement, the process of setting new rates began in the Assembly department. In view of the completely unrealistic nature of these new rates, the workers in that section replied with a sit-in strike, which was only brought to an end by an aggregate meeting of all sections.

The new rates were next applied in sub-Assembly, where the workers went on a work to rule in protest. The reply of the management was to take away all fringe benefits and staff status from the workers concerned. Once again, the general meeting decided that the section should resume normal work.

An approach was made to the Welsh Iron Founders for conciliation. But the arbitrary methods of the management seemed designed to provoke the workforce. At last, the polishing shop workers walked out over the sacking of a union member. The management, true to form, responded by dismissing those workers. Thus the "punishments" were gradually being stepped-up.

The sacked workers were allowed to ask for their jobs back. But they were not to be re-instated, but to lose all fringe benefits and commence work as new employees.

Last year, when a toolmaker was suspended on a Wednesday and sacked by post on a Friday, this was opposed by his workmates — who were all immediately sacked. The same tactic was employed by management as before. The sacked men, with terms of employment from 6-17 years, including two charge-hands, were offered employment — but as new employees. The resultant loss of fringe benefits would be equivalent to a saving of thousands of pounds for Aladdin in the event of redundancies.

The conflict over timing spread to the press shop. The workers bluntly stated that the new rates could not work. They would reduce the earnings of the men. Thus, according to the new rates, a normal work load was only equivalent to 60% of normal earnings!

These rates were between 50 and

guarantee of 100% of previous earnings if they would implement the new system. They put this to the union representatives at 5pm and gave them until 6 am the next day to get it through all three shifts. Failing this, they would implement the new system whether the men accepted it or not.

This high-handed ultimatum was rejected by the night shift who refused to make a decision under pressure. For this, the entire night shift were suspended for three days! After that, the afternoon shift also voted against — and were unceremoniously suspended without any recourse to procedure.

The morning shift followed suit. The protests of the stewards were met with allegations of "mob rule" and "militant control" of the night shift. At length a compromise was reached and the men once more went back to work, but under duress. But it was evident from what followed that management were out to "make an example of the night shift."

On Monday January 21st, despite a guarantee that there would be a time and motion man on 24-hour duty, there was no time and motion man on the night shift. The men were therefore unable to work normally, under the new timing system. Then, management accused the men of not fulfilling the rates.

On Tuesday night, a time and motion man was present, but this time the foreman informed the men that the usual tea-break at 12 pm was cancelled. This had been custom and practice for years on built-in allowances. The men disregarded the foreman's warning and broke for tea as usual.

Next day, the convenor was called into the office and told that a "tea party had been held in works' time. It was also alleged that certain individuals were "not trying" to implement the new rates. No attempt was made to prove or substantiate these allegations.

On Wednesday night, the foreman repeated his warning that there should be no break for tea. The shop steward refused to instruct the men, so the foreman went round each worker individually. At 12 pm precisely, every machine stopped and the workers took their tea break!

By a strange co-incidence, the only tea-machine working that night was in the canteen. Most workers were forced to leave their work place to get a cup of tea. Upon returning, they were met with a curt "get back to your machines". By five minutes past twelve (it only took

five minutes for 25 people to go to get tea and back) four men had been suspended!

When the steward went into the office to negotiate, he was informed that the men had been suspended and that anyone who did the same would get the same treatment, and there was nothing to discuss.

When other workers left their work to see what was happening, they were told to clock off. Incensed by this blatant victimisation, the men refused to go. They realised that once they walked through the gates, they would get the same treatment as others in the past: an offer to return to work with loss of all fringe benefits. So they stayed put.

The management then called in the police to evict the workers, but were told that as there was no disturbance and the men had not clocked out, they were not trespassing. The management put that to rights by immediately sacking all the workers (thus leaving their open to eviction for trespassing!) Grounds for dismissal: "industrial misconduct".

Thereafter, events moved inexorably towards a strike — after procedure had been exhausted — but not before the management had made 210 people redundant, one hour before the strike was due to start! Having heard a prepared statement to this effect read out, with no discussion to take place, the stewards were told to "leave the office and forget it". 600 AUEW workers have been on strike ever since.

The management at Aladdin has broken every rule in the book, while accusing the workers of "unconstitutional action". The AUEW does not recognise the redundancies and has declared the strike official. After six weeks, the workers remain 100% solid and determined to show the Aladdin management, and all like them, that the organisation of the workers cannot be broken by bullying, arrogant methods.

Too many firms have moved to "depressed" areas, like the Swansea and Amman valleys to take advantage of Government grants and cheap labour only to shut up shop when they have squeezed the maximum advantage out of it. This kind of thing must be stopped. And the strike at Aladdin must be supported by all workers.

- * Defend the trade union organisation!
- * Support the Aladdin workers!
- * Black all work from this factory!

All messages of support and donations to:
Adrian Herdman
(AUEW Convenor, Aladdin)
201 HEOL 'Y GARD,
Gwaun'cae'Gurwen
Glam.

MILITANT

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N. IRELAND

FROM PAGE 1

their economic and strategic interests. They would like to move towards a "Federal Solution" under the British umbrella.

It is this which is behind the "Council of Ireland" set up on the basis of being "all things to all men" attempting to allay the fears of Protestants while establishing some co-operation between the Governments across the border.

But tragically for them, as well as for the workers, the sectarian monster brought into life and nurtured by the British Imperialists in the past, refuses now to lie down.

The Protestant workers' fears of being coerced into a capitalist United Ireland is exploited by reactionaries in the leadership of the UWC and the likes of Craig of Vanguard. The same Craig, when a Minister, is reputed to have told a trade union delegation to "go and jump in the Belfast Loch".

But the Provisional IRA leadership must also bear responsibility for the present situation. It is true that British Imperialism created the situation but the bombing campaign of the Provos has deepened and extended the divide between the workers. They bear a responsibility for the reinforcement of sectarianism. 60,000 have been forced to move home in Belfast since 1969, the biggest population displacement in Europe since the war.

Many of the leaders of the Provisional IRA claim that their campaign is "not sectarian". But "the road to Hell is paved with good intentions"! The senseless bombings have enraged Protestant workers and driven them into the arms of their worst enemies such as Craig and co.

The policies pursued by the Provos are leading in the direction of sectarian civil war. Some of the leadership may believe that out of this will come some kind of "United Ireland" but in reality, with the balance of forces between the Catholic and Protestant populations, it would be more like India at the time of British withdrawal with the mutual slaughter of Muslim and Hindu, millions driven from their homes, and a new partition of the country.

The Catholics would be driven out of Belfast and the Protestants out of the border areas resulting in the possibility of a new partition with, say, Fermanagh and Tyrone going into the Republic.

The Provo leaders' aim of a "United Ireland" would be postponed for decades. The suggestion made by one of their supporters in a letter in The Times (21/5/74) that the UNO could supervise a solution is hollow. Have they been able to solve the conflicts between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots, the Arabs and Jews in the Middle East?

In the desperate situation which has arisen, the leaders of the Labour and Trade Union Movement must also bear a measure of responsibility. The Labour Ministers responsible for Northern Ireland, Stan Orme and Merlyn Rees have sent the army, to remove the barricades and used Tory terminology in denouncing "Political Strikes".

Our opposition to the "strikes" must be because they are viciously anti-working class, not because they are "political".

The standpoint of the organisers of this strike can be seen from a spokesman of the UWC who said that anyone who opposed the strike "must be a United Ireland supporter or a Communist" or Jim Smyth who described the Irish Congress of Trade Unions as a "Dublin-based Republican Organisation".
(Irish Times 20/5/74).

But to send the army into the power stations would set a dangerous precedent for the movement in the rest of Britain, for use in the event of a General Strike.

The watchword of the Labour movement must always be to "rely on your own power" not on that of the capitalist state, but the Labour leaders will have to take this course if they remain on the basis of capitalism.

Some attempt to take class action has been launched in the "Back to work marches" organised by the Trade Unions. The three or four hundred shop stewards who attempted to march and the hundreds of others who have stood out for class unity on the factory floor and in the most extreme circumstances are the real unsung heroes of the past few years. If the Labour leaders had adopted a bold class approach 5 years ago, the present crisis would not have arisen.

Nevertheless the turnout was low because of mass intimidation, workers' estates were blocked off by armed thugs at 6.00 am. Who would take their life and that of the family left behind, into their hands, and defy such intimidation?

This march was a tremendous initiative, but there could only be a response if the workers were provided with a real means of defence.

The full horror is shown by a statement from Charles Hull, the chairman of the Northern Ireland Committee of the ICTU:

"Two days after our conference an active lay representative of one of our unions was murdered... we had union meetings disrupted by armed thugs who robbed those present."
(Irish Times 9/5/74).

Yet the workers know full well that neither the British army nor the RUC are willing or able to defend them.

Only an armed trade union defence force would be capable of providing that defence. In the first place the leaders of the unions, should take the initiative in calling for conferences of shop stewards, union branches, tenants' associations, Labour Parties and Trades Councils to discuss the question of defence against sectarian violence.

An objection is often raised that this would increase the number of arms in circulation. But a section of the working class already have arms, the problem is that they are turned in the wrong direction and that they are in no way under the control of democratic working class organisations.

But to those who oppose the demand for the trade unions to arm themselves, the "Back to work" marchers should provide an object lesson. You cannot make placatory speeches or offer a bunch of flowers to sectarian madmen intent on shooting workers going to and from work! The arming of the trade unions is a minimum step which is now necessary even to prevent the trade unions themselves being consumed by sectarianism.

Reactionaries like Craig are determined to split the unions and create a strictly Protestant Trade Union Movement. They have openly raised the demand for the Northern Unions to be separated from the ICTU. Such a split would be disastrous for the working class, further weakening its power in the face of the employers' onslaught. Already, as Charles Hull said, weekly earnings in the North are between £6 to £8 lower than in Britain.

Only a class approach can create a movement of both Catholic and Protestants able to eliminate sectarianism for ever.

LPYS DEMONSTRATION AGAINST RACIALISM

3000 marchers poured through the centre of Bradford on Saturday 18 May to shouts of "Black and White unite and fight" "Racialism out, Socialism in!" The Labour Party Young Socialists national campaign against racialism culminated in a vitally successful march and rally.

For months we have campaigned in the Labour Movement and union branches — the first national campaign in the movement on the question.

The response of those sections

of the movement reached and in particular of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi workers groups, has belied those sceptics who tried to hold us back.

On the march itself, contingents of black workers from Huddersfield, Bradford, Birmingham, Scotland and many other places took part.

Young and old black workers in Bradford joined the march as it moved along. Hundreds of onlookers bought copies of Militant and the LPYS paper Left.

A tiny handful of mostly young working class lads, misled by the viciously racist "National Democratic Freedom Movement", staged a pathetic "counter-demonstration. The National Front and the Yorkshire Campaign against Immigration didn't show their faces.

At the end of the march, an open air rally was held, addressed by a number of speakers. From Bradford, a member of the Labour Party welcomed the marchers. Speakers who followed were: Mahommed Ayub spokesman for the workers at Heckmondwike Carpets who are on strike; a speaker from the Pakistani Action Committee; a local nurse; RS Virdee of the Bradford Indian Workers' Association; a representative of the Bangladeshi workers in Birmingham and Nick Bradley, Young Socialist elected to the National Executive of the Labour Party at the LPYS Conference last month.

A clear lead, answering the fears and prejudices of workers — which racialism feeds with

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P.O ENGINEERS

As reported in recent issues of Militant, the struggle of the PO Engineers of Liverpool is echoing throughout the industry.

Meetings of POEU members up and down the country have called for a £10 across the board increase in

to the conciliatory approach of the union leaders.

More information and copies of the pamphlet produced by the Liverpool Internal Branch can be obtained from:

Thomas MacNicholas (secretary)
Liverpool Internal Branch POEU