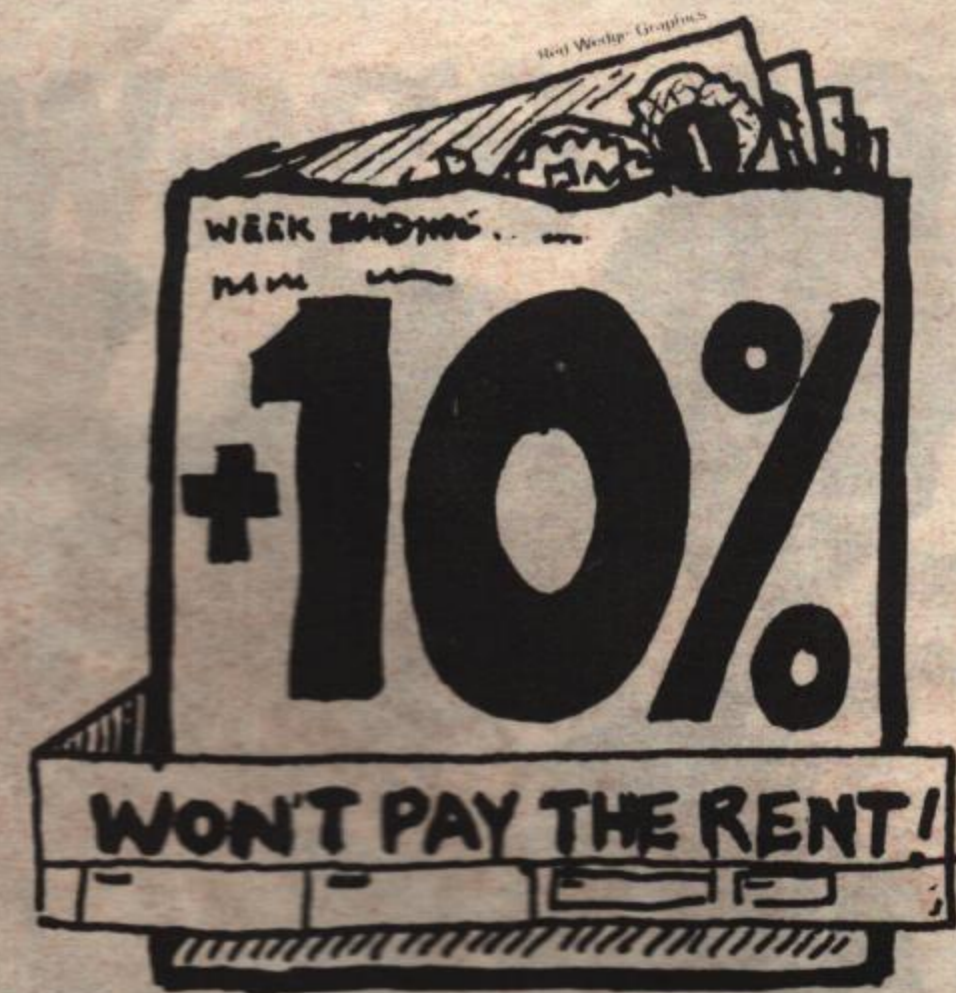


Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY 10P



Where do we go from here? Firemen, power workers, miners in the battle for all our wages SEE PAGE THREE

MAGNIFICENT MINERS!

THE FIRST of November 1977 will go down as one of the great days for the British working class.

It was the day the miners rallied against the vast army of employers, ministers and bureaucrats who had campaigned against them.

Against all the predictions, they voted by 110,634 to 87,901 against the Coal Board's productivity deal, which had been supported by their union president, Joe Gormley and the Minister for Energy, Anthony Wedgwood Benn.

They have refused to pay with their blood and bones for an increase in coal production. By their vote, they have called for a united union and a united fight for

higher wages and better conditions.

The Stock Exchange drooped. The Coal Board bosses moaned. Even the pound, which has been looking so cheerful recently, floundered.

Everywhere, men who live on the wealth produced by others lost heart.

For they know that the miners' 'No!' is not just a refusal to a productivity deal.

It's a 'No!' to all those appeals for sacrifice and not to rock the boat, appeals which have kept rich men rich at workers' expense for nearly four years now—yes, since the last time the miners gave the lead in 1974.

They know that the miners will now press ahead for the £135 which their conference voted for in the summer.

They know that every other worker will start to stand up straight again: to feel proud of their unions, determined to use their union strength to win back the wealth which has been filched off them for four long years.

Press ahead

They know that firemen will not listen if their union leaders, as with the miners, try to hedge their bets over conference decisions.

They know that agricultural workers won't any longer accept the subs of ministers and that miserable 10 per cent.

They know that hospital workers, busmen and teachers won't stand back any longer while their services are ruined and their jobs destroyed.

The miners' vote is a beacon—a beacon of confidence, hope and militancy—in what seemed like a dark pool of poverty, apathy and 'moderation'.

FOLLOW IT!



Miners' lobbying their union executive a fortnight ago



Voting at Snowdown Colliery last week—a resounding NO to the attempt to reverse their conference decision

Grunwicks: Stop the scabs' bus on Monday

THIS MONDAY'S mass picket at Grunwick is certain to be affected by the wave of self-confidence felt by workers everywhere after the miners' ballot result.

Thousands of workers will be much more willing to take

a day off work and join the Grunwick strikers in stopping George Ward's busload of scabs.

For if the miners can turn the tide, so can we all.

The Grunwick strikers see Monday as the 'Day of Reckoning'. Either real efforts are made to lift the strike

out of the doldrums on that day or many of them feel there is no further reason for carrying on.

Essential

It is even more essential that in the last couple of days before the weekend every

worker, every fellow trade unionist, every friend and workmate who has ever expressed even the slightest sympathy for the Grunwick strikers, should be invited to join the coaches going to the mass picket.

Where possible, mass meetings should be held to get

the message across. Miners' MP Dennis Skinner is touring North London factories this week hoping to speak to as many workers as possible.

Teeth

The miners have spearheaded the campaign to

keep the Grunwick mass pickets alive in the teeth of opposition from the TUC and the Labour government.

It was the miners in the summer who helped build the picket into the giant blockade of 11 July. It was the miners who brought the main contingent to the recalled mass

picket on 17 October.

Now more miners are expected on the picket line next Monday than ever before. Together with thousands of others they can prove an unbeatable combination.

Monday must prove the slogan: The workers, united, will never be defeated.

MASS PICKET: This Monday, 7 November, 6.30am onwards, Chapter Road, London NW10 (next to Dollis Hill tube station).

ENNALS TO CHAIR MEETING AGAINST ABORTION

THE PACT between the government and the anti-abortion lobby has been bound closer by David Ennals, Minister of Health and Social Security. Ennals has agreed to chair a private debate organised by Life, the anti-abortion pressure group.

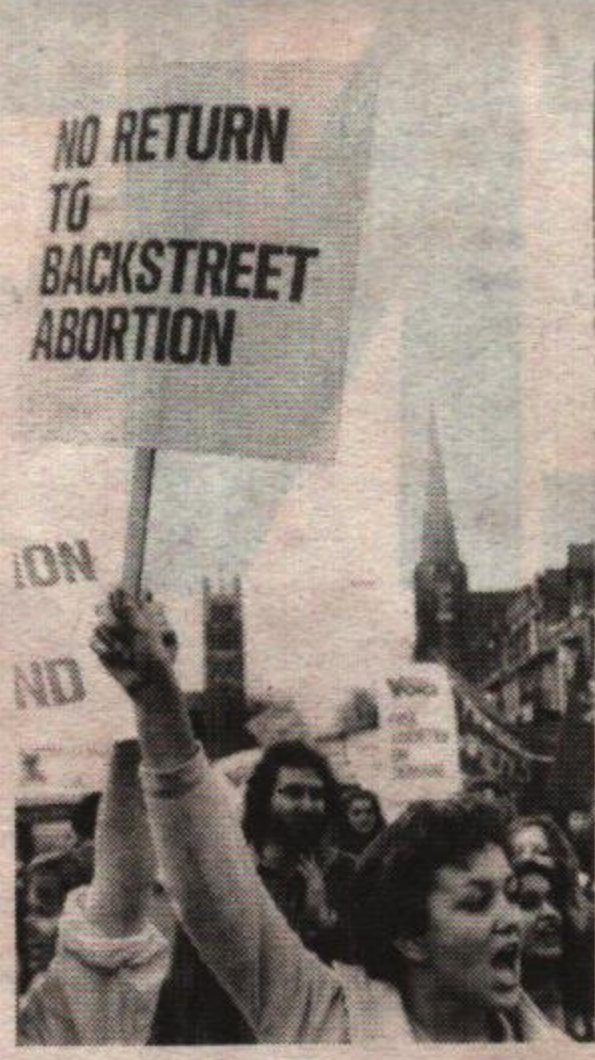
The debate will take place in Norwich, where Ennals is an MP, next Friday 11 November. If Ennals is well enough—he is in hospital at the moment—he will be chairman.

ENGINEERED

Liz Gibson, who describes herself as 'a pregnant supporter of Womens Voice in Norwich', told Socialist Worker: 'This is not an open debate. It's by invitation only. The whole thing is engineered to boost Life and the anti-abortionists.'

'We think it's disgraceful that a Labour Minister should agree to chair this meeting, and it makes us feel that the deal between the government and the anti-abortionists is further ahead than we thought.'

'We'll be picketing the meeting—and Ennals'.



Pictures from Sunday's demonstration in Birmingham by Phil McCowen

The great march the press ignored

MARY ROBSON, mother of two children from North London, went on the big abortion demonstration in Birmingham last Sunday. 'It was very big—much bigger than I expected', she says.

'At one point the march was on a slope, on a long winding road, and I could see nothing ahead but this great demonstration. Then I looked back, and there were thousands of people behind me too.'

'Most of the people there had travelled a long way to get there. It proves that really lots of women everywhere are really getting together to fight for their rights, especially for abor-

tion. There were banners there not just from women's organisations and Womens Voice, but from trade unions as well.

'But when I got back to London and turned on the television news, what did I see? Not a word about this demonstration. It's bloody disgusting.'

'How is our message and our demonstration going to get round to people if the telly and the newspapers don't say a word about it?'

'They're always quick to report violence. But great demonstrations of women like that are completely ignored.'



Some of the thousands of people who marched through Birmingham. Women's Voice placards and banners made up at least a quarter of the march.

Subject: SOCIALISM Candidate: D. HEALEY School: WESTMINSTER SCHOOL FOR HYPOCRITICAL LAYABOUTS CSE Examination

Question 1.

Imagine you are Chancellor of the Exchequer and you are contemplating cuts in income tax. You are faced with two people—one married and earning £30 a week and the other also married and earning £500 a week. Whose tax do you cut the most and by how much?

Answer:

I would cut the tax of the person earning £30 a week by £1.04 and I would cut the tax of the person earning £500 a week by £2.55.

Examiner's Comments:

Quite right. This man shows promise.

Question 2.

Christmas is coming and the profits are getting fat; time to put some money in the rich man's hat. A married person earning £500 a week will get a Christmas bonus in the form of a tax rebate. How much will this be? Will you give anything to the old age pensioners and if so, how much?

Answer:

I will give the old age pensioner a £10 bonus. I will give the person on £500 a week a tax rebate bonus of £89.

Examiner's Comments:

Absolutely correct. This candidate has shown great imagination and personal integrity. He really does understand what governing this great nation of ours is all about. There must be a place reserved for him in the House of Lords as a reward for his services. (After all, we know they won't really abolish it.)

Signed:

Maggie Thatcher!
WELL DONE!

BY BILL MESSAGE

The Labour ministers and the anti-union boss's yacht

REMEMBER the Forte thieves? The way hotel workers were sacked simply for joining a trade union? Multi-millionaire Charles Forte's refusal to countenance recognition for unions within his empire?

Remember too the attempt back in 1969 of a Labour government to introduce a law against the unions, very similar to the law actually introduced by Ted Heath's Tory government two years later?

The diaries of Richard Crossman, former Labour cabinet minister, whose third volume was published this week, reveal a remarkable connection between the two sets of events.

The architect of Labour's proposed law against the unions was Barbara Castle, then Minister of Employment. She and Harold Wilson fought for the law against the opposition of the whole trade union movement, the majority of Labour MPs and even much of the cabinet.

In the middle of this fight she and her husband went on holiday with the Crossman family—in Sir Charles Forte's luxury yacht.

RUSHED

Crossman tells how, after discussions on how the anti-union law should be worded, 'Barbara and I rushed off to Cafe Royal, right up to the top to a delicious flat where Charles Forte lives. He owns the Cafe Royal, and has proposed that we should borrow his motor yacht and cruise at Whitsum.'

Later he continues the story of how they travelled on the 'gorgeous vessel' which was 'so valuable', of how they were met in Rome by 'two cars and a very sleek Cafe Royal waiter

who had been specially flown out to look after us', and how 'Barbara was tremendously keen to keep it a secret we are going on Charles Forte's yacht'.

Such stories make you begin to understand why politicians of all parties have staunchly supported creatures like Reginald Maudling, Edward Short, Alf Roberts, and other MPs who received favours from corrupt businessmen. As Barbara Castle's political mentor Aneurin Bevan once said: 'They're all at it.'

Crossman also reveals one firm ally of Wilson and Castle in their attempts to castrate the unions. 'Wedgy Benn had obviously been brought into line behind the scenes,' says Crossman. 'Something that should be noted by those who now parade Benn as a 'left-winger' just as they should also note his present membership of the cabinet sub-committee imposing the wage controls, and his demand for productivity dealing in the mines.'

ALL POWER TO THE GOVERNOR OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND?

'POUND SOARS! A GREAT BOOST FOR BRITAIN'S MORALE!' The Daily Express was delighted with the 'floating of the pound' this week, which has raised the value of the pound on international exchange rates.

How was this important decision taken? For it wasn't even discussed in the cabinet.

It was taken by a committee of three men. One of them, Prime Minister James Callaghan, was in favour of the float. Another Chancellor Denis Healey, was against it.

The man who tipped the balance was Gordon Richardson, Governor of the Bank of England. No one ever elected him. He 'rose to office' through a mixture of inheritance and financial cunning.

A chance to beat the wage controls

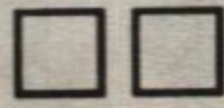
THE miners' vote against the productivity deal was a first stunning blow against the government's wage controls. But that does not mean the controls are dead.

Even while the miners' votes were being counted on Sunday and Monday, the government were preparing troops for use against another section of workers with dangerous and grossly underpaid jobs—the firemen.

And its friends in the press were

doing their utmost to turn people against the power workers, who have also been forced to take industrial action to protect their standards of living.

The government and the employers know that if they can beat the power workers this week, then many firemen will be frightened to go into battle next week.



And if they can stave off the challenge from the firemen then they will be in a better condition to face up to the miners when they make their wage claim.

Make no mistake. It is not only

Socialist Worker

WHAT WE THINK

these three groups of workers who would suffer as a result. If they cannot break the wage controls, what hope is there for the hospital workers, the local authority manual workers, the farmworkers, all of them with wage claims in the balance.

The miners' ballot at least gives us a chance to beat the wage

controls, to restore our wages to what they were worth three years ago. But only if we rally round the power workers, the firemen and the miners now.

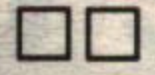
On page 19 of this paper a power worker explains their case. We urge our readers to pin the article up on factory notice boards and use the facts in it for arguments in support of the power workers' industrial action.

On this page we print the firemen's case. If they strike, there must be leaflets in every workplace putting that case to far wider numbers of workers than this paper reaches.

Finally, over the page, London

docks shop steward Michael Fenn shows how in all the current disputes trade union leaders are doing their best to sabotage the fight to restore living standards. That is why he urges support for the Rank and File Conference on Saturday 26 November, of which he is organising secretary.

United we can now win. But divided we can still lose.



Socialist Workers Party branches throughout the country will be putting leaflets into at least 150 workplaces this Friday urging support for the miners, the power workers and the firemen. The designed artwork for these has been sent out at the same time as these papers.

TROOPS THREAT TO THE FIREMEN

by Cheshire fireman

ANGER is growing on Merseyside at the news on Sunday that the government have made contingency plans to break the fireman's threatened strike by using the armed forces.

The information was leaked out by local Radio City and confirmed by the Liverpool Daily Post.

IT'S A DISGRACE, LABOUR!

TERRY SEGARS, an Essex fireman and FBU regional chairman, East Anglia, told Socialist Worker:

It is a disgrace that a Labour government is willing to use the troops. What a mockery it makes of our right to 'free collective bargaining'.

But we'll see how effective these strike-breakers will be. They couldn't cope in Glasgow during the Glasgow firemen's strike a few years ago—so I don't see how they'll manage throughout the whole country.

It is rumoured that there may be a strike ballot. This is unnecessary because of the recall conference on Monday.

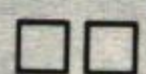
Everyone has had plenty of time to consider the consequences of strike action. The last thing we what is a campaign in the press bombarding our members with horror stories to persuade them to vote against strike action.

Said Terry Fields, regional secretary of the Fire Brigades Union: 'It's not unexpected, but it seems insensitive while negotiations are still proceeding.'

'I was sick as a pig when I heard the news. But if the government is throwing the gauntlet down, we will not hesitate to pick it up.'

These government plans came to light the day before negotiations over a demand for an increase of £20 for qualified firemen. So it is clear the employers are preparing to do battle over firemen's pay. So much for the negotiations.

Said Terry Fields: 'I only hope the employers come up with money on the table. If not we'll be going for a strike action when union delegates meet next Monday.'



Whitehall have confirmed that all three services will be involved in emergency plans, but the forces lack trained firemen.

Firemen will be the first big group of workers to challenge the 10 per cent limit on pay. If the employers win by using the troops against them there can be little hope of other unions following suit.

If the forces do move in, firemen will picket all stations manned by them.



Flashback to 1970, and troops move in against a dustmen's strike in East London



The troops held out for 10 days during the firemen's strike in Glasgow. Let's see how long they can hold out against a national stoppage.

Merseyside firemen will strike from 9am on Monday 7 November—the same day as the recall union conference.

The firemen will need the support of fellow trade unionists, not only on the picket lines, but especially financial support. There is no strike fund in the FBU, and with Christmas creeping up, they will be particularly vulnerable to the losses in pay that a strike will bring.

Take workplace collections when the strike starts. Don't fail those who never fail you.

FIREMAN

Paper produced by and for rank and file members of the FBU. 5p (minimum donation) from Rank and File Centre, 265a Seven Sisters Road, London N4. (Please add postage).

READY TO STRIKE?

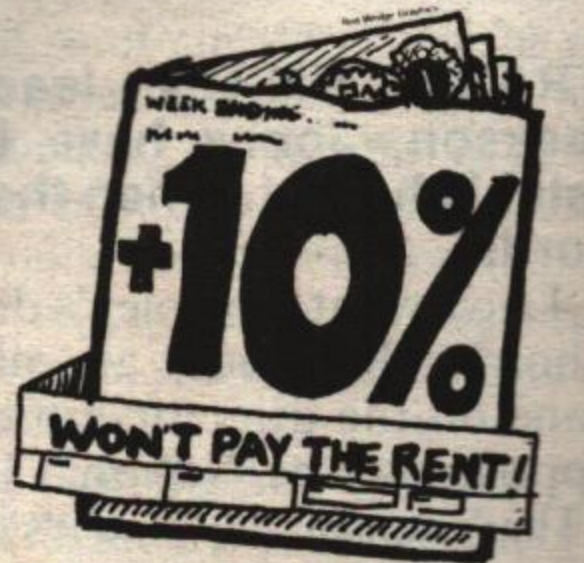
Merseyside firemen: They'll picket their own stations if troops are used

Ambulancemen join the action

A HUNDRED and thirty ambulancemen in Liverpool are answering emergency calls only. Last Thursday all NUPE members voted to begin an eleven-day work to rule after deciding that the offer from Merseyside Regional Health Authority on bonus payments was unsatisfactory.

Said Tom MacIntyre, NUPE branch secretary, said: 'They put a tentative offer to us. But we held a meeting and rejected it. On 7

THE CASE FOR THE FIREMEN'S WAGE CLAIM



THE firemen's claim is amazingly modest.

All they want is the average weekly wage of adult men plus 10 per cent to take account of danger and unsocial hours. Top take-home pay at the moment is £47.50.

A lot of fuss has been made about how dangerous policemen's jobs have become. But little is said about the firemen.

One statistic says it all: Last year five firemen were killed, but not one policeman. Everyday at least one fireman is seriously injured.

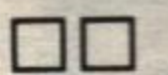
One reason all firemen give for the hazardous nature of the job is the increasing use of chemicals. Fires these days ignite all kinds of complex substances—plastics, polythene, polystyrene and so on that can do incalculable damage when inhaled.

Firemen take for granted that some sort of injury is likely to inflict them at some time in their working life.

The public are deliberately misinformed about the dangers. One example really angered firemen recently.

Victor the giraffe hit the headlines for days as firemen tried to save his life. At about the same time two young firemen from Reading, earning less than £40 a week, were killed on duty. There was hardly any coverage in the press at all apart from a few lines in the Daily Mirror.

But this is not all. The unsocial hours are far worse than those in industry. A 15-hour night shift is the norm. Even then a shift only ends fires permitting.



Firemen have to work Christmas and bank holidays too.

But above all the firemen's case is made by simply remembering what their job is about something rather special—saving life.

As a fireman's wife told Socialist Worker recently: 'If my husband just saves one baby in a lifetime then surely it's worth a decent wage.'

IF THE firemen strike there is no doubt that they will be hounded and abused by the press and television. They will need all the support they can get to publicise their case.

Socialist Worker readers must make sure that the information from these articles is reproduced plus local ideas and facts as leaflets and handed out in work places as possible.

All conceivable support in the labour movement must be mobilised as rapidly as possible.

November we will reconsider our position, and if we think it necessary we shall begin to hold industrial action on alternate weeks from then onwards.'

On Sunday NUPE members in St Helens and Wirral voted to join the ban on all cases other than accidents and emergencies.

Mechanics at the Central Service Depot on Merseyside will also join the dispute by refusing to service non-emergency vehicles.

It's the shop stewards who represent the workers. They should have the say in running the unions, over wages, schools, hospitals

'TRADE UNION leaders like Scanlon, Jackson, Jones have become part of the establishment. When they retire they become Lords.

Look what Gormley's done—he's got a job with Thomas Hudsons, an oil corporation. So he's gone on the directorship of a firm that's directly opposed to the National Union of Mineworkers.

That's conspiracy. And it's not only that. It's treason. The man's a traitor. And that doesn't only apply to Gormley. It applies to most of the trade union leadership in this country.

Look at the bitter experiences we've had in our trade union movement. Fine Tubes, three years on strike. The two most powerful unions in the country. Scanlon and Jones sold those people down the river. Grantham doesn't want to win, he wants to get out the place. If he had the opportunity he'd say 'here, I don't want the membership in Grunwicks'.



• Jones. Campaigning for higher pensions. Retires next year.



• Gormley—a directorship



• Scanlon—a seat in the Lords?

Mohair

I've met Scanlon, I've met Jones, I've met Chapple. They're all the same, bureaucrats, mohair suits and silk ties. They're getting very similar to the unions in the states, big business men, doing big business.

They've got big offices, big cars, paid for by the union and that's all they want to know about. They've become completely divorced from the people they're supposed to represent.

The people who represent the workers are the shop stewards, in the sorts of industries where there are no stewards, the representatives, whatever they call them.

It's the shop stewards who should have the say. They should have the say over wages, the cuts in hospitals, schools, racialism or anything else. That's why I believe in rank and file trade unionism and the rank and file conference.

The officials don't want to have to put themselves on the line. The people who have to are the shop stewards. They're the people who should run the unions and don't.

Officials

They're just being used by the official machinery of the unions to get members. And when they get those members and it causes aggravation the union officials don't want them.

Rank and file militants have to organise so that we can get back to trade unionism as it was before the Jones and Fishers and Scanlons took it over. We have to go back before we can go forward. It can be done.

I'VE BEEN involved in the National Port Shop Stewards Committee since it started back in 1968. It's an

Michael Fenn, a shop steward in the London Docks, and Secretary of the Rank and File Conference Organising Committee, talks to Socialist Worker about the importance of the conference.

INTERVIEW BY CHRIS HARMAN

example of what can be done although it was an effort.

The Committee was very active around the time of Pentonville, but then it didn't function for about three years, because the convenor didn't call meetings.

But then when there was the threat to close Preston docks the Preston docks shop stewards committee sent letters to everydocks shop stewards committee in the country.

Secure

That got the National Committee back together again, a new convenor was elected and things began to work again.

Four hundred jobs were going to be lost at Preston. The officials were going to do absolutely nothing. But the National Port Shop Stewards Committee called a one day strike. Out of 29,000 dockers we got 26,500 out on strike.

The government coughed a grant of £4m and the jobs were secure for another three years.

We had periods of doldrums, the same groups

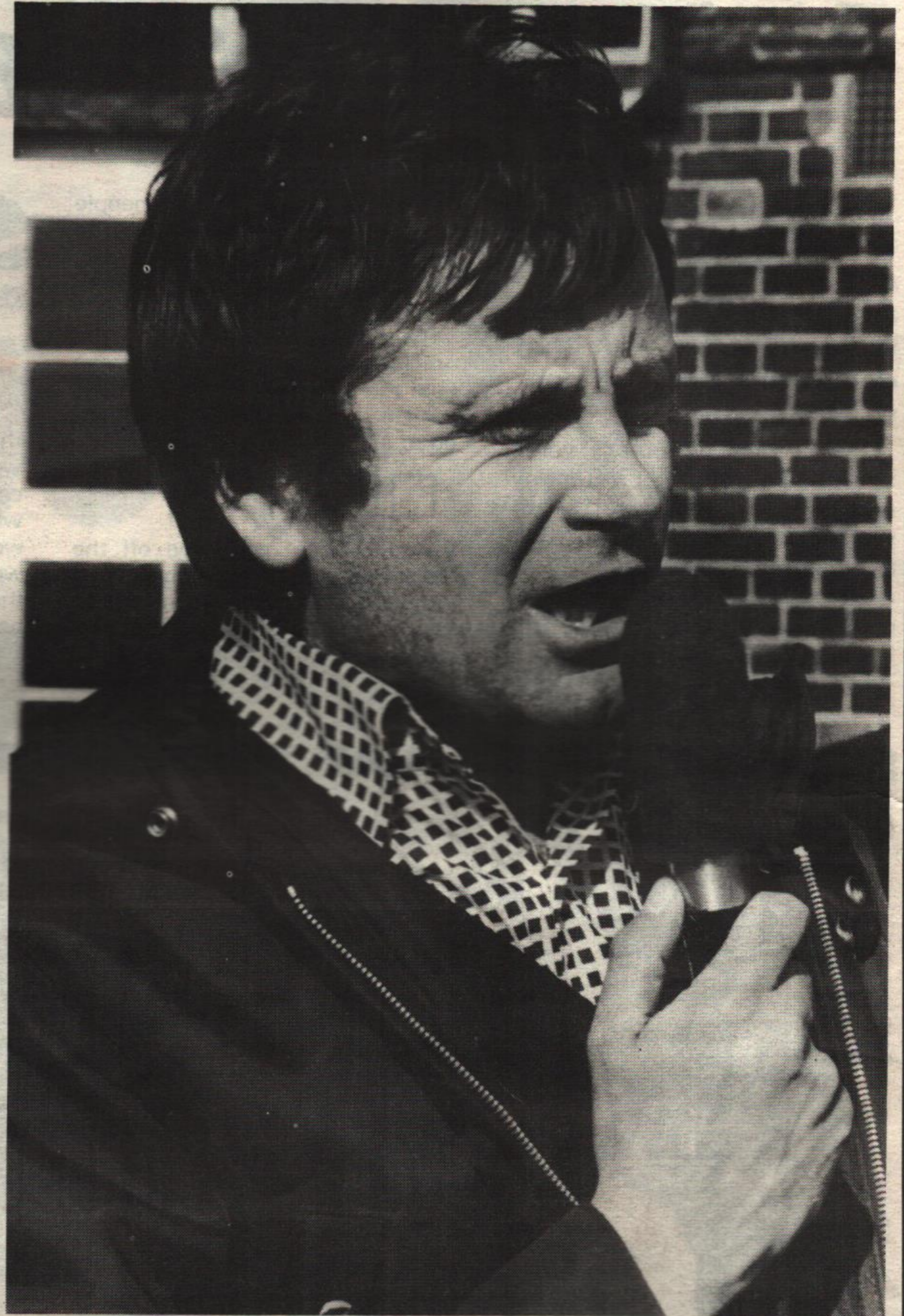
turning up all the time. About 20 ports were represented at the first stewards meeting about Preston. At later meetings a lot of them didn't turn up, and it gradually went down to the hard core.

But they all sent pledges that they'd support the strike over Preston. And this was backed up by the Dockworker, which we sent to about 15 major ports with the front page saying 'your jobs are at stake'.

I've been writing to blokes now since 1973 who I've never met in my life. They never come to meetings. But they sell the paper, they've got an identity with the Dockworker.

THERE IS a hunger, a need to get in and do something without the trade union officials. That's why we've got to have a rank and file movement, because the need is there.

Trade unionists who are active, who are socialists, feel the need to do something when they see the local hospital closing down, when they see they have to pay another two or three quid for the kids school dinners, when



their wages are being cut. But they know the officials are not doing anything, because they can sit and watch them on television saying: 'Now, we've got to do this for the country, we've got to do that for the country', while we're skint and they're getting millions. It's as simple as that.

Govnors

The last attempt at a rank and file organisation was the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions. But they couldn't do it, because their attitude was that they were the govners and everyone had to do what they said.

We, the Royal Group of Docks, were one of the founder members of the Liaison committee. But we withdrew from its conferences because they were completely undemocratic.

What did they do? Fine tubes—nothing. Pentonville—nothing. The miners strike—nothing. Shrewsbury—nothing. Grunwicks—nothing. Yet when you get into situations like Pentonville,

there's an awful lot of people around who want to do something but are frustrated.

Within a couple of hours of the imprisonment of the five dockers, we'd stopped every major port in Britain. Then we decided that the most important thing was to stop the mass media, because the papers were putting poison into us.

We had to walk into papers and find the fathers of the chapel (stewards) who took over and stopped the printing.

The same was true in other places. Our problem was knowing who to contact. That's the importance of having the rank and file movement. You need stewards with names and addresses you can contact.

Bank

AND ONE of the most important things about a rank and file movement is finance. Because the money collected from contributions to the official trade unions goes into their bank accounts.

We lost our strike in 1975 because we didn't have a bean.

We had to wait four weeks before we got the money to hire coaches to picket—then we got £200 from the Kent miners. Then we went to Hull and Liverpool and Southampton. But by that time it was too late.

If we'd had the contacts to get finance in the first place, we'd probably have won.

At the moment there are people on the docks supporting the conference who are still very sceptical. But they're very interested. It'll be an education for them to see other trade unionists, to hear the level of debate.

I went to the last rank and file conference last year. The contributions from the stewards, from the trade unionists from every section of industry and the hospitals and the schools, were every impressive.

Build

All the enthusiasm and energy of the conference can be used—to form rank and file committees, to help other trade unionists who are in dispute, to provide contacts so that they can get financial assistance.

One of the most important things that could come out of this conference is to build a network of contacts that militants and stewards could use during strikes.

That's why it's important that every shop stewards committee and branch sends delegations.

Rank and File delegate conference Saturday 26 November. 11.30am, New Century Hall, Corporation Street, Manchester. Delegates invited from all trade union bodies.

Credentials 50p from Rank and File Centre, 265a Seven Sisters Road, London N4.



BENEFIT FILM SHOW

for the completion of the film about the 1977 Right to Work march **UNION MAIDS**—a rarely-shown documentary from the USA in the 1930s, based on three women who came from the rank and file to become union organisers.

plus Bunuel's LAND WITHOUT BREAD
Plus extracts from the filming of the Right to Work march

plus a speaker
Saturday 12 November, 6.30pm, The Cinema, Tottenham Street, London WC1.

Tickets £1.50 (unemployed £1). Bar and food available.

RANK AND FILE FILMS

REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

How it was won and why it was lost



IN PREPARATION for the First of May, the Soviet government has decreed, where possible, the removal from the streets of old Tsarist monuments, the old stone and metal idols which remind us of our slavery of the past.

We shall then endeavour to erect in the nearest future on our squares new monuments, monuments to Labour, monuments to workers, men, women and peasants, monuments which will remind every one of you: look, you were a slave, you were nothing, and now you must become everything, you must rise high, you must learn, you must become the master of all life.

There are the sciences and the arts—and all this is inaccessible to the toilers, because the workers and peasants are compelled to live like convicts, chained to their wheelbarrow. Their thought, their consciousness, their feelings, must be freed.

It is all of this that we shall be reminded by May Day when we must meet together with the Red Army and declare: we have taken the power into our hands and we shall not give it up, and this power is for us not an end in itself, but a means—a means for another grand object, which is, to reconstruct the whole life, to make all wealth, all the possibilities of happiness, accessible to the whole people.

To establish at last, for the first time, such an order upon this earth as would do away, on the one hand, with the man bent and oppressed and on the other, with he who rides on the back of his fellow-men.

TAKE POWER INTO YOUR HANDS

Comrades, we should be wretched, blind people of little faith if we even for one single day, were to lose our conviction that the working class of other countries will come to our aid, and following our example will rise, and bring our task to a successful conclusion.

You need only call to mind what the toiling masses are living through at the present moment—the soldier masses of Germany on the western front, where a raging, hellish offensive is going on, where millions of our brothers are perishing on both sides of the front.

Everywhere the war produces the same consequences. Dire want and poverty reign supreme in all lands. And the final result will be, in the long run, everywhere the same: the rising of the labouring masses . . .

But you, workers of the other countries, do not exhaust our patience too much, hurry up, stop the slaughter, overthrow the bourgeoisie, take the power into your hands, and then we shall turn the whole globe into a republic of Labour.

All the earthly riches, all the lands, and all the seas—all this shall be one common property of the whole of humanity, whatever the name of its parts: English, Russian, French, German, etc. We shall create one brotherly state: the land which nature gave us.

This land we shall plough and cultivate on associative principles, turn into one blossoming garden, where our children, grand-children and great grand-children will live in paradise. Time was when people believed in legends which told of paradise. These were vague and confused dreams, the yearning of the soul of the oppressed for a better life. There was a yearning after a purer, more righteous life, when people said 'There must be such a paradise, at least in the other world.'

But we say, we shall create such a paradise with our toiling hands *here*, in *this* world, upon the earth, for all, for our children and grand-children, and for all eternity!

LEON TROTSKY

From a speech made in April 1918. Trotsky gave his life to the cause of socialism and was at the heart of the Revolution. He was later banished and murdered by the bureaucratic ruling class that grew on its ruins.

I went back to Petrograd riding on the front seat of an auto truck...The old workman who drove held the wheel in one hand while with the other he swept the far, gleaming capital in an exultant gesture.

"Mine!" he cried. "All mine, now! My Petrograd!"

John Reed 10 Days that shook the world

AS THE nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth Russia was a backward barbaric tyranny. A corrupt and monstrously wealthy aristocracy still held virtually total sway over a territory with a population of 160 million. The overwhelming majority of the population were peasants, not all that long freed from total serfdom.

Capitalism was a late comer to Russia. But by the end of the nineteenth century some industrial development was taking place.

Such development brought a totally new factor on to the stage of Russian history—the industrial working class. By 1914 as Russia too was embroiled in the catastrophe of the First World War there were five



million workers in the land. But the political weight and potential of those five million workers was bigger by far than their numbers. They had already shown their ardent desire for real freedom and democracy in the Dress Rehearsal for November 1917 that took place in 1905.

And it is in that year that our calendar of the revolution must start. At that time Russian society used the Julian Calendar thirteen days behind the calendar in use in the west. That is why the two revolutions of 1917 are sometimes known as the February and October revolutions. But according to the western Gregorian calendar (since adopted in Russia) the revolutions took place in March and November 1917 and it is that anniversary we celebrate this week.

1905

15 January Russian Japanese War results in ceding of Port Arthur to the Japanese.

22 January Bloody Sunday in St Petersburg. Vast crowd of peaceful workers led by priest Father Gapon march to present the Tsar with a petition. It began "Sire, we workers, our children and wives, the helpless old people who are our parents, we have come to you, Sire, to seek justice and protection." Instead of protection they got bullets. Hundreds were killed and wounded. Outrage in St Petersburg. The First Russian Revolution had begun. In May came the first workers council in all the Russias, the Soviet at Ivanovo-Vasnesensk. The idea spread like wildfire.

14 June. Mutiny on the Battleship Potemkin. Mutineers isolated.

26 October First Soviet of Workers Deputies in St Petersburg.

December Bolshevik organised rising in Moscow smashed. Vicious counter revolution Military courts hand out 5000 death sentences. Right wing mobs lynch Jews in officially sponsored pogroms. Decimation of socialist organisations.

1914

1 August War declared between Russia and Germany. Russian economy too weak to bear the burden. Series of military defeats.

1916

29 December Murder of Rasputin the monk/guru to whom both Tsar and Tsarina deferred. By this time 15 million men were mobilised in the armed forces. Two and a half million soldiers had been killed and three million captured or wounded. Starvation, shortages of fuel and clothing in the cities. For workers and poor people, that is. Meanwhile the rich, bloated with war profits, are feasting.

1917

13 February Strike wave in Petrograd.

7 March International Womens Day demonstration in St Petersburg starts the revolution. Women demanded bread. 90,000 strike and besiege the town hall.

But there was no repeat of Bloody Sunday. Czarist officers feared that soldiers would refuse any order to shoot workers.

Next day the movement explodes. Slogans change to Down with the autocracy, down with war. Government forced to use Cossacks, but even Cossacks will not wound anyone.

Third day of the revolution, 250,000 workers are on the streets. Revolt in the army becomes an epidemic.

12 March Tsarist regime overthrown in St Petersburg. Organisation of State Duma (Westminster style Parliament) but also a Soviet of Workers Deputies, much more radical workers democracy.

15 March Abdication of the Tsar in favour of his brother, Michael. Establishment of first provisional government.

16 March Abdication of brother Michael, shortest reign in history.

16 April Lenin arrives from exile at the Finland Station. Met by a delegation of moderate socialists he ignores them and turns to address the rank and file. "The hour is not far off," he says "when the people will turn their weapons against the capitalist exploiters."

20 April Publication of April Theses by Lenin, calls for new workers revolution and the end of the war.



Workers take control of their lives

3-5 May Demonstrations of soldiers and workers against Provisional Government and its intention to prolong the war. Government terrified, looks to moderate socialists to shore up its power. These gentlemen are only too willing to oblige.

17 May Trotsky returns from America.

16 June First Congress of Soviets opens in St Petersburg now known as Petrograd, later Leningrad. **1 July** Kerensky announces new offensive against Germans with a great hoo ha and fanfare. Revulsion at the war spreads into open revolt in the army and the factories.

17 July Half a million workers and soldiers on the streets of Petrograd with slogans like 'Down with the Provisional Government.' 'Down with the ten Capitalist Ministers' 'All power to the Soviets of Soldiers and Workers Deputies'.

Immense pressure to overthrow the government then and there. Persecution of the Bolsheviks and their press. Campaign against Lenin 'the German spy'. Provinces lag behind Petrograd. Lenin signals caution and is forced to flee. So does Bolshevik leader Zinoviev while Trotsky and Lunacharsky are arrested.

21 July Organisation of a new war cabinet with Kerensky as Prime Minister.

25-27 August State conference in Moscow attended by all political parties except Bolsheviks. Moscow workers strike against counter revolutionary nature of the conference.

6 September Commander in chief of Russian Army General Kornilov moves on Petrograd, aiming to destroy the Soviet and stage a military coup. Persecuted Bolsheviks throw all their power into a temporary defence of the Kerensky regime. Bolsheviks demand arming of workers and instruction of workers by soldiers to defeat Kornilov. Response is so magnificent that Kornilov is easily defeated. Tremendous swing to the left. As a result Bolsheviks get their first majority in the Petrograd Soviet.

19 September First Bolshevik majority in Moscow Soviet. Pattern repeated throughout all Russia.

8 October New coalition government.

23 October Bolshevik Party central committee decides for insurrection through the Petrograd Soviet.

7 November THE WORKERS TAKE POWER

Amid rumour of another military coup, detachments of soldiers and armed workers take over Petrograd in the name of Soviet Power. There was practically no resistance. Only the Winter Palace is defended. This is stormed. The Second Soviet Congress, the most democratic government institution in the history of the world, assembles at the Smolny Institute. Bolsheviks and their allies have a large majority. The first workers state on a national scale is born.

8 November Land decree from the new Government of peoples commissars. Peace negotiations offered to all warring powers.

14 November Kerensky flees.

22 December Peace negotiations with Germany at Brest Litovsk.

1918

3 March Brest Litovsk peace treaty signed.

16 July Execution of Tsar and Imperial Family. Allied intervention in Russia

1919-20

Civil War, as various dictators Kolchak, Denikin, and Wrangel, funded by foreign powers, attempt to crush the workers' government. Period of War communism. By a mixture of heroism and will, the dictators and their imperialist backers are defeated by November 1920. But the price paid in dead workers, political exhaustion and economic ruin is enormous.

1921

March New economic policy proclaimed. Of necessity the workers' government has to make concessions to the peasants and capitalist forces.

23 April Lenin, ill since Christmas has operation to remove bullets fired into him by would-be assassin in August 1918. Partly paralysed, he loses ability to speak.

23-31 December Lenin, desperately worried by growing bureaucracy, lack of sensitivity to the oppressed nations, and Stalin's authoritarian attitude, dictates his last testament.

1923

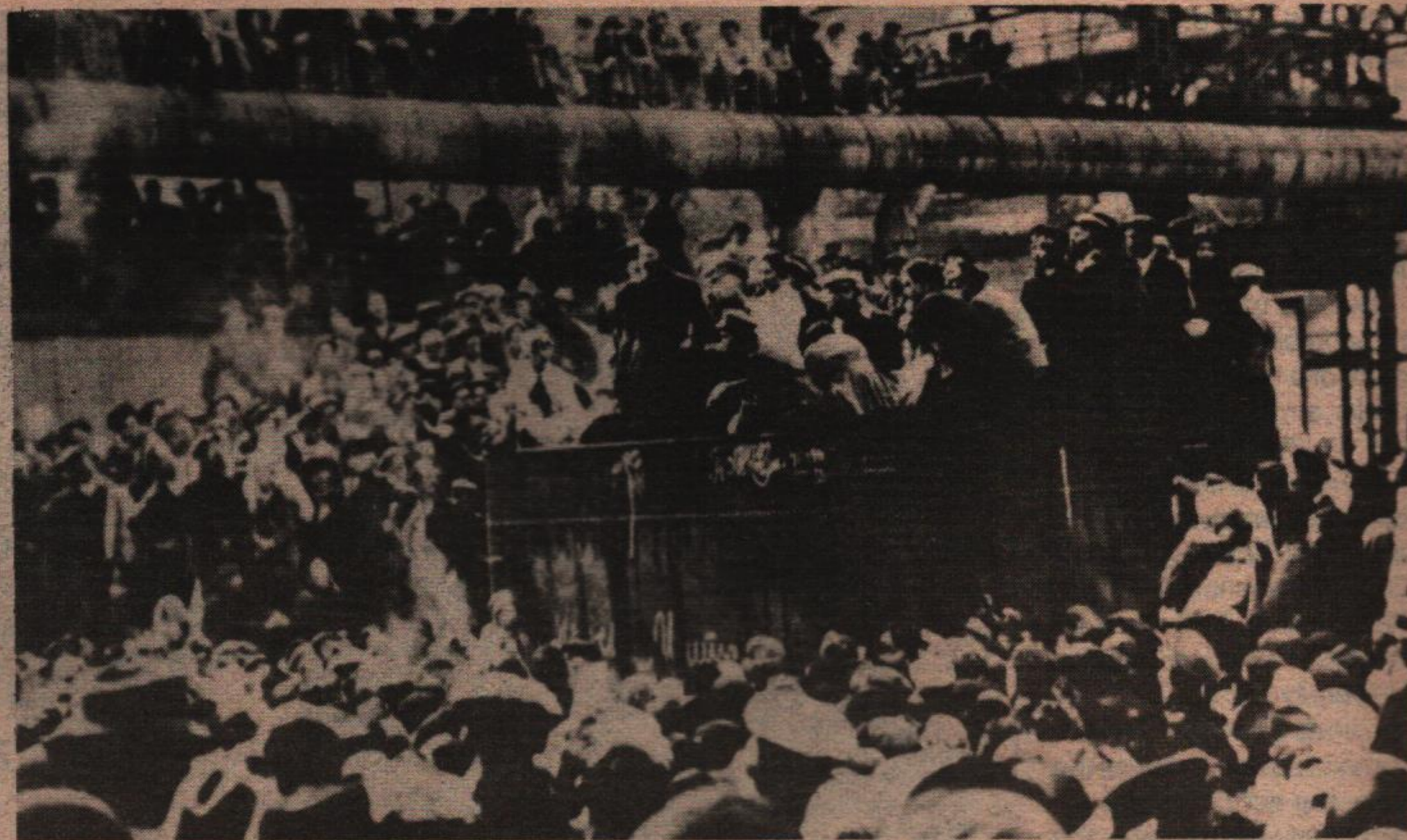
10 March For Lenin further political activity impossible due to new stroke. Failure of ill-considered rising in Germany isolates revolution still further.

1924

21 January Lenin dies. The isolated revolution begins to be consciously betrayed. Replacement of Internationalist policies with Nationalist ones. Rise of Stalinism, complete by 1928. Destruction of the Bolshevik Party, tyranny.



Mass meeting at the Putilov Works elects delegates to the Petrograd Soviet.



Workers in a Petrograd factory listen to a soldier speaker.

WORKERS POWER: Heart and soul of socialism

by John Reed, author of the classic
Ten Days that Shook the World.

The Soviet state is based upon the Soviets—or Councils—of Workers and Peasants' Soviets. The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which was in operation when I was in Russia, may serve as an example of how the urban units of government function under the socialist state.

It consisted of about 1200 deputies and in normal circumstances held a plenary session every two weeks. In the meantime, it elected a Central Executive Committee of 110 members, based upon party proportionality, and this Central Executive Committee *added to itself by invitation* delegates from the central committees of all the political parties, from the central committees of the professional unions, the factory shop committees, and other democratic organisation.

Elections of delegates are based on proportional representation; which means that the political parties are represented in exact proportion to the number of voters in the whole city. And it is *political parties and programmes* which are voted for—not candidates. The candidates are designated by the central committees of the political parties, which can replace them by other party members. Also, the delegates are not elected for any particular term, but are subject to recall *at any time*.

No political body more sensitive and responsive to the popular will was ever invented.

EMBRACED, AND WEPT, AND CHEERED

I shall never forget the Peasant's Conference which took place towards the end of November, and how Tchernov fought for control and lost it, and that wonderful procession of grizzled proletarians of the soil who marched to Smolny through the snowy streets, singing, their blood-red banners floating in the bitter wind. It was dark night. On the steps of Smolny hundreds of working men were waiting to receive their peasant brothers, and in the dim light the two masses moving one down and the other up, rushed together and embraced, and wept, and cheered . . .

When the March Revolution broke, the owners and administrators of many industrial plants either left or were driven out by the workers . . .

Without superintendents, foremen, and in many cases engineers and bookkeepers, the workers found themselves faced with the alternative of keeping the works going or of starving. A committee was elected, one delegate from each 'shop' or department; this committee attempted to run the factory . . .

It is this quality in the Russians that is forgotten by people who think that Russia can have no government, because there is no central *force*; and whose mental picture of Russia is a servile committee in Moscow, bossed by Lenin and Trotsky, and maintained by Red Guards.

Quite the contrary is true. The organisations which I have described are reproduced in almost every community in Russia. And if any considerable part of Russia were seriously opposed to the Soviet government, the Soviets could not last an hour.



Workers in arms—Red Guards from the Electrocraft Factory, Petrograd.

TO DECIDE once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics . . .

The way out of parliamentarism is not, of course, the abolition of representative institutions and the elective principle, but the conversion of the representative institutions from talking shops into 'working' bodies . . .

The commune substitutes for the venal and rotten parliamentarism of bourgeois society institutions in which freedom of opinion and discussion does not degenerate into deception, for the parliamentarians themselves have to work, have to execute their own laws, have themselves to test the results achieved in reality, and to account directly to their constituents. Representative institutions remain, but there is *no* parliamentarism here as a special system, as the division of labour between the legislative and the executive as a privileged position for the deputies.'

Lenin, in *State and Revolution*, the book of the Russian revolution written in August and September 1917 as the workers reached out for power.

Arthur Ransome, author of bestselling children's books like *Swallows and Amazons*

THERE was a tap at the door and a couple of railwaymen came in. They explained that a few hundred yards away along the line a concert and entertainment arranged by the Jaroslavl railwaymen was going on, and that their committee, hearing that Radek was at the station, had sent them to ask him to come over and say a few words to them if he were not too tired.

'Come along,' said Radek, and we walked in the dark along the railway lines to a big one-story wooden shanty, where an electric lamp lit a great placard, 'Railwaymen's Reading Room.' We went into a packed hall. Every seat was occupied by railway workers and their wives and children. The gangways on either side were full of those who had not found room on the benches. We wriggled and pushed our way through this crowd, who were watching a play staged and acted by the railwaymen themselves, to a side door, through which we climbed up into the wings, and slid across the stage behind the scenery into a dressing-room. The little room filled to a solid mass as policemen, generals and ladies of the old regime threw off their costumes, and, in their working clothes, plain signalmen and engine-drivers pressed round to listen. When the act ended, one of the railwaymen went to the front of the stage and announced that Radek, who had lately come back after imprisonment in Germany for the cause of revolution, was going to talk to them about the general state of affairs. I saw Radek grin at this forecast of his speech. I understood why, when he began to speak. He led off by a direct and furious onslaught on the railway workers in general, demanding work, work and more work, telling them that as the Red Army had been the vanguard of the revolution hitherto, and had starved and fought and given lives to save those at home from Denikin and Kolchak, so now it was the turn of the railway workers on whose efforts not only the Red Army but also the whole future of Russia depended.

TO HAMMER HOME TRUTHS

I wondered what sort of reception a man would have who in another country interrupted a play to hammer home truths about the need of work into an audience of working men who had gathered solely for the purpose of legitimate recreation. It was not as if he sugared the medicine he gave them. His speech was nothing but demands for discipline and work, coupled with prophecy of disaster in case work and discipline failed. It was delivered like all his speeches, with a strong Polish accent and a steady succession of mistakes in grammar.

As we walked home along the railway lines, half a dozen of the railwaymen pressed around Radek, and almost fought with each other as to whom should walk next to him. And Radek, entirely happy, delighted at his success in giving them a bombshell instead of a bouquet, with one stout fellow on one arm, another on the other, two or three more listening in front and behind, continued rubbing it into them until we reached our wagon, when, after a general handshaking, they disappeared into the night.

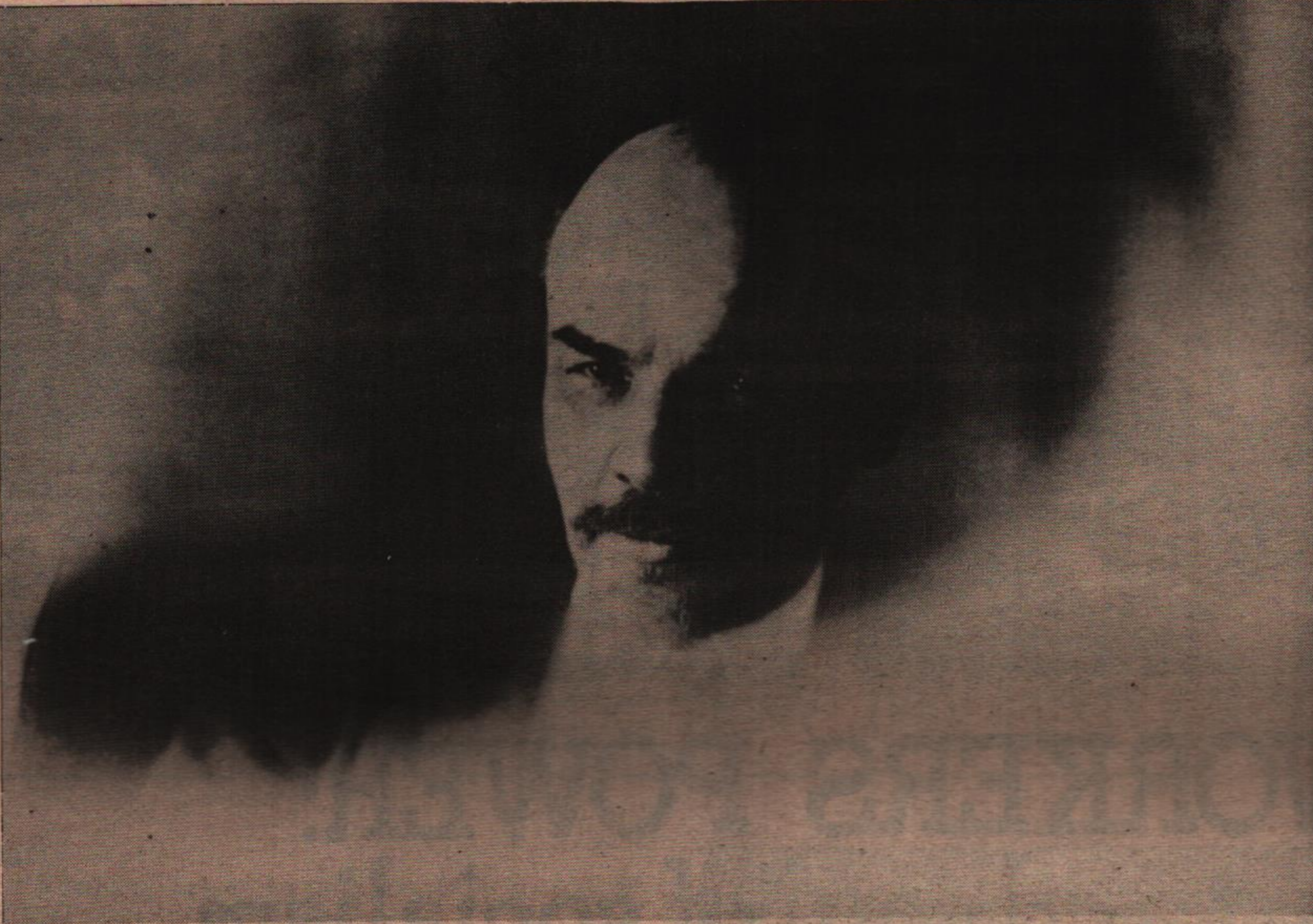
THE BOLSHEVIK Party was not an autocratic entity that seized power behind the backs of the workers in some elitist coup d'etat. If it had been the Russian Revolution wouldn't have lasted a week.

But the truth about this remarkable working class party of a new type is buried under a mountain of official lies. In recent years a number of writers have begun to retrieve the truth about the Bolshevik Party. One of these is Alexander Rabinowitch, Professor of Russian Politics at Indiana University. His book 'The Bolsheviks come to power' includes the following portrait of the party that was in reality the indispensable vehicle of the masses as they moved into action and reached out for power over their lives.

The central question of why the Bolsheviks won the struggle for power in Petrograd in 1917 permits no simple answer... Had it not been for the Provisional Government's commitment to pursue the war to victory, a policy which in 1917 enjoyed no broad support, it surely would have been better able to cope with the myriad problems that inevitably attended the collapse of the old order.

As it was, a major source of the Bolsheviks' growing strength and authority in 1917 was the magnetic attraction of the party's platform as embodied in the slogans "Peace, Land and Bread" and "All Power to the Soviets". The Bolsheviks conducted an extraordinarily energetic and resourceful campaign for the support of Petrograd factory workers and soldiers and Kronstadt sailors. Among these groups, the slogan "All Power to the Soviets" signified the creation of a democratic, exclusively socialist government, representing all parties and groups in the Soviet and committed to a program of immediate peace, meaningful internal reform, and the early convocation of a Constituent Assembly...

Perhaps even more fundamentally, the phenomenal Bolshevik success can be attributed in no small measure to the nature of the party in 1917. Here I have in mind neither Lenin's bold and determined leadership, the immense historical significance of which cannot be denied, nor the Bolsheviks' proverbial, though vastly exaggerated, organisational unity and discipline. Rather, I would emphasise the party's internally relatively democratic, tolerant and decentralised structure and method of operation, as well as its essentially open and mass character...



THE PARTY: Instrument of liberation

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION proved among other things that a working class party is essential to the taking and keeping of workers' power. But it is not a party of the kind that Labour bureaucrats or sectarian marxists conceive.

This Tony Cliff makes clear in the second volume of the Pluto Press biography of Lenin.

The sailors of Kronstadt, the soldiers of Minsk, the workers of Petrograd, Moscow and Saratov, the peasants ransacking the landlords' mansions all over Russia, were in thousands upon thousands of different groups. Even if they were pushing in the same direction, they still had very different levels of consciousness. If it had not been for this unevenness in consciousness there would not have been a need for a revolutionary party.

The party exists in order to hasten the elimination of this unevenness by raising consciousness to the highest possible level. The party aims to spread the actions of the masses, to unite the actions of the masses from one end of the country to the other, to co-ordinate the different efforts, to select the most favourable moments for action, to be the proletariat's general staff.

As the Bolshevik Party was a mass party with deep roots in the working class, naturally the unevenness in the class must have had a decisive influence on local party organisation.

FORGED DURING YEARS OF STRUGGLE

With the Petrograd workers impatient for a showdown with the provisional government, it is no wonder that in April, June and July the leading local Bolsheviks were ultra-left, far to the left of the Central Committee, and straining at the leash. At the same time, party leaders elsewhere, practically throughout the provinces, were dragging behind the Central Committee, and belonged overwhelmingly to the right wing of the party.

How could both the militant Vyborg and Narva districts organisations of the party, and the extreme right-wing organisations of Kiev and Odessa be kept in tandem...?

To add to the difficulties, what Lenin had to rely on was not a smooth running party organisation with a large cadre of well established local leaders, but one which was in a tremendous turmoil of growth.

How could one expect stable leadership in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, where membership grew from 10 to 5,440 over five months; in Ekaterinburg, where membership grew from 40 to 2,800; or in Saratov, where it grew from 60 to 3,000?

And what was the central party apparatus that had to deal with this exploding party membership, with the numerous city committees scattered over enormous distances, with very few local cadres, many still hesitant

even about breaking organisationally with the Mensheviks?

A group of five or six women party workers made up the secretariat. The offices were two rooms plus a toilet in Ksheshinskaia Palace, the headquarters of the Bolsheviks in Petrograd. One room served as an office, the other as a reception room. The toilet was a store room for the party records. After the July Days the secretariat moved to the apartment of one of its senior members, Elana Stasova, and a short time later to a boys' school.

Given the Stalinist myths about Bolshevism, one would imagine the workings of the Central Committee to have been bound by red tape and bureaucracy. But there was nothing of the sort.

First of all, attendance at Central Committee meetings shows how far this body was from bureaucratic formalism. The Sixth Congress elected 21 members to the Central Committee. However the number of members present at various sessions when records were kept ranged between 6 and 16, with an average of 10 per session. At the 10 October session which took the historic decisions about the insurrection only 11 members were present!

The Central Committee again and again reached decisions which its members forgot all about immediately afterwards...

Above all, the state of the Bolshevik Party in 1917 demonstrated that a revolutionary party is not born ready made for revolution. It does not arise like Minerva from the head of Zeus. It is moulded, transformed in the process of the revolutionary struggle, and above all in the revolution itself. The ideas of Bolshevism were not disembodied ideas, but were represented in thousands upon thousands of proletarian cadres who had been forged during years of struggle.



The Bolshevik Party central committee in session.

MORE than ever, Lenin struck me as a happy man. Walking home from the Kremlin, I tried to think of any other man of his calibre who had had a similar joyous temperament. I could think of none. This little, bald-headed, wrinkled man, who tilts his chair this way and that, laughing over one thing or another, ready any minute to give serious advice to any who interrupt him to ask for it, advice so well reasoned that it is to his followers far more compelling than any command, every one of his wrinkles is a wrinkle of laughter, not of worry. I think the reason must be that he is the first great leader who utterly discounts the value of his own personality. He is quite without personal ambition. More than that, he believes, as a Marxist, in the movement of the masses which, with or without him, would still move. His whole faith is in the elemental forces that move people, his faith in himself is merely his belief that he justly estimates the direction of those forces. He does not believe that any man could make or stop the revolution which he thinks inevitable. If the Russian revolution fails, according to him, it fails only temporarily, and because of forces beyond man's control. He is consequently free with a freedom no other great man has ever had. It is not so much what he says that inspires confidence in him. It is this sensible freedom, this obvious detachment. **Arthur Ransome**

ANOTHER mountain of lies has been built to pretend that Lenin was an autocrat and a dictator when in reality this rare creature was himself an expression of a new and superior democracy trying to be born.

Nina Gourfinkel, a student in the University of Petrograd in 1917 who left Russia for France in 1925 has demolished this particular calumny in her remarkable little picture book 'Lenin'.

POWER

These was no shade of superiority in his attitude toward his colleagues. Those who worked with him took care not to let the shadow of flattery slip into their words; they knew they would be severely scolded. This President of the Council never gave orders. The notes he wrote to ask for this or that were courteous or familiar. He was a citizen the same as the others, and felt it indefensible to benefit from any priorities. When, rarely, he asked the public library to allow him to take home reference copies, he specified that he would consult them that night so that readers would find them in their usual place the next morning.

Lenin was perhaps the only statesman known to history on whom power had no hold. Far from wanting to rule

single handed, he wanted to associate himself with as many of his colleagues as possible, with a view to having himself replaced, and this even before he understood the seriousness of the malady which was to carry him off. He always preached collective leadership, believing that nothing better developed a sense of responsibility than the conscientious and loyal exercise of power.

Intransigent on principles, Lenin was flexible in his tactics. He was not afraid to reverse the engine momentarily, since his plans were drawn on a long-term basis.

He did not close himself up in the Kremlin but maintained constant personal contact with the masses, visited factories, went to meetings, and received all those who asked to see him. "It is necessary to frankly explain to the workers that we are terribly poor and that despite the famine, it is indispensable that they hold on yet a few more months." When certain factories hoisted the white flag as a sign of protest, he went there and explained. And the workers stuck by him.

FAMINE

He dreamt of the recon-ditioning of apartment houses and the upkeep of streets; for, he said, a city's appearance is an important psychological factor for its inhabitants.

His deepest solicitude was for the young, and not only to those in the ranks of the Komsomol. War and famine had engendered the flood of *besprizornye*, the homeless adolescents who formed bands of robbers, and who were the heroes of the film *The Road to Life* and of *Pedagogical Poem* by Makarenko. Lenin had doctors and teachers introduced into the juvenile courts; for the benefit of the young strays he created a special committee attached to the supreme executive committee and put Dzerzhinsky at its head. The Cheka then had to help these children become men; and one wonders if, in taking these steps, Lenin was not trying to humanize both of them...

THE RISING OF THE WOMEN

WOMEN WERE in the forefront of the revolutions. In March 1917 it was the International Women's Day demonstration which sparked off the whole revolutionary process.

But the November revolution cleared the way for giant steps down the road of human liberation.

Divorce laws were changed so that divorce was available at the simple request of either partner.

Abortion was made available on demand. A tremendous effort was made to spread knowledge of biology, sexuality and contraception.

The revolution 'wrote Leon Trotsky,' made a heroic effort to destroy the so-called family hearth—that archaic, stuffy, and stagnant institution in which the woman of the toiling classes performs galley labor from childhood to death.

The place of the family as a shut-in petty enterprise was to be occupied, according to the plans, by a finished system of social care and accommodation: maternity houses, child-care centres, kindergartens, schools, social dining rooms, social laundries, first-aid stations, hospitals sanatoria.

But this was no revolution from above.

As Vera Alexeyeva explained:

'I remember the first women's meeting I called, how I tried to draw the women out to discuss the problems before us. One after another got up and talked of her own troubles.

'Each one had to tell how she had suffered during the revolution and the famine. How could she get bread and clothing, how could she get work, why should so much misfortune have been visited on her?

'Now they are talking about our problems—how we can organize day nurseries to take care of our children and how we can improve our nurseries to take care of our problems—how we can organize day nurseries to take care of our children and how we can improve our condition. That is a great advance, to have got the women to think and act collectively'

But foreign intervention, civil war, famine and economic chaos all pressed in on this experiment.

Before long the new ruling class under Stalin were restoring the iron grip of the family, making it difficult to get a divorce or an abortion and constructing again the kind of conservative morality beloved today of Mary Whitehouse and the Festival of Light.

ALEXANDRA Kollontai changed the name of the Ministry from Social Welfare to Social Security, to make it more in keeping with the Soviet idea of benefits as a right rather than a gift.

The revenue for the department was raised largely by a monopoly in playing cards. They were sold at thirty rubles a dozen. Kollontai, on the theory that cards were not a necessity of life and therefore should be heavily taxed, raised the price to three hundred and sixty rubles a dozen. The purchasers complained, but ordered as many as three hundred to five hundred decks.

When Kollontai took charge, the officials went on a strike and took the key from the treasury. For two weeks the whereabouts of the key remained a mystery. Then Kollontai, sent for a hand of Red Guard and sailors, and her order, picked by their bayonets, was obeyed.

She reorganised the department from below, but installed democratic management, giving every employee a vote. There were four thousand minor employees drawing very miserable salaries, while a few figureheads received as much as twenty-five thousand rubles a year. She readjusted the scale so six hundred rubles a month became the highest salary paid any one.

THE SOVIET Government suppressed the Imperial Ballet, and the groans of the outraged intelligentsia ascended to heaven. What! These ignorant brues destroy beauty, suppress art!

But Lunacharsky, Commissar of Education, had good reasons for his action. In the first place the Imperial Ballet cost a fortune to maintain, with its training-school; and in the second, the masses of the people had no chance to see it—for the tickets were sold by subscription to wealthy people who left them to their heirs in their wills; a close corporation.

But under the Soviets there was the School of Proletarian Drama, established by Lunacharsky. There was a free people beginning to create its own theatre, in the scores of stages which sprang up in every barracks, every factory.

The last week I was in Russia the theatre of the soldiers of the Preobrazhensky Regiment produced Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*—but brought down to date, with Russian characters!

In the Obukhov factory the workmen gave Gogol's *Marriage*; but just to show their state of mind, consider the heading of their program: 'Nicolai Gogol. *A Marriage Under the Old Regime*.'

JOHN REED:

How the Russian Revolution works.

There are two and a half million maimed soldiers in Russia, and in January there were four million others who were sick or wounded. These and nearly a half a million dependent children, came under the care of the department.

Russia's infant mortality rate is the highest of any so-called civilized country, Kollontai, in an effort to correct this, opened a Palace of Motherhood, with a maternity exhibition and training classes to prepare a mother for the coming of her child. She planned this as a model for similar houses to be established all over Russia.

SELF-GOVERNMENT WAS INTRODUCED

It was arranged that mothers could come there for eight weeks prior to the birth of the child, and remain for eight weeks afterward, while substitute mothers went into the homes to take care of the other children.

Several measures were passed by the Council of People's Commissaries to protect maternity, and these

were under the jurisdiction of Kollontai's department. The work-day for nursing mothers was reduced to four hours, and a compulsory rest period before and after the birth of the child was established.

'Little republics' were established in all the homes for older children and for the aged, and self-government was introduced. The social programme included an adequate scale of compensation for the disabled victims of the war, many of whom were forced to beg on the streets. This entailed a tremendous expenditure, and I asked Madame Kollontai how it would be possible to raise so much money.

'We found money for war,' she answered. 'We shall find money for this.'

She asserted that graft in the department rached into millions of rubles, and that the elimination of this alone would go far toward realizing some of her schemes. She proposed also requisitioning the monasteries and convents, which were the repositories of untold wealth in lands and jewels, and turning them into children's homes and asylums.

From American journalist Bessie Beattie's eyewitness account *The Red Heart of Russia*.



Above: Alexandra Kollontai. Left women and children flock to the Agri Train for news of the revolution in other parts of the country.

Tradition was literally turned upside down

SOVIET sexual legislation was the clearest expression of the first attack of the sexual revolution on the life negating sexual order. This legislation literally turned upside down most of the traditions.....

The significance ascribed to the sexual revolution by the social revolution is evidenced by the fact that Lenin, as early as December 19 and 20, 1917, issued two relevant decrees.

One was "About the dissolution of marriage": true, its content was not as unequivocal as its title. The other was, "About civil marriage, children and the registration of marriages."

Both laws deprived the husband of his prerogatives of domination in the family, gave the woman the complete right to economic and sexual determination and declared it to be a matter of course that the woman could freely determine her name, domicile and citizenship.

Of course, these laws did in themselves nothing but guarantee extremely free development to a process which was still to come. It was a matter of course that the revolutionary law intended the abolition of patriarchal power.

Depriving the ruling class of power meant at the same time the elimination of the power of the father over the members of the family, and of the representation of the state within the compulsive family as the structure-forming cell of the class society.

Divorce was made very easy. A sexual relationship which was considered a 'marriage' could be as easily dissolved as it had been established. The only criterion was mutual agreement among the partners. No one could force somebody else into a relationship; there was only the free determination of the partners.

Under these circumstances, 'reasons for divorce' became meaningless. When a partner wanted to relinquish a sexual companionship he did not have to give reasons. Marriage and divorce became purely private matters.

WE HAVE A RIGHT TO BE PROUD

The registration of a relationship was not mandatory. Even when a relationship was registered, sexual relationships with others were 'not prosecuted.' However, not telling the partner about another relationship was considered 'fraud.'

The obligation to pay alimony was considered only a 'Transition measure'. The obligation lasted for six months after the separation and only if the partner was unemployed or otherwise incapable of making a living.

That the obligation to pay alimony was thought of only

as a transitory measure goes without saying in view of the Soviet tendency to establish full economic independence of all members of society. It had the function of helping over the first difficulties which stood in the way of establishing full personal and economic freedom.

It has to be remembered that the compulsive family was only legally abolished, but not in reality. For as long as society cannot guarantee security to all adults and adolescents, this guarantee remains the function of the family and thus causes it to continue.

Lenin is often called to witness in support of cultural and sexual reactionary attitudes. It is useful to remember, therefore, how clearly Lenin saw that legislation alone was no more than a beginning of a sexual and cultural revolution.

He wrote:

'Certainly, laws alone won't do, and we will in no case be satisfied with decrees alone. As to legislation however we have done everything that was asked of us to make the position of the women equal to that of the man.

'We have a right to be proud: At present, the position of the woman in the Soviet Union is such that even from the standpoint of the most progressive nations it would have to be called ideal. In spite of that, we say it is nothing but a beginning.'

WILHELM REICH

WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITED!

BRITAIN

Harry McShane the Glasgow socialist was working as an engineer in 1917, historic year of the first successful socialist revolution.

I was working at A. N. W. Smith's factory when the November revolution of 1917 occurred and the Bolsheviks took power through the Soviets, the new form of workers' government in Russia. The Liberals went stone mad; Winston Churchill toured the country speaking against the Bolshevik 'beasts' and he lost any popularity he had ever had in the working class. The Labour Party wouldn't support the Bolsheviks either. Like the Liberals Ramsay MacDonald and others had been supporting Kerensky, the leader of the Mensheviks, the Russian Socialists, who wanted a Parliamentary 'Duma' and not Soviets. Of course the revolutionary element, including some ILPers, began to understand workers' democracy for the first time. For the Glasgow socialist movement the second Russian Revolution, and the new Soviet system, was a revelation. From Phillips Price's reports we got to know the slogan 'All power to the Soviets' and to get some idea of what Soviets were. We had realised that they were Workers and Soldiers Councils and a new kind of rank and file organisation and everybody had welcomed the Leeds Convention in June. But what some there had not understood was that this organisation would become the form of Government of the future. When Lenin called for 'All Power to the Soviets' it was obvious that in Russia they had discovered something new—organisations, a system of working-class self-government, through which the old crowd could be completely destroyed. We began to realise what was meant by revolution. We could now talk about working class power—before we had only known working class revolt.

Of course the mass of the workers didn't support the Bolsheviks; many were still Liberals and the Liberals were campaigning for the overthrow of the Bolsheviks and the return of Kerensky. But for the first time the ordinary worker saw the possibility of something being gained by revolution, and with the kind of fight that we had conducted in Glasgow for workshop organisation it was easier for them to understand what was happening in Russia. Many people were sympathetic to ideas of Revolution who hadn't been before and we used the Russian Revolution to get our ideas across. We seized the ideas of the Russian Revolution and spread them. Lenin's 'State and Revolution' helped us enormously in our understanding.

THE attitude of the British Press towards the Revolution was perhaps best summed up by an editorial in The Times. 'The remedy for Bolshevism', it announced, 'is bullets'.

They were to get their bullets—in the form of an invasion by hostile capitalist countries, including Britain. To justify that intervention, what better than a series of horror stories about 'barbaric' Bolsheviks?

And so, as is usual when newspaper barons feel panicky, the truth was never allowed to get in the way of a 'good story'.

Typical was one that appeared in The Observer in early 1918. The Bolsheviks, it warned, were proposing 'that all capitalists over eight years of age should be killed'.

Meanwhile, in the United States, newspapers were claiming that the Bolsheviks had installed an electrically operated guillotine in Petrograd that lopped off 500 heads an hour.

Presumably, they all belonged to capitalists over the age of eight . . .

As laughable as it seems now, it all served a purpose at the time: to create enough hysteria about Red Russia to justify the Allied invasion as a Crusade for Freedom.

Eventually, that intervention—faced with mutinies in its own ranks and determination in those of the Bolsheviks—fell apart. But not a word of the true extent of the fiasco appeared in the British Press until it was nearly over.

Correspondents, such as Harold Williams saw to that. Like others, he worked hand-in-glove with the counter-revolutionary forces. Williams failed to mention (among other things) the interesting fact that theft, rape and murder had become so widespread among the White armies that the British army had to resort to public executions to try to restore order; he also managed the remarkable feat of reporting the 'collapse of Bolshevik morale' on the very day that the White forces finally surrendered.

But if Williams' campaign, like that of the entire British press and 16 Allied armies, was a gigantic flop, there was one small consolation awaiting him on his return to Britain: promotion to Foreign Editor of The Times.



Russian soldiers hoist the Red Flag, 1917.

Eddie Frow was for many years secretary of the Manchester District of the Engineers Union. Inspired by the Russian Revolution and its impact on Britain he joined the Communist Party in 1924. Now retired Eddie has written 'To make the future now' a history of Manchester Trades Council and built up one of the finest working class libraries in the land.

I was still at school when the Russian revolution

took place in 1917. By 1920 there was a terrific sympathy right throughout the labour movement with the Russians and the Soviet system. War weariness was also a factor. It was only two years after the end of the war. The two factors coalesced and made for a tremendous movement. It took the form of masses of workers being prepared to take action in support of the 'Hands off Russia' movement.



The chairman moves the resolution for a general strike at the historic meeting of the Council of Action in London in 1920. The British Government was threatening war against Russia but the workers of Britain were war weary and determined to fight to stop the war. Their leaders were forced to take more radical action than ever before. They set up councils

of action and threatened a general strike. Rank and file militants up and down the country pressed hard for the councils to take up the fight against unemployment price rises and repression in Ireland. But the government gave way and the Labour leaders did everything in their power to ensure that the councils never developed any independent life

workers power) as against Parliament. The revolution was a terrific inspiration for all the militant workers in Britain, the shop stewards, the political activists in the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party and other organisations. After the revolution their thinking was if the Russian workers have overthrown capitalism in Russia, it must be possible to do the same here.

Kathleen Jones has been a lifelong feminist and socialist. Now 75 she is a keen reader of Socialist Worker and Womens Voice. She sent her recollections of the revolution 60 years ago this week to Socialist Worker.

'My father ran into the room with a folded newspaper, calling out 'Here you are' and slipping it on to the breakfast table. To this day I can still see the banner headline across the upper: REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA. My parents were both socialists. I felt thrilled,

elated, thinking to myself "Like 1789 in France when the people couldn't stand starvation and tyranny any longer"

Then my aunt who was staying with us asked "Will it get the war over any sooner" My father said "No—make it last longer" My heart sank.

My elder brother whom I loved dearly was a conscript in the army and I lived in constant dread of losing him, crying about him in bed when I ought to have been sleeping. Then I thought "No, dad isn't always right. This is a splendid thing. Only good can come of it."

My friend still remembers his feelings too. He says I remember thinking "At last something has happened" The war was going on and on, and then, when the Russian Army revolted and started shooting their officers I thought "This is fine." Yes, people thought it would prolong the war because when the Russians gave it up the Germans would be able to turn all their attention to the other Allies and finish them off. But when Czar Nicky was disposed of, it scared the daylights out of Kaiser Bill and all the other bastards at the top and they had to pack up.'



A good

Hand

The Russian Revolution sent shock waves across the world

THE Russian Revolution sent shock waves throughout the world. It reached into South African society, into Asia and Latin America.

The first great swell of the Chinese revolution had come in 1919 when nationalist students, supported by workers in the cities, rose in protest against the Versailles settlement and against the corrupt Peking politicians who wanted to capitulate to Japan.

This new current in Chinese life and the new revolutionary impulses radiating out of Russia quickly found a common path, generated a high political amperage and sent powerful shocks coursing through the entire political structure of China, and for that matter, the whole east.

The October Revolution offered more than an example to the Chinese people. It appeared to be a successful test,

on a huge scale, of a whole set of ideas that had peculiar relevance in China . . .

The world had no place for it as a new and free national state based upon a freely functioning capitalist economy China's hope for expansion on a capitalist basis collided with the superior competitive position of foreign capital which was far more interested in extracting immediate profit from Chinese raw materials and cheap labour, in the classic manner of colonial exploitation, than it was in the systematic development of a new and productive economy for the Chinese people as a whole

The Chinese workers had already embarked spontaneously on the revolutionary path. The impulses they radiated from the cities were already beginning to stir great layers of the peasantry into action. Chinese industrialists and businessmen, their hopes for expansion fluttering were already reaching out to control this incipient movement and were already attempting to cloak themselves as Lenin foresaw they would, with the authority of Communism.

In a few short, swift years, a stupendous mass movement rose from the streets of Chinese cities and the tired land of Chinese fields. It threatened to destroy all that was corrupt and rotten in Chinese society.

Russia (by now controlled by Stalin) intervened in this movement and, blindly defeating its own purposes, prevented this movement from breaking clear of the hold of the exploiting classes. As a result the Chinese revolution was halted in its forward surge, the new organisations of the people were shattered, their leaders cut down.

HAROLD ISAACS:
The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution .



Tom Mann speaking to solidarity meeting in China.

GERMANY

THE FIRST word that the October revolution shouted to the peoples of the world was: Peace!

This propaganda had a great success. In Austria and Germany there was a powerful strike movement. Half a million workers took part in this January strike in Berlin, a million throughout Germany.

At the beginning of November 1918 the workers' movement rose in revolt again 20,000 sailors in the port of Kiel refused orders to set sail for battle in the open sea, and instead raised red flags over their ships, disarmed the officers and elected a sailors committee.

In the next two days similar mutinies in other ports, such as Wilhelmshaven and Cruxhaven, were joined by workers. Workers' and sailors' councils took over the towns.

On 5 November it was the turn of one of Germany's most important cities, Hamburg. A few sailors called for a demonstration, which 40,000 people joined. A workers' and soldiers' council was formed, and armed sailors, led by the revolutionary socialist Paul Froelich, seized the presses of the local daily paper to produce their own paper, called Rote Fahne (Red Flag).



Workers demonstration in Austria.

In the next four days workers and soldiers councils took control of every major city, until it was the turn of Berlin. A general strike paralysed the city and huge crowds of workers marched from the factories to the centre of the city. The police disappeared, and soldiers replaced the imperial, white cockade in the caps by red cockades.

But preparations were being made to strangle the revolution even at the moment of its birth. The right socialist leaders Scheidemann, Ebert and Noske rushed to keep ahead of the revolutionaries by themselves proclaiming a 'German republic' (Note the omission of the word 'socialist').

They packed the workers' and soldiers' council with their trusted hacks, they conspired with extreme right wing army officers to destroy the left.

Their success came in January, when they provoked a section of the left into a premature rising and then murdered hundreds of workers leaders, including the great revolutionaries Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.

Civil war was to rage through Germany for another 12 months, but the revolutionaries were never quite able to win back the initiative they had lost to the combination of right-wing social democrats, and extreme right-wing officers who were later to back Hitler.

ITALY

IN AUGUST 1917, the Russian provisional government of Kerensky sent two emissaries to seek support from the workers' movement in the west for its policy of continuing to take part in the First World War. When the emissaries, Smirnov and Goldenberg, reached Turin 40,000 workers met them with cries of 'Long Live Lenin'.

Ten days later there were barricades in the streets of Turin. The immediate cause of the rising was the disappearance of bread from the shops. But the violent energy with which it was fought—as indicated by the number of dead and wounded—had other origins.

In the preceding months opposition to the war had grown. There was now a widespread feeling that it was better to lose five hundred in a battle for the workers' own cause than ten thousand against the Germans fighting for the cause of the bourgeoisie. (Fior, Life of Gramsci).

The uprising was bloodily suppressed, and many workers' leaders arrested or forced to flee from Turin.

But by the end of 1918 the workers' movement was reviving, with the election of factory councils in the biggest plants. In spring 1919 there was a huge strike in all the city's engineering factories. But the official leaders of the Socialist Party and trade unions declared this to be 'premature' and allowed the employers to isolate it.

In the autumn there were renewed strikes, culminating in the occupation of factories throughout Italy, and the formation of armed red guards to protect the occupied plants.

But there was no revolutionary party able to finish the revolution by taking state power. Eventually the workers returned to work on the basis of a compromise.

Within two years high unemployment had demoralised the workers movement and the fascists were able physically to destroy the trade unions and the workers' parties.

AMERICA

Before the First World War the American Socialist Party had more than 100,000 members. In 1912 there were 1000 socialists elected to public office, including the mayors of Akron Ohio and Milwaukee. The party had five daily newspapers and 320 other publications.

The Socialist current in America also rose on the revolutionary wave that was sweeping the world and which culminated in the 1917 Russian Revolution. The official newspaper of the Seattle AFL (equivalent of a Trades Council) the Union Record welcomed Lenin and Trotsky to power in banner front page headlines.

This wave receded however in the defeat of the 1919 German Revolution and then the failure of the Russian Revolution. Hundreds of thousands of American workers remained revolutionary socialists right through the depression, but the heart and soul of socialism was destroyed in a movement dominated by Joseph Stalin. Cal Winslow.



clean out of kings and millionaires alike. In this 1920 Cartoon by V. Deni, Lenin is on the broom.



Off Russia demonstration in France.

WHY THE REVOLUTION WAS LOST

Everything has changed. The aims: from international social revolution to socialism in one country. The political system: from the workers democracy of the soviets, the goal of the revolution, to the dictatorship of the general secretariat, the functionaries, and the GPU (the secret police) The party: from the organisation free in its life and thought and freely submitting to discipline, of revolutionary Marxists to the hierarchy of bureaus, to the passive obedience of careerists. The leaders: the greatest militants from October are in exile or in prison.

The ideology: Lenin said, "We shall see the progressive withering away of the state, and the Soviet state will not be a state like the others, but a vast workers' commune!" Stalin proclaims that "We advance toward the abolition of the state by the way of strengthening the state. The condition of the workers: the egalitarianism of Soviet society is transformed to permit the formation of a privileged minority.

Morality: from the austere, sometimes implacable honesty of heroic Bolshevism, we gradually advance to unspeakable deviousness and deceit. Everything has changed, everything is changing, but it will require the perspective of time before we can precisely understand the realities. Too much attachment to the regime, too many illusions about men, too much love for the land, the country, the dead—too many great memories blind us all, more or less....

It is untrue, a hundred times untrue that the end justifies the means. Justice is not made by iniquity, the world and men are not transformed by means of chains, loudspeakers crying out falsehoods and vast agencies of intellectuals paid to cram people's heads full of lies. Every end requires its own means, and an end is only obtained by the appropriate means.

Though the socialist revolution may in times of crisis, be forced to make use of the old weapons left by bourgeois society, afterwards it must find its own methods. It can only progress by improving the material and moral condition of the masses, by more personal well being, more liberty, fewer lies, more dignity, more respect for humanity. The socialism which proceeds otherwise gives in to a sort of inner counter-revolution, desecrating itself and risks suicide.

Victor Serge
From Lenin to Stalin

BY A mixture of popular support revolutionary ardour and at times pure will, the counter-revolutionary forces and the foreign intervention were defeated in the Civil War. But the price paid was enormous.

This cannot be counted in merely material terms. But in these alone it was great. What suffered above all was industrial and agricultural production.

In purely quantitative terms, the class that had led the revolution, the class whose democratic processes had constituted the living core of Soviet power, was halved in importance. In real terms the situation was even worse. What remained was not even half of that class, forced into collective action by the very nature of its life situation. Industrial output was only 18 per cent of the pre-war figure, labour productivity was only one third of what it had been. The very personnel in the factories were not those who had constituted the core of the revolutionary movement of 1917. The most militant workers had quite naturally fought most at the front, and suffered most casualties. Those that survived were needed not only in the factories, but as cadres in the army, or as commissars to keep the administrators operating the State machine. Raw peasants from the countryside, without socialist traditions or aspirations, took their place.

THE BOLSHEVIKS HAD NO CHOICE

But what was to be the fate of the revolution if the class that made it ceased to exist in any meaningful sense? This was not a problem that the Bolshevik leaders could have foreseen. They had always said that isolation of the revolution would result in its destruction by foreign armies and domestic counter-revolution. What confronted them now was the success of counter-revolution from abroad in destroying the class that had led the revolution while leaving intact the State apparatus built up by it.



Russia 1920 means famine and death. Meanwhile in America there is such a surplus of maize that the farmers burn it

"Bureaucracy is ruining us... Bureaucracy. We've scarcely had time to bury the bodies of our comrades... their blood is hardly dry... before we're sitting in private rooms with easy chairs with lovely riding breeches like generals. And the formalities—docketing papers, marking doors "no admittance"... soon we shall get to "Your Excellency".

We had comrades. Where are they? I feel that the working class is oppressed and miserable once more.' 'You're wrong comrade Shuk. That's not the case. Your point of view is radically wrong. One can't argue like that. That's not important. We have many enemies comrade Shuk but the Soviet has to have a firm, efficient, well-tested administrative machine—

'We have always proclaimed and repeated this elementary truth of marxism, that the victory of socialism requires the joint effort of workers in a number of advanced countries.'

V Lenin
February 1922

In all this the Bolsheviks had no choice. They could not give up power just because the class they represented had dissolved itself while fighting to defend that power. The alternative was too barbaric to contemplate. Nor could they tolerate the propagation of ideas that undermined the basis of its power—precisely because the working class itself no longer existed as an agency collectively organised so as to be able to determine its own interests.

Of necessity the Soviet State of 1917 had been replaced by the single-party State of 1920 onwards. The Soviets that remained were increasingly just a front for Bolshevik power.

Paradoxically, the end of the Civil War did not alleviate this situation, but in many ways aggravated it. For with the end of the immediate threat of counter-revolution, the cord that had bound together the two revolutionary processes—workers' power in the

towns and peasant uprisings in the country—was cut.

The revolution in Russia had reached the stage where it involved the exploitation of the country by the towns, maintained through naked physical force. It was clear to all groups in the Bolshevik party that this meant the revolution must remain in danger of being overthrown by peasant insurrections.

There seemed to be only one course open. This was to accept many of the peasant demands, while maintaining a strong centralised socialist State apparatus, via a New Economic Policy.

In the period of the NEP the claim of Russia to be in any way 'socialist' could no longer be justified either by the relationship of the working class to the State it had originally created or by the nature of internal economic relations. The workers did not exercise power and the economy was not planned. But the State, the 'body of armed men' that controlled and policed society was in the hands of a party that was motivated by socialist intentions. The direction of its policies, it seemed, would be socialist. Stalinism put paid to that.

It is often said that the rise of Stalinism in Russia cannot be called 'counter-revolution' because it was a gradual process. But the bureaucracy did not have to seize power from the workers all at once. The decimation of the working class left power in its hands at all levels of Russian society. Its members controlled industry and the police and the army. It did not even have to wrest control of the State apparatus to bring it into line with its economic power. It merely had to bring a political and industrial structure that it already controlled into line with its own interests. This happened not 'gradually', but by a succession of qualitative changes by which the mode of operation of the Party was brought into line with the demands of the central bureaucracy. Each of these qualitative changes could only be brought about by direct confrontation with those elements in the Party which, for whatever reason, still adhered to the revolutionary socialist tradition.

In order to protect its power the ruling group in the Party resorted to methods of argument unheard of before in the Bolshevik party. Systematic denigration of opponents replaced rational argument. The control of the secretariat of the Party over appointments began to be used for the first time openly to remove sympathisers of the opposition from their posts (eg, the majority of the Komsomol Central Committee were dismissed and sent to the provinces after some of them had replied to attacks on Trotsky).

A NEW CLASS HAD POWER

By 1928 the Stalinist faction had completely consolidated its control in the Party and State. When Bukharin and the Right wing split from it, horrified by what they had helped to create, they found themselves with even less strength than the Left Oppositions had. But the Party was not in control of the whole of Russian society. The towns where real power lay were still surrounded by the sea of peasant production. The bureaucracy had usurped the gains of the working class in the revolution, but so far the peasantry remained unaffected. A mass refusal of the peasants to sell their grain in 1928 brought this home sharply to the bureaucracy.

What followed was the assertion of the power of the towns over the countryside that the Left Opposition had been demanding for years. This led certain oppositionists (Preobrazhensky, Radek) to make their peace with Stalin. Yet this policy was in its spirit the opposite of that of the Left. They had argued the need to subordinate peasant production to worker-owned industry in the towns. But industry in the towns was no longer worker-owned. It was under the control of the bureaucracy that held the State. Assertion of the domination of the town over the country was now the assertion not of the working class over the peasantry, but of the bureaucracy over the last part of society lying outside its control. It imposed this dominance with all the ferocity ruling classes always used.

There can be no doubt that by 1928 a new class had taken power in Russia. It did not have to engage in direct military conflict with the workers to gain power, because direct workers' power had not existed since 1918. But it did have to purge the Party that was left in power of all those who retained links, however tenuous, with the socialist tradition. When a reinvigorated working class confronted it again, whether in Berlin or Budapest, or in Russia itself (eg, Novo-Cherkassk in 1962), it used the tanks it had not needed in 1928.

even if it's bureaucratic—so long as it works reliably.'

'You, too! It's the same with everyone. Everyone says the same things. Where does the working class come in? Ah, Comrade Serge... it hurts... And there's none you can talk to.'

From Cement by F E Gladkov.

THE ABSOLUTE OPPOSITE OF SOCIALISM

Russia today: Dissidents speak out



May Day in Moscow—what workers state would boast of its ability to destroy other workers.

SINCE Arnosht Kolman was a young man he has been a revolutionary socialist. Born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1892, he joined the Russian Bolshevik Party in 1918. He fought side by side with Lenin and his wife Krupskaya and the old Bolsheviks who were later to die in Stalin's purges

Now, aged 84, Arnosht Kolman has broken with the party to which he has given his life. But he has not broken to become an opponent of socialism. On the contrary, he remains a revolutionary. He remains what he was when he joined the Russian Bolshevik Party in 1918.

What follows is an extract from the open letter to the present party boss Leonid Brezhnev sent by Arnosht Kolman from Sweden where he was finally allowed to go to visit his daughter.

'About what sort of socialism can one talk... when the place of the former exploiting classes has been taken by the privileged castes of the party? They are drowning in wealth, live isolated from the people, above them and contemptuous of ordinary folk, not wishing to and incapable of understanding their needs and sufferings.

The Soviet Union lacks the most elementary democratic rights: instead of free elections there is voting for candidates imposed from above; there is no public political life; strikes are forbidden and the trade unions are subservient to state interests; political discussions are forbidden and everything is covered by universal censorship; information is subject to the interests of lying propaganda.

Basic human rights are crudely trampled on in the Soviet Union: dissidents are harshly persecuted, tens of thousands of them are languishing in jails, concentration camps and psychiatric jail hospitals, many being punished for their religious beliefs only.

AMASSING NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND ROCKETS

As far as the nationalities policy is concerned, the history of the Soviet Union is nothing but an uninterrupted chain of territorial annexations, forced 'unification' of foreign lands, subjection of and discrimination against many nationalities in the country, among them the Crimean Tatars, the Volga Germans, Jews, the Baltic nations, the people of the Caucasus and Central Asia, etc. This makes the Soviet Union no less a 'prison of the nations' than Tsarist Russia was.

While preaching about 'international detente' and 'peaceful coexistence' the Soviet Union is in fact amassing at an increasingly fast rate nuclear weapons and rockets.

It keeps vast armies outside its frontiers, builds more and more military bases in Europe, Asia and Africa, and is preparing for the occupation of Romania and Yugoslavia.

Under the guise of 'selfless aid' to the national liberation movements and developing countries, the Soviet Union is carrying out ceaseless attempts to infiltrate their ranks and establish its military and political overlordship in various corners of the earth; it is also supplying arms and providing military support for most reactionary regimes and international terrorists.

It is perfectly logical that under such circumstances and as a result of the colossal expenditure on arms, the sustenance of the vast KGB network and of the party and state apparatus, the country's economic situation grows worse and worse.

Inflation and rising prices, officially denied, are accelerating.

Can one simply ignore all these facts without drawing conclusions from them?

A human being must be able to say aloud what he thinks, write down what he thinks, read what takes his fancy, choose his place of abode freely, and go wherever he wants.

But we are once again afraid, just as under Stalin, we hide our manuscripts, stop trusting one another, write meaningless letters for fear of the censors and sever links with friends....

And how long can one live like this? I can no longer go on living like this.

My decision to leave the Communist Party does in no way mean that I will be abandoning the ideals of socialism, with which I became acquainted in 1910 and which have since constituted the main substance of my long life.

On the contrary I have come to the firm conclusion that my staying in the ranks of the Soviet Communist Party would amount to a betrayal of the ideals of social justice, humanism and the building of a new and more human society, for the attainment of which I have strived despite my mistakes and the errors of my ways, and shall go on striving to the end of my days.

LEONID PLIUCHTCH, a socialist who spoke out against the lack of workers' democracy in Russia, was arrested by the KGB in January 1972.

Charged with producing anti-Soviet propaganda, he was imprisoned in Kiev and Moscow before being sent to the notorious Serbsky Institute of Forensic Psychiatry, where doctors declared him to be 'mad'.

For Lenin, socialism in a political sense is a transitory society, whose self-contradictions should be diminishing. The bureaucratic and police apparatus, for example, should be on the way out. The state should be being transformed into a voluntary association of collectives.

Throughout, the whole emphasis must be on democracy, the involvement of the masses in controlling their own lives. The dictatorship role that every state has should be beginning to vanish.

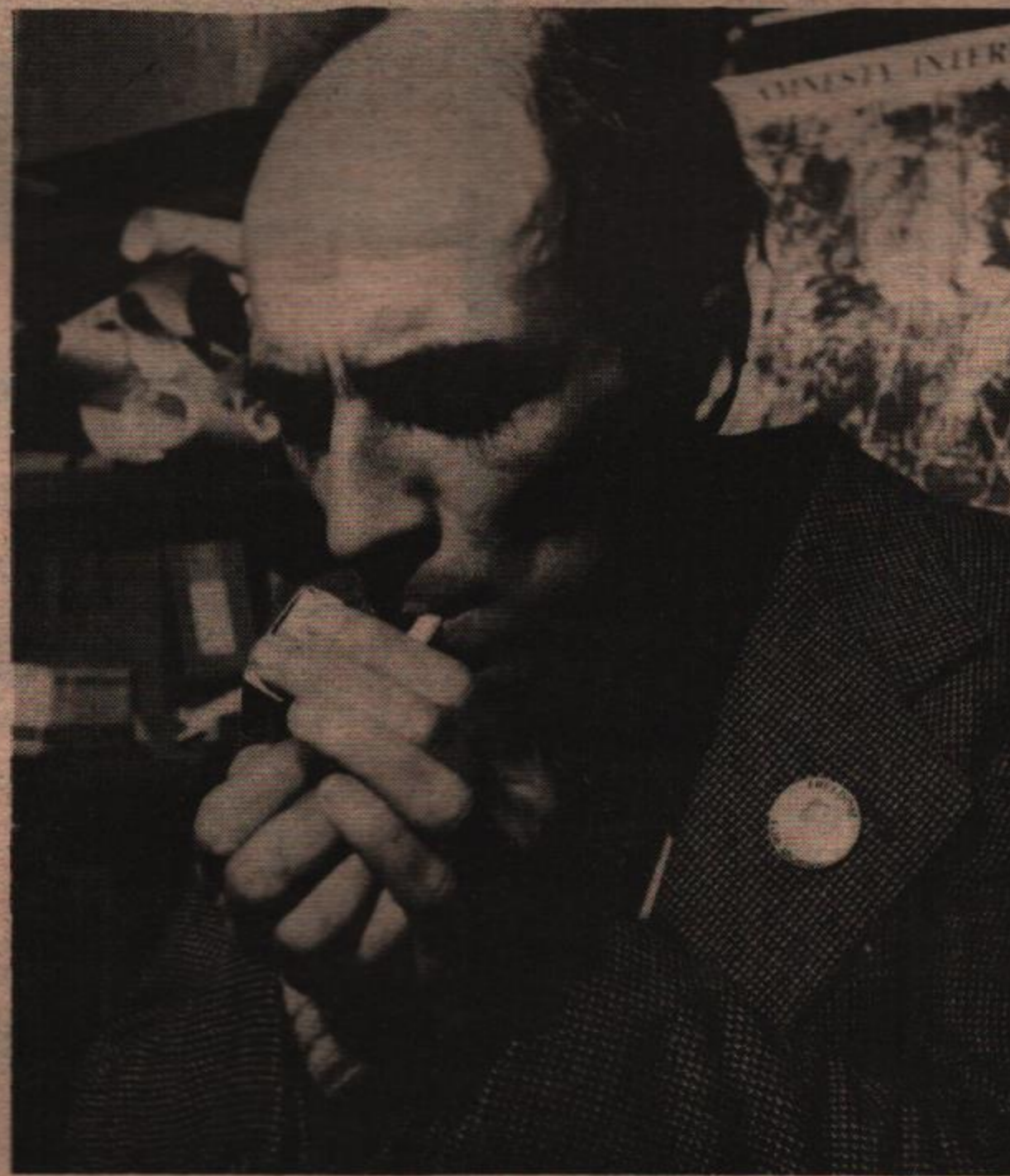
Yet even Khrushchev was forever harping on about the massive role of the police apparatus.

As you know, there are workers' strikes in the Soviet Union. There was the enormous Novocherkassk uprising and others.

Yet nowhere in any of these risings did a trade union of any sort appear as defending the workers' interests. In the Soviet Union, the working class has no party and no other organisations which defend its interests.

We have a mono-party state system which claims a monopoly on ideas, which are subject to the whims of a particular group or even of a particular individual at the top.

In theory, too, you would expect a socialist state to support working class movements in the west. We know that under Stalin there was the pact with Hitler. We know that Khrushchev was giving Nasser a 'Hero of the Soviet



Leonid Pliuchtch.

Union' medallion at the very time Nasser was putting socialists and communists in jail.

We can also see that Brezhnev keeps very good relations with the Iranian government and has never once interceded for any imprisoned socialist of any kind.

How do I characterise the society that exists in the Soviet Union? After a long search, I have come to the conclusion that the most accurate characterisation, though not absolutely perfect, is state capitalism.

Lenin used this term to describe a situation that existed not very long after the revolution when power was still in the hands of the toilers.

When I use the term, I do not mean this, since in Russia today power in no sense is in the hands of the workers.

You have to examine who is the exploiting class. Who is doing the exploiting? Who controls the surplus.

Djilas (the Yugoslav government minister who later broke with Stalinism) says that the exploiting class is the bureaucracy as a class. I feel that it is still more accurate to say as Marx once did that the state is an abstract exploiter.

I AM NOT A MAN WITHOUT HOPE

But with the existence of the bureaucracy, you do have the ruling echelons controlling the surplus and sharing the profits with their bureaucratic stooges.

This is exactly what a capitalist does. He doesn't put it all into his pockets. Some goes to his lackeys, some to the state, a part for the bureaucratic police apparatus and entourage.

Marxist groups in the Volga region issued a programme titled 'The sunset of capital'. They were not referring to the West. They were characterising the situation in the Soviet Union as the last form, the death pangs, of capitalism.

'And it is true that all these signs of decay do exist. There is the most widespread corruption. There is a moral vacuum moral emptiness, especially among the youth.

There are immense social problems, the growth of drug taking and alcoholism, the destruction of nature and the environment the swift unplanned capitalist exploitation of natural resources, the emphasis on militarism, the horrible police role, the chauvinism.

I say all this. But I am not a man without hope. On the contrary, I look forward to this being changed.

I am a marxist. I look to the intelligentsia and the working class to succeed in realising the noble ideals of socialism, and perhaps sooner than any of us think.

A feeble logic whose finger beckons us to the dark spectre of the Stalinist Soviet Union, affirms the bankruptcy of Bolshevism followed by that of Marxism followed by that of socialism Have you forgotten the other bankruptcies. What was Christianity doing in the various catastrophes of society? What became of Liberalism? What has Conservatism ever produced in either its enlightened or reactionary form? Did it not spawn Mussolini, Hitler, Salazar and Franco? If we are honestly to weigh out the bankruptcies of ideology we have a long task ahead of us . . . And nothing is finished yet

..... The reactionaries have an obvious interest in confounding Stalinist totalitarianism—exterminator of the Bolsheviks—with Bolshevism itself; their aim is to strike at the working class, at Socialism, at Marxism and even at Liberalism Victor Serge 'Thirty years after the Workers Revolution'

■ ■ ■ If you want to read more about the Russian Revolution start with John Reed's marvellous *Ten Days that Shook the World*. This is cheap and readily available. So is Victor Serge's *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* and his *From Lenin to Stalin*. Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* has just been reprinted by Pluto Press. If you can't afford to buy it, it may well be in your library. *Bookmarks* 265 Seven Sisters Road has a first class selection of books on the Revolution and will be pleased to advise you on further reading.

■ ■ ■ This Socialist Worker supplement was designed and edited by Roger Huddle and Laurie Flynn. It couldn't have been produced without the help of Eve Barker and David King, the staff of the Red Saunders Studio and of the London School of Economics Library.

Socialist Workers talking



ALAN GIBBONS

Shop steward: How about a bonfire at the factory?
Manager: Whereabouts at the factory?

Shop steward: Well, I meant in the factory, really. That conversation really happened at the place I work, last week. It's what's called an irresponsible attitude.

I started thinking about irresponsible attitudes. The guerillas in South Africa, for example. They're irresponsible.

So are Chiswick Women's Aid. (I mean, all those battered women in one building!).

Then there are the miners. They are very irresponsible. And the SWP at Lewisham. They must be just about the most irresponsible people anywhere.

The things all these people have in common is this funny knack of being irresponsible. The Daily Express says so.

Unlike James Callaghan, Margaret Thatcher, Cliff Richards, Ian Smith and Rin Tin Tin, they just haven't got it. No responsibility.

Depressed

I started to get quite depressed. I'm an SWP member after all, so I can't have any responsibility at all!

I got quite a good view of how people become irresponsible a couple of months back. I was part of a joint trade union and management delegation to the Department of Employment. We were submitting a pay claim which was outside Phase 2.

Reluctantly, I agreed to go. In my best clothes, of course.

Management paid for our train fare (the first time I've ever travelled first class) a meal in the dining car (another first) and our drinks (hic).

Subtle

As I sat opposite the personnel manager and the company industrial relations officer I could understand all the subtle ways of seducing trade unionists, socialists and rebels of every kind away from what they believe in. The isolation from their own people, the glimpse of a cosier life style, the smiling reasonableness of those you always look on as opponents on the shop floor.

The trip was fruitless, of course.

I came back alone. I took off my tie and sat in the second class with a can of Newcastle Brown and a sweaty cheese roll. I need responsibility like Rochdale needs Cyril Smith.

It might win you a free car, a nice house, influential friends, your picture in the papers—but somehow it isn't worth it if you lose your self-respect, your soul and the aspirations of working people.

Don't ask me. Ask Jack Jones.

BUILD THE SOCIALIST ALTERNATIVE!

Scotland

PAISLEY Socialist Workers Party public meetings: Fortnightly on Tuesdays, 7.30pm to 9.30pm, for meeting place see your SW seller.
8 November: What is fascism—how do we fight it? Speaker: Mike Gonzalez (Chilean Solidarity activist).

Yorkshire

BRADFORD Socialist Workers Party Teachers are holding a series of meetings about educational issues. It is vital that socialist teachers counteract the right-wing in the education debate. Alternate Thursdays, 5pm, Meeting Room 1, Communal Building, Bradford University.
3 November: Streaming—is it necessary? What are the alternatives?
17 November: Examinations—in whose interest are they?

North West

LIVERPOOL SOUTH Socialist Workers Party discussion meetings: Every Wednesday, 8pm, All welcome to informal discussions. Details from SW sellers.
9 November: Will the Labour Party bring socialism?
16 November: Unemployment, Job Creation Schemes and the Right to Work Campaign.

ORMSKIRK Socialist Workers Party discussion meetings: Every Thursday, 8pm, All welcome. Details of place from SW seller.
10 November: Ireland—Troops Out!
17 November: Scottish oil, Welsh water—is nationalism the answer?

BOOTLE Socialist Workers Party discussion meetings: Every Thursday, 8pm, details of place from your SW seller. All welcome.
10 November: Southern Africa

SALFORD Socialist Workers Party discussion meetings: Thursday evenings, details from SW sellers.
3 November: the meaning of Marxism. Speaker: Colin Barker.
17 November: The role of Women's Voice. Speaker: Anne Robertson.

BOLTON Socialist Workers Party public meeting: Why you should be a socialist. Speaker: Paul Foot. Thursday 10 November, ask you SW seller for details.

WARRINGTON Socialist Workers Party discussion meetings: Every other Thursday, 8pm, details from SW sellers.
10 November: The need for a Rank and File Conference.

CHEETHAM/CRUMPSALL Socialist Workers Party public meetings: Details of places and time from SW sellers.
Wednesday 9 November: The case for socialism. Speaker: Paul Foot.

Wales

BANGOR Socialist Workers Party public meetings: Fridays, 7.30pm, place from branch secretary or paper sellers.
4 November: New programme of discussion meetings. Remember, remember the 5th November—but don't forget October 1917. Speaker: Gerwyn Evans.

11 November: Did social democracy die in the trenches? Reformism in British politics. Speaker: Allan Williams.

BANGOR Socialist Workers Party public meeting: Revolutionary on the Shop Floor. Speaker: Graham Coldwell. Friday 18 November. Details from SW seller.

Public meetings and events organised by the Socialist Workers' Party and its fraternal organisations.

Send notices, to reach us by first post Monday at the latest, to Whats On, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London, E2 9DS.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

How it was won —and how it was lost

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY MEETINGS TO CELEBRATE THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1917 REVOLUTION

EAST OF SCOTLAND: Tour by Victor Haynes (Committee in Defence of Soviet Political Prisoners).
DUNDEE: Thursday 3 November
ABERDEEN: Monday 7 November
ALLOA: Tuesday 8 November
EDINBURGH: Thursday 10 November
See your SW seller for details.

OXFORD: Torchlit procession, Monday 7 November, 6.30pm, Bonn Square.

CARDIFF Socialist Workers Party discussion meetings: All at SWP Bookshop, 58 Bridge Street, Cardiff.
7 November: Rank and file-ism. Speaker: Pip Jones.

South East

CRAWLEY Socialist Workers Party discussion meetings: Fortnightly on Fridays, 8pm, place from SW sellers.
4 November: A broad look at student politics and introduction to NOISS.

ASHFORD Socialist Workers Party public meeting: Why you should be a socialist. Speaker: Tony Cliff. Thursday 17 November, 8pm, for meeting place see your SW seller.

London

SOUTH WEST LONDON Women's Voice Group meets alternate Tuesdays, 8pm, details of meeting place from VW sellers. Further information phone 01-673 1329.
1 November: Why prices rise. Speaker: Judith Hamilton.
15 November: What a pair of knickers! Does this offend you? Aileen Knowles will speak on sexism.

INNER EAST LONDON Socialist Workers Party meetings on Why You Should be a Socialist. All welcome. Alternate Fridays, 7.30pm, details from SW sellers.

18 November: Because there wouldn't be any oppression. Speaker: Norah Carlin.

SOAS Socialist Workers Party: Pirate Jenny's play Our Own People, by David Edgar. Monday 7 November, 6pm, Malet Street, London WC1. Admission 50p.

CENTRAL LONDON Socialist Workers Party Civil and Public Services Branch public meetings: Wednesdays, ask your SW seller for times and places.
2 November: Rock music—racist and sexist?
9 November: Socialism or barbarism—the choice is ours!

INNER EAST LONDON Socialist Workers Party discussion meetings: Why you should be a socialist. Alternate Friday evenings, 7.30pm, for meeting place see your SW seller.
4 November: Because we wouldn't be frustrated. Speaker: Paul Foot.

Socialist Workers Party GAY GROUP public meeting: International gay struggle. Tuesday 15 November, 8pm, University of London Union, Malet Street, London, WC1. For further details ring 01-790 2454.

OUTER EAST LONDON Socialist Workers Party fortnightly meetings: The revolutionaries. An Alternate Fridays, 7.45pm, for meeting place see your SW seller.
11 November: Trotsky. Speaker: Chris Harman.
25 November: Mao. Speaker: Nora Carlin.

SOUTH WEST LONDON Socialist Workers Party series of international meetings to commemorate 60th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. Alternate Mondays 7.45pm. Battersea Library, Lavender Hill, London SW11.
7 November: Workers' struggles in Eastern Europe. Speaker: Andy Strouthous.



followed by public meeting and social. All socialists and trade unionists welcome. Bring banners, red flags, wear something red, and come and celebrate a great day in our history!

HACKNEY, East London: Thursday 3 November, 8.45pm, for meeting place see your SW seller. Speaker: Paul Cunningham.

BIRMINGHAM: Monday 7 November, 7.30pm, for

meeting place ask SW sellers. Speaker: Tony Cliff.

LOWESTOFT: Thursday 10 November, for meeting place ask your SW seller.

MANSFIELD: Monday 7 November, 8pm, for meeting place see your SW seller. Speaker: Dick Williams.

LEAMINGTON: Wednesday 9 November, for meeting place see your SW seller. Speaker: Peter Binns.

NORTH LONDON: 10 November, 8pm, for meeting place see your SW seller. Speaker: Tony Cliff

GLASGOW: Sunday 20 November, 7.30pm, for meeting place ask SW sellers. Speaker: Chris Harman.

HAMMERSMITH: Monday 7 November, 7.30pm, for meeting place see your SW seller. Speaker: Colin Sparks.

SUB/EDITOR with experience of design needed for Socialist Worker.

Experience in socialist politics needed. Apply in writing with full details of experience to the editor, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS (phone 01-739 0185).

Socialist Worker Printshop requires a resident MAINTENANCE ENGINEER or Fitter to work on various printing and binding machinery. Reply to Mel Norris, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS, or phone 01-739 1413.

Socialist Workers Party requires a GENERAL LABOURER, packer, driver, at its London office. Party membership, enthusiasm for hard work, plus initiative essential.

LAMBETH Socialist Workers Party discussion meetings: Meetings on Sundays, details from your SW seller.
30 October: The Thirties, fascism and unemployment. Speaker: Joanna Rollo.

South West

POOLE Socialist Workers Party public meeting: What the Socialist Workers Party stands for. Speaker: John Rose. Tuesday 8 November, 8pm, for meeting place see your SW seller.

SOUTHAMPTON Socialist Workers Party public meeting: What Socialist Worker stands for. Speaker: John Rose (a journalist on Socialist Worker). Wednesday 9 November, 8pm, for meeting place see your SW seller.

BATH Socialist Worker discussion group meets every Thursday 7.30pm, for meeting place see your SW seller. All SW readers welcome. SW sold 11am to 12.30pm, every Saturday, outside Littlewoods.

Action in the unions

HOSPITAL WORKERS: Important meeting for all SWP hospital workers in London. Wednesday 9 November starting at 7pm sharp. Place from your district organiser/industrial department. Don't go sick!

Notices and meetings

Notices for this column must be posted to arrive by first post the Monday before publication. We cannot take them over the phone. Send CASH WITH COPY (10p a word) to Classified, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2 9DS. No invoices can be sent.

STATE RESEARCH collects and publishes information from public sources on state policy, particularly in developments in policing, internal security, and espionage, and the links between these fields and business, the Right and paramilitary organisations. A series of seminars will be held at 9 Poland Street, London W1. The first is on Friday 18 November, 6.30pm. The reform of the Official Secrets Act.

CONFERENCE ON KURDISTAN: Saturday 12 November, 10am to 4pm. Speakers: Stan Newens and others. Film: Voice of Kurdistan. Imperial College Union Building, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 (near South Kensington tube) For further details contact Brunel Students Union.

WORKERS POWER No 5 OUT NOW. Articles include: Fascism and Anti-Fascism. The Workers' Govt. Socialist Challenge—a statement. Euro-Stalinism. Marx and Engels and German Social Democracy. Available from all left bookshops, or from Dave Hughes, 1a Camberwell Grove, SE5 8JA—57p inc. postage.

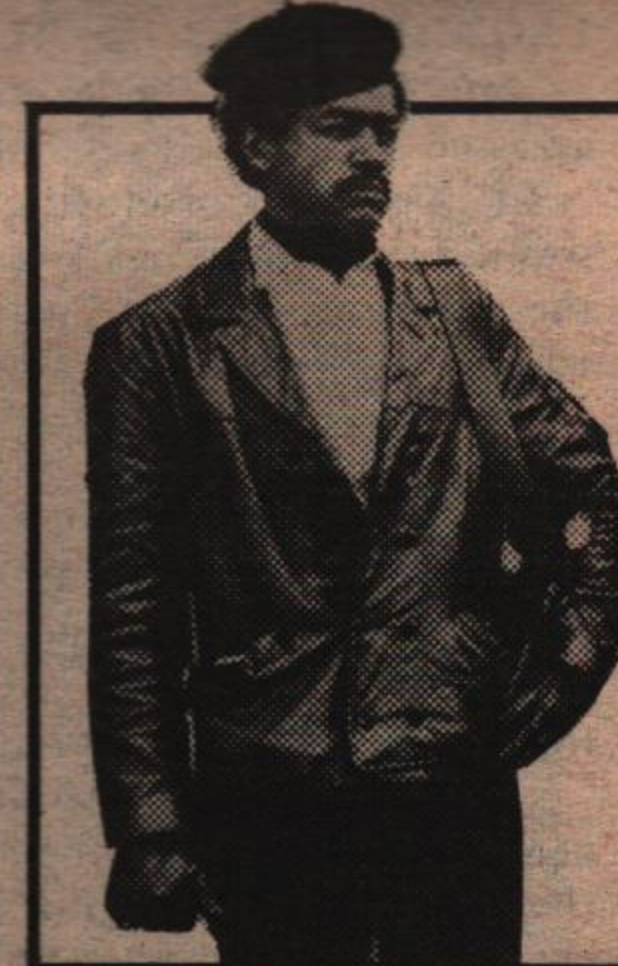
PIRATE JENNY THEATRE (team two) seeks actors/ac-tresses/musicians for show on Ireland. Equity rates. Political commitment essential. Write: 76 (basement) Oxford Gardens, London W10.

IS SOCIALISM POSSIBLE? Socialist Worker Pocket Pamphlet No 2. Price 5p, 3p if you order more than 10 and pay in advance. From SW Distributors, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.



RENTAMOB, agitprop bulletin of the SWP and supporters. First issue includes articles on starting a socialist film club, making banners, badges for fund-raising, street theatre, video, Rock Against Racism and others. PLUS a full-size poster. 10p a copy, plus 7p postage, from Dave Simmonds, Counter-Act, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1. (Cheques/POs made to SW Recordings please).

ROOM WANTED for comrade in SWP house, North or East London preferred, but anything considered. Please phone SW Recordings, 01-739 9043.



Polive V Black Panther Party USA . . . racist murder and harassment.

Bill Hampton, brother of Fred Hampton, one of the murdered Black Panther Party leaders, will be touring Britain next month with the support of Flame, the black workers' paper of the Socialist Workers' Party. Come and hear him expose his brother's murderers. See the new film about the FBI's attempts to wipe out the Panthers.
Admission to all meetings 30p (unemployed/students 10p)

SOUTH EAST LONDON: Wednesday 16 November.
BRADFORD/LEEDS: Thursday 17 November



The latest issue of FLAME is out. Articles include: Black Women, Carnival, South Africa, and police rampage in Lewisham. Get your copy now. Order from Flame 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2. 17p including postage.

TROOPS OUT and SMASH THE PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT stickers, printed in red and black, four designs 500 for £1 plus 20p postage, post free to SWP members (state which branch). CASH WITH ORDER to Socialist Worker, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

Socialist Workers Party PHILOSOPHY GROUP foundation meeting: Oxford, Sunday 20 November, 10.30am. Open to all SWP members and supporters and NOISS. Pooled fare. Overnight Saturday accommodation can be arranged, also creche. Come to Oxford SWP social on the Saturday night while you're about it. Details from SWPhil, Oxford SWP, c/o 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN or phone 0865-5200. Agenda suggestions welcome, but draft agenda available now.

NOISS National Organisation of Student International Socialist Societies.

NOISS weekend school: 5-6 November, in Sunderland. Why we have NOISS, organising NOISS, and how to intervene in a dispute. Leaflet writing and production, public speaking, government economic policy and the cuts. Saturday night social, plus CAST with Goodbye Union Jack. Ideal for new NOISS members. Details: IS Society, Newcastle Poly Students Union, Sandford Road, Newcastle 1 phone 0632 813877.



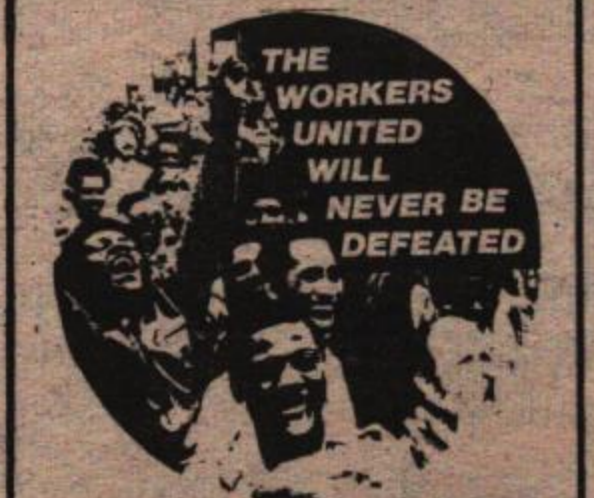
CYPRIOT WORKER/NOISS Day School: Saturday 5 November, 11am to 5.30pm, North London Poly (Room 61) Holloway Road, London N5. Sessions on: Cypriot students in Britain—fight the racist fee increases, stop the education cuts. Post 74 Cyprus: What next?—no partition, no federation, Greeks and Turks unite against imperialism. Cypriot workers in Britain—join the fight against the deportations, stop the racist attacks against the Cypriot community, fight the brutal exploitation by the Cypriot bosses.

BIRMINGHAM: Friday 18 November
MANCHESTER: Monday 21 November
SOUTH LONDON: Tuesday 22 November
NORTH WEST LONDON: Wednesday 23 November
NORTH LONDON: Thursday 24 November, 7pm, for meeting place see your SW seller.
EAST LONDON: Friday 25 November
All inquiries please contact Flame, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2, phone 01-739 1878. Posters and leaflets available.



All London gay groups **GAY BLASPHEMY BALL**, Saturday 5 November, 8pm till midnight, Manning Hall, University of London Union, Malet Street, London WC1. Julie Bedford Band and disco. £1 admission (60p unemployed and students).

RED BADGERS



A Flame/SWP badge in red and black, extra large size. One for 22p by post, 10 for £1.70, 50 for £8, 100 for £15.



STOP RISING FOOD PRICES—eat the rich! Printed in green and red, 20p each, 10 for £1.50, 50 for £6.50, all prices including postage.

Cheques made out to RED BADGERS please.

All from RED BADGERS, SW, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2.



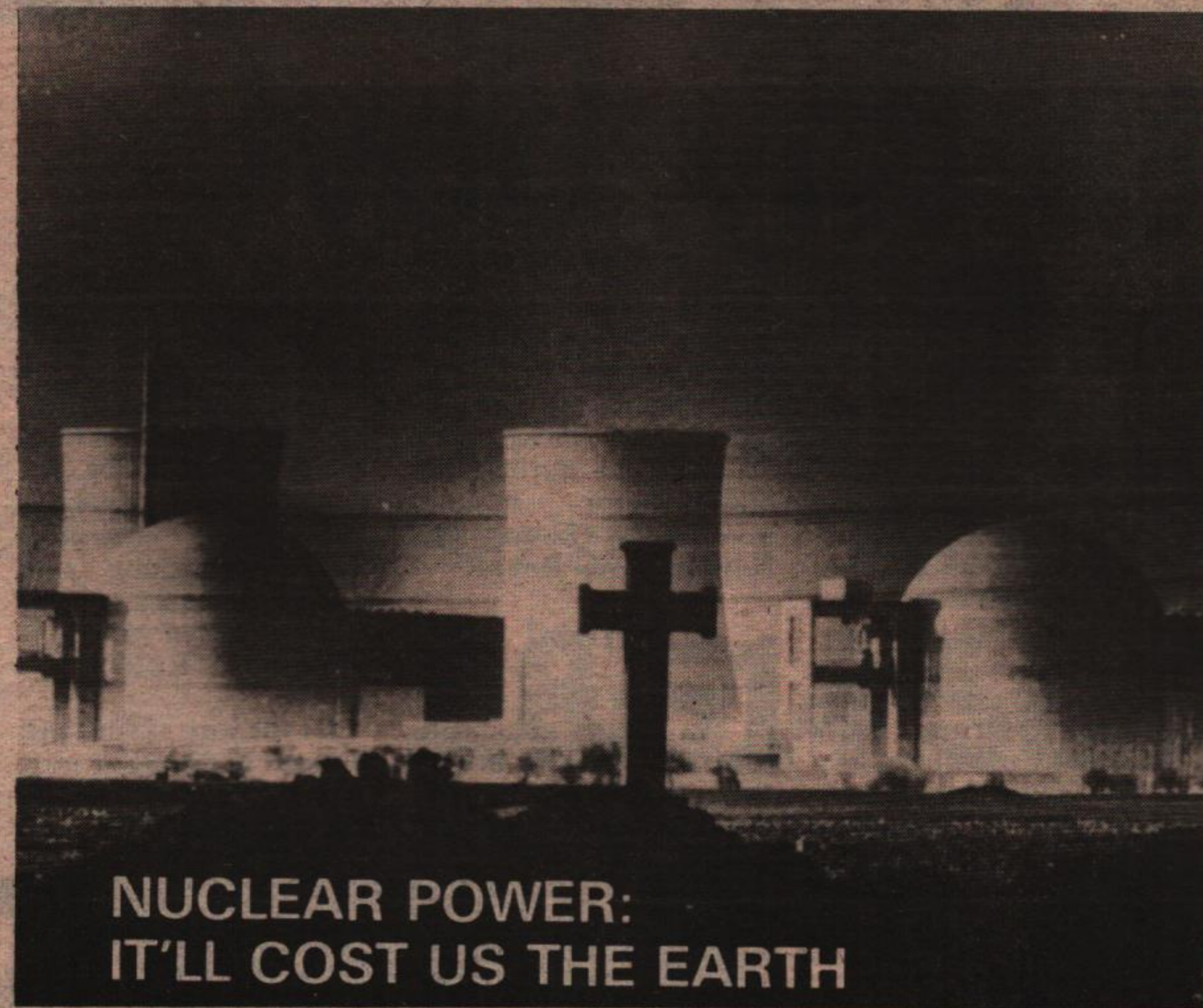
BADGES AVAILABLE NOW! RAR badges in new colours—green and red 24p (inc postage), or 10 for £1.50 post free. Orders to 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

IT'S UP TO THE WORKERS



THEY'VE been on strike for more than a year, The pickets at Grunwicks have nothing to cheer. Inquiries come and inquiries go But the strikers outside have nothing to show. Why are the TUC dragging their feet? When they know that George Ward has got to be beat? The Post Office workers who helped in the fight Were condemned by Tom Jackson for doing what's right. We have plenty of union leaders who talk so glib, But when called for action, they've nothing to give. So it's up to the workers to show them the way And mass picket George Ward till he calls it a day.

□ HARRY PENFOLD, Basildon



NUCLEAR POWER: IT'LL COST US THE EARTH

So why use plutonium?

IGNORE the fact that working with plutonium (nuclear fuel) causes cancers such as leukaemia.

Ignore the constant increase in radioactivity in places such as Windscale.

Ignore the hundreds of accidents that have already happened at nuclear power and processing stations.

Ignore the unknown genetic effects on future generations as radioactivity builds up in your body.

Just ask why have 36 countries so far now got nuclear power stations? After all, most 'experts' no longer consider nuclear power a cheap source of energy.

Could it be that John Vorster wants to bring electricity to South African

shanty towns? Can he no longer stand the sight of thousands of black people without electricity?

Mobutu, Vorster's CIA-backed friend in Zaire, has a nuclear power station in his back garden. How is this going to help the majority of people in Zaire, who are suffering from malnutrition?

Does the Shah of Iran want more electricity to give all his political prisoners colour television sets in their cells?

□ □

Why don't they use cheap and safe solar energy instead? Could it be that threatening to drop solar panels on opposing nations would have little effect?

There is no such thing as plutonium for peaceful purposes only. It's still plutonium whether it's a nuclear power station or a nuclear warhead.

All nuclear power and reprocessing stations should be phased out. The huge sums spent on them should be used to develop other forms of energy.

Known coal reserves in Britain will last another 300 years. There is nearly enough peat in Ireland to melt the polar ice cap.

Add to this the known oil and gas reserves and hydro-electric power and we have enough energy to last us until new sources of power have been fully developed.

□ J MOSS, Blackburn

Kicking the system?

'NO EXCUSE for England fans' bad behaviour' was the headline on one page of our local newspaper. The article went on to describe the 'orgy of drunken hooliganism' that took place after the England-Luxembourg match.

'There is no justification for such anti-social behaviour,' it said.

Whenever we hear about soccer hooliganism today we get the same old story about stiffer penalties, heavier fines of jail sentences.

But whenever I see violence at the football match, two opposing factions fighting, whether inside the ground or outside on the streets, I don't see the sons of lawyers, judges and managing directors. I see the sons of working-class people having an afternoon out getting away from the other side of life, living in a terrace house on the breadline.

In a real socialist society these problems would not exist. The hate and the violence inside the soccer hooligans should be directed against the people who made them what they are, not against other working-class people.

□ ADAM WEST (age 14), Sheffield.

Letters

Send your letters to Letters Page, Socialist Worker, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Crescent, London E2

LET THEM EAT CAKE?

REGARDING James Undy's letter on the 'Stop rising food prices—eat the rich' badge, in Darlington, we've had a great response, especially from women. They get the message quite clearly.

However, if James Undy needs an explanation, allow me. The rich are the only ones who can afford to buy goods these days. We can't afford to buy bread, so the answer from the rich is the same as Marie Antoinette's 'Let them eat cake'.

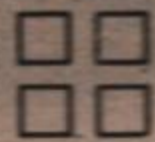
Nonsense—let's eat the rich, let's get rid of the capitalists.

When we control the

economy, when we control our lives, we will be able to afford the food we want again.

The women, the ones who have to go out to buy food, know exactly why they're buying this badge.

□ EUNICE SHARPLES, Darlington.



WHY represent your politics in terms of bad-humoured wealth bashing? I feel those 'eat the rich' badges are simplistic and counter-productive.

JOHN BRYAN, Halifax

Cuts campaign

WE NEED a campaign to fight the cuts in the Health Service now, and to fight for higher pensions. When the Socialist Workers Party in Norwich occupied an empty, newly built old people's home a couple of months ago a lot of local people joined in.

The Tory-controlled council is now being forced to open the home.

The campaign I am suggesting means mass leafletting, a campaign to fight the cuts and for a substantial increase for pensioners.

□ AN SWP supporter, Norwich.

Ireland

THE ONLY objection I can see to your otherwise excellent paper is the lack of reports on British atrocities in Northern Ireland, and the way the so-called 'Irish' southern government has lined up with the invaders in the north.

The British occupiers of Northern Ireland and the traitors in the Dublin government do indeed all piss in the same pot.

□ BILL MONAHAN, Ilford, Essex

LOST DOCUMENT AT LEWISHAM

Would the person who took a document from a black comrade at Lewisham for safe keeping please contact Socialist Worker, phone 01-739 6361.

POWER OF THE ELITE

I HAVE a problem. You might even call me neurotic. You see, I worry, especially when I read articles on these hideous, nightmarish places such as Windscale nuclear power plant.

You could call me non-progressive and unrealistic, but electricity produced in



I AM writing to expand on your article on the recent conviction of Dick Hall after a confrontation with the Nazis during the Ashfield by-election.

During the election the SWP and local people who hate the Nazis constantly restricted the NF's election campaign. Their posters were removed within hours of being put up, and on a radio phone-in their candidate was torn to shreds. When they appeared on the streets they were driven off.

So it was not surprising that after the minor scuffle, which led to Dick Hall being charged with assault, the Nazis sought revenge in the courts.

□ □

In the court case the prosecution lawyer spent most of his time denouncing the SWP over Lewisham, and on the flimsiest of evidence, which even the police were dubious about. Dick was found guilty.

The magistrates took the hints given by the establishment to crack down on anti-fascists, and imposed the highest fines for years in this area. With costs the fines totalled £275, not £175 as SW said.

Obviously financial support is urgently needed. Send donations to Mansfield SWP, 15 Sycamore Rd, Mansfield, Woodhouse, Notts.

□ DICK WILLIAMS

HIDDEN KILLER

I AM AGAINST nuclear power stations. I don't trust the firms who build them or run them to do it safely.

Firms that cut corners when building blocks of flats won't have a different standard even when it comes to something as potentially dangerous as nuclear power.

My brother works on a nuclear power site in Port Huron, Ohio, USA. A few years ago there was a big scandal there.

One of the quality control men—employed by the building firm to check sub-contractors' work—found that the construction was way below specification.

He raised a stink about it. The firm—instead of thanking him for doing a good job—gave him the sack and hounded him out of the state.

So there is a nuclear power station being built (it will probably be finished in 15 years) with cracks in some of the walls! The whole thing was hushed up and forgotten. Which is how it will be until the plant starts operating—and leaking.

They play with our lives every day, but nuclear power makes them much more dangerous.

□ JENNY JACKSON, Walthamstow.

I AM working on a book on the British Disarmament Movement, a section of which is concerned with the subsequent activities of CND and Committee of 100 supporters. I would be very interested to hear from activists from the 1958-1965 period who would be willing to complete a questionnaire.

□ R K S TAYLOR, Ellerslie, St Andrews Avenue, Leeds.

SOCIALISTS should oppose nuclear power not only because it is dangerous to the workers and the environment, but also because of the structure nuclear power is based upon.

Its technocracy and bureaucracy show clearly how nuclear power is far removed from the ordinary person. A society which allows a few experts to control such a dangerous technology is a sick society.

Socialists want energy-making to be more of a community process, not a remote, technocratic process. We want to free the expert from the isolation capitalism has put him in.

□ CLINTON FRASER, Bridge of Allan, Scotland.

A MYTH TO BE BROKEN

BERTRAND RUSSELL, in his milk and water account of the Russian Revolution, said the driving force behind the Bolshevik movement is generally a hatred of enemies rather than a love of friends.

This appears to be rather well-founded, judging by the total lack of compassion, in day-to-day terms, which is evident in conversation with Socialist Workers Party members. Look at the sectarian attitudes—the pride taken by certain sections in the notoriety that has descended upon us in recent months.

There is a myth, created by the national press, that the SWP is organised thuggery controlled by a clique of middle-class intellectuals playing at politics.

We have to smash these myths by breaking down these attitudes and by spending just a little less time in committee rooms where the leaflets proclaim 'everyone is welcome', and more time explaining our politics on the streets where the seeds of prejudice can be stopped from taking root.

□ STEVE GREEN, Crewe.

LEGALISED TERROR—THE PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT: A pamphlet, written by Steve Berry (SWP Irish committee), 10p a copy (plus 8p postage) from SW Distributors, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2. More than 10 copies, post free.



BRITAIN OUT OF IRELAND—HOW AND WHEN?



Labour Movement Delegate Conference Saturday 19 November, 10am-5.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1. Credentials £1 per delegate.

Sponsors include: Phil Flynn (deputy general secretary, LG&PSU, Ireland), Matt Merrigan (Dublin district secretary, ATGWU), Ernie Roberts (AUEW), Aidan White (NUJ executive committee), Jim Murray (AUEW executive), Paul Foot (NUJ), Dick North (NUT executive), Mick McGrath (CPSA national committee) (all in personal capacity), TGWU 1/281.

Organised by NLDMI, 1 North End Road, London W14.

Trotsky



THE HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION by LEON TROTSKY

Trotsky's finest literary achievement and the most authoritative, impassioned and superbly written account of the Russian Revolution ever published.

£5, plus 25p postage. 1296 pages.

PLUTO PRESS, Unit 10 Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1.

□ SIMON BEARD, Braintree, Essex.

SWP WHERE WE STAND

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

The workers create all the wealth under capitalism. A new society can only be constructed when they collectively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up, or reformed, as the established Labour and trade union leaders say. It has to be overthrown.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers. The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia. At most, parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system. Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a world-wide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries. We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries. We oppose racialism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls. We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements. The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country. Russia, China and Eastern Europe are not socialist, but state capitalist.

We support the struggles of workers in these countries against the bureaucratic ruling class.

We are for real, social, economic and political equality of women.

We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against homosexuals.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism, the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party. Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

We urge all those who agree with our policies to join with us in the struggle to build the revolutionary party.

If you want to know more about Socialist Worker and the Socialist Workers Party, fill in the form on page 15.

That's my boy!

THOSE WHO watched the Panorama programme about the Dobson revelations in Socialist Challenge might still be smarting from the intervention of Lord Robens, chairman of Vickers.

Robens told Peter Cooper, who taped the speech, 'You have betrayed your father'. He then went on to liken Peter to Nazi children who betrayed their

socialist fathers to the Hitler regime.

Lord Robens has always believed in the closest possible cooperation between father and son.

When Lord Robens was chairman of the National Coal Board, his son's new public relations company in Nottingham received generous contracts—from the National Coal Board.

The young Robens was married to Patricia

Bonser, daughter of the chairman of Bonser Engineering, a firm which made a fortune out of the very lucky contracts it got during the mid-60's—for mining machinery from the National Coal Board.

Agreed

When the Board decided to limit pit prop contracts to three major firms, Bonser's part of the business was sold at

fantastically lucrative terms to Doughty Engineering.

Young Robens thus did very well indeed from decisions taken by the Coal Board, of which his father was chairman: thus establishing that cosy parental relationship of which the pompous Robens is proud.

By the way, if you spell Bonser a different way, you get Robens. Amazing coincidence.



PRESS FREEDOM PART 604: The Western Daily Amil on October 21 thought that one of the most significant things happening in the world was what Mr David Cole, chairman of the Press Association had to say about the closed shop for journalists.

He claimed that the National Union of Journalists has 'political associations.'

Mr Cole is also managing director of Thomson Regional Newspapers. You've guessed it. Thomsons owns the Western Daily Mail.

A MAN WHO claimed to be a member of the National Front told police that he was carrying a knife 'to cut the niggers', PC William Jones told a South London court.

Thomas Grace, 22, pleaded not guilty to carrying an offensive weapon and denied being a suspected person.

The flick knife was found in the back pocket of Grace's jeans.

'He just exploded the moment I spoke to him,' said PC Jones. 'He started shouting about muggers and winding himself up into a frenzy.'

Once in the car, said PC Jones, Grace said: 'I don't want to hurt anyone, I just want to cut the niggers. They don't count as human beings.'

FANTASTIC FACTS: A survey conducted by a firm of management consultants shows that for the 12 months before July 1977—during Phase 11 of the Social Contract—a wide range of company executives received more than twice the increase allowed under phase two. The average increase was 8.6 per cent.

This does not include fringe benefits and bonuses.

LOWESTOFT LABOUR Party have called a meeting of local bodies to set up a joint campaign to fight fascism and racialism.

They haven't invited Lowestoft SWP because they said, they wanted 'to keep the campaign non-political'.

WITHOUT COMMENT

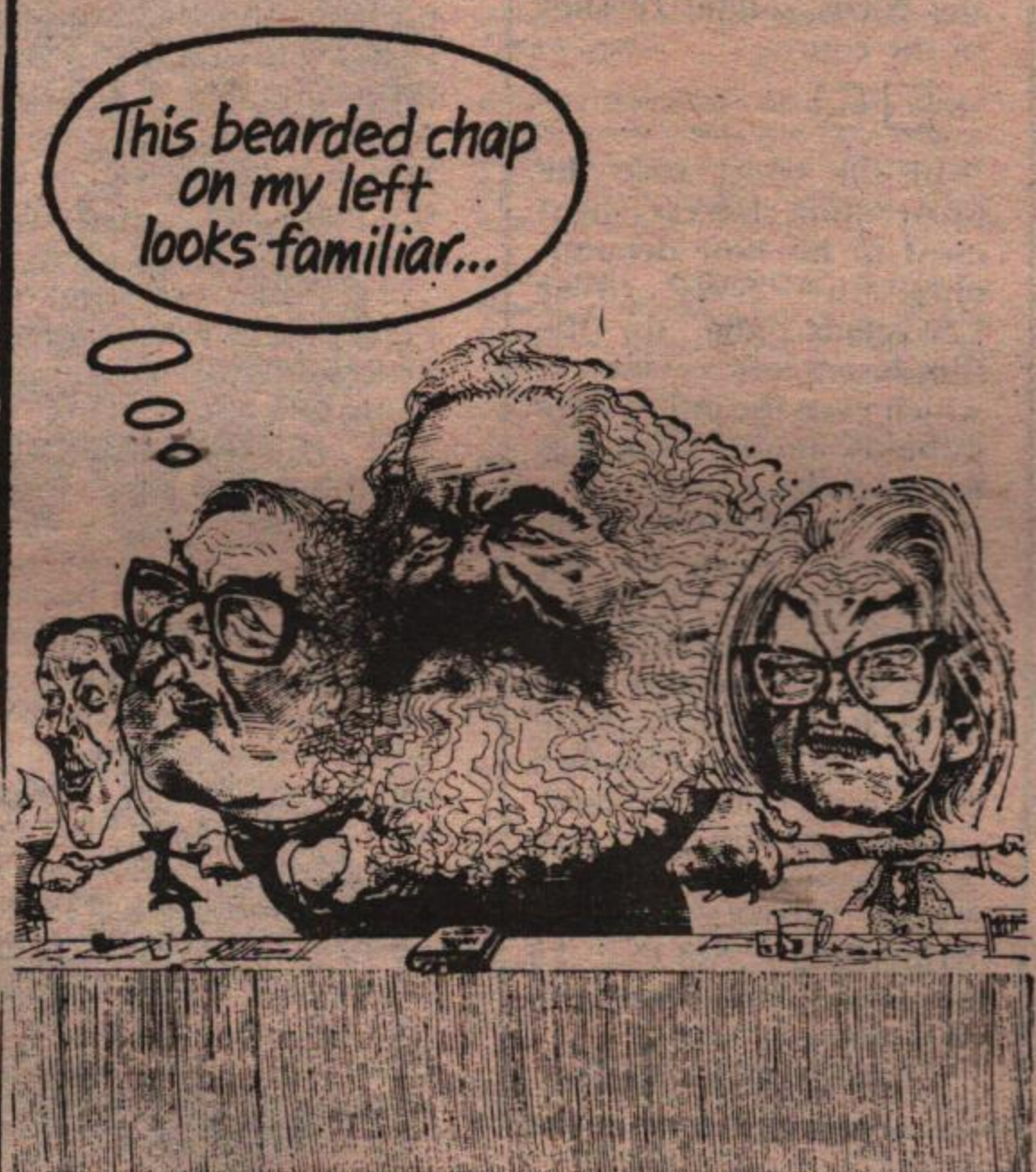
British workers like them shapely



Some overalls lose their 'body' through being worn and washed too many times. So although they may be clean, they don't look very shapely. At Spring Grove we take pride in the fact that we never send out tatty garments. So people take a pride in wearing them. We also pride ourselves on punctuality so no-one has to wear a pair of overalls longer than they should—at the expense of health and hygiene. We are the largest renters of Polyester Cotton workwear in Europe.

VENT YOUR anger against sexist adverts like this with Women's Voice 'This ad degrades women' stickers. Three sheets 50p from Womens Voice, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

ADVERTISEMENT



Most Communist Parties from Europe, including Iron Curtain countries, are attending the Labour Party Conference.

Issued by Aims for Freedom and Enterprise, as a political health warning.



With enemies like these...

MOST OF the biggest corporations in Germany were enthusiastic supporters of the Nazi regime before and during the Second World War.

After all the first occupants of the concentration camps were trade unionists and socialists and communists, arrested straight after the Nazis took power and destroyed working class organisation.

Secret documents have just been released by the American State Department which show that support for Hitler before and during the Second World War also came from some American companies.

The largest corporation in America, Du Pont Chemicals, which then owned General Motors, kept up links with the Nazis through the war.

General Motors' German subsidiary, provided most of the trucks used to transport troops. In 1938, the year before the start of the Se-

cond World War, Hitler's closest adviser, Hermann Goering, complained that the German car industry was not producing vehicles suitable for an easy shift to military needs.

Goering went on 'the fortification of the western frontier could not have been carried through if American units had not been reverted to.'

Defend

One General Motors plant spent the war making bombers, another produced the first ever jet fighter for the Nazis.

In 1935, General Motors provided the one essential ingredient that made the Nazi war effort possible. They gave the German firm, I. G. Farben, in which they owned a large interest, the details of a special high octane petrol. Without this petrol according to one captured Nazi document, 'the present method of warfare would be unthinkable.'

FREEDOM'S TRAITOR

THE American Federal Bureau of Investigation, the heroes of numerous films in defence of freedom, provided the Nazis with information about wanted Americans who were Jewish.

The FBI, according to documents just released, provided information describing people as Jews, Jewish type, Jewish race, to Interpol after it had been taken over by the Nazis.

J. Edgar Hoover, the long lived dictator of the FBI, kept up contacts with Interpol until the days before Pearl Harbour and the American entry into the war in December 1941.

The same firm made another contribution to the Nazis. It made the gas used to carry out mass murder in the concentration camps.

General Motors kept some control over their subsidiary throughout the war, via their company in Denmark. When the Nazis invaded Denmark, General Motors was allowed to go quite unmolested.

The Nazis then rented the factory.

In 1943, after over two years of war, the State Department discovered that General Motors was trading with the enemy. Their Swiss subsidiary was importing material from enemy territory. They were still receiving sales figures for cars and trucks sold behind enemy lines.

Making

The F. B. I. investigated three Vice Presidents of General Motors because of their pro Nazi sympathies. One of them, Graeme K. Howard, even wrote a book defending the Nazi occupation of most of Europe and arguing that the United States should accept it.

In 1943 Du Pont tried to sell a patent dealing with metal processing to Italy, then governed by Hitler's fascist ally, Mussolini.

After the war Du Pont and General Motors collected the profits. Ger-

man troops had ridden to war in General Motors trucks, overhead they had been supported by General Motors bombers. Behind the Nazi lines, Du Pont was making a profit from the gassing of the millions in the concentration camps. On the other side American troops were riding into Europe in trucks supplied by General Motors.

The founder of the Du Pont empire, Pierre Du Pont, summed it all up—'we cannot assent to allow our own patriotism to interfere with our duties to achieve reasonable profits for our stockholders.'

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Fight the racists! Stop the Nazis!



£10,000 appeal

Send donations and collections to Socialist Worker Fund, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

£8,514 SO FAR

LAST WEEK we reported that we were being evicted from our headquarters. This week we have investigated new offices and costs.

Conclusion: Even if we beg, borrow and steal we will still need a few thousand pounds if we are to buy premises from which we cannot be thrown out.

How can we raise such funds? We are aware that you our readers have been exceptionally generous during 1977. First our successful £40,000 appeal closely

followed by the £10,000.

If it is at all possible we want to avoid launching yet another fund.

But to do this we need to bust open our existing target of £10,000. If we can raise £13,000 to £14,000 this time around then we can do it. We will have just about enough money to make ends meet.

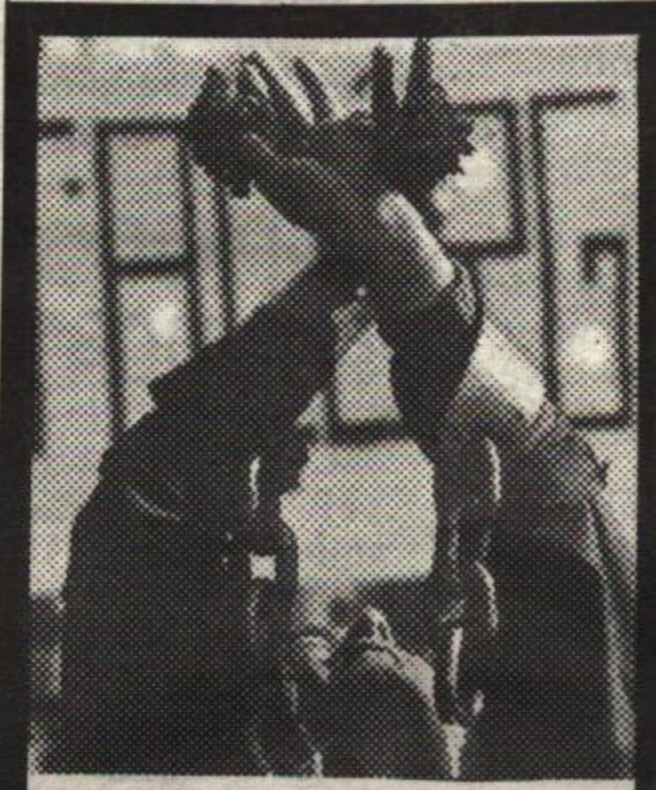
So dig deep, organise those collections and help us move.

THANKS TO:

- Coventry SWP
- Derham SWP
- Chichester SWP
- Pontefract (Featherstone) Basingstoke SWP
- Canterbury SWP
- York SWP
- Crawley SWP
- Bangor SWP
- Bangor SWP
- Cardiff SWP
- Black Country SWP
- Edinburgh SWP
- Stirling University
- S.E. London SWP
- Grewe SWP
- NW London SWP
- Hendon SWP
- Sheila Mitchell
- Sarah & Roger, Lucy & Rosie Cox
- Hammersmith SWP
- Coventry SWP
- West Yorks SWP
- Caxton House Islington
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- Chippenham Indian Workers Assoc. & Chippenham SW Readers
- K. Reid
- Jan Ribane (Deptford)
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- Islington Council Environment Health Department
- I. Best—Sunderland
- Anon Wimbledon
- Roy Naylor
- Yorkshire Imperial Metals Ltd SW Supporters
- Leeds Comrades
- Old Oak Common British Rail Diesel Depot
- Anon, Hoxton
- Glyn Walkers
- L. Gardner & Sons
- L. Willits



Jewish speaker banned by Zionists



WORLD IN STRUGGLE

THE FIRST Jewish speaker ever has been stopped from speaking at a British University—by supporters of the State of Israel.

Norman Temple, a Jewish member of BAZO, the British Anti Zionist organisa-

tion, was a guest speaker at Liverpool University invited by the Arab Society.

Rather than face a Jewish speaker arguing against the racist policies of the State of Israel, the Jewish Society successfully moved a resolution banning Norman Temple from speaking.

No newspaper has reported this attack on free speech. Instead the Daily Mail and other newspapers are continuing their efforts to label the Socialist Workers Party as anti Jewish.

In fact we haven't banned anyone from speaking, and we haven't banned any Jewish societies. What we have argued is that the funds

of student unions should not be used to produce propaganda in support of the State of Israel.

Our position has been completely distorted by the national press.

For example they claim that the Jewish Society was banned at the School of African and Oriental Studies. There is no Jewish Society at SOAS. There is an Israeli Society. But this hasn't been banned, it has been refused student union funds.

Beneath all the abuse in the newspapers is a very simple issue. NOISS—the SWP's student organisation—is opposed to the funds of student unions being used to promote propaganda in favour of Israel.

We support the rights of the two million Arab refugees, living in camps outside Israel, who were driven from their homes.

As long as they are not allowed to return home, as long as Arabs in Israel are second class citizens, Israel will be a racist state and we will oppose it.

Andy Strouthous

Students picket South African Airways

SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS in London was forced to close down early because of a 70 strong picket. The picket was organised jointly by the Southern African Solidarity Campaign and NOISS—the Socialist Workers Party student organisation.

Another three student unions have joined the call for a national demonstration on Southern Africa on 13 November.

At Hull University 200 students attended a mass meeting to discuss Southern Africa.

On Saturday, around ninety students from Exeter University and Exmouth College marched through the town in support of the struggle in Southern Africa. Afterwards they attended a rally organised by Exeter University Students Union.

Students at Aberdeen University have now been in occupation for over two weeks in protest at the College's investments in South Africa. On Wednesday they organised a mass picket of the recruiting office of the South African consul. The consul was trying to persuade



people to emigrate to jobs in South Africa. As a result of the picket only 4 people turned up for the interview.

On Saturday a rally in support of the occupation was attended by delegation from colleges all over Scotland. Bob Hughes, MP for Aberdeen North and National Chairman of the Anti Apartheid Movement addressed the rally.

There are only two weeks to go before the national demonstration. It is crucial that NOISS and SASC supporters book coaches for the demo now and make sure that activities are organised in the colleges for the National Day of Action on the 11th.

• □ SUNDAY 13 NOVEMBER: DEMONSTRATE: Against the murder of Steve Biko; against the bannings, against the detentions.

ALL OUT: for solidarity with black workers and students in South Africa; for victory to the Freedom Fighters in Zimbabwe.

Assemble 12.30pm at Speakers' Corner, march followed by a rally

□ SWP SEMINAR: Crisis in Southern Africa. The new imperialist strategy in Southern Africa; Urban resistance and the black consciousness movement; What future for the armed struggle in Zimbabwe? Speakers include: Chris Matebane, Black Consciousness Movement (Britain); A Zimbabwean revolutionary; Alex Callinicos.

MONDAY 7 NOVEMBER. 7.30pm Old Theatre, London School of Economics, The Aldwych, London WC2.

Editors on trial

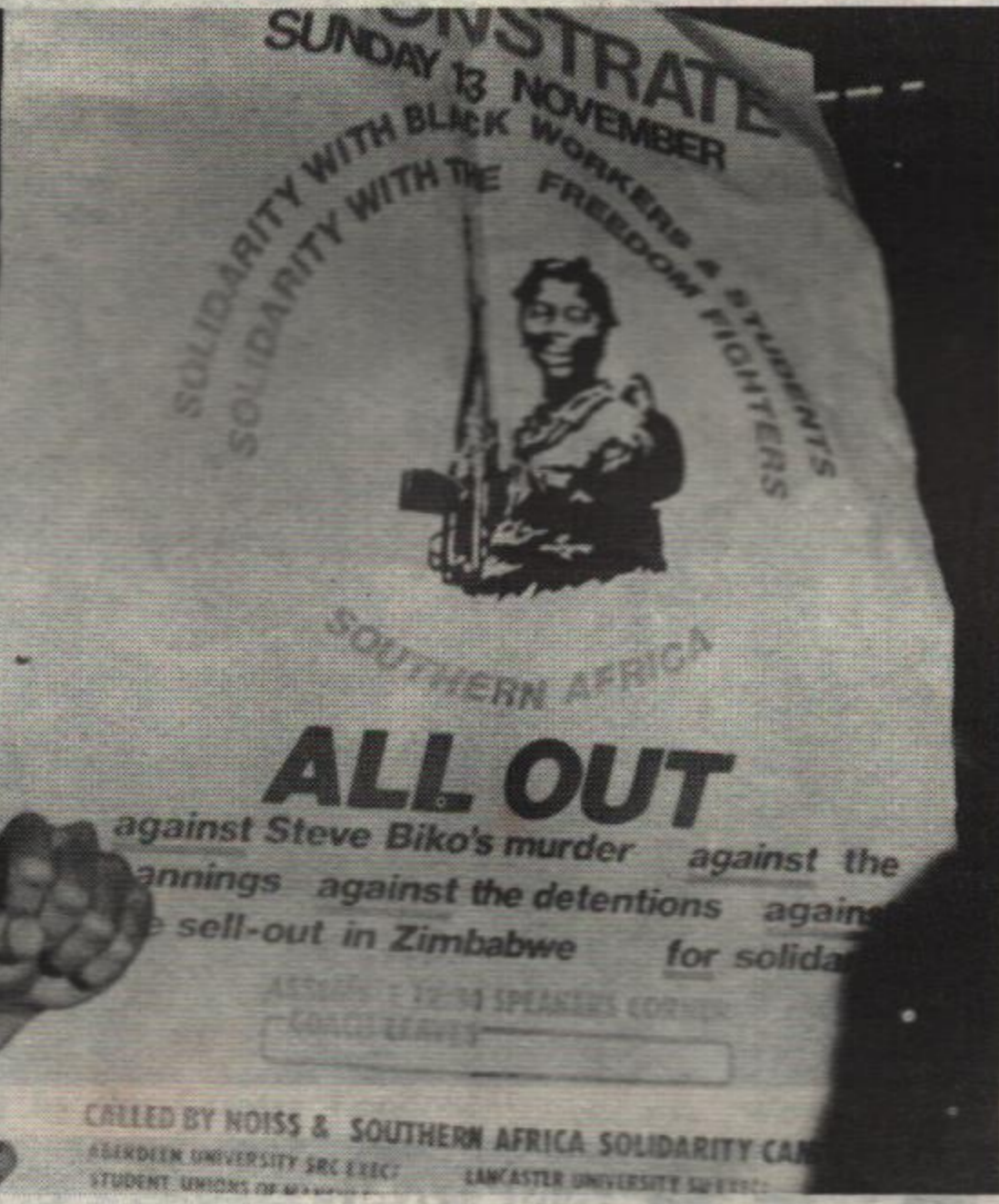
THE EDITORS of five left wing papers in Greece have been imprisoned and are now awaiting trial.

They are accused of moral responsibility for a fire at a German Company's office in Athens. The fire was started by a Greek anarchist in protest at the deaths in prison of members of the Baader Meinhof group.

The anarchist was shot dead while in police custody. The police claim he was 'trying to escape'.

More protests at the German Embassy resulted in arrests and prison sentences of between one-and-a-half and three years. The five editors have all been accused of publishing articles about violence in the last two years. Five more editors now have warrants out against them after printing articles urging people to attend the funeral of the shot anarchist.

STUDENTS picketing the South African Airways office in Oxford Street last week.



PREVIEW

SATURDAY Howard Hughes was living proof that it's crooks, not geniuses who rise to the top under capitalism. Owner of one of the world's big airlines, the only plane he ever designed crashed on its first flight. But it's doubtful if these points about an insane system will be put across in BBC's two programmes on Hughes, on Saturday and Sunday.

BBC2 start repeating the interesting series *Women at War*. This shows how under the impact of war, women were suddenly found to be capable of doing all sorts of jobs which they had previously been excluded from.

Our design department rave about the Tom Robinson band, the most political of the new rock groups, and are doubtful about the Strangers attitude to women. But see for yourself when they both feature on *So It Goes*. (London ITV 11.45pm, Sunday Granada).

MONDAY: Shiftworkers, housewives and the unemployed have a treat. Thames TV are repeating *Bill Brand*, the series of plays about the trials, tribulations and ineffectiveness of a left wing Labour MP.

TUESDAY Cystitis is a disease which afflicts most women at some time. But you'll be lucky if you can get adequate treatment or advise from a cut-to-shreds NHS. Thames' programme *Problems* discusses the issue.

SATURDAY BBC2 show the marvellous Russian science fiction film, *Solaris*.

□ Paul Foot is appearing on *What the Papers Say* this Thursday.

THE BRITISH National Party have announced a march in Sheffield on 12 November under the slogan 'Curfew for blacks after 9pm'. All members of the Socialist Workers Party in Sheffield and Rotherham, Leeds and Bradford to attend counter-mobilisation.

Welsh rock

THE RIGHT to Work Campaign in Port Talbot, South Wales, is literally swinging along.

Two weeks ago a huge social brought 250 people from the town to hear Alcatraz and Red Dog, two of the most popular groups in South Wales.

Red Dog have agreed to play every month for the Right to Work Campaign, free of charge, and many more parties and socials are planned.

November Issue Out now!

Womens VOICE

The revolution of the women: the 60th anniversary of the Russian Revolution

Is the pill really safe?

More about maternity leave

Copies from SW sellers or direct from WV, 6 Cottons Gardens, London, E2. Price 20p including postage

□ Every SWP branch must collect its order from the local station this week - separate from the SW order.

NUJ closed shop strike spreads

DARLINGTON: Sympathy strikes were starting this week in support of the Darlington journalists closed shop battle. Representatives of 13 NUJ chapels (office branches) in the Westminster press group voted last Saturday to support selective strike actions.

Printers at some centres were likely to support the strike and so stop the papers.

The Westminster Press delegates made it clear that if this action, ranging from one to five day stoppages, is not effective by the end of the month they want an all-out strike across the group.

In Darlington the strike - now in its twenty second week - is solid despite the cowardice of the national NAT-SOPA union leadership.

For 13 weeks the three print union chapels NGA, SLADE and NATSOPA, have been out on strike in support of the NUJ. But last week NAT-SOPA General Secretary, Owen O'Brien ordered his production chapel members back to work.

Start now

The Northern Echo management were delighted by this apparent split in the printers' ranks and agreed to pay the NATSOPA men just for cleaning machines with production still stopped.

No doubt the bosses hoped that the NATSOPA return to work would stampede the other print unions into also going back.

But this has not happened and the NGA and SLADE rank and file seem even more determined to back the NUJ.

Dave Nicholson, member of the NUJ Strike Committee, says: 'Spirits are amazingly high here. We are confident that if the other offices in Westminster Press come out and the printers also respond we'll be on the way to victory at last.'

2000 strike

ON MONDAY over 2000 car workers went on strike at Liverpool's Leyland No 2 factory over management's attempt to introduce new productivity and manning levels without shopfloor agreement. This strike follows a return to work on Monday morning after a six week layoff.

Leyland: What after the ballot?

JUST OVER half—54 per cent—of Leyland manual workers have voted to accept corporate bargaining in principle.

This shabby victory has come after two months of propaganda from management, the press and television.

The only people to fight against this wave of propaganda have been some of the left.

By Tony Priest, TGWU shop steward Leyland Longbridge

Even the Communist Party inside the factory advocated corporate bargaining along the same sort of lines as the management.

Most of the workers inside Leyland have had no information—except what the management saw fit to give them. The factory leadership

must carry a lot of the responsibility for this. They gave the company a free hand to spread their propaganda without fighting back.

Now the rank and file will have less say than ever—all they will get is more management propaganda under the cloak of participation.

But this ballot was still the first skirmish in what will be a long war. We now have to organise on every one of the issues which will emerge in the battle over corporate bargaining—mutuality, productivity deals, speed ups, manning levels.

We must organise now to protect the rank and file shop stewards organisation in Leyland. That is why rank and file shop stewards in Longbridge have called for support for a conference of like-minded workers on Saturday to organise the fight back.

□ Saturday 5 November, Digheth Civic Hall, Birmingham, 11.00am.

Defend Richard Maull Picket

by Don Trudell, Branch secretary, Hendon 628 ASTMS.

COMPUTER workers at Smiths Industries, Cricklewood, will stop work on Friday when Richard Maull appears in Willesden Magistrates Court. Richard is the young trade unionist who was charged with throwing the bottle that hit SPG officer Trevor Wilson at the Grunwick mass picket in June.

Richard is completely innocent of the charges against him. But he is black and known to the police as a leading member of the militant ASTMS group at Smiths.

Other ASTMS members at Smiths have suffered endless harassment and surveillance since the confrontation between police and pickets during the lock-out and occupation of the computer block last summer.

□ Picket Willesden Magistrates Court, St Mary's Road, Harlesden NW10. 9.30am Friday 4 November. Leaflets, stickers and posters from Hendon ASTMS, 65 Ashworth Mansions, Elgin Avenue, London, W9.

HOTEL WORKERS: WE WANT A £50 BASIC



ABOVE: Sadie Levis pays £13 out of her meagre wages to live in a room owned by her employers, The London Metropole Hotel which made £1½ million profit last year.

RIGHT: Anne Linehan pays £10.50 for a room she shares with two others.

SADIE LEVIS pays £13 a week for a room. The money is stopped out of her wages. Each week she takes home just £19 a week for working 40 hours on room service at London's Metropole Hotel.

Sadie and another 50 of the Metropole's workers are now on strike for a minimum wage of £50.

Anne Linehan pays the hotel £10.50 so that she can share her room with two others. She is chambermaid at the Metropole with a take home pay of £19.80 a week.

'This is the worst place I've ever worked,' she said. 'You do more work and there's less money.'

At the start of the strike, three weeks ago, all

the workers in the hotel walked out.

Anne Linehan says, 'Tilson, the GMWU official, said it would be made official straightaway. The next day they dropped us, and tried to stop the picket. They even suggested a meeting in the staff canteen.'

Some of the hotel workers went back in. But about 50 decided to stay and make a fight of it.

Anne says: 'We want to show people what these officials are like. Romp and Tilson have done it before. In fact they're quite famous for it. No one has ever stood out before.'

'They're in their jobs for life. Just think how many others they can do this to.'

Alan Gager the strike committee treasurer, said: 'I've never heard of the GMWU making a strike official. They just think we'll give up and go away.'

Instead the strikers are chasing the two officials from function to function. 'At one meeting they called the police to carry us out. Tilson was blushing all over his face. At Caxton Hall he saw us and just ran away up the stairs to get away', said Anne.

'If this strike was official everyone would be out the whole hotel. The trouble is catering workers can't afford to be out unless they get strike pay or some help. In the first few days we had no money coming in and no support so people couldn't afford it.'

Other hotel workers in London are also putting in claims for a £50 minimum wage. John Bruce, one of the strikers, told Socialist Worker, 'a lot of people are watching us here. This strike is getting round. If we keep going here there could soon be other hotels out with us.'

Support

As Anne Linehan says: 'It's about time hotel workers got some protection.'

Hotel workers suffer some of the worst wages in the country, conditions are not better. Sackings and victimisations are commonplace. In some hotel groups, including the biggest Trust House Forte, to join a trade union is to risk being sacked on the spot.

The profits of the hotel companies are huge. The Metropole alone made £1½ million last year. Its parent company, Lonrho, made over £90 million.

If the Metropole workers can win their £50 minimum wage there are another 200,000 catering workers behind them who will also benefit. They are fighting without support from their union. So they do need support of rank and file trade unionists everywhere.

□ Support the mass pickets—every Friday evening, 6.00pm until 10.00pm at the staff entrance opposite the Classic Cinema in Praed Street Central London (nearest tube Paddington).

□ Send money and messages of support to Alan Gager, Metropole Strike Committee Treasurer, 76 Hatherley Road, Walthamstow E17.



Picture: John Sturrock (Report)

RANK AND FILE DIARY

October issue of THE COLLIER, rank and file miners' paper, out now. Articles on Stuff the Prod Deal, Rockingham—we won't let them shut our pit, US miners fight gun thugs on picket line, Prod deals in Poland, Coal Board profits, Jack Lally, 10p a copy plus postage (more than 10p post free) from The Collier, 38 Abbey Lane, Cundy Cross, Barnsley, South Yorkshire.

RE-OPEN HOUNSLOW HOSPITAL!, Emergency broadsheet produced by Hospital Worker rank and file paper, with full details of the Hounslow kidnap, trade union action, and the continuing occupations at the EGA and Plaistow Maternity Hospitals. 2p a copy (plus postage) or 50 for £1 post free. Also stickers (while supplies last) 12 for a sheet of 12. From Hugh Girling, 19 Red Post Hill, London SE24 (phone 01-733 8443).

HOUNSLOW HOSPITAL Occupation Committee. EMERGENCY FIGHTBACK CONFERENCE, Saturday 5 November, 1pm to 5.30pm, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2. Credentials 50p per delegate. For details phone 01-570 4448.

PLATFORM paper of the London Transport rank and file. November issue out now, 15 copies £1, from 16 Barnsbury Park, London N1. Meeting: Sunday 6 November, 7.30pm, Prince Albert, Wharfedale Road (near King's Cross Station).

COLCHESTER public meeting in support of the Right to Work. CAST presents Union Jack Summer, the story of the Jubilee, the Social Contract, Lewisham, Grunwicks and much more besides. Wednesday 9 November, 8pm, Recreation Hotel, Military Road, Colchester. Admission 30p.

HALIFAX Right to Work Campaign social. Monday 21 November, 7.30pm, Plummet Line, Bull Green. With North West Spanner theatre group.

NATIONAL LOBBY OF EETPU BIENNIAL CONFERENCE: £15 minimum now! No 12-month rule! Elect all officials! Tuesday 22 November, 12 noon, Norcalympha, Norbrick, Blackpool. Coaches from most big cities. Details phone 01-802 0978.

THE STRUGGLE IN THE LIFTS AND THE EETPU. Come to this public meeting to hear how 1,000 are locked out and what we can do about it. Speakers: An Otis shop steward and Peter Porteous, shop steward Yarrows, Clyde-side. Thursday 3 November, 6.30pm, Earl Russell pub, St Pancras Street, London W1 (beside King's Cross Parcels Office).

BENEFIT FOR PUBLIC CON, a new magazine for workers in the Welfare State. NLP, Ladbroke House, Highbury Grove, N5. Bands. Disco. Bar extension. 4 November.

NO BEER!

WEST MIDLANDS: When management at Holden's Brewery, Woodsetton, Dudley tried to deliver beer to a customer during their strike the strikers rang the pub and threatened future blacking if they accepted delivery.

The strike breakers were sent back with the beer. The dispute is official and blacking has support from all major suppliers.

The whole workforce 28 Transport and General Workers Union members - are striking for an increase of £12.50.

One lad recently picked up £17 for 40 hours. Women in the bottling plant get £30.54 basic.

□ Donations, messages of support or help on the picket line contact: Irene Hughes, (shop steward), 14 Patricia Crescent, Woodsetton, Dudley.

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(BLOCK CAPITALS)

CHRYSLER: NOW FOR A FULL SIT-IN

THE REAL reasons for the management-engineered walkout at Chrysler, Linwood are now out in the open. The company's clear intention is to destroy our trade union organisation. A 17-page company document presented to the shop stewards last week makes this clear.

Chrysler refuse point blank to reopen the plant until they get their way. And if they do it would mean overturning every agreement we've fought for. It would mean doing what we're told by supervision without question—or be 'off the clock'. Above all, it would mean the destruction of shopfloor control over our elected union representatives.

If the company don't get their way, then it is their intention to pull out of Linwood.

There is no doubt that Chrysler are out for a show-down. The lockout was provoked one day after the launch of the Sunbeam, their new model. Production has been at a standstill for two and a half weeks—costing £20 million. Is this some new way of promoting a new car? Five days before the lockout Chrysler management at the Stoke engine plant in Coventry were arranging layoffs and movement of labour to tie in with a closedown here at Linwood.

The response of the trade union leadership inside the factory has been pathetic. For two and a half weeks the workforce have been taking part in a sit in but sadly the shop stewards committee, despite determined efforts by a large minority of shop stewards, has failed to give a lead. As a result that sit in has not involved the 7,000 workforce.

Majority

The majority of the stewards have failed to see the implications of Chrysler's offensive. They have responded by playing it cool, by relying on public opinion supporting the justice of their cause.

Astonishingly, no real sanctions have been taken against the company. At the same time the leadership have to accept the responsibility for relegating the majority of the workforce to the role of passive onlookers in what should be an all-out battle for their future.

Instead of waging a militant offensive to take control of the plant, the stewards have opted for a passive sit in that has played into the management's hands and that threatens to demoralise the workforce.

The only positive decision that the Shop Stewards Committee have taken—the

by Chrysler
SWP branch

convening of a West of Scotland Shop Stewards Meeting inside the factory this week—the issuing of appeal sheets to other trade union organisations—the decision to picket Chrysler establishments and call for blackings from the dockers—and the decision to send a delegation to meet shop stewards from other Chrysler plants in Coventry—all of these have been proposed by rank and file stewards and not the factory leadership.

Either

Chrysler have made it crystal clear that it's either them or us. There can be no negotiating half-way house for us in this dispute. In some areas foremen have been taking the names of those involved in the sit in. Why? For payment? No chance, it's for the company files.

We can't sit back on the defensive. It means the workforce have to be involved in the struggle, not treated like a stage army who only respond to commands from above. We would like to believe that a work in would be enough to change Chrysler's dogmatic attitude. We say the present management have abrogated any right to manage. We should eject them and take control of the factory.

We demand that Chrysler be nationalised without the loss of a single job. The only way we can force that position is by our own actions. **Message of support and donations to: T Boyle, Treasurer, Shop Stewards Committee, Chrysler, Linwood.**



Rolls workers picket car fair

PICKETS FROM Rolls Royce outside the Motorfair. Rolls Royce workers at Willesden in North West London have been on strike for two months now for a 17 per cent wage increase. Inside the Motorfair was one of the cars the strikers

had made—a Rolls Royce costing £71,000.

□ Donations and messages of support to the strike treasurer, Mr Arbut, 2 Lucas Avenue, Harrow, Middlesex, HA2 9UJ

Why your lights are out

SAM works for the Electricity Board at Eggborough Power Station in Yorkshire. Sam is not his real name, but he is afraid of victimisation if his true identity appears in Socialist Worker.

Like many other power workers he is worried about what the papers are printing about the overtime ban and work to rule that they are operating at the moment.

Perhaps

'Some papers have said that we're on strike—well perhaps we should be. People don't realise when they turn the light on what muck and dirt lies behind it.'

'There's steam leaks, water leaks, oil leaks. All jobs that

should be put right when the units are switched off for maintenance. But they don't bother with them. They only get the big jobs done. These leaks don't really affect the running of the units much. They only affect our working conditions you see.'

'People think that we work in nice clean rooms with rows of switches. We get thousands of visitors a year at Eggborough, but they don't see the boilers. They're only shown the clean side.'

'There's pulverised fuel dust and ash all over the place. The only difference between us and the miners is that miners can't go to the window every now and then for a breath of fresh air.'

Last year the Central Electricity Generating Board made a record profit of over £100 million with a record low number of workers. In the past

two years alone 5,000 jobs have been lost in the industry.

Sam has worked at three other power stations before moving to Eggborough. 'About 200 stand-by stations have been knocked out in the past twelve years,' he says.

'Men now have to travel from all over the place to get work. We've got men travelling from Doncaster, Wakefield and York—and that's over 20 miles away. So one of the things we want is a travel allowance for these men who have to run their own transport because of the shift system.'

The shift payments themselves are another issue that the power workers are angry about. Sam is an A. P. A.—an Auxiliary Plant Attendant—on the boilers. He works an anti-social shift system that gives him just one week-end off every four weeks.

Many other workers in Britain have to work similar shifts of course, but the shift allowance paid by the CEBG is among the worst in the country. 'We only get £1.50 a week more than we would if we worked regular days,' says Sam.

Highest

His highest take-home pay in the four week cycle is £49.50—and that is for a 48 hour week. Included in that is a pitiful allowance of just £1.08 for working in the heat and dust of the boilers.

As well as better shift payments and travel allowances the third demand of the power station men is for a fuel allowance.

'This has been a bone of contention for years,' says

Sam.

'All those items have been on the agenda for years, but it's the union leaders who are to blame. Take Frank Chapple, for example. He's a fine spokesman for the government, but he's never done a bloody thing for us.'

And that is why the power workers are now taking action themselves.

They need and deserve the support of every other worker in the country. Especially as the press and television hate campaign against them builds up.

Fitters out

BOOTLE: Workers at the Cooper Bessemer plant are out on strike in support of the reinstatement of an apprentice.

John Burns, engineering workers' shop steward, told Socialist Worker: 'We want this lad back. We think that the lad should be assessed by a foreman of his own trade and we're staying out till management concede.'

SUPPORT THE LOBBY OF THE EETPU BIENNIAL CONFERENCE
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BOC: 'secret' pay offer

BRITISH Oxygen workers who have been on strike for £20 for nearly four weeks, will vote this Thursday on a proposal to return to work.

There is no definite offer of more money. But stewards are expecting a substantial pay increase of more than 20 per cent, plus a guarantee of overtime and no redundancies.

Stewards representing 46 depots voted 38-36—after the first vote tied 36-36 on Monday to recommend a return to work.

Transport and General Workers chemical officer John Miller told them that the company's offer of more money was 'known only to me and Jack Jones'. But he also told them that if they went back to work the money paid would 'make the Fords deal look like peanuts'.

John Walsh, convenor at Hackney's BOC depot, voted against the resolution. 'Only the previous Thursday we'd voted by a huge majority that we wouldn't return to work until the company put money on the table.'

Against

'I'm absolutely against the principle of going back to work until we know definitely how much the offer is.'

'What's more, the vote was rigged. If we'd voted depot by depot, the motion would never have been carried.'

Nevertheless, John Walsh and many other BOC stewards up and down the country feel confident that BOC have been forced to offer a package which will blow the government's pay guidelines to smithereens.

'It can't be less than £15 says John Walsh. And if it is, well, we'll just have to come out again.'

The underhand way in which the deal was done has damaged the confidence which many BOC workers had in their officials.

The importance of acetylene cylinders from abroad was banned by the customs last week-end: two days after Socialist Worker's front page warned that they were dangerous.

John Walsh says: 'I'm quite certain that our case against the danger of these imported cylinders and their publication in Socialist Worker, forced the government's hand.'

AUEW election results

THE VOTE in the first round of the Presidential elections in the engineering union, the AUEW, shows a break with the elections of the last two years.

After a string of right wing successes, the right wing candidate, Terry Duffy, got just 300 votes more than the candidate supported by the Broad Left, Bob Wright.

This is a welcome and important shift. The right

wing offensive in the AUEW of the last two years is on the decline.

But the fifth place and 9,997 votes won by Ian Morris the candidate of the rank and file paper, Engineers Charter, is disappointing.

It is clear that many militants and socialists voted for Bob Wright on the first ballot because of the threat of Terry Duffy. In fact because of the AUEW rules there would

have been a second ballot even if many of those who voted for Wright had in fact supported the Charter candidate.

The postal ballot also ensures that rank and file candidates are less known in the union. Instead of the issues being discussed by members in a branch meeting and then voting, people vote in their own homes with Woodrow Wyatt in the Sunday Mirror as their only guide.

The main lesson is that there is still a very long way to go to build an effective national rank and file organisation in the engineering union. Every effort must be made to make sure that Bob Wright is elected on the second ballot. But equally every effort is needed to ensure that we start to organise now to build rank and file groups who will fight regardless of the behaviour of any full time officials.

Socialist Worker

PAPER OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY 10P

Revolution in Russia!



Sixty years ago this week the working people of Russia took control of their own lives.

Their revolution inspired workers throughout the world before it was turned in on itself and crushed.

If you want to know how it was won and how it was lost, turn to page 5.

'We will not give up Petrograd'
Russian revolutionary poster by David Moor (real name Dmitri Orlov)