

workers' ACTION

No. 14 April 15th - 28th 1976 8p

LPYS Conference
WORKERS' ACTION Meeting
**'HOW TO FIGHT
THE GOVERNMENT'**

Speakers: Andrew Hornung
Dave Hughes

Sunday 18th. 7pm.
'Veevers Arms'

Junction of Cookson Street & King Street
3 mins from Winter Gdns.

**FASCIST
VERMIN!**



Drive them off the streets!

On April 24th the National Front is marching in Bradford; and in London, the riff-raff of the smaller fascist groups will be trying to come out on the streets. The Front's march will be their first big public display of strength since their split at the beginning of the year. Kingsley Read and Roy Painter attempted to take over the organisation, to give the Front a more respectable image, and to push aside men like John Tyndall and Martin Webster, who had long connections with openly Nazi groups.

Read, Painter and their cronies eventually left to form the National Party, but it seems that most of the Front have remained loyal to Tyndall. After a period of disruption, both groups are now re-organising their forces and bringing out regular publications.

Even a superficial reading of those publications shows that neither side have altered their basic fascist policies.

Most of the pages of "Britain First" and of the Front journal "Spearhead" are devoted to sickening attacks on coloured people and other racial minorities. For example, The March issue of Spearhead contains an article by Tyndall on the 'Jewish Question'.

Although he claims not to be

ers of Zion'. With the aid of this piece of garbage, and whilst trying to appear 'reasonable', he ends up seeing "the Jewish Question as a central issue in the struggle for the salvation of British manhood". Tyndall has not changed much since the days when he openly praised Hitler.

Webster has already announced that he intends to make the Bradford demonstration a symbol of the NF's recovery from the faction fighting. Funds have been pouring in from rich supporters. Francoise Dior, wife of Colin Jordan, has given the NF £6,000 and a South African doctor has given them a house for a new HQ at a nominal rent.

Moreover, the recent scandalous decision of the BBC to show the Open Door programme produced by Jim Merrick's British Campaign Against Immigration has given openly racist ideas publicity in many thousands of homes. It resulted in nearly 5,000 letters to Merrick asking for more information. Merrick was backed by the Front, and letter-writers have received Front publicity in answer to their enquiries. This has led to a squabble between Merrick and Webster, with both of them claiming the pickings from these

weakened their morale, and did contribute towards Read's search for a 'more acceptable face of fascism'. But we have only wounded the beast; we must make sure those wounds do not heal.

The groups who will be marching in London are weaker than the NF. Most of them are small, lunatic groups with little following. The march is being organised by a veteran fascist crank, Lady Jane Birdwood. She has applied for the use of Trafalgar Square after the march, and even if permission is denied the fascists will probably try to hold their first rally there for many years.

The British Movement (led by Colin Jordan, founder of the National Socialist Party from which came Webster and Tyndall) and the British National Party, both of whom regard the Front as being 'too soft on Jews' and not fascist enough, are supporting the demonstration. The British National Party is based in Leeds. Under its previous name of 'National Democratic Freedom Movement' it carried out a series of violent attacks on gays, on immigrants, and on left meetings.

The Bradford march is the more dangerous; but the London march, too, must be opposed. If the 'fringe' fascists establish

Stop the cuts in the NHS!

FOR THE National Health Service the cuts threatened in Healey's White Paper on public spending will be the third bout in the last three years.

In November 1973 the Tory government slashed the NHS budget by £111 million, while Labour, instead of making good the loss, followed this up with a £76 million cut from its prospective budget for 1976. Unlike in certain other areas, the NHS cuts are not simply a thing of the future - we are up to our necks in them now.

The following list - itself only a small fraction of the total - was given in "Public Employees", the journal of NUPE (National Union of Public Employees) recently.

"In Newcastle only £125,000 was allotted in 1975 for capital expenditure on existing buildings, yet the hospitals involved made requests for £750,000

"North Tyneside's new General Hospital has been 'postponed' for at least three years. The West Midlands Regional Health Authority expect their capital budget to be slashed from £30 million last year to £17 m in 1976...

"Oldham's general hospital is more than 100 years old - and part of a converted workhouse... (but) the capital budget of the North West Health Authority was cut by £3 m last year, despite

inflation. The chairman of the authority claims that since the NHS was created they have been deprived of £36 m.

"The effect is apparent in the statistics: Oldham's infant mortality rate 29 per 1,000 as against the national average of 16.

"At Portsmouth, the management board of the city's 20 hospitals has put a total ban on recruitment and replacement of nursing staff..."

The overall picture is best summed up by looking at the trend in expenditure on the NHS as a percentage of overall government expenditure. In 1964 it was 15.1%; in 1973 it had fallen to 13.75%; while by 1974 it had dropped to 11.6%.

At the same time the NHS is leeches on by two private enterprise parasites whose extermination must be first steps to freeing the Health Service from the burdens of capitalism: the private beds and private medicine system, and the money-minting drug industry.

Although private beds are not a very big part of the beds in NHS hospitals, their very existence is an obscene gesture to the democratic anti-privilege spirit that the working class prizes in the NHS. Pay beds must be banned straight away. (Nor should anyone be fooled by the claims that this brings in important funds for the Health Service. It doesn't. The approximately £12 million of charges on pay beds goes straight to the Treasury, not to the NHS!)

All trade unionists - particularly those in the Health Service - should support the demonstration on April 25th, called by the National Co-ordinating Committee Against the Cuts in the NHS, and show the Government the strength of the growing opposition to the deterioration in living standards it is trying to force on the working class.

Inside

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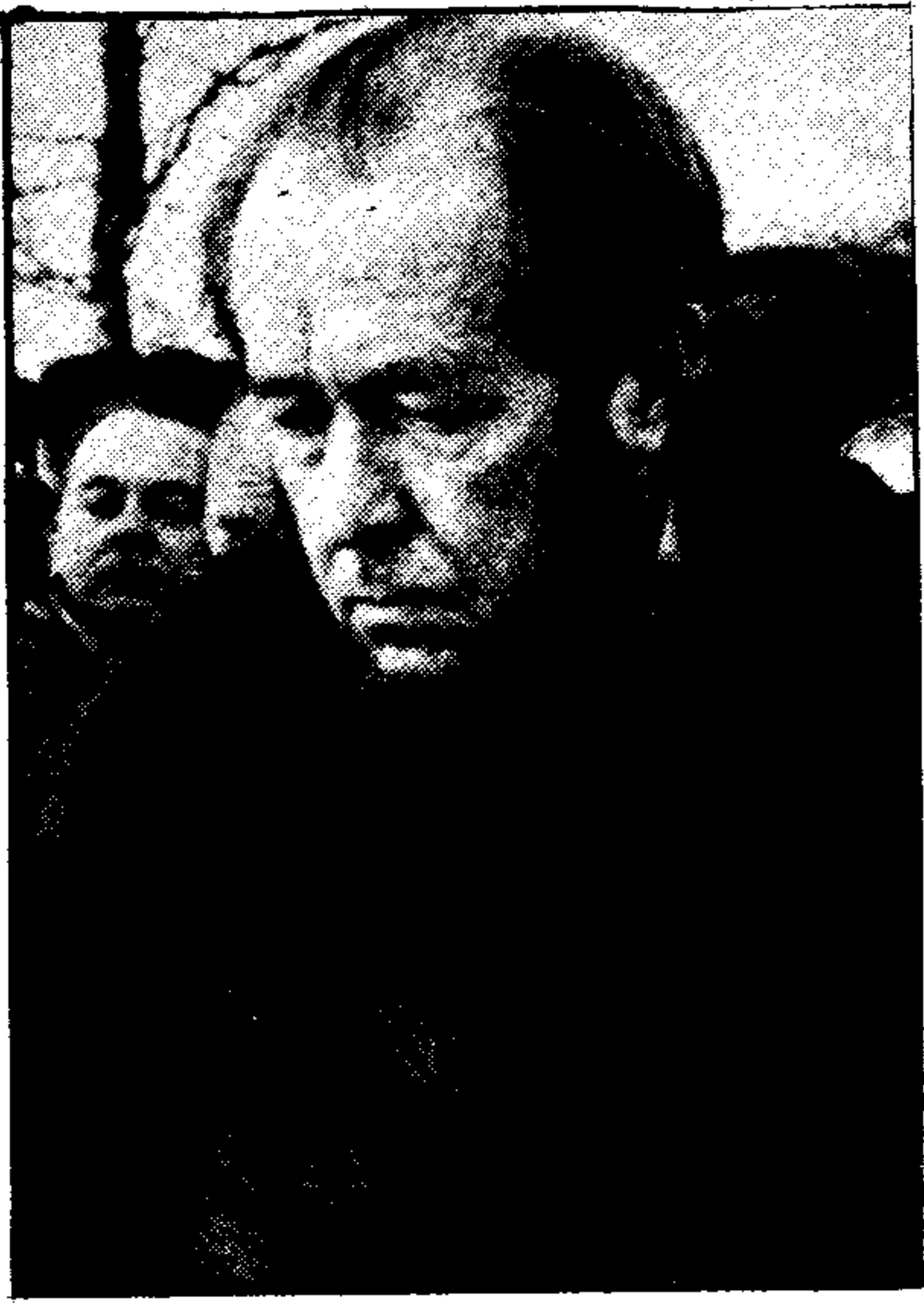
Easter
Rising

**DEMON-
STRATE**

12.30 on 25 April,
Hyde Park to
Trafalgar Square.

SUNDAY





Solzhenitsyn — a Christian dictatorship...

Who speaks for Russia's opposition?

THE PRESS and TV have recently given unstinting attention to every utterance of Alexander Solzhenitsyn. He is given time on the radio. He is given repeat performances on the TV. The papers gush with praise and gratitude for his 'timely warnings' and for his infinite wisdom. The National Front's magazine Spearhead contains long extracts from his speeches. George Brown claims the words of Solzhenitsyn as his reason for leaving the Labour Party.

If we look at what Solzhenitsyn is actually saying we can see why the media are so anxious to hang on his every word. We can see why he has become a high priest in right wing circles. And we can see why the cause and the arguments of other dissidents in and out of Russia receive so little attention.

Faith

Under the pressure of repression at the hands of the ruling Russian bureaucracy, Solzhenitsyn has come to adopt a position on the extreme right of the political spectrum. He argues that in 1917 the Russian workers trampled underfoot all that was worthy and noble in Russia. He reasons that the present stagnation and repression in Russia is a direct result of 'uncultured and untutored' workers trying to take over and run society.

Having no faith in the masses, Solzhenitsyn is no democrat. This does not embarrass his patrons. He wants to maintain a dictatorship in

Russia, but wants that dictatorship to be guided by what he calls Christian principles. That is why he has appealed, from the West, to the Russian Party leaders to change their ways and run their dictatorship according to his principles.

What are these principles? One sort of dictatorship he has nothing against is that of Franco's Spain. He has spoken in favour of fascist Spain, warning its present leaders to keep their grip lest the Communists and Left take advantage of 'more democracy'.

Solzhenitsyn's campaign is of tremendous value to the ruling classes of the West. He has denounced the socialist oppositionists inside Russia. He says that those like Leonid Plyushch who question the socialist credentials of the regime are no different from Brezhnev and Kosygin. According to Solzhenitsyn the Trotskyists would have resorted to the same methods too — if they had not been murdered and imprisoned.

To the delight of all the old Cold Warriors, Solzhenitsyn continually calls for greater spending on armaments in the West and for curbs on trade, as part of a programme of tightening military and economic pressure on Russia. And Solzhenitsyn's voice has been added to the sickening chorus of those like Keith Joseph, Margaret Thatcher and Roy Jenkins who attack social services and welfare spending as a threat to individual freedom and liberty.

It is no surprise therefore that the right wing media should have

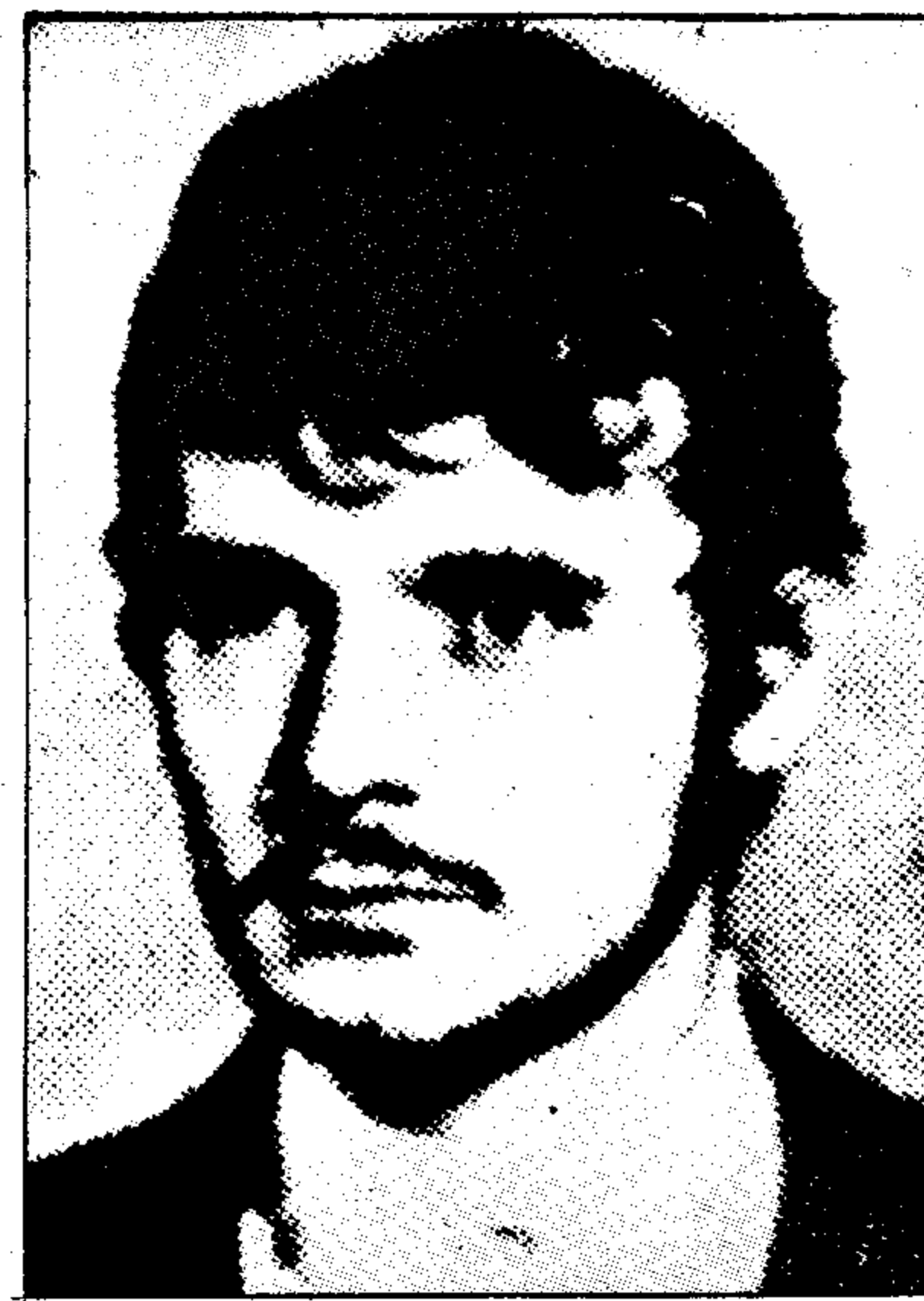
given Solzhenitsyn so much mileage. He is arguing their point of view, and doing so with an aura of martyrdom from his years in Russia's prison camps, and with a history and reputation as a perceptive novelist to give him added weight in the propaganda drive.

Trials

But while the press drools over Solzhenitsyn's every word, there has been a virtual blackout on information about the socialist and nationalist opposition inside Russia. The recent release of the Ukrainian Leonid Plyushch after pressure in the West, and the current wave of trials and disorders inside Russia, have received only the scantiest attention by comparison.

Plyushch, now living in Paris, insists that he remains a communist against the pretensions of Brezhnev and the Russian bureaucracy. It is they, he argues, who have trampled on the elementary principles of socialism.

In a series of interviews in the West Plyushch has made it clear that he considers that the Russian workers have lost power and must regain it. He attacks "the absence of organisations expressing the interests and consciousness of the class of workers" and sees the fight for individual rights, for the rights to organise and for national independence inside the 'Soviet Union' as part and parcel of the struggle to re-assert workers' power.



Dzemilev — 7 months on hunger strike



Plyushch — still a communist

Declared mad by official psychiatrists, Plyushch has stuck firmly to his views despite isolation and incarceration in a prison mental asylum.

Such a man, committed to his own variety of Marxism, cannot be the hero of the Western press. Those few papers that have described his case have only been interested in the barbarity of his prison conditions — not his politics or his views.

Plyushch's release comes at a time of considerable unrest in the Russian prison camps.

Last week, two important trials were due to start in Russia. The first, the trial of the head of the Moscow branch of Amnesty — Tverdokhlebov — was postponed on the grounds that the judge was ill. On the same day in Omsk, the trial of Mutapha Dzemilev was due to start. This was postponed too — after his lawyer received a hoax phone call telling him the trial was cancelled.

Dzemilev is a Crimean Tartar who is fighting for the rights of the Tartars to return to the lands they were forcibly deported from by Stalin in 1944. The Crimean Tartar movement has been probably the broadest and most sustained opposition movement in Russia. In 1968 over 800 Tartars were arrested in Moscow as they arrived there intending to stage a mass demonstration.

Dzemilev, raised in a policed reservation for Tartars in the Uzbekistan desert, has faced per-

petual repression as a leader of this movement. He had been on hunger strike for over 7 months in order to force the trial he faces at present.

The opposition inside Russia is often confused and politically divided. They face a repression that forces some to buckle (most recently the Ukrainian dissident Ivan Dzyuba has publicly recanted his 'crimes' and 'mistakes'). Isolated from socialists outside Russia and from the masses inside Russia many dissidents place too great a stress on the intellectuals or on persuading sections of the ruling bureaucracy. However, the hunger strike in the prison camps during the recent 25th Congress of the Russian Communist Party, and the strength shown by such individuals as Plyushch, indicates that the struggle for socialism, for individual and national rights, has not been extinguished by the most brutal police thuggery.

Clique

Socialists must counter the reactionary myths spun by Solzhenitsyn. But they must also step up the fight to support those in Russia who want to end the political rule of the bureaucratic clique, not just give it a 'Christian' face.

V VOLYNKA

British firm supplies 'Electronic battlefield' to South Africa

IN December last year Marconi Communications systems Ltd of Chelmsford signed a contract to supply the South African Defence Department with £8 millions worth of highly sophisticated military communications equipment. This will form the permanent backbone of a computer-controlled defence system stretching up to the Angolan border. The South Africans need the Marconi Tropospheric Scatter system (Trop) to link their already-existing radar and detection devices to the main military control centre at Silvermine, near Simonstown.

Trop is used by all major milit-

ary powers because it offers secure, reliable communications links without the need for vulnerable relay stations. As well as carrying voice messages, it can carry electronic information direct from battlefield sensors and reconnaissance aircraft. This information can be transmitted for analysis to computers hundreds of miles away and command decisions can then be made in fractions of a second.

These developments have made possible the development of the 'electronic battlefield', which has been used by the US in Vietnam and the British in the Arabian Gulf.

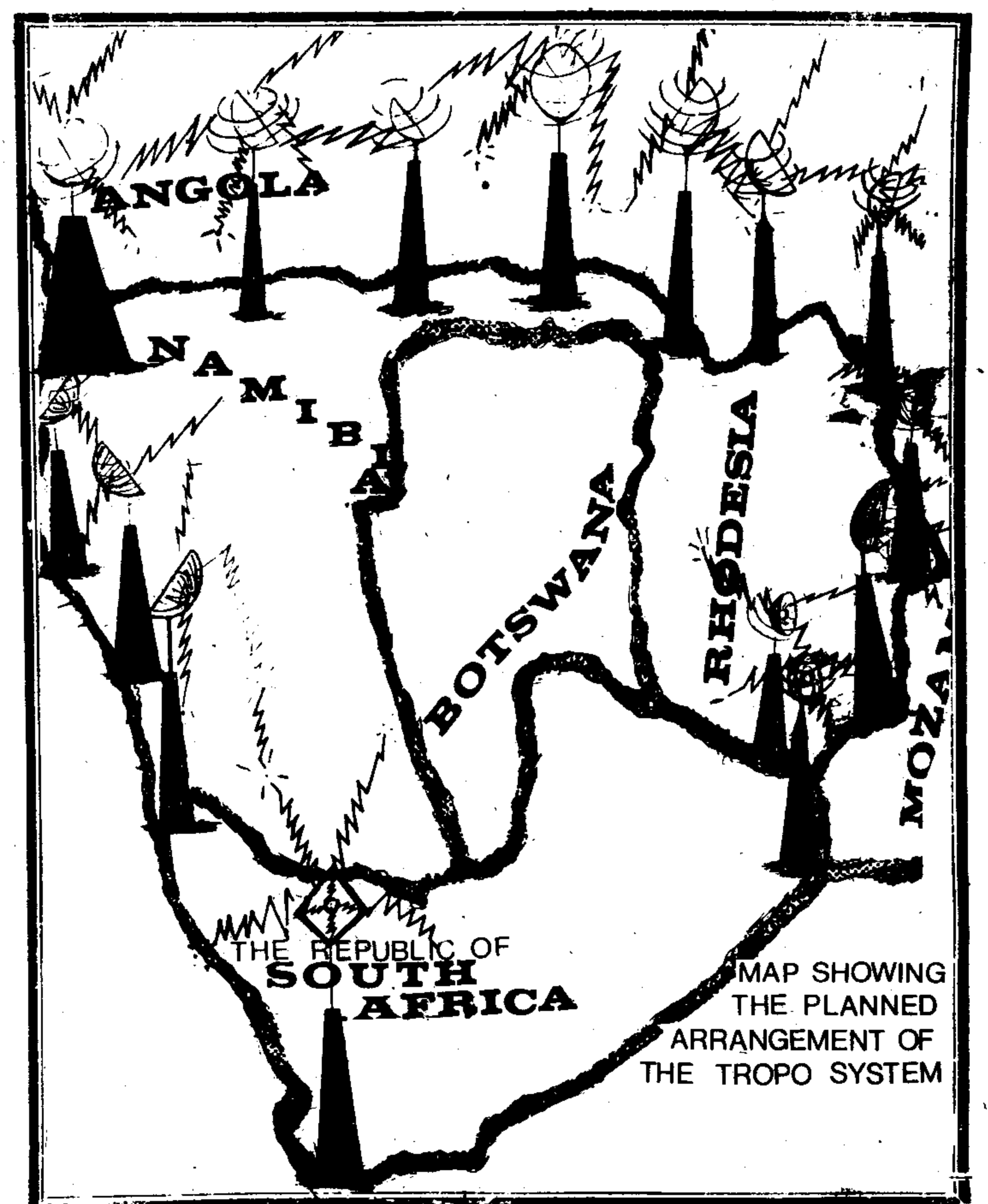
Basically the electronic battlefield provides a defence system which can more easily deal with the threat of guerilla activity. Finding the guerilla forces usually puts a big strain on ground forces, but this can be overcome by the use of electronic sensors linked to a computer.

The South African Defence Department has recently purchased a large number of battlefield sensors. These are automatic detection devices which can respond to the presence of human beings. Various types exist, capable of detecting sounds, ground vibrations caused by vehicles or troops, and the body heat of guerillas. Others are like tripwires — they signal when an invisible beam of light is interrupted.

These devices will be sown over the area threatened by guerillas and linked by the Trop system to Silvermine. From there the computer can relay decisions activating mines, or other defence systems, in the area.

The victory in Angola and the rising struggle in Rhodesia represent a long-term threat to the South African occupation of Namibia [South West Africa] Originally South Africa had a United Nations mandate to administer the country. That was revoked in 1966. Since then the South African occupation has faced mounting opposition from the guerillas of the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO).

For South Africa Namibia is of great importance as a buffer zone between it and the African states



MAP SHOWING THE PLANNED ARRANGEMENT OF THE TROPO SYSTEM

from GRASS ROOTS

in the north, and also because of its mineral wealth, especially diamonds and uranium. A valuable part in retaining South Africa's hold on the territory will be played by the Trop system.

The export of this equipment to the South African regime is a major hole in the United Nations arms embargo, which should be immediately plugged by the British government. Attempts by MPs so far have produced no real response from the government. In spite of Labour Party policy on Namibia calling for South

African withdrawal, the Labour government seems determined to continue its economic links with South Africa.

The news about the Marconi deal follows the announcement (reported in Workers Action no. 12) of the government's decision to buy uranium from a South African mine in Namibia. The Marconi affair is another example of them putting the interests of big business and a good deal before their duty to support the African struggle against the apartheid regime.

BLACKLISTED!

JOCK HALL used to work for Marconi. Now he's out of a job and probably won't be finding one in the near future. Why? Because he wrote to a national newspaper giving details of his firm's South African contract.

He is an expert on the engineering of radar and radio antennae, who worked on the design of the Trop system for South Africa and became suspicious because the ranges involved were too long for it to be used simply inside South Africa itself.

An active member of the Labour Party, he was aware of the issues involved by South Africa's occupation of Namibia, and when his bosses told him to begin development work on the project he refused. They transferred him to other work.

Then the Guardian carried a story giving details of the contract. He wrote to the paper urging other work-

ers on the project to search their consciences before continuing work on it. Marconi then imposed penal sanctions on him.

He was ordered not to make or receive personal phone calls, to report to a special supervisor when instructed, and not to discuss the company affairs without anyone outside it.

Refusing to do this, he resigned. He rates his chances of finding a new job as lousy. At the end of one job application, his prospective employer told him: "No thanks, our personnel officer reads the Guardian"

Victimised and blacklisted for his activities, Jock has continued to try to raise the issue of the Marconi contract. His willingness to fight in solidarity with black South Africans is in marked contrast to the spineless passivity of the leadership of the Labour Party on this issue.

BUDGET: HEALEY WANTS WORKERS TO TAKE A POUNDING

AFTER HEALEY'S budget speech, the Economist — house-journal of big business — was in no doubt what it thought about it. Pointing out that Healey had "produced his third businessman's budget in a row", they hailed this latest as "a budget speech that could hardly have been more favourable to the City".

Among the goodies doled out to the bosses were: a halving of the 25% luxury rate of VAT; a promise to ease price restraint; and a big boost for pre-tax profits.

The budget was drawn up in the context of the recent dramatic slump in the value of the pound on the world market. Since the beginning of February, it has been effectively devalued by 9% against the dollar.

This rapid fall has brought some advantages in that it cheapens exports and allows British bosses to sell more easily abroad. At the same time, however, it has exactly the opposite effect on the price of imports. Given the massive dependence of Britain on imports, especially for food, this devaluation is bound to drive up the rate of inflation.

RECOVERY

The instability that an unsteady pound contributes to the world monetary system will not be tolerated for long by stronger economies such as Germany and the USA. Britain is chronically dependent on loans from just those countries. Those loans are badly needed by Healey to put the economy in a position in which it can take advantage of the expected economic 'recovery'. To do this he needs foreign financing, coupled with increased productivity and a stiff incomes policy. The incomes policy is essential both to help the bosses and to attract overseas funds.

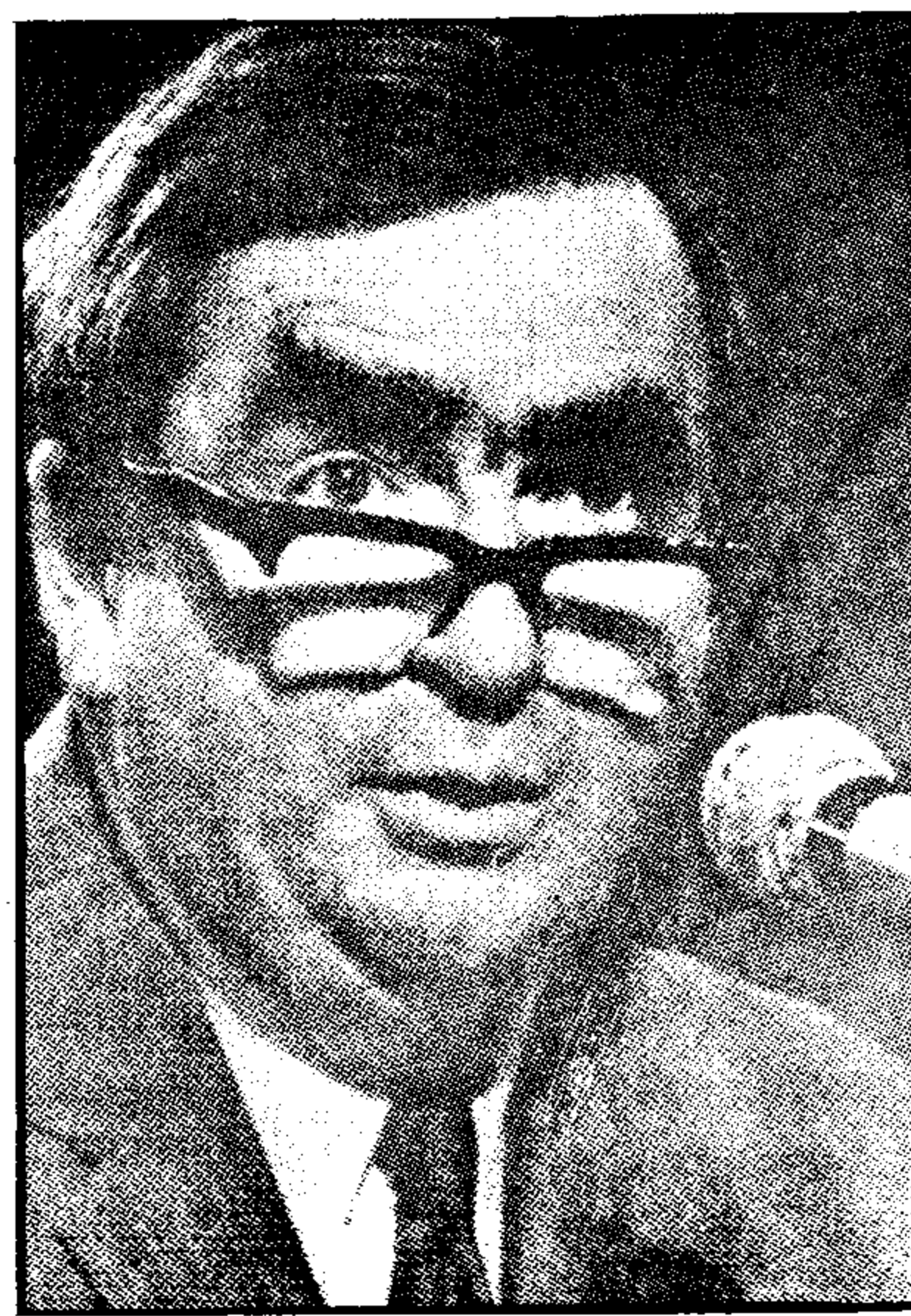
Realising that another flat rate wage policy would not work again, he has come up with a bigger stick... and a very mouldy carrot. This time wage increases will be limited to only 3% — and coupled to tax 'concessions'. What will this amount to for most workers?

Figures produced by NUPE's research department show that the wage increase would on average amount to £1.96 a week. With deductions this figure comes down to £1.17.

The tax 'concessions' come to round about the same amount, with up to about an extra £1 for married men with children. For

most workers Healey's package amounts to... cutting the £6 limit by half!

Healey's lie that this budget will 'help the lower-paid' has been firmly nailed by the Child Poverty Action Group. Their director, Frank Field, pointed out that the threshold beyond which income is taxed will still be left well below the poverty line. A family with one child will still start paying tax when its earnings are £12 BELOW this line. The tax threshold has in fact been falling continually since 1945, with only the occasional increase in election or pre-election years.



Healey

What's more, Healey has made it clear that these miserable 'concessions' are totally dependent on the trade unions stomaching the 3% limit. If they object and resist — no tax cuts! Workers are being asked to hand over part of their wages for tax concessions, which in turn are being paid for by... part of their wages.

All this is put forward not against the rate of inflation (even as measured by the grossly inaccurate Retail Price Index) — but against Healey's scheme to reduce the rate of inflation by the end of the year to 5%. No-one really expects this, except perhaps the TUC. Since the beginning of the year, food prices alone have gone up by 8%.

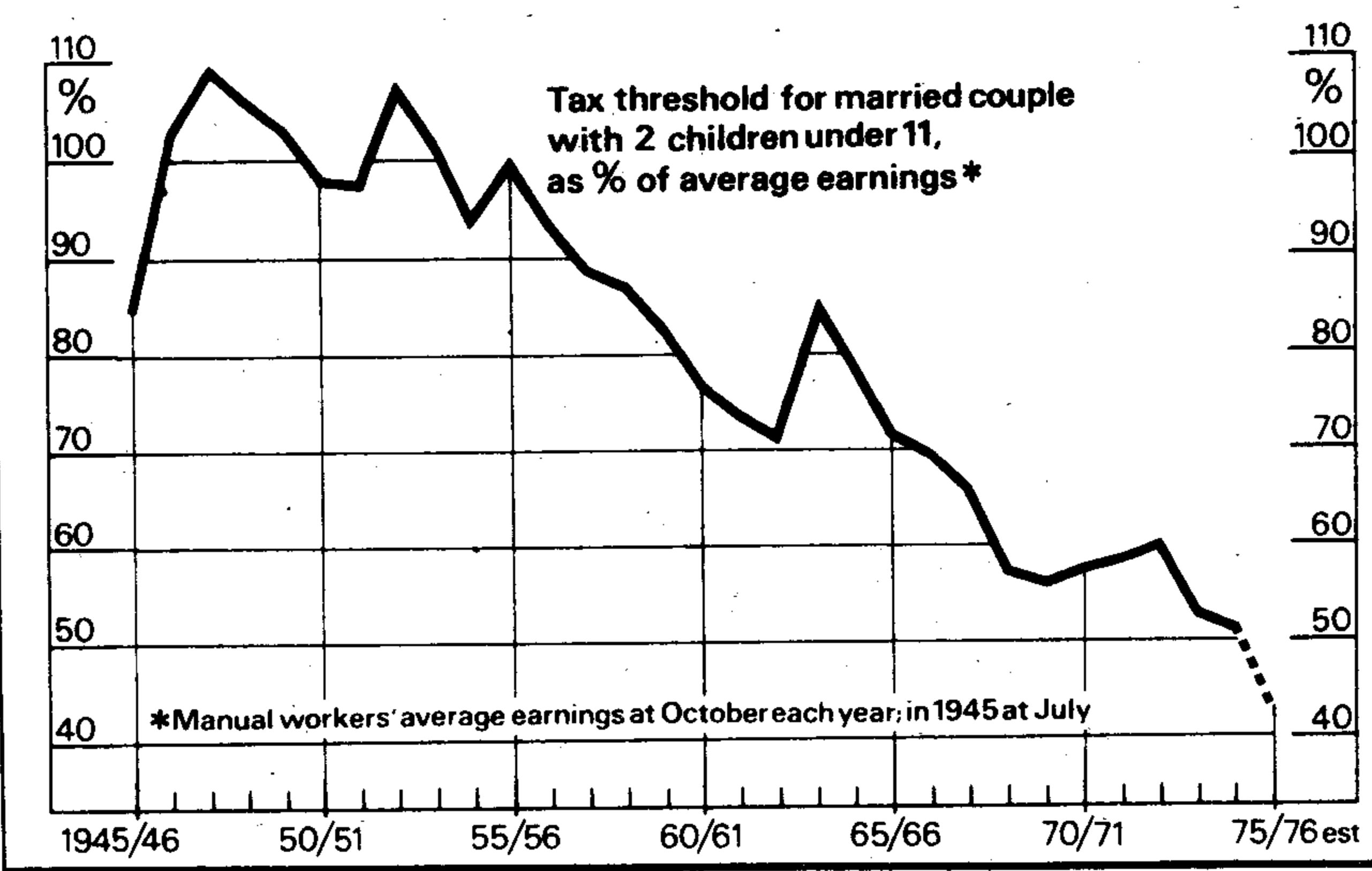
The falling pound, a whole backlog of price increases, and a rise in world commodity prices as a recovery gets under way all make Healey's target to be, in the polite jargon of the Economist, purely "notional". In plainer language — a con-trick.

SLASHED

The message of this budget is clear. Workers have already paid for the crisis in slashed social services and falling real wages. Now they must fork out even more to finance the 'recovery' — one which for ailing British capitalism will be weak and halting, the prelude to further crises.

In the 1940s, a married couple with two children would start paying income tax only if they received more than the average earnings. By

1974-5 they would be paying income tax as soon as they got over half the average earnings.



TRADE UNION COMMITTEE SAYS



1330 Arrests under Jenkins' Terror Act

Since the introduction of the Prevention of Terrorism Act in 1974, there have been 1,330 arrests under it up to the beginning of 1976. Out of all those arrests only 65 charges have been made — over half of them for non-terrorist offences such as theft and wasting police time.

A typical case was that of a woman from Northern Ireland who

was visiting some relatives in London. Like many visitors to London, she went to look at St Pauls cathedral, leaving her car parked near the Old Bailey. The car became the centre of a bomb scare because of its Northern Ireland number plates.

The woman and her sisters immediately identified themselves and willingly went with the police to

Let's

get

back to

fundamentals

Editorial

WHAT DID the trade union leaders, the self-proclaimed wise men of the labour movement, expect from the Budget? Whatever it was, they were fooled.

And it showed on their faces too, when the 3% 'increase' was announced on Budget day. Scanlon stared dejectedly at the television cameras moaning "it will be tough indeed to get the trade unions to accept the type of deal the Chancellor is suggesting"; Jones was silent; and Lord Allen of the shopworkers' union blinked in disbelief at the unaccustomed stance of opposition he found himself in.

Healey had declared war on the working class and what did our leaders have to say in the following days: the figure of 3% was too low; the 3% was acceptable only as a bargaining figure (which no doubt it is); and, from Len Murray, "we must concentrate on widening the agenda for discussion".

No one was asking the basic question: since when was it the aim of the trade union movement NOT to defend its living standards, NOT to advance workers' pay and conditions, but simply to reach a compromise with the Government?

Secretly, the trade union bureaucracy has been playing that game for a long time. But it is only since the emergence of the infamous Social Contract that this aim became the open, unfurled banner of the trade union leaders.

Let's get back to fundamentals. We don't want more items on the agenda, as Murray claims; we don't want to argue the toss with Healey, Foot, Booth or anyone else around a negotiating table at No.10, No.11, Chequers or the Royal Mint. We want collective bargaining, each union democratically setting a target for wages and conditions that it thinks it is strong enough to beat out of the bosses or gouge out of the Government.

Negotiations have a part to play; but they are no alternative to the working class mobilising itself for a fight. But that is exactly what these negotiations that the TUC Economic Committee is gearing up for are about.

The rank and file must not get drawn into the debate over the framework or the negotiating pattern of these discussions. The trade union bureaucracy wants that to be the focus of the debate within the working class because the present procedures — whatever the figure or the items in the bargaining — put the fate of the class in their hands.

Our demand has to be: BREAK OFF talks and prepare for A FIGHT.

Likewise we don't want a recall TUC to submit ourselves to either a lighter or a heavier yoke. The fight at that Conference must be for an end to the Social Contract and for a clear line of attack to defend and where possible advance the working class standard of living.

* NO incomes policy under capitalism!
* FOR free collective bargaining!
* FIGHT for lump sum increases in wages, guaranteed against cost of living rises!

* Maximum unity: safeguard the living standards of the low paid. For a £40 national minimum wage, also guaranteed against cost-of-living erosion! Full vigilance to ensure equal pay and opportunity for women!

* No 'time bans' on wage agreements!

the nearest police station. They were released six days later, without being charged! In the meantime eight of their friends had been arrested and interrogated by the police.

Secure

A shop steward at Hammersmith Hospital had a similar experience of arrest and detention without charge. After that, his NUPE stewards' committee saw the need for a trade union campaign against the Prevention of Terrorism Act — which would provide practical aid to people arrested.

This led them to form the Trade Union Committee against the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which held its first conference last Saturday, with an attendance of 70, many delegated from trade union branches.

The main purpose of the conference was to get the Committee on to a secure footing and to begin to

provide a network of people ready to help those detained under the Act. Several important steps were taken towards, including the provision of a legal service which can be contacted round the clock at 01-68654. The Committee also called for the establishment of a network of people prepared to come on pickets of police stations where people are being detained.

This is an excellent initiative. There is a desperate need for practical aid. Many of those held under the Act find it difficult to get legal aid, and are unsure of their rights. Advice is especially important since the police systematically flout the Judges' Rules governing the rights of any arrested person.

The Committee is trying to spread its area of activity throughout London, and also to other areas where there is support. They are appealing for union affiliations. Details from 46 Prince George Rd, London N16.

NEAL SMITH

JAMES CONNOLLY

THE EASTER RISING

SIXTY years ago the 'Irish Independent', the paper of the Catholic bourgeoisie of Dublin, responded to the defeat of the Easter Rising with glee. Under a picture of James Connolly it advocated "Let the worst of the ringleaders be singled out and dealt with as they deserve". The leaders of the insurrection against British rule were duly taken out and shot; and the 'Irish Catholic' summed up the Church's view: "What was attempted was an act of brigandage pure and simple. There is no reason to lament that its perpetrators have met the fate universally reserved for traitors."

Yet the descendants of these forces who now hold power in the 'Republic' of Ireland will this Easter celebrate with much pomp and reverence the Rising of sixty years ago as the foundation of their state.

In the circumstances of the present struggle against the continuing hold of British imperialism on the north east of the country, these official ceremonies take on an extra element of savage mockery. The regime that has jailed more republicans than Britain in the past few years and stands as the bitterest foe of everything that Connolly, Pearse and their comrades fought for, will once again be laying its official claim to their heritage — in a vain attempt to keep that heritage out of more 'dangerous' hands.

Why were the events of Easter Week of such profound significance, not only for Irish men and women but for the whole international working class movement?

James Connolly, presented by the official hagiographers as an Irish national hero, was a revolutionary socialist — a Marxist. In 1896 he had formed the first Irish Marxist organisation, the Irish Socialist Republican Party. In its first public statement the party recognised "The struggle for Irish freedom has two aspects; it is national and it is social."

For twenty years Connolly conducted a two-fold fight. Against those Irish nationalists who patriotism was a cloak for their middle class interests; and against those professed socialists who tried to ignore the national oppression of the Irish people.

Connolly's 'nationalism' was no narrow defence of Irish exclusive-

vain. England would still rule you. She would rule you through her capitalists, through her landlords, through the whole army of commercial-industrial institutions she has planted in the country and watered with the tears of our mothers and the blood of our martyrs. She would rule you to your ruin."

Nationalist businessmen had good reason to fear and hate Connolly and the Irish working class movement that he and James Larkin had guided in the years from 1907 to 1916. Men like William Martin Murphy, leader of the top-hatted Dublin Chamber of Commerce, were quite prepared to use the forces of British domination in Ireland, its army and its police force, to bludgeon the Dublin workers in the great strikes which swept Ireland between 1907 and 1913. Arthur Griffith, the founder of Sinn Fein and editor of its journal of that name, fulminated against the "English-made strikes" and proclaimed "Against the Red Flag of Communism — we raise the flag of an Irish Nation."

At the same time Connolly was unsparing in his criticism of the anaemic Socialism then predominant in England and in sections of the Irish labour movement. The sort of socialism which, masquerading as internationalism, preached indifference to national oppression, submission to the imperialist yoke, or concentration on social reform or economic gains alone.

This attitude was typified by William Walker of the Belfast ILP and Trades Council. Walker made no bones about the fact that he was "a unionist in politics". When questioned during his election campaign in 1905 he committed himself to supporting the British Sovereign's accession declaration of support for the Protestant faith, and gave the singular reply: "Protestantism means protesting against superstition, hence true protestantism is synonymous with labour".

Unity

Walker tried to claim that Connolly was just a nationalist and that the Belfast ILP represented true internationalism.

Connolly replied: "The Socialist Party of Ireland considers itself the only International Party in Ireland, since its conception of internationalism is that of a free federation of free peoples, whereas that of the Belfast branches of the ILP seems to be distinguishable from Imper-

ialism, the merging of subjected peoples in the political system of their conquerors."

Those socialists, particularly those in a nation which has for so long enslaved other nationalities, who protest against the nationalism of the oppressed, are not internationalists but disguised chauvinists. Alas, 'Walkerism' did not pass into history with William Walker. Today the majority of the British Left are content to advocate Bills of Rights, Trade Union Defence forces and the unity of Catholic and Protestant workers — all on the basis of retaining the 6-County state of 'Northern Ireland' owned by British capitalism.

Flag

Those who use these slogans for dodging the issue of supporting the right of the Irish people to complete separation from Britain and for evading the demand for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland, are seeking, in Connolly's words "to rally us not to the sacred banner of true internationalism, but instead to the shameful flag of a bastard imperialism!"

Connolly was one of that small group of working class leaders who responded in a real internationalist fashion to the outbreak of the imperialist war in 1914. His response ranks with that of Lenin, Trotsky, Luxemburg, Liebknecht and John Maclean: he advocated not pacifism but class war. "A great continental uprising of the working class would stop the war; [but] a universal protest at public meetings would not save a life from being wantonly slaughtered."

It was within this context that Connolly saw that the Irish working class's international duty was to pursue its battle against imperialism to armed insurrection — an insurrection which would "set the torch to a European conflagration that will not burn out until the last throne and the last capitalist bond and debenture will be shrivelled on the funeral pyre of the last war lord."

In 1913 Connolly had helped to organise an armed workers' defence squad to protect the Dublin strikers against the police and the employers' armed thugs. From the outset of the war, Connolly set out to transform this into a disciplined fighting force — the Irish Citizen Army — which Lenin was to call the first Red Army in history.

By 1916 Connolly was convinced that some sort of negotiated end to the war was in sight. That unless



British troops search ruins of the GPO, Connolly's battle HQ



Eamonn de Valera under arrest. He took part in the Easter Rising and fought in the Civil War against the 'Free State' forces who accepted Britain's Partition of Ireland. But the party he later formed — Fianna Fail — is now an established governing party in the 26 Counties. De Valera died last year

socialists and nationalists took the opportunity to strike against Britain whilst it was still fully occupied by the Imperialist slaughter, the chance to free Ireland would be lost for a generation.

He pressed vigorously for an alliance with the nationalist volunteers led by members of the secret Irish Republican Brotherhood of Padraig Pearse. Though Pearse was a petit-bourgeois nationalist, he had been influenced by Connolly's writings, and his movement represented the revolutionary element of the Irish Republican tradition.

Link up

Connolly correctly estimated the need to link up with this tendency whilst at the same time recognising its limitations: "The odds are a thousand to one against us" he told the Citizen Army as it prepared for

battle "but in the event of victory hold onto your rifles as those with whom we are fighting may stop before our goal is reached."

Clearly Connolly saw the possibility of the Irish workers pressing on to the goal of socialist revolution. But he did not counterpose this goal, the workers' republic, to national freedom.

The Easter insurrection failed after seven days of fierce fighting. In jail awaiting execution, Connolly remarked "The Socialists will never understand why I am here."

British socialists, with a few honourable exceptions like John Maclean, certainly did not. Some like Arthur Henderson, a minister in the government which shot him, did not because they were willing tools of imperialism. Most failed totally to understand the relationship between the national and the class struggles.

It took the writings of Lenin, the prestige of the Bolsheviks and the generalisation of these lessons by the

REBEL LEADERS SURRENDER.

THREE PRINCIPALS TRIED AND SHOT

OTHERS ARRESTED & HELD FOR TRIAL UNCONDITIONALLY.

SERIOUS FIGHTING ALL ROUND THE CITY HEAVY CASUALTIES IN DEAD AND WOUNDED.

CENTRE OF DUBLIN DEVASTATED BY FIRE. PALATIAL BUILDINGS IN ASHES.

"The main file insurrection, which broke out in Dublin City on Easter Sunday at noon, has been effectively crushed. The positions of strength which the rebels took up in various parts of the city were abandoned, and the leaders unconditionally surrendered."

Thomas J. Clarke, P. H. Pearse, and Thomas Woodgreen, three of the officers in the leader maintaining an Irish Republic, have been tried by court-martial and

ness. In 1914 he was to say: "I make no war upon patriotism; never have done. But against the patriotism of capitalism — the patriotism which makes the interest of the capitalist class the supreme test of duty and right — I place the patriotism of the working class which judges every public act by its effect upon the fortunes of those who toil.

"That which is good for the working class I esteem patriotic, but that party or movement is the most perfect embodiment of patriotism which most successfully works for the conquest by the working class of the control of the destinies of the land wherein they labour.

"To me, therefore, the socialist of another country is a fellow patriot, as the capitalist of my own country is a national enemy."

Connolly recognised that to give any real content to Irish independence a social revolution was necessary — the emancipation of the Irish workers and small farmers. He recognised in essence that the economic dominance of British imperialism was not identical with its direct military/political dominance; that 'Home Rule' or even total independence would not free Ireland from this grip.

"If you remove the English Army tomorrow and hoist the Green Flag over Dublin Castle, unless you set about the organisation of the social-

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Communist International to conce...
supporting and participating in...
national anti-imperialist struggles...
The confusion of the Easter Rising...
— owing to the cancellation by...
in MacNeil (head of the Irish...
unteers) of the order for a general...
ing — led some socialists to char-...
terise it as a putsch. Even some...
shheviks, such as Pyatakov, starting...
from the erroneous position that...
perialist war made all national...
ers outmoded and fearing the sub-...
lination of the workers' struggle...
the petit bourgeois nationalism...
the IRB, concluded that the Rising...
s a confused adventure.
Lenin replied sharply: "Whoever...
is such an uprising a 'putsch' is...
her a hardened reactionary or a...
ctraire hopelessly incapable of...
cturing a social revolution as a liv-...
ing thing."

Fused

The tragedy of 1916 is that Conn-...
y vested his strategy of independ-...
t working class participation in the...
tional struggle in his own person...
d not in a revolutionary party.
ter his death the leaders of the Irish...
our movement, both in the Irish...
cialist Party and the Irish Transport...
d General Workers Union, followed...
e path of subordinating the work-...
-class movement to the bourgeois...
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e political sphere and of an increas-...
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n in the industrial arena.
Connolly had fused in his leader-...
p the best, most revolutionary...
ments of industrial unionism and...
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tional struggle. This synthesis could...
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For socialists in Britain and in...
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e capable of playing an active role...
against British imperialism and ag-...
st the Green bourgeoisie of the...
e public'.

by Dave
Stocking

AT ITS first national delegate conference, on the weekend of 10/11th April, the Working Women's Charter Campaign began to organise itself as a fighting movement on a national scale. 280 delegates — from local Charter groups, women's groups, Trades Councils, Trade branches, Labour Parties and LPYSs — decided to adopt a national structure and to produce a campaigning newspaper.

Mary Corbishley, the opening speaker for the Working Women's Charter Campaign, said that since 1974 the Charter had been adopted by 12 national trade unions, 75 union branches, 39 Trades Councils and numerous Labour Parties and LPYSs. Some 50 local Charter groups have been set up.

The Charter, she said, cannot be a blueprint for a perfect society. It must be a banner to mobilise women in a fighting movement, always geared into the current needs and struggles of working class women. The Charter must win support in the labour movement on that basis.

The conference gave most of Saturday to workshops on various aspects of the Charter campaign.

Reporting back from the 'Charter and the labour movement' workshop, Pat Longman outlined the difficulties of winning support — especially active, effective support, not lip-service — for the Charter in the trade union movement. The Charter has to produce campaigning bulletins which will help build women's caucuses in unions and workplaces.

Slogan

The idea of 'positive discrimination' to redress bias against women has been brought to the fore by the Sex Discrimination Act, which mentions it favourably but without laying down any means to enforce it. The workshop backed the idea of fighting for 'positive discrimination' although one delegate felt it was 'splitting the working class'.

Pat Longman also spoke of the need to fight for the Labour Party Young Socialists — which formally adopted the Charter at its 1975 conference — to campaign actively for the Charter.

Seven LPYSs sent delegates to the Charter conference; but not one of those delegates was from the 'Militant' tendency which dominates the leadership of the LPYS. The Communist Party was also absent from the Charter conference, despite giving formal support to the WWC.

A final session on Saturday debated the format in which the Charter should be amended. North Tyneside Working Womens Charter group advocated a 'two-tier' Charter with eleven brief slogans, each supplemented by fuller demands.

The alterations to the Charter, approved almost unanimously by conference as a basis for discussion, strengthen it on a number of important points.

A new clause is added on women's right to work. The demand on equal pay is reinforced by including a call for a sliding scale of wages. This was the only point in the alterations which caused major debate, but an amendment from Islington WWC which would delete the

We pledge ourselves to agitate and organise to achieve the following aims:

1. For the right of women to work. Security of employment for part-time and casual workers.

For the full integration of all women workers into a fight against unemployment.

2. The rate for the job, regardless of sex or race. For a national minimum wage. For this national minimum wage, and all benefits and wages, to be fully protected against inflation by automatic increases based on a working class cost of living index.

Rates to be negotiated by the Trade Unions.

3. Equal opportunity of entry into occupations, in promotion, and equal rights in defence of jobs, regardless of sex, age, race, marital status, sexual orientation, and hours worked.

4. Equal education and training for all occupations, regardless of sex, age, race, marital status, sexual orientation, and compulsory provision of day release for 16-19 year olds in employment. Equal access to apprenticeships and positive discrimination in training for jobs where few women are presently employed.

Employers to provide day release for the first three years of employment undertaken after 16. Increased training and re-training provisions and

grants for women returning to work. Occupational training to be a right for all unemployed persons.

5. Equality for women in working conditions and conditions of employment, without deterioration of previous conditions. Protective legislation to be extended where appropriate to cover men, and not to be used as grounds for discrimination against women. Part-time workers to receive the same benefits and protections as full-time workers.

The extension of beneficial protective legislation (providing special working conditions to women) to cover men, in order to provide better working conditions for both men and women. For improved health and safety at work. To oppose any move to allow women to work on jobs or with materials which might endanger their health.

6. The removal of all legal and bureaucratic barriers to equality, regardless of sex, marital status, and sexual orientation, with regard to tenancies, mortgages, pension schemes, taxation, passports, care, control, and custody over children, social security payments, insurance and supplementary benefits, and hire purchase agreements.

7. Free state-financed, community-controlled child care facilities with flexible hours to suit all parents, to be available for all under-fives. The integration of day care and educational facilities. The provision of play

CHARTER BECOMES A NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Karen Margolis, summing up the debate for the London Planning Committee, brought out the dangers of this approach.

The shorter Charter of eleven slogans would be no more than a bland list of demands, including points apparently granted by legislation already. It could not incorporate and reflect the experience of struggle over recent years.

The North Tyneside format was rejected by 29 votes to 146.

On Sunday morning the conference adopted policy for campaigns around the Sex Discrimination Act/Equal Pay Act, and against the cuts, unemployment and attacks on living standards. The major debate was over an amendment proposed by Jane Deighton from Islington WWC, to delete the call for a national rally in December on the theme 'One Year on from the Sex Discrimination Act — A Rally for Women's Rights'. She argued that this rally would be seen as celebrating, rather than criticising, the Sex Discrimination Act; the Working Women's Charter campaign should instead concentrate on grass roots work.

Geraldine Smith (Glasgow NAC) argued that a national rally, relating to the real impact the Sex Discrimination Act has had on women's consciousness, could in fact help rather than hinder local work. Conference voted 90 to 70 to retain the rally.

Before the conference went on to consider alternatives to the Charter and national structure for the campaign, there was a debate over the procedure on the alterations.

Mary Corbishley, for the London Planning Committee, argued that the conference should adopt an amended Charter and begin a campaign in the labour movement to gain support for that amended Charter. The Charter is not a blueprint or a 'perfect document' — it must be an effective working programme incorporating the key issues of today's struggles.

The conference had the right and the duty to amend the Charter according to the needs of an active, fighting campaign — even if that means the Charter loses some of its present paper support from trade unions.

Other delegates advocated adopting alterations to the Charter only as a basis for discussions, and definitively altering the Charter at the next conference in 12 months' time. There were two separate

lines of argument for this policy.

Helen Gurdon (Coventry WWC) felt that a better amended Charter could be worked out through a process of a year's discussion throughout the Campaign and the affiliated bodies. Implicitly, this argument tended to see the Charter as a 'perfect document', a definitive check-list of women's rights.

The other line of argument was not so much argument as brow-beating. Len Lever of the CPSA had already, on the Saturday, suggested that his union would disaffiliate if the conference amended the Charter, and Campbell Christie made the same threat to the Society of Civil Servants. Audrey Heggie of Coventry TASS, and Marjorie Jones of the Coventry Workers' Association, presented the alterations to the Charter — which later were approved almost unanimously by conference — as 'political manipulation' by revolutionary-left organisations.

Terry Lovell, summing up for the Coventry WWC, firmly rejected this demagoguery; but, unfortunately, speakers from the International Marxist Group adapted to the brow-beating arguments of the union leaderships. Tessa van Gelderen (Brent Trades Council) argued that the Charter is the property, not of Conference, but of broader sections of the labour movement. Wider consultation is necessary to maintain the unity of the movement.

Delay

The conference voted by a majority of about two-thirds to delay amending the Charter.

But it is always an opportunist argument to appeal to the anonymous broad movement against the active, leading element.

Undoubtedly, many delegates voting for the delay feared that the Charter movement could be turned into a sect with an excellent programme but little rank and file support. That is a real danger; but standing still and shivering every time a union bureaucrat sneezes is not the way to avoid it. That approach runs the risk of 'gutting' the Charter as a fighting movement in a different way, by transforming it into a collection of more-or-less timeless good advice for the government and the trade union bureaucracy.

But the future of the Charter

will be decided by the struggle which must start now to build it at rank-and-file level.

WHAT THE CONFERENCE DECIDED

* To set up a national structure for the Working Women's Charter Campaign, with a campaigning newspaper. There will be annual national delegate conferences, quarterly 'National Coordinating Group' policy-making meetings, and a national Secretariat of 15 members.

* To formulate amendments to the Charter updating it in the light of the experience of the fight for women's rights since the Charter was first drafted in 1974. These amendments will form a basis for discussion in the labour movement, leading up to a conference next year which will adopt a definite amended Charter.

* To involve the Working Women's Charter Campaign in two major campaigns:

— Round the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act, using the expectations and demands raised by this legislation to win support for the Working Women's Charter and to show up the limitations of the Acts.

There will be a national mass rally in December on the theme 'One Year On From the Sex Discrimination Act — A Rally for Women's Rights'.

— For the defence of living standards and of women's right to work, and against the cuts.

A national conference is being organised on Women and the Cuts, and the WWCC will produce a pamphlet, for national distribution, on 'Women & the Cuts'.

* To support resistance to the TUC's new Model Rule 14 for Trades Councils. This Rule bans Trades Councils from cooperating with any organisation campaigning against TUC policy or any political organisation other than the Labour Party. It thus has severe consequences for many WWC groups which are sponsored by or have links with Trades Councils.

* To ensure closer links between the Working Women's Charter and the National Abortion Campaign.

* To support the day of action against unemployment on May 26th.

are fought for in all the organisations which sent delegates to the Conference, and in other organisations supporting the Charter. None of them are small-print footnotes or marginal details; they all relate to very practical issues of the present struggles.

[Supplementary "policy" clauses were added to some of the demands of the Charter. They appear in light type below]

FIGHT FOR THE NEW CHARTER NOW

sliding scale of wages was lost by 60 votes to 102.

In three clauses demands are added against discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation.

The question of equal rights for part-time workers — very

many of whom are women — is also included for the first time.

Finally, a detailed programme of action is included for equality for women within the trade unions.

It is vital that all these points

facilities after school and during the school holidays for all children. For the integration of private child-care facilities into the public sector.

Where workplace nurseries exist, these should be under the control of the union, parents and nursery workers and should be open for us by the local community. The provision of child-care and educational facilities after school and in the school holidays. For the unionisation of child-minders and their integration into a comprehensive public nursery system (with training and facilities provided). Adequate community provision for the elderly, physically and mentally handicapped.

8. A minimum of eighteen weeks paid pregnancy leave. Adequate paternity leave. The right for either parent to take a year's child care leave after birth, half of which to be paid. No dismissal during pregnancy, paternity or child-care leave. No loss of security, pension or promotion prospects. Paid leave to care for sick children or deal with other family responsibilities to be given to men and women alike.

9. Birth control clinics to be extended to cover every locality. For free and safe abortion, contraception, vasectomy and sterilisation on demand on the NHS.

10. Child benefits to be increased to

£5 for each child now. Benefits to be protected against inflation and to be tax-free, and non-deductible from social security, supplementary and insurance benefits. Protection against inflation by automatic increases based on a working class cost of living index.

11. To campaign amongst women to take an active part in trade unions and political life, and to push for any structural and organisational changes needed to achieve this. To campaign amongst trade union men so that they too may work to achieve these aims.

[a] Free membership and the right to participate in all union affairs for all unemployed and those absent from work due to family responsibilities.

[b] Trade union meetings to be held in work time to enable women with family responsibilities to attend. Where this is not possible creche facilities to be provided.

[c] For a campaign in the trade unions to organise women workers.

[d] For the right of women in unions and workplaces to meet together to discuss their problems and needs as women workers and as members of a trade union and to win support for their struggles and demands. This right to be extended to all oppressed groups.

[e] For the adoption of policies of positive discrimination to enable women to participate fully on leading bodies in the trade unions.

LAST week's demonstrations in Peking give an indication of the depth of the conflict between the two sections of China's rulers.

For the western press, it is all a matter of competing personalities: Mao and his wife Chiang Ching on the Left, and Teng Hsiao-ping and a grouping of 'moderates' on the Right.

The terms Left and Right, however, have very little meaning in the context of the present power struggle. For instance China's foreign policy, which hasn't been criticised by either side, has consistently been in favour of some of the most reactionary forces in world politics.

Support for Yahya Khan's Pakistan against Bangla Desh, support for Mrs. Bandaranaike of Ceylon in crushing the revolutionaries of the JVP, support for Unita and FNLA in Angola against the MPLA and support for the EEC establishment are a few examples of China's 'revolutionism' — not to mention the warm relations with Richard Nixon both in and out of office.

The differences between the factions focus on the question of domestic economic policies. 1976 is the first year of the new Five Year Plan — yet the Plan itself hasn't been published.

The inability to chart China's way forward is the result of the stalemate between the two factions. On the one hand the Maoists (radicals to the western press) argue for economic self sufficiency based on the development of small scale industry and agriculture. Recognising China's poverty and backwardness they realise that the resources necessary for development of any kind can only come from continuing increases in productivity from both peasants and workers.

New markets

To obtain this increase they rely on mass mobilisation through political campaigns designed to rouse the enthusiasm of the masses. This style of politics is what gives Maoism its 'leftist' appearance.

The "Capitalist Roaders" (moderates to the Western press) have a different strategy for development. For them the central problem is the need to industrialise as quickly as possible. Modern technology and heavy industry are the key areas in this perspective. Since China hasn't the resources to provide these then they must be imported, whatever the cost and the political implications. Hence the import of Canadian steel plant and the deals with Japan on exploiting mineral resources. Hence also the West's support for this faction, which promises vast new markets.

The fight between the two sides is no new phenomenon. It can be traced right the way back to the mid-fifties, though it reached its last peak in the unresolved 'Cultural Revolution' struggle.

But the experience of the Cultural Revolution revealed the biggest obstacle to both sides.

Factions fight it out after Chou En-lai's death

by Ian White

The need of both sides to find support outside the bureaucracy which governs China led to mass involvement and debate, and soon generated the kind of social conflict that neither section of the bureaucratic leadership wants to see. In Shanghai, for example, a general strike broke out in support of demands for higher pay; in Canton and Wuhan the Army had to be called in to restore order; visitors to the Canton Trade Fair reported hearing artillery fire on the outskirts of the city.

The bringing in of the army marked the end of the Cultural Revolution and revealed a stalemate between the two factions. Neither side had enough backing to oust the other.

But the in-fighting has continued, albeit out of sight. The fall of Lin Piao was one example. The Party was reorganised. But sooner or later the conflict was bound to surface again, and the current wave of open unrest is testimony to this.

Since last September the University of Peking has been used by the Maoists as a training ground for a new campaign against "capitalist roaders". The death of Chou En-lai in January (himself a "capitalist roader") was their cue for the start of the public campaign, manifested by the appearance of wall-posters attacking the Teng faction, at first in general terms and then in increasingly personalised ones. The 'right' replied before long with their own posters around the country, particularly in Canton. At this point the Maoists relented a little: with a 'change of attitude', Teng could be 'salvaged', they argued. (He had already made his way back to the top after the Cultural Revolution.)

Then came another eruption. Sunday April 4th is the Chinese festival of Ching Ming, when it is traditional to honour the dead. The Teng faction chose the occasion to embarrass the Maoists and show their

potential support. Hundreds of wreaths were laid in Peking's Tien An Men square in memory of Chou En-lai, and as a thinly disguised demonstration of support for Teng.

The Maoists responded by clearing the wreaths away, and it was this action which led to the riots the following day.

The ferocity of these riots very probably unnerved both factions. Taking advantage of the reluctance of the Teng faction to take further action that might get out of hand, the Maoists stepped in and confirmed their man Hua Kuo-feng as Premier, and stripped Teng of all his official posts. In doing so they relied on the still tremendous personal authority of Mao himself.

What are the practical strengths and weaknesses of both sides? The Maoists have the personal prestige of Mao, control of the media and twenty years of experience in mobil-



Hua Kuo-feng

ising mass support. The "Rightists" on the other hand appear to have control of the state machine and the apparatus of the Chinese Communist Party itself, with strong support coming from the managerial strata in industry.

Very importantly, they can prob-

ably also rely on support from some sections of the industrial working class. It is they, after all, who stand to lose as a class if the Maoists get their way. Increases in productivity without modernisation of machinery mean more work and sacrifices in any country — no matter how they are dressed up.

The Army

One crucially important section of Chinese society hasn't yet shown its hand — the Army. All the indications are that its leaders, at least, would favour the 'industrialisers' for the increased technical sophistication their policy would bring. The last two chiefs of staff (Lin Piao and Teng Hsiao-ping himself) have been accused of being "capitalist roaders".

The Army figures centrally, too in the issue of the continuing dispute with Russia. Both Lin and Teng have been accused of pro-Sovietism; the Mao faction see the concentration on large scale heavy industry at the expense of agriculture, in emulation of the way the USSR developed, as the "capitalist road" par excellence. During the last fortnight, Moscow Radio has addressed itself to the Chinese Army, urging it to assert itself "in the interests of the Chinese people" and not to be used by the Mao clique.

On Thursday April 8th Peking Radio declared that Teng was now an "antagonistic contradiction"; in Maoist jargon this means that he can no longer be tolerated. He has nevertheless kept his membership of the Communist Party, and may have enough support within the Party to prevent his expulsion. In fact the People's Daily quoted Mao as saying that the "capitalist roaders" are the controlling faction in the Party.

Both factions are jockeying for a position of dominance on the leading committees so that they can get their version of the Five Year Plan

adopted. The Maoists will rely on their well-tried methods of mass mobilisation to gain popular support; but the "Rightists" are firmly entrenched within the bureaucracy and are in a good position to prevent any plans they disagree with from being implemented. But both factions could lose control of the struggle as they did during the Cultural Revolution, and in such a situation demands expressing the class interests of both workers and peasants are bound to come to the surface again.

Apart from the current problem of the Five Year Plan, another factor gives added urgency to the jockeying for position, and that is the impending death of Mao himself.

Revolution

Should socialists here take the side of one or other of these factions?

Neither faction can actually overcome the problems that China has inherited from the past. Neither economic isolationism and enthusiasm nor foreign capital can solve the problems of a peasant economy trying to support both a massive population and the production of nuclear weaponry. China's 'Socialism in one country', like Russia's before it, is a dead end both for the Chinese workers and peasants (who suffer massive repression despite the semblance of 'participation' that Mao's methods creates) and for those countries of the Third World who hope to develop on the same road.

The interests of both sections of the Chinese bureaucracy are directly opposed to those of China's workers and peasants. Only an anti-bureaucratic revolution led by the working class in alliance with the peasantry could start the process of breaking the stranglehold of world imperialism on China's productive forces by spreading the revolution throughout Asia.



Teng Hsiao-ping

AS THE POET Alexander Pope recognised, "damning with faint praise" is an art all of its own. In RED WEEKLY of April 8th, its most recent practitioners have raised their pens to "praise" WORKERS ACTION

In an article entitled "Workers Action takes three steps forward", Peter Jameson lists both the snakes and the ladders he claims Workers Action has landed on of late. "After initially launching a vicious sectarian attack... against IMG for raising the slogan of 'Recall the TUC', Workers Action has now adopted the slogan itself. After polemicising against all demands to 'Make the Lefts Fight', Workers Action has now correctly moved to take up the demand that the left MPs should vote against the Budget. Finally, in relation to the candidates in the Labour leadership election, Workers Action took the correct position of calling for a vote for Benn and nobody else".

One-sided

Workers Action has not adopted the slogan of 'Recall the TUC' in anything like the sense the IMG uses it. What has happened is this. In Workers Action no.2 we published an article which warned of the way in which the "Recall" slogan was being used. That article was too one-sided.

Given the increased support for that demand in the following period, a month later we published a far more balanced article. This article

OUR THREE STEPS FORWARD?

also took into account the fact that then, as distinct from in January, the "Recall" slogan had been made a central one not just by the CP, the Tribune lefts, and their mimics on the revolutionary left, but by large sections of the labour and trade union movement.

Although it was by no means the central next step forward for the class struggle, we were bound to give the "Recall" slogan our critical support — which we spelled out in Workers Action no.7

That article indicates the slogans we see as central in the present period, and argues that our agitation should include presenting those policies in the context of the politically amorphous drive for the recalled TUC and recalled Labour Party conferences. But adopting the "Recall" slogan as our own central message, as a self-sufficient battlecry, would in no way serve to clarify the political content of a working-class alternative to TUC-Labour Party treachery.

That is why in Workers Action 7 we said, "We also criticise the IMG and the 'Militant' tendency, both of whom make 'Recall the TUC' the absolute centre of their agitation. They tend to do little more than add their small voices to the general murmur in the labour movement in favour of the recall of the TUC".

As to the rest of Peter Jameson's

claim — it is simply laughable. Did Workers Action actually polemicise against "all demands to 'Make the Lefts Fight'"? No. It polemicised against some "left-Labourites, and some like the IMG and the WSL, who see the crucial political division as resting between the right and the left wing of the Parliamentary Labour Party".

Budget

Workers Action believes in making demands of the 'left' MPs of the Tribune group — indeed of the Labour Party as a whole. Clearly this must include the demand that the working class is not made the target of government attacks. On March 10th that meant voting against the Healey "Cuts" White Paper, on March 11th it meant refusing to support the Government in the vote of confidence (something on which, interestingly, Red Weekly has made NO comment), and in April it will mean voting against the Budget.

Do we therefore make the slogan "Make the Lefts Fight" central to our agitation? Do we therefore agree with the line of the IMG? Calling on the left MPs to vote "no" on these occasions is as much an acceptance by Workers Action of the IMG's line as the same call made by the IMG is an acceptance of the WRP's ridiculous central

slogan "Force the Labour Government to Resign".

Again the IMG seems incapable of distinguishing between single episodic or subordinate slogans and central orientations. Workers Action's polemics on the subject both of the 'Recall of the TUC' and the 'Kick Out the Right' (which Peter Jameson confuses with 'Make the Lefts Fight') were chiefly directed against making those ideas central to the agitation of revolutionaries.

Most of Red Weekly's article, peculiarly, is taken up with asking us why we supported — albeit critically — Benn's candidature in the Labour leadership elections. The reasons we gave are quoted in full. Not good enough. "Why", we are asked, "does Benn objectively have behind him forces opposed to the Government....?"

The answer is simple because, however palely, Benn represents that form of capitalism, state capitalism more or less, which, thanks to the distortions of Fabianism and Stalinism, is confused with socialism in the minds of the majority of workers. It matters not one bit whether Benn is demagogic — something the IMG seems to want to discuss at length — sincere, naive or calculating.

In that case should he have been supported over the EEC issue? Not at all. Asked to take up a position

on a political issue as such, revolutionaries have no choice but to "say what is". The EEC had to be defined and analysed, an attitude taken towards it, the campaign against it assessed clearly. That position could not be held hostage to the preference of siding with the right or siding with the left in the Labour movement. Workers Action is happy to see that on this score the IMG has taken one step forward. After all, had it adopted the prostrate "with the left whatever happens" position it had over the EEC campaign when it came to the second round of the leadership elections, they would have recommended a vote for Foot!

Urgent

In the last three paragraphs of his article Peter Jameson steps into a fantasy world where, with the best will in the (real) world, we cannot follow. For instance, where does he get this kind of nonsense from: "Workers Action continues to divide organisations into only three camps — reformist, revolutionary (which is essentially itself), and centrist"?

Finally, the good comrade invites supporters of Workers Action, and members of the International-Communist League, to discuss with the IMG. Workers Action can only speak for itself: we say, why not a debate on the urgent question of the Fourth International?

COLIN FOSTER

ONE KEY question hangs over the 15th Annual Conference of the Labour Party Young Socialists (LPYS) due to be held at Blackpool this Easter. It is, what sort of LPYS do we want to build?

CUTS

There is undoubtedly great potential for a mass working class youth movement. When young people are facing massive unemployment, social security benefits that don't keep up with prices, education cuts and a housing shortage that keeps them pinned down to their parents' home, the Young Socialists should be able to mobilise tens of thousands.

Instead we see a stunted and inward-looking grouping, bureaucratically manipulated by the dominant 'Militant' tendency.

The number of branches has declined over the past year, from 389 to 359, and many of these exist on little else but paper.

The key to the failure of the LPYS to grow is in the political character of 'Militant'. This group sees to it that the LPYS is little more than a permanent contact class for their own organisation, rather than a fighting socialist youth movement.

Even when they do manage to launch a campaign, it is invariably marked by sectarianism and crass organisational incompetence. Last year's unemployment campaign was no exception. It was organised totally separately from other moves against unemployment, such as the campaign of the North West Region of the TUC, and did not seek to involve anyone outside the YS.

Thus we saw the normal round of local meetings followed by regional marches and rallies, followed by a national demonstration followed by lengthy rounds of self-congratulation.

DREARY

But its most striking feature was its dreariness. The campaign material appeared to be written by and for middle aged social democrats. It remarks sadly that it is no wonder that "our young people" smash up telephone boxes, given the lack of social facilities — as if it hadn't occurred to the authors that some of "our young people" would even be reading the leaflets!

The conference discussion document on unemployment is in much the same vein. There isn't a lot in it that we would disagree with — but what is sorely lacking is any plan of action to fight the dole queues.

If the unemployment document is bad, the other major discussion piece, on Spain and Portugal, is far far worse. It claims that Portugal provides a good opportunity for a peaceful socialist revolution — despite the violent methods used by the capitalists to reverse even the limited gains that the working class has so far won. When pressed, 'Militant' supporters say that the revolution will be peaceful but that there will be violent attempts at counter-revolution.

This sort of clever-clever argument can only cause confusion.

The document goes on to say that capitalism is effectively dead in Portugal, although the state remains in the bosses' hands; the nationalisations have created a



Bob Labi, LPYS Executive member state capitalist structure all ready for the workers to take over (peacefully, remember) and turn into socialism.

'Militant' also continues to maintain its position of support for the reactionary campaign which the Portuguese Socialist Party mounted for the return of Republica and Radio Renascenca to their former owners.

And finally, the document issues a blanket condemnation of the Spanish and Basque guerilla organisations such as

FRAP and ETA V — and blames them, and not the fascist regime, for the repressive 'anti terrorist' legislation.

The document is remarkable for its subservience to the leaders of the Spanish and Portuguese Socialist Parties. The whole orientation is towards giving them friendly advice, rather than denouncing their activities and putting forward a programme of action to fight them.

Although the majority of resolutions follow the 'Militant' line, there are a significant number which offer a left alternative. They come mainly from branches in which supporters of 'Workers Action' or the Socialist Charter are active.

ACTION

For example Northampton South calls for the building of action committees to fight unemployment, uniting trades councils, shop stewards committees, union branches and Labour Party organisations. They stress the need for the Young Socialists to be involved in broad labour movement action against unemployment, in which the LPYS can play a big role.

Support for the Day of Action against unemployment, called by the Labour Movement Assembly for May 26th, will be proposed in an emergency resolution to the conference.

When it comes down to it, the LPYS will not be built by programmes or resolutions alone. It will require a serious struggle to put them into practice. This means transforming the local branches from discussion clubs to real centres of working class political action. This is the task that the hundreds of delegates and observers must set themselves when they return from the Conference.

Rent rebels rapped for taking right line

HARINGEY council is not going to raise its rents this year — thanks to a group of Labour 'rebels'.

Originally the Haringey Labour Group had agreed to the proposal by Housing Chairman George Meehan for raising an extra £300,000 from the 200,000 dwellings belonging to the Council. But this agreement was made on the condition that there would first be "consultation with the Party". (Some left wingers felt that the rent rise would certainly be quashed that way.)

After a series of confusing and contradictory meetings the rent rise decision was confirmed (although the stipulated 'consultation' — whatever it was supposed to mean concretely — had not occurred).

A number of left wing Labour councillors had already stated their opposition to any rent increase. Led by Len Silverstone, the vice-chairman of the Housing Committee, they voted against the proposed rent increase when it came up at the Council meeting. In so doing they found some unlikely supporters in the shape of the Haringey Tory group — who voted against the increases because they didn't think they were big enough!

Enraged by their defeat on the Council the Labour Group majority decided to discipline the rebels. In the meantime, however, a meeting of the three Labour Parties that make up the Borough — Tottenham, Hornsey and

Wood Green — took a decision to reverse the rent increases policy, which by now had become a terrible embarrassment.

After that it would seem logical that the disciplining of the 'rebel' councillors would be dropped. Nevertheless, at the following Local Government Committee meeting, the decision was taken to discipline Len Silverstone and his followers.

Silverstone himself, instead of being thanked for giving the right lead, found himself removed from his post on the Housing Committee.

Included in those who voted for these disciplinary measures were five supporters of the 'Militant' grouping, representatives of Tottenham Labour Party. In so doing they were, like the rest of those who voted for the decision, putting supposed 'Party loyalty' before political principle and the far more important loyalty to working class interests. And these are the members of a tendency that laughably refers to itself as... 'revolutionary'!

The outcome of all this manoeuvring has been that the vast majority of Labour supporters in the Borough don't even know that a victory has been scored on their behalf. That being the case the victory is bound to be shortlived and shallow.

ALAN SHAW



LPYS on the march — a tired routine

workers' ACTION supporters' groups are being formed in the following places:

Birmingham, Bolton, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Chelmsford, Chester, Coventry, Crawley, Durham, Edinburgh, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Newtown, Northampton, Nottingham, Oxford, Reading, Rochdale, Sheffield, Stafford, Stoke

Write for details of meetings & activities to:
WASG, 49 Carnac Street, London SE27

'Red-bashing' in London Labour Party

AFTER THE expulsion of Keith Veness from Islington North Labour Party, another wave of 'red-bashing' has begun. In Newham South the right wing have recently attempted to expel four left wingers on vague and lying accusations.

Three of the accused were notified by post that they would have to appear before a Special Executive Committee meeting on 24th March. At this meeting no charges were made, but various accusations were hurled at them — that they had conspired with 'Communists and Neo-Trotskyists' (!) to subvert and discredit the Labour Party and sow discord among the members.

The whole meeting was stage-managed by the right wing under the leadership of Fred Dance and Tom Jenkinson (who is also Chairman of the Highways and Works Committee of Newham Council and the director of a local haulage firm). They refused admittance to legal advisors of the accused members, and later excluded the four themselves from the meeting.

At the General Management Committee immediately afterwards the accused refused to defend themselves (and thereby recognise the validity of the whole proceedings) and were expelled with no right of appeal.

The next day three of the 'defendants', Ian Seabright, Sue Black and Terry Jones, took out an interim injunction against the CLP to stop

the expulsions taking effect. Out of 9 injunctions 8 were served on the Thursday night — the only one not served was on Tom Jenkinson.

Repeated attempts were made to serve it but his wife ripped them up and threatened to call the police.

On Tuesday 30th another attempt was made to serve the in-

UNION BLOC VOTE MUZZLES DEBATE ON BUDGET

AT THE Labour Party Southern Region Conference last weekend few supporters of the policies of the Labour Government were to be found. Resolutions on housing, education, the NHS and on other cuts were overwhelmingly passed. All condemned government policy.

But, as usual, little was said about how to fight back. Those who felt that the passing of resolutions alone has no real effect on government policy or on mobilising workers to resist the cuts were dismayed by the decision on the chairman to not allow discussion on the only campaign which was put forward — the Working Women's Charter Campaign. His reason was that no-one wished to speak against the Charter! So yet another paper resolution was passed.

The economic debate saw an emergency resolution against the budget knocked off the agenda, although the majority of delegates wanted to

junction on Jenkinson. A number of Newham South members gathered at his house, supported by some members of Newham North East CLP. Jenkinson knocked the person serving it to the floor and kicked Tony Kelly of Newham North East in the groin so badly he had to be treated in hospital.

The following night Terry Jones withdrew from the court action and Friday 2nd April was re-admitted to the Party with Sue Black and Ian Seabright. Frank Grant, the fourth expelled member, is appealing to the National Executive Committee.

MICK WOODS

see it discussed. Their wishes were thwarted by a bloc of trade union delegates, who pressed the issue to a card vote in which they carried a disproportionate weight. So much time was taken over this controversy that a composite resolution blaming the EEC for Britain's economic crisis and calling for import controls was passed with little discussion.

The strength of feeling of the conference was typified by the final resolution, which protested at the Labour government's representation at the funeral of Franco; but its lack of clarity was highlighted when one delegate (a supporter of Workers Action) pointed out that this internationalist sentiment was inconsistent with the demand for import controls, which would hit particularly hard at workers in countries like Spain and Portugal.

CHEUNG SIU MING
Wokingham LPYS

WORKERS IN ACTION

NUS Conference

Tories gain but Broad Left still complacent

TRIBUNITE and Communist Party delegates came away from the Landudno conference last Friday well satisfied that their Broad Left caucus still controlled all but three places on the executive of the National Union of Students. This conference saw one of the biggest Federations of Conservative Students (FCS) contingents for many years, 70-strong. Despite this, and the recent spate of disaffiliations from the union, the Broad Left seemed unconcerned about the threat from the right.

They did level some rather empty verbal attacks against the Tories; but they were quite prepared to accept FCS votes to keep the revolutionary left off the executive. Under the transferable vote system it was the Tory third-preference votes which eventually held the balance and put Charles Clarke back as president along with other members of the Broad Left.

The growth of the FCS has been helped by the genuine groundswell of discontent among students. Over the last few years they have seen the Broad Left tighten its bureaucratic grip on the union, using vac-

uous demagoguery about 'action', yet unwilling to initiate a determined campaign to protect the members.

The recent disaffiliations from the NUS have not been led by the FCS, but rather by libertarian and apolitical elements. Some of them are reacting in a confused fashion to the increasing bureaucratisation of NUS and some are simply wishing for a return to the old days when student unions kept out of politics.

Clarke has issued a statement on disaffiliations, along with the FCS and the Liberal students, saying that they are the work of a few right-wing students. He has failed to come up with any more serious response or analysis, and this has opened the way for the right wing to make political capital.

In the debate on government economic policy, a Broad Left amendment featuring the demand for import controls was overwhelmingly defeated. Sue Slipman, NUS Secretary and Communist Party member, presented the ludicrous argument that these import controls would be aimed solely at fascist dictatorships, and not at the working class abroad. She might have forgotten that the import controls on textiles



Photo by Chris Davies (Report)

NUS President Charles Clarke

supported by the CP have hit particularly hard at revolutionary workers in Portugal.

The NUS executive was mandated to support the mobilisation for May 26th by strikes, occupations, and mass meetings.

The main Executive report on government economic policy was referred back because - despite NUS policy to support all working class initiatives against unemployment - they had refused to support the Right to Work march.

In support of the Executive Clarke read out the platform of the Right to Work march. Unfortunately for him each demand was greeted with enthusiastic support by conference delegates.

Socialists inside NUS cannot afford the complacency of the Broad Left. Unless the union is transformed into a fighting organisation that can succeed in defending its members, the most likely outcome will be a return to the early '60s, when NUS was dominated by the Labour right, hand in hand with such dubious allies as the CIA.

Leicester Strike against 18 sackings dispirited by 300 redundancies

The 10-day strike in Leicester by 2,000 shop-floor workers of the Bentley engineering group is over. A mass meeting voted to accept the shop stewards' recommendation to return to work.

As forecast in the last WORKERS ACTION, the sacking of 18 workers in one of the Bentley factories has proved to be the prelude to the announcement of widespread redundancies.

During the strike Bentley management announced that the factory where 18 workers were sacked for refusing to take part in 'selective working', is to be shut down completely with 300 workers losing their jobs.

Undoubtedly Bentley set up the initial dispute by deliberately contravening normal union procedure to pave the way for sacking all 300 workers in the factory.

The initial response of the shop stewards' organisation was immediate and effective in calling a strike in all the Bentley factories in Leicester. But when faced with redundancies there was no response, and a return to work was recommended without full reinstatement of the 18, the only concession being that the 18 workers will now get redundancy money from the company.

A major share of the responsibility

LEYLAND Strikes show participation schemes working for bosses

Unofficial strike action by Rover toolroom workers throughout the country has forced Leyland management to recognise the national toolroom agreement which they were trying to ditch.

But the Leyland employers have not only been taking on the Rover workers. Toolroom workers at Triumph Coventry and SU Carburators, Birmingham, have been forced back to work with their claims not fully met. At the time of writing toolroom workers at the Transmissions and Longbridge plants in Birmingham are fighting for parity with machine demonstrators.

The parity claim would mean staff status for the toolroom workers and wage rises that would take them through the £6 limit. Assembly workers at Triumph Coventry are also involved in struggle. The Leyland employers are using the £6 pay limit to avoid paying up money owed through a productivity deal signed last April.

Despite a recommendation of the Executive Committee of the Triumph combine and the shop stewards committee, a mass meeting of Triumph Assembly workers voted overwhelmingly to cut production by 5% if management were not prepared to pay up.

Convenor McGarry, an arch-proponent of the Ryder participation scheme, tried everything in his power to undermine the assembly workers' resistance. He put to a mass meeting of 6000 Coventry Triumph workers a proposal that a secret ballot be taken on the issue. He was defeated. The mass meeting voted overwhelmingly to support the assembly workers.

In these disputes the Labour Government and the employers are insisting that no payment can be made because of the £6 limit. The Trade Union leaders accept this logic. Scanlon summoned the toolroom leaders to the AUEW executive to make it clear that union support for the £6 pay policy ruled out any backing for workers fighting the Leyland employers.

Under the terms of the Ryder proposals, union leaders and even shop stewards have been drawn in to taking responsibility for the company; this has worked well for Leyland management. Terry Duffy, assistant divisional organiser of the AUEW, was "very upset" because of the strike action. Derek Robinson, Longbridge convenor and a toolroom steward himself, is reported to have opposed strike action by Longbridge toolroom workers. At Triumph the convenors and senior stewards are involved to the hilt in participation schemes, and they have tried every trick in the book to force the workers to climb down.

The Longbridge and Transmissions workers fought on despite threats of the employers, the press and the AUEW leadership. Triumph assembly workers battled with management over the speed of the line in pursuit of their claim.

Both groups of workers by their actions have threatened the £6 limit. Success for them could open up possibilities for all of us. That is why these workers deserve full support, not a stab in the back from the union leaders and the shop floor based 'participants'.

JAMES ROGERS

EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Send copy to 'Events', 49 Carnac St, London SE27, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following weeks issue.

Saturday 17th April. Troops Out Movement meeting at Labour Party Young Socialists Conference. 8pm at the Victory Hotel, Counce St, Blackpool. Sponsored by Carlton and Hackney North LPYS.

Sunday 18th April. Workers Action meeting on 'How to fight the Government'. Speakers: Andrew Hornung and Dave Hughes. 7pm at the Vevers Arms, junction of Cookson St & King St, Blackpool.

Wednesday 21st April. Wandsworth Campaign against Private Practice public meeting, at Battersea Library, Lavender Hill. "Fight the Priory Hospital Scheme! Defend the NHS!"

Saturday 24th April. North-West Regional Council TUC march against cuts and unemployment, starting 1pm from AUEW offices, The Crescent, Salford.

Friday-Saturday-Sunday 23rd-24th-25th April: National Women's Liberation conference 1976. Registration forms and information from 46 Simonside Tce, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 6.

Friday-Saturday-Sunday 23rd-24th-25th April. Delegate conference to make the 50th anniversary of the General Strike, at Sussex University. Registration: Peter Cresswell, Trade Union Group, Sussex University Union, Falmer, Brighton.

Saturday 24th April. Songs and music from Spain, organised by Manchester Spanish Solidarity Committee. 7.30pm in Reynolds Theatre, UMIST. Price of admission, 60p.

Sunday 25th April. National Demonstration called by the National Coordinating Committee against the Cuts in the NHS. Assemble 1pm at Hyde Park Corner. Details from P. Stern, 55 Bridge Lane, London NW10.

"Fight the Cuts" film made by a group of film-makers in ACTT. Available free for all meetings and conferences against the cuts. Phone 01-794 2825. 55 minutes, black and white, 16mm optical sound

'DO UP YOUR OWN HOUSE' TENANTS ARE TOLD

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Project in Birmingham have produced an analysis of how the housing cuts will affect the city.

For a start there will be £380,000 less for general repairs to council houses and less maintenance men to do the job. At the same time Birmingham is halting its redevelopment programme and asking people who were going to be re-housed to improve their own houses instead. But the Government-sponsored improvement programmes are being cut, and are now half the 1973-4 level. Although individual grants were not cut, they have not kept up with inflation.

Since June, the council's mortgage scheme has been frozen so that people who want to buy their own homes can't afford it. A recent survey by the CDP showed that in Salfley 1 in 15 houses or flats were empty. Most of them had previously been rented, but their landlords tried to sell them, trying to make more profit, only to find that no-one can pay. The Building Societies were supposed to 'fill the gaps', but by February 1976 they had only provided three mortgages in the whole of the city for pre-1919 houses nominated by the Council, thus spending only a fraction of the £2½ million given to them by the Government.

Gagged - by Rule 14

The delegates at the Greater London Association of Trades Councils meeting were in the main fairly unruffled about the TUC's disaffiliation of Camden Trades Council for not subscribing to Rule 14.

Thus they took the Camden "delegate's" report after a suspension of standing orders - so as to please the TUC and still hear the report.

that after all their caution for fear they should upset the TUC, the TUC-appointed chairman of the forthcoming Annual Conference of Trades Councils had ruled their motion and four others out of order... because they criticised the Government.

Happy to accept the Rule 14 gag, because, they say, "it will never be used", the don't-upset-the-TUC members on the GLATC have now

FIGHTING FUND

After a promising start last week, our £6000 fund drive has come to a grinding halt. The only donation we have had this week is £2 from a reader in Cambridge. This leaves us with a tremendous fight if we are to reach our target of £1500 by May 1st.

The LPYS Conference over Easter will be a good opportunity to raise some of the money but this will not be enough. It is up to you, our readers, to support your paper. The facts are simple: if we do not raise the £6000, we cannot buy the new typesetter; at present we are spending over £100 a month to hire an inferior machine, and we cannot afford that, either!

Please send all donations to Workers Action, 49 Carnac St, London SE27.

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