

# WORKERS' ACTION

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## TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND!

**NOW!**



**SUNDAY AUGUST 12 SPEAKERS CORNER 2.30PM**

## SELF DETERMINATION FOR THE IRISH PEOPLE!

IT IS TEN YEARS since British troops went onto the streets of Northern Ireland and still few labour movement organisations support the call to get them out and to let the Irish people decide their own future.

It has been a decade of shameful silence by the labour movement. The army of the British ruling class has been able to roam the streets of Ireland harrasing people on the streets, invading homes in Catholic areas and shooting down civilians — without protest from the British labour movement.

The August 12th demonstration calling on the government to "commit itself to a policy of withdrawal from Ireland" was not initiated by any section of the labour movement. It was left to Liberal politicians like Cyril Smith and David Alton, the National League of Young Liberals, Lords, and just a few Labour MPs to make the call. And the call fails to make one obvious and vital point — Britain has no right to be in Ireland.

A 'Troops Out Now' contingent is being organised on the demonstration to make just that point. It is being supported by Islington North Labour Party, Coventry Trades Council and a number of LPYS branches.

'Socialist Organiser' has published 15,000 copies of a special labour movement appeal for the demonstration — asserting that the British working-class movement must have its own class attitude to Ireland, and that attitude can be none other than 'Troops Out Now' and support for the fight for a united and independent Ireland.

The appeal, originally signed by 3 members of the CPSA's National Executive and 3 members of the executive of the Labour Party's Greater London Regional Council, has now been sponsored by: Coventry Trades Council, Dick North (NUT National Executive), Jonathan Hammond (NUJ National Executive); the secretaries of Edinburgh, Hounslow and Basingstoke Trades Councils, the President of Lambeth Trades Council, the General Secretary of Lambeth NUT, the Wales Regional Secretary of the CPSA (DoE), union convenors at ITT Cannons (Basingstoke), Heath Hospital (Cardiff), a Senior Steward at Rover Solihull, plus several union branch secretaries and CLP officials.

That support must now be turned into a large labour movement mobilisation on August 12th, to begin rooting a Troops Out Now campaign in the labour movement.

NIK BARSTOW

## ENGINEERS: ALL OUT AUGUST 6th

ON MONDAY 30th July, 2½ million workers covered by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions will start an overtime ban, and, on 6th August, a series of one day strikes in support of the national wage claim.

The amended claim is £80 minimum time rate, a one hour reduction in the working week with progress to 35 hours by 1982, 2 days extra holiday, and a common implementation date on April 1st 1979.

Inadequate as the claim and the action are, we must support them. Those of us already earning more than £80 must stand beside the lower paid factories. Extra holidays and a shorter week will benefit us all.

We have little chance of winning next year's £100 claim if we lose this one. If the action flags, then the right wing will gain — and they will have a strong argument to use for discrediting any future proposals for militant action.

Boyd and Duffy are already arguing for a reversion to local bargaining, and this will make a national fight for the 35 hour week impossible.

Attempts by right-wing leaders Boyd and Duffy to settle for £70 were narrowly defeated at the last AUEW National Committee. But the £80 demand is insufficient to unite engineering workers behind the claim.

Most well organised factories already have the £80. There are areas like Bristol, for example, where two-thirds of the engineering firms are within 10% of the present £60 minimum and many are below it. But in that area, the two strongest union factories, Rolls Royce and British Aerospace, pay well over £80 already, so there is little incentive for these workers to take strike action.

A claim to rally real united action would have to include a major across-the-board pay rise, automatic protection for wages against inflation, and 35 hours now. We have to

argue for that sort of claim in 1980.

Yet the present claim — especially the demand for a shorter working week — is too big to be won easily by the one-day strikes. Domestic engineering orders have slumped 12½% in the first four months of this year to the lowest level for two years, and the engineering bosses are in no mood to give easy concessions.

The one-day strikes have also been called at the time when they are least likely to be effective: in many major engineering districts, the factories are shut down for annual holidays, and the strikes will just mean a one-day stoppage of maintenance work.

Only in Sheffield, the stronghold of the Broad Left, has the District Committee yet made much effort to organise for the claim.

Yet the Broad Left deserve criticism hardly less than Boyd and Duffy. They have played Parliamentary politics on the National Committee of the AUEW, formulating their resolutions on the basis of how to win votes against the right wing rather than how best to represent the interests of the membership, and indulging in bureaucratic bravado and bluster rather than soberly evaluating the balance of forces and the state of union militancy.

They thus risk allowing Boyd and Duffy to 'bleed' and discredit militancy. If that happens, active shop stewards and socialists will bear the brunt of the backlash. Every effort must be made to ensure the official action is well supported. The Confed. is due to meet on August 27th to reconsider the situation, and the AUEW has decided to press for further action then if no progress has been made.

MARK HALL

North London District Committee demonstration, 1pm Monday August 6th, from Tower Hill to the engineering employers' offices in Essex St, Strand.

## Summer holiday — don't forget the Fund

After this issue we are taking a two-week summer break. No. 149 will be dated August 18th.

But readers should keep money coming in for our fund. This week we have had only £5 [from North London], bringing the monthly total to £35. We need £165 to reach our £200 target by August 28th.

This week's paper is bigger than usual, 16 pages. We have a special 8 page supplement on the history of Labour's youth movements, prepared as a background to the debates at this year's LPYS conference on July 28th/29th.

Because the paper is the last till mid-August, it has a larger proportion of background articles than usual.

Extra copies of the Supplement can be obtained for 10p each plus postage from WA, PO Box 135, London N1 0DF.

## Somoza is out, but is the US?

FORTY HOURS after declaring he would 'fight to the end', Dr Francisco Urcuyo fled Nicaragua. Urcuyo, installed on July 17th as the replacement for President Somoza, thought that the 15,000 strong National Guard was still solid enough to hold out against the Sandinista guerillas.

But widespread desertions, Somoza's departure, and the loss of US support had shattered the confidence of the Guard's com-

manders. The Chief of Staff, Frederico Meja, quit the country leaving the Guard no orders on what to do next, and 1,000 of them simply ran off, taking refuge in neighbouring El Salvador.

Within a day of Urcuyo's departure the Sandinistas took the capital, Managua. On July 20th a mass rally of over 100,000 greeted members of the Sandinista-backed Provisional Government in Managua's Place of the Republic. They heard

government members issue proclamations dissolving the National Guard, confiscating all Somoza family property, and promising land reform.

But the new government's programme is not particularly radical. Nicaragua's bosses also supported the confiscation of Somoza's property, hoping for a share of the loot at a later date. The bosses' organisation, the 'Private Enterprise Council', together with Nicaragua's Conservative Party, has been

guaranteed places in the 33-person Council of State, which will have the power to veto government decrees.

Nicaragua has been ravaged by the civil war. Over 40,000 are reported killed since the start of the fighting in June. Food supplies are scarce and large sections of industry have been destroyed.

The US had hoped to wring concessions from the Sandinistas by forcing them to deal with the interim 'Som-

ozist' government. Now they are pinning their hopes on the use of promises of aid. The strings attached to the aid will be used to give the bourgeoisie a more powerful voice in the government.

The young Sandinista fighters know they were not fighting to replace the Somozas, installed and supported for 40 years by the USA, with new exploiters still in the USA's pockets.

NIK BARSTOW

IN IRAN, a recent Bill, drafted by the ayatollahs themselves, scraps the Islamic Revolutionary Courts in favour of courts with three judges 'aware of Islamic law and loyal to the revolution'.

The same Bill, which deals with 'counter-revolutionary crimes, says that anyone found guilty of disruptive tactics in factories or worker agitation faces a gaol term of between two and ten years.

It also declares that "Anyone who rises up against Iran's independence, to separate part of Iranian territory" will be liable to between 3 and 15 years in gaol. Those involved in armed risings 'with or without foreign aid' will get the death sentence.

This is clearly directed at the struggles of the Arabs in Khuzestan, the Kurds, the Turkomans and the Baluchis, which the government insists are all separatist rather than struggles for autonomy within a federal Iran.

Despite obvious friction and strain between the religious and civilian authorities — between Qom and Tehran — the leaders of Iran are doing their best to institutionalise the bourgeois Islamic Republic.

That is why so much importance has been attached to the appointment of "the right man" to lead the army; that is why Prime Minister Bazargan threatened to resign unless talk of a purge of the state forces ceased; that is why Khomeini announced his amnesty for soldiers and police accused of crimes against revolutionary militants.

Kar, the paper of the Iranian People's Fedayeen Guerillas, is full of examples of increased repression. For instance, the workers' committee of the Babak Cement factory called on the Islamic Committees to protect them against their employer.

## IRAN'S WORKERS FIGHT GROWING REPRESSION

When the armed members of the Committee turned up, under the leadership of the very man the workers had dismissed as manager a short time before, they set about attacking the workers.

A group of Iranian lawyers recently issued a statement attacking the 'serious attacks on the achievements of our revolution, on freedom of political parties, freedom of expression, freedom of writers and freedom of assembly'. Press censorship is arbitrary but severe: Khomeini only has to state publicly that he disapproves of a paper for it to be burned down by his Committees.



Ahwaz workers protest at arrest of their leaders.

Resistance to the growing repression is coming from a number of sources. From the national minorities — particularly the Kurds and the Arabs — from the workers' organisations, from the left, and even from sections of the peasantry where landowners or old SAVAK and military personnel seek to impose themselves.

Recently the Fedayeen held a mass rally in Tehran which attracted over 50,000 people. Speakers demanded the release of forty Fedayeen militants who had been arrested and of the nine members of the Socialist Workers Party of Iran who are in jail in Ahwaz in Khuzistan. Since then another seven SWP members have been arrested together with leading members of the oil workers' council.

Steelworkers in Ahwaz fought for and won a 40-hour week. Customs workers threatened a national strike for the right to form a union and for other demands. Fishermen on the Caspian coast have demanded a union and the right to control fishing and marketing.

One of the most dramatic struggles was the sit-in by 7,000 carpet workers and 5,000 unemployed workers at the workers' club in Tabriz.

In their declaration they demanded:

- immediate interest-free loans for the workers,
- free medical insurance,
- abolition of reactionary labour laws,
- passing of new laws with workers' participation in drawing them up,
- a seven hour day and 35 hour week,
- establishment of a state cooperative to purchase and market woven rugs,
- prices to be fixed by workers' representatives,
- retirement at full pay for old and disabled workers.

The unemployed, dismissed and part-time workers met separately, supporting the above demands and also calling for:

- immediate re-hiring with full back pay,
- equal pay for equal work for women,
- the setting up of an unemployment fund,
- an end to interference by capitalists, foreign or otherwise.

"We ask the Islamic government", a workers' leader said, "to set up workplaces where the only boss is the government (or to) give us sufficient funds to organise a cooperative... We are completely fed up with capitalists, and that's that".

The unity of the employed and unemployed which was such an important factor in this struggle has featured in several other battles. Kar reports that "The workers of the Technical Services Company... having witnessed the sacking of a number of workers and the reduction of the wages of the remainder by 15%, set up a Workers' Council and immediately went on strike".

Their demands included: 'The prohibition of sackings by the employer, the reappointment of all workers made redundant... payment of wages to the redundant workers for the period of their redundancies, workers' control over the Company's wasteful expenditure [and] the workers' council's right

to participate in all contracts signed between the Company and others".

Twice the workers kidnapped their boss, beating off an attack by the Islamic Committees; finally, they won all their economic demands and the reappointment demand.

The demand that can best unify the different struggles is the demand for a truly revolutionary - democratic Constituent Assembly. Against Khomeini's backtracking on the Constituent Assembly project and against the more conservative interpretations of it by people like ayatollah Shariat Madari the revolutionaries must call for a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of universal suffrage. Its task should be to guarantee the democratic rights of the poor and the national minorities.

At the same time, the workers' committees which have been set up in several industrial plants, and the peasant committees in Merivan, in Shahr Kurd, in Zagmarz and Islam Abad, need to be generalised, they need to be armed where they are not, and they need to be linked up. Every effort must be made to push forward the spontaneous linking of the struggles of the unemployed and the workers, both in the urban and in the rural areas.

The committees must insist on work for all, adequate social provision, decent wages protected against inflation, nationalisation, and workers' control.

*Readers should urgently try to get resolutions through labour movement bodies demanding the release of the HKS [SWP of Iran] militants and of the Ahwaz workers. Telegrams of protest should be sent to: Mr Bazargan, Prime Minister, Tehran, or Islamic Revolutionary Council, Tehran, Iran.*

## CONSPIRACIES ON THE LEFT OR THE RIGHT?

THE CAMPAIGN in Italy to release Professor Negri and other leftist militants arrested in a pre-election "anti-terrorist" sweep is stepping up. Negri was arrested on April 7th on suspicion of being involved in the Red Brigade's kidnapping of Aldo Moro. The sole evidence against him is some articles he wrote for the far-left organisation Potere Operaio (Workers Power).

According to Padua magistrate Fais, that doesn't matter because Antonio Negri is a Marxist and Marxists believe in the unity of theory and practice. (Though Negri has actually criticised the Red Brigade's tactics).

While the state's campaign against the far-left — under the title of a campaign against terrorism — dominates the press, another affair which could turn into an Italian Watergate is kept out of the headlines of the bourgeois papers.

This concerns the murder of Giorgio Ambrosoli. It is alleged that Ambrosoli was murdered because he had got the dirt on the financier Sindona and his connections with the Mafia and with leading political figures like Prime Minister Andreotti, ex-Prime Minister Fanfani, and Christian Democratic leader Zaccagnini.

Sindona, it is said, was making huge illegal contributions to the Christian Democracy's funds. In return, Andreotti pronounced the financier 'the saviour of the lira'.

That was before Sindona's private bank went bust — despite assurances from Fanfani that it was sound — and investors lost their money. According to Sindona, he lost his own money in the venture too, but the lawyer for the small shareholders claims he has proof that the 'saviour of the lira' managed to save nearly £150 million for himself.

WARREN WRAY

## JANATA IS DEAD. WHAT NOW?

INDIA'S JANATA coalition government, headed by Moraji Desai, was defeated in a motion of no confidence last week. This collapse is only the latest in a series of crises which have beset bourgeois rule in India over the last 10 years.

From independence, in 1947, until 1977, the Congress Party ruled India continuously. It had the total backing of Indian industrialists and landlords — although it used the fig leaf of "socialist" demagoguery.

However, the Congress Party gradually began to fall apart in the late 1960s. Desai split to form the Congress (O). Corruption was rife within its ranks — the state, with its heavy intervention in the economic life of the country, was a major route to personal enrichment.

India's intervention on the side of Bangladesh in its war to secede from Pakistan boosted Congress' support temporarily in the 1971 elections. But cracks reappeared very quickly.

In early 1974 massive demonstrations and general strikes in both Gujarat and Bihar provinces, against inflation, food shortages, and local/central government corruption, demanded the dissolution of the State Assemblies and called for new elections.

These movements were only cut down by the intervention of the army, who killed 160 people.

In May 1974 a national rail strike, demanding a minimum wage and the 8 hour day, was ruthlessly repressed, with 60,000 people arrested.

### Demise

Eventually the rising anti-Congress feeling, spontaneous and without a socialist political lead from the parties of the left, gave rise to the Janata Party, a totally opportunistic alliance of parties, ranging from George Fernandez's Socialist Party through Congress and

the People's Party of India to the extreme Hindu chauvinism of the Jan Sangh. Janata's only basis of agreement was the obvious coming demise of Congress — and the possibility of getting into government and sharing out ministerial posts.

The political instability of this rag-bag coalition stopped it winning the confidence of the majority of the bourgeoisie, who backed Congress' leader Indira Gandhi's declaration of Emergency in 1977 to shore up the deteriorating economic and social unrest. The Emergency also had the support of the pro-Moscow Communist Party of India, which denounced the "fascist" nature of the anti-Congress movement.

The Emergency, however, simply intensified the anti-Congress feeling, and when elections occurred in 1977 Janata swept to power.

These ministerial changes did not improve in the slightest the daily lives of the 600 million rural dwellers at the mercy of vicious landlords, nor eased their unem-

ployment problem and abysmally low standard of life. Neither have the urban workers and the poor got a better deal. And corruption still runs right through India's political life.

### Moslem

The inevitable disintegration of Janata came last week with the fall of Desai's government after a successful motion of no confidence. The inner tensions between the right-wing Hindu chauvinism of the Jan Sangh, who have links with the RSS, a paramilitary movement responsible for attacks against the country's Moslem population, and the more secular-oriented and moderate parties are coming into the open. Jan Sangh forced the resignation of leading figures in the Janata Government, and that led to the desertion of other MPs.

The Janata Party is now dead, and there is a mad scramble for the formation of

a new government and new alliances.

The three main contenders are: Desai, who refuses to resign from the leadership; Charan Singh, who is seeking an alliance with Gandhi although he was imprisoned by her for 18 months during the Emergency; and Jagjivan Ram, the leader of India's untouchables (Harijan). The attitude of the Jan Sangh (and of course the RSS) could be critical for success of any of these projects since it is the most tightly organised and disciplined of all the Janata coalition parties.

However, the question is: with the demise of Congress in 1977 and its subsequent split in two and the present collapse of Janata — what credible political alternative remains for the Indian bourgeoisie to continue ruling through Parliament? Or is the possibility of the Army stepping in to control the situation, an extended Emergency, not so remote in the world's "largest democracy"?

ANTONIO GERMARO

## JAILED FOR ASKING QUESTIONS

A WEST German socialist, Annette Bahner, has been jailed in East Germany. According to a statement by the GDR Minister for External Affairs, she is to be charged with 'gathering information'... contrary to Article 98 of the Penal Code.

Bahner, a member of the German Social Democratic Party, has been active in the Committee for the Defence of Democratic Liberties in the Whole of Germany and in a campaign for the release from jail of East German dissident writer Robert Havemann. She was arrested while visiting East Berlin on July 8th, and held incommunicado for five days.

In Britain, signatures are being collected for a protest to be delivered to the East German Ambassador, and two lobbies of the East German Embassy have been called, on Wednesday 25th and again on Friday 27th. (From 11am, at 34 Belgrave Sq., W1).

For the defence campaign, contact: Ken Stratford, 1 Moblerley Cres., SE19 (771 0202).

# Calling Labour's leaders to account

Issues of democracy — mandatory re-selection, election of the leader, and the question of the NEC deciding the contents of the manifesto — will be central at this year's Labour Party conference. Andrew Hornung spoke to Vladimir Derer, secretary of the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy.

matically remitted to the NEC for consideration and recommendation at the following year's conference.

The three-year rule seems to be beaten, but there's also this 'one year rule'.

The NEC will consider whether to make an exception in the case of mandatory re-selection when it meets on July 25th. We have argued, of course, that it would be very bureaucratic to try to exclude this debate.

If it is discussed, then it will be the most important of all the debates on the subject of democracy. It is more important than the leadership election issue. In any case it would not help to have a leader elected by Conference and accountable to it while the Parliamentary Party remained rather right wing and unaccountable.

The MPs' emphasis has always been on the extension of democracy within the PLP. The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy has never had the support of even the majority of the Tribune MPs.

Those who really did back us on mandatory re-selection to the hilt could be counted

on the fingers of one hand. Frank Allaun and Joan Maynard were among the few.

Some were openly hostile. Joe Ashton, Michael Foot — who is still a member of Tribune, I suppose — Lena Jeger (who is now in the Lords) and Joan Lester are all people who are considered to be on the Left but have been openly hostile to mandatory re-selection.

■ ■ What do you think is the trade union line-up on this issue?

The TGWU passed a vote on mandatory re-selection at their recent conference. NUPE, the ASTMS, NUM, the Sheet Metal Workers' Union and the Agricultural Workers' Union all support mandatory re-selection, but, as last year, the crunch will come over the AUEW vote.

The joint conference of all four sections of the AUEW has been postponed until September and, although the question is raised in resolutions, there is no guarantee that it will be debated. If it is, and if it is won, there is still no guarantee that the vote of the union's delegation will be cast accordingly at the Labour Party confer-

ence, although even Duffy would then find it hard to back-track.

You have to remember that a delegation's vote is not necessarily cast according to the wishes of the union members or even of the delegation.

Among some trade unionists there is a fear that mandatory re-selection will shift things in favour of the more middle-class outlook and composition of the constituencies, and mean that middle class criteria of formal accomplishments will then prevail in selection. This would obviously militate against the adoption of workers as candidates.

■ ■ How important is the issue of the NEC writing the election manifesto?

There are about 30 resolutions on this, and if the NEC backs it, it could well go through. I think it is important: it is all trench warfare, fighting for small areas of territory, but it would be of great importance for morale. It is important too as a practical question connected with the power of the Prime Minister and party leader.

# Socialism tomorrow instead of a fight today

THE LABOUR Party Young Socialists conference this weekend (27-29 July) was postponed from just before the general election.

The same resolutions and amendments as were submitted for the Easter conference will form the basis of the agenda. But where the general election was the most pressing political issue, now it is the fight against the Tories.

The LPYS National Committee will be presenting a statement — not circulated before conference — on 'Fighting the Tories'. Its likely drift can be gathered from the resolutions which the *Militant* majority of the YS had submitted on the general election.

"A Tory victory would be a catastrophe for the working class", said Nottingham West YS. Several other resolutions stressed the future hardships workers would suffer under a Tory government. None of the *Militant* resolutions, however, drew any conclusions about the harsh experiences of the working class under the Wilson-Callaghan government, beyond commenting mildly on "the failure of the Labour Government to carry out the pledges made in the 1974 elections" and declaring it would be a good thing for Labour to adopt a programme of sweeping nationalisations.

So we can expect that the National Committee statement will denounce the Tories, but fail to draw the conclusions about organising the left for a drive against the right-wing Labour leadership. In reply to an emergency resolution from Edinburgh Central YS, arguing for a fight against the right wing, *Militant* supporters are likely to say primly that it is a matter of politics, not personalities.

## No threat

Conference delegates should fight to make sure that Edinburgh Central's resolution is taken together with the NC statement. The LPYS should not be left going along in practice with the Shadow Cabinet line of "no recriminations, all pull together against the Tories", just glossing it up with pleas for Labour's leaders to take up a socialist programme.

James Callaghan and Denis Healey will never fight for socialism, but they don't mind people passing resolutions saying that socialism is a good idea. That's no threat. We have to organise to call the right wing to account and to fight them on the practical issues of the class struggle.

As in previous years, the debate on Ireland will be hard-fought.

*Militant* argues that a united Ireland would be no step forward unless it were socialist, and deduces that the Republican struggle is harmful 'terrorism', as bad or worse than British military repression.

Thus *Militant* resolutions on Ireland stress the building of an all-Ireland Labour Party and the establishment of a 'trade union defence force'. They call for the withdrawal of British troops, but only in that context. It is often unclear whether or not *Militant* makes its support for getting the troops out conditional on the trade union defence force they advocate being set up first, and certainly YS branches under *Militant* influence have not been active in campaigns and demonstrations for withdrawal of troops.

## Troops Out

This view will be challenged. There is a general resolution (from Basingstoke YS) arguing the duty of the British labour movement to support the Irish struggle against imperialism and partition without posing conditions as to that struggle being socialist. There will also probably be an emergency resolution calling for the YS to support an independent labour movement 'troops out now' contingent on the August 12th demonstration called by the Young Liberals and others.

YS Conference debates are often dominated by long speeches from the platform and detailed National Committee recommendations on how to vote. Resolutions from Birmingham Selly Oak, Ruislip-Northwood, and Leeds South East call for reforms to remedy this and to have the NC directly elected by conference (rather than region-by-region, before conference, as at present — a system which means the NC can dominate conference and is not accountable to it).

Unfortunately the National Committee is certain to oppose these resolutions — although until *Militant* won control of the YS they were all for such reforms.

Having won control of 'part of the official labour movement', *Militant* supporters are moulding themselves to that movement's status quo and existing leaders — to the people we'll have to fight if the movement is to defend itself against the Tory government's attacks.

NIK BARSTOW

# LAMBETH'S CUTS WERE DECIDED IN SECRET

"NORWOOD Old People's Home is being closed, and its 40 residents will have to face the trauma of losing what they regard as their home..."

"There are drastic cuts in home helps, luncheon clubs, meals on wheels and aids for those who are Physically handicapped...Cutback in childminders at Groveway and other places. Cuts in nursery staff...over 100 places lost for under-5s provision..."

"Cuts in the opening of specialist homes for the mentally handicapped. Closure of 4 homes at Shirley Oaks. Increased staff vacancies..."

"Cuts in staff leading to a shortage of social workers..."

These are some of the cuts planned by Lambeth's Labour council, detailed in a leaflet by local NALGO social workers.

But there is strong feeling for a fightback, and not only among NALGO members, who voted at a 1,000-strong meeting to give no cover for vacancies.

The borough's four constituency Labour Party GMCs are meeting separately on Thursday 26th, then together on Sunday 29th. A resolution from Lambeth Trades Council Executive, calls on the Labour council to:

- refuse to implement the cuts
- cease its policy of not filling vacancies

• support demands of its own workers seeking to protect their jobs and living standards

• seek support from local unions and community groups, and from other Labour councils for a united fightback against the Tory cuts

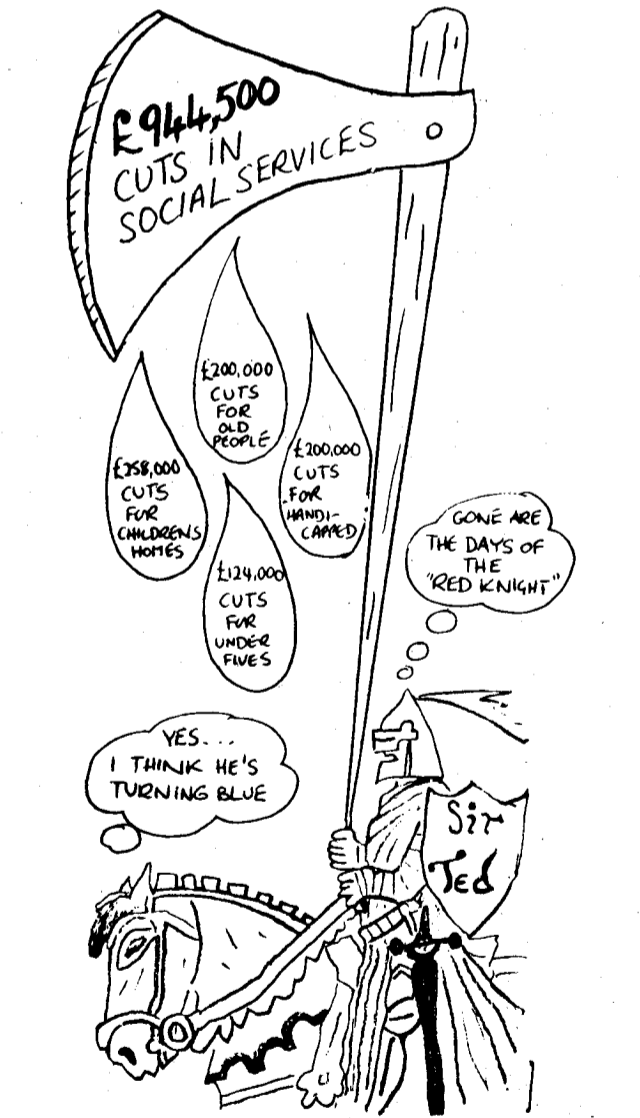
• not to consider rate increases as a method of avoiding a confrontation, but as part of the fightback. Rate increases to be a last resort to gain time to build the fightback.

• in the likely event of Tory government intervention, seek pledges of industrial action from the local and national trade union movement, to call for a national campaign of solidarity.

There are at least two other resolutions for Norwood GMC opposing cuts. One, from CLP chairman Ian Wilson and councillor Bill Bowring, calls for councillors to be sent "on speaking tours of all organisations and large workplaces of the labour movement, to call for a national campaign of solidarity".

Bill Bowring told WA: "Ted [council leader Ted Knight] has underestimated the opposition. On his calculation the right wingers will outvote the left except maybe in Norwood, but we have canvassed hard in Lambeth Central and Vauxhall".

"The most deplorable aspect", he said, "was that the decision to cut was taken in secret. The Labour Group was presented with a fait accompli by Ted. Chairmen



of departments were told to draw up proposals for cuts in their departments without consulting anyone, not even the vice-chairmen..."

"It's a logical extension of Ted's attitude of administering local government. Norwood Labour Party called a meeting early on against cuts, which he did not encourage or support. He had the opportunity to initiate a fight".

Kevin Moore, another anti-cuts councillor, said: "Ted is quite pragmatic. He knew it was easy to win the Labour Group to a high spending programme based on the rate increase, but not so easy to a real fight against the cuts".

But where the Labour Group failed to fight, many are determined that the labour movement will.

CHEUNG SIU MING

THE LIST of notables supporting *Troops Out* in August 1979 starts with a flatful of Lords and a dozen MPs, followed by writers, trade unionists, churchmen, journalists, political activists and organisations and numerous labour movement bodies.

But in August 1969 the major group on the far left in Britain, panicked by the pogroms in Belfast and Derry, were so relieved to see the British troops go into action that for nearly a whole year they dropped the slogan 'British Troops Out'.

On August 17th ten years ago, a hastily convened special meeting of members of the two leading committees of the International Socialists (IS, now the Socialist Workers' Party) voted by 9 to 3 to drop the Troops Out slogan 'as a headline', while the text of articles and editorials would make clear that IS wasn't really siding with the British Army.

But the IS leaders were facing both ways. The decision to approve what the troops were doing, taken under pressure of the prevailing assumptions of the bourgeois media that the troops had gone in to keep the peace in a neutral sort of fashion (if anything, siding with the Catholics), had to be defended against the IS leadership's critics from the left, notably the *Workers' Fight* faction within its ranks (now the International Communist League).

Already in the very first editorial, which was supposed to put to rights the absence of *Troops Out* in the headline by warning about the army's 'long term role', *Socialist Worker* readers were told that though the troops were 'not angels' they will not behave with the same viciousness as the RUC and B-Specials 'because they do not have the same ingrained hatreds'. (A resolution at the Executive Committee to insert a statement that the troops' presence was 'in the long term interests of British imperialism' had in fact been voted down by Tony Cliff, John Palmer and Paul Foot.)



The warning seemed to consist of the mildly critical thought that 'It should not be thought that the British troops can begin to solve the problems (of the Catholic workers). The role of the British troops is not to bring any real (!!) solution to the problems of the people of Northern Ireland...

Within a couple of weeks, the main fire was directed at the leadership's critics. (Meanwhile, a *Troops Out* emergency motion at IS's conference was defeated after the leaders had pulled out a good many demagogic stops.)

There were constant attacks in *Socialist Worker* on 'those who call for the immediate withdrawal of British troops', accompanied by dire warnings about the horrors of life in Catholic Belfast without British troops 'When the Catholics are armed they can tell the troops to go', a front-page caption in *SW* generously conceded. But the idea of these armed Catholics using their bullets to tell the troops to go was just unthinkable: "... they would merely add their bullets to those of the Paisleyites and provoke an immediate clash in a situation which would lead to massacre.' And 'when the Catholics are armed' they would tell the troops to go because, the assumption went, they wouldn't need them anymore

# WHEN BRITISH TROOPS WENT INTO ACTION IN 1969 HOW SOCIALIST WORKER DROPPED 'TROOPS OUT'

A vote was taken as to whether we should demand the withdrawal of British troops as a headline.  
For: cdes. Hallas, Protz, Nagliatti  
Against: cdes. Looker, Harman, Cliff, Osborne, Cox, Widgery, Palmer, Milsom, T. Lindop

Belfast on Sunday: when the Catholics are armed they can tell the troops to go

Time is vital to bring aid to the Northern people. The intervention of the British troops only allows a temporary breathing space in which the defences of the Catholic community can be strengthened.

In Derry in particular the...

But it should not be thought that the presence of British troops can begin to solve their problems.

**NOT ANGELS**  
Because the troops do not have the ingrained hatreds of the RUC and Specials, they will not behave with the same viciousness - although...

The breathing space provided by the presence of British troops is short but vital. Those who call for the immediate withdrawal of the troops before the men behind the barricades can defend themselves are inviting a pogrom which will hit first and hardest at socialists.

Clockwise: Socialist Worker, 11.9.69; next two, SW 21.8.69; SW page 1 11.9.69; minutes of special IS leadership meeting, 17.8.69; IS EC minutes 29.9.69.

— not because they were and would be the enemy.

The paper had at first presented the issue as a purely internal Northern Ireland one, as if the British ruling class had no interest in the matter. The troops were passive and neutral: 'Behind the lines of British troops the repressive apparatus of Stormont remains' — as if the troops were not themselves repressive.

Continuing the line of thought, 'the Special Powers Act, which permits imprisonment without trial, has not been revoked' — presumably, if the troops were really doing a proper job, they might have gone on to revoke the Act. 'And when the troops leave...' It will all still be there. It didn't occur to them that the troops might not leave but stay on and themselves imprison people without trial.

But when the IS leaders were called to order from the left, and reminded that British imperialism stood behind Stormont rather than vice versa, they concocted an elaborate and convoluted

theory of lesser and greater contradictions to justify their position.

The greatest 'contradiction' was between the troops and the Paisleyites, who were thwarting British designs for a bourgeois united Ireland. Meanwhile the contradiction between the troops and the Catholics' barricades, and the Catholic workers' arming and self defence, would only become acute 'at some future turn'. A centre page article by Stephen Marks presented the case for British troops to stay under the headline: 'Fine slogans and grim reality — The contradictory role of British troops gives Catholic workers time to arm against further Orange attacks'. (No mention of attacks by the army itself, of course.)

The benefits of the British army in Belfast and Derry were that they were 'freezing' the conflict, 'buying time' and providing 'a breathing space' in which Catholics could prepare to fight the Orange mobs. They could also, apparently,

're-arm politically' in the course of opposing the moderates' calls for reliance on the army — though no thanks to *Socialist Worker*, which stood four-square with the moderates with its apologies for the British Army.

The 'contradiction' between the Army and the Catholics' barricades and guns was in fact acute from the first day. The army's aim was to prevent such self-defence — by substituting for it, and by repressing it.



In the very week when the troops were taking down the barricades this same article talked of a 'future turn in the situation when the demolition of the barricades may (!) be needed in the interests of British capital itself and not merely of its local retainers' — as if, in its zeal to save Catholic lives, 'British capital itself' was quite happy to have barricades up in its streets for any length of time at all.

IS had made a big thing of

The contradictory role of British troops gives Catholic workers time to arm against further Orange attacks

Slogans behind the Protest

From SW's centre page, 18.9.69.

the barricades. Defence of the barricades had been its militant call, substituted for *Troops Out* as soon as the troops were on the streets. The special issue of *SW* on Ireland following the change of line had declared in banner headlines: 'The barricades must stay until: \*B-Specials disbanded \*RUC disarmed \*Special Powers Act abolished \*Political prisoners released'. And on 11th September the main headline was 'Defend the Barricades — No peace until Stormont goes' (by which one would understand that there should have been peace in northern Ireland since Whitehall scrapped Stormont in 1972).

But the week the barricades were taken down in Belfast found *SW* with its main centre page policy article defending *SW*'s failure to call for the troops to go (and defending themselves, in the course of the argument); and the week the barricades were brought down in Derry, as a prelude to the liquidation of 'Free Derry', found *SW* utterly silent on the question.

To continue to call for the defence of the barricades would have meant to call the Catholics into conflict with the troops — which really would have exposed 'the main contradiction' in IS's line.

Ten years and 1900 deaths later on, *Troops Out* is a respectable demand. *Socialist Worker*, ever able to articulate the lowest common denominator of political feeling, puts it this way in its leaflet for the August 12th demonstration: 'Ten years on — it's time to go!'. But IS and the SWP had and have pretensions to be revolutionaries. And revolutionaries can't afford to wait for hindsight. They shouldn't need ten years, or even ten days, to discover what's wrong with British troops being deployed in Ireland.

As the *Workers' Fight* faction in IS put it in 1969, the matter was an ABC one: 'No practical or political confidence in the intervention of the imperialist state; the necessity at all times to deny them the right to intervene; reliance on the self-mobilisation, self activity and self defence of the working class or oppressed people, not merely as a ritualistic recital of a credo but for the very practical reason that all these things are necessary for the working class to develop and maintain that self reliance and confidence necessary for taking power; not to turn for aid to forces which exist precisely to destroy independent working class action.'

Another effect of the abandonment of *Troops Out* was to miseducate the IS members in political method, telling them that you could play fast and loose with principles and that it was a good thing to be 'clever' and say different things in headlines and agitation from what you

said among the initiated. (That was the theory anyway; in fact what was said in the 'small print' was worse.)

Is it now all water under the bridge? If IS/SWP had held to a consistent line throughout the British military occupation and insisted through thick and thin that Britain had no right to have its troops in Ireland, a half-decent Troops Out movement might have been built in the past ten years.

But IS preferred to follow the fashion: when a Bloody Sunday happens, or an outcry over torture or internment or SAS killer squads, it has been staunchly (and loudly) against the troops. But when the Officers' Mess at Aldershot was bombed IS turned its main fire against the Republicans, and later adopted the slogan 'Stop the Bombings'. (Directed at no-one in particular: possibly the Republicans, perhaps the British Army, or maybe to the British chauvinist working class.)



When IS finally re-adopted *Troops Out* in the summer of 1970 on a National Committee resolution from Sean Matgamna of *Workers' Fight* (having fought tooth and nail to avoid defeat on the question by the Easter conference two months earlier) the IS leaders reiterated this empirical, fashion-tailing method by saying they had been right all along. One took one's position 'in response to changes in the immediate role of the troops'. It all depended on just what the Army was doing at any particular time.

*Workers' Fight* commented: 'The task of Marxists is to understand and state the overall character and role of such things as an imperialist army or bourgeois state police. Obviously their actions vary from day to day. Policemen help old ladies across the road. At other times they bash through picket lines. If we take the empirical method we will have to say that in some actions we support them, in others we oppose them.'

'The whole purpose of a class analysis is to ascertain which aspect dominates.'

The IS leaders didn't for long hold to the line that they had been right all along. For the past eight years or so they have denied they ever argued for the troops to stay, and declare that those who say so are slanderers.

In true Stalinist fashion they go through the old papers, picking out a quote here and there out of context to support their claim that 'week after week after week' they opposed the troops. But there are two simple words that they can never quote from that crucial year, and they are: TROOPS OUT.

Rachel Lever

## The risks of Depo-Provera BAN THE JAB!

A CONTRACEPTIVE drug which may cause cancer and has serious side effects is being used on women who are not told the consequences and may have no chance to refuse it.

Depo-Provera is an injection containing the synthetic hormone medroxyprogesterone acetate, marketed by the American drug company Upjohn. One injection of 150mg Depo-Provera, which lasts for about three months, has the effect of preventing ovulation. It also makes the lining of the uterus less able to accept a fertilised egg, and makes the plug of mucus in the cervix more sticky so that it acts as a barrier to sperm.

Being quick and convenient, it could be an ideal contraceptive. But many women have found that their menstrual cycle is disrupted and they suffer heavy and prolonged bleeding; some women have menstruated almost continuously for three months. Anaemia (due to excessive blood loss), weight gain, depression, headaches, acne and loss of libido are other side effects.

After the injection is given it cannot be counteracted, so any side effects have to be endured for the whole three months.

More worrying is the possibility that Depo-Provera may cause cancer. It is known that in studies on beagle dogs it was found to cause an increase in breast cancer. Recently it has been discovered that in these same tests most of the dogs developed diseases of the uterus, including cancer; after three and a half years, 18 out of 20 dogs given varying doses of Depo-Provera had died as a result of the action of the drug on the uterus.

Despite this, Depo-Provera has been approved for use as a contraceptive in at least 70 countries, mostly in the Third World. The International Planned Parenthood Federation has estimated that between 1962 and 1977 five million women had been given this drug.

The American Food and Drugs Administration has refused to approve it for use in America because of the cancer risk, but last year in a communication with the manufacturers Upjohn the FDA proposed a double standard: 'We recognise that the benefit/risk considerations may be different in other countries, where the alternative methods of contraception may be less available or less acceptable and where the physician/patient ratio is lower.'

In Britain, the Committee for the Safety of Medicines (CSM) has approved the use of Depo-Provera as a short-term contraceptive for two specific categories of women: those whose partners have had a vasectomy and are waiting for it to become effective, and those who have had vaccinations against German Measles (when it is important not to become pregnant for three months to protect the foetus from the effects of this vaccine).

But the drug isn't banned from use in other circumstances. If the patient does not fit into either of these specific categories, it is still up to the doctor whether or not to use the drug, and it is he or she who takes the responsibility, not the drug

manufacturer.

Doctors are using their 'freedom of clinical judgment' to prescribe Depo-Provera for women who may be unaware of its side effects and have no way of knowing that it does not have official approval.

There is evidence to suggest that Depo-Provera is being used primarily for black and working class women. Two areas it has been widely used are Glasgow and London — in the former, women were given it if they lived in deprived conditions and were 'bad contraceptive risks'.

In London, many women are given German measles vaccinations after having a baby. This is particularly so with Asian women, as the health authorities claim that they have no way of knowing whether a woman born abroad has been protected against the disease. (There is in fact a blood test which can be performed to see whether vaccination is necessary.)

In line with the CSM guidelines, it is common for these women to be given an injection of Depo-Provera at the same time, sometimes without their knowledge or consent. Side effects are often not explained. A large number of these women will be breastfeeding their babies and passing the drug on to them in the breast milk. We are not likely to know for many years what effects this may have on these children.

In a recently publicised case a 14-year old West Indian girl was given Depo-Provera while under anaesthetic and without her consent, following an abortion in a north London hospital. Before the operation she had decided, with her social worker and the consultant, to have a coil fitted, rejecting the pill because she was worried about it on medical grounds.

The surgeon who did the abortion was unable to fit a coil, and instead he took the decision to give her Depo-Provera; he said it was given while she was under the anaesthetic so that there was no discomfort to the patient!

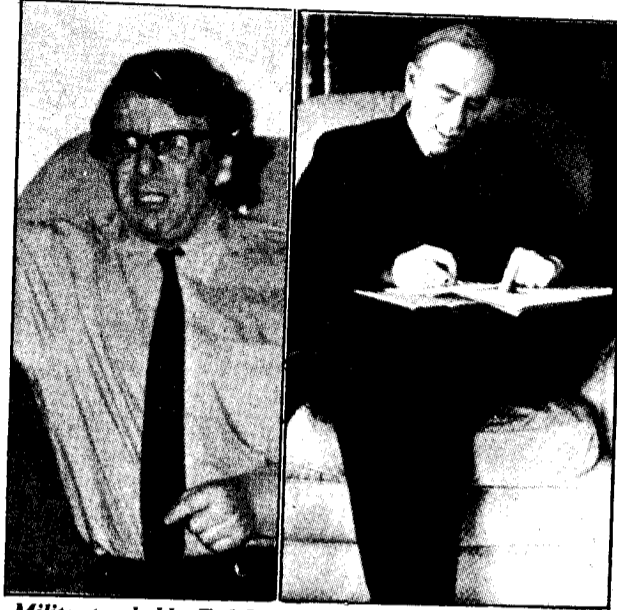
In an interview on *The London Programme* (London Weekend TV) the surgeon said when describing his motives: 'I think it's reasonable to say that my thoughts before giving the injection were both those of a medical man and those of a parent and a citizen of the UK. We can practice freedom of thought; I felt rather shocked that I was having to do a termination on a 14-year old girl. Now I think it's slightly irrelevant what form of contraceptive you fit at that time.'

Evidently freedom of thought is not a right which this surgeon extends to a young black girl.

The *Ban the Jab* campaign against Depo-Provera was set up by women concerned about the way in which it is being used, particularly as a form of social and racial control in England and the Third World. The campaign is currently collecting information from women who have been given contraceptive injections, so that a detailed analysis of the usage of Depo-Provera can be made.

The campaign can be contacted at 374 Grays Inn Road, London WC1

# 'ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY' & 'SOCIALIST PLAN' SOCIALISM BY FORMULAS



Militant — led by Ted Grant [left] — counterposes a 'Socialist Plan' to the 'Left Alternative Strategy' based on the ideas of the radical bourgeois economist Keynes [right].

GORDON BREWER reviews 'Capitalist Crisis: Tribune's "Alternative Strategy" or Socialist Plan', by Andrew Glyn. 'Militant' pamphlet, 60p.

GLYN'S PAMPHLET is an attempt to show the contradictions in the industrial strategy of the right wing of the Labour Party and in that of the official left, the so-called 'Left Alternative Strategy'.

In an introductory section he underscores the depths of the world crisis, showing how the drive towards protectionism, far from being a 'socialist' solution to the problems of economic stagnation, in immanent in the development of the capitalist crisis itself as the capitalists, although still united in attacking the working class, scramble with each other over the proceeds of exploitation. Glyn also takes up some of the standard arguments about the crisis, such as that North Sea oil can usher the decrepit British economy into an era of prosperity, or that an upturn can take off on the crest of an export-led boom.

Turning to the alternative to Callaghan provided by the Tribune group and the Communist Party, Glyn attacks it on two fronts. On the one hand the strategy is not a socialist strategy at all, merely an alternative for running the capitalist system, supposedly in the interests of the working class. Central to the alternative strategy is an implied subjectivist theory of the crisis. The capitalists do not cease to invest because of real contradictions in the system, but because they are too 'greedy' to invest productively. Or else governments simply have a wrong understanding of how to counter the crisis. Thus the Labour Government was supposedly 'fooled by Tory arguments', and the central task for socialists is to convince them of the error of their ways.

For Tribune, as for the bourgeoisie itself, the 'economy' is not a system of class relations but a quasi-independent mechanism, and debates over the economy are not debates over class interests, but technical discussions about how best to run the machine. The reformists want to discuss with the ruling class on the latter's own terms.

Thus it is quite logical for reformism to march hand in hand with an underconsumptionist theory of the crisis. If only we would boost wages instead of cutting them, more demand would be created and this could provide a stimulus to more investment. Glyn argues: 'But this approach only sees one side of the dilemma of the capitalist class — the question of markets — while ignoring the other and equally fundamental question of profitability. Any policy which increased real wages, while temporarily improving the market situation, would further drive down profits'. Thus the futility of the 'left's' attempts to drag in Keynes with a Marxist hat to solve the problems of the ruling class.

On the other hand, Glyn argues, if the capitalists are intelligent enough to empirically wallow about in the crisis in their own best interests without the aid of Tribune and the Communist Party, they would put up bitter resistance to the implementation of any elements of the alternative strategy that they did not like. 'The danger is not just that the ideas of socialism would be discredited in this way, but that the economic chaos which would result would pave the way for a reactionary takeover on the basis of crushing the organisations of the working class, as the Chilean experience makes clear'.

On every level, Glyn argues, the Alternative Strategy falls down. It is utopian, in the idea that you can run capitalism in the interests of the working class; it is nationalist, with its call via import controls for the exportation of unemployment on to the backs of foreign workers; and it is extremely dangerous as it attempts to take on the power of the bosses independently of a programme based on the self-activity of the working class.

But if these are the strengths of Glyn's pamphlet, its

weaknesses are legion. Glyn tends towards a catastrophist view of the crisis, failing to locate class struggle as central to the bourgeoisie's attempts to solve the crisis. He thus downplays the role of the Labour Government as aiding the bosses' recovery from the 1974-5 recession. The Labour Government did not just have bad policies, it was an important factor in quelling resistance by the organised working class to the attempts by the ruling class to get out of the crisis at the expense of the workers. And although Glyn is correct to point out that the recovery was only partial and inadequate to the needs of capital accumulation, the fact is that a partial recovery has only been possible because of the role of the Labour Government in policing the trade union movement with the active co-operation of the trade union leaders themselves.

Instead, Glyn merely says that the Labour Government was 'forced to shelve its plans to curb the power of capital'. Of course, whether they really were forced, or whether they 'shelved their plans' to the tune of a drunken toast at the Overseas Bankers Club is not the point. The point is that the capitalist system is not a machine which grinds to a halt of its own accord. The crisis will be resolved at the expense of one or other of the major classes in society; the depth of the crisis is a measure of the severity of the steps that the ruling class will be forced to take against the proletariat.

This takes us to the central failing of Glyn's pamphlet. Glyn's alternative to the Tribune 'alternative' is to argue for a 'socialist plan of production'. As opposed to the reformists, who want to nationalise only 25 major companies, Glyn wants to nationalise 200. And, with a passing reference to the law of the transformation of quantity into quality, this is supposed to be the heart and soul of a revolutionary programme.

This conception of a revolutionary programme converts it into just another good idea for running society. And, of course, as such it can be used to highlight the inadequacies of reformism. But as a programme rather than a pedantic exposition of what socialism would be like, it is completely inadequate. The specifically revolutionary content of a Marxist programme is its ability to intervene in the daily struggles by the working class to defend itself against the attacks of capital, constantly driving them forward and seeking to demonstrate that in the epoch of imperialism the defensive fight can only be won by going over to the offensive, by raising the question of who controls production.

Secondly, and bound up with this, a revolutionary programme bases itself on the organisations thrown up by the working class in the course of the struggle against the bosses, seeing these organisations as simultaneously fighting organs within capitalism and also as the basis of the future workers' state. Although revolutionaries are in favour of using parliament as a means of propaganda, a revolutionary programme is not centrally based on parliament but on the self-activity of the working class.

Thus the revolutionaries do not just disagree with reformism on how many companies to nationalise, but on the whole nature of a socialist strategy. The revolutionary conception is of a programme of self-emancipation, the reformist of a parliamentary-administered state capitalism.

All this Glyn ignores. In fact his strategy is a return to the ideas of the early Second International where the day to day routine work of a revolutionary party was not connected to the 'final goal' of socialism. Glyn's stress on the maximum as opposed to the minimum elements in the programme is entirely in this tradition. And this despite the fact that his demands for the class struggle bear a formal similarity to those of Trotsky's Transitional Programme. The difference is that what for Trotsky was a tool for revolutionaries to use in relating to the class struggle is for Glyn a lifeless formula to counterpose to the lifeless formulae of reformism.

## CAPITAL & CLASS

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# From Kautsky to Eurocommunism:

## Introduction

by Bruce Robinson

IN THE SECTION of "A New Strategy" printed last week, Karl Kautsky analysed the role of the mass strike in the Russian Revolution of 1905. In the section printed here, he contrasts the situation in Russia with that in Germany in 1910 in order to argue against using the mass strike in the Prussian suffrage struggle.

Kautsky, like many others since, tries to dismiss the relevance of Russian revolutionary methods to Western Europe by arguing that those methods were appropriate only to a backward society and economy. According to Kautsky, Russian economic backwardness determined that mass strikes could follow one another in a wave over a period of years. He argues that the political backwardness isolated the Tsarist autocracy and thus ensured more support for mass strikes among all sections of the population, and also that the strike was the only means of political expression left open to the working class.

Eurocommunists base much of their argument as to why a revolutionary strategy is not possible in Western Europe on the different nature of the state in advanced countries compared with countries like Russia. In Russia, they argue, the state had few roots in society as a whole; it was therefore possible to mount a direct assault on it and overthrow it. In Western Europe, the state has far deeper roots, both in its ideological hold on the majority of the population and in its material base. It can therefore resist a frontal attack and can only be undermined by a slow process of 'war of position'.

■ ■ ■

Kautsky's line of argument is very similar, though dominated by his own economic determinism. He too sees the German state as stronger than the Russian, and concludes from this that 'a new strategy' is needed. Because Germany is economically more advanced than Russia, both the working class and the bourgeoisie are more powerful, and both have created a whole array of their own institutions on which they can rely for support. This allows the proletariat to use more sophisticated methods than the "amorphous primitive strike" used in Russia. Kautsky draws an odd conclusion:

"The struggles between these organisations [of the workers and of the bourgeoisie] thereby become likewise ever more centralised and concentrated. They do thereby gain in force... but with this they also become — rarer and rarer".

Kautsky here again depicts the mass strike as something apocalyptic — the final showdown between Capital and Labour, which only becomes possible when the proletariat's organisations have won over the overwhelming majority of the working class. In the meantime, Kautsky (like the Eurocommunists) relies on the continued existence of bourgeois democracy. He writes:

"... Thanks to political freedom, the workers have such ample opportunity to state their views without risk that even in the case of extraordinary reasons only the most powerful and most advanced among them will take upon themselves the risk of a mere protest strike".

Yet the Germany in which he was writing was very far from being even a formal democracy — in Prussia the unequal suffrage remained, and only two decades earlier the SPD had been banned altogether. Kautsky, like his latter-day followers, does not examine the reality of bourgeois democracy, but rests content with illusions which provide consoling explanations of why revolutionary struggle is only needed in the far-off future.

■ ■ ■

Kautsky considers the Russian socialist movement to be at a more primitive level than the German. He emphasises the positive side of the German social-democratic movement — its organisational strength — and plays down its bureaucracy and conservatism. In this respect he parallels the Militant, who constantly stresses the strength of the British labour movement and draw the conclusion that great caution should be observed, for easy victories are certain in due course as long as the natural evolution continues. Both attitudes — Kautsky's and the Militant's — spring from a similar conception: that socialism will be brought about through an organic growth in the existing labour movement. In both cases this leads to rejection of a revolutionary strategy in favour of passive propaganda for socialism and a postponement of bold action to the indefinite future.

Rosa Luxemburg and Lenin both came to realise that in many ways the 'primitive' Russian workers were more politically advanced than the more impressive workers' organisations in Western Europe, dominated by a conservative bureaucracy which in 1914 decisively betrayed the working class. They judged the issue not by means of mechanical schemas but by the ability of the working class to make a revolution.

## Don't go over the limits of what is achievable



Russian workers in a communal canteen

## Karl Kautsky: A NEW STRATEGY

### 5. Strikes in Germany

IN present day Prussia the situation is completely different from that in Russia five years ago. Here we have to deal with the strongest government of the present period. Nowhere are army and bureaucracy so rigidly disciplined, nowhere is the number of people employed by the state greater; they are definitely nowhere in such a 'divinely willed dependence', nowhere are they kept under control by a worse blind obedience than in Germany and particularly in Prussia. Above this terrorised mass, however, there stand exploiters of an energy and brutality which are without parallel. All these leading exploiters stand united behind their government, all the more united the more stubbornly it

clings to the existing order of things. And the government is supported as guardian of the existing order against any revolution, by great masses of peasants and petty bourgeois.

In Russia in 1905 the government was completely isolated. In Prussia today the proletariat is isolated in every action in which it wants to energetically attack the existing conditions.

And if in Russia in 1905 the government had wretchedly collapsed in a light-minded war against a small power, then the Prussian government has been bolstered for nearly a century now by the glamour of constant victories, victories against the strongest great powers of the world.

On the other hand however the living conditions of the German proletariat are not so desperate as those of the Russian proletarians up to the time of the revolution. For the former the strike by no means constitutes the only possibility of action as a class, the only possibility of associating with his comrades, of protesting united with them, of putting forward demands, of developing his strength. Clubs, meetings, the press, elections of all kinds plentifully occupy him. Under these conditions the strike has a completely different meaning for him.

If in Russia the fact of a strike was a victory, whatever its practical outcome might be; if the strike was a means of organisation, of education, of stimulation, then that is not at all the case with us. We have other means of achieving this. In Germany — and in western Europe in general — the worker turns to the strike as a method of struggle only when he has the prospect of achieving particular successes through it. If these successes do not emerge, then the strike has not served its purpose. And if the lack of success results from bad leadership, which either chose the wrong time for the strike or misestimated the forces of their own or the enemies' organisation or acted wrongly in some other way, then the strike can very easily achieve the opposite of what it intended and exert a demoralising effect on the workers.

Therefore before a strike one considers its chances exactly and it becomes an important task of the strike leadership to formulate exactly, right at the beginning of the strike, the demands which are to be realised. To a large extent success depends on how they are drawn up. They must not be too negligible if the élan of those fighting is not to fail. However they also must not go too far over the limits of what is achievable in the given conditions of power if they are not to make a victory impossible from the outset.

What might be superfluous, pedantic, narrow-minded differentiation from the standpoint of the amorphous primitive strike of revolutionary Russia is an important condition of any rational conduct of a strike in Western Europe. A strike movement can of course cut across another one, a strike movement can of course take on various forms in the course of its development, forms which cannot be foreseen. From a protest strike there can develop a lockout or a strike of compulsion, an individual economic strike can take on the dimensions of a mass sympathy strike and finally achieve political importance. A victorious political mass strike can draw individual economic offshoots in its wake. All of that does not prevent there being very different types of strike, and that at the beginning of a strike — given the present conditions — the nature and type of this strike, as well as the goals and purposes set for it, must always be exactly weighed up.

The conditions of striking in Western Europe and especially in Germany are thus very very different from those of pre-revolutionary and revolutionary Russia. A strike tactic which proved its value there is therefore not necessarily in order here for a whole period.

Even in the mere protest strike differences can be noticed. It would be much more difficult in Germany to call a protest strike of such proportions that it would change the whole situation and thereby make the deepest impression on the whole bourgeois world as, too, on the most indifferent layers of the proletariat, as was the case fairly frequently in Russia. At the time of the south Russian demonstration strikes of July 1903 comrade Vera Zasulich wrote in *Iskra*: 'Such has never been seen by Russia, and I believe even by western Europe also. We see here something completely new in the history of the world: the absolute solidarity of all workers whatever their profession or nationality. All workers from the well situated professional classes down to the lowest layers of porters are striking as one. Travel by steamship and railway is at a standstill, electric and gas lighting are cut off, the clerks of the large warehouses are on strike, the tram workers are on strike, no newspapers are published, bread and foodstuffs are rapidly increasing in price, the building sites are silent, in Baku the water supply is cut off. In Western Europe such strikes have never yet taken place in spite of half a century of the socialist movement, of the social democratic organisation and of political freedom.' (Quoted in *Tscherawanin*, 'Das Proletariat und die russische Revolution', p.51.)

Certainly, protest strikes of this type have never taken place in western Europe. And they will also not come about so easily, not in spite of, but because of, the half century of the socialist movement, of social democratic organisations and of political freedom. They are peculiar to a situation in which a modern mass proletariat, with the example of a half century of the socialist movement and political freedom in western Europe before it, is itself without any legal possibility of organisation.

In western Europe, as a result of half a century of proletarian class struggle, not only the proletarian organisations but also the capitalist organisations which oppress the proletariat are much more strongly developed, and they enter into action much sooner and much more powerfully even in a mere protest strike. On the other hand, thanks to the political freedom, the workers have such ample opportunity to state their views without risk, that even with extraordinary reasons only the most powerful and the most advanced among them will take upon themselves the risk of a strike if this is to remain a mere protest.



In view of the iron discipline in the state, town, and private large-scale monopoly concerns and in view of the rigid mutual support of government and capital, it is completely inconceivable that in this country a protest strike against the government would bring the metropolitan railways, the trams or the gasworks to a standstill. But in many other branches of industry also a very strong impetus will be needed if the workers are to enter into a mere protest strike as soon as they find resistance on the part of the employers. Thus the strike is not the only possible form of political protest and political activity, indeed a mere protest strike is not even the most impressive. A victorious Reichstag election makes a far greater impression. It would hardly be possible, without a tremendously important reason, to really carry out a protest strike which becomes a real mass demonstration across the whole empire, if it is about something which does not demand immediate defence but which is to make a mere protest against an injustice which has already been in existence for half a century. Rather it is the case that local protest strikes are conceivable as a protest against a deeply felt injustice existing at that moment, which momentarily rouses the masses and calls out for immediate defence which cannot be postponed until the next elections. In my article *What now?* I have also expressed the expectation that such protest strikes as we have already had in Kiel and Frankfurt would be repeated and intensified if the police brutalities were to be repeated and intensified. Such strikes however cannot be discussed in advance. They arise of their own accord out of particular situations.

A far reaching political effect could not result from such local protest strikes if they were also to stimulate the development of the movement. In order to be politically effective the protest strike would have to be much more widespread. Comrade Luxemburg is even of the opinion that the mass strike which she has in mind in the present suffrage struggle, whatever she means by it, should involve not merely Prussia but the whole of Germany.

Such a strike also would not be in any case impossible but, as already mentioned, it would encounter great difficulties, could only succeed in the case of the concurrence of highly favourable factors and would yet have hardly more effect than a Reichstag election, for example.

In comrade Luxemburg's view it does not even stop with protest strikes. She speaks of a constantly intensifying and sharpening mass action which is perhaps initiated by a 'short, single demonstration strike'.

Comrade Pannekoek expresses himself more clearly than comrade Luxemburg does in her article. He says in his second article: 'The mass strike as a political method of exercising compulsion on the government cannot here, in the struggle for the government, be a single act, but only a drawn out process. It can only be a long tough struggle. It cannot therefore be a single strike of long duration — the workers themselves cannot tolerate that — but it must be a rising and falling colossal strike movement in which now here, now there, the fighters must take a break and catch their breath before they again fling themselves into the struggle, whereby they unite as many forces as possible for a simultaneous strike, sometimes perhaps also separating again into individual struggles.'

This example is taken completely from the Russian history of strikes. In fact Pannekoek himself says before this: 'Nothing is more important than recognising fairly clearly the forms which a mass strike movement will take on in Germany as it develops. In this however the examples from western Europe are of least use to us for here the whole power of the ruling class was never at stake. Rather the Russian strike movement can serve as an example. Nonetheless this example also cannot be used without further ado — not for the reason which Kautsky thinks, i.e. that in Russia the revolution held sway but does not here, for the Russian revolution consisted of exactly the mass strike



The Tsar and Tsarina

movement, and the German revolution has basically already begun with the Prussian struggle for suffrage. But the difference lies in the powerful organisational strength of the German proletariat, which has never yet been seen in such a struggle and which will provide the proletariat with tremendous force.'

Pannekoek does not therefore look to western Europe to strengthen his case but to Russia. He himself does indeed immediately admit that a difference exists between the Russian and German situations, but he sees it only in the 'powerful organisational strength of the German proletariat' and is of the opinion that this can only lead to increas-

ing the impetus of the struggle.

I am of a different opinion. This powerful strength of the German proletariat is a consequence of the powerful concentration of capital and the no less powerful development of the communications network which increasingly brings all regions of the empire into the closest economic and intellectual interdependence, but which also makes not only the organisations of the proletariat ever more centralised and unified but also those of the industrialists and of the state.

The struggles between these organisations thereby become likewise ever more centralised and concentrated. They do indeed thereby gain in force, as Pannekoek notes, but with this they also become rarer and rarer. In such circumstances one ponders for a long time before entering into a struggle, but as soon as it has been started then it immediately spreads as widely as possible and must be fought out with all possible weapons, either to victory or to the point of complete exhaustion of one's forces right down the line.



Kautsky argued that the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5 [above] was crucial in preparing the way for the 1905 mass strike. But when even more devastating war came to Germany, in 1914-18, Kautsky still opposed revolutionary action.

Such a struggle cannot be repeated for some time, far less the more far reaching it has been, the more the whole mass of the proletariat was involved in it. The conception of a period of mass strikes which at first have no practical results but are renewed again and again, after short breaks to regain one's breath, until the opponent is defeated, finds some support in the Russian economic backwardness, but it contradicts completely the conditions of struggle in a highly developed industrial country with a far advanced concentration of capital and centralisation of the fighting organisations of both the proletariat and also of the industrialists and government.

On the other hand it was a result of the political backwardness of Russia that every strike, even a purely economic one, which took place there became an act of revolutionary politics, so that it was possible to come to regard a period of strikes of all kinds — most of them being local and economic — as a period 'of mass strikes' or even as 'the mass strike'.

In this sense comrade Luxemburg said in her work about the *Mass Strike, Party and Trade Unions*: 'It is completely wrong to conceive of the mass strike as one act, as a single action. The mass strike is rather a definition of, the collective term for, a whole period of the class struggle lasting years, perhaps decades. Of the innumerable different mass strikes which have taken place in Russia in the last four years (since 1902) the idea of the mass strike as one which is purely political and is a short individual act that has been summoned up deliberately and intentionally matches only one type, and what is more a subordinate type: the pure protest-strike... All other great and partial mass strikes and general strikes were not protest strikes but fighting strikes, and as such they mostly arose spontaneously, every time out of specific, local, random causes, without any plan or intention, and expanded with an elemental power into great movements whereupon they did not enter upon an 'ordered retreat' but changed sometimes into economic struggle, sometimes into street fighting, sometimes crumbled away of their own accord.' (p.29)

It is evident that after 'half a century of social democratic organisation and political freedom', strikes take on a different appearance from those Russian strikes, and that that is not the strike of the future for us in Germany. In our case the strike is a completely legal activity, it can be freely discussed and organised, in itself it still is not a threat directed against the government, and the strike of completely unorganised masses 'without plan or intention' is ever less in evidence. As a rule strikes are carefully considered before their outbreak, do not then finally 'crumble away of their own accord' and do not change into 'street fighting' either. If strikes take place close together in certain periods it will not occur to anyone here to want to use the collective term 'mass strike' to describe such a period of strikes, and just as little would anybody believe that such a period of economic and local strikes is already a revolutionary action which will lead to the overthrow of the government. If in this country the miners in the Ruhr district were to strike today for higher wages, and six months later the building workers in Berlin were to do the same followed six months later by the textile workers in Crimmitschau, then no-one will expect that that is the mass strike which will force the Prussian government onto its knees.\*

If an action here is to have an effect as a political mass strike then it cannot be local, without any planning or goal. It must be planned and intended as a political strike from

the outset, and it must remain this until the end. It must cover the whole state, cannot be 'partial', 'local' mass strike and it leads to a painful defeat if it changes without political result 'into an economic struggle, into street fighting, or crumbles away of its own accord'.

Only in the situation of the complete lack of freedom in Russia could a period of years of strikes which followed one another and were mostly of a local and economic nature take on such a revolutionary character — only here could this period be named 'the mass strike' without doing all too great a violence to the concept.

If however comrade Luxemburg was of the opinion that such a period of strikes could be extended indefinitely for decades then experience has shown since then that under Russian conditions that was not possible.

In the end the Russian proletariat also necessarily became exhausted by constant strikes, and there came the moment when it was confronted by the dilemma of either winning a decisive victory or suffering a long term defeat.

Even under Russian conditions, strikes only organise, educate and strengthen the proletariat for a certain time without regard to whether they collapse and are defeated or are victorious. The more the Russian strike period took on the character of a real political mass strike, the more it approached the moment when it faced the choice: victory or defeat.

I am not saying that in order to line up with those security commissars who today lecture the Russian proletariat about their reprehensible policy of violence. Its mass strike action was an elementary event, not created by anybody. It was the task of socialists in this mass action, as in every mass action of the proletariat, to place themselves at its head, whatever the foreseeable result might be. And it was by no means at all clear from the outset that Czarism would be victorious once again.

Finally, even if this mass strike did not achieve what we all hoped, it was not in vain. It left behind it a different Russia from the one it had found in existence.

But thereby perhaps even Russia has gone beyond those conditions which made it possible to name a strike period lasting a number of years 'the mass strike'. As soon as a working class movement in Russia in again vigorously under way, and that will hopefully soon be the case, it might find that conditions exist which make the 'strike without plan and aim', the strike which is a gain whether it 'ends in street fighting' or 'collapses', appear as a relapse into out of date methods. Then indeed in Russia too the 'pedantic' differentiation of strikes according to plan and aim will be necessary, and a political mass strike will become a single act just like in western Europe, an act for which the conditions are sharply different from those of the economic strike.

But however that may be, the pattern of the Russian mass strike before and during the revolution does not in any case suit German conditions.

Here, in this conception, lies the most basic reason for the differences of opinion about the mass strike which exist between my friends and me. They expect a period of the mass strike; under the conditions which exist in Germany I can conceive of a political mass strike only as a single event into which the whole proletariat enters with all its might, as a life and death struggle, as a struggle which defeats our opponents or smashes, or at least paralyses, all out organisations and our whole strength for a number of years.

Of course I do not conceive of this single event as an isolated act 'created at the drop of a hat'. I too expect a period of embittered mass struggles and mass actions, but I see the mass strike as the final weapon which is employed in the fight, that weapon with which the decisive blow is carried out. I consider it impossible to carry out, in German conditions, the whole struggle with this weapon right from the outset, and equally impossible to use this weapon again and again, when its force would exhaust our own army too quickly.

You do not fight outpost skirmishes with heavy artillery.

\* Here I seem to have once again prophesied wrongly. I wrote that I had not yet read the article in Vorwaerts about the speech which comrade Luxemburg gave in Charlottenburg on the 7th June. She there explains, if the article is correct, 'indeed we have now also a part of the mass strike: the lockout in the building trade'. If a lockout belongs to it also then just about everything that happens inside of the working class movement becomes 'a part of the mass strike'. Taken to a logical conclusion we have been involved in the 'mass strike' for half a century already, the very mass strike which must be our next step...

# TALBOT/CHRYSLER STRIKE: SECONDARY PICKETS NEEDED TO WIN

'SECONDARY PICKETING' may be vital to win the pay strike at the Ryton and Stoke plants of Talbot/Chrysler, in Coventry.

The recent T&GWU conference voted for 'maximum resistance' to the Tories' plans for anti-union laws, including a ban on secondary picketing. Stewards at Talbot/Chrysler are hoping that the T&GWU leadership will put this resolution into practice by giving official backing to secondary picketing in their dispute.

At present the two factories are on holiday. The Stoke holiday ends on Monday 30th and Ryton on Monday 6th, the same day as the end of the holiday at the Linwood plant, in Scotland, which depends on supplies from Stoke.

Seven days' notice was given to the bosses before Stoke struck on the 10th. In that time all the parts in the factory were shipped out and added to large stocks already accumulated over the previous months at holding

depots in the north of the country.

Unless these depots are picketed, the bosses will be able to keep the Linwood and Dunstable plants supplied for three to four weeks independently of the production from Stoke. Linwood workers will vote on their return from holiday whether to join the strike, but it is not certain that they will, since they are being offered more (10.4%) than the Coventry workers (5.5%).

Secondary picketing is already being done at the Freightliner depot in Coventry. The management here have agreed to black the sending out of any Talbot/Chrysler containers, although it is possible that outside contractors may be brought in to shift them.

Talbot/Chrysler stewards also expect official T&GWU backing at the docks of imports of cars or parts to break the strike.

The Ryton bosses have dropped their efforts to bust the picket lines with the help

of police. No more attempts have been made to bring white collar workers and craftsmen into the factory. But non-union managers and some maintenance men are being allowed in by the pickets.

At Stoke, the situation on the picket lines is even more low-key. The management has agreed not to remove any parts from the plant, and last week security guards even impounded (on behalf of the pickets) two cars being removed from the premises.

The calm is not likely to continue long, however. Talbot/Chrysler were clearly expecting a strike. They have been surprised by the militancy and resolve of the strikers, and the strikers will have to make them more surprised still if they are to win.

NICK LAWRENCE

Messages of support and donations to: Chrysler Strike Fund, Transport House, Coventry.

# Workers' ACTION

## SACKED FOR SPEAKING OUT

THERE IS free speech in Britain — unless you're at work. Dunlop bosses in Leicester gave another proof of this last Friday, 20th, when they sacked a trade union militant, Stan Crooke, for helping to produce Workers' Action bulletins exposing their productivity scheme.

The productivity deal was thrown out in votes in two departments — but the bosses are ramming it through anyway.

As a special WA bulletin said:

"It is an outstanding example of management's gutlessness and dishonesty that they claimed Stan was being sacked for 'bad references'. Stan has been here five months, and management suddenly decides he has bad references!

"Moreover, this pathetic excuse does not stand up to a moment's examination. His references from previous employers are not bad, and his record here gives no cause for complaint at all. In five months

he has never been late and has been absent only twice (once for the strike in solidarity with the workers at Speke, and once because he had to go to court because he was one of the anti-fascists arrested when the National Front recently tried marching in Leicester).

"He was sacked for telling the truth about the prod. scheme. When management introduced the scheme they said the workers could reject it if they did not like it. The sacking last Friday shows management up yet again to be liars.

"For the rest of the workforce, it will mean more attacks from management. If management can get away with sacking just one person for opposing the prod. scheme then they can get away with sacking anyone else who opposes the scheme.

"Moreover, if management succeeds in the sacking then they will see this as a sign of weakness amongst the workforce and treat us with even more contempt and arrogance than they do already".

## EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Paid ads (including ads for publications) 8p per word, £5 per column inch — payment in advance. Send copy to Events, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD.

**TUESDAY 31 JULY.** Inaugural meeting of Southwark branch of the National Abortion Campaign: 'Fight Corrie's Abortion (Amendment) Bill'. 8pm, Lansbury House, Camberwell Grove, London SE5.

**THURSDAY 2 AUGUST.** Manchester Workers' Action public meeting, 'The Rank and File Movement'. Speaker: John Douglas, secretary USDAW CWS Packing (in personal capacity). 7.30pm at 'The Packhouse', near Deansgate Station.

**SATURDAY 11 AUGUST.** Haringey United Troops Out Movement benefit social. 8pm at Caxton House, St John's Way, N19 (Archway tube).

**SUNDAY 12 AUGUST.** Demonstration in London to call on the British Government to adopt a policy of withdrawal from Ireland. The United Troops Out Movement is organising a 'Troops Out Now' contingent. Coach from Edinburgh leaves at 10pm on Saturday 11th from Waverley Bridge. Tickets £10 return. Contact 031-229 1861.

**FRIDAY-SATURDAY 12-13 OCTOBER.** 'Critique' conference on the socialist alternative and in defence of Rudolf Bahro. At Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., London. Speakers include Zhores Medvedev, Ernest Mandel, Rudi Dutschke, Hillel Ticktin, Andre Gunder Frank, Ernesto Laclau, Michel Raptis, etc. Registration £5 for two days, £2.50 for one day, from Critique, 31 Clevedon Rd, Glasgow G12 0TH.

**Friday 10 August.** London Workers' Action public meeting: 'Why Troops Out Now? 8pm, Hemingford Arms, Offord Rd, N1.

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## HARINGEY NALGO OPPOSES CUTS

ON JULY 26th Haringey's Labour Group will meet to decide on the details of the council's proposed 2.7% cut in spending.

An emergency meeting of Haringey NALGO on Thursday July 19th to discuss our response to the cuts was attended by over 500 people. The main motion opposed cuts in services, but proposals in terms of practical action were limited to: "any post left unfilled should not be covered by any full-time or part-time employee of the council", and "appropriate support through the medium of the Joint Consultative Committee to other council unions in similar circumstances".

An amendment called on: "Haringey Labour Group to refuse to implement any cuts and mount a political campaign to win support from tenants, trade unionists and community groups to a policy of resistance", based on the following:

- an end to the ransom paid in interest charges and cancellation of the council's debts;
- increased government grants and subsidies to pay for essential services;
- the Labour Group to present all options in budgeting to fight the cuts, to tenants, trade unions and community groups so that a joint decision and joint resistance to the cuts may be made.

Despite the fact that the amendment was lost, 200 people voted in favour of it, a response which if reflected in other unions and in the community shows the potential for a real fightback in Haringey.

MARY CORBISHLEY  
Haringey NALGO

# Unions need a plan to fight the cuts

THE TORY Cabinet, on Monday 23rd, decided to cut £4,000 million off planned levels of public spending. It will mean that all plans for social provision must be cut about 5% — or, more likely, by more, since the armed forces and the police are in line to get more money than previously planned.

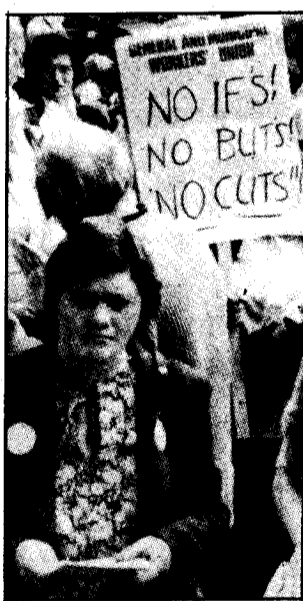
The planned cuts are bigger than the dramatic March 1976 cuts carried out by the Labour Government on the orders of the IMF. And their effects could be even worse. Public services, after years of cuts already, are struggling to maintain minimal operation.

The chairwoman of the South-West Thames Regional Health Authority said last week that waiting lists would 'double and treble'. Hospitals would close.

The waiting time for non-emergency operations on the NHS will become longer and longer, just as the waiting time for council houses will stretch.

In South London, the Labour group on the Lewisham, Southwark and Lambeth Area Health Authority is to propose at a meeting on July 30 that the AHA should refuse to make the cuts demanded by the Government, and risk being 'sacked'.

The cuts, they say, would



mean some wards and hospitals being closed, and some patients seeking treatment in high-cost areas of medicine being turned away.

The public service unions will have to be central to the fightback. Their jobs, as well as everyone's services, are on the line. In the civil service, 150,000 jobs may go.

The Guardian of July 18th and the Morning Star of the 19th reported the beginning of a joint campaign by the civil service unions against the cuts. Unfortunately, it

was not what it seemed.

There was no joint statement. The press had simply picked up on a routine meeting of union general secretaries on the 17th.

The agreement reported was vague. According to the Guardian, an overtime ban was planned (they gave no committee or spokesperson as announcing this). According to the Morning Star, it was a ban on extra overtime.

Both papers agreed in reporting that the unions would not cooperate by sharing out work where staff were short.

Workers in the civil service unions should take this policy as a minimum in the fight against the cuts, and strengthen it to a firm line of 'no cover, no job flexibility'.

They should also demand that the unions use industrial action to fight the cuts and give automatic support to any members suspended for fighting back.

In every area, the unions should link up with each other and with Labour Parties and community groups to form active cuts campaigns.

Above all, the campaign against the cuts must go beyond defensive measures. It must link up with the general fight to ensure the right to work by cutting the working week with RHODRI EVANS

## CORBY CALLS FOR A STRIKE

5,000 PEOPLE at a public mass meeting in Corby last Friday, 20th, backed a union action committee call for a national steel strike to stop British Steel's plans to slash jobs.

British Steel aims to close the Corby steelworks — cutting 5,000 jobs — and Shotton, with 6,500 jobs. In Corby the closure would mean local unemployment of about 30%.

The meeting showed a will to fight. But the main steel union, the ISTC, is extremely right wing and conservative. The star spot in its conference this year was given to Prince Charles. It will never call any national action unless it is forced into it by local initiative.

Local action — best, an occupation of the works — is needed of the Corby jobs are to be saved.

# Workers' ACTION

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## Sit-in needs wider support

FOLLOWING the lock-out at Renolds Chains a month ago, 1700 USDAW members at Kelloggs, Trafford Park, have been locked out for three weeks after working to rule in support of a pay claim for £25 a week more and better shift allowances. (Night work at Kelloggs is paid at time and a fifth).

The bosses proposed £8.50 as a final offer.

The work to rule cut back production to 30%. Another offer of an extra 1¼% and consolidation of past pay in-

creases amounting to £6.50 was rejected by the stewards' negotiating committee.

The bosses, who include Personnel Manager Bill Bowden, an ex-USDAW full-timer, closed the plant, but it was two weeks before the USDAW Executive made the dispute official.

Picketing has now been stepped up, and nothing is being taken in or out by T&G drivers. Dockers at Heysham are refusing to handle imports from Dublin destined for the plant, and the Manchester

Trades Council has pledged support.

To win this dispute, the stewards and rank and file militants will have to mount effective picketing at Seaforth Terminal, Liverpool, the Kelloggs print works at Irlam, and the new factory at Wrexham. A strike support committee should collect donations from other workplaces (especially those with USDAW members) and coordinate the fight against Kelloggs at a national level.

JOHN DOUGLAS