

# WORKERS' ACTION

12 pages  
15p

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## THE WAY TO BEAT THE TORIES

BY JO THWAITES

"THE MEN are disgusted with BSC. They are trying to stop all steel", said ISTC South East Wales Divisional Officer John Foley last week. Pickets of stock holders and private steel firms have been stepped up.

Flying pickets have been sent out from South Yorkshire to ports, engineering firms and British Leyland plants all over the country. This week saw the first lay-offs, at Alloy Steel Rods in Sheffield and at Gowerton I&S, as a result of picketing.

The pressure is on from the rank and file to force the ISTC to call out the private sector workers and to stop all movement of steel in the country. As Keith Jones, of the Sheffield Strike Committee, said: "The aim is to cripple big business and force the government to act".

It's clear that the strike is no longer just about pay, if it ever was. It is a fight to save jobs, jobs that are being cut as a result of the Tories' ultimatum that BSC must make profits or else. So it's no good for either the Tories or the TUC to say the issue is pay and nothing else. The strike is a direct result of Tory policies.

As the Secretary of Shepcote No.1 branch of the ISTC in Sheffield said, "The strike is forced to get bloody."

continued on centre page

# STOP ALL STEEL



## IMPERIALIST HYPOCRISY ON AFGHANISTAN

### The warmongers' smokescreen

THE LAST CONCERN of the Western big powers in their outcry over the Russian invasion is the welfare of the people of Afghanistan.

The Afghan people face the prospect of brutal oppression as the Russians assert their control and combat the reactionary rebel forces. But the USA and Britain have propped up or installed repressive regimes all across the globe. Now the USA is strongly hinting that it will give aid, at least indirectly, to the Muslim rebels in Afghanistan who have been fighting against the progressive reforms the PDP regime tried to bring in, and who want to preserve medieval conditions, with all the privileges of the landlord class.

Carter and Thatcher talk about the right of nations to self-determination. Ask the Vietnamese, the black majority of Zimbabwe, or Irish nationalists, how much that talk means!

The real concern of the imperialists is that the USSR has stepped outside the framework of the implicit agreements on 'spheres of influence' under which the big powers arrogantly carve up the world between them.

And they are also using the invasion to help prepare the people of the USA and Western Europe for war. The US ruling class aims to free itself from the burden of the memories of Vietnam, which still make even limited war very difficult for it — or at least, to begin freeing itself from that burden. The economic sanctions and the threats against Iran serve the same aim.

The talk about boycotting the Moscow Olympics shows up the hypocrisy. In 1968, four hundred left wing students were shot down in the streets of Mexico City. The Olympics went ahead in that city without any protest from the imperialist powers. In 1978, the football World Cup was played amidst Argentina's torture chambers and graves. And as for Moscow itself: repression of left wing dissidents in Russia and Eastern Europe did not set Thatcher and Carter talking about a boycott.

If the imperialist powers are at all worried about Russia despoiling Afghanistan, it is because they see a threat to their ability to despoil the world in their way.

Why Russia invaded: see feature, p.10-11

## Britain covers up as Rhodesian racists continue the war

UNDER THE authority of the British Governor, Lord Soames, Rhodesian forces last week shot and killed 7 members of the ZAPU liberation army.

Apparently they were being taken to an assembly point by a bus sent by the monitoring force and refused to hand over their arms to the Rhodesian troops. British officials immediately defended the right of the Rhodesian forces and blamed the rebellious guerillas for not surrendering their guns.

In another, similar incident, six ZANU guerillas were killed.

Such is justice in Rhodesia under the British administration.

The Rhodesian armed forces are being used regularly. They encircle the over-20,000 guerillas who have entered the assembly points.

An un stated number of South African troops are still operating in the country under the pretext of guarding the road and rail links between Rhodesia and South Africa; and Muzorewa's 24,000 auxiliaries are continuing to lend their leader help in his "free and fair" election campaign.

All this is against the terms of even the Lancaster House agreement, which dictated that the Rhodesian troops and auxiliaries must be kept to their barracks and which forbade the use of South African troops.

It is reported that the auxiliaries, alongside the official armed forces, are engaging in widespread intimidation in the rural areas under the control of the PF; in the concentration camps (euphemistically known as protected villages), where, behind 10-foot high barbed wire fences, inmates are shot on sight for violating the curfew; and in the townships, where ZANU and ZAPU supporters have been beaten up and had their homes firebombed.

Amid protests from the front-line states and other African states (Kenya, for example, is now threatening to withdraw its contingent from the monitoring force), ZANU and ZAPU have remained restrained. They have little alternative as they have committed their guerillas probably irrevocably to British control.

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## No bans, no proscriptions

A NEW witchhunt has been launched by the Labour right wing against the *Militant* tendency as part of its general campaign to maintain its domination in the Labour Party.

Last Thursday, David Owen, speaking on the platform of the right wing Campaign for Labour Victory attacked *Militant* as "authoritarian people" and called for the creation of a "political climate" in which such people would have to abandon their "authoritarian philosophy" if they wanted to stay in the party.

Since then, one article

has followed another in the press, calling for action against *Militant* and implementation of the recommendations of the Underhill report. Reg Underhill, the national agent until last year, presented a report on *Militant* to the NEC in 1976. An NEC sub-committee decided to take no action on the report, considering its case to be "not proven", and to keep it secret.

Last Friday, Underhill announced that he has spent the time since his retirement compiling a second report which he plans to submit

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## Fund Drive

So far this month we have received £22 (from Coventry) for the Fund. Our monthly target is £200 to enable us to maintain the paper at 12 pages.

Send contributions to Fund, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD.



## INDIAN ELECTIONS

# Gandhi wins, India's masses lose again



THE CONGRESS Party (I) scored a sweeping victory for the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament) in last week's Indian elections.

The Party, headed by Indira Gandhi and her youngest son Sanjay, which was responsible for the repression of Indian workers and peasants during the two year Emergency Rule period (1975-77), received over two-thirds of the seats (351) in the Lok Sabha. Congress had 42% of the votes, but the Westminster-type voting system and the fragmentation of the opposition has given it a huge parliamentary majority.

The Janata coalition parties, which in 1977 swept to victory after capitalising on the massive revulsion against the Emergency, were crushed. None of them got even 50 seats, the minimum necessary to be officially recognised as a parliamentary opposition party.

## Rag-bag

Why did this enormous turnout occur?

The Janata government which came into power in 1977, after Gandhi's emergency, was an unprincipled coalition of parties ranging from Socialists to the extreme Hindu chauvinists of the Jan Sangh, and motivated primarily by a desire to share the governmental spoils, so long denied them by Congress' virtual monopoly of political power in post-independence India.

They capitalised on the anti-Indira feeling of the time arising from the brutality of her government, the financial scandals of Sanjay, his horrific forced

sterilisation campaign and the corruption which surrounded Congress' close links with the big bourgeoisie and the Party's extensive influence in the large state sector of the economy. And they won. In every respect it was a pyrrhic victory.

Janata had no viable common programme of government, and was more concerned with competitive drives for personal advancement. The coalition collapsed over six months ago, with the forced resignation of Moraji Desai as prime minister.

As a consequence, Janata at no time had even the most minimal confidence of the Indian bourgeoisie, who steadfastly stuck beside Congress (I) and at most tolerated the rag-bag bloc until it could be disposed of by constitutional means.

The immense flood of voters into Janata's arms in 1977 was only a negative consequence of revulsion at the Emergency. Apart from the Lok Dal (Charan Singh), which has consistently represented the prosperous farmers of Northern India, the Janata parties have never gained deep roots, even of a clientelist nature, within the Indian masses.

## Misrule

Their misrule of the country compounded this. Since Janata gained office, the Indian masses have suffered rapidly rising inflation which has now reached over 20%, growing street violence from the paramilitary RSS (linked to the Jan Sangh, a constituent of the Janata coalition), which in pursuit of Hindu 'purity' has launched mur-

derous pogroms against India's 80 million Muslim minority and the Harijans (Untouchables).

Cuts in real living standards have been compounded by shortages in commodities such as sugar, kerosene and diesel, and much of industry has stagnated due to a lack of raw materials. Inevitably, black marketeers have stepped in to exploit these bottlenecks.

Power blackouts have become a feature of daily life, especially in Northern India and Calcutta, with power stations working at only 45% of capacity.

As Moraji Desai was telling the masses how good it is to drink their urine, to achieve health and spiritual stability, the millions of India continued to live in increasingly dire conditions.

## Left

The Left in India has been traditionally split between the two major blocs of the Communist Party of India and the CPI (M). The slavishly pro-Moscow CPI totally supported Gandhi's Emergency Rule, being reluctant to offend the "progressive national bourgeoisie", represented by Gandhi, who is very friendly with the USSR. (Gandhi has tacitly defended Russia's invasion of Afghanistan). It is only now that the Party seems to be changing direction slightly by finally accepting the resignation of its Chairman, S.A. Dange. His uncritical support for Gandhi was obviously becoming too great a liability.

The CPI (M), although not tied to the USSR, pursues in essence an equally re-

formist strategy. Although it stabilised and augmented its base in the election, winning 35 seats, it is primarily limited to the state of West Bengal. For the election, the two parties formed a front, agreeing not to stand against each other in the same constituency.

But their "alternative" for India's millions consisted in craven class collaboration, supporting the caretaker government of Lok Dal and a Congress split-off with the excuse that it was to prevent political power falling into the hands of Janata or Gandhi.

Charan Singh, the leader of Lok Dal, had accused India's working class of "holding the country to ransom" by striking so often, and recommending that all strikes should be banned for three years and that there should be a wage freeze!

The stage was set for Indira's triumphant return after her banishment into the political wilderness. Her past crimes and scandals were quietly forgotten and she now begins to set India back in "order".

Her order will be of immediate benefit to the Indian bourgeoisie, but it will hardly fulfil any of her demagogic promises during the election about dealing with poverty.

## Assault

In the words of the *Financial Times*, a "tough stabilisation programme" is on the agenda, similar to her 1971-75 economic measures.

In other words, massive cutbacks in public spending, abolition of bonuses and the cost of living increments, and a highly restrictive monetary policy. Similar measures led to the massive working

class unrest in 1974 (riots in Gujarat and a railway workers' strike) which was crucial in the breakdown of Congress support, leading to the Emergency Rule.

However, these heavy cutbacks will in no way sweep away inflation — as the external factors for its appearance and growth, the massive importing of oil and the predicted drought this spring, adversely affecting the harvest, are beyond the government's immediate control.

Buttressed by her two-thirds majority, giving her the power to amend the Constitution, Gandhi, in the name of the Indian bourgeoisie, is preparing another assault on the masses.

Whether she will succeed or not will depend on the resistance of the Indian workers and poor, and on their leadership.

ANTONIO GERMARO



Indian railworkers on strike: Gandhi put thousands of them in jail.

## Rhodesian racists continue the war

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Joshua Nkomo's arrival in Salisbury evoked a massive demonstration of support from over 150,000 Africans but his conciliatory call for unity "among all those who have made Rhodesia their home" and his refusal to condemn the governor, give little inclination that he has the power or the will to resist the regime.

It was characteristic that he was surrounded by bodyguards from Scotland Yard rather than his own people.

The prospect of a unified electoral campaign by the PF remains as dim as ever as Mugabe declares that ZANU alone will fight all the seats, including those in the 20

whites-only areas.

Muzorewa, supported by the whole Rhodesia Front, by the South Africans, by most of the British businessmen who have returned to see their assets in good order, has declared that a vote for ZANU or ZAPU will mean further killing. Behind every word of this stodge clown, there lies a threat for the Zimbabwean people.

Meanwhile the BBC round off the British offensive with a eulogy of the professionalism of the Anglo-Rhodesian police and with propaganda about the whites' desire for revenge on Nkomo for shooting down two Viscount jets. Once again black bodies don't really count...

BOB FINE

# RACISM ON WHICH THE SUN NEVER SETS

MONDAY'S *Sun* leads on a Rhodesian story, a "Shock for the Troops", that is, for the British troops in Zimbabwe.

The shock is not at the free hand their Rhodesian colleagues have to kill Zimbabweans during a 'ceasefire', nor at the fact that South African troops are freely allowed to continue operations in Zimbabwe. It is not at the appalling conditions in which most Zimbabweans live, in contrast to the whites there.

Nor is the shock at the

supposed freedom and fairness of elections in which the two main parties with support in the black population were, until a few weeks ago, outlawed; or at the fact that those parties' official leaders are not allowed their own bodyguards but are 'protected' by white Rhodesian police who acknowledge them as valid targets for assassination by whites.

The shock is the seizure by Rhodesian censors of the *Sun*, destined for British troops, because of its page

3 nude. While condemning these "kill-joy" officials, the *Sun* repeats their foul and crude racist justification without comment: "We don't want those saucy pictures to get into the hands of the blacks... The 30-year old men have the minds of 12-year olds".

All comment is reserved for the "prudishness" of such censorship, all sympathy with the soldiers "robbed... of one of their most-loved perks". No comment on the plight of Zimbabwe's majority.

ruled by people with out-and-out racist attitudes which would be at home only in the National Front.

No comment on the thousands of black women guerrillas who have fought side by side with their male counterparts, or on the effect that that can have on women's position in society: women in the Vietnamese Army achieved equality. ZANU has reported that its women members are demanding that 35% of ZANU candidates in the coming elections be women, and are fighting a battle against the ZANU Central Committee on this issue. Who are the Victorian-minded Rhodesian censors to say that the black people of Zimbabwe "have the minds of 12-year olds"?

How long will we allow the British Army and the British government to prop up those racists? And how long will we allow Britain's press to be run by profiteers who will retail and exploit any amount of prejudice for the sake of titillation and profits?

# TUC continues talks with Tories Break collaboration!

AS THE gutter press winds itself up into frenzied paroxysms of rage over the steel strike, out in the real world the battle lines are being drawn up ever more clearly.

The steel strike is growing stronger, and is increasingly regarded as being a fight not just about pay but against the closures and against the Tories. The Wales TUC has called for a general strike in Wales against the steel and pit closures. Opposition to the cuts is growing in the public sector, and the water-works and public sector workers are threatening strike action. The Tories, the bosses are on one side: the labour movement, the working class on the other.

This is nowhere more clearly spelt out than in the Tories' anti-union Bill. Last Thursday, the TUC met Tory Employment

Secretary James Prior, for the third time, to discuss the proposals in the Employment Bill. The proposals quite explicitly prepare an attack on workers' rights to strike, picket or take any independent action to defend our living standards. And the Tories haven't finished yet — they said last week that they may be "forced" to make more stringent restrictions because of the conduct of the steel strike.

The Tories obviously think they're doing quite well. Prior and his cronies must be delighted that the leaders of the trade union movement are actually sitting round a table politely discussing with them how to curb the actions and rights of their own membership.

The Labour opposition has announced that it will not repeal the whole Bill — no doubt there are parts of it

that the Labour government would have loved to have passed themselves.

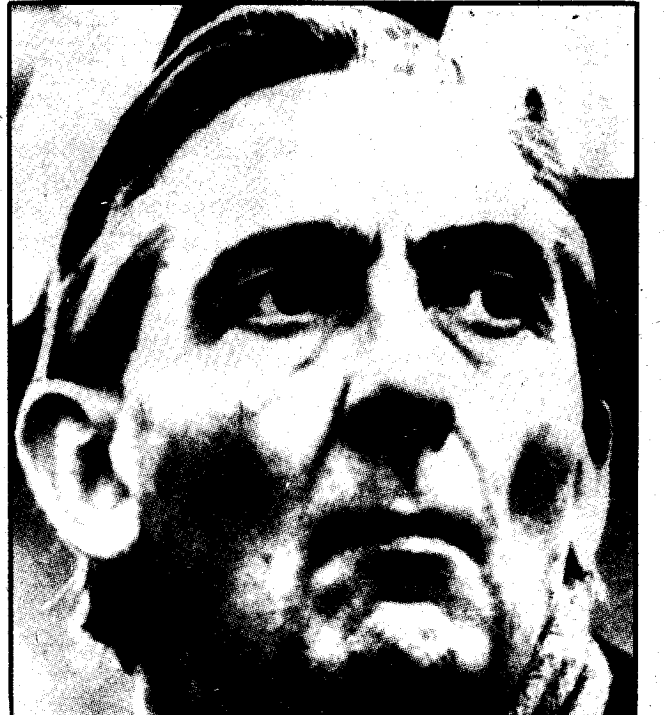
The most the TUC bureaucrats have threatened is that they'll withdraw their 'Guidelines on picketing', which already accepts many of the Tories' arguments. The steel strikers haven't shown much inclination to follow them anyway, so the TUC's threats sound more like whimpers.

For the TUC to have talks with Prior on the Employment Bill is collaboration with the Tories when we need to be fighting them. It must withdraw from any negotiations with the Tories, withdraw the 'Guidelines on picketing', and fulfil its proper function of supporting and organising solidarity with workers taking action against any aspect of the Tories' attacks. The TUC must start organising now

for rallies, workplace and factory-gate meetings, demonstrations and strikes to mobilise the movement against the Tories' Bill.

In reply to the Tories' restrictions, we must assert our rights to strike and picket by winning our trade union branches, shop stewards' committees, district committees and Trades Councils to the Rank & File Code of Practice adopted by over a thousand trade union delegates at the 'Defend the Unions' conference last June.

And to make quite clear that the TUC and union bureaucrats don't represent the independent interests of the labour movement, we must take up the fight for the election of all union officials, to be paid the average wage of those they represent, subject to recall at any time, and the right to make



Murray — still talking to the Tories

all decisions at workplace meetings in worktime.

The faint-hearts of the TUC have also requested the Wales TUC to call off its proposed general strike with vague promises of "considering" calling a

national stoppage themselves. That stoppage will never materialise unless we make quite clear that the rank and file are not going to allow the TUC to continue with its collaboration with the Tories.

# YS MEETING TO CAMPAIGN FOR DEMOCRACY

ON Saturday 19th, Young Socialists members from all over the country will meet to map out future activities for the Campaign for YS Democracy.

The CYSD was started by Edinburgh Central and Southampton LPYS branches following the defeat at 1978 YS National Conference of a resolution calling for the further democratisation of our movement. Since then, support for the campaign has grown dramatically in all regions of the LPYS.

The campaign was set up to fight for reforms in the way the YS National Committee is elected and the way national conference is run. The YS NC should be elected by and accountable to national conference.

The national conference should be run so as to encourage meaningful debate and discussion on YS policies and how to fight for them in schools, factories and campaigns — thereby equipping YS members to carry this out. This means ending the way that the YS

NC uses the platform to make the YS conference the monopoly of ideas of one tendency, the *Militant*, and cutting out the NC replies to debate and recommendations on voting.

The CYSD has also initiated a debate on the nature of and need for labour movement democracy. *Workers' Action* supporters will argue at the conference that this means not only campaigning to democratise the trade unions, and to make their leaders accountable to the rank and file, but also organising for our politics in the Labour Party to beat back the right-wing counter-offensive against the Brighton conference decisions on Party democracy.

If we are to win, once and for all, these key issues of Party democracy, we must understand that the fight is not over, that the left must press ahead with organising around its demands for democracy and not just rely on the NEC left on the Party Inquiry to win the day.

Here and now this means

that we must fight the pressures being built up by the right-wing by its witch-hunting of the *Militant* tendency. The CYSD must declare its support and campaign for the right of all socialist tendencies to organise in the Labour Party. We must condemn and organise against the anti-*Militant* witchhunt if we are serious about extending democracy and rank and file participation in the YS and the Labour Party.

The conference will also discuss the role of the CYSD in building the LPYS. As far as *WA* is concerned, we must get away from small propaganda-type discussion branches and turn outwards to working class youth, drawing them into the YS, campaigning against the way youth are hit under capitalism, organising street meetings, demonstrations, pickets etc. We must relate to youth on their terms via discos, films, gigs etc — and not in the boring holler-than-thou manner of the "wise(!) old men" of the *Militant*.

NEIL COBBETT

## CYSD Conference

11am to 5.30pm,  
Saturday 19th  
January.

Birmingham Labour Club, Bristol St., Birmingham.

Agenda: 1 Building the LPYS.

2 The Labour Party Inquiry.

3 Resolutions and elections to CYSD Organising Committee.

Delegates invited from YS branches. Individual LPYS members also welcome to attend.

**barricade**  
NO. 1 JAN 1980  
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'Public' schoolkids — we pay for their privileges

# AS CUTS CONTINUE HOW STATE MONEY STILL GOES TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS

THE RICH get enough privileges without the state forking out to subsidise the education of their children. But this is exactly what happens, to the tune of nearly £500 million a year, according to Rick Rogers, education correspondent of the *New Statesman*, writing in the January issue of 'Where'.

He breaks down the figures as follows:

■ Independent schools get £35 million tax relief, and £1.2 million rate relief, because of their charitable status.

■ £32 million is spent providing boarding places for children of forces personnel. These are mostly officers' children — 'other ranks' youngsters go mainly to ordinary local authority schools.

■ £8 million is provided for diplomatic and other government staff to send their children from abroad to boarding places in Britain. This figure does not include fares to and from school (all subsidised) so should be larger.

■ The local authorities, at the same time as slashing state education all around them, actually spent £85.5 million in 1977-78 buying places in independent schools, presumably for children who they think their own schools aren't good enough for.

But the largest chunk of this scandalous subsidy — around £255 million — arises from the fact that the state has paid for the training of vast

numbers of teachers now cosily tucked up in the private sector.

Apologists for the independent schools say this figure is unfair because it uses current teacher training costs on teachers who were trained up to 40 years ago. But it's the figure independent schools would have to pay now if they were forced to provide their own teachers instead of leeching on the state.

In fact, that's just what these places are: leeches. They're no more 'private' and 'independent' that so-called private medicine is. Private medicine uses state trained staff, state-owned equipment and state built hospitals.

We cannot allow a private education sector to exist. Inevitably it will be a breeding ground for power and privilege.

The National Union of Teachers should put teeth in its opposition to private schools and campaign in the TUC for their abolition.

In the meantime, we must demand the following:

□ Scrap the charity status of independent schools now!

□ Away with the scandal of local authorities buying independent places when they're chopping state education left, right and centre.

□ No to private education subsidies for armed forces and diplomatic staff.

IAN HOLLINGWORTH

# Whitelaw sits on Kelly case secrets

HOME SECRETARY William Whitelaw, has backed down and said he will after all publish the names and details of the 245 people who have died in police custody over the past ten years.

But he still says there will be no public inquiry into the case of Jimmy Kelly, a Merseyside labourer who died with massive injuries after (so several eyewitnesses testify) being badly beaten by police. The action committee set up by Kelly's relatives and friends is continuing its campaign for an inquiry, and this week sent all MPs a copy of a pathologist's report on Kelly's injuries.

The action committee also revealed that West Midlands Assistant Chief Constable David Gerty's internal police inquiry on Kelly's death failed to interview at least four important witnesses. Gerty's report has never been published, and the *Guardian* (Jan. 14th) reported that Whitelaw decided to refuse to hold a public inquiry without even reading that report.

# Water workers face army threat

ON SUNDAY, the "Telegraph" printed a front page article on plans by the government's Civil Contingencies Unit to smash the coming water workers' strike.

It states that up to 15,000 troops are ready to be used in an "emergency".

Water workers in the GMWU have called for a national strike if the National Water Council does not meet their demand for a 46% increase. So far the NWC has offered only 13%. The 46% is made up of a £15 per week flat rate increase plus £10 a week extra to make up for the amount they have fallen behind gas and electricity workers.

This national strike is likely to be joined by water workers in NUPE and the T&GWU.

# Oppose this witchhunt!

# Tory press, Labour Right, and 'lefts' unite for red-baiting

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to this week's NEC meeting. At the same time (hardly by coincidence) the following articles have appeared in the press:

■ A major feature in *New Society* by Tom Forester, a councillor identified with the Labour left, which gives a long and not entirely accurate account of *Militant's* history and politics. Although it tries to ridicule *Militant* rather than hysterically denouncing them, its message is clearly that *Militant* should be outside the party.

He concludes: "The *Militant* tendency are trying to build a revolutionary party inside a reformist one. In the end, they will almost certainly fail. In the meantime, they may mess things up for those who want to make a better job of the existing Labour Party."

■ Forester's article was followed on Friday by the *Guardian*, which published a long extract from Underhill's original report on its centre page, and saw the

subject as warranting discussion in the first editorial.

Apart from generally supporting the CLV's proposals for party reorganisation, the *Guardian* quotes Forester's article approvingly and calls for Underhill's report to be implemented.

■ The *Sunday Times* and *Sunday Telegraph* both ran front page stories based on new *Militant* documents handed to them — from where one can only guess. The *Sunday Times* quoted Underhill as describing *Militant* as "a cancer".

■ Last Monday's *Daily Mirror* dedicated half its front page and most of another page to an 'Exclusive' by Wilson's ex-press officer, Joe Haines. Its editorial, under the headline "Stop the Trots", states quite openly what the attack on *Militant* means:

"Some of those who control Labour's National Executive were once themselves the targets of Labour's right wingers. That's why they say now they don't want a witchhunt."

"Nobody does. There can only ever be one excuse for it. When there is a witch about."

This press campaign — whoever is orchestrating it — is an attempt to force the NEC into starting a witchhunt. Even if the National Executive Committee again decides to leave Underhill's report on the table, that is unlikely to defuse the campaign against *Militant*.

Underhill and the Right would still have two options open. One is to get the inquiry into party reorganisation to take up the question. Callaghan also proposed, when the inquiry was first set up, that it look into *Militant's* activities.

## Expel

The inquiry has, of course, to report back to the next Conference but if the atmosphere of witchhunting hysteria is maintained until then, and the Left panics, *Militant* may still be faced with disciplinary action.

The alternative is simply to go round the NEC by publishing Underhill's report, and thus giving the green light to local parties to expel *Militant* supporters. Underhill himself is quoted in Monday's newspapers as saying that he will publish his 1977 report (large sections of which have, in any case, already been published in the press) if the NEC refuses to do so.

Now that he is no longer employed as an officer of the Labour Party, there would be nothing to stop him doing it. Local parties would then be able to take action on the basis of the report.

This witchhunt is not just an isolated attempt to get *Militant* out of the Labour Party. It is the spearhead of the Right's attempt to reverse the trend towards greater accountability in the party, and to re-establish unchallenged control. Immediately after the last Labour Party Conference, WA warned: "... it would be a mistake for the Left to be complacent. It is unlikely they [the right] would give off without a fight. The Right has positions of great reserve strength

The Labour Party's No Entry signpost ultimatum on **Mirror** Labour Marxists

**NEWSOCIETY** Let's get rid of these parasites lurking in the Labour Party

**'STOP THE LABOUR'** Militants are cancer because they contradict our principle

**LABOUR'S HIDDEN 'CANCER'** I'll publish SECRET FILES WARNS PEER

**TROT ROT WARNED** Red-handed



and support within bourgeois society. They have backing from the bourgeois press. They could count on support from passive Labour voters and supporters if they could organise them — and there are powerful forces in British capitalist society which would be eager to help them organise."

Since then, the Right has gone onto the attack. Rodgers' threat to split the party, Callaghan's and Owen's attacks on the Left, and the CLV's sudden conversion to democracy of a particular type are all attempts to throw back the gains the Left has made. The witchhunt against *Militant* is an integral part of this.

There are three positions in response to it, which fail to come to terms with what is at stake. Firstly, *Militant* itself has in the past hoped to be able to keep quiet and wait until witchhunts blow over. *Militant* has never fought to establish its own right to organise as a tendency for its political views within the party, but has adopted a defensive attitude.

## Bias

Secondly, there are those, including, it appears, some members of the NEC, who argue that there would be no harm in publishing the report if *Militant* has nothing to hide. In reality, the publication of a report made up of unsubstantiated allegations would serve only to create the witchhunt atmosphere that Underhill wants. Given

the bias of the press, *Militant* would have no equal right of reply.

Thirdly, there will be those generally on the left of the party who will be willing to see *Militant* witch-hunted, in the hope that it would pacify the Right, and removing what many of them see as a threat from those who take left wing ideas more seriously. As Forester puts it, *Militant* "may mess things up for those who want to make a better job of the existing Labour Party".

Yet we must be clear — as the Right is — that there can be little democracy or accountability when witch-hunts are conducted and bans and proscriptions are in effect.

If the Right is attacking *Militant* today, it is not because they are immediately threatened by *Militant* (who go out of their way to make themselves acceptable). It is because they see it as a way of dividing the Left, starting a move back to a situation where the parliamentary leadership and right wing union leaders have a complete hold over the party (as in the 40s and 50s).

A serious witchhunt would not just stop *Militant*. All those who tried to defend them would be open to attack on the basis of 'guilt by association'. Tendencies to the left of *Militant* would be the first to be caught up in a wave of witchhunting hysteria, and *Militant* might be willing to join such an attack if it felt that it would

help it to remain in the party.

But it would not stop there: the Right would be able increasingly to take on the 'traditional' left, using the organisational weapons that a revival of bans and proscriptions would put at their disposal.

The whole of the Left must unite to defend *Militant* if we are to turn back the right wing counter-offensive. We must oppose any return to bans and proscriptions and fight for the right of tendencies to organise and fight for their political views.

The right wing and the leadership already have the means to organise — they have access to the press, to the party machinery and parliamentary influence.

## Step

Their concern is to make the party a safe party of capitalist government and that would not be possible if there was full democracy and accountability in the party. The witchhunt against *Militant* is their first step to try and regain the control needed if the next Labour government is to be able again safely to ignore party policies and conference decisions, and to govern on behalf of the International Monetary Fund.

For us, a serious fight against the witchhunt must be part of organising and transforming the party so that is not possible.

BRUCE ROBINSON

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Jan.19,20 Southall calls for action

Southall Day of Action January 19th: local activities in many areas.

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FREE THE SOUTHALL PRISONERS PICKET

SUN 20 JAN ASSEMBLE 1pm EUSTON STATION WEST SIDE - MELTON ST MARCH TO PENTONVILLE PRISON CALEDONIAN RD N. PICKETS 2-3pm



# No bans, no proscriptions

## Purging to maintain their monopoly

JOE HAINES in the Daily Mirror sums up his case against Militant like this:

"The constitution of the Labour Party excludes from membership anyone who belongs to a political organisation which has branches in the constituencies or which owes allegiance to any political organisation situated abroad."

"The Militant Tendency does both."

"Labour's constitution also forbids any organisation with its own programme, principles and policy."

"The Militant Tendency has all three."

Sounds damning? It's just hypocrisy, from a Labour right winger like Haines.

Militant is organised as a political current in the Labour Party; it has its own special views on policy (as who doesn't) and it expresses them quite openly in its paper each week. How can there be any sort of democracy unless different political currents of this sort do exist and organise?

The right wing, of course, is organised for its special views too. The difference is that the right wing monopolises the Parliamentary leadership and uses that position regularly to defy Party conference policy. The right wing flouts not only particular conference decisions, but the basic idea that the Labour Party should uphold the interests of the working class.

The right wing has its organisations and publications. For them, however, open political debate is less important than organisational manoeuvres.

Militant, like other currents of the left, depends entirely on the support of rank and file labour movement activists. It has to organise that support. The right wing is not so interested in rank and file support. It has wealthy backers in plenty.

Instead of struggling to produce its own paper and to sell it at the factory gates and in the High Streets, Shirley Williams, Roy Hattersley and their like have the columns of the millionaire press open to them whenever they like.

Militant has links with

international co-thinkers, socialists in other countries. The right wing has a record of proven links with the CIA.

Militant supporters, like other left wingers, are absolutely loyal to Labour in its fight against the Tories. Prominent right wingers cooperate with the Tories. Callaghan and his right wing government were more loyal to the IMF than to the labour movement.

At best the purge Haines wants would mean seizing on the letter of the rules in order to make sure that only the right wing can organise vigorously for its politics in the Labour Party.

To cover up the hypocrisy, and to avoid any discussion of Militant's actual ideas, the red-baiters use innuendo. The Mirror shrieks about "the secret bid to take over Labour", and "the undercover Militant Tendency", and splashes a few Militant internal circulars as "secret documents".

In reality the documents "reveal" only what is openly proclaimed each week for all to read in the Militant newspaper: that Militant aims to gain support for, and win Labour to its ideas. Nothing very sinister about that, for anyone who believes in labour movement democracy.

Militant "is spreading its infiltration", says Joe Haines. What does he mean, "infiltration"? Most Militant supporters are long-time Labour and trade union activists. They have no more "infiltrated" the movement than they have "infiltrated" their own skins! The same can hardly be said of many of Haines' well-heeled right wing friends.

The Mirror also reports as something shocking the fact that Militant supporters have been "intervening in strikes and other disputes". When David Owen crossed a civil service workers' picket line and said he was "pleased to do so, wasn't he 'intervening'?" When the last Labour government broke strikes, what was that? Yes, the right wing "intervenes" too — only on the opposite side from the left.

## LABOUR'S REAL CANCEROUS GROWTH

ORGANISED right wing groups in the Labour Party have a rather murky history — a much more interesting one, with more substantial lumps of mud than those aimed at the Militant tendency.

In 1975, a document released by the Radical Research Services showed that many of the right wing Labour Party members, including Gaitskell, who were involved in the "Campaign for Democratic Socialism" (CDS), which reversed the 1960 unilateral nuclear disarmament conference decision the next year, were in fact connected with the American CIA.

The truth about this strange association for so-called socialists was revealed in a report commissioned by the Sunday Times, but suppressed before publication. The report showed

that this association runs right into the Labour Party, including such notables as Denis Healey, Anthony Crosland, Douglas Jay, Roy Jenkins, and Dick Taverne.

During the 50s the CIA backed the Congress for Cultural Freedom, to "defend freedom and democracy against the new tyranny sweeping through the world" with unlimited funds. Gaitskell, Crosland and Healey were associated with it.

Around the same time, Crosland and other right wing LP members were involved in setting up the 'European Movement', financed by agents of the CIA to propagandise against the "communist threat" — founder members were Gaitskell, Healey, the then president of Unilever and Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands.

You might be excused for thinking that receipt of CIA funds for political purposes and membership of the Labour Party were incompatible. But no, apparently not. Labour then lost the general election in 1959 and the right wing lost the 1960 Party conference.

The Parliamentary Labour Party, headed by Gaitskell, refused to accept unilateralism, and orchestrated a campaign, using the Labour Party machinery, to reverse the decision — the Campaign for Democratic Socialism. The key man was William Rodgers, the same man who is behind the present Campaign for Labour Victory. The CDS received a large sum from an anonymous source, and worked at its disposal fieldworkers tens of thousands of pamphlets, and a regular free bulletin. All

that without a single subscription from a rank and file Labour Party member. And not surprisingly, the CDS was successful in reversing the decision on unilateralism at the next conference.

When the right wing adopts holier-than-thou shock and horror at the thought of organised tendencies in the Labour Party, we might ask what the collaboration with the CIA did to damage the Labour Party — what cancerous growths they spawned which were never cut out.

At a time when all and sundry are calling for unity of the Party in the face of Tory attacks, the right wing in the CLV and Manifesto groups seem to relish the thought of splitting the party they profess to love so well.

JO THWAITES

## The SCLV Steering Committee on 12th January passed a resolution condemning the witch hunt.

This meeting of the Steering Committee/Editorial Board of the SCLV expresses its complete solidarity with the comrades of Militant against the witch-hunt which the Tory agents in the Labour Party, aided by the bourgeois press, are attempting to launch.

We propose to the NEC of the Labour Party that it should immediately repudiate and denounce those in the Labour Party who are attempting to create disruption in our ranks; that it brands the witch-hunt for what it is, an attempt by an isolated and discredited ultra-right wing segment of the Labour Party to utilise the support it enjoys among the ruling classes and their press to create division and conflict in the labour movement; that it declares its firm support for the right of political tendencies to exist in the Labour Party, which is the broad party of the British labour movement; and that it should ensure that the inquiry does not go beyond the limits originally laid down to include an inquiry into political tendencies.



# SMASH H-BLOCK

AS THE TORIES, Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party, and John Hume of the SDLP manoeuvre, bluster, and strike poses at the 'constitutional talks' organised by Tory Minister Humphrey Atkins, 400 Republican prisoners in the H-blocks at Long Kesh are still 'on the blanket'.

Because of their protest demanding the restoration of political status, the prisoners are denied clothing, exercise, visitors, and most normal prisoners' rights. They are constantly harassed by prison warders. 40 Republican women in Armagh jail are also protest-

ing for political status. In solidarity with the prisoners' struggle, a demonstration has been called for 27th January (to correspond with the 8th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday" in 1972 when British troops fired on a peaceful demonstration in Derry, killing 13). The demonstration, organised by Provisional Sinn Fein, will call for:

- Repatriation of Irish political prisoners in Britain
  - Smash the H-blocks
  - Political status for Republican prisoners
  - A general amnesty
- It will also highlight links

between the fascist National Front and the loyalist Ulster Defence Association, and the lenient treatment of the NF by the police and courts as contrasted with the frequent harassment of Republican or pro-Republican activists under the dragnet Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Support for the demonstration is being organised by most groupings of the British revolutionary left and Troops Out Movement. TOM coaches leave London from York Way (Kings Cross) and from Kilburn Square at 10am on the 27th.

## Demo called for Jan 27

Bloody Sunday Commemoration Demonstration  
2pm, Sunday 27th January  
From Sparkhill Park, Stratford Rd, Birmingham.

## The Right discovers 'democracy'

THE RIGHT wing Campaign for Labour Victory, including in its ranks such labour movement stalwarts as David Owen, Roy Hattersley and Roy Mason, has published its proposals for constitutional reform as a leaflet to be sent to every constituency party.

There are no real surprises, just various organisational recommendations designed not to achieve "real democracy" but to remove the left wing.

For instance, in order that the NEC becomes "more representative of the membership and the whole spectrum of party opinion", MPs would no longer be able to stand for election to the constituency section. Two new sections of the NEC would be created. Firstly, a parliamentary section elected by the Parliamentary Labour Party — a much more "representative" body than Party Conference, they say — and secondly a local government section, to be elected by local councillors.

Obviously the aim is to make inroads on the constituency section and the hold of the left wing.

Women's section representation would go, and the trade union section would be expanded to include smaller unions so that there would be a better chance of representing more "moderate" opinions in the party.

Either running out of ideas or gall (or both), the CLV would keep the Young Socialists seat on the NEC, but, according to their master plan, that won't matter much, as elsewhere in their leaflet they propose running the Militant out of the party.

In the constituencies, for the CLV "real democracy" means effectively abolishing the GMCs. Selection of MPs and candidates would be done by only party members of more than one year's standing. Union delegates would be excluded at this level of "democracy" for obvious right wing reasons: you can depend on the trade union bureaucrats at the top, but you can't depend on rank and file delegates to GMCs to represent the "whole spectrum" of party opinion! Election of conference

delegates, and their mandate, would also be done at a meeting of all party members and not at the GMC, again excluding union delegates.

Members could come along once a year and on the basis of a couple of hours' debate could decide policy, whereas the GMC system means that debate goes on all year round and delegates to the Conference are elected on the basis of politics that have been thrashed out over the last 12 months.

The CLV's proposals protest about the unrepresentative nature of the present structure, not because they are concerned about labour movement democracy, accountability of MPs or defending working class interests, but because they fear the independent activity of the working class through rank and file control of the party. They seem to forget whose interests they are supposed to be representing — but then again, perhaps they know exactly what they're doing.

# WALES TUC GENERAL STRIKE CALL POSTPONED TO MARCH 10th

THE WALES T.U.C. have backed down on their call for a general strike in Wales for January 21st. They got their knuckles rapped by the TUC, as apparently the Welsh strike call is regarded as a 'distraction' from the main business of negotiating with BSC in London.

At a meeting in Cardiff last Monday of Welsh union leaders, the vote went in favour of falling in line with the TUC for now, and delaying the indefinite strike call to March 10th. In the meantime the Wales TUC will hand the issue of jobs in South Wales over to the TUC 'to handle completely through their committees', according to Wales TUC general secretary George Wright, 'provided that they solve the matter by Monday 10th March'.

## Plans

By then, the Wales TUC wants a settlement on three issues: that BSC's plans to cut Welsh steel production by 50% are deferred for two years, that the Corporation's top management is replaced, and that an inquiry is set up into the running of BSC and its decision to buy imported coking coal.

The miners' union representatives, who had the overwhelming support of their

members to back the strike call on January 21st, abstained on the decision to defer the strike.

Don Haywood, chief administration officer of the South Wales NUM, said that, 'The opinion of the NUM lodges in the South Wales area is that the ISTC leadership is giving the wrong lead on just pay, and that instead we should take on the bosses on two fronts, that of pay and jobs'. It seems obvious — what is the point of going all out for a rise, if your jobs will not be there when you go back. Despite this, the TUC still claims that the steel strike is about pay, not jobs.

The immediate effect of BSC's proposed closures would be the loss of 45,000 jobs, and the overall loss, including related industries, could be 100,000. Steel centres like Port Talbot would be devastated.

Instead of the January 21st action, there will be a one day strike on January 28th with a mass rally in Cardiff. All 650,000 workers whose unions are affiliated to the Wales TUC will be invited to take part.

The specific demand of this one day strike is to get a commitment from BSC to restrict its imports of foreign coking coal to their level of last November. There are rumours that

a contract for 1.2 million tonnes is to be signed next month.

The miners have already been operating a blockade on the import of foreign coal, and two ships with coal for BSC are still lying off Barry, where they have been since before Christmas.

## Step

It's unfortunate that a demand has been chosen which is very much restricted to one industry, and which focuses the fight against foreign coal rather than against the Tories and the bosses. But January 28th can still be a step forward in the general fight for jobs.

The task now is:

- To mobilise for January 28th,
- To make sure socialist answers are heard then,
- To keep up the pressure on the Wales TUC not to back down from its March 10th ultimatum,
- To start organising broad labour movement conferences, and meetings in every workplace and trade union branch, to prepare for a Welsh general strike from March 10th, and
- To press for TUC support for spreading that general strike from Wales to the whole country.

JO THWAITES



## BSC come up with a Militants say: Full claim

THE steelworkers started their strike by putting up two fingers to the BSC's offer of 2%. That was over two weeks ago. Since then more workers have struck. The GMWU followed the ISTC, the NUB, and the TGWU, and now the craft unions have made the strike official too.

Picketing has been widespread and determined, and the strikers

have got a lot of solidarity from the labour movement.

The result... the BSC has put up a worse offer. The new offer is an 8% rise with an extra 4% guaranteed for three months on local productivity deals which might yet yield more. But all of this is in exchange for a whole string of commitments by the unions on absenteeism, demarcation, unofficial disputes and other matters.

The tiny pittance of 'new money', the 2%, the result of an earlier promise by BSC to consolidate some supplements, has disappeared. Nothing is now being offered without strings!

The negotiators on both sides talk about 'lead-in' payments, higher guaranteed in-

come from deals, and unions should show that there are cuts. That is the workers' demand. The real difference is the branch office ISTC decide

## SHEFFIELD: We'll shut the place down

AS FIVE of the pickets arrested at Hadfields East Hecla works, Sheffield, left court last Wednesday, one of them, Michael Coulson, vowed, 'We're going back every morning until we shut the place down'.

The pickets were arrested as they tried to stop steel lorries going into Hadfields. As one lorry was entering the gates, police shouted to pickets, 'Move back, or we'll take some more away'.

The secretary of Shepcote no.1 branch of the ISTC said:

'We've turned away quite a few lorries which won't be coming back again. The strike is forced to get bloody. In my opinion it's a fight against the Tory government. They wanted a confrontation'.

Hadfields is one of many private steel firms which

think they can hoodwink pickets by switching BSC labels. The trouble is that they're not very efficient at doing the switching, and sometimes forget one or two.

The chairman at Hadfields, not surprisingly, denies this, and has called on the TUC to stop the mass picket of the plant. ISTC assistant general secretary Roy Evans is doing his best to oblige. He said, 'Pickets in South Yorkshire are acting against the advice of this organisation', and told them to cool off their picketing of private works.

The first major lay-offs started last Friday when 150 men were sent home from Alloy Steel Rods, and many more among steel stockholders and private sector firms are expected this week,

as the BSC craftsmen are going to have their own pickets and their prime aim is to stop private sector steel.

Hundreds of flying pickets are being sent out from Sheffield to Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, and Barnsley to blockade steel stockholders, particularly those supplying BL in the Midlands BL shop stewards are expected to help the pickets' efforts to stop all steel.

50 pickets have gone to Dover, where loads of steel are thought to be arriving by ferry.

Keith Jones of the Sheffield Strike Committee says that the aim is to cripple big business and force the Government to act.

At other docks, including Hull, practically no steel is getting through, thanks to total support from the dockers.

ing at Alphasteel, the strikers, from the ISTC, the TGWU, and the NUB at Whiteheads and Llanwern steelworks near Newport, are maintaining the picket and stopping deliveries of scrap. A spokesperson for the pickets said, 'The reason we are picketing is that we don't think it's on for a private company like this to supply steel which is breaking our strike. We will continue it as long as we think it's necessary'.

Ray Rowlands, the district officer of the TGWU in Newport, is complaining that the pickets are 'out of control'. John Foley, divisional

officer in South East Wales, said, 'The men are disgusted with BSC and are stepping up action. They are trying to stop all steel'.

That is the only way to win the strike, in view of the fact that firms have been swapping consignment notes and switching labels on BSC steel.

Pickets have also been maintained at the Hoover washing machine works in Merthyr, at Signode, and at Crown Clark. An ore carrier has been turned away from Port Talbot by dockers.

## LABOUR YOUTH BACK WALES GENERAL STRIKE

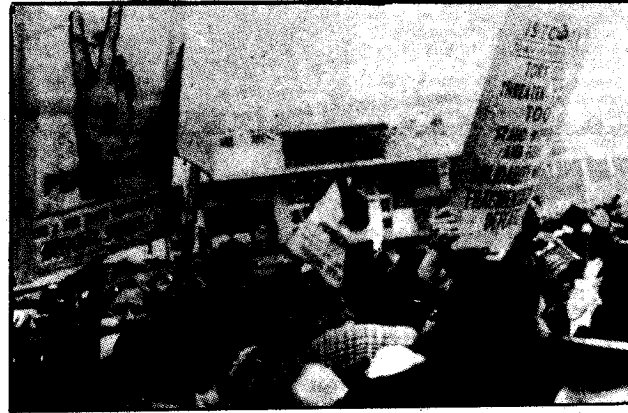
LAST WEEKEND (5th January 1980) members from the Newport, Pontypool, Aber-tillery and Cwmbran LPYS branches met to voice their disapproval at the government's plans for steel.

A resolution passed at the meeting condemned the government's decision to idly stand by and allow 52,000 steelworkers to lose their jobs. This figure, coupled with the 44,000 redundancies already made over the past five years, was totally unacceptable. We urge the government to reverse its decision not to make good the BSC losses

in 1980/81.

The closure of Llanwern, or even its partial rundown, was thought to be the worst economic and social disaster to hit Gwent since the years of the Depression. Not only will the steelworkers be affected but the closures will also hit the engineering, mining and transport industries. Already it is forecast that eleven South Wales coking collieries, employing 8,000 miners, will be closed, with a further 20,000 thrown out of work in other sectors.

The present proposals for Llanwern and Port Talbot are a blatant political assault



KEITH JOSEPH got a shock last Friday when he came to Birmingham to say that he and the Government had nothing to do with the steel strike. 1500 militant steel strikers were waiting for him thought otherwise. They'd come from Wales, Yorkshire, Corby in Northamptonshire, as well as Birmingham to picket Five Ways House where Joseph met a delegation from the W.Midlands TUC who asked him for government intervention in the strike, a new BSC Chairman and a commitment to cover BSC losses. Joseph wasn't interested in the W.Midlands TUC delegation, though he couldn't fail to notice the angry mood of the strikers outside.

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Picketing is

## S. WALES: The only way to win

8,000 more steel workers, members of the craft unions, have joined the strike in Wales, and the strike is beginning to have major effects on stockholders.

Gowerton Iron and Steel has laid off 55 workers, as picketing has stopped all movement of stocks. At Port Talbot the strike committee has rejected TUC instructions to lift pickets at the Metal Box factory near Neath, where 500 face the sack.

Pressure is increasing on private steel firms, particularly at Alphasteel in Newport. Despite union officials' efforts to stop picket-

upon the industrial base of the South Wales economy. It was accordingly felt that the present steel strike should have been directed as much against the closure plans as for a higher wage claim. We fully support the ISTC in its fight for better pay but also urge the unions to uphold the fighting principle of no redundancies.

We are also in favour of an inquiry into the management of the steel industry, especially following the revelations by Newport MP Roy Hughes concerning management inefficiency over supply contracts. BSC is paying Amey Roadstone Co. £300,000 a year for supplying limestone pieces to Llanwern works. But the limestone pieces are not delivered, because they are not needed! A 15-year contract was signed at national level at the same time that the local management decided they did not want the stone.

Finally, those at the meeting pledged themselves to full and active support of the general strike called for the 21st January by the Wales TUC. We hope that all members of the Labour and trades union movement will unite and fight against the destructive policies of this Tory government and will support all Labour and TUC activities opposing these policies.

MICHAEL THOMAS  
Chairman Newport LPYS





# 'Don't forget the jobs fight'

"WE STARTED the strike with full picketing of the Scunthorpe works", Charlie Goddard, an ISTC safety adviser told Workers' Action. "But then we turned most of our attention to the ports of Immingham and Goole and to steel stockists. The main ones here are Trent Steel and Smith's of Scotter, where we've had a bit of trouble

of firms. Sometimes the same steel changes hands four or five times with each firm getting its rake-off. It's a real tangle of contracting and subcontracting. One thing that's coming out of it: we're identifying some of the cowboy operators and this information is useful for the transport workers.

necessary to produce coke and carry out other operations to keep the plant in running order.

On the staff side there are about 1,000 SIMA members of middle management at Scunthorpe and they're still working, though BSC say they're not doing extra work.

According to Charlie Goddard, "BSC is not making sense. At the beginning ISTC would have settled for about 13% — they might even have settled for 10%. Now it's not possible they'll settle for less than 20%. Attitudes have hardened that much.

"What they're offering as a productivity deal is just blood money. It's just selling jobs. The real issue is the question of the future of people's jobs in the industry. The pay thing has brought this to a head, but it isn't the real issue.

## Trouble

"In some places we've been able to go in and make arrangements with the employers. We tell them they'll be in dead trouble if we don't get a satisfactory arrangement. But at Smith's, when our lads first went down there, the employer came up to the picket line threatening us if we so much as put a boot on his property.

"We've had a good response from the dockers, and now we have regular meetings with dockers' and drivers' representatives. Of course, we can understand the dockers' and drivers' positions: they want to keep their members at work. So we have come to agreement: for instance, at Immingham the dockers have unloaded a cargo, but it will stay on the quayside.

"As far as the stockists are concerned, we're finding out just how complicated the system is. There are hundreds

"They're getting up to all sorts of tricks to hide the fact that they're trying to move BSC steel. Bill Sirs has mentioned their switching labels, but it's more than that. You see, steel loads are hardly ever covered in sheets; now some people are trying to smuggle loads out under covers. They're even putting small length billet in containers."

The Scunthorpe strike committee was set up by the ISTC as soon as the strike started. It was linked with similar committees in Rotherham and Sheffield in one divisional committee. The NUB came out after the ISTC but joined them in the strike committee as soon as they were out. The same went for the GMWU which came out last week. Now the craft unions are on strike but as yet they have not formally coordinated their activities with the other strikers.

Inside the plant there is a fairly high proportion of people working with union permission, because quite high manning levels are

## Fear

"My real fear is that when we get this solved now, when we've gone back, people might forget about jobs. But what's the point of a wage rise if you're only going to be at work for another three months?"

"I think what the South Wales miners have called for, a strike to stop the steel cuts, to suspend the BSC board pending an inquiry and get a commitment to keeping the industry going for another two years, is bang on the nail."

# PICKETING STEPPED UP AFTER NINE ARRESTS

THE STRIKE in Glasgow and Lanarkshire is solid. Pickets from Ravenscraig, Clydebridge and Hallside works have sewn up steel movement in the area.

The Clyde Area Joint Committee of the ISTC has organised flying pickets to cover all important stockholders in the area. As from Monday 14th, Ravenscraig works in Motherwell will have token pickets while the steelworkers concentrate all their strength on secondary picketing of the stockyards.

The decision to step up the pickets on steel stockholders' yards comes after nine pickets were arrested

at Watson Towers, Wishaw, last Friday.

Police had been called in to get scabs' steel through the one hundred-odd pickets last week. The men were arrested on charges of obstructing the police, and then released.

In Cambuslang, Glasgow, men from Clydebridge and Hallside, who have been lent the local Labour Party halls, are picketing local stockholders GKN, CMT and Delmarnock Road Services.

One local owner said he was going to close up shop, but, suspicions aroused, the pickets decided to keep an even closer eye on his yard.

Hallside is threatened with closure. As one picket told WA: "The word is Hallside will close in March, but as yet there is nothing in writing. The boys here from Hallside on the picket think BSC might try to close the plant down during the strike."

Determination to win the strike and to keep up the picketing is strong. There is no strike pay, and collecting boxes have gone out to local pubs, though the initial response has been poor.

Donations and messages of support to: ISTC Strike HQ, Glen Café, Ravenscraig, Motherwell.

JOHN WILDE

# worse offer and no job loss

productivity on. The be using to insist no more the issue brought and that that the be firm

is quite Month, of the to press

for the BSC cuts option that would slash another 11,000 jobs from the Port Talbot and Llanwern plants. And there can be no doubt that the present negotiations are discussing this and similar plans.

The strikers cannot rely on the union leaders not to sell their jobs. The union leaders chose to call a strike on pay

and not on jobs precisely because they could see no alternative to continuing to cooperate with BSC — even if they now wanted to raise the price of cooperation.

As part of the organisation of this strike, strike committees have to call meetings on the jobs issue and pressure their leaders not to back down.

ANDREW HORNUNG

ham n

STEELWORKERS from Corby this week sent out a 'task force' of more than 200 flying pickets. The largest contingent, about 100 strong, went to Grantham, where the John Lee's steel stock depot was picketed.

The 12 TGWU drivers at John Lee's have been laid off and Mick Shelton, ISTC strike coordinator at Corby, said John Lee's were recruiting 'cowboy' drivers to shift steel supplies. "The management has even been getting the help of farmers to shift steel using

tractors and trailers. We aim to put a stop to this."

The John Lee's company is a major stockist of all types of steel and most of its striking ISTC members are women. They were not able to form a strong enough picket line outside the depot to stop lorries, and asked the Corby steelworkers to help.

Other groups from Corby went to Kings Lynn docks, the Metal Box factory in Leicester and another major steel stockholder in Birmingham.

MARK HALL



to victory

## THE WAY TO BEAT THE TORIES

continued from p.1

In my opinion it's a fight against the Tories — they wanted a confrontation. And the bloodiness won't stop at BSC. BL workers, the shipbuilders (who have a claim in for 20%) and the miners are all facing the same prospect — job cuts for the sake of profit.

The struggle must be generalised — all workers will lose if the steel strikers lose. Solidarity is vital. Workers in all steel-related industries should black all steel — no steel should be touched anywhere and all transport companies carrying steel should be told they will be blacked afterwards.

All union branches, Shop Stewards' Committees and trades councils should report to the nearest strike committee on any movement of steel, and organise collections and meetings in every workplace (there is still no strike pay). Strike committees should demand of Labour councils (as the miners did in 1972) that they provide full facilities for the running of the strike. The steel workers are fighting for us all against the Tories.

Support for the pickets in the face of police attacks, such as those at Sheffield and at Wishaw, should be organised by local trades councils. We must defend in practice the right to picket.

Democratically elected strike committees, accountable to regular mass meetings, must run the strike, not the 'take it easy' ISTC, TUC or Scottish TUC leaderships. All movement of steel must be stopped and that will not happen if the union leaders carry on making appeals to pickets to 'cool it', or handing out dispensations to steel-related firms.

**Don't forget these dates!**

• Sunday 26th January  
Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions conference on the Tory anti-union bill. Friends House, Euston Rd, London, NW1. Credentials: c/o 137 Wanstead Park Road, Ilford, Essex.

• Saturday 2nd February  
Labour Party Young Socialists National rally against the Tories. Porden Road, near Brixton tube, South London, 12 noon.

• Saturday 9th February  
Rally and demo against the cuts, called by S.Yorks. Association of Trades Councils

• Monday 18th February  
One day general strike against the cuts, called by South Yorkshire Association of Trades Councils.

• Sunday 9th March  
TUC national demo against the cuts and the anti-union Bill.

• Saturday 22 March.  
Labour Movement Fightback for Women's Rights conference. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London WC1. 11am. Inquiries: c/o 41 Ellington St, N7.

• Saturday 22nd March  
National conference against the cuts, called by Liverpool Trades Council and District Labour Party. St. George's Hall, Liverpool. 11am. Credentials: T. Harrison & A. Dodswell, 70 Victoria St, Liverpool 1, (delegates' fee 50p).



## The bosses' school for class war

Left: war games at Heathrow

'WAR SCHOOL', the first programme in a BBC series of four about the army's staff college at Camberley, was instructive in a number of ways. The staff college has acquired a incisive director (officially styled Commandant) Brigadier Sir Frank Kitson, expert on counter-insurgency operations.

Kitson's preoccupations have produced changes in the curriculum, resulting in an initial period of instruction in theories of 'counter-insurgency'.

This is obviously an area where the army clearly plays a political role. Kitson himself understandably denied any desire to participate in any form of military coup in Britain, but this programme, which included comments by individual students, demonstrated well how the army sees itself as the last ditch defence

against the breakdown of 'law and order'.

Individual students expressed the view that some strikes at least could be classed as "politically motivated" or "subversive", rather than arising from "a genuine grievance".

An assortment of colonels on the teaching staff, some from other European countries, combined to act various "subversives" with whom the army might find itself in conflict. One was a civil servant (the audience was asked "Where do you think the Fourth Man is now?": the programme was made early last year), another a trade unionist and member of the Communist Party. Another appeared in a kilt, but we were not told whether he was supposed to belong to the Provisional IRA or the Tartan Army or whatever. The episode was somewhat hilarious, given the caricature of Marxism

and of other ideologies, opposed to capitalism.

Later, viewers were shown an exercise involving confrontation between the army and guerillas in a fictitious British city called Two Rivers, where law and order was supposedly on the brink of collapse.

A funeral of a comrade had been planned by revolutionaries, under cover of which they intended to release a number of their arrested comrades. This involved attacks on police barricades and the police, unable to hold the mob back, requested the military to take over.

Students played the parts of army commanders, media personnel, and guerillas, supposedly giving each group considerable insight into the mental (and emotional) makeup of the protagonists. The student in charge of the "revolutionaries" told his team: "Our

aim is to make the army hated by the civilian population. We hope to provoke the army into shooting people, but if they don't do it we'll do it for them".

Clearly the situation in Northern Ireland lay behind all this, particularly in the training of handling the press and TV questions during the exercise.

All in all the programme should have disabused anyone of any illusions that the army will stand aside in a situation where they judge there to be a breakdown of "law and order" — something already demonstrated by the British Army in Ulster since 1969.

The following programme promises information on the social background of staff college students. If you haven't any more pressing business on the next few Wednesday evenings, don't miss it.

CHRIS GRAY

# An outrage in the '30s, tame today

LUIS BUNUEL's *L'Age d'Or*, known as one of the most important surrealist films, shocked audiences in the 1930s by its attack on bourgeois institutions, Church and State. Bunuel, like other 1930s surrealists, set out to expose and explode established conventions, particularly in artistic expression, by unreal representation and counterposition, by exploration of the extraordinary in everyday life and of symbolism and the unconscious. Many were consciously revolutionary: Bunuel is at least radical, though his collaborator on *L'Age d'Or*, Salvador Dali, was sympathetic to fascism.

In the 1930s *L'Age d'Or* was banned. But surrealism now is such a familiar medium (for instance, the cigarette ad preceding the film owed its impact to it) that the sight of a bishop being thrown out of a window after a burning tree and a stuffed giraffe is only reminiscent of Monty Python, and has lost much of its power.

Some of the contrasts are subtly made, and striking: the acceptability of emotional expression through classical music and its un-

acceptability in more spontaneous forms; the temporary distraction of party guests by the shooting of a child outside compared to their genuine concern when the hostess has her face slapped. But all the characters, except the anti-hero, are two dimensional and too easy a target for their debunking to make much of a comment on their society.

The Church is a subject of irreverence, rather than critical attack — a bleary-eyed Jesus staggers from 120 days of orgy — and other images show the church hierarchy to be vain and silly, but there is little more.

One of the consistent targets of mockery seemed to me to be the current cinematic representation of romantic love: the lovers in the film alternately attempt to make love in the most 'unsuitable' and public surroundings, and then in private only sighed and gazed at one another.

Much of the imagery is too idiosyncratic and too isolated from its context to convey much to the audience. In some of his later films his contrasts shock more by repeated exploration rather than by brief glimpses, and they have a contin-

uity and coherence which *L'Age d'Or* lacks.

The supporting film, *Magritte*, is an affectionate and imaginative use of the imagery of the surrealist artist René Magritte in a roughly chronological study, using his writings for a sparse commentary. Magritte emerges with a pleasant sense of humour, a healthy suspicion of dogma among the "futurists", and a fascinating mix of pomposity and self-effacement in describing his work.

Events from Magritte's life are acted simply, but with a powerful sense of the surreal. His pictures are made to move and his comments are added, enhancing the contrast he drew between object and representation — for instance, his stone bird takes flight: of the picture of a pipe entitled "Ceci n'est pas une pipe", he comments "Well, you can't smoke it."

With much less deliberateness than Bunuel put into his surrealist ridicule, the film about Magritte, though taking no particular targets, and working towards greater appreciation rather than destruction, conveyed much more about how one surrealist sees his world.

MANDY WILLIAMS



Magritte's "The Lovers"



Joseph Conrad

HELICOPTER cavalry officer Killgore is crazy about surfing. Here on the Vietnamese coast, he observes, in one of the most remarkable scenes in *Apocalypse Now*, the waves dividing as they break. Think how great it would look if two expert surfers rode the same wave at the same time, one rolling with the part that broke to the right, the other with the part that crashed to the left. A perfect symmetry.

But the Americans don't hold that part of the shore. It is overlooked by a village held by the NLF-North Vietnamese forces. So the surfing has to take place in the middle of a furious assault on the village. People are being killed, helicopters and homes blown up and the area napalmed... but out in the bay two surfers are coming out of a wave in perfect formation.

This is the real Vietnam War. Not the John Wayne movie, the numbing newsreels or even the daily body counts. It is barbarism, hypocrisy and greed. But for Coppola it is more. It is not only the truth about war but the truth about civilisation, and thus the truth about mankind. For imperialist war is in *Apocalypse Now* what colonial

# Apocalypse Now

trade is in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

Coppola's linking of his film to the themes of Joseph Conrad's short novel is clear. In *Apocalypse Now*, Captain Willard is sent upriver into the jungle, across the Cambodian border, by the army, on a top-secret mission: to kill Kurtz, the brilliant commander operating there. Kurtz, according to the army, has gone mad, has gone too far, is operating outside the rules.

The further Willard (Martin Sheen) goes, the more he sees of the depravity of imperialism. The nearer he gets to Kurtz (Marlon Brando), the more he feels under his spell.

In Conrad's work, Marlow travels up the Congo to meet Mr Kurtz, who is gathering ivory in the interior. In both works, Kurtz, when found, is both gigantic and depressing; he is worshipped by the primitive tribe he has organised to fight for him, and he is beyond sanity and morality. Much of the script of *Apoca-*

*lyse Now* comes directly from *Heart of Darkness*.

But that is the problem. Conrad, for all his ability to see the truth behind the myths and lies of the 'civilising mission', to strip bare the hollow pretences of virtue and morality, was a man of his class and his time. The prevailing philosophical currents — Sorel, Nietzsche, Bergson — with all their reactionary irrationalism dominated his thinking. He not only strips existing society of its deceptions and pretences, he declares that civilisation as such is only an organised deceit, an orchestrated egoism. He denounced morality for being no more than a calculation of happiness, not truth, a mere sentimental fabrication.

But Coppola, working three quarters of a century later, should surely be able to add something to Conrad's inquiry. The film shows not the slightest understanding of imperialism: historically and politically. Instead, following Conrad, it is the expression of 'the inner condition of the human soul'.

Perhaps the clearest indication of how reactionary the implications of this notion are is given in both *Heart of Darkness* and in *Apocalypse Now*. Kurtz, the brilliant mind, has been preparing a report; his proposals to solve the army's problems (the problems of the trading company in the Conrad novella) are carefully documented, yet, when Willard flicks through the pages, he notices scrawled in red over one the simple message: "Kill them all".

Because of this, we have a film which for two-thirds of its length is a searing indictment of imperialist war, but which in its final third descends into reactionary, mystical mumbo-jumbo. That final third is complicated by another factor: there are three versions. The one being shown in London now is not Coppola's favourite ending — in which Willard kills Kurtz and takes his place as the warrior-god of the Mantagnard tribe — nor is it the most logical.

ANDREW HORNUNG





George Meany [above] represented the class collaboration in US trade unionism which the 1978 miners' strike [below] began to crack.

# George Meany: Imperialism's favourite trade unionist



## USFI SPLIT: JUST MORE BLIND ALLEYS?

Comrades,  
I would like to take issue with the claim printed in WA 162, that the recent split in the USFI has "cleared obstacles to this essential work" (of building a revolutionary international) "insofar as it shattered or at least seriously damaged the claim by the USFI that it is itself the Fourth International, with the authority of the World Party of Socialist Revolution."  
To start off with, I share WA's assessment of the USFI of being the mainstream of post-war Trotskyism, i.e. the only major international tendency which hasn't either junked Trotskyism completely, collapsed into Social Democracy, Stalinism or virulent sectarianism.  
The split or splits of the LTT and the BF towards the rightist OCI clarifies nothing and indeed adds a false glow of ideological unity to the rump of the USFI in that the original rotten-bloc which was stitched together in 1963 survives.

The rapidly rightward moving SWP(US) is decisively calling the tune over the more 'orthodox' European sections as can be seen in some of the formulations in the European document:  
■ Gone is the communist principle of supporting national liberation movements — the pro-Official SWP condemns the Provisionals war of resistance as "terrorist".  
■ Gone also is the position of "No platform for fascists", the SWP has allowed free speech for Nazis and the KKK for years, it has now dragged its European comrades into the position of issuing vague generalities about "mass mobilisation". Also the SWP's right wing trade union orientation is rubbing off on their European sections who are already turning away from building rank and file movements towards "class struggle left wings" with left bureaucrats. This is now official policy.  
If the SWP is driving the

USFI to the right the other side is even more depressing.  
The Bolshevik Faction, which apparently has the healthiest political line of all the tendencies involved is eager to link up with one of the most rightward, dogmatic sects in the revolutionary movement. This might seem odd if one doesn't take into account the record of Nahuel Moreno, the leader of the BF, who has changed since the early 50's from a Peronist into a guerillaist, thence to an admirer of Mao, to a pro-SWP anti-guerillaist, finally breaking with them in 1975 to form his own tendency.  
Organisationally he uses slander and violence against opponents and in organisations where his tendency had control he has expelled supporters of the USFI majority. The adventure of the Simon Bolivar Brigade had less to do with building a Trotskyist party in Nicaragua (where Brigade members posed as members of the FSLN anyway)

than with creating a big splash as he split from the USFI. The fact that such an organisation could exist within the USFI for so long speaks volumes on the federalism and lack of effective democratic centralism in the USFI.  
The record of the OCI is if anything worse. From the ICFI stable, they finally split with Healy's SLL (now the WRP) for reasons that had little to do with politics. The ICFI was at best an amalgam of national sects with no effective international discipline. The OCI's organisational methods are gangster-like and their politics are bizarre — they recognise the state of Israel and they spent the last French election campaign begging the Communist Party not to break the Union of the Left (which they put no revolutionary demands on anyway).  
The real reason for this drive of both sides, OCI and BF, to shed political differences is that both are national sects

and so long as the OCI stays out of South America and the BF stays out of France, they will be able to bask in one another's glory without upsetting one another's routine. The politics are unimportant...  
We are faced with a future of more and more national sects turning further and further from the internationalist traditions of Trotskyism and the sight of the USFI being dragged along behind the SWP(US) line of constitutionalism and opportunism.  
This split has clarified nothing and further dispersed the cadre of Trotskyism in blind alleys. Although we need a serious international discussion of the issues raised nobody will be prepared to discuss them.  
MATTHEW WEBB  
REPLY: Matthew Webb exaggerates in his criticisms. The Bolshevik Faction, for example, whatever its other faults, is not a national sect. It exists in a substantial way outside the country in which it

is strongest (Argentina), and the major issues on which it has demarcated itself (Portugal, Angola) are not narrow national ones.  
In any case Webb's conclusion is too drastic. "Nobody will be prepared to discuss..." Really? Everybody in the revolutionary movement is corrupt and dead to the world except perhaps Matthew Webb, and a few people close to his id. We don't believe it. Anyways we should not assume that even the most entrenched leaderships are closed to discussion without testing the issue.  
Webb also seems to miss completely part of our argument. Until recently the USFI has been able to deflect many political debates by retreating to a defence of "My International, right or wrong". If there are two international currents of comparable strength, then that is no longer possible. The politics have to be debated, one way or another. And that is a gain.

GEORGE MEANY, president of the American Federation of Labour - Congress of Industrial Organisations (AFL-CIO, equivalent of our TUC) died on Thursday at the age of 85.

Although born in poor circumstances in New York, Meany rose in the US labour movement to become its president in 1952. Since then Meany has personified class collaboration and anti-communism in the trade union movement. He will be sadly missed by those he has most loyally served; not the rank and file but successive White House administrations.

Following his father, Meany became a plumber and joined the AFL. At that time the CIO did not exist. The AFL was an elitist outfit. It only recruited skilled workers and it discriminated against blacks and women.

### PRICE

The philosophy (if it can be called that) behind this attitude was that the members should protect their jobs and privileges by keeping out other workers, making their skills scarce and thereby raising their price on the labour market.

Meany readily accepted this approach. He rose rapidly in the ranks of the AFL, becoming president of the New York Federation of Labour (roughly equivalent to our trades councils) in the 1930s.

In the 30s, the conservative AFL was shaken to its roots. Around the mid-30s the unskilled workers, particularly in steel and the automobile industry, started to organise and fight for the right to join a union.

They didn't join the AFL. They flooded into a new union federation — the CIO, which was initially a sub-committee of the AFL and then broke away. The mass strikes, sit-ins and demonstrations of the unskilled rocked American society and eclipsed the AFL.

When the US entered world war 2, however, all the major unions (AFL or CIO) backed the war effort, and no-strike clauses were introduced. Only the miners dissented. After the war the CIO leaders, although initially militant and ready to fight, soon revealed how much they had become bureaucratized.

When the cold war got underway, the CIO bureaucracy co-operated fully with the McCarthy witchhunt and

expelled all known communists from its ranks despite the fact that many of the bureaucrats, like Walter Reuther, president of the Automobile Workers, had got their positions through help from the Communist Party.

The CIO (and the AFL) also did little to oppose anti-union legislation like the Taft-Hartley Act. Increasingly the CIO took on the bureaucratic and conservative characteristics of the AFL.

In the meantime, Meany continued his steady climb in the AFL machine, becoming secretary-treasurer in the 40s. By the early 50s the way was open to merge the two federations and unity was achieved on December 5th 1955.

Meany, who had been elected president of the AFL in 1952, became president of the new AFL-CIO, and CIO president Walter Reuther became vice-president.

It was not a workable arrangement. Apart from the fact that the two men disliked each other, Reuther still retained some elements of radicalism from his early days. Although it was on a purely verbal level, to the arch-conservative Meany it made him seem like a red revolutionary.

Eventually Reuther left in 1967, taking the auto-workers with him, the second largest union in the USA.

### BACKUP

Meany believed in capitalism and was a firm backer of US foreign policy (where he was ably abetted by former Marxist Jay Lovestone who became Meany's most trusted advisor on anti-communism). He was responsible for setting up the AFL-CIO 'International Department', which has had precious little to do with internationalism but has provided a solid backup service for US imperialism.

At the unity conference of the AFL-CIO Meany had this to say: "To be frank, we American trade unionists like the capitalist system. Naturally we well intend to preserve it in our efforts aimed at bettering the standard of living of the workers by improving the system itself. But we do not intend to abandon it for some pipe-dreams or some ideological fantasies invented by those who do not understand the workers' real needs and aspirations".

Meany was also a racist, although publicly he tried

to present himself otherwise. He consistently refused to take any concrete action against AFL-CIO branches which discriminated against blacks. In one debate at an AFL-CIO conference he attacked A. Philip Randolph, president of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters — one of the few prominent black trade unionists in the AFL-CIO — yelling at him "Who the hell appointed you guardian of all the negroes in America?"

A few days later the AFL-CIO executive publicly censured Randolph and at the same time rejected the US Commission on Civil Rights report on Employment!

### SCAB

Under Meany's brand of 'business unionism' — which sees the workers and capital as having basically the same interests — the AFL-CIO membership stagnated: 15 million at the time of unity and around 14½ million today (NY Times figures). There was a drop in unionisation of workers in manufacturing industries — in 1960, 31% of the workforce was unionised; in 1970 it was down to 27.4%. The living standards of the American workers have stagnated too in the last decade.

On hearing of Meany's death, Jimmy Carter remarked that he had been an "American institution" and that he had "changed the shape of the nation". Meany certainly was an institution — of corrupt, class-collaborationist trade unionism — an institution and way of life thoroughly woven into the goings-on of the US trade union bureaucracy.

But he didn't change the shape of anything, let alone the shape of the American nation. He was fully in accord with all the past malpractices of the labour aristocracy even down to his investments in the hotel business in the West Indies. For the vast majority of his years, Meany probably rarely saw the shopfloor. His world was the White House and the banqueting halls of Miami.

The American workers have not lost anything by this scab's death. The only sad feature on his departure is that his successors will carry on in exactly the same way. Meany rose from the ranks, but, as the great American socialist Eugene Debs once remarked, the point is not to rise from the ranks but to rise with them.

JOHN CUNNINGHAM



# Behind the

**In the second part of an article analysing the background to Russia's invasion of Afghanistan, JOHN O'MAHONY describes how the would-be revolutionary regime established after the April 1978 coup failed and slipped deeper and deeper into crisis.**

## The Muslim revolt spreads

WITHIN SIX weeks of the April 1978 coup, armed Muslim tribal bands were reported to be in rebellion against the new regime.

Opposition to central government was normally a stable part of the outlook of the Sardars (chiefs). And now the central government was 'pagan' and 'infidel'.

Already in 1973 the Muslim Brotherhood had attempted a coup against Daud. Muslim assassins had been active before the April 1978 coup, killing Akbar Khyber, the leader of Parcham.

The Taraki government decreed abolition of peasant debt to the village usurers; then it decreed drastic land reform; and finally it 'abolished' the bridal price and introduced educational reforms involving women.

Now all the upper layers, the 'lords temporal and spiritual' of Afghanistan's semi-feudal and rigidly hierarchical society had greater reasons than ever before for moving into opposition to the Government and to revolt; reason even for attempting to overcome their endemic tribal and other divisions so as to effectively oppose the government. In the event they have not managed to achieve unity, even today. Had they managed to bring the potentially overwhelming forces opposed to the PDP regime together, they could probably have toppled it by mid-1979.

The upper layers seem to have carried with them most of the lower orders of the social and regional hierarchies of which they were at the head.

It would be a mistake in judging such a society from outside (or from 'above'), which may be the point here) to assume a seething rebelliousness (as distinct from grievances) at the base of society. Far from it. Living as they do in rural isolation and medieval backwardness, the Afghan rural masses would have to make an immense mental leap to reach the possibility of even conceiving of a different arrangement of society, or, much more so, of committing themselves to a struggle to attain it by breaking up the existing social structures: that would be true even for the most oppressed of them, and even for those who felt themselves to be op-

pressed. And of course the fabric of such a society is woven from many ties of mutual responsibility and personal and family loyalties between the members of the different hierarchical layers, ties that seem largely to have remained intact.

To revolutionise such a society, to wean the lower layers from the existing structures, more than decrees were needed. The revolutionary regime was not installed by a revolutionary uprising of the masses. The example and the prodding of bourgeois areas in Afghan society, of areas that had developed beyond the semi-feudal level, was not available.

No part of Afghan society had achieved sufficient bourgeois/capitalist development to give the government an adequate base-area from which to begin to revolutionise rural society, to suggest or provide alternatives to the semi-feudal relations (including even usurious capitalist relations) around which the lives of the rural masses were organised.

The central government, as we have seen, did not even have the resources to organise an adequate alternative credit system when it decreed peasants' debts abolished — an act which should have benefited, and affected the attitudes of, 11 million peasants.

Thus the decrees of the 'infidel' central government and its 'interference' must have seemed mainly a threat to the rural masses. The government failed to ignite the rural masses against the upper social layers, and thus had to continue to rest, fundamentally, on the army.

Even the land reform, designed to benefit the 700,000 landless peasants and millions of others, does not seem to have polarised rural Afghanistan so as to rally a strong layer of the rural masses to even passive support for the government which made the revolutionary decrees.

On the contrary, using the religious battle cry 'Defence of Islam', the Sunni Muslim priests (and landlords and royalists) rallied the masses against the government, before the government's decrees had had time to achieve a class polarisation in the rural areas. The government's lack of a serious base in the population must have been decisive here.

Beginning as a series of limited local revolts in summer 1978, the rebellion spread until by the end of 1979 the Muslim insurgents could plausibly claim to dominate 22 out of 28 provinces. A big factor in this process and in the speed with which the Muslim masses were polarised against the reforming government (speed outstripping by far any possible polarisation of the masses against the traditional ruling class) must have been the brutality with which the government reacted.

From the summer of 1978, that is from the first and ex-

tremely limited revolts, the government bombed and strafed tribal villages. Eventually, by mid-1979, it was using napalm on the rebels and engaging in military sweeps which pushed thousands across the border.

When the government finally abandoned land reform in July with the obviously untrue claim that it had been completed already (and six months ahead of schedule!), it was left with no possible means of polarising the lower orders of traditional Afghan society against the landlords and priests, and could rely only on the arguments of the MIGs, helicopter gunships, and napalm against the vast majority of the Afghan population.

The policy of reforming decrees and repression then became a policy of repression just to enable the government to survive. The early resort to savage repression in the style of Somoza and the Shah flowed from the lack of an adequate base of support for the government. It increased and deepened the government's isolation.

The dividing line for the Taraki regime was autumn 1978, when the revolutionary decrees were announced. Before that the revolt was limited and the regime's Muslim credentials had not been entirely rejected. On

— on the government, in March 1979.

The striking way in which the material interests of the ruling class were mixed together with the prejudices of the Muslim faith and with the enormous ignorance of the rural masses (over 90% of the people of Afghanistan are illiterate) was captured by an anonymous writer in the *Economist*:

*"In fact no restrictions had been imposed on religious practice: the mosques were always open, and were particularly thronged with worshippers during the ID festival last weekend. The Shora courts continued functioning."*

*"The acts that were interpreted as anti-Islamic measures included the fact that the new regime ignored the religious leaders, the introduction of the red flag [removing the green of Islam], the enforced education of women [a first step, the mullahs claimed, towards their being sent to Russia to live lives of shame], the land reforms [many of the mullahs are landowners], and the use of the words 'comrade' and 'hurrah' [this cheer word, the mullahs said, was really the name of Lenin's mother] (1.9.79). Maybe they'd heard about the 'Lenin' mausoleum.*

The priests were encouraged by events in Iran. A

had recently been expelled from Iran. Army mutinies occurred and sometimes whole army groups deserted to the rebels.

In June there was fierce fighting around the strategically very important town of Jalalabad. In August a four-hour battle with mutineers took place in Kabul itself: they were routed by tanks and helicopter gunships.

In July the Muslim groups, of which the biggest is the 'National Front for the Rescue of Afghanistan', claimed to have set up an alternative government (though in fact they remained incapable of coordinating their combined forces).

More and more of the countryside was controlled by the rebels, and the government securely controlled only towns, garrisons, and wherever its army had asserted physical control at any given time.

A vicious war of attrition between the government and a large part of the population developed. The volume of refugees who crossed the border into Pakistan tells its own story. In December 1978 there were 10,000. In March 1979, there were, according to Pakistani government figures, 35,000 refugees in Pakistan. In June it was 100,000. By July there were 150,000; and some of them had napalm burns.

By the end of 1979 the Pakistani government was citing a figure of more than 400,000. (Unofficial figures were usually higher than those of the Pakistani government).

## Outside involvement

Other than the Russian involvement, and long before the full-scale Russian invasion and the reactions to it, the Afghan civil war had already developed international ramifications.

The anti-government forces were allowed to base themselves in Pakistani territory, across the border from Afghanistan, and to train and arm there (*Economist*, 24.3.79). Money from the Gulf states helped finance the Muslim brotherhood (*The Times* 13.10.78). Emissaries toured Muslim capitals to get support and money for their holy 'anti-communist' war. Places they went to included Egypt and Saudi Arabia. (*Daily Telegraph*, 22.1.79).

By February 1979, the leaders of Hizb-i-Islami claimed they had so far raised and spent £400,000 on weapons (*Economist*, 17.2.79). The Muslim insurgents had Chinese rifles (*Economist*, 13.1.79), and the Chinese government sent soldiers to Pakistan to train them.

When [Pakistani] drug enforcement agents spotted some Chinese in the tribal border areas, an urgent message was sent to the Pakistani government demanding immediate action.

The official reply was that the Chinese had nothing to do with drugs and were to be left alone.

*"Members of Pakistan's narcotics control board later learned that the mysterious visitors had been sent by Peking to train Afghan guerillas"* (*Economist*, 21.4.79).

The same issue of the *Economist* gave details of just how accommodating to the needs of the Pakistani reactionaries the Pakistani government was being:

*"...The war inside Afghanistan does seem to be financed increasingly with the proceeds of the illegal opium trade. Feudal Afghan landlords, whose holdings are threatened by the Taraki government, are bringing their poppy crops into Pakistan and using the proceeds to buy arms in the town of Darra, where rifles, machine guns, explosives, even cannons, are available to anyone with cash in his pocket.*

*"The arms merchants of Darra report that business is booming"* (*Economist*, 21.4.79).

Guns also came from Iran: *"...a burgeoning opium-for-guns trade with dissident groups and Baluchi tribesmen in Iran has built up... Narcotics experts believe an increasing amount of the 300 tons of opium produced annually along Afghanistan's southern fringes is being funnelled into meeting the growing demand from Iranian addicts, and for refining in Iran to supply Western markets for heroin."*

*"In return many of the guns seized from Iranian armouries during that country's revolution are finding their way into Afghanistan, probably with the knowledge of some Shi'a Muslim clergymen who want to help the overthrow of the 'kafir' or infidel regime in Kabul"* (*Economist*, 19.5.79).

## The PDP at bay

The PDP had accepted office from the officers with whom it had collaborated to overthrow Daud. It had enough support and members among them to give it so secure a grip on the armed forces that it could purge those forces and make its continued control certain. However, as we have seen, it found that it did not have the strength or the influence to carry through serious reforms, and that attempts to do so by decree allowed reaction to mobilise a big proportion of the Afghan masses against the PDP government.

The PDP régime, with its too narrow base, increasingly found itself pitted against everything else in Afghanistan. It began to tear itself apart.

Parcham and Khalq had a history of bitter conflict. The fragile unity broke down three months after the April 1978 coup. Parcham was ousted and soon persecuted,



Right wing rebels got mass support

important occasions Taraki publicly prayed for the revolution in Kabul mosques. The 1,410th anniversary of the Koran was celebrated officially throughout the country.

The regime felt sufficiently sure of its standing to denounce the Muslim Brotherhood for 'Unislamic activities' and to declare a Jihad on it in September 1978, pretending to regard it as the only enemy. After the revolutionary decrees on land and women, the forces against the government had gained sufficient strength to be able to declare their own 'Jihad'

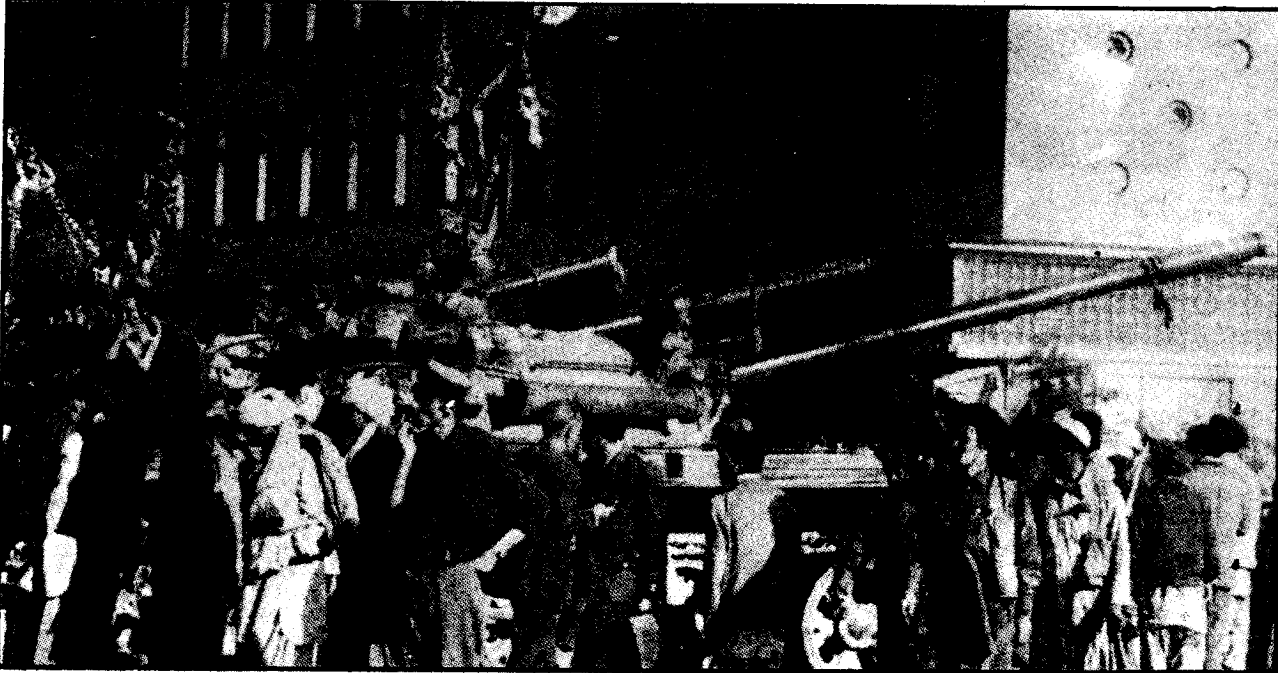
Muslim priest told a *Daily Telegraph* reporter that they would fight with the Koran in one hand and a gun in the other. For they were 'fighting a pagan regime which has no place in Afghanistan... This Jihad will surely mean the end of the Communists, and the triumph of Islam, just as it has triumphed in Iran and Pakistan'.

In late March 1979 there was a mass uprising in the town of Herat, during the suppression of which perhaps 5000 people were killed: it seems likely that some at least of the insurgents were Afghan workers who





# Kabul coup



Russian tanks in Kabul

as were its supporters in the army. The leader of the coup — and of the one before that in 1973 — Abdul Khadir, was one of the first to fall, arrested and charged with anti-revolutionary activity and treason. He 'confessed' after one month in custody, and his confession was published by the ministry of defence, now headed by the other hero of the April coup, Abdul Waragan...

The previous history of the two tendencies and subsequent events lend weight to reports published in 1978 that they differed on the extent of the Soviet Union's role in Afghanistan. They may also have differed in that Parcham, reflecting the Russians, advocated a slower and more cautious approach to reform.

## PDP makes concessions

Faced with growing and spreading revolt, the one year old regime made vigorous attempts to conciliate Islam and to annex for itself the trappings and symbols of the religion, undoing its 'offences' where possible.

Attempts at manipulation, attempts to use the existing forms, perhaps on the model of the way the army had been used, were to do service where revolutionary mobilisation of the masses had been lacking.

Offending words like 'comrade' and 'hurrah' disappeared. The regime now saturated itself even more thoroughly in the Muslim faith, and tried to legitimise itself according to it: prayers and Koran reading accompanied everything; every public announcement opened by invoking the name and the approval of Allah.

In August, an Assembly of some 100 leading ulema was convened to declare that the revolutionary deeds were in accordance with the teachings of the Koran. They made a ruling — quoting the Koran — that it was obligatory for all believers to fight

those opposing a regime that has done good to the common man. But most Afghans continued to prefer the invocation of war for a different interpretation of the Koran, that made by the vast majority of the priests.

The government also back-pedalled on its reform policies, and made a general attempt at conciliation. In June Taraki appealed for a return of the refugees and declared an amnesty until July. 1300 political prisoners were released. In July the land reform was declared already 'completed'; the government made much publicised approaches to mullahs, tribal elders and traders. In August the pay of officers and NCOs was doubled.

This turn was Russia's policy for Afghanistan. In July and August, according to the Western press, the Russians were eagerly signalling to the west that their policy was for concessions and attempts to broaden the base of the government (and the PDP), even to the extent of including royalists in it.

In fact the reactionary revolt continued to spread and to become more threatening.

## The Khalq divides

Publicly Khalq was united on the policy of concessions. But as the civil war situation continued to worsen, divisions on similar lines to those between Khalq and Parcham re-emerged within Khalq, under pressure of events and of the USSR. They centred on president Nur Mohammed Taraki on one side, and Hafizullah Amin, who was becoming increasingly prominent, on the other.

Amin took over as prime minister in March 1979, retaining the position of field marshal and becoming vice-president of the supreme defence council. Taraki remained president and supreme commander of the armed forces, though now he reportedly devoted a lot of his time to a luxurious style of life in the royal palace, which had been renamed the People's Palace.

Publicly, Amin, who had organised the Khalq cells in the armed forces, was identified with the mailed fist approach. He was the 'strong man' of the regime.

Before the turn to concilia-

tion, he had advocated a 'no questions' policy. He was considered to have been the prime mover in pushing through the real reforms — against Russian advice for caution — and also as the man who was responsible for the purges in which thousands had died and the morale of the armed forces had been shattered.

In July Amin took over the ministry of defence from Waragan, in what was then thought to be a move to forestall a new Russian-inspired coup.

## Amin's coup, Sep. 1979

The Russians attempted their coup on September 14th. Taraki passed through Moscow on his way back from the 'non-aligned' (!) meeting in Havana, and was publicly bear-hugged by Brezhnev. Three days later he was dead, killed after a gun battle with Amin and some of his supporters in the People's Palace.

The evidence suggests that it was Amin who was to have been removed, because he was the most hated re-

presentative of the brutal and politically bankrupt regime, and probably because he really was partly or wholly against the Russian policy of more concessions to broaden the regime, and did really believe in a policy of slugging it out with the entire population of Afghanistan if necessary.

Summoned by Taraki to give an account of his purge of three ministers including Lt.Col. Waragan and Major Mazdooriyar, who had been the leaders of the assault on Daud's palace, prime minister Amin went, apparently under a safe-conduct from the Russian ambassador.

He was fired on as he approached, and together with his supporters came out on top in a ten hour gun-fight that followed. Amin now denounced Taraki, publicly blaming everything on him, released a few hundred non-political prisoners as well as a list of 12,000 people who had disappeared — and continued to purge and to shoot armed forces officers and members of the PDP.

Whether or not Amin and Taraki stood for clearly distinct policies before September 14th, Amin's victory did lead to a new primary reliance on the firepower of an army increasingly demoralised and fragmented, in an attempt at outright suppression of the revolt by force. He did not broaden the base of Khalq, reportedly the policy of the Russians and of Taraki.

In late October, Amin made a victorious military sweep against the insurgents, driving 40,000 people — mostly non-combatants — across the border into Pakistan.

## Russia drawn in deeper

Russia had had many hundreds of civilian and military advisers in Afghanistan before the April 1979 coup; and these numbers were increased in the month after the coup, during which more than 30 trade and aid agreements were signed.

On December 3rd, 1978, a new Soviet-Afghan friendship treaty was signed, by which time an estimated 5000 Soviet advisers, half of them military, were in Afghanistan.

Dozens of Russians, at least, were killed during 1979. Russia, of course, supplied the tanks and the gunships and no doubt the napalm too. To the degree that the post-April regime was weak against the Afghan population and to the degree that it progressively destroyed and decimated its own base in the army and the PDP, the Russians substituted themselves and their resources. The invasion was the logical finale.

The purges had decimated the officer corps. For example, there were 2000 air force pilots in April 1978; in July 1979 there were only 500 of them left. The ranks

of the army were conscripts on a wage of £1.20 a month, who would naturally be affected by the Muslim revolt. There were many mutinies and desertions.

Reports cite 6,000 desertions, often of whole groups, between April and November 1979; the insurgents claimed many more than that.

After Amin's coup, despite the elimination by shooting of many officers, including the chief of staff, most officers were considered hostile to Amin, and the rebels were 15 miles from Kabul.

By now, western observers put the number of Russians in Afghanistan at anything up to 20,000, including combat troops. The main air force base was protected by Russian troops; the air force, now with many Russian pilots, was effectively under Russian control.

In fact, towards the end of the Amin regime, there were virtually two state machines in Afghanistan, what was left of the original one and a parallel-structure directly controlled by the Russians.

## Russia's invasion

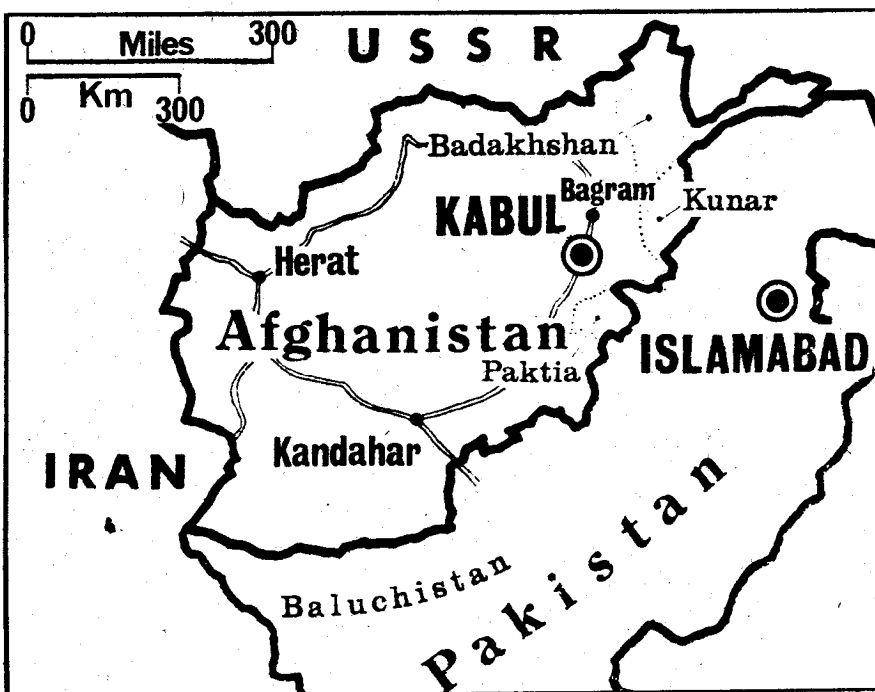
Finally, over Christmas 1979, the Russians flooded in troops, and took complete control on December 27th. The leaders of Parcham were flown in and put in charge as Russia's puppets, with their first chore to 'invite' into Afghanistan, retrospectively, the Russian troops on whose tanks they rode to power.

Babrak Karmal became general secretary of the PDP, and in return for his 'invitation' to the Russian troops, Leonid Brezhnev publicly congratulated him on his 'election': "I warmly congratulate you on your election to the post of general secretary of the central committee of the PDP and to the highest state posts in the People's Democratic Republic of Afghanistan!"

Amin and his associates were denounced as agents of American imperialism, as tyrants and as adventurers and demagogues who had run a 'fascist regime'. They were 'tried' and shot. The Russians said their troops had been sent "to defend the revolution against outside interference".

Despite the prominence of Parcham leaders like Babrak Karmal, Dr Anahita Ratebzad, etc., and the semi-miraculous reappearance of Lt.Col. Abdul Khadir out of Taraki's and Amin's dungeons, the regime in Afghanistan is not a continuation of that established by the April 1978 coup. The Russian takeover marked the end of that chapter and registered the failure of the PDP/Army experiment by moving in to bury it before the Muslim insurgents did.

To be continued





# CUTS RALLY 'TO SHOW WE MEAN BUSINESS'

MERSEYSIDE anti-cuts committee, supported by Liverpool District Labour Party and Liverpool Trades Council is calling a national conference on the cuts for Saturday 22nd March.

As cuts committee secretary and District Labour Party executive member Terry Harrison told *Workers' Action*, the conference is intended to rally the labour movement against the cuts and "demonstrate to the local authorities that we mean business."

The conference also has a local focus. Liverpool Labour also hopes to end the present stalemate on the council — where no party has a majority — and win control in the May elections. Then, said

Harrison, "as far as I'm concerned, there'll be a fight for no rent or rate increases and no cuts."

The March conference could be vital in rallying support for any Labour council which defies the Tory cuts in its budget-making for the financial year starting this April. A council which refuses to make cuts or raise rates will immediately face legal action; only direct backing by strikes and mass demonstrations will enable them to stand up to the Tories.

At the conference, and in the build up to it, socialists must campaign for that industrial backing for the cuts fight.

★ Conference: 11am, St George's Hall, Liverpool. Delegates' creden-

tials 50p from T.Harrison/A.Dodswell, 70 Victoria St, Liverpool 1.

★ The Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory Steering Committee/Editorial Board, at its meeting on 12th January, decided to back an appeal launched by activists in Lothian for pledges of labour movement support for councils which defy the Tory cuts by going for no cuts and no rate or rent rises in their budget-making this spring.

Latest signatories to this appeal are Jack Gould (secretary, Coventry Trades Council) and Neil Lindsay (Lothian Regional Council). Names of new signatories should be sent to John Bloxam, c/o PO Stamford Hill, London N16.

# Workers' ACTION

## Cowley witch-hunt led by CP

On January 9th the biannual secret ballot for convenor took place at BL's Assembly Plant at Cowley. Cowley Assembly is the only plant in BL where the convenor is elected by this method.

On the day of the election, a leaflet — written and distributed by CP members in the plant — appeared, connecting the sitting convenor, Bob Fryer, to the "mass execution of T&G members!"

This was a reference, it turned out, to Fryer's opposition on the Oxford District Committee condemning a T&G

branch for taking its banner on a march organised by Provisional Sinn Fein. In the event, Bob Fryer was elected with an increased majority — thanks mainly to the intervention of shop stewards to stop the witch-hunting.

But it is, to say the least, ironic that while leading CP member Derek Robinson remains the victim of a vicious red-baiting witchhunt, CP members at Cowley have attempted to whip up a similar reactionary hysteria against Bob Fryer.

A.C.

## 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.

**SATURDAY 19TH JANUARY**  
Ted Knight (leader, Lambeth council) on the cuts. 10am, University Settlement, Barron Hill, Bristol. Meeting sponsored by Bristol West LP. All welcome.

**SATURDAY 19TH JANUARY**  
Cardiff NAC Open Conference "Abortion and women's rights". Students' Union, Park Place, Cardiff. 10-4. Creche provided.

**SUNDAY 20TH JANUARY.**  
Coventry Socialist Organiser meeting on the Cuts. 7.30pm at the White Lion, Gosford Green. Speakers: Joe Little, NUPE Coventry branch secretary, and Bill Bowring, Lambeth Councillor.

**FRIDAY 25TH JANUARY.**  
Showing of film of 20,000-strong Iranian women's demonstration, at the Women's Arts Alliance, 10 Cambridge Terrace Mews, Chester Gate, London NW1. 8pm. The film will also be shown at St Ann's Hall, Venn St, Clapham, London SW4, at 7pm on Saturday 2nd February.

**FRIDAY 25TH JANUARY**  
London Workers' Action public meeting: 'Support the steelworkers, stop the Tories!' Speaker: Pete Radcliff (BSC Stanton). 8pm, 'Metropolitan', Farringdon Rd/Clerkenwell Rd.

**SATURDAY 26TH JANUARY**  
Islington campaign against the Cuts march. 11am Whittington Park (Holloway Rd) to Islington Town Hall.

**SUNDAY 27TH JANUARY**  
Bloody Sunday commemoration demonstration. 2pm, Sparkhill Park, Stratford Rd, Birmingham. Organised by Provisional Sinn Fein

**WEDNESDAY 30 JANUARY.**  
'Women Fight Back against the Tory attacks'. Meeting organised by the women's subcommittee of Lambeth Trades Union Council. Speakers include Terry Marsland, deputy gen. sec., Tobacco Workers' Union. 7.30pm, Lambeth Town Hall, Lower Hall.

**FRIDAY 1 FEBRUARY.** Picket the Home Office to demand the children of Anwar Ditta be allowed to enter Britain. 12 noon to 3pm, 50 Queen Anne's Gate, opposite St James's tube station.

**TUESDAY 5TH FEBRUARY**  
Campaign against Corrie mass lobby and rally. 2pm, Central Hall, Westminster.

**FRIDAY 8TH FEBRUARY**  
Women's assembly (women only) against third reading of Corrie bill. 2pm, Central Hall, Westminster.

Published by Workers' Action, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD, and printed by Anvil Press [TU]. Registered as a newspaper at the GPO.

## Victory at Adamsons after five months strike...

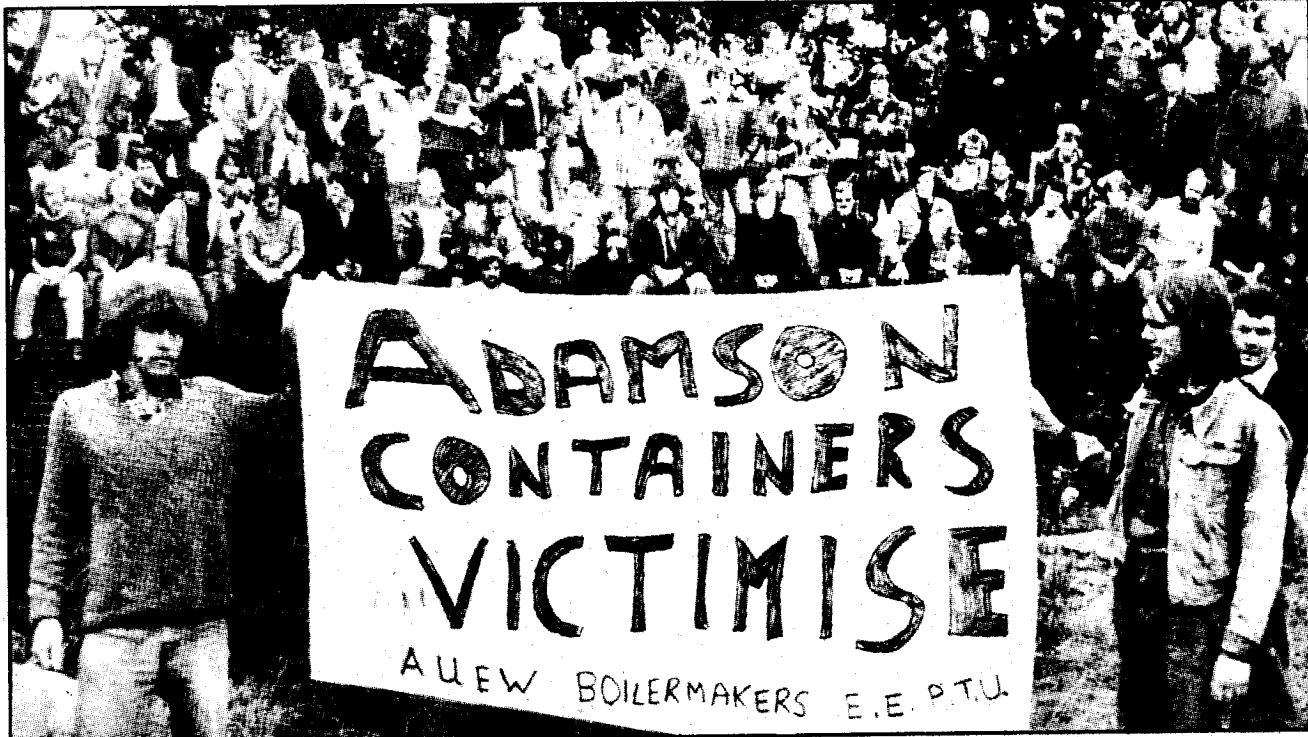
THE STRIKERS at Adamsons Containers, near Manchester, have won after 22 weeks.

After threatening to shut the plant down, Adamsons bosses finally collapsed in talks on Monday 14th and agreed to no victimisations.

The strike started in August last year, when management put out a redundancy list including convenor John Taylor and all but one of the shop stewards' committee. 261 workers came out.

oo

The strikers faced police violence, red-baiting in the press, fake letters from 'a striker's wife', and a bribery attempt (£20,000, or wages for life, offered to John Taylor or to abandon the fight). They stood firm — and won. If they can win, why not also the BL workers opposing the victimisation of Derek Robinson?



## ...but at BL, no new moves to reinstate Robinson

ANYONE WHO attended the Sunday 13th conference in Birmingham hoping to hear a serious debate on the way to win the reinstatement of Longbridge convenor Derek Robinson will have been disappointed.

The 1,000 delegates from all over the country heard a number of rousing speeches, notably one from Arthur Scargill, who said: "We should not be involved in an inquiry into the sacking. We should be involved in industrial action."

"If you make the call, the

Yorkshire miners are prepared to join in any industrial action". But none of the British Leyland union leaders present was willing to give any specific commitment to industrial action.

The resolution, proposed and voted on without any discussion or opportunity for amendment, merely pledged the conference to "full support for whatever action was necessary to secure this demand" (the unconditional reinstatement of Derek Robinson and the removal of disciplinary measures against

Len Brindle, Jack Adams and Mick Clarke). There was no decision to support the campaign to force the resignation of the AUEW Executive.

Surprisingly, Bill Jordan, the pro-Duffy Birmingham Divisional Organiser of the AUEW spoke expressing his "unequivocal support for Derek Robinson". But Jordan's dishonest attempt to combine "support" for Robinson with support for the AUEW Executive's betrayal provoked angry heckling from the floor of the meeting.

Appeals for solidarity were

heard from John Taylor, the victimised convenor of Adamson's in Manchester (who have been on strike for five months) and from Brian Molyneux, an ISTC Branch Secretary at Stocksbridge, who was sacked shortly after Robinson. Nearly £1,000 was collected to be shared between the two strike committees.

The Workers' Action leaflet distributed at the conference pointed out the connections between the issues at stake in BL and the steel strike:

"BL workers and steel

workers together could force back the Tory offensive. We can stop the redundancies in BL, stop the steel closures, turn the tide of the attacks on the public sector.

"And if we can force the TUC to take up the Welsh TUC's call for an all-out general strike from January 21st, we can go still further — beyond throwing back particular attacks or even throwing the Tories out of office. It would challenge the whole capitalist structure."

ALAN CHERETT

## 5pc insult rejected at BL

AFTER MONTHS of hesitation, the union side of the Leyland Cars Joint Negotiation Committee has finally rejected the company's insulting 5% and strings offer and has decided to organise a ballot of the workforce. We don't yet know what the wording of the question on the ballot form will be, but we clearly have no choice but to reject the company's offer — and to prepare for all-out action to win our original claim.

The Company have already said that they won't accept the decision of the ballot — so much for their trumpeting

about "majority rule in BL"! But we can still expect a massive company-inspired "Vote Yes" campaign from the media.

This time however BL workers are not going to be taken in by lies, half-truths and downright blackmail. We all know that a 5% rise is a real wage cut of over 15%. And we all know that the "85-page document" would take away all our hard-earned rights on the shopfloor — mutuality, seniority, rest allowances in fact every existing agreement!

VOTE NO AND BE READY TO FIGHT!

## No nuclear waste in London!

**Demonstrate SAT JAN 26 ASSEMBLE 1.00pm PRIMROSE HILL FIELDS PLAYGROUND (Chalk Farm Tube)**

Nuclear waste is carried by train through London three nights a week. Containers are unsafe, and are tested for withstanding an accident at far lower speeds than those possible. Already three nuclear waste trains have been derailed.

An accident with only 10% leakage would kill thousands of people.

For more information, contact: London Regional Anti-Nuclear Alliance, c/o 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1.

**Labour movement Fightback for Women's Rights A WORKING CONFERENCE**

Discussing: abortion after Corrie, women and cuts, maternity rights & the Employment Bill, legal rights & the immigration rules, and women in the labour movement

Participating: JCWI, Rights of Women, Women's Aid Fed., NCCL, National Council for One Parent Families, CPAG, Gingerbread, NUS Nursery Campaign, National Maternity Grant Campaign, LARC, and others.

Conway Hall Red Lion Sq WC1 Sat. March 22 11am - 5pm

Details, agenda & registration from: Fightback for Women's Rights, 41 Ellington St., London N7 (607 5268)