

# workers' ACTION

No.17 May 13th - 19th 1976 8p

ALL OUT FOR MAY 26th

SPEAKING AT the North-West area National Union of Mineworkers conference, last week, Len Murray described his deal with Healey. "I cannot pretend to you that this wage policy will suit every one of you".

He is dead right. It is openly admitted by the Labour Government, by the TUC, and by all the economic commentators, that the deal will mean a cut in real wages for us all next year. And in their rush to accept, the Trade Union leaders did not even secure the vaguest of promises about the 'price restraint' that they said they wanted. Such 'price restraint', in a capitalist economy, has anyway time and again over the past few years proved to be a sham.

The guns are now being brought out in the battle to force the Trade Union movement to accept the Government-TUC deal. Hugh Scanlon faces 29 resolutions against wage restraint at the forthcoming AUEW National Committee. Only one resolution has been submitted supporting the Government policy.

Miners in Yorkshire, Kent, South Wales, and the North West have come out clearly against the deal. At last weekend's national conference the ASTMS voted to reject the deal with Healey.

A veritable circus has been drummed up to troop around the trade Union conferences to persuade them to accept. This doesn't just include Jack Jones, Len Murray and Callaghan. Now that Foot's 'left' image is more than tarnished, Wedgwood Benn has been turned out as a more likely candidate to win the Trade Unions to support for the

## RECALL TUC MUST SAY — No Limit! No Deal!

Labour Government.

He has come out clearly in favour of the wage-cutting deal. Speaking at the North West area NUM conference, Benn had this to say on the agreement: "This has greatly and permanently increased Trade Union influence in the formulation of public policy and whatever government is in power, that particular clock will never be able to be turned back".

At present Trade Union leaders prepared to sell their members' liv-

ing standards to maintain the 'confidence' of the bankers and to keep in power a Labour government, are the best allies any government could have. The Labour government is committed to the hilt to anti-working class policies. It has pushed up unemployment to the 1½ million mark. It is slashing the National Health and education services to shreds. Through its £6 pay limit it has already cut deeply into workers' living standards.

As long as the trade union lead-

ers are able to sell the wages and conditions of their members, no Government need break with them. In fact they are a vital weapon in their attack on the working class. Benn is right when he talks about how much governments, be they Tory or Labour, rely if they can on a trade union leadership that will hold back its members.

But the minute the trade union leaders are incapable of selling wage

CONTD. PAGE THREE

Inside

IRELAND p2  
PORTUGAL p6  
1776  
p4&5

## Race hate press campaign started by Fascists

THE FASCISTS of the National Party and the racist bigots of the Tory press have jointly whipped up a new campaign to victimise Asian immigrants.

The basis of the campaign is the 'discovery' that West Sussex County Council was paying £100 a night for the past five weeks to accommodate two families from Malawi at a hotel near Gatwick airport.

The press was tipped off about the situation by one Anthony Brewer, a Woolworths' security officer who lives in Crawley. Brewer is a well-known fascist in the area, having stood as a candidate in the General Election on behalf of the National Front, and in the local election on behalf

of the National Party.

After the tip-off from this fascist, the race-hate mongers went to work. "A passport to plenty — More Asians on the way to join 4-star immigrants" roared the Express. "We want more money, say the £600 a week Asians" jeered the Mail. "Migrants 'here just for welfare handouts'" added the Telegraph, jostling for its place among the "Paki-bashing" press. And that well-known racist cartoonist Jak captioned his Evening Standard cartoon with the lines: "Boy! Would you show Mr. Singh to the British Passport Holders' Suite."

Day after day the filth mounted up. And so did the abuse directed at members of these families on the streets of Crawley...and so did

the hate mail, the abusive phone calls.

The fascists were jubilant. On Thursday 7th the National Front staged a demonstration in Crawley; on the following Saturday the National Party marched from the airport hotel to Crawley town centre, many of them with their faces blacked and yelling racist slogans mainly directed at the two families.

One thing is right; there is a scandal here. But the scandal isn't anything to do with the immigrants. It is the scandal of a housing situation which everywhere — not just in West Sussex — relies on hotel



The next family to arrive — met by a barrage of pressmen ready to twist their words

CONTD. BACK PAGE



## Ulrike Meinhof — a stranded revolutionary

ULRIKE MEINHOF is dead, found hanging in her cell after four years of captivity in solitary confinement. Like her comrade Holger Meins who died on hunger strike in 1974, she saw her own life as expendable. Subjected to a regime of isolation and sensory deprivation techniques designed to break and tame her ready for a show-trial, her death was a last defiant gesture.

Meinhof epitomises two things. The total commitment of the true revolutionary against capitalism. And the utter futility and blind impotence of anarchist terrorism.

After the ice-age of a quarter century in which workers' parties, especially and

system, all 'wise counsel' was deservedly discredited. In the late 1960s, from the USA to Ireland to Germany, direct action — preferably with guns — cut through all the hypocrisy and timeserving of the labour movement.

Or at least it seemed to. Meinhof began 'political' life as a middle class do-gooder, and progressed to anarchist terrorism. She faced — vicariously — the problem of capitalism's rejects and drop-outs and decided, rightly, that there was no solution within capitalism.

She concluded that the answer was a violent assault on capitalist society.

All the ideas of the labour movement as the vehicle for change had lost cred-

towel round the neck after four years' captivity — they, following Guevara and the Third World guerilla forces, 'could change things'.

Of course they changed nothing. Terrorism is at least as much a blind alley as reformism — even if the terrorists are more admirable as people. Meinhof, Baader, Meins and their comrades entered the blind alley of terrorism, and set out to pit themselves in a violent duel with the institutions of the capitalist state.

We honour Comrade Meinhof and we mourn her. Honouring her as a comrade we reassert on the basis of HER experience (the latest of a long and terribly

movement of the masses, and with firm communist ideas in place of the present dominating reformist and chauvinist ideology.

Meinhof and many others in different countries are the victims of the nature of the international working class movement. These are our comrades, while such as the members of the Labour Government, those of the other blind alley, are on the other side of the political, industrial and ideological barricades.

Better the sacrifice and the example of Comrade Meinhof. Better still a militant working class movement and a party linked to the masses fighting for what Meinhof perished fighting for, and able



WHEN eight members of the British Army's notorious SAS regiment were arrested several miles inside the border of the Republic of Ireland, all the Army could mutter by way of an explanation was "we believe there has been an incidental incursion into the Republic and an investigation is being held".

Soon the 'white-wash' story came out: the men had made "a map reading error". No-one really believes this, and no wonder: for it to be true, the SAS men would have had to have made four errors twice over, as they arrived in two vehicles, one three and a half hours behind the other!

Not only that, but these troops — reputedly the most expert and best trained, as well as the most vicious — were travelling in exactly the opposite direction from the one they should have been taking if, as they say, they were on their way home.

The eight men were from the military barracks at Bessbrook, Armagh. They weren't wearing uniform, but they were carrying sub-machine guns, pistols and pump guns.

What has bewildered the British Government and its lap-dog press is that the eight men were arrested. After all, the Irish Government has admitted that the British Army has "strayed" over the Border "about a hundred times over the last year". Why the furore this time?

One of the reasons is certainly

# SAS arrests expose Army's true role

that the SAS are no ordinary regiment. They are a specialised unit trained to operate on their own and in secrecy — their major job being "dirty tricks", such as assassination, acts of provocations and abductions.

## Deny

The British Government has always been at pains to deny that the SAS were operating in the Republic. In fact it is only five months since they have admitted that the regiment was operating in the North!

Another reason is that the Irish

Parliament, the Dail, has just passed the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill, which provides for the trial in the Republic of Ireland of people accused of committing "limited terrorist-type offences" in Britain or Northern Ireland. The Bill is the Irish counterpart to legislation already passed in Britain, and marks a really enormous increase in the open, legal and official collaboration between the 26 County state and the British state in trying to eliminate the IRA.

Particularly in the light of the huge support shown for the Provisional IRA (their Easter Sunday commemoration rally, which was banned, attracted 20,000, includ-

ing a Labour Dail member), the 26 County government is probably anxious not to add to the reaction against their new Bill by permitting this incursion to go unanswered.

Also they are probably furious that the British Army is 'rocking the boat'. The joint anti-IRA campaign had been going smoothly. The phasing out of Special Category status started on March 1st, the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill went through the Dail on March 3rd, and Wilson held talks with Prime Minister Cosgrave on March 5th.

## Wipe out

We will probably never know what the SAS was really up to south of the Border. It is probable that they were hunting for some of the prisoners who escaped from Long Kesh detention camp.

Not only has this incident shown that the SAS do operate in the Republic, but it also demonstrates the real nature of the Army's role in Northern Ireland. The job of these heavily armed assassins is not to "preserve law and order" — it is to wipe out Republicans and destroy their base of support.

If the eight SAS men do go on trial in the Republic, it will be the first time the REAL terrorists, instead of their opponents, have stood in the dock.

## Kow-towing to the British government

AFTER Brendan McManus and Henry Doherty had tunneled out of Long Kesh camp near Lisburn in the North of Ireland on Tuesday 4th, they crossed the border into the South — where they were arrested.

They are being held under Section 30 of the Republic's Offences against the State Act while the authorities there work out how to deal with them.

Their dilemma is this: both McManus and Doherty are members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP). They have committed no offences in the South and the IRSP is not an illegal organisation, so they can't be jailed in the Republic.

Pressure by Britain to have them extradited has hit an obstacle too. For the part of the prison camp they had been jailed in was a "political compound" (Rees's phasing out of the Special Category status has not yet affected this part of the camp). And Irish law forbids the extradition of those convicted on only political charges.

Although this case has received much less attention in the press than the SAS border crossings, it is much more important. If the Irish Government agrees to extradition, they will have gone the whole hog in kow-towing to the wishes of the British state.

# The working-class war in Northern Ireland

"SINCE the ending of internment in 1975 the Northern Ireland Secretary, Merlyn Rees, has been at pains to stress the criminal nature of the continuing violence in Ulster. Ministerial speeches have been peppered with words like 'thugs' and 'murderers', and hints of 'evil men' behind the scenes. This is related to the current official policy to rely on the police rather than the army and to phase out special category status for convicted terrorists so that newly convicted men can be treated in prison like ordinary criminals. It is all part of a wider strategy of denying any possible political legitimacy to the IRA and its Loyalist counterparts".

So says an article published in the latest edition of the journal 'New Society'. The article gives a breakdown of statistics on people convicted of so-called 'terrorist crimes' and the figures show just the opposite of what Rees and other ministers have been saying.

The figures (which we reproduce here) show that almost all of those convicted of 'terrorist crimes' are working class. In fact they are more or less a cross-section of the Northern Ireland working class. Far from their being either 'inveterate criminals' or 'professional gunmen', most of them were employed when they were arrested — many in skilled jobs — and a vast majority of both Catholics and Protestants had no previous 'serious convictions'.

## Violent

As the authors, Kevin Boyle, Rosemary Chesney, and Tom Hadden, point out, "The figure for the socio-economic class of those involved in the violent part of this conflict confirm, as might be expected, that the 'war' is essentially a working class one". And they add, "The assumption that all terrorism is the

work of full-time guerillas, permanently on the run, cannot be sustained; nor can the idea that if only more employment could be provided there would be no problem".

But these findings do more than show the lies behind the Government's propaganda campaign so faithfully amplified by the press. They also show the nonsense behind certain arguments prevalent on the left.

According to the paper 'Militant', for instance, the Republicans are criminal elements living on the fringes of society, not workers. Consequently they call for the establishment of a "trade union defence force". The 'New Society' figures, however, show that the entire working class is riven by the sectarian conflict, and that there simply is no section from which this 'defence force' could be recruited. In short: it is trade unionists who are "the gunmen".

The Communist Party and some

trade union leaders support the 'Campaign for a better life'. These people (and 'Militant' too) believe that an improvement in social conditions would solve the roots of the Northern Ireland conflict. The



Rees

authors of the 'New Society' article show how ridiculous this view is.

The Government's line conforms to a common pattern of propaganda by repressive regimes: all political rebellion is labelled 'banditry', 'hoo-

liganism', 'insanity', or 'social deviance'. In South Africa, for example, military opposition to the racist rule of the white minority is described as the work of 'brigands'; and in Russia, opposition to the system is attributed to 'hooligans', 'bandits', 'anti-social elements', and the 'mentally disturbed'.

Guerilla warfare and 'volunteer' activity often give rise on their fringes to a certain amount of semi-political and non-political criminal activity. But, while there may be elements of that in the Northern Ireland situation, what is clear is that it is in essence a war between Britain and sections of the Irish population and secondarily an inter-communal war between two Irish communities. Both are clearly POLITICAL struggles.

Workers Action does not agree with 'New Society' that the IRA's activities are 'acts of terrorism'. Also, unlike the article, Workers Action would draw out some further conclusions: that those arrested for, say, acts of bombing in Britain, should be considered prisoners of war be accorded appropriate status and treatment.

Nevertheless the article is a valuable weapon in the counter-campaign that must be waged against the Government's propaganda.

### People on trial for terrorist crimes in Northern Ireland, June 1975

employment at time of arrest				
	Prot. %	R.C. %	all %	
employed	60	51	55	
unemployed	26	34	31	
school/housewife	9	9	10	
not known	4	4	4	
previous criminal record				
none	39	55	48	
non-serious	45	22	28	
serious	9	16	13	
not known	8	7	7	
total No.	179	288	476	
class of all defendants				
	Prot. %	R.C. %	all %	N.I.* %
A & B	3	2	2	24
III A	1	9	5	9
III B	34	23	27	32
IV	16	19	18	19
V	33	33	33	12
school	8	7	7	—
housewife	1	2	1	—
age of those convicted				
	Prot. %	R.C. %	all %	E&W† %
14-17	14	7	10	3
17-21	42	63	55	28
21-25	11	13	12	20
25-30	16	8	12	17
30-40	8	4	6	19
over 40	4	1	2	14
not known	5	4	5	—

\* total active male population in Northern Ireland  
† total Crown Court convictions in England and Wales



"The men behind the wire"

# THE CASE FOR POLITICAL STATUS

1. The majority of the prisoners in the North and all the prisoners in the South have been sentenced by "Special Courts" — namely, the Diplock Courts in the North and the Special Criminal Court in the South. In these courts juries have been abolished, the rules of evidence have been changed to make defendants guilty until they prove innocence; the weight of evidence is loaded against the defendants: statements can be accepted on the word of a police constable. It has been made very difficult to prove duress, both by the laws of the courts and by the RUC (especially) holding prisoners incommunicado for 72 hours or 7 days, not admitting solicitor, doctor, or relatives, who could testify to their condition.

Prisoners sentenced by Special Courts under special laws of evidence are, in fact, in a Special category. Special category status is a fact of life like the Irish Dimension and no amount of argument can remove it.

2. In 1966 there were about 300 prisoners in jail in Northern Ireland. Now there are about 2,000. This increase of about 700% or 7 times cannot be attributed to an abnormal rise in the crime rate in a normal state. It has been due to an abnormal political condition of the country. Six out of every seven prisoners sentenced, Loyalist or Republican, would not be in jail if it were not for the political upheavals of the last few

years. They are therefore "political prisoners".

3. Many of the prisoners are in jail because of confessions extracted by torture or duress. This has been proved in the case of the Irish Government now before the European Court on Human Rights. The widespread use of torture has been permitted for five years to extract statements, especially from Republican prisoners. This category of victims of torture makes them into "Special Category" prisoners.

4. A bias against Republicans has been shown in refusing them bail, in the preferring of charges (more serious against Republicans), and in the serious disparity of sentences as between Loyalists and Republicans. This unbalanced treatment gives the Republicans the right to Special status.

5. No member of the British Army has served a day in jail in the last five years for killing or assaulting persons or prisoners while on duty. No RUC man has served a day in jail for killing people, or assaulting prisoners. There is complete lack of justice or fair play on the part of the British Government. This complete lack of impartiality means that the prisoners whose relatives were shot or tortured without redress, regard themselves as "special category prisoners".

Published by the Families of Political Prisoners, Lurgan.



# NO LIMIT! NO DEAL!

cuts to their members; of holding back the tide of anger at deteriorating living standards, of policing the labour movement, then the government will move against them too — it will not be able to rely on them to implement its policies. It will have to adopt again policies of confrontation to hold back the workers' movement.

That's why Benn is absolutely wrong if he thinks that no government will ever change tack and clearly confront the trade union leaders if they can't deliver the goods. The trade union leaders are only here to stay in the 'corridors of government' as long as they are able to hold back their membership.

Likewise, Benn and the Labour Government will not survive if the trade union leaders don't deliver the goods. They too will have outlived their usefulness in policing the working class for the bankers and employers.

## Critics

But is the role of trade unions really to sell their members' wages to keep Governments in power? We say: no. It is for us absolutely elementary that the trade unions exist to defend and advance the living standards of working people. The TUC leadership have shown themselves clearly incapable of standing by this most basic of principles.

Speaking to the Lancashire miners, Len Murray called for the 'critics' to "name their alternatives". Such touching concern for other views in the labour movement is not normal practice for Mr Murray. The recall TUC has been organised, with no motions except from the General Council, so as to deliberately squeeze out the 'critics' and the alternatives to Dennis Healey's wage cuts.

But it is still necessary for socialists to put forward a clear alternative both to Mr Murray and to those lefts who so far have made noises or actually voted against the deal with Healey. We need that alternative not to edify or enlighten Len Murray, of that we can be certain, but in order to build a united fighting movement against wage-cutting, against unemployment, and against the TUC leadership's commitment to those policies.

We must clearly differentiate ourselves from many of the alternatives to the TUC General Council which have been voiced so far. Ly-

ons of the EPEA, Clive Jenkins of ASTMS, and many of the resolutions at the AUEW National Committee (particularly from the traditionally right-wing Coventry area) oppose a deal with Healey because it undermines traditional differentials and privileges of skilled and well-paid workers.

## Action

We too defend those differentials against levelling-down by the Labour Government. But beyond that we have no brief for differentials. The defence of craft and skill differentials does not lay the basis for a united workers' movement against the Healey measures. An appeal to craft privilege and elitism can only split and divide the labour movement further.

The Communist Party too is clearly against the deal. Ken Gill of TASS voted against acceptance on the General Council. But what are they doing about it? On the initiative of the CP, the Labour Assembly on March 27th voted overwhelmingly to support a Day of Action on May 26th. Mass mobilisation on that day can be a vital focus for the movement against a sell-out by the trade union leaders. But the 'Morning Star' has only given half hearted coverage of the moves to build for that day. It has issued no clear, unequivocal call for action. In Trades Councils around the country, CP members have either not pressed for, or deliberately sabotaged (as in Manchester: see last week's Workers Action) calls for action on May 26th.

## Bloc

The reasons for this are clear. Those figures in the trade union movement which the CP has been trying to court as progressives — for example, Hugh Scanlon, Alan Fisher of NUPE, Lawrence Daly of the NUM — are actually campaigning for the Healey deal. Either the CP has to break with and organise against its erstwhile allies, or it must pretend not to see what is going on.

The entire perspective of the CP to build a bloc with the 'left' officials has been thrown into crisis by this deal. That's why the CP is so mute about the May 26th call to action; but that's also why in many areas individual CP militants have been organising in the factories and

district committees to secure support for action against the government. The neat scenario of Labour 'Right'-wingers against progressive 'Left'-wingers like Benn or Scanlon just does not describe the reality of the new deal. The CP is consequently at sixes and sevens, incapable of offering a clear lead for a fighting alternative.

Our argument against Healey is not that this or that group of workers, however deserving they may be, are a special case, that they deserve particular exemptions. In the past, arguments in the NUM have hinged on this view. We need a clear and simple alternative to Healey that all sections of workers can unite around. Our alternative can be summed up briefly:

1. We will not pay for the crisis

of the employers' system with cuts in our living standards, and conditions.

2. We support lump sum pay increases to at least compensate for our loss of earnings over the last year. We support the miners' claim for up to £100 per week.

## Limit

3. We oppose all time limits on pay deals, all restrictions on the number of payments that can be secured in one year.

4. The Trade Union Movement must take up the fight now for automatic protection of our wages against inflation. For every 1% rise in our cost of living we demand £1 new money to compensate. The

trade union movement must develop its own cost of living index, a workers' cost of living index, rather than the official one.

This policy can united all workers. It can provide the basis for a fight of all sections of the class against Healey and Murray. Taken up and fought for by particular groups of workers, it will still be a battle that all can identify with, rather than a demand that only fits a 'particular' or 'special' group of workers.

The employers need, for their survival, in order to salvage their competitiveness, to hold our wages below the rising cost of living. We say that workers must not pay the price for solving their crisis. Either we pay with our living standards, or the employers face increasing uncertainty and instability. Len Murray can't face that prospect. That's why he has no alternative but to accept wage cuts.

Against Murray, we are clear that the employers must not get their way and force down our living standards. If the employers can't pay up, if they can't keep us in jobs, then their plant and businesses should immediately be nationalised, recognising workers' control, and with not one penny of compensation.

The trade union movement faces one of its sharpest tests. Murray & Co have lined up with the employers. The CBI is delighted with the performance of such trade union leaders. That's why the task of building a fighting opposition to the TUC sell-out is so urgent

With the trade union leaders set to sell out to Healey, with the Communist Party pussy-footing on the Day of Action on May 26th, it is absolutely vital that all stops are pulled out to make that day a clear demonstration of opposition to the Labour Government's anti-working class policies.

A lobby of Parliament has been organised in London. The London Political Committee of the Co-Op is calling for full support. The North London district of the AUEW has called for a half-day stoppage throughout the district, and is convening a meeting of the stewards in the district on May 18th to discuss the action.

The AUEW shop stewards' committee at Acton London Transport works is recommending a half-day stoppage to a mass meeting of its members. In South London, Lambeth and Southwark Trades Councils are organising a joint march

to join the main lobby. Lambeth Trades Council is organising street meetings, and a public meeting has been organised for the Day of Action. London NATFHE Regional Council has called on its National Executive Committee to approve strike action.

In Manchester and Liverpool the National Right to Work Organising Committee are organising demonstrations.

These initiatives must be supported and built upon. May 26th can be an important focus in building a movement against the Labour Government and independent of the trade union leaders. It provides an excellent opportunity to debate and discuss policies of the Labour Government in the workplaces. That's why no time can be lost in ensuring that the maximum opposition to unemployment and wage cutting is mustered for May 26th.



Striking Chrysler workers last year. Have the TUC brought militant workers to heel for a measly £4? (Photo John Sturrock, Report)

## Labour loses 1,300 seats in huge local election defeat

BIRMINGHAM, Leeds, Rochdale, Cardiff, Newport, Leicester, Darlington, Nottingham — all lost to the Tories. 1300 seats lost to the Tories. Those were the depressing results for Labour in last week's council elections.

In the last round of council elections — 1973, at the height of the Heath government's unpopularity — Labour did very well, capturing most of the newly-created large districts and metropolitan

councils. So everyone expected Labour would lose some seats. But no-one in the Party can be happy with this result.

There was a very low turnout for the poll (about 25%). Evidently many Labour voters stayed at home.

Plaid Cymru, the Welsh nationalist party, picked up a lot of frustrated Labour voters. It won control of Merthyr Tydfil and became the largest group in Rhymney.

The combination of this election result with the general passive acceptance (so far) of the Healey 4 1/2% limit, shows how many workers feel about the government. They are dissatisfied and resentful, but still put up with policies they would never take from a Tory government, because they see no serious alternative to Labour.

## Tories

Thatcher has called for an early general election. But that was only for form's sake. The last thing the Tories want now is to try to manage Britain's crisis-stricken economy. They know that they would not get trade union cooperation in wage cutting as the present government has done. The Tories want Labour to stay in office and make workers pay the cost of the economic crisis. Then, when Labour has done the job the bosses need, the Tories can be swept to power on a wave of working class disillusion with Labour like last week's.

## Leicester fascists come close to victory

FIELDING a full slate of 48 candidates, the National Front polled a total of 45,000 votes in Leicester's local elections — 20% of the total votes cast. In one ward they came within 62 votes of victory. The Front's local chairman, Anthony Reed-Herbert, said, "If it hadn't been for immigrants voting, we would have won".

Clearly Leicester has become the centre of the NF's activities, encouraged by the virulent racism of the local trade union leadership. Martin Webster, national activities organiser for the Front, has already been in Leicester to sort out the NF's next steps after the elections, which are expected to include a membership campaign and a nationally-supported march in Leicester later this year. During the count, NF thugs physically attacked a Labour candidate.

THE CASE of racist Robert Relf has been made a cause celebre by the National Front and Lady Birdwood. Relf was jailed for contempt of court at Birmingham County Court last week, for refusing to remove a "For Sale to an English family only" notice from outside his house. He is in prison at Winson Green.

The National Front are picketing the prison, which is situated in the middle

In the week before voting, the Press demagogy on homeless Asians arriving from Malawi proved a godsend to the Front's campaign. In one area the Front put out a leaflet which, on one side, had a reprint of an Area Health Authority official warning about the dangers of tuberculosis, and on the other a series of vicious lies blaming immigrants for everything from spreading disease to causing the water shortage.

## Support

Leicester Anti-Fascist Committee distributed 10,000 leaflets during the elections, on the estates and in local factories. The Committee is now approaching trade union branches and shop stewards comm-

of a multi-racial residential area. Fascists are using this occasion to intimidate local black people by fly-posting, particularly offensive racialist material. The Front's week of activity they hope, will culminate in a march through the area, which lies between Handsworth and Smethwick.

Local anti-fascists and immigrant organisations are responding to the

ities for support. Local Labour MP Jim Marshall said after the election results that "the time has come for the labour movement to stand shoulder to shoulder in opposition to the Front". This belated rhetoric has to be translated into concrete action by the Labour Party and by the trade unions.

In Bradford, too, the National Front made gains. They got 9,399 votes — 7% of the total. However, the militant response by West Indian and Asian youth to the NF demonstration through the streets of Bradford last month shows that the NF's growth will not go unopposed.

Not only in Leicester and in Bradford, but nationally, socialists must prepare to ensure a concerted and well-organised response if and when the National Front call a march in Leicester.

National Front's provocative actions by calling on local people to support an anti-fascist rally on the afternoon of the 15th.

Relf, whom the Guardian referred to as a "veteran right-winger", had stated earlier in the proceedings, "For the past 30 years Germany has been embarrassed by a man called Rudolf Hess, and now England is going to be embarrassed by Robert Relf."



# 13 Colonies The 'Ph of King!

In this article (entitled 'The Movement for American Independence when first published in 1950) WILLIAM F. WARDE traces the changes that turned loyalty to 'mother England' into a defiant war for independence

far outweigh them. Such a leap into the unknown appeared to most as impossible, unnecessary and undesirable.

It seemed impossible because England stood forth as the mightiest and richest power on earth which had just crushed such formidable foes as France and Spain. How could the weaker colonies which had never achieved unity under the Empire expect to consolidate and mobilise enough strength to consummate the overthrow of Great Britain? Where would the forces and resources for so hardy an enterprise be found? Up to 1763, there had been no successful revolts of colonials in America, Africa or Asia.

At the same time so radical a step appeared unnecessary. The Patriots hoped to gain their demands by putting pressure upon the British rulers, through alliances with friendly elements in England and through traditional channels of protest. After all, they had forced the repeal of the Stamp Act in 1767 and wrested further concessions from the Crown government; why could not these methods suffice in the future? This was the main argument both of the Tories and of those Whigs who later remained loyal to the British regime.



Independence was obnoxious because of the incalculable risks involved. Civil division and armed strife might open the door for France to return and the Indians to rise up again. Finally, the major deterrent was the foreknowledge and foreboding among the colonial possessing classes that the struggle for secession would release sentiments and forces among the masses that would be highly dangerous to their own privileges and power. This justified dread of the revolutionary potential of the democracy, this fear of "plebeian phrenzy", curbed their aspirations for independence for a long time.

For these reasons the Patriot leaders adhered to their limited ideas and comparatively moderate methods. There was only one flaw in their outlook. The British despots wouldn't and couldn't grant the major demands of the colonists, reasonable as they seemed. Consequently, the ten-year struggle for reforms within the Empire finally had

dictatorship. But at every markable turn, from the Stamp Act Demonstrations in 1765 to the Battle of Lexington in 1775, leading Patriots took pains to make clear their loyalty to the Empire. Here is a small part of the record.

The first intercolonial assembly of protest, the Stamp Act Congress, declared in 1765 that the connection of the colonies with Great Britain was their "Great happiness and security" and that they "most ardently desired its perpetual continuance". At the next upsurge of struggle in January 1768, the Massachusetts legislature repudiated the very thought of separation: "We cannot justly be suspected of the most distant thought of an independency of Great Britain. Some, we know, have imagined this ... but it is so far from the truth that we apprehend the Colonies would refuse it if offered to them, and would even deem it the greatest misfortune to be obliged to accept it."



The 'Massachusetts Spy' on July 7, 1774, two years before the Declaration of Independence, characterised independence as "a tree of forbidden and accursed fruit, which if any colony on this continent should be so mad as to attempt reaching, the rest would have virtue and wisdom enough to draw their swords and hew the traitors into submission, if not into loyalty." (Massachusetts was to head the independence movement a short time later.)

That same year John Adams wrote that independence was "a Hobgoblin of so frightful mien, that it would throw a delicate person into Fits to look it in the face." (He was later to help draft the Declaration of Independence and lead the fight in the Continental Congress for its adoption.)

The delegates to the First Continental Congress which met at Philadelphia in the autumn of 1774 assured the King: "Your royal authority over us and our connection with Great Britain we shall always carefully and zealously endeavour to support and maintain."

During this same crucial period Franklin, Washington, Jefferson and others voiced equally strong protestations of loyalty to mother England. In March 1775 Franklin testified in London that he had never heard in America one word in favour of independence "from any person, drunk or sober". Even after the Battle of Lexington, George Washington told his Tory friend Jonathan Boucher that if he ever heard of Washington joining in any such measures as the colonies separating from England, Boucher "had his leave to set him down for everything wicked."

More than two months after the Battle of Bunker Hill, Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, wrote in a private letter that he was "looking with fondness toward a reconciliation with Great Britain."

Some extreme radicals like Sam Adams and the Liberty Boys did not shrink from the prospect of independence and would have welcomed it. The Patriots could see certain advantages in separation — but, prior to the decisive events of 1775-76, the overwhelming majority reckoned that the losses would



PARADOXICALLY, when the curtain rises on the colonial contest, imperial unity had never seemed stronger or the affection of the Americans for their overseas 'protector' so deep-seated. Benjamin Franklin, Jonathan Mayhew and other notable Patriots affirmed that "probably at no time during the entire colonial period was there more good will toward Great Britain in America than at the conclusion of the Seven Years War" ('Origins of the American Revolution, by John C Miller, p.71).

The British and Americans had fought together in a successful war which ousted France from the North American mainland and hurled back the Spaniards and Indians. But this very victory generated conditions for the disruption of harmony and growing friction between England and her colonies. The elimination of the French threat removed the main factor which had hitherto bound the two together. The colonials no longer feared invasion and conquest from Canada while London, no longer needing colonial aid against the foremost challenger of its imperial interests, could concentrate attention on squeezing its possessions. At the same time this most expensive of wars had strained and drained the British Treasury, spurring the King's Ministers to seek new sources of revenue.

On the American side the triumph over the French and Indians had considerably enriched the colonies, given greater economic independence to the merchants and commercial planters, enhanced their political power and raised their self-confidence. The colonial assemblies took advantage of the Seven Years' War to cut down the prerogatives of royal governors, cripple the Crown's authority, and increase control over appropriations and expenditures.



Thus the Seven Years' War set the stage for the beginning of a realignment of forces and reorientation of policy to North America which eventuated in a life-and-death battle between the British overlords and their subjects. But that was not the way the situation presented itself to either of them when opposition to English domination first flared in the colonies toward the close of the postwar economic depression in 1763.

The colonial struggle started on a very elementary political level, developing through successive stages. At first the dissident Patriots simply sought the repeal of odious laws and harmful edicts, directing their fire against colonial governors and Councils and appealing for remedies to the Parliament or Crown. Their activity was founded upon what seemed the solid rock of fealty to the British Empire.

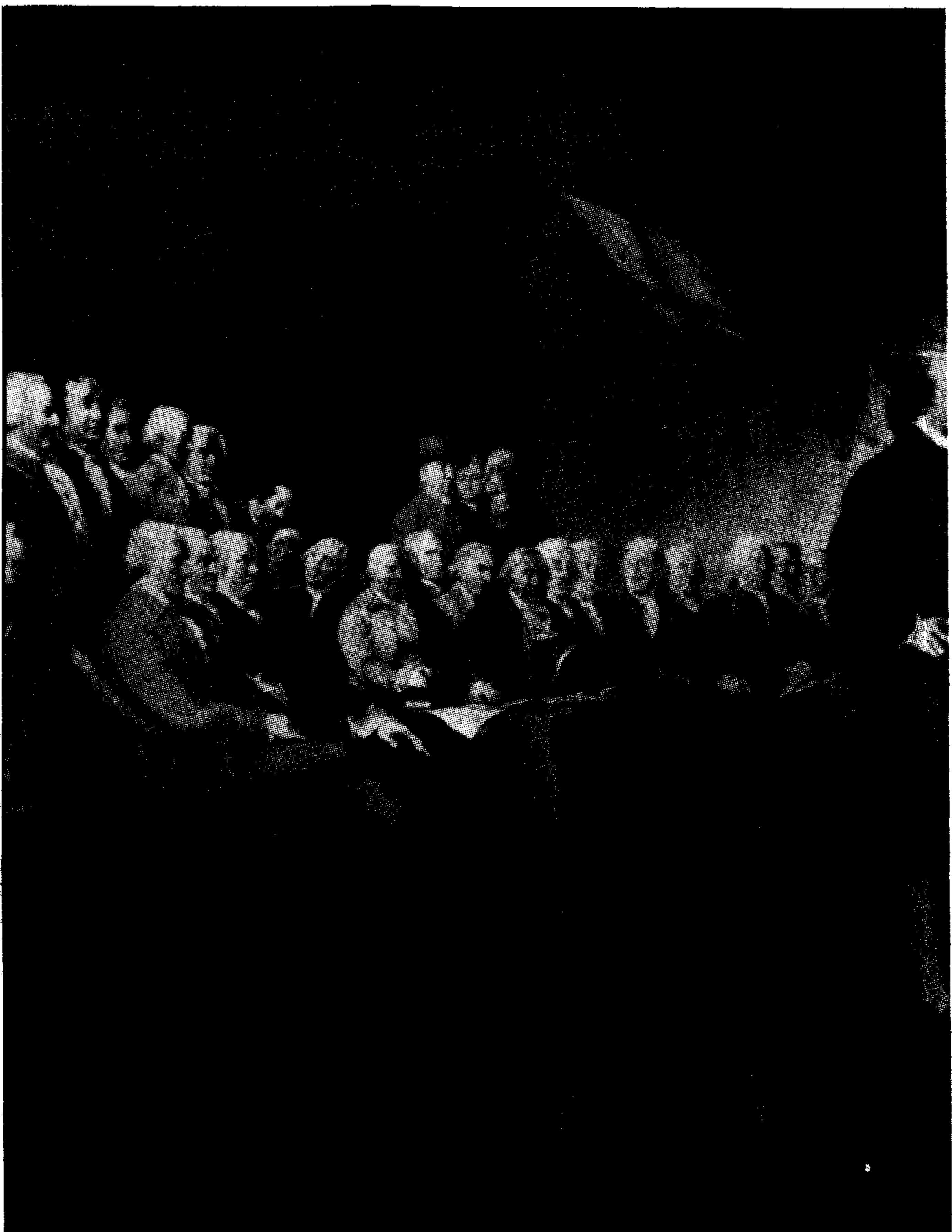
The Patriots regarded themselves, not as Americans driving toward divorce from England, but as "free-born subjects of Great Britain", moving to secure their rights as Englishmen. There were, to be sure, sharp differences in the methods advocated and employed by different sections of the Patriot party in securing these aims. Whereas the moderate merchants, planters and landowners preferred reliance upon permitted legal procedures and peaceful channels of protest, the radical and plebeian forces resorted to direct action in expressing their indignation and enforcing their demands.



But from 1765 to 1775 the avowed programme and aims of all elements in the colonial opposition were identical: the improvement of their positions within the British Empire, not withdrawal from it.

Indeed, right up to the Battle of Lexington in April 1775 — and for months thereafter, the foremost Patriots were not only unaware of the real direction of their course and its logical outcome, but repeatedly, sincerely, indignantly denied any intention of breaking away from the British Empire, rejecting the very thought as abhorrent.

For ten years the encounters between the established regime and the Patriot opposition surged back and forth, bounding in intensity until in 1774-75 they exploded in armed



1776: signing the Declaration of Independence

to pass over into the revolutionary struggle for national independence.

The incubation period of the independence movement extended from the Boston Tea Party in December 1773, which provoked the Crown to impose its military dictatorship over unruly Massachusetts, to the Declaration of Independence in July 1776. These two and a half years witnessed the maturing of the subjective conditions for independence and the passing over of the Patriots to actions popularising the demand for separation from England.

The defiance of the Bostonians initiated the sequence of events which produced the radical overturn. The insurgent masses, hitherto excluded from the political arena or kept to the background, now came to the fore. They were the radical merchants, the militant artisans, shopkeepers, and workers of the seaports backed up by the anti-British planters, farmers and frontiersmen. Thereupon two interacting processes cut the ground from under the advocates of compromise on both sides of the Atlantic. One was the uprising of the people in the localities against the authority of the King. They refused obedience to the laws, armed themselves, proceeded to depose the representatives of the Crown and to set up their own courts, assemblies, armies, and governments. Although undertaken as defensive measures against the aggressions of the British despots upon the rights of the Americans, these actions constituted a thrust toward complete independence.

This revolutionary outburst was met by equally firm determination on the part of the British rulers to subdue the rebellious colonials once and for all; to strip them of all acquired rights and powers; and

tyrannise without restraint over Massachusetts and the other colonies. The clash of two such forces heading in opposite directions could not be resolved by compromise.

The British power had already been effectively shattered and replaced by new authorities created by direct action of the Committees of Safety and Correspondence in the separate localities and provinces before independence was set forth as the general slogan and goal of the movement by Tom Paine and others. In fact, the issue of independence had been fought out and decided by a series of direct contests for power between the Loyalists and Patriots within the cities, villages, and districts of the colonies throughout 1774 and 1775 which brought victory for the most part to the insurgents. But this de facto state of independence had still to be fully recognised by the active fighting forces of the revolution and formally ratified by their official political representatives in the Continental Congress.



For well over a year and a half after civil war had been raging and new relationships of power had been instituted within the colonies, the conservative merchants and moderate planters, clinging to hopes of reconciliation, kept restraining the liberation movement. Although British rule had been successfully broken and overturned by the assault of the people in arms, their acknowledged leaders shrank from admitting the actual state of affairs and desiring the abolition of



# against arab land'

Its effects can best be gauged by its stimulus upon Paine himself, the trumpeter of emancipation. Some historians write as though Tom Paine's individual literary efforts virtually called forth the independence movement overnight. Actually its material premises had been growing for many years before 1765 and its psychological and political conditions were created by the struggles of the preceding ten years.

What Tom Paine did was to disclose the inner tendencies of the mass upsurge, to give a clear goal and a general slogan to the unfolding struggles; he was the first to openly propagate the idea of a free and independent United States of America. His writings entered as a link in the chain of events at the most critical turn of the revolution, leading the movement to higher ground than it had dared dream of occupying only a little while before.

Tom Paine had been revolving in his mind the main points in his message ever since the Battle of Lexington incited the wrath of rebellion throughout the colonies. He wrote his first pamphlet "Common Sense" toward the end of 1775 and issued it on January 10, 1776. Its doctrine of independence was still so novel and audacious that he had trouble finding a publisher in Philadelphia.



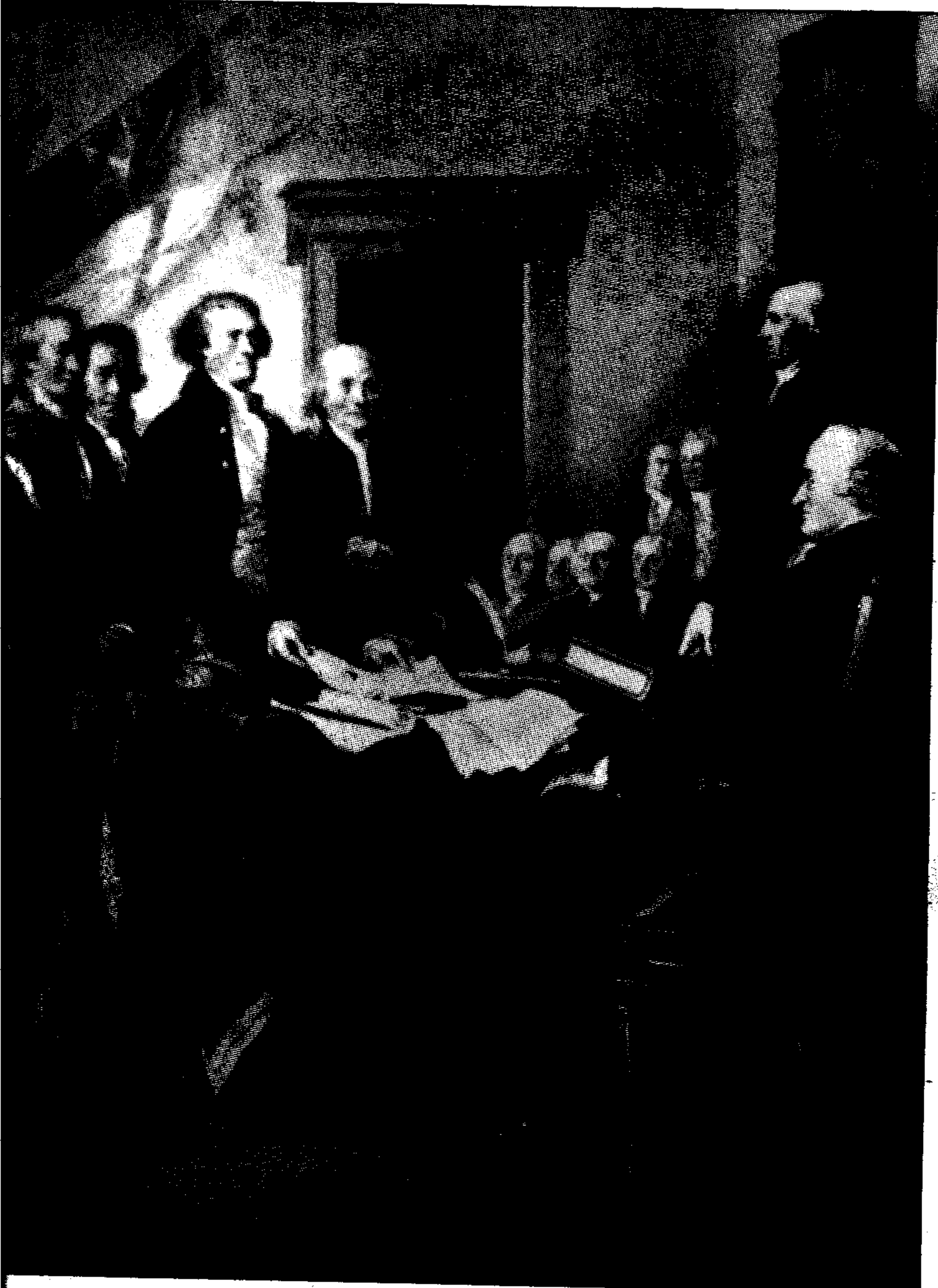
Few political documents ever had greater effects in changing people's minds and moving them to act than this pamphlet. In its first six months Paine's pamphlet sold 100,000 copies in a country of 3 million. Printing presses turned them out day and night. Its arguments were read, repeated, debated in clubs, streets, taverns, schools, churches, and in the Continental Army. George Washington wrote on April 1, 1776: "I find Paine's 'Common Sense' is working a wonderful change there (in Virginia) in the minds of men..."

"Common Sense" generalised in its teachings what the people were already carrying out in real life. Just as the Committees were destroying the authority of the Crown, Paine launched his main attack. There can now be no turning back, he keeps insisting throughout his polemics. "The independence of America should have been considered as dating its era from, and published by, the first musket that was fired against her. This is a line of consistency; neither drawn by caprice, nor extended by ambition; but produced by a chain of events, of which the colonies were not the authors.... We have it in our power to begin the world over again... The birthday of a new world is at hand... Every day convinces us of its necessity"

The independence movement originated and was forced forward by the clash of interests between the colonists and the system of British domination. But its rate of development depended upon the interaction of the different social forces within the Patriot camp. The impetus for action came from the demands of the masses and initiative from the leaders who best expressed them. But between the masses below and the British on



TOM PAINE (above), radical republican who raised the call for independence; and the wealthy GEORGE WASHINGTON, who took up the call.



British sovereignty. That meant cutting off the road of retreat and placing feet firmly upon the revolutionary highway. They kept looking backward as the masses kept pressing forward.

Events emerging from the struggle itself assisted the rebels and propelled the liberation movement forward. The breaking point in the attitude of the colonial masses came with the Battle of Lexington which drew a line of blood between the King and the most resolute rebels. This armed encounter snapped the ties binding the radical wing in the Patriot camp with the Crown

and steeled their will to resist to the end.

The news of this battle, for example, aroused the Liberty Boys of New York to take over that key city. Tom Paine testified in "Common Sense" that his own change of heart was produced by Lexington: "No man was a warmer wisher for a reconciliation than myself, before the fatal nineteenth of April 1775, but the moment the event of that day was made known, I rejected the hardened sullen-tempered Pharaoh of England forever".

The decisive drive toward independence dated from this event.

top stood the merchants and planters who wanted to confine the struggle within safe boundaries.

The Continental Congress became the central stage upon which the drama of independence was enacted. This Congress was constituted exclusively of representatives drawn from the upper classes: lawyers, doctors, merchants, planters, large landowners. The wealthiest men in the colonies, Washington, Carroll, Hancock, were there. The common people were not directly represented by men of their condition and choice, although the most radical spokesmen for the merchants and planters like Sam Adams and Patrick Henry leaned upon them for support.

Three main divisions of opinion contended for supremacy within the Congress. As Sam Adams characterised it, it was "one-third Whig, one-third Tory, and the rest mongrel." On the right was the conservative section, headed by Albert Gallaway of Pennsylvania, who was later to go over to the British; at the left a group of radicals inspired by the Massachusetts delegation. The bulk of delegates occupied a more or less indeterminate ground between these extremes.

The conservative influence predominated up to 1776. The Congress directed its main efforts along the line of conciliation, acting timidly and reacting sluggishly to events. The right wing was suspicious of any radical proposals by the 'violents' which would push them too far forward.



This mistrust was so strong that before the opening session of the Congress the Philadelphia radicals sent a committee to intercept the Massachusetts delegation at Frankford and warn them that the New Englanders were suspected of desiring independence. "You must not utter the word independence, or give the last hint or insinuation of the idea. No man dares speak of it".

We cannot here detail the complex chain of circumstances which produced the conversion of the Continental Congress.

Suffice it to say, the active masses were ready for independence early in 1776 but the possessors were not; their representatives had to be pushed forward or swept aside. The half-year between the publication of "Common Sense" and the adoption of independence was a critical period of tense and passionate controversy in the Continental Congress around this question.

As late as January 1776, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland instructed their delegates to vote against independence if the matter was brought up.



in a report on independence which stated: "We are accused of carrying on war for the purpose of establishing an independent Empire... We disavow the intention". By this time the radicals were influential enough to have the resolution laid on the table.

Meanwhile the demand for independence was growing from a whisper into a roar which began to drown out cries for compromise. Joseph Hawley wrote John Adams on April 1, 1776 that if Congress didn't act swiftly a "Great Mob of citizens and soldiers would descend on Philadelphia to purge Congress and set up a dictator".

The pressure of the masses on one side and aggressions of the British on the other broke the hold of the conservatives on Congress. The surge towards independence became so irresistible that the majority was swept along with it. On May 23 Congress heard that the King was going to send 30,000 mercenaries to America by June. This projected invasion cut off the last hopes of conciliation and speeded up the steps in the colonies and Congress resulting in the final break. By July the great deed was done.

The Declaration of Independence represented not merely the triumph of the Whigs over the Tories, but the victory of the radical wing of the Whigs over conservatives, the masses over the upper classes, the future over the past. The revolution was at last marching



Bunker's Hill, a height overlooking Boston Harbour, stormed by British troops



# Portugal: the fire reduced to a spark

TWO YEARS AGO one hundred thousand workers packed the streets of Lisbon in the most joyful and triumphant May Day celebrations Europe had seen for a quarter of a century.

Soldiers fraternised with the crowd with red carnations in the muzzles of their guns. A well-organised military coup, aimed at liquidating the bankrupt dictatorship, ending the hopeless colonial war in Africa, and modernising Portuguese capitalism, had overthrown the old regime. But when Caetano handed over power to Spinoia he said:

"General, I surrender the government to you. You must take care. I am frightened by the idea of power loose in the streets".

The next 18 months saw a series of major waves of working class advance. Firstly, the workers hunted down and rooted out the hated secret police of the old fascist regime, the PIDE. In factories, in offices, and on the land, the most reactionary supporters of the old regime were purged, thrown out by the workers themselves. A great strike wave swept Portugal as workers fought for decent wages and conditions long denied them.

Spinoia and the senior officers of the Armed Forces Movement took representatives of the Portuguese Communist and Socialist Parties into the government, to help them control the situation. With the support of the "workers' parties" a number of anti-strike laws and curbs on the freedom of the press were enacted. The workers were not cowed by these measures, which were speedily rendered ineffective.

Driven to desperation by working

class militancy, Spinoia and the more conservative elements in the AFM launched two abortive counter-coups — the 27th/28th September 1974 "march of the silent majority" which was crushed by armed workers and rank and file soldiers, and the 11th March attempted coup which led to Spinoia's flight abroad.

These events opened a new phase of the Portuguese revolution. In February 1975 30,000 landless farm workers in the south of Portugal began to seize the land, confiscating the huge latifundia and setting up agricultural cooperatives. Particularly in and around Lisbon, workers began to create commissions in the factories, to demand and win workers' control.

## Control

In the banks, the newspaper offices, the radio stations, workers seized control or exercised close supervision over their bosses. In the army discipline began to crumble. The barracks became centre of political debate and discussion. The AFM itself was increasingly riven with divisions between the more conservative commanders and the radicalised junior officers.

Yet this radicalisation did not simply flow forward without obstacles. The election of a Constituent Assembly on 25th April 1975 gave the Socialist Party 38% of the vote. SP leader Soares used this to launch an offensive against the workers who had occupied "Republica", a paper he wished to use as the exclusive mouthpiece of the right-wing leadership of the SP. Hiding under slogans about "pluralist democracy", the

SP withdrew from the Government and launched a vicious anti-communist and anti-trade union campaign centring in the North, a traditionally backward area.

The Socialist Party, despite its demagogy about socialism and workers' control, holds up before the working class the transformation of Portugal into a "normal" bourgeois democracy. This attracted to it those workers and petty bourgeois who had the strongest illusions in 'democracy' and the least confidence in their own strength and organisation.

The bureaucratic manoeuvres of the CP with the AFM, its attempt to stamp out opposition to itself within the Intersindical, and its opposition to strikes during the first five provisional governments, led many of those workers to see Soares' party as the standard bearer of democratic rights.

Yet in fact the SP was not even true to its claimed devotion to democracy, let alone socialism. It did not oppose the subordination of "parliamentary democracy" and the Constituent Assembly (in which the CP and SP had an overall majority) to the military governments.

The SP has signed the various pacts with the Revolutionary Council of the Army hierarchy, which condemn both the Constituent Assembly and the new Legislative Assembly to impotence. Soares merely wanted to use the Constituent Assembly as a power base to squeeze the CP out of the state apparatus and its alliance with the AFM, and install the SP instead.

Throughout the summer of 1975 he was quite prepared to use the SP to mobilise the reactionary peasants of the North in collusion with extreme right-wing elements to launch attacks on CP and trade union offices in the North and Centre of the country. After Soares' success in squeezing out Goncalves and the 5th Provisional Government in early September, the SP allied itself with the d'Azevedo government and the right wing of the AFM.

## Peak

At the peak of the massive strike wave and rank and file soldiers' mobilisations against the government in October and November, Soares called for the removal of the government and the Constituent Assembly to the North, aiding the reactionary officers who were contemplating civil war, should the working class of Lisbon and the south seize power. Soares was quite prepared to use the SP to give "democratic" cover to a "white-guard" offensive against a potential Lisbon commune.

The treachery of the CP and the confusion of the revolutionary left made this unnecessary. Yet Soares hastened to hail Jaime Neves, who masterminded the crushing of the paratroopers and Copcon on 25th November, as the saviour of "the Revolution". "November 25th", he said, "saved the revolution. In one blow November 25th wiped out the suicidal inclinations of the far left and cut the ground from under the far right. Democracy emerged from the test victorious and strengthened".

Since then Soares and the SP have supported every anti-working class measure. On the question of land occupations, the SP remains bitterly hostile to the cooperative farmers of the Alentejo, even to the extent of virulently attacking the SP minister of Agriculture, Lopes Cardoso, who stands on the left of the party, as a "secret communist" because he defends the "legal occupa-



SPINOIA

ations" in the South.

Yet the SP, despite its bourgeois counter-revolutionary leadership and policies, still has substantial working-class support. SP rank and file worker-members, organised in factory nuclei, have joined with rank and file members of the CP and the revolutionary groups in organising support for workers in struggle. This 'left wing' of the SP is allowed no free expression within the party. It is hounded and persecuted, and a series of purges and expulsions have been organised by Soares and his cronies.

A group of Socialist Party militants, anonymous because of the witchhunt against "CP infiltrators", published a "Revolutionary self-criticism" after the November events. It stated:

"In order to shake hands with Pinheiro d'Azevedo..., to maintain



Right wingers bust up CP office

ministerial positions of our doctors, we are supporting press censorship the freeing of fascists and PIDEs, the imprisonment of progressives, increase in the cost of living, the payment of indemnities to capitalists and latifundists, and the repression that is beginning to return... Comrades, we are going to reflect and act. We are going to organise meet-

ings in our branches to discuss the situation impartially and internally, and define the strategy to be followed. We are not going to leave the SP. We are going to transform it into a genuine socialist party (Marxist). We are going to be revolutionaries (and not splitters and followers of Soares). We are going to struggle for Socialism before it is too late!"

The Portuguese Communist Party has offered no better alternative than the Socialist Party.

The PCP is the majority party of the industrial and rural proletariat, comprising the best organised and most experienced militants. Yet it has, since the 25th April 1974, criminally misled the working class.

In the Intersindical the CP has bureaucratically suppressed the right of other working class tendencies to have a voice, playing into the hands of Soares. Its grip on the workers' commissions helped limit those bodies to economic issues and obstructed their development as organs of working class mobilisation and power.

During the summer '75 offensive of the SP and the reactionaries, it tied the working class response to hysterical support for Vasco Goncalves, turning massive working class demonstrations into an auxiliary of his grouping within the AFM.

## Revolt

The CP made an apparent 'left' turn after the fall of the 5th Provisional government, and, whilst participating in the 6th Government, used the massive mobilisations of the autumn as a bargaining counter to squeeze PPD and SP ministers out of the government and install CP ministers in their place. One of these manoeuvres coincided with a spontaneous revolt of the paratroopers in response to a deliberately engineered right-wing provocation. During the events of 25th November, it at first called a two-hour general strike, then beat a retreat, telling the workers to go back to work and "remain calm". They left the paratroopers to go down to defeat.

The chances of workers' revolution in Portugal can only rest on the building of a new revolutionary party, independent of both Social Democracy and Stalinism.

DAVE STOCKING



Left-wing soldiers guarding jailed political police.

# workers' ACTION

supporters' groups

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

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



## Workers' Action supporters map out LPYS campaigns

A DAY school in Coventry last Saturday (8th May) brought together some 50 Workers Action supporters and sympathisers in the Labour Party Young Socialists. The school, a follow-up to the LPYS annual Conference last month, mapped out plans for campaigning in the YS in the coming months.

Introducing the session at the school on the fight for women's rights, Mary Corbishley (Hornsey LPYS & Haringey Working Women's Charter) said that although the LPYS voted at its last conference, a year ago, to support the Women's Charter, the LPYS majority led by Militant had done nothing about it.

These people oppose women organising themselves in women's sections or women's caucuses. Instead, they urge them to 'unite and fight', the same as they say for black workers, or for Catholic workers in Northern Ireland.

A number of YSs represented at the day school undertook to get Working Women's Charter speakers invited to their branches. The school also discussed the local campaigns around the Charter in which YSs can get involved.

The attitude of the LPYS majority on the Irish question shows a similar pious passivity. Steve McSweeney (Workers Action EB), introducing the session on Ireland, pointed out that while the LPYS majority were willing enough to make general statements 'blaming' British imperialism for Ireland's problems, they have rigorously abstained from any activity to force the withdrawal of British troops.

The first duty of British socialists, he argued, had to be solidarity with those Republicans and socialists fighting against imperialism and to smash the sectarian Six County state. Criticism of their tactics had to be secondary.

Steve McSweeney, summing up, called on YS branches to help build active Troops Out campaigns in each area, arguing for them to be on a united front basis, controlled by delegates from the labour movement, rather than the present TOM individual membership structure which constitutes TOM as a sort of parallel political party.

The school also included sessions on 'Which road to Socialism' and on relating the LPYS to industrial struggles and unemployment campaigns.

Arnie Prout (Newtown CLP), introducing the first of these, argued that the record of the Labour Party shows it to be a party firmly wedded to capitalism. However, it also has organic links with the working class movement, partially reflecting the fact that most workers still think in terms of reforming, rather than overthrowing, capitalism; and as long as it has those links, revolutionary socialists have to relate positively to the Labour Party.

Andrew Hornung, in the concluding session, argued that YSs should wherever possible give their full support to industrial struggles. He recalled the Press outcry when, on the introduction of the £6 limit, a circular was put round in the Labour Party advocating that CLPs and YSs should not just pass resolutions against the £6 (which no doubt many of them did, without causing anyone much concern), but should issue leaflets in the local community and local factories pledging support for all workers entering struggles against the pay limit.

Norwood CLP later issued just such a leaflet.

Most immediately, YSs can get involved in unemployment campaigns. A number of YSs said they would try to send delegates to the conference this coming weekend on 'The Campaign against Youth Unemployment', to argue there for a fighting programme of action and against such useless schemes as import controls, 'reflation of the economy' and other such pointless appeals to the Powers that Be.

THE 1976 CPSA conference evaded the major issues. The only real policy on redundancies, besides a vague motion calling for opposition to 'arbitrary cuts', said the Model Redundancy Agreement should be amended so as to ensure that non-members be sacked first. The motion to affiliate to the Labour Party was knocked back by 137,592 votes to 70,410. The NEC election results saw a sharp shift to the right. Three leading right-wingers — Losinska, Elliott and Judge — held the top three places, and the left majority was cut from 6 to 2. However, two militant rank-and-file 'Redder Tape' candidates (members of IS) were elected for the first time.

The Conference reflected a mood common in the labour movement: wait and see if the solutions offered by the TUC and Labour leadership will work.

The major blame for the weakness of the conference lies at the door of the 'Broad Left', who had the majority on the 1975 NEC. The Broad Left's failure to fight for a clear alternative policy opened the way for the supporters of Callaghan and Murray to argue their line, or to push through motions that meant no action.

The feebleness of Conference on the major issues was matched by bravado over relatively minor issues, with, for example, right wing officials arguing for industrial action over the closure of the Civil Service Council for Further Education.

However, the proposed merger with the Society of Civil Servants was decisively rejected, and for the right reasons: that the SCS is a management union. The Working Women's Charter won overwhelming support again, after a debate which centred almost totally on the issue of abortion and a woman's right to choose.

The British Library branch proposed that the NEC prepare a paper on the question of election of full-time officials. Even this mild proposal was thrown out.

## CPSA CONFERENCE: A free hand to do all the wrong things

Delegates argued that the full-time officials needed a career, job security, and a rate of pay that this proposed document would threaten!

Conference leaves the CPSA with no clear mandate on the NEC for the year ahead. On many issues motions were so phrased as to leave the NEC a free hand. One side-effect of this is that already the new General Secretary, Ken Thomas, with support from the right wing, is organising to get the new NEC to back the TUC-Labour deal of 4%. He

IN PROTEST at the 'secret' visit of Brazilian President Geisel to the British Museum on Thursday 6th May, the representatives of the five civil service unions walked out of a joint meeting with management.

Union arguments against the visit were met with the usual line of "Don't blame us, blame the government — they arranged it all".

Only 20 minutes notice was given of the visit, and, to prevent anything similar occurring in future, the union reps are demanding that there be prior consultation on all visits by foreign heads of state.



## THE UNIONS



can do this because of the vagueness of the motion on incomes policy, even though its whole drift runs entirely counter to his manoeuvre: "Conference endorses the NEC's opposition to Government incomes policy and instructs the NEC to continue to oppose and campaign against any form of policies which mean unemployment, public expenditure cuts, and reduced living standards of its members".

With two 'Redder Tape' supporters on the new NEC, the need for a clearer debate within 'Redder Tape' as to its policies and its organisation is urgently needed. Workers Action supporters will be arguing for the sliding scale of wages as a central demand for organising the fight on pay. **STEPHEN CORBISHLEY** (Chairman, CPSA British Library, in personal capacity)

Last week's Workers Action report was wrong in saying that Emergency Motion 1007 was passed. This motion was in fact withdrawn by the NEC on Thursday afternoon, after the announcement of the 4% deal. The report, phoned in from Margate, was garbled in this respect: it intended to say that the NEC were relying on having that emergency motion passed.

## 35 schools in 'no cover' action

WITH THE beginning of the new term, 35 London schools are starting unofficial 'no cover for unappointed or absent staff' action. This is twice as many as at the end of last term.

But still the fight is uncoordinated. There are two separate ad hoc committees against the cuts: the Standing Committee against the Cuts in Education (dominated by IS) and the All London Action Committee (dominated by the IMG)

The All London Action Committee and the IMG try to avoid confining themselves to school-based activity and to get a united fight across the public sector against the cuts. But they end up saying no fight short of a united fight is worthwhile.

Hence, at a meeting of Newham Teachers Association, where the motion on the floor contained a section opposing in principle and

in practice any victimisation of teachers taking unofficial 'no cover' action, comrades from the IMG argued to replace this section with a demand for "campaigning among the mass of teachers" to avoid "isolated action" and create "mass support".

Obviously mass action is preferable to isolated and sporadic activity. But that is no justification for counterposing the hoped-for 'united action' against the real struggle that has already started, as in Newham.

What is urgently needed is real steps towards united action. Rank and File, the militant teachers' grouping, should sponsor a united-front campaign, bringing together the Standing Committee and the All London Action Committee, on the basis of a full democratic debate on tactical differences.

ALAN JAMES

## 'Militant' on voluntary redundancies

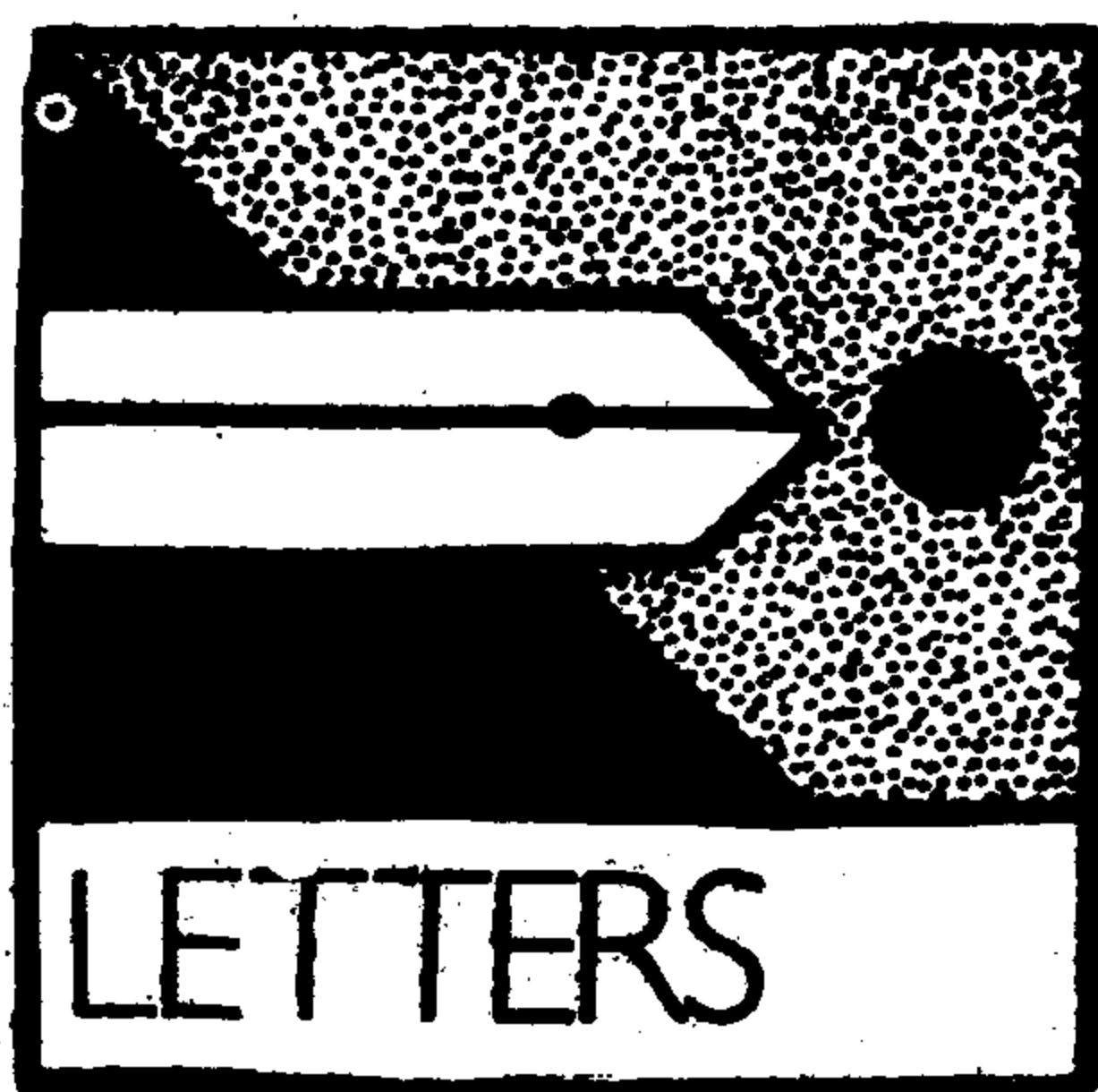
[This letter has been sent to "Militant"] Dear comrades, "Militant" has in the past argued against the acceptance of voluntary redundancy under any circumstances. I was therefore most surprised to read Roy "Sheff" Hill's account of the return to work at Bentley Engineering, Leicester, in your 23rd April issue.

Not only does comrade Hill appear to justify the calling off of the Bentley strike ("get back in and fight!"), but also virtually endorses the decision of those workers who took voluntary redundancy ("Far better, it's been argued, to get redundancy pay and look around for another job...")

"Socialist Worker", the International Socialists' paper, has described Sheff Hill as having "urged surrender". I usually take "Socialist Worker"'s notorious muck-raking journalism with a pinch of salt, but in this instance Sheff Hill's own account of the Bentley events would seem to bear out their attack on him.

Opposition to voluntary redundancy is a basic question of class solidarity, and I hope that "Militant" will clarify its position at the earliest opportunity — and preferably disassociate itself from Sheff Hill's article.

Fraternally, **JIM DENHAM**, Birmingham.



## Troops seize film on Ireland

THE BRITISH occupation troops in the north of Ireland have seized copies of a film about the situation there called 'Ireland — Flashpoint of Europe'. This film had been made by the Italian revolutionary group 'Lotta Continua' in conjunction with Peoples Democracy. It is the most damning visual expose of the role of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the 'B' Specials and the British Army.

The only precedents for a seizure of this type were the banning by the old Stormont regime of 'The Song of Bernadette' under the notorious Special Powers Act, apparently because of its Catholic subject matter, and the seizure, for a few days before it was to be shown in England, of the film 'Ireland Behind the Wire'.

That film was returned. But 'Ireland — Flashpoint of Europe' has been held since March and not returned. We can only assume it has been banned from circulation because of its political message.

**PATRICK DOHERTY** London P.D.

## Light-minded view of Women's Campaign

"WOMEN will only be able to finally overcome their oppression when they fight and organise for liberation themselves".

This commendable sentiment appeared in a Broad Left handout to delegates at the NUS Women's Conference, which took place last weekend at Kent University. But the Conference itself showed that the Broad-Left-dominated NUS Executive do not take the ideas in their leaflet very seriously.

Delegates arriving at the Conference on Friday night were confronted with an agenda which had been changed so as to drastically reduce the time for discussion and resolutions on vital issues such as the Working Women's Charter.

Instead, most of the first day was to be taken up by 'information sessions' run by the NCCL on the Sex Discrimination Act. These changes had been introduced by Penny Cooper, the only major Executive figure at the Conference.

A 'dissidents caucus', which met throughout the conference, challenged the way the conference had been structured. It proposed that the NCCL sessions be cut short, and that discussions on the National Abortion Campaign, the Working Women's Charter, and on legal and financial aid for women be put in their place. This was accepted.

The caucus also produced a composite resolution on 'women in society'. This pointed out that the root of women's oppression lay in the family, and could not be solved merely by measures like the Sex Discrimination Act. This might lessen oppression, but would not remove it.

The resolution also condemned discrimination against gay people.

This was adopted unanimously by the conference as a rough draft which should

be sent to individual student unions. They should amend it, and send it forward with an instruction to prioritise it for the next National NUS Conference.

The workshops on the Working Women's Charter and nurseries passed resolutions supporting the Charter campaign and calling on NUS and individual unions to affiliate to it, and calling for a national demonstration in Bristol this Friday to support students who are being victimised because of their campaign over the lack of nursery facilities for students and staff.

The NUS Executive was also instructed to draw up detailed proposals for a nursery campaign.

Most of the resolutions and workshops were heavily critical of the attitude of the NUS Executive to the Women's Campaign in the NUS.

This came out most clearly in a resolution which emerged from the 'Democracy and Women in the NUS' workshop. It demanded that women, gays and blacks should have the right to organise autonomously — with closed meetings if necessary — in colleges without loss of funds. By passing this motion, the Conference re-emphasised that the self-organisation of women on their own is an essential feature of the Women's Campaign.

This is one of the most fundamental areas of disagreement about how the campaign should be run. Yet, in all likelihood, it will not be discussed at NUS Conference, nor will the Executive take its implications seriously.

NUS Executive in the past has taken a very light-minded attitude to the Women's Campaign. Last week's Conference shows that it hasn't had a change of heart — but that there are women willing to fight to make it do so.

**ALISON DOWNIE**  
**CAROLYN IRVING**

## NUS launch Gay Rights Week

"IT'S A DAMN LIE! We don't employ any homosexuals!". This bigoted reply was sent by Solihull and Croydon councils to a National Council for Civil Liberties circular asking if councils would employ gays.

Trevor Philips, National Union of Students executive member with responsibility for gay rights, outlined this and other examples of discrimination at a press conference last Friday opening NUS Gay Rights Week of Action.

In Stockport College, the Principal stopped the formation of a gay society. When a gay person was elected as President of the students' union, he declared the election void.

In Northern Ireland ALL homosexual acts are illegal. Students have been complaining of a recent increase in police harassment of

gays, including the seizure of records of Gay Rights campaigners. Lesbian mothers involved in child custody cases are almost certain to lose the children, and may even be denied access to them.

Tim Manning, a member of NUS Gay Rights committee, dealt with discrimination in jobs, particularly in teaching and social work. The Department of Education and Science has a 'List 99', which is a blacklist of people believed to have committed sexual offences. According to Tim Manning, people 'suspected' of being gay are on this list, denying them the right to a job.

The NUS campaign will take up cases like these. During the week, students in various parts of the country will be holding gay rights meetings, demonstrations, socials and so on.

**NEAL SMITH**



# WORKERS IN ACTION

LAST WEEK's Workers Action reported the case of AUEW militant Jack Sprung who has been suspended from his job at Triumph Canley works in Coventry. This victimisation has been accompanied by a witch-hunt against him on the front page of the local paper, the Coventry Evening Telegraph.

Sprung tried to reply to this attack by getting the paper to publish a statement, but they refused. The

## 'I challenge Coventry Evening Telegraph' says Jack Sprung

following issue of the Coventry Evening Telegraph then attacked him for not replying to their original allegations!

Jack Sprung decided to reply to this by producing a leaflet which was given out at his works on last Friday. It says:

"This letter is the only way I can put the facts before you to judge. I have taken legal advice, but, because of the costs involved (there is no legal aid for libel) I am unable to take any other action to clear my name. I hereby challenge the Coventry Evening Telegraph to prosecute me if what I say here is incorrect.

"I did not... smuggle spies into the plant. In fact, the only 'spy' in the plant during the work-in was a reporter from the Coventry Evening Telegraph, Ken Welsby, disguised in a cow gown, and he had nothing to do with me....

"The company have made charges against me which they can't prove. Unfortunately the only way I can refute them would mean naming other shop stewards. This I

am not prepared to do, despite very great pressure in private from AUEW officials who ought to know better!

"Nor was I allowed to be present at the Plant Conference (April 29) which suspended me on pay, pending an appeal to an extended Plant conference yet to be held. So I am found guilty without even a trial.

"Some questions still remain.

"Is my dismissal based on my actions during the work-in?

"Or am I being victimised for my past Trade Union activities and my forecasts on MDW and plant reorganisation?"

"Furthermore, where did the Coventry Evening Telegraph get its false information?"

The day after this leaflet was given out the Coventry Evening Telegraph felt compelled to publish it more or less complete, although they did so without any comment. They did not reply to

the questions posed by Sprung. Nor did Leylands.

Shortly after Sprung's suspension, Leylands announced that the Canley was to cease to function as an assembly plant, and would go over to manufacturing components. Elections also took place for a new AUEW convenor. Only strong efforts by the stewards kept the workers from refusing to start work on the Monday after Jack Sprung was suspended. Evidently Leyland's 'participation' scheme is working well — but in whose interests?

DAVE SPENCER



An earlier struggle: JACK SPRUNG (right) arrested at mass picket of Art Castings strike

THE COWARDLY bully-boys of the purged and newly 'toughened-up' National Front decided that discretion was the better part of fascist thuggery last weekend. They kept well away from a day-long teach-in on Ireland organised by Manchester Polytechnic Students Union.

Three months ago a large gang of fascist thugs launched a surprise attack on a meeting on Ireland in the same building, organised by the National Council for Civil Liberties. Serious injuries were inflicted. Graeme Atkinson of the 'Socialist Charter' had 16 stitches in wounds caused by a broken bottle being jabbed in his face.

This time the meeting was properly stewarded, and, though a gang of National Front thugs was spotted in the vicinity, they kept their distance: they came, they saw, and they slunk away!

Earlier, five threatening phone calls in the name of the Ulster Volunteer Force, an Orange assassin gang, had been made to one of the main speakers, Sean Matgama, national secretary of the International-Communist League, an organisation which has a policy of outspoken support for the IRA against the British army and the Orange para-military forces. Whether this was the UVF, or the NF, which does have connections with the Orange murder gangs, is unclear, but most likely it was part of a campaign of intimidation related to the meeting in Manchester.

But when it came to the Manchester meeting, the only people intimidated were the National Front.

Jim McCorry, a left Republican from Belfast, explained the complexities of the situation in Northern Ireland. Neil McCafferty, an Irish feminist, dealt with the problem as it affected women. Neil Bell, summing up, made the case for British troop withdrawal, and explained the problems facing Republicans and socialists in Ireland.

The axis of the teach-in was the debate between Al Stewart, National Union of Students vice-president, and Sean Matgama.

Stewart argued the line common to the Official Republican Movement and the British Communist Party, and the



Graeme Atkinson after fascist attack so-called 'Broad Left' in the NUS. The British Army must be withdrawn to barracks, the 'political process' must be allowed to gain momentum in Northern Ireland, and thus, hopefully, solve the problem of the community antagonism between the Loyalist and Republican populations. A Bill of Rights was the real answer, to guarantee the Catholics against sectarianism.

Stewart stressed that this was primarily something to be worked out between the communities, not essentially something implemented by Westminster, though Westminster would have to ratify it. To the argument that this was evasive word-play and in reality a Bill of Rights meant Westminster legislation or nothing, Stewart made no reply. Central to his argument was the idea that the Six Counties existed and socialists had to fight within it, not pretend it didn't exist: therefore 'troops out' was counter-productive.

Matgama argued that there were two interlinked problems, the British presence and the Orange community. Ireland as a British colony was not of one type, but combined two types on one island. Over most of the country a thin layer of exploiters, the Protestant Ascendancy caste, had ruled: in the North-East a colony composed of all classes, a colon settlement, had taken root, though without completely exterminating the 'natives' as the same

be ready to house four or so families in primitive conditions."

Far from the two families living it up in a 4-star hotel, they had asked to be moved out of the Airport Hotel long before the barrage of filth from the press began to arrive. Incidentally, the money went not to "£600 week Asians", but to a hotel owner who didn't even have the bother of providing meals. If the press were in the least bit honest, it would have referred to a "£600 a week" hotel owner, and to the £26 a week subsistence that the Suleman family of 8 had to survive on.

They have now been moved to a hostel for the homeless, which is a converted workhouse. When they arrived there they were greeted by anger, abuse, and protest banners.

Despite the fact that West Sussex Council is a solid Tory council, local right-wingers managed to present the issue as if it was all the 'fault' of the Crawley Labour Council. Racism became a useful weapon and the Tories took 11 of Crawley's previous 25 all-Labour seats.

Said the fascist Brewer: "The publicity has been a great help in

## Threats don't stop Irish meeting

sort of colony did in the USA. Partition very roughly divided Ireland along the lines of the two types of colony — very roughly indeed, because to render an Orange state viable a 40% Catholic minority had to be included in it. The minority was too big to be tolerated and given full rights, lest it challenge the majority; and too big to be extirpated. The result was, in Northern Ireland, the logic of the political/communal relations of a settler state roughly on the model of South Africa, Rhodesia or Israel.

### Only

The only solution is to deny the Six County state the right to exist, and to understand that only in a federal united Ireland is there a framework for a solution. Even the Catholic-sectarian character of the 26-County gombbeen 'Republic' is a product of partition. Consequently the drive of the Provisional Republican movement to smash the Six County state is the only solution. The Provisional IRA have a right to demand of British socialists that we support their fight, including when they strike against military targets in Britain. Whatever criticisms one would make of Provisional

IRA tactics, those criticisms, in Britain — though not for socialists in Ireland — must be secondary to unconditional support against the British state.

The policy of withdrawal to barracks has already shown its bankruptcy. Only the UDR and the RUC can replace the army — that is, Orange suprematism. British political control cannot modify that reality in the local situation, whatever the Labour government may think.

Because the CP, the Officials, and the Broad Left refuse to look at this reality, they are just whistling in the wind. Without making the destruction of the Six County statelet the cornerstone of policy, no progress is possible. Withdrawal to barracks implicitly accepts Britain's right to be in Ireland. It denies the right to self-determination. 'Realism' as regards that State is the politics of slavishness and treachery. Those who raise the slogans of 'Troops Out' and 'Self-Determination' don't offer advice to the Labour Government. They raise a banner to rally forces to fight that government and its policies. We are not philistines who agree to work within the framework decreed and controlled by our enemies, as do the Broad Left and the CP.

## Increased use of 'Terror Act' in London

POLICE harassment and detention of Irish people in and around North West London is on the increase. Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, police can detain suspects for seven days without charge, refusing to grant the detained any legal aid or any right to see members of their families. Any Irish person can be deported without charge or trial.

Harrow and Harlesden have come in for special attention recently. Tom Goodchild was held for 33 hours at Wealdstone Police Station on April 16th. His release was secured just minutes before a large picket was due to start. Cormac McKeever, a teacher, and his wife, were detained at South Harrow police station on May 4th. He told Workers Action that a school register was one of the items that was taken by the police.

## Easter

The response to the arrests since Easter has been encouraging. The Trade Union Committee against the Prevention of Terrorism Act has organised large pickets outside police stations and is raising the issues in the local labour movement. On April 27th the Committee mounted a picket outside Harlesden police station to demand the release of Vincent Plover and Sean

Canavan. Since then Vincent Plover has been released and Sean Canavan has been charged and moved to Brixton, where further picketing is in progress.

The frantic search for the elusive Brendan Swords has given the Bomb Squad a convenient excuse to intensify its activities in this part of London. The hue and cry here is only part of the government's strategy, which has already seen over 1400 arrests and countless raids since the PTA was introduced. Out of those arrested, only 65 to 70 have been charged.

People arrested and released without charge can still be stigmatised as 'undesirable', which can and has led to dismissal from their jobs. The intimidation seeks to drive a wedge not only between English and Irish workers, but also to deter the Irish community from giving further support to those actively engaged in fighting British imperialism in Ireland.

The PTA must be repealed. It is an erosion of the civil liberties of trade unionists and other workers, but primarily it is the latest in a long line of attacks on the ability of the Irish people to organise independently and without interference from Britain.

BERNIE McADAM

Trade Union Committee Against the Prevention of Terrorism Act: legal service, phone 01-603 8654; further information from 265A Seven Sisters Rd, London N7.

## EVENTS

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

Thursday 20th May. Birmingham Workers Action meeting on 'The May 26th Day of Action and the next step'. Speakers: Andrew Horning and John Bryant. 8pm at the 'Wellington'.

Thursday 13th May. Nottingham Workers Action meeting. Keith Bennett on 'Terrorism'. 8pm at the Peacock, Mansfield Rd.

Monday 17th May. Teesside TOM organising meeting, 8pm in the Cleveland Hotel, Linthorpe Rd, Middlesbrough.

Friday 21st May. Michael Farrell speaks on 'Northern Ireland: the Orange state'. 7.30pm at Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq. Organised by Peoples Democracy.

Tuesday 18th May. West London Workers Action meeting: "Women's Oppression — The Fight Back". Speakers: Pat Longman (WWCC Nat. Secretariat), Juliet Ash (NAC Steering Committee), both in personal capacity. 7.30pm at Hammersmith Town Hall, King St, London W6.

Tuesday 18th May. Cardiff Workers Action meeting on "Women and the crisis". Speaker: Michele Ryan (WWCC Nat. Secretariat, in personal capacity). 7.30 at the Rhymney Hotel, Adam St.

Thursday 20th May. Reading Socialist Forum on "The Fourth International" 8pm at St Davids Hall, London Rd, Reading.

Nottingham Teachers' Centre, Cranmer Rd, Nottingham. "The new laws and how to use them... What you and your union can do in the struggle for equal rights". Organised by Nottingham Trades Council NCCL, WWCC, and Anti-Sex Discrimination Campaign.

Saturday 22nd May. Day School on Womens Rights. 10.30am to 5pm at the Nottingham Teachers Centre

Sunday 23rd May. Manchester labour movement conference on Chile. Speakers Pedro Cornejo (Chilean TUC), Andrew Bennett MP. 2pm to 5pm at the AUEW offices, The Crescent, Salford.

Sunday 23rd May. Troops Out Movement seminar for Greater London Labour Party members, at City Poly. Details from Don Flynn, 18 Lordship Park, N16

Tuesday 25th May. 'Unemployment: organising the fight-back in Brent'. Joint Brent Trades Council — Brent East LPYS meeting. Speakers: Jim Roache (TGWU), Jack Dromey (Brent TC), Mike Davis (Hackney TC). 8pm at the Trades and Labour Hall, 375 High Rd, Willesden, NW10.

Tuesday 25th May. Greater Manchester TOM meeting on 'Why self-determination'. 7.30pm at the Ducie Arms, Gt Ducie St.

## SUBSCRIBE NOW!

STANDARD SUB:

50 issues — £7.50  
25 issues — £3.75

To: Subscriptions, 49 Carnac St., SE27

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Cheques payable to Workers' Action

Published by Workers Action, 49 Carnac St, London SE27. Printed by Prestagote of Reading (TU). Registered as a newspaper with the GPO.

## Asians (from p1)

and hostel accomodation for the homeless.

When it comes to this scandal the Tory press isn't quite so forthcoming. When it comes to the terrible conditions that, for example, Asian families in the East End of London are forced to live in, these hate-mongers are silent. And when it comes to attacks on these families the 'best' they do is refer to the 'immigrant' problem — the worst they do is stir up such attacks. That is what they are doing now!

What are the facts in this case? The decision to put the two families in the hotel was taken by West Sussex County Council. This bunch of Tories expressed its real attitude towards immigrants through one of its members, David Blacker, who is also High Sheriff of Sussex. In an uncommonly disgusting statement to the council's policy and resources committee, he said: "A transit camp should be set up for homeless Asian families... Let us make it as comfortable as possible. We must