



# WORKERS' ACTION

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10p

**ALL OUT**

**APRIL 20th**

**NO PHASE 3**

**SUPPORT ALL BATTLES  
AGAINST WAGE CURBS!**

# ITALY - CP UPHOLDS STATE VIOLENCE

AFTER SEVERAL months of affirming that they would defend it to the last, the Italian trade unions have finally agreed to curtail the "sliding scale" agreement which provides for automatic wage rises in line with cost-of-living increases. The "basket" of goods on which the cost-of-living index is calculated is to be changed so as to reduce pay by about £2.50 a month in the current year.

The agreement between the Socialist, Christian-Democratic, and Communist Party-led unions, and the government, on 30th March, follows on a previous agreement, in January, to "cut labour costs", which was presented by the union leaders at the time as a concession which would "save" the sliding scale. What the agreement will "save" — temporarily, at least — is the Christian-Democratic minority Government and the \$530 million loan which it is trying to get from the International Monetary Fund.

On 3rd April, Communist Party general secretary Enrico Berlinguer issued a vague warning against the Government — but that was after the agreement had been concluded! Almost certainly it will be passed through Parliament before the temporary 'decree law' enacted in February expires, on 8th April. That decree included an increase in VAT and a redefinition of the sliding scale (now to be replaced by the redefinition agreed with the unions) to exclude those VAT increases from consideration in the 'sliding scale'.

The fight against the Andreotti government has been sidetracked and divided by the Communist Party. Although periodically announcing "self-criticisms" on its attitude to the workers' and students' struggles, it has never ceased to main-

tain the minority government by abstaining in Parliament.

On 23rd March the trade unions called a general strike and a mass demonstration in Rome — against the same Government austerity policy that they have now effectively accepted — while alongside them the students organised a separate demonstration. The students, who have occupied their universities and marched on the streets against tighter selection procedures and against the youth unemployment which leaves one-half of graduating students without jobs, approached the trade unions for a joint demonstration; but the trade union bureaucrats made it a precondition that the student speaker on the demonstration should start off by condemning "violence".

The CP, together with the Christian Democracy, organised

its own demonstration against "violence" on 16th March, in Bologna. The demonstration was not aimed against the police, who had shot dead a left-wing medical student, Francesco Lorusso, on 11th March, nor against the army, who, on the day of the big student demonstrations of 12th March, were placed on alert in every barracks throughout Italy.

It was aimed against the militant students. "The democratic state has the right to defend itself", declared the CP. Thus the leaders of the Italian working class take on themselves the responsibility for defending the capitalist order, siding with the armoured cars and armed policemen with which the "democratic state" has imposed its will on the universities. It remains to be seen whether the Italian workers will accept this betrayal.



# WHO GETS WHAT FROM HEALEY'S BUDGET

"The fattest favours go to the married man, with no children, on £22,225 a year..."

As the Sunday Times sums it up, last week's budget, insofar as it gives anything away, gives to the rich, not to the poor.

A married man with two children gains 3.7% increase in net income if he earns £2,500 a year; and over 8% if he earns between £15,000 and £25,000.

Traditionally, the labour movement has always favoured progressive direct taxation (income tax), over taxes on the purchaser. The idea is that the tax burden should be borne by those who can afford to pay, and particular groups, such as those with families, or on very low pay, should be proportionately shielded from the effects of taxation through special allowances.

In recent years, however, inflation has brought about a situation where even the lowest-paid workers were paying a third of their wages in tax, with National Insurance and Pension Scheme payments on top of that. Under the 'poverty trap', lower-paid workers can find the value of their wage increases reduced to almost nothing by beginning to pay income tax and by losing means-tested benefits.

Denis Healey's reaction to this 'anomalous' income tax situation purports both to give an all-round 2% easing, and to take account of inflation by raising the various 'thresholds' at which different tax rates come into effect.



845,000 people have moved out of the reaches of income tax because they don't even earn the derisory sum of £805 per annum. But there are bigger benefits at the top of the scale, because the limit for taxation at the standard rate has been put up from £5,000 to £6,000, and the taxation 'bands' have been lengthened up throughout the scale. And there are no special 'shielding' benefits for needy groups at all in the Budget.

The Economist, on 2nd April, published some illuminating figures on the effects on taxation of Healey's four years as Chancellor. In 1974-5 corporation tax brought in 12.2% of all revenue; in 1977-8 it will 7.0%. The share of the total tax burden taken by taxes on capital has dropped from 3.3% [1974-5] to 2.0% [1977-8].

Naturally, the Budget tax changes pleased the fat, greedy, lazy riff-raff who cry for 'incentives', with extra noughts behind the £ sign, for investment, or even for gracing us with their presence. Labour's Budget brought different comments, however, from Age Concern: "Pensioners are not going to get much help, if any, from the Budget", and the Child Poverty Action Group: "Children are the losers".

While the Budget has given a certain amount away in direct taxation, it has taken a good deal of this back in increased indirect tax. The apologists for this move say that in this way taxes can be directed away from income and basic necessities. Thus beer and tobacco and petrol are favourite targets, while the higher rate of VAT on 'luxuries' is also a recognition of this principle. In this Budget cigarettes and petrol had their tax increased.

Generally these taxes make not much difference to the quantities purchased of the commodities in question, only to the price. This of course hits the lower-paid harder than the rich, because the increased tax will be a higher proportion of the low wage than of a high one. Added to this is the special case of petrol: not only is petrol a necessity for many people for transport to and from work, or even for their work, petrol [and diesel] price increases also put up other prices through increasing transport costs.

This Budget is the best that Healey has come up with to satisfy the Government 'side' of the Social Contract: even if there were nothing else wrong with this 'bargain', no bargainer in his right mind would cede anything for this bait. Will Len Murray...?

BOB SUGDEN

JO THWAITES  
CALLUM McCRAE

# The Hammer and the Thistle

THE SCOTTISH Labour Party was formed by two breakaway Labour MPs, Jim Sillars and John Robertson, at the beginning of 1976. They hoped that with the swing towards the SNP in Scotland they could combine Tribunism with a generous dash of nationalism and re-coup the declining Labour vote for their own alternative to the SNP.

By the time of the Party's October conference it had become obvious that Sillars' project was a dismal failure.

Sillars' reaction was to blame the left in his party, and in an hysterical witchhunt branches were disbanded and supporters of *Red Weekly* in the SLP were summarily expelled en masse.

The expelled branches and individuals walked out. Reconvening their own SLP left-wing a few weeks later they repudiated Sillars' undemocratic methods but made no clear political demarcation from the party that had just expelled them. Putting more accent on the left reformism and less on nationalism, resolutions outlined a Scottish parliamentary road to socialism.

Despite proclaiming the need for a separate political organisation for the Scottish working class, the SLP left had no position on Scotland apart from the call for the "right of Scotland to self-determination".

Two weeks ago, the SLP left had another conference. With the membership whittled down to basically *Red Weekly* plus

supporters, the conference saw its task as to transform the SLP left into a "revolutionary" organisation. But all it managed to transform was its name, to the Scottish Socialist League.

*Workers' Action* has argued that Scottish nationalism is reactionary. The SSL came in to this reactionary nationalism both by agreeing with aspects of it and by having a position which does not enable them to wage war against it.

Failing to understand that the present campaign for a Scottish Assembly is based on particularist illusions both among the Scottish petty-bourgeoisie and in the labour movement, the SSL has now come out with the call for a "constituent assembly" in Scotland.

Marxists support the call for a constituent assembly in situations where the suppression of the democratic rights of the population gives the struggle for the highest (bourgeois) democracy a progressive dynamic. But in Scotland nationalism is no less reactionary than the Great British chauvinism so characteristic of the Labour left.

The impetus behind the wave of Scottish nationalism is not any struggle for democratic rights but illusions that an Assembly with oil revenues can alleviate the effects of the international capitalist crisis on a devolved or independent Scotland. Far from being progressive, Scottish nationalism is a parochial petty-bourgeois react-

ion to the problems of unemployment and low wages. Far from providing a solution to these problems, however, nationalism is likely to set back the working class struggle by splitting the organisations of the working class — either under the banner of an oil-fired capitalist utopia or of a "Scottish road to Socialism".

While the SSL pours scorn on the first, it goes all the way with the second.

Justifying the existence of a specifically Scottish organisation, the conference documents stressed that the class struggle in Scotland takes place in "a different framework" and that Scottish workers face different problems.

## Farce

But if this is so (to any greater extent than the special problem of any other region or sector) then the job of socialists is to stress the common, unifying problems and tasks facing both Scottish and English workers.

One of the special problems faced by Scottish workers is in fact the influence of nationalism. The SSL's accommodation to this nationalism (and by its very existence it is such an accommodation) is likely to make this problem worse.

Farcically, though the SSL expresses no doubts on the need for a separate socialist organisation for Scotland, the conference couldn't agree on whether

or not Scotland is an oppressed nation!

There was no more clarity on other issues. The SSL is to be "democratic centralist" — but with no clear programme this decision is meaningless, and can only lead to an SWP (IS)-type bureaucratic centralism.

The same programmatic confusion rendered the decision to seek international links just as meaningless. With all the verve of a 1940s Paramount picture, the SSL decided to embark on "The road to the Fourth International" (i.e. the United Secretariat of the FI). But the question was presented quite apolitically, with no discussion on the USFI's politics. Just Brian Grogan's picture of the USFI as a "big" organisation in the process of having fusion with everyone who vaguely agrees with "revolutionary politics".

Links with the USFI will not stop the SSL from being a nationalist organisation. The fact that the SSL has pretensions to being "revolutionary" in fact only makes things worse, adding an extra element of confusion by seeking to bind the heritage of Trotskyism to Scottish particularism.

The alternative for the Scottish working class is socialism or nationalism. By binding the two into one, the SSL stands as a diversion from socialism, and an obstacle to the fight against nationalism.

"I warn the Labour Government, the trade union leaders and the general council of the TUC that as far as the social contract is concerned, we have had it. No more social contract...I am sick and tired of hearing the whining that we must sustain a Labour government. I am not prepared to continue to support policies which harm the members I represent." These words from Arthur Scargill at the Leyland stewards' Conference on April 3rd received a huge ovation from the 1,700 trade union delegates who packed Birmingham's town hall.

And the Conference declaration demanded "total OPPOSITION to any further 'incomes policy', 'wage restraint', or any other interference in the Trade Unions traditional role of free collective bargaining — whether in conjunction with any government, or in the disguise of 'an orderly return to free collective bargaining'..."



The Fleet Street dailies whose habit it is to ignore all such workers' meetings were forced to recognise that the mood of the conference spelled danger for any attempt by the government and trade union leaders to impose a third round of wage curbs.

Speakers like Diane Langford of NATSOPA, who paid tribute to the toolroom strikers for having "woken up the trade union movement", John Deason of the Right to Work Campaign, and Tessa van Gelderen from the Working Women's Charter, drew big applause from the audience.

In last week's **Workers' Action** we wrote that the first task of the conference must be support for struggles against pay curbs now. The response to Wyn Bevan's appeal on behalf of the 520 electricians striking at Port Talbot steelworks showed that the mood of the conference ran along the same lines.

But the platform's attitude was different. The declaration adopted by the Conference says nothing about supporting struggles against Phase 2.



The bosses' paper the **Financial Times** was not slow to recognise it: "Moves...for militant action to seek a return to free collective bargaining", it reported, "were headed off".

The conference called for a "massive day of action on April 20th, including a commitment to a massive lobby of the House of Commons". More militant delegates called for a one-day general strike.

A one-day general strike could build on the toolroom strike, the Heathrow dispute, the Port Talbot electricians' action, and other battles against Phase 2, and focus the growing anger within the working class against wage controls.

# ALL OUT

## APRIL 20th

### NO PHASE 3

It would be a mobilisation that could both give the bosses warning and act as a spur for new sections of the working class to come into struggle.

But if the day of action is confined to a lobby of Parliament by selected delegates, then it will achieve very little. It will certainly persuade no MPs. It will bring no new sections of workers into struggle.

Eddie McGarry, vice-chairman of the Leyland stewards' committee and a platform speaker at the conference, has already declared at his own works, Triumph Coventry, "We have lost 11 weeks

already this year because of disputes. The lads are not going to lose another day".

Militant socialists will continue to work for strike action on April 20th: and for factory gate meetings, mass meetings in work time, and solidarity action with those currently in struggle against Phase 2.

McGarry has supported and policed the pay curbs so far. So has Bob Wright, Broad Left candidate for AUEW President and guest speaker at the Conference. Only a couple of weeks ago Wright, together with Longbridge convenor Derek Robinson, joined in order-

ing the Leyland toolmen to knuckle under to British Leyland's sacking threats and go back to work.

There was hostile booing for both at the Conference. Yet the **Financial Times** was able to comment that "the convening of the conference was something of a personal triumph" for Robinson.

The call for the conference came from Stewards at the Rover Solihull plant, one of the few Leyland plants where the toolroom men did not support the recent unofficial strike. This call was seized on by elements within the combine committee —

in particular the supporters of the Communist Party — as a way of covering up their refusal to lead or to support action now against the social contract.

These people — some of whom had lost rank and file support because of their support for the social contract and were now looking for a way to reestablish themselves with their members — wanted a conference that would show the trade union bureaucracy that it must change course...so that they themselves would not be squeezed between the wishes of the rank and file and the power of the trade union bureaucracy.

And they wanted a way of setting themselves at the head of the mounting struggles against the social contract although they refuse to support these struggles in practice.



The only proposal in the Conference declaration, apart from the day of action on the 20th, is "selective import controls, increased state investment in manufacturing industry". This is a strategy for hitting at the jobs of workers in other countries, pushing up prices in Britain, and obstructing the possibilities of international working-class unity — but in no way is it a strategy for fighting to push up wages!

The call for local rank-and-file committees, made by the 26th February Liaison Committee conference, was not taken up by the April 3rd conference declaration.

But these committees already exist in a few areas. In others militants are trying to build them up. Their central purpose, their main activity, and their touchstone, must be support for struggles against the wage curbs now.

■ Make April 20th a one-day general strike!  
 ■ Support the Heathrow workers, the Port Talbot electricians, and all other struggles against wage curbs now!

■ Build local rank-and-file committees, to mobilise for April 20th and to organise solidarity action, in spite of and against the sabotage of the trade union bureaucrats!

## SUPPORT ALL BATTLES AGAINST WAGE CURBS!

### 'OUR VICTORY WILL HELP ALL GRADES'

BOTH THE number of days 'lost' in strikes — 713,000 — and the number of strikes in progress — 301 — were higher in February than in any other month since August 1975, when the £6 limit began.

Workers are becoming convinced that there is no light at the end of the tunnel of the Social Contract, and are fighting to recoup the erosion of real wages over the last two years. That, and not just differentials, was the essence of the Leyland toolroom strike; and that is the root of the fight by 520 electricians at Port Talbot for higher wages.

Their convenor, Wyn Bevan,

put it clearly at the April 3rd conference: "This is not a strike for elitism, but against the union's failure to take action and the adamant stand by the British Steel Corporation. Our victory will help the fight for all grades to improve their wages".



In fact it is the British Steel Corporation who are being divisive, not the electricians. The dispute began when five electricians started work on new technology in the sinter plant. Substantial re-training and new skills were required; and the workers demanded major increases for all electricians at Port

Talbot. BSC have said they are ready to give increases to a small number of electricians: but no more, or else — they will be in breach of the Phase 2 wage curbs.

The 520 electricians struck on 25th March, and the whole works was shut down from 3rd April. The right-wing officials of the electricians' union, the EEPTU, have vehemently opposed the strike.

That's the general line-up, as the Lib-Lab coalition struggles to enforce Phase 2 and prepare Phase 3: the rank and file on one side, and the union bureaucrats together with the government and the bosses on the other.

### AUEW'S PARROT CRY — 'GET BACK TO WORK'

"GET BACK to work" is the message from British Airways management to the Heathrow airport maintenance engineers now on strike. "Get back to work" echoed the obedient AUEW, the men's union, after conferring with management.

The Heathrow situation is a repeat of the Leyland situation. Skilled workers, seeing their differentials eroded and their standard of living fall in two years of the Social Contract, and fed up with a negotiating committee where they don't feel their interests are represented, are out on strike against their

employers, the other unions at the workplace, and their own union.

And just as in the Leyland situation some of the strikers' representatives are saying that the strike is not against the social contract. It is obvious that this line is being put about so as not to narrow the room for manoeuvre of the employers too much.

But to gauge the real feeling of the men, it should be born in mind that they were one of those groups of workers who passed resolutions condemning the social contract in the wake of the Ley-

land demonstration against Varley over a month ago.

Southall District Committee of the AUEW — a district dominated by the Communist Party-led Broad Left in the engineering union — has done no more than "agree to note the dispute". But the strikers need a lot more than a note in the minutes book. They need the support and solidarity of other workers.

The strike is a test for the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions. It has a strong following in the area. It must be pushed to show effective support for the strike.

## ARNIE PROUT continues his series to mark the 60th anniversary of the Russian Revolution

ON APRIL 3rd 1917 Lenin arrived in Petrograd and immediately set about winning the Bolshevik Party to the perspective of the proletarian seizure of power.

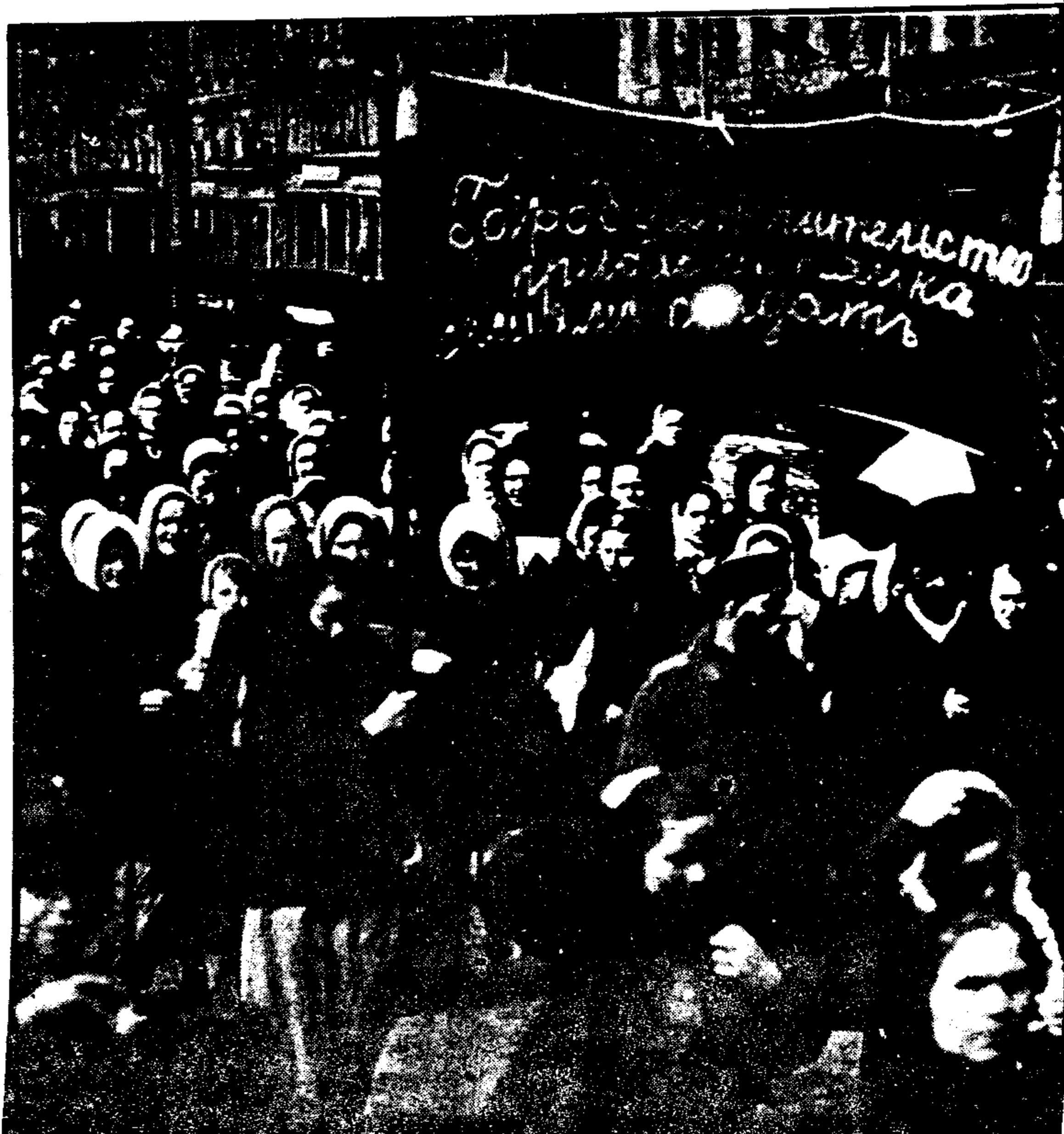
Brushing aside the reception committee of the Petrograd Soviet, headed by its president the Menshevik Chkheidze, he directly addressed the crowd of workers and sailors who had come to greet him:

"I am happy to greet in your persons the victorious Russian Revolution, and salute you as the vanguard of the world wide proletarian army... The piratical imperialist war is the beginning of civil war throughout Europe... The world wide socialist revolution has already dawned... Any day now the whole of European capitalism may crash. The Russian Revolution accomplished by you has paved the way and opened a new epoch. Long live the world-wide socialist revolution."

The whole tone of this speech contrasted sharply with the conciliatory attitude of the Bolshevik press from



KAMENEV



the middle of March.

On 5th March Pravda had begun re-publication and under the editorship of Molotov broadly reflected the party manifesto written by the inexperienced leadership which existed in Petrograd during the February Revolution. It denounced the Provisional Government as "a government of capitalists and landowners", called on the Soviet to establish a constituent assembly, and took an anti-war position, calling for the imperialist war to be transformed into a civil war.

Exiled in Zurich Lenin had expressed general agreement with this position (although he noted that clear conclusions for action had not been drawn out). He was alarmed, however, when in mid-March Pravda executed an about-turn by publishing a blatantly 'defencist', i.e. pro-war, article by Kamenev



In the following weeks the anti-war sentiments of Molotov's editorship were entirely dropped and a line virtually indistinguishable from that of some Mensheviks was adopted.

This resulted from three senior party members (Stalin Muranov and Kamenev) returning in mid-March. The left-wing around Molotov, which included Shliapnikov and Alexandra Kollontai, found themselves ousted and more cautious voices now dominated the party press.

Lenin's speech at the Finland Station showed that he was throwing his weight behind the left current — in fact going much further than they had done.

The differences between Molotov and Shliapnikov on the one hand, and Kamenev and Stalin on the other, were differences between left and right Bolsheviks. But Lenin broke with the "old Bolshevik" programme as a radical bourgeois revolution and proposed that the Bolshevik Party take as its immediate objective the conquest of power by the proletariat.

Some of Lenin's associates called him a madman. Others said he had become a "Trotskyist".

In a sense he had.

All the Marxists until 1905 were agreed that backward Russia needed a bourgeois-democratic revolution, like in 18th century France, and that Russia was not "ripe" for a workers' revolution.

From 1905 a sharp division existed between those who concluded that therefore the bourgeoisie would lead the revolution and the working class should support them (the Mensheviks), and Lenin who argued that the Russian bourgeoisie was too weak and too frightened of the powerful Russian working class to lead a revolution against Tsarism.

He concluded that the bourgeois revolution in Russia was only possible as the work of a plebeian alliance of urban proletarians and the peasantry.

Trotsky agreed with Lenin on this, but drew different conclusions. The workers and peasants would have to lead the revolution — but Trotsky insisted that the working class would not lead a revolution and at the same time refrain from taking action to satisfy its own needs. It would establish a proletarian dictatorship which would carry through the social measures against the landlords and the feudal institutions (which a bourgeois revolution required) and would also immediately act as a working class government.



Trotsky held that the flaw in Lenin's schema was that it required the working class to lead — because only a city based class, bourgeoisie or proletariat, could lead — the revolution; and simultaneously pass a 'self-denying ordinance' against satisfying working class demands like the demand for the 8-hour day.

Trotsky agreed that Russia was not "ripe" for socialism. But he argued that the penetration of backward Russia by the most modern industrial complexes had created a proletariat potentially every bit as advanced as that of the established capitalist countries. And the combination of the bourgeois and proletarian revolutions in Russia, led by the working class, would be a link in a chain of world-wide revolutions. Workers' states in advanced countries would link up with that in backward Russia.

This was the theory of permanent revolution.

Lenin in fact accepted Trotsky's programme in 1917. Had he not done so, there would have been no revolution — for Trotsky had not built a revolutionary party to fight for this programme. Lenin had. His task in early 1917 was to convince the party of his revised views.

To understand how Lenin came to this position we must return to the outbreak of war in August 1914.

International social democracy, in the shape of the Second International, had predicted the war since the turn of the century. At its 1907 Stuttgart Conference it had, at Lenin's instigation, declared that it would "utilise the economic and political crisis caused by (an imperialist) war in order to ... hasten

the destruction of the class domination of the capitalist class."

But when war was actually declared the social democratic parties, almost without exception, lined up behind their respective national bourgeoisies, in a massive betrayal of proletarian interests. Throughout Europe Socialist Deputies voted for war credits, acted as recruiting sergeants, and declared a truce in the class war.



In retrospect the reasons for this sell-out are clear. For years the parties of the Second International had followed a reformist practice. Activity had been concentrated upon the "minimum programme" of reforms whilst the socialist revolution was pushed further and further into the future — being used only as a ritual totem.

Within each party [and the trade unions associated with them] had grown up a bureaucratic stratum of officials and functionaries who defined their role [and personal careers] in terms of the national institutions, parliaments etc of their particular capitalist states. The war rudely stripped their politics of all internationalist pretensions.

The speed of their betrayal shocked even those like Rosa Luxemburg who had detected this corruption much earlier. Lenin refused to believe newspaper reports of social democratic Deputies voting for war credits — denouncing the reports as forgeries of the imperialist military powers.

Throughout Europe, however, there were minority groups of anti-war socialists. Some were pacifists.

# THE R MUST

Lenin responded by denouncing all those 'socialists' who failed to follow through the logic of the Stuttgart resolution — especially the pacifists "with their pitiful and craven dreams of unarmed struggle against an armed bourgeoisie".

He advocated the formation of a new, communist, international and argued not just for opposition to the war but a struggle to "turn the imperialist war into a civil war".

At the conference of anti-war socialists called in Zimmerwald in September 1915 he advocated a "vast propaganda campaign in the army and at the front in favour of socialist revolution, calling upon the masses to turn their guns not on their own brothers [the workers of other countries] ... but against their [own] government."

In other words Lenin called upon socialists to work towards the military defeat of their 'own' imperialist forces; ending the war, not in order to return to 'peace-



ful capitalism' but by means of a Europe-wide socialist revolution. In Russian terms this separated Lenin even the most left wing Bolsheviks, and also from the Mensheviks.



In fact the war conditions had convinced Lenin that European revolution was imminent. The role of the working class in spearheading the February revolution and immediately generating a network of their own councils — soviets — convinced him that the revolutionary workers might seize power in advance of the rest of Europe, a result of Russia being 'a weak link in the chain of imperialism'. Lenin was evolving away from the Bolshevik ideas toward the perspective of "permanent revolution".

When news of the February revolution reached Lenin in Zurich he immediately took a clear and uncompromising line. Writing to Alexandra Kollontai he said:



# APRIL 1917 REVOLUTION MOVE ON

reduce them to nought, to establish the undivided power of the bourgeoisie."

For their part the Soviets, influenced by the "gigantic petty-bourgeois wave (that has swept over everything and overwhelmed the class-conscious proletariat", were voluntarily ceding complete power to the Government.

Third, that the main demands of the masses (the ending of the war, an end to the economic crisis, and the land to those who till it) could only be solved by a proletarian government, the result of the revolution's "second stage, which should give power into the hands of the proletariat and poorest strata of the peasantry" and those only possible form could be the Soviets.

A number of practical tasks flowed from this analysis.

- The Bolsheviks must struggle against the Provisional government and the war, which despite the revolution remained an imperialist one.

- Uncompromising opposition to 'defencism'.

- A mass campaign for the transfer of power to the Soviets and a battle to win a Bolshevik majority within them.

- Immediate transition to workers' control of production; the nationalisation of the banks; the nationalisation of the land and its redistribution by the peasants themselves; the transformation of large estates into model estates controlled by agricultural workers.

- Lastly, changing the party name from 'social democratic' (its official name) to Communist, the revision of the party programme and the formation of a new, revolutionary, international.

would have been no second revolution, no Red October.\*

Clearly implied here was the view that the proletariat of Russia, in alliance with the peasantry (who must be won away from the bourgeoisie) could begin the socialist revolution in advance of Europe — although only by revolution in the West could it be completed.

"The ravings of a madman"; "lunatic"; "stupid and fantastic". These were the responses which met Lenin's bold and revolutionary change of course — even within the party. But not everyone took this line. The 'leftists' around Shliapnikov and Kollontai rallied to the revolutionary line.

The struggle for the soul of the party had begun.



Lenin's position won over the party within a relatively short time. At the Petrograd party conference on April 14th, only Kamenev presented a coherent defence of the policies which had been generally accepted before the April Theses.

He argued that the Soviets should exercise "the most watchful control" over the Provisional Government. Lenin argued for the party working towards a transfer of power to the Soviets. He won a majority.

Ten days later the all-Russian party conference adopted the slogan of **ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS**.

Several reasons explain the rapidity of this change.

Undoubtedly Lenin's immense respect within the party played a part. But we must also remember that the April Theses struck a chord that had already been sounded within the party. In early March Pravda had groped towards a similar position, and when it changed line in mid-March it is said that Bolshevik workers in the Vyborg factories were dismayed and angry.



But probably the greatest influence was the development of the political situation itself. The Provisional Government faced crisis on three fronts: the war; the factories; the peasantry.

The Government since March had tried to sustain the illusion that the revolution had been the result of an outbreak of patriotic fervour aimed at conducting the war more efficiently. The test of this came on 18th March when Foreign Minister Milukov sent a diplomatic note to the Allies (Britain and

France) pledging support for their war aims.

This provoked a storm of working class protest. Massive armed demonstrations of anti-war soldiers took place. The anger of the masses was eventually calmed by the 'moderate' Soviet leaders.

The widening rift between the proletariat and the government was equally apparent in the factories. As the economy collapsed, employers closed enterprises and in response workers occupied and instituted workers' control under elected factory committees. At the same time hundreds of thousands of workers were involved in a



TROTSKY

bitter struggle for the eight hour day.

The countryside too was in turmoil. The running sore of the agrarian problem demanded urgent action from the government. But all it could do was plead with the peasantry to wait for the constitutional process — fobbing it off with chronically slow 'investigations'.

Slowly at first, but with increasing momentum, the peasants began to take matters into their own hands by seizing the land — while the supposed representative of the peasant party, Alexander Kerensky — as Minister of Agriculture — condemned all such actions and



SHLIAPNIKOV

even supported attempts to forcibly suppress peasant risings.

Although the peasantry generally supported the government the land question was potentially explosive — and the fuse was alight.

The acceptance of the April Theses placed the Bolsheviks in a position to lead the proletarian struggle and integrate it with the unrest in the army and countryside. That such a position had to be fought for within the party illustrates the way in which the struggle for ideological clarity must continue even, perhaps especially, in the midst of vast practical class battles.

"Never again along the lines of the Second International! ... By all means a more revolutionary programme... tactics... propaganda, agitation and struggle for an international proletarian revolution and for the seizure of power by the 'Soviets of Workers' Deputies'."

The return of Lenin to Petrograd threw the party into turmoil. On the evening of his return he addressed an astonished meeting of party members and the next day presented the famous April Theses — "Tasks of the Proletariat in our Revolution". These were a concentrated exposition of his thinking during the enforced wait in Switzerland.

First, the Russian revolution was placed in an international perspective — the war and the crisis flowing from it.

Second, the class character of the February events and the Provisional government was assessed: a revolution which "gave power to the bourgeoisie as a result of the insufficient organisation and consciousness of the proletariat"; the Provisional

Government a bourgeois one which had been voluntarily given power by the Soviets; a situation of dual power which, one way or the other, could only be temporary.

"The main feature of our revolution" said Lenin "is the dual power which arose in the very first days after the triumph of the (February) revolution."



"This dual power" he explained, was expressed in the simultaneous existence of a bourgeois 'Provisional Government' of Lvov and Co., brought in by the February revolution; and, side by side with it, the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies — the embryo of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But, he emphasised "Two powers cannot exist in a state. One of them is bound to pass away; and the entire Russian bourgeoisie is already trying its hardest everywhere and in every way to keep out and weaken the Soviets, to

Lenin's presentation was, on its first hearing, completely rejected, as well it might have since it broke with the old Bolshevik conception that their goal was 'the revolutionary democratic' [i.e. bourgeois] dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry'. This, proclaimed Lenin, had already been realised; the revolution must move on.

Here Lenin was partly misstating the case, in the heat of the struggle to cast off the fetters on revolutionary action which the old slogan (democratic dictatorship etc., understood as a radical bourgeois republic) had become. The bourgeoisie had political power. But it was unable to carry out the 'tasks' of the bourgeois revolution (especially in the countryside). If it had been able to accomplish this and satisfy the peasants' demand for land distribution, then the revolutionary workers in the cities would have been isolated, as the Parisian workers were during the Commune of 1871. There

\* This is an important point to note. Ever since the rise of Stalinism the Communist Parties (and more recently the Maoists too) insist that Lenin's programme of the democratic dictatorship of proletariat and peasantry was correct against Trotsky's permanent revolution theory. They cite Lenin's statements in the 1917 polemics as 'proof' that the February revolution was a completed bourgeois revolution, justifying their adherence to the stages recipe for backward countries.

But had the bourgeois revolution been properly accomplished in February there could have been no Bolshevik revolution in October.

Lenin's exaggeration, aimed at shifting the Old Bolsheviks from their goal of the democratic dictatorship is pardonable. Stalinist mis-use of Lenin's discarded democratic dictatorship slogan has, by contrast, been a counter-revolutionary influence that has aborted numerous revolutionary possibilities in the last 50 years.

# Militant: sneaking up on capitalism

Pete Keenlyside looks at MILITANT's criticism of the COMMUNIST PARTY programme

"THE British Communist Party show that they have learnt nothing from the events in Chile ... [they] fail to see that, as with Chile, piecemeal measures, tinkering with the capitalist system .. will irritate the capitalists and give [them] time and opportunity to prepare [their] counter-stroke against a 'left government'."

Jim Brookshaw, reviewing the new draft of the Communist Party's "British Road to Socialism" in Militant (4th March) contrasts the "Marxism" of Militant with the "gradualism" of the CP.

However: "the CP is absolutely correct, as against the ultra-left sects, to pose the possibility of a peaceful transfer of power." The critical difference, for Brookshaw, is that what the CP see as being done through a "series of 'left governments'" must be done all AT ONCE.

"Because of the overwhelming strength of the working class in Britain, if the labour and trade union leaders were Marxists and campaigned in the movement to explain the crisis of capitalism and the need for socialism, then capitalism could not last six weeks..."

"We have shown [sic] that if the Labour government were to nationalise the 200 monopolies in Parliament — backed up by the mass mobilisation of the 11-million strong trade union and labour movement — this would eliminate the economic power of the capitalists, paralyse the army tops, rally the middle class and politically uneducated workers behind its banner and thus ensure a peaceful change."

Nationalise all the monopolies, and the Brigadier Kitsons and

other arch-reactionaries in the army and police will be rendered powerless — together with NATO and all other forces of counter-revolution! The scope of the mass mobilisation rallied to defend the nationalisations will rule out any Pinochet-type coup.

This argument assumed that the ruling class, together with the chiefs of the army, the police and the state bureaucracy, just wait — like Louis 16th strapped under the guillotine — for the death blow being prepared for them by the newly Marxist Labour Party leadership.

The Labour Party wins the election and forms the government without them stirring. The civil service bureaucrats implement the 'socialist' legislation without a moment's quibbling.

It is some time since the British ruling class used direct violence on a mass scale in Britain itself. But its record in the colonies, and today in the north of Ireland, shows that it will be ferocious and speedy in repression when its vital interests are at stake. No ruling class in history has ever just handed over, peacefully.

And then, the whole scenario is

dependent on the "Marxist" Labour government creeping up by stealth on its capitalist victim. It would have to declare the 200 monopolies nationalised, and then mobilise the workers, having kept its intentions secret in order to take the ruling class by surprise!

No self respecting thriller would have a plot so improbable as Militant's strategy.

And of course, it would be an unexpected surprise for the workers, too! Militant's concept of socialism is one of socialist from above, introduced for the working class by leaders working within the existing institutions. Workers' councils, the essential basis of workers' revolution and workers' power, capable of organising and arming masses of workers so that the violent resistance of the capitalists could be, not wished away, but defeated, are not even mentioned in Brookshaw's article, which is entitled "Which way to Socialism?"

## Streets

Brookshaw's assumption throughout is that the decisive battles take place in Parliament [backed up, of course, with some orderly mass mobilisation organised from Parliament to defend the advances legislated in Parliament] — not in the factories and on the streets.

The "Marxists" have no responsibility for mobilising the masses — the Labour leaders will do it, once they have decided [why? how?] to get rid of capitalism. The masses are relegated to the role of bit-players in the crowd scenes, while the MPs create socialism at

Westminster.

Militant's idea of 'socialism' is basically similar to the CP's or Tribune's. It is, in fact, a form of state capitalism, equating nationalisation with socialism. The active force to create socialism is not the working class in struggle; but Parliament.

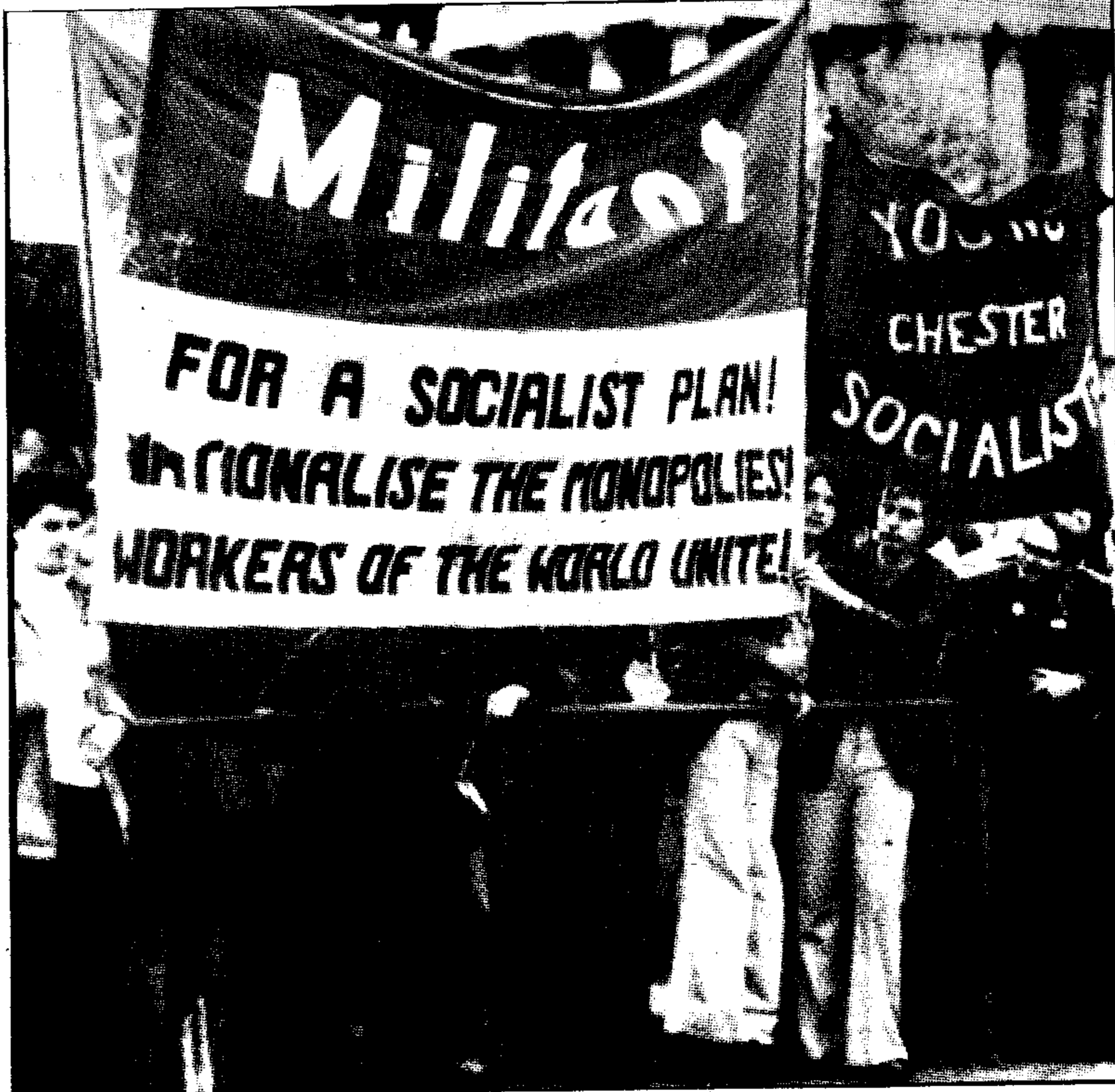
## Sense

Within the common framework of ideas, the CP's version makes more sense than Militant's. The CP argues that the state can be transformed bit by bit. The armed forces and the civil service can be gradually "democratised" by putting people of a left-wing outlook in their leading posts; and more socialism can be made more and more socialist by more and more nationalisations.

For Militant, however, Parliament will change the whole nature of the state "overnight".

In an advertisement accompanying Brookshaw's article, Militant offers for sale Lenin's "State and Revolution". There, Lenin writes: "The necessity of systematically imbuing the masses with this and precisely this view of historic revolution lies at the root of the entire theory of Marx and Engels... The supersession of the bourgeois state by the proletarian state is impossible without a violent revolution."

Militant does all it can to "imbue" the workers' movement with the opposite view — the view of trifiers, who subsist on day-dreams instead of facing the real problems of the struggle for socialism.



## JLL REVIEW

THE FIRST scene of "The Best Days?" (Panorama, March 21st) showed a school Assembly at Faraday Comprehensive School, Acton. An earnest schoolmaster is trying to sell his favourite piece of music, Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries". "How many of you have ever been to the opera?" he asks. No hands go up — surprise surprise. The teachers stand at the side like embarrassed prison warders.

And this really sets the scene of the documentary — the vast social gap between the kids and the school authorities; the total irrelevance to their lives of anything that was being done. The only exception, maybe, the examination classes, backed by the motivation of a possible future job but still with no interest in the content of the lessons.

The film has, it seems, caused quite a rumpus in staff-rooms around the country. But most commentators have concentrated on the chronic breakdown of Law

## SCHOOLS: THE PROBLEM IS DODGED AGAIN

and Order in the English and History classes. (The NUT have complained — both nationally and at Faraday School itself — that the two teachers featured had only two months' experience and that the whole programme was thus distorted.)

The TES (Times Educational Supplement) reviewer also commented on this question of "control" and noted that clearly a minority of teachers were demoralised and felt the whole process was a "meaningless routine".

But how can we describe the performance of those teachers regarded as being successful?

### Class

The headmaster, praised by all, was seen reading Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* to a non-examination class. They discuss why Elizabeth won't marry Mr. Collins. "Why do people get married?" he asks. A good deal of giggling is the reply. "Well", he answers, "yes, we know all about that. And actually Mr. Collins hardly inspires confidence on that side. However..." and he gets back to the story. The point is — here is a real human problem, and he's dodged it!

As for the biology homework, briskly dishing out homework on "The Fly"; ordering "Take down these notes on the menstrual

cycle"; and dealing with an offending pupil — "You're a nasty, rude girl": the thing is, within the exam-ridden, discipline conscious context of the school, she's a success!

Then there's the housemaster. Praised by the TES reviewer — but for sheer suffocating condescension and oppressive tolerance, he would be hard to beat. Clearly a future headmaster...

He talks to a bewildered young man, "You've let yourself down and that worries me. You swore at a woman of mature years. I want you to apologise." Like hell it worries him. Either the kid has a case against the woman or he deserves a kicking.

This "You've been naughty, what are you going to do about it" liberal clap-trap is neither here nor there. Neither kids, parents nor teachers know where they stand.

Either there are rules and the authorities enforce them or a form of democratic order prevails which can be negotiated. The present system is not fish nor fowl — it just stinks.

No wonder some teachers complain that the Black Paper will have a field-day over a programme like this! The Black Paper lobby of course want to go back to more authoritarianism and a traditional curriculum — and there are real attractions for the average

classroom teacher in this.

The answer is not to deny the reality of the problems, as the headmaster-dominated NUT does, but to put forward the alternative: a democratic system based on the needs of the school students.

As Marxists we have to take into account that the education system is part of the state machine, a means of passing on the ideas of the ruling class, and that a democratic system in the schools is not in itself the answer. Or, as Basil Bernstein put it, "Education cannot compensate for society".

And what we saw at Faraday School was a microcosm of society — of a bourgeoisie in difficulties trying to rule by corporatism, at time perilously close to losing its nerve. I suspect a "fly on the wall" view of other British institutions would reveal a similar picture.

The present education system is useless for the working class. It establishes a sense of hopelessness and failure in the average school student as surely as if that

were the conscious purpose of the bourgeoisie in the whole exercise.

The first thing we must get right is there has to be a realistic view of the education system: no facades, no blind-spots, no cover-ups.

We must fight all cutbacks in education. Much of the Black Paper-type retrenchment (which we must oppose in itself anyway) is a rationale for allowing the massive education cuts.

The presently favoured idea of a "liberal authority" is a fake and a shambles. We must fight for a fully democratic system in the schools which would give full democratic rights — and human dignity — to all school students and teachers.

With this, changes in the curriculum to reflect the needs and requirements of the students and the working class community; and community involvement and use of school buildings.

DAVE SPENCER

# THE POLITICS OF Militant

A WORKERS' ACTION PAMPHLET  
20p plus postage from 49 Carnac Street, London SE27

# NUS REJECTS REAL FIGHT ON FEES

THE CAMPAIGN against the Government-ordered increase in students' fees, especially for overseas students, was the dominant issue at the National Union of Students conference.

The NUS Executive wanted a policy of "No fee increases for self-financing students" (as against "Abolition of fees"). Failing to take up the issue of immigration controls, they ignored the racist character of the increases.

Overseas students themselves pointed at the facts: "First the unequal fees. Then the tightening of the Immigration Act. Then the different hostel charges. Then the fees campaign". The National Coordinating Committee for Overseas Students described the Exec slogan as "quite inadequate". "The main burden of the increases will fall on self-financing students, especially those from overseas. However, new overseas students who would receive awards from the Governments because of the increased price of fees. The same applies to post-graduate students from this country, who are, anyway, having less awards granted to them in the coming year. The increases in

tuition fees will result in the reduction in the overall funds available for grants. This will cause the number of discretionary awards to be reduced... Thus it is clearly not merely self-financing students who will be hurt by fee increases".

The Broad Left said that abolition of fees was a long-term objective to be achieved by an "alliance" between liberal College authorities and the NUS. But where colleges like Bradford are opposed to the fees increases, it is because it would greatly increase their reliance on fees and thus increase the relative strength of students in negotiations.

Unfortunately, opposition from the left was inadequate. The IMG and its allies in the SSA, while attacking the Broad Left, argued for a slogan of "freeze the fees", virtually in counterposition to the call to "abolish all fees". Their position, based on the desire for lowest-common-denominator unity, weakened their arguments against the Broad Left.

As overseas students explained, "The idea of phased negotiation towards the abolition of fees



Sue Slipman, NUS President, speaks to Birmingham University ASTMS strikers

is an unrealisable strategy, and ignores the necessity to put forward the call now as a national unifying focus for all students... By supporting any fees the authorities are discriminating against all students who do not have their fees paid and who are unable to get awards".

The confusion of both NOISS and SSA over this issue was clearest in their opposition to the call for a nationally-coordinated fees strike, which has developed from the struggles at LSE and Sheffield. Both groupings argued that such a campaign would isolate overseas students. This argument, while not comparable to the Broad Left attitude of opposition to any action, is, however, dangerous.

The fees strike was and is proposed as a supplement to actions like occupations which can unite overseas students in action with other students and provide cohesion for a "strike" which will occur anyway simply because many students will not be able to pay.

Despite the Conference's rejection of calls for action organised on the scale that is needed, action is still going on and must be built up over the Easter vacation. At least five colleges - North East London Poly, North London Poly, Middlesex Poly, Birmingham and Teesside - will be in occupation. They require active support now. The campaign's next steps will be discussed at a number of regional conferences organised by overseas student activists [for details see 'Events']. From those conferences national action can be argued for and initiated.

## Broad Left woos Tories

TRYING TO retain their dominance of the Executive, the Broad Left in the National Union of Students has come to its own "historic compromise" with the Federation of Conservative Students (FCS). The alliance isn't formalised, it is often denied, but it does exist. It exists first and foremost as a bloc in NUS elections to "keep out the ultra-left".

For almost every Executive position, there was a final vote between the Broad Left and NOISS (National Organisation of Student International Socialist Societies, backed by the SWP), or SSA (Socialist Students' Alliance, backed by the International Marxist Group) - and it was transferred Tory votes which delivered victory to the Broad Left. Despite that, SSA got two Exec members and NOISS one.

The Broad Left-Tory alliance, however, is not just an electoral accord, it involves agreement with the Tories on a range of major issues.

On racism, they attempted to replace the existing NUS policy

of "No platform for racist speakers" by a "No invitations" policy.

That failed, but on Ireland the Broad Left and FCS maintained an even stronger agreement, backing the Peace, Jobs and Progress Campaign and the Peace Movement, and arguing that the Army are peace-keepers.

Though NOISS and SSA motions for "Troops Out Now" were defeated, there was considerable opposition to the Broad Left position. This was evident at the largest fringe meeting of the Conference, where two to three hundred heard Bernadette McAliskey debate with a representative of the Peace People.

The coming student movement conference on Ireland on May 7th, at Middlesex Poly, is an opportunity to crystallise this opposition, by linking up with the campaign for a labour movement enquiry into the role of the troops in Ireland which has already been launched in the Labour Party Young Socialists by *Left Action*.

NIK BARSTOW

### THE FIGHT FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

A WORKERS ACTION PAMPHLET



15p

## COMPROMISE ENDS ASTMS STRIKE

ON FRIDAY 1st APRIL the ASTMS technicians' strike at Birmingham University ended after seven months. The strike was for the demand that the University management implement the 1974 agreement, signed under the auspices of ACAS (the Government's Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service), which promised the technicians an extra five days' holiday a year.

The agreement was in itself a compromise, as ASTMS were negotiating not for holidays at all, but for a pay rise. The University ratted on the agreement and the strike (130 out of 600 on all-out strike) was called.

During the strike the University used scab lorries under police escort to get supplies in. The strike committee maintained unanimously until last week

that they were staying out until they got the full five days, and were not going to arbitration. As Gordon Darkes, the branch secretary, said: "We will not compromise on a compromise".

At the end of last week, in discussions between union officials and the University, under the auspices of ACAS, a 'compromise' was agreed on. The 'compromise' split the strike committee, but a majority, along with local officials, recommended the technicians to accept it, which they did by 140 to 33 with some abstentions.

### ACAS

This compromise gave an interim settlement of one day's extra holiday per year, and an agreement to go to 'mediation' with ACAS in the chair, a re-

presentative from University management and one from ASTMS, on condition that the technicians returned to work at once.

This compromise is a setback not just for the ASTMS technicians at Birmingham university, but all workers and students on campus. The University had deliberately engineered a confrontation with the technicians (the strongest union on campus) as a first step towards the implementation of massive cutbacks.

It is also a setback for technicians in the rest of the country who haven't settled under the 1974 agreement yet, as Birmingham University was seen by both management and workers as a test case for all technicians who had not settled.

Jim Hoyle

## workers' ACTION supporters' groups

BASINGSTOKE, BIRMINGHAM, BRISTOL, CAMBRIDGE, CARDIFF, CHELMSFORD, CHESTER, COVENTRY, EDINBURGH, HUDDERSFIELD, LEICESTER, LIVERPOOL, LONDON, MANCHESTER, MIDDLESBROUGH, NEWCASTLE, NEWTOWN, NORTHAMPTON, NOTTINGHAM, READING, ROCHDALE, SHEFFIELD, STAFFORD, STOKE.

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

**APRIL 19:  
ACTION  
AGAINST  
FRONT  
STRONGHOLDS**

ON TUESDAY 19th April the National Front, represented by Tyndall, Webster, and Richard Verrall, will be appearing at an enquiry at the Municipal Offices, Twickenham.

The enquiry is being held under the auspices of the Department of the Environment, following a refusal of planning permission to the NF in relation to the ground of floor of 91 Connaught Rd, Teddington.

All those who can, should support the counter-demonstration against the NF's appeal, which will assemble outside the Municipal Offices at 10am.

On the same day, 19th April, in the evening, the Hackney Community Relations Council is holding a meeting against racism in Haggerston School, Hoxton. The NF claim Hoxton as an area of strength, though last summer a Hackney CRC meeting there was successfully defended against attempts at disruption. A good turn-out to defend the meeting will be necessary again this time.

## EVENTS

**SATURDAY 9 APRIL.** Troops Out Movement meeting for delegates to Labour Party Young Socialists Conference. 6.15pm at Park House Hotel, North Promenade, next to the Imperial Hotel.

**SATURDAY 16 APRIL.** Student conference on the fees campaign, in York. Information from Fees Campaign Committee, Students' Union office, Goodrich College, York University.

**SUNDAY 17 APRIL.** International Communist League public meeting: "What Programme for Workers' Power?" Speaker: Sean Matgamna. 7.30pm at the 'Roebuck', 108A Tottenham Court Rd (Warren St tube).

**SATURDAY 23 APRIL.** Counter-demonstration against National Front St George's Day march. 1pm, Duckett's Common, Turnpike Lane, London N8.

**TUESDAY 26 APRIL.** Haringey Campaign against Racism meeting. 7.30pm at Lord Morrison Hall, Chesnut Grove, London N17.

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY 21-22 MAY.** National conference of the Working Women's Charter Campaign — "Which Way Forward for the Charter Campaign?" Delegates' credentials £1.50 from Jill Daniels, 1a Camberwell Grove, London SE5. Last date for resolutions from delegating bodies: 15th April.

## ADS

Out now. Workers Power no.4. Articles include "Party & Programme", "Comintern Theses on Women", Eastern Europe and Ireland. 35p. available from 1A Camberwell Grove, SE5.

### "INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST"

No. 5 now out: Special issue on "The Leninist Party". Documents 1967-76 on the Leninist theory of the party and the conceptions of the SWP-IS. 30p plus 6½p postage. Still available: "International Communist" no.4, price 30p plus 6½p postage; "Women's Liberation and Workers' Revolution", an I-CL pamphlet, 20p plus 6½p postage. Send all orders to G. Lee, 98 Gifford St, London N1 0DF. Cheques payable to "Phoenix Pamphlets" or "ICL".

# Lib-Lab pact comes to grief in Stechford

**LAST THURSDAY, 31st March, thousands of workers gave their verdict on the present Government's record, by abstaining or voting for the Tories or National Front in the Stechford by-election. In less than three years, a Labour majority of 12,000 has turned into a Tory majority of 2,000. Only 58% bothered to vote.**

For the first time a Tory was elected MP for Stechford — not because of any love for Tory policies, but because a Labour government has demoralised and betrayed the workers who elected it. Even right-wing members of the Stechford Labour Party confess that they were not particularly upset or surprised to see their candidate, Terry Davis, defeated.

Davis is a Leyland manager and a firm supporter of the Government. While denouncing the Tory council for its social spending cuts, he failed to mention that the council was acting on Government directives. Worse still, he avoided making any statement at all on the major issue of immigration and racism.



The victorious Tory candidate, however, was not so reticent. He advocated an immediate end to all immigration, including that of relatives. Even after Mackay's disgusting statement, Davis remained silent. Not so the National Front, who accused Mackay of trying to "out-nigger the NF".

The 2,995 vote for the NF, beating the Liberals into 4th place, is a far bigger blow for socialists than the Tory victory, and makes Davis' failure to offer any alternative to the Government's policies even more criminal.

The idea that fascism will quietly melt away if it is ignored is being cruelly disproved. At this rate the NF will soon have the strength, at least, that the Italian MSI gained in the early 1970s, and every picket-line and every working-class organisation will have to reckon with NF violence as a real danger.

**Only energetic and decisive mobilisation on the streets — and mobilisation that goes further than just shouting "Smash the NF" from a safe distance — will stop them.**

The dismal performance of the Liberal candidate should cause no dismay. It underlines the complete lack of support

for the Lib-Lab deal.

The Stechford result is a major blow to the Callaghan-Steel alliance. With a victory in Stechford, the Government might have a good chance of holding the other vacant seat, in Grimsby, which goes to the polls on 28th April. (The Labour majority there is 7,000). With those victories, with the vote of confidence in Parliament, and with the other 'vote of confidence' which the City gave through the rise in share prices when the Tories' move to bring down the Government was defeated,

Callaghan would be well placed to stay in office for some time. Not to introduce any reforms, or any measures favouring the working class, but at least to get Phase 3 settled.

With Stechford lost, Grimsby is bound to go too. The Liberals may be beginning to think that though they would suffer in an early election, they will suffer even more through the Lib-Lab pact. The bosses' confidence in the Government to push through Phase 3 must be waning rapidly.

JIM DENHAM

# Only the left fought racism

TWO CANDIDATES attempted to offer a socialist alternative. The Socialist Workers' Party (IS) fielded Paul Foot in a publicity-stunt campaign, focused entirely and exclusively on recruiting to the SWP.

The IMG's Brian Heron campaigned round the slogan, "Vote for a Leyland worker, not a Leyland boss", but made most impact as an anti-racist candidate, with some well-attended meetings.

Workers' Action supporters intervened in the election campaign in two ways. Along with members of the Workers' League and the IMG, we supported a united-front anti-racist campaign which the SWP and the Labour Party boycotted. And we participated in the Labour campaign, making use of every opportunity to attack the Government's record and propose our alternative.



THE IMG's platform for the election ended up as an unhappy compromise between the IMG's own programme and their assessment of the right programme for a "class struggle left wing", and thus appeared as a series of abstract and arbitrarily-chosen demands.

Likewise the IMG seem to be

### EASTER

**Workers' Action will be taking a two week break over Easter. So this issue is dated April 7-28, and Workers' Action no. 54 will be out on April 28th.**

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**NOW BL  
BLACKMAIL  
DUBLIN  
WORKERS**

HAVING TRIED to blackmail the toolroom strikers by talk of closing down, British Leyland is now claiming that it is "unable to pay" increases due to 300 workers at British Leyland (Products) Ltd, Dublin.

£2 plus 3% of basic pay is due to the workers under the National Wage Agreement, the 26 Counties' version of the Social Contract. The Agreement allows companies to plead "inability to pay", as Leyland is doing, saying that they will hold back the increase until the workers accept Measured Day Work.

The workers, members of the Transport & General Workers' Union (Amalgamated) and of the Automobile, General Engineering and Mechanical Operatives' Union, are now on strike. In their appeal they say: "We have no intention of accepting MDW unless we have safeguards for union organisation on the job, and until they meet our claim of basic pay plus one-third, which amounts to £73 p.w...."

We are not prepared to submit to the company's blackmail, and we are now on strike to win our rise without accepting MDW. Four other Leyland plants in Dublin are out on sympathy strike. Two years ago, Leyland closed the assembly plant in Dublin with a loss of 600 jobs. We have taken enough pushing around from Leyland and we now appeal to fellow-workers in the company, and in Britain generally, for support.

The company has resorted to the courts to defeat us, and an injunction has been granted to them to stop us picketing. We do not recognise the validity of injunctions, and will picket until we are sent to prison, if it comes to that.

"We ask for your support to black work which will undermine our strike, and for your financial support. The strike has not yet been made official, and we have no social security benefits".

Messages and donations to: British Leyland strike committee, c/o 112 Marlboro Street, Dublin 1.

# CARDIFF SEAMEN SACKED IN ANTI-UNION ATTACK

GEOFF WILLIAMS is the fourth seaman to be sacked from a ship in Cardiff over the past few weeks.

"I was sacked", he says, "from the British Merlin for lateness. But that is not the real reason. The real reason is that I have been raising the issue of non-union labour. That's what they really objected to. Three other seamen have been sacked recently and they are all trade union activists".

The National Union of Seamen has agreed to in-

vestigate the case because, they say, "there appear to be grounds for a tribunal case". But Geoff Williams has refused the tribunal approach and is trying to organise support within Cardiff NUS, where he already has some backing, for industrial action.

"The first step", says Geoff, "is to try and get the ship blacked. We have got to get organised for a meeting at the end of the month when we can try to exert more pressure".