

Workers' ACTION

No.9 March 10th-16th 1976 8p

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The
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is on

Rail strike! That's the way to fight the cuts

THE RAIL UNION leaders proclaim that they oppose the run-down of the rail service. They make long speeches about the inconvenience to travellers, the over-loading of the roads, and the redundancies among railworkers that will result from the cutbacks.

Yet the union leaders have

accepted the cuts; and they have accepted the redundancies.

The rank and file railworkers have made no pompous proclamations. Yet they have acted to stop the cuts.

As WORKERS ACTION goes to press, the train-drivers' strike is affecting Yorkshire,

Nottinghamshire, and Kings Cross, and still spreading. The strike is in protest against drivers being sent home for refusing to work schedules changed in line with service cuts.

The press, of course, is groaning about 'disruption'. Yet it is only the rank and file railworkers who are doing

anything to halt the real disruption that will be caused if the rail cuts go through, driving freight and passenger traffic onto already overcrowded roads, and driving railworkers onto the dole queue.

Every trade unionist should give full support to the train-drivers' action. The action

should be given official backing by ASLEF and by the NUR. The rail cuts should be stopped immediately, and the funds sustaining the rail services protected from inflation by automatic increases in line with price rises.

Anne Fox

GEC WORKERS from all over the country together with many other workers from North London will be staging a mass picket of the London headquarters of GEC on March 17th. They will be demonstrating support for the 350 strikers at Keith Blackmans, a GEC subsidiary in Tottenham, North London.

Blackmans workers have been on strike for over nine weeks now, after the management tried sacking TASS representative Rudr Klein. During those weeks the strike committee — the "activists' group" — have organised a tour of the northern GEC plants to collect money, collections in local factories, and a systematic drive to gain support for the dispute.

On February 25th, the workers re-occupied the plant to try to force the pace. Meanwhile management are holed up in a plush hotel nearby.

Blackmans, like RTZ at Avonmouth (Workers Action no.4), like Electro-Motion at Leicester (back page, this week), and hundreds of others, is fighting to retain trade union organisation.

This was not the workers' first resistance to management's attempt to smash the shop floor organisation. Last May the workers occupied the plant after months of harassment by management.

Tactic

As Tom Eastwood told Workers Action, "between January and May their tactic was to suspend people. In TASS alone over 30 people were suspended. Naturally when this happened the trade unionists stuck together and paid their wages out of shop funds. Management were quite deliberately trying to drain those funds prior to the wage claims in the summer."

That occupation brought together the white collar and blue collar workers and finally forced management to concede a wage increase of £7.50 — more than twice the original offer!

Since then management have been trying to weaken the strength of the unions in the plant. "They accepted the union organisation", said Tom Eastwood, "as long as it was controlled and policed so that it caused no trouble. They've learnt the lessons of last year and are now looking to the future. They are out to make profits and if they can control the unions they can keep the wages low and so make bigger profits."

But if the bosses can learn lessons, so can we. The struggle at Blackmans contains plenty. The unity of the white collar and blue collar workers; the addition of the

SHOPFLOOR UNDER ATTACK

GEC want to break these workers



Tom Eastwood, a TASS steward, addresses Blackmans strikers. (Photo by Andrew Ward, Report)

factory activists to the strike committee to ensure more strength and more involvement; the drive to take this dispute outside the Blackmans workforce to the workers of the area, meeting a good response, and to the rest of the GEC Combine; the use of the mass picket — and the use of the occupation, which Tom Eastwood describes as "only a tactic... we want to use it as a launching pad for a national campaign to force management to

recognise trade union rights". But most of all the lessons to learn is this: there is nothing that can replace the strength of the shop floor organisation; without this any dispute is doomed. That, of course, is precisely why management is attacking shop floor organisation.

Issue

Blackmans is not alone. All over the country — in a period of

declining strike figures on the wages front — there are disputes cropping up which centre around the same issue: defence of the shop floor organisation.

Taking the disputes for the whole of 1975 (both before and after the imposition of the £6 limit) there were nearly twice as many wage-rise stoppages as all other stoppages (mainly defence of shop organisation) put together; yet the December figures show exactly the reverse

relationship. Defence of the shop floor, defence of established procedures, retaliation against victimisation, manning and allocation disputes — these now far outweigh wage disputes.

Fight

And in many cases it's the small firms, like Blackmans, where the attacks are taking place. The firms are small, but the fight isn't!

LAST WEEK'S NEWS of the closure of the border between Mozambique and Rhodesia has given a big boost to the African nationalist movement fighting the Smith regime. The Machel government in Mozambique has tightened the screws on the hard-pressed Rhodesian whites by closing the border, seizing all Rhodesian assets, and declaring that it will now apply full economic sanctions against Rhodesia. This has effectively cut off Rhodesia from access to the sea, and made the economy entirely dependent on the goodwill of South Africa.

South Africa, however, is far from keen on spreading much goodwill around. Rather, it is concerned with maintaining friendly relations with black southern African countries such as Zambia and Zaire. The Rhodesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pieter van de Byl, recently visited South Africa, seeking extra facilities for Rhodesia such as access to South African ports. He got a frosty reception. Loubser, general manager of South African railways, has already announced that Rhodesia cannot depend on South African aid. Rhodesia can only expect facilities for 'normal traffic' on South Africa's railways.

BRAVADO

As Rhodesia's economic difficulties mount so do its military problems. The south-east border near Chipinga and the tourist areas around Inyanga and Vumba are now under attack giving the Rhodesian security forces a one thousand mile border with Mozambique to patrol. They are finding this increasingly difficult.

The white population don't even know the facts of the situation. Censorship is so fierce that they cannot find out the details of the fighting, or even the extent of the draft. South African papers, hardly hostile to the white settlers, are banned.

In the areas near the border, the white farmers are barricading themselves in... and indulging flights of bravado. "The terrorists are just another problem", said one of them, "like bugs eating tobacco leaves".

But the guerillas won't be dealt with so easily. Already the enormous strain on the Rhodesian forces has resulted in a massive call-up. More than 20,000 white soldiers and policemen are on stand-by or actually fighting. Every area of white Rhodesian life is feeling the strain.

This new situation has pulled the rug out from under the feet of African 'moderates' like Joshua Nkomo. Talks between him and Smith might have felt their way towards some form of compromise — one which undoubtedly would have left the whites holding on to substantial power. The actions of the Machel government and the increasing temp of the guerilla war have scotched any chances of a quick settlement.

Now the effective leadership of the nationalist movement is in the hands of Robert Magube, the leader of the guerillas. It is with the militants of the guerilla movement that the Smith regime now has to reckon. They can now see the end in sight of the white supremacist regime. The sooner the better.

Support the Blackmans strikers! Picket GEC Headquarters on March 17th!

ON October 12th 1974, black youths from all over London were enjoying themselves dancing at the Carib Club in Cricklewood. In the early hours of the morning while the disco was in full swing, police entered the club supposedly searching for a man who had stolen a car. Apparently they hoped to find and arrest one west Indian youth in a crowd of hundreds, and thought that a dancefloor was the right place to make their search.

So they went into the club and onto the dance floor, peering into people's faces and making a nuisance of themselves. Soon 'reinforcements' were brought in, including a dog handler with his Alsatian.

DOGS

The arrival of these reinforcements, and the dog, provoked an inevitable clash between the police and the crowd. More police arrived — about 140 of them, in fact. Five more dogs were also brought in. And independent white witness later told how he saw one of the dogs chasing a young black woman and tearing at her clothes.

Two roads leading to the Carib Club were sealed off, and the police chased the black youths into the night, beating them with truncheons.

In the days after the raid, police toured the area near the Carib, visiting addresses they got during the raid, following black people from the club, taking names and statements. Over 40 people were arrested during the raid. Twelve people were eventually charged.

Witnesses for the prosecution were gathered by the simple process of harassing the black community. One arrest was made after 8 youths were taken from their beds at 6 in the morning to an identification parade, without any explanation of their legal rights.

The only person who wasn't turned over by the police seemed to be the original alleged car thief. He was never found, and most people involved in the incident don't believe he ever existed: it's happened before that police will mount a bust-up in a club on the pretext of looking for someone that they never find. This was the fifth police raid on the Carib. There is little reason to believe that it was anything other than part of a policy of systematic intimidation.

FRAMED!

3 years for victims of police riot

The twelve who were charged included the DJ, Dennis Bovell. The police seemed especially interested in 'getting' him. The owner of the Carib later explained that Inspector Parker, the officer in charge of the case, had said that "...if I gave him one man, everybody else could go free, and he indicated that by giving him Dennis the rest could go free and I could run the club as I liked."

The trial opened at the Old Bailey on June 2nd 1975. The twelve were charged with an impressive array of crimes, from affray to assault on police and possessing offensive weapons. But it soon turned into farce: the police version of events simply could not be made believable.

The Prosecutor, Nelligan, opened his case by producing evidence that one of the accused, Roger Streadwick, took part in the fighting and had possessed an offensive weapon. To support this he produced a statement signed by Streadwick admitting the offense. But the charge didn't stick — Streadwick was not even at the Carib on the night of the raid, but at home watching TV with his parents!

Why did he sign the statement? He was 'persuaded' to by two police officers, Lawrence and Bocking, who punched him in the stomach, twisted his arm and threatened that he would be locked in a room with a police dog. So he signed that he had been at the Carib and fought the police there...

Nelligan claimed that Anthony Lovindeer was carrying a knife, which PC Nailard claimed to see "fall out of his back pocket". Lovindeer modelled for the jury the trousers he was wearing on the night — tight fitting and without a back pocket.

Keith Logan was charged with throwing bottles from a second floor window. Investigations

Dockery — they failed to agree. While the police — clearly guilty of a dozen and one crimes of violence, assault and perjury — got off scott free, these three had to stand trial all over again.

Last week their second marathon trial (at the end of which they were denied bail and kept in the cells) ended. Oliver Francis was acquitted. But both Bovell and Dockery were found guilty by majority verdicts and sentenced to three years each.

The police certainly had it in for Bovell, who they had accused of inciting the 'riot' in the first place, using his loudspeaker and 'inflammatory' records like 'Bring Down Babylon' (which he denied). They had to find a scapegoat or else the blame would fall on them.

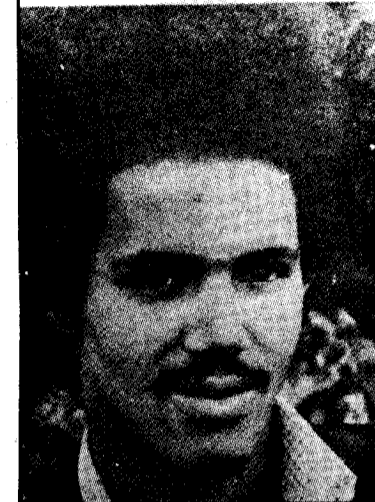
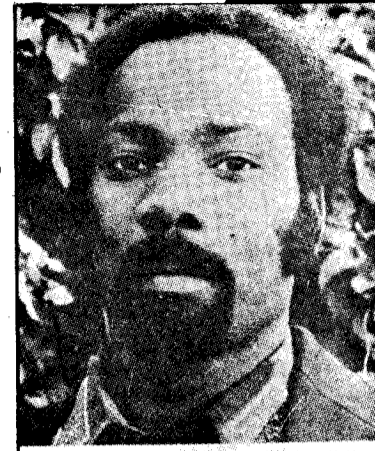
When the police returned to their station after the Carib raid, a senior police officer was heard to criticise his men for "making a mess of it". They could hardly admit that the blame for this mess fell on them. Instead they picked on Bovell.

CULPRITS

The real culprits in this case are obviously the police. It was they who started the riot, and it was they who intimidated and beat up the people in the club. It is scandalous that now two black people will spend years in jail because of the racist attitudes and behaviour of the London police.

This is not the first of such incidents, but it is probably the most blatant. The trial and the sentences are parallel to the infamous Shrewsbury trials of building trade unionists and involve the same sort of police conspiracy and intimidation.

The convicted men are appealing against the verdict. The labour movement should provide them with every support in their fight to clear themselves and win their freedom.



Dennis Bovell (top) and Royfield Dockery

showed that the windows could not be opened!

And witness after witness got up and told about the actions of the police that night: how they formed up on either side of the narrow stairs from the club so that those leaving had to run the gauntlet of foul-mouthed racist and sexist abuse, and truncheon blows, as they left. How they threw people over a fence into vans.

At the end of 83 days' trial, the jury gave their verdict: no one was convicted. 8 of the defendants were not guilty; a ninth was discharged. But in the case of three men — Dennis Bovell, Oliver Francis and Royfield

Vote of confidence for Wilson

THE result of the Coventry North West by-election was a sign of Labour loyalty clear enough and generous enough to gladden the heart of Harold Wilson.

The constituency is in a town with a traditionally high standard of living, now threatened by the government's policies. There has been a colossal rise in unemployment locally. Had the turn-out been low, even though Labour had won, the Labour leadership might have feared a return to the situation leading up to the 1970 election.

The amazingly high turn-out (73%) and the fairly small swing away from Labour given the context of the by-election, suggests that Labour voters are looking for a solution within and through the Labour government. Certainly the candidate, Geoffrey Robinson, fully endorsed the Government line.

Many in the Tory Party will be relieved at Labour's win. The loss of Labour's parliamentary majority could have put the Tories in a difficult situation: now is not the time when they want to overthrow the government, which has the trade unions obediently lined up to make workers pay for the bosses' crisis.

The Liberals' failure — they fielded their entire parliamentary team in the campaign, and still lost their deposit — is a serious warning for them: as economic tension increases, it appears, they are being squeezed out between the major parties.

For socialists, the fact that fascist candidates got well over a thousand votes — including 986 for the National Front — cannot be dismissed on account of its insignificance in terms of winning an election. The vote will be a fillip to local fascists, particularly after the drubbing they got the previous weekend when they tried to march through Coventry.

China's top cop takes over Chou's job



Hua Kuo-feng

THE Western press has really been caught out recently trying to follow the twists and turns of Chinese political infighting. Having prophesied the rise to power of Teng Hsiao-ping after the death of Chou En-lai, they suddenly had to account for the appearance of Hua Kuo-feng as Premier. Not only that, they also had to find out who on earth he is.

The reason for his obscurity is fairly simple: for some years he has been in charge of the internal security forces, that is to say, the police. Rumours abound that he was also in control of the 'secret police'. What is far more difficult to explain is the reasons behind the current power struggle in Peking.

Unlike the Cultural Revolution of the mid-sixties, the campaign against Teng has built up very rapidly. On top of that is the well-orchestrated nature of the campaign. Despite the 'spontaneous' wall posters denouncing the "capitalist roaders" the campaign obviously began somewhere very high in the Communist Party. And although the name of Chairman Mao has been closely linked with the anti-Teng campaign, it is becoming clear that his wife, Chiang Ching, is playing a very important role in the whole affair.

Whatever the differences with the Sixties (and Chiang Ching was also then a prime mover of the campaign, then directed against Liu Shao-chi) the problems at the root of both campaigns are much the same. At the root of the struggle for power lies the all-important question: which way forward for the Chinese economy? The so-called "capitalist roaders" are those who wish to develop the economy as quickly as possible, hence Teng's 'crime' of promoting experts without regard to their politics. The 'Maoist' faction, on the other hand, has always relied on stirring up the enthusiasm of the masses to overcome the backwardness of the economy.

International Notes

Meanwhile other internal struggles in China get no mention in either the Chinese or Western press. Hanchow, for example, has been closed to visitors since mid-74 because of civil disturbances which included a rail strike last summer.

Both of the warring factions in Peking have to make sure that the question of the way forward for the whole of China is not allowed to connect with these struggles.

AN agreement has finally been reached between the Italian government and British Leyland over the fate of 4,500 workers at Leyland's subsidiary Innocenti, in Milan.

In October last year, Leyland decided to close their Innocenti factory and put the whole operation into liquidation, sacking the entire workforce. The workers responded by occupying the factory.

The Italian government has now agreed to underwrite the continued existence of the firm, for 60 billion lire. But more than 2,000 workers are scheduled to lose their jobs.

Leyland's involvement with Innocenti began in the Spring of 1972. They told the shop stewards committee that production would be expanded to 110,000 cars per year. 16,000 million lire were invested in the plant, and 800 more workers were taken on.

By 1974, however, production had only risen to 62,000 a year, with a workforce of 5,000. Production was limited to the Mini. When the factory actually went into liquidation, only 60 cars a day from the works were being sold in Italy. Exports to other European countries were stopped by Leyland management.

Leyland had obviously decided that Innocenti was not a profitable proposition — and proceeded to close it down without the least reference to the livelihoods of the workers involved.

LEYLAND TO SACK 2000 IN MILAN



Innocenti workers march in Milan. Occupation stopped closure — now they fight 50% redundancies

Portuguese Solidarity Campaign Conference

THE Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class holds its first conference this Saturday (March 13th).

Despite the downturn in the Portuguese struggle since 25th November last year, the Conference has generated interest around the country. Liverpool Trades Council is one of a number sending delegates, as are six constituency Labour Parties and a number of union branches including several covering workers employed by firms with Portuguese subsidiaries.

The conference was planned last Autumn, when the situation was much more volatile than now. The rank and file soldiers' movement had paralysed the command structure in the army. A massive wave of workers' struggles had forced substantial concessions from the government. Workers' grass-roots organisations were running factories, farms, villages and whole urban neighbourhoods.

In early November, this movement culminated in the siege of the Constituent Assembly by thousands of angry building workers, forcing the cabinet to agree to a 40% wage rise.

The occupation of air force bases on November 25th by paratroopers faced with demobilisation was met by a rapid and well-planned counter offensive by the right wing, which caught the left totally unprepared. In the weeks that followed, three quarters of the army (including all the left wing units) were demobilised; a total wage freeze was imposed, existing wage contracts were suspended, and the government's austerity programme led to sharp rises in the price of many products.

STILL HELD

500 left wing soldiers and civilians were rounded up and thrown into jail. Former secret police were released in droves: 1200 of the 1500 fascist prisoners have now been released.

Although most of the prisoners of 25th November have now been freed, at least 40 are still held. Their position was dramatically emphasised last week by the forced eviction from jail of Otelio Saraiva de Carvalho, the former COPCON commander. He had refused to leave jail until all the other prisoners, less well known internationally and more dangerous to the government, were released.

A key task of the Solidarity Campaign must be to fight for the freeing of the remaining prisoners.

While the bosses have been able to impose a temporary stabilisation in their favour, this may be pretty short lived. Already inflation is running at 70% per annum and unemployment is at least 15% (not counting hundreds of thousands of refugees from Angola and Mozambique). And the economic crisis is so severe that further attacks on the working class are inevitable.



THE Portugal solidarity conference will be held on March 13th at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London (Holborn Tube). It will be chaired by Jack Dunn (secretary, Kent NUM) and is also sponsored by Ray Buckton (Gen. Sec. ASLEF); Alan Sapper (Gen. Sec. ACTT); Ernie Roberts (Asst. Gen. Sec. AUEW); Mick McGahey (President Scottish NUM); Emlyn Williams (President S. Wales NUM); Reg Taylor (Nat. Exec. TGWU); Jack Collins (Kent NUM); Brian Crossland (Convener, Plessey Beeston); Ken McMillan (Lanarkshire Joint TC Secretary); Dan Draper (Plessey Isle of Wight AUEW); John Spencer (London Co-op); Ken Coates (IWC); Sid Bidwell MP, Audrey Wise MP, Joan Maynard MP and Stan Newens MP.

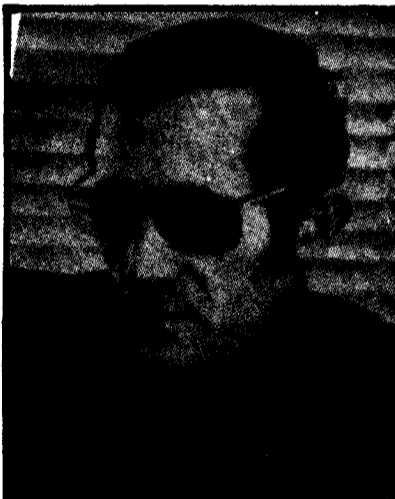
For further details, contact: PWCC, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC2, or phone 01-439-3006.

All Portugal's major industries have been hit very hard: EEC tariffs imposed last Autumn have been disastrous for the textile industry; the shipyards have virtually no work due to massive over-capacity internationally; the electrical industry was based on low wages for labour intensive assembly work and the multinationals which controlled it have been falling over each other in their rush to get out.

At the same time, Portugal has a massive trade deficit, fast shrinking gold reserves, and a declining international credit rating.

Faced with this, the 6th Provisional Government's austerity plan calls for a 30% cut in living standards this year. But although the bourgeoisie won a major victory on 25th November, the working class was not taken on and decisively beaten. The workers' commissions in the factories still exist. Occupations, such as the one at Timex, have continued.

An explosion of militancy seems likely within the next few months. Many British firms, such as Plessey and GEC, have Portuguese subsidiaries, and the solidarity campaign can play a key role in the struggle ahead, linking struggles in the two countries, providing information, and organising international backing where necessary.



New army chief Eanes — sacked ¼ of the army

There have been persistent rumours of preparations for a right wing coup to be launched before the elections scheduled for the end of April. Fascist groups have been fanning the discontent of Northern peasants and Angolan refugees, and there has been a series of bomb attacks against left wing targets in recent months.

MILITARY RULE

The right have probably not got the forces to launch a successful right wing coup at present. But the situation could quickly change. The democratic credentials of many who now claim to support an elected civilian government are not impressive. Colonel Jaime Neves, now passing as the champion of freedom, headed the commando regiment responsible for the notorious Wiriyamu massacre in Mozambique. President Costa Gomes was, for a time, Chief of Staff under the Caetano dictatorship and is well known to favour continued military rule. The position of the capitalist class as a whole is best summed up as "democracy if we can, dictatorship if we must".

The Solidarity Campaign slogan 'Portugal must not become another Chile' is very apt.

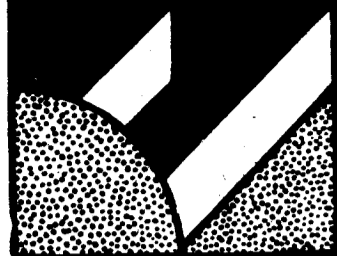
The struggle against repression, against the austerity measures and against the continued threat from the extreme right make the building of an effective solidarity campaign essential. Saturday's conference will not be able to plan mass mobilisations or cheer great victories. It will, however, be an important stage in grouping the forces needed to build an effective solidarity campaign.

Right to Work March

Labour Assembly

WHAT WILL THEY LEAD TO?

Editorial



UNEMPLOYMENT is a threat to all workers. It is not just the problem of those made redundant. It is not just the concern of those leaving school with no prospect of work. With official figures going over the one and a half million mark, unemployment strengthens the hand of the employers and the Labour government in their attacks on working class living standards and organisation.

WORKERS ACTION therefore supports all moves to develop a fightback against unemployment. For that reason we support the call from the London Co-op and CSEU No.8 for a Labour Assembly on Unemployment on March 27th. And for that reason, we support the Right to Work March which will be arriving in London on March 20th.

However, more than large assemblies and long marches will be necessary to fight unemployment. While supporting such activities, we must be clear as to what policies and what kind of organisation will be necessary in order to fight unemployment rather than just draw attention to it.



The Labour Assembly can be an important step forward. It will bring together shop stewards committees, trade union branches and Labour Party organisations from all over the country. This constitutes an enormous potential for struggle, for leading a fight. But both on past experience and on the likely platform of the Assembly, it is likely that it will not live up to its potential.

The moving force behind the Assembly — the Communist Party — sees the Assembly as part of a campaign to put pressure on the Labour Government to abandon 'Tory policies' and embrace 'socialist policies'. They simply want to hold a rally of passive support for the policies of Eric Heffer and the Labour Left.

This would be disastrous. Firstly, the policies of 'Tribune' and the Labour Left will not solve the question of unemployment for workers. Their call for import controls offers, at best, the export of unemployment to workers elsewhere; at worst, it saps the strength of the working class with the poison of nationalism and class collaboration with "our" British bosses. 'Selective reflation', more funds for the National Enterprise Board and suchlike schemes offer only a restructuring of investment, a revamping of capitalism, and no alternative to the workers paying the price for this.

Not only are such policies a blind alley. Reliance on such 'Left' leaders will not get us far. The experience of the struggle against the Industrial Relations Act, the battle to free the jailed dockers, and the miners' defeat of the Tory government, all showed us one thing. That the working class movement's greatest strength lies in the power that can be mobilised in the workplaces and factories.

The fight against unemployment needs not a confused resolution supporting the policies of the Labour Left. It needs fighting policies that can be taken up where the threat of redundancy arises and which can unite workers in struggle.



The Labour Assembly will no doubt be an impressive meeting. It will no doubt represent the mounting anger among workers against rising unemployment. But the policies it will be offered represent a recipe for dull inaction. On this basis, the opportunity of building a fight back would be missed.

That is why it is vital that all opinions in the labour movement should be represented at the Assembly. That is why all attempts by the platform to restrict rights of amendment and rights to speak must be opposed.

In the past, the Communist Party has managed to call impressive and important meetings. But their stifling grip on procedure has stood in the way of any real outcome. The fate of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions should be a lesson for the Assembly.

WORKERS ACTION calls for the maximum unity of all those individuals and organisations who wish to ensure that the

Assembly is not a platform-orchestrated rally.

But the Labour Assembly is not the only national focus in the fight against unemployment. The National 'Right to Work' march is now heading for London.

This march is organised and dominated by the International Socialism group. Its paper *Socialist Worker* is now 'the only paper' supporting the Right to Work March! IS sees its march as being the only answer, the only initiative, in the fight against redundancy. The answer *Socialist Worker* has offered to steel workers, to car workers, to telecommunications workers, to teachers and health workers, and in fact to all workers facing sackings, has been "Support the Right to Work March". Tony Cliff, IS leader, has even claimed that "without IS nobody would have taken the initiative in the fight against unemployment" (SW 21st February). This is utter rubbish.

What is important is that the support that the march has gathered is not siphoned off into a series of sideshows and stunts by the IS. Self proclaimed 'Right to Work' committees with no base and set up as an alternative to the broad labour movement can be a positive obstacle to developing a serious fight for jobs.

The support for the Right to Work March, the increasing number of delegations coming to the Labour Assembly, all show that the basis does exist to build a mass campaign against redundancies. But neither the policies nor the organisation of the Right to Work Campaign or the Labour Assembly can build that mass campaign.

The energies behind the two 'events' must be directed to building a proper campaign at both national and local level. Campaigns and committees, built normally around Trades Councils but pulling in shop stewards committees, trade union branches and Labour Parties, must be strengthened in the areas. The Labour Assembly should issue the call for the building of such bodies.

Such campaigns should ensure that Working Women's Charter groups, black workers' organisations and all youth organisations in the labour movement are also drawn into the campaigns.

Such campaigns, locally and nationally, will mean little unless they can win support for workers actually fighting against redundancies. They must fight to enforce overtime bans and the 35 hour working week immediately with no loss of pay.



In order to organise the unemployed — to protect unemployed workers from the isolation and demoralisation of the dole — campaigns against unemployment must organise Trade Union meetings at the dole queues. They should insist on full union membership for the unemployed (with full rights) and on trade union registration of all vacancies and of all unemployed workers. Pickets of the unemployed should be organised outside factories working overtime.

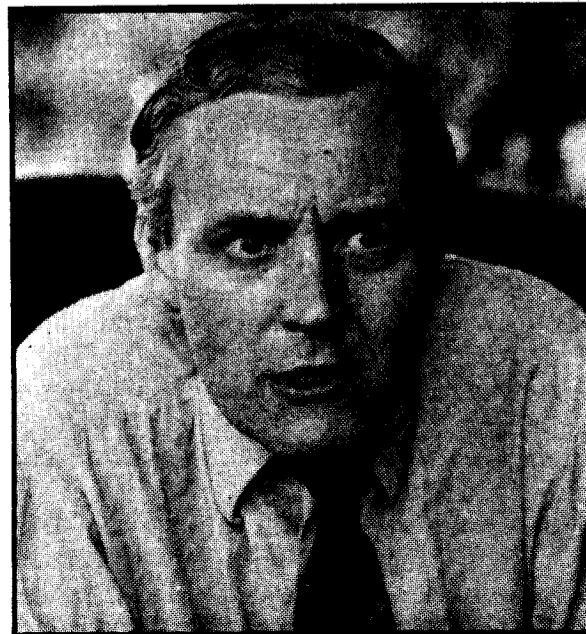
Only on this basis can the links be strengthened between the unemployed and the trade union movement. Only from such activities can a national organisation of unemployed workers be developed.

At a national level and locally, alternative policies to those of the Labour left must be fought for. The workers must not pay for the crisis with rising unemployment and diminished trade union strength. In the Labour Assembly and in the local campaigns, the following policies must be fought for:

1. Cut the hours, not the jobs. If there is not enough work, then the trade union organisation should share out the work, under their control, and insist that the employers give full pay.
2. Open the Books! Trade union organisations must fight to open the accounts and the meetings of the employers and the state so as to arm themselves in the fight for jobs.
3. Immediate occupation of plants threatening redundancies — holding the bosses' property as ransom to force nationalisation, without compensation, and recognising workers' control.

The Labour Assembly and the Right to Work march open up possibilities of pushing forward the fight against unemployment. It is vital that those opportunities are not lost.

NEB — the bitter end



Wedgwood Benn

When Anthony Wedgwood Benn made his proposals for a National Enterprise Board, the sun was still shining brightly on the Labour leadership's left wing pretensions.

The Bill for setting up the NEB was so mauled in the committee proceedings that many of its supporters wondered whether it would ever emerge in anything like its original conception: a large state concern covering all the essential sectors of industry and finance, armed with the teeth of compulsory planning agreements and compulsory disclosures of information.

Quite early on, it was clear that its budget would be derisively small — £1,000 million — and that the Ryder rescue plan for British Leyland would swallow almost all of it. Eric Heffer was then still in office in the Department of Industry, which was pushing the NEB. He wrote in the 'Guardian' that he didn't think that the NEB would succeed in its stated objectives. It would be powerless.

After the mauling, after Heffer's removal, after Benn's demotion, and the successive shifts to the right in government policy, the NEB has emerged not only with the tiny frame Heffer had expected, the dental extractions of the committee stage and the muzzle of virtual pennilessness, but with all limbs broken and its throat cut.

Varley's NEB has no compulsory powers, no disclosure clauses and no cash! But it does have an injunction forbidding the NEB to have any competitive edge over private capitalism.

The NEB was never part of a socialist programme. It held out the false promise of advance for the working class within and through a state-capitalist restructuring of British industry. Yet the Benns and the Foots have proved incapable of fighting even for that: state capitalist reform programme against the slightest serious resistance from the bankers and the bosses.

SPAIN: THE FIGHT SINCE THE DEATH OF FRANCO

QUESTION: The regime of Juan Carlos seems to be adopting a 'stick and carrot' approach to the workers' movement. It has initiated reforms such as the repeal of the death penalty for killing policemen, but has also viciously attacked demonstrations like the one in Barcelona on February 8th. What is the thinking behind this behaviour?

ANSWER: Nobody can guess what is going on in their minds but their fundamental aim is not



Marcelino Camacho (above) one of the leaders of the Workers' Commissions and of the Spanish Communist Party.

For a long time the Workers' Commissions, for all their caution and bureaucracy, were certainly an important progressive factor in Spain. Increasingly, however, since the death of Franco, the Commissions' conservatism is directly clashing with the spontaneous development of the mass movement.

Attacked

The working class finds itself attacked on every side: there is a wage freeze in force while the cost of living continues to rise rapidly. Wages, in any case, are almost everywhere very low, and workers trying to increase them not only meet the intransigence of employers but they face both punitive sackings by the bosses and repression by the police and army.

All these things inevitably propel struggles beyond the realm of workplace economic battles. Economic struggles invariably issue into democratic struggles for "free trade unions", "a general amnesty" and "an end to the police state".

Because the dominant forces within the workers' commissions, while they agree with these slogans, see the militancy behind these demands as a threat to their alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie and middle class, they have frequently opposed militant action.

Militancy

These leaders feel they need to deliver their 'partners' in the various formal and informal 'democratic alliances' some guarantee that the situation will not get out of hand should they be given a place in the "new democratic order".

In Barcelona, for instance, where the Commissions negotiated a minimum wage of 19,000 Pesetas — the highest wage for building labourers in Spain — in the construction industry, they denounced the renewal of struggle when dissatisfied workers set up strike pickets.

The situation in the Asturias is even clearer, where the miners' actions are

to give freedom to the Spanish people. If they take a decision saying they won't kill anyone, if they decide to legalise a demonstration, or if they let the press say things it was forbidden to talk about before, then that is because these are the minimum steps the regime has to take in order to improve its image abroad. On the other hand the government fears the strength of the working class and that is why they've adopted measures like putting strikers under military discipline.

I was personally surprised at the line the regime took in allowing workers to hold mass meetings. For in the long run the state can't really allow the power of the workers to show itself. The government isn't worried about how many meetings the Christian Democrats hold. It's worried about what the workers might do and that is why it hasn't granted full rights to form trade unions.

If nobody struggles for such rights then of course there will be no repression in Spain. It is therefore up to the opposition in Spain to prove how far the government will go in respect of granting reforms. The opposition can only do this by pressing harder for democratic liberties.

Q The Peseta was devalued last week and this will add to the deterioration in living standards of Spanish workers. Spain, like every other capitalist country, has not escaped the effects of the economic recession. How is the workers' movement facing up to the economic crisis?

Freeze

A Officially the number of unemployed in Spain is put at 300,000 but the real figure is at least a million. Prices are supposed to be rising by 19%, but this includes things like Rolls Royce cars and fur coats. If you take the things that workers buy, they are going up much more. A number of newspapers have in fact said that the cost of ordinary household goods has gone up by over 30% in the last year.

The government has been trying to impose a wages ceiling, but this has met with fierce opposition. A series of strikes have taken place against the wage freeze with workers demanding increases to keep pace with the cost of living.

Q The strikes against the Spanish version of Wilson's 'Social Con-trick' and in favour of the right to form free unions have occurred in different cities at different times: one week Madrid, next Barcelona, then Valencia and so on. Is this because the workers lack coordinated organisation or is it the policy of the workers' leaders to pursue such a course of action?

A It is not a strategy pursued by the leaders. There are two reasons why there is no means for coordinated action at the moment. First, the Coordinating Committee of the Workers' Commissions (CCOO — an 'illegal' union federation dominated by the Spanish Communist Party) are only strong in certain areas of the country like Madrid, and they are weak in places like the mining region of Asturias. In Asturias the General Workers' Union (UGT) is the main 'illegal' union federation, and that is dominated by the PSOE (Spanish Socialist Workers Party — the party in Spain which has links with the Labour Party

Apart from these two main organisations there are many other unions. There are half a dozen different workers' commissions, two Catholic inspired unions, and the Anarchist-led National Workers Confederation, the CNT.

Today no organisation exists in Spain which can coordinate a national general strike, although many workers see a general strike as the weapon to overthrow the regime with. The Coordinator of the Workers' Commissions at national level is very bureaucratic and is not backed by the Workers' Commissions themselves in many cases. The CCOO in the Basque country, Barcelona and certain areas of Madrid have denounced the CCOO leadership.

Secondly, it is doubtful whether a general strike can be successfully launched without the existence of more liberties. When 120 Madrid Metro workers held a meeting to coordinate their strike it was smashed up by the police. That shows how difficult it still is to organise a strike in a city let alone nationwide.

Q Do you think then that a general strike to oust Juan Carlos is unlikely at present?

A If the CCOO got together with the UGT and other workers' organisations a general strike would be possible. This could be a general strike called by the workers' parties with the aim of securing a total amnesty for anti-fascist prisoners, for free trade unions and for the breaking up of the "continuity" represented by the present government.

A general strike could also develop spontaneously, however, against the wage freeze or on trade union rights. This would be the more radical variant and both the PCE (the Spanish Communist Party) and PSOE would be forced to support it if it happened.

Both the PCE and PSOE have established their respective 'front' organisations — the Democratic Junta and the Democratic Convergence — in every Spanish town, and have reached the obvious conclusion that the 'democratising' spirit of the regime won't last very long. They are talking of uniting both 'fronts' now around four demands: legalisation of all democratic parties including the CP; free trade unions; total amnesty; formation of a provisional government comprising all the 'democratic' forces.

New bills

Q But Francoists still control the Spanish state and the government won't even grant legal status to the CP despite the party's frequent denunciation of socialist objectives and its even more frequent pledges to adhere to the 'democratic processes'. What lengths are the right wing prepared to go to to halt any reform?

A The government has said no to legalising the CP, and Fraga the Minister of the Interior (who is reputed to be the most 'open minded' and 'liberal' member of the government) has stated this more often than anyone else.

It is true that the right is powerful throughout the entire Spanish state. The right dominates the commission set up to 'prepare new bills' for a 'democratic' Spain, and many of its members who are not on the right are on the extreme right. One member who inspired the repressive 'anti-terrorist' laws is

BAS HARDY interviews Antonio Santos, a leading militant in Spanish solidarity activity in the North-West.

Santos, aged 27, has been in Britain for a year, and was previously active in the student left at Madrid University.



Above: nine Spanish officers now on trial for membership of the Military Democratic Union. Their trial is likely to be followed by a much bigger one: following the arrest of Antonio Herreras Robles — a captain of the Engineers' Corps and the son of the first Francoist officer to fall in the Civil War — the police claim to have discovered a list at his home

containing the names of nearly a thousand senior and junior officers. The trial spotlights the crisis of cohesion and authority within the regime of Juan Carlos, together with the 'self imposed' ideological limitations both of the traditional sections of the ruling class and the 'democratic opposition' within that class and its state forces.

'democratic' laws. The Cortes (*parliament*) is still the same, still full of Franco's old cronies. And one can find no better persons renowned for their loyalty to Franco than the members of Spain's supreme governing body, the Council of the Realm.

But the influence of the right in the legislature is surpassed by their influence in the army, the civil guard, the armed police, the secret police and all the other bodies which have oppressed the working class for so long. It would be very difficult for the government to go beyond the

A The UDM is made up almost exclusively of middle ranking officers, and part of the reason for this is that repression makes it difficult for rank and file soldiers to become involved. The UDM claims that 1000 officers are 'committed' to its programme and that it has 300 to 400 members. One has to bear in mind, however, that there are 28,000 officers in the army. UDM members are mostly young officers born about the time of the civil war. The programme is for democratic reforms, but they are very hazy about social and economic questions.



Carrillo (left) will "unite with the devil", But Fraga still won't legalise C

present reforms, should it even want to, because of the fascist presence in the armed bodies. Just to take one case, the General Director of the Civil Guard was a member of the 'Blue Division' which fought alongside the Nazis on the Russian Front during World War Two.

Q But the press devoted a lot of space to supposedly democratic currents within the army shortly before Franco died. How significant is the liberal officers' organisation, the Democratic Military Union?

Q So the UDM is a very long way from becoming a force as significant as the MFA was in Portugal?

A The situation in the Spanish army after Franco's death is quite different from that in the Portuguese army after the death of Salazar. There isn't the involvement in colonial wars in Spain pulled out of West Sahara before the fight. Members of the UDM are also under very heavy repression. Nine are on trial now and the state prosecu-

BELOW: gestures of defiance at the funeral of strikers shot by police in Vitoria, in northern Spain.

A general strike call has gone out in response to the shootings. But even before that, workers' struggles were on the move in every city and region of Spain.

A national lorry drivers' strike is crippling supplies of provisions to many cities despite the military strike-breaking activities. Bread queues have formed in Madrid and medicine is becoming scarce.

The building workers' strike in Barcelona, which despite a settlement is still not over, is being coupled there by a strike of council workers whose strike committee includes striking traffic police and firemen. 1200 Pirelli workers there are also on strike.

In Biscaye, police have managed to dislodge workers occupying the steelworks at Sestao, but their strike is still on. In Pamplona, where a fortnight ago there was a march of 30,000 workers, the Vitoria events have brought workers out onto the streets again. In Seville, transport workers are out.

Meanwhile, over one million schoolchildren have been off school because of a national teachers' strike. Some universities are also on strike.

Even footballers have made calls for free trade unions.

Vitoria's 'day of struggle' a night of death

TWO more people have died from wounds received when riot police opened fire on 3,000 workers and students in the northern Spanish town of Vitoria. This brings the death toll to five, with more than 100 more suffering from bullet wounds — some on the critical list — and hundreds more injured by police baton charges and tear-gassing.

The PSOE (Spanish Labour Party) together with the UGT (an illegal trade union federation aligned with the PSOE) have called for a general strike throughout the Basque country. The call has been supported by the Communist Party, the 'left' Monarchists (!) and all the other trade union and political tendencies of the left.

The bloody attack came during a meeting held in a church in Vitoria to mark the town's 'day of struggle', in solidarity with strikers throughout the Basque country mainly in the metal industries.

Police surrounded the church, smashed the windows, broke open the door and threw tear gas canisters inside. They baton-charged groups emerging from the church and went in after those trying to stay inside.

That day — Wednesday March 4th — was the same day that Harold Wilson was listening to the Spanish Foreign Minister Arielza telling the story of how "the regime of King Juan Carlos will introduce democracy". It came only a week after Juan Carlos himself had congratulated the "security forces" for the 'restraint' they had shown in their handling of the huge wave of strikes and demonstrations.

But the Vitoria massacre was not simply an isolated hysterical action, regretted on all sides. On the contrary, the next day police baton charged groups of people trying to assemble to protest against the deaths. They beat up visitors to the hospital where the injured were being treated. And they raided the homes of leaders of the striking workers in the area, in an attempt to force them back to work.

By then the news had inflamed feelings in other parts of Spain.

In Pamplona, also in the Basque country, riot police firing tear-gas and rubber bullets attacked people protesting about the killings. In Bilbao, baton-wielding police charged and broke up a demonstration of about 17,000 workers.

It must have surprised these workers, full of anger at the Vitoria events, to hear Marcelino Camacho, one of the leaders of the Workers' Commissions, say that he was "unwilling to exploit the tragedy of Vitoria" — as if this was what the thousands of demonstrators were doing!

The funeral of the first three victims — a 27 year old metal worker, a 19 year old student and a 17 year old student — took place on the following Friday, after a procession of tens of thousands of mourners had followed the coffins from the cathedral of Vitoria to the cemetery.

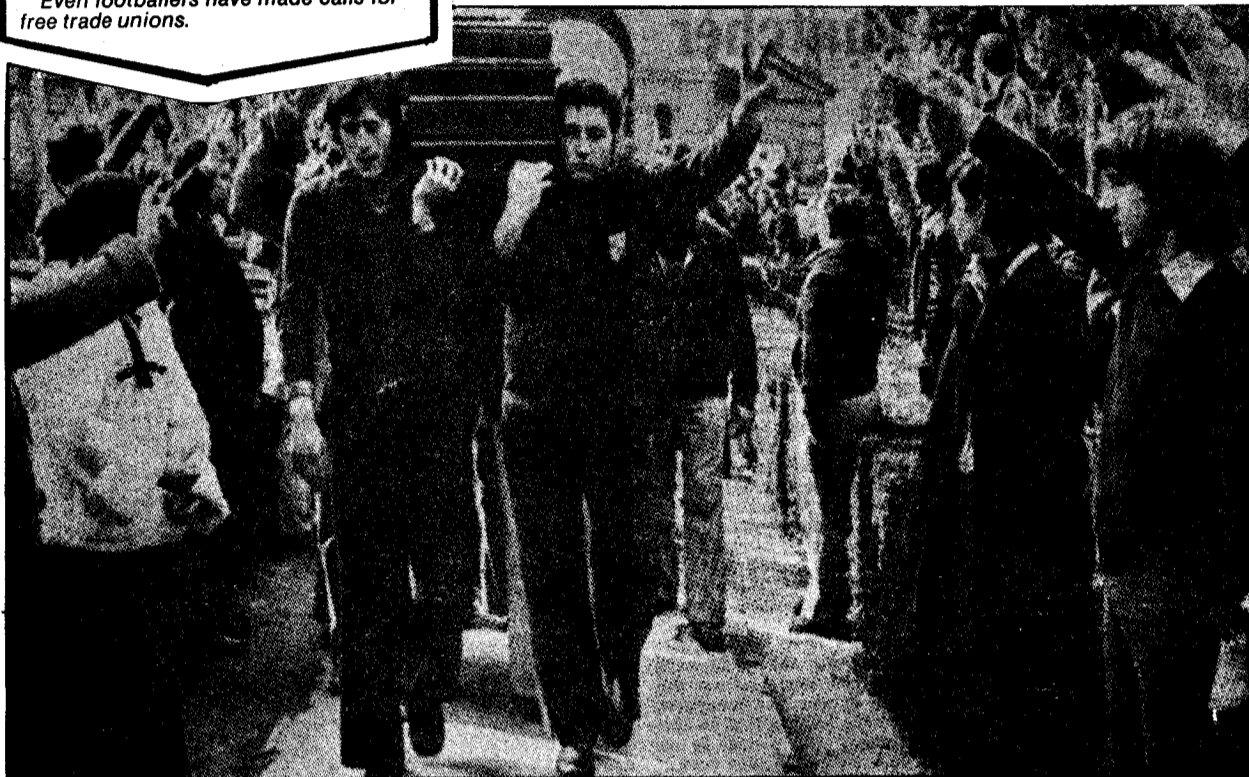
Everything about this event spelt defiance of the regime, from the sermon itself to the two-fingered victory gestures of the mourners as the procession passed the local Governor's office. The sermon had been collectively written by all the local priests, with the local Bishop's approval. It accused the police of using "death dealing arms in absurd abundance, in a completely irrational way, without prior warning, against a defenceless crowd..."

A workers' leader, Jesus Naves, summed up the cause that the victims died for — the purpose of the "day of struggle" — as "a general pay rise for metal workers of about £50 per month; a 40 to 42 hour working week; one month's holiday; more pay for persons on sick leave, and retirement at 60."

Now, other demands are coming to the fore: a public trial for those responsible for the killings, and the release of all arrested labour leaders.

The situation in Vitoria is in many ways typical of the developments in those parts of Spain where the working class is newer and therefore less traditionally tied to the mass parties and the Workers' Commissions. Not a town known for its militancy (like, for instance, the towns of the Barcelona area and the Asturias) Vitoria has, particularly since Franco's death, seen strikes in many industries. Above all the metalworkers of the town have been on strike since the beginning of the year. Only a week before the 'day of struggle', demonstrating workers had set up barricades in Vitoria.

Whereas the Workers' Commissions and the PSOE (Spanish Labour Party) have strong roots in Vitoria, the small revolutionary organisations now have a readier audience. The day of action itself is reported to have been called by the ORT, a semi-Maoist organisation.



is demanding heavy sentences for all of them. They've been denied civilian lawyers.

The UDM also say that they want a "professional (and non-political) army". The army should only 'safeguard democracy' and should never be involved in party politics.

Q What forces, apart from the PCE, are involved in the Democratic Junta?

A Traditional Monarchists (supporters of Juan Carlos's 'liberal' father Don Juan), the Popular Socialist Party which, despite its name, has no popular base; individuals like ex-fascist Rafael Calvo Serrero; and the CCOO. The Junta is supposed to be a 'broad front' but in reality it is under CP control although it spends most of its time denying this. The Junta is also supposed to include 'progressive industrialists' but most of these are in the Democratic Convergence together with Monarchists of the Carlist variety.

Q But most of the CP's 'allies' in the Junta supported Franco in the Civil War. How does the CP explain this away?

A The CP are in favour of 'national reconciliation' and say that in order to press for democratic reforms they must 'use all the forces to hand'. Carrillo (the CPE leader) has said that he will align himself with the devil if need be... That competes for notoriety with another statement of his — "We are against all dictatorships, and that includes the dictatorship of the working class". The CP also stress that at present they are fighting for 'freedom' and not against capitalism. That's why no mention of nationalisation can be found in the Junta's programme.

Q Is there any major difference between the CP's line and that of the PSOE?

A Not if we consider the programmes of the Junta and the Convergence. They are very similar. The present separation of the two reformist parties really dates back to the civil war. Today the PSOE say they want the CP to be legalised and are not opposed to linking the two 'democratic fronts'. Yet they fear that the CP

will swamp them in a unified front because of its size and ability to mobilise workers.

PSOE has 8,000 members but its strength is mainly within the middle class. It hopes to boost its size because of the connections it has with European politicians like Wilson and Schmidt. In this respect it sees Soares' success in Portugal as an example. However, the PSOE has a tradition going back 80 years and its trade union arm, the UGT, embraces some 10,000 militants; so the comparison with Soares and the Portuguese SP has its limits.

Yet there is an important difference between the PSOE and the CP over the question of the Sindicados — the state-imposed trade unions. The CP-led CCOO decided to stand candidates at the last election of "enlaces" ('shop stewards' of the Sindicados), which implies an attempt, if not to change the Sindicados from within, at least to use them. The UGT has consistently opposed this false alternative and has put forward the need to establish genuine working class trade unions independent of the present state.

Violent

Q What lessons have been learnt from Portugal?

A Portugal has shown to the Spanish bourgeoisie that it can't rely on repression to maintain its rule indefinitely. But then again Portugal has also shown what happens when all the doors are opened. However, I would say that the defeat suffered by the left on 25th November in Lisbon has made the right more confident in Spain.

The CP and the liberals argue that because Spain is more developed industrially than Portugal, this means that violent change can be ruled out. But the more industrialised a country, the stronger its working class. That makes the task of establishing workers' power easier in Spain than in Portugal. In Portugal workers could take over a car components factory, but they couldn't produce cars. Spanish workers can take over a car

factory and continue to produce.

Q How relevant are the national struggles of the Basques and Catalans to the class struggle in Spain as a whole?

A The struggles of the Basques and Catalans are very important indeed, because the workers of these two areas played a leading role in fighting the regime and represent the vanguard of the working class in Spain. Catalonia and the Basque country are the most advanced regions industrially, and the workers are better organised and much more experienced there than in the rest of Spain.

Link

In both areas the struggle for independence led quite naturally to the struggle for socialism and in every struggle the traditional bourgeois nationalist parties have been overtaken by the workers' anti-capitalist demands. The workers realise that the Basque and Catalan bourgeoisie are part and parcel of the Spanish bourgeoisie and that they have to work together with the workers of the rest of Spain to overthrow the regime.

Q What can British socialists do to aid the struggle of Spanish workers?

A Multinationals like ITT have branches in Spain and in Britain, so there is an obvious link between British and Spanish workers at this point. The Spanish workers want solidarity and are prepared to offer it back. If ITT threatens to close a factory in Madrid then Spanish workers should be able to expect that workers in Glasgow will take strike action to stop this. The same applies the other way round. The building of solidarity committees in the factories must be the major task of solidarity work of British socialists.

Then there is the need to put pressure on the Labour government on the question of Spain's entry into the EEC. No negotiations with the regime unless full trade union and all other democratic rights are granted and all political prisoners released are things we should be demanding here.

workers' ACTION

supporters' groups are being formed in the following places:

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

Write for details of meetings & activities to:

WASG, 49 Carnac Street, London SE27

THE SOUND of mortars exploding as Belfast airport came under artillery fire from the Irish Republican Army, and the noise of squalid bickering amongst pigmy politicians provided an appropriate requiem as the 'Northern Ireland' Convention collapsed and died.

Set up to find a way out of the chronic conflicts in 'Northern Ireland', it was shipwrecked on the unshakeable determination of its Protestant majority not to concede an inch to the claims for equality of the Catholic 40% of the population of 'Northern Ireland.' It was left to Merlyn Rees, its midwife, to finally pronounce it officially dead. That was a mere formality.

The Convention had never really lived. For most of its members, bargaining positions were already inflexibly set before the Convention's first meeting, and this was predictable even before the elections.

The Convention was a charade, a fiction, an exercise in procrastination by the British Government. The British government doesn't have, and can't have, any solution to the problems of 'Northern Ireland', yet it refuses to take the only alternative — to get out. The Convention accurately reflected the chronic antagonism within 'Northern Ireland' society, and therefore it was inevitably deadlocked. The manoeuvring did produce some surprises (as when 'hardliner' Craig suddenly threw up a cunning Orange plan to gain at least a partial return to Orange Ascendancy). The Social Democratic and Labour Party, unsurprisingly, crawled on its belly, abandoning all the aspirations of the Catholic population it 'represented' in the Convention, sticking only to a demand for ministerial posts for some of its leaders in a 'Northern Ireland' coalition cabinet. Many of the 'moderate' Unionists showed some signs of wanting 'compromise'.

Deadlock

But fear of the grass roots reaction, articulated by the foul demagogue Ian Paisley, kept them in check, and disappointed the ministerial ambitions of the SDLP. The logic of **deadlock** between the communities within the artificial Six County state imposed itself inescapably.

The politicians, even under intense pressure from the British government, and despite their desires for 'home rule' for the Six Counties and their fears of civil war, could not escape that logic.

The Six County 'problem' won't go away. Britain is committed to direct rule, 'indefinitely'. But indefinitely can be a short time in politics! The end of the Convention ends a two year stalemate which began with the Ulster Workers Council strike. The political jockeyings and realignments are already starting again.

The Unionist block, within which the 'hardliners' have been calling the tune, is visibly breaking up. Realignments and manoeuvres in pursuit of the chimera of a stable, Stormont-ruled Six County state will continue. Freed from the pressure to maintain a clear 'side' in the Convention, 'reasonable' Unionism, so silent, weightless, and insubstantial

Convention collapses!

Will it be civil war?

'In a civil war no-one can stand aside...'

Q: 'Can anybody surrender?'
'We cannot take prisoners. They are a liability.'

when faced with real issues and real decisions, will rear its head again and regain its voice.

The IRA is likely to launch a new offensive. Its belief that any solution is impossible unless it include the abolition of the artificial Six County state has been given irrefutable proof by its most bitter Unionist enemies. They have demonstrated yet again that 'Northern Ireland' is unreformable. The IRA has a right to fight to drive the British Army which supports that State out of Ireland. "Workers Action" supports that fight.

IRA military action is likely to spill over into Britain. Even if we do not believe that attacks on civilian targets in Ireland or in Britain are justifiable, socialists must insist that the blame lies squarely with the British government. Britain should get out of Ireland now — and let the Irish people get on with solving its own problems.

The Orange para-military forces are stepping up sectarian assassinations. Thwarted in their demands for a restoration of their dictatorship over the Catholics, they may escalate their action to the point of bloody sectarian civil war.

"Workers Action" believes that any agreement reached in the Convention could only have institutionalised a reactionary modified anti-working-class sectarianism. But the fact that it was the Orange bigots who made any agreement impossible, even with the Uncle Toms of the SDLP, should clarify the situation for British workers inclined to say to both Catholics and Protestants: "A plague on both your houses".



Loyalist leader Craig at mass rally

Especially hard for British workers to grasp is the degree of bloodthirsty Nazi-like anti-Catholic racism that animates the militant Orange men and women.

The excerpts published here will, we hope, bring home to British workers the psychology of the Orange bigots, and why we must support the Catholic population and their militia, the Irish Republican Army. The man interviewed, Sammy Smyth, is no isolated crank, but a central leader and official spokesman for the Ulster Defence Association, the mass, legal, Protestant militia, which grew up with the support of the British Army in 1972 and after.

To understand the implications of what this racist bigot is actually saying with his talk of 'taking no prisoners', 'dealing with enemies of the State', etc., it will help readers to keep the following facts in mind.

All Catholics in 'Northern Ireland' — 40% of the population! — are, in minds like Smyth's, "enemies of the State". Most of them indeed are, with good reason, enemies of the existing Six County state. To maintain a Protestant-dominated State, Smyth proposes to drive out or exterminate all Catholics.

One third of Belfast's population is Catholic. Over two thirds of Derry City's population are Catholics, though Protestants predominate in Derry county. To talk of 'no prisoners' is to talk of slaughtering one third of Belfast's population, and two thirds of Derry's.

JOHN O'MAHONY



British troops 'pacifying' the population

Excerpts from an interview with Ulster Defence Association Sammy Smyth. The excerpts are taken from *Republican News* of 14th February; the interview originally appeared in a Belfast student newspaper, *Gown*, and Sammy Smyth was interviewed by *Gown* editor Jamie Delargey.

JD: In a possible loyalist offensive against Republicans, who are the legitimate targets?

SS: People who act against the State or give passive or active support to those who do.

JD: Will it include SDLP men and their supporters?

SS: The SDLP are the enemy. Their strength and consistency depends entirely on the violence of the Provisional and Official IRA.

The conflict is over the establishment of a 32 County Republic. Hume said it was that or nothing. So this merely re-emphasises that they identified with the Provo and Official IRA. At this bottom level there is unity among them, i.e. the destruction of the State of Northern Ireland the elimination of the Protestant people.

JD: Of course your knowledge of who the Republicans are isn't good. That means your offensive will probably involve the deaths of innocent Catholics. Would that deter the UDA?

SS: War exists in Northern Ireland and in a war situation there are no innocent people. Those not actively involved and who are killed happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Civil war

Every citizen has a stake in the community. No-one can abdicate responsibility, cannot stand aside, we do not accept that anyone has the right to opt out.

JD: Do you think that civil war is inevitable if the Provisional IRA don't give up or aren't defeated?

SS: Nothing is inevitable, but only a miracle can prevent it. We've had two miracles before. If it hadn't been for the Ulster Workers' Council there would have been a civil war. If at that time the Army had moved in you would have had a full-scale conflict. The Army knew this but the people were ignorant of it.

JD: When might a civil war be expected?

SS: Let's not be naive. You don't give dates when you are going to do anything — be prepared. The people are saying now that defence is no longer enough. They want it [i.e. the present situation — WA] stopped, we will decide when but you can expect it anytime.

JD: We have been reliably informed that Glenn Barr's allegiance to Vanguard policy is not popular with grass-roots UDA opinion. Is that so?

SS: That's not a fair question. He's a politician, whereas the UDA is not. If Vanguard advocates power-sharing with the SDLP at Cabinet level, then it is out of step with the Protestant people. That sort of policy does not have the support of the UDA... The UDA will support those parties who grant defence of the border and are against power-sharing.

JD: Is it true that the incompetence of the Scottish loyalists means that in fact they hinder rather than help your cause?

SS: They're naive, but the goodwill is there and that's never to be despised, but there's not much money in it.

JD: Would they not come over and

support you in a civil war?

SS: Look, Westminster would stick the navy up the Irish Sea and prevent any movement across.

JD: Would you not try to be one move ahead?

SS: This is the game. We must get our supporters before that happens.

JD: Do you expect defections from the Army?

SS: Yes. Every Battalion has lost men. There's no love lost there for the IRA.

JD: Do you know what their contingency plans are?

SS: We've a good idea.

JD: What about the Eire Army?

SS: We have a good idea what their contingency plans are too. Their number of openings is limited and we don't know what the specifics are, but we have a good idea of the overall strategy.

Takeover

They must be concerned in the event of a war about a takeover down there by the Provos. So they must first and foremost be concerned with the security of their state.

JD: Do you defend the bombings in Dundalk and Dublin?

SS: A war exists here and we will defend ourselves. The Free State is part and parcel of the enemy.

JD: How long would a civil war last?

SS: We would like it to be over in a week.

JD: What about those Catholics who have no arms?

SS: How do you know that they've no arms. We will assume that Catholics are fully armed and on that assumption we will take action against them. The Provos have support from the Catholics. Otherwise they just couldn't exist.

In a civil war no-one can stand aside. Those who do not partake will be classed as an enemy. So will the person who cannot be depended upon.

JD: Can anybody surrender?

SS: We cannot take prisoners. They are a liability.

JD: Will you win?

SS: While there are Protestants here there will be a Northern Ireland as a part of Britain.

JD: Do you expect a new state to be smaller?

SS: No, larger. We would go for extra territory so that the Republic can't be a threat to use in a couple of generations.

JD: What will be the conditions under which Catholics will stay?

SS: There will be no room for RCs in a new state.

JD: None?

SS: None.

JD: How do you know that you have the support of the Protestant people?

SS: I meet people all over the country and I know that the feeling is there that something must be done. They're saying that defence isn't enough.

JD: Why hasn't Civil War been more fully discussed in the papers and television?

SS: The media conceals the horror of civil war by editing the interviews to suit their own purposes.

For instance, the Sunday News left out in an article of mine that no prisoners would be taken.

JD: Has the determination to finish this once and for all made the Ulster Volunteer Force settle its differences with the Ulster Army Council?

SS: It has.

WORKING WOMENS CHARTER

National Working Women's Charter Conference

10th and 11th APRIL 1976

at the LANCHESTER POLYTECHNIC, COVENTRY

Details and application forms from Helen Gurdon, Flat 4, 39 Newbold Terrace East, Leamington Spa, Warwick

Organised by the Working Women's Charter Campaign in Coventry and London for all groups and organisations fighting for the demands of the Charter

Only one choice in AUEW vote

A CRUCIAL battle is shaping up in the Engineering union. After considerable defeats in the last round of elections for Union posts, the Communist Party dominated 'Broad Left' is fielding Bob Wright for the post of Assistant General Secretary. His principal rival is right winger John Weakley — whose candidature will be backed by the bosses' press. His major claim to fame is that he took the union to court last year!

Weakley's platform must be opposed by all militants and socialists. At a time when all workers face savage attacks from the Labour Government, Weakley states "we must allow our government to govern ... we must support it, not fight it". Supporting the government, "our government" as Weakley calls it, must mean support for unemployment, speed-up and declining real wages.

Weakley also argues for the maintenance of the postal ballot system of election in the AUEW. This

is a system that enables the employers and press most readily to influence union policy; it means that workers take decisions in isolation from one another, not knowing what strength of feeling exists for particular courses of action. In that isolation the employers and their 'media' can subject workers to their campaigns for 'moderate' and 'sensible' right wing candidates.

A vote for Weakley would obviously be a setback for the left. But should socialists therefore be canvassing and voting for Bob Wright? We think not. He has the signed support of 6 AUEW sponsored MPs and 50 full time officials. Those officials even include Laurie Smith who stood for the post of National Organiser and won as an independent socialist against the Broad Left. 22 'left wingers' on the National Committee are also supporting him.

Despite this huddling of left officials against the gains of the right in the Union, Bob Wright does not have a platform that can answer the needs of the members and lead a fight back against the right wing.

It was Bob Wright who presided over the Chrysler carve-up. He perpetually argued for an acceptance of Chrysler's terms and the "rescue" plan which involved mass sackings and union cooperation.

In Leyland, Bob Wright has supported the Ryder participation schemes for Leyland workers to take responsibility for the crisis of the company.



Left to Right: Blood, Wright & Weakley

only one candidate who tries to face and explain the issues facing the members. This is Len Blood from Lancashire. Unlike Wright's reliance on the union machine to gather support, Blood's signed support is from convenors, stewards and ordinary union members. He clearly opposes the secret ballot and puts forward particular policies that Union members should support.

WEAKNESS

He is for the smashing of the £6 limit, for nationalisation without compensation of firms unable to guarantee jobs, for an immediate overtime ban and a 35 hour week. Unlike the other principle candidates, he is not hedging his bets on mealy mouthed empty statements either for or against the Labour attacks.

There are some weaknesses in Len Blood's programme. On wages, he argues only for a £15 across-the-board increase. This will compensate for the cuts in real wages already effected by this Government; but to unite engineers, a national pay claim must include the battle for automatic cost of living increases to compensate for inflation as it is happening from month to month. And such increases should be calculated by engineers themselves on the basis of our real cost of living, not the official index.

Nor does Len Blood come out for work sharing under trade union control with no loss of earnings as an immediate answer to redundancies. And he doesn't campaign for the opening of the books and meetings of the companies, nor does he clearly oppose participation schemes. His

platform address also omits the vital question of defending women's right to work and equal pay in engineering.

But against Bob Wright and John Weakley, Len Blood must be supported. On the issues of Union democracy, the Labour Government's attacks, the £6 limit and redundancy, Len Blood should be supported rather than Bob Wright.

In the circumstance of a second ballot leaving only Wright contesting the position with Weakley, engineers should then vote for Bob Wright — not for what he stands for, but to keep out Weakley and the right wing. A victory for Weakley would demoralise and disorganise militants in the union whose leadership will be crucial in mounting a real fight.

THE UNIONS



BRITISH LIBRARY's CPSA branch AGM has sent the following resolutions to Annual Conference:

1) In the face of mounting attacks on public sector spending and jobs (particularly those in the public sector) this Conference instructs the incoming NEC to organise a one-day national strike to give warning to the TUC and Government that the CPSA members will not tolerate these attacks any longer. Furthermore, that the CPSA NEC contacts other unions affiliated to the TUC to ask for support, on the basis that the CPSA will take action with or without them.

2) Conference agrees that while previous conferences have pushed for a 34-hour working week, it is necessary to cut the working week to 30 hours. This is to be a major priority for the coming year, and the basis for a CPSA motion to the 1976 TUC.

3) This conference, noting that over 1½ million are unemployed, and that attacks on public sector employment are increasing, calls for: no redundancies; total opposition to all forms of natural wastage as a means of cutting jobs and increasing work loads; job vacancies not to stand for more than 1 month; the immediate revoking of the Model Redundancy Agreement. Conference instructs the incoming CSEC to organise a campaign on the basis of the above demands.

SILENT

In his election address, this man who promoted 6000 sackings at Chrysler bemoans unemployment but puts forward no policies to fight it. Of government policy to deal with inflation he meekly claims that "one must question whether those actions are correct or sufficient to ensure success." He does not come clean on his attitude to the Labour government's attacks, nor give a clear position against the £6 limit or any future wage restraint. His address is equally silent on the question of the secret ballot.

Wright hopes to slide in with the prestige of past office and the support of the upper echelons of the trade union machine. On the key issues facing the membership he is silent. When tested at Leyland and Chrysler, Wright's policies have been no different from those of the right wingers he now opposes.

Against those candidates, there is

Teacher victimised for fighting cuts

DRACONIAN new rules which the NUT Executive has proposed will make it easier for Education Authorities (who hire and fire teachers) to victimise teacher militants. These rules entail the automatic suspension from the Union of any teacher taking action not approved by the Executive.

Militant teachers taking action against education cuts could face themselves up against two lots of fire simultaneously, attacked by both their union and their employer; and because of the rule suspending them from the union even while their case is being looked into, they will have no Union protection against the employers.

The NUT Executive has already fired a warning shot in refusing to support Mike Colley, who is NUT representative at Clissold Park School in Hackney. He was elected by his school union group to attend the October 21st South East Region TUC Rally and demonstration against the education cuts, and is now facing disciplinary action by the Inner London Education Authority — even though the school NUT bent over backwards to cause minimum disruption and agreed to cover his lessons while he was on the demonstration.

Mike Colley's attendance at the demonstration was also officially supported by the Hackney Teachers' Association (the local NUT body). But even this does not impress the NUT Executive, where Max Morris (one-time President of the NUT, and a

Communist Party member) argued against any solidarity action in school time on the grounds that the demonstration had not been called by the NUT.

The incident has brought to light officially the Executive's view of school NUT groups and local associations — the grass roots of the NUT. In reply to a letter in *The Teacher* (the official NUT paper) of March 5th, it is stated that "The Union structure is based on the division (made up of local associations) which negotiates with the employing authority, and the local association, which collects and communicates the views of its members. The school group has no official role, except to collect the views of members within a unit and convey them to the association."

No case

Schools and associations should deluge the Executive with resolutions demanding its support for Mike Colley and condemning his victimisation by both the ILEA and the NUT, and supporting the right of Clissold Park School NUT to organise independently. Letters to the Clissold Park governors should demand they rule that there is no case for Mike Colley to answer.

This victimisation, if it succeeds, will only whet the appetites of the gaudier of the NUT Executive, giving them added strength to pick off militants using their new disciplinary rules. Teachers at school and



Photo by Andrew Wlward (Report)

association level must prepare for the worst and work to gain support for strike action in solidarity with any teacher who, under the new rules, finds him- or herself suspended from the union just when the employers are out for the chop.

One heartening aspect of the Clissold Park dispute is that when the S.E. Region TUC heard about the disciplinary action against Mike Colley the organiser of the October anti-cuts march sent a letter to the ILEA telling them that they should take up the issue with the TUC General Council and send a letter of apology to Mike!

SEND copies of resolutions and letters to the NUT Executive, the ILEA, Hackney TA and Inner London Teachers Association, as well as to the Defence Campaign Committee, c/o Jon Duveen, 18 Finsbury Park Road, London N.4 (Tel: 01-226-2491)

IAN HOLLINGWORTH
N. London Rank & File

Close Open Door to fascists

About 120 supporters of Birmingham Anti-Fascist group marched through Balsall Heath (an area where many black people live) to the BBC's studios at Pebble Mill to protest at the BBC screening an openly racist programme. The programme was compiled from a film which had been made with money from George Young of the Monday Club, together with interviews with Lady Jane Birdwood, veteran supporter of the National Front and other Nazi outfits.

Jim Merrick, the National Front's 'front man' in the "British Campaign", coordinated and presented the programme.

Earlier in the day an application for an injunction to stop the screening had been brought by the Indian Workers' Association and the Standing Conference of Pakistani Organisations in the UK. Mr. Justice Stockwell, sitting "in chambers" in his home in South Kensington, refused the injunction.

WIDIRKERS IN ACTION

Electro-Motion You can join the board —but not the union

54 of the 60 shop floor workers at Electro Motion, Leicester, are in the sixth week of official strike for union recognition and no victimisation.

The conditions in the factory are appalling. Temperatures are often less than 38° on a cold morning and rarely above 50°F. No lockers are provided and there are only three lavatories for over 60 workers. There has not been a wage rise for over 17 months.

While wages and conditions are held down, the firm is planning a £25,000 expansion of its premises, and the Managing Director, Mr Jeeman, manages to own a yacht, an aeroplane, and a Rolls Royce. He has made his position clear to the workforce. "This is my company—make no mistake—I am the company. Those that are not for me and against me".

The company insists that it accepts union recognition—as long as the convenor, the leading stewards, and one third of the workforce accept redundancy! They also want to appoint the Union representatives. Seeman has another trick, too—anyone who shows any signs of making trouble at the factory is appointed a worker-director! ALREADY ONE WORKER IN TEN IS A "worker-director".

In this small dispute a weak group of workers are not just facing a cranky or out-moded employer. They are facing an employer made confident by union retreat, hoping to use his own 'participation schemes' and mounting fear of unemployment to break trade union rights and organisation.

These strikers must be supported, such tactics by the employers against weaker groups of workers must be broken. Already the AUEW district committee in Leicester has given its support to mass pickets at Electro-Motion. But the strikers desperately need cash to continue the fight. Messages of support and donations to: Bridget Paton, AUEW Hall, Vaughan Way, Leicester.

DAVE JEWSON

A 61% majority in the National Union of Mineworkers has voted to endorse the National Executive Committee's decision to call off the overtime ban over the issue of the impending closure of Langwith colliery.

Militants had campaigned for a vote to resume the overtime ban. A special "Miners' Action" bulletin produced by rank and file miners in the Nottingham area pointed out the issues: "The National Coal Board have been very adroit in picking what should be described as a borderline pit as a battlefield upon which to test our willingness to put up a fight... Langwith is only the springboard... Remember the '60s, brothers? That period of decimation of our industry began in much the same way—starting with one pit, then two or three, a dozen, a hundred and so on. We cannot, must not allow that situation to develop again".

But the weight of right wing propaganda and miners' reluctance to go into battle with an irresolute leadership, had effectively stymied a fight-back.

Derbyshire miners call for Gormley's resignation after overtime retreat

The last blow was the damning report by the union's mining engineer which condemned the Clowne seam at Langwith as unworkable. The report was summarised in a special edition of the 'Miner' (the NUM official paper), distributed at the eleventh hour to forestall any counter-propaganda.

Previous to his appointment as NUM national mining engineer, the author of the report, an ex-coliery manager, was mining engineer to the Derbyshire area NUM. In that capacity, some months ago, he produced a report on the workability of Langwith, concluding that the Clowne seam was a viable proposition.

So much for the integrity of the union's expert advice! It certainly seems to be an action replay of the old proverb

whoever pays the piper calls the tune. Also in the special issue of the 'Miner' was an article by Joe Gormley, entitled 'Why we called off the ban', which one rank and file militant said should have read, "Why we sabotaged union policy". In his article, Brother Joe assures us that "the Union will still oppose pit closures as far as is humanly possible, as we have been doing since 1960".

If we are to expect a performance from the Union officials similar to that of the '60s, when thousands of miners lost their jobs, they'll never help us. The only Union function would be vocal expression of regret!

It has been reported that the Derbyshire area have called for Gormley's resignation because of his antics over the Langwith issue.

The £6 limit issue is not to be separated from the overtime ban. Many of those miners who have voted against the overtime ban did so solely because they see overtime as being the only way by which they can keep pace with the cost of living.

Many have been appalled to discover that the £6 is only to be a supplement to wages, rather than an actual increase on wage rates. There is still doubt as to whether or not the supplement will be payable for holidays and rest days. It will not be payable on overtime earnings.

The NEC have declared that they will press for consolidation—after August 1st—but we will see.

It is vital that the wages resolution to annual conference is precise and uncompromising. It must "demand" rather than "seek" increases, and it must state precise figures (not "a substantial increase"). The Yorkshire area claim for £100 will be the central demand for militants; and there will also be attempts to add a claim for cost of living compensation in the form of the sliding scale of wages.

STEVE ABBOTT (Calverton NUM)
For copies and further information on the "Miners Action" bulletin, write to 14 Beck Ave, Calverton, Nottinghamshire.



Photo by Angela Phillips (Report)

Despite the policy of the Planning Committee, banning men, and only grudgingly admitting political and Trade Union banners, the International Women's Day demonstration last Saturday, March 6th, attracted 900 marchers.

Education cuts

LAST SATURDAY'S (February 28th) conference against unemployment in education attracted about 150 delegates. It was organised by the standing committee elected at last year's Rank and File Cuts Conference.

The first session was largely given over to eulogies from prominent IS members on the Right to Work Campaign; but the second session worked detailed programmes of action for "The Fight in the Schools".

The key demands which teachers must fight around in the schools at

present are no classes over 30 and no cover for unappointed staff or staff absent for more than three days. Forecasts of teacher unemployment range as high as 19,000 by September of this year; any teaching of oversize classes or covering for absent staff ultimately means other teachers are being deprived of jobs. So far at least 17 schools are operating the 'no cover' sanction.

In addition we must fight against exploitation of students on teaching practice, who are asked to cover. In some areas even sixth-formers are roped in! NUT representatives in schools must organise to monitor the situation by getting NUT members to report any incidence of classes left on their own, or covered by students.

IAN HOLLINGWORTH

The Standing Committee against the Cuts have organised a public meeting around the demands of 'no cover' and 'no compulsory transfer'. It is on Tuesday March 16th at the Euston Tavern, Euston Rd, opposite St Pancras Station, at 5.30pm.

An all-London meeting is also being organised for school ancillary workers. For details contact Mr Bidyut Chattopadhyay at Hackney Downs School.

Clarksons

37 WOMEN CLERICAL WORKERS (TASS) at Clarksons International have been on strike over equal pay since February 25th. The women told 'Workers Action' that the strike had come as a surprise to management, who had "walked over the staff for years".

As the final payment to bring equal pay they were offered £2.40. Negotiations finally broke down, and a meeting of the women unanimously decided to strike for £9 across the board,

which would bring the rates up to those in a sister factory in Nuneaton.

The present top rate is £32-£36, but no-one gets that: most of the wages are in the £28-£34 range.

Following the strike decision, the management laid off 40 women from the shopfloor and blamed the TASS picket for the loss of work. Linda Ward, shop steward for the women, said, "They thought it would set the women against the women, but it didn't work. The whole shop floor, 400 men and women, came out demanding the immediate reinstatement of the 40 laid off. That was the help we needed to stop the strike dragging on for weeks".

The management also made the two men doing the same job as the women 'supervisors' only hours before the strike.

The strikers feel that women should have the same rights as men, whether it be for pay, conditions, or a job. They told 'Workers Action' that they certainly didn't work for luxuries: "We need a decent wage to give us a decent standard of life". And they insisted on their right to work: "Nobody would catch me staying at home all day, it's too boring".

BRIDGET THOMPSON

£200 A MONTH FIGHTING FUND

GOOD news as we go to press. £30 from a supporter in East London, and £2 from a reader in Portugal who writes that the paper is "a very good help for Portuguese workers".

Other supporters will need to get moving soon to get this month's fund in: even small collections from readers or at meetings will easily build up to the target if they're done regularly. There's still £168 to get this month. Send all contributions to: Fund, 49 Carnac Street, London SE27.

PLUTO PRESS are offering a pre-publication bargain on two books due at Easter on Northern Ireland.

The two volumes are Michael Farrell's "Northern Ireland: the Orange State" — 'The first political history of the puppet state and its current disintegration', selling at £5 for a solid 400-page volume; and Geoff Bell's "The Protestants of Ulster", selling at £2.

On orders received before Easter (cash with order) Pluto will let you have both books for £5.

Orders to: Pluto Press Ltd., unit 10, Spencer Court, 7 Chalcot Road, London NW1 8LH.

NUSS Week of Action

The National Union of School Students (NUSS) is holding a nationwide Week of Action to ban corporal punishment from March 7th to 13th. Where NUSS is strong in a school, it will be advising students to refuse physical punishment.

The Week of Action will be mainly concerned with leafletting, writing to local press, and a lobby of Parliament on Wednesday 10th March urging MPs to vote for the abolition of corporal punishment. Only Great Britain, Ireland, Canada, South Africa and Bavaria still allow beating by law; Poland abolished it as far back as 1783, and France in 1887.

The week of action has to be the beginning of struggle, not only against corporal punishment, but also against Healey's attacks on our education, and against rising youth unemployment which is now very much in the minds of all school leavers. We will need the help of trade unions and of the National Union of Students in all actions we take: standing on our own, we can still be defeated easily.

Messages of support to NUSS, 3 Endsleigh St, London WC1 (01-387 1277).

STEVE GOLDSTONE (East London Area NUSS)

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.

Friday 12th March: Film Show and Discussion on the Cuts. 7.30pm in Theatre B, Roscoe Building, Manchester University. Organised by Manchester and Salford Housing Action.

Saturday 13th March: Solidarity with the Portuguese Working Class — conference at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1, 10am. All labour movement organisations may send delegates. Details from PWCC, 12 Little Newport St, London WC2 (01-439 3006)

Saturday 13th March: Islington Campaign against the Cuts. Conference at Essex Road Library. Details from 15 Bayon House, New Orleans Walk, London N19.

Thursday 18th March: Newham Rank and File Teachers public meeting on the cuts, 5.30pm at the Railway Tavern, opposite Forest Gate station.

Thursday 18th March: Manchester 'Workers Action' meeting on "What is Marxist Theory For?". 8pm in the Ducie Arms, Great Ducie St.

Saturday 27th March: Labour Movement Assembly on Unemployment. At Central Hall, Westminster. Details from 'Assembly', no. 8 Confederation District Committee, 12 Denmark St, London WC2H 8NJ.

Saturday 3rd April: National Abortion Campaign demonstration for Free Abortion On Demand and A Woman's Right To Choose. Assemble 2.30pm at Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park.

Saturday 3rd April: Local labour movement conference on Unemployment and the cuts: organised by Lambeth Trades Council and Norwood Labour Party. At Stockwell Hall, Stockwell Park Walk, SW2. Details from V. Wiseman, 23 Saunders House, St Martins Estate, SW2.

Saturday and Sunday, 10th-11th April: Working Women's Charter national delegate conference. At Lancaster Poly, Coventry. Details from Helen Gurdon, Flat 4, 39 Newbold Terrace East, Leamington Spa, Warks.

Sunday 11th April: Campaign to Repeal the Immigration Act demonstration — assemble 2.30pm at Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park. Committee to organise the demo meets every Friday, 7.30pm at 152 Camden High Street.

Saturday 24th April: Rally against Unemployment and the Cuts called by North West Regional Council of the TUC.

Sunday 25th April: National Demonstration against Cuts in the National Health Service; called by NCC Against Cuts in the NHS.

Thursday 18th March: Nottingham 'Workers Action' meeting — "How 'Communist' is the Communist Party?". 8pm at the 'Peacock', Mansfield Rd.

Monday 22nd March: Northampton 'Workers Action' forum — "Why 'Workers' Action?".

March 15th to 20th: 'Growing Oppression, Growing Struggle' — Kurdistan week of action. Seminars including film and photo exhibition. 6.30pm, March 15th-16th. Imperial College Botany common room; March 17th, Brunel University Lecture Room C. March 20th: Kurdish New Year party at Imperial College Students Union. Sponsored by Brunel University Students' Union.

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