

workers' ACTION

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10p

THE LEYLAND WORKERS at Speke, Merseyside, are going to fight the closure of their plant.

They decided this at a mass meeting on Saturday 15th. The Leyland combine committee have pledged support for the resistance at Speke, and it looks as if Confederation of Shipbuilding & Engineering Union Officials will have to do likewise.

The next steps in the struggle are a mass demonstration in Liverpool on May Day, and on a one-day strike and lobby of Parliament on May 9th. The No.1 plant at Speke — which is not immediately threatened by closure — has decided to come out on the 9th, and Liverpool Trades Council is organising trains to London. (The march to lobby Parliament will assemble at 12.30 at Euston It should be a rallying point, especially for all Leyland workers and for trade unionists throughout the London area).

What turned the scales in favour of fighting, rather than the line of 'take the money and run', was the details of Leyland's redundancy terms, revealed on Thursday 13th.

The press has been feeding Leyland workers with tales of pay-outs of several thousand pounds each. Even that much wouldn't last long, compared to the long wait on the dole queue that must face anyone losing their job on Merseyside these days; nor would it compensate for the demoralisation and misery of long-term unemployment. But the promises seemed attractive.

Speke workers

'WE'LL FIGHT BACK!'

Then it turned out the money offered was in terms of hundreds, not thousands. As the Guardian reported, "The average length of service at the plant is about four years and a 22 year old man who had been there for that time would receive only £650"

There still needs to be more urgency in the fight-back. An effective fight

against the closure is going to depend on **occupying** the plant, but as yet there is only vague talk about that. The next mass meeting isn't to be until May 13th — by which time the scheduled closure date of May 26th will be less than two weeks off!

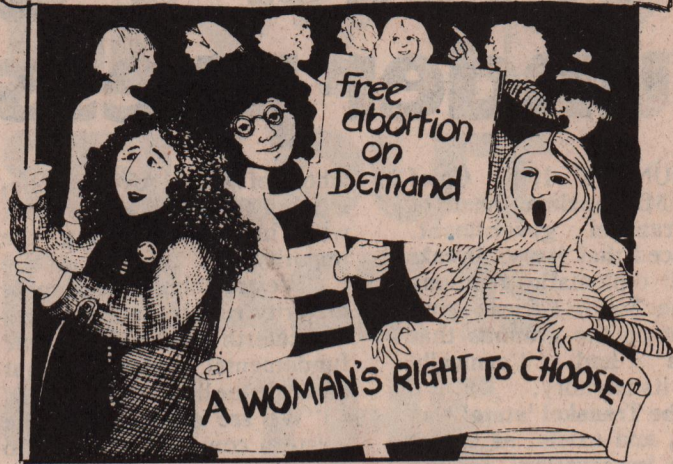
The Trades Council and the District Labour Party are still dragging

their feet over the decision by a Merseyside labour movement delegate conference on April 9th to set up a council of action against closures and unemployment.

If workers at Speke and on Merseyside rely on the official leadership to organise the struggle, then they could find that the resounding speeches just go on and on, with very little action to match, until suddenly they are cut short by the axe of closure. But the will to fight is there among the rank and file. And so is the power.

NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN CONFERENCE

29-30 APRIL



See 'Events', page 8

BAKERS' UNION ELEVENTH HOUR FIGHTBACK

ELEVEN days after Spillers announced the closure of 23 bakeries, and four days before they fall due, the Bakers' Union leadership has started talking about resistance.

On 18th April general secretary Stan Maddox announced "Unless the closures are halted, pending discussion, all our members throughout England and Wales will stop overtime from April 22, the date named for the closure".

The union will also black Spillers flour.

Maddox said that it in some bakeries workers were having to do six 12-hour shifts a week, as Rank Hovis McDougall and Associated British Foods scramble to grab the share of the bread market being vacated by Spillers. "Can anyone justify that? In Liverpool men are compelled to do overtime..."

It is vital that the rank and file should take up this call to action — even if the officials go back on it. But unless the union goes further, it could be too little, too late.

Regional officials have been sinking chances of a fight-back by arranging for the transfer of small contingents of workers from bakeries to be closed to other plants, and sometimes by stifling rank-and-file calls for opposition.

Even now, the union leadership is talking more about postponing the closures than stopping them; they centre their argument on the fact that Spillers have not given the full 90 days notice due under the Employment Protection Act.

The solution which can safeguard bakery workers' jobs is the nationalisation of the whole industry, without compensation, and the imposition of work-sharing with no loss of pay. Overtime bans can start the resistance, but to win it occupations and strike action will be needed.

**COURT TO FASCIST: I WISH YOU LUCK
COURT TO ANTI-FASCIST: 6 WEEKS JAIL**

KIM GORDON, a leading member of the Socialist Workers' Party's black section, has been sentenced to six weeks in jail on a charge of incitement at last year's Lewisham anti-fascist demonstration.

The trial was a farcical frame-up. Initially Kim faced three incitement charges. The magistrate had to throw out the first. The defence proved that at the time the police said he was urging a crowd to attack a public house, Kim was actually in a coach travelling between Birmingham and London.

The second charge suffered the same fate. It could be proved that Kim wasn't yet in Lewisham when the supposed incitement took place. Again the police's frame-up failed.

Instead of throwing out this case and recommending an investigation into the police, the magistrate went on to hear the

third charge.

Against there were only police witnesses — against a number of witnesses and a video film — to claim that Kim had urged demonstrators to stone a police van and attack the Ladywell police station. This time the muck stuck... and Kim was sentenced and ordered to pay £100 costs and £50 towards legal aid. He is out on bail pending an appeal.

Moreover, the case assumed that insults hurled at the National Front are unlawful — while recent cases have established that the NF can go round inciting race-hatred and chanting abuse with impunity.

It is all right for National Party leader Kingsley Read to refer to the murder of an Asian immigrant by saying "One down, one million to go" — Judge McKinnon even said, "I wish you luck" — but it is unlawful for an anti-fascist demonstrator to shout



Kim Gordon "Nazi bastards" or "Smash the National Front".

The Morning Star, paper of the Communist Party, did not report the judgment. Perhaps it didn't fit in with their line of reliance on the law.

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SUPPORT SPEKE - JOIN THE MARCH ON MAY 9

TRANSKEI

Vorster's Quislings under pressure

ON MONDAY 10th, Chief Kaiser Mantanzima, head of the Transkei government, announced that it was breaking off diplomatic relations with the South African government on the grounds that Pretoria had "cynically raped" its territory.

Yet the Transkei 'state' was formed, and exists, as a sort of black 'reservation', for the purposes of and under the domination of the South African government.

The main reason given for the break was that Pretoria had decided to transfer a corridor of land known as Griqualand East from the Cape to Natal. Griqualand East separates the main area of Transkei from a smaller piece around the town of Umzimkulu.

Mantanzima has for a long time claimed this piece of land as part of the 'historic territory' of Transkei, and he insisted that the refusal to hand it over was "a declaration of war against Transkei".

"Knowing the strength of South Africa militarily, Transkei will bide its time before taking up arms to recover the land that has been cynically raped from it..."

"We were treated with contempt. Hence we can no longer take it. We have been compelled to join the liberation movements and claim the

whole of South Africa as belonging to blacks and whites, with blacks controlling the majority..."

"We are going to propagate majority rule in South Africa. Henceforth this will be the fundamental policy of our struggle for liberation..."

"We are appealing to the western countries to come to our assistance. We have never been a homeland of discriminatory South Africa. We were a colony under the British Government before being forcibly joined into South Africa by the white parliament..."

Sharp

The next day he accused the South African government of 'slaughtering' millions of blacks in the process of enforcing 'obnoxious apartheid laws'. He went on to denounce the shootings at Sharpeville and Langa in 1960, and the killing of blacks during the Soweto uprising. He said that the total of people killed since 1910 under laws applying only to blacks would top a million.

69 people were killed at Sharpeville and figures collected by the South African Institute show that at least 618 blacks were killed in black townships between June 16th and December 31st, 1976.

Pretoria immediately de-

nied Mantanzima's accusations

Many people will be puzzled by this sharp 'about-turn' on the part of the puppet regime of Transkei, which was most definitely formed as part of Pretoria's racist policy. Its leaders continue to aid and abet Vorster's racist policies, such as the 'scrapping' of the pass-book system and the introduction earlier this year of a system whereby blacks became foreigners in their own country, being deprived of their status as South African citizens and being forced to register as citizens of the 'homelands'.

At the time this was denounced by oppositionists in South Africa as "the worst thing the homelands leaders have done to urban blacks", and some indicated that this would also lead to the 'homelands chiefs' using their power to issue papers as a way of controlling militants among the migrant or settled urban workers.

Mood

Obviously, as the liberation struggle in South Africa continues unabated, the leaders of the Transkei find themselves in an intolerably weak position, especially as the real meaning of their decision to support the new citizenship

laws sinks in.

The mood of the black population in South Africa was shown last week by the return of the elections for a local council in Soweto. The elections were organised after the Government had put the recognised leaders of the community under detention or 'banning' orders. First time round, there was only a 5% poll, and no candidates at all in several areas; this time, the voting rate had risen to 6%, and the Government claimed a victory!

Budget

With an area of 16,000 square miles, Transkei is twice the size of Wales, but its land is poor agriculturally and although it is the 'homeland' of the Xhosa people, only two million live there, the other half of the Xhosa population living and working in the urban areas.

Transkei gets over 70% of its budget from Pretoria. The leaders of Transkei may well be genuinely angered at Pretoria's refusal to hand over Griqualand East, but there is no way that Transkei could possibly become economically independent of Pretoria. The real reasons have been outlined by Percy Qoboza (who was detained by the Security Police last October), in an editorial in the 'Post':

"There is widespread scepticism among our people concerning Paramount Chief Mantanzima's announcement that he is breaking off diplomatic ties with South Africa. Many of us see this as yet another trick by the homeland leaders to gain international respectability and acceptance".

Stoned

In addition, the homelands leaders obviously don't want to be outflanked by the liberation movements, as some of them may be candidates in the future for the same kind of puppet 'transitional' government as Smith is setting up in Zimbabwe with Muzorewa, Sithole, and Chirau. The fact that another homeland leader, Buthelezi, was recently stoned and chased off by black crowds at the funeral of a black militant is some indication of the pressure which they are under to maintain their credibility.

NEIL COBBETT

Seven years' jail for trying to get out of hell

WOMEN'S GROUPS in Ireland and Holland are launching what they hope will be a European-wide campaign to free Noreen Winchester.

Noreen's appeal against her seven-year jail sentence was rejected last week. A request for the 'Royal Prerogative of mercy' to be used has been made to Home Secretary Roy Mason.

Noreen's 'crime' was to have stabbed her father 21 times... when she could no longer stand the beatings and rape which he had inflicted on her.

She was the oldest of eight surviving children out of 16. As Ann McHardy wrote in the Guardian (April 18): "Through the years she [Noreen's mother] was badly beaten by her husband, herself became violent with the children, took to treating herself with a home-made mixture including vinegar, to end unwanted pregnancies, became an alcoholic, and was finally driven to leave home".

By the time her mother left, Noreen had already been sexually abused for six years. Noreen's mother is now in a mental hospital, and unlikely to leave.

The family moved from house to house in the most squalid areas of Protestant Northern Ireland: where sex outside the strict family bounds is frowned on; where overcrowding and poverty make the oppressive bonds of the family, and male supremacy within it, doubly harsh; and where, in Belfast, incest is more common than almost anywhere else in Britain.

Noreen was advised to plead guilty to manslaughter. Not understanding what it meant, she did: and so no mitigating evidence was put forward at the trial.

At the appeal, after listening to extensive evidence of Noreen's appalling living conditions, the three judges (two of them former Unionist MPs) said they could find "no reason in law to release her".

At first the story received little press coverage. But after a Dutch magazine covered the case it came to the attention of a feminist group in Holland.

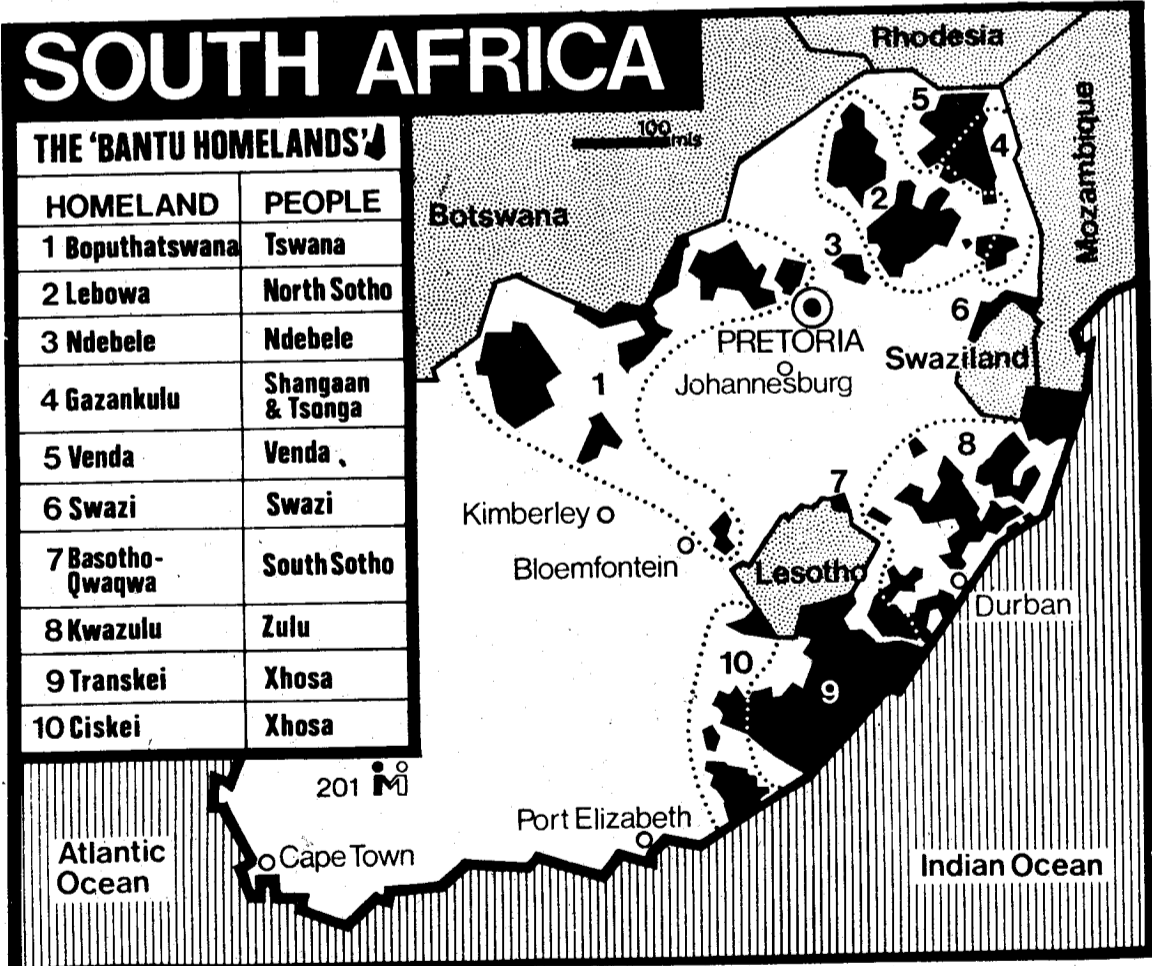
A 'Free Noreen Winchester' group was subsequently formed in Amsterdam, and the case has also been taken up by Belfast Women's Aid.

CLARE RUSSELL

THE HUNGER strikers at Qasr prison in Iran have won many of their demands, according to the 'Guardian' of 18th April.

"Among the concessions is the right to uncensored books and Government newspapers. Visiting conditions have been improved and prisoners will also be allowed needles to mend their clothes".

After this victory the prisoners called off the four-week strike on April 10th.



Germany

ONE LAW FOR NEO-NAZIS, ANOTHER FOR THE LEFT

TWO RECENT cases of the use of West Germany's *Berufsverbote* have highlighted the way this repressive legislation is used to keep left-wingers out of jobs in the public sector.

Edgar Vogel is a member of the ruling SPD (Social-Democratic Party). But when he applied to the Bavarian Ministry of Culture for a job as a grammar school teacher, he was turned down as a subversive.

He had, it seems, supported the SPD's medium-term programme, which describes Germany as a 'class society'. That, according to the Ministry's judgment, is 'anti-constitutional' and quite enough to cast doubts on the political safety of Mr Vogel.

The *Berufsverbote* were introduced — in 1972 — by a Social Democratic government; but the

regional administration in Bavaria is run by the Christian Social Union, which is part of the right wing opposition.

The Ministry has claimed that its connecting the programme with anti-constitutional ideas was a slip of the pen. It was the Ideas of the Munich branch of the Socialist University Federation that were anti-constitutional, and Mr Vogel's membership of that was what made him unsafe to be a teacher.

Meanwhile the court in Mannheim has ruled that there is no evidence to suggest that the National Democratic Party — a neo-Nazi outfit — pursues 'anti-constitutional aims'.

The two cases cropped up just when the West German press was waging a cover-up campaign on the issue of the *Berufsverbote* to counteract the findings of the Russell Tribunal on human rights, which has been investigating the use of these laws.



FASCISTS IN BRIXTON

Inside Webster's phony 'Public Meeting'



'you, you and you'. Webster, with East London Thug Derek Day, picks his audience.

ONE of the local teachers who managed to get inside the meeting described what happened to Workers' Action.

The 18 of us who got in were closely vetted by Webster, who turned away anyone he did not like by labelling them as Socialist Workers' Party members. [In fact two Sunday Mirror journalists were also barred from the meeting].

We were 'guided' to seats in the back of the hall, away from

the entrance, with NF stewards behind us and on either flank. Right from the start we were intimidated and verbally abused, and NF cameramen photographed us individually. Webster then announced that he didn't mind heckling as long as it was not abusive!

He said that he had asked for 30 teachers but none had bothered to come in. I challenged this by declaring that I was a local teacher, and that as far as I knew the Lambeth NUT have

not been asked to send in observers.

I was shouted down, by chants of "National Front! National Front!" and clapping.

The chanting intensified when a slightly bald man [probably Tyndall] spoke. I could feel that there wouldn't be question time, and that there was going to be trouble.

The stewards who stood right behind us were clapping in such a way that their elbows continually knocked against our necks and shoulders.

We shouted back, calling them Nazis and doing a Hitler salute. Someone in the middle of the hall got up and did a clenched fist salute. At this the audience went berserk and several set upon him.

We were then attacked, and had chairs thrown at us; I was pushed and kicked by four stewards, one of whom said, "I know you, you're a local teacher, you swine. I'll get you. In fact I shall kill you, you scum".

As the melee died down, Webster said, "The TV cameramen are being very unfair to us". The police advised us strongly to leave, as the cameras were about the leave the hall as well.

They did little to protect us, and ignored many of the audience who wore paramilitary camouflage combat jackets with large NF badges on.



FURIOUS TEACHERS PICKET THEIR SCHOOL

ABOUT 1000 local anti-fascists turned up at short notice to picket the National Front Lambeth by-election meeting at Brixton on Saturday 15th April.

It was the second time that the NF have booked the Loughborough primary school, the last time being a council by-election in Angell ward last year.

The booking was made for the afternoon after the teachers had booked up every available evening in their effort to stop the Front. The entire staffs of the junior and infants schools, including the headteachers, strongly opposed the booking — to no avail.

There was a massive contingent of over 4,000 police, complete with mounted police, dozens of vans, and SPG, and TV cameras. The anti-fascists were outnumbered and harassed by the cops, who made 34 arrests.

Dick North, a National Executive member of the National Union of Teachers, was arrested for obstructing the police. Mrs Singh, an Indian teacher, was arrested for assaulting the police.

At a NUT branch meeting two days afterwards, teachers listed other arrests they witnessed, including random snatches by police in vans of five or six black youths as they left the picket. Several people who stopped to find out what was going on were also arrest-

ed when two extra SPG vans appeared.

Those who picketed Brixton police station afterwards were pushed away by rows of police, who were trying to provoke people in order to make more arrests.

Earlier in the week, various attempts had been made to ban the event on the grounds that NF meetings are not genuine public meetings as required by the Representation of the People Act. These attempts, by ILEA and the Anti-Nazi League, were by-passed by the Front when a token 30 were allowed in. After close vetting by NF organiser Martin Webster, only 18 actually got in, including several local teachers.

Inside the so-called public meeting, the 18 were crudely abused by the 200-strong crowd, and repeatedly jostled by NF stewards. If it were not for the presence of TV cameras, they would certainly have been seriously injured; the few police who were inside did little to stop the NF heavies who had a go at the 18. They were ejected from the meeting after about 45 minutes.

A defence fund was started at the Lambeth teachers' union branch meeting on the following Monday for those arrested, and the branch is proposing to the Trades Council that a Defence Committee be set up immediately.

CHEUNG SIU MING

Duckets Common Festival

LAST YEAR on April 23rd, 3000 socialists and anti-fascists gathered on Duckets Common, Turnpike Lane, in North London, in protest against a National Front march.

We didn't stop the march, but we made sure it was flanked by vocal protest all the way, and could only struggle through under heavy police protection.

This April 15th, the anniversary was marked by a Festival against Racism on Duckets Common, sponsored by the Haringey Labour Movement Campaign against Racism and Fascism, the Haringey Community Relations Commission, and the United Black Women's Action Group. Over 500 local people came to the Festival.

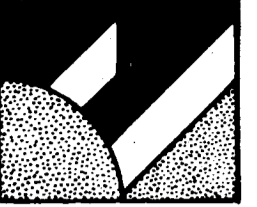
There was Broadside Mobile Workers' Theatre performing their play, 'Divide and Rule Britannia'; a steel band; the reggae group, 'Black Slate'; speakers; and stalls organised by political and community groups.

Next Saturday, 22nd, a similar Festival is being organised in Islington: at Highbury Fields, from 12 noon. And throughout that afternoon there will be mass anti-racist leafletting of the Borough.

MARY CORBISHLEY

THE NEXT SELLOUT PHASE IS ON THE DRAWING BOARD

Editorial



"A DEFINITE figure of a 7 per cent pay norm will get a public 'no' from the TUC, as the current 10 per cent policy has done, but tacit support from union leaders"

As this report from the Guardian shows, the TUC leaders and the Labour Government are already conspiring and organising to get another year of wage curbs. With the firemen's defeat only a few months old, they are organising to try to make sure there are similar betrayals next year!

Since the Government's most optimistic predictions for price rises in 1978-79 come to 7%, a 7% wage-rise norm — after being eaten away by taxes and so on — would mean a further drop in workers' living standards.

In the state sector, the Government proposes to impose this limit directly; in the private sector, it will try to enforce it by the threat of economic penalties for employers paying over the odds.

And there will be propaganda to back it up, about wage controls being necessary to stop inflation. But who still believes that? The fact is that wage rises chase after price rises, not the other way round. The connection between inflation and wage controls is that both are results of the crisis of the capitalist system.

Economy

The real motive for wage controls is the drive to increase profits at the expense of wages. The Labour Government thinks this is necessary to 'save the economy'. They have committed themselves to running the capitalist system, and they know that for that system a healthy economy means healthy profits... and the workers getting what crumbs we can.

And while the Labour Government is trying to save the profiteers, the TUC leaders are trying to save the Labour Government at all costs.

Some union leaders, like Moss Evans of the TGWU, have been forced by their members to say things like: "in no way would we agree to a continuation of pay policy either imposed by the

government or by voluntary agreement".

But at the same time they make it clear that they will do their best, behind the scenes, to back Labour Government wage controls. "We recognise the importance of making a complete economic recovery", said Evans, "and to do that it is necessary to have a Labour Government... if a Tory government were elected it would be a disaster for Britain".

And the end result of all this talk about helping "the economy" is that the Labour government, aided by the trade union leaders, is imposing bigger cuts in workers' living standards than any Tory government has ever dared or been able to!

This line of being more Tory than the Tories is a dead end for the labour movement. The rank and file needs a different policy.

Drift

Already Callaghan and Healey, Evans and Murray, are aware there is more opposition to wage limits than ever before. Probably the norm for Phase 4 will be allowed to drift upwards a bit from the 7% level. Especially in an election year, when Labour really needs working class support, the whole wage-control swindle can be broken up completely.

Working-class action, and working-class solidarity, at rank and file level, is the force that can do that, with demands for:

- Wage increases sufficient to make up the loss in living standards since 1974-75;

- Automatic cost of living increases to protect against inflation in future;

- An adequate national minimum wage.

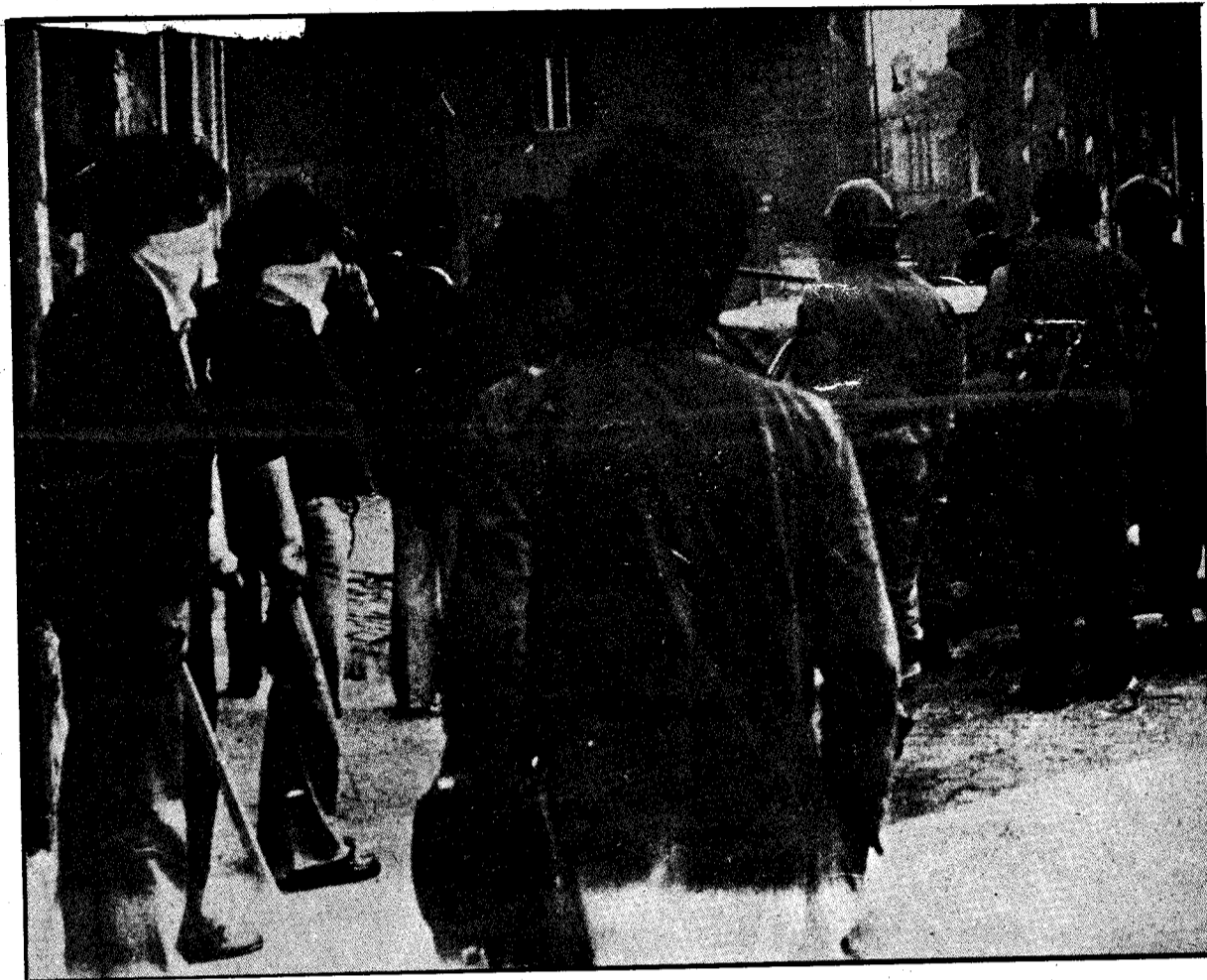
For socialists in the labour movement, our duty is to make these demands and these policies heard loud and clear during the run-up to the coming general election — to show that Callaghan's wage freezes are not the only voice of Labour. That is what the 'Labour Campaign for Socialism' recently launched by Workers' Action will be doing.

A witch-hunt against the left, by a right-wing government, is in full swing in Italy. Meanwhile the working class is bludgeoned with wage freezes and calls

for 'austerity'. But the major party of the Left — the Italian Communist Party — is supporting the government, supporting its drive against 'subvers-

ives', and supporting its pressure for 'austerity'! PAUL ADAMS explains the development of the 'historic compromise' strategy which guides the CP.

The PCI — of comp



Police provocateurs ready for action at a demonstration. Much of Italy's violence stems from state agents.

A LITTLE REFORM TO FORESTALL FREEDOM

BY 308 votes to 275 the Italian parliament's lower chamber has approved a bill that will legalise abortion and make it free. There seems little doubt that the bill will pass through the upper house and soon become law.

While the new bill certainly improves the situation of women, it cannot be seen as a victory. It had been framed in large part in order to head off the possibility of a referendum on the issue, called for by the small Radical Party, which might well have resulted in a far better deal for women.

The present bill claims to provide free abortion on demand, and to leave the decision to the woman, but this is not really the case. Article 4 indicates the circumstances in which abortion will be allowed within the first 90 days of pregnancy: when there will be a danger to health (either mental or physical); where it is advisable on economic or social grounds; where there is proof of rape or a malformation of the fetus.

Bill

A great deal of the bill is taken up with setting out the procedure for establishing these proofs. In the end of course it is up to the doctors and state functionaries to sanction the abortion. Hardly a case of abortion on demand.

Another article requires the consent of the father of the unborn child. In the original draft this provision did not exist. It was inserted

after strong pressure from the Christian Democracy (who in any case voted against the bill) and was accepted by all the parties supporting it.

When the woman is under 18, the father's permission is also required. In the original draft the age limit was 16; again the Christian Democracy's pressure prevailed, with the Communists abstaining.

Risk

All this applies, of course, only to the first 90 days. After that an abortion is only possible if a doctor issues a certificate saying there is likely to be grave risk to the mother's life or that the fetus is deformed.

The strangest stipulation in the bill is in article 8, which appears to ban hospitals from performing any abortions should their number exceed 25% of all operations.

The bill naturally permits doctors to refuse to participate in these procedures on conscientious grounds — something that is likely to be a big factor in a predominantly Catholic country. It also calls for heavier penalties for illegal abortion.

There is widespread feeling that the bill, if it becomes law, will be implemented in such a way that the present highly restrictive situation does not change radically. That is why the parties to the left of the CP voted against the bill, and why the Radical Party's MPs tried to talk it out. Within the CP women's organisation, the UDI (Union of Italian Women), a big row has developed over the bill.



In 1974 there was a referendum on divorce, instigated by the right-wing Christian Democrat Fanfani. The results were dramatic. Only 40% opposed divorce, as against 48% two years before. The PCI was not slow to understand the implications. Berlinguer addressed the Central Committee: "The process of modernisation of society, brought about by Italy's transition from a predominantly agricultural to an industrial society, has contributed to the fall of many old taboos and backward ideas and customs, of which women have been the major victims".

The 'theory' of the "historic compromise" is simple.

The struggle is to be for a new, advanced democracy containing elements of socialism, from which complete socialism can be reached gradually, peacefully and constitutionally. This advanced democracy is based on a broad alliance which unifies the whole nation against the monopolists who are the real social base of fascism and reaction.

With the forging of an alliance between the parties of the constitutional spectrum the preconditions are established for taking the road to socialism using parliamentary democratic methods only, because the reactionaries will be isolated.

What about the state? no problem: a government uniting such popular masses would have not only constitutional authority but sufficient real power to bend the state machine to the will of the people.

And nationalisation? No need: as Renato Zangheri, PCI Central Committee member and mayor of Bologna, says "The economic situation in our country is very serious, and we do not intend to try to improve it by further nationalisation. In Italy, there is already a significant proportion of state ownership. Here the problem consists in running the already existing industries better. To run them better means to run them for the benefit of the population and not for the benefit of small groups. And not to run them so that they are subordinated to the interests of the big monopolies, as is the case today. Our aim is reform of state industry but not its expansion."

The 'errors' of this outlook are legion. But in reality it is not a matter of errors, but of cynical apologetics thought up to justify the CP leaders' slavish concentration on getting niches for themselves within the system.

The whole thing is based on the assumption that the working class and the oppressed can identify with the interests of almost the entire bourgeoisie — of all the bourgeoisie except a few monopolists.

Minor

And what is it that united the exploiters and the exploited? The CPI (and the Communist Party of Great Britain for that matter) would say that the exploiters and those they exploit are all opposed to the power of the monopolies and to the continuation of economic backwardness.

In fact, any differences the smaller capitalists have with the monopolists are minor compared to their common hostility to the working class. And where they differ from the monopolists, the smaller capitalists often want harsher exploitation and more severe measures against the working class!

It is nonsense anyway to think that one section of the capitalist class can be isolated from the rest of the capitalists purely on the basis of its distinct economic interests. This crucial 'error' shows up in the analysis of fascism common to the Communist Parties.

The CPI claims that fascism is the movement of the big

bourgeoisie alone. It also tends to lump fascism and reaction together as a single idea. Not surprisingly, then, the 'historic compromise' turns out to be little more than an updated version of the Popular Fronts policy pushed through by Stalin at the 1935 Comintern Congress

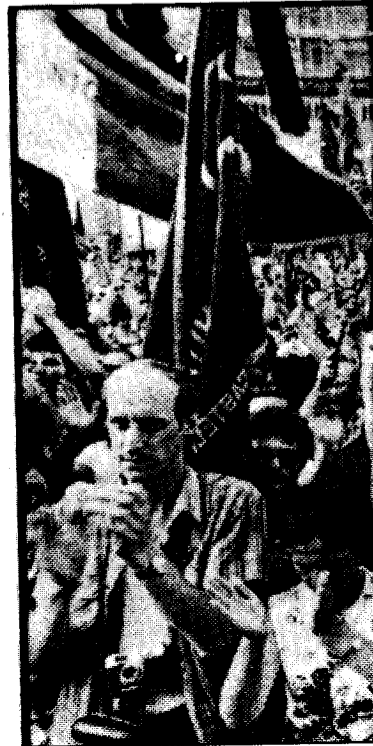
No wonder Trotsky called it "the Comintern's liquidation Congress", and how right he was to say it announced the entry of the Third International into the camp of the reformists and patriots of the Second International!

As it turns out, despite this identification of the monopoly bourgeoisie and fascism, the CPI's attacks are directed less and less against this powerful section, but more and more against "big middle-men and speculation" and "rentier and parasitic interests". In other words the CPI has taken up

HARD WORK FOR THE NATION AND STATE

PCI chief Enrico Berlinguer often speaks of his party's commitment to the "non-ideological nature of the state and its democratic organisation". The state is not seen as an instrument for the exploitation of the oppressed classes, but as the representative organs of public service and public order.

Naturally, if the bourgeoisie or almost the whole bourgeoisie is not the enemy, if the state is not an instrument of oppression and if the reactionary elements that do exist can be isolated by the handclaps of the big party leaders, the class struggle has no real role. Or rather it is limited to a range of moral issues — including the fight for ... increase



a history promise

the slogans of populism (and even of fascism!) about 'good' and 'bad' capitalism, 'good' industrialists and 'bad' financiers!

But isn't the alliance with the Christian Democracy an alliance precisely with the party that represents the monopolists? Not at all! "The Christian Democrats", to quote Zangheri again "are not merely a bourgeois party. It is, of course, the party which has traditionally represented the interests of the Italian middle class. However, it is also an inter-class party which embraces large masses of the people..."

"Do you think it is possible that these 13 million are all reactionary? ... For among these 13 million Christian Democrat voters, there are without a doubt countless workers who desire the progress of the country. And it would be a

great mistake if we did not realise that we must include the great mass of Catholic workers in our policy of democratic progress who still vote for Christian Democrats."

However, far from it being an exception for a party of the big bourgeoisie to have a mass base including not only petit bourgeois but workers, it is in fact the norm. It just means that socialists have to work to win those workers away from their servile attachment to the Tories or the Christian Democrats.

Of course the Tory Party does not have the same relation to the Church — though it must be said that this is waning in Italy — not the same connections with institutionalised graft and corruption. But these features of the Christian Democracy can hardly be what makes it a likely partner in a "progressive alliance"!



Above: arrests at a Left demonstration. Below: Berlinguer, Carrillo and Marchais.



productivity. Thus is an extreme right-wing twist given by the CPI to Antonio Gramsci's theory of the hegemony of the proletariat!

Berlinguer's Report to the Central Committee at the end of 1974 spelled out all these themes in terms no Tory could dissent from. "We repeat, the essential thing is to take the situation as it is today as our point of departure and see how we can climb back out of it."

"And it is precisely because we take this standpoint that we — the Party of the working class and exploited — clearly say that we cannot get out of the crisis without a period of hard work and strenuous efforts by the whole

people and a mobilisation of all national energies.

"We must, however, be very clear about the social, political and moral conditions on which these efforts are possible and acceptable.

"Hard work means that we must produce more, avoid waste, save and effectively use all available resources to reconvert industry and reorganise economic and administrative activities according to criteria of efficiency and honesty.

"It means we must change certain habits in order to find a better way of life in different forms than the present. Hard work means that our political personnel and all members of the

public administration must show a new spirit of dedication at the service of the nation and State.

"It means that our teachers and students must again turn to their studies with seriousness and discipline, that all citizens must work to improve their education and culture within the limits of their possibilities, that all intellectuals must again grasp the sense of the role they are called to play in the country's progress.

"Finally, it means that we must all react vigorously against the present manifestations of delinquency and immorality, in order to recreate a sense of solidarity and mutual support among

men, against all forms of egotism and exacerbated individualism."

The last time the CPI was in the government, after the Second World War, the bourgeoisie was able to throw two million workers out of their jobs, using the collaboration of the CP to keep working class resistance to a minimum. In the period of the Italian 'economic miracle', the Italian bourgeoisie could afford to rule without such assistance.

Now, for the bourgeoisie and for the leaders of the CPI, the 'historic compromise' is to be the political cover for a new period of intensified exploitation and capitalist rationalisation — this time in the context of international capitalist crisis.

NEW LABEL ON AN OLD BOTTLE

FOR REVOLUTIONARY socialists the bloody defeat of the Allende regime in Chile in September 1973 bitterly confirmed their warnings: the capitalist state must be smashed, constitutions and traditions of bourgeois democracy are no guarantee against counter-revolutionary action by the state forces, constant preaching of the need for a 'peaceful road' disarms the workers and their allies...

But others were drawing opposite conclusions from the same event. Giorgio Napolitano, chairman of the Economic Bureau of the PCI, recounts how "at the same Enrico Berlinguer [the party's general secretary] stressed the need to provide Italy with a government and political direction that were not based solely on an alliance of the left — of the Communist and Socialist parties — but which had different and far broader bases. This was the premise of the 'historical compromise'..."

Allende had been too left wing; he had isolated himself dangerously from the middle classes. The answer was to go slowly, in alliance with parties like Italy's Christian Democracy.

This plan to form a government with all the parties of the so-called 'constitutional spectrum', and move gradually and peacefully 'in the direction of socialism', within the limits of the existing constitution, was in essence a new label on an old bottle of not very red wine.

The Communist Parties had long been in the camp of reformism, and the PCI in particular had been one of the pioneering parties for a line of 'pluralism' and 'polycentrism' — jargon terms for going along with capitalist democracy and getting along with one's own bourgeoisie even when it doesn't suit Moscow.

And the PCI had already once been in government alongside the Christian Democrats, after the fall of Mussolini. But that alliance came to an end in 1947 with the opening of the Cold War.

Meanwhile the PCI's leader Togliatti declared: "Our constitution is not entirely a socialist one, but precisely because it is the expression of a broad movement for national unity and renewal it is radically different from other bourgeois constitutions. Its political and social characteristics form a workable basis for the development of Italian society along a path leading to socialism."

The novelty of the 'historic compromise' lies only in its setting: firstly it is for the first time in thirty years not simply a project, but a practical reality now that the Christian Democratic government has formally accepted PCI support; secondly, it goes along with the development of a deep rift between a number of Communist Parties, above all the Italian and Spanish, and Moscow.



The upsurge of '68

EXACTLY ten years ago...

9000 textile workers at Valdarno, a small town halfway between Milan and Venice, smashed the bronze statue of their boss, Gaetano Marzotto, from off its base.

This symbolic overthrow of Marzotto, who ruled the lives of tens of thousands of people in Valdarno and the surrounding towns, was followed over the next ten months by three big strikes, including a month-long occupation of Marzotto's works. From an area known for its political passivity, Valdarno became a by-word for revolt. Students, artisans, and other workers in the area rallied to the side of the textile workers.

Meanwhile in Turin, Fiat workers with their wives and children, and supported by students, fought police in a series of street battles that went on for days. Their slogan was: "What do we say? We've had enough! What do we want? Every-

thing!"

In Milan, workers at Pirelli stormed the company's sky-scraper headquarters and forced their directors out onto the highest window ledge, threatening to 'teach them how to fly'.

Everywhere the struggles taken up by one group of workers were supported, spread, and continued by others — by other workers, by students, by tenants, and by artisans.

The bureaucracies of the trade unions and workers' parties only responded sympathetically under pressure. In general they tried to hold back or head off the struggles.

The far left groups, on the other hand, were incapable of giving these struggles any perspective.

Eventually the proletarian storm blew itself out: wave after wave of mass action beat down on the beaches of bourgeois order, then died down.

The PCI [Communist Party] did not gain electorally while the mass struggles were at their height: indeed, their 1970 vote was marginally — 0.17% — lower than their previous tally. They were not seen as the champions of the militant mass movement.

With the decline of those struggles, however, people began looking for political alternatives to supplement or substitute for direct action. The PCI, as the traditional mass party of the workers' movement, gained a lot: the margin between the PCI and the Christian Democracy, the big conservative party, narrowed from 10% to 1.8%.

A further indication of the continued leftward shift was provided by the result of the 1974 referendum on divorce.

It was against this background that the PCI announced its new formula of the 'historic compromise'.

JL REVIEW

JOHN PARSONS reviews
"NO MEAN FIGHTER"
by Harry McShane and Joan
Smith [Pluto Press, £2.95]

TO BORROW a trick from the current method in film advertising, Harry McShane is 'No Mean Fighter'.

The book is the record of the struggle for the working class cause by a Scottish socialist who at the age of 87 is still a revolutionary and a trade union activist.

It focuses on Glasgow, and the battles of that city's working class against unemployment, eviction, poor housing and poverty, war and Orangeism.

One of the most interesting aspects is the insight it gives into the ideological development of the socialists before world war 1. Harry McShane's own early intellectual development came through the debates and speeches of the roofless lecture halls of the 'university' of Glasgow Green, the city's Speakers' Corner.

Freethinkers

The debates at Glasgow Green were about Protestantism versus Catholicism, Orangeism versus Republicanism, and free-thinking versus religion. Socialists usually spoke as free-thinkers.

Among the more famous speakers there were Emanuel Shinwell, John Wheatley (of the Catholic Socialist Society and later the ILP), John Maclean (whom the Bolsheviks appointed Soviet consul in Glasgow), and Willie Gallacher (later a leader of the Communist Party and an MP).

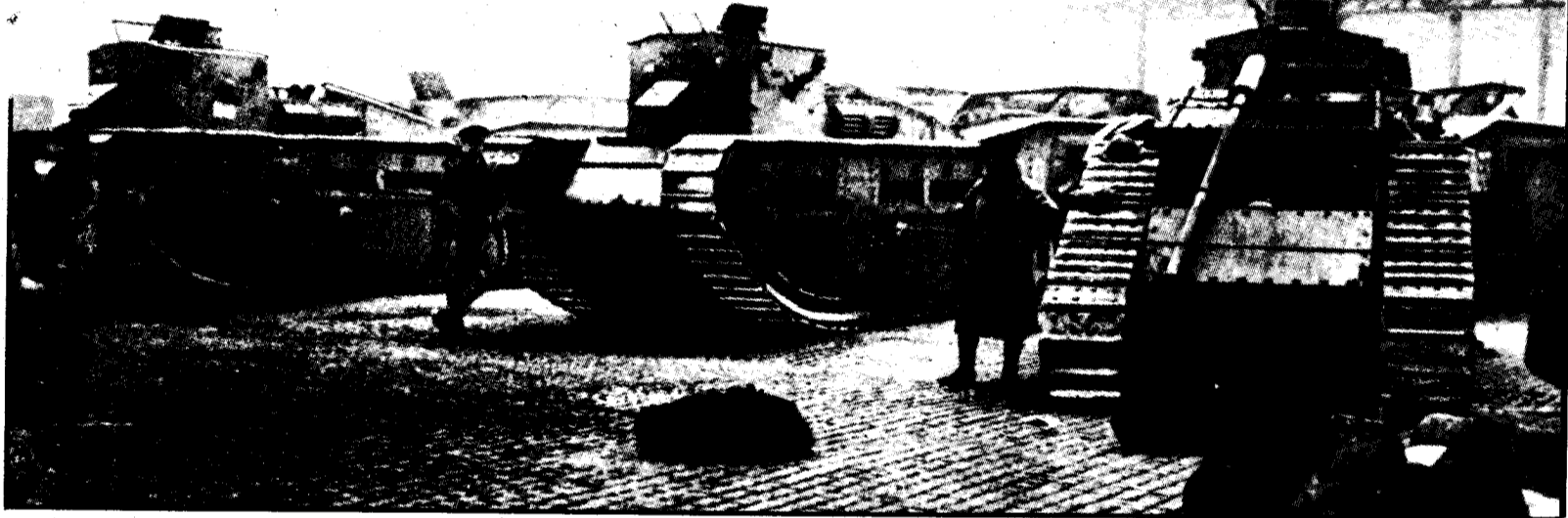
This was the intellectual background of many leading figures in the early Communist Party — not only of the Scots who were so important to it.

For instance, contrasting *Daily Worker* editor William Rust with the party's general secretary Harry Pollitt, McShane writes, "Whereas Rust had come into the movement through the Young Communist League, Harry Pollitt was in the movement earlier, as I was. He had obviously read widely in the free-thought literature; he and I discussed Haeckel's 'Riddle of the Universe'. I got the impression that was part of his background".

Lords

Harry McShane's first political affiliation came when he joined the Independent Labour Party in 1909. The Glasgow Kingston branch had about forty members. "Some of them became very prominent in the Glasgow movement: Pat Dollan, Andrew Hood, Jimmy Walsh and Tom Kerr, all of whom became Lord Provosts of Glasgow. Jean Roberts, who later took charge of Cumbernauld New Town, was also in it".

"I don't regret the time and energy and sometimes the hardships involved. The movement kept me alive. The movement owes me nothing; on the contrary, I owe it much. Life would have been empty without it".



Harry McShane: and, below, tanks sent in to Glasgow in 1919 by a fearful capitalist state.

Among the leading ILPers in Glasgow at that time were John Wheatley, who later became Minister of Health, and David Kirkwood and Emanuel Shinwell, both of whom "ended up warming their backsides on the upholstery of the House of Lords".

A rich picture is painted of the early Labour left — both the ILP and the British Socialist Party, which McShane joined when it was founded in 1911 — and the way in which opportunism flourished there. The account of David Kirkwood's fall from shop steward to parliamentary dignity is interesting and instructive.

World War 1, like a poultice, drew the poison of opportunism to the surface, in a way which shocked the young Harry McShane. Not only did Hyndman [the leader of the BSP] and Blatchford [the ILP's great publicist] support what John Maclean called "the murder business", but even Victor Grayson, whom Harry much admired as a speaker and a real socialist, was struck down by the war fever which infected the mass of the population.

At this point another lesson was learnt: that those who were militant fighter in the workshop, but saw that as the be-all-and-end-all of politics, would in a situation like war be little better than the opportunists.

"Although the leadership of the Clyde Workers' Committee were supposed to be revolutionary socialists, they actually came under the in-

fluence of other ideas. Gallacher had the usual syndicalist cry — too much education and not enough action; theory wasn't a strong point with him. Johnny Muir was the 'intellectual' of the CWC.

"Muir was a member of the Socialist Labour Party and worked for Barr and Stroud's, the instrument makers. He argued that the CWC should accept the war as a fact and work for what they could get in the circumstances.

"David Kirkwood was a member of the SLP when the war broke out, and because of Muir's attitude he left and joined the ILP.

"Most SLP members were anti-war like Arthur MacManus, but didn't oppose Muir at the CWC; neither did the BSP members. This meant that no anti-war fight developed inside the factories; the men were making guns, shells and all kinds of munitions, but the all-important question was never raised".

Hero

In late 1915 John Maclean, Harry McShane's closest comrade-in-arms, and the leader of the anti-war fight in Glasgow — indeed in the country — criticised Gallacher openly: "How could any man calling himself a socialist come to speak at a meeting at this time and not refer to the war that is raging in Europe!"

Harry McShane doesn't hold with hero-worship, but

it can be said that John Maclean, with whom he fought the rent struggles, the anti-war fight, the Home Rule agitation and with whom he formed the touring educational group of the 'The Tramp Trust Unlimited', is the hero of the first part of the book. And it is in connection with the struggles of that period that the book is most absorbing.

Harry McShane did not join the Communist Party at its founding. He joined through his activities in the unemployed movement; there he gained the close comradeship of Wal Hannington but lost that of John Maclean who founded the Scottish Workers' Republican Party.

From his Glasgow activity he knew many of its early leaders — Aitken Ferguson, Arthur MacManus, Helen Crawford, J R Campbell, Tom Bell, Willie Gallacher and Peter Kerrigan. Later he got to know Pollitt, Gollan, Rust and Hannington, all of whom are sharply sketched in the book.

McShane's account of life in the Communist Party is unfortunately very fragmentary and anecdotal, rarely analytical. The descriptions are however lively and often very informative. The following is a good example:

"The worship of Stalin affected all levels of life inside the party. Because decisions were taken in Moscow and the party leaders merely had to justify the line, the party became dominated by men with no independence:

mere bureaucrats.

"Harry Pollitt had done mass work, but the other leaders were people trained inside the Communist Party. John Gollan gained his reputation during the 'social fascist' period, when he made his famous appeal to the troops. But he had no real experience of the movement — yet Pollitt was determined he would be the next general secretary.

Shift

"Gollan was walking along the road in front of us one day when Pollitt said to me: 'There is your next general secretary'. I wasn't very happy about it, and among the mass of the membership there wasn't much enthusiasm either.

"The new members of the Glasgow Committee didn't have much background in the movement. They had come in during the second world war, not understanding marxist politics; they followed every latest shift in the party line..."

I found the most interesting part of this section of the book the story of the Communist Party's accommodation to bourgeois Scottish nationalism. Harry McShane left the Communist Party in 1952.

It should be added that occasionally the book is not quite accurate where it is dealing with matters outside Britain. For instance, no way was Kerensky "the leader of the Menshevik faction of the Russian socialists"!

SINCE the Garscadden by-election result, Labour right-wingers have been crowing about the success of fighting elections "on the Government's record".

But for the Young Socialists who gathered in Birmingham last Saturday, 15th, for a **Workers' Action** day school, it was obvious that defending the Government's record has little relevance to winning elections and none at all to socialism!

The day school concluded with a discussion of the "Labour Campaign for Socialism" launched by **Workers' Action** supporters at the LPYS conference this Easter. The aim of this campaign is to make a militant, anti-capitalist, anti-Government voice heard, from the labour movement, during the run-up to the elections. Since the YS conference the **Socialist Charter** movement in the Labour Party has indicated its willingness to join in the campaign.

The campaign, said Simon Temple of Birmingham Selly Oak CLP, will not be a matter of passively petitioning Jim

ANTI-RACIST WORK CENTRAL TO LABOUR CAMPAIGN FOR SOCIALISM

Callaghan or local MPs for better policies next time. It's a matter of organising and galvanising left-wing Labour supporters to get revolutionary socialist ideas across in the election period, and to prepare a socialist opposition to the next government — whether it's Tory or Labour

Racism

A major feature of the campaign will be anti-racist activity. Geoff Williams (Cardiff

North LPYS) reported on a local election in the Cardiff area where the CLP had forbidden the local YS to campaign against racism during the election period. Racism isn't an issue, they had said: we're fighting on the Government's record. Geoff Williams said that Cardiff **Workers' Action** supporters, together with the local Anti Nazi League, would certainly be campaigning despite that.

Anti-racist and anti-fascist work was also discussed more generally. Ross Catlin from Northampton North LPYS said that the local anti-fascist committee would be organising one or two coachloads to come down to the anti-Nazi 'carnival' on 30th April.

Earlier in the day the school had talked about getting the YS involved in campaigns on the Irish question and on unemployment. Joe Baxter (Edinburgh Central YS) gave a report on recent progress with the Edinburgh YCAU's fortnightly bulletin 'Dole Mole'. Several people from Edinburgh North

YS were now involved in the campaign alongside the original activists from Edinburgh Central, and they hoped to have a number of trade union branches sending delegates to the conference the Edinburgh YCAU is organising soon. They are also organising a social to build the campaign.

Stifled

People from Merseyside and Cardiff, however, reported on how the **Militant** majority in the YS had stifled campaigning against unemployment in those areas. Cardiff YS members reported that they had been having discussions with local SWP youth about the possibility of joint activity on unemployment.

The day school fell short of our hopes in the numbers attending — only about 25 — but those who did attend felt that a solid basis had been laid for the coming months' activity in the YS.

MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN

IMG's muddled election message

THE INTERNATIONAL Marxist Group held its conference last weekend, 15-18 April, to decide the main lines of its policy for the coming year. Unusually for a revolutionary organisation, it invited press reporters from other revolutionary-left papers to part of the conference.

The majority proposed that the IMG's main slogan for the coming period should be: 'For a Labour Government, but Build a Socialist Alternative'.

The slogan is intended to cover the situation where the IMG will be promoting Socialist Unity candidates in some constituencies but voting Labour in most. It can't be said it does that very well: 'For a Labour Government but don't vote Labour' is likely to seem an odd message. On top of that, the IMG's formulation seems to put obstacles in the way of IMG sympathisers in the Labour Party participating in the 'Labour Campaign for Socialism', launched recently by **Workers' Action**, which will be trying to make a revolutionary socialist voice heard from the labour movement at election time.

Also, as the small opposition tendencies in the IMG pointed out, this orientation amounts to little more than 'Vote Labour but Build the Party' — a slogan with little programmatic content or meaning. It differs from the SWP's 'Build the Party' agitation in that the SWP focuses on building the present SWP, whereas the IMG focuses on building a future broad, unified socialist movement — but in both cases the political content is left vague.

The demand 'For a Labour Gov-

ernment' is also, at best, clumsy. Marxists say to people, vote Labour but fight tooth and nail against the anti-working class policies of the Labour leadership. The slogan 'For a Labour Government' just seems to say that a Labour Government is a lesser evil than a Tory one; a proposition which is very doubtful after the experience of the Wilson and Callaghan years!

However, the opposition in the IMG, arguing 'For a Labour Government, but fight for Socialist Policies', interprets it very like the 'Labour to power with a socialist programme' bleating put out by the **Militant**.

'Socialist Unity' was very much at the centre of the IMG's perspectives, though not much was said about its future prospects: will it be a new party, or a looser sort of movement, or just an electoral bloc?

Generally — for example, in their stress on building an *autonomous* women's movement, without a specific class identification — the IMG felt they were making a healthy break from the "economism and syndicalism" which had long dominated the revolutionary left. To me it seemed that "economism and syndicalism" was often being misused to refer to sharp concern with working-class interests and a working-class viewpoint. But we can hope that the IMG's drive against sectarianism will be reflected in a willingness to debate these issues with the rest of the revolutionary left, including **Workers' Action**.

CLARE RUSSELL



Young anti-fascists at Lewisham

Members must hold NUR to anti-NF rule

MICHAEL O'Sullivan talked to Dave Kelleher, a NUR shop steward on London Transport and chairman of Central Ward, Tottenham CLP, about the NUR's decision to ban fascist activists from the union.

□ What fascist activity do you know of in the union?

■ In the escalator division they have been active putting up fascist stickers and the like. In the other sections of London Transport they've kept a low profile.

□ What's your reaction to the call for the expulsion of fascists?

■ The rank and file on London Transport have been fighting for this for years. I would like to see other unions on public transport following the NUR's lead. It came from the shop floor, and gradually worked its way up through the district council.

□ Do you think there will be any support for the fascists?

■ No, not on my section.

□ What has the union bureaucracy done to implement this

decision?

■ Nothing as yet. It may be that given all the opposition from people like Callaghan and from the press they might attempt to back down.

□ What would you do if they did that?

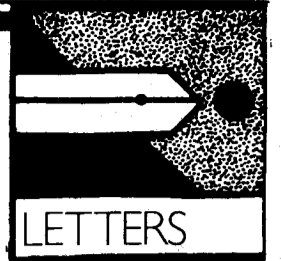
■ We would fight at branch level to implement the decision.

□ What do you think about the press coverage the decision has got?

■ It's only to be expected: just as they supported the fascists at Lewisham and just as they're for the expulsion of the Cowley trade unionists who are fighting for their rights. The media is always anti-union and pro-capitalism.

□ What has been the reaction of black workers?

■ Not much at present, though they are a high proportion of the workforce. They have not played a big role in the union, for instance we have no black stewards. But the decision should help to raise their confidence in the union.



LOOKING INTO METHODS OF EARLY DAYCARE ABORTION

Dear comrades,

A comparative study has been set up at the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh. The aim of the study is to compare four methods of early abortion, to determine which of the four methods, which are relatively new, would be the most useful and acceptable to the woman.

At the moment the woman will be given a choice of one out of the following methods:

■ Menstrual extraction: this is the emptying of the contents of the uterus using a fine tube or cannula, attached to a syringe. This method will be carried out under either a local or a general anaesthetic.

The procedure will be carried out on a day-care basis, the woman being permitted to return home the same day provided she gets a taxi or is accompanied by a friend.

■ Menstrual regulation: this involves the insertion of a pessary impregnated with one of two prostaglandins into the vagina.

Prostaglandins are a group of substances, produced naturally in the human body, whose synthetic (commercially manufactured) derivatives produce contractions of the uterus.

The contractions of the uterus muscle lead to the expulsion of the contents of the uterus.

The use of this method of early abortion necessitates an overnight stay in hospital, as the side effects of prostaglandins are as yet unknown. This includes the amount of bleeding they may produce.

Trial

At the moment this scheme is a trial only, and is restricted to women who are referred via the Family Planning Association, the Brook Clinic, and the Student Health Centre, and who are less than seven weeks pregnant, i.e. less than seven weeks from the first day of their last period.

Although at present the scheme is only a trial, if it proves successful there is no reason why it should not be continued on a permanent basis.

Day-care abortion facilities are also available at the Eastern General Hospital, with referral via the woman's own or a sympathetic GP. These are being performed on women up to twelve weeks from their last period, usually under a general anaesthetic using a technique known as vacuum aspiration (removal of the contents of the uterus by suction). This is usually done under a light general anaesthetic, but it is also possible to use a local anaesthetic. Whichever form of anaesthetic is used, the woman is allowed home the same day, provided that she goes home in a taxi or is accompanied.

ANNE SCOTT
Edinburgh NAC.

workers' ACTION supporters' groups

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WORKERS IN ACTION

EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Paid ads (including ads for publications) 8p per word, 25 per column inch — payment in advance. Send copy to *Events*, Box 1960, 182 Upper Street, London N1, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

SATURDAY 29 APRIL. March Against Racism: meet at Balham tube station 12 noon, rally in Brockwell Park. Sponsored by All-Lambeth Anti-Racist Movement and other organisations.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 29-30 APRIL. National Abortion Campaign national conference: from 10am at Sheffield Students' Union, "Groves" Building, Weston Bank, Sheffield.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 29-30 APRIL. Socialist Teachers' Alliance Open Conference on the Politics of Education. In London: details, 25 Highgate West Hill, London N6.

SUNDAY 30 APRIL. Carnival against the Nazis. Organised by the Anti-Nazi League. Assemble 11am, Trafalgar Square; march to Victoria Park.

FRIDAY 5 MAY. 'What Programme for Socialist Revolution?' Debate between Spartacist League/Britain and the International-Communist League. 7pm at Essex Road Library, London N1. Admission 20p.

SATURDAY 6 MAY. 'The Crisis Intensifies: Which Way Forward for the Working Class?' Revolutionary Communist Day school. Saturday 6th May, 10am to 6pm (social in the evening). Write for details to: Dayschool, RCG Publications Ltd (A), 49 Raiton Rd, London SE24 0LN. Registration £1 (50p students/unemployed).

SATURDAY 14 MAY. Grunwick solidarity conference: 11am to 5pm at Wembley Conference Centre, Empire Way, Wembley. Trade Union and Labour Party branches can send two delegates: fee £1 per delegate, to the strike committee, Trades & Labour Hall, 375 High Road, Willesden, London NW10.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 17-18 JUNE. National conference of the Working Women's Charter campaign, at Manchester Poly, Cavendish House, All Saints, Manchester. Further information: Pat Cross, Flat 2, 49 Spring Bank Rd, Hull (telephone Hull 443 243).

'REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PAPERS No. 2' — Theoretical Journal of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency. Special Issue on Ireland. Articles on British Imperialism and the Irish crisis, and the revolutionary position on National Self-Determination. Available from BM RCT (WA), London WC1v 6XX. Price 50p plus 15p postage. Cheques & postal orders payable to RCT Association.

PICKET LINES

THE LONDON JOINT sites committee has called on building workers to lobby the new round of union-management talks on pay, this Thursday, 20th.

The union's claim is for new rates of £80 for craftsmen and £68 for labourers, plus consolidation of Phase 1 and 2 increases into the same basic rate. They also called for a 35 hour week and a fourth week's holiday each year.

Management have completely rejected the claim on hours and holidays, and on pay they have offered £60 for craftsmen and £52 for labourers. The Joint Sites Committee points out that this would give only £3.40 extra for craftsmen, and £2.70 for labourers.

Rail unions talk about job cuts

IN NEGOTIATIONS ON 12th April, representatives of the three rail unions — NUR, ASLEF, & TSSA — accepted a 10% rise on basic pay. It was a slight improve-

ment on British Rail's previous offer of 9.6%.

Negotiations are now focusing on possible productivity increases. British Rail will be demanding the unions agree to new cutbacks on jobs before any further money is offered.

Unofficial committee calls for 'no' vote

VOTING ON THE POWER worker's pay offer will be completed on Tuesday 25th. The proposed deal, giving a straight rise plus productivity payments, is reckoned to yield increases of between 11 and 22%. The union side of the official negotiating body has made no recommendation, but the rank and file power workers' committee based in Doncaster has called for a 'no' vote.

Leyland sack a convenor

LAST WEDNESDAY, 12th, British Leyland sacked John Power, for 13 years AUEW convenor

BAKERIES — IF THE 8000 GO, WHO'LL BE NEXT?

eight workers, his was the third job to be lost in a matter of weeks. Another worker is due to leave in a month: will he be replaced?

About one third of the work-force work on "morning goods" — rolls, tea cakes, baps etc — which are going out of production at the same time as Spillers bread operation. Management have sent out a letter to all employees in the cakes section, across the country, saying that their jobs are secure; but few workers give much weight to this promise.

The other aspect of McGonigle's sacking is political victimisation. Just two weeks ago, Ian Robinson, a steward at Memory Lane and a member of the Socialist Workers Party, was forced under management threat of

court action and regional officials' threat of expulsion from the union to withdraw statements made in a Rank and File bulletin he helped produce at the plant.

McGonigle had just been involved in producing a leaflet on the Spillers closures together with workers at the Merretts bakery next door. And a motion on the closures which he was going to propose at the union branch disappeared after it had been posted behind a clock card to the branch secretary.

The Joint Shop Stewards Committee was called — on Saturday 15th — mainly to discuss the closures. What it could do on that was limited, however, because the Maindy Lane plant, due to be closed, was not repres-

ented. The Maindy Lane stewards sent a letter to the committee saying that a mass meeting had decided to accept the redundancies, only pressing for more redundancy pay.

Strong pressure from regional union officials was probably a major factor in this decision.

At Merretts, however, a victory has been won. Management have backed down on their plans to introduce a three-shift system so as to boost production to make up for the Spillers closures.

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Garners strikers step up picketing

THE GARNERS Steak House strikers report in their latest strike bulletin:

'We are now entering the twelfth week of our official strike for the recognition of our union, the Transport and General Workers' Union...

Almost 100 trade unionists attended a conference on 13th April at Transport House, to discuss ways of intensifying the struggle...

Delegates pledged to mobilise their memberships to picket, raise funds, and step up the blacking of goods and services to Garners. The Conference resolved to have a recall conference if the strike is not won within six weeks, and to hold a solidarity day in the near future.

The strike committee will set dates and notify all supporters well in advance. We thank all the delegates who attended, and with their help we are even more determined to win this battle.

We are intensifying picketing and are asking trade union

branches to picket regularly at the five main restaurants that we are concentrating on. These are at: 399 Oxford St, 40-41 Haymarket, 56 Whitcombe Street, 243 Oxford Street (Oxford Circus), and 29 Cockspur St (Trafalgar Square).

The strike committee urges all trade unionists to picket. The five restaurants are being picketed from 11am to 3pm and 5.30pm to 11pm each day of the week.

A large scale picket takes place every Saturday at 12 midday at 399 Oxford St. Further details and leaflets about picketing can be obtained from the strike committee.

As strike pay from the TGWU is only £6 per week, we are dependent on contributions from you for the continuation of our struggle. **We need money urgently...**

Send donations payable to Garners Steak Houses Strike Fund, c/o TGWU, room 84, 12-13 Henrietta St, London WC2.

at the Leyland service and spares depot at Horspath, Oxfordshire. Power is also president of the Oxford AUEW district committee a Labour PPC — and an active witch hunter of the Cowley nine.

The reason Leyland gave was 'irregularities' in travel expenses.

The workers at Horspath struck in protest on Friday 14th, and at a meeting on Monday 17th they decided to strike again. The strike decision was held over for union-management talks, which ended in BL withdrawing the sacking.

Robinson rebuffs the Cowley nine

AMONG THE TRADE UNION bodies sent letters asking them to support the nine trade union militants from Leyland's Cowley car assembly plant who are being witch-hunted by regional TGWU bureaucrats was the Works Committee at Longbridge.

The Cowley militants have got widespread support — including from some members of the Communist Party. The CP dominates the Longbridge Works Committee. But their response to the letter was...to tear it up.

The envelope, they said, had been addressed to the "TV & Games Room". They took this as an insulting hint as to the way the Works Committee spends its time. But that was, it seems, a fancy of their overwrought [and guilt-ridden?] minds. The envelope was addressed to "TGWU Office".

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Readers will notice an improved quality of printing this week. In future, we hope, WORKERS' ACTION will be more attractive and readable; it will also cost us £80 per month more in printers' bills.

Some — perhaps all — of that should be covered by increased sales. But we are launching a fund drive:

- to make sure of covering the increased bills;
- to enable us to get a 'headliner', a machine that will do headlines more quickly and better than our present means allow;
- to enable us to put out more WORKERS' ACTION pamphlets.

- and, of course, to enable us to deal with ever-increasing prices of all our materials.

The fund has already been started with a £100 donation from a Midlands reader. But we hope to see many smaller donations too — £5s, £2s, £1s. Send them to: WORKERS' ACTION [Fund], Box 1960, 182 Upper St, London N1.