

Socialist Challenge

NO RECOGNITION OF SMITH-MUZOREWA NOT NOW,

IF THE Tories recognise the Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia this is what they will be endorsing:

Racism — because the black population has never been consulted about an 'internal settlement' which gives the small white minority an effective blocking vote in the new parliament.

Murder — seven times as many unarmed black civilians have been killed as the number of white civilians said to have been killed by guerillas — and those are official figures.

Autocracy — all parties opposed to the 'internal settlement' are forbidden, ZAPU and ZANU, the two parties which now lead the guerilla war, were banned as long ago as the early 1960s.

Censorship — nearly seven million blacks aren't even allowed a newspaper which is critical of the regime.

Military rule — the country has been under a State of Emergency for 14 years and most areas are under martial law. Constitutional rights are suspended and the security forces can detain without trial, implement forced labour, impose curfews, and destroy property.

Electoral fraud — in one constituency there was a 108 per cent turnout for the 'internal settlement' election — not surprising since there is no record of voters.

This is the reality of Rhodesia after the 'internal settlement'. This is the Rhodesia that Thatcher and Carrington want to recognise.

Already British suppliers pay little attention to sanctions, but with recognition the flow of arms and aid would become a flood.

The British labour movement has a large responsibility in making sure that this does not happen.

We should not be deceived if the Tories do not try to implement their



plan immediately. The talks with US Secretary of State Vance this week were aimed at working out a way of gradually compromising with Ian Smith.

We say there is nothing to compromise about. Nothing will satisfy the people of Zimbabwe

short of the total destruction of the Smith regime.

The demonstration in London on 30 June is a first chance to show united labour movement opposition to the Tories' African policy. Let us say clearly that no British

government has any right to dictate to the people of Zimbabwe.

• Demonstrate, 2.30pm, 30 June, Smithfield Market, London. Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo, leaders of the Patriotic Front, have been invited to speak.

NOT EVER

THIS WEEK

EUROPE

Only one candidate in the Euroelection in Britain stands for withdrawal from the Common Market. He also happens to be the editor of this paper. Tariq Ali writes on the virtues of the Eurosausage... page 2

Vote Bernadette

And in Ireland we'll be backing Bernadette McAisley. She tells us why she's standing and recalls the spirit of 1918... page 3



Austerity

The Italian Communist Party (page 11) thinks that austerity is an 'agent of social change'. Ernest Mandel (page 13) says it's an agent of social misery and argues for international working class solutions.

TORIES ATTACK...

Health

While we queue for treatment, private medicine is looking forward to a boom... page 4

Housing



Rumbles from the Department for the Destruction of the Environment... page 5

Abortion

The Right to Life campaigners are the same ones who would bring back hanging... page 5

Unions

What the union bosses are saying... and why they should say nothing to the Tories. NUPE decides to give the government the cold shoulder... pages 6, 7 and 16



Basic rights



Our democratic rights were won outside Parliament and that's how they can be defended. The centrespread by John Ross looks at the history of that struggle... pages 8 and 9

Photo: G. M. COOKSON (Socialist Challenge)

EDITORIAL

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Denationalisation and jobs

TORY ASSET-STRIPPING is to be extended from private industry into the public sector. That is the meaning of the widely leaked government proposals to start selling off sections of nationalised industry.

The general shape of the plans is already clear. Shares would be sold in profitable nationalised industries such as electricity, gas, and British Airways. The profitable shipbuilding and aircraft manufacturing industries would be treated in the same way. The Post Office would be split into an unprofitable postal section and a highly lucrative telecommunications section — which could later be sold off.

The same would be done to firms taken over by the National Enterprise Board. Profitable parts, for example Ferranti's, would be sold to private industry. British Leyland would be scheduled for splitting up between a profitable specialised cars division and a 'lame-duck', Austin-Morris section.

All that would be left in the nationalised sector would be a totally unprofitable rump. Apart from that only those industries, for example the mines, where working class resistance would be so huge that denationalisation is believed by the Tories to be impossible, would be left untouched.

What would happen to denationalised firms is shown by example of the steel industry. That was denationalised by the Tories in 1951. Even then it was in a bad way. By the time it was renationalised under the 1964-70 Labour government, lack of investment had made the steel industry a disaster area. Today, without a total rebuilding of the industry, endless redundancies face steel workers.

But the denationalisation plans don't only affect abstract things such as investment figures. Denationalisation will be a catastrophe for jobs. Seven million people are unemployed in the private enterprise dominated Common Market. Unemployment in Britain has doubled in the last ten years.

These facts show that private industry is totally incapable of providing jobs. The only source of increasing employment in the last ten years has been in the public sector.

Already the prospects for employment are disastrous. The reports of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development and the last government's White Paper predict sharp rises in unemployment in Britain in the 1980s. The Cambridge Economic Policy Group surveys predict 2,700,000 unemployed by 1985, and 3,700,000 by 1990. Private industry means a return to the 1930s with a vengeance.

Of course nationalisation in itself does not guarantee jobs. That requires a huge expansion and emergency programme of public spending. But public ownership is the precondition for any serious programme of expansion. Without it the unemployment of today will appear as nothing compared to the dole queues of the Tory future.

Tory denationalisation plans must be fought tooth and nail. There are two parts to that struggle. The first, and most urgent, is industrial action against denationalisation. The Tories openly admit that they cannot denationalise even the profitable pits because the miners would bring the entire industry to a halt if they tried. Post Office, electricity, gas, British Airways, Ferranti and other workers can only protect their jobs if they make it clear that denationalisation threats by the Tories would be met with strike action. This should be openly supported by the Labour Party.

The case of the sovereign sausage

By Tariq Ali

WHY should revolutionary socialists oppose the Common Market? What sort of campaign should we conduct and why? These questions are raised once again because of the elections to the 'European Parliament'.

We are opposed to the EEC because it is an institution designed to create an imperialist super-state which can both crush the workers movement in Western Europe and organise a more orderly exploitation of the 'Third World'.

In short the EEC aims to strengthen pro-capitalist forces and institutions throughout Western Europe. The concluding paragraphs of Labour's manifesto for the EEC elections put it quite pithily:

'As at present constituted, it (the EEC) helps maintain a capitalist system which rewards the rich and powerful at the expense of the poor and weak.

'It makes more difficult the realisation of traditional socialist goals — jobs for all, an end to poverty, help to the needy, rising living standards and the abolition of privilege.'

But in that case surely the immediate next step should be withdrawal from the EEC? Yet the Labour manifesto shies away from this obvious conclusion.

The real problem remains that the left wing of the British labour movement has utterly failed to conduct an internationalist opposition to the Common Market.

Arguments against the EEC over the last decade have ranged from the fact that the British sausage as we know it would disappear (a case for supporting the EEC?) to the hoary old chauvinist arguments about British sovereignty.

These latter have been faithfully echoed by the Communist Party of Great Britain. On 14 May, the party announced that it would not be putting up candidates, stating: 'The CP will conduct its own campaign to rally resistance to all EEC attempts to interfere with the British economy and push up prices, and against all EEC moves to limit the rights of the British Parliament.'

In other words, what both the Labour left and the CP counterpose to the EEC is the



political, economic and social status quo in Britain today.

Socialist arguments must be very clear. The only way to argue for withdrawal from the EEC is to counterpose a set of socialist measures that would transform the British economy.

We refuse to accept either the devil of the EEC or the deep blue sea of British capitalism.

The nationality of the bosses does not upset us too much. It is their class we need to fight.

Secondly, we can only wage an effective campaign against the EEC on a Europe-wide basis. Against the ruling class of Europe we must strive to unite the workers.

The only effective antidote to the poison of chauvinism and a

co-ordinated ruling class is proletarian internationalism.

The campaign being conducted by the Fourth International and other revolutionary currents (such as Lutte Ouvrière in France) is the only consistently internationalist campaign in this election.

We fight against the institutions of capitalist Europe, but we fight on a continental basis. We fight for:

a) A European Congress of Labour. A conference of the European trade unions to map out a counter-strategy to fight unemployment and inflation. Such a conference would find it somewhat difficult to favour import controls. Co-ordination on the level of shop stewards in the multinationals would also be considerably aided.

b) Equal rights in every sphere for women and immigrant workers. The latter have no rights whatsoever in most of capitalist Europe.

c) Withdrawal from NATO and massive economic aid to those countries in the 'Third World' prepared to break loose from the world market. Military support for the liberation struggle in southern Africa.

d) A free association of European socialist republics in a United Socialist States of Europe.

e) Turning the continued occupation of Ireland into a European issue and bringing pressure to bear for an immediate British withdrawal.

f) A co-ordinated fight against the growing attacks on democratic rights throughout Western Europe.

g) Socialist democracy to replace the bureaucratic regimes in Eastern Europe.

Our campaign for withdrawal is therefore a Europe-wide campaign. This is not an empty utopia. It is the most practical way of defeating the plans of the European ruling classes.

*** Tariq Ali is the candidate of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International, in West London. If you would like to help or contribute to the campaign write to: A. Lilley, 10 Hamilton Road, Southall, Middx.**

If you agree with these principles and want to be involved in activities by Socialist Challenge supporters in your area, fill in the form below and send it to us.

- * I am interested in more information about activities in my area.
 - * I would like additional literature and enclose 50p to cover costs.
- [Delete if not applicable]

NAME

ADDRESS

Send to Socialist Challenge, 328/9 Upper St, London N1.

OUR POLICIES

Capitalism is in crisis. The leaders of the Labour Party and the trades unions offer solutions that are in the interests, not of the workers, but of the capitalist class.

Socialist Challenge believes that the two vital tasks confronting revolutionary socialists are:

1 To build broad-based class struggle tendencies in opposition to class collaborationism in the labour movement. These should be non-exclusive in character grouping together militants holding a wide range of political views.

2 To begin to fight for the creation of a unified and democratic revolutionary socialist organisation which can, through an application of united front tactics, begin to be seen as an alternative by thousands of workers engaged in struggles. Such an organisation should be based on the understanding that:

1 The struggle for socialism seeks to unite the fight of the workers against the bosses with that of other oppressed layers of society — women, black people, gays — struggling for their liberation. This socialism can only be achieved by creating new organs of power and defeating with all necessary means the power of the capitalist state.

2 Our socialism will be infinitely more democratic than what exists in Britain today, with full rights for all political parties and currents that do not take up arms against the socialist state. The Stalinist models of 'socialism' in the USSR and Eastern Europe have discredited socialism in the eyes of the millions of workers throughout the world. We are opposed to them and will offer full support to all those fighting for socialist democracy.

3 The interests of workers and capitalists are irreconcilable on a world scale. Capitalism has not only created a world market, it has created world politics. Thus we fight for working class unity on an international scale. This unity will in the long run be decisive in defeating both the imperialist regimes in the West and the brutal dictatorships they sustain in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

In Britain it implies demanding the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and letting the Irish people determine their own future.

4 The Communist Parties in Europe are in crisis. Neither the 'Euro-communist' nor the pro-Moscow wings have any meaningful strategy for the overthrow of the capitalist state. New revolutionary socialist parties are more necessary than ever before. Conditions today are more favourable than over the preceding three decades. But such parties can only be built by rejecting sectarianism and seeing internal democracy not as a luxury but as a vital necessity. This means the right to organise factions and tendencies.



Anti-Repression stand in Europe elections Bernadette: 'The spirit of 1918'

BERNADETTE Devlin-McAliskey is standing as an Anti-Repression candidate in the elections for the European Parliament. She has a good chance of winning.

By Steve Potter

Bernadette was a leader of the mass upsurge in Derry against the British occupation. On the strength of this she was previously elected to the British House of Commons, where she spoke out fearlessly for the interests of the Irish people.

Now she wants to take the same message to the European Parliament. Not that she has any illusions about it.

'It's a talking shop' she says. 'But if I'm elected I will be talking about Ireland'. She intends to make sure that the message is heard throughout the length and breadth of Europe.

Her campaign is making sure that elected or not, the call for Britain to get out is broadcast loud and clear before the 7 June poll and afterwards.

Her candidature was launched in Coalisland on 10 May. In this tiny town, 250 people came from all over the six counties to discuss the programme and campaign.

Many were relatives of prisoners; activists in Relatives Action Committees from Dungiven, Armagh and Derry; there were members of political parties, Frank Maguire MP from Fermanagh and members of the Irish Independence Party and militants from Peoples Democracy and the Irish Socialist Party, of which Bernadette is a member.

First on the agenda was whether to stand at all.

An Phoblacht/Republican News, paper of the Provisional Sinn Fein, doesn't think so.

It argued against Berna-

detta's candidacy, saying that 'sending politicians to the so-called parliament in Brussels will not change the fact that unemployment, the sell-out of our national resources, poor housing and the many other social evils of the capitalist system will continue unabated.'

Bernadette says in reply to the Provisional boycott position:

'Boycotting the election will merely be registered as apathy about Europe. With the Thatcher government just elected it's important that there is a candidate saying loud and clear that Britain should get out.'

At the campaign meeting, Mary Nellis, a member of the Derry Relatives Action Committee, said that the decision was a difficult one for her.

Referring to her three sons on the blanket in H Block, she said: 'I wish I could get into H Block to discuss with them about it.'

She was sure that, as Republicans, they would be in favour of the boycott.

But the decision has to be made in the interests of all those seeking political status and for all the people of Ireland who sought freedom.

Having agreed to stand, the meeting went on to discuss what policies and platform Bernadette should stand on.

Her Anti-Repression programme includes demands for an end to emergency legislation, political status for H Block Prisoners, immediate



withdrawal of British troops and self-determination for the Irish people as a whole.

Importantly, the meeting also adopted a wider policy of opposition to the EEC itself.

The objectives of the campaign are to build the resistance. Public meetings, street meetings, and demonstrations will be held all over the six counties. The campaign aims to strengthen RAC's where they exist and help to build them where they don't.

There is also the matter of votes, Bernadette hopes that she will get more votes than the Social and Democratic Labour Party.

'These people will be claiming to represent the nationalist population', Bernadette says. 'I hope my campaign will take away that false claim.'

'We don't have their election machine — and we don't want it! — but it is possible for us to get near the 80,000 votes which they are expecting.'

If that happens then it is probable that Bernadette will gain a seat in the north.

Northern Ireland is a multi-seat constituency. Candidates are elected on proportional representation. It also gives a golden opportunity to project their campaign throughout the six counties.

And it's not just in the six counties. As Bernadette points out:

'It's been 60 years since the Irish people voted in the same election. Then Sinn Fein won 83 per cent of the vote in a mandate for an Ireland independent of Britain. That's why the British partitioned our country. I want to rekindle that spirit.'

European TUC - happy prisoners of the EEC

UNEMPLOYMENT in the Common Market countries could rise to a staggering 15 million by 1985 according to the EEC Commission.

And last week saw a meeting which actually had the power to do something about that threat — right now.

We're talking about the third congress of the European TUC, held in Munich from 14-18 May. Never heard of it? That could be because it's never done anything.

Yet this body represents 40 million trade unionists, in the nine EEC countries, organised in 31 federations.

Just think of that potential. If 40 million workers came out together for the 35-hour week to cut unemployment, who on earth could stand in their way?

But the people who are standing in their way are the very leaders of the European TUC — even though they're committed on paper to the 35-hour week.

How do they propose to win this demand? The European TUC's French language paper, *Syndicats*, commented in its issue of 12 May: 'The time has come for the heads of government to make at least a declaration of principle in favour of a reduction in working hours.'

Great! A declaration of principle, no less. That's a real beacon of light to the thousands of workers who are being thrown on the scrap heap every day because this 'democratic' system can't even provide them with the right to work.

But such declarations are the stock-in-trade of the trade union bureaucrats. Take the example of Oskar Vetter, president of the European TUC.

Vetter is also president of the West German DGB union federation — committed by its last conference to the 35-hour week. And he's a candidate on the SPD list for the European Parliament elections — whose platform again includes the 35-hour week.

But that hasn't stopped Vetter and the other DGB leaders from burying any

struggle — such as that of the steelworkers last winter — for the 35-hour week.

Their latest triumph is a deal in the book and paper sector. After the usual declaration of principle, this goes on to say that there can't be any negotiations on the 35-hour week for another four or five years!

If this reminds you of the way the TUC let the post office engineers' demand for a 35-hour week be sold out last summer, you'd be dead right.

A leading light at the European TUC meeting was our very own Len Murray. He had a dramatic proposal for fighting unemployment — the establishment of a European TUC economic committee to press for changes in EEC economic policies.

A particular bee in his bonnet was the uneven distribution of industrial and employment subsidies between one sector and another and one country and another. In other words, what we need is equality of sacrifice (for the workers, that is). Forward to an EEC Concordat?

But if the European TUC leaders are happy to embrace the capitalist Common Market, many of their members aren't.

One step to start organising a Europe-wide fightback for a workers' alternative to the EEC is being taken on 2-3 June, when the Fourth International is organising a conference of trade union militants in Antwerp to discuss what this means in terms of common demands (such as the 35-hour week) and coordinated action (in steel or the motor industry, for example).

That certainly won't confine itself to a declaration of principle!



RALLY AGAINST THE EEC

FRIDAY 1 JUNE

Down with the bosses' Market!

For a United Socialist States of Europe!

Speakers: **Ernest Mandel** (FI candidate in Belgium)
Lutte Ouvrière representative (from joint revolutionary slate in France)
Tariq Ali (IMG candidate, West London)

7.30pm, Porchester Hall, Porchester Road, Paddington

'MAKE IRELAND AN ISSUE'

Hear **Bernadette McAliskey** (Anti-Repression candidate, N. Ireland)
Tariq Ali (IMG candidate, West London)
Pat Arrowsmith (United Troops Out Movement)
Wednesday 30 May, 7.30pm, Ealing Town Hall



Future of the NEB

The revealing case of the titanium granules

THE announcement in the Queen's Speech that the Tories intend to introduce a new industry Bill in this session of Parliament has provoked debate among the bosses about the future of the National Enterprise Board.

By Rich Palser

Sir Keith Joseph, former director of Drayton Premier Investment Trust and now Secretary of State for Industry, stands by the Tory election pledge to sell off the NEB's better assets to private industry.

Leslie Murphy, chairperson of the NEB and former deputy chairperson of Schroders merchant bank, takes a slightly different view.

While he accepts that there should be 'greater involvement of the private sector' in the NEB's ventures into profitable industry, he wants the NEB to continue to play the role of a 'bridge between state ownership and private entrepreneurial activity.'

The Tory Bow Group, whose members have an equally personal interest in private industry and finance, have come up with an even grander proposal of fusing the NEB and

the British National Oil Corporation.

The new body would receive both government and private finance, and provide a 'short term cash generator' for British industry.

What all these Tory bosses have in common is that they want to see profitable industry in private hands — preferably their own. But neither they nor other capitalists are prepared to invest unless the profits make it worthwhile.

That's where the argument for a modified NEB comes in.

If the capital for ventures essential to the British economy cannot be raised from private sources, get them off the ground with public money and encourage private capital to take them over as returns begin to show.

Thus the NEB's proposal to build a £10m titanium granule plant in Teeside. Titanium

granules are vital to sections of private industry, but private industry is not prepared to take the risk of investing.

Kearney, Trecker and Marwin — a machine tool company — is one example of a successful sale back to private hands. To make sure the NEB carries out such exercises, the firm had to show itself able to make a profit over the long term.

The Bow Group therefore argues '...given the considerable reluctance of UK companies to invest in high-risk industries, this facet of NEB activities was a major success.'

Sir Keith Joseph, on the other hand will be able to point to the overall performance of the NEB — the fact that the board is a long way from showing a profit, and one of its major patients, British Leyland, is far from ready to return to private hands — even in pieces.

Joseph also is looking at the reduction of the role of the NEB from another viewpoint — the need to cut public spending, which the Tories have argued is the key to economic expansion through

lowering interest rates.

Whatever the outcome of the bosses' debate, what attitude should the labour movement take to these changes?

The labour left, and Benn in particular, have argued that the NEB should be strengthened with more public spending and 'planning agreements'.

Unfortunately, this doesn't tackle the real problem — those with capital will not invest if the profits are too low or the risks too high.

The only way that planned investment can be brought about is by breaking with the sacred laws of private property — denying the right of those with capital to dispose of it as they wish. And once you start doing that you have to go the whole hog — by expropriating their wealth.

That means fighting for the nationalisation of the banks and finance houses, together with the core of British industry, without compensation and under workers control.

If private capital cannot provide jobs and develop industry, then it must be taken out of their hands.

WHAT'S LEFT

11th COMMUNIST UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
7-15 JULY — UNIVERSITY OF LONDON UNION

The top theoretical event in the Marxist calendar offers day, weekend and evening courses; a creche; music, film, theatre; political discussion; and a one day event on 'Youth and Authority'.

Further details from CUL 11, 16 King Street, London WC2.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST TENDENCY

RACIAL OPPRESSION — HOW TO FIGHT IT

Series of three forums on how to build working class defence against attacks on black communities.

- 1 June The struggle against racism and fascism — lessons from the past Frank Richards
- 15 June British imperialism and racism — the experience of the last 30 years Kevin Green
- 20 June Fight SUS and smash all immigration controls Judith Harrison

North Library, Manor Gardens, N7 (tubes: Archway, Holloway Road), 7.30pm

IMMIGRATION in Europe. As part of the Campaign of Revolutionary Groups in Europe, including OCT (France), DP (Italy), MC (Spain), VS (Denmark), Sinn Fein (Ireland), Big Flame is organising a meeting with speakers from France, Portugal, Ireland, Grenada, etc. On 3 June, 1-8pm. Film and social in the evening. At St Anne's Centre, Venn St, Clapham SW4. Admission 50p. Details: Big Flame, 27 Clerkenwell Close, London EC1.

MANCHESTER 'Hands off Ireland' film tour showing 'Prisoner of War'. Speakers from PSF, RCG. Thursday 31 May, 7.30pm, Lesser Free Trade Hall, Peter St, Manchester. Entrance 50p, tickets 40p.

POLITICS of Food. Day conference Sat 2 June, 10am to 6pm, Gregory House, 40 Brunswick Square, London. Contact BSSRS, 9 Poland St, London W1V 3DG. 01437 2728.

MALE socialist wankers share flat in London. East End preferred. Phone 470 2581 (day) for Niall.

WOMEN Against Racism and Fascism national meeting. Sat 9 June, Methodist Church, Lancaster Rd, nearest tube Ladbroke Grove. 10am-5pm. Open to all women active against racism and fascism.

LAMBETH IMG public meeting. 'Unite to fight the Tories'. Speaker Tariq Ali. 31 May, 7.30pm. Room 119, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton.

OXFORD ANL weekend school 'Fascism Today'. Speakers from ANL, CARR, Searchlight, BASH and others. Films, socials. 500 places only. £2.50 or £1.50 students/claimants. ANL, PO Box 18, Oxford OX1 2JE.

HACKNEY ANL benefit with Charge and Oxy and the Morans, Fri 25 May, 8pm, Chats Palace, Brooksbury Walk, E8.

WORKERS Against Imperialism: the British labour movement and Ireland, by Mary Masters, Revolutionary Communist Tendency. This pamphlet explores how British workers have responded in the past to the struggles of the Irish people against imperialist domination, and shows the possibility and necessity for bunding an anti-imperialist movement in the British working class today. 35p + 15p postage. Payments to RCT Association, BM RCT(4), London WC1V 8XX.

NAC CONFERENCE — venue changed to: Meadows Community Centre, Queen's Walk, Nottingham. Details: 01-278 0153.

By Geoffrey Sheridan

IMAGINE that the contracts of four out of five school teachers allowed them to take over classrooms during the day to give private lessons to fee-paying students, or to bunk off to teach in private schools.

That is the basis on which 80 per cent of the surgeons in NHS hospitals are employed. Over half the consultants in the other main clinical specialties are also on part-time contracts.

That's the freedom the Tories want to extend. The Queen's Speech promised a Bill to 'facilitate wider use of private medical care'.

For NHS patients, it's the freedom to wait even longer in the queues for health care — possibly to die waiting — while those with cash jump to the front.

Earlier this week, at the National Union of Public Employees' annual conference, health workers declared war on medicine's private sector.

With just two votes against, and against the executive's call for remission, the 750 delegates supported a resolution for a campaign to halt any further expansion of private hospital facilities and for a speeding up of the phasing-out of pay beds from NHS hospitals.

The resolution gave the government an ultimatum. Unless by 1 January next year it has set a deadline for the removal of all NHS pay beds, NUPE members are instructed to begin a total boycott of private patients from that date.

SWP member Bill Geddes from Hammersmith Hospital, who moved the resolution, told delegates: 'The private sector

has its hand around the neck of the NHS. It is our duty to cut it off.'

While the executive didn't formally oppose amputation, its proposal for action — waiting to see what the Tories planned and then mobilising the membership — amounted to the same 'leave it to us' policy that allowed private medicine to flourish under the Labour government.

As BUPA, the largest British private health insurance company, revealed in a report issued just before the election: 'The 1976 Health Services Act (which provides for the

phasing out of pay beds as and when the private sector can provide alternatives) has formalised the existence and raison d'être of the independent sector, and far from weakening its position the legislation has proved instrumental in bringing about the much needed stability whereby: 'Consultants use independent hospital facilities, occupancy levels increase, hospitals become economically viable, future markets are assured, and financial institutions are more willing to invest in the private health industry.'

The NUPE delegate from

Solihull General Hospital explained just what this meant in the context of the axe that has been taken to NHS expenditure.

While the campaign to save his hospital from closure has raised £2,000 over the past three years, a consortium of Birmingham business people raised £1m in 12 months to open a private clinic next to the Solihull General.

It means that the direct action by hospital workers to throw out the remaining 2,819 pay beds has to go hand-in-hand with action against the private hospitals and the health cuts.

IMG member Ray Varnes, secretary of NUPE's IEA district committee, was applauded at the conference when he called for the private sector to be nationalised by taking it into the NHS, and a fight against the cash limits imposed on health expenditure.

The Tories will do all they can to aid the financiers' stake in health care, and if the workers' movement is not to witness the dismantling of the health service it fought to create, then it's up to all of us to blunt the axe on our hospitals and ensure that the bosses can't develop theirs.

These will be among the items on the agenda for the 'Health — not cuts' conference to be held by Fightback on Saturday, 30 June. It is to be held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Details and the latest action sheet from: Fightback, 30 Camden Rd, London W1. Tel 01-560 3431 ext 679.



PRIVATE medicine in focus. A medical secretary to a hospital eye unit told the Parliamentary Expenditure Committee on NHS facilities for Private Practice that some patients were kept waiting for three or four years when there was no need to wait more than six months.

When questioned, the consultant replied: 'If we keep them waiting long enough they get fed up with being unable to see us and agree to become private patients.'

Sixteen consultants from Moorfields Eye Hospital paid for the optical equipment at the private Wellington Hospital. The Wellington made a trading profit of £1.6m in 1976, and just applied for a hundred more beds.

HOME NEWS

Immigration controls at work

'When did you last see your father?'

IMMIGRATION officials do not patrol electrified fences around Britain's shores — they have other brutal ways of enforcing the immigration controls that the Tories now want to tighten.

There is only one kind of 'humane' immigration policy — and that is the ending of all restrictions on entry to Britain.

By an Immigration Officer

MANY people were shocked by the disclosures about the 'virginity' tests carried out by immigration officials at Heathrow airport.

But medical tests, pregnancy checks, X-rays to supposedly determine a child's age, and intimate cross-questioning are all a normal part of the degrading and distressing abuse of black people who want to come to Britain.

Immigration control at Britain's ports begins with an interview by an immigration officer. If he or she is satisfied the passenger is 'genuine', the officer has a wide discretion in the type of stamp put in the person's passport, from six months' stay to a few days.

But if the officer's suspicions are aroused, the passenger is interviewed in depth. Baggage is likely to be searched; any letters are read, as are diaries and address books.

Intimate details of family life are asked of women and children; information about friends' and acquaintances' immigration status; questions about income and housing, eating and sleeping are all 'relevant' for an immigration officer at the port of entry or to an entry certificate officer interviewing dependent relatives in Dacca or Islamabad, Jamaica or Hong Kong.

The same checks are made on those picked up by the police in Britain as suspected 'illegal' immigrants. They have no right of trial or appeal. In 1977, 485 'illegal' entrants were de-

ported, and 13,000 passengers refused entry at the ports in the same year.

If there is any mention at the port of entry of a job, marriage or study, or of a friend or family that has not already

been admitted, a chief immigration officer is called and after clearance by an inspector the passenger is likely to be refused admittance.

Work permit holders may be refused if the immigration officer is not satisfied the

references are genuine, while those with visas issued by the British embassies or high commissions abroad may be refused if the immigration officer believes the visas were gained by concealing 'relevant' facts or by 'deception'.

Refused passengers are taken into detention centres staffed by Securicor and those without visas are then removed on the next available flight. They may appeal from abroad against the refusal of entry, which is a lot of consolation to someone who has spent perhaps £500 on a return ticket.

An immigration appeal adjudicator, Malcolm Hurwitt, recently resigned because of the injustice in deciding such cases, when it is the absent passenger's word against the interviewing officer's written account of the interview.

Injustice runs right through the immigration control system. Someone who wants to come and see or stay with a relative has to prove that the relationship is genuine. The immigration officers don't have to prove it isn't genuine.

The waiting lists for an initial interview with entry certificate officers vary from three months to two years in Dacca and Islamabad. An appeal against a refusal may take a further year or two to come for a hearing. A 14-year-old applying in Dacca may be 16 at interview, 18 at appeal, and then too old to reapply as a dependent if the sponsor's appeal fails.

These lengthy procedures are defended as being necessary to prevent 'abuse' of the immigration laws. The abuse of the wives, children, and fiancés waiting years in the queues goes unremarked. The Heathrow tests are only the tip of an iceberg in a system which takes as its starting point the racists' determination to keep blacks out of Britain.

★ For details of the immigration laws, their effects, and how to oppose them, make sure you obtain a copy of the Newsletter of the Campaign Against the Immigration Laws. A thousand copies already sold!

From: CAIL, Box 133, Rising Free Bookshop, 182 Upper Street, London N1. Price 5p plus p&p.

GIVE THEM ENOUGH ROPE AND THEY'LL HANG US

THIS photograph, of a 'legal' execution in the United States at the turn of the century, says more eloquently than words that capital punishment is a class issue.

Tory MPs have already promised to introduce a Bill to bring back hanging, and a Private Members' Bill to further restrict abortion rights can also be expected.

Labour MPs will be allowed a free vote on both these issues. They will vote according to their 'conscience'. But the working class did not vote Labour because it liked the 'conscience' of individual candidates.

Capital punishment and a woman's right to choose are both class issues. So there should be no free vote for Labour MPs; no let out clause for those who refuse to accept the Labour Party's policy on these issues.

Details of the National Abortion Campaign's conference in Manchester on 9-10 June from: NAC, 374 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1.



Housing—it's a sell-out

By Piers Corbyn

FROM the beginning of this week, local authorities were permitted to sell council houses and flats for as little as half the market price, thanks to new regulations introduced by the Tory government.

Even the chairperson of the Tory-controlled Association of Metropolitan Authorities was moved to say 'these sales might create an imbalance in housing revenue accounts'.

Translated, this means that the loss of rents from houses that are sold will have to be made up by big rent increases on remaining houses in order to meet the debts to the financiers.

Meanwhile, those on the waiting lists will have to carry on waiting because new council house construction will be axed.

To implement their plans, the Tories are relying on the traditional unwillingness of the trade unions to take up 'social' questions such as housing and education in a forceful way, and on the weakness of community organisation.

It is by militants developing practical methods of struggle on these issues, both nationally and in the communities, that they can be effectively raised in

the labour movement.

The present state of organisation of tenants, squatters, and community groups is low, but the Tories' election victory is revitalising activity in many areas.

Tenants' organisation was at its peak in 1972, with rent strikes against the Heath government's Housing Finance Act.

Squatting groups have declined in activity since the Tory Greater London Council and other councils made extensive rehousing concessions in 1977.

A new political turn came during the general election, when Housing Action — an organisation of squatters and tenants — occupied flats on the GLC's new Ferry Lane estate in Tottenham.

The council has been trying to sell them. Housing Action is demanding an end to all council house sales, and that the flats be allocated to those on the waiting list.

At present, the Tory government simply 'urges', 'trusts', and 'hopes' that councils will co-operate in the sale of the century. Compulsion is due to come with a Housing Bill in the autumn.

In the Commons debate last

Thursday, Labour's former Housing Minister Peter Shore was quick to assure the government: 'It will be for local authorities like other organisations in this country to obey the law.'

Never mind that we wouldn't even have an organised workers' movement today if Shore's touching deference had been observed by those who fought to form the unions and the Labour Party.

The fight for decent housing means Labour councils refusing to participate in the sale of the century, and resisting the financial sanctions that can be expected to follow such action.

Instead of the sale of council houses, we should demand more democratic control by tenants over their homes and their environment, and a reversal of the housing cuts.

An opportunity to discuss these issues will be at a conference on 'Housing in the next five years', to be held on 30 June. Sponsors include Housing Action and Shelter.

Among the items on the agenda are opposition to council house sales; the defence and extension of direct labour; tenants' rights, and council

PIERS IS INNOCENT O.K.



PIERS CORBYN — 'political' rents.

The conference is to be held in the Botany Department, University College, Gower Street, London WC1. Details from Joan Halbert, Housing Conference, c/o Shelter, 157 Waterloo Road, London SE1. Tel 01-633 9377 or 01-607 2789 ext 5027.

'Squatter's conviction is political,' says probation officer

By Geoffrey Sheridan

THE POLICY of the National Association of Probation Officers not to be involved in political cases that come up in the courts has for the first time brought one of its members into confrontation with the bench.

The sentencing of London squatter Piers Corbyn had to be postponed last Thursday because probation officer Patrick O'Sullivan refused to prepare a social inquiry report on Corbyn, who was earlier convicted of resisting the mass eviction of squatters in Huntley Street.

O'Sullivan told the magistrates at Marylebone court: 'I decided that I could not do a report.'

'It seems to me that if I did I would be putting myself on the same level as both social workers and psychiatrists in other countries under other regimes who abuse their professional skills by colluding with the labelling and treatment of political offenders.'

NAPO is opposed to the Criminal Trespass Law, and

has announced that its non-cooperation policy will also be applied to any cases arising from the three hundred arrests at Southall, which last week brought an apoplectic response at the Police Federation conference.

Marylebone magistrate Roderick Romain reacted similarly, saying: 'I insist, indeed I order, that a social inquiry report be prepared, and if that order is not obeyed I shall take the requisite steps to ensure that it is obeyed.'

The sentencing of Piers Corbyn, who faces possible imprisonment, has now been postponed until 13 June, for which the Huntley Street Defence Campaign has called a picket of the court, in Marylebone High Street, beginning at 10am.

Some 50 support meetings have now been held. For a speaker, video film of the eviction, pamphlet, and newsletters, contact the Huntley Street Defence Campaign, c/o Camden Law Centre, 146 Kentish Town Road, London NW1. Tel 01-701 5691 or 01-267-1456.

HOME NEWS

TUC-Government talks —

What the Tories hope to gain

JOE GORMLEY can't wait to get round the table with Tory Employment Minister Jim Prior. And he probably won't have to.

Len Murray has already been for an informal chat, and will be reporting to the General Council of the TUC on 23 May. 'Given the right climate, we have always been willing to co-operate with the employers and government to achieve further improvements in industrial relations', he says.

By Rich Palmer

The trade union leaders were just as keen to talk with the Tories when Heath became Prime Minister. But then the Tories weren't so keen to talk to them.

Joe Gormley would complain that, 'I've never met John Davies once, and he is the minister in chief of the whole question of the coal industry'.

Heath paid no attention to such whining until July 1972,

when the imprisonment of the Pentonville 5 nearly led to a general strike.

Thatcher will learn from that mistake — and try to talk as many concessions out of the TUC as possible before moving on to legal means of curbing the unions.

Heath's talks with the unions broke down because he could not give the union leaders enough concessions to sell to their members. Vic Feather, then TUC general secretary,



commented after the breakdown of talks:

'We tried all ways to compromise, we were prepared, provided the rest of the package was right, to agree that these controls (limiting wage increases) should be purely voluntary.'

But the rest of the package wasn't right.

It's unlikely that Thatcher will be prepared to give wide concessions either. Len Murray's view is:

'Doctrinaire policies for the legal regulation of industrial relations would be worse than irrelevant. They would impede our efforts to find sensible ways of making practical progress towards these ends.'

At the very minimum Thatcher wants eventually to outlaw flying pickets. But in the meantime talks have their usefulness.

The Economist (12 May) comments cynically that, 'A public stab at agreement, demonstrating the reasonableness of the government, makes sense politically and practically. And the ritual could usefully be drawn out to carry the Tories over a nasty winter in the public sector.'

Not only does Thatcher gain time through talking — the trade union leaders, having committed themselves to 'trade union reform', will have difficulty explaining why those reforms should not be embodied in law.

What is more, the right-wing union leaders can be strengthened in the process. Their line will be: if we don't want the Tories introducing laws we had better 'act responsibly' and show that there is no need for laws.

Which way will the union leaders jump?

AT the start of this year twelve trade union leaders put their names to a document called 'The Better Way'.

This said that incomes policy should be accepted as a permanent feature of industrial relations, and that it should be policed by a new Prices and Incomes Board and the TUC.

Some of these leaders were:

FRANK CHAPPLE, Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunication and Plumbing Union. He accused the public sector workers last winter of practising 'terrorism' not trade unionism.

He attacked the strike at Leyland's Longbridge plant because 'there was no strike ballot. It is high time the TUC said they were going to make things work.'

TOM JACKSON, Union of Post Office Workers and TUC Chairperson. 'The one thing certain to breed extremists within the union is extremists in government', was his response. He has warned that laws



dealing with what he calls 'untypical' union actions could distract attention from their 'typical' function, 'which is maintaining industrial peace, finding solutions to difficult problems'.

Not one member of the General Council opposed the Concordat, introduced to try to patch up relations with the Labour government after the TUC in September 1978 had kicked out the incomes policy. The Concordat's main architects were:

DAVID BASNETT, General and Municipal Workers Union. He said of the Concordat: 'The fact that such an agreement could be made in a period of



WHAT THE CONCORDAT SAID:

- Picketing should be confined 'to premises of the parties to the dispute'.
- 'Union rules should provide for strike ballots.'
- 'The closed shop need not be a rigid arrangement.'
- 'Strike action should only be taken as a last resort.'

WHAT THE TORY MANIFESTO SAID:

- Picketing should be limited 'to those in dispute picketing at their own place of work'.
- 'Wider use of secret ballots for decision-making throughout the trade union movement should be given every



encouragement.'

• Because of the closed shop, 'people arbitrarily excluded or expelled from any union must be given the right of appeal to a court of law. Existing employees and those with a personal conviction must be adequately protected, and if they lose their job as a result of the closed shop they must be entitled to adequate compensation.'

• 'Strikes are far too often a weapon of first rather than last resort. One cause is the financial treatment of strikers and their families. . . we shall ensure that unions bear their fair share of the cost of supporting those of their members who are on strike.'



industrial disagreements, many of which have yet to be resolved, shows how a Labour government and trade union movement can and must work together. No such agreement could have been made with a Tory government.'

We still doubt whether we shall see David Basnett opposing talks with the Tories.

MOSS EVANS, Transport and General Workers Union. He showed his support for the Concordat during the lorry drivers' strike when he put out a guide to picketing which made it clear there was to be no picketing of firms not immediately involved in the dispute.

He has not commented on



whether there should be talks with the Tories!

Of the 'lefts' on the TUC General Council, who will oppose the talks?

RAY BUCKTON, Amalgamated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, has warned Thatcher that she 'faces trouble' if she goes ahead with her declared plans on the unions.

'The Concordat will now be over — we made it clear it was with a Labour government. It would be absolutely impossible to reach one with the Tories. I believe leopards don't change their spots.'

Will he oppose the talks?

At the union conferences

ASTMS

By Janet Maguire
Secretary, SE London Medical Branch ASTMS

THIS year's conference of the ASTMS white collar union has seen the national executive swing to the right.

Last year conference instructed the leadership to take the initiative to co-ordinate action against the wage controls and to defend basic union rights.

Instead general secretary Clive Jenkins ignored this resolution and signed the TUC Concordat which directly opposed ASTMS's policy.

This year the executive dispensed with left talk. Their economic resolution didn't even refer to free collective bargaining or union rights.

The executive has also urged talks with the Tories and will be negotiating with Thatcher's Ministers. Jenkins wants to 'talk to the government in a

non-combative manner'.

This conference was the first chance that ASTMS members had had for five years to change the union's rules. Control of the executive, elections of officials, more power to local branch and district committees had been raised through motions.

The leadership attempted to exclude any discussion of these issues from the conference agenda. Three times on Saturday they tried to get their agenda accepted, and each time the delegates rejected any attempt to stop motions being raised.

On Sunday conference started without an agenda, and the executive finally won its position through a card vote.

Who decides union policy — standing orders committee or conference delegates — is now a major issue.

Red Collar, a rank and file paper, had a successful meeting of over 60 delegates from every

left organisation and local area. They discussed the fight against the executive's right-wing turn.

This was the biggest far left meeting ever held at an ASTMS national conference.

Red Collar will be sponsoring a national conference in October to fight for socialist policies throughout the union.

CPSA

By Stewart McLennan
Chairman, Glasgow North DHSS branch CPSA

LAST week's conference of the main civil servants' union, the CPSA, declared that it was appalled that its general secretary, Ken Thomas, had signed the document 'The Better Way'.

By 115,095 votes to 90,006 we made it clear that we rejected his position, and that he should represent the

membership's views on the TUC General Council and not his own.

The left won the union executive elections overwhelmingly, with 20 out of 26 seats. Peter Coltman was returned to the post of Vice-President from which he had been removed last year after a witch-hunt about ballot-rigging.

We also won some major victories on policy. The NEC and senior officials were censured for failing to give a lead during our pay fight.

Individual voting at work place meetings was also won (as against either the present branch block votes or postal balloting). And support for the civil service gay group was won.

We were only narrowly defeated in calling for withdrawal from the 'pay research' (comparability) system, with 440 delegates for and 444 against.

Socialist Challenge

TRADE UNION DAY CONFERENCE

**UNITE TO FIGHT THE TORIES —
DEFEND BASIC RIGHTS**

A NEW THREAT now faces trade unionists — a Tory government, in government by a party created and supported by big business is going to do us in for ever.

But if the Tory government is a new enemy to fight, the problems we will face have not changed.

There is a crisis of profits — a crisis leading from bankruptcy and creating mass unemployment, a crisis which demands that workers take measures to restore profits, a crisis which requires that new technology cut jobs instead of the working week.

A socialist response to the crisis requires us to appear as we before the election, and that's why Socialist Challenge has organised a conference for trade unionists on 24 May — to discuss how to fight the Tories and the socialist alternative we need.

Speakers include (on general capacity): Pat Hickey, TUC; Deputy Secretary Stewart Bruce; Sid Holt; Carl Brockler, Hounslow Hospital Occupational Committee; Steve Fitzpatrick, All London Campaign Against School Closures; Loran Armstrong, speaker on 'Workers Plans and Workers Control'.

Saturday 24 May, 11am-5pm.
Cooney Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1
Registration £1.

Coffee, food, stalls

FIGHT SOCIALIST POLICIES — WORKERS PLANS AND WORKERS CONTROL

HOME NEWS

Prepare the unions to— Defend basic union rights

THE TORIES will be using the concession made in the Labour government/TUC Concordat to justify their 'trade union reforms'.

To defend basic union rights means rejecting the assumptions made in the Concordat, argues PAT HICKEY.

Picketing

The prevention of 'secondary picketing' means the prevention of effective picketing — whether it is through control by union officials over picketing, as in the Concordat, or the Tories' proposed legal restrictions.

Secondary picketing is no more than a way of preventing the employer from evading the consequences of a strike by continuing to distribute products and receive supplies.

Sending out flying pickets allows you to draw on the solidarity of workers in other places to prevent the distribution of the employers' goods and the despatch of supplies in the first place.

In the lorry drivers' strike, the only way to prevent firms from using their own drivers or scab firms to move their goods was to stop all lorry traffic.

In the bakery workers' strike, ineffective picketing of the flour mills (often owned by the bakery employers) was one reason why the strike failed.

Strike ballots and postal ballots

Strike ballots are a way of preventing workers from responding rapidly to management's moves. Employers do not have a ballot before they speed up machines, lay off workers, or sack shop stewards.

Even worse, ballots are designed to break down the solidarity that arises from a collective discussion where all the arguments about what to do can be weighed by the membership.

Workers are left instead with only the press and media to influence their decision — against any effective action. It's no accident that strike ballots were part of Heath's Industrial Relations Act.

The closed shop

Once you agree that not every worker need be in the union, the employer can induce or intimidate other workers into not joining a union. They



can turn into the most willing scabs if there is a strike.

It was the editors and 'conscientious objectors' who scabbed in the recent provincial journalists' strike and undermined the action. Both the Concordat and Tory proposals effectively mean no closed shop.

Strike action as a last resort?

No worker wants to strike. But strike action is often not a last resort — it is the only resort when an employer says 'No' to your demands.

And very often timing is decisive. If you allow an employer to prepare for a strike by wasting time drawing out

negotiations, you will be forced into a much longer strike when it does take place.

The Tories talk about making the unions bear the cost of strike action — by cutting social security for strikers or, more likely, by delaying tax rebates till the strike is over, since this affects more workers.

First of all, we pay our taxes and social security or tax rebates are our right when we are not earning.

But the purpose is to make strike action dependent on official union backing and strike pay.

The Ford strike of last year began unofficially and only then got official backing — as do most strikes. The Tories want to prevent the membership from deciding to take action and then forcing the union to back them up.

Trade union reform means rendering trade unions ineffective. Trade unionists have to organise now against this threat, and demand an end to the talks.

Trades council could take the lead in holding local union conferences on the Tory proposals, and setting up trade union defence committees based on stewards committees and union bodies. Preparation must begin now — don't be lulled by the talks.

A new alliance in the student movement?

By Mick Archer

THE PAST DECADE has seen dramatic changes in the student movement. The strategy of mass action in alliance with the working class which broke the grip of the right wing ten years ago has now been abandoned by the National Union of Students' Broad Left leadership in favour of 'democratising higher education.'

Theorised by the Communist Party in 1977, this strategy explained that questions such as grants being cut would now be tackled in the context of the ideological and democratic issues raised about the future of education.

The previous combativity of the student movement was hammered flat as proposals for national and local mass action were met with a disdainful response from the national leadership.

Far from raising the consciousness of the student movement and seeking ways to combat the betrayals of the labour leaders, far from promoting socialist policies alongside building campaigns, NUS became increasingly absorbed into the right-wing project of the Labour government.

It is against this sombre background that an open letter was circulated at the last national conference of the NUS. Signed by leading members of the Broad Left, the Union of Liberal Students, and independents it argued for:

'A political force embracing all those on the left active in the student movement who are arguing and fighting for fundamental and radical change in society.'

Coming at the time of the election of Thatcher and Co. it provides an opportunity to

discuss a basis for united opposition to the Tories.

But many of the signatories of the open letter are architects of the strategy outlined above.

The decision not to ask far left members to discuss the letter implies that some sections of the Broad Left are aiming for an alliance with ULS to

occupy the centre of the political spectrum in NUS and isolate those other sections of the left, including some of those in their own ranks.

Clearly if the Open Conference organised around the letter this weekend decides on such an alliance it will be an endorsement of the strategy of the last two years and a declaration that the NUS leadership intends to pursue this strategy into the 1980s.

If the weakness of NUS has escaped the attention of those in its leadership, it certainly has not escaped Thatcher, Mark Carlisle and Rhodes Boyson.

There are parallels with the way the Concordat weakened the trade unions. The Economist, advocating a cautious approach to trade union reform, suggested:

'Holting the unions by the petard of their own concordat, undertakings of good behaviour would be the neatest and most conciliatory way into trade union reform.'

The concessions made by the NUS leadership to the Callaghan government will provide similar openings for attacks on the student movement.

If any new alliance is to be formed in the student movement it must reject the current strategy of the NUS if it is to have any hope of defending student interests.

The unity of the left within the NUS is now more crucial than ever, as is a clear policy of

support for the struggles of the working class whether they have the approval of the trade union leaders or not.

Within this framework the maintenance of the independence and autonomy of the student movement from the state is the decisive question.

This means particular priority in strengthening the unions in the Further Education sector and the small colleges in general.

This must be extended

through an emphasis on mass campaigns around grants, overseas students and the other main issues that are in the front line of the Tory attack.

The necessity of alliances with the labour movement has

particular prominence in defence of trade union organisation, living standards and the social services.

Solidarity with the struggle of the anti-imperialist movement in southern Africa, Palestine, Iran and Latin

America will be vital to a student movement which can only gain through a fight against the common enemy of imperialism.

The scandalous lack of activity by the NUS to fight for the right of the Irish people to self-determination and the immediate withdrawal of troops must be the first in the NUS's anti-imperialist tasks.

In order to engage the student movement in mass action around the crucial issues

mass participatory democracy in the NUS remains a gain to be defended.

If an alliance with such a programme of action was to emerge from this weekend's conference, then the future of the NUS as a fighting union would remain assured. Those participating have a heavy responsibility.

(Mick Archer is a member of the NUS Executive.)

* Conference on the new alliance, 26-27 May, Polytechnic of Central London.

Record of Song for Blair Peach Now Available



This song, written and performed by Mike Carver is available on an EP record with 3 other tracks. (The SPG Song: Urban Decay, Nobody Loves You When You're Unemployed.)

All proceeds will go to the Blair Peach Memorial Fund so send at least £1.10 (inc. p&pt) to: SW Recordings, 265 Seven Sisters Road, London N4 2DE.

Murder of Blair Peach

I can't believe they'd do that
But they did, I saw it
Walking peacefully away to the pub
To the pub, he bought it
Pigs sealed off the road
Blocked it off with vans both ends
Ran wild with flailing truncheons
To terrorise our friends

They hit him once, he fell down dazed
Get up you cunt, they cried
He couldn't so they smashed his skull
And later on he died
Vomiting in hospital
His blood ran on the floor
The worst head wound I've ever seen
And then he was no more

Who needs the nazis
When we've got the SPG
Who needs the fascists
In this 'democracy'
Racist pigs protecting fascist rats
In the name of liberty
Who needs the nazis
When we've got the SPG

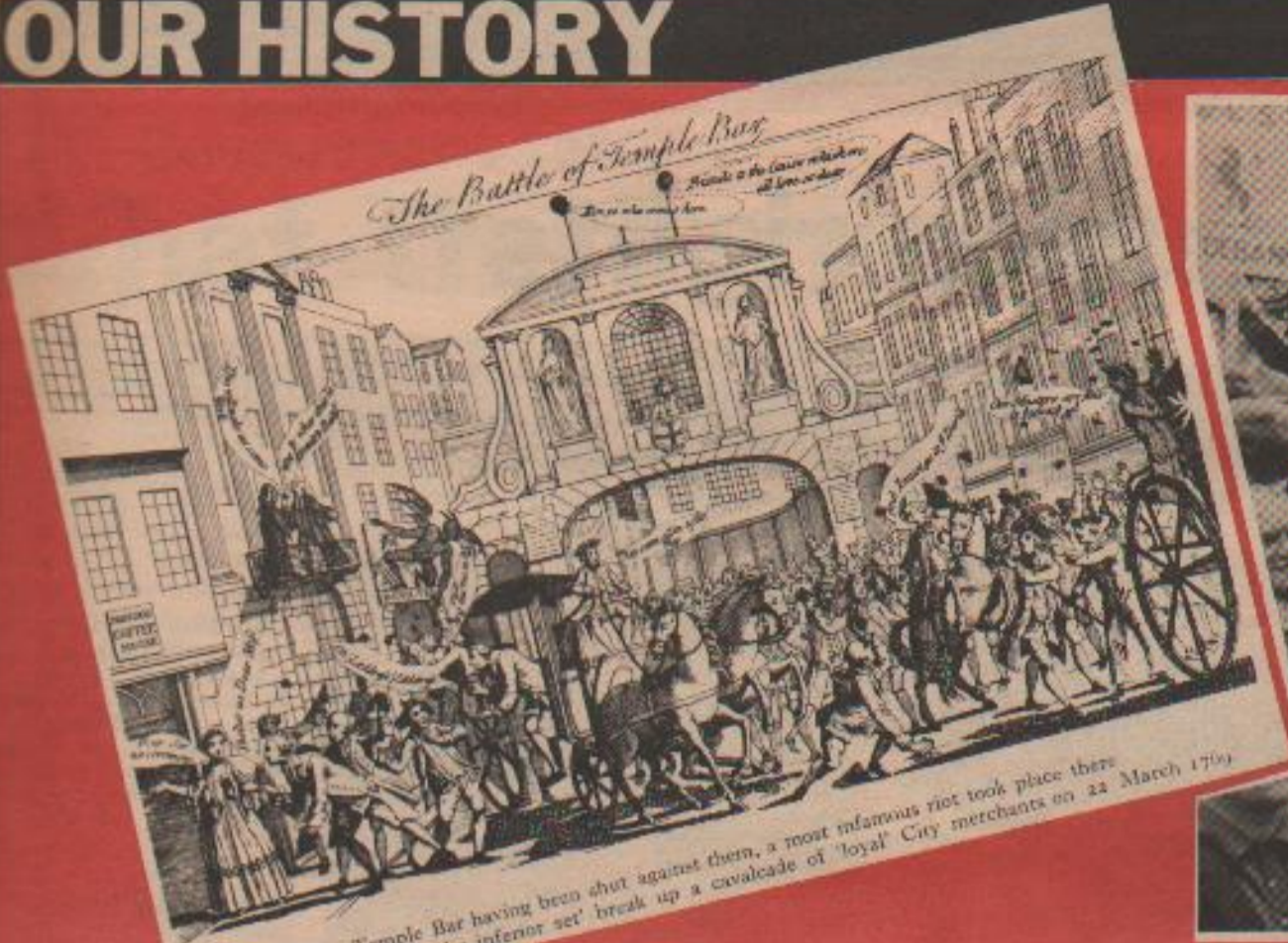
From Monday April twenty-third
Nineteen seventy-nine
Blair Peach won't stammer any more
Or drink or shoot a line
Can't be mugged again by nazi thugs
Or lead the union's rank and file
Or teach his kids or hurt his friends
Or love or laugh or smile

'Urban Freedom Fighter
'Left Wing Activist' they sneered
The TV News, the Daily Mail
They stood around and jeered
It's easier to crush an apple
Than to chop down a large oak tree
He went to stop recurrence here
Of Hitler's memory

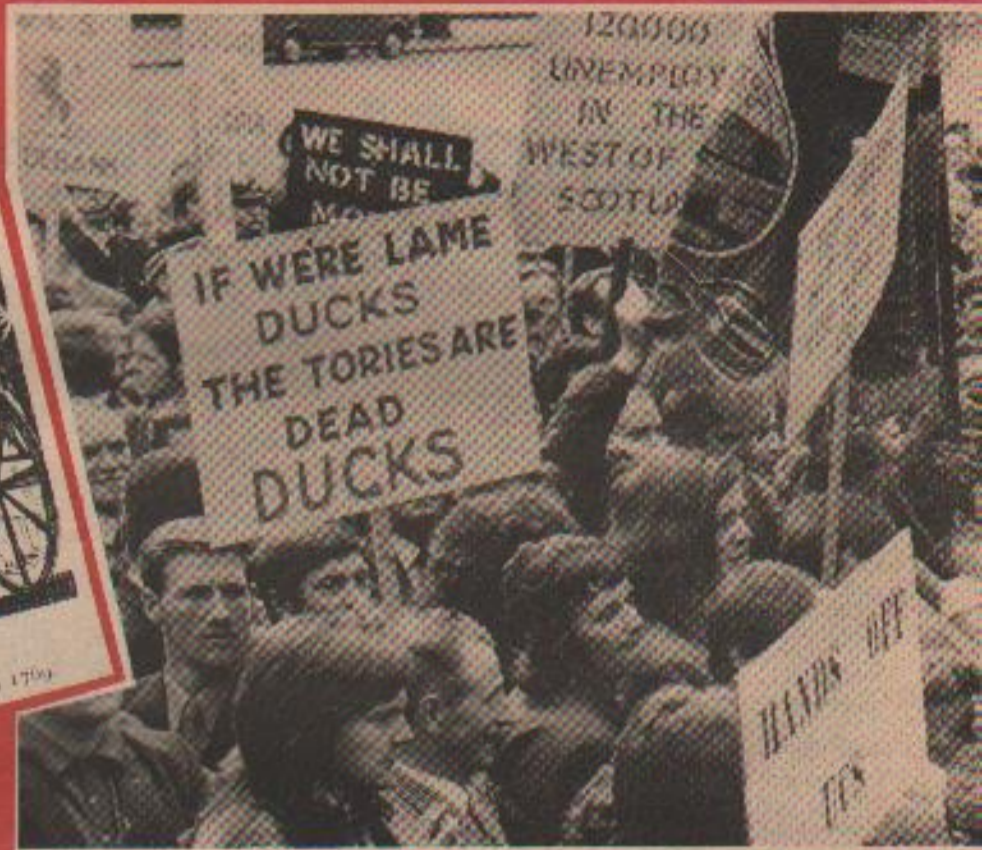
Who needs the nazis when
When we've got the SPG
Who needs the fascists
In this democracy
Hooligans in uniform
Attacking you and me
Who needs the nazis
When we've got the SPG
Smash the nazis
Disband the SPG

Proceeds to Blair Peach Memorial Fund

OUR HISTORY



The gates of Temple Bar having been shut against them, a most infamous riot took place there. Wilkes-supporters of 'the inferior set' break up a cavalcade of 'loyal' City merchants on 22 March 1769.



MANIFESTO OF THE TRADE COMMITTEE, GLASGOW. CALL TO BRITISH LABOUR. BOLDLY ATTEMPT TO SMASH TRADE UNIONISM.

When the Aristocracy was elected it has been...
 The 20th, a large demonstration was held...
 On the following day the office of the Glasgow Trades and Labour Council, the centre of Scottish Trade Unionism, was heavily raided by the police.

Three years ago we were told by...
 The oppressed workers of Scotland get...
 In our view, the institution of a...
 Fellow-workers!
 Railwaymen, Miners, and all Workers of Scotland, England and Wales.
 Rally to the support of your comrades in the Clyde!

Are you prepared to support us in the struggle...
 Every man, therefore, to take to the streets...
 PROTEST, AGITATE, and ORGANISE!
 On behalf of the Joint Committee.
 J. S. MURPHY, Secy.
 W. B. WILSON, Secy.
 J. H. WILSON, Secy.
 T. MITCHELL, Secy.

The right to resist

HOW OUR RIGHTS WERE WON

By John Ross

The outcome of opposition in Parliament is already known. The Tories have a 43 seat overall majority. They will win every major vote.

A policy based on opposition in Parliament may be termed the 'Act of God Strategy'. It relies on 44 Tory MPs conveniently assembling on one place and then being struck by lightning. Without that the Tories will win every time.

A strategy of opposition based on Parliament leaves working and oppressed people to be savaged by the most reactionary government since the war.

It also ignores the fact that neither the capitalist class, nor the working class, nor any section of the oppressed, has ever had its real strength for opposition in Parliament.

The capitalist class certainly recognises this. It has never hesitated to use means outside Parliament to gain its ends.

The biggest weapon in this has been the courts and direct sabotage by employers. When mass trade unions developed in the 1890s, the courts changed the law by the infamous Taff Vale decision to fine unions for strike action.

Under the last Tory government the courts resurrected the ancient frame-up charge of conspiracy to attack Des Warren and the right to picket in the Shrewsbury case.

Under the last Labour government procedures on union recognition and

picketing were thwarted by the combination of ultra-right wing employers such as George Ward, and totally arbitrary 'interpretation' of the law by judges.

When the courts have not been sufficient to oppose a government the capitalist class has always turned to more fundamental weapons. In 1914, when Home Rule was to be granted to Ireland, the Tory Party openly called for armed resistance. The army refused, in the Curragh mutiny, to implement the Act of Parliament.

Direct disobedience to elected governments is still carried on by the armed forces. When in 1974, for example, the Protestant bigots went on strike in the North of Ireland, the Labour government ordered the army to break the strike. The army officers sabotaged the orders and allowed the Loyalist strike to win.

Even before it comes to such drastic steps the capitalist class has its own means of economic sabotage and resistance. In 1950-1 for example, a Labour government nationalised the steel industry.

The employers were determined it would not happen. They succeeded in effectively blocking the nationalisation by refusing to hand over production plans and preventing trained personnel cooperating with the government.

It is absurd to believe that the capitalist class will obey the law where its fundamental interests are threatened. No group in society ever has

surrendered where it has the means to resist.

The way that every single basic right has been gained has been through action and opposition outside Parliament. Take for example the very issue of the rights of Parliament itself. How were these achieved?

It was certainly not through a debate in the House of Commons. It was settled through a Civil War between the armies of Parliament and those of the King. The rights of Parliament were gained through the armed defeat and execution of Charles I.

When another King, James II, threatened these rights the supporters of Parliament rightly had no time for the 'rule of law' either. They called on the troops to disobey the King and any officers loyal to him. They prepared armed resistance. They called in the army of the Dutch king to invade and aid them. James II was overthrown by the threat of another Civil War in the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688.

The rights of Parliament were established by force and the threat of force. Acts of Parliament merely ratified the fact.

It has been the same with every single right gained since then.

Take for example even the restricted right to choose who you want as your MP. That might seem elementary. But in fact it was achieved by enormous struggle.

John Wilkes was an opponent of King George III and his supporters. In

the early 1760s he ran a radical newspaper called *The North Briton*.

Wilkes was imprisoned in 1763 for 'seditious libel' in attacking the King. He was then elected MP for Middlesex. The King, and his supporters in Parliament, used their majority in the House of Commons to overturn the election result and install Wilkes' opponent as MP.

This move of the King was greeted with vast riots in London. Huge nationwide petitions and meetings were organised. At subsequent election Wilkes was four times re-elected, and each time barred from taking his seat as an MP. Finally, faced with mass opposition outside, Parliament was forced to back down and admit Wilkes.

In this case Parliament ratified the right to be elected as MP — but it didn't create it.

The right of women to vote appeared so obviously fair and just that now no party would dare to openly challenge it.

You would think it was a right so obvious that Parliament arrived at it through reasoned debate — and that is certainly the message of the Tory Party.

The reality is totally different. Parliament steadfastly refused to grant votes for women. The first major attempt to raise the issue in Parliament was in 1866. Fifty years later it was still not granted. It never would have been gained by a policy based on opposition in the House of Commons.

Votes for women were gained by the tremendous militant campaign outside





Ulster's Solemn League and Covenant.

Being convinced in our consciences that Home Rule would be disastrous to the material well-being of Ulster as well as of the whole of Ireland, subversive of our civil and religious freedom, destructive of our citizenship and perilous to the unity of the Empire, we, whose names are underwritten, men of Ulster, loyal subjects of His Gracious Majesty King George V., humbly relying on the God whom our fathers served, do hereby solemnly and confidently pledge ourselves in solemn Covenant throughout this our time of stress and trial to stand by one another in defending ourselves in solemn Covenant throughout this our time of stress and trial to stand by one another in defending ourselves and our children our cherished position of equal citizenship in the United Kingdom and in using all means which we found necessary to defeat the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland. ¶ And in the event such a Parliament being forced upon us we further solemnly pledge ourselves to refuse to recognise its authority and to subscribe our names. ¶ And further, we individually and collectively already signed this Covenant.

The
Ulster

STRIKE! ON THE Taff Vale Railways

Men's Headquarters,
Coburn Street, Cardiff

There has been a strike on the Taff Vale Railways. The Management are using every man here who they employ for re-tugging the men on strike.

Men, Guards, Brakesmen, and Signalmen, are all out.

to be known as a
Blackleg?

On arriving at Cardiff, call at the Men's Headquarters for information and assistance.

IMPORTANT
NOTICE
SUNDAY NEWS

CENTRAL COMMITTEE
EIGHT HOUR LEGAL
WORKING-DAY DEMONSTRATION

ask all taking part in that Demonstration to observe—

1. Absolute punctuality to assembling and starting;

2. Complete obedience to the directions of the officials;

REMEMBER—

that the Legal Day Demonstration occupies the East or Strand side of the bankment;

that it leaves the Government by the East side along Oxford Street to the Marble Arch;

that its Platforms are more Eastern of the Marble Arch.

WHEN TONY BENN announced his decision not to run for the Shadow Cabinet he declared his aim was to examine: 'First, how to mount a principled and effective Opposition in parliament to the policies and philosophy of the new government in so far as these policies harm the interests of the people whom Labour represents; and to do so in conjunction with the Labour party and the trade unions.'

'Second, how to study and analyse the experience of the last five years, especially the relationship which existed between the Labour government, the parliamentary party, the National Executive and the annual conference, so that we can apply the lessons learned to the future work of the party.'

To study and analyse the experience of the last five years is a very good aim.

But where the statement goes dead wrong is the first priority it gives to 'how to mount a principled and effective Opposition in Parliament'.

Parliament waged by the Suffragette movement. Huge demonstrations, riots, attacks on property, imprisonment, mass breaking of the law.

These were the means by which the basic right of women to vote was achieved.

The 'welfare state' set up after 1945 is also presented as a triumph of 'Parliamentary socialism'. But once again the reality is totally different.

The Labour victory of 1945 was achieved through tremendous agitation and preparation.

The working class was already disgusted before the war by the mass unemployment and pro-fascist policies of politicians like Chamberlain. During the war huge votes were received by independent and socialist candidates opposing the official Labour policy of electoral truce with the Tories.

A strike wave began to develop. Huge sales of socialist pamphlets, and creation of political organisation, took place among workers, women, the troops, young people and every section of the population.

The real reason the welfare state was accepted was expressed by Quintin Hogg, now Tory Lord Chancellor, in 1943.

'If you do not give the people social reform they are going to give you social revolution' was his correct view.

It was fear of uncontrollable social struggles if there was any attempt to return to the conditions of the 1930s that forced the ruling class to accept the

welfare state.

Parliament granted what it was no longer in a position to resist.

It was the same with the Heath government. This came to office, pledged to vicious anti-trade union laws. It passed them with all due solemnity through the House of Commons. The 'principled opposition in Parliament' could do nothing to stop them.

But it was a very different thing when it came to the opposition outside Parliament. As soon as the Industrial Relations Act was introduced into Parliament it was met with two huge unofficial strikes.

In December 1970 and January 1971 half a million workers struck against the Act. On 1 March 1971, supported by the AUEW, two million workers came out on strike again.

Meanwhile Heath was continuing with other anti-working class measures. In June 1971 his government decided to let Upper Clyde Shipbuilders close with the loss of thousands of jobs. This was met by the occupation of the shipyards, a protest demonstration of 100,000 people, and solidarity strikes throughout Scotland.

Defeated by this huge opposition outside Parliament, the government was forced to partially back down and keep some of the yards open.

In January and February 1972 an even bigger opposition struck the government. The miners came out on strike. An immense wave of 'secondary

pickets' closed down the power stations, 40,000 Birmingham engineering workers struck in solidarity, 11,000 joined the picket line to close down Saltley coke depot. In all this innumerable acts against the law and the sovereignty of Parliament took place.

But as always it wasn't who had Parliament on their side but who had the power to win that decided things.

Tory MP William Deedes openly admitted it when he said:

'The crux at places like Saltley was not how the law was interpreted but how it could be enforced. It was not doubtful law but numbers which held the police back.'

How things really are decided was shown even more clearly later in that summer of 1972. The due process of Parliament gave the government the right to put a stop to pickets and trade union actions. The National Industrial Relations Courts set up under the Industrial Relations Act duly decided to put the law into effect.

It ordered the imprisonment in Pentonville jail of five dockers engaged in secondary picketing.

The result was a gigantic explosion. From the morning of the arrests workers began to move out on strike in dozens of industries. Fleet Street, car factories, the docks and construction sites were closing down. Scared of being overwhelmed by the tide the TUC ordered a 24 hour general strike.

Amid this opposition the sovereignty

of Parliament and the law collapsed like a pricked balloon. Like a rabbit out of a hat a totally unknown flunkey called the Official Solicitor was produced by the government to order the release of the dockers.

Open defiance of the law, huge mass actions to defend those doing it, achieved what opposition in Parliament never could. From then on the backbone of the Industrial Relations Act had been broken.

By mid-1972 Heath was on the rocks. He still had his Parliamentary majority. In 1973 he patched up an incomes policy which the TUC leadership accepted. He easily overcame Parliamentary opposition. But his government was shaken and it was not clear whether it could really rule or not.

In winter 1973-74 the opposition outside Parliament decided the issue. A second miners strike started. Heath openly feared a bigger working class struggle even than 1972 if he tried to break the strike.

Unable to impose his policy he was forced to call a general election and suffered a crushing defeat. Action outside Parliament had achieved what opposition inside it could never have. It destroyed a government with a comfortable Parliamentary majority.

The rights of the unions had been defended in the only way any right has been gained. Not by opposition in Parliament but by mass struggle outside it. That is the only type of opposition that will defeat Thatcher now.



IRELAND

Army tries to cover up intelligence report

A SMOKE-SCREEN has been blown over the secret British Army intelligence report which came into the hands of *An Phoblacht/Republican News*.

The Army is desperately trying to prove that the document 'accidentally' came into the hands of an ordinary thief. Naturally most newspapers have preferred to dwell on this topic rather than what the document actually said.

Their reticence is understandable. The press projects the official view of the IRA as criminals with no popular sympathy or political motivation.

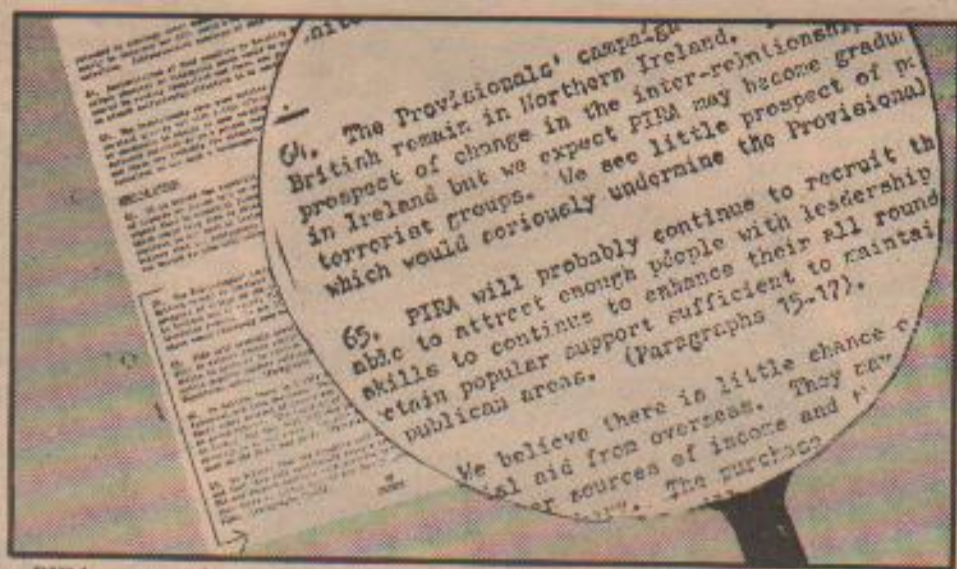
But as AP/RN pointed out in reprinting extracts from the document this public position is very different from the private assessment of British military intelligence.

In examining the membership of the IRA the report says about the men they choose to portray as 'Godfathers':

'LEADERSHIP. PIRA is essentially a working class organisation based in the ghetto areas of the cities and in the poorer rural areas. Thus if members of the middle class and graduates become more deeply involved they have to forfeit their life style. . . Nevertheless there is a strata of intelligent, astute and experienced terrorists who provide the backbone of the organisation.'

Similarly the document goes on to blow up ideas of IRA militants as criminals by explaining:

'RANK AND FILE TERRORISTS. Our evidence of the calibre of rank and file terrorists does not support the view that they are mindless hoodlums drawn from the unemployed and unemployable.

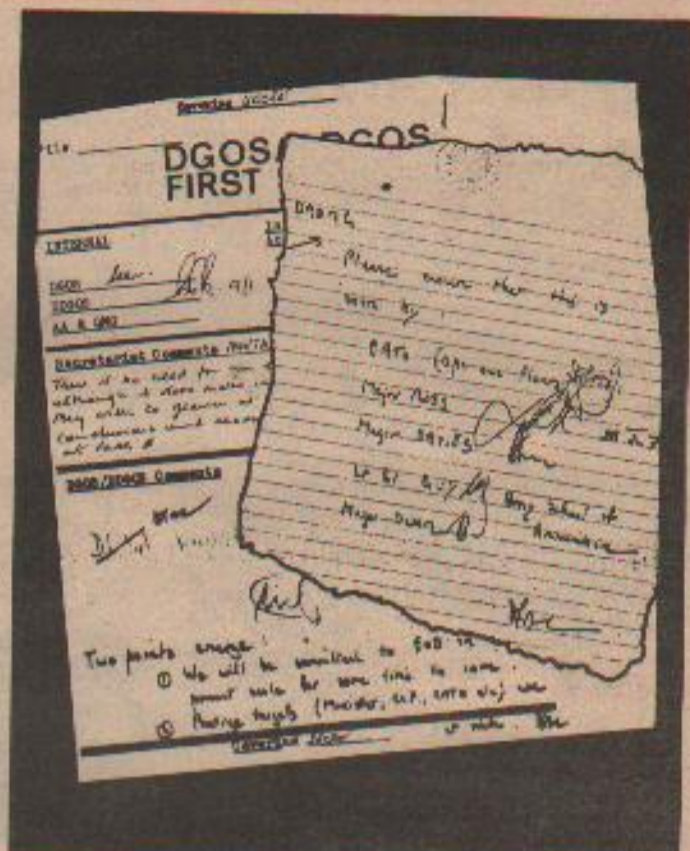


PIRA now trains and uses its members with some care. The Active Service Units (ASUs) are for the most part manned by terrorists tempered by up to ten years of operational experience.

As AP/RN points out: 'In not one single sentence does the whole report suggest that the IRA is "criminal".' In fact the report goes out of its way to say that it has no evidence that Republicans line their own pockets.

Among the chief conclusions of the report:

'The Provisionals' campaign of violence is likely to continue while the British remain in Northern Ireland. We see little prospect of a political development of the kind which would seriously undermine the Provisionals' position.'



TORY POLICY—THE ARMY OPTION

One aspect of the report is the Army's preference for what policy the British government should pursue in the six counties. AP/RN comments:

'The report outlines a number of broad political options for the future:

(i) continued direct rule where 'government policy would be principally one of containment and the underlying problems would remain unsolved'.

(ii) direct rule 'modified by introducing another elected upper tier of local government'.

(iii) 'devolved government' that is a return to Stormont, 'although this seems unlikely'.

(iv) six county independence 'but the two communities interpret the objective differently'.

(They certainly do. The Loyalists — correctly — see it as a way of retaining the Ascendancy, the few nationalists who support it incorrectly see it as a step towards a United Ireland.)

(v) described in an unnecessarily complicated fashion, the fifth option is a united socialist Republic which is apparently not on the cards because of 'sectarian and nationalistic sentiment' (rather than the real reason — the Brit presence.)

The report chooses option (i) as the only one which 'offers any real prospect of political calm'. Even then it admits to 'no prospect in the next five years of any political change which would remove PIRA's raison d'etre.'

Frost's global censorship

By Steve Potter

FROST was on a loser before he started.

At the beginning of Yorkshire Television's Global Village debate he announced that his own station had found that 56 per cent of people they interviewed in a poll wanted the troops out.

That wasn't the end of the Boy David's problems.

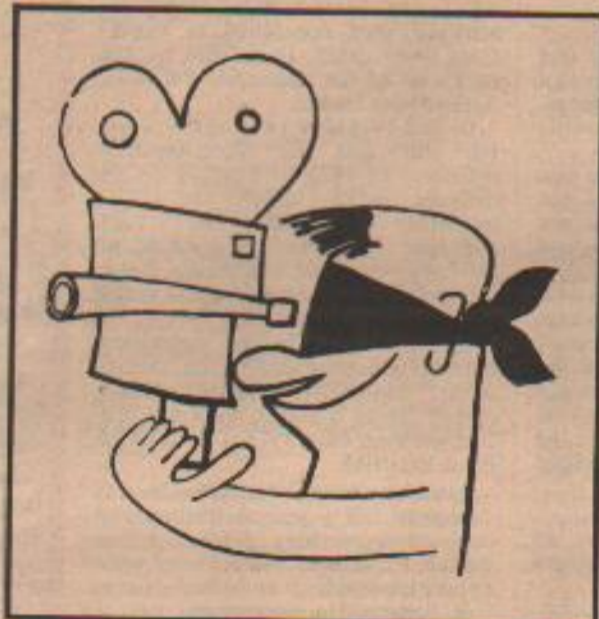
Puzzled viewers saw Frost suddenly appear to explain that the programme was not live at all and that they had completely censored the remarks of Ruairi O'Bradaigh, a leader of the Sinn Fein.

The blatant censorship came after four MPs who had appeared on the programme — Kevin McNamara, Stan Orme, William Van Straubenzee and John Biggs-Davison — protested to the Independent Broadcasting Authority about O'Bradaigh's appearance.

Afterwards they tried to pretend to the press that they had immediately walked out when they knew O'Bradaigh was appearing.

But according to Bernadette McAliskey, who was in the studio audience, it wasn't like that at all.

'They sat right through O'Bradaigh's remarks. It was only when they found out that the Official Unionist MPs had walked out before the programme started that they began to look uncomfortable. Finally Biggs-Davison shuffled out and the rest followed behind him.'



Stan Orme — ran out



Ruairi O'Bradaigh — gagged

Of course they didn't censor Alan Pirie, the military leader of the Ulster Defence Association who was in the audience, nor Glen Barr of

the same organisation.

Nor did they bother to cut out the comments of Conor Cruise O'Brien who was able to rant on about 'the Godfather'.

But despite Frost's desperate attempts he could not muffle Bernadette, a determined mother from the Relatives Action Committee or a young ex-soldier. All came out with the same message: 'Britain's presence is the problem.'

* The full story of media censorship on the six counties is told in *The British Media and Ireland*, a new pamphlet produced by Information on Ireland.

The pamphlet explains how events like that on the Global Village programme come about.

'When it comes to Northern Ireland the pressure is constant. It consists of not just the standard letters of protest from government and opposition to the Independent Broadcasting Authority and the offending contracting company, but personal meetings between the Chairman of the Authority and the Secretary of State and the Chief Constable of the RUC.'

(Peter Taylor—Thames Television reporter.)

Copies of the pamphlet cost 50p plus 15p p&p. There is a third discount on orders of 10 or more copies.

Get it from Information on Ireland, 1 North End Road, London W14.



A demonstration demanding 'Defend Free Speech — Drop the Charges' marched through Cardiff last weekend to defend Pat Arrowsmith.

Pat was arrested twice during her campaign in the general election. Banners from the local trades council, UTOM, Hands Off Ireland and the South Wales Irish Solidarity Campaign figured prominently.

Pat is one of the growing number of Irish solidarity activists who have been recently harassed by police all over the country.

A petition demanding the dropping of all charges against Pat is being circulated as part of the defence activities.

Copies and further information can be obtained by writing c/o PO Box 50, London N1 2XP.

Quick action beats PTA

DAVE SIMPSON, a student at Balliol College Oxford, is one of the latest victims of political harassment under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Dave was lucky. Quick action secured his release.

Questioned originally by a mysterious 'off-duty' police man who was not a member of the local police force, Dave was arrested while selling *An Phoblacht/Republican News* in Cornmarket, Oxford.

Police told him he was suspected of belonging to a proscribed organisation. Dave announced to a growing crowd that the arrest was political, aimed to suppress opposition to Britain's imperialist occupation of Ireland.

In St Aldates police station a Special Branch man asked him whether he supported the IRA or the United Troops Out Movement. Dave

denied that he had any contact with the IRA.

During the interview a picket assembled outside the police station, journalists started to ring the station and the police started to backtrack.

Dave was released with the police lamely trying to say that he had no license to sell papers.

Dave's case follows that of another Oxford troops out campaigner, John Skinner. At his appeal against conviction John was accused by his judge of selling seditious literature in the shape of a UTOM bulletin.

As Dave says: 'My arrest was an attempt to intimidate me and the increasing effective anti-imperialist campaign in the area. It failed because of the level of organised opposition that was swiftly mobilised.'

Eurocommunists in congress

Italy - the 'sensible' Mr Berlinguer

WHEN Italy goes to the polls on 3 June it will be concerned above all with the record of the Italian Communist Party. The party is likely to lose votes as a result of its policy of 'historic compromise' with the right-wing government.

HENRI WEBER looks back at the Communist Party's recent congress to see how its leaders are using the elections to silence internal opposition.

The 15th congress of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) ended in Rome on 3 April as it had begun — in disillusionment and depression.

However, the extended preparatory debate had indicated a promising congress. In the discussion forums of *l'Unità* and *Rinascita*, but also largely in the bourgeois press in the form of articles and interviews, the deep dissatisfaction of many rank and file militants and party cadres found free expression.

There is a crisis of identity for worker militants caught in the dilemma between the demands of the austerity policy which the party defends and the obstinate refusal of the Italian workers to meet the costs of capitalist waste.

And there is a strategic crisis for the 'Eurocommunists' who

are making sacrifices on the account of the 'historic compromise', but are still waiting for the pay-off in terms of workers' control over production and investments.

This growing rank and file disillusionment, the obvious setbacks, particularly in the South, reflected in by-elections, and pressure from certain sectors of the trade union movement finally made the PCI leadership decide to go ahead and leave the governmental majority in January.

Is this a long-term retreat into opposition or a mere interlude before re-entering the corridors of power in force? In theory it was up to the 15th congress to decide after a long political balance sheet of two years of support for the Andreotti government.

To say that this didn't

happen is putting it mildly. It was opportune that the decision to leave the governmental majority came just three months before the congress opened.

This placed the congress under the shadow of the forthcoming election, a decisive test for the party in which it risks losing the ground won in 1975-76. This was the time not for self-criticism but for everyone to do their bit.

The three hour introductory report left no doubt on this score. To the delegates who anxiously asked who out of the Christian Democracy and the PCI was running circles round whom, the party's general secretary replied imperturbably:

'If we had to do it all again we would. The party was right to enter the governmental majority in 1975-76. It was right to leave in January 1979. We can certainly deplore inadequacies and errors.'

The temporary impasse in the policy of national unity is the fault of the Christian Democrats who have sacrificed overriding national interests for the preservation of their own private interests.

'The PCI shows patience and

an exemplary statesmanlike attitude. It therefore demands full participation in government. If this is not forthcoming, the Communists in opposition will exercise a

sustained and sensible attitude towards the social base of Christian Democracy.'

The one false note was the intervention of Umberto Terracini, a member of the leadership and president of the Communist group in the senate, one of the founders of the PCI along with Gramsci.

Terracini enjoys a privileged status within the leading group. His non-conformist past — he was one of the few Italian Communists of the 1930s to oppose first the theory of 'social-fascism' and then the German-Soviet pact — his age (84), his prestige, and his moral authority place him beyond attack and able to criticise with impunity.

Senator Terracini was al-

lowed a virulent denunciation of the strategy of historic compromise, opposing to it a line of unity of the workers' parties and organisations.

The 'weakness' of collaboration with the Christian Democrats, he explained to respectful but rather embarrassed delegates, was not because of the bad faith or narrow mindedness of their leaders but because of the party's class character:

'The Christian Democracy is the political organisation of the Italian big bourgeoisie. It is no more an "inter-class" party than the PCI, the party of the working class... It fiercely defends the social interests of Italian big capital. Any prolonged collaboration with it as a way to socialism is a trap.'

THE three 'Eurocommunist' parties in figures:

*France, 700,000 members; 5,787,436 voters (20.6 per cent of votes cast).

*Italy, 1,800,000 members; 12,620,509 voters (34.4 per cent).

*Spain, 300,000 members; 1,915,000 voters (10.9 per cent).

France - democracy only skin deep

By Martin Meteyard

BARELY a whiff of dissent disturbed the 23rd congress of the French Communist Party (PCF), which took place from 9 to 13 May.

After one of the stormiest years in the party's history following the 1978 election

defeat of the left, has the PCF now emerged strong and united, as general secretary Georges Marchais claimed? Was it all a lot of fuss about nothing? On the contrary.

What the 23rd congress in fact confirmed was that the PCF's commitment to democracy is only skin-deep. The

calmness of the proceedings wasn't accidental: all the dissidents had been bureaucratically weeded out in the complicated round of cell, section and federal conferences leading up to the election of delegates.

Furthermore, while the party's membership has now topped 700,000 on paper, many are voting with their feet by refusing to take part in its internal life.

Some cells haven't met for months. There was even a poor attendance at some of the pre-congress section conferences, made up of delegates supposedly elected by the cells.

In Nanterre, for instance, only 102 delegates out of 180 turned up; in Corbeil-Essonnes, only 70 out of 110.

But none of this was reflected in the congress discussions. Only the leadership elections at the end of the congress gave some indication of the internal problems.

Former rising star Jacques Chambaz, who had clearly failed in his appointed task of keeping the party's intellectuals in line, wasn't re-elected to the political bureau.

And among those dropped from the central committee was Francois Hincker — editor of the party's theoretical journal, *Nouvelle Critique*, which had given a limited voice to some PCF dissidents.

Hincker is also one of the authors of a recent book, *The USSR and US*, which made some sharp criticisms of the Soviet bureaucracy.

The PCF's attitude to the USSR and Eastern Europe became in fact the most controversial point in the weeks



400 people demonstrated on Saturday in solidarity with Iranian women. The marchers were protesting about the discrimination against women in Iran and the harassment that the emerging feminist movement has faced since International Womens Day on 8 March.

The Bazargan-Khomeini government is attempting to exclude women from some jobs altogether — particularly television announcers, lawyers and judges which Islam considers as male provinces.

Some women are still being forced to wear the veil or a headscarf if they go out to work. In the villages women out in public have been attacked by men even when they are wearing the veil!

'Not the Mosque, not the state — women must decide their fate,' was the message of the marchers. A petition was handed in to the Iranian Embassy and a collection made towards funding a delegation of British women to visit Iran.

The delegation is being organised by the Iranian Women's Solidarity Group which meets every Thursday at 6.00pm R13 Regent Street Poly.

Much work has to be done to fund the delegation. Get your womens group to send a rep along if you live in or near London.

Organise a meeting on Women in Iran if you live outside London. Write to IRWG, S. London Womens Centre, 45 North St, London SW4 for speakers.

leading up to the congress, in response to the official resolution's talk of a 'globally positive balance-sheet'.

Dissidents turned this into a real issue by circulating a resolution calling for support for the dissident struggles in Eastern Europe, the breaking of relations with the Czechoslovak CP, and the rehabilitation of all the victims of Stalinism. Three of them visited Czechoslovakia to meet with Charter 77 representatives.

Expelled by the authorities, they brought back a message addressed to the PCF congress which called on delegates to

speak out against the repression in Czechoslovakia, and in particular the jailing of Jaroslav Sabata. Not surprisingly, the party leadership refused to allow it to be read out from the platform.

At the heart of the PCF's problems is the sectarian line it has pursued since it broke with the Socialist Party and the Union of the Left in September 1977.

Party leaders now cynically admit that they broke the Union because the SP rather than the PCF was recruiting out of it — a rather startling admission of the bankruptcy of their own policies.

This also shows how the interests of maintaining the party apparatus have come to dictate policy; the working class is seen not as the agent of social change but merely as voting fodder.

These questions weren't raised at the 23rd congress — the party leadership made sure of that. But they continue to be heatedly discussed in countless PCF cells.

And through those discussions, and through united action on questions such as Eastern Europe, revolutionary Marxists will be fighting for the creation of a party which can genuinely call itself communist.



Will we see a Thatcher-Smith concordat

By Richard Carver

THE Tory government faces its first political crisis — not because of anything at Westminster but as a result of a vote several thousand miles away. The US Senate's decision to recommend lifting Rhodesian sanctions propels the Tories into the southern African conflict quicker than they wanted.

The vote is not binding on the President, who continues with his policy of all-party talks in Zimbabwe, but particularly given the enormous 75-19 margin it narrows the administration's margin for manoeuvre.

The motion was the work of two right-wing senators, Republican Sam Hayakawa and Democrat Jesse Helms. Hayakawa had previously enlisted the support of liberal Democrat George McGovern to press for an official US team of observers for the April 'internal settlement' elections. When this was not forthcoming they organised their own observers who predictably discovered that the elections were 'free and fair'.

Helms and Hayakawa have long been the leaders of the Washington pro-Rhodesia lobby. It was Hayakawa who organised Ian Smith's visit to the United States last October.

For the moment the administration will avoid pressure to implement the Senate decision by claiming to operate within the terms of the Case-Javits amendment to the 1978 Security Assistance Act. This says that sanctions will be dropped when the Smith regime agrees to all-party talks (that is, including the Patriotic Front nationalist organisations) and when a new government has been freely elected with the participation of all political groups.

The two liberal Republicans who proposed the amendment worded it in such a way as to allow the administration great room for manoeuvre. It effectively allows Carter to choose when and how he recognises a new government in Zimbabwe — at the same time as appearing to adhere to lasting political principles.

This is important for the US President because his policy is determined not by the need for democratic government in Zimbabwe but by what is the best way to establish a stable, pro-imperialist regime with sufficient mass support to stand a chance of survival.

How to achieve this has exercised the minds of Capitol Hill policy makers throughout their term. There has been a running disagreement inside the administration between 'Africanists' such as UN Ambassador Andrew Young, who argue for broad-based political solutions, and 'global strategists' like National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski who present a harder line on the need to resist the Soviet threat in Africa.

For the most part Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance have tended towards the former position. But the debate is a serious one because, for once, there is a genuine 'Soviet threat'. Southern Africa is the one area of the globe where the Soviet Union does seek a

qualitative tilt in the balance of forces in its favour.

This will not, of course, involve the overturn of capitalism in the region. As in Angola and Mozambique, Western investment will be safe. But it would strengthen the band of regimes which identify with the Soviet leadership, thus weakening imperialism's strategic position in the continent.

Equally importantly the 'Soviet threat' is a useful shorthand for a process which has nothing to do with the Soviet Union — the revolutionary upsurge of the black masses of southern Africa. From the US point of view this has to be dealt with somehow. Is repression or integration the better way?

Repression has been tried and has failed. South Africa used the military method in Angola, just as it used it against the Soweto students. In neither case did it work. The Rhodesian regime is currently using it against the black population of Zimbabwe with equally disastrous results.

Washington desperately hopes that there is a better way. Andrew Young was dead right when he commented that 'President Carter understands it a lot better than does the Senate'.

The Senate defeat nevertheless puts a fairly short time limit on Carter and Young's attempts to win over the

Patriotic Front. It places similar restrictions on the Tory government — just when Thatcher and her Foreign Minister Lord Carrington could have done without them.

Throughout the election campaign even the liberal wing of the Tories, such as Francis Pym, breathed fire and brimstone at the Labour government's Rhodesia policy, which was identical to that of the Americans. The demands of office, however, require them to come up with something more practical.

We predicted last week that the Tories would not immedi-

ately move to recognise the Smith-Muzorewa government. The absolute earliest they could do that would be after the Commonwealth conference in August and then only if there had been substantial political changes in Zimbabwe and in the attitude of black Commonwealth leaders.

Nothing that has happened in the past week alters that prediction. Carrington is probably the most able member of the government and, himself a company director with substantial southern African interests, can be relied on to put imperialism's best interests

first.

Thatcher herself has little pretence to foreign policy formulation and already seems prepared to defer to Carrington's judgement.

The problem they now have, however, is to sell their cautious policy to the more bovine sections of the backbenches for whom extreme racism is an article of faith. The Senate decision makes things more difficult for Thatcher by providing the backbenchers with ammunition.

So does the report of the Tory team of observers of the April elections, released this week. The report says that the elections were free and fair and urges the government to recognise the Smith-Muzorewa regime.

If the Tory leadership decides to ignore that advice it still faces the problem of how to reach an acceptable compro-

mise with Smith. The prospect of all-party talks is dim as long as the white regime is trying to bomb the Patriotic Front into oblivion. Instead both Washington and London will step up its strategy of trying to split the Patriotic Front.

It is noticeable that the British press has become softer towards ZANU leader Robert Mugabe, who has less firm international alignments than ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo and would therefore, so the reasoning goes, be more ready to seek new allies.

Smith himself sees the value of this strategy, referring to Mugabe as a 'very realistic and sensible person' who is 'playing with Marxism as a matter of convenience'.

Zbigniew Brzezinski even tried to get the Chinese leaders to use their influence with Mugabe to get him to join the internal settlement. Mugabe has never indicated the slightest willingness to go along with this plan, if for no other reason than the cynical one that people on the winning side seldom leave to join the losers.

Mugabe's announcement last week of the growing unity between the two Patriotic Front parties is a welcome indication that the split strategy has little hope in the foreseeable future.

March on 30 June

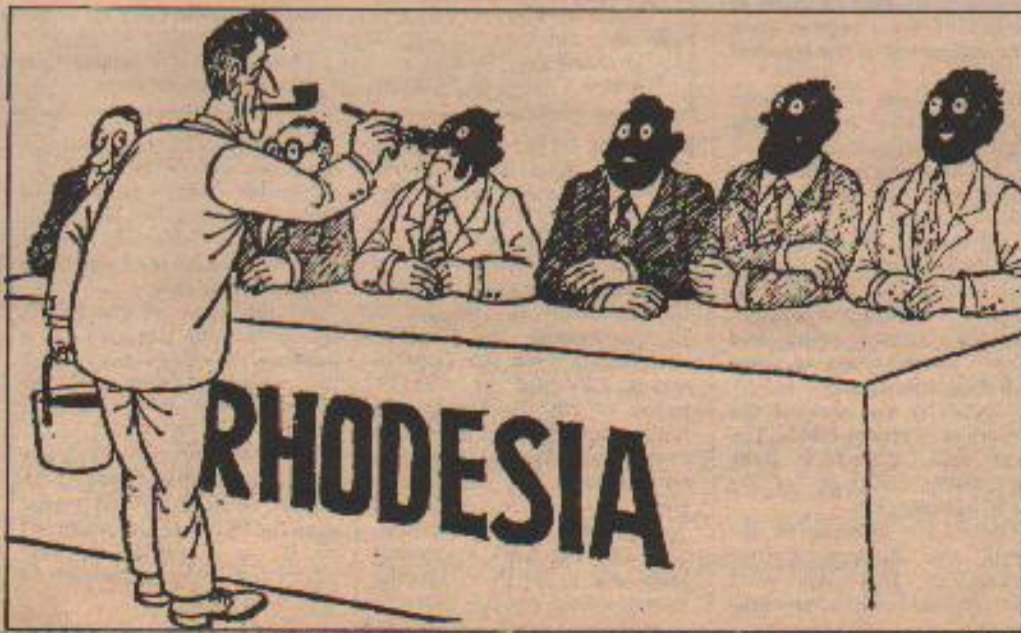
SOONER or later, in one form or another, the Tories will try to recognise the Smith regime. Even before that happens we must be there to stop them. Even if recognition is not imperialism's best long-term strategy it would still confer an important political respectability on the regime, as well as allowing it freer access to military aid.

The first major chance to stop recognition will be a national demonstration on 30 June, assembling at 2.30 at Smithfield market, London, and demanding 'No Tory sell-out in Zimbabwe'.

The demonstration is called by the Zimbabwe Emergency Campaign Committee, convened by the National Committee of the Anti-Apart-

heid Movement to allow the broadest participation in solidarity against the Tories. The Committee is meeting in London on 6 June to discuss its plans. All organisations which support its aim are invited. Details from AAM, telephone 02-580 5311.

Although the broadest unity against the Tory plans is necessary, the campaign should give no credibility to the Anglo-American plans endorsed by the Labour government. One of the most serious threats remains the use of British troops in southern Africa. Adherence to the Anglo-American terms offers no way of opposing that — indeed it was under that plan that David Owen as Foreign Secretary proposed sending troops.



Reverse the Soweto verdicts

THE South African state scored a victory when it found 11 black students guilty on sedition charges, but the weight of the black movement is such that the court could only impose relatively light sentences.

The 'Soweto 11' trial was an attempt to pin responsibility for the massive uprising of 1976 on a small group of 'agitators'. The 11 were accused of trying to create political, social and/or cultural awareness and solidarity amongst black schoolgoing students with the ultimate object of contributing toward the liberation of blacks in the Republic of South Africa...

But the openly political nature of the trial undermined the attempt to present the uprising as a conspiracy. And

when it came to the sentences the real weight of the mass movement outside was felt.

Seven of the 11 were only given suspended sentences and of the four who have gone to jail all have part of their sentence suspended. The heaviest penalty is for Sechaba Dan Montsisi, president of the Soweto Students Representative Council at the time of his arrest, who has an eight year sentence, four of them suspended.

If the moderate penalties surprised most observers they are still no cause for complacency. Four comrades are still in the apartheid jails and efforts to release them must not let up now.

- Free the four!
- Reverse all guilty verdicts!

SURPLUS VALUE

Austerity offensive European workers break out of straitjacket

By Ernest Mandel

THROUGHOUT capitalist Europe the bourgeoisie reacted to the generalised recession of 1974-75 by unleashing an anti-working class 'austerity' offensive. Its basic aim was to make the workers bear the cost of the capitalist crisis and rationalisation. The main lines of attack were:

• An attempt to stop any increase in real wages, and even to reduce them, on the pretext of fighting inflation.

The high rate of increase in productivity maintained in most of the imperialist countries meant that this would lead to a considerable increase in the rate of surplus value and therefore — all things being equal — to a significant boost in the rate of profit. That was effectively the chief aim of austerity.

• A no less brutal attack on the gains of the workers movement in the sphere of social security and welfare spending, which today represents an important component of wages in the fundamental sense of the term (cost of reproducing the labour force).

• A systematic reduction of jobs in all the industrial sectors hardest hit by the crisis, right up to the dismantling of whole sectors or sub-sectors. Steel, shipbuilding, the textile and footwear industries are typical examples.

The consequent sharpening of regional differences partly explains the reappearance or growth of regional agitation, even the rediscovery of certain 'national identities' in various European countries.

• An attempt to erode trade union rights and the ability of the labour movement and working class to mount a vigorous response to this generalised anti-working class offensive.

This includes measures such as the extension of wage contracts (Denmark), attacks on secondary picketing (Britain), tentative moves to limit the right to demonstrate (France), and attempts to cut down on shop stewards' rights, especially their ability to go beyond the results of national negotiations (Italy, Spain, Britain, etc.).

This generalised anti-working class offensive has obviously taken specific forms in each country. The incomes policies of the Wilson and Callaghan governments in Britain, the austerity plans of the Andreotti government in Italy and of successive governments in Portugal, the Barre plan in France — these are the most striking examples.

Surprised and disconcerted by the crisis and its consequences, bogged down in their general strategy of class collaboration, refusing to admit the possibility of any global anti-capitalist solution (by breaking with the logic of profit), the reformist leaderships have generally capitulated before the schemes of big capital.

In a series of countries they have even been the main initiators of austerity — above all in Britain, in West Germany, to some extent in Belgium, in Portugal, in Finland. They have 'managed the crisis' of capitalism.

In other countries, their involvement in 'social contracts' used as smokescreens for the austerity policies of bourgeois parties has allowed their initial implementation.

This is notably true of the policy followed by the Italian CP (and also SP) under the Andreotti government; in relation to the Moncloa Pact in Spain; and also in Finland, where the CP covered up completely for the austerity policy of a government led by social-democratic and bourgeois parties.

Nevertheless, after marking time for a period, the working class has begun to mount a response in 1978 and early 1979 (again, the timing and scale have varied from country to country). This has generally taken a triple form:

• Tough wage struggles aiming to shatter the limits imposed on basic wage increases. These have achieved major success in West Germany and Britain, less so in Spain (although they were very militant and

struggles against sackings and factory closures. A typical example is the French steelworkers' struggle.

In drawing up a balance-sheet of the three years since the start of the austerity offensive, one can state that, with the exception of Portugal, the gains obtained by the bourgeoisie have been modest.

With the bourgeoisie unable to impose its solutions, and the working class lacking as yet an adequate leadership to impose its own, the crisis

and 'political power'. The search for overall anti-capitalist solutions to the crisis must involve political solutions.

The response of revolutionary Marxists to the austerity offensive combines five necessary elements which are merely the application of the general strategy of transitional demands to the concrete conjuncture:

1. The projection of precise demands as immediate objectives of struggle:

• against attacks on purchasing power, a sliding scale of wages and social benefits on the basis of a cost of living index drawn up by the trade unions;

• against the continuing crisis, a plan of economic development based on the complete nationalisation of credit, key industries and all major firms, without compensation except for very small shareholders, a democratically elaborated plan whose priorities are in line with the needs of the working masses and the 'Third World' peoples.

• for international coordination of workers' action throughout every multinational and in the industries hardest hit by the crisis (steel!).

2. Unitary mobilisations to obtain these objectives, essentially through extra-parliamentary action:

• systematic agitation and propaganda for a general strike to end austerity;

• propaganda (including by example) for the setting up of democratic structures for the self-organisation of the masses (democratically elected strike committees, central strike committees, conferences of strike committees, etc.).

3. Systematic defence of overall political solutions, including at the governmental level, which can only be unitary solutions:

• systematic propaganda and, on occasion, agitation for a workers' government, for governments of the workers' organisations (Labour government, CP/SP governments, CP/SP/trade union governments, according to the country and the concrete circumstances), demanding that they satisfy the chief demands of the working masses;

• systematic propaganda for the unity of the working class and its allies, for a united front of all the organisations claiming to be part of the workers movement, and the structuring of this united front through unitary committees from the base to the summit in order to control the activity of such a government;

• no illusions about the ability of the reformist leaderships to break effectively with capitalism.

4. Systematic action to advance the emergence of alternative leaderships inside the mass organisations:

• a struggle for trade union unity and democracy, for militant unionism, for the emergence of class struggle tendencies aiming to seize control of the unions from the bureaucratic apparatuses, above all during and following major struggles;

• for comradely discussion and unity in action with the left tendencies developing little by little inside the Communist and social-democratic parties.

5. A systematic policy of building and strengthening the nucleus of the revolutionary party, whose growth is vital both to stimulating the appearance of alternative leaderships in the plants and unions and in orienting the mass struggle in a clearly unitary and anti-capitalist direction.

With the present relationship of forces, there is nothing which says that the semi-spontaneous response of the masses cannot be transformed into a generalised assault against the capitalist system. Nor is there anything which guarantees it.

To achieve this transformation — the only possibility of a positive outcome to the crisis — requires a struggle for the whole of the action programme which has just been outlined, both nationally and internationally.



Social democrats Schmidt and Callaghan look uneasily on European workers' struggles. Clockwise from top left: public sector, Ford, German steel, French steel.

widespread). The current explosion of workers' struggles in Ireland falls in the same category.

• Considerable pressure inside the trade union movement to break the 'social contracts' used to justify austerity policies. This was largely successful in Spain, where the Moncloa Pact was not renewed. Its effects are beginning to be felt in Italy. In Denmark there was even a general strike to this end in 1978.

• Partial but highly explosive

will therefore be long and marked by a number of sharp turns.

While one can note a clear change in the temperature of the class struggle, with the working class beginning to respond to the generalised austerity offensive, it is as well to be aware of its limits.

It is only on the level of the economy as a whole that effective solutions can be won. And 'the economy as a whole' really means questions of 'government', 'state',

• against unemployment, a 35-hour week with no loss of pay, with workers hired in proportion and workers control over the work-rate;

• against factory closures, nationalisation without compensation and under workers control;

• against sackings, a workers' power of veto, no redundancies without provision of alternative employment at the same rates and in the same area;

Photo: LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

RADIO

Cardiff Broadcasting Has a community captured the airwaves?

THE FRANCHISE of Cardiff's new commercial radio station has just been awarded to a company based on community groups, with an electoral process for choosing half its board of directors.

Will this measure of community control prevail over the business interests which dictate the output of the rest of Britain's so-called independent radio?

BOB DUMBLETON, a member of the Socialist Workers Party, Cardiff and South Wales Housing Action, and now a director of Cardiff Broadcasting writes on the possibilities and pitfalls.

Both the 'public service' BBC and commercial TV and radio are controlled and patrolled in ways which reinforce the status quo.

By and large it is the establishment, the orthodox, the 'moderate', the spokespersons, the police and army handouts that these media weigh in the 'balance' and rarely find wanting.

The Annan Report on broadcasting and the subsequent White Paper drawn up by the Labour government included tentative suggestions for new ways of running the media.

They included, for example, the proposal that the fourth TV channel should run by an open broadcasting authority — a proposal which the Tories have just clobbered in favour of their commercial friends.

For local radio, the suggestion was that non-profit making trusts reflecting the 'community' could run new stations instead of the usual business outfits.

A few journalists and community activists in Cardiff picked up this message at the end of last year and began to organise a bid for the Cardiff franchise, which five groups of business people, media stars, and public figures were already competing for.

Cardiff Broadcasting really took off at a public meeting which over two hundred people turned up to. Support at that stage was mainly leftist and radical.

The problem was to raise the cash. There were no charitable foundations to provide the £450,000 eventually needed, although Gulbenkian funded much of the preparatory work.

We had to have financial investors, and that meant some form of compromise.

At this point a few socialists opted out, but to get into any sort of shape acceptable to the Independent Broadcasting Authority — which awards the

prizes — a compromise was always what it had to be.

The presence of financial stakeholders and financial 'discipline' was a crucial sign to the IBA that we weren't all that different.

50 per cent block vote.

Nearly 400 people came to the public meeting which elected the present board, including a phalanx of church people and SPUCites. The outcome was: two non-conformist clery, two women's activists, a Labour councillor, and an SWP member.

The whole enterprise has been a series of compromises, first with the financiers.

The present directors are not obviously in it for the money — most local radio is not a gold mine, and business people have cultural and 'community' aims, in such matters as the arts and charities.

But profits will have to be



The compromise constitution works like this: the radio company has a board of 12 directors, half of whom are selected by the shareholders as in a normal company and the other six elected by a democratically elected trust.

Since the finance shareholders are limited to a maximum holding of 10 per cent, and there are lots of them, there is real power in the trust's

made in order to survive.

The second compromise will be with the advertisers, which means seeking the biggest audience. Our application stressed news and information, as opposed to the usual pop, so there is evidently a set of pressures here.

Thirdly, the IBA supervises the political impartiality of programmes and has a veto over the key appointments.

What may be the biggest problem is that 'community' and 'democracy' in this context reflect the status quo, and in relation to other 'interest groups' and pressures we are too divided to develop the station in a single pioneering direction.

What is needed is for the elected trust to recreate the spirit and real democracy of the hectic days when the application was put together.

The trust aims to involve people and to carry out education on the uses of the medium. A regular newsletter, public meetings, and workshops are planned.

Only if there is continued pressure from activists will anything distinctive emerge from Cardiff Broadcasting, otherwise all the good and radical intentions can be reshaped by the system into the same old product.

What could be achieved? A radio station with content instead of perpetual 'pop' drivel. A much needed competitor to the Thomson press and the BBC and HTV news services in the area.

A stimulus to democratising and demystifying the media. The professional broadcasters will have community activists as bosses and teamworkers, and so won't be the usual copy fodder.

Our aim has to be to harness the mass of free talent and imagination to make the output rich and living.

Above all, the success and failures will illuminate the central question of who owns and controls the media.

In Cardiff people will soon be voting regularly to exercise a measure of control over their local radio station. The next election of the trust will be on

Why 100,000 marched in support of a radio station



Members of the Housewives' Collective injured after fascist attack — from Granada's Chain Reaction

NEXT Tuesday, 29 May, at 10.30pm Granada TV is screening Chain Reaction, which examines how the far left in Italy sees the present political situation there.

Featured in the programme is Radio Citta Futura (Future City), an independent radio station of the far left in Rome, which was physically attacked in January by an armed group of fascists.

Sandro Silvestri of Radio Citta Futura told Chris Walker of the Peoples News Service about the attack and the role of the station.

'For the first time in Italy, and for that matter in Europe — except for certain radio stations during the war — people can broadcast without any prior control or censorship, and really say what they like.'

'There are a lot of people who have never had the opportunity to explain to other people their position and ideas. That's RCF's role.'

'It's not only for the left, but for anyone who is involved in a mass movement and has something to say — oppressed people such as women, gays, students, the unemployed...'

'Due to the way we operate, it is not possible for RCF, or any other democratic radio station in Italy, to broadcast an account of events which is misleading or simply not true.'

'Once something happens which involves workers, for example, people listen to the state radio and then to what we say. Anyone who disagrees with us can phone in and express their opinion on the air.'

'In this way RCF can give a very clear version of events. This is very important in Rome at the moment.'

RCF was set up in 1976 by Workers Vanguard (AO) and Party of Proletarian Unity (PDUP), but shortly afterwards became independent of

these groups, aligning itself with the 'Movement'. The Housewives' Collective is an example of this involvement.

'The collective is impossible to imagine without a radio, because the housewives have to stay at home.'

'The Housewives' Collective was launched following an appeal by some of the women of Radio Donna, a feminist radio operating independently within RCF.'

'Step by step, these women — most of whom are middle-aged — came out, and now this is one of the strongest elements of the feminist movement in Italy...'

'We are a voice which the state, the establishment, and even the Communist Party find really disturbing. Several times, acting on the instigation of the CP, the police have tried to stop our broadcasts.'

'The attack by the fascists is part of a new strategy. After having attacking, injured and killed ordinary people on trains, in banks, and on the streets, the fascists are attacking the revolutionary left.'

The attack on the radio station on 9 January came when five women from the Housewives' Collective were making a broadcast about abortion and contraception. The fascists set fire to the studio and shot at the women as they escaped.

That afternoon, 10,000 marched from the neighbourhood to the hospital to see the women.

The following day 40,000 women demonstrated in Rome against the attack, and some 50,000 marched a few days later in support of RCF. In 15 days, the station collected £10,000 in donations, and construction workers helped to rebuild the studio.



Socialist Challenge

THREE WEEKS the Tories have been in office. Three weeks — and already we've had thousands of jobs destroyed; among young people, in the Civil Service, and for any public sector workers who get a pay rise.

And they still have four years and 49 weeks to go — unless we do something about it.

Miners' leader Joe Gormley wants us to accept that they will be there for five years — and so we should talk to them to get the best deal we can.

'THE people have made their choice of government. I am going to talk to Ministers to get the best deal I can.'

— Joe Gormley, NUM president

Like Jim Callaghan, he has declared that he will not engage in 'factional opposition'.

Is it 'factional' to defend working people's interests against their exploiters?

We know that the Tories are preparing for the attack — an attack on basic union rights, on the public services, on nationalised industries, on the rights of black people, on abortion rights.

Yet instead of preparing a plan of action to ward off those attacks, instead of alerting the labour movement — Gormley and Callaghan would rather talk with the government about their 'trade union reforms' and be 'non-factional' in opposition.

'CONSULTATIONS between trade union leaders and the government must cease now that the Tories have made it clear they are hell-bent on shifting the balance of power away from the workers and towards the employers.'

— Dennis Skinner MP

It's time to break off the talks, time to prepare a plan of action. And that's what the National Union of Public Employees conference proposed last weekend.

They passed a resolution moved by Camden General Branch, which we print here, offering a way of resisting the Tories.

We must take our lead from this, and see that we fight the right-wing Labour and trade union leaders to get a plan of action adopted to fight the Tories.

* Reports on the trade union conference pages 6-7.

Now NUPE says it.

NO TALKS WITH THE TORIES



Photo: BOB MURPHY (Socialist Challenge)



JOHN SUDDABY, secretary of NUPE's Camden general branch

The Camden Resolution

THE NUPE conference notes that the newly-elected government plan:

— to introduce legislation attacking trade union rights;

— intends to launch a full scale offensive against the public sector involving the imposition of rigid cash limits, cuts in services, and attacks on public sector workers' jobs and living standards.

1. Conference will fight against any limitations on the collective freedom of trade unions to organise effectively in

pursuit of their interests.

In particular conference opposes restrictions on effective picketing, the imposition of restrictive collective bargaining and disputes procedures, and interference in unions' rights to decide their own decision making processes. Accordingly conference:

(a) Instructs NUPE's representative on the TUC to oppose any talks with the Conservative government on the above issue.

2. Conference states its

opposition to any system of cash limits and any attempt to interfere with the comparability payments on this basis.

Conference will engage in a campaign against the Conservative government's attacks on the public sector involving meetings, demonstrations and industrial action.

In particular conference will campaign:

(a) against increased mili-

tary defence spending and for the re-allocation of defence funding to the public services;

(b) for the creation of a public sector alliance uniting all public sector unions under attack;

(c) among the private sector trade unions calling for solidarity of all trade unionists in defence of public services and against the government's attempts to divide the trade union movement, private sector against public sector.

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OUR FUND DRIVE

THE MESSAGE the paper's been bringing you since the election is loud and clear. It's not just coming from us, but from everything the new government does and everything that's begun to happen inside the Labour Party.

A Tory government doesn't mean that we're back to the nice simple economic struggle in the workplace. Labour in opposition doesn't mean that Sunny Jim and axeman Healey are going to go over to a red-blooded socialist alternative. A socialist challenge is as essential as ever.

Something else hasn't changed either.

Lots of people think that Socialist Challenge is a good

thing. They subscribe to the paper, buy it from one of our sellers, or just (shame) read someone else's copy. That's you — our readers.

You wouldn't be happy if one Thursday there was no Socialist Challenge. But somehow, just like before the election, that support doesn't seem to get translated into cash.

We're now seven weeks into the new quarter — more than half way — and only £958 has come in so far for our fund drive. That means we need over £1,500 in the remaining six weeks: £257 a week, to be exact.

That's why we need you to double your money. We said it last week and we aren't ashamed of saying it again.

Meanwhile our thanks to this week's contributors:

A. Platt	£ 1.00
A. Tortorella	5.00
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S. Bodini	1.00
Hull SC supporters	3.00
Walsall teacher	5.00
G. Wallis	2.00
Swindon reader	1.00
Week's total	£121.11
Cumulative total	£958.95

LOTTERY WINNER

The winning ticket in the Socialist Challenge lottery was number 2611, held by D. Johnston, 7N Fort Street, Leith, Edinburgh.

