

# Workers' fight

5p

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## HEADS THEY WIN



## TAILS WE LOSE

This is the giveaway Government - as long as you're a big boss or royalty. For the moguls of industry, there are billions of pounds to be scooped up from Wilson's treasury: vast contracts for useless armaments; £500 million in 'loans' in the last budget, together with £1,000 million in tax handouts; the never-ending drain of 'compensation' for clapped out industries taken over more than a quarter of a century ago; and now the prospect of a billion pounds handed over in 'investment' by Benn's NEB, in return for no more than the right of the government to advise and influence.

On top of all this, the Queen is to be given an extra £400,000 per year rise.

The British Royal Family is, of course, noted for its graciousness the world over. This totally parasitic and useless crew receives tax-free income from one of the biggest private fortunes in the world, and on top of that, gets millions every year from the 'civil list' in order to practice its unique brand of grace.

On the very same day, her gracious majesty's financial agents in the property game, the Crown Agents, got a court order to evict scores of squatters from properties that had been left empty for five years. Even the Judge stated that the order he was legally obliged to grant was a disgrace.

### 'FAIR SHARES'

And still the Labour Government wants us to accept the Social Contract! Originally, they said it would lead to fairer shares all round. Now that this particular mouldy carrot has been slung out, they're relying for a big stick on the biggest 'heads I win, tails you lose' argument: if you want higher wages, you can say goodbye to the jobs. Take a cut in living standards, they say, or there'll be massive unemployment.

But by the look of it, we are getting both the unemployment and the cuts. When it comes to those who work for their keep (and for the lavish upkeep of their 'betters' in our society), this giveaway government turns into a take-away government.

### DAMAGING CUTS

Food prices, it is forecast, will go up 40% in the coming year. And food is one of the major items of the working class budget. This week bread goes up to 16p a loaf. Workers are worst hit by inflation.

Working people are most at the mercy of the really damaging penny pinching cuts in vital services like

health and education. In Buckinghamshire, for instance, one in every four teachers is to be 'eliminated' from the schools and colleges. Nursery classes, some whole colleges and nearly all the libraries in the county will be closed down to save £3½ million.

Hundreds of thousands of workers are on short time, with their wages drastically cut. Over a million are out of work altogether (if you include the many women who don't register for the dole when they lose a job) just because the bosses can't make big profits out of building houses or making clothes or furniture. As if people didn't need those things any more.

### TAKING THE BLAME

And the worst of it is, workers are supposed to take the blame for it all.

When things go well for the capitalist system, its defenders never tire of telling us how well it's 'proving' itself, and how 'outdated' Marx and Lenin are, "now that everyone lives well."

But Marx and Lenin weren't just reacting with their emotions to the squalor and irresponsibility of early capitalism. They knew its workings, and told how the squalor, the violence, the exploitation would remain, ebbing and flowing in intensity as long as the system continues its convulsive, junkie's existence of virtually uncontrollable booms and slumps.

### CLOUDS GATHERING

And now that the clouds are gathering and the capitalist system is in a mess, what do the 'never had it so good' pundits and apologists have to say in defence of their system?

Now they talk less about capitalism - and more about the workers 'messing things up'.

But inflation and unemployment are ravaging throughout the capitalist world, and in those countries where trade unions are weak or outlawed and workers and peasants live on the breadline or starve, there are MORE people out of work, and prices go up FASTER.

When things go well, the capitalists take the credit; but when things go badly, workers are made to take the blame. Once again: heads they win - tails we lose.

Squatters evicted by the Queen's agents. The property had been empty for five years.



## Mines deal: LESS THAN MEETS THE EYE

The storm that has erupted over the money the NCB is to pay out to the miners hides the fact that this figure is the price the Labour Government had to pay for a victory over the only group of workers expected to take on the government.

The section of the working class that shook the Tories to their roots in 1972 and brought them down in 1974, has been bought off by the Labour Government for an increase in the total wage bill of only 23%.

The bosses' experts are right in predicting a rate of inflation of 25%. That means that within months, the miners will be back where they started, and thereafter their real wages will be lower than they are now. (The claim that the increases range from 28% to 35% conveniently ignores the fact that 40% of this increase is made up of existing threshold payment that have now been consolidated.)

In addition the National Coal Board has got the NUM to agree to the re-

introduction of productivity and efficiency targets in the coal industry and managed by increasing the differentials between various groups of miners to sow potentially dangerous divisions within their ranks.

After the announcement of the settlement, Gormley gave his opinion of the outcome: "I think it's a damn good settlement" he said. What he didn't admit was that this agreement not only fell a long way behind what the left were fighting for, but it fell behind even what the right wing in the NUM was demanding. They were asking £44 for surface workers, and got £41; and £64.50 for faceworkers, who ended up with £61.

The uproar in the press and in parliament reflects the fears that what trade unionists will see in this deal if £3,000 a year ... and make it their own target.

But the workers now in the queue, the railwaymen, the power workers and the postmen, are not those with the most militant record - which is what you would

expect with leaders like Weighell, Chapple and Tom Jackson. True, Sidney Weighell has invited Joe Gormley to attend a meeting of the Executive Committee of the NUR next March "with a view to forming a much closer alliance and to getting agreement on common problems". But while this could have been an important step forward (like the Triple Alliance after World War 1), coming just after the NUM-NCB negotiations it is no more than a bureaucratic ploy.

### Alliance

If the RANK AND FILE workers in these unions in the pay claim queue really did form an alliance for struggle, though, they could forge a weapon capable of meeting any offensive the employers could mount.

That "closer alliance" would be a powerful weapon also against the 'closer alliance' of the trade union leaders and the government, which is really the essence of the Social Contract.



# PERU THE BRITTLE REGIME CRACKS

Whatever 'normality' may have returned to the streets of Lima is recent days, it cannot conceal the fact that last week's violence there and in other Peruvian cities revealed a crisis of major proportions in the country — the deepest faced by the 'progressive' bourgeois nationalist regime of General Velasco Alvarado since the military seized power in the bloodless coup of 1968.

Bitter fighting broke out in Lima on Wednesday 5th February, as government troops moved in to crush an occupation of barracks by the Civil Guard police force, who were demanding a £20 monthly pay increase and better conditions.

Troops and tanks were sent in to storm out the 2,000 armed Civil Guards, who had barricaded themselves in for over 48 hours. The news of this battle sparked off a major confrontation, as thousands of demonstrators swarmed into the city centre, setting fire to the offices of two government controlled newspapers and radio stations, burning military clubs and throwing Molotov cocktails into hotels.

Reports spoke of both left wing and right wing forces being involved in this, and of firing between soldiers and groups of students and civilians. The government responded by declaring a state of emergency, taking away civil and constitutional rights, and legislating sweeping powers to detain, search and deport.

## Mutiny

With the fighting over, the death toll was put at around 100, with 600 seriously injured. Damage to the two newspaper offices was put at £500,000, and 800 people were arrested for pillaging.

In the southern town of Arequipa, what the government called "an attempt to take over the town by force" was put down with 300 dead.

Though the Civil Guards' demands were over pay and conditions (in a situation of 30% inflation) and their action involved the lower ranks, it is also clear that some very reactionary forces were attempting to use the strike as a political weapon against the government.

The CIA, for a start, are widely assumed in Lima to have had a hand in orchestrating the well-planned police mutiny. Right wing civilian opponents of the regime were involved in the violence, with members of the pro-US populist movement APRA seen in

considerable numbers on the streets.

The plan seems to have been to spark off a revolt in the conservative navy, in the hope of winning sections of army against Velasco, taking advantage of recently increasing splits inside the military government.

Since Velasco took power in 1968 under the banner of "national sovereignty" a number of considerable reforms have been put through, with the object of developing the national economy. Within a week of taking over, the generals nationalised Standard



President Velasco

Oil's International Petroleum Corporation, and later proceeded to take over the US-owned copper mines and the important fishcanning and processing industry.

A fairly wide ranging land reform was also enacted, which broke down much of the power of the great landowners in the provinces. New projects for irrigation and local colonisation have been launched, together with ambitious plans to develop the copper mining industry. And internationally, Velasco has boosted his progressive image by recognising Cuba, exchanging ambassadors with China, expanding trade with Russia and Eastern Europe and establishing close ties with Allende's Chile.

## Aloof

He has come into serious disputes with US imperialism through the nationalisation of the Le Brea and Parinas oilfields of what was the Esso Company. Again, recently, the government reduced the traffic rights of the US airline Braniff in an out of Lima

Airport. More worrying to US imperialism, perhaps, was the decision of the Andean Pact countries, which Peru's Government supported, to place stringent control over foreign shareholdings in local enterprises, and over profit remittances from these businesses.

But, as far as the Peruvian working class and rural workers are concerned, these measures have all been carried out in a paternalistic way by an aloof military government which has avoided any popular involvement in carrying out its reforms. Instead there has merely been plenty of demagoguery about "our revolution". And the vastly expanded state sector under the regime has brought the most conspicuous benefits to the armed forces, senior police officials, industrialists and technicians.

## Ferment

Lately the regime has been increasingly running out of steam, as the various class interests between which Velasco balances react against his policies. Repression has been stepped up. Last year's press laws virtually abolished any independent press in Peru, and a number of journalists were deported, as the press was placed under the control of government supporters. Five lawyers were jailed for criticising the government's concessions to Japanese big business in an oil deal.

During 1974, there were a number of major disputes with the working class, whose discontent was fuelled by the high rate of inflation and by reports of corruption in the army. In a long and bitter dispute, the copper miners clashed directly with the government, now the owners of the mines. (And these disputes were preceded by a local general strike in Arequipa in 1973.)

On the land, there has been agitation to speed up land reform, and there have been occupations of land organised by the militant Confederacion Campesina de Peru.

The government — fully supported by the Peruvian Communist Party — has tried to neutralise these conflicts by creating alternative bureaucratic structures: sponsored unions, and a national peasant confederation.

On the right wing, discontent has made itself felt in actions such as bomb attacks on delegations from Cuba and Russia, and these have been followed by drastic 'anti-terrorist' laws.

This ferment has inevitably found its reflection inside the government. There was much confusion recently over the appointment of General Morales Bermudez as Prime Minister, Minister of Defence and Commander in Chief of the Army; Bermudez is a man deeply opposed to any further radical measures in Peru, in the name of "consolidation of the revolution". Unrest in the upper ranks of the Navy has increased, especially since the navy chief was forced to resign last year, and it seems that a confrontation took place behind closed doors in 1974 between the military, and conservative members of the Navy.

Abortive attempts previously made on the life of Peru's former Prime Minister and on the Navy Chief of Staff further indicate a growing instability, doubtless

accentuated by CIA "destabilising" operations against the regime.

When it came to a possible showdown last week, none of the oppositional elements could bring any decisive sections of the military to move against Velasco. But his room for manoeuvre within the armed forces is rapidly dwindling, especially as he is increasingly isolated in Latin America with hostile neighbours like Bolivia and Chile (which got together last week for the first time since 1962) on his southern borders.

With the increased weight of the right wing "consolidationist" forces inside the government, and a fear of calling forth mass support (especially among the industrial workers), Velasco's progressive image is likely to become much more tarnished in the months ahead.

**William Butler**

## ISRAELI SECRET SERVICE WRANGLE

ISRAEL's secret service organisations are reputed to be among the most efficient and ruthless in the world. And, in normal times, the most secretive. But, in the wake of the 1973 war, it has lately been suffering the fate of the CIA, as it has come under public scrutiny along with other sections of the Israeli military machine.

The Paris based magazine 'Israel and Palestine' has recently revealed details of an intriguing power struggle which has been raging in the various branches of the secret service, as a result of the report of a commission which recommended the merging of the various units into one body to be called the 'Central Institution for Intelligence and Special Tasks'. With the enforced resignation after the report of

Colonel Zaria, the Head of Military Intelligence, there was obviously going to be some jockeying for the new top job.

The ensuing power struggle provoked a split between two tendencies operating within the secret services, revealing a technocratically minded faction on the one hand and a political, virulently anti Arab group on the other (which included those operating as death squads to organise the murder of Palestinian leaders outside Israel).

## FORTRESS

In the event it proved impossible, for the time being, to appoint an overall boss. But there are clear signs that the anti Arab fanatics have gained the upper hand for the present.

General Zamir, who was clearly a candidate for the new top job, has been shifted out of the Security Services altogether and given a post in Solel Boneh — Israel's biggest building company (one of the enterprises run by the so called trade union body, the Histadruth). Zamir had been an efficient but relatively unassuming head of MOSSAD — the international intelligence agency clearly identified with the technocrat faction.

Then Yosef Hermelin was sacked as head of the internal security services — the Shin Bet — and replaced by General Rachbaam Zeevi, who had previously held a central post with military intelligence.

Zeevi, a vehement right winger, is remembered in many quarters for his lavish expenditure of army funds to construct a 'fortress' in the area of the Egyptian front where he was commander of land forces; guarding the gates of his 'fortress' were two lions specially imported from South Africa. Journalist friends of this character would be taken on 'terrorist' hunts in his private helicopter, and on one such occasion Zeevi intercepted an Israeli patrol, relieved them of their two Arab prisoners, and promptly shot the two bound men.

As head of the Shin Bet, Zeevi will be head of security in the Occupied Territories as well as inside Israel itself.

## EXPANDED

Meanwhile Professor Yuval Neeman, formerly rector of Tel Aviv University, has been given Zeevi's last job, that of 'special Adviser' to the Prime Minister on security matters. Which is enough to raise several different doubts about the regime at Tel Aviv University...

The Foreign Ministry's Documentation Unit, which collects intelligence material abroad but does not act on it itself, is being expanded, as is AMAN, the military intelligence body which is becoming increasingly involved in electronic surveillance.

It is generally known that not only does the Israeli secret service carry out many operations solely on its own initiative, making itself an independent political force, but also that its advice plays a major role in the shaping of Israeli policy. With this in mind, the struggle within its ranks and the consequent right wing shift will undoubtedly have serious consequences.

S.V.

## Praise be for the second best!

IF YOU wanted to give someone a dachshund instead of a doberman for a guard dog and still be told that "that's just what I needed", then make sure you give it to a Tribuneite.

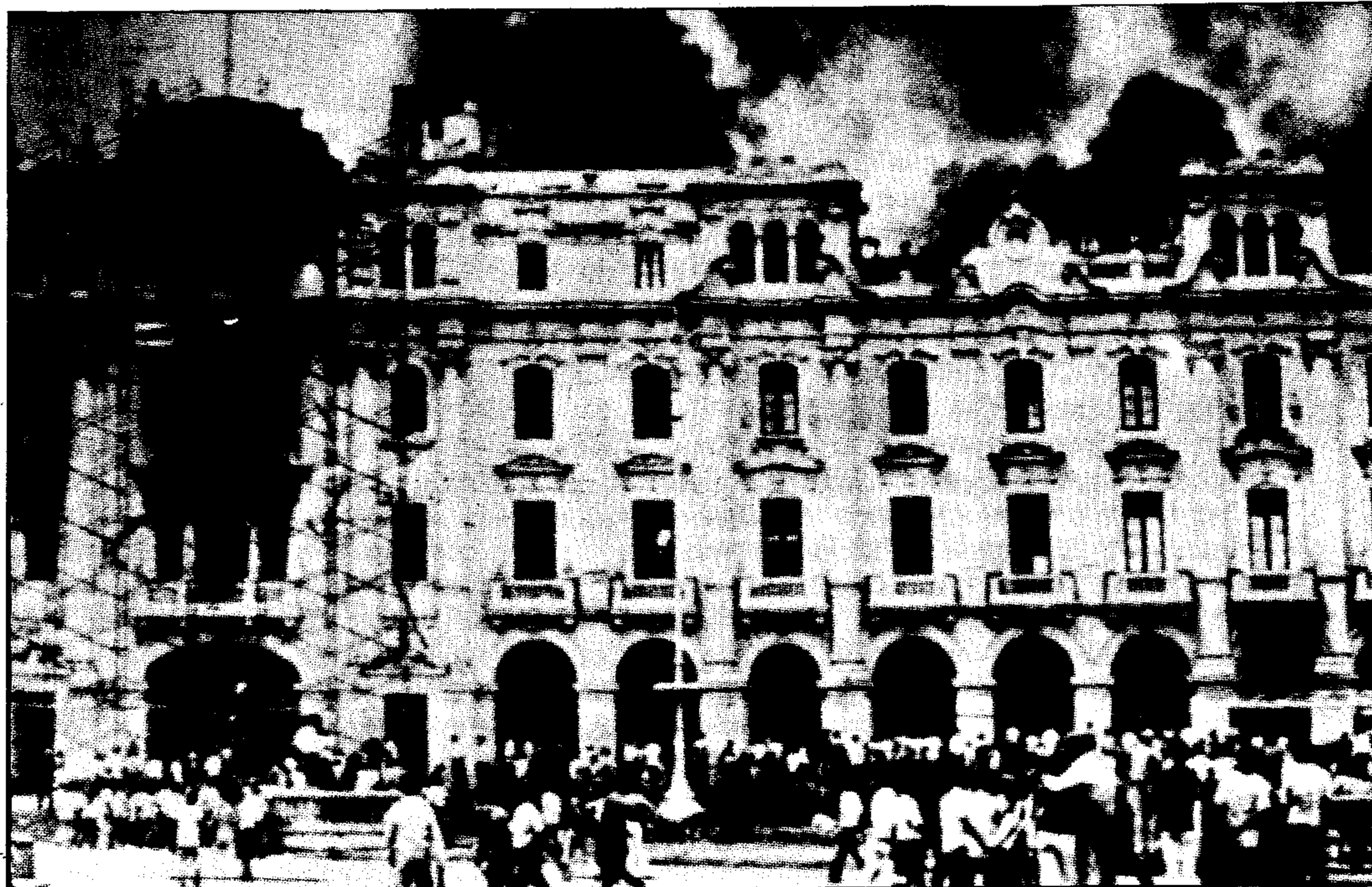
These left Labour MPs gathered around their weekly mouthpiece, the journal 'Tribune', have spent a parliamentary life time praising the Labour Government for giving them a tiny fraction of what they asked for.

The latest case of this is their response to Wedgewood Benn's new Industry Bill. This Bill which, as we quoted last week, was thought by the OBSERVER to hold out "the tantalising prospect of shop floor cooperation not known in modern times", had Tribune leader writers on their feet applauding what they called "The People's Bill" and managing to claim that it "had been received with squeals of outrage and fear from big business and the Tory press". Like the Observer, presumably....

The Observer was brighter than the Labour 'Lefts' (which won't surprise anyone). But where they went wrong was in thinking that the Labour 'Lefts' would be bright enough to see that Benn had "switched Labour policy from outright nationalisation to something approaching a corporate industrial estate". That, the Observer thought, would infuriate the 'Left'.

The Observer was wrong.... the Tribune 'Left' never noticed.

As we commented last week, "Unfortunately, the traditional misconceptions of the trade union and Labour left only serve to aid people like Benn. Their customary failure to see the Labour Government as essentially a capitalist one, and state intervention under its control as a positive benefit to big business, leaves them open to the thinly disguised conmanship of 'participation'."



Buildings ablaze in Lima's Plaza San Martin

## FIREBOMB CASE STOKES ANTI-IRISH HYSTERIA

"An East End shopkeeper was turned into a human torch seconds after a petrol fire bomb was thrown into his face by a mystery attacker." So the East London Advertiser opened a horrible front page story on an atrocity that took place in Whitechapel last week.

The victim of the attack was an Irishman, John Sheridan, who owned a newsagents shop. There is no obvious motive, and the incident appears as a ghastly example of anti Irish hysteria.

But that's not how the rabidly anti IRA East London Advertiser sees it. For this paper, it comes as yet another chance to have a bash at the IRA: "Detectives have not

ruled out a theory that the IRA may be behind the attack", comments this gutter sheet, giving its full endorsement to the sentiments that were obviously behind the attack on John Sheridan.

Have those detectives "ruled out" the possibility that it could have been the act of a right wing anti-Irish fanatic? Probably not. But whether they have or not, they don't see fit to mention this rather obvious "theory".

But then, local police have been seen regularly at fascist meetings, supposedly "keeping an eye on subversives" — and keenly donating when there is a paper money collection at the end.

Of course they are happy to let the local press print any old hypocritical rot about IRA involvement.

Meanwhile John Sheridan fights for his life after having his head shoulders and chest ablaze and being turned into a human fireball. For those not blinded by the bosses' 'Advertiser', it is all too reminiscent of fire bomb attacks on Irish pubs and clubs in the ferocious aftermath of the Birmingham bombings, and of incidents against black immigrants in Brixton and Bradford — for which fascists were held responsible.

LIZ JONES





Women in an equal pay rally — union placards but little union support.

# HOW MUCH EQUALITY WITH THE EQUAL PAY PACKET?

BY THE end of this year, the Equal Pay Act will be law, and it will be illegal to employ women at rates lower than those of men doing similar work.

But will post-Equal Pay woman be much better off?

Even the Government thinks not, and this year will be presenting a Sex Discrimination Bill to Parliament. How effective that will be can be judged from the fact that the Government's White Paper "Equality for Women" hopes to "harmonise the procedure for sex and race discrimination". And there's been ample evidence (such as the Lords ruling that black people can be excluded from Working Men's Clubs) to show how ineffective these procedures have been in the case of racial discrimination.

But perhaps a better way of judging the effectiveness of these laws is to set them against the problems that working women face — and to compare what they promise with the demands of the Working Women's Charter, which have gained wide acceptance within the labour movement.

## RAW

The truth is that women face such a mountain of disadvantages that no amount of neat little Bills and Acts drawn up on crisp parliamentary paper can — without a serious struggle being mounted — level down that mountain. In terms of pay alone, women get a raw deal for several different (though of course related) reasons: first, they face unequal rates for the same job. This was the target of the Equal Pay Act, though many employers have got around it by regrading and creating separate 'women's jobs'. Then there is the fact that women are trained or brainwashed for a very small, generally not very skilled, range of jobs in lower paid areas of industry such as catering, shops, offices and general services. And on top of that, a very large number of women are forced to work only part time, giving them fewer hours of course, but also an even narrower choice, a fact often exploited to pay a lower hourly rate than even full time women workers in the same job take home.

Without training and educating women as equals and providing adequate child care facilities, sex discrimination legislation is pretty ineffectual. What's the use of insisting that a woman with equal qualifications should stand an equal chance for any job, if the government's education system itself fails to give women equal qualifications? And what use is the rate for the job, if women with children can't get out of the home to take the job?

These are precisely the questions that the Working Women's Charter takes up. Having established the simple aims of equal pay and equal job opportunities in its first two demands, it goes on beyond these

## Equal pay for teachers — but don't they have it already?

WOMEN TEACHERS officially get equal pay. In reality, this is something of a sham. It never really has existed, and the latest pay structure brought in since the Houghton Report and agreed a few weeks ago by the NUT, will if anything make things worse.

As at 31st March 1973, roughly 50% of all women teachers in England and Wales were on the bottom salary scale. The figure for men was 25%. In 1971-72 in Scotland, 81.3% of all retiring male primary teachers were headmasters, while 71.5% of all retiring female primary teachers were unpromoted.

In January 1973 in England and Wales, 88.3% of primary school teachers were women, and of these, all but a tiny few were non-graduate training college trained teachers. The Houghton Report recommends up to £426 a year special allowance for university graduates, which is going to leave these women teachers further behind in the pay scales than they have ever been before.

to the logical outcome of such aims: education, nurseries, abortion and contraception free on demand and readily available, legal equality and maternity leave. And finally, it stresses work in the trade unions as a major way of fighting for these aims: that is, that they will be won not through reliance on parliament, but through struggle, using the power of the working class movement.

One of the clearest expressions of the gulf between the Labour Government legislation and the problems women face is apparent from comparing men's and women's actual take home pay. Though there has been "progress towards equal pay" if you define equal pay as equal rates. A comparison of pay defined as earnings gives a very different picture. In manufacturing industry in 1973, for example, (the last year for which full figures are available) women's earnings were further behind men's earnings than they were in the period 1948-56! (See table.)

Average incomes of women shown as percentage of men's...	1969	52.1%
	1961	50.4%
	1963	50.0%
	1965	49.0%
	1967	49.3%
	1969	49.0%
	1971	51.1%
	1973	51.7%

In an industry where all the pay is low, there's usually less of a gap between women's and men's rates. Yet even without such a gap, the women who work in "miscellaneous services" and "distributive trades" — i.e. those with the biggest concentration of women workers — are way behind those women who do full time manual work in the vehicle manufacturing industry, whose rate for the job is only two thirds of the men's rate: the widest gap in rates anywhere.

Even in public administration where discrimination in rates is not allowed, the lower status of jobs given to women has meant that their median hourly rate was only 82% of the men's. In jobs such as teaching, where the myth of equal pay has long been peddled, this is particularly true. (See inset.)

## BETTER

But despite all the figures that have appeared in Government reports and White Papers in the wake of the Equal Pay Act and Sex Discrimination Bill, the myth has grown that women's jobs are somehow "better" today than they were "before the war", and certainly better than in "granny's

Women who leave teaching to have a baby and then attempt to come in on a part time basis are further at a disadvantage. For a start, maternity leave is a discretionary award as far as local education authorities are concerned. The Inner London Education Authority, one of the more enlightened bodies, has the following scheme.

They give 18 weeks' maternity leave consisting of 4 weeks on full pay less maternity allowance, 4 weeks on half pay and the remaining 10 weeks also on half pay — but only payable on completion of 3 months' full time service after a return to work. (Since the time it takes to have a baby is not a matter of choice, it would seem more reasonable to be paid for the whole time!)

The three months' work after a return to teaching is extended 'pro rata' for any woman returning part-time. Moreover, part time teachers forfeit pension rights and cannot be employed on any scale higher than the basic.

Given the fact that out of 20,520 part time teachers in England and Wales (Jan.1974) 18,800 were women, the claim that women teachers are getting equal pay looks more and more like a pernicious fairy tale.

The new pay deal, which widens the gap between lower and higher pay scales (giving an increase of £40 a week to top headmasters, and a mere £4.40 a week to starting teachers) will of course correspondingly widen the gap between what the mass of women teachers get, and what the graduate men can look forward to after a few years of the "careers" rat-race.

I.H.

day". What has fed this myth is the growing population of women workers, and the fact that a few bans on women taking certain jobs have been abolished, usually to a loud fanfare of publicity.

There certainly are more women workers. In just ten years between 1961 and 1971, there were an extra half million, bringing the total to over eight and a half million — while the total number of men at work actually fell by 433,000. (This is because more boys than girls are taking longer over their education — something that will add another twist to the discrimination spiral...)

No doubt some of these women are doing jobs that they weren't allowed to do before. But the general pattern is that women's jobs are actually worse than they were in "granny's day"!

If grading is anything to go by, and presumably it is, then between 1911 and 1966 there was a

that 39.1% of all women not working because of children wanted to return to work and would have done so sooner if satisfactory arrangements could be made to look after the children.

This is something the Working Women's Charter understands.

The government, however, is not in the liberation business, but in the profit business. Its strategy in counteracting the demands of oppressed groups for equality is to grant concessions to some, and leave others where it wants them. In the case of women, this will mean that full time women workers will get better chances and a less openly discriminatory deal, while a vast army of part time and casual women workers can be kept on hand to supply the needs of a fluctuating 'labour market', to be got rid of without fuss, redundancy payments or dole money (and without even swelling



Women in the textile industry where they earn only 2/3 of the men's rate. Over 90% of machinists in this industry are women.

substantial drift of women away from skilled grades towards semi skilled and unskilled ones. And this applies both to manual and white collar work.

In manual jobs, the proportion of unskilled jobs done by women went up from 15.5% to 27.5%, while the proportion of skilled jobs held by women fell from 24% to 14.7%.

Among white collar workers the bulk of the higher graded posts (those described by the Dept. of Employment as "lower professionals and technicians") still go to women, but the percentage of women has declined from 62.9% to 52.1%.

One third of all women workers do less than thirty hours a week (while only one twentieth of men do). And the tendency, as more families are hit by inflation, is for more and more women to take part time jobs. Naturally these women aren't going to get a great deal out of the current and proposed legislation.

What of the women who 'don't work'?

Of those women over the age of 15 who don't go out to work, very few have never worked. In a 1971 survey, only 13% of all women declared that they had never gone out to work, and in the 25 to 44 age group it was only 4.3%.

According to another survey, "the most important reason (for not going out to work) was the need to look after children. This reason was given by 93.7% of the respondents, who were practically all female." This survey also found

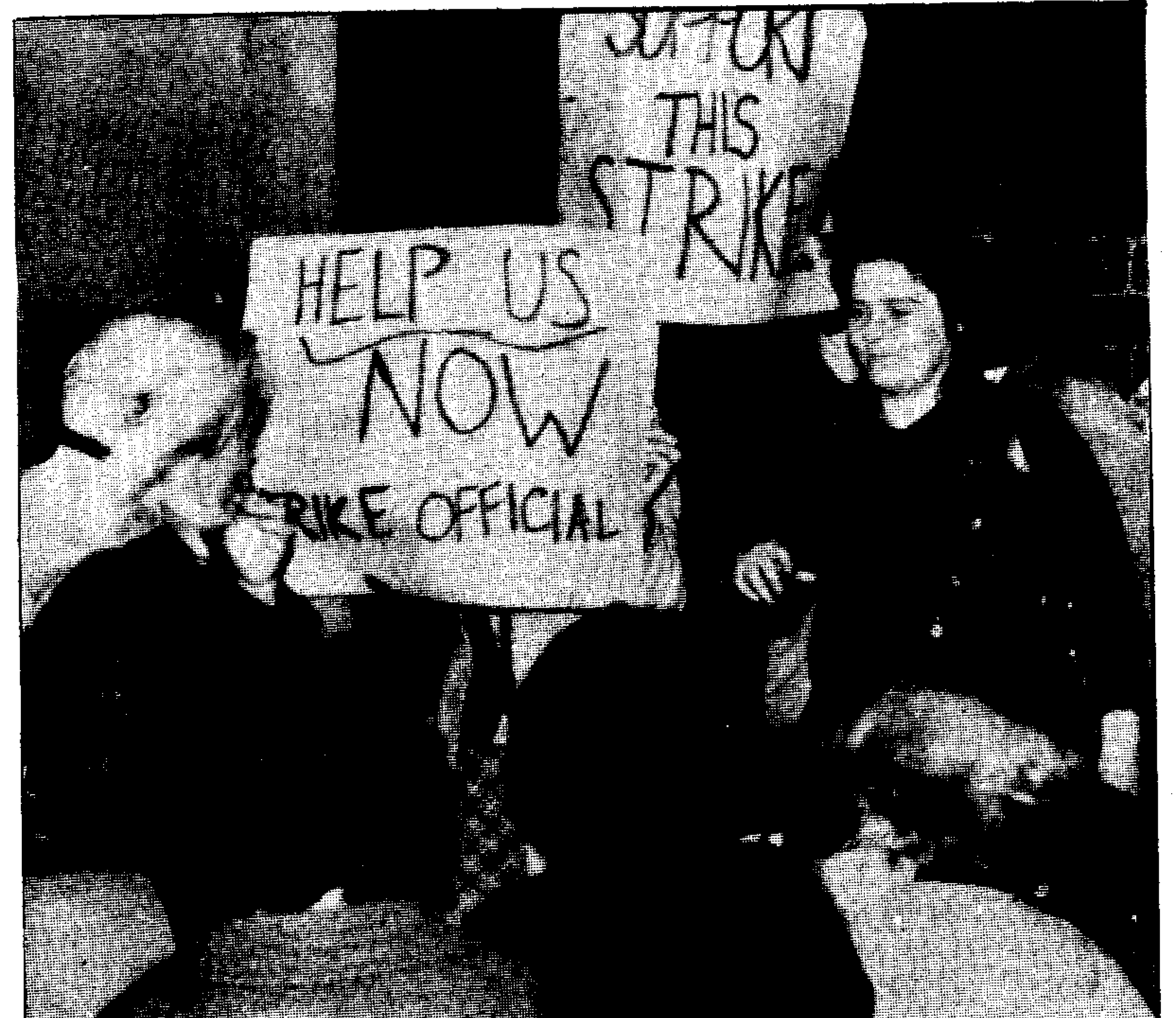
the jobless figures) whenever it's convenient.

Basically, then, the passing of Acts will not help much unless there is a fight to demand the rights these laws claim to ensure and a great deal more besides. The government hopes that the promise of "equal pay" will lull women workers into passivity. It's not been like that so far, and the struggles that we have witnessed in recent years will no doubt gather momentum as women feel more and more cheated by 'advances' that don't touch on so many of their real problems.

## FOCUS

The Working Women's Charter movement should serve as a focus for that struggle within the factories and within the trade unions. (Some of the more 'progressive' of which have a disgusting, discriminatory grade — the women's grade — which is lower than the unskilled male grades; the AUEW is a case in point. Others are in the forefront of reactionary barriers to women working in certain jobs.)

The Charter needs sharpening, and needs changing. But whatever its shortcomings, it does understand the connection between women's super-exploitation at work and their house-ties. And this is something the government has so far ignored. Indeed, it is something the government will be underplaying on purpose, as it cuts deeper and deeper into the budget for social services like nursery facilities.



Striking night cleaners being addressed by their rank and file leader, May Hobbs.



WE CONTINUE HERE AND CONCLUDE THE ARTICLE FROM THE FRENCH PERIODICAL LUTTE DE CLASSE ON ITALY'S CHRONIC POLITICAL TURMOIL. THE FIRST PART, PUBLISHED LAST WEEK, DESCRIBED THE PROBLEMS OF FORMING STABLE CENTRE LEFT OR CENTRE RIGHT GOVERNMENTS MADE UP OF COALITIONS SCRAPED TOGETHER TO GIVE A MAJORITY OVER THE LARGE OPPOSITION COMMUNIST PARTY.

IN THE CONCLUDING PART THE ARTICLE LOOKS AT THE OPTIONS OPEN TO THE RULING CLASS TO STABILISE THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

There are many possible solutions to the Italian bourgeoisie's problems. To a certain extent, the bourgeoisie can afford to wait. The system has shown that it could last as it is, until circumstances favourable to the radical transformation it needs have developed.

There have been numerous ministerial crises. But nevertheless, somehow or other, the state apparatus has always managed to play its role in relation to the working class. It has used weapons of repression or imprisonment when needed. It has sometimes relied on traditions from the Mussolini era, even if only by having recourse to articles of the Penal Code laid down by the Fascists and still in use.

The deep sense of responsibility that the working class parties have towards the bourgeois social order has sometimes actually made up for the irresponsibility and jockeying of the bourgeois politicians. This explains why unions and left wing parties alike have not put forward wages demands that would cut into the bosses' profits. Instead, they have stood for a "struggle for reforms" along the lines of a modernisation of the state structure which would benefit the bourgeoisie. And the working class upsurge of 1969-70 was kept within acceptable limits by the unions.

The pre-occupation of the bosses, who want a "strong union" to negotiate with, that is, a union capable of controlling the working class very closely, is mirrored by the preoccupations of the union bureaucrats. A new framework for union-management negotiations is being built, thanks to which the unions and the bosses will succeed in putting the workers' representatives as far away as possible from the workers' control.

To this end, the 'factory councils' which have sprung up during the workers' struggles over recent years have become institutionalised.

The politics of the unions and the 'left' parties have thus helped



Workers on a protest march in Rome in the 'hot autumn' of 1969.

# ITALY

## COMMUNIST PARTY IN THE GOVERNMENT ?

the country was particularly affected by the crisis. The flight of capital and the national debt rose in a dramatic fashion and could only be checked by U.S. loans.

In these conditions, the absence of a stable government capable of taking the necessary economic measures was all the more deeply felt by the bourgeoisie. This is why a possible Communist Party participation in government is now being openly considered by bourgeois politicians, especially in the left wing of Christian Democracy.

For years, the Italian CP has been kept away from government. As we have seen, this accounts for the weakness of all governmental coalitions. As for the CP, it has been offering its services for a long time. It has stood for a "peaceful road to socialism" even more forcefully than the French CP, thus asserting its will to become part of the system.

It also stressed 'poly-centrism', meaning the right of every CP to have its own 'national' policies and its own 'road to socialism'. The party's links with the USSR were loosened earlier than other parties', and more boldly.

But this was not enough — up until now, the Italian bourgeoisie has refused to let the CP sit with it. It still has its doubts about the CP because of the latter's links with the USSR and with the more combative fraction of the Italian working class. Instead of calling the CP into the government, it chose to keep to its unstable changing governments because it could unhesitatingly count on them, as they were composed of classic bourgeois politicians.

### Control

Now the American policy of 'detente' has tempered the cold war. And the Portuguese CP's participation in government is a European-wide experiment that will show the viability of a recourse to governments of national unity which include the CP. If this experiment is of vital importance for countries like Spain or Greece

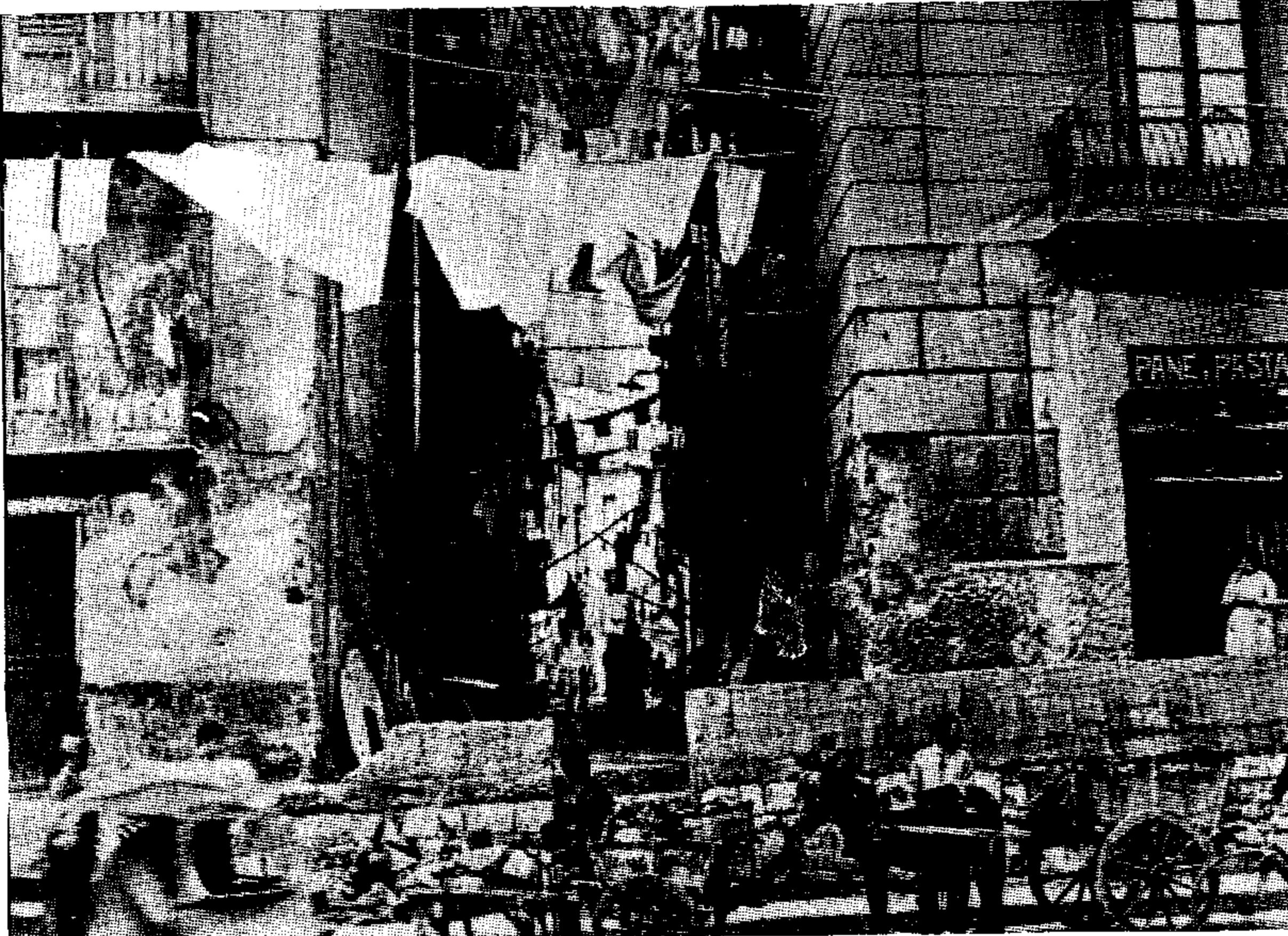
(with similar problems to Portugal's) it can also serve as a proof of the faithful managerial capacities of the CPs which could interest the ruling classes of Italy or France as well.

Meanwhile, the evolution of the CPs in the direction of 'social democratisation' continues. In the course of the social disputes of the last few years, the Italian CP has largely proved its capacity to control the working class. It also made further steps to the right, especially when Giorgio

least, a turn to the right.

CP participation remains a plausible hypothesis and is openly considered in political circles, especially in connection with a possible deepening of the economic crisis. The CP in government could then enable the bourgeoisie to make the working class bear the burden of the crisis.

The coming to 'power' of the Italian CP is therefore one of the political possibilities of the coming years. Whether or not this eventuality becomes a fact will



Slum housing in a South Italian city.

Amendola, an old CP right winger, launched the notion of the "historical compromise", by which he meant a CP-Christian Democrat coalition "guaranteeing Italy's future".

There are still of course numerous opponents of such a "historical compromise". For instance, the ministerial crisis that started in early October 1974 was due to a determined opposition of one member of the centre-left coalition Social Democratic Party to any kind of "opening to the left". It seems that the US embassy — whose links with the Social Democratic Party are especially strong — even intervened in order to impose, for the time being at

depend on the depth of the crisis and on the international situation — especially the attitude of US imperialism.

In any case, CP participation in government would enable the Italian bourgeoisie to have again a stable government, at least for some time.

### Integration

But this integration of the CP would not change the basic elements of the political crisis very much, unless this integration became durable — that is, unless the bourgeoisie was ready to accept the permanent presence of the CP at the head of the state.

with the concessions to the working class that this implies. Such a process would of course mean a more complete social-democratisation of the CP, which would then become a party more like the British Labour Party, or even Germany's Social Democratic Party.

This development is itself closely tied to the economic possibilities open to the Italian bourgeoisie. Given the present world crisis, these possibilities appear very limited indeed. The very narrow manoeuvring options for the ruling class on the economic level, and the very small concessions it is therefore ready to make to the working class, set the limit to the social-democratisation of the CPs in all those countries where they are powerful.

### Solution

The completion of any process of social democratisation would ultimately lead to two-party systems as in Britain and Germany, where the ruling class has a choice between a traditional right wing party and a big left-wing party that came out of the working class, but which now plays its role in the bourgeois political game, and which is acknowledged wholeheartedly by the bourgeoisie as one of its parties.

This is even truer in a weak imperialist country like Italy, where such a solution seems excluded. Because of this, the participation of the French and Italian CPs in their respective governments would be unlikely to last long, serving simply to lay down the conditions for a turn to the right and, most certainly, for a downright attack on the working class and its organisations.

### Acute

In a country like Italy, where the economic crisis can rapidly become more acute than anywhere else and where it adds to the problems posed by a decaying political crisis which has been going on for years, such an outcome might in fact be accelerated.

Whatever the type of reactionary solution the Italian bourgeoisie wants, one thing is certain: the working class cannot rely on the 'republican legality' of a decaying bourgeois state to defend it. The law-abiding politics of the working class organisations are criminal, as they prepare the demoralisation and defeat of the working class instead of victorious counter-attacks.

Fortunately, the combativeness of the Italian working class stands well above the politics of the so-called workers' parties.



Belinguer: CP General Secretary.

the party to survive and get out of a bad period. The *de facto* support of the centre-left by the Italian CP has even helped the Italian state and the bosses face many of their problems without the working class intervening. The state has got away with minimal concessions to the working class, and the bosses have even managed to turn the general weariness and dissatisfaction against the left wing parties — thus preparing the conditions for a 'turn to the right'.

In the last year, the world monetary crisis has become more acute — owing to the 'energy crisis' — and has made the problems even more urgent. Italy's economy being based on international trade,



# BACK TO THE BACKSTREETS

## SAYS ANTI-ABORTION LOBBY

"Our fundamental aim is to remedy the abuses in the private sector and the appalling exploitation of large numbers of women... we are allowing a section of psychopathic doctors to make a business out of this." (Leo Abse, Labour MP).

Mr. Abse was referring not to the Consultants' wrecking action against the NHS or the alarming growth of private hospitals in general; his target was the private clinics that have sprung up since the liberalisation of the Abortion law in 1967. These clinics have been asking high fees from women who for one reason or another have been unable to get an abortion on the NHS.

### HORROR

Large sections of the press, many MPs, and organisations such as SPUC and Women for Life, have made a big hue and cry about the racketeering and touting in the abortion industry, and the fact that women from overseas have come to this country to have abortions and have been fleeced by the private clinics.

But what they are really against is abortion itself: they are in favour of women being forced to carry, give birth to and then bring up every foetus that's conceived.

Thus they circulate horror stories, such as the one cited in the book *Babies for Burning*, about the Harley Street doctor who is

alleged to have sold foetuses to soap factories. Well, that might be fine for Hammer Films. But who hears the real horror stories — of what happened to women before the 1967 Act (and in some cases since that Act) who were unable to get abortions legally and were forced into the backstreets to risk dangerous complications or injury, perhaps even death.

The obvious answer is to expand the abortion services of the NHS: in fact it is precisely these people's campaign against abortion, which has included lining up NHS consultants to refuse to sanction abortions, that has driven so many into the arms of the private clinics.

At present only 50% of all abortions are done under the NHS. The Abortion Law Reform Association suggests that this situation be changed by allowing abortion on request (which would not then need 2 doctors' signatures), an increase in out-patient facilities, and the bringing of all abortions under the NHS.

The increasing number of private clinics carrying out abortions is a reflection of the ever increasing growth in the 'private sector' of medicine generally — something which the Government seems quite unwilling to tackle. In fact it is at the present time cutting the NHS services relentlessly, and closing some hospitals dealing specifically with women's complaints.

Meanwhile, the 'compulsory pregnancy' lobby are proposing to deal with the question of private clinics... by making it practically impossible for women to get an abortion anywhere.

The Bill which got its second reading in Parliament last week was drawn up by Mr. James White, a Labour MP and a member of the T&GWU. Mr. White thinks that 200,000 abortions a year is far too many: "we certainly don't think women should have an abortion just because they want one!"

### LANE

Mr. White has many supporters among the reactionary organisations that want a reversion to the pre-1967 situation. The Second Reading given to this Bill shows that these organisations have obviously been walking the so-called corridors of power — and getting a very sympathetic hearing there.

By contrast the Lane Report, which stressed that abortion should be part of the whole family planning process, has been practically ignored for the last 9 months.

If Mr. White's Bill becomes law, it will mean that women will have to prove that having a child would present a 'grave risk' to their lives or 'serious injury' to their mental or physical health. Firm medical grounds would certainly have to be established. The Bill also includes another clause which severely restricts abortion facilities, altering the law so that in future all abortions will be illegal and doctors performing them guilty of an offence, unless they can show that the circumstances of the patient conform with the new criteria.

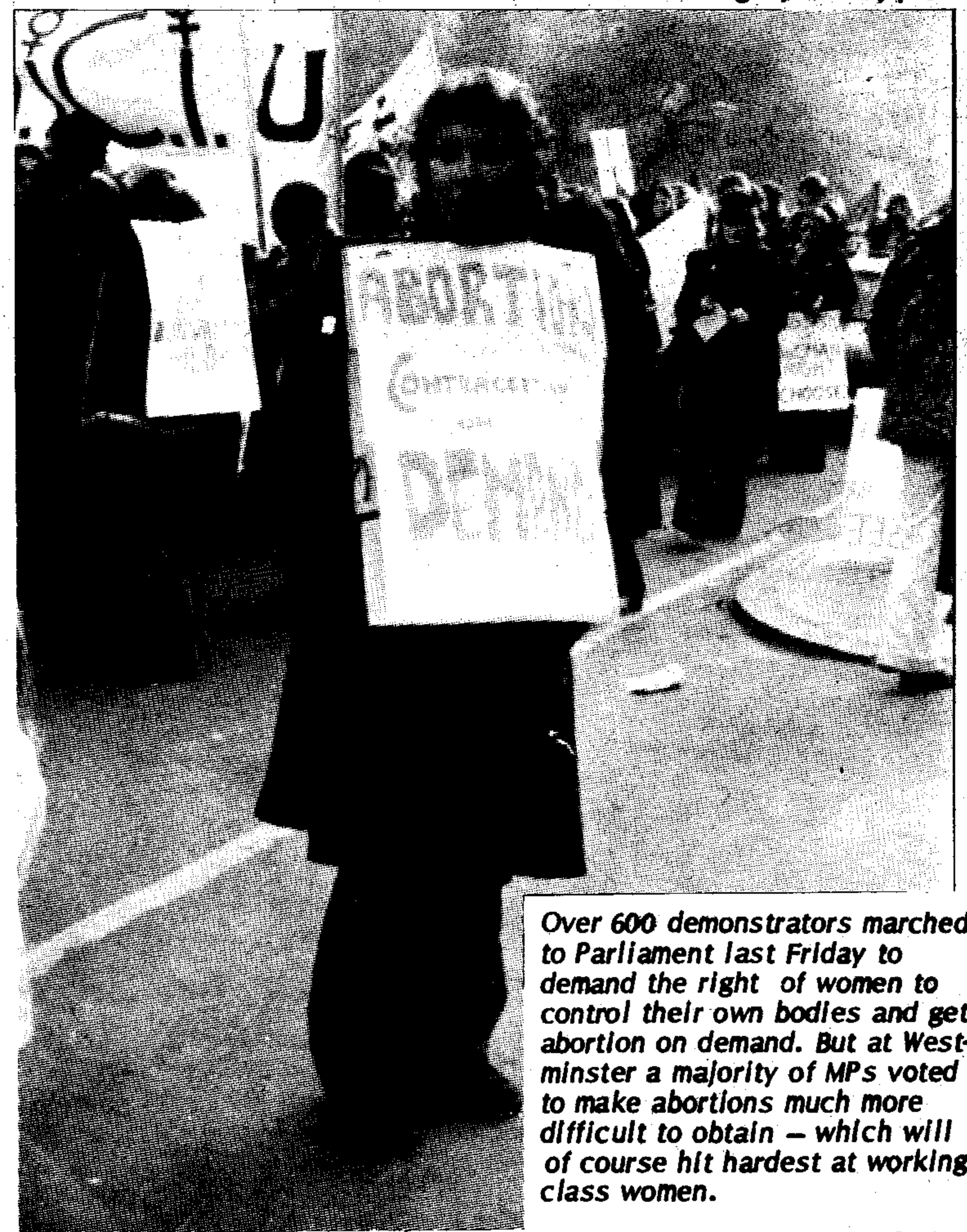
At present all abortions carried out in the NHS or at approved places are legal unless a prosecution can prove that the grounds for abortion have not been met.

If this is changed, in order to protect themselves doctors are likely to terminate pregnancies only where medical, rather than social grounds are provided. And, as the ALRA pointed out, by far the largest number of abortions at the present time are done for social reasons.

Obviously the Bill's supporters don't think these reasons are enough.

### BURDEN

We live in a society which, in an age of potential abundance, fails to meet even the basic needs of working people. Millions of children in Britain today are growing up in poverty, insecurity and slum housing. In a so-called welfare state the problems of providing and caring for young people, properly a responsibility for the whole of society, are thrust onto individual, isolated families, and within those families women bear the brunt of the work. In the



Over 600 demonstrators marched to Parliament last Friday to demand the right of women to control their own bodies and get abortion on demand. But at Westminster a majority of MPs voted to make abortions much more difficult to obtain — which will of course hit hardest at working class women.

case of one million children, one parent alone has to shoulder this burden.

The least that women can expect is the right to choose whether or not to have a child that wasn't willingly conceived.

Mr. White's Bill aims to cut legal abortions by 70,000 a year. However, as has been stressed by everyone involved, the number of abortions legal and illegal has remained practically the same whatever legislation is on the books: the only difference therefore is that instead of these 70,000 abortions being legal and safe, they will be illegal, dangerous and costly.

It will be the same old story: the rich to Harley Street; the poor to the backstreets.

If a woman is desperate for an abortion then she will get one anyway.

### REQUEST

Mr. White's Bill would if passed mean that Britain would have one of the most conservative abortion laws in the whole of Western Europe. Even Austria, a predominantly Catholic country, has had abortion on request since January. France's new legislation will legalise abortion up to 12 weeks menstrual time (as advocated by ALRA), which will effectively be abortion on request.

Mr. James White is a member of the T&GWU, and one of its sponsored MPs. At the same time, many branches of this union have adopted the Working Women's Charter, and its journal has carried articles on the Charter.

This Charter has been quite clear in pointing out that to talk about equal pay and opportunities without demanding the right for women to have an abortion on request is pretty empty.

Against a background of the almost total lack of public creche and nursery facilities, where maternity leave is a rarity and paid leave almost unknown, and where all job security is lost when a woman has a child, it is a fact that women will not have equal chances if they cannot control their own bodies and decide whether or not to have a child.

The Labour Party proclaims that it is fighting for women's rights. Yet this Bill, which is an outright attack on women's most basic right, was introduced by a Labour member, and supported by many Labour MPs. The TUC is less hypocritical — it does not support any action taken to make abortion available, and Marie Patterson, Chairwoman of the TUC and the T&GWU's Women's Officer, is against the TUC or her own union putting up a fight against the Bill.

Branches that have adopted the Working Women's Charter, and other trade union branches (especially those in the T&GWU) must make it clear that women themselves have the right to choose. The T&GWU SHOULD PUBLICLY DISSOCIATE ITSELF NOW FROM Mr. James White and his Bill, and organise against it.

### Pat Longman

**WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK**  
We have received some more contributions to this discussion but feel that, after 5 articles, the paper should make room for other subjects. However, we hope to publish the entire discussion in pamphlet form in the near future, and then all the contributions received will be included.

This action has been given official backing by the NUT.

The Tories who control the County Council have described the cuts as "trimming the frills". The "frills" were originally going to be trimmed to the tune of £7.1 million, and amongst the proposals were: all nursery classes closed; two colleges and most of the county's libraries closed; and nearly 25% of teachers to be made redundant.

Bucks Association of Trades Councils has formed an alliance against the cuts which includes NUPE, NUT, GMWU, ATTI, NALGO, and the Fire Brigades Union.

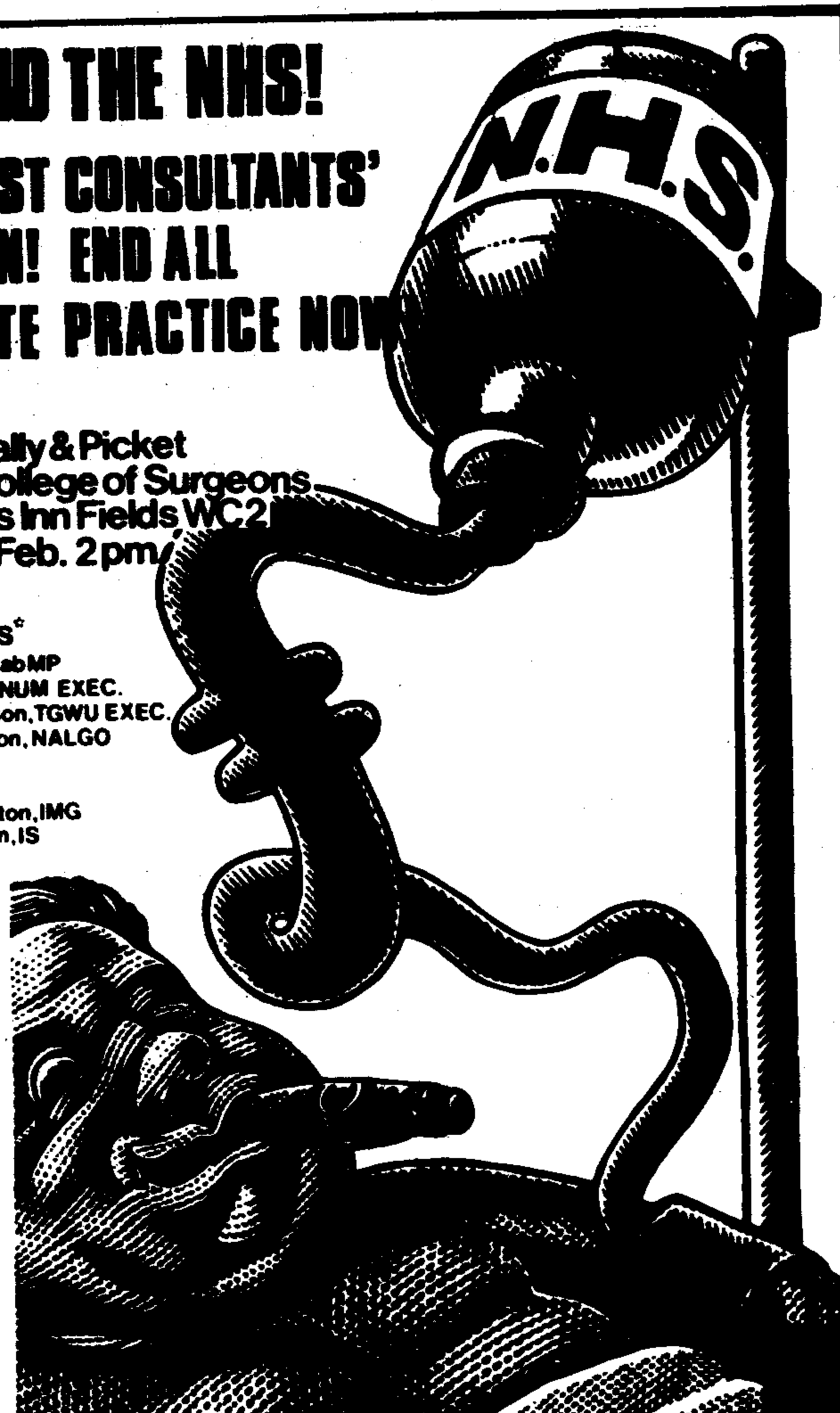
A joint Defence Committee has now been set up in London to fight for the teachers victimised at Highbury Grove school and South Hackney school, and also for John Warburton, the teacher sacked by ILEA after he talked frankly to a class about homosexuality. (See WF 85 & 86). There is to be a picket of ILEA at County Hall on Thursday February 27th, starting at 4pm.

**DEFEND THE NHS!**  
**AGAINST CONSULTANTS' ACTION! END ALL PRIVATE PRACTICE NOW!**

Mass Rally & Picket  
Royal College of Surgeons  
Lincoln's Inn Fields WC2  
Sat. 22 Feb. 2pm

Speakers:  
Sid Bidwell, Lab MP  
Jack Collins, NUM EXEC.  
Brian Nicholson, TGWU EXEC.  
Steve Johnson, NALGO

plus:  
Bob Pennington, IMG  
Steve Ludlam, IS



# EDUCATION: IF IT'S NOT A CUT IT'S THE CHOP

Latest reports on the NUT salaries claim indicate that it will be for a rise on the starting salary of £363, excluding thresholds. This figure will be applicable to all current salaries, up to the level when about nine and a half per cent is greater than £363, in which case the percentage claim will operate until a maximum of £550 has been reached.

The claim is therefore weighted in favour of Scale 1 teachers, but even so works out as a starting salary of only £2040, a long way short of the demand for £2500 and upward assimilation of Scale 1 into Scale 2, currently being campaigned for by classroom teachers. In fact, £2040 is short of the official NUT policy of £2200 and it seems that the Executive are attempting to bring up their claim to the official level by including threshold payments currently in operation (£229) as part of the claim!

There was a formal meeting on

February 12th at which the NUT Executive placed this claim, and there is every likelihood that subsequent meetings will be arranged as soon as possible in order that negotiations can be wrapped up this term. Time is therefore once again of the essence.

MICHAEL Carey, a teacher at Highbury Grove, has been threatened for refusing to stand in for another teacher who was away for more than three days — even though refusing to cover is his official NUT branch policy.

As a result, Highbury Grove NUT, together with Shelburne NUT (the school where the backlash against teachers operating the covering sanctions first began to be felt) is calling for an all London meeting of delegates from schools operating the sanctions, in order to consolidate and extend the campaign. The meeting is planned for Wednesday 26th February. Further details from Michael

Carey (Highbury Grove) or Jeff Hurlford (Shelburne).

Five teachers at South Hackney School who took part in the TUC lobby of Parliament in support of the Shrewsbury 2 are now facing disciplinary proceedings. Letters signed by Dr Briault, Chief Education Officer of the ILEA, inform them that their governors are to consider disciplinary action (which could take the form of sackings, demotions, or reprimands) at a disciplinary hearing which they must attend.

One of the victimised teachers is Michael Knowles, secretary of Hackney Trades Council. Notification of the TUC lobby was officially sent out to members by the NUT (a TUC affiliated union) but the NUT Executive have refused to support the five teachers.

A Defence Campaign has been set up and it urges all schools to pass motions supporting the five and to send copies to ILEA (EO/TS13), the NUT Executive at

Hamilton House, and to the Defence Committee, c/o 9a Talbot Road, London W2, as well as raising the matter at local associations.

Disciplinary action is being taken against teachers in Liverpool who did no more than protest at the action of the branch president in ruling out of order last November an emergency motion calling for support for the Scottish teachers' strike and unofficial action in a local school in protest against Houghton. A selected list of 12 militants was taken and it is these 12 who are being victimised. A Defence Committee has been set up to campaign against the undemocratic nature of the local NUT association.

Nearly 2000 teachers in Buckinghamshire held a mass rally in school time on Friday 7th February in protest at the threatened cut of £3.6 million in the county's educational expenditure.



# LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE ON THE SHREWSBURY 2 CP PUTS THE DAMPERS ON

ON SUNDAY 9th February, a conference was held by Liverpool Trades Council to discuss the campaign for the release of the Shrewsbury 2. The meeting was attended by 120 trade unionists from all over the country.

Simon Fraser, Liverpool Trades Council secretary, presented a resolution drawn up by the executive of the Trades Council, which ran as follows:

*This Conference congratulates the TUC for holding a successful lobby of Parliament, but recommends that the following steps be taken to capitalise on that success:*

1. The General Secretary of the TUC sends a strong protest to the Prime Minister and Home Secretary at the transfer of Des Warren and Eric Tomlinson to a closed prison

## STOPPAGE

2. That the General Secretary on behalf of the General Council of the TUC names a date for the calling of a one day national stoppage for the release of the Shrewsbury 2.

3. That the General Council inform the Government that if steps are not taken soon to release the two pickets, then steps will be taken by the General Council to organise a General Strike.

Conference supports the call by the London district committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions for a stoppage on the 26th of February, when the General Council of the TUC will be lobbied.

The most interesting feature of this resolution is the fact that it says nothing about what the Trades Council itself will do. There is a great deal about what

they hope the TUC General Council will do — not much about practical steps here and now.

The speakers from the floor were monopolised by Communist Party members supporting the resolution. Non-members of the CP had great difficulty in getting to speak. Pat Hickey, a UCATT convenor and a member of the International Marxist Group, had his hand up to speak throughout the meeting, as did numerous other members of the audience.

A member of the International Socialists got to speak, but had nothing to say except that IS had made a film about the Shrewsbury 2 and offered it for showing in trade union branches.

Bill Hunter of the Workers' Revolutionary Party proposed an amendment, to support the building workers' march from Wigap to London and their call for a General Strike.

Barry Williams, chairman of the meeting and a member of the Communist Party, refused to take a vote on Hunter's amendment. The Trades Council, he said, had produced the resolution, and only they could amend it.

## ABUSE

This was a blatant lie: the resolution had never been presented to the Trades Council, and in fact it was drawn up ten minutes before the meeting started. Uproar broke out and Williams was forced to take a vote on the amendment. Before doing so, he took care to abuse the position of the chair by making a long speech denouncing "splitters".

The amendment was defeated, with members of the International Socialists voting against it. WF,



WRP, IMG, and Revolutionary Marxist Current supporters voted for the amendment, as did several others.

The unamended resolution was then moved and passed unanimously. Once

again the Communist Party had succeeded in keeping the movement to free Warren and Tomlinson within the safe confines of what is acceptable to the trade union bureaucracy. Len Collingwood

# 'Take no notice of the CAS' say NUPE workers

ON THUESDAY 4th February two shop stewards were sacked and five others given final warnings and seven reprimands at Newsham General Hospital, because they had called a stewards' meeting during work hours.

The NUPE members, both ancillary and nursing, immediately voted to strike, and this was straight away made official. The action was followed by 24 hour strikes in at least 15 Liverpool and Wirral hospitals. Manchester hospital shop stewards were also contacted, and Billy Connors, the branch secretary of East Liverpool Hospitals, outlined the case and asked for support at the Shrewsbury 2 Conference organised by Liverpool Trades Council.

The charges arose when a stewards' meeting was called in Newsham over an incident in Alder Hey hospital where a nurse was threatened with discipline for refusing to do non-

nursing clerical duties.

Bob Gregory, one of the stewards involved at Newsham, was the recognised area representative for nurses. Management was approached and informed about the meeting — however, they refused permission when the stewards wouldn't tell them beforehand what the meeting was about.

## APPEALS

The management then sacked two stewards, Bob Gregory and Martin Phillips, without even allowing them to state their case. As Billy Connors said, "If we let them get away with this, then unions are a waste of time".

The 24 hour support actions were called as a warning to management before the appeals over the sackings, which took place on Monday 10th February.

After a very long meeting, the dispute was referred to the Governments Concili-

TWO more Irish men from the Luton area are being held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act to await deportation.

One of these, JOE GALLAGHER, has been the object of harassment and provocation by the police and state for many years, because of his Republican views and his standing as a trade unionist and militant.

Eighteen months ago there was an attempt by local police to frame him on a charge of obtaining money with menaces, in connection with the collection of funds for Northern Ireland relief. The attempt failed owing to total lack of evidence, and perhaps also because of the energetic campaign of picketing and protests on his behalf.

Then last year Kenneth Lennon, the Special Branch agent who described to the NCCL what he'd been asked to do, revealed that he was told by the Special Branch to try to get Joe Gallagher to commit an unlawful act so that he could be arrested. (As Lennon succeeded in doing with 3 other Luton

# "HONEST FIGHTER FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS" — JOE GALLAGHER ARRESTED

republicans, who are now still in jail — despite the Lennon confessions.)

The police, having failed to frame Gallagher and then failed to trick him, now have a handy weapon — the Prevention of Terrorism Act — to get Joe deported without having to produce even faked up evidence against him. Which goes to show yet again what a boon this law is to the police if they want to move against political opponents of Britain's policies in Ireland.

Joe Gallagher has lived in this country for 25 years. His wife is not Irish, and if he is deported will be faced with a choice between separation and exile. Their three teenage children will have their education utterly disrupted. Ties and friendships built up over years can be smashed to pieces overnight. Literally overnight: for no reason other than perhaps to satisfy their puny sense of 'drama', and create general terror and insecurity, the police came for Joe Gallagher in the night. After a day in Bletchley nick, he was transferred to Brixton, and his wife was not even informed about the transfer.

## Letter

A protest letter, signed by various organisations of the labour movement (Gallagher's UCATT branch, the LPYS, ICRA, Workers Fight, the Communist Party and IS, as well as Labour councillors) in the Northampton and Bletchley areas, has been sent to the Home Secretary Roy Jenkins, demanding Joe's release. "He is widely respected" they say "as an honest fighter for workers' rights, as evidenced by positions held in the trade union movement and his present position as shop steward and convenor."

DAVE GREEN

# Steelworkers barrack Foot at Ebbw Vale

WHEN MICHAEL FOOT returned to his constituency of Ebbw Vale last week to dish out another dose of rhetoric, he found the streets full of people who had come to see him... in fact 6000 workers from the local steel works who had struck for the day in protest at Foot's feebleness.

For two years he has been promising the steelworkers of Ebbw Vale that they do not need to fight the steel closure plan put forward by the BSC. Ebbw Vale would not be closed, he claimed, though 1000 would lose their jobs.

Now the Government has announced a number of reprieves for steelworks — in Shelton, Shotton, Hartlepool and East Moors... but not Ebbw Vale. There 4500 jobs will go.

The BSC's original plans were for huge capital investment in the industry at the same time as a severe cut back in the number of steel producing centres. The overall redundancy plans to be accomplished by 1982 were to have been 40,000. The announcement of the

reprieve is said to reduce this number by 13,500.

The chief reason for the reprieve is likely to be the availability of government funds. Inflation has meant that the plans that the BSC drew up are going to be severely delayed. What was going to be a ten year programme looks like taking fifteen or more years. Industry of course still needs the steel and therefore it has been necessary to retain the capacity by retaining some steel making and processing facilities.

## Reprieves

It would be wrong to see these reprieves as the result of the campaigns waged fitfully by the different sites. There seems to be no connection between the campaigns and the reprieves. It is far more likely that, realising that because of cash difficulties the initial plan would have to be slowed down anyway, the Government decided to get some cheap credit for the 'Social Contract'.

Jack Price

# CPSA WITCHUNT MUST BE REBUTTED AT CONFERENCE

THE FEBRUARY issue of the official journal of the Civil and Public Service Association (CPSA), contains one of the worst recent witchunts in the trade union movement.

Bill Kendall, General Secretary of the CPSA, accuses the "Redder Tape" group, a militant group in the CPSA, of "destroying" the union.

Previously, in mid December, there was a motion passed on the CPSA National Executive Committee attacking Redder Tape, and also hitting against the "more traditional Marxist influences", an obvious reference to the Communist Party.

Kendall's article says that Redder Tape is "under the



direction of IS" (the International Socialists). It is certainly true that IS has a substantial influence in the Redder Tape group, but Kendall's phrase "under the direction", implying sinister manipulations from the outside, is simply slanderous.

Kendall works along the political line of, or "under the direction of" if he wants to describe it that way, the leadership of the Labour Party. He supports class collaboration between workers and bosses.

Many Redder Tape

supporters, who may be supporters of IS, supporters of Workers Fight, or of other political persuasions, work for a different political line: against class collaboration, for better wages and conditions, for democracy in the trade unions. They work openly and honestly for their ideas. Such activity may undermine the position of

the union bureaucracy, but it will certainly not destroy the union.

At the forthcoming annual conference of the CPSA, the union executive must be sharply called to account for their dishonest and reactionary attack on democracy in the union.

Stephen Corbishley (CPSA, British Library)

## IMG students in manoeuvres

AFTER a marked lack of success in recent years' campaigning over grants and education cuts, there is a strong temptation for revolutionary socialist students to water down their politics in order to feel less isolated.

A particularly glaring example of this took place in Manchester recently. In line with a call put out by the International Marxist Group nationally for a left alliance in the National Union of Students, IMG students at Manchester university called a meeting to discuss united action.

Nothing much came out of the meeting in terms of united action. What did come out were amazing scenes of IMG members — previously priding themselves on being 'hard liners' — gaily throwing important points of principle overboard in a search for a mythical broad

unity.

One grouping of 'libertarians' objected to the policy of "No platform for fascists". No problem, cried the IMG, we need not insist on that. And we'd best not have any criticism of the NUS leadership over the grants campaign, because that would prevent agreement with the CP.

This approach can do nothing but seriously miseducate students — giving the idea that revolutionary political positions are simply optional extras for declaiming when suitable, but to be dropped whenever, that seems opportune.

Socialist students must hope that this opportunistic manoeuvring is a local aberration rather than another new strategy for the IMG. Neal Smith

# OCCUPATION AT ANTI-UNION BOOK FIRM

LAST Wednesday, the US-owned firm Educational Audio Visual in North London declared it was closing down, giving no reason. Of the eleven people employed there, the six NUJ members decided to occupy the place, and to fight to get the NUJ to make their action official.

Solidarity actions have been mounted in support of the 24 hour occupation by the NUJ book branch and the ASTMS publishing branch.

If the NUJ National Executive Committee does make the action official, this will mean that the SOGAT members in the warehouse of the distributors, E.J. Arnold, will black goods to EAV.

The company, the major part of which is based in the US, has a record of attempting to break the trade union organisation, and the dismal prospects for the publishing industry in general make it important that their efforts should be defeated. Collections, and volunteers to help occupy should go to Educational Audio Visual, 30a Drayton Rd, London N5.

A.H.