

# RED WEEKLY

**THE DEATH OF  
MAIRE DRUMM**  
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# LABOUR'S CRISIS - A FIGHTING ANSWER

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AS THE HIT-MEN OF THE I.M.F. fly in, as Labour suffers electoral humiliations, as the pound slithers, dithers and falls, Jack Jones, one time 'left' leader of the trade union movement, proclaims:

'There is no question that the pound is undervalued, and the message that Britain must give to the world is that we are a united nation determined to pull through.'

The working class have heard many fantasies from the likes of Jones, Scanlon and Murray in the last two years.

**They have told us** that the Social Contract would benefit workers.

**They have told us** that their policies were necessary to keep out the Tories.

**They have told us** that if we all pulled in our belts, we would be on the road to recovery.



Well, now the kidding has to stop. The IMF will be demanding higher taxes on the working class, more cuts in the social services. The Tories are on the brink of striking electoral advances through working people's disillusionment with Labour's policies. Trade unionists have undergone wage cuts and unemployment. And for what?

For precious little, except to hear Jack Jones acting the governor of the Bank of England, telling us that the pound is undervalued and that we are a united nation.

Which is as far from the truth as all those promises about the Social Contract were. It is a peculiar sort of unity when Scottish voters give notice to quit this 'united nation'. When tens of thousands of workers prepare to march against the Labour Government on 17 November, when young unemployed workers work out their frustration through football hooliganism and street violence.

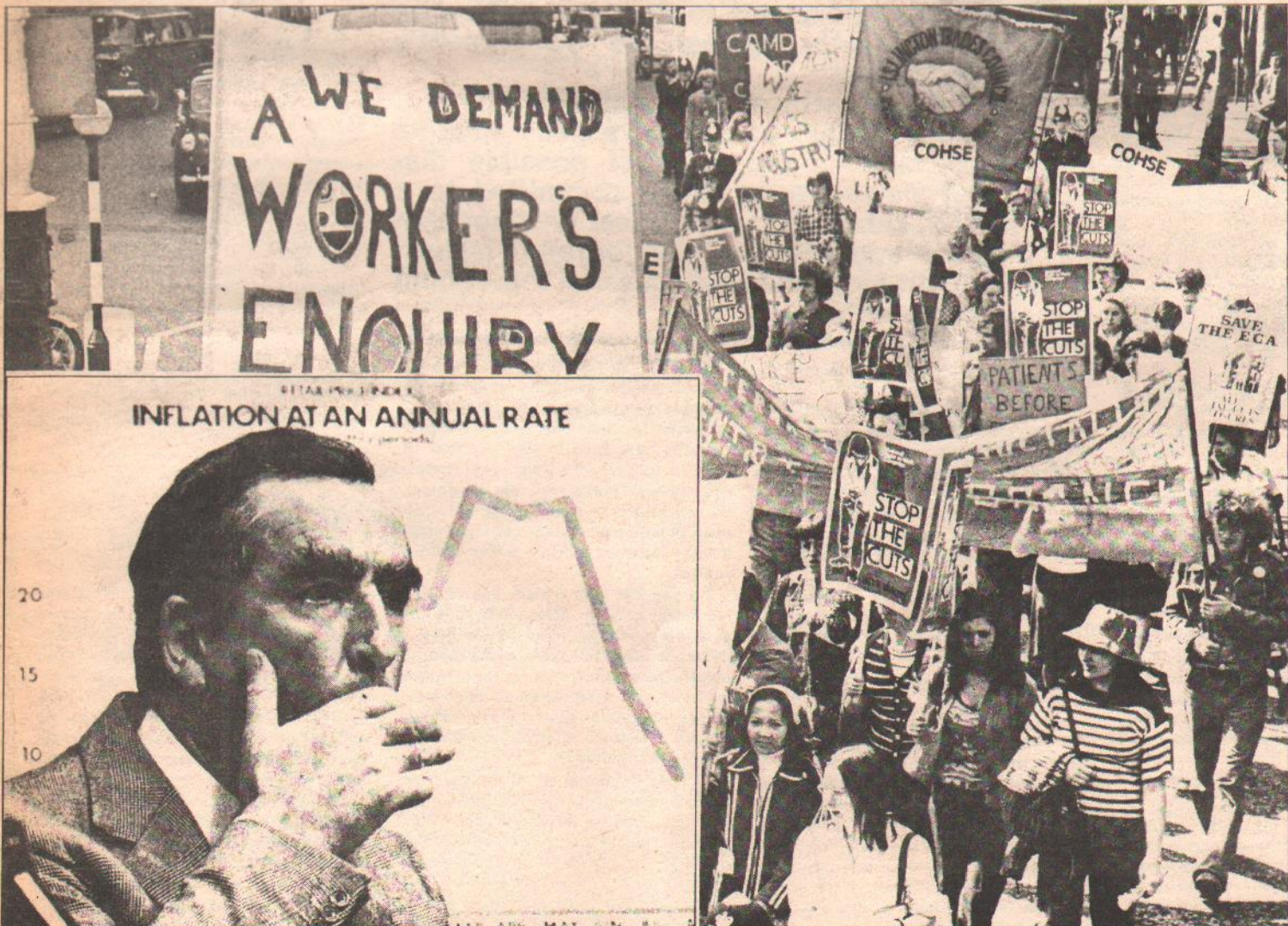
There is as much unity in Britain today as there is socialism in the Labour Government. Precious little.



But one form of unity is possible — that of those willing to fight back against the attacks of the Government and the IMF. Already there are signs that it is growing.

The support given by the Labour National Executive for the 17 November lobby is a reflection of the pressure being placed on Labour's leaders. Now that pressure must be extended, and the fighting policies on which it can be built should be thrashed out and acted upon.

Most of all **acted upon**, and in the coming two weeks this means organising for the day of action now supported by the Labour Party. That is 17 November. Be there.



John Sturrock (Report)

# ACT UP ON 17 NOV

# Why we support Right to Work Conference

THE CONVENING of the National Right to Work Conference on 6 November could represent an important advance in the struggle against the Labour Government's Tory policies.

The Right to Work Campaign has been a significant force over recent months in organising opposition to these policies. The publicity gained by the RTWC's initiatives have made it an attractive proposition to some of those workers seeking an alternative to the anti-working class policies of the Callaghan-Healey leadership of the Labour Party.

The weakness of the campaign has been that it consistently ignores the central problem facing those workers who wish to build such an opposition movement. How is it possible to organise in action those workers — a vast majority — who still place some trust in the bureaucrats of the trade unions and Labour Party, who still retain illusions that reformist politics — whether they be social democratic or Stalinist — offer some way forward for the working class?

## Shied

The RTWC and its principle backers, the International Socialists, have shied away from this question. The unfortunate fact is that most workers who wish to fight back against the cuts and unemployment do not support the politics of IS. Yet all nominations for officers of the campaign from the Conference Arrangements Committee are members of IS. Does this really represent the state of the opposition to Government policies, or is it just another stunt to build the Socialist Workers Party?

This narrow and sectarian conception of how to build such an opposition has been reflected in the lack of democracy within the RTWC. The 'military discipline' of the September Right to Work march and the initial decision to exclude resolutions from delegating bodies at this conference were a denial of the basic principles of workers democracy which must form the basis for a fight back. The decision to allow amendments to the main declaration is therefore a step forward, though it is still far less adequate than allowing alternative resolutions.

## Sectarian

This sectarian attitude is also shown in the narrowness of the bodies allowed to delegate to the conference. The need for a united fight back can only be met if all organisations of the workers movement are allowed representation. This means, for example, that Constituency Labour Parties should have delegates. Composite 26, passed at the Labour Party conference, which opposes cuts and unemployment, would provide the framework for a broad-based campaign against the Government's policies.

Student teachers have been in the front line of the battle against unemployment. Student Unions which support the conference like that at Hull should be allowed delegates. The Hull resolution supporting the conference stressed the need to open the RTWC to all labour movement bodies and emphasised the links between the fight against student teacher unemployment and the fight against the cuts as a whole.

march refused to allow a separate contingent around the slogan of 'A Woman's Right to Work', and now delegates' credentials are not available to organisations such as the Working Women's Charter Campaign which take up this specific problem. Once again, the desire for sectarian stunts appears to have come before the need to build unity among all sections of the working class on the question of cuts and unemployment.

## Unite

The RTWC declaration calls on the Assembly on Unemployment and the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions to unite with it. This represents a real advance in the fight for unity, although its hectoring and sectarian tone still reveals gross

inadequacies in the IS's understanding of the need for such unity. It would still have been preferable for the RTWC to seek unity with these other bodies before calling its own conference.

But the real test of the desire of the RTWC to build a united opposition directed towards the mass organisations of the working class — the trade unions and Labour Party — will come after the conference. Red Weekly supporters will be arguing

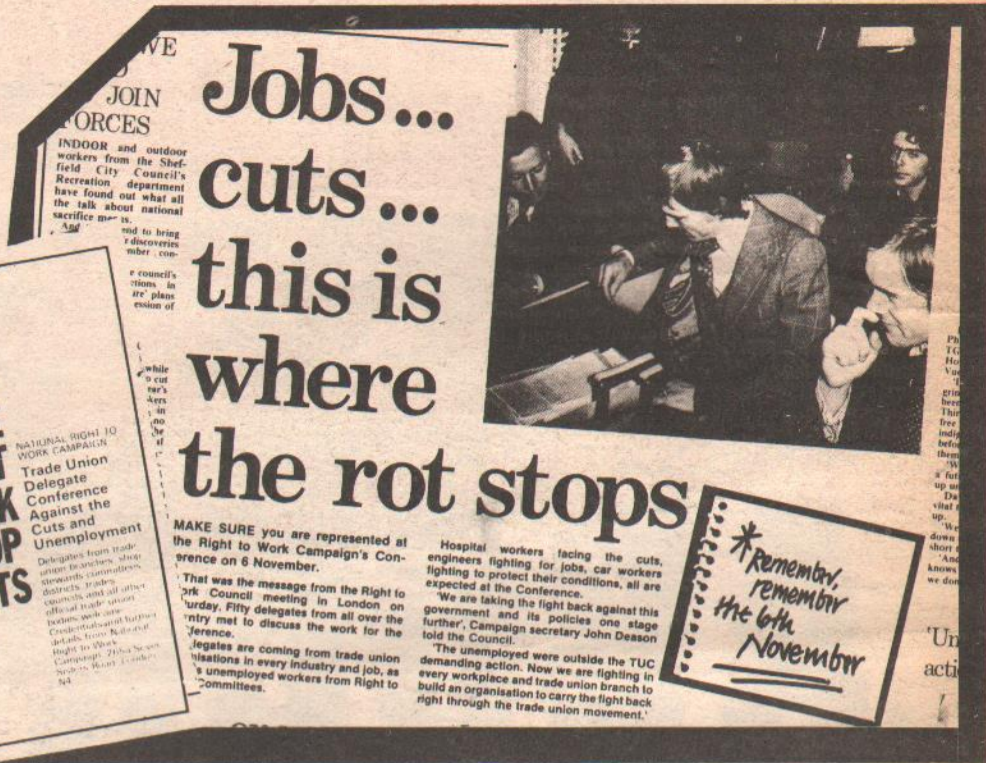
for the local Right to Work Committees to take up the fight for a public sector alliance as the first step towards building an organised opposition in the labour movement as a whole.

## Public

This means an alliance of all unions in the public sector and of other working class bodies with a direct interest in this question to

fight on a local, regional and national level against the public expenditure cuts, which mean both an attack on essential services and a threat to the jobs of many workers.

The RTWC declaration does mark a step forward, even if only a small one, in the fight against cuts and unemployment; and Red Weekly therefore calls for a vote for that declaration. But we will also fight for amendments to give that resolution teeth, to point the way forward to the public sector alliance.



# 'We need a plan of action' - Rolls Royce convenor

Why did you support the lobby of the TUC?

Obviously with the present unemployment situation I had no hesitation in saying that the lobby should be supported, irrespective of who organised it, because the intention of the lobby was the main thing to support. The stewards getting their banner up there was a small but necessary step in starting to tell our Executive and TUC delegates that there were grass-roots bodies of some importance beginning to develop the fight against unemployment.

With the decisions of the TUC conference to accept the Social Contract and the decline in working class living standards, how do you see the oppositionists within the labour movement beginning to build action against these policies?

I think that this is going to be a very long term problem. What you've got to recognise is that it's already established in the TUC, and now through the Labour Party conference, that they'll hold down the wages of working people well into 1977.

I think what it's done for us is to give us time to build up the alternative to ensure that the policy does not continue. There are already signs that shop stewards bodies and indeed the membership are gradually beginning to challenge the results of these policies. So it's up to the shop stewards movements now to start to put out alternative strategies to the present ones.

Last March the Assembly on Unemployment, called by the North London CSEU, drew together 3,000 delegates in opposition to unemployment. A body with such rank-and-file support could give a potential national lead in coordinating such a mobilisation. Do you think that the Assembly should be recalled, and if so, on what basis?

Yes, I think they should be recalled. In fact, as I understand it, there is an opinion afoot that the conference was going to be recalled by its organisers. I think that if it's going to be reconvened, it must be for a purpose. I believe this conference needs some plan of action to harness more of the labour movement than it's got to date.

Besides actively supporting all factions that are campaigning, and joining in a Broad Left movement, the conference should campaign within the official Lab-

JOHN BLACKLEY is Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers convenor at the Rolls Royce aerospace plant in Filton, Bristol. A delegate to the TUC Congress, he is also a featured speaker at the 'Public Forum' against cuts and unemployment being organised by Bristol activists next Monday. Here he explains to Red Weekly how he sees the fight back against the Government's policies beginning.

We do not agree with all the points made by Bro. Blackley. But the task of building a class struggle opposition requires the broadest possible discussion of views among those committed to a fight against Labour's Tory policies. We hope that this interview and others we plan for future issues, will help to promote such a discussion throughout the labour movement.

and get these bodies to commit themselves to the fight.

Within the AUEW on a national level there is substantial disillusionment with the Broad Left. Many militants, both in the rank-and-file and the leadership — such as Mike Cooley and Ernie Roberts — are supporting the Engineering Voice paper which has opened itself up for debate on the way forward for the left in the union.

Do you see such a debate as being part of a process of drawing together the left after its recent defeats by the right, in a perspective of opposition to unemployment, defence of living standards and so on?

Yes, I think so. If Engineering Voice can use its influence within the AUEW in the elections and stand more progressive candidates, and at least not fragment the left when it comes to voting, that in itself is important and should be supported.

What we've got to compete with is the so-called popular press now beginning to recognise the significance of the moves that the left has been making. I think they've been worried about some of the gains which we have made in the past, and now we're finding the full power of the press interfering in the ballots and supporting right wing candidates. We must have actions underway which will mean

Many of the workers in the aerospace and shipbuilding industries are faced with unemployment, despite the Government proposals for nationalisation. Aerospace stewards have been in the forefront of developing alternative plans for the industry, and could play a vital role in winning the workforce to campaigning for such plans to be accepted as the basis of a planned, nationalised industry under workers control.

Do you feel such a plan, opposing all redundancies and demanding that the available work be shared out without a decline in living standards, could begin to involve the workforce, under the stewards leadership, in a campaign to implement these proposals, as against management's present disastrous attempts at rationalisation and speed-up?

Yes. At the beginning of the year, we called a factory gate meeting, and we put it to them that we should call upon both the Government and the executive to call a halt to any movement of labour within Rolls Royce and the aircraft industry.

We then stated that everyone's present job should be maintained and guaranteed until the airframe side of the industry had been organised into the so-called Aerospace Corporation. We even argued that the engines side should be integrated into this new aerospace corporation.

force voice which can link up with government and the management which are going to run this new 'empire'. A corporate strategy should then be hammered out that affects the livelihoods of our members in the future. And until that is completed every bit of policy brought about by private capital and by management should be shelved.

We've got Rolls Royce under a merchant banker chairman appointed by the Government. As a merchant banker, and true to his own class, he deplores any form of state or national control of companies. He's also working with a mandate from the Government which says: you will manage Rolls Royce as a state-owned company under normal commercial laws. So we're back again to the old yardstick of profits before people.

Nobody in the political field of the Labour Party/Government and nobody in the trade union leadership seemed to be paying any heed to the present situation. They were expecting us shop stewards to sit back and accept this concept of the industry. So what have we got? Blantyre being closed, sit-ins and fights taking place. Dundonald to follow very soon. Then presumably Fairford.

## Security

At Filton at the moment we're fighting against Fairford, because we don't want that to happen at Filton, because we're so worried about our own security. And that's worker against worker. You've got a majority of workers fearful for their own future, all trying to crawl into the most secure part of the industry. The tragedy is that there is no secure part to crawl into in this industry.

So it is quite obvious that we must fight from the grass-roots level to say: a plague on both your houses, whether they be semi-capitalised by public money or completely nationalised. We must say that our members come first, and that any future strategy should be for the security of their employment. We'll be mounting a campaign — we've already done so — and I would say that our membership in Bristol Rolls Royce have provided us with a mandate for a militant fight against any

# LABOUR'S CRISIS - A FIGHTING ANSWER



Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

Workers at Grunwick Film Processing in Willesden - seen here leafletting a local tube station - are now in their eleventh week of strike action for union recognition. A boost to their struggle came last week when the Union of Post Office Workers finally agreed to act on Tom Jackson's pledge at the TUC in September and instruct their members to black deliveries. But why wasn't this action taken when it could have really affected Grunwick's trade in processing holiday snaps?

## IN FOCUS

### Against the Social Contract!

'THE INTENTION IS NOT TO DISRUPT essential services but to make sure that there is good attendance at the lobby.' A West Midlands official of the National Union of Public Employees commenting on the decision to send 2,000 of his members to the 17 November anti-cuts demonstration.

The West Midlands decision summarises the strengths and weaknesses of the action advanced by the leaderships of the public sector unions. 75,000 West Midlands NUPE members will be striking on 1 December. But not on 17 November. Only 3 per cent of the membership is being mobilised for the most important united working class action in several years. No attempt is being made to build a public sector alliance as a step towards united working class action against the Government's attacks on living standards.

This is duplicated throughout the other public sector unions. NALGO, the CPSEA and others are not prepared to go further than support for local strike action. None has taken the initiative in calling for such action on a national basis. The NUT, for example, wants each of its 564 local associations to send ten representatives. But there are half a million teachers in Britain, all directly threatened by the cuts! Already over 20,000 of them have been driven to the dole queue, yet the NUT will only mobilise 5,000 representatives.

#### Growing opposition

This is because the 17 November lobby, called under the pressure of rank-and-file opposition, is seen as a way of 'holding the Government to the Social Contract' rather than organising a national fight against it. But what is the Social Contract? Is it some generous deal arranged in 1974 which the Government is now selling out, as the leaders of the public sector unions seem to think? Or is it rather a term which covers any attempt by the Government to attack working class living standards with the connivance of the bulk of the trade union bureaucracy? The Government could not break the Social Contract because it dictates the terms.

Alan Fisher of NUPE and the other 'new lefts' in the public sector unions are able now to dust off their militant credentials. Unlike Jones and Scanlon, they are not implicated in the whole range of Government measures which go under the name of the Social Contract. But, like those twin 'scourges' of the Heath Government, actual opposition to the Government's anti-working class policies could not be further from their minds.

Organise a 'day of action' to protest about the attacks on their sector and boost their popularity with the members? Certainly. Fight for united class action against the attacks on living standards — even just call for a national strike action on 17 November? Never.

#### Communist Party

Communist Party member Jean Geldart of the NALGO NEC writes: 'The campaign that is now launched will not end on 17 November. It has to be carried over into the localities, to develop unity everywhere in the battle against local cuts'. Fine sentiments, but the problem is to build unity not just on a local level but nationally. The CP is not prepared to lead a struggle against the Social Contract since that would upset its cosy relationship with Fisher and the public sector bureaucrats, the successors to Scanlon and Jones as the rising stars in the 'left' constellation. Just as there is no real division between the question of cuts and unemployment, so these issues have to be seen as part of the overall Government attack known as the Social Contract.

This leads to two conclusions. First comes the need to fight for united action of the whole labour movement on a national level, since it is the entire working class which is being hit by these attacks. The national alliance of workers in the public sector is the first step in building a fighting opposition.

The second conclusion is that the real enemy is the Social Contract, under which the principal leaders of the trade union movement tie their members to inaction before the Government offensive. That is why Red Weekly fights for workers to march behind the banner of opposition to the Social Contract being raised by the National Coordinating Committee Against the Cuts on the 17 November demonstration.

## All-London cuts fight planned

- \* The number of homeless double the figure for ten years ago, with rents, rates and heating costs up £5 in nine months!
- \* Bus routes redefined as 'supplementary' and then chopped, with no recruiting from the 2,500 waiting list to make up for the 4,000 deliberate vacancies!
- \* Tube fares up a staggering 114% in 18 months!
- \* One in three schoolchildren in classes

of over 30, with 2,000 newly trained London teachers thrown onto the dole queue!

\* At least fifty-two local general hospitals to close with over 50,000 people on waiting lists needing treatment now!

This is what working people and their families are facing in London even before the latest round of Mr Healey's cuts have bled them drier. These are the facts that

faced the Labour majority on the Greater London Council in late July when they voted for more cuts, which were going to throw 300 more people out of their jobs. Now they wonder why workers might vote them out in the GLC elections in May!

But despite the refusal of the labour bureaucracy to fight back so far, London workers themselves have not taken this lying down. Led by the public sector workers, who see the vision of the dole queue coming closer and closer, demonstrations and strike actions have begun to spread all across London — and across the different sectors: train drivers at Waterloo, bus workers in Shepherds Bush, hospital workers in Hackney, Camden, Hammersmith and Hounslow, student teachers and teachers themselves in South London.

#### United

But we all know that these have not been enough. Our jobs and services are still on the chopping block. We all know that only massive united action behind fighting demands for the whole working class will begin to reverse the cutbacks. That is why we are building an alliance of public sector workers fighting for all-out strike action on 17 November.

Already the need is being felt to thrash out the next steps, and support is growing for the labour movement delegate conference called by the London Regional Committee Against Cuts in the Public Services on 13 November. Backed by four anti-cuts GLC Labour councillors, public sector unions, trades councils, other unions and housing groups, the agenda will allow full debate on how to use the 17 November day of action to strengthen the unity of the whole labour movement in action to build a continuing fightback against the cuts.

DOMINIC COSTA [JSSC, Hammer-smith Hospital]

## FARE ENOUGH!

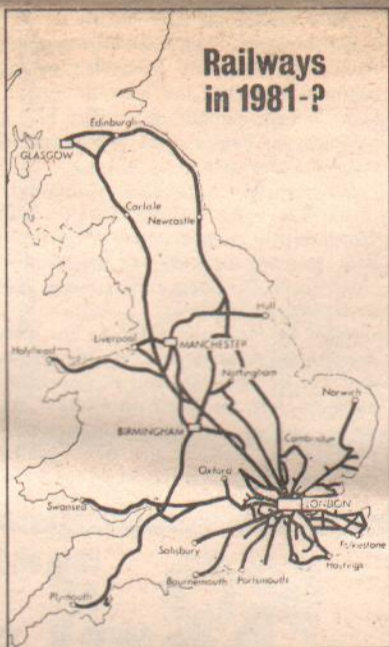
EARLS COURT branch of the NUR, the largest single branch in the union, has passed a resolution calling on the National Executive to implement a nationwide fares strike. The branch is recommending that the Executive, in conjunction with the other transport unions, issue a directive to all members that they should refuse to collect the expected increases.

Meanwhile Midlands NUR is holding a day of action on 6 November, setting up stalls on station concourses to collect signatures and publicise the threat to rail services. A total of over 4,000 miles of track faces the axe under the Government's new 'Transport Policy'.

In contrast Sidney Weighell, the National Secretary of the NUR — along with certain consumer and rail-users' bodies — has been pleading for months with the Labour Government not to increase fares. The Railway Board Transport Policy document argues for real fare increases of 7½ per cent per year from 1977. Real fare increases mean increases on top of those to keep pace with inflation.

Weighell correctly argues that this will drive away passengers and leave the rail unions facing redundancies. However the Government will listen far more closely to the quiet words of the IMF when thinking about increasing the costs of public services than it will to Weighell's begging letters.

The sort of direct action advocated by the Earls Court branch is the only way in



which the fare increases can be stopped and the sympathy of the commuters won to the side of the rail workers in their fight for jobs and a real public service on the railways. All NUR branches should take up this demand for action from their executive.

## CPSA leaders reject strike call

The leadership of the Civil and Public Services Association has rejected the call for a one-day strike on 17 November.

Red Weekly predicted on 14 October that the union's National Executive Committee would attempt to back down on the 3 September resolution which stated that 'an all members one day strike should be considered in conjunction with other public sector unions ... to coincide with the 17 November lobby of Parliament'.

A CPSA circular dated 26 October explains that 'after consultation with other public sector trade unions and after

overtime ban.

The joint CPSA/Society of Civil and Public Servants rallies referred to in the circular were a travesty of union democracy. They were the chosen mechanism for the bureaucrats' sell-out.

Most branch and office officials and the mass of the membership were not even told about these 'rallies'; notification was mainly through the bureaucracy's grapevine. Even so, only some of these bodies gave the NEC a mandate to call off the strike action.

Workers are advised that 'the full

## DEMOCRACY DILEMMA

ABOUT 250 PEOPLE — delegates and individual trade unionists — attended the conference on 'Wage Control and Union Democracy' on 23 October, organised by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement. Amongst the unions which had branches represented were the AUEW, UCATT, ASTMS, NUR, NUPE, SOGAT, NAFHE, and NALGO. Among the platform speakers were Sally Groves from Trico and Islington Labour Party militant Keith Veness.

The conference debated an action programme around which to fight the Social Contract. But the conference was marked by confusion as to what task it was to perform. Despite the fact that it was called on the theme of wage control and union democracy, no systematic attempt was made to involve Communist and Labour Party members in the conference. The policies — such as the sliding scale of wages — put forward in the organising committee's appeal, although correct, allowed the Stalinist and reformist leaders to avoid committing themselves to a fight.

They were able to argue that whilst they wanted to defend union democracy they could not support the conference since they disagreed with the action programme. Far from building a campaign 'for democracy in the labour movement', the organising committee thus excluded from the conference those workers who genuinely want to fight the Social Contract and the attacks on union democracy being used to police that Contract,

The conference did discuss two amendments to the action programme from Red Weekly supporters, which were accepted by the organising committee into the main resolution. One of these called for support for black self-defence as a first step to workers self-defence against fascists, and an end to immigration controls. Another called for active support for the fight for women's rights. The end product is a fine action programme on paper — but there was next to no discussion on how to fight for that programme, to advance the struggles in which the working class movement is presently involved.

The blame for these failures must lie at the door of the main political group behind the organising committee — the Workers Socialist League. Arguing that the CP and trade union lefts are not going to make a serious fight against attacks on workers democracy, they make no attempts to force them into united action against these attacks. That simply lets the Stalinists and 'lefts' off the hook. It is only in the course of such united action that broader layers of workers will be won to the action programme.

Red Weekly believes that the planned recall conference could be of considerable use in allowing militants to discuss their experiences of fighting for the action programme adopted by the conference. But this will only be possible when the organising committee accepts that this is not a broadly based

# Far Left Fight By-elections

Support for the Socialist Worker candidates in Newcastle and Walsall has been a feature of the campaign by the International Marxist Group in the latest round of by-elections. Another prominent feature has been a fight to get local bodies fighting on the cuts, unemployment and racism to use an electoral platform to get over the need for a fight against Labour's policies. This is the experience so far.

## Walsall

Unlike any other of the political organisations in Walsall, the IMG has been consistently active over the last year in the fight against cuts in public expenditure and racism. Prior to the by-election, that fight had already notched up some successes. In an area where for a long time the working class has had a history of passivity, a local cuts committee and an action group against racism

were established.

In September a meeting organised to build an anti-racist demonstration attracted over 70 militants. On 24 October Tariq Ali spoke at a meeting around the elections in Birmingham which was attended by over 90 people. IMG members and supporters canvassed heavily for Jimmy McCallum last Saturday as the election date drew close.



BIRMINGHAM IMG called a 90 strong meeting around the by-elections last week. Tariq Ali (right) was the main speaker.

The IMG has consistently explained throughout the campaign that for socialists the reason for standing in elections is simply to use the election platform — and any seats gained in that way in Parliament — to popularise the need for a revolutionary struggle against capitalism: the mobilisation of workers in the struggle for workers power. In his election address in Walsall North, Jimmy McCallum says essentially the same thing: 'A vote for me is a vote for you. It's a declaration that you will go on fighting for socialism after the election.'

But despite this declaration, what Jimmy McCallum and the International Socialists are actually doing in the campaign goes against these fine intentions. The real message which Jimmy McCallum is putting over, as he explained to Red Weekly a fortnight ago, is the building of the Socialist Workers Party.

Beyond this measure the IS have not indicated practically how the many correct things in their election address — nationalisation under workers control, troops out of Ireland, abortion on demand, opposition to cuts and incomes policy — can be fought for by the united action of the working class.

Speakers at an IS meeting around the closure of a maternity hospital in Bloxwich, for instance, failed to bring up either the Right to Work Campaign conference on the cuts or, more importantly, the 17 November demonstration against the cuts called by the public service unions.

The narrowness of the Socialist Worker campaign was equally reflected in the writing off of the first anti-racist committee meeting (which attracted 70 militants, many from the black community) as 'white liberals sitting in a room'. And the building of the local cuts comm-

ittee has not been an important part of the campaign either.

The result of this line of march is that in practice the IS have not used the campaign to make sure that people go on fighting after the election. For the few who accept the perspective of building the Socialist Workers Party there is an alternative. But for the many who don't and yet see the need to fight Labour's policies there is not.

This demobilising effect unfortunately has much in common with the effects of Labour campaigning. Those bodies which do have a potential of carrying the struggle after the election have actually been weakened by the campaign.

The campaign of the IMG has been the reverse — to build these bodies to make sure that something is built through these elections other than the piles of election literature.

## Newcastle

At a large Socialist Worker campaign meeting in Newcastle last Thursday, IMG members reaffirmed their support for the candidate Dave

Hayes. Yet the local leadership of the campaign have been reluctant to accept the offers of practical help from the IMG or the Workers League

unless these were subordinated to the task of building the Socialist Workers Party.

However, the secretary of nearby Durham IS did point out the absurdity of such a position, and argued that IS should welcome support from other political organisations on their own terms.

To pursue the point further, IMG members in Newcastle discussed the progress of the campaign with Dave Hayes:

*The IMG in Newcastle argued for a candidate based upon Tyneside Action Committee Against the Cuts [TACAC], the Right to Work Committee, the Working Women's Charter Groups, Tyneside Socialist Centre, and other bodies which contain people of widely differing political views but which are prepared to fight the anti-working class policies of the Labour Government. Why did IS put forward their own candidate, rather than fighting for a class struggle candidate supported by these bodies?*

IS saw the need to build a socialist alternative to the Labour Government's policies over the last two years. We believe that the policies we have are the way forward, so we decided to stand candidates in two by-elections, Walsall and Newcastle. Side by side with that we are trying to build a rank-and-file movement towards the building of that socialist alternative.

We are putting the alternative for building a new Socialist Workers Party where we would try to involve people in the fight back into the campaign, and involve them in that campaign towards building the new party.

*IS clearly rejects the policies of the Labour Government, so what sort of alternative programme do you put forward?*

We stand for total opposition to unemployment, to the hospital closures. We want to see the strengthening of the Right to Work Campaign nationally and the local campaign on Tyneside in the fight against unemployment and the cuts. During the three weeks campaign we've been doing so far, while we've been going round the factories and hospitals we've argued that they should send delegates to the 6 November conference at Belle Vue.

*One of the problems of the campaign we think is the line of building the SWP. On Tyneside many of the people involved in the fight back, such as in TACAC and North Tyneside Housing Campaign, are actually members of the Labour Party, and we've just had a Labour Against the Cuts set up in North Tyneside. How do you see your campaign relating to these people?*

First, we relate to those people by taking up a fight against unemployment through the Right to Work Campaign. Many

of the last nine months or so. We want them to be involved in the fight against hospital closures alongside us, and in the process we are putting up the alternative of the SWP.

We will be arguing with Labour Party supporters that they should be involved in the fight against the cuts. We say to them that the Labour Party can't be changed from the inside, it's controlled by big business, and that the Labour Government is carrying out the orders of big business, the bankers etc. We're putting the alternative to that.

*But you can't simply say to militants: 'Leave the Labour Party and join IS'. Certainly you might recruit a few individuals, but the mass of the membership won't leave the Labour Party until they see a viable alternative.*

What we're saying is that IS has, over the last few months, been the main force involved in the fight against unemployment through the Right to Work Campaign, and has been the only organisation recently involved in the fight against racism. We're hoping to win a lot of

Labour Party activists on the basis that we're the only organisation that is fighting. In some areas in the last few months, Labour Party members have been leaving to join the IS and the building of a new workers' party.

*But clearly that is still an organisation of the vanguard. It is not an organisation that is going to attract the mass of Labour activists, or people who simply vote for the Labour Party. So in that sense we don't think you can counterpose the SWP to the Labour Party. What is necessary is to fight for unity in action with those individuals inside the Labour Party who are prepared to fight the Government's attacks, but are not prepared to join the SWP.*

We'll be trying to get a united fight back on issues, a united fight back against hospital closures, against unemployment. We'll be trying to build a rank-and-file movement of people who are prepared to fight on issues such as racialism, unemployment, etc.

## OPEN LETTER

One result of the International Socialists' decision to stand candidates in the by-elections has been the opening of a discussion on the far left about how to build an alternative to the betrayals of Labour. One militant who has rejected the IS strategy is a Darlington bus worker who has resigned from that organisation. We reprint his 'Open Letter to all Socialists'.

As soon as IS announced the Socialist Workers Party I decided to resign, because I saw the SWP as a sectarian and substitutionist venture.

Various comrades who had similar reservations or who saw the SWP as a first step towards the road of parliamentarianism urged me to remain and fight within. However, this has proved impossible. As I was a loner in my branch [things might be changing at the moment], and since the opposition groups have never had much hope of a healthy future [note the recent expulsion of Workers League], my decision remained.

I consider that the running of the SWP campaign so far has completely vindicated that decision. The campaign excludes all those who, while being loyal to the working class and committed to socialism, are not committed to IS.

This is especially true in Newcastle Central, where the various organisations such as Tyneside Action Committee Against the Cuts, Tyneside Shop Stewards

consistent record of fighting the Callaghan Government's anti-working class policies are built, by and large, from members of the Labour Party. Also, there are many militants inside the Labour Party who are fed up with the campaign of the official candidate but will by no stretch of the imagination support IS precisely because of the type of campaign being waged.

This is clear by reading even the official statements of IS, which point out that the only effective way to fight Labour's policies is to join IS.

'We [IS] do offer the only credible alternative and the only serious possibility of building a revolutionary party. Those elements inside other organisations who want to build such a party could readily join by becoming members of IS and fighting to build a much bigger revolutionary organisation. We see it as being a question of recruitment to IS.' [Jimmy McCallum, Socialist Worker candidate for Walsall North, interviewed in Red Weekly, 21 October].

So there we have it straight from the horse's mouth that the whole campaign is simply to build the IS, and that perspectives for struggle are secondary. This is why I and many others have left IS. It has proved impossible to develop a revolutionary strategy for the working class from within IS. In fact IS has now become a roadblock to developing that strategy.

# WHAT ALTERNATIVE TO TORIES?

**WHO'S TO BLAME? The Labour Party will go into one of its periodic bouts of self-examination after the likely massive drop in the Labour vote in the by-elections in Walsall, Workington and Newcastle.**

First in the line of fire will be the Almighty. His November weather is always a favourite with the right wing. Their second option is to blame the working class—'Labour voters apathetic' (as compared to the political fanatics who turn out for the Liberals or Tories).

The more politically sophisticated will doubtless focus on 'the confusion' brought about by the standing of the Socialist Worker candidates, or of 'Walsall man' himself — shop keeper Sidney Wright. **But these excuses just will not wash.**

Labour is heading for a defeat in the next general election, and it has nothing to do with the weather, or 'natural apathy'.

The attitude of the working class toward electoral support for Labour reflects the two and a half years' betrayal since that historic downfall of Heath. The only programme which Callaghan can now push to retain his support in the trade unions and the electorate is to 'keep the Tories out'.

## Danger

This is the danger which the Labour leaders use as a yoke to harness the Labour and trade union lefts into support for the Government's policies — a yoke which the lefts find easy to bear. They understand as well as the Government the political dangers to their own position of mass action round socialist policies.

So whatever their opposition to particular policies — witness their support for the 17 November action against the cuts for example — the lefts speak with one voice, that of Callaghan and Healey, in declaring: 'Hold back the struggle. Keep the Tories out!'

This cop-out by the lefts creates both the need and opportunity to build a left wing in the unions and the Labour Party based on the policies of class struggle rather than the class collaboration of the Social Contract.

This class struggle left wing in the mass organisations must be built with all those militants who, whatever their different political positions, are prepared to fight for mass action against the policies of the Labour Government.

## Fight

But that fight should not be postponed because of elections. There is a burning need, particularly in elections, to use electoral platforms to fight for such working class organisation.

The fight for candidates who express that need can be carried out within the

Labour Party itself. Candidates who dedicate their campaign to building such action against the policies that have produced mass unemployment, declining living standards and the run-down of the social services must be supported.

But the party apparatus is very aware of the explosive impact of such a campaign waged by an official candidate. That is why the Tribunites refuse to mount such a campaign. Similarly, the Communist Party candidates — tied to the coat tails of the left bureaucrats — have all the disadvantages of Labour's reformist programme and none of the advantages of the audience of millions that the Labour

Party politically dominates.

## Tactics

So, while militants must support the return of a Labour Government in a general election as the mass party of the working class, it will be necessary to support and fight for candidates independent of the Labour Party who consistently play their part in organising such a fight back. In the first instance, that must mean that all bodies fighting for those policies in the locality are fully involved in

electoral campaigns, from cuts committees, women's groups, and anti-racist committees, to strikers and union bodies.

The Socialist Worker candidates ignore these vital forms of organisation in favour of their campaign to build the Socialist Workers Party. Their tactics rely on the classic pattern of all ultra-lefts — the united front from below.

They think it is possible to jump over the stage of winning the base of the trade unions and Labour Party — the mass organisations of the working class — without confronting the reformist leadership of the class for unity in action. But only this tactic can succeed in proving to

workers in practice the bankruptcy of their traditional leaders.

The IS does not represent the 'only' alternative. But it represents part of it. That is why it is correct to call for a vote for the IS against Labour candidates in Walsall and Newcastle.

The blame for the humiliations suffered by Labour at the polls rests entirely on the backs of the Government and their trade union lieutenants, Murray, Scanlon and Jones. Only those who break with their policies can claim to be 'fighting to keep out the Tories'.

Steve Potter



JIM SILLARS — launched massive anti-left campaign with full assistance of media

Last week we ended an assessment of the Scottish Labour Party by examining the gulf which existed between the reformist direction of its leadership and the socialist aspirations of the bulk of its members. That gulf opened up into a chasm at the party's conference in Stirling last weekend. By Sunday night around half the delegates to the conference had been suspended or expelled.

The conference opened with a hysterical witch-hunt — the conclu-

sion of a week-long orchestrated press campaign against 'extremist notions' and 'extremist infiltrators' in the SLP. Such diverse newspapers as the *Daily Record*, the nationalist *Question* and the ex-Trotskyist *Scottish Worker* all played their part. Such unanimity was not accidental. Using extensive contacts with the media, the SLP apparatus united with the so-called 'radical nationalists' — including Tom Nairn, Neil Ascherson and Bob Tait — to try to stampede the conference.

# Split at SLP Conference

THE CRISIS has hit nowhere harder than Scotland. The elimination of the Tories as the main party of the ruling class by the Scottish National Party means that the writing is on the wall for a major electoral defeat for Labour in the next general election. MPs Jim Sillars and John Robertson were the first to leave Labour's sinking ship to form the Scottish Labour Party. The 2,000-strong party held their first conference since foundation last weekend.

majority for the leadership's positions, a line now existed down the middle of the party.

## Expulsions

An underlying theme of many of the contributions in the debate had been anxiety about the freedom with which Alex Neil, the General Secretary of the SLP, and Sillars have operated outside the control of the party membership. Saturday afternoon saw Cumbernauld SLP put forward a simple motion to prevent any unauthorised statements to the press.

Uproar ensued, with the session breaking up in confusion. Despite Friday's expulsions, the leadership conjured up new visions of waves of reds taking over. Secret National Organising Committee meetings,

scuffles and much verbal hysteria occupied most of Saturday evening.

Reconvening the next morning, delegates were amazed to find that the first item on the agenda was ... more expulsions! Four branches — Stirling, Stirling University, Kelvin and Cumbernauld — were picked out for undisclosed 'disruptive practices'. Although no discussion was taken on the motion it was passed.

While this business was being taken, Sillars and Neil alternately resigned, rejoined and resigned from the party. Sillars explained to the press that he 'was unconvinced that the ordinary rank and file members had the acumen or guts to deal with it [the expulsion of the left] on their own'. The previous day's elections to the National Organising Committee (NOC) were declared void and the remaining conference proceedings rendered a farce.

The expelled branches hastily called a meeting at Sunday lunchtime. Attended by 80 delegates, the meeting declared its refusal to recognise the expulsions and its intention to appeal at all levels of the SLP from branch to NOC.

## Reconvene

In addition they decided to set up a steering committee, declared that the expelled branches would continue in existence, and argued for the reconvening of the SLP conference on 14 November. These points, issued in a statement to the press, thus received support from around half of the delegates at the Stirling conference.

It is hazardous to speculate on the aftermath of Stirling. But it is possible to say that Jim Sillars has been left with a rump body whose direction is openly nationalist, born in an atmosphere of hysterical anti-communism. The potential of the now split SLP clearly depends on the success or failure of the left to respond to these attacks of the Sillars leadership.

## Leadership

The SLP leadership had been gripped with a real fear that their central policy documents, including the key 'Jobs and Industry' paper, were going to be defeated. Drawing on all the well-worn traditions of British social democracy their response was immediate — 12 socialists were expelled.

The expulsions were carried, with Jim Sillars threatening resignation from the party if the 'extremists were not dealt with'. Riotous scenes followed as many of the delegates understood the logic of these expulsions and the lessons that were intended for any opposition to the platform's policies. A meeting called at Saturday lunchtime drew 70 such delegates.

The polarisation around the question of democracy paralleled a clear political divide on the conference floor. Education and local government were discussed quietly enough, but the debate on a Scottish government opened up two different wings of the party.

The leadership's position of support for a sovereign Scottish government inside the EEC was vehemently fought against by branches and individuals with political experience in the labour movement. Explicitly rejecting the leadership's dream of an oil-rich, liberal Scandinavian-type Scotland, delegates like Dougie

# OIL OVER TROUBLED WATERS



The issue of oil exploitation is at the centre of the debate in the Scottish left. Sillars and his fellow thinkers in

# WHAT'S ON

THE FINAL DEADLINE for notices for 'What's On' is 10am on the Monday before publication. Adverts are only accepted over the phone in exceptional circumstances. Rate: 2p per word.

**NAC FUND-RAISING** Disco: Sat. 6 Nov, 8pm-1.30am at the Basement, 29 Shelton St, London WC2. 50p entrance — all welcome.

**GLASGOW** Socialist Forums: every Thursday night at 7.30pm in the Iona Community Centre.

**BENGALI FRIENDS** in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and 'Srani-Dal-Biplab' (Fourth International paper) contact: Bengali, c/o Internationalen, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

**PUBLIC FORUM** in Bristol: 'The Fight against Cuts and Unemployment'. Monday 8 Nov, 7.30pm, Central Hall (Old Market). Speakers include: John Blackley (AUEW Convenor, Rolls Royce), Harriet Wordsworth (RiW marcher), representative from LPYS Youth Unemployment Campaign. Supported by Rolls Royce Shop Stewards, delegates to Avon Liaison Committee against Education Cuts, Bristol RiW marchers. For further details tel. 33567.

**WORKERS VANGUARD**, weekly paper of the Spartacist League/US, carries international news, hard-hitting polemics, in depth political analysis. Special introductory offer: 12 air-speeded issues for £1. Cheques payable to C. Reid. Mail to IST-B, BCM Box 4272, London WC1.

**CARDIFF** public meeting on 'Women in Spain', organised by Women's Action Group and the Spanish Solidarity Committee. Mon 8 Nov, 7.30pm, Friends House, Charles Street.

**SCHOOLS MEETING** to discuss 17 November, sponsored by East London, Wandsworth and Westminster Teachers Associations (NUT). Meeting 10 Nov, 7.30 at LSE Old Theatre, Houghton St, WC1.

**BIRMINGHAM** Red Weekly Supporters Group meets every other Wednesday at 7.30pm in Australian Bar, Hurst St.

**RED WEEKLY** public meeting: 'Women Fight Back'. Speakers include Dr Berry Beaumont (NAC), Bob Singh (Trico) and Celia Pugh (IMG). Thurs 11 Nov, 7.30 in Queen's Hall, Ealing Town Hall.

**OPEN CONFERENCE** of Left-Wing Teachers, Sat 20 Nov, 11am-5.30pm at Sir William Collins School, Charrington St, London NW1. Creche and pool fare. Information from Dave Picton, 221 Westcombe Hill, London SE3 (01-858 4942).

**LABOUR MOVEMENT** Delegation to Ireland: report-back meeting, Tues 9 Nov, 7.30, Kentish Town Library, Kentish Town Road, NW5.

**IRELAND**: come and hear reports of W. London delegates who went on the Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland. Wed 10 Nov, 7.30 Acton Town Hall.

**ANGOLA INDEPENDENCE** — first anniversary. Hear Angolan women speak: Dina Almeida. — Conceicao Boavida plus Maibuye (ANC). Thurs 11 Nov, 7.30. St. Pancras Town Hall. Organised by ASC.

**SOUTHAMPTON** 'Red Weekly' public meeting: 'For a Socialist Programme to Fight the Cuts'. Speakers Jonathan Silberman (RW Editorial Board) and M. Tucker (unemployed teacher). Mon 8 Nov, 7.30, St. Matthews Church Hall, St Mary's Road.

**NOEL JENKINSON** Commemoration Meeting at Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., WC1 — Fri 12 Nov, 8pm.

**CAMBRIDGE** Challenge Group — discussion group for regular 'Red Weekly' readers. Meets Wednesdays at 8pm in the 'Man on the Moon', Norfolk St.

**MANCHESTER BONFIRE**: Fund raising social for Manchester Red Weekly Centre — food, drinks. Adm. 50p. Starts 9.30pm, 5 Nov, at 18 Henrietta St, Old Trafford.



# THE SO

## Six tests of Labour

When offering up the Social Contract one of the biggest carrots produced was a drop in the rate of inflation. Denis Healey promised that in 1976 prices would rise by no more than ten per cent. Already in the first nine months of this year they have risen by that amount, and the expected rate now is something in the order of 14 per cent — a rate which continues to grow as the pound drops through the floor.

Even this figure under-estimates the increase in the cost of living for working people. For the Retail Price Index is not a true guide to the cost of living. For example, last month the index rose by 1.3 per cent. But according to the Financial Times, grocery prices rose in the same month by 3 per cent. And grocery prices are a much truer reflection of the rate of inflation for working people than any other statistical estimate.

### GROWTH

A significant increase in industrial growth was the means by which Healey and friends promised to take us all out of the economic wilderness. In July this year he predicted an increase in gross domestic product [the amount of finished goods produced] of 4.5 per cent in the coming eighteen months. Even now, only three months later, that figure is being revised. The reason is that from June to August industrial output actually fell by 1.5 per cent. Denis has got it wrong yet again.

### THE WEALTHY

The 1974 Labour Manifesto included the promise that Labour would introduce a 'wealth tax' — designed to fulfil Denis Healey's prediction that he would 'squeeze the rich until the pips squeak'. On coming to office that plan was postponed until a select committee of MPs could study the vexed question. Considering that there were Tories on this body, it was hardly surprising when it broke up in disagreement at the end of 1975.

Little mention has been made of this wealth tax since. But in the Financial Times last week it was divulged that it 'is expected to be quietly dropped from the next parliamentary session'. So if you haven't noticed any rich pips squeaking lately, now you know why.

### THE CUTS

The huge scale of the cuts in government expenditure have been detailed many times. Let us just take one example — the construction industry. In August of this year orders placed in construction fell by 18 per cent from the previous month. This will only increase the already heavy unemployment in the building industry.

And look where this fall is concentrated. Not in the homes of

the wealthy, or in office blocks, but in those areas which affect the poor and the sick. In council houses where the drop was 52 per cent, and in the crisis-ridden National Health Service where there was a fall of 66 per cent.

**92%** That's how much your pay should have risen in three years... just to stand still

### WAGES

And then there is wages. The simple statistics speak for themselves. Average earnings this year have increased at an annual rate of approximately 9 per cent. Even the Retail Price Index says that the cost of living is rising at 13 per cent. And that's only this year.

Next year, says the Economist, 'with inflation rising towards an annual 14 per cent, the 5 per cent wage maximum will mean a 10 per cent drop in many ordinary workers' post-tax standard of living'. No wonder Samuel Brittan commented in the Financial Times: 'Britain has now become one of the few low wage countries in the industrial world.... Indeed, the wage disparity between Britain and other similar countries is now so great that one might normally expect a torrent of overseas capital to take advantage of cheap British labour.'

The wages of Labour are slight indeed.

### NORTH SEA OIL

But all our troubles, so we are told, will soon be over. At the last moment the cavalry will arrive to save Britain from a fate worse than death. The form this particular cavalry takes is North Sea oil. The problem with that particular cavalry is who owns it and who controls it.

Despite all Tony Benn's blather about state control of the North Sea resources, an estimate in Labour Research indicates that by 1980 only five per cent of North Sea oil production will be owned by the state directly. Another 17 per cent will be owned by British Petroleum, in which the Government has a majority shareholding. But all the rest will be owned and controlled by the multinationals.

This does not mean that North Sea oil will have no effect. The most optimistic prophecy is that in four years time, Britain will have earned £5.4 billion from the oil. But already Britain owes £6 billion to overseas agencies and bankers, and there is another £6 billion in debt in sterling balances. Then there is the £3.9 billion loan the IMF is expected to cough up. North Sea oil will certainly prove a bonanza, but as far as British workers are concerned it will not be their bonanza.

NOT SO LONG AGO, all Britain's problems were blamed on nasty strikers. If only workers would get down to hard work, everything would be all right. Today the Union bureaucrats celebrate the fact that the strike rate over the last nine months is lower than at any time since 1953.

Next we were told that the whole problem was that wages were running at a higher level than prices. Again it was the greedy workers who were to blame. Now prices are rising higher than wages.

Fewer strikes, lower wages, higher prices. And the economy is in a worse state than ever. The Tory and Labour governments' argument that it is working people who are to blame has been proved to have not a shred of credibility. The demands of the Tory press, the stock exchange, the employers have been met many times over by working people. But the much urged sacrifices have brought nothing but greater disaster.

It is time the workers made their own demands — demands aimed at ensuring that the attacks on our standard of living are halted, and that the ordinary working people begin to exercise some real control.

### 1. WAGES

#### ★ A Sliding Scale of Wages

Under capitalism, incomes policies always mean limiting workers' wages in order to boost the bosses' profits. We say no to incomes policy. There is only one way to protect wage rates — to tie them to the rate of inflation.

For every 1 per cent increase in the cost of living (as calculated on a trade union index) wages should rise by the same amount. This does not mean that militants only fight for a sliding scale. Already there has been a substantial decrease in the value of real wages under the Social Contract, and substantial increases on top of a sliding scale need to be won. But a sliding scale is a start — it means that workers are not having to run just to stay in the same place, but can chalk up any increase as a real gain.

It also makes the vital point that workers will not suffer the consequences of an economy that they do not control.

### 2. UNEMPLOYMENT

#### ★ A Programme of Useful Public Works

House building is declining rapidly, the National Health Service is deteriorating, many schools remain crumbling educational slums. There is a lot of work which is not just available but is vitally necessary.

A programme of useful public works would fill the social need for improved social standards, and the employment need for more jobs. Unlike the phoney 'job creation' scheme, a programme of useful public works would contribute to a long-term solution to unemployment. There are many houses which need to be built and many unfilled vacancies in education and the NHS which need to be filled.

#### ★ Work-sharing — Full Pay

Militants should answer demands for redundancies with their demand for work-sharing and a shorter working week. And because the working class should make no sacrifices, work sharing should not involve any loss of pay.

Work-sharing, tied to a sliding scale



## A Funny thing Happened on the Way to the Stock Exchange

In dusty rooms of universities, learned professors spend hours of their working day studying the meaning of words, where the words come from, how their meaning has changed. It is an interesting, if largely pointless exercise. At times it even has its uses.

Take the word 'socialism'. The crisis of Labour's economy is, we are told by the Tories, a crisis of 'socialism'. Now even the most politically naive must find some problems in equating mass unemployment, wage-cuts, the destruction of the social services, racist immigration policies and all the rest with 'socialism'.

And was it not the right-wing journal The Economist, which said recently the Denis Healey is 'the best conservative chancellor we have had'. Words, it may appear, are losing their meaning as fast as the pound is losing its value.

'socialism' the Tories are merely indulging in a little bit of political name-calling. The Economist is right — Healey is the best 'conservative'. And conservative, to get down to basics, means capitalist. To get even further down to basics, the crisis is a crisis of capitalism.

The major headline grabber has been the decline of the pound. On Monday last week, sterling dropped seven cents because the previous day the Sunday Times had stated that the International Monetary Fund desires such a drop. It then rallied when the IMF denied the story but dropped further on Wednesday after the Labour NEC had voted to back the 17 November demonstration against Labour's cuts.

Finally [or not so finally] it again rose a little towards the end of the week, thanks to another media story — that a further new loan was being negotiated for the ailing

What, you may well ask, was going on? How can the once proud, strong, and sterling British pound be subject to the whims of newspaper writers or the sabre rattling of a Labour NEC which the Callaghan Government has repeatedly said it will ignore anyway?

For an explanation, begin with this quotation from the Financial Times of 25 October: 'If the government puts confidence first and arithmetic second it will be on the way to sounder policies.'

So it is all a question of 'confidence'. When the Labour NEC blusters there is panic. When a speculative news story makes prophecies of decline there is panic. It is all a question of 'confidence'.



Because the day-to-day events in the economy are not determined by anything as scientific as planning, they are determined by a series of irrationalities. And the dealers in the pound, the speculators, the stock market whiz-kids do not have faith in poor old Britain anymore.

There are reasons for that lack of confidence. First, the free enterprise system is in rather a mess, with profits declining at one of the highest rates for many years.

Second, the Callaghan Government — as with the Wilson Government, as with the Heath Government — has proved incapable of imposing a heavy defeat on the working class. Capitalism's friends think a massive cut back in social expenditure could inflict this defeat.

Third, the ability of Callaghan to inflict this defeat is thrown into question when the Labour NEC dissociates itself from his policies.

The irony as the Financial Times admitted is that the cuts are not so much necessary in themselves; the prime concern is not one of 'arithmetic' — that is, of balancing the budget. The cuts are necessary for what they represent, for increasing the 'confidence' of the IMF, the Financial Times and other such earnest institutions in the ability of the Labour Government to take on and defeat the working class. Because such a defeat in some form is the only option British capitalism has left.

That is a rather good indication of what the system called capitalism represents. A system in which confidence is restored by 'defeating' the majority of the population — the working class — or by making conditions much worse for the sick, the elderly and the underprivileged.

Such is the system for which we are all supposed to make sacrifices. It is a demand as lunatic as the system itself.

# LABOUR'S CRISIS - A FIGHTING ANSWER

# SOCIALIST CHALLENGE

wages, overcomes the vexed question of overtime. Today many work overtime to try and overcome the effects of the wage-cut policies of the Social Contract. A minimum wage and sliding scale would ensure that the great which overtime poses to jobs could not operate.

the books of any firms unable to meet this demand for the right to work would be opened for the workers' inspection. This would lay the basis for the drawing up of a plan for the nationalisation of such companies under workers control.

## THE CUTS

### Sliding Scale of Public Expenditure

It is not just wages which suffer from inflation. There is also the 'social wage' — pensions, social security payments, educational and health spending, and so on. This social wage would also be tied to the cost of living.

Automatic rises for pensioners and claimants, automatic increases in social spending tied to the rate of inflation — these are the policies which will stop further cuts in the social wage. As with wages it is only a start — all the cuts already imposed must be reversed — but a sliding

scale of social expenditure ensures that the cuts planned for the future will be challenged and the demands of the IMF will be thrown back in their faces.

## 4. THE MONEY

### ★ Cut Out Waste

All the demands outlined above will need financing, but the Labour Government shrugs its shoulders and says the money just isn't there. So they plan to chop 'unnecessary' social expenditure — and the IMF applaud encouragingly and demand more.

But what is the largest area of social expenditure? It is education, and education is not just some luxury, but a long-fought for democratic right. However, there are areas of government spending which have nothing to do with democracy and which can be cut. The most obvious is defence spending. The magazine *Labour Research* has estimated that in 1976-7 the total defence budget will come to a massive £5,627 million.

To put this in understandable terms, take just one example: one multi-role combat aircraft costs approximately £10 million. The same amount of money would buy 20 new primary schools and a new railway station in Birmingham.

When they say that there is no money available, what they mean is that there is no money available for the ordinary working people; but for the war-lords, for those who send British troops to Ireland, Oman or wherever there is literally billions of pounds.

### ★ Nationalise

Billions of pounds will also go to the North Sea oil multinationals. Those who control the multinationals will not have earned that money — the only reason they profit is because they had capital in the first place to buy the prospecting rights in the North Sea.

A similar situation exists with regard to the banks, who by charging high interest rates make huge amounts of money through loans of capital to local councils. They have done no real work for that money; they do not run their concerns in the interests of the community, only in the interests of their owners.

Both the oil companies and the banks should be taken out of the hands of the tiny elite and put under the control of the working people. They should be nationalised without compensation.

### ★ Control

So too should a whole series of other concerns: such as the food companies, who constantly raise prices to protect their profits; and the construction companies, who decide when, where and what they should build not on the basis of social need but on the profit they can make.

None of these demands will be won easily. They will not be granted by some kindly Parliament suddenly transformed into a workers' benevolent society. They will be resisted by the bosses and Parliament alike — because they begin to wrest control of the economy out of the hands of the ruling class.

That ruling class uses Parliament, its police and army and its courts to prevent such challenges. That is why the demands which present a workers' answer to the crisis must be fought for in a militant and united way based on the self-organisation of the working class. Through that fight, workers can begin to exercise a type of control over their lives which Parliament, the



## Import Controls - The New Jerusalem?

MANY YEARS AGO, I remember standing on a hill overlooking Skelmersdale and thinking that if this was meant to be the New Jerusalem they could keep it. That's how it was planned. Out of the backstreets of Liverpool came thousands of young people seeking new homes, new jobs and a new life.

In return they got the highest density housing in the country and the longest dole queues.

With last week's announcement that the state-built and state-financed Courtauld's factory was closing in the town, another 1,000 faced the prospect of the dole. It was only in January that 2,000 workers at Thorn Electrical received similar treatment. Courtauld's closure will boost the local unemployment rate to 20 per cent.

In both cases the Labour left and Communist Party are arguing that the trouble is imports — cheap mass produced television tubes and textiles swamping a shrinking market. Foreign goods now take 68 per cent of the British textile market.

Predictably enough, the call has gone up for import controls. But it is a call that must be decisively rejected if the 4,000 jobs threatened throughout the Courtauld's empire are to be saved. Why?

**1. Import controls would boost prices.** The Price Commission has just reported that price rises totalled a staggering £1,800 million in the three months June to August. That was before the pound plummeted again. That was before the latest round of increases.

Ban cheap imports and that figure will increase still further. Working class people will be forced to buy more expensive British goods. Any increase in domestic production would be paid for entirely by consumers — the working class.

**2. Import controls would not save jobs.** If working people are forced to pay more for British textiles instead of foreign ones while pay rises are being curbed, then these same people will have less to spend on other goods.

Jobs 'saved' in one industry by these methods would simply be at the



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

Those arguing for import controls now have done nothing to fight wage restraint, which has already slashed living standards.

**3. Import controls fuel racism.** If you can keep their goods out, why not keep the blacks out and give their jobs to the white unemployed? That's what the racists argue, and the Labour left and Communist Party fall straight into the trap with the call for import controls.

Where could Britain exclude goods on any large scale from, anyway? Not from major capitalist powers like the States and West Germany, who could do the same to Britain. Only from the planned economies of Eastern Europe and — more importantly — those countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America already crushed by imperialism. We would be making their misery worse and cutting British workers off from their only allies in the struggle against the multinationals — the international working class.

But the bluff of the 'lefts' is about to

has done better for the ruling class than they could ever have hoped. To keep it in office a little longer, speculates big business's *Economist*, wouldn't it perhaps be worth some import controls to placate the lefts as further spending cuts are forced through.

The right-wing Manifesto group of Labour MPs are now offering the same olive branch to the lefts — more precisely a fig-leaf. Having done nothing on jobs, nothing on cuts but scream 'import controls' (selective, of course), the lefts could be silenced at a stroke.

They have created their own vision of the New Jerusalem. It might not be Skelmersdale, but it does have a bloody big wall around it labelled import controls. However, the lefts may soon discover that their wall — far from protecting England's green and pleasant land — will be their own Jericho.

# US ELECTION: SWP on ballot in 28 states

## Rising Interest in Trotskyist Platform

When Socialist Workers party (SWP) presidential candidate Peter Camejo talks to workers at unemployment offices and factory gates he immediately identifies himself as a socialist. Otherwise, people think he is another Democratic or Republican party politician and they often walk away in disgust.

Since the SWP candidates began campaigning in the beginning of 1975, well over one million pieces of literature on the socialist program have been distributed.

The interest in the socialist campaign has been reflected in the amount of coverage in the mass media. Peter Camejo and SWP vice-presidential candidate Willie Mae Reid have been interviewed by major daily newspapers and television stations throughout the country.

"Watergate"—the multiple violations of democratic rights by the government—is a central issue in American political life. The capitalists have been unable to bury the past and stop the flow of revelations about their methods of government. And it has been the suit launched by the SWP and YSA against government spying and harassment that has been a prime source of the continuing disclosures.

### F.B.I.

The combined approach of suing the government while running in the elections has been particularly effective. On the one hand, the suit has won massive publicity for the election campaign. At the same time, the fact that the FBI is directing its attacks on constitutional rights against the campaign of a presidential candidate has made the suit more timely and increased its impact.

When the U.S. Justice Department announced September 13 that it had ordered an end to the FBI's thirty-eight year "investigation" of the SWP, the party was in a position to demand in the name of its presidential candidate the immediate removal of all FBI informers operating within the SWP, and the release of all files on them.

"This is an outrageous situation," Camejo told reporters. "Here we are less than two months from the presidential elections, and the government is operating a ring of informers and dirty-trick artists inside the campaign committees of one of the candidates. This must be stopped and stopped right now!"

### Power

The feeling of outrage expressed by Camejo is widespread in the United States today, and it has been deepened by the disclosures forced out of the FBI by the Trotskyists' law suit. In fact, the context of the 1976 presidential election has been set by two overriding factors—the continuing revelations about the U.S. government's violations of democratic rights, and the impact of the world economic crisis of 1974-75.

Together, these two factors have resulted in a third—a crisis of confidence in the institutions of American bourgeois democracy, and in particular a massive loss of confidence in the Democratic and Republican parties.

For more than a century the reins of power in the United States have been handed back and forth between two capitalist parties. There is not a single mass-circulation newspaper or magazine claiming to speak in the interests of the working class, let alone a mass party representing the workers or the oppressed nationalities in the United States.

parties. Thus, the editors of the *New York Times* described, in the September 13 issue, the continuing decline in voter turnout as "a turning away from politics."

In fact, the behavior of American voters is a clear indication of the disgust and cynicism with which they view the Democratic and Republican parties. As one recent study put it, "The American people in increasing numbers have been giving a 'no vote' to their leaders and institutions."

Conducted by the Peter D. Hart Research Associates, the study estimated that roughly 70 million qualified voters—nearly half the voting age population—will choose not to vote November 2. The most common reason for not voting—given by 68 percent of the nonvoters surveyed—was that "candidates say one thing and then do another."

### Campaigns

A look at the Ford and Carter campaigns shows clearly enough why they have failed to arouse enthusiasm. The Democrats and Republicans simply do not offer answers for the big problems facing American workers.

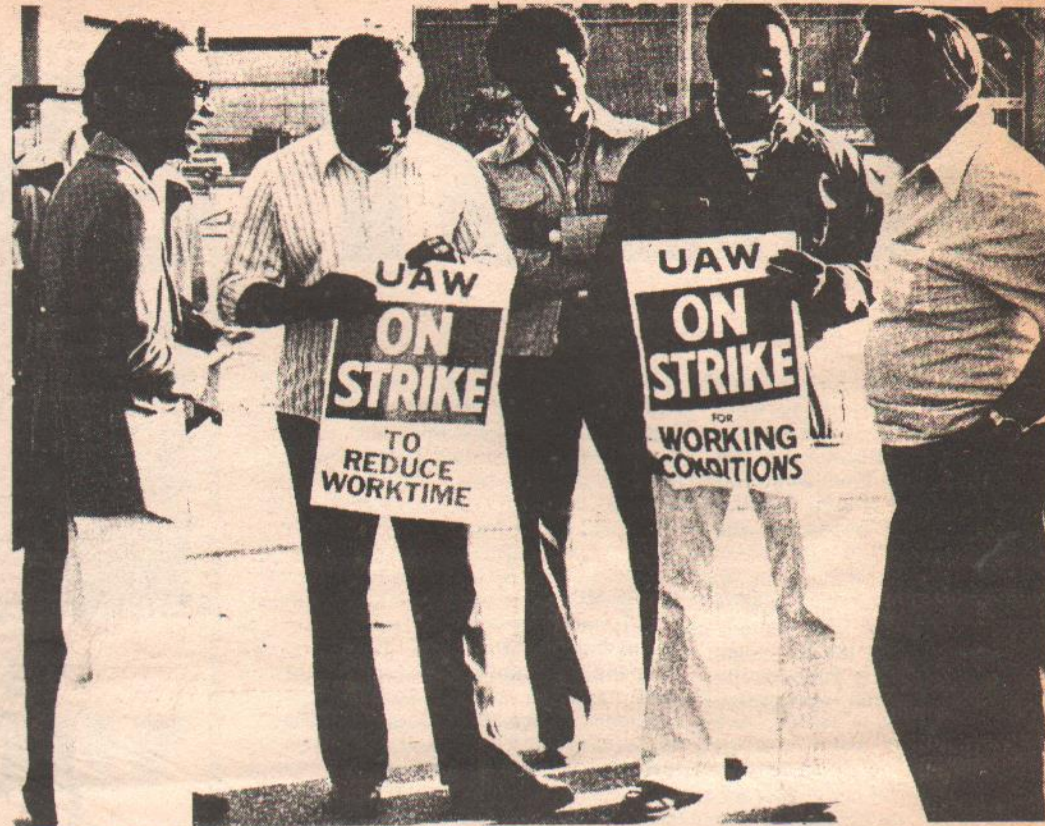
More than seven million persons are unemployed; Blacks and women face increasing attacks on their basic rights; and the ever-present threat of war continues unabated. On all these issues, Ford takes a hard right-wing line. He is opposed to any federal action to provide jobs for the unemployed; he is opposed to the busing needed to end segregated education; he is opposed to the right of women to choose abortion; and he urges still greater military spending.

Carter, like Ford, opposes "forced busing." At the same time, he plays up his support from Black leaders and insists that he is a representative of "the new South," which has supposedly put discrimination against Blacks behind it.

While refusing to back a constitutional amendment that would allow state governments to once again make abortions illegal, Carter also says that he would not necessarily oppose such an amendment.

At the same time that he attacks Ford for doing nothing to relieve unemployment, Carter insists that any social programs he implements will come second to the need for a balanced budget—the traditional excuse for denying funds to social reform programs.

In short, Carter's election strategy is to appear as all things to all people.



SWP Vice Presidential candidate, WILLIE MAE REID talks to striking car workers.

### Stalinists Cross Wires on U.S. Election

There was no report on how Gus Hall, the presidential candidate of the American Communist party, reacted, but according to a September 29 Associated Press dispatch, Soviet Communist party Chief Leonid Brezhnev has declared his neutrality in the American

presidential race.

Perhaps Hall was still recovering from the declaration of French Communist party leader Georges Marchais. On August 16, Marchais told an interviewer, "If I were an American, I would vote for Carter."

Nothing illustrates this better than the reaction in the Black community to the SWP presidential and local campaigns. Black newspapers with a total circulation of more than 1.3 million have published articles on the SWP campaign. (There are roughly eight million Black households in the United States.)

An example of the impact of SWP campaigns among Blacks was the 26 percent of the vote won by Pat Bethard last November in her campaign for a seat on the Seattle City Council. Bethard's campaign was centered in Seattle's Black community, and the SWP opened up a storefront headquarters and later established a branch there as a result of this campaign.

Increasingly, the SWP is being seen as the party that is on the front lines fighting for the rights of Blacks wherever they are under attack. This led to the decision of Local Division 26 of the Amalgamated Transit Union to endorse the campaign of Steve Beumer for the Detroit school board this spring.

Local 26 represents 1,400 Detroit bus operators, nearly 90 percent of whom are Black. The local voted unanimously in April to support Beumer, a militant in the union, because he was the only candidate defending the desegregation of the Detroit

school system and the busing plan needed to carry it out.

Supporters of the Camejo-Reid ticket were also among the leaders of a floor fight at the convention of the 450,000-member American Federation of Teachers this August. The fight to put the union on record in support of busing to desegregate schools became the main issue at the convention. It was the first serious challenge to the union's racist leadership in a decade.

The changing situation within the trade-union movement was also demonstrated by the success of SWP candidates in San Francisco in winning union endorsement last fall. Three SWP candidates for the city Board of Supervisors were endorsed by a chapter of Social Services Union Local 535. A vote for endorsement in Painters Local 4 ended in a tie vote.

### Interest

Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, the largest oppressed nationalities in the United States after Blacks, have also shown rising interest in the socialist campaign. The Camejo-Reid ticket has had particular impact in the Chicano movement.





In Texas, Camejo has had Spanish language meetings with striking farm workers set up by the Farm Labor Organizing Committee, and participated with Chicano activists in protests against the victimization of immigrant workers from Mexico. Pedro Vásquez, the SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Texas, is a respected leader of the Chicano movement.

The special oppression of women has been another area in which the SWP candidates have spoken out as leaders in the fight for human rights. Both Camejo and Reid participated in the 8,000-strong demonstration for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S. constitution held in Springfield, Illinois, this May. Both SWP candidates were introduced from the platform at the rally.

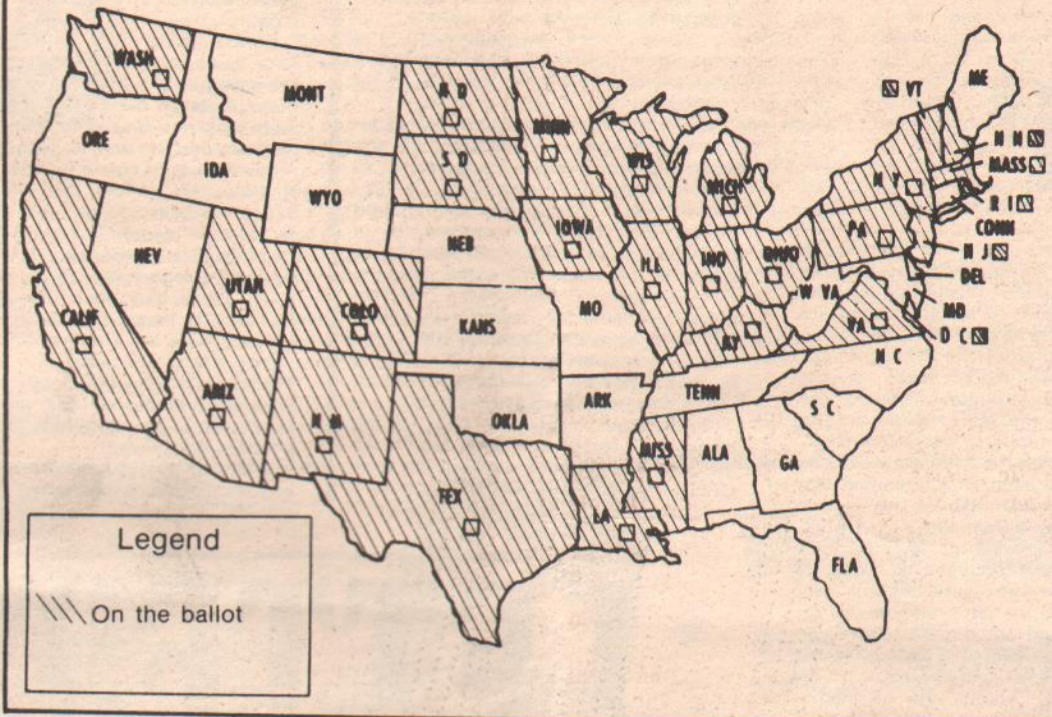
## Message

Whether they are speaking to trade unionists, to unemployed Black youth, to women demanding equal rights, to Puerto Ricans struggling for bilingual education, or to Chicanos protesting terrorization by immigration police, the SWP candidates have one clear, direct message: American capitalism is in crisis; the ruling class is attempting to solve this crisis at the expense of the working class; the attacks on Blacks, women, and other specially oppressed layers of the working class are an expression of this crisis; and it is necessary for the workers to unite and to organize independently to fight these attacks.

Above all, it is necessary for the working class to break politically with the capitalist class and form its own party to fight for its interests. To further this goal the socialist candidates call for the unions to form a labor party.

Looked at from a broader point of view, the success of the American Trotskyist movement in the 1976 election campaign reflects the cumulative impact of the role played by the SWP and YSA throughout the radicalization of the 1960s and 1970s. By participating in and helping to lead the antiwar movement and the women's liberation movement while the other tendencies on the left defaulted, the SWP and YSA

# Camejo and Reid on the ballot in 28 states



On the ballot:

- |            |               |              |                  |
|------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|
| Arizona    | Louisiana     | New Mexico   | Texas            |
| California | Massachusetts | New York     | Vermont          |
| Colorado   | Michigan      | North Dakota | Virginia         |
| Illinois   | Minnesota     | Ohio         | Utah             |
| Indiana    | Mississippi   | Pennsylvania | Washington       |
| Iowa       | New Hampshire | Rhode Island | Washington, D.C. |
| Kentucky   | New Jersey    | South Dakota | Wisconsin        |

The SWP candidates have managed to get on the ballot in the 28 states marked above. Formidable difficulties are involved in getting on the ballot in the USA. Each state government has its own laws establishing various ingenious obstacles for opposition parties seeking a place on the ballot. In California, SWP candidates had to get 300,000 signatures before they were allowed ballot status.

Even when all the signatures are collected, the authorities try to sabotage the campaigns of independents. In Missouri, the SWP was ruled off the ballot after collecting 25,000 signatures. One of the signatures 'invalidated' by the scrutineers was that of Roger Goldman, the eastern Missouri president of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Financing their campaigns is also a problem for opposition candidates. They do not get a cent from public funds, although the Democratic and Republican campaigns benefit to the tune of \$43.6 million apiece.

were able to win new forces to their banner and new respect after the long isolation of the 1950s.

This same process is currently being repeated to some degree in the Black liberation movement, particularly around the issue of busing and school desegregation.

Another theme running through the SWP campaign is its internationalism. Camejo and Reid have spoken out against the racist repression in South Africa and Israel, making solidarity with the struggles of the working class and the oppressed around the world part of their campaign.

The success of the socialist campaign has attracted the attention of right-wing terrorists as well as of those interested in fighting against injustice and exploitation. In Pasadena, California, Nazi thugs have shot out the windows of the SWP campaign headquarters; similar armed attacks have taken place in Denver. In Los Angeles, the SWP campaign headquarters was the target of a bomb attack.

Such terrorism, however, has never proved effective in stopping the spread of ideas.

The American Communist party is running its own election campaign this year. Gus Hall, the CP's candidate, is currently on the ballot in eighteen states and the District of Columbia. Hall also ran for president in 1972, with less-than-satisfactory results from the point of view of the Stalinists.

Many of the CP's members have been immersed in the Democratic party for so long that they are resistant to the idea of running their own campaign. This would explain why much of Hall's campaign activity this year has been devoted to speaking before CP clubs and making declarations for the Stalinist press.

Behind Hall's concern with presenting a CP alternative in the elections is the effect that the SWP's 1972 and 1976 presidential campaigns have had within the broad radical movement. This year the Stalinists launched their biggest electoral effort since the 1930s, but the SWP campaign has made a qualitatively greater impact. □

# The I-CL split and the fight for regroupment

The letters received by Red Weekly following the split in the International-Communist League — notably that from Maxine Landis on behalf of the I-CL Political Committee (Red Weekly, 21 October) — fully confirm the analysis which we made of this split: that their sectarianism and refusal to recognise other forces on the left as revolutionary inevitably led the leadership of the I-CL to the suppression of democracy within their own organisation. Furthermore, the most damning indictment of the I-CL's methods comes not from those who left the I-CL but from the account given of the split by the leadership of the I-CL itself.

According to the I-CL press statement of 4 October, the Workers Power leaders were originally suspended from the Political Committee by a decision of the Secretariat — 'The suspensions were ratified by a PC, which of course the suspended members had no right to attend' (I-CL press statement, 4 October). In other words the I-CL leadership openly admits that it used the decision of a lower body (the Secretariat) to overturn the composition of a higher one (the Political Committee).

## Sectarian

On that basis, not merely have the leadership of the I-CL, even from a formal point of view, carried out an 'infringement' of democratic centralism, but they have destroyed its very basis — the election of all bodies and the subordination of lower ones to higher ones is one of the basic organisational expressions of democratic centralism.

Much more important than the formal

by the I-CL leadership. Instead of recognising that they have made a gross sectarian error in refusing to recognise Workers Power as revolutionaries with whom they have differences — and refusing to recognise organisations such as the IMG, the RCG and other Trotskyist forces as revolutionary — the I-CL continues with its absurd attempt to declare that these organisations are not revolutionary but are 'centrist obstacles', are formed of 'political suicides' etc.

The I-CL attempts to provide pseudo-justification of this by utilising the famous words of Trotsky about 'calling things by their right name'. However, the whole point is that the I-CL doesn't call things by their right name but by wrong names and has a wrong analysis.

To show the consequences of this for internal democracy, we need only consider one of the most famous of all statements on internal democracy — that of Trotsky in describing the leadership methods of Lenin. He said:

'The entire history of Bolshevism was one of the free struggle of tendencies and factions. It was not a matter of

anti-boycottists, 'otzovists', ultimativists, conciliationists, partisans of 'proletarian culture', partisans and opponents of the Brest-Litovsk treaty, left communists, partisans and opponents of the official military policy, etc, etc.

'The Bolshevik Central Committee never dreamed of demanding that an opponent 'abandon factional methods' if the opponent held that the policy of the Central Committee was false. Patience and loyalty towards the opposition were among the most important traits of Lenin's leadership.' (Trotsky — 'Trotskyism' and the PSOP' in Writings 1938-39, p. 131.)

## Factions

Lenin's attitude of 'patience and loyalty' and the defence of internal democracy was not 'softness' but flowed inevitably from a principled political basis. If persons in tendencies or factions are seen not as 'centrists' or 'political suicides' but as revolutionaries who are making mistakes on certain questions, then the 'patience and loyalty' necessary to win them back to correct positions flows logically.

Once, however, comrades in other tendencies or factions are seen not as revolutionaries but as 'centrists' or 'political suicides', then any political basis for internal democracy disappears. The political characterisation given of those they disagree with by the leadership of the I-CL has, and always will, lead them to be unable to create and allow a democratic regime in their organisation.

Finally the comrades of the I-CL ask what is the attitude of Red Weekly to the split. It is very simple. Red Weekly stands for the building of a real revolutionary party — even if the IMG is a minority in it in its first stage. We genuinely welcomed the creation of I-CL out of Workers Fight and Workers Power as a step towards the regroupment of the revolutionary left.

We hoped that the fact of being in a larger organisation with bigger opportunities to intervene in the class struggle would help overcome sectarian pressures. Furthermore, if it was to stay together, the I-CL would have to permit internal democracy. We hoped this would lead the comrades of the I-CL towards seeking to

# The Split in the



and others into a really major Trotskyist organisation in Britain.

Instead of this positive development, however, it was the sectarianism and lack of internal democracy of the I-CL leadership which predominated. The resulting split was inevitable. We regard that outcome as much less desirable than one whereby the I-CL had changed its course and played a real role in regroupment.

We hope that further reflection can still

ences, the IMG, Workers Power and other organisations of the left are not 'centrist obstacles' but revolutionaries. Without that understanding, the I-CL leadership are not capable of playing a real role in revolutionary regroupment.

In short, the I-CL should learn to call things by their right name. In return for that we would gladly give up the £50 which the I-CL offered, and now owe Red

# The 'politics of the personal'

The 'Battle Of Ideas' supplement is a welcome development, and so far very interesting. We suggest that one of the important topics it should take up is the politics of personal life and sexuality, in relation to women's oppression, gay oppression, and the division in capitalist society between private and public life.

This is important for three reasons in particular: to discuss ways to genuinely integrate the struggle against women's and gay oppression into revolutionary politics as a whole; to find ways of reaching important sections of the working class, such as housewives, who can otherwise fall prey to the fascist propagandists understanding only too well how to use the 'politics of the personal'; and because this debate is at present generating a great deal of interest on the left.

The *Socialist Worker* series of meetings on sexual politics and the current Communist Party discussions are cases in point. It is worth quoting the leaflet advertising the IS meetings: 'Even now,

these questions are often ducked by Marxists who are concerned to fight for workers control in the factories, but who consider the fight for workers control of their own bodies as a peripheral issue.'

It is true that most of the revolutionary left have been made aware of the importance of struggles such as the abortion campaign, but even here the real issues this struggle raises are 'ducked'. No paper on the left, as far as we know, has discussed what 20,000 women last summer really marched for, which was the right to sexual freedom.

The sixth demand of the women's movement, which includes '... the right to a self-defined sexuality' has not been integrated into the left's understanding, propaganda and agitation. The struggle against gay oppression is still conceived of on a purely 'civil rights' level.

Our strategy against the growth of fascism in particular could suffer dangerous defeats — as Reich tried to teach the left forty years ago — if we ignore the real breeding ground for fascist ideas among the masses, one

aspect of which is the corruption of sexuality.

The IMG takes a principled position in favour of an autonomous women's movement. However, socialist feminists and gays are not separatists. We believe that our struggle must be integrated with the rest of the class struggle. We would not pretend that we have a fully worked out strategy to do this. On the contrary, instead of leaving 'personal' politics to the exclusive sphere of the women's and gay movement, the revolutionary left needs to enter into the debate and draw it into the rest of its politics.

We suggest that the debate could be opened up by a discussion of the material basis of women's oppression, to give a theoretical grounding to the private/public division and the function of women's and gay oppression in capitalist social relations. The positions of the CP and the IS for instance should be taken up here. Reich's work could be discussed, also Eli Zaretsky's *Capitalism, the Family and Personal Life*, and a new pamphlet on consciousness-raising by Sue Bruley which raises a number of interesting political questions.

This debate is vital not only for the struggle of women and gays, but for the struggle of the whole working class. — CELIA HOLT, JAMIE GOUGH (London).

# BINGO! IT'S A STRIKE

Club One Bingo opened in November 1974. At that time the average pay of the employees was less than 50p per hour. In October 1976 the average pay of the girls employed at the club is 56½p per hour.

During these two years the girls have made constant representations to the management, attempting to improve these derisory rates. The management reply was not simply to dismiss these requests, but not even to negotiate them.

In an effort to obtain justice, the girls of Club One joined the Transport & General Workers Union, the only body capable of negotiating for the girls' best interests. Predictably, management refused categorically to accept the TGWU, insisting that the girls join NATTKE [National Association of Theatre, Television and Kine Employees].

NATTKE is no good for the girls. The rates it usually negotiates for its members are below what management are paying at present — and that's below a decent living wage!

Club One Bingo is not a small club or a one-man show. It is part of Orr Enter-

prises. This is a big business. There are several clubs and a cinema in the Midland group as well as several seaside clubs. In addition they own numerous shops in Coventry and elsewhere. The owner of Club One has not one but two Rolls Royces. It's BIG takings, BIG profits but small wages for the Bingo workers.

The strike committee ask you to help by NOT GOING TO ORR ENTERPRISES for entertainment at Club One, the RIALTO, Theatre One Cinema or the Spa at Leamington.

We ask you to make a collection for the women, many of whom depend on their wages as a sole source of income. It's not pin money for them. Support the girls in their demand for recognition of the union they want [the TGWU] and a decent living wage. Despite promises and suchlike from the top, prices, rents, fares, etc. are still going up.

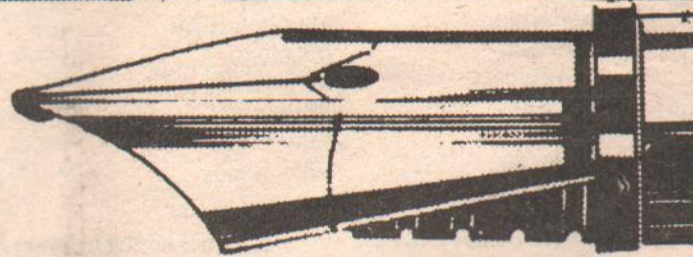
All monies and offers of support to be sent to the Strike Committee: 42 Hamilton Road, Stoke, Coventry.

— CLUB ONE STRIKE COMMITTEE

Red Weekly fully endorses this appeal. Support so far has been encouraging. All refuse collections and deliveries to Club One have been stopped, new films for screening at the Theatre One Cinema have been returned to the distributors, and pickets at the Rialto bingo hall have met with a good response. The local students unions, the Unemployed Workers Centre and other labour movement bodies have also provided meeting rooms and printing facilities, and arranged a nursery for the strikers' children.

But faced with the management's refusal to negotiate and attempts to demoralise the strikers, it is vital that the TGWU uses its power to escalate the dispute. A drive to organise and improve conditions in other clubs and entertainment facilities in the area — particularly those owned by Orr — would allow the establishment of a common front against the bosses and show all unorganised and poorly paid workers that it is possible to fight back against the Government's attacks on living standards.

# LETTERS



# women in strikes - the problems

We all welcome the success of the strike for equal pay at Trico as a victory for women and the whole working class. The strike itself raises important problems for the movement which have so far been overlooked in the left's propaganda and activity, and which need urgent consideration for future struggles like Trico. The kind of issues which were posed can be indicated by a problem which confronted student teachers who invited Trico strikers to speak at a meeting on 'Women's Right to Work': one of the scheduled speakers was forbidden to attend the meeting by her husband.

The general problem posed by incidents like this is that women in strikes, etc., face barriers which appear to be personal matters rather than trade union or political matters. Yet clearly the issue was a very political one, and such problems are universal: for example, in France a woman was beaten up by her husband after daring to take part in an overnight occupation at the Lip factory. Women's capacity to take part in this kind of struggle is constantly limited by that

part of our oppression which involves the so-called 'personal' sphere. The movement must urgently debate the problem posed by the separation of 'personal' and 'public' politics, which immediately becomes apparent when women enter public struggles.

Overcoming this problem would mean, for example, fighting for the unions to take responsibility for any oppression a woman may face in her 'personal' life. It would mean putting more energy into arguing that unions should encourage caucuses of their women members, as well as providing creches at public meetings and holding union meetings in work hours.

The problems raised for women by the failure to integrate the 'personal' part of our oppression into the whole of the class struggle are complex ones, and a debate in the movement on this question is long overdue. The left press must take on its responsibility for the development of this debate without delay. — SOUTH WEST LONDON WOMEN'S GROUP

bureaucratic manoeuvres in the NUT Rank-and-File, their refusal to build even a broad support committee in their election campaigns (let alone take part in united campaigns), and indeed in the internal regime of the IS itself. None of these antics do anything to convince workers that socialism means a different and superior form of democracy.

This is particularly important in a country like Britain, where for most workers parliamentary democracy means real freedoms and rights that don't exist either in most other capitalist countries or in the so-called socialist countries. The working class is not going to fight for the vision of socialist democracy unless its worth is demonstrated in practice during that fight.



JIMMY McCALLUM

For socialists standing in elections, that means a democratically organised campaign, with the candidate responsible to his/her supporters. It also means spelling out that such a candidate, if elected, would be accountable, not to a cross every five years, nor to the Central Committee of the Party, but to frequent mass meetings of his/her constituents at which the policies he/she would fight for

# WOMEN STUDENTS FIGHT FOR NEW POLICIES

There is a tradition of opposition within the National Union of Students women's campaign, whose conference takes place this weekend. The refusal of the NUS leadership to allow women to organise autonomously without the loss of funds and status within their students union has prevented women from organising a campaign based on their own demands.

Since 1974 NUS women's conferences have consistently voted for the recognition of women's right to close their meetings to men if they wish without loss of funds or status. Equally consistently, the Broad Left-dominated Executive have refused this recognition — not even bothering to take this issue to national conference.

In recent months, however, women students have been organising to take their demands into the whole of NUS. Supporters of the Women's Left Caucus are no longer prepared to see the fight for women's liberation hived off into a limited campaign — 'to keep the women quiet'.

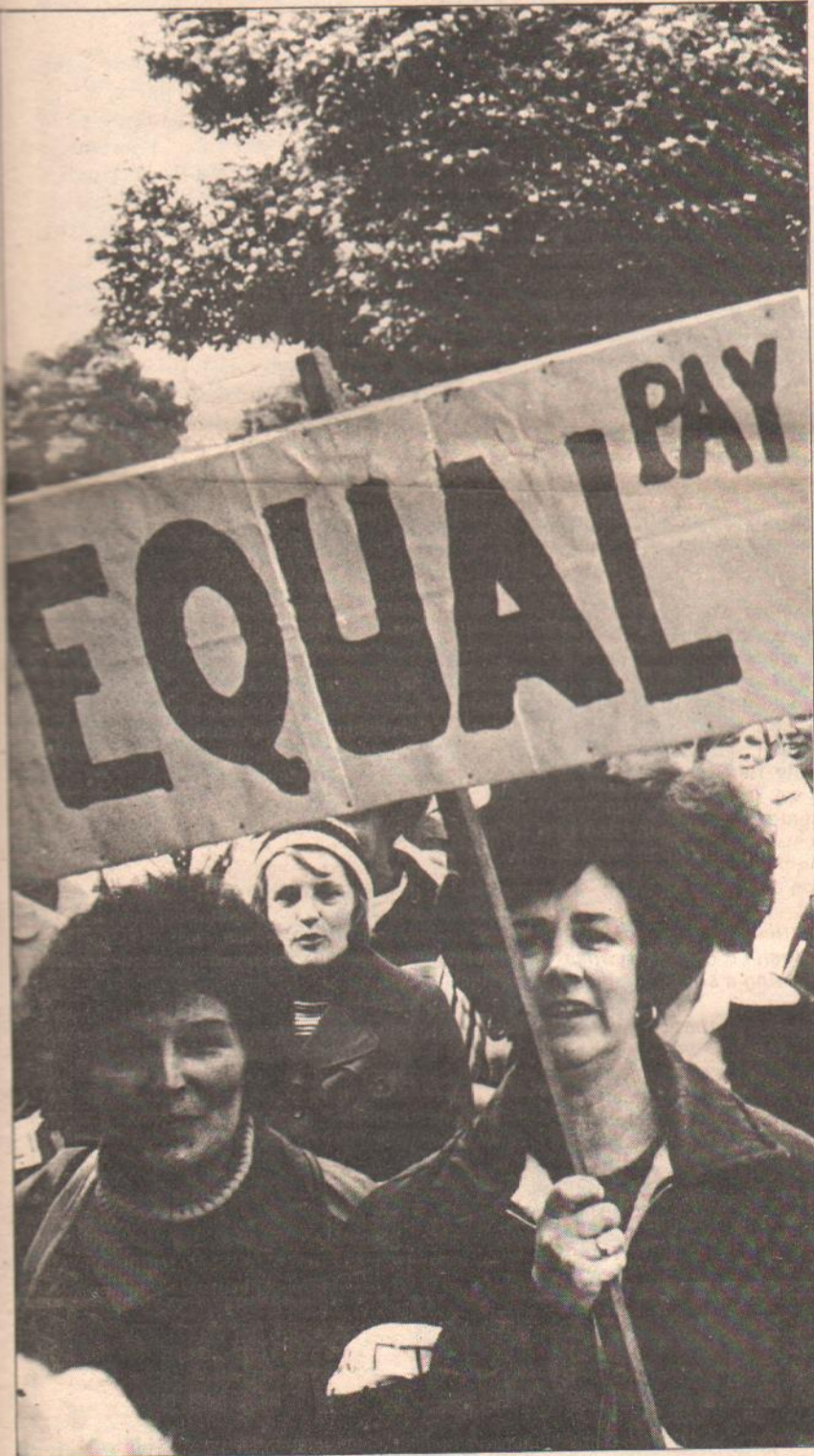
For instance, women at a recent NUS

for the abortion rights campaign. The recognition that entertainments are not non-political has led women's groups throughout the country to demand representation on social and cultural affairs committees.

The Women's Left Caucus provides a focus for socialist women to discuss what kind of campaign is needed within NUS, and how such a campaign can be organised. It does not pose as an alternative to the present NUS women's campaign, but rather seeks to challenge the present leadership by putting forward its own perspectives for the fight against women's oppression.

The support it has won was shown at the NUS Nurseries Conference, where the WLC motion was passed unanimously. Only the WLC put forward concrete proposals that did not rely solely on either negotiations or occupations, but advanced ways in which students could join with other sectors in fighting the Government economic policies which are eroding already inadequate nursery facilities.

Women students who share this perspective are invited to write for informa-



# Workers democracy and elections

In last week's issue Geoff Ryan rightly criticised the lack of democracy in the

Labour Party. I think the question of real workers democracy, as against parliamentary democracy, has to be one of the main planks of any class struggle election candidate, in theory and in practice.

The IS campaign in Walsall has unfortunately paid little attention to this issue. Jimmy McCallum (in his interview in *Red Weekly*) makes no mention of how a socialist MP should be immediately answerable to the people who voted for him or her; and when asked this in a public meeting, he merely said he'd give his salary to *Socialist Worker*.

## CORRECTIONS

1. In the introduction to our interview with Hungarian revolutionary Nicholas Krasso in last week's issue, we wrote that he had contributed to the Hungarian Communist Party's theoretical journal 'between 1947 and 1959'. This should have read 'between 1947 and 1949'.

2. In Paul Mitchel's report on the struggle at Jaguar, Coventry, also in last week's issue, a misprint turned our correspondent's reference

# 7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES



demanding the retention of political status and the withdrawal of the British Army. Speakers from all groups, including the Movement for a Socialist Republic [Irish section of the Fourth International], addressed the huge audience on the need for unity in the anti-imperialist camp. The importance of focussing mass activity on the central issue of the Army was stressed as the way to expose the hypocrisy of the peace movement.

The inability of the peace march to compete with this mass militancy and hold their rally on the Falls Road illustrates their own and, more importantly, Britain's dilemma. Despite official attempts to maintain a 'neutral' attitude towards the peace movement, it has become clear to the anti-Unionist vanguard that the only function of the peace movement in their own areas can be to clear the way for increased Army repression.

Nowhere has this been more understood than in the Turf Lodge area in West Belfast, where the inhabitants have been waging an ongoing battle against British troops ever since the vicious murders and woundings in the area by the Army three weeks ago. Turf Lodge has been declared a no-go area, a policy which has operated with a high degree of success for over a week at the time of writing. According to the Northern Ireland Office, the Army has been keeping a 'low profile' in the area; in reality, they have been kept out by the use of mass tactics developed in the aftermath of internment — bin-lid bashing to warn of the Army's presence, followed by large crowds to drive the Army out.

The people involved in this struggle have cleared away a lot of the confusion originally created by the peace movement — they are stating clearly that the cause of violence is British occupation, and that peace equals surrender. The 23 October demonstration confirmed the position of the revolutionary left [MSR, People's Democracy] that the peace

movement cannot be fought with stones but only by developing a mass combativity. As far as the people of West Belfast are concerned, the peace movement is now rapidly becoming a thing of the past.

Definitely not a thing of the past — except for the hypocrites of the 'peace at any price' brigade — is the threat of execution hanging over Noel and Marie Murray in the 26 Counties. All speakers on the 23 October demonstration stressed the urgency of the case and the need for action to save them. Banners, placards and leaflets were evident everywhere on the Falls Road in support of the Murrays.

Sections of the anti-Unionist working class increasingly understand the significance of the case, both as a test for capital punishment and as a test for the State of Emergency in the 26 Counties. Committees to mobilise support for the Murrays are in the process of formation in Armagh, Derry and Newry. Even more striking is the growing involvement of Northern students in the campaign. In Queen's University in Belfast, notorious over the last two years for maintaining its reputation as a political wilderness, a Murray Defence Committee is operating; similar committees are also springing up in the Northern Ireland Polytechnic and the New University of Ulster.

From all this renewed upsurge in activity, one crucial lesson can be drawn: the peace people are dying amid the contradictions of the Six County state, and by their impotence they are more and more exposing the real nature of military occupation and the correct targets for the anti-imperialist struggle. Yet again the solution is staring the international labour movement in the face — TROOPS OUT NOW!

Mike Pinter

Saturday 23 October was supposed to be the day the peace people returned to West Belfast in triumph. But after a week which started with life sentences being handed out to members of the Ulster Defence Regiment for the Miami Showband murders — the UDR is one of those state institutions the peace movement wants us to support — the real question was how the people of the Falls would show their hostility to 'peace at any price'.

The answer was decisive. Provisional Sinn Fein made a call for all anti-imperialist forces to join in a demonstration which would coincide with the time, route and venue of the peace march. Over 6,000 anti-Unionists marched up the Falls Road in pouring rain behind banners



West Midlands Murray Defence Committee occupy Amnesty International offices last week in protest at the secret trial of the two young Irish anarchists in the shadow of the gallows and the lack of interest shown by Amnesty.

## Why we're holding Student Conference

PAMELA HOLMES, Vice-President for External Affairs of the University of Kent at Canterbury Students Union [UKCSU], is the Planning Committee Convenor for the 13-14 November student conference on Ireland. Red Weekly asked her what were the aims of the conference.

The aim of the conference is to plan a campaign against British repression in Northern Ireland. In the past British students have taken up similar campaigns in defence of Soviet dissidents, against apartheid in South Africa, and against the Chilean dictatorship. But the NUS has done virtually nothing about Ireland since 1972, although it's right on their doorstep.

How has the conference been organised?

From the beginning we recognised that to be successful we would have to involve the broadest number of students in all the decisions leading up to the conference, as well as in the conference itself. So the Students Union here set up a Planning Committee (PC) which is open to anyone supporting the aims of the conference.

The PC's job is to publicise and build the conference. We have always made sure that the big decisions were taken by National Planning Meetings which have been fully advertised well in advance. There have been occasions when we consciously refused to take decisions until we were sure that there was adequate representation. This democratic preparation partly explains the broad support the conference is attracting.

Has the Planning Committee taken a position on the political basis for building a solidarity campaign in this country?

No, that is the job of the conference. That is why it was called. When we have talked of a 'campaign against British repression in Ireland', that is not a slogan for the conference — it merely says what its general aims are.

Anyone who has a position to which they aim to win the mass of students should come and argue for it at the conference. Anyone supporting the aims of the conference can submit a resolution, and we expect a number from both those who support the 'Troops Out Now/Self-Determination' position and those holding other viewpoints. Provided it is borne in mind that this is an



action conference, not one for abstract chit-chat, we expect a very good debate on just this sort of question.

What do you mean when you say that it will be an action conference?

That's best illustrated by looking at the conference agenda. On the Friday night we've got an Irish band for those who get here early. Then next day we will have a panel of speakers talking about different aspects of repression — the repression of Irish women, for example.

We have also invited the NUS delegation and the Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland to send speakers, but all these are structured in such a way as to inform the debate which will take place in workshops and plenary sessions.

Apart from the very first session on Sunday, when we hope to show the film 'A Sense of Loss', which was banned by the BBC, the whole of the second day will be devoted to debating resolutions from the floor. In this way the debate on political positions informs the debate on campaigning activity; and campaigning activity on an informed basis is our target.

Further information about the conference from: Pamela Holmes, Kent University Students Union, Canterbury [tel. 0227 65224].

# MAIRE DRUMM— another victim of British Imperialism

By PETER STEWART

THE ASSASSINATION of Maire Drumm, the former Vice-President of Provisional Sinn Fein, is yet another foul deed committed by British imperialism in Ireland. As Maire Drumm herself stated, the responsibility for every death during the current Irish war rests firmly on the shoulders of the British state. But a direct link can be more easily traced in some cases than in others.

In the case of Maire Drumm's death, while the finger which pulled the trigger may have been a Loyalist one, the prime stimulus came from London. From early this year through to his appointment as Home Secretary, Merlyn Rees waged a scandalous campaign of verbal abuse directed personally at Maire Drumm.

His campaign combined with a hysterical witch-hunt waged by the Fleet Street gutter press to make Maire Drumm a prime target for Loyalist assassins. Even *Guardian* writer Derek Brown was forced to admit: 'At the end of the ceasefire she became the Number One bête noir of Merlyn Rees.'



of sectarianism.

In April she explained: 'I have never attacked a Protestant, nor the Protestant religion, ever. My whole effort is against the British. All I ask is that they make a declaration of intent to get out of our country.'

Her hatred was for the colonial forces that have ruled by the gun in Ireland for 800 years. And she lost no opportunity to spell out the message loud and clear: if the British refuse to leave then they will have to be driven out by their own methods — force of arms.

## Dual

Some of the less hysterical bourgeois commentators saw in her a dual identity. One the one hand 'a friendly, cheerful' person who was 'first and foremost a wife and mother, concerned for her children's welfare and education, worried about her husband's unemployment and anxious that any visitor to her home should be well cared for'. On the other hand, 'she epitomised the hard face of militant Republicanism, screaming abuse at soldiers, snarling defiance at the Government and all its works.'

These commentators seem incapable of realising that it was because she was a warm and loving person that she struggled to get the British out of Ireland. That it was because she did love her family, her community, and her country — all of which have suffered so grievously at the hands of the British — that she was a lifelong Republican.

She joined Sinn Fein in 1940, and was first arrested in 1943. She was jailed on several subsequent occasions, and once claimed: 'When you get into jail the strength gets into you. You come out fighting more than when you went in.'

The only fitting tribute to her will be to force the British out of Ireland and thus help establish the Republic for which she

the Orange assassins' card. This was done to the applause of Fleet Street.

'No normal person could suppress one moment of exultation at the death of Mrs Drumm. She died as she lived, by violence and hatred. Justice is done.' These were the opening sentences of last Saturday's *Daily Telegraph* editorial.

'Grandma Venom Assassinated', screamed the *Daily Express*. They subtitled their story: 'A female Hitler: She died by the gun she loved so much.' The suggestion that Maire Drumm was a fascist is not only grotesque but ironic coming from a poisonous rag like the *Daily Express*, a real fertiliser of fascism.

But their fear of Maire Drumm was well founded. She was an unflinching enemy of British imperialism. The enemy

## Deaths

Back in March, Rees was interviewed on BBC radio about the deaths of three British soldiers in South Armagh. He said: 'I'm sure that Maire Drumm and her associates are happy at the news of the brutal murders.' Later he compared her with Madame Defarge sitting by the guillotine in *A Tale of Two Cities*.

After she had made a tremendous speech in August in support of political status for Republican prisoners, Rees launched another bitter attack on her. She was charged with taking part in an illegal procession, but was released from prison after these charges were dropped for lack of evidence. But he was still not satisfied.

On BBC he said: 'If you ask me personally whether I want Maire Drumm

## EXPOSE THE 'PEACE PEOPLE'

The peace people are rapidly losing credibility in the 6 Counties. But outside Ireland these self-admitted backers of British repression continue to attract some support. The latest to join the fan club is the British Government, which has announced that the 'peace people' will be allowed to rally in Trafalgar Square—a right which has been denied to all Irish activists in London for four years.

But the appearance of these anti-Republicans in Trafalgar Square does at least provide the opportunity for others to demonstrate and explain to those attracted by the rally the real nature of the 'peace people'. Taking this opportunity, the Peace Through Freedom Co-

Republican groups, this committee will seek to mobilise as many as possible on the day of the peace rally under the slogans 'Ireland Unfree Will Never Be at Peace' and 'First Step to Peace — Troops Out Now'.

All Red Weekly readers are urged to build support for this important action. The day to remember is 27 November.

HULL IMG was shocked to learn of the sudden death of Steve Hodgson. Steve was the foremost activist in the local gay movement. Although he was not a member of the IMG, we learnt a great deal from our association with him. The best tribute we can give him is to continue to give full support to

Photo: LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

# Black youth- the real victims

'In South London, aggression on the streets has escalated to such a degree that one is as much in danger of being mugged in Lambeth as in New York.' That was the sensationalist angle chosen by the London Evening News last week in an article on crime and black people.

Shortly before, Scotland Yard had stated in a report that the extent of 'mugging' averaged 30 incidents a month, and that 70 per cent of the assailants were black while 85 per cent of their victims were white. In March of this year the Metropolitan Police, in their evidence to the Select Committee on Immigration and Race Relations, stated that statistics relating to persons arrested for indictable crime during 1975 revealed that 'the involvement of black people in the arrest figures is disproportionate in respect to every main category of crime.'

The police campaign amounts to an attempt to justify and give credibility to the racist ideas advanced by people like Powell, who talked of mugging as a new and racial phenomenon when he spoke at a seminar in Cambridge organised by the Police Federation.



doubt as to what he is inviting — his utterances give an air of legal sanctity to fascist and racist thugs in their attacks on blacks. Fascists and racists become heroes, defenders of 'God, the fatherland and white women'.

Of course, we do not deny the involvement of a section of black youth in street robberies and theft. But it must be pointed out that the factual basis of the police case against black people is completely false. For a start, there is no such technical crime as 'mugging', either here or in America where this emotive term originated.

What is more, the Metropolitan Police, for instance, draw their conclusions from the 'disproportionate involvement of black people in the arrest figures' (our emphasis). No figures are available for convictions. In other words, the evidence simply shows that the police tend to arrest more black people than whites. This

couldn't have anything to do with racist bias, could it?

Of course, a look at the conviction figures might in the event show a similarly disproportionate involvement of black people. But with judges like Gwyn Morris around, that wouldn't be too surprising either.

Furthermore, the amount of violence involved has been grossly exaggerated and the involvement of elderly women has been overplayed in order to engender the desired emotive and anti-black sentiment amongst the white working class. Faced with the challenge of black youth, as shown for example in the cases of the Notting Hill and Wood Green confrontations, the police are clearly preparing public sentiment for an increase in the harassment and brutalisation of black youths, many of whom have refused to be the passive victims of police 'authority'.

wagelessness (or its insufficiency), resorted to alternative forms of earnings. But it is important not to view such activity as crime, since the whole concept of criminality within the context of our present society is an integral part of the ideology of the ruling class.

## Anti-social

The behaviour of black youth who have sought an alternative means of existence must be viewed rather as anti-social — as a manifestation of the sub-culture which the racism and anti-youth discrimination of capitalist society has forced upon them. This is not to condone the victimisation by black youths of weaker members of the working class, white or black. But we are not dealing with a moral issue — or at least moralist pronouncements are not going to change the situation.

What is necessary is to heighten the struggle against racism and the reactionary policies of the present Government, building on the 21 November demo called by the TUC and Labour Party. What is necessary is a struggle which challenges the very core of class and race oppression today, and within this struggle all efforts must be made to involve the youth on the basis of those issues that most affect them.

With this in mind the struggle against State oppression, particularly against police harassment and brutality, must be

intensified. A national minimum wage for both employed and unemployed must be fought for, and a policy advanced which demands the creation of jobs, rather than the creation of profits. Through the actual waging of these struggles, black youths can be shown the long term inadequacies of all other 'solutions' to their predicament, and thus be involved in these struggles.

TUNDE ANTHONY

## THE RULE OF WHOSE LAW?

JUDGE GWYN MORRIS made his call for 'street vigilante corps' while passing sentence on six black youths accused of mugging offences.

Their so-called leader, 17-year-old Ronald Crawford, was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment; Carl Bennett, 16, was ordered to a detention centre for five years; Julian Llewellyn and Denville Newell, both 16, were ordered to be detained for three years; and Cecil Crawford, 16, was sentenced to Borstal training. Only Clinton Harris, 16, was released — his sentence deferred for six months pending reports.

These sentences were imposed for theft, robbery and burglary. None of the youths were accused of causing any serious injury.

Four days later, Judge Morris was sitting in another case. This time three white men were accused of violently attacking and injuring three Nigerians. Morris described it as 'a murderous attack ... you behaved savagely towards three innocent Nigerian victims'. He then sentenced two of them, found guilty of causing actual bodily harm, to nine months imprisonment, suspended for two years; and the third man, found guilty of causing grievous bodily harm, to a mere three years in jail.

But then, they were white.

## Case

Last May, Judge Gwyn Morris said in a case involving black youths from South London: 'Within memory these areas were peaceful, safe and agreeable to live in. But the immigrant settlement which has occurred over the last 25 years has radically transformed the environment.'

This same judge last week advocated the setting up of white vigilante groups to patrol the streets and defend white women from black attackers. There should be no

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RED WEEKLY is published in the interests of working people, not just in Britain but internationally. Only RED WEEKLY brings home the full story of events in Southern Africa, Spain and Portugal. RED WEEKLY consistently reports on the fight against Britain's interference in the affairs of the Irish people. RED WEEKLY takes care to analyse fully developments in the Labour Party and the trade unions. Most of all, RED WEEKLY regularly opens its pages to discussion and debate on all these issues.

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Bankers orders are starting to come in. In last Saturday's post alone we received pledges of more than £18 a month. But please do not delay. For the cost of a couple of pints per week, you can play a vital role in stabilising your paper.

Meanwhile, our thanks to those who sent occasional donations this week: M. Webber, £10; East London reader, £1; J. Alwyn, £3; Southampton readers, 50p; South London IMG, £50; Cardiff IMG, £3 — making a grand total of £67.50.

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## Hammer

In this context we should note the appointment of David McNee as the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to replace Sir Robert Mark next year. McNee, known as the 'Hammer', is famous for his extra tough approach to street policing.

Finally, notwithstanding the gross exaggerations of the police, it is undoubtedly the case that sections of the black youth have, partly as a consequence of their

# THE TRUE FACE OF THE TRANSKEI

26 October was a day of mourning in the black urban communities of South Africa — for on that day more than a million people were stripped of their citizenship, and with it the last few rights and scanty measure of security that they held in the racist Republic.

This was the real meaning of the 'independence' of the Transkei 'Bantustan', for the South African Government insists that Transkei's citizens include not merely the 1.7 million who 'live' there (most of them because, since 1968, they have been forbidden by South African law to live anywhere else), but another 1.3 million Xhosa-speaking people who live in the black urban townships and 'minister to the needs of the white man' [as the racists put it]. Many of these 'Transkei citizens' were born in the urban areas, and have never set foot in the Transkei.

This is the face that the South African Government is trying to show the world.

THERE'S A NEW FLAG DAY ON OCTOBER 26



A ...

This is the real face of the Transkei:

### 'PEACEFUL'

★ For the past 16 years the Transkei has been in a permanent state of emergency — since the South African army and police had to be used to break a mass peasant rebellion in the Pondoland district.

★ A special force of 700 South African police had to be drafted in to guarantee order during the independence ceremonies.

### 'DEMOCRATIC'

★ The Transkei is governed by an assembly first set up by the South African Government with a majority of appointed 'chiefs'; today 'only' 50 per cent of the Transkei Assembly is appointed; The Chief Minister, Kaiser Matanzima, has never personally had to stand for election.

★ In order to ensure Transkei's 'democracy', an election was held just before independence; however the leaders of the main opposition party were first thrown

into jail under the state of emergency [for the 'crime' of calling for a referendum] and their names crossed off the ballot.

### 'INDEPENDENT'

★ All the top positions in the Transkei Civil Service are held by white bureaucrats on secondment from the South African Government; the army is headed by a white South African officer.

★ Over 80 per cent of the Transkei's male workers have to find work outside the territory, on the farms, mines and factories of 'white South Africa'; only 25 per cent of the 'national income' of the Transkei is actually earned in the territory.

★ The Transkei Government depends for some 75 per cent of its revenue of subsidies from the South African Government.

### 'PROGRESSIVE'

★ The most repressive of South Africa's racist laws — the Terrorism Act and the Suppression of Communism Act — will remain in force in the Transkei.

★ The notorious South African secret police agency, BOSS, will handle 'security' matters in the Transkei.

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