



# BENN BACKS HEALEY'S BUDGET

Whatever the aftermath of Labour Chancellor Healey's deflationary package to be announced today, one outcome can be ruled out in advance. There will be NO split in the Labour Cabinet over the terms of the IMF loan. 'Left' Energy Secretary Wedgewood Benn has already participated in a unanimous Cabinet endorsement of Healey's measures.

Benn's position, of course, in no way reflects the feelings of the working class. The workers' movement clearly does *not* accept either the necessity for the savage spending cuts to come, or the right of a Labour government to carry them out.

## FIGHT

The 80,000-strong November 17th demonstration, last weekend's huge demonstration in Dundee, numerous one-day strikes and the occupation of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in London all show the willingness of workers to fight the Healey-Callaghan policies.

Indeed workers are responding eagerly even to the most inadequate lead if given the prospect of any kind of action against the cuts.

## DEFENCE

But 'left' talkers like Benn jump into line at the crack of Callaghan's whip precisely *because* they have *no* intention of leading any independent action of the working class in defence of jobs and wages or for alternative socialist policies.

Indeed Benn himself is so far from fighting for socialist policies that he is even prepared to see a part of his own department — a

chunk of the state holding in British Petroleum shares — *sold off* by Healey in a bid to raise £500 million cash to satisfy the profits lust of the IMF!

Combine this probable attack by Healey on state-owned industry with the certainty of spending cuts throwing thousands of public sector workers onto the growing dole queues, additional taxation cutting the purchasing power of wages and a continuation of the 4½% wage freeze policy, and you have the measure of the package Benn has put his name to in the Budget.

## BETRAYAL

But if Benn represents the *clearest* case of betrayal by supposedly 'left' Labour leaders the 'Tribune' group of MPs are lining up their own brand of sell-out.

They have already begun to mouth phrases of verbal opposition to further public spending cuts.

But at the same time it is abundantly clear *none* of them will take the fight even as far as to vote against the cuts in Parliament — let alone leading any campaign against them in the Labour and trade union movement.

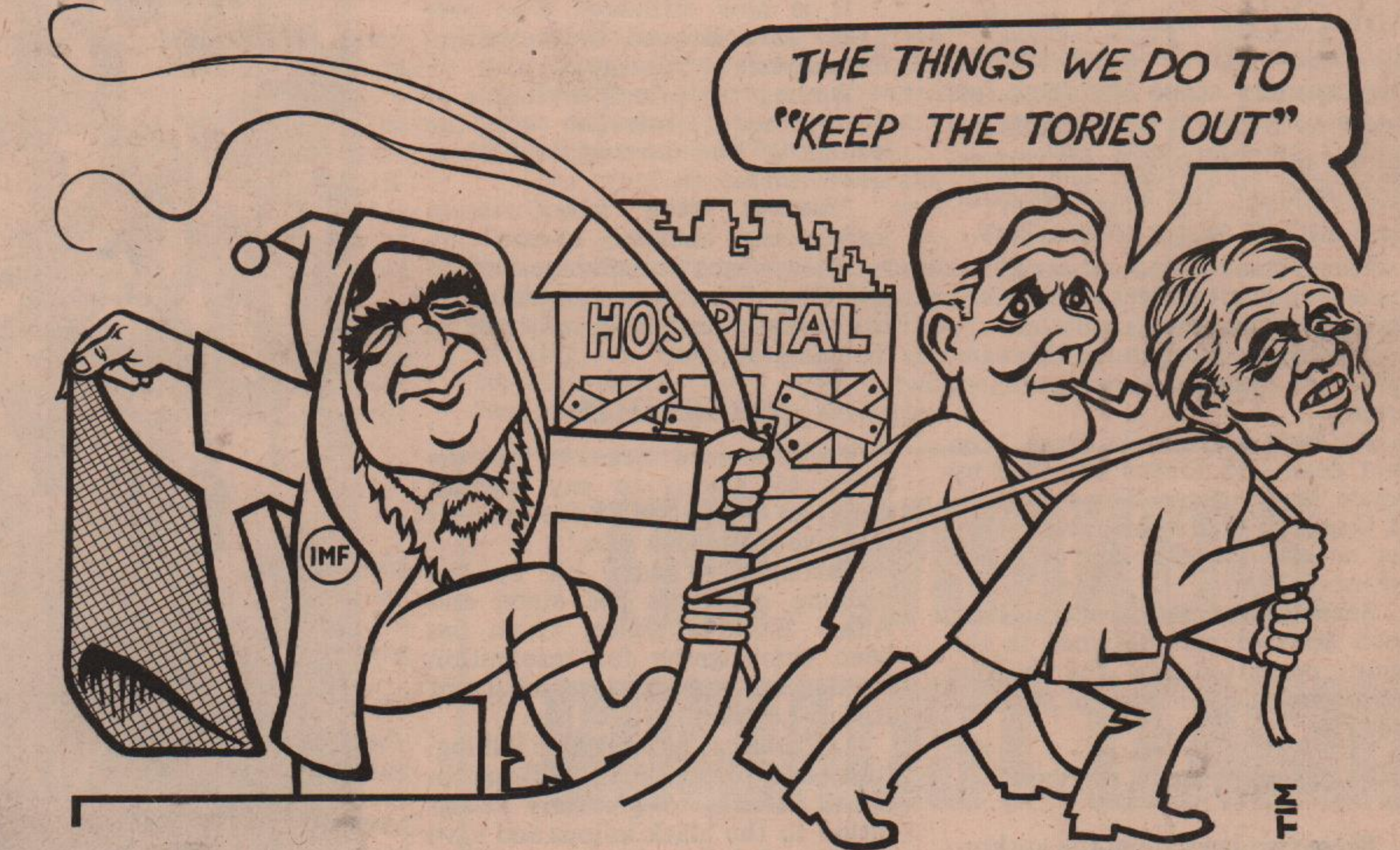
In limiting their activity to talk

the 'lefts' do nothing but weaken and confuse the growing mass of workers looking for a way of fighting back in defence of jobs and living standards.

And they actually *assist* Healey and Callaghan in their reactionary deals with the IMF, as the *Daily Telegraph* shrewdly pointed out:

"They [Healey-Callaghan] will find shouts of protest — so long as they are not backed up by votes against the government in the division lobbies — quite helpful as a means of showing the financial world that the Cabinet has been tough over the measures which will accompany the new £2,000 million loan from the IMF."

Workers' interests cannot be



## NO GIFTS...JUST THE SACK!



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

served by such manoeuvres and protests from the 'lefts' — nor by the empty militant rhetoric from TUC public sector leaders such as Drain (NALGO) and Fisher (NUPE) who rant on endlessly about not accepting cuts while restricting their membership to protest marches and one-day stoppages while the cuts are daily forced through in every area.

## RUTHLESS

As this next round of cuts approaches, we say clearly that if this attack is not confronted then it will *not* be the last.

There will be another round, another and another as the Labour leaders ruthlessly carry out the requirements of British and international capital — forcing the working class to pay with its jobs and living standards for the world-wide crisis of profitability.

## SUICIDE

Those who argue that all this is necessary to "save the Labour government" or "keep the Tories out" make no sense at all.

By-election results have already confirmed that the present

Healey-Callaghan course is one of political suicide for the Labour government.

## HAND-OUTS

And in Wallsall the defeat of Tribune David Winnick showed that the Tribune Group's variety of spineless 'left' talk linked to reactionary import controls and handouts to private employers offers no real alternative to workers.

The 'left' MPs who claim to oppose these IMF dictated cuts must stand up and be counted in the lobbies in Parliament *opposing* Healey's measures.

## DEMAND

They must table a motion in the PLP for the removal of Healey and Callaghan, and take up a campaign throughout the constituencies to drive out the entire cabinet of wage-cutters and dole queue millionaires.

At the same time they must publicly demand that Fisher and Drain, along with the other dozen or more unions that backed the November 17th protest, call sustained national strike action to halt the cuts.

# BACKING FOR EGA FIGHT



Details of EGA support conference, see page 1

# ONLY STRIKE ACTION CAN STOP THE CUTS!

# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

## SOUTH AFRICA

The response of the racist Vorster dictatorship in South Africa to the massive political upheavals which have shaken the country since last June has been to unleash an increasingly savage campaign of repression against the black population and its white supporters.

Every basic democratic right is ground under the heel of Vorster's repressive apparatus.

During the last month this campaign has reached unprecedented levels.

At least ten blacks have been shot dead and dozens wounded by police in the Cape Town suburbs of Guguletu and Nyanga after they had attacked the homes of police informers.

Several hundred people have been arrested and detained in the same period under the vicious Terrorism Act and Internal Security Act.

### UNLIMITED ARREST

These two laws allow the authorities to arrest anyone without charge for an unlimited period without reference to the courts and without being obliged to reveal the nature of the charges or even that the arrests have taken place.

As a result hundreds of black workers and students have 'disappeared' into custody over the last few weeks. Minister of 'Justice' James Kruger has admitted to holding about 150 under the Internal Security Act; but black and civil rights organisations estimate that the number is many hundreds more than this.

No accurate estimate is possible since many hundreds of black militants from all the major cities have been escaping arrest by

fleeing to neighbouring countries such as Swaziland and Botswana.

It is now estimated that over 2,000 have escaped the indiscriminate arrests in this way.

Among the principal victims of the present onslaught are the leaders of the unrecognised black trade unions.

Twenty seven black union leaders and members of the Universities wages commissions which do research for these unions, have in the last month been subjected to 'banning' orders.

### NO RIGHTS

To be banned means to lose the rights to belong to any organisation, to be quoted in the press or to move to another area.

Particularly badly hit by the banning orders is the Metal and Allied Workers Union which has been campaigning for recognition by the South African subsidiary of British Leyland.

Leyland has refused, like Pilkingtons and other British firms in South Africa, to give any recognition to the black unions and have collaborated fully in the racist and anti-union policies of the Vorster dictatorship.

Various liberal church organisations have come under increasing repression. So has the white National Union of South African Students (NUSAS).

### ACQUITTED

Five NUSAS members, however, were acquitted by the courts last week of such charges as 'advocating an egalitarian society'.

The fact that not even Vorster's own courts are always reliable instruments of his repression is one reason why his regime is increasingly using the provisions of the repressive laws which allow it to



SWAPO guerrilla fighters

operate in complete secrecy.

The growing fear and desperation of the racists which has led to the current wave of intensified repression is to be seen not only in South Africa itself but also in Namibia where Vorster hopes shortly to set up a fake 'independent' government.

Such a puppet regime has no hope of defending itself against the independence movement now waging a guerilla war in Namibia.

This explains why the South African defence minister last week

gave a broad hint that South Africa was about to launch a new invasion of Southern Angola in order to wipe out the guerilla camps of the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO).

The growing repression in Southern Africa requires the strongest possible response from the British labour movement — action against the British firms which refuse to recognise black trade unions; and action to force the Labour government to end its collaboration with Vorster's racist tyranny.

## SPAIN

The Twenty Seventh Congress of the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE), after being banned by the fascist government in November, was finally permitted by the regime in the first week of December.

Permission was still withheld until the last moment in a vain effort to get the PSOE to register itself under the regime's new law governing the legalisation of political parties.

The semi-legality which the government has granted to the PSOE in the last few months is part of its effort to channel the opposition to Francoism into what it sees as the safest organisation.

### YELLOW INTERNATIONAL

It regards the PSOE as just such an institution; safely allied as it is internationally to that group of opportunist anti-working class 'socialist' leaders, such as Helmut



Tanaka

Schmidt, James Callaghan and Mario Soares.

The regime thinks that it can tempt the PSOE out of its opposition alliance with the Communist Party, which has far greater importance in the Spanish workers' movement, by offering to legalise the PSOE while keeping the Communist Party and all the parties to its left illegal.

### EAGER

Filipe Gonzalez, reelected First Secretary of the party, gave a strong hint that he would respond eagerly to this appeal to his opportunism.

Though the PSOE still claims to oppose participation in elections until all political parties and unions are legalised and all political prisoners are released, Gonzalez announced to the Congress that the PSOE might 'have to' participate in the elections proposed for next year in order to gain control of the government and legalise the other parties itself.

Gonzalez did not make this scandalously unprincipled statement until he had already been assured of a majority of Congress delegates for his right wing line of class collaboration and a negotiated pact with the fascist government at the expense of the other parties to the left of the PSOE.

### NOT REJECTED

The position of the Communist Party is not to reject such a deal but merely to demand that it is itself party to it. That was the theme of the dramatic press conference which CP General Secretary Santiago Carillo gave last week under the nose of the regime.

If the CP was not legalised, said



## MEXICO

In Mexico the transfer of presidential power from one member of the bureaucracy of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (which has monopolised political power for over 50 years) to another, is usually an orderly affair.

But not this time. When probig business President Lopez Portillo took over from President Luis Echeverria on December 1st, he inherited raging inflation, suspended currency dealings and a huge increase in foreign debts.

Mexico's social and economic crisis is fundamental. Capitalist development has failed to solve a single one of the problems facing the masses of impoverished workers and peasants.

### MULTI-STOREY

In the cities, glistening multi-storey skyscrapers are surrounded by huge areas of the most impoverished shanty-towns.

In the countryside, the land reform law is abused by large landowners 'sharing out' property among their families.

This system is presided over by the corrupt bureaucratic, and right wing Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).

Echeverria has attempted to disguise his own role by indulging in 'anti-imperialist' and populist rhetoric which he hoped would lift him into the Secretary-Generalship of the United Nations. Last week, as he expected, he failed.

### POWER

Echeverria's real aim was to retain some power inside Mexico.

To this end he implemented the redistribution of 100,000 hectares in the northern province of Sonora from 73 large landowners to peasants. The hypocrisy of this act is shown by the fact that in the autumn of 1975 he had sent his troops to forcibly evict peasants from land they had occupied in the very same province.

Carillo, then there would be a political crisis. This was not, however, (he was at pains to emphasise) a threat.

He never spoke a truer word: it was an offer to the fascists. 'Share power with us', he said in effect, 'and we will use all our political power to destroy any independent mobilisation of the working class.'

In fact the Communist Party leaders have already shown hundreds of times that this offer is not conditional on their legalisation.

### MORE DIFFICULT

What they, and probably some sections of the fascist regime, fear is that continued illegality will make it more difficult for them to implement their collaboration with capitalism and the Francoist regime.

The demands which flow out of the situation in Spain are completely the reverse of the crawling subservience of Communist Party and PSOE leaders. They are: \*Boycott the referendum! \*End class collaboration by the workers' parties! No pact with the fascists! \*For a general strike to force the abdication of the fascist regime! \*For a constituent assembly and a provisional government of workers' parties!

## JAPAN

When the newly elected members of the Japanese Diet (Parliament) meet in Tokyo on Christmas Day to select a new government it will be the first time for twenty-one years that the main capitalist party, the Liberal Democrats, have not held an absolute majority of seats.

Yet the main electoral gains have not gone to the parties based on the working class (the predominantly pro-Moscow Communist Party, and the divided Socialist Party) but to the 'centre' groups (the break-away 'New Liberal Club', the right-wing Social Democrats — formed after a split in the Socialist Party in 1960 — and the demagogic 'Clean Government Party' — Koweito — which campaigned against the involvement of Liberal Democrat chiefs like former Prime Minister Tanaka in the Lockheed bribes scandal.

### SUPPORT

And, paradoxically, ballot-box support for both Tanaka himself, who got six times as many votes as were necessary to be elected, and for former Justice Minister Inaba, in charge of pursuing the corruption enquiries, remained strong.

This reflects the power of the political arrangements built up by the ruling class in the LDP factions since the war, relying on the conservatism of the countryside and the party machines of the cities.

The recent elections also formed a crucial test of the new 'reformist' policies of the Stalinists in the leadership of the Japanese Communist Party.

Far from bringing the gains which Secretary-General Fuwa was promising the membership, the shift to the right — including (as in France) the formal abandonment of the goal of 'the dictatorship of the proletariat', and open-ended suggestions for a coalition — had the effect of slashing the Party's parliamentary strength from 39 to 17 seats.

The Party, however, remains central to the grip of the Labour bureaucracy over the organised working class, with considerable strength in the trade unions, over a third of a million members, and electoral support (about 12% of the votes cast) proportionately much larger than its strength in Parliament.

And from both Stalinist spokesmen and leaders of the right and centre in the Socialist Party have come statements since the election that indicate manoeuvres for 'Popular Front' agreements with the capitalist parties.

They made it clear that neither nationalisations, nor the repudiation of the Japanese-American military pact, were conditions of political collaboration.

This treaty is one of the central elements in US military plans directed against the USSR and China.

Opposition to the pact has been one of the central planks of the Japanese Communist Party in the whole post-war period.

Their abandonment of it points the way to Popular Front agreements of the type now being openly prepared in Italy and France to tie the workers movement to capitalist policies in face of the economic crisis.

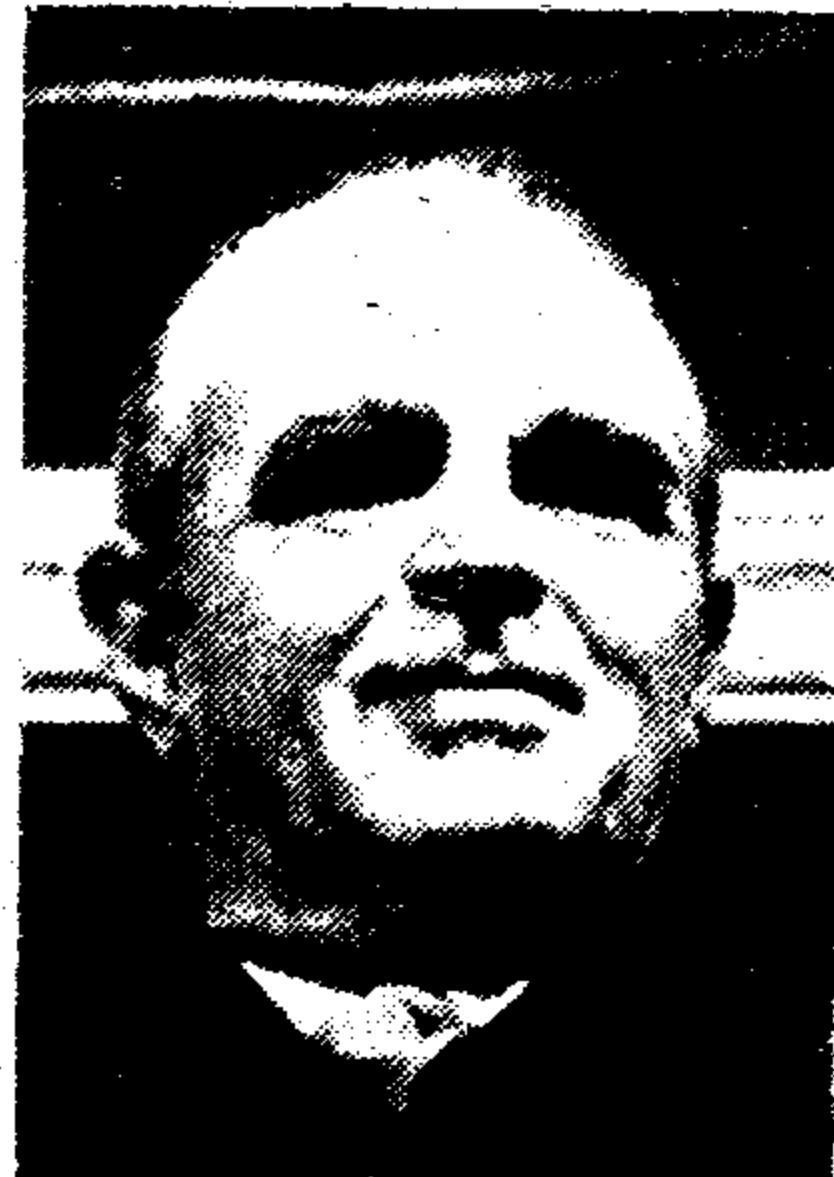
# GREECE: 1 MILLION MARCH AGAINST KARAMANLIS

SPECIAL REPORT BY OUR ATHENS CORRESPONDENT

One million people flooded the streets of Athens on the 17th November, for the 3rd anniversary of the Polytechnic uprising in 1973.

The huge demonstration, which was equalled in numbers only by that on the first anniversary, was a show of strength by the workers and youth against the increasingly unpopular policies of the right wing Karamanlis government.

The whole anniversary was a three day activity organised by the National Union of Students, during which tens of thousands of youth and workers visited the Polytechnic School of Athens, the various



Karamanlis

photograph exhibitions within the premises, film shows related to the heroic uprising against the junta, and joined the discussion groups spontaneously formed around the Polytechnic.

Thousands\* of wreaths were also laid in the garden of the building in honour of those who were killed, by all political organisations and parties as well as by all the trade unions of Athens and Piraeus.

The most important factor in the gathering of such a huge crowd for the demonstration was the controversy that was created over the march to the American Embassy, as a protest against the Americans who imposed the junta in 1967 and continue their imperialist policies in Greece today.

## BANNED

While on the previous anniversaries there was a march to the American Embassy, this year the Karamanlis government banned it, as a show of subservience to the Americans and a step forward in the taking away of all democratic rights won with the overthrow of the junta.

The controversy went on for many days, with the NUS insisting that the march should be allowed, and backed in it by all the opposition political leaders, while the government insisted that the march would undermine 'national unity' and implying that it would use the police against the crowd if the ban was disregarded.

Discussions in political organisations of the left, trade unions, in the factories, and universities, raised spirits high against the government and contributed to the mass participation, creating conditions for a defiance of the ban, which would ridicule the strength of the government.

## POLICE

The police force which massed its strength in Constitution Square, creating a human dam to the streets leading to the American Embassy, was numerically a drop in the ocean.

On the morning of the 17th, however, the leaders of the two Greek Communist Parties publicly advised the NUS not to break the ban, thus saving the government from a political defeat at the hands

of the people.

This assistance to the bourgeoisie from the two CPs and the Stalinist leadership of the NUS on the very anniversary of the heroic struggle against the junta, can only remind the vanguard which fought this struggle of the Stalinist policies opposing the uprising in 1973, while they present themselves today as the champions of it.

## KREMLIN TRADE

In 1973, the pro-Moscow CP, following the Kremlin line of accommodation to the dictators through extensive trade relations, fought hard against the occupation of the polytechnic, and even after its members had failed to prevent it, stayed on trying to terminate it at every stage.

This was clearly shown in subsequent issues of their underground press, where they claimed that the occupation was carried out after 350 "thugs of the junta" disguised as students and led personally by the top CIA Greek man Roufogalis, came into the premises of the Polytechnic, where they "incited" the people to stage the occupation.

The Stalinists claimed this was done in order to bring about the downfall of junta leader Papadopoulos and his replacement with police chief Ioannidis, since Papadopoulos - they claimed - had come into conflict with the Americans.

## CONTAINED

The pro-European Communist Party at that time, while having essentially the same line, did not publicly oppose the occupation but rather tried to contain it, and so succeeded in holding the majority of the Co-ordinating Committee, which was formed on the evening of the occupation and lasted for three days, until the tanks went in on the night of the massacre, the 17th.

The saving of the government, today, however, is not such an easy task for the Stalinists given the policies followed by Karamanlis and the strength of the workers movement.

The Karamanlis government, has for sometime now been arming itself with all the legal structures it will need for the smashing of the movement of the working class and the peasantry, which they clearly understand will come forward much more decisively than during 1975, as a result of the mass price increases of the present time and the austerity policy announced recently.

## ANTI-UNION

The anti-union law passed by the government in May 1975 (which is much more severe than the Tory anti-union law in Britain) was

coupled with a law that greatly increases the powers of the police against the citizens, and legalises any degree of police harassment.

And now there is a very important bill under discussion in parliament, which would allow a reimposition of internment, the most hated institution in Greece, which has been used by all governments from the 1920s on and has affected hundreds of thousands of people, especially after the civil war.

The taking away one by one of democratic rights is preparation for the implications of the austerity policy in the intensification of the class struggle.

## PEASANTS

The peasants, constituting almost 40% of the population, are now those to suffer first the burden of the increased military spending of the new budget.

This is coupled with EEC competition that has already started to have an impact on the Greek economy - one recent example being the enforced destruction of thousands of tons of cucumbers in Crete.

The fall in the prices of major agricultural products like tobacco, cotton, raisins and olive oil, has created a situation of desperation within the peasantry and mass struggles like those of 1975 are to be expected again.

By the recent stepping up of his antipopular policies, in line with the demands of the capitalists and his American patrons, Karamanlis is creating the conditions for the unity of all the oppressed and the petty bourgeoisie of the towns in opposition to him, much as Papadopoulos did in early 1973, resulting in the Polytechnic uprising and the subsequent overthrow of the junta.

## ELECTION

So the recent forecast by PASSOK leader Papandreou that there will most probably be elections by the end of 1977, is quite realistic. Such elections would be a major test for the two Communist Parties, since they both not only maintain that Karamanlis is the only viable government for today, but are also trying to head off the strike movement and political developments so as to make sure that no challenge is posed to his policies.

Their intervention to stop the march on 17th November, is a good example of their attitude towards the government in contrast to the will of the working people.

Only four days after the Polytechnic demonstration, further proof of the unpopularity of Karamanlis was given in a picturesque way, when the meeting



Greek police with armoured car

he called to celebrate the 2nd anniversary of his "democracy" in a big theatre of Athens, was attended by an audience that was less than a million by a mere 997,000.

They were all decent ladies and gentlemen with cheerful, well dressed youth, surrounded by police informers, some of whom could be seen shouting and clapping in the street in front of the meeting, as they listened to the representatives of the two tendencies of the Party delivering

contradictory speeches - one saying that he believes in socialistic capitalism and the other that communism must be contained!

The great problem highlighted by the Polytechnic demonstration for the leaderships of the two CPs is how to persuade the workers and peasants, and even more their own members, that tightening our belts and abolishing democratic rights to save an unpopular government is the only way forward.

# THE WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist organisation fighting to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class in opposition to the betrayals of both "left" and right wing Labour and trade union leaders and the Communist Party.

In the daily struggle to take the demands and principles of Trotsky's *Transitional Programme* into the trade unions, the WSL has been at the forefront of the fight for the sliding scale of wages, and work sharing on full pay - demands which at the 1975 T&GWU Conference were the only alternative to Jones' £6 pay plan and the wholesale acceptance of redundancies by the bureaucracy. In today's fight against the TUC's 4% pay cutting deal with Healey this demand for a sliding scale of wages (rising according to the rising cost of living as assessed by trade union committees) is the essential basis of consistent opposition.

In the Health Service WSL comrades have led the struggle for a sliding scale of NHS spending, for the start of workers' control of the service (beginning with opening the books of the Health Authorities), along with the fight to end all private practice. Perhaps more important we have led the growing call for *strike action* to defend the NHS against the cuts and to implement these policies, fighting those like the ASTMS and NUPE leadership who substitute the words for the action.

In London this policy has already won a big response with the one-day action against the closure of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital - when 2,000 hospital workers in the area struck and 400 marched to lobby MPs against the cuts.

In local disputes also, WSL comrades have tested and developed the demands of the *Transitional Programme*, putting forward in every case the only real opposition to the Stalinists and the right-wing. Our struggle for the "open the books" demand in the motor industry and against all forms of "workers' participation" have won mass responses.

At the same time we have put forward a policy to fight unemployment, calling for unity of employed and unemployed through the fight to mobilise the trade union movement.

The WSL is the only movement that fights consistently for transitional demands, going beyond mere trade union militancy to pose the political issues to workers.

In doing this our comrades have been forced also to lead struggles for trade union democracy against the bureaucratic manipulation of the Stalinists and right-wing.

But our struggle for the continuity of the principles of Trotskyism is in no way a task confined to Britain. It requires an attention and involvement in the international struggles of the working class and moves to rebuild the Trotskyist Fourth International.

So while many interventions in Britain have developed the League's grasp of Trotsky's *Transitional Programme*, there has been a consistent drive to deepen and enrich the movement's understanding of the history and the present crisis of the Trotskyist Fourth International, as an essential part of any serious initiative towards its reconstruction.

We urge all readers who agree on the need for revolutionary leadership and the demands we put forward to find out more about the WSL and join our fight in the labour movement.



Tank attacks Polytechnic in 1973



Please send me more information about the Workers Socialist League.

Name.....

Address.....

\*Post to WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NWS 1HR.

# LABOUR LEFTS MUST LAUNCH PURGE OF CRYPTO TORIES

"There are too many of these people who have infiltrated this party already. Get them out!"

These words referred *not* to the increasingly blatant dominance of extreme right wingers and crypto-Tories within the bureaucratic ranks of the Labour leadership, but were used by Prime Minister Callaghan in an attempt to further stir up the atmosphere of witch-hunt against *left* wingers within the Labour Party.

## KNIGHTHOOD

His speech, delivered in Leeds, was publicised simultaneously with a similarly vicious attack on Labour militants, by Sir Harold Wilson, whose very *Knighthood* speaks volumes of his cringing services to British capitalism.

Wilson's speech, like many of the recent speeches by the right wing, exposed almost in spite of itself the moribund state of Constituency Parties in which the right wing holds sway.

Apparently nothing is easier than for a few "bed-sitter infiltrators" to move in and commandeer a CLP for their own purposes.

[Of course the proportion of workers living in bed-sitters has massively increased as a result of the policies of Wilson-Callaghan cutting house-building and increasing mortgages.]

## INDIVIDUALS

Appropriately, therefore, Wilson in seeking a weapon to attack these so-called "infiltrators", turns to call for an increase in *individual* membership of the Labour Party — in other words a conscious turn to middle class layers more likely to provide support for the right wing.

At the same time a turn to more hidebound and bureaucratized layers within the Labour Party is indicated in Wilson's proposal that any delegate to a General Management Committee must have appeared on two successive electoral registers — aiming to rule out new and young members who are the most likely to mount a serious challenge to the leadership.

Yet while the right-wing, with the whole hearted support of the capitalist press, moves onto the offensive, the Labour "lefts" can only come up with the most puerile and spineless reply.

## BENN V. MARX

According to press reports, Labour Party "moderates" are incensed at a speech on Thursday by Energy Secretary Wedgewood Benn, in which he allegedly defended Marxists in the Party.

The whole incident has of course been blown up out of all proportion to regenerate the fading "left" image of Benn.

"All that we require by way of political allegiance from party members or paid officials is that they should accept the policy and programme of the Labour Party and thus commit themselves to advancing socialism through parliamentary democracy", he said.

Even by this wishy-washy standard not only the open right-wing around Callaghan (who clearly oppose Clause 4 of the Labour Party constitution setting the objective of nationalisation, preferring instead to channel funds into private industry through the NEB and tax concessions) but also 'lefts' like Benn himself who do nothing to halt the Labour government's rush towards *Tory* solutions to the crisis, would be excluded from the Labour Party.



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Infiltrator: Healey

Eric Heffer and Joan Lestor, for example, have tabled a resolution for the next meeting of the National Executive which deplores "unsubstantiated and hysterical allegations" — but seeks only to preserve a peaceful coexistence between 'left' and right in the party.

## MOAN

While Heffer and Lestor simply moan about "a frenzied witch-hunt", Callaghan and Healey are all set to launch a new package of economic policies which will drive yet another nail into the coffin of Labour's election prospects, while the Tories wait delightedly in the



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Benn

As the capitalist crisis rushes on, knocking the ground from beneath the feet of the reformists, Benn's platform for 'left' rhetoric becomes more and more rickety.

In this sense whether or not he opposes Callaghan next week on the Labour NEC by voting to confirm the appointment of *Militant* group leader Andy Bevan as Party youth officer is irrelevant.

Benn's speech shows such a gesture will only be play-acting for a dwindling and bored audience in the gallery.



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Infiltrator: Callaghan

wings, sharpening their own knives.

## RIGHT WING

We say it is high time there was a serious witch-hunt in the Labour Party — directed at those extreme right wingers who each day drive home new attacks on the members they were elected to represent.

It is high time that 'left' talkers such as Heffer and Lestor were put on the spot. *Do* they, or do they not stand for the right of Healey and Callaghan to act in the name of the Labour Party while carrying out Tory policies?

And what is the position of the centrists in the *Militant* group, at whom all this venom is supposedly directed?

## SUPPORT

Far from fighting to drive out the right wing, they have advocated parliamentary support for Callaghan-Healey policies in the name of "saving the Labour government". They have so far posed no threat whatever to the Labour bureaucrats.

Are the manoeuvrers and talkers

prepared to pick up the gauntlet contemptuously thrown down by the right-wing — or will they join Tribunes Heffer and Lestor in collapsing completely before any confrontation takes place?

## CLASS RESISTENCE

The right wing attack is not aimed at the spineless *Militant* group — but at the growing solid core of working class resistance now beginning to find a reflection inside the Labour Party and challenge the monopoly hold of the Callaghan clique.

It is an attack flowing not from strength but from weakness.

Now is the time for principled Labour Party militants to campaign for a programme of socialist policies and for the removal of all MPs and representatives who refuse to fight for them.

It is possible that in this fight some of the best forces in the Labour Party will be bureaucratically expelled for their stand — but better to take on such a fight than to tolerate Tory policies today in the vain hope of a 'left' swing by the Callaghan leadership tomorrow.



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Heffer - seeks peaceful coexistence

## PRENTICE BITES THE DUST

struggle.

The recalled AGM was itself the outcome of blatant moves by the Labour Party bureaucracy to preserve Prentice and manoeuvre against the left wing majority — but Prentice has become such a despised figure in the Labour movement that even this device could not save him.

But the fact that an MP with an anti-union record like Prentice was allowed by Jones and the T&GWU leadership to remain on the Union panel of sponsored MPs until he chose to resign is an indication of the thoroughgoing rottenness within the leading ranks of both the Labour Party and the unions.

In this sense, the replacement of

Prentice, which is the next step in Newham, must be seen as a continuation of the challenge so far mounted to the bureaucratic reformist leaders.

Prentice's successor must be a candidate prepared to draw on the strengths that have emerged in the anti-Prentice campaign, and take up a struggle throughout the Labour Party and the trade union movement for the ousting of the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

They, together with Prentice and his reactionary allies in the Social Democratic Alliance and the 'Manifesto' Group must be driven out of the Labour Party and into the ranks of the party they *really* agree with — the Tories.

# STUDENTS SLAM BROAD LEFT, OCCUPY

Students at Essex University will this week stage a two-day occupation of the university in protest at the government's proposed fee increases.

This token occupation, however, is seen as merely the prelude to a full-scale occupation to be launched next term against the increases, and against all education cuts.

This decision, which was coupled to an explicit condemnation of the protest diversions of the Broad Left leadership in Essex and within the NUS nationally, was passed despite opposition from both Tories and the Broad Left.

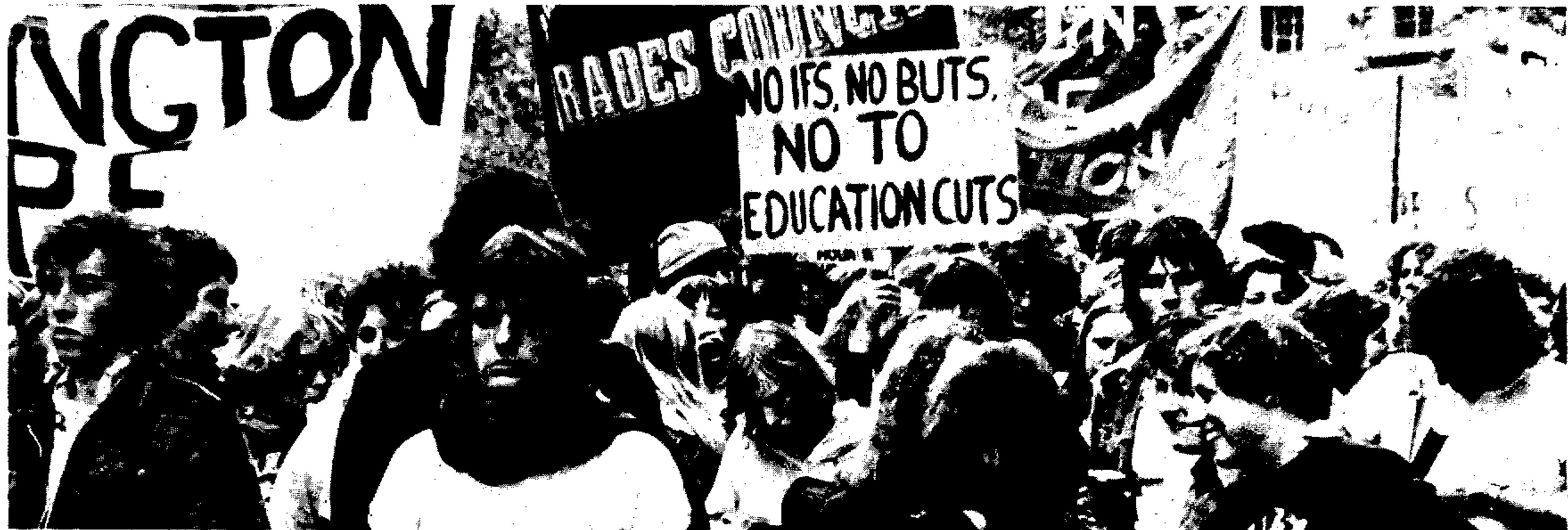
## PART OF CUTS

The heavily-amended motion further pointed out that though these fee increases are so far aimed specifically at overseas and self-supporting students, they must also be seen as part of the government's policy of cutting public expenditure.

The resolution adopted therefore called for a *sliding scale of public expenditure* as the only way in which such cuts can successfully be resisted, and this was coupled to the decision to elect an "open the books" committee to investigate "the University's plans and proposals re education cuts".

The students' willingness to fight was confirmed a week later when a 600-strong Union meeting rejected a Tory stratagem designed to call off the occupation.

Already there have since been signs that the Broad Left Union Executive would dearly love to call off the action, but the determin-



Students ready to fight: Broad Left ready to divert the struggle

ation of the students leaves the Executive little room for manoeuvre.

In a feverish effort to regain some of their lost credibility among students, the Broad Left have had no option but to support the occupation - despite their initial opposition to it.

But this "left turn" must be seen for what it is. It is *not* a demonstration of the Broad Left's willingness to lead struggles. On the contrary, it is an attempt to take control of the occupation in order to defuse it, to syphon off student militancy, and channel it into "negotiations" and talks.

They feel they can support this occupation precisely because it is a purely protest action lasting only for two days.

The real battles will therefore

begin next term. The Executive have already been instructed to draw up plans for a full-scale occupation - whether these plans will materialise remains to be seen.

The students at Essex have, like students in Middlesex Poly, on Teeside and at Kent, indicated their readiness to fight; the Broad Left have everywhere revealed that they are both unwilling and unable to lead such a fight.

Only a principled leadership fighting on a clear programme can carry this struggle to a successful conclusion.

Such a programme must take as its minimal demands:

- 1) the rejection of all proposed fee increases;
- 2) the reduction of the present level of overseas fees to the 1976-7 level of home student fees.

But the programme must also include a series of broader demands against the cuts - for a sliding scale of public expenditure and a sliding scale of grants in order to defend educational services and students' living standards against the ravages of inflation.

## COMMITTEES

In both cases, the amounts needed to match inflation must be determined by elected committees of trade unionists and students.

Only by fighting on such a programme will the reactionary policies of this Labour government be defeated.



NUS Broad Left President Clarke asked is where have these profits come from?

Instead of demanding the immediate nationalisation of all the Service companies under workers' management, the Broad Left can only search for "better" means of getting concessions from capitalism.

Likewise their strategy of education spending cuts is to exert pressure on the Labour government for a more 'sensible' policy.

This even goes as far as seeing the appointment of right wing Education Minister Shirley Williams as being a hopeful sign because of her 'concern for education'.

Williams first move as Education Minister was to announce the proposed closure of 30 teacher training colleges.

In the NUS the effects of the Broad Left's strategy are clear to see. The right-wing and the Tories gain in influence in direct relationship to the leadership's inability and failure to find a way forward.

## SAVED

The jobs and services offered by NUS Travel, Uniprint and Photo-mech must be saved. The accounts of these firms must be opened to a joint elected committee of students and workers, independent of the bureaucracy.

On this basis, the campaign for nationalisation can be fought and extended through uniting with all transport unions in defence of jobs and for a system of useful public works to create a fully integrated nationalised transport system.

Clearly for students, the central requirement in fighting for such a policy is the replacement of the politically bankrupt Broad Left bureaucracy by a leadership based itself on a programme to unite students with the working class against the attacks being carried out by the Labour government on behalf of capitalism.

# NUS TRAVEL CRASH 200 JOBS LOST

On the eve of the Blackpool Conference of the National Union of Students the policies of the Communist Party and left reformist leadership have been starkly exposed by the liquidation of the NUS's Travel Service and the printing companies Uniprint and Photomech.

The collapse occurred only weeks after the Broad Left controlled Executive had endorsed the sacking of 37 workers in order to 'save' Travel and in defiance of a decision of the Easter conference that no redundancies should be permitted. Now something in the region of 200 workers have lost their jobs.

The Broad Left blame the collapse of Travel on the economic recession and "over-optimistic" expansion begun in 1973. The solution they put forward, the setting up of Local Student Travel Bureaux is remarkable both in being identical to the policy of the Tories and in failing to start from the defence of the jobs of the sacked workers.

## BLAMING WORKERS

By allowing Travel to fold and by at the same time calling for the setting up of LSTB's as a replacement, the Broad Left are in practice blaming the workers.

What is clearly shown by the liquidation of the Services is the fraudulent policy of the Broad

Left of operating commercial companies in order to create 'Union consciousness'.

This argument is blown sky-high when the Union, which is supposed to be campaigning against unemployment, is itself sacking workers.

## NON-UNION

Of the 200 workers made redundant most are women and very few are even in unions. In fact the existence of Staff Associations as part of the contract of employment of the firms seriously militated against recruitment into the unions.

The printing firm's difficulties were therefore compounded by the NGA's correct policy not to accept work for printing unless prepared by union members.

The LSTB solution agreed between the Broad Left and the Tories in reality means the setting up of more efficient (i.e. more exploitative) alternative companies financed by local students unions.

Thus the Broad Left capitulates to the Tory threat to push for disaffiliation of colleges from NUS if the Services are not maintained. The right-wing wants to see NUS converted into a purely service organisation rather than a campaigning body.

It is in fact entirely wrong for NUS to run any private companies. All these services should be government financed.

This includes the Endsleigh Insurance firm which the Broad Left are currently congratulating for having made record profits. The obvious question to be

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The fight to build a revolutionary youth movement today takes place under conditions of unprecedented crisis on a world scale for the capitalist system.

As the underlying tendency of the world capitalist economy — the tendency for the rate of profit to fall — asserts itself more and more strongly, the ruling class in one country after another is forced to thrust the burden of the crisis onto the backs of the working class.

Unable to bring inflation down to the levels of the boom period, and unable to produce surplus value on a scale sufficient to match the enormous levels of credit created during the boom period, the ruling class now demands, in every country, massive cuts in public spending, wage cutting, reduction of the money supply, speed-up and rationalisation in industry and the creation of mass unemployment.

In launching these attacks, the ruling class face a strong and determined working class which, apart from a few exceptions (notably in Latin America), remains not only undefeated but victorious in a number of struggles, most importantly in Vietnam, and in Angola, Portugal and Greece.

The traditional leaders of the working class internationally, the reformists and the Stalinists, seek in this situation to do their utmost to hold back the working class and oppressed masses in their struggle to defend jobs and living standards and throw off the shackles of imperialist domination.

**NO LIMIT**

There is no limit to the betrayals and defeats into which the Stalinists and reformists are prepared to lead the working class, motivated, as they are, by the necessity to defend capitalism in crisis.

The question of leadership is therefore posed as the number one question facing the working class and oppressed masses internationally.

The crisis of capitalism cannot be resolved in the interests of the working class unless the crisis of working class leadership is itself first resolved.

In this situation the role of working class youth assumes considerable importance. Whether they be conscript soldiers in Portugal, guerilla fighters in Zimbabwe, school students in Soweto or young workers in Madrid and Barcelona, young workers the world over have demonstrated their determination not to accept the burden of the capitalist crisis.

It is, of course, no accident that young workers should figure so prominently in the struggles of the working class. Many of the gains fought for and won by the working class since the Second World War, particularly in such areas as health and education, full employment and high wages, have been of particular benefit to young workers.

Now as the crisis accelerates into a slump, all these gains are being viciously attacked. Cuts in public spending are resulting in falling standards of health and education, hundreds of thousands of school-leavers face the dole each summer and those lucky enough to find jobs face government wage-cutting enforced by the trade union bureaucracy.

But the youth have both the enthusiasm and the ability to fight back.

**PAST DEFEATS**

Free from the responsibility for the past defeats of the workers movement in the 1930's and for the formation of an opportunist leadership, reared in the boom conditions of the '50s and '60s, and determined to head off struggles by any sections of the working class now that the boom has collapsed, the way is open for working class youth to play a central role in the fight for principled leadership.

As Trotsky wrote in the *Transitional Programme*:

"The movement is revitalised by the youth who are free of responsibility for the past. The Fourth International pays particular attention to the young generation of the proletariat. All of its policies strive to inspire the youth with belief in its own strength and in the future. Only the fresh enthusiasm and creative spirit of the youth can guarantee the preliminary successes in the struggle; only these successes can return the best elements of the

older generation to the road of revolution."

Young workers can thus be a powerful lever against the bureaucracy in the struggles of the working class.

The trade union leaders quite deliberately concentrate their chief attention on the top layers of the working class and ignore both women and young workers whose needs and demands are unable to find expression in opportunist organisations, which by their very nature are unable to represent the most down-trodden sections of society.

**MOVEMENT**

A revolutionary youth movement must therefore be forged in opposition to these bureaucratic leaders.

Today, when capitalism can no longer consistently grant reforms, struggles to defend the interests of workers must be part of a revolutionary programme and fought for by a revolutionary leadership.

This fight for revolutionary leadership cannot be left as a distant aim when youth under capitalism face the prospect of continual economic dependence on the family, the dole or a dead-end job.

Only by directing young workers into the mass organisations of the working class, by putting demands on the trade unions and fighting for support can the bureaucrats be exposed and an alternative leadership formed.

**YOUTH PROGRAMME**

**Youth at Work.**

The struggle of young workers must deal with capitalism's flagrant disregard for their physical and cultural development. Only a strong organisation amongst youth in the trade unions can prevent abuses where young people are used as cheap sweated labour.

All barriers which prevent young workers and apprentices from playing a leading role in the organisation of the working class must be removed. This includes the removal of the age bar on young workers taking out a steward's card.

Youth commissions at all levels of the trades unions must be imposed on a bureaucracy who must be forced to fight for the specific demands of youth.

Factory committees of youth should function with delegates on shop stewards committees.

Similarly, young workers' representatives must be brought on to open committees of the trades councils to fight for the interests of all sections of youth — employed and unemployed.

**TRADE UNION CONTROL**

All control over the use of young labour must be under the direction of trade union committees to safeguard the health of youth by preventing practices like heavy work, shift work or night work.

Alongside this, we demand compulsory training facilities and opportunities for general study must be raised, the cost of this to be borne by the bosses.

All supervision of training must be under workers control. The struggle to extend training facilities and recruitment into industry directly connects with the issue of unemployment.

Youth have a right to economic independence from the family. We demand that apprentices be paid 75% of the adult rate and that unskilled youth receive the same wages as adult workers doing the same work — the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work — but under workers' control.

This is particularly relevant for girls, as is the struggle for equal training and equal apprenticeship opportunities.

The development of a struggle for control over wages leads on to the fight for a sliding scale of wages pegged to an index of prices worked out by trade union committees to keep wages level with the rate of inflation.

**Youth on the Dole.**

The main problem facing youth today is unemployment. Over 200,000 school-leavers in the summer of 1976 swelled the dole queues and six months later there were still 140,000 school-leavers without jobs.

With Treasury officials forecasting (in private) a 1977 level of unemployment of 1.8 million, the



Triumphant liberation forces enter Saigon in April 1975

question of the fight for jobs will continue to confront large sections of working class youth.

The struggle for the right to work challenges the very basis — the quest for profit — of capitalism.

The inability of capitalism to plan production to satisfy need is manifest in the closure of factories and machinery lying idle while workers are given the sack or suffer wage-cutting and a decline in their living standards.

It is vital that the trade union leaders are forced to throw open the doors of the unions to exploited and unemployed youth. Trade union dues should be reduced for youth. As long as youth remain unorganised their energy will be sapped and they will be left defenceless against harassment by the state.

Only the unity of the employed and unemployed can oppose the employers' device of snatching jobs through policies of 'natural wastage' and running down the level of recruitment.

Working class youth will only be won to a revolutionary programme if they can see its relevance to their own circumstances.

**DEMANDS**

But the demands of youth can only be struggled for as part of an overall programme capable of leading workers beyond capitalism. Young workers must develop the demands of youth as part of the banner and programme of the whole working class.

Youth's right to work has to be part of a programme against redundancies. All sackings and redundancy measures must be opposed — instead a policy of work sharing on full pay — the total number of hours divided equally among the whole work force with no loss of pay — must be implemented.

Where the employer refuses this demand the factory must be occupied and a committee elected to open the books and investigate the finances of the firm. Where these committees establish that the firm is bankrupt the Labour government must be forced to nationalise the factory without compensation and under workers' management.

The government must moreover be forced to provide the factory with government contracts in order to keep the workforce employed.

**NEW JOBS**

Given the high proportion of youth who are out of work it is not merely the defence of existing jobs but the creation of new ones which is posed: part of this programme must include demands for the maintenance of recruitment and the extension of training by forcing the reopening of shut down factories to be used as training facilities.

Moves to employ youth on subsistence wages in all sorts of 'community work' in order to patch up the crumbling social services, and the more recent job swap scheme must be answered by a campaign for the commencement of large scale public works.

Trade Union committees in each area must draw up plans for useful public works to provide employment at trade union rates. This plan must be under workers' management from top to bottom.

**Black Youth.**

Black youth in Britain face particularly acute problems. Denied access to a proper education or

# THE WAY FOR Y

We reprint below the main body of the Resolution on Youth Work of December 4th and 5th. The other resolutions from the Conference will be reprinted in the next issue of the Socialist Press.



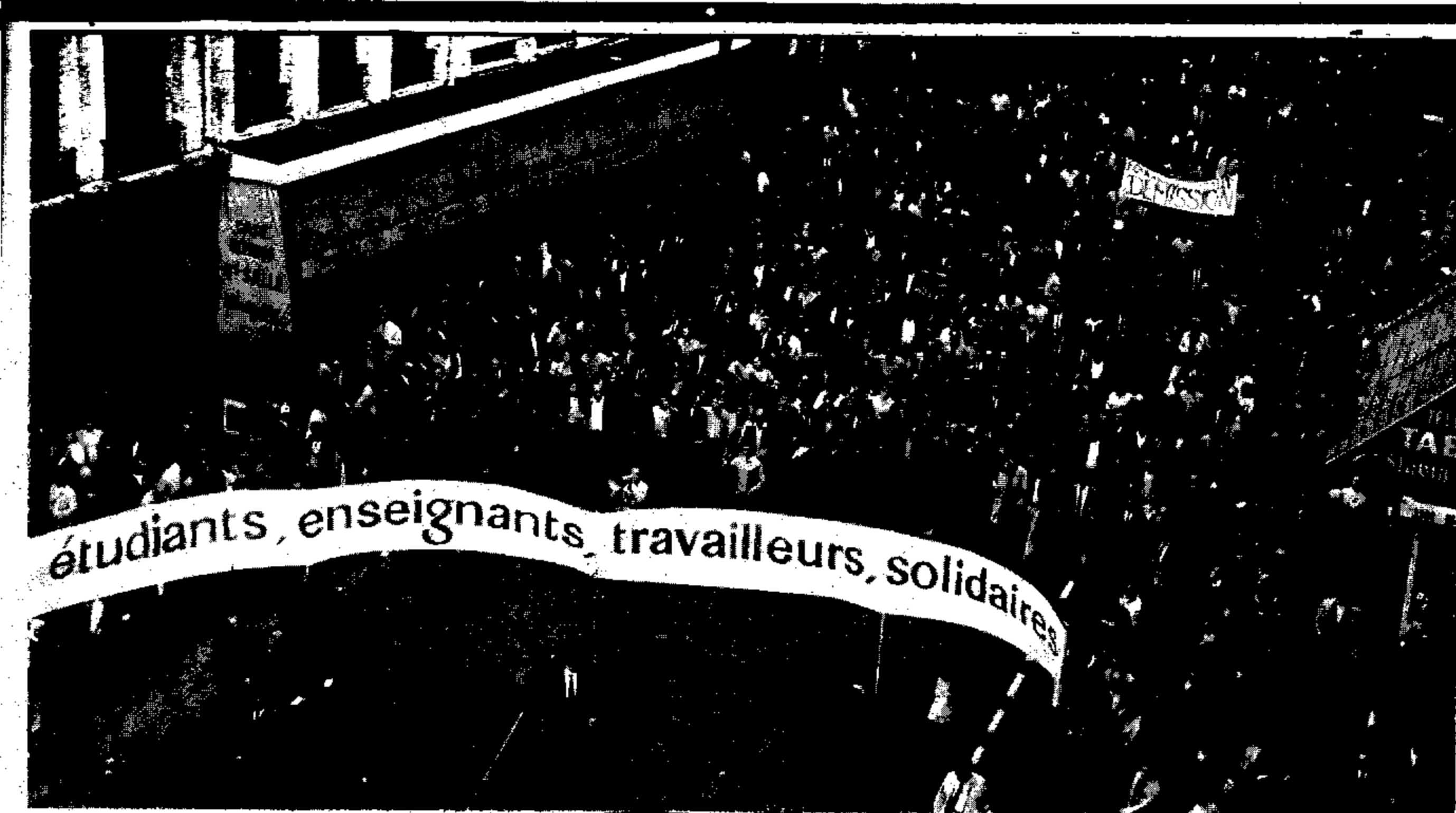
training, they have been forced into low paid, unskilled jobs.

As the crisis deepens, more and more black youth are forced onto the dole. In parts of London over 25% of black youth are unemployed.

Neglected by the leaders of the organised labour movement, black youth remain largely unorganised and leaderless, subjected to racialism — which this year resulted in the murder of three Asian youths at the hands of racials; and police harassment which led to the battles between black youth and police at the Notting Hill Carnival as a direct result of a massive police provocation.

Frustrated by their inability to defend their standard of living in the face of manoeuvres by the trade union bureaucracy, sections of the working class fell prey throughout the summer to the racist hysteria whipped up by the capitalist press, a hysteria exploited by fascist and extreme right-wing groups in an attempt to win sections of workers to the idea that the immigrant population is responsible for the crisis.

In this situation large numbers of black youth, both Asian and West Indian, took to the streets in numerous demonstrations and in some areas began to organise the defence of their communities



Youth, students and workers on a joint demonstration through Paris in May/June, 1968

# FORWARD

# YOUTH

adopted at the First Annual Conference of the Workers Socialist League on... published in our theoretical supplement *Trotskyism Today* starting in the New



against racist attack and police harassment.

It is precisely in such a situation where the fascists attack racial minorities today, attempting to split and divide the working class so that they can attack all socialists and trade unionists tomorrow, that the demand for workers' self defence becomes central.

Black youth have a key role to play in the fight to mobilise the working class in the formation of defence squads against the fascists, while the labour movement itself has a responsibility to come to the defence of any section of the labour movement singled out for attack by the forces of reaction.

But the fight for workers self defence must go hand in hand with the fight against the anti-working class policies of the Labour government and the collaboration which, by holding back the struggles of the working class leads to the kind of frustration which can result in a surface reaction to the racist hysteria of the capitalist press.

This means that black youth must be brought into the organised labour movement to take up a fight not only for the organisation of workers' self defence but also to demand that the leaders of the trade unions lead a fight against the Labour government's attacks on the working class.

On the other hand it will only be possible to bring black youth into the labour movement on the basis of a programme which will appeal to these youth because they see in it a way of securing united action to overcome the problems that they face. Such a programme must include:

\*The recruitment of black youth alongside white youth, employed and unemployed, into the trade unions.

\*The setting up by trades councils of youth unemployment sub-committees where black youth can fight alongside white youth around such demands as the drawing up of a plan of useful public works which the government must be forced to finance under trade union control.

\*Trade union enquiries to investigate the harassment of black youth by the police and law courts.

\*Workers' defence squads, organised by the labour movement to protect the black community from police and fascist harassment.

Despite the political differences existing between Marxists and the various 'Black Groups', the right of black youth to organise in such groups must nevertheless be defended from the harassment and attacks of the police and extreme right wing.

When necessary, trade union organised protection of premises and meetings must be fought for.

## Youth and Leisure.

With the worsening of the economic crisis, and inflation now once more on the increase, working class youth find themselves more and more limited in the range of leisure activities they can pursue.

The entertainments industry, like all capitalist industry, is run for profit. The inflationary crisis has put many forms of entertainment out of the reach of young workers.

For hundreds of thousands of youth living on large council estates on the outskirts of provincial cities, all that remains by way of leisure activity is the local youth club. The slightest trouble, however, frequently leads to youth being barred from these clubs.

## POLICE

Consequently they are forced out onto the streets where they fall prey to the police patrols. The creativeness of youth is given no chance because the facilities do not exist to develop this.

A programme for youth should include the following demands:

\*Nationalisation of the entertainments industry without compensation and under workers' management.

\*Youth facilities, including youth clubs, schools and playing fields owned by local authorities must be placed under trade union control and made freely available to all youth.

\*Trade union committees must draw up plans for an adequate provision of facilities for all young people which the Labour government must be compelled to finance.

Not only will this result in assisting the physical and cultural development of young workers but it will also provide jobs for the unemployed.

## Youth at School and College.

Capitalism denies working class youth access to education and the right to work. As unemployment rises, working class youth are

forced to stay on at school in increasing numbers.

But with the cut back in state expenditure and an increasing number of school students, conditions and standards of education decline.

While the raising of the school leaving age to 16 should be defended, it must be turned into a gain for the working class. The raising of the school leaving age must be linked to the fight to defend and improve the state education system by means of opening the books of the LEAs and of all education supply firms to elected trade union committees, principally the teachers and students unions.

## STATE SPENDING

From the information revealed, it is possible to argue for an increased injection of state expenditure.

This will compensate for the cuts already implemented as well as offsetting the effects of inflation by the operation of a sliding scale of public expenditure. Control over state educational expenditure will prepare the path for the future management by the working class of state education.

Defend the raising of the school leaving age to 16 with grants to school students over the age of 15, based on a sliding scale tied to a working class cost of living index and supervised by workers' representatives - not a means test.

Down with privilege! Abolish private schools and use their facilities within a fully integrated comprehensive state education system under the management of the working class.

Schools must be approached through the National Union of School Students, recognised by the NUS, which all League members and contacts who are eligible must join to campaign to make the union a mass organisation enabling a broader layer of youth to be reached than otherwise possible.

The present Stalinist leadership, which is unable to realise the potential of the union and unable to organise adequately its day to day running, must be challenged. This can only be done by building areas with large memberships and a correct leadership capable of challenging the existing Stalinist leaders.

## Students.

The mass of students in colleges and universities (excluding technical colleges) occupy a class position intermediate between the working class and the bourgeoisie.

Though the deep crisis of capitalism lessens their prospects of gaining access to a privileged career this does not necessarily mean that they will be won to the side of the working class.

The struggles and college occupations which developed in the late 60s marked the high point of any independent activity by students and at the same time demonstrated their illusions in their independence from class society and the limitations of any student movement which is not tied to the working class.

In this period many revisionist groups identified students as a revolutionary force and lent support to the idea of 'student power' in the universities. (The Pabloites, adapting to the student movement, for some time adopted a strategy of fighting for 'red bases' in the universities).

Now in the mid-70s, students, like the working class, are confronted by a Labour government intent on introducing enormous cuts in public expenditure, including education.

## RESTRICTED ACCESS

The fact that capitalism has always restricted the access of working class youth to education, especially higher and technical education, is nothing new.

The ruling class have always attempted to ensure that culture and science remain their exclusive preserve.

Now, in the throes of the economic crisis, by drastic cuts at all levels of the education system, capitalism threatens to further restrict the development of human science and culture and attacks the limited rights to education that have been won by the working class.

Though both the course content and structure of the education system embody the desire of the

ruling class to develop a privileged intelligentsia to serve its class interests, we cannot pick and choose which parts of it to defend.

To defend the jobs of all workers in the colleges and preserve what access to education has been won for the working class, we oppose all cuts in higher education.

We call for the financial accounts and details of the planned cuts to be made open to elected committees of education workers and other trade unionists.

We call for students' representatives to be brought on to these committees and for joint student-trade union action against the cut backs. This must include the mobilisation of the working class around the demand for a sliding scale of public spending.

Alongside this must go the fight for entry to the colleges and universities to be made open to all youth who are willing to study. For an immediate grants increase to give full maintenance and automatic increases to compensate for inflation under the control of trade union committees.

The existing leadership of the National Union of Students have proved themselves incapable of leading such a fight to defend higher education against the attacks of the Callaghan-Healey government.

## NO LEAD

With the government announcing more and more drastic cut backs in the number of teachers to be employed, and the teacher training colleges being rationalised to cater for fewer trainee teachers, the NUS have provided no leadership in the fight back against these attacks.

It was the student teachers themselves, faced with the threat of the dole, who this year occupied their colleges in protest against the education cut backs.

The Broad Left leadership of the NUS, elected with the support of Tory votes at the last NUS Conference, moved in, not to support organise and extend the action of the student teachers, but to gain control of the actions so that they could defuse them as quickly as possible.

A fight by students on the above programme for education cannot be separated from the struggle to replace the leadership of the NUS, the fight to expose the bankruptcy of the Broad Left with its policy of talk, demonstrations and no action, and the struggle to build a new, revolutionary leadership in the student movement, a struggle which can win many of the best students to the WSL.

It is through our understanding that the attacks on the education system cannot be finally defeated without the working class seizing state power, and with a perspective of winning students to the side of the working class that we fight to take a leading role in the struggles to defend higher education against the cuts.

## INTELLECTUALS

Though only a minority of students are open to revolutionary politics it can be a valuable gain for the movement to win a section of young intellectuals.

This can only be an overall gain for the WSL, however, if they are fully won to revolutionary Marxism and integrated into the work of the League.

Both because of their class position and the strength of ruling class ideas in the universities there is a danger of students bringing idealist methods into the League.

Consequently it is essential for students to take up a fight for Marxist theory in conflict with the ruling class ideology in higher education.

On this basis they can also fulfill a vital role in bringing the ideas of revolutionary Marxism to the more class conscious elements in the working class who are attracted towards the revolutionary party.

This development cannot proceed, however, if it is left purely at this level. The separation of theory and practice is an essential part of reactionary and idealist schools of thought.

Only by taking up a struggle in practice to win the working class to the revolutionary programme, by participating in the struggles of their generation, can students be developed and tested as part of a revolutionary leadership.

The Chinese Revolution and the People's Republic of China help to shape virtually every important political question of our time.

Second only to the October Revolution and the establishment of the Soviet Union, the Third Chinese Revolution's victory in 1949 overshadows the history of the second half of this century.

Livio Maitan, in his revised edition of this important book sets himself the task of a Marxist analysis of "the society and the politics that emerged from this momentous transformation", with the central aim of showing how the concentration of political decisions in the hands of a "tiny group of top Party leaders...systematically comes into collision with the underlying momentum of the socialist revolution itself."

#### SEPARATES

In doing this he separates himself from the two predominant schools of thought and writing on modern China: those "inspired by anti-communism and the Cold War whose aim is to attack and discredit the Chinese revolution"; and writing which "simply echoes with naive enthusiasm the particular official ideology of the moment... often written by those who have spent a month or two travelling in China and are understandably impressed by what they have seen."

In both cases, Maitan correctly points out, the result is "a complete inability to grasp the nature of political struggles in China" (Introduction, pp8-11).

Maitan writes as a political leader of the majority tendency of the 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International'. His book therefore offers an opportunity to examine one central example of the way in which the general line and framework of political analysis of this section of the world Trotskyist movement attacks the problems presented by the development of Stalinism in China, in this case set out at length rather than attempting to compress the scope and complexity of events into the limits of a journal article or similar.

It is to Maitan's credit that he recognises and clearly states the importance and difficulty of the task he sets himself.

#### DETAILED

The centrepiece of the book is a fairly detailed account (a little less than 200 pages) of the events of the Cultural Revolution, concentrating on the period from the August 1966 Plenum of the Communist Party Central Committee, at which the public demotions of Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping began, through Mao's drive to re-establish central control in the first half of 1967, using the Army as a means of intervention in political struggle and calling for support for the 'good cadres' of the Party apparatus, to the defeat of the 'left' groupings in 1968.

This central section is preceded by an opening chapter outlining developments from the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949 to 1965; and Maitan ends with a final chapter on 'The Aftermath of the Cultural Revolution', which deals with the ousting of Lin Piao (Mao's main lieutenant in the earlier stages of the Cultural Revolution) in September and the sudden moves of Chinese foreign policy to closer relations with American imperialism in the same year.

The book does not, of course, discuss the spectacular events which have taken place this year following the death of Chou En-lai: the second removal of Teng Hsiao-ping, the death of Mao and the leadership crisis which it brought to a head, and the ousting of the 'Shanghai Left' by Hua and the military chiefs.

#### UNDERSTANDING

But how far can Maitan's book help us understand these events and, more generally, the basic class forces at work in the Chinese state?

In asking this question we must ask two further ones. How successful is Maitan in examining all the contradictory sides of Chinese social and political history? And how far does he succeed in bringing out the central, essential antagonisms of Chinese society and of the Chinese state within the international class struggle?

As far as the first question is concerned it would be wrong to condemn Maitan's book solely



Workers on a Chinese Commune

# THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

'Party, Army and Masses in China: A Marxist Interpretation of the Cultural Revolution and Its Aftermath', by Livio Maitan. Translated by Gregor Benton and Marie Collitti. (Second, revised edition, New Left Books, London, 1976; first edition published as 'Partito e Masse nella Crisi Cinese, Rome 1969.)

REVIEWED BY PAUL STEIN

because it concentrates so heavily on the first three years of the Cultural Revolution, 1966-68. These events did, indeed, form a crucible. In it were released many of the hostilities of the masses, and especially the youth, towards many particular aspects of the governing stratum.

#### ANTAGONISMS

Latent antagonisms within the latter erupted violently, sometimes dating back to times well before the liberation of 1949 (and, at least as often, being dated back that far in polemic by Party leaders determined to show - in the full Stalinist tradition - that their opponents had worked covertly against Mao against socialism and the state for decades past).

In the chapter on 'The Dismissed Leaders' Maitan reviews the main accusations and replies that were exchanged, but without casting much light on their underlying causes. He demonstrates clearly, for example, that the charges levelled against Liu-Shao-chi from April 1967 as having been an opponent of Mao were utterly false and dishonest. They represented, moreover, an attempt to rewrite history during the 'left' phases of the Cultural Revolution in such a way that the rightist policies of Mao and the Party leadership as a whole in the past could be blamed on scapegoats and 'infiltrators' like Liu.

Thus the charge that Liu favoured 'peace and democracy' rather than class struggle and social revolution following the victory over Japan in 1945 is one that is patently true of the whole Party leadership, including Mao, who personally conducted the negotia-

tions for a coalition with Chiang Kai-shek.

Maitan's book accurately punctures, therefore, many of the falsifications and abuses carried out - or encouraged - by Mao and his supporters at different times in the top echelons of the bureaucracy.

He deals also with the opportunist origins and development of the 'theory' that the Soviet Union under Khrushchev and since has become a 'social imperialist' state with a new ruling class, and with the crass suppression of cultural and intellectual life by Mao's wife, Chiang Ch'ing as well as the slanders against Liu and others.

#### ECCLECTIC

But Maitan's assessment of these political positions is eclectic and inconsistent.

For example, a few pages after his defence of Liu he is quoting with approval (pp 234-6) the important programmes of the 'Sheng-wu-lien' Committee in Hanan (published March 1968), on the grounds that it finds the driving force of the Cultural Revolution in the contradiction between the economic foundations, which "looks generally to be socialist", and the political superstructure (the state machinery) which is controlled and inhabited by "the newborn and yet decadent privileged stratum of the bourgeoisie"...headed by Liu and Teng!

The programme goes on to retail all the "approved" political estimates of the day, including eulogies to Mao, Lin Piao and Chiang Ch'ing.

Although Sheng-wu-lien was publicly attacked, it appears to have overstepped the mark only in

one specific respect - branding Chou En-lai as the "general representative of China's red capitalist class".

Yet Maitan draws the conclusion that this and other 'ultra-left' groups, of which less is known, "show that the cultural revolution generated forces capable of understanding its dual nature, its contradictions and its essential limitations and capable of showing the way forward to the revolutionary struggle necessary to overthrow the rule of the bureaucracy".

Such a conclusion contains a kernel of truth, and of correct optimism, but as a whole it is dangerously vague and complacent.

What marks and limits the texts he quotes is an inability to break from dependence on the political authority on a section - and at that moment the ruling section - of the bureaucracy.

The Cultural Revolution in China was not the breaking of the political revolution against the bureaucracy as a whole, nor, in almost all cases, did those who were drawn into struggle against 'capitalist roaders' break from bureaucratic leadership.

#### SUPPORT

On the contrary, Mao and his changing layers of support within the state, army and Party apparatuses were able to strengthen their positions by directing the fire which arose from political hostility to the bureaucracy as a whole against particular sections which were made into objects of sacrifice.

Maitan mentions only briefly the invasion of the Foreign Ministry by Red Guards of the Foreign

Languages Institute in May 1967, in search of documents to establish the complicity of Liu with Suharto, chief butcher of the Indonesian counter-revolution.

The 'Central Group of the Cultural Revolution', under Mao, and so probably in the person of Chiang Ch'ing intervened immediately, summoning in the army to ensure that the archives were returned to safe, secret storage. And the reason is clear - the documents risked incriminating not only Liu, but the entire hierarchy, up to and including Chou and Mao, in a way which it might not have been easy to contain.

Another, broader, question which gets insufficient emphasis in Maitan's book is the origins of the modern, bureaucratised Chinese state in the areas controlled by the Communist Party and the Army before the liberation of 1949.

#### 95 MILLION

He mentions, it is true, the probable estimate that in 1945 the population of the 'liberated areas' (mainly in the north, centred on Yenan) was around 95 millions (ie larger than any of the states of Western Europe today) - but he nonetheless effectively begins his account from October 1949, when Mao proclaimed the People's Republic of China.

While this is without question the highest watershed in political terms, it is an artificial date for purposes of understanding the social origins and character of the bureaucratic strata against which the rebels of the Cultural Revolution rebelled.

They were largely formed, and began to gain a decisive social weight, in administering the 'quasi-state' organisations which ruled very large areas and populations - without expropriating landlords or capitalists - for more than a decade and a half before liberation. And it was *this stratum*, based on the peasant army which routed Chiang Kai-shek in civil war, which took political power in 1949.

Not grasping this nettle presented by real historical development, Maitan can say little of fundamental importance about the central contradiction of the Third Chinese Revolution: that the revolutionary transformation of property and production relations in this huge nation state has taken place under the leadership of a Stalinist party which played - and continues to play - a role of compromise and balance with the main imperialist powers, acting to protect capitalist rule outside its own frontiers.

#### ILLUSION

It is an illusion to suppose that Mao's leadership broke with Stalinism in carrying through the revolution in 1949, and that only later came the social formation of the bureaucracy. Chinese Stalinism led the war for military and political power in order to defend the social base into which it had already sunk deep roots.

Maitan's analysis, however, oscillates on the basic character of the bureaucracy in China and its social root. He tends to seek for the causes of its openly Stalinist political methods in habits brought over and revived from the Stalinised Comintern.

And though his book contains many important and interesting observations and facts, and numerous useful references to non-Chinese language sources, these are mostly embedded in arguments so general that one is left with a series only of impressions, of never having examined the wood for always looking at the trees - even if very critically at some of them.

#### POST WAR STALINISM

In this, Maitan's approach reflects the basic eclecticism towards the post-war history of Stalinism which characterises the entire tendency within the USFI of which he forms a part.

His book has been attacked in the bourgeois press for depending on solely non-Chinese sources. Such accusations are light-minded. There is an entire cottage industry in the West now devoted to the narrow and blinkered 'explanation' of this or that aspect of China. Maitan recognises that the Chinese revolution is too important a matter to be left to the Sinologists; he attempts - though he does not succeed - to treat it as a whole and as a Marxist. And despite its faults, his book provides one of the most useful factual accounts in English of the Cultural Revolution.



# "INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY" VERSUS OPEN THE BOOKS

The recently announced plans for sacking 3,000 Courtauld workers shows clearly that in this period of economic crisis even the largest firms may suddenly declare that "financial reasons" require redundancies and the struggle for workers to gain control over the chaos of capitalist production becomes a matter of absolute necessity.

To establish this control workers need knowledge — knowledge which starts with their own firm and how it functions in its own sector of industry, its separate plants and how they are related, its customers, its suppliers, its financial backers — and widening out to link up with other sections of workers in related industries.

## NOT NEW

This is not a new problem. Even in the years of boom from 1948-1968 employers would play off one plant against another by transferring work or by keeping wage differentials for similar work.

Many workers responded to this by forming combine committees to impose a measure of control over the movement of work or over wage rates throughout the combine.

The first steps in this direction involved forming a workers' committee and then gaining knowledge of how the combine functioned.

Unfortunately these committees were from the start dominated by reformist leaders — who see their function only as one of looking for how "their" firm can be made

profitable under capitalism.

It is this standpoint that forces these leaders to join now in the schemes of "participation", rationalisation and speed-up that management use in a futile attempt to solve the crisis at the workers' expense.

NO  
SECRET  
DEALS



The British Leyland combine committee is a clear and sad example.

The knowledge gained in the early days about the working of the car industry are now being turned against the workforce as convenors scramble to give joint management-union "participation" committees

ideas on how to rationalise production through speed up and redundancy, and how to control the workforce through no-strike clauses linked to bonus payments.

The activities of these convenors now even threaten workers in the supplier firms which feed off British Leyland. Their "participation" committees tour the country threatening to absorb work into Leyland and throw the component workers out of a job.

This shows very clearly that while knowledge can be powerful it is only useful to workers if wielded

in their interest under their direct control.

To limit their gaze to one individual factory or even one vast corporation can spell disaster not only for the workers directly involved but for others.

Trotsky understood this problem when he wrote:

"To those capitalists . . . who of their own accord sometimes offer to throw open their books to the workers — usually to demonstrate the necessity of lowering wages — the workers answer that they are not interested in the book-keeping of individual capitalists but in the account ledgers of all exploiters as a whole. The task is one of reorganising the whole system of production and distribution on a more dignified and workable basis."

To succeed, a trade union "open the books committee" fighting for access to management's full accounts and plans must constantly expand and multiply until it covers whole industries.

The Aerospace combine, although not pressing for concealed figures, showed a useful approach in its survey of what products could be produced as an alternative to useless and declining military production.

## ALTERNATIVE

This has had an important effect in giving aerospace workers a glimpse of a socialist alternative to production for profit.

Unfortunately this move stopped short, still within reformist limits, pulling back from any attempt to impose its suggested programme on the industry.

It also failed to involve wide sections of workers at plant level, relying heavily on convenors and specialists.

It is against this that the proposals of the reformist TUC and Labour Party for the "disclosure of information" must be seen.

The Industry Act and the Employment Protection Act both contain sections on this subject.

Companies must now in theory disclose information needed by Trade Unions in collective bargaining over wages, conditions, employment and allocation of work.

Yet all this is a *limitation* on information since workers equally need facts about *other* firms with

whom they do *no* bargaining.

It is also obvious that workers need to investigate any set of company books thoroughly before they can discover which particular questions to ask.

But under the law the company need not give even information requested "if it could cause substantial injury to the undertaking". In other words the reactionary code of business secrecy still reigns supreme.

## OPPOSITE

Since the interests of workers and shareholders are inevitably opposite, most information of use to workers will be injurious to the shareholders, who under bourgeois law are identical with "the undertaking".

Another important protection for the employers is that no "confidential" documents need be produced even on request.

Lastly, if the employers refuse information, nobody has the authority to force it out of them!

It is obvious that only information selected by the employers will be disclosed, and any that is disclosed will be information which will benefit the employers and their tame representatives in the trade unions.

In this way the reformists have turned a real demand by workers for knowledge into a weapon to be used against them.

## ACTION

Only industrial action will force the employers to reveal the vital information that workers need.

The struggle to defend jobs must start in each plant with an open the books committee elected by trade unionists that sets its goal not at an understanding of the individual factory or enterprise in which it begins work, but of a whole industry and eventually a whole economy.

In this way the struggle for knowledge becomes a struggle for control and a school for planned economy.

# INTRODUCTION TO MARXIST PHILOSOPHY

Georges Politzer: *Elementary Principles of Philosophy*  
Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1976. Price £2.00.

REVIEWED BY CLIVE HILLS.

For Marxists, the question of philosophy is not something optional, something that they can leave or take as the fancy strikes them.

Marxism is founded upon a philosophical method, the method of *dialectical materialism*.

All the major struggles that have taken place within the international working class movement have involved struggles on philosophical questions. (Which is not to say — as the Healyites of the Workers Revolutionary Party — that these struggles have not involved very important political questions.)

That is why the publication of this important work by Georges Politzer can only be welcomed by our movement.

Politzer was a leading member of the French Communist Party (PCF) in the period preceding the Second Imperialist War.

During the war he led the resistance within the universities against the Nazis and the Vichy Regime, publishing a paper called *The Free University*.

It was because of this heroic struggle that he was murdered by the fascists in May 1942.

This book is in many ways a living refutation of those who, like certain tendencies within the "Trotskyist" movement, believe that there is a mechanical relation between politics and philosophy.

According to these theorists the politics of an organisation follows

directly from its philosophical method and vice versa.

There is, of course, a sense in which this is true and this reveals itself in Politzer's book in the way in which he chooses examples to illustrate the principles of Marxist philosophy.

This is only the superficial appearance of the question, however. Politzer is correct on all fundamental philosophical questions, and it is this that makes his work of importance.

## RELATION

The relation between politics and philosophy is a *dialectical* one. Philosophy and politics form a unity and conflict of opposites, within which each opposite reacts back on the other.

Their unity is *relative* and historically conditional, while their conflict is absolute and eternal.

Within this relationship it is, of course, political practice which is the fundamental and basic opposite and which in the *ultimate instance* determines politics.

What does it mean to say that the unity of politics and philosophy is *relative*? Precisely that philosophy as one of the higher spheres of ideology enjoys a certain *autonomy* from its material basis, but that this autonomy is not absolute.

This book consists of the texts of several series of lectures on *dialectical materialism* which

Politzer gave to the French Workers' University during the thirties.

In the first part he considers what he describes, following Engels, as "the fundamental problem of philosophy" that is, the question of the nature of the relationship between Being (matter) and thought (consciousness).

He examines in turn the two main answers that have been given to this question, namely that of, on the one hand, materialism (which maintains that it is *matter* which is fundamental and from which the phenomena of consciousness are derived) and on the other, that of idealism (which holds the contrary view that thought or Spirit is basic and that matter is a derivative product of Spirit) — and he shows why Marxism adheres to the materialist viewpoint.

He also briefly considers the way this question has been posed by idealist philosophers such as Berkeley.

## MATERIALISM

In the second part, he turns to a discussion of the principles of *philosophical materialism*, that is, of those views and attitudes which all the philosophies of the materialist camp share in common.

He also briefly outlines the historical development of the materialist world-outlook.

Politzer then goes on to consider that which separates the philosophy



(Top) Hegel, (Above) Engels of Marxism from all previous and later materialist philosophies, namely the method of *dialectics*.

Marx and Engels began their philosophical development as more or less orthodox adherents of the classical German idealist philosopher Hegel in whose system the *dialectical method* (which Engels

described as the "revolutionary side" of Hegel's work) reached its highest point of development, and when they later went over to become materialists they retained the essentials of that method and united them with their new views.

It is this method, which insists on viewing all things, all phenomena as *processes*, as continuously in *motion*, that separates Marxism from all the systems of metaphysical philosophy which regard things as static and unchanging, as remaining essentially the same.

Politzer shows why the dialectical method is superior to that of metaphysics and goes on to discuss the fundamental laws of the dialectic.

In the fifth part, entitled "Historical Materialism" he shows how this philosophical method of Marxism must be applied to the study of the development of human society and of the economic relations that underlie society.

He shows how the division of society into classes has not always existed and how it will not always exist and also explains the tasks which flow from this recognition.

## STALINIST LINE

Finally, he goes on in the final part, which is easily the worst in the whole book, to consider "the application of the dialectical method to ideologies" and it is in this section that the Stalinist political line that he adhered to shows through most clearly, as in his defence of the treacherous policy of the Popular Front which led to the defeat of the Spanish and French resistance during the thirties.

Nevertheless, the book remains a very valuable basic introduction to the philosophical method of Marxism and can be thoroughly recommended to everyone who is beginning a study of this question.

# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

## CONFERENCE BACKS EGA OCCUPATION

A conference held on Saturday 11th December to build support for the occupation of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital showed clearly that London health workers are determined to take decisive action to defend the NHS, which the Labour government's massive cuts are threatening to destroy.

This conference was organised at short notice by the EGA Joint Stewards Committee and members of the Central London Medical

ASTMS and COHSE regional officials explaining their role in it.

One of the latter, Frank Dowling of ASTMS, spoke also of his role as councillor in Newham in refusing to vote for the cuts in defiance of the Labour whips there.

The most important issue to arise in this session, however, was the question of what the occupation itself means and what it should achieve.

NUPE full-timer Mike Taylor, suggested that its primary aims had been to get publicity and to prevent a surprise closure but several speakers from the floor,

report which proposes axing 62 hospitals in London over the next year.

They cited facts and figures showing the extent of the cuts and the impact of "nil growth", which has already meant 20% longer waiting lists.

Colin Kenny, (ASTMS) from St. Mary's hospital, Paddington, explained how in his area stewards had exposed the role of Joint Consultative Committees in doing management's dirty work and set up instead Joint Shop Stewards Committees which, for example, mobilised 3,000 health service

patients out of two wards scheduled for closure in St. Marks hospital; Labour Party members fighting to force their MPs to oppose government policy on the cuts.

Camden's Jock Stallard was cited as an example of MPs who claim to be personally opposed to the cuts but who continue to vote for them in Parliament.

### REFUSED

EGA steward Arthur Churchley, prompted some heated discussion over the Camden and Islington Area Joint Shop Stewards' Committee whose convenor recently went so far as to refuse to accept a delegation of EGA stewards speaking on the occupation.

Churchley proposed that the committee should be reconstituted of those stewards who actually want to lead a fight in the area.

Stewards from University College Hospital and the Royal Free Hospital spoke of the need for militant stewards to give constant support to the struggles of others.

At the end of the conference a resolution was passed supporting the EGA occupation and all other occupations to stop hospital closures. The resolution further calls for sympathy strikes and all-London strike action in the New Year as a beginning in rejecting the RAWP report and the cuts already underway.

### SUPPORT

Delegates supported a call for a labour movement conference in the spring and a number of delegates spoke in support of the CLASH conference to be held on 23rd February 1977. This conference will be the basis for a London Joint Shop Stewards Committee in the health service which can co-ordinate a wide response to back up any local initiatives.

We support the CLASH conference and see it as the way forward in opposing cuts on more than a hospital by hospital basis.

The 24-hour picket continues at the EGA itself and all support is welcomed. Come by the hospital

and join the picket over the Christmas period. Donations and requests for speakers to:

EGA Joint Shop Stewards, Euston Road, London NW1. (Tel. 387 2501).

Provisional details of the CLASH Conference are that it will take place on Wednesday 23rd February at 2 pm at Bonham-Carter House, 52, Gower St. London. For further information contact Terry Prosperer, Sec. S. Camden JSSC, University College Hospital, Gower St. London.

THE FOLLOWING motion was passed by the Colchester branch of ASTMS.

"This branch of ASTMS:

### NOTES

1) The recent decision by workers at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital to occupy the hospital in order to prevent its closure.

2) The continuous 24-hour picket which has been placed on the hospital, and the call by workers there for active support for the occupation.

3) That this occupation is officially supported by the following unions: ASTMS; NALGO; COHSE; NUPE.

### RESOLVES

To actively support the occupation, and as a token to donate £15 to the occupation fund.

### DEMANDS

1) That the Camden and Islington Area Health Authority open all its books to a committee of trade unionists elected by the workers engaged in the occupation.

2) That MP's Lena Jager and Jock Stallard, who have been involved in the EGA struggle:

a) fight against the closure of the hospital;

b) vote against all public expenditure cuts.

3) That the NEC of ASTMS name a day and date for a one day national strike in support of the EGA workers, and in protest at all public expenditure cuts.

4) Copies of this motion to be sent to:

a) EGA workers;

b) ASTMS Divisional Council No. 5

c) MP's Lena Jager and Jock Stallard.

d) Camden and Islington AHA.



Hackney hospital workers

Photo: Hackney Gazette



branch of ASTMS because of the need to build a network of London health service workers to back up the EGA occupation and begin to initiate coordinated action against other hospital closures and cut backs.

In response to this call, 110 workers gave over one of their two last Saturdays before Christmas to a discussion of the EGA occupation, the struggles led by stewards in other parts of London, and proposals for future supporting action on a London wide basis.

The conference began with EGA stewards filling in the background to the occupation and NUPE,

including members of the Workers Socialist League, argued that the occupation must be the beginning of workers control of the hospital, with the workers actually taking over the running of it and developing a plan for expanding services to meet women's health needs in the area.

### ALL-LONDON

In the second session, on all-London health cuts, speakers from the platform attacked the social contract which the government has used to cheat workers out of jobs, wages and services, and the RAWP

workers on November 17th. in a local demonstration and march preceding the main demonstration.

Chris Potter (NALGO) of West Middlesex hospital also spoke of the need for strong Joint Shop Stewards Committees to co-ordinate action at both hospital and area levels.

She questioned the validity of Community Health Councils which had in most areas refused to put up any fight against the cuts.

Following this, delegates from the floor began to speak of their own struggles:

Hackney hospital workers who decided this week to ban moving

## SHEFFIELD UNIONS FIGHT CUTS

At a mass meeting of the Northern General Hospital in Sheffield, last week, members of NUPE and COHSE voted overwhelmingly to refuse to prepare and serve continental breakfasts consisting of a bowl of cereal and a bread roll which has been introduced into the hospital in place of the usual three course cooked breakfast as part of the cuts.

A continental breakfast would mean not only a reduction in patient services, but also a reduction in the number of catering staff required to prepare the meal.

The mass meeting took this decision despite the union leaders' attempts to avoid a struggle.

The union leaders tried to reverse the vote by inviting the catering manager to address the meeting on the "merits" of the

continental breakfast. One shop steward even went so far as to say that he would refuse to implement the decision of the meeting saying that a continental breakfast is better than no breakfast at all.

At a second meeting the leadership made yet another attempt to reverse the decision but were again defeated.

### PUT OFF

The hospital management have now been forced to temporarily put off the introduction of the continental breakfasts.

This shows that the cuts can and must be fought - not only against the Area Health Authority but also against the union leaderships.

The fight must be taken up now by all hospital workers for joint shop stewards committees on an area wide basis to be established to prepare local strike action against the cuts.

## Bureaucrats turn out for Grunwick rally

A formidable line up of national union bureaucrats assembled in Willesden Trades Hall on 12th December to make Sunday socialism speeches.

They were appearing at a meeting to support the Grunwick strike - a great let-out for them from having to defend the policies of the Labour government against the hostility of their members.

This reactionary employer has provided them with an excuse for 'left' militant words.

TUC General Secretary Len Murray insisted the whole trade union movement was on the side of the strikers - yet the TUC has done nothing but circulate branches calling for financial and moral support.

He paid tribute to the Labour government for bringing in the Employment Protection Act which has now been defied by the Grunwick management.

Lena Jaeger brought greetings from the Labour Party National Executive Committee and appealed to the meeting to inform them of "loopholes" in the Act.

But while Roy Grantham, APEX General Secretary gave a rousing "we'll fight to the finish" speech Stalinist Maurice Styles of the UPW executive called for "realism" and the avoidance of another Shrewsbury Two - this time with postmen in jail.

Styles' fears on this of course would be the greater with the memory of the complete betrayal of the Shrewsbury pickets by the TUC!

At the same time he intimated he would support the reimposition of a black on Grunwick's mail.

In contrast to this rhetoric was the straightforward account of the struggle by Mohammed Ahmed, Secretary of the Strike Committee who called for the blacking of all Grunwick products.

And the AUEW Convenor of the local Associated Automation GEC factory, Abdul Wagu, correctly condemned the talk of reliance on arbitration and law, and stressed the importance of industrial action.

Grunwick workers are unlikely to be taken in by the verbal displays presented by the union leaders last Sunday. As in Trico and a whole series of local disputes now in progress, real support from these officials would have produced victory almost at once.

# BITTER FIGHT FOR HOTEL UNIONS

A call for one day all out strike action by T&GWU members in Oxford to support striking hotel workers has faced the local bureaucrats with a major problem.

The strike would close down the Cowley car factories and bring Oxford to a halt — actions that the bureaucrats will fight to the finish to avoid. But at the same time they have pledged themselves to supporting workers at two hotels in the town who are striking over union recognition.

Workers at the Linton Lodge and at the four star Randolph came out on strike after being sacked when they joined the T&GWU. Their struggles are now in their fifth and fourth weeks respectively.

## NO NICETIES

The managements — with none of the niceties that the Leyland management have learned to hand out to the union bigwigs — sent the ACAS arbitration men packing and at first refused to meet union officials.

In response the Oxford and District Trades Union Council called a demonstration in the town to back the hotel workers to which about 300 workers responded.

At the meeting following the march Pat Lally, a representative of the Student-Trade Union Liaison Committee, called on the T&GWU to recall the District Committee after Christmas and to call strike action throughout Oxford.

It was a key contribution which struck an immediate response from the meeting. Lally quoted the T&GWU District Organiser Geoff Hulett, as saying that the strikes were crucial to the pay and conditions of the catering industry throughout the Midlands.

If that is so it followed that strike action on a massive scale was appropriate. "The time has come to back this dispute with action as well as words."

Hulett, sitting next to Lally on the platform weighed in with invective against the "last bastion of slave labour" but studiously avoided mentioning either the District Committee or supporting strikes.

The omission was so blatant that he was forced to his feet a second time to say that the matter was already in hand "if it proves necessary".

Left-talking Trades Council president, John Power, said that if the T&GWU called supporting strikes he would, as AUEW convenor at BLMC Service, do his



Oxford workers demonstrate in support of striking hotel workers.

best to get his members out too.

He said that once the disputes were won they should look to extend the battles into pubs and then shops!

But Power, fearing an excess of zeal, added a warning "You can only do your best and if your best is not good enough it isn't any good walking round criticising anyone."

## FORTE

Truste Houses Forte, who own the Randolph and who are strongly rumoured to be taking over the Linton Lodge early next year, have now called a meeting with Hulett and the T&GWU District Secretary, David Buckle.

Ominous signs that these officials are already looking for some form of compromise sell out came from Hulett who said that the meeting must lead to a reasonable basis for further meetings.

The workers have no such illusions. They have declared their conditions to be reinstatement for all sacked workers, full union recognition and the start of talks, in one hotel on contracts of employment, in the other on wages and conditions.

Both hotels are suffering under the pickets which have been successful in turning back guests and deliveries but both picket lines are suffering from lack of numbers at key times of day — which has enabled the Randolph to force through a load of oil in the early hours of Monday morning.

The vital factor keeping the pickets going has been the workers' own massive efforts and the guidance and support of the Student-Trade Union Liaison Committee.

Workers at the hotels are beginning to understand the links with other disputes up and down the country. A speaker from the striking bingo hall workers at Coventry, Ann Coffey, spoke at the Oxford meeting saying they had been paid 50p an hour for two

years and joined the union to get a rise.

"We thought it would be quite an easy fight but it hasn't worked out like that. Trade Union officials have not backed anything."

The fact is that in Coventry and in Oxford workers are learning how bankrupt are the militant noises of the trade union bureaucrats. It will take the maximum efforts of militants to ensure that they do not have to learn that lesson too bitterly.

# ... AND IN LONDON TOO

Another section of hotel workers in struggle are in the Aquatels strike at Basildon, now in its second month.

Conflict began when hotel workers at Aquatels Leisure Centre formed a G&M branch in an effort to halt the increasing exploitation on that site.

Even though the ACAS arbitration found that 23 out of a workforce of 29 had become members, and therefore legitimately formed a branch, Aquatels managing director Mr. Reg Treble refused to recognise it.

When the newly-unionised workers struck in defence of their rights, Treble promptly sacked them all and evicted them from their houses on the site.

Treble then brought in new workers who were hired on the basis that they would not join the union.

Despite this harassment, six of

the workers are still on strike, manning a picket line which blocks the main road and blocking delivery of supplies to the bar and hotel.

But although the G&M agreed official support for the strike, the six have received no strike pay to date and no assistance from the union until the London Hotels (3) branch jumped in to give them aid.

Officers of this branch ignored their Regional Officials who first sent out a circular asking for financial and moral support to the strikers and then — when the London branch officers paid a visit to the picket and advised moving it to a strategic point where all incoming vehicles could be blocked — turned around and told the branch that "this strike does not concern you!"

The London branch have donated all their branch funds to the strikers and solicited funds from other sources.

# Support for Bingo Strik

SEVERAL HUNDRED  
Coventry trade unionists crowded into the local T&GWU hall on Friday to attend a fund-raising social for the women, now in its eighth week of their strike over union recognition at Club C Bingo.

The response of the Coventry labour movement was so great that the hall was soon filled to capacity and many had to be turned away.

In a situation where so much massive support exists the obvious question is why eight weeks?

Why have the strikers and their supporters been standing in freezing temperatures picketing Club C Bingo, while even with the strikers being official from the first day there have been no moves by trade union officials to instigate blacking.

The strikers have had to fight every inch of the way for any moves from the officials.

It was not until thirty of the strikers occupied the T&GWU offices that the union began to distribute regular hardship payments.

The powerful support shown by the social should be turned into a concerted effort to force the T&GWU officials to black all deliveries to Club One and other Orr Enterprises establishments.

Donations and picketing help both still urgently needed. Get in touch with:

Sister Ann Coffey, T&GWU Shop Steward, 42, Hamilton Road, Stoke, Coventry.

The Basildon Trades Council donated a tent so that the picketers can man a 24-hour vigil.

But the role of the G&M bureaucrats is no different from that of the AUEW in the Trico strike.

There the AUEW gave official support but did not fight for blacking of windscreen wipers within the car industry — thereby prolonging the struggle.

The G&M similarly refuses to give any lead at all to hotel workers in the Central Hotels group in London, (Central Hotels own a hotel at the Leisure Centre), giving no call for industrial action in defence of victimised union members.

The London (3) branch has correctly challenged the Regional Officials on this issue and is calling for all workers, especially G&M members, to raise the call for support in their branches and on the Regional level.

# MINERS' BALLOT

THE VOTES CAST in the miners' union ballot on whether to mandate the National Executive to call industrial action to back the NUM demand for early retirement are still being counted as we go to press — but two things are certain.

FIRSTLY, there will be a huge majority in support of action to win what is obviously a legitimate demand — and one which the leadership have refused to fight for the last 30 years.

AND SECONDLY, NUM President Gormley has already made it clear he has no intention of calling any action regardless of the vote — simply using this indication of rank and file militancy to press for a more respectable "compromise" deal.

Socialist Press stressed two weeks ago that the early retirement issue has been wheeled out at this point by the NUM leaders as a conscious diversion from the wages struggle — aiming to syphon off miners' hostility to the impact of the 4½% pay deal into the blind alley of 'fringe benefits'.

Yet some other left wing groups seem to regard the early retirement issue as a threat to the Social Contract — to such an extent that they do not even criticise the stand of the right wing NUM leaders!

The front page of the IMG's

Red Weekly, for example, argues that "As in 1974 the miners are not just fighting for themselves; for they are fighting the Social Contract policies of this Government".

Not a mention of wages by the IMG — who fall hook, line and sinker for Gormley's decoy. Much the same position is taken by the International Socialists, though their paper, Socialist Worker does at least mention the need to fight the 4½% policy, though it makes no call for a fight to smash the TUC-government wage freeze.

We fully support any action taken to back the demand for early retirement. But we have a duty to expose the underhand motives of the right wingers who now eloquently argue for it.

We say that nearly every vote for action on the retirement demand could, if given a lead, have been a vote for action also on wages — to confront the 4½%, and fight for catching up increases tied to a cost of living index worked out by elected trade union committees.

And we stand by our position in the last issue of Socialist Press: "Early retirement is a vital demand, particularly for miners. But you can't eat it. Gormley's diversion must be seen for what it is."

# 3,000 STRIKE AGAINST STEEL SACKINGS

Three thousand workers from Edgar Alan Balfour factories in Sheffield are now out on strike against the closure of Balfour Darwins Capital Tool Works.

Not only 450 jobs at the Capital Tool Works but many more in other factories are threatened by the closure, the first step in a rationalisation plan.

This joint action follows weeks of stalling by the Confed and the attempt to negotiate an alternative plan to "make the factory viable". The only action called by the Confed has been for the blacking of Balfour Darwins products to pressure management to reopen negotiations.

Rather than ineffective blacking factory after factory voted for full

strike action, shutting down all the Edgar Alan Balfour factories in Sheffield.

This action showed the strength and determination to fight the redundancies but it is hamstrung by the policies of the Confed leadership who refuse to call official strike action or fight for the nationalisation of the industry.

Instead they argue for a plan for "viability", accepting that the preservation of jobs is conditional upon guaranteeing the profits of the Company.

Under the cloak of negotiations with management about "viability" they are preparing the ground for voluntary redundancies and a reduction in the workforce.

These negotiations entirely direct away from a fight against management to defend jobs. In opposition to the Confed leaders,

the fight must be taken up for the defence of all jobs by work-sharing on full pay.

The strike action must be extended to other Edgar Alan Balfour factories outside Sheffield and elected committees must be established in each factory to fight for the opening of the books of the company to expose the plans of management and lay the basis for a fight for the nationalisation of the company under workers' management.

No compensation must be paid to the owners but instead financial resources injected to expand and modernise the plant.

To fight for these policies and to thwart management's attempt to move out machinery and close the plant, the occupation of Capital Tool Works must be fought for.

# EXPULSIONS: ACT NOW!

Support continues to grow for the campaign to stop the deportations of American journalists Philip Agee and Mark Hosenball.

CPSA and ACTT, as well as many individual trade union branches, have endorsed the work of the Agee/Hosenball Defence Committee.

On Wednesday 8th December, a two-hour picket outside the Home Office attracted about 150 supporters, mostly members of the National Union of Journalists to which both Agee and Hosenball belong.

The Book and Magazine Branches of the NUJ passed resolutions calling for a one day strike by all chapels, (office branches) in connection with the picket.

But the NUJ leadership have done nothing to mobilise the union behind its endangered members. A meeting with Rees has been set up, a press conference is to be called, and a somewhat lackadaisical canvass of NUJ MPs has begun.

## BLEATING

The National Union of Students invited Agee to address its full national conference last weekend and over 100 Labour MPs have raised their voices in protest, but only one, Arthur Lewis, has gone beyond ritual bleating, to withhold his vote from the government.

Home Secretary Merlyn Rees first announced the deportations on November 16th and 17th. Rees declared that the two were to be expelled for "security reasons" under a section of the 1971 Immigration Act.

All efforts to discover the charges have so far been in vain. Rees refuses to reveal them, again, for "security reasons"!



Agee

The appeal will be "tried" before a hand-picked appeals tribunal. (Agee on January 11th, Hosenball on the 19th), and even then they will not be told why they are being kicked out, nor will they be allowed legal representation.

Both Agee and Hosenball have denied posing any threat to British security. Agee, a former CIA agent, has provoked extreme

hostility from the American government for his book exposing the Agency's terrorist activities (*Inside the Company: CIA Diary*).

His recent uncovering of CIA activities in Jamaica has also not endeared him to friends of imperialism.

In the absence of concrete information, rumours about the reasons for the deportations have been rife.

## DENIED

At one point it was mooted that Hosenball had been planning to name members of MI6 in the magazine *Counterspy*; and the theory was put forward about security and government agents in Ulster. Both these allegations have been denied.

Agee is now working on a second book, but Britain is not mentioned in it. It is reasonable to suppose that the force behind the expulsions is the CIA itself. There is a new Agency chief in Britain, Edward Proctor, and disrupting Agee's work may have been one of his first assignments.

With the recent loan negotiations with the IMF, the government is particularly sensitive, and even more eager than usual to act as lackeys for American imperialism.

We say that if British "security" has been threatened, so much the better. British Military Intelligence, whether operating at home or in the Six Counties, does nothing to protect the interests of the working class. Its hand-in-glove collaboration with the CIA should be exposed wherever possible.

## CAMPAIGN

We support the demands of the Agee/Hosenball Defence Committee (Stop the deportations; Agee and Hosenball must stay; Out with the CIA; Repeal the Immigration Act) and all efforts to build a campaign in the labour movement against this dangerous infringement of democratic rights.

We call on the NUJ to reject back-door haggling with this anti-working class government and to organise national strike action against the deportations.

Any Labour MP with a shred of principle should add his refusal to vote with the government to that of Arthur Lewis.

The Agee/Hosenball Defence Committee is calling a national demonstration on Sunday January 9th (assemble outside Embankment Tube Station at 12.45pm, to march to Home Office and US Embassy).

## PAMPHLETS

A benefit film performance will be held at The Other Cinema, (25, Tottenham St. W1, near Goodge St. Tube) on Saturday December 18th, at 4pm.

The Committee have also published two pamphlets, *CIA Briefing* (20p) and *Jamaica Destabilised* (25p), available from the Agee/Hosenball Defence Committee, c/o NCCL, 186, Kings Cross Road, WC1, to which donations and resolutions of support should also be sent.

# POLICE ATTACK FRENCH PRINT SIT-IN



100,000 French trade unionists in Paris and thousands in other cities took to the streets on 6th December to protest against the brutal police occupation of the newspaper "Parisien Libere".

The police invasion followed a court finding in favour of the bosses and against the workers occupying the plant, as part of a two year old dispute with the anti-union management.

Most of France went without a daily paper as print workers and journalists struck in sympathy.

The unanimity and militancy of the action attests to a general wave of anger from the French working class against the anti-working class policies of the Giscard regime and Prime Minister Barre's policy of cutting real wages and creating unemployment.

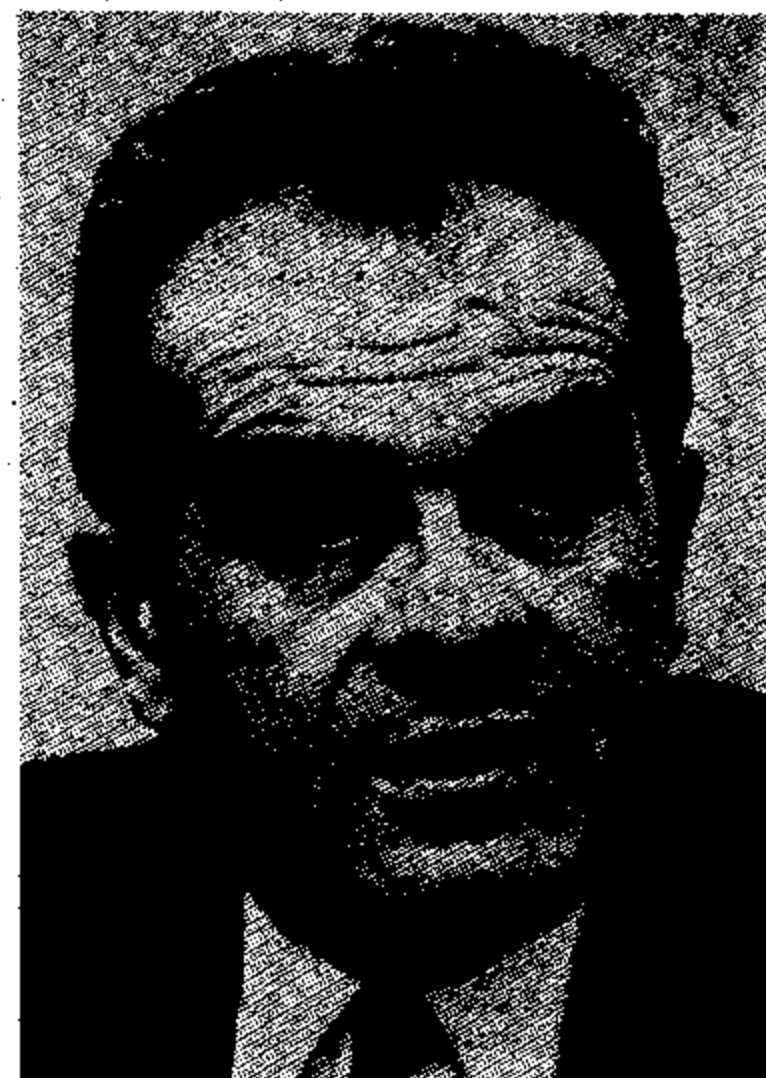
Employers have torn up existing agreed wage contracts which don't fit the new wage control regulations. Electricity and postal workers have already begun strikes against the measures and many others are threatened.

The Stalinist leaders of the Communist Party union federation, the CGT, are forced to run as fast as their legs will carry them to appear to be still at the head of this wave of anger.

But though verbally opposing

the Barre economic plan, they limit action to token strikes and explicitly reject any political offensive against the government.

Communist Party Political Bureau member Fiterand said "we do not believe in strikes as a political weapon. We are happy to wait for the proper election date."



French CP leader, Marchais

# FUND

## SPECIAL FUND

The collection at the end of our First Annual Conference saw us complete the target for the £1,000 Special Fund. A few small pledges are still outstanding and should be met as quickly as possible.

Final total: £1,012.86.

## DECEMBER £600 FUND

Donations for the Monthly Fund are beginning to arrive but if we are to complete the fund before Christmas as we would like, there remain only ten more days in which to do so.

Among donations so far received are the following:

Oxford, £15; Banbury, £1.40; South London, £13.48; Coventry, £3.20; East London, £13; Leamington, £1.00; Islington, £20; Winsford, £5; Central London, £17.50; Hull, £10; South Yorks £5.

Total to date: £104.58

Please send all donations to:  
Socialist Press Monthly Fund  
31, Dartmouth Park Hill  
London, NWS 1HR

# NEXT EDITION

Since our next edition is due to appear in Christmas week, with the preparatory work falling over Christmas weekend, the Editorial Board of 'Socialist Press' has decided to postpone publication of our next edition for one week.

We shall therefore reappear in the New Year on Wednesday January 5th.

In the meantime, we wish all our readers and supporters Season's greetings.

# SOCIALIST PRESS ★

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