

BIG FLAME

Paper of the Revolutionary Socialist Organisation Big Flame

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8p

Trucks smash pickets

AN EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNT

ELEVEN WEEKS of bottled up hope, anger and frustration exploded on the Trico picket in West London last Thursday July 29th, when five enormous lorries driven by some of the most hardened vicious looking characters I have ever seen, careered through the cordon of women and men weakened by the presence of an equal number of idiot policemen. Three people were arrested.

The strikers, plus 30 or so of us supporters, fought hard and

hurled abuse at scabs and scab police alike. Chairs and placards were thrown, but we were not strong enough and the picket line was broken. There were tears of rage and disappointment at this new set-back. But later we heard that the fork lift truck drivers inside refused to handle the scab loads of parts. And the drivers had damaged a lot of it getting it unloaded. Much of it is now unusable.

The pathetic wooden coppers said 'But we're only upholding the law of the land' as they held us back. WHAT A BLOODY JOKE. This strike is about equal pay and equal pay IS the law of the land. The Old Bill turns up to prevent women getting their rights.

At the back of your mind you often think 'There's one law for the rich, and another for the working class'. But when it hits you, or rather, when there's a 20 ton lorry bearing down on you trying to smash you against a concrete post and the police are waving it on, it makes you realise what a disgusting thing this class system is.

(full story page 4)

Manchester Pickets

Two long pickets that continue in the Manchester area make it clear that the bosses are trying to use the recession to establish their lost authority.

Automat

At AUTOMAT in Swinton the mass picket every Thursday morning is growing, last week it was strengthened by coach-loads from Stockport. The 'Manchester Evening News' is giving Stretford M.P., Winston Churchill, all the space he wants to attack the workers who are on the picket. He seems to have inherited his hatred of the working-class from his grand-father who ordered the troops to fire on striking Welsh miners.

ICL

At ICL, Gorton, the picket is in its 12 week. The dispute is over management's attempt to force flexibility of labour between the wiremen and the fitters. The EEPTU is not supporting the strike which the AUEW has made official and the 6 EEPTU members who have come out and joined the picket are threatened with expulsion from their union.

This lack of union solidarity can only do harm at a time when ICL management has announced 1400 redundancies nationally. Financial support should be sent to: Brother R. E...



Bottom left is Sally Groves, member of the Trico strike Committee, knocked to the ground by the police in their eagerness to help scab labour into the factory. (Chris Davies, Report.)

HELP TO BUILD FOR SEPT 11

SUPPORT IS growing for the anti-racist demonstration in Blackburn on September 11th. The challenge to the National Party and National Front is being organised by the Blackburn Campaign Against Racism. Support has come from national black organisations, from the North West Regional TUC and from socialist groups. This demonstration is of

NATIONAL significance. It is taking the fight into one of the strongholds of the fascist enemy, of the working class. Recently Blackburn gained notoriety by becoming the first area to elect fascist councillors, Kingsley Reid, leader of the National Party, and one other gaining seats. The latter has since resigned his seat when it was discovered he had stood

under an assumed name to cover up his past. He will soon stand trial charged with 'wasting police time' after an incident when he was alleged to have shot out the windows of a house and attempted to blame Asians. The left must ensure that the NP do not win the resulting by-election. The demonstration could be important in this.

Violence against Blackburn's Asian Community is at a high level. The National Party has organised gangs of white youths to carry out this violence. Asian youth has fought back by organising itself into the Asian Youth Organisation, which has taken a militant line of self-defence in opposition to many of the older

The NP and NF have promised to attack the demonstration. They are planning a counter demonstration. The local press, active supporter of the fascists, describes the anti-racist demo. as 'provocative' and is campaigning for it to be banned. Steps will have to be taken to ensure that the anti-racist demonstration is adequately defended from fascist attack. This means building a militant leadership and not tailing behind priests and liberals as some recent demonstrations have done.

Mobilising for this demonstration cannot be left at pulling out simply the already active anti-fascist militants. It should be used as an opportunity to campaign generally against racism and fascism within the black community.

TENANTS MARCH ON TOWN HALL



300 ANGRY Liverpool tenants marched on the Town Hall last month in protest against the council's attempt to alter their tenancy agreements. The tenants won their demands. The council were trying to give up any legal responsibility to maintain communal lifts, rubbish chutes and lighting in multi-storey property — despite the fact that a three-year fight in the courts, led by Haigh Heights tenants, had recently established this legal principle in the House of Lords.

'They just can't do it', was the common cry of high rise tenants when news leaked out of the council's intention to pass this motion. And while frantic councillors from all parties tried to save their non-existent political reputations by arguing about who should dismiss the motion, tenants sang and chanted outside the Town Hall as news of the victory was announced.

Tenants had previously leafleted the direct works depots of the Corporation since they knew that this proposal threatened the jobs of maintenance workers as well as making conditions in high rise blocks even worse.

This victory was notable for the way in which tenants had organised their protest in only a few days through the network of tenants associations and action groups which exist in the city. As we go to press a general meeting has been called in Everton to take this informal organisation further and try to establish a tenants charter.

This development is very important since, if successful, it could pave the way for establishing a basic platform on which all Liverpool tenants could fight any more attempts to worsen existing conditions, and provide the general organisation through which tenants can fight for improvements in their own interests.



★ Council rents will rise yet again by an average of 85p this September in Liverpool. This is part of a country wide rent increase which is part of the recent Rent Act which both Labour and Tory Parties have been using to force tenants to foot the bill for council property and the enormous interest charges that go with them.

Any campaign against these rises will have to come purely from council tenants since the Labour Party have neither the power nor the intention of preventing them.



Tenants take on the cuts.

CARDIFF: HEATING BILLS BURNT.

MORE than 100 tenants from a Cardiff housing estate burnt their heating bills outside the City Town Hall last month. The bonfire came after a march through the city in protest against defective central heating systems.

The tenants, from the Pentwyn Estate, pay up to £4.76 a week for heating and hot water. Each quarter they get a statement showing either an under or an overcharge. The surcharges and rebates are settled once a year. When the Council came to settle up, 291 people received bills of up to £50. Each one was estimated as the Council admits that the meters are 'faulty'. Initially, hundreds of tenants who had received bills swamped the heating centre complaining bitterly that they could not possibly have used the amount of hot water the Council estimated they had.

TENANTS ORGANISE

BUILDING SOCIETIES CON.

THE BIGGEST cut of all — that's the housing cut Healey has just announced, which will take £246 million out of the housing budget. It's twice the size of the cut in defense spending. It means that:

- Council house building programmes are being cut by nearly half.
- Council mortgages, the only way many families can get a home at all, are being cut by £146 million. If you're chance of getting a mortgage was small before it's almost out of the question now.

Announcing this cut, Healey tried to gloss over the staggering size of it by claiming that the building societies would step in to fill the gap. Yet the next day the societies were forced to admit there are certain parts of cities where they are not prepared to lend money.

These are the so-called red-line districts, within which the companies say lending money is too high a risk. They are also working class areas where housing pressures are greatest. The building societies attitude was exposed by Shelter, an organisation which campaigns for the homeless. These areas also have a large number of black people. The building societies policies reflect the racist attitudes of profiteers towards black communities by their refusal to invest in the improvement of the areas and allowing them to become run down ghettos.

Shelter says these policies starve older areas of mortgage funds aggravate urban decay and frustrate improvement policies. Three national societies, The Leicester, Halifax and Britannia draw a red-line around the centre of Leicester within which they rarely lend. The Leeds Permanent, and four other major societies, have zoned areas in Leeds where prospective buyers have been refused mortgages.

Once again those in most need come off worst, and Healey's cuts are shown for what they really are; a major attack on our standard of living.

the individual took. This proves the Council claim that the estimates are 'accurate, fair and reasonable' to be ludicrous.

At a well attended public meeting, the Pentwyn Tenants Action group was formed and a committee elected. The following demands were made

to the council: the cancellation of all 'arrears', the setting up of an independent investigation into the heating and metering system, at the council's expense.

To support this the following line of action was unanimously agreed upon;

- the non-payment of estimated bills.
- non-payment of the heating charge from the rent.
- a march and burn-in of the bills.

rents withheld

To date, we estimate that over 150 tenants are withholding the heating charge from the rent, despite harassment from the rent collectors and over 250 tenants are refusing to pay the estimated bills. Certain council employees on the estate have been warned off from participating in the heating charge strike.

LONDON COUNCILS TAKE ON SQUATTERS

INNER LONDON councils are preparing for mass evictions of squatters over the next four months. The Criminal Trespass Bill becomes law in the Autumn, and combined with the squeeze on Council spending, many local authorities appear to have decided this is the time to take action.

In BRIXTON, South London, 25 people, supported by 100 or so others, barricaded themselves into the Housing Department last month, to stop the eviction of 120 squatters in Villa Road. In CAMDEN, North London, the council plans to evict 3,000 squatters, many of them licensed. And in neighbouring ISLINGTON the council recently called in 150 police and ten bailiffs to smash their way into five houses in Charteris Road and evict squatters.

The Villa Road squatters, some of the best organised in London, have been under threat of eviction for several months. Houses have been barricaded and an early morning warning system installed. They are demanding the Council drop all evictions and implement the findings of local Trades Council enquiry which calls for the money spent on evictions to be spent on doing up a neighbouring 'slum' council estate.

As soon as the squatters occupied the Housing Department 20 police arrived. But the barricades remained firm. Outside on the pavement members of Villa Road street group sang anti-eviction songs to the accompaniment of a piano. Demonstrators also gave out a thousand leaflets explaining the struggle and talked to tenants and homeless families visiting the ground floor Housing Advice Centre.

After two hours the Director of Housing agreed to talk to squatter delegates as soon as the demonstration ended.

After written proof of the deal was obtained and witnessed by a representative of Lambeth Community Law Centre and a verbal 'no victimisation' agreement made the occupation force left the building. There were no arrests. The Council made a 'verbal' offer to rehouse the families.

campaign

The campaign against the squatters is all part of local authorities attempts to cut their housing bills. In Camden, for example, the council plans to do up squatters' houses on the cheap and shove in families who would otherwise go into bed and breakfast accommodation. They are planning to spend £850 on repairing the houses which they hope will reduce their £2 million a year bed and breakfast bill.

In the Tolmers Square area, Euston, Camden Council brought out loads of Joe Levy property in order to 'stop office development'.

Now to pay back the interest on money borrowed for this and other projects and to 'save money' the council intends to build offices for profit.

Tolmers Squatters who face eviction for this diabolical scheme are fighting the cuts.

In Cleveland St. W1 Tory Westminster Council is really doing the same as Camden but under the cover of their godchild Paddington Churches Housing Association. The office development there — and squatters eviction — is posed as a way of 'saving money' because offices won't need such a large subsidy as housing because when finished they will be worth more. Meanwhile, while council house

WE THINK

Smokescreen of lies surrounds the cuts

Never has so much rubbish been talked as over the last month's £1 billion cuts. **Callaghan** says they are essential 'to save the Labour Government' and the TUC calls them the 'best measure for keeping the Government in office'. We can only ask; *what* Labour Government? In the last 6 months the Government has:

- Cut £5.5 billion from the public services we use and need.
- Increased unemployment by an estimated 100,000 at a stroke. This is what *even* the TUC calculates the latest round of cuts will mean. Is this the programme millions of people voted for when they voted Labour two years ago?

Healey calls them 'necessary action to protect the steady move in this country back to full employment', by transferring money back to industry. Even the *Financial Times* found this a little hard to swallow. 'Last week's cuts, of course, had little to do with directing resources to industry', wrote its industrial correspondent **Adrian Hamilton**.

There are at least three good reasons for this:

- Industry is not short of cash. It just doesn't want to put it into this country. That's why something like £2 billion was exported last year for investment overseas. And this doesn't include the millions multi-nationals 'export' to their parent companies or overseas subsidiaries.
- More investment does *not* equal more jobs. Ask British Steel workers, who have found that more investment and new machinery equals *fewer* jobs.
- Ironically, in a small way, the cuts hit all those industries which rely on Government or council contracts — in particular the building industry. The TUC has estimated at least 70,000 jobs in industry will be hit as an immediate spin-off from the cuts. And, as the *Economist* magazine wrote; 'The real burden has been thrown, at one remove, upon private industry. When, for instance, road building plans are cut, it is Wimpey and Laing, and others, who lay off workers or hire fewer'.

The real aim of the cuts is to appease the 'international capitalist community'. It's no secret that countries like France, Germany, the US and Japan don't like the shaky state of Britain's economy. With Portugal, Spain and Italy all dangerously unstable for capitalism, they can't afford another weak link.

They have already lent money to prop up British capitalism. Now, just as in Italy where they are refusing loans if the Communists are allowed into government, they are using this power to influence Government policy.

Small matter the cuts make little sense economically. They are first and foremost *political* — an attempt by the Government to prove to its international capitalist backers that it's really on the side of private enterprise.

By doing this it not only hopes to secure future and existing loans, it is also hoping to stop speculation by international financiers against the pound. Once again Labour has mortgaged its supporters to international capitalism. And the only people to benefit in this country will be the financiers — who will find their daily raw material, money, is no longer going down so fast in value on the world market.



How we're fighting a hospital closure

This hospital must not close

OVER 2000 people took part in a day of action last month in protest at the planned closure of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in London — one of the very few women's hospitals in the country. We were backed up by total strikes at the National Temperance and St. Pancras hospitals, next in the firing line for cuts and partial strikes at UCH, the Royal Free and the Whittington.

About 1000 people, including trade unionists, local tenants associations and pensioners marched from the EGA in Euston to Westminster to lobby MPs. We were greeted by MPs **Lena Jaeger** and **Jock Stallard**, who spent most of the time demanding to know where the support for the EGA had been

nine years ago when the run-down began, and the rest of the time hedging our questions about what they were going to do about the EGA and the cuts in general.

After having been in the Committee Room about an hour, with very little time for discussion, we were told we had to leave because the room was going to be used to show a film. As one of the women from the EGA said; 'When it comes to a toss up, they're more interested in a film than in talking about our jobs, our future.' This lobby was a disheartening end to an exciting day that had mobilised much support and a march that had received a fantastic response from people in the street.

The EGA has been temporarily moved to nearby Whittington Hospital in Islington, but it is due to finish there at the end of August. The move has not only meant a cut in facilities — operating time has to be shared and there are practically no abortions now — it's also meant more work for the staff at Whittington. Neither the staff there nor the Islington Labour Party want the EGA to stay beyond the August deadline. The EGA's maternity wing, which was reopened a month ago because of threatened strike action, is not being used by women because there is no guarantee of being treated by an all woman staff — one of the reasons women choose to go to the EGA.

The planned closure of the hospital is yet another attack on a health service which already fails to provide adequate facilities for women. Because of the shortage of women in medicine most of us do not get a chance to be treated by sympathetic women doctors. Yet a large number of health problems are specific to women — menstrual problems, malfunctioning or infection of the reproduction system, or minor complaints like cystitis. Furthermore, research into women's health has lagged far behind general medicine. In a small way, the EGA has been meeting these needs, training women to be doctors, and even providing an opportunity for women with families to train and work part-time. Of course it goes nowhere near meeting the full need for such hospital facilities, but it does provide an important service it is crucial not to lose. As a women's hospital, it not only gives sympathetic and understanding



EGA domestics on the demonstration to stop the hospital closing

treatment, but by concentrating on women's health problems could begin to develop an understanding and awareness within the medical profession of these problems and

towards providing the help we need throughout the N.H.S. and a service we must fight to keep.

Seven more London hospitals are

near future. They are the London Homeopathic, the National Temperance, the Dreadnought, the National (Queens Square), the Eastman Dental Clinic, the St. John's Skin Hospital and St.

Victory in Liverpool.

UNION members in Liverpool's Southern Area Health Authority won another victory last month when they forced management to involve them in negotiations about disciplinary procedure. Management had wanted to bypass unions in negotiations using instead the Joint Consultative Committee — a non-elected committee of people which is supposed only to make recommendations on facilities for workers in the hospital.

After repeated refusal by management to negotiate with the unions, ancillary workers stopped all meals to staff. The Liverpool hospitals threatened to stop their laundry supplies in support of the Southern Area Health Authority. Management capitulated by agreeing to discuss the document with union reps from the hospitals.

Had they got their own way, proposals such as the right of management to sack or suspend a shop steward without consultation with the union might have gone through. If a steward could go that easy, what chance the ordinary worker?

Leeds cuts demos

LAST MONTH saw three demonstrations against the steady erosion of welfare facilities in Leeds. On 1st July, nearly 300 teachers stopped work for the afternoon and rallied at the Town Hall to hear union representatives (NATFHE, NUT, and NAS) attack the Tory council's proposal to save £600,000 by cutting foreign language teaching, swimming, outdoor education, immigrant work, infant and nursery provision, school transport and by adjusting FE teaching ratios. NUT representative **Cliff Morris** pointed out that this is only the tip of the iceberg — the council wants to save £3 million. He told the meeting: 'I feel a great deal more disquiet about the coming cuts. I'm sure there will be further cuts. And I'm sure we must demonstrate quite clearly how we feel about them at this stage.'

This demonstration was followed up on 13th July by 400 children and parents who demonstrated against the proposal to 'rationalise' under 5's education — making children in West Yorkshire, who at present can go to school before their fifth birthday fall in line with Leeds children who cannot go to school until they are five. Since the demonstration the Council has climbed down: it decided that West Yorkshire children can go to school before they are five.

200 women from Annley demonstrated for the second time in six months against the proposal to close their wash house. The women had voted to accept increased charges for use of the wash houses and this suggestion was accepted by the Tory Council, who will wait to see if the increased revenue justifies keeping them open. The fact that the council has gone ahead with plans to close Kirkstall and Meanwood wash houses shows that the women



STOPPING THE SCABS AT TRICO

350 WOMEN have been strike for equal pay at Trico's windscreen wiper factory in Brentford, West London, for nearly 3 months now, supported by a handful of male fellow workers. Up to one thousand men are still inside, although the women reckon that they are producing only a quarter of usual output.

Nevertheless, management are still desperately trying to fulfil their orders to keep their main customers, the car bosses of Fords, Vauxhalls and British Leyland happy. If anything this latest incident has made the strikers more bitterly defiant than ever. They are determined to get Equal Pay. Management have offered less, and are now taking it back to the Tribunal, which they backed out of before. All along the women have refused to go to arbitration because history has shown this is the quickest way to lose equal pay.

Support

Over the weeks, many things have changed for the women. One woman said: 'When we first came out, many of us were unsure about it. We'd never been on strike like this (no one can remember anything more than one day stoppages before). But after the first couple of weeks I think we got more sure of ourselves. Morale grew as the strike went on. We've had a fantastic amount of support really. Most of the women have been marvellous.'

I asked some of the women what they felt about the people still working. They explained: 'Many of them are in different unions, ASTMS

and APEX. They can't join the picket but many of them are supporting us with money.'

About eight women have gone back out of desperation. The women say they don't blame them as they've got to feed their kids. Meanwhile the strikers get £10 strike pay plus weekly rebates. There is also a hardship fund from all the donations and this goes to those most in need. One woman who came out was forced back when her husband gave her two black eyes. And then a bloke who had been injured by acid in the factory previously was forced back too. Since his accident he's been nery and his wife threatened to leave him if he stayed on strike.

Lorries

The blokes in the foundry still working are in the AUEW like the strikers. One woman said she thought that about 10 percent of the people still inside were out and out scabs. This includes the chairman of the Joint Shop stewards Committee. During the fight to stop the lorries, he had the nerve to stand on the other side of the dual carriageway with his forman mates and jeer at the strikers. Most of the other people inside are doing nothing. There are also non-unionised workers.

Some of the women talked about what they'd do when they got back. 'I'll never let those inside forget that it was me who fought for the money in their pockets while they sat on their backsides'. Another said, 'We're going to make it a closed shop. Why should someone who did nothing get the benefit of our struggle out here?'

Many of the women have worked for Tricos for years. I asked a woman who had worked there for 20 years whether the strike had changed her. She said, 'I've worked hard all my life. We had to work hard in those days. I don't mind work if its interesting. My job is to inspect the work. Often I used to point out faults and extra things which I didn't have to. I used to check up on all sorts of things to keep it running smoothly. But being on strike

has made me see things differently. When I get back in there, I'm not going to tell them a thing. I'm not going to lift my finger or put myself out. I'm going to let the lot go to the very end of the line. Mistakes or not. Let Fords sort it out. They've had enough favours from me.'

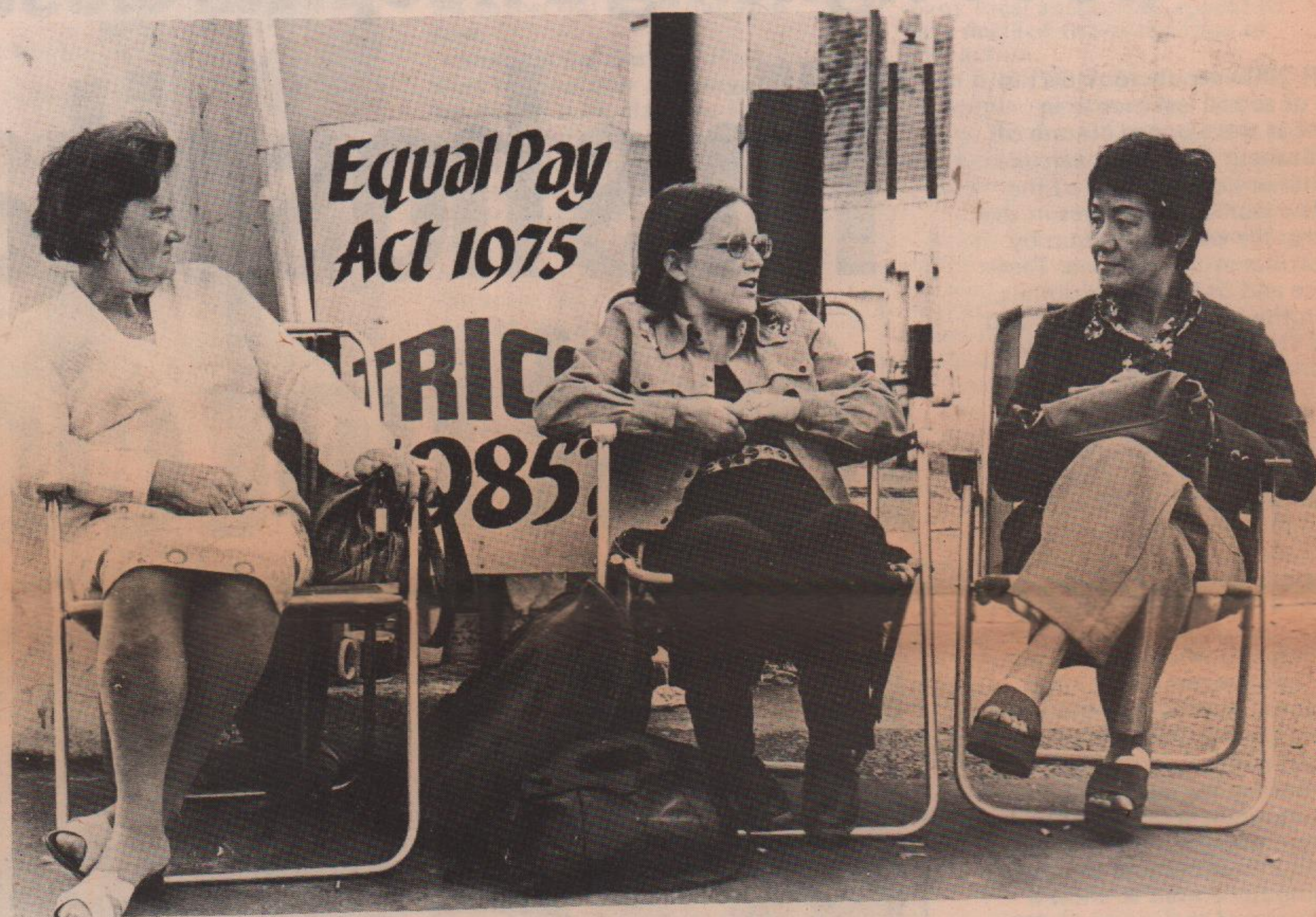
Some women talked about how they'd got to know each other better being on strike, and talked about how much healthier they felt being in the open air all day. Said one: 'There's

not the tension that you feel when you're at work. I sleep much better now after a whole day out here.'

Tricos is one of the toughest fights there's been for equal pay. But the women are sticking it out. In some cases their families and friends are right behind them, but there are a lot where the men might help with the kids, but won't support the picket. THAT'S WHY THE TRICO WOMEN NEED ALL THE SUPPORT THEY CAN GET. You can help by picketing when it's most needed. In the evening, at night and at weekends.

Send collections and donations to:
Trico Strike Committee, AUEW District, 1 Woodlands Road, Southall.
OR TAKE THE MONEY TO THE PICKET LINE at:
Trico-Folberth, Great West Rd., Brentford, West London. (underneath M4 flyover).

by Kate Trescott



Women picketing outside Trico

GAYS BEATEN-UP

'Queer-bashing' - the beating up of homosexuals is something that has always gone on. But it seems that at the moment it is on the increase. It's just another side to the huge social crisis in this country in which people are denied a most basic right - the right to sexual freedom and choice. Here, a gay member of Big Flame, writes about the current attacks on gays and the response to them.

Not all homosexuals have experienced 'queer-bashing'. If we stay quiet, avoid gay bars, clubs, discos and clothes that are in any way 'different', never hold hands or kiss at the bus-stop, don't take jobs like truck-driving (if a woman) or hair-dressing (if a man) - we'll probably escape. Others of us, who do some or all of these things get through life with only sidelong glances, hostile comments and crude jokes to contend with. But not all of us:

*In LEEDS, men and women

leaving a gay disco in the town centre were set upon by a group of youths and beaten up - some were badly hurt.

*In OXFORD, a woman queuing for a hot-dog at the bus-station was socked on the jaw and knocked to the ground simply because she was tall, wore leather jacket and trousers and had just got off a powerful motorbike.

* In LANCASTER, some Hell's Angels broke up a dance organised by the Campaign for Homosexual Equality. Several gay people who protested were hit.

* In TOWER HAMLETS, East London, the Gay Centre was attacked and the three people living there intimidated.

* In BRISTOL, a group of friends of the Manager of the Moulin Rouge Club, where a Lesbian conference social had just ended, got in and harassed the women who remained. A fight developed, in the course of which several women were badly

bruised and beaten. The police were called, didn't arrive for 20 minutes and then did nothing. None of the men were hurt. This last incident, in February of this year, prompted the women involved to set up CLAN, the Campaign for Lesbian Action Now. There are now branches in towns all over Britain. A conference was held on July 24th, a newsletter is out and activities include public meetings and leafletting of gay gathering-places. One gay woman said: 'Lesbians and homosexuals have accepted this sort of treatment at the hands of people threatened by our existence for far too long. We can't afford to put up with it any longer!'

* For Gay Information and Advice CLAN c/o Womens Centre, 59 Lower Union St. Bristol 1 (0272) 712621
MAGIC (Manchester Gay Info Centre) phone 061 - 273 3725
WIRES (National Womens Lib Info Service), 30 Blenheim Terrace, Leeds 2 0532 35561 (12-5 pm)

FOR YEARS women have fought for equal pay with men. On January 1st this year, it looked as if they'd got it - legally. But as many people said at the time, the law is one thing; reality is something else. As this page shows with the Equal Pay Act eight months old, women are still having to fight, just as bitterly, for every penny of "equality".

In fact the equal pay legislation is a sick joke. Even the Equal Opportunities Commission admit that 'Equal Pay Act is a farce'. And Lord Allen, boss of USDAW, the shop workers union which draws three fifths of its membership from women, was recently forced to admit: 'Equal pay legislation has not achieved any significant narrowing of the gap between men and women's earnings.' The facts speak for themselves. Out of some 4000 complaints about equal pay, 1754 went to an industrial tribunal for arbitration, in the first four months of the Act becoming law. Of these only 18 were successful. Small wonder women at Trico (see story same page) have refused to attend an arbitration tribunal to hear their case.

Equal Pay Act is a farce!

A round up of recent tribunals shows: Striking differences in success rates in England and Scotland. In Scotland, where women are allowed to sit as members of a tribunal, findings have been much more favourable.

A survey of managers who form one third of the tribunal staff in England, found that 70% of them are opposed to equal pay, in principle.

Many tribunal findings have been utterly insulting to women. At the Kraft Cheese factory, in Kirkby, Liverpool, women quality controllers were refused equal pay because the management said they were unable to walk across a catwalk between departments, in case men looked up their mini skirts. The women explained that they wore trousers to work, and anyway, mini-skirts were five years out of date. The tribunal accepted the management's argument and as a result the women will continue to get £12.45 a week less than the men.

The law says women should get equal pay 'for work of the same, or broadly similar, nature'. The definition is wide enough to drive a coach and horses through. It's clear that if women are going to get anywhere near equal pay with men, they're going to have to continue to rely on their own strength and organisation.

LIVERPOOL NURSES WORK TO RULE

TRAINED NURSES in NUPE and COHSE at Walton Hospital, Liverpool are on a work to rule in protest against chronic understaffing, particularly on nights at the hospital.

Already within the week they stopped doing much of the clerical work they normally do, jobs were suddenly being offered to the newly qualified nurses at the hospital who expected to go on the dole. The nurses feel that their action, and the threat that their organising poses to management, is responsible

for this. And this is despite the Flo Nightingale Attitude of the NUPE nurses branch secretary at neighbouring Fazakerly Hospital where nurses took action in support of Walton. She resigned, urging others to the same because she disagrees with nurses taking industrial action. So do many nurses.... but when the service to patients will suffer in the long run, and there are nurses on the dole....then many are now prepared to take action to force managements to employ more

nurses.

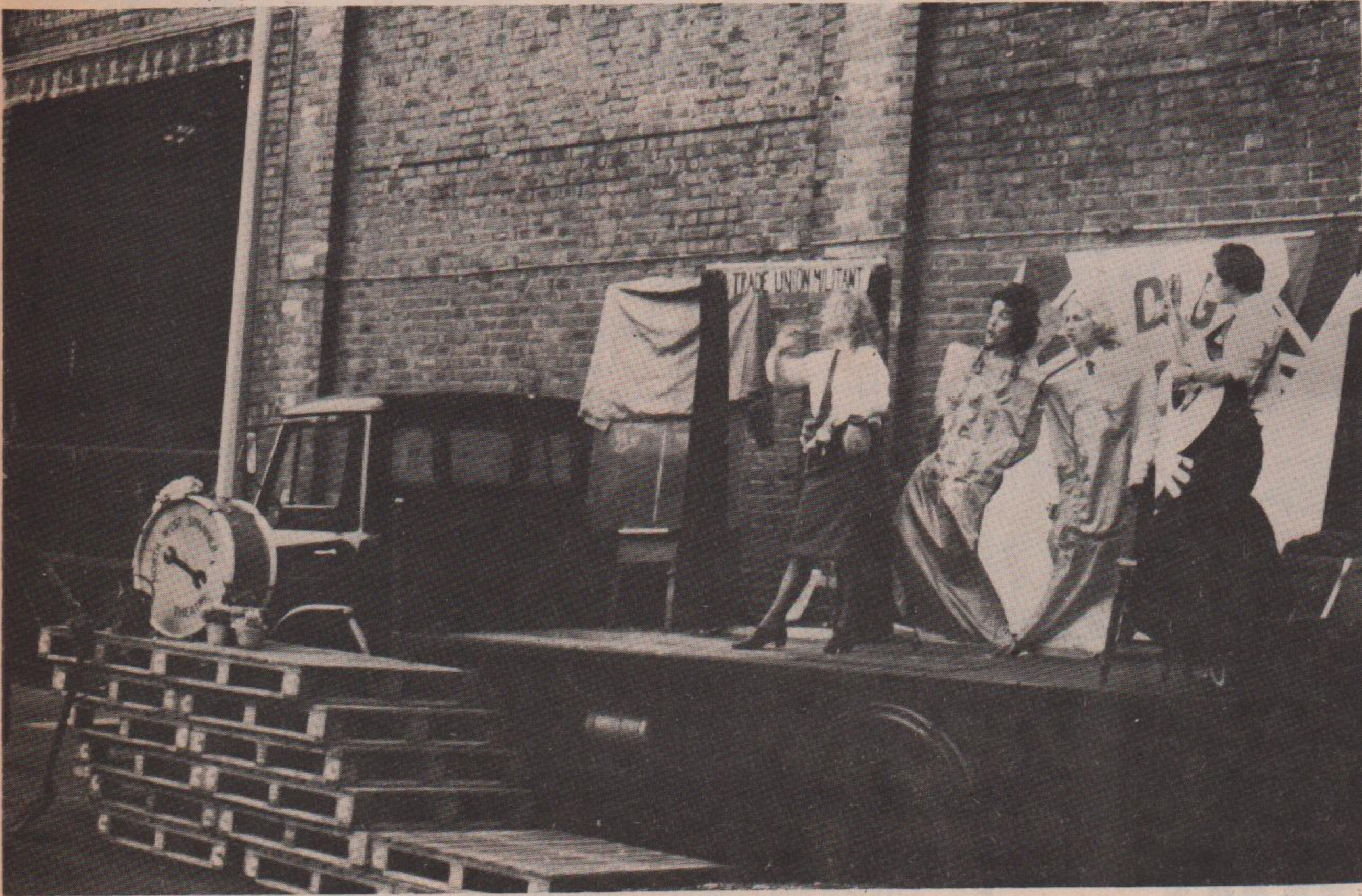
WHAT LED TO THE WORK TO RULE...

* No nurse at all on a 12 bed ward between 9pm and 7am (Horsley Ward)

* One nurse on the Childrens Ward of the Neuro Dept. on nights

* Untrained nurses left in charge of wards of up to 26 patients on nights.

* A constant frustration 'that we can't give of our best to the patients because we are so under staffed and overworked.'

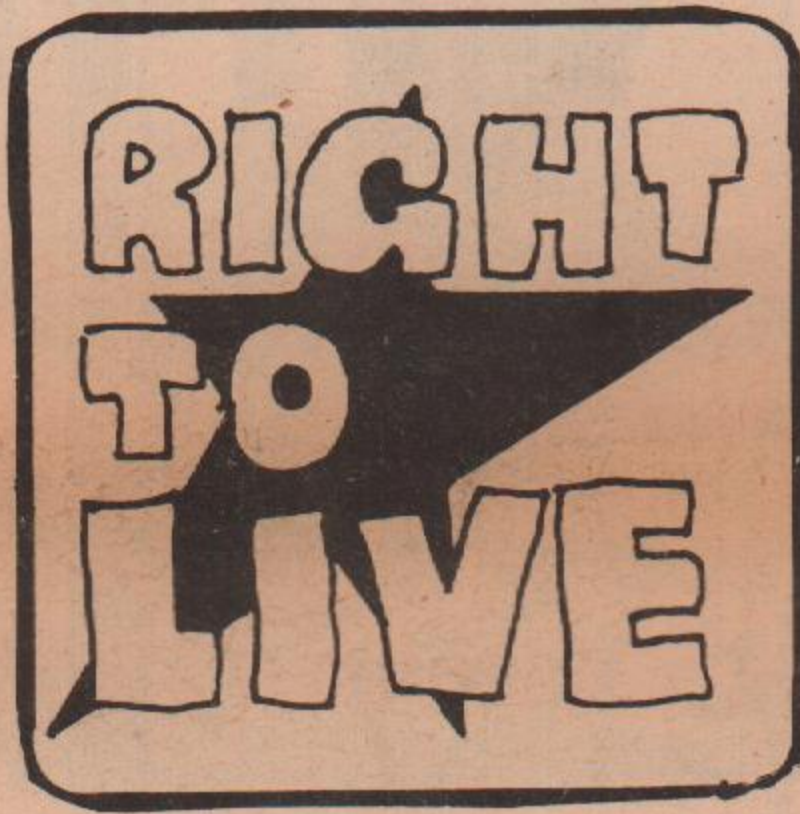


The North West Spanner Theatre Group take their unemployment play around northern factories, to promote solidarity between employed and unemployed.

Coventry unemployed workers club

Off the dole queue!

WITH UNEMPLOYMENT officially near the one-and-a-half million mark, unofficially much higher, and showing no sign of dropping off, the problems of organising unemployed people to defend their interests, and gaining support for them among employed workers, remains as important as ever. The following account looks at some of the problems encountered by the nine month old Coventry Unemployed Workers' Club.



SINCE IT started nine months ago in central Coventry, the Unemployed Workers' Club has run into two main problems. The first one, which is being continuously debated among the organisers, is: what should it be doing? Some see the Centre as a sort of super Claimants Union, specialising in the problems of the unemployed in making claims, getting retrained and applying for such jobs as there are. Others have put forward a much more outward going, and radical, programme. It includes:

- Democratisation: the Centre should be run by a committee of unemployed people elected from a mass meeting. The present committee is composed of social workers and some committed unemployed people.
- Premises: The Centre should have its own premises for full time use under its own control. The present building, at Bardsley House, Hilltop, is lent by the Cathedral on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- Aims: The Centre should be concerned to link employed and unemployed in the fight for decent conditions and an adequate income, whether working or not.
- Activity: All activity should further the aims of unemployed workers; better treatment by DHSS; support for shorter working hours; less overtime without loss of pay; action to prevent unemployed people being used as scabs.
- Finance: Regular fund raising within the labour movement. Better still, a regular subscription as used by the National Union of Unemployed Workers in the 20's and 30's.

ions that make up the labour movement. It's been made more difficult by not knowing exactly what the centre should be doing. The response from many sections of the labour movement in Coventry to suggestions for support and joint action has been disappointing. Nevertheless there have been successes. Branches of the T&GWU, AUEW, TASS and the Rolls Rotce (Ansty) Joint Shop Stewards Committee have given financial support and invited speakers from the centre to their meetings. The Centre has observer status on Coventry Trades Council and hopes to be able to raise issues on it in the future. There is a scheme for the Trades Council to employ six full time workers under the job creation scheme to work amongst the unemployed in Coventry. This could be a valuable boost to the resources of the Centre and lead to closer links with the Trades Council.

Demoralisation

But behind these two common problems is a deeper one, which always hits unemployed people — demoralisation, isolation and differing chances of getting a job. In the first few weeks after a mass redundancy contacts between the workers are maintained to some extent. This is what happened when the Centre was able to provide help to the Chrysler workers last winter when some 3,000 got the chop in a period of two months. But as time passes and the drastic drop in income takes its toll, workers from a particular plant living scattered all over the city stay at home more often, lose touch and get caught up in their own personal and family problems. Finally some get jobs, particularly the younger, skilled and often white ones, and this further breaks up the friendship networks

It's only when this underlying problem is solved that the internal problems of the Centre and its relations with the labour movement will sort themselves out. To democratise a centre needs mass support; to be taken seriously by the labour movement also means mass support. To overcome the demoralisation and isolation of being unemployed



needs imagination, stunts perhaps, which the local Tory-controlled press and the local radio cannot ignore. This way your existence is broadcast to every last council estate on the edge of the city. A draft programme and account of the present state of affairs could be distributed as widely as possible; at dole queues, door to door and so on. Fund raising should be used not just to get money but as a means of spreading information. Duplicated leaflets with a description of the Centre, its aims etc, handed out at factory gates where there has been no response from a union branch or stewards committee, incorporating a collection slip. A wall newspaper outside the Centre giving the latest situation and the Centre's activities, would spread the message.

Until the unemployed are seen to be organised in large numbers with a clear programme they will not be able to gain a voice in the making of labour movement policy, locally or nationally.

Teaching in Tameside.

IN THE last month, the issue of selective education in Tameside has moved to the Law Courts. This is already a defeat for ordinary people. The Appeals Court and the Law Lords are composed of members of the ruling-class who will only give a judgement favourable to the working-class if there is the threat of working-class unrest. In these extracts of an interview with a Tameside teacher, Big Flame looks at what is happening in Tameside.

What are the general lessons to be learnt from how things have gone so far?

We should have learnt that teachers should not rely on government ministers and high court judges. When the Tories announced their plans to introduce selection, there were 300-400 teachers at the local NUT (National Union of Teachers) meetings. There was a unanimous vote for action in general - but no action was specified. We should have implemented a policy of non-cooperation, no cover for absent staff - which would have forced the authority to take on supply teachers. Also teachers could have refused to teach all first year secondary students who were at a school different from the one they had been allocated under the Labour plan.

What about attempts to involve the parents and workers in the fight?

The Trades Council called for public meetings in conjunction with the Labour Party. These meetings were well attended but the attitude of the Labour Party was 'Trust Mulley', they did not want to mobilise the grass-roots. There was a Parents Action Group but it wanted to keep politics out of things. It was inevitable that there would be a

split between the Tory and the Labour supporters in the Action Group because it is a highly political issue. The Trades Council has made it clear that it will get its members out in support of any teacher victimised. The support NALGO and NUPE workers have given the struggle has made things very difficult for the Tories - in fact they had to send out the selection letters from an Estate Agent!

Tameside teachers have not had much support from industrial workers - why do you think this is?

In our attack on the Tory proposals we have always concentrated on the time factor. Our approach has not been to attack the proposals but to concentrate on there being no time to implement them. We have steered clear of the issue of comprehensive education and why it is important for the working-class. Through their education proposals, the Tories are attacking the working-class. The NUT refuses to take up the political side of the issue - it still cannot decide whether it is a union or a professional body.

Is comprehensive education a step towards building a classless society?

Schools operate in a class-ridden society. There are the public schools for the rulers and judges, the grammar schools for middle management and the secondary moderns for the workers. To try and change society through schools is doomed to failure; schools reflect society. The advantage of comprehensive schools is that they bring workers and middle management together; this may help to break down some of the myths. All I can hope to do with the kids I teach is to give them a critical attitude to the society they live in; so that in 10-20 years time, this critical attitude will be useful to them if they want to change society.

APPEAL APPEAL APPEAL APPEAL

The BIG FLAME appeal fund really has hit a low trough. Last month was again bad with only £11.77 coming in, to take the total to £106.35. Well behind schedule if we're to reach the target of £500 by January 1st 1977.

The £500 is to keep the paper running. Our sales cover the printing costs but we're still left with bills for phone calls, stationery, administration etc.



If these aren't met, the paper is threatened. We've said it before: we're not kidding anyone that Big Flame is 'the only' paper on the left. There are others well worth reading: But overall the left is in severe crisis. Unable as yet to build a serious opposition to this right-wing government; unable to build a large anti-imperialist movement against the army and British government in Ireland, and now threatened by the growth of the fascist right.

In the coming months, there has to be a serious bout of thinking and discussion between all left-wing activists on how to alter this situation. How to develop the strategy to overcome the present problems. If Big Flame newspaper folds, that discussion and practice would lose an important contributor: one that has taken a firm stand on the Irish struggle; one that attempts to report on struggles from the rank and file base of the working class; one that recognises all our struggles, not just in the factories; one that gives a particular voice to women and the fight for feminist revolution.

Our thanks this month to Manchester Big Flame and readers (£5.00) Merseyside readers (£1.77), Bruce Birchall, Sheffield (£5.00) Please send all donations to Big Flame Newspaper Appeal, 217 Wavertree Road, Liverpool 7.

Organisation

The second problem has been relations with the various organisations

BLACK COMMUNITIES UP AGAINST THE LAW

Victory in Leeds



Black-white people picket outside the court during 'Bonfire night trials'

Defence group formed in Brixton

[The following article has been written by members of the Railton 4 Committee from Brixton, London. BF does not necessarily agree with all the views expressed - in particular the analysis that Britain is already a fascist state. We will debate this position in our next edition.]

THE RAILTON 4 Committee emerged out of those people who were involved and conscious of the incident which took place in Railton Road on June 1st. (See BF 39).

4 people were arrested after a 61 year old black man was harassed by two policemen and finally arrested for assault.

Two black women who went to his assistance (one of whom was 6 months pregnant) were also arrested and charged with assault. The fourth person was merely an onlooker who stepped into the street and had a police car run over his foot. He retaliated by kicking the car once. He was later charged with malicious damage.

There was an active response from the community in support of the four arrested. It was led mainly by the black women in the community who organised all the necessary initial activities. Within twelve days the committee had organised 3 demonstrations, 2 public meetings and a picket of the police station.

The Committee was formed out of the first public meeting and composed not only of active political people but all interested and committed members of the black community. Organisations represented on the Committee are Flame (IS), The Bookshop (a political bookshop run by a black collective), the Black Women's group, Brixton and Croydon Collective and now WIDC (West Indian Defence Committee).

- Its initial aims were to:
- acquit the Railton 4.
- press charges against the police with a view to having them transferred if not totally removed from the police force.

However the last of these aims is dependent on the outcome of the trial.

Within the committee individuals thought it should be an on-going body, to deal with the defence of black people. It was decided that a permanent committee would have to have certain relations with lawyers, social workers, doctors, people to stand security, access to funds, full-time workers and much more to be effective as a permanent committee. And once such a body was established by its very nature it would have to take up every case including mugging. The committee would also deny the person involved the necessity for she/him to be involved.

It is the overall view of the committee that the fight against racism and fascism is a long term struggle. Therefore it is beyond the scope of this or any committee. The committee will handle selective individual cases which may arise during the Railton 4 case, but acknowledges that the main work has to be done

by political organisations. Defence committees and anti-fascist committees have generally arisen because of the lack of consistent successful political work in the black and white working class communities. The proof of this is that racist and fascist ideas and organisations are growing in areas of schools, housing, unemployment etc. where no alternative is given.

Political organisations are treating racism and fascism as an issue of the moment, like it was not before. They are also trying to use committees set up to publicise and gain support for individual cases as organs from which to launch themselves attain instant credibility. This is outright opportunism.

In relation to any defence or anti-fascist strategy they must all be geared to mass consciousness and mobilisation and not short-term activities for activity's sake, namely patrols just for the sake of doing something. Patrols at a given period against specific action, ie regular attacks can be positive but this does not apply everywhere.

Finally we believe that the fight against fascism and racism is a direct fight against a state which is fascist, and whose overt oppression is constantly increasing.

Railton 4 Committee.

'We want the freedom to enjoy our lives'

Leeds defendants speak

Big Flame talked to two of the youths from Chapeltown about their experiences in the trial and in the area.

ON UNITY AND LEADERSHIP

D.C.
'It's the same in every other black

area - you know every time I've been down to London I've been picked up by the police, every time. We're black, we're always going to be on the receiving end, until the day when we can... Fighting against them in this way (ie attacking the police as they

THE LEEDS BONFIRE NIGHT TRIAL ended with a victory for the black youth undreamed of even by the most optimistic of the defence. Of the ten who pleaded not guilty, six were acquitted of all charges: Danny Cohen, Glenville Sheriffe, Derek Crossley, Max Farrar, Eurie Maurice and Michael Walters. Henry Grey pleaded guilty to two charges, and was found not guilty of 11 of the 12 others he faced. He was sentenced to three months detention centre. Of the three youths found guilty, Keith Gumbs got a six month deferred sentence, and Clyde Sheriffe and Claude Hendrikson got Borstal. The two who pleaded guilty at the start of the trial, Tony Pyke and Vernon Fleming, also got Borstal.

In his summing up, Judge Beaumont (an ex Communist Party member who fought in the Spanish Civil war and turns up to court in his gardening clothes) put it squarely to the jury. The verdicts, he said:

"ultimately depend on whether you are satisfied that the written statements of confession made by the youth were made of their own free will, or whether, as they allege, they were obtained by violence or some sort of pressure."

The all white jury believed the youth, not the police. Each defendant who said he had been beaten by the police was found not guilty. The defence, who had rejected 56 possible jurors in an effort to get a young, working class jury (there were no black people on the jury panel), were vindicated.

Disbelieved

Thus the sworn testimony of twelve men from Chapeltown police station was disbelieved by the jury. And part of the sworn evidence of Chief Inspector Brayson and Inspector Jew was also disbelieved.

did on Bonfire Night) isn't going to help us. We want to fight against them some other way. But what other way? For a start we should start sticking together. A black man will always call the police against another black man. A white man would talk it over first.'

SHAFT
'We exploit each other, that's why we're never going to get on.'

D.C.
'For us to unite there's loads of things we have to fight to get unity and one of those things is going to be Babylon (the police). That's why we can't get anywhere because when they see black men uniting they get frightened. They fear there's going to be revolution.'

ON WHITE PEOPLE

SHAFT
'Yeah, we're proud to be black. You can never change it—we will always be suspicious of the white man, we've got that in us from our ancestors. It's always going to be there, that's why I'm saying it's always going to be what it is, we're just going through what our ancestors went through.'

D.C.
'You walk in blues and you see a white person you don't check them as white like you check Muller (the prosecutor in the trial) or the Babylon. You don't check them that way because you see them every day at blues and they've lived like us you know. They've adopted our way of life...'

SHAFT
'In Chapeltown the white people and the black get on all right, but it's the police. You see they won't give us a chance... the white community and the black in Chapeltown are like brother and sister like it says in the Bible, but the youth have been forced to think of the police as not human. The police, once they put on that uniform they become upper class - they've got so much power.'

THE YOUNG AND THE OLD WEST INDIANS

In the light of this amazing attack on police credibility, Chapeltown News has called for a thorough investigation of the Chapeltown police force. It calls for answers to several other questions raised by the evidence heard in court:

- Chief Inspector Brayson said that all officers were briefed before entering Chapeltown that night, yet six officers denied that there had been any special instructions.
- In the press the police claimed that they had arranged to keep a low profile, yet many officers denied this.
- In court police claimed that they entered Chapeltown because of an emergency call from one of their officers. Yet the officer concerned said there had been no trouble, and he had not sent out an emergency call.

Chapeltown News concludes: "Putting this at its worst, it appears that certain police officers might have set about engineering a deliberate confrontation with the youth. Putting it at its best, the police that night made a disastrous error of judgement in sending vehicles into the area in the way they did and at the time they did."

Now the question is raised of where Chapeltown goes from here. Chapeltown News urges the defence committee to stay together and take up the other problems the community faces - unemployment, meaningless work, cuts in welfare spending, the National Front, discrimination against blacks at Mecca discos, and the continued activities of Chapeltown's police force.

A new unity has been forged, and the presence of hundreds of black youths in the gallery during the Trial demonstrated a new awareness and commitment. As the interview with some of the defendants on page 6 shows, many problems face militants who try and channel these feelings. But the basis for struggle is clearly there.

SHAFT
'The older people have adapted. They've been forced to live the only way they can live. The younger people now, we're not accepting that way. We can't accept that way.'

D.C.
'Most of our parents have never been in trouble with the police because they're afraid. Them work and them go to them house and them watch television and them go to work. Not we. Young people today them daring.....'

SHAFT
'This Bonfire Night incident, it was probably the wrong way of going about it, but like the youths got together, and it's been talked about and talked about why, and for the first time a couple of older people began to listen and to understand. And I'm not saying that more violence is going on but the more that happens the more they are going to understand why.'

WHAT IT'S LIKE BEING BLACK IN CHAPELTOWN

SHAFT
'There's a lot of people who would like to get jobs - to survive you've got to have money, and that's why there's all this stealing and that because there's no jobs. There's no way to get money.'

D.C.
'But what kind of jobs they going to give us, what kind of dumb job they want to give us? I got through my exams for shattering on the building site and when I went to the site they didn't want to give me a job.'

SHAFT
'But now you can't even get a shit job.'

THE POLICE

'The law is the law - we're not saying we don't want no Babylon to come into Chapeltown. We're not saying we want to break into someone's house and nothing is done about it. What we're saying is we want our freedom and we want to be looked at as human beings. We want them to leave us alone and let us live our lives, enjoy our lives.'

THE STRUGGLE WORLDWIDE



TELL-EL-ZAATAR is a left-wing refugee camp in Lebanon. It has been under siege since June 22. The destruction of the camp is an essential part of the plans of the Lebanese right-wing to partition the country. Their aim is a three way divide, into a large area controlled by Syria, which is providing military equipment and arms, an area controlled by the Lebanese right-wing and fascists, and an area they will be forced to concede to the left-wing and Palestinians. The following article is by LELIA SHAHID president of the Palestinian students in France.

FOR A MONTH now the Palestinians in Tell-el-Zaatar, in the suburbs of Beirut (population 20,000) has driven back over 50 attacks from the fascist right-wing. The number of attacks, and the size of the military mobilisation cannot be explained only in terms of military goals. Of course the camp is situated near a possible border if the country is partitioned. But more important is the political and ideological importance that the camp has for the fascist right.

When it was set up in 1950 by an agency of the United Nations to house Palestinian refugees of the 1948 war, Tell-el-Zaatar only had 400 inhabitants. All it had for housing were Nysen huts left behind by the British army - no water, no electricity, no sewers. The inhabitants were totally dependent on the UN for food rations, and in order to get a ration book you had to be unemployed.

Light industry

In the mid '50s, the growth of a Lebanese commercial middle-class began industrial development in this suburb of Beirut. Small factories producing plastics, paper furniture and tinned foods developed. The Palestinians of the camp were there ready to take jobs; they made easier this industrial development.

It was at this time that the Lebanese government decided to move the inhabitants of the small camps in Beirut into the larger camps in the suburbs. Also a large number of Lebanese, from the south, looking for work, moved into the camp. So the population of Tell-el-Zaatar reached 20,000.

On top of the difficult living conditions there was fierce police repression. The Lebanese army ran the camp together with the UN. All political activity all meetings, all collective action was forbidden. The camp was completely cut off from the outside and there were identity checks at the two entrances. When there were strikes or demonstrations in Beirut, the inhabitants of the camp were not allowed out. Police searches of

Palestinian refugees

6 WEEKS UNDER SEIGE

the huts occurred every day and the younger members of the camp were constantly being arrested and tortured.

The social and political situation lasted until 1969, when the fighting between the Palestinian resistance and the Lebanese army began. The response of the inhabitants of the camp to this fighting was to kick the Lebanese army out of the camp. The resistance organisations, which had been doing secret work in the camps, took over their administration. People's Committees were set up to deal with the daily problems; in most cases the people themselves took over the running of the camps at all levels. The first step at Tel-el-Zaatar was to rename it with the name of an Israeli occupied town in Palestine. Other camps did likewise. Then they were all divided into areas and the area committees set about building sewers and cement houses - something previously forbidden by the Lebanese authorities. The different resistance organisations formed a co-ordination committee in each camp - and people's militia organised.

People's Clinics

Particularly important was the setting up of people's clinics, since the health care provided by both the UN and the Lebanese was extremely low. Nurseries were set up so the women could go out to work. Adult literacy programmes and community centres were created.

This total take over went together with important changes in people's relations, both inside the camp and with the world outside. Close ties were

built with surrounding working class areas, and there was the possibility that the developing 'self rule' of the camps would have a political influence on many Lebanese people nearby.

It is precisely this link between the inhabitants of the camps and the local working class that the right-wing is afraid of. This area, called by the right, the red-belt of Beirut, was becoming a nightmare for the Lebanese middle-class. By destroying the camp, they also hope to destroy not only a Palestinian enclave in a Christian area, but, more importantly, it's social and political influence.



French workers, immigrant workers: same boss, same struggle

FRANCE

Watch your Lip...

THE RECENT visit of the French president to England has been used as an excuse for the gutter press to remind us of the French 'economic miracle'. In recent years France has had the fastest economic growth in the EEC, and it is predicted it will soon overtake West Germany. Although France is now faced with rising unemployment, there has been economic growth in recent years.

It has been achieved on the backs of several groups within the working class in particular: agricultural workers, women, and immigrants. At the same time the Government has used ferocious repression to stop unrest in the army, the prisons and among students. So far the struggles of these minorities have not been supported by the Labour Movement which has been busy planning to get the Socialist Communist coalition elected to the Government in 1977. But although the leadership has had its mind elsewhere, all over the country rank and file workers are taking action.

There are over 400 occupied factories. The focal point of

these is the Lip watch factory in Besancon, which is once again faced with closure. In 1973 the Lip workers 'appropriated' the unsold watches in the works and from this position of strength forced the Government to invest in it and keep it open. Agricultural workers and small peasants are fighting the EEC agricultural policy, the effect of which is to force them off the land and look for work in the towns. For two years now, 103 peasants in Larzac have been fighting the army's attempt to extend an army camp over their land.

In Aix-en-Provence, militants from the Abortion Campaign are on trial for having invaded the town hospital and carried out an abortion.

Many French barracks have their own underground newspaper. Army desertions have reached record proportions.



Meeting of the Arab Workers Movement

...or there'll be trouble

THERE ARE nearly 1.5 million immigrant workers in France today. They have had no share in the 'economic miracle' their work has brought about. Once in France they are housed in company or privately owned hostels. Companies get subsidies from the government for this, subsidies which are meant to be what the state would have to pay in family allowances if immigrants were allowed to bring their families with them. Usually they are not.

SONACOTRA

One of the largest companies in the hostel business is Sonacotra. A room in a Sonacotra hostel costs £40 a month. The rooms measure nine foot by six foot; there is one kitchen for every 14 residents; one shower for every ten, and hardly any communal living space. There are no washing machines and the phone is usually in the managers office. Visits are not allowed after 10pm, and meetings are forbidden.

For almost 18 months now, up to 12,000 workers in 58 Sonacotra hostels in Paris and the provinces have been on strike. At first they were demanding a rent reduction of 50 per cent. Now their demand is for a rent reduction of £12 a month. The strikers are organised into a co-ordination committee which collects the rent every week and banks it.

Recently the strikers have been having open days at their hostels where they invite local people in to see their living conditions, and share their food and music.

The first reaction of Sonacotra was to charge its tenants not on

rent strike higher rents; this, of course, spread the strike. The cultural associations of the immigrant workers, like the Algerian Workers Friendly Society, which are run by their home countries, also tried to smash the strike. Their job was to find out who the leaders were and shop them to the police. As a result, at 5am one morning in April, police raided different hostels and arrested 16 strike leaders. They were expelled from France the same day. But the strike was not broken. Several days later a huge demonstration called by the Sonacotra Co-ordinating Committee of 15,000 French and immigrant workers, marched through the working class areas of Paris.

SOLIDARITY

For many years immigrant workers in France have been involved in struggles. In the strikes at Citroen and Renault, good links have been established between French and immigrant workers. These links are all the more important at a time when the French Government is trying to blame increasing unemployment on immigrants and get French workers to do jobs previously done by immigrants. The solidarity being built around the Sonacotra rent strikers is a concrete example of how to build unity between immigrant and French workers.

TIME OFF

Olympic power games



by Jake Roney

'We're people and we've decided human life is more important than winning medals'

LEE EVANS Mexico Olympics 400 metres winner and Nigerian coach



PEOPLE ALL over Britain are now desperately trying to catch up with lost sleep after watching the Olympic Games until 2 o'clock every night. That's the way it gets you. All of a sudden you find you have a passionate interest in handball or Greco-Roman wrestling, though you never even knew they existed before. The Olympic Games is a fantastic spectacle. Everything about it is the best. Unlike the onedimensional World cup - a leather ball being kicked for a couple of weeks - the Olympics contains everything (well almost!) that the human body is capable of - strength, speed, spring, nerve, strategy, etc, etc. And so even if you were only interested in swimming when the games started you could not help but be enthralled by the Russian or Rumanian women gymnasts, the Cuban boxers, the American and East German swimmers etc. It's a drug - it's better than the 6 billion dollar man and the bionic woman put together, it's the real thing.

NOT SEPERATE

But the Olympics is something more than the glorification of human athleticism. These particular Gods and Goddesses do not look down on us mortals from their thrones on Mount Olympus like in the Greek myths. The winners of today live in the real world with all the rest of us. This means that the Olympics can't be separated from the rest of human society. Politics cannot end when the Olympics begin. The walkout of the African countries was a pity - I too wanted to see Boit of Kenya run against Walker of New Zealand in the 1500 metres - but the walkout was necessary.

The political nature of sport was shown at the Olympics not just by the walkouts but also in the sports themselves. One of the main things about the Games is that they are very much to do with individuals, team sports take a low priority. This was the original conception of the Olympics - individual against individual. But of course that is now secondary to the battle between nations, between political systems, the individual athletes become pawns. It is only when they are competing that they can separate themselves from chauvinistic clamour.

ON YOUR OWN

The television commentators really showed what it was all about. In David Wilkie's 200 m breaststroke final, the commentator spent the first half of the race calling the swimmers by their names, but once it was obvious that Wilkie was going to win the commentary changed to 'It's Britain first, America second...' If you win you become the epitome of the excellence of the country you happen to have been born in. If you lose - your on your own kid!

Because of the nationalistic aspect of the Games a lot of the individual performances become debased, and the only people you can really support are from the smaller strictly amateur countries. The most exciting events become those where it is truly down to individuals, where money, class background and training facilities count for little. The long distance running events are the best example of this.

10,000 METRES

The Men's 10,000 metres with Viren of Finland, Lopez of Portugal and Foster of Gateshead was a gem. Training on roads and fields in all kinds of weather they epitomised the best of the Olympic tradition. The reverse side of the coin is the East German, Polish and Russian soccer teams packed with World Cup players. Or the American swimmers - children of the bourgeoisie - training 8 hours a day in sunny Florida or California whilst 'studying' for a degree in Kite flying or something similarly idiotic. The Russian men are another case in point - it makes you wonder if the Russian Army is really so powerful. Judging by the amount of sportsmen in it it seems that 'manoeuvres in the Ukraine' are merely a cover for endless inter-divisional sports contests!

The Olympics are exciting and fun but most of the time they only remind you that we live in a world of rich and poor; of competing power-blocs, of the cynical exploitation of man by man. Where some are able to develop athletically out of wealth put aside from the exploitation of the majority.

Lonrho: He who makes the gold...

When Ted Heath called LONRHO 'the unacceptable face of capitalism', he meant 'unacceptable to other capitalists'. The government investigation into LONRHO is the result of a struggle between the 'gentlemen' of financial capital (the 'City') and the self-made 'cowboys' who include Tiny Rowlands, the boss of LONRHO.

In this country if you want to be accepted by the financial establishment you have to play the game on their terms which include being quiet about the money you make and paying the establishment their percentage. LONRHO's crime was, in the eyes of the financial establishment, that Rowlands was too noisy and interfered in politics.

The LONRHO report makes clear that the directors of LONRHO who include a member of the Royal Family (Angus Ogilvy) and two leaders of the Tory Party (Duncan Sandys and Edward Du Cann) committed crimes under the Southern Rhodesia Act 1965. This makes it a crime for a Briton, resident in this country, to be involved in the export of goods

from Rhodesia - but it is unlikely they will be prosecuted.

When Rhodesia declared UDI in 1965 it became obvious to many businessmen that a lot of money could be made by companies prepared to do some sanctions busting. LONRHO had good connections in Rhodesia and Rowlands figured that if he could buy on to his board of directors men like Angus Ogilvy his company would be untouchable (after all it would not do for a member of the Royal Family to go to jail).

In the years after UDI in Rhodesia LONRHO's investments there increased from £2330 million to £12,526 million.

Derelict mine

In 1968 LONRHO bought a derelict mine in Mozambique for £150,000. The Edmondian copper mine was near Beira on the same railway as LONRHO's mines in Rhodesia. LONRHO bought the Edmondian to get bogus certificates for the copper they were mining in Rhodesia, because they were having trouble selling Rhodesian copper throughout

the world. As Rowlands himself says, 'It is quite clear to me that Edmondian being in Mozambique would have been used to produce certificates of origin for copper concentrates.'

No difference

LONRHO has been singled out because the establishment want to get him, but as Rowlands says in the report: 'Whatever the position of sanctions busting, it was certainly no different from the board of BP or Shell or Turner and Newall or Charter Consolidated. Even BOAC, who the last time I was in Salisbury were conducting a heavy advertising campaign to the effect that if you fly from Johannesburg to London by BOAC they would pay your ticket from Salisbury to Johannesburg free.'

It was becoming clear to Rowlands that Duncan Sandys, a man with good contacts with politicians all over the world, would be a good man to have working for LONRHO. In 1970 he was made a consultant to the company at £11,000 a year which was soon raised to £51,000. When Sandys was made Chairman of the company at £38,000 a year he was given £130,000 compensation for

his loss of earnings as a consultant!

One of the conditions Sandys put on working for Lonrho was that the work he did be classified as 'overseas' consultant. His wages were paid into a Jersey bank account to make sure he avoided paying income tax on them.

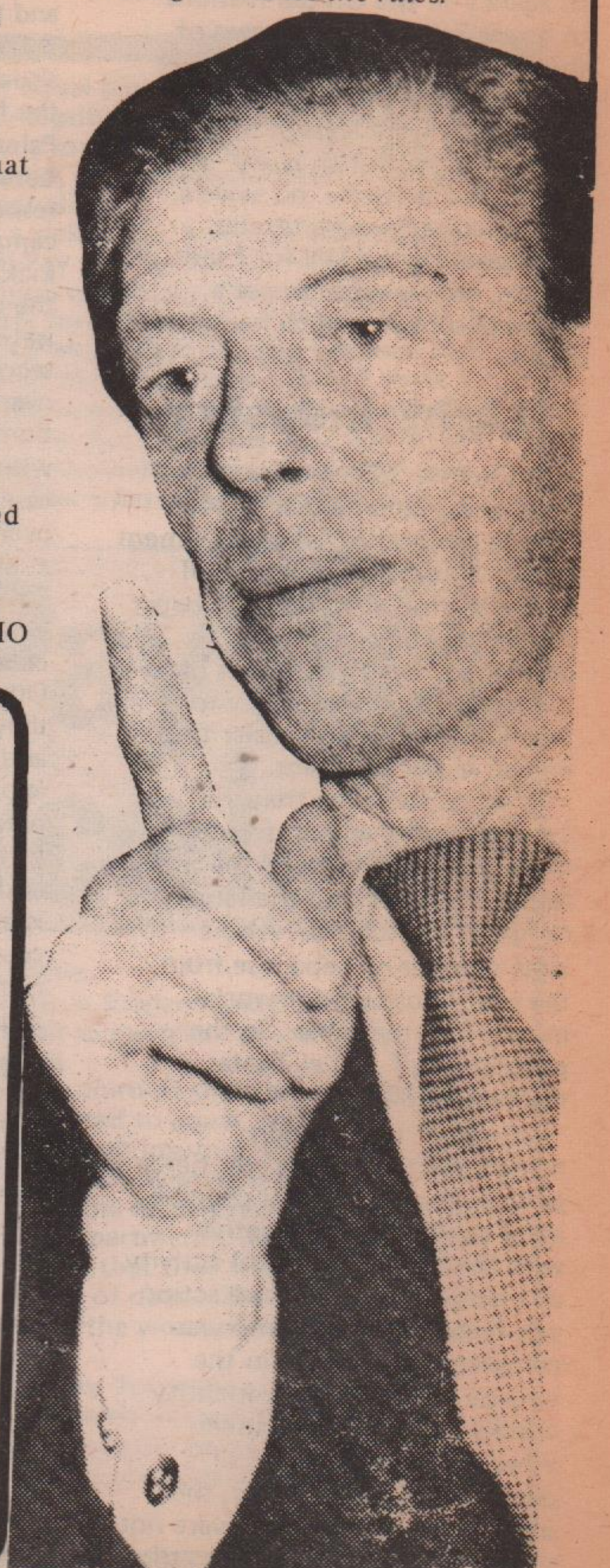
Tiny Rowlands was clever enough to see that the balance of forces in Southern Africa was changing. His solution, which is the same as Kissinger's and the CIA's, was to back 'revolutionary' movements, that if they gained power would carry out pro-capitalist policies. So, for instance, LONRHO put their jet plane at the service of Holden Roberto and the FNLA.

Another leading Tory up to his neck in LONRHO is Edward Du Cann, the ex-Chairman of the Tory Party. He is now a director of LONRHO. And not surprisingly he concealed from the other directors the fact that his old mate Sandys had got £130,000 compensation to become chairman of the company. Du Cann's merchant bank, Keyser Ullman, has become banker to LONRHO and Du Cann was on the LONRHO

board that allowed Rowlands to claim claim retrospectively £307,471 expenses for the years 1965 to 1972.

In the films every week at our local Odeon on ABC the criminals get caught and the sheriff gets a larger star. In reality things are different; the Labour Government has just loaned LONRHO a £5 million subsidy to buy Brentford Nylons with! It seems to approve of these financial mercenaries. Duncan Sandys has been knighted for his services!

As the golden rule says: He who has the gold makes the rules.



BIG FLAME IS...

BIG FLAME IS A REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST ORGANISATION. Socialist because our aim is to build a society which the working class, the majority of the people, run in their own interests. Revolutionary because we believe we'll only reach that goal by completely

changing society, not by patching it up or by piecemeal reforms. At the moment the working class produces the wealth and the ruling class takes it. In a socialist society we will get all the wealth and the power to control our own lives.

WE STAND FOR GENUINE MASS INVOLVEMENT. Every struggle must be controlled and run by the people concerned. We want to put the means of struggling - propaganda, information, ideas and organisation into the hands of the majority of the people. Not just a handful of militants, however committed. Only when people join together and fight do they work out where their interests lie and use their imagination to achieve them.

CAPITALISM OPPRESSES THE WHOLE OF OUR LIVES. We are not only exploited at work; we also have to pay high prices and rents; make do with bad housing, schools and hospitals. And it is not just these sections of the working class who are economically oppressed, like the miners and

engineers, who can fight. Housewives, hospital workers, the unemployed have all proved they can fight - and win!

THE RULING CLASS TRIES TO DIVIDE OUR CLASS BY SKILL, SEX, RACE AND AGE. It encourages divisions...skilled and unskilled, black and white, women and men, old and young...to prevent us fighting for our interests as a whole. We recognise these divisions, but try to develop unity among the working class against the common enemy - capitalism.

CAPITALISM IS INTERNATIONAL. The struggle for socialism in other countries attacks capitalism internationally and helps the fight in this country. For countries dominated by imperialist powers, the fight for national liberation is a progressive fight and usually inseparable from the struggle for socialism. This is the case in Ireland, a country oppressed by Britain for 800 years. We support these struggles and try to spread information about them.

WE TRY TO BUILD A MARXIST MOVEMENT FOR TODAY'S NEEDS. We try to learn from the various Marxist traditions, but we firmly believe in the need to create a politics and organisation which grows out of today's situation.

We believe that Big Flame's job is to help the whole working class understand and learn from its power, and so strengthen that power. We see the need for a revolutionary party of the working class that will lead the fight to defeat capitalism, but such an organisation can only be built out of the struggles of the whole of our class.



We fight for higher wages, shorter hours, a lighter workload and for full pay whether there is work or not.

We oppose incomes policies, productivity deals, redundancies and speed-ups.

We encourage links between factory and community struggles, the opening up of factory occupations to the community,

and the taking of rent and housing struggles to the workplace. We back the fight of council tenants, private tenants and squatters against rents and for decent housing for all.

We support the struggle for state-paid community-controlled facilities like nurseries and playgroups, which provide a better life for our children, and are part of the struggles of housewives against their unpaid labour in the home.

We fight against sexism and racism and support the independent organisation of women and black people for their own power.

We support struggles for sexual freedom. Freedom from the law and freedom from social prejudices. In particular we support the independent gay organisations.

We oppose British involvement in Northern Ireland, and support demands for troops out now, for self-determination for the Irish people as a whole, and for a united socialist Ireland. Against the army and the British state we give basic support to all the republican and socialist groups fighting in Ireland, whatever criticisms we may have of their political strategy or tactics.

We support and work in the National Abortion Campaign, the Troops Out Movement, the Portuguese Solidarity Movement and local anti-fascist committees.

We want people who agree with us to work with us and join our organisation.

MINERS DEMAND EARLY RETIREMENT

ONCE AGAIN the miners are shaping up for a major showdown with the Government. This time it's over the age of retirement. They're demanding retirement on full pay at 60, by the first of January next year, in direct contravention of the so-called social contract.

As one delegate put it at the recent miner's annual conference which endorsed the demand: 'No as an answer would not be tolerated.' The conference had just heard speech after speech in which miners described the ravages of mine work - accidents, injuries and lung diseases. As one

delegate said: 'We shouldn't any longer tolerate a situation in which men are physically ruined during the best years of their lives, so that they're too destroyed to enjoy retirement even when it comes.'

Action

The conference resolution, which threatens industrial action if no progress has been made by January 1, calls for retirement at 55 for underground workers, and 60 for surface workers, spread over the next four years, so that by 1980 the 55-years target has been reached. Under

the social contract no changes in hours, pensions or holidays are allowed. The demand has also been taken up by steel workers.

It's about the sixth try at a miner's conference to get a united decision on earlier retirement. The NUM's executive was caught on the hop and the vote was passed unanimously. Even if successful it will still mean miners in this country working until later in life than in several others. In France and Russia underground workers have won the right to retire at 55 with no loss of earnings. The demand is for full pay up to 65.

Trained killer runs amock

A BRITISH soldier recently found guilty of stabbing another soldier to death, walked out of the court a free man!

Private Peter Price stabbed Signalman Robert Hamilton SIX TIMES after Hamilton had jumped the queue at the chip shop in Catterick army camp.

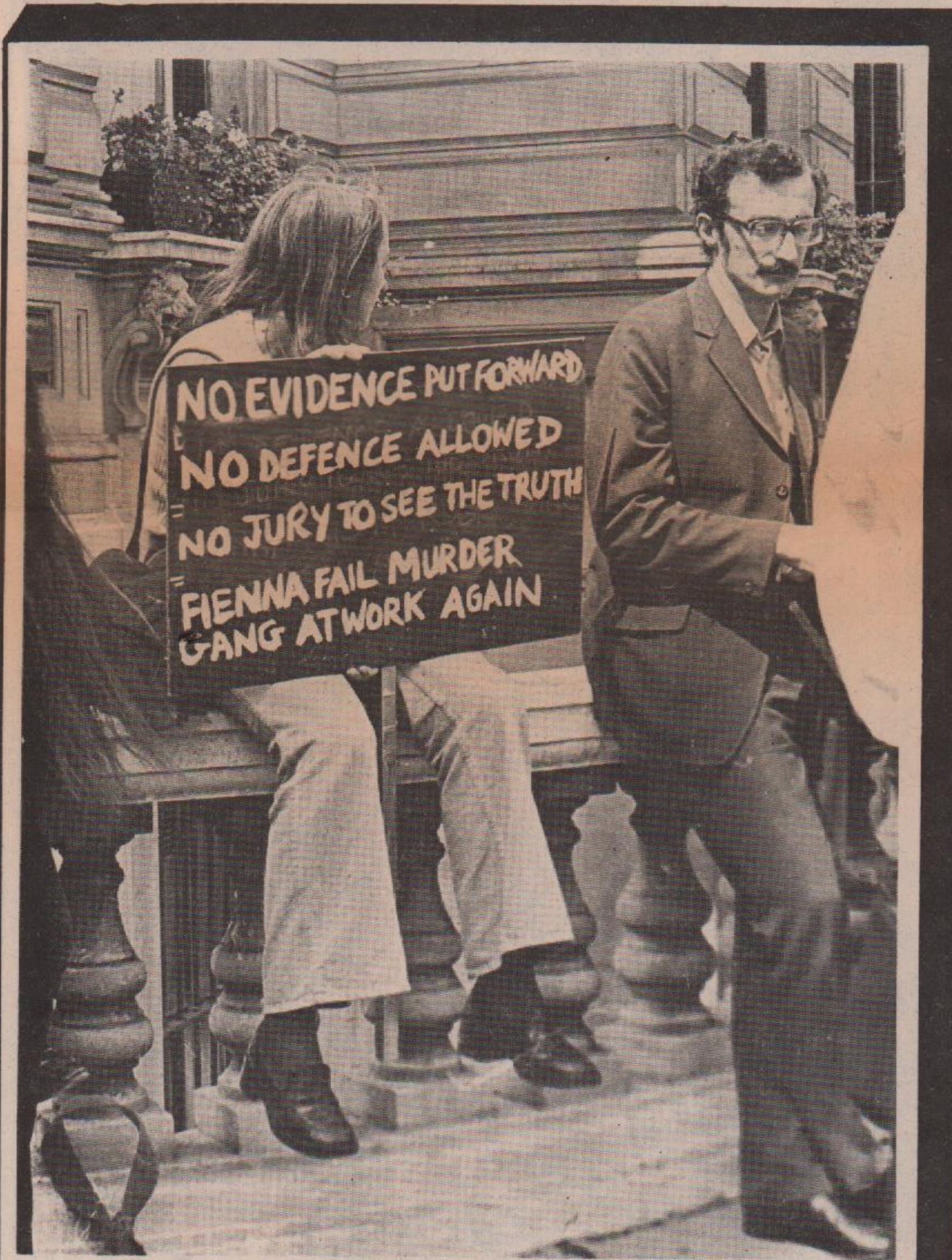
But Price had a good defence in court. He only had to explain about his gruelling service in Gibraltar, Cyprus and especially Northern Ireland and the judge was immediately on his side. Though found guilty of manslaughter, Price was only sentenced to six months SUSPENDED for one year.

Mr. Justice Thesinger said: 'In your state of mind that follows on your service dealing with urban guerrilla warfare, you went too far. I don't think you are a bad fellow at all and the army thinks you are a good one. Don't use a knife so readily as you did on this occasion.'

Anyone who uses a knife like Price is welcome in the army. His commanding officer, Major Frank Gladden said 'Were I to go back to Northern Ireland tomorrow I would be pleased to have Price with me'. In other words, we can forget all the whitewash about the British Army playing a 'peace keeping role protecting the civilian population in Northern Ireland'. The army wants killers - professional ones, The nastier, the better. It's worth remembering that the hired killers recruited in Britain to fight in Angola were all ex-soldiers many from notorious units like the Parachute regiment and the sinister S.A.S.

Maybe the fear and hatred felt by the nationalist people of Northern Ireland towards the British army of Occupation is understandable after all.

How would you like your streets patrolled by people like 'Colonel Callan' who massacred innocent civilians as well as 14 of his own men, or Private Peter Price who stabbed aman 6 times because he jumped the queue a the chip shop?



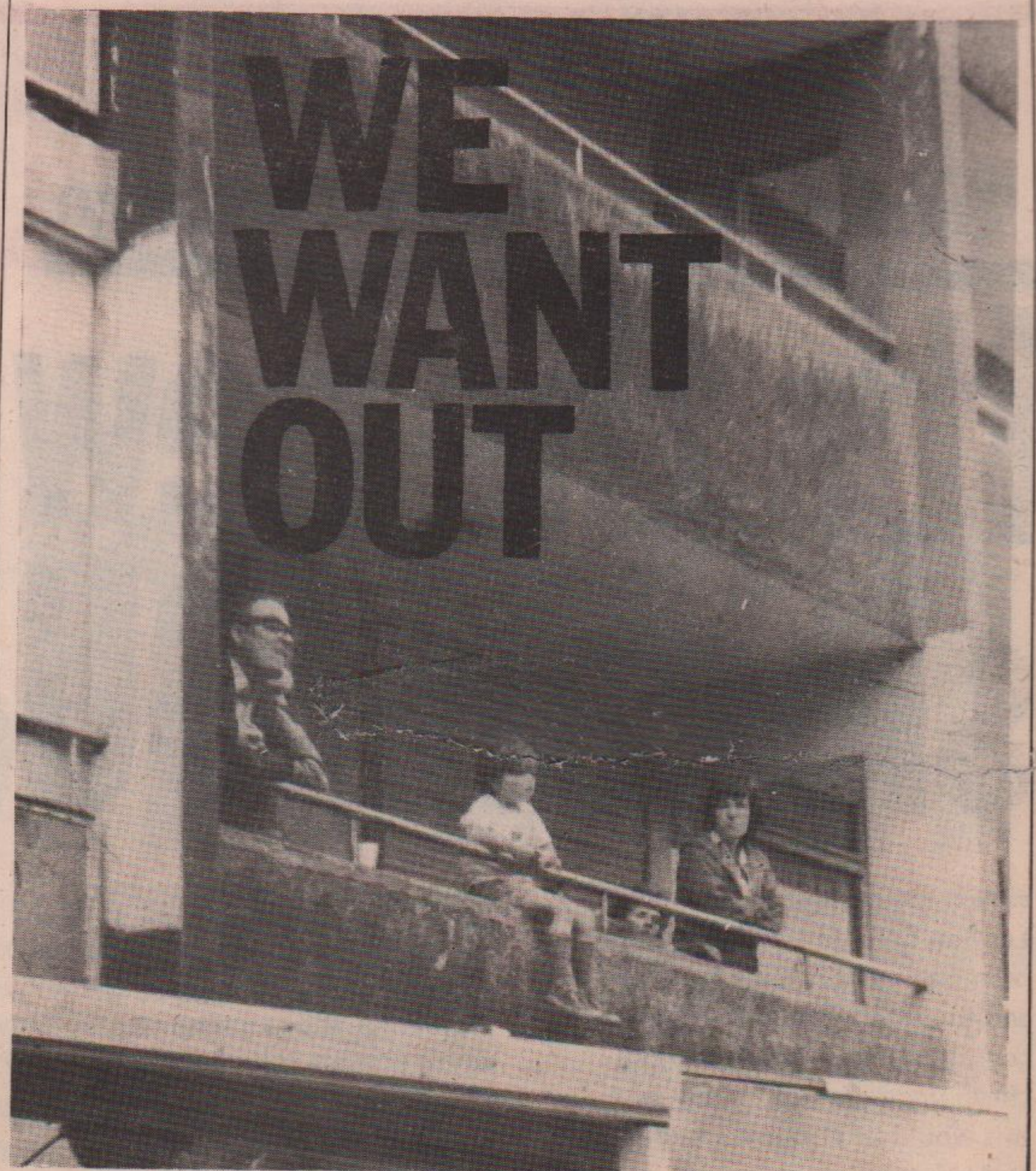
The picture is of a picket that was recently held outside the Irish Embassy in London to stop the hangings of Marie McPhillips and Noel Murray.

They are to be executed for the largely accidental murder last September after the robbing of a bank in North Dublin. The victim was an armed civilian who later

turned out to be an off duty policeman.

The trial took place in a court made up of three people. There was no jury. No-one in Ireland is actually prepared to do the hangings and so a mercenary hangman is to be imported from Britain - and we've heard lots about them recently!

TRAPPED IN A SLUM



THE sixteen remaining families in a three-quarters empty block of 'slum' flats in Liverpool barricaded themselves in for two days last month to prevent corporation workmen renovating empty flats for students, before everybody had been rehoused.

It was part of a long-running battle by tenants in Haigh Heights to be rehoused from the flats, which are a local byword for bad design and repair. After discussions between tenants and workmen, the men

agreed to stop work. At a meeting later between tenants representatives and housing officials, the council agreed to consider rehousing the tenants while renovations are going on.

However, the block is one of three due for modernisation, and families in the other two could still find themselves in ever-worsening conditions. The council has said it can't do all three at once because of the government cuts in spending.

'I have a dream'

The following letter was sent in response to a leaflet given out at the factory gates by the Big Flame Ford Halewood group. The leaflet entitled 'Watch out, watch out - there's a Fascist about', showed how much of the fascist propaganda is lies, and how the National Front and others are using racism to further their own ends.

Dear BF,

I am writing in frustration, as a writer in the Transmission Plant. For the last ten years I have got to know my fellow workers and their attitude and political awareness. Overtime militancy is about the only common ground left to unite the men and our so-called union representatives.

Regarding the leaflet 'Watch out, watch out, there's a fascist about', it must have given little significance to the majority. I am sure the National Front has a strong following here. Still, perhaps some light may have shone through when they realise what this system is doing to all the working people.

No doubt the Daily Mirror is a well read daily. The Hellicar report on the 'Arab Invasion', devoted two days on the article glorifying the rich capitalist Oil Sheiks. If only some of us could see



how this system of our society welcomes the money spending immigrants and not the money earning ones

As for this Tory lackey Labour Government which has been cutting our standard of life ever since they came into office - they are going to do more for the capitalist bosses next year by filling their already bulging pockets through cutting public spending (our hard-earned money that they confiscate in taxes and rates).

Without any public outcry £5 million of tax payers money was handed over to Lonrho. Yet what happened when the nationalised British Leyland asked for a similar loan?

I have a dream perhaps one day the British worker will start striving for a system that will benefit us all and not just a few.

From an old dissatisfied human machine working for the 'Fraud' Motor Co. Ltd.

Reprieve at Tates?

THE AXE that was threatening to fall on 2,000 jobs at Tate and Lyles Liverpool refinery has been lifted again. But there are fears that it may fall next year with even worse effects. At a recent meeting between Tates Action Committee and Fred 'Sugar Beet' Peart, Minister of Agriculture, stewards were told that a decision on the future of the industry had been postponed till March 1977. Why?

Tate and Lyle are in the process of making a take-over bid for Manbre and Gorton, the other small British refining company with special interests in glucose. Peart is now waiting to see what will emerge if this rationalisation takes place. But one thing is certain. Neither he nor Tates' bosses wish to be the one who is seen to be

responsible for redundancies at either Manbre or Tates. Whatever happens, if the refining capacity of the private refineries continues to be 'unprofitable', Peart will not hesitate to fall back on the EEC's 'sugar mountain' - and Tates are likely to repeat their highly profitable role as 'middleman' for continental sugar.

Though the future remains uncertain, one ominous sign is the fact that Tates have not renewed their contract with the dockside Huskisson Transit Company through which sugar supplies reach the Liverpool refinery. This combination of factors means that the new March deadline is not a reprieve, but a breathing space while Tates and the Government try to save face, and plan future profits regardless of the

Unite to fight trespass law



A NATIONAL conference-rally in mid-October is the next step in the campaign to kill the Criminal Trespass Bill.

The 3 July meeting of the Campaign Against a Criminal Trespass Law National Committee agreed to make the conference - of workshops, discussion, and general decision making sessions - the main focus for mobilisation in the coming period.

Trade union bodies, Labour Parties, Student Squatting groups, Cuts Campaign Committees and so on must all be approached to send delegations.

The meeting took steps to ensure that the central importance of the squatting issue is adequately expressed in the campaign.

It is clear from meetings all over the country that whatever the formal support CACTL gets from trade unions, student and Labour Party organisations, these bodies will not take action as long as their rank and file members are hostile to squatting and feel the Trespass Bill is largely about the 'squatting problem' - even if it affects them too.

The Committee agreed the recent deal to the labour movement.

only be signed by this derestrained personalities in Labour Party but all groups, womens groups.

This will help to build a more active anti-squatting movement. It should be when it is circulated against racism and the black and minorities.

More effort is being made to

to actually affiliate to the campaign committee - along with trade - rather than just to be called support.

The 12 week. The dispute is over management's attempt to force flexibility of labour between the wiremen and the fitters. The EEPTU is not supporting the strike which the AUEW has made official and the 6 EEPTU members who have come out and joined the picket are threatened with expulsion from their union.

This lack of union solidarity can only do harm at a time when ICL management has announced 1400 redundancies nationally.

Financial support should be sent to: Brother B. Franks 64 Windsor Rd. DENTON, Manchester

BIG FLAME

London Fare Fights Campaign

It's the new slogan: IOU

WHEN the present Labour Greater London Council was elected, they promised to hold fares for a year, and then start reducing them to a completely free bus service and cheap underground. They said this would be cheaper, more efficient and more socially just: AND THEY WERE RIGHT! But what's happened to that promise?

TUBE FARES UP 118% in 18 months.
 BUS FARES UP 113% in 12 months.
 SERVICES CUT, MORE WAITING, MORE CROWDING, MORE HARRASSED PASSENGERS LOSING THEIR TEMPER WITH MORE OVERWORKED TRANSPORT WORKERS.

All this because the Government has said that public transport should 'break even'. It's more likely to break our backs, because cutting back on public transport makes the effects of all the other cuts worse. For instance, 27 hospitals in Northern and Central London have closed in the last eight months. Just think of all the extra travelling this is causing for patients' relatives and hospital workers. Now this travelling is to be made more difficult and for some people, impossible.

On the 18th July, tube fares in London went up 25 per cent. That night hundreds of posters went up in and around tube stations showing how to fight the rise. The next morning passengers started to open their own credit accounts with London Transport. We paid what we thought was a fair price and handed in IOUs for the difference to the ticket collectors. By having the IOUs ready no one could be charged with 'travelling with intent to avoid payment'. As the London Transport bureaucracy don't seem to want to spend their time working out a sane and fair transport system, they are going to have to spend their time trying to cash those IOUs. And its going to take them a long time! After all, many of the letters they send out demanding money may not arrive, or may get lost in the post. So reminders will have to be sent out.

Mistakes

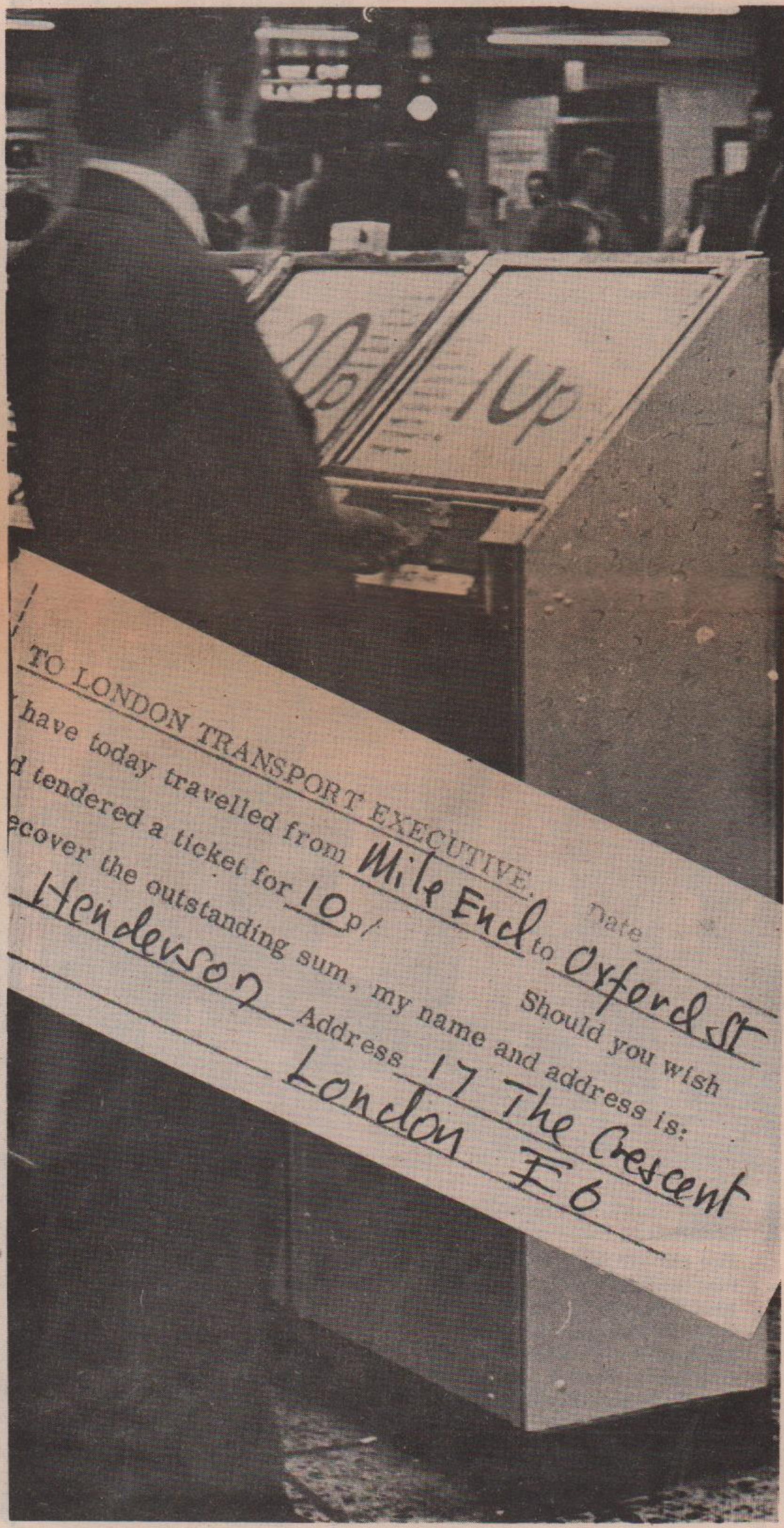
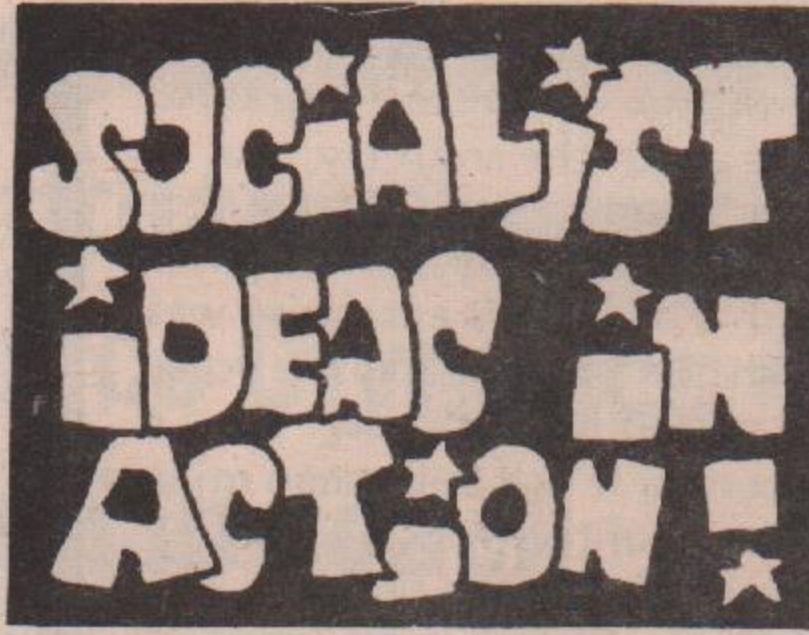
If any of these go astray, London Transport will probably have to resort to recorded delivery, and hope they change to catch people in when the working class arrives. The next problem is that the ruling class takes all the power to control our own lives.

in case mistakes have been made. Finally, it's inevitable that a small percentage of people will make silly mistakes on the cheques or postal orders that they send in, so that the whole process will have to start all over again.

The campaign has been organised under the name FARE FIGHT, and the organisers (originally a few people from the George Davis campaign) have been able to involve and enthuse a wide range of people and groups. To start off the campaign, they produced 1500 posters, about 6000 books of IOU slips, leaflets to give out to the general public, explaining the campaign another set of leaflets explaining how to defer payment as long as possible and your exact legal position at every stage, and yet another aimed directly at the LT workers themselves.

AND THEY DIDN'T STOP THERE. Many people have never put up posters so they were given a set of instructions with each bundle of posters explaining how to make paste that would stick for ever, the legal position, and a number to call if you were caught doing anything you shouldn't have. The same applied to leafletting on the trains, the underground and so on. In other words the campaign isn't just about something that concerns ordinary people, it's also being organised and fought in a way that ordinary people can take part in fully and confidently. And just in case London Transport do give any FARE FIGHTERS a rough time at any station, that station can then expect a visit from a big crowd of very confident people within a few hours.

We want to see a transport system that suits the needs of ordinary people in London. So that we don't have to spend half our wages getting to and from work. So that we don't have to spend half our lives waiting for the bus or tube that never comes. We want to be able to go and visit our friends, family, the cinema etc. and not have to pay through the nose for it. Impossible? Here is a quote from Sir Ron Ironmonger, Leader of South Yorkshire County Council, announcing an 'unexpected but welcome increase in bus fare revenues. South Yorkshire fares are the lowest in the country, and the council is the only authority to show a revenue increase this year'. SO, SINCE AT LEAST ONE WORKING CLASS SOLUTION TO THE CUTS HAS BEEN PROVED TO WORK, WHAT ABOUT ALL THE OTHERS? Contact FARE FIGHT c/o Flat 3, 76 Sidney St., London E.1. 01-790-9965



Anti-facists arrested

THERE ARE BIG FLAME GROUPS IN:

BIRMINGHAM: 768 Bristol Road, Birmingham 29

LEEDS: 25 Lucas Street, Leeds 6 0532-457177

LIVERPOOL: 217 Wavertree Rd., Liverpool 7 051-263-1350

LONDON: 79c Annerly Rd., London SE20 01-659-3895

MANCHESTER: 317 Bradford Rd., Manchester 10

FIVE PEOPLE from an anti-fascist action group in Benfleet, Essex, were arrested last month during the Thurrock by-election campaign for fly-posting Big Flame anti-racist posters.

They were held in connection with the Criminal Damages Act, questioned at length and kept in the cells from mid-night until 5:30 am, without being allowed a phone call. No formal charges have yet been made.

The action group was formed to fight the activities and propaganda of the National Front in the area. Grays, where the arrests took place, was the scene of violent clashes between the fascists, police and anti-fascist demonstrators last month, when the Front held a march through the town a week before the by-election led by Robert Bell.

'Can't afford the bills'

Julie Broadbent recently had her electricity cut-off because she couldn't afford to pay the bill. She and the local heating action group, in Chapeltown, Leeds, had been organising to prevent the cut-off. But they were taken by surprise when six Yorkshire Electricity Board workmen and two policemen arrived at 8am and forced their way in with crowbars. The story was picked up by the Yorkshire Evening Post, which wrote in an editorial: "Most people will sympathise with Mrs Broadbent in her plight, but at the same time there is another side of the picture. That can be summed up briefly: most people pay their bill." This is Julie's reply, which the Evening Post didn't print.

I feel really pleased that somebody lives in a district where people can pay their bills. I don't. Most people I know have enough trouble managing to find enough money to pay for their food, rent and kids clothes. Not all people are finding it easy to meet increasing gas and electric as was implied. I don't intend not to pay my bills, the same as I don't intend to stop eating. But I have to have some order of priority. Mine just happens not to be the YEB.

The YEB claim consumers of gas and electricity are entitled to look to these undertakings to ensure that payments are made. We can all agree that the YEB can resort to the sort of tactics they used on me today, that is two vans from the YEB, each containing three or four electricians in each van, plus two police officers, to gain entrance into a house with just one woman stopping them. But I would have thought they could have channeled their energy to a more human solution to the problem. "Of course I would rather pay my way. All I need to do this is a decent wage or cheaper fuel."

The Chapeltown Heating Action Group has been formed by three local women, fed-up with receiving huge heating bills they can't afford to pay. They have already successfully fought one cut-off. As part of their campaign to stop cut-offs, they have leafleted Yorkshire Electricity Board workmen and talked to people in local pubs.

Fines in Bradford

LAST MONTH over a hundred and forty people were fined £25 each for obstruction of the highway, a very minor offense. The fines were for the anti-fascist 'carnival sit-down' in the centre of Bradford in June, organised by the Manningham Defense Committee. People dressed up in carnival costumes and there were paper hats, streamers and balloons. The demonstration's peaceful nature was symbolised by a giant yellow teddy bear, which led the sit down and sat in Bradford Magistrates' Court, watching the proceedings.

Although there was no violence and nobody resisted arrest, demonstrators were locked in crowded cells for between six and sixteen hours, and the Magistrates decided to multiply the usual fine for obstruction by five.

The demonstration was intended to get away from the idea of the young virile 'street fighting man', and to involve more people in the struggle against fascism. Its success can be judged from the large number of women and gays who took part. As one member of the Gay Liberation Front said: "It was particularly good, gay-wise. It really freaked the police when we kissed and hugged each other whenever we met in the corridors or the cells. As one gay brother said afterwards, I've never been so proud to be gay."

Gay people were also in the court in large numbers, wearing drag, make-up, or fancy dress costumes. One gay man spoke of the hatred and fear the National Front and other fascists have for gay people.

Sit-down

Nevertheless, while the sit-down was fun and got publicity, it was also naive. As one demonstrator put it: "If I was a fascist or a copper, I'd rather face a load of people sitting down than a crowd chucking things and looking like they'd kick my head in." While violence is no complete solution, passive resistance is not enough. If you want to help those arrested with their fines, please send donations via Leeds Big

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