



STRIKE ACTION NOT WORDS TO STOP CUTS

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£1,000 million in new spending cuts, along with another £1,000 million in extra taxation, is the latest in the long series of savage attacks on jobs and conditions which have been made by this reactionary Labour government.

These attacks cannot be defeated by gestures, by protests or by 'left' rhetoric. They can only be defeated by all-out strike action by the unions affected, calling for the support of the whole labour movement in defence of jobs, conditions, the social services, health and education.

ADMITTED

While Healey and Callaghan arrogantly admit that the cuts are made entirely in the interests of the capitalist class in Britain and internationally, not one trade union or Labour leader has so far presented any programme to defend the working class.

The 'lefts' have criticised the cuts - but give no lead for action to fight back.

They act as if a few words and votes will change the minds of the government.

But every attack so far has shown that its policies can only be defeated by the mobilisation of the full strength of the working class.

This has to centre on strike action, based on a programme of demands which fully defend the interests of the working class, irrespective of the requirements of capital.

SACRIFICES

The sacrifices which Healey offered up to the capitalist class last week involved major reductions in spending on the health service, housing, local authority spending, food subsidies and pensions for disabled housewives, as well as increased charges for school meals, dental treatment and spectacles.

Healey admitted that the measures would give another huge boost to unemployment (he admitted to 70,000 redundancies, while the Tribune group estimate 200,000).

This was only a day after the

latest figures showed that the number of registered unemployed was almost 1½ million.

Three days later the government gave the details of a further £100 million of previously announced staffing cuts in the civil service. And its campaign for more immediate cuts in the "overspending" by local authorities has been stepped up.

STAFF CUTS

Callaghan urged in the House of Commons that authorities should cut staff as well as services because, he added cynically, "the purpose of the staff is to provide the services."

There has been no shortage of words in opposition to these policies - from some of the trade union leaders as well as the parliamentary 'lefts'. These words will now be tested.

Unless verbal opposition is backed up with action then it is nothing more than a smoke-screen behind which to hide betrayal of the interests of the working class.

The Tribune MPs have correctly argued that Foot and Benn should have resigned from the Cabinet in protest over the cuts; but what will they do themselves to oppose them?

AMBIGUOUS

Their threats to vote against them or abstain in parliament have been veiled and ambiguous and are only made on the assumption that, because of Tory support or neutrality, there is no danger of the right-wing Callaghan government being defeated.

Keeping this anti-working class government in power at all costs remains the reactionary and cowardly objective of the Tribune group.

Voting against the cuts in parliament, however, though a necessary step to be welcomed, would not defeat them. That requires a united and uncompromising response by the working class in the form of strike action.

Will the Tribunes campaign to mobilise the mass following they have among certain sections of workers in support of strike

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PHOTO: Courtesy of Camden Chronicle.

400 hospital workers march through London

HOSPITAL WORKERS STRIKE TO STOP CLOSURE

The success of the one day strike at four London hospitals against the threatened closure of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital is an important step forward in the fight against the cuts in public spending.

The strike, fought for by members of the WSL, was the workers' reply to the lobby of Parliament proposed by local Stalinists in an attempt to head off growing support for an occupation of the EGA.

Instead, the day of action on the 21st July became a platform on which an occupation can now be built with strikes at the EGA, University College, St. Pancras and National Temperance hospitals, including the Royal Free (North Camden) and Whittington (Islington).

These were the first strikes

against the present cuts in public spending since railway men on the Eastern Region were bullied back to work by their union bureaucracy last March.

Their success shows the willingness of workers to fight the present policies of the Labour government and trade union leaders.

After picketing the various hospitals in the morning 400 workers marched from the EGA to the House of Commons.

During the march veteran Stalinist Betty Harrison announced from the lead car that this was a "protest" march against the threatened closure of one hospital, the EGA.

This claim was in marked contrast to the high level of militancy shown by the marchers who clearly saw the fight to save the EGA as part of the fight against the cuts in public spending.

Thus the whole march took up the demands of the WSL - "No More Cuts in the NHS - Strike Occupy!", and "Save the EGA - Strike Occupy!"

Upon reaching the House of Commons 200 of the marchers crowded into the lobby room to see Betty Harrison take the chair introducing a series of speakers.

In her introduction Harrison completely ignored the fact that strike action had been taken against all hospital closures, insisting that the march was a protest against the closure of the EGA.

Amongst the platform speakers, only Richard Shield, the secretary of University College Hospital Joint Shop Stewards Committee, put the day of action in the context of a fight against the present policies of the Labour government.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS



POLAND REPRISALS AGAINST STRIKERS

Brutal sentences were handed out last week in Warsaw and Radom to workers involved in the June 25th strikes and demonstrations which forced the Polish regime to withdraw — overnight — the massive increases in food prices they had announced the day before.

In Radom, (an industrial city sixty miles south of Warsaw, where mass demonstrations attacked Communist Party offices and opened up the luxury apartments of local bureaucrats) six workers were jailed for terms of six to ten years after a secret "trial".

"TRIAL"

And in the first of the Warsaw "trials" seven workers of the Ursus tractor plant got sentences of three to five years.

One of those who received the longest term was a young worker, Mirosław Chmielewski, accused with others of ripping up a main railway line running near the plant. Further secret victimisations are certainly due or already in process.

DILEMMA

The Stalinist bureaucracy in Poland is desperately trying to recover from one of the biggest blows struck at them by the working class since the war.

Their dilemma is sharply expressed in the fact that while they are blaming "the disturbances" of June 25th on a handful of "hysterical hooligans in a state of drunkenness", in practice they faced a strike movement which forced them, within hours, to capitulate on price increases totalling thousands of millions of pounds.

And reports now show that it was indeed a national strike move-

ment. There were important stoppages in the cities of Poznan and Wrocław.

In Warsaw, as well as the Ursus works, there were strikes at the Karol-Swierczewski Steel Works, at the Tewa transistor factory and — perhaps most important of all — at the Zeram motor plant, the centre of preparations for armed resistance to the threatened Soviet invasion of 1956.

At Plock there were demonstrations at the petro-chemical works, which process oil piped from the Soviet Union. And there are also reports of action in the Baltic ports of the Gdansk area, scene of the strikes and demonstrations against similar price rises which toppled Gomułka and brought Gierek's group to power in December 1970 and January 1971.

Such a national movement reflects the profound social contradictions of the deformed workers' state in Poland.

The Stalinists' version that food prices are artificially low because workers have been protected from inflation since 1970 is a cynical lie.

PRIVILEGE

While prices in state shops have been controlled, supplies have been diverted more and more into the black market and into the innumerable "privilege" shops in which party and state functionaries can get whatever they want — while ordinary workers must queue for hours for inferior produce or pay through the nose, on the black market.

The strike wave was not at all against socialism or the state control of prices, but on the contrary, against the bureaucratic deformations and prostitution of the planned economy to serve the greed and arrogance of the Stalinist caste.

Western Stalinism has reacted with lick-spittle hypocrisy. The Italian Communist Party has sent a note to Gierek expressing "pre-occupation" after receiving an appeal from the Polish oppositionist Jacek Kuron, himself jailed by the regime in 1965 and 1969.

The labour and trade union movement in Britain, and in particular the British Communist Party, must take up the defence of the workers who face repression and long jail terms in Poland for the "crime" of opposing price-rises and wage cuts.

Trade union branches and Trades Councils must demand that the Polish government must release those jailed and drop the dozens of secret "trials" that are still pending. [Polish Embassy — 47, Portland Place, London W1.]

PERU:

STALINIST-BACKED JUNTA MOVES RIGHT

The strikes and riots which followed the Peruvian military dictatorship's latest anti-working class economic measures have in their turn provoked a major upheaval within the military regime which first seized power eight years ago.

After he had put down an abortive coup by one General, the Prime Minister and Commander in Chief, General Fernandez Maldonado was himself deposed only a few days later to be replaced by General Arbulu Galliani.

This complicated reshuffling of Generals represents a decisive shift of power inside the Peruvian military. The shift is *not*, as the capitalist press and some of the left papers say, from the left to the right.

It is rather a move away from the "modernising" section of the right-wing military which seized power in 1968.

JUNTA

The Junta has since attempted to build up Peruvian industrial capitalism, has increased the role of the state, reduced the power of the old landed oligarchy and somewhat reduced the influence of the United States in Peru, replacing it with closer links with other imperialist powers in Western Europe and with Japan.

Maldonado and other members of his cabinet who have fallen with him still to some extent represented this "modernising" tendency in the military.

The only representative of this tendency now remaining in a major position is the President, Morales Bermudez, who himself seized power from President Velasco after a previous series of anti-government riots in August 1975 and is now politically isolated.

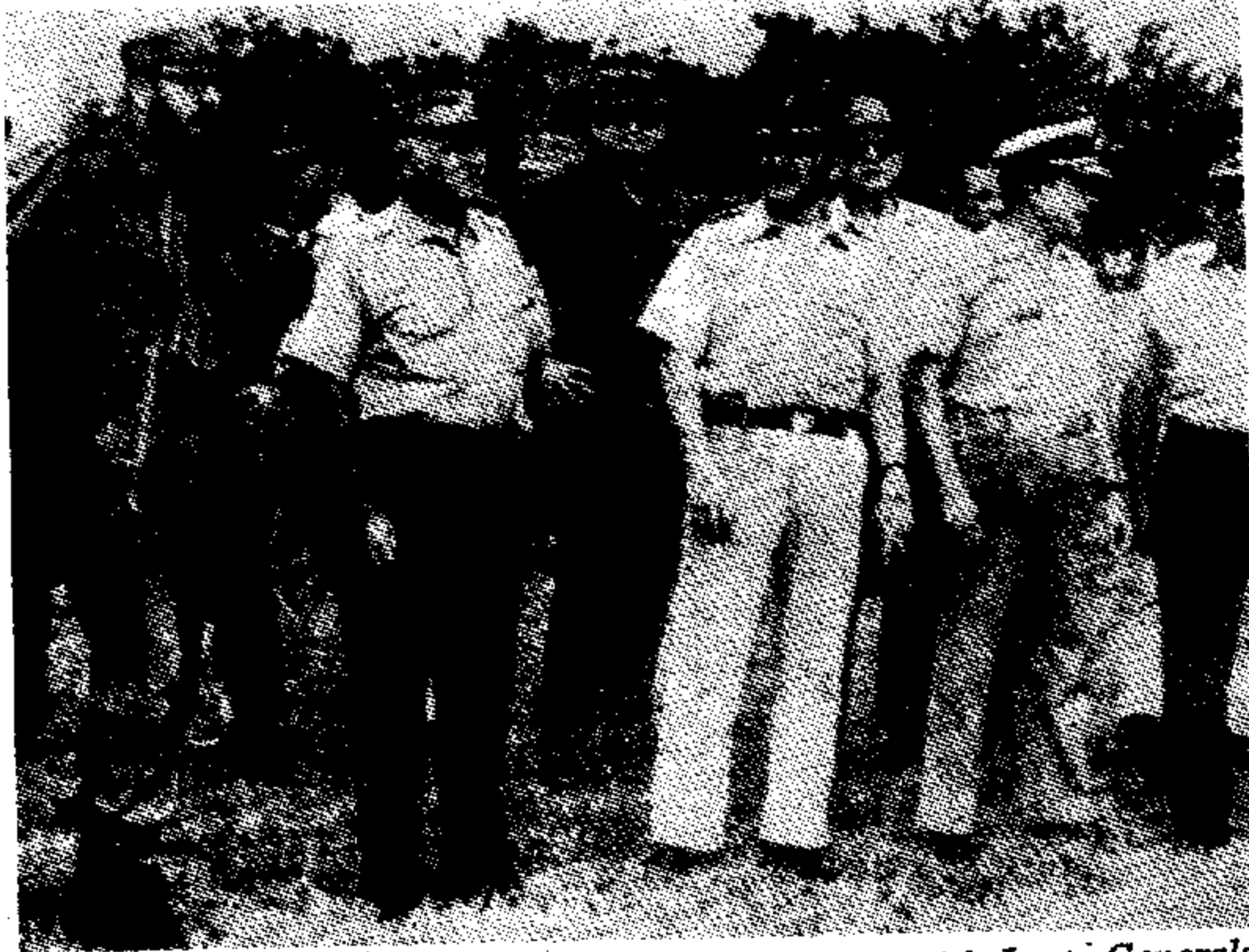
ANTI-WORKING CLASS

There was *never* anything "left" about this group. They have systematically pursued an anti-working class policy, brutally suppressing any independent political movement of the working class and peasantry.

The right to strike and form trade unions has been rigorously limited. On a number of occasions strikers have been shot dead by police.

Hundreds of workers and peasant leaders have been tortured, imprisoned or exiled.

Wages have been controlled by



Castro with Junta Generals



Velasco

The land reform introduced with much fanfare has brought no benefits to the peasantry.

In foreign policy, although the regime has produced a torrent of "anti-imperialist" and "third world" rhetoric, it has in reality been participating in inter-imperialist manoeuvres.

NO ASSISTANCE

When the military dictatorship set out to crush the working class of Chile in 1973, the supposedly "progressive" Generals of Peru gave no assistance to Chilean workers; instead they assisted the military junta by returning political refugees, and that was totally in character with their regime.

class policies.

The Peruvian Communist Party has consistently supported the regime both directly and through the trade union federation, CGTP, which it dominates. The Soviet bureaucracy has continually allied internationally with the military dictatorship.

CASTRO

And Fidel Castro has also given the Peruvian generals uncritical support.

In 1971 in Lima, Castro told an audience of Peruvian workers, some of whose leaders were in jail, who were forbidden to form independent trade unions or go on strike, and who might be shot dead if they did so: "If I were Peruvian I would support this government".

It will now be more difficult for the Stalinists as well as many liberals and social democrats to continue to make their grotesque claims for the revolutionary credentials of the Peruvian military dictatorship.

The group under General Arbulu who have now taken power are closer to American imperialism and the old landed oligarchy than the defeated Generals.

They make absolutely no attempt to disguise their extreme right-wing positions and anti-working class intentions.

FIGHT BACK

But they come to power at a moment when the Peruvian working class has shown itself ready to fight any new attacks on working class conditions and is demanding

ARGENTINA:

CRACK-DOWN CONTINUES

In the growing campaign of terror waged by the Argentinian military dictatorship some heavy blows have been inflicted on the workers' and left organisations.

The main direct agents of the terror are the police and the licenced death squads which are organised by army generals and the security services.

Huge numbers of local trade union leaders, left-wing priests and political refugees from other Latin American dictatorships have been murdered or have disappeared and are presumed dead.

But a large part of the campaign has been directed against the two guerilla organisations — the ERP (People's Revolutionary Army) which is the armed section of the Castroite PRT (Workers' Revolutionary Party) and the left-Peronist organisation, the Montoneros.

Last week the secretary-general of the PRT, Roberto Santucho, was murdered by the police along with six other leading members of the ERP/PRT.

The increasingly savage and indiscriminate nature of the repression reflects the rapid break-up of central authority within the dictatorship.

General Videla and other leading members of the Junta wish to exterminate the guerilla groups and repress all signs of independent activity by the working class.

But having sent their finance minister Martinez de Hoz on a begging mission to Europe and the United States to get funds to alleviate Argentina's financial crisis, they would like to do it without the embarrassment of the death squads and the more public savage activities of the police.

The fact is, however, that the Junta does not really hold command. Its power over the Generals who manage the death squads is minimal and it is scarcely able to control the police.

General Videla's Junta is becoming little more than a figurehead in a country where the ultra-right murderers freely roam the streets.

And the working class is now paying a heavy price for the treachery of its political leadership, especially the Communist Party which supports the military dictatorship and most of the trade union bureaucracy which continues to discuss compromising deals with the Junta.

The two guerilla organisations have suffered heavy casualties and this seems to have advanced the movement towards their unification under the title Argentine Liberation Organisation (OLA).

They continue to offer considerable military resistance to the Junta but their previous political positions have kept them relatively isolated from the working class and prevent them from offering an effective political leadership to Argentinian workers.

BOLIVIA

BANZER

CONFRONTS CRISIS

The miners' strike continues in at least two of Bolivia's major tin mines (Siglo XX and Catavi). In the rest there has been a partial return to work in advance of wage negotiations which were due to begin on July 14th.

But there is little chance of these negotiations taking place in the near future since the miners' newly elected representatives have demanded the withdrawal of the troops occupying the mining areas and the return of the exiled and imprisoned leaders before they are prepared to negotiate.

Several hundred union leaders have been arrested since the struggle began and about sixty of them have been deported to Chile.

Banzer faces this trial of strength without any popular support and



own army. And the stocks of tin which amount to 7,000 tons are enough to last only a few more weeks before Banzer's government runs

SPAIN: MASS STRUGGLES AGAINST NEW REGIME

The new Spanish cabinet is already showing itself no more capable than its predecessor of holding together the crumbling structure of fascism.

Prime Minister Suarez took office when military and other ultra-Francoist forces objected to the "reformists" of the previous cabinet.

But already Suarez has been forced into the same kind of "reformist" rhetoric in an effort to find shelter from the tornado of anti-government activity from the working class.

The sight of demonstrations in the last two weeks of tens of thousands in every major Spanish city terrified the members of the Cortes (Spain's fake parliament) into finally passing the law which would legalise some political parties.

The Communist Party will be excluded, though it is not explicitly mentioned in the law as many members of the Francoist 'bunker' wanted.

REFUSED

All the parties of the class collaborationist opposition alliance, the Democratic Coordination, have so far refused to apply for legal recognition under this new law.

Suarez has also reiterated Arias Navarro's promise of a constitutional referendum in the autumn followed by "general elections" before June 1977.

And the growing clamour for amnesty has made it almost certain that King Juan Carlos will shortly be forced to announce the release of about 350 political prisoners (not including members of the Euskadi nationalist organisation ETA or the Maoist guerilla group the FRAP).

PATHETIC

All this is the Suarez government's pathetic effort to put on an acceptable face. But even



Workers demonstrate in Barcelona, February 1976

since the amnesty proposal was announced, there has been a noticeable increase in the number of political arrests.

Trade union leaders in particular have suffered. The socialist party's trade union organisation the UGT, hitherto relatively unmolested, has had several militants arrested in the last few days and one of its members in Asturias shot dead in the street by the Civil Guard while putting up posters.

BOMBS

On the fortieth anniversary of Franco's rebellion a series of bombs exploded in important government buildings in Madrid and other cities. Responsibility has been claimed by an organisation calling itself the "Anti-Fascist Resistance Group" but it seems certain that the bombs were the work of right wing provocateurs.

The placing of the bombs make it fairly obvious that the bombers had the cooperation of the security services even if they were not the

very same people.

The bombs were immediately used as the pretext for a new police round up of the left. And the amnesty, if it comes, will not, of course, involve any reduction in the mounting scale of political arrests.

The Suarez government, then, has found no better answer than its predecessor to the problems of the Spanish ruling class.

One of these problems is how to impose real wage cuts and higher unemployment, which Spanish capitalism so urgently needs on a working class which is every day more aggressive and impatient. Last week it was forced to concede the wage demands of the striking postal workers (which the Arias government had temporarily crushed a few months ago by calling up the postal workers into the army).

150,000 MARCH

And the police did not dare to intervene against the march of 150,000 in Bilbao demanding work for the unemployed.

The regime's position could hardly be more contradictory. They are forced to put on their "reformist" camouflage in order to entice the working class within range. Yet they are unable to disguise the fact that they cannot allow their reforms to have any real content.

So they hint at permitting the right to strike, knowing that they must fight mercilessly to prevent its being used.

Since the brutal suppression of last months' riots which left hundreds of black workers and school children dead or wounded, Vorster's racist government has completely withdrawn the measure which sparked off the disturbances (the compulsory use of Afrikaans in schools) and it has sacked the officials responsible for the policy.

But the signs of black discontent have never ceased. And it has now boiled up once again. At Kinross near Johannesburg on July 19th, 1000 gold miners went on strike after a day of rioting in which six were killed and many others wounded; similar incidents had taken place a few days earlier at the St. Helena mine.

CLOSED

The black university of Fort

They offer amnesty but at the same time step up political arrests. They promise elections contested by legalised parties - but none of these will be parties which have significant numbers of working class members and supporters.

"INDEPENDENT"

"Independent" trade unions are planned but they will not include any of the organisations which the working class has itself set up during the years of repression.

For this reason the recent general assembly of the Workers Commissions in Barcelona was banned and had to be held "in secret" (though the UGT had been permitted to hold a congress two months earlier).

The Workers' Commissions (local and factory based workers' organisations) first developed after the strikes in Asturias and other regions in the early 1960s. They developed so fast that the Spanish Communist Party (PCE) liquidated its own union organisation the OSO into the Commissions and has since then been the major, if not always the dominant, force inside them.

LARGEST

They were nearly destroyed by repression between 1969 and 1972 but vigorously came back to life after that to become the largest organisation of the Spanish workers' movement.

The PCE has made activity in the Commissions a central element

of its strategy. It has consistently tried to maintain the Commissions as a very loosely federated 'movement' and prevent them from developing into a real trade union federation.

A few months ago the PCE leaders actually took a decision to liquidate the Commissions into the Francoist regime's official syndical organisation (in which elections to local and factory posts had recently been won almost entirely by Workers' Commission candidates).

This scandalous proposal was resisted so strongly by the rank and file of the movement that the PCE leaders were forced to withdraw it almost immediately.

But they made sure that the recent general assembly should lead to no further challenge to its political line. The assembly was not prepared by a wide discussion in the Commissions and most of the delegates were not democratically elected but bureaucratically hand-picked.

Not surprisingly, therefore, Marcelino Camacho, the PCE candidate, was elected to the leading position of the movement nationally; the executive of 20 consisted almost entirely of PCE nominees; and the PCE's political theses were passed by the assembly by a very large margin.

The main point of the theses was that the Commissions should not attempt to build themselves into an independent trade union structure until unity had been achieved with the Socialist-dominated UGT and the ex-Christian USO.

COVER

This apparently worthless commitment to trade union unity is in fact nothing more than a cover for a policy which holds back the development of the Spanish workers' movement.

But pressure against this line is mounting inside the Commissions from the centrist organisations the PTE and the ORT, other left and revolutionary groups and from large sections of the rank and file.

The bureaucratic organisation of the general assembly is an example of how the PCE leadership is being forced into increasingly naked attacks on workers' democracy in order to maintain its political position.

This struggle within the main workers' organisation is a reflection of the broader struggle between the Spanish working class and the mortally wounded fascist regime whose life is only prolonged by the policy of the Communist Party.

The Workers Socialist League

The Workers Socialist League was formed in December 1974 to struggle for the continuity of the principles of Trotskyism in Britain and towards the rebuilding of the Fourth International.

In the daily struggle to take the demands and principles of Trotsky's Transitional Programme into the trade unions, the WSL has been at the forefront of the fight for the sliding scale of wages, and work sharing on full pay - demands which at the 1975 T&GWU Conference were the only alternative to Jones' £6 pay plan and the wholesale acceptance of redundancies by the bureaucracy. In today's fight against the TUC's 4½% pay cutting proposals this demand for a sliding scale of wages (rising according to the rising cost of living as assessed by trade union committees) is the essential basis of consistent opposition.

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

In local disputes also, WSL comrades have tested and developed the demands of the Transitional Programme, putting forward in every case the only real opposition to the Stalinists and the right-wing. Our struggle for the "open the books" demand in the motor industry has won a mass response.

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

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

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

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

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

SOUTH AFRICA: TWIN CRISES GROW

tions in which students barricaded themselves in a hostel.

The violent demonstration was followed by attempts to set buildings alight. Other South African government buildings have suffered arson attempts and one white official in Soweto was shot dead.

On July 20th the tension mounted as some of the schools which had been closed at the time of the Soweto events were reopened. In a gesture of continued protest, many students stayed away from school.

"CONFUSION"

The authorities hopefully attributed this to "confusion" over which day the schools were to open since many of them, especially in Soweto were kept closed until the 23rd.

The black areas were patrolled by thousands of police who had been put on full alert.

The so-called Minister of Justice, Jimmy Kruger, announced that the new security law which permits

trial would come into effect immediately and that all meetings would be forbidden for a month.

GOLD

While the regime faces these mounting political attacks, the economic situation shows signs of worsening very rapidly. Last week's sudden new fall in the price of gold means a new crash in South Africa's export earnings.

The 40% fall in the gold price over the last year has already forced one devaluation on the South African government.

The balance of payments is in further trouble because of the beginning of a panic outflow of funds produced by the current political upheavals. And the latest economic figures show that the slump is rapidly gathering speed in South Africa and inflation is accelerating.

All this is bound to intensify the forces which are driving the African masses into head-on collision with

OCTOBER CONFERENCE CALLED ON WAGE CONTROL AND UNION DEMOCRACY

To All Trade Unionists:

The workers' movement today faces an all-round attack. Whilst unemployment is driven over 1½ million and public spending and social services savagely cut, the 4½% limit on pay increases endorsed by the TUC Special Congress, means a substantial cut in real wages for workers over the next year.

And the trade union officials who supported every one of these policies of the Labour government are now cracking down within the unions, attempting to impose a complete bureaucratic straightjacket on their members. We feel the time has come to fight back.

This situation has escalated since the election of the Labour government in February 1974. The ruling Tory government had been forced out of office because of its wages policy. The miners took a stand and defeated their attempts at wagecutting.

'BACK TO WORK'

The new Labour government elected during the three day week on the slogan "Back to work with Labour" conceded the miners' claim, froze council rents and, when confronted by an AUEW strike, began the repeal of the hated Industrial Relations Act.

But Wilson knew he would immediately face the same economic crisis of capitalism which had driven the Tories onto the attack. And, just like the Tories, he set out to solve it at the expense of the working class.

With prices rocketing, workers struggled for, and often won, big wage increases. The Labour leaders attempted to turn this against them by blaming high wages for inflation — a line they took straight from the employers — and put forward the policy that wages must be held down below 30%. On June 23rd 1975, Wilson retreated in front of a national rail strike threat and the 30% policy was in ruins.

SOCIAL CONTRACT

This defeat forced the Labour government into a change of policy, and the Social Contract came into play. Labour leaders began openly to argue that wages must be held down to cut inflation.

This was also the argument of Jones, who cynically used the July 1975 conference of the T&GWU as a lever to introduce the £6 so-called voluntary limit — its introduction was announced by Healey within hours of the T&GWU decision. Jones' other argument was to say that it would save jobs, yet unemployment has soared ever since — now reaching a post-war record.

As the £6 limit drew to an end, the ground was laid by Labour and TUC leaders for an even lower limit — resulting in the 4½% figure plus some nominal tax concessions — agreed at the TUC Special Congress on June 16th.

LOANS AND CUTS

The government argued that if the 4½% deal was not accepted, they would need further international loans — a condition of

We reprint below the full text of a statement by the newly-formed Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, an ad hoc committee set up by trade union militants, which as its name suggests, has been formed in order to campaign for democratic procedures in the Labour movement. As the first step in its campaign the committee, at its meeting last Saturday issued a call for a Conference on "Wage Control and Union Democracy" to be held in Birmingham on Sunday October 24th. As the statement makes clear the Conference is open to all trade unionists. But the committee asks in particular for trade union branches, District Committees, shop stewards committees and Trades Councils to send delegates, sponsor the Conference and make a financial donation towards the organising costs.

The Workers Socialist League will give full support to this Conference and all branches and members are called upon to begin the campaign.



Key TUC leaders defying their members' interests to give support to the 4½% deal: Jones (T&GWU), Bassett (GMWU), Scanlon (AUEW), Gormley (NUM) and Jackson

the tax concessions meant "real money" in the wage packet, and said there would be a "slight" relaxation of price controls.

The TUC accepted all of these arguments, and took up the fight to "save the pound". They began to force the 4½% deal through the unions by a series of bureaucratic manoeuvres — in many instances directly breaking conference policies.

Some trade union leaders such as Jackson of the UPW, began to press for permanent wage control, arguing that he wanted "no return to the rat-race of free collective bargaining".

In the T&GWU, the Executive, which is by rule bound by Biennial Delegate Conference policy, accepted the deal, completely ignoring their own Executive Council resolution at the previous BDC in 1975. This conference had accepted the social contract on condition that eight points were fulfilled, amongst which were: a permanent system of price controls and "vastly improved social services by the injection of the necessary resources."

AGREEMENT BROKEN

In the AUEW, the deal was forced through after Scanlon, together with the right-wing leadership of the engineering section, broke the merger agreement with the other sections. This provided for free votes at full conference. Scanlon obtained a majority in favour of the 4½% at the conference of the engineering section (which holds a majority of votes in the whole union) and then mandated all their delegates in favour of the 4½% at the full conference of all sections.

The result of this was a split conference and the 4½% was accepted with a majority of the conference abstaining on the vote.

In UCATT, the Executive were defeated at their Biennial Delegate Conference which voted against the deal. General Secretary Smith announced that he did not accept

and that a ballot of the membership would be held. Yet, with a deceptively worded ballot paper and a union journal arguing only Smith's case, he only narrowly secured acceptance.

DEFIED MANDATES

In the NUM, the right-wing obtained a majority of one on the Executive, with three right-wingers defying mandates from their own areas in order to support the 4½%. Gormley then used this one vote majority to ballot the membership — again with a deceptively worded ballot paper and amid a huge campaign in the Tory press.

Only using such manoeuvres did the TUC leadership get their 17-1 majority at the Special Congress. In reality their votes did not represent the views of the working class, but only the views of themselves as bureaucrats.

Manoeuvres came also from those claiming to oppose the pay policy. In ASTMS, which voted against the 4½% deal, the influence of the Communist Party ensured that the Conference resolution said nothing about actually fighting the policy — simply voting against it at the TUC.

In a similar way, at the AUEW engineering section conference the motion opposing the deal was defused even before the vote on the 4½% by two Communist Party members who successfully fought to remove a clause in the resolution opposing the deal which would have given official support to any section of members fighting the limit.

DECEPTION

Now we can begin to see the prolonged, conscious deception carried out jointly by the Labour and trade union leaders. Not one of the arguments for wage controls held any water.

The so-called voluntary £6 "flat rate" policy accepted was turned to "avoid state control" has turned

by law as soon as you don't. Free collective bargaining — nominally the policy of virtually every union — has been abolished.

The argument that wage-cutting was necessary to "cut unemployment" has been turned into a laughing stock with the £6 limit being followed up by huge redundancies and rationalisation in both private and nationalised industries, creating record unemployment which has been accepted without a finger being lifted by the trade union leaders.

"SAVE THE POUND"

The 4½% deal, held up as a means of supposedly "saving the pound" and avoiding the need for international loans and public spending cuts, has in reality been accompanied by a further collapse in the pound, huge new loans, and the first of a further round of massive spending cuts, beginning with £1,012 million.

Indeed the fall in the value of the pound, reflected in rising prices, has already more than wiped out the whole of the 4½% increase.

The promises to control prices have collapsed and instead the existing inadequate controls have been relaxed, giving a £1,000 million bonus to private employers and cutting over 2% from the value of the wage packet of a worker.

Now, to cap it all, there is talk of increasing taxes later this year, to cancel out the nominal cuts made in Healey's budget to sugar the 4½% pill.

The TUC leaders backed up all these promises with a political threat: they argue that a rejection of the 4½% would mean the return of a Tory government, ignoring the fact that any danger of a return of the Tories is entirely the responsibility of the Wilson-Callaghan policies which was shown absolutely clearly by the mass abstention of Labour voters in recent by-elections.

EXCUSES

But the trade union leaders

carry out the series of cynical manoeuvres outlined above they have had to take measures to silence critical voices within the trade union movement. To this end they began tightening the bureaucratic control of the full time officials over the shop stewards movement and the membership.

The new 'gag' Rule 15 was adopted by the TUC in September — only two months after the £6 limit, clearly in anticipation of a fight in the Trades Councils. This new rule ties Trades Councils to TUC policy and has an optional clause giving dictatorial powers to remove the credentials from delegates regarded as "disruptive".

'PARTICIPATION'

As part of this drive, "participation" schemes are being forced in, in an attempt to transform the shop stewards movement into an extension of management, similar to the joint consultative committees in the nationalised industries and hospitals.

Plant level bargaining is being ended and negotiations placed in the hands of full time officials.

Where militants win mass bases of support, the full weight of bureaucratic oppression is combined with orchestrated press witch-hunts in attempts to isolate them. Where militants win control of committees the officials and the right-wing simply close them down as they did with the T&GWU Automotive District Committee in Oxford.

CLOSE DOWN.

Where a principled leadership emerges in a Trades Council, again as in Oxford, that Trades Council is bureaucratically closed down and "reorganised" by TUC officials backed by the right-wing and Communist Party.

In Bradford the Trades Council is threatened with disaffiliation from the TUC for organising a meeting critical of Labour Party policy.

The leadership of many trades unions have adopted a policy of expulsion and the removal of shop stewards credentials.

In the Fire Brigades Union, the entire Strathclyde Area Committee were expelled for opposing the £6 limit. In Hull, the shop stewards credentials of every T&GWU steward on the docks was removed by the regional committee because the dockers refused to lift a black imposed in defence of jobs.

STRENGTH

But the bureaucrats still have a problem. Despite their attacks on trade union democracy the strength of the working class continuously emerges.

Earlier this year, in British Leyland, skilled workers fought the £6 pay deal and it took the full Executive of the AUEW to force them back to work.

Although betrayed by their leaders, student teachers occupied their colleges against the cuts.

In union ballots, despite the intervention of the capitalist press and the manoeuvres of the leadership, 47% of miners and 40% of UCATT members voted to reject the 4½% — even though they were told they would be "on their own" against the whole trade union movement. It is clear that the barrier to the defence of wages and jobs is the trade union leadership.

We say that it is time to begin

UNIONS IN THE DOCK AUEW



NUM

Battles continue around disciplinary action taken by the Yorkshire area council against two extreme right wingers who gave union documents to the Tory press.

The two - Bill O'Brien, until decision Branch Secretary at Gledhoughton Colliery, Castleford, and Tom Roebuck, of Manvers Mill Colliery, were banned from office for two years for giving voluminous statements and confidential documents to lawyers representing the *Sheffield Star*. The information aided the paper's defence against libel action brought by Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire area president on behalf of the NUM.

Now the disciplined men resorting to legal action to try to get the decision reversed.



AUEW General Secretary Boyd: right wing leadership rests on intervention by courts.

EQUITY

At a Special General Meeting last November the present Equity Council leaders tried to get a motion passed which would have meant they could change union rules by referendum. They were defeated.

Since then, using the union's resources to pay the costs of Marius Goring and Graham Hamilton, the Council has taken the issue to court.

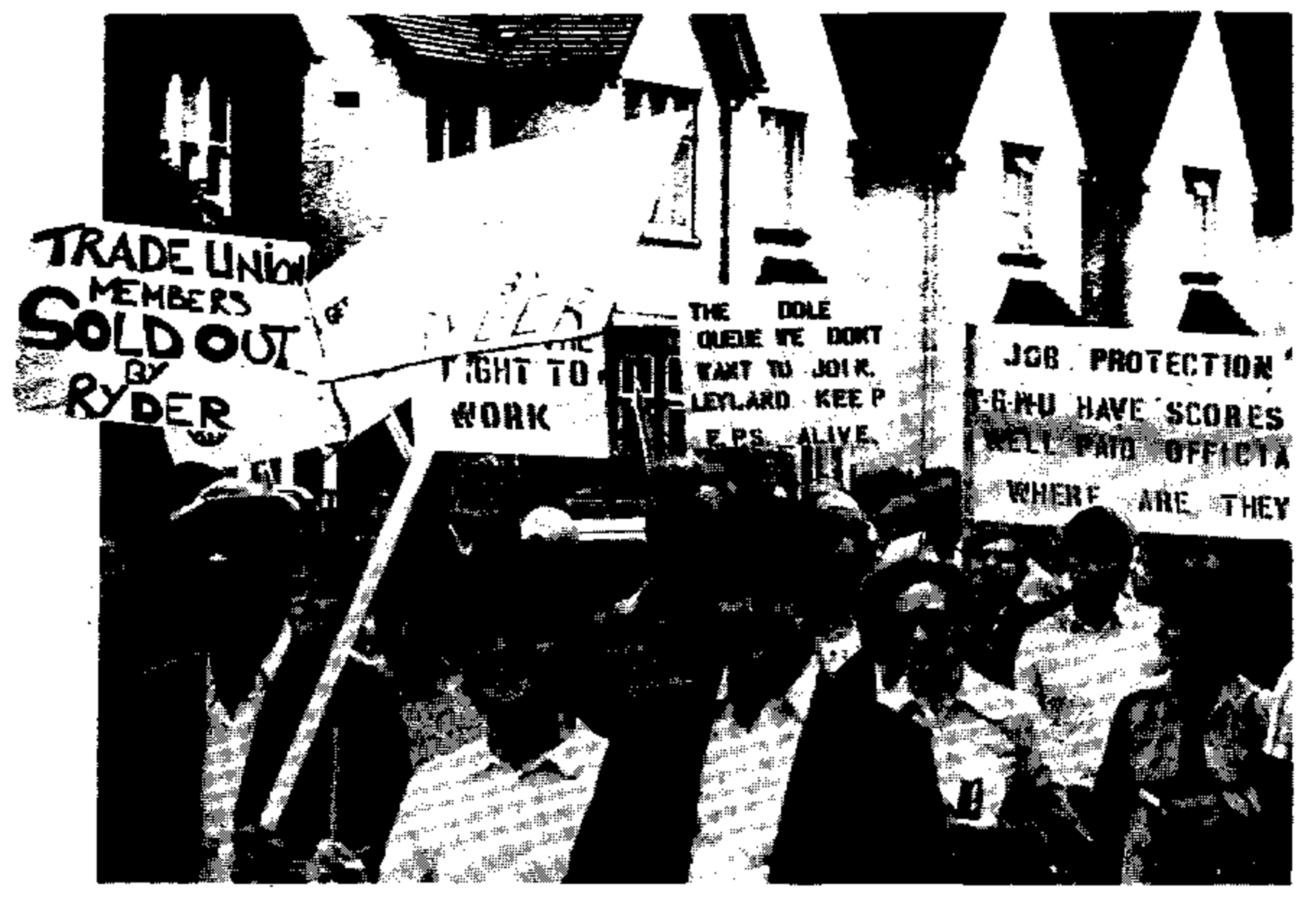
In court on Thursday 22nd July, they obtained a judgement in the

Chancery Court, which permitted them to change rules in this way.

In other words the Council has taken the decision of a Special General Meeting to court to get it reversed having lost a democratic vote.

But Corin Redgrave, who opposed them, and in effect spoiled the decision of that Special General Meeting, had to pay his own costs.

He is understood to be appealing against the decision.



700 workers from Export Packing Services, near Banbury, march to lobby the Oxford District TGWU Offices against impact of Ryder plan threatening closure of their factory to boost BLMC rationalisation.

capitalist class which always end up with the working class footing the bill.

The fight must press forward to throw out all forms of state control of wages. Instead we call for a sliding scale of wages clause in every agreement, to ensure that wages rise automatically with the cost of living - on a scale assessed by elected committees of trade unionists and housewives.

OPEN THE BOOKS

To those employers or government departments who say they cannot pay, we must demand that they open their books to these elected committees. This will either prove them wrong, or prove that they must be nationalised without compensation under the control of elected committees of workers, not tailored to the requirements of capitalism as at present.

We are for immediate strike action to stop the cuts. Where redundancies and closures are threatened, we must fight for occupation and demand work sharing on full pay, administered by trade union committees, together with a programme of public works to provide jobs for the unemployed at trade union rates.



Key demand: Open the Books!

ELECTED

But to fight for these policies means to fight the bureaucracy and its allies in the trade union movement. We must demand that all full time officials are regularly elected at branch meetings. At the same time careerists must be driven out of union positions by demanding that full time officials be paid no more than the average wage of their members.

Steps must be taken to protect trade unions from the interference of the Tory press. And "participation" schemes which subordinate unions to management must be opposed on principle.

We are convinced that the working class will fight the wage-cutting policies of the government and the TUC. But this needs a clear lead and a perspective on which to fight.

CAMPAIGN

To this end, we as trade union militants, have formed ourselves into the Campaign for Workers' Democracy, an ad hoc committee of rank and file trade unionists.

We are calling a Conference in order to promote the widest possible discussion on the policies and analysis outlined above. The Conference, convened on the issues of "Wage Control and Union Democracy", is open to all trade unionists. But we ask in particular for trade union branches, District Committees, shop stewards committees and Trades Councils to send delegates, sponsor the Conference and make a financial donation towards the organising costs.

Copies of this statement, further details of the campaign and conference credentials (25p) can be obtained from the Conference Secretary: Kevin Lee, 44, Devonshire Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham 20.

NO LEAD FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS

"No politics" was the unspoken rule at the recent conference of the National Union of School Students. Many of those most eagerly following this line were Stalinists of the Young Communist League who were strongly represented among the 80 delegates and observers at the Conference.

This is why, though one of the main campaigns of the Union is supposedly against spending cuts in education, any specific method of fighting the cuts was rejected.

A motion containing WSL policy calling for a fight for a sliding scale of public expenditure rising automatically to keep pace with inflation - was defeated in favour of a meaningless resolution simply stating that "The Union should fight education cuts", but leaving open the question of how.

Defeated also was a motion which demanded a struggle to secure work sharing on full pay together with a programme of useful public works to fight unemployment.

One delegate, clearly prepared to see huge sums of government cash bolstering up private contractors' profits, told the conference he did not see why useful public works could only be carried out alongside a scheme of nationalisation!

When discussion shifted to the question of wages, another delegate went so far as to suggest that school students "aren't interested" in economic or political questions.

This view was correctly attacked by the speaker advocating the main motion "deploring" the TUC's 4½%

pay cuts plan, who expressed amazement that anyone could believe working class school students aren't interested in wages.

This motion was clearly quite inadequate to provide any alternative path for the struggle to defend living standards against inflation. It was narrowly defeated, while a motion advocating a fight for a sliding scale of wages clause in all agreements to protect against inflation was more heavily voted down.

But the real weakness of the present NUSS leadership even on simply day to day questions emerged clearly in the National Committee reports to the Conference.

They contained a long and sorry saga of petty personal feuds among the national 'leadership', resulting in splits with many NC members resigning. Even some of the survivors were absent from the Conference for obscure 'personal reasons'

ABSENCE

What has clearly been absent from the leadership has been any firm fight for principle or serious desire to overcome the inevitable initial organisational and financial problems in building the NUSS.

The Stalinists of course refuse to fight the periphery of liberals and right-wingers who have crept into the leadership, with the result that now far too many of the union's members are paper members only.

This situation must be turned by recruiting school students on the firm basis of an active union with a fighting policy both to defend education and to fight alongside the working class as a whole against the attacks of the employers and their agents in the labour movement.

BUILD WORKERS' DEFENCE SQUADS

The following motion has been submitted to Birmingham Trades Council by the UCATT 131/Small Heath (Birmingham) branch.

This Trades Council expresses its determination to stamp out the wave of attacks on black people by groups of racist thugs.

These attacks are the direct

result of the racist campaign being carried out by the press with the direct collaboration of the police and some leading members of the trade union movement.

This Trades Council will approach black workers' organisations with a view to establishing joint workers defence groups to defend black people at labour movement meetings against attack.

More racist attacks are going to take place. The necessity for developing defence squads in those areas where attacks are already taking place is therefore becoming more urgent.

The task of revolutionaries is both to defend those being attacked and show that these attacks are a class issue. Fascism is about breaking up the organisation of the working class as a whole.

Those immigrant organisations or individuals who have started the formation of vigilante groups have taken an important step forward in breaking from the reformist position of appealing to the police - the capitalist state, to defend themselves against fascism - which itself is just another form of capitalism.

But, unlike the International Marxist Group and other groups we do not say it is simply a question of "Build labour movement support for black self-defence" (*Red Weekly* front page statement 10.6.76) or "Only the defence of the black communities by blacks themselves are any guarantee for protection against racist attacks" (IMG national leaflet).

We of course support the right of immigrant workers to defend themselves in whatever way necessary against racist and fascist attack.

But we also have a political responsibility to attempt to direct these self-defence groups towards calling on the strength of the organised labour movement as a whole so that the most united defence can be launched against fascist provocation and violence.

If black workers and youth have been the first target of the fascist picket lines and trade union meetings will be next. Fascists have already attacked meetings in Ireland.

WSL members and supporters in areas affected must therefore propose at their union branch, trades councils and Labour Party that a fight is waged for workers' defence squads organised jointly between immigrant and trade union organisations.

Where possible, we must fight for this within immigrant-organised defence squads by attending as delegates from the trade unions and urging that they unify with trade union bodies, particularly trades councils, in their fight against fascist attack.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

Part 15:

WOMEN AND THE REVOLUTION



Part of the international struggle against imperialist work must be found.

1910 brought a massive wave of strikes to Russia in which women were solidly involved, winning concessions on such questions as maternity leave and pay. But it was not until February 23rd, 1913, the first Russian celebration of international women's day (which had been started five years before by textile workers in Manhattan) that the Bolsheviks really took up the struggle among women.

A special issue of *Pravda* was produced, congratulating women for entering the ranks of the fighting proletariat and insisting, contrary to the Mensheviks, that the day be celebrated by the entire working class and not just women.

Bolsheviks all over Russia gave speeches on the road through socialist revolution to the emancipation of women.

INVADED

That year also, Bolshevik women invaded a meeting organised by the Mensheviks. Seizing the microphone, one of them made such a fiery speech about the aims of the revolution that all the women and soldiers present left singing the International, leaving only one Menshevik behind.

The correspondence resulting from this lead was so great that by the autumn the Bolsheviks decided to start a women's newspaper, *Rabonitsa* - The Working Woman.

Eight factory workers worked with the editorial board on the first edition which called on women to join the fight for socialism hand in hand with men.

The paper declared that it helped women to become conscious and organised and while it included articles on maternity insurance, female labour, child care centres, hygiene information, the family and children's stories, it emphasised the common cause, the common goals, the common path to these goals.

ARRESTED

While preparing the second issue of the paper, however, the whole editorial board was arrested.

Only Lenin's sister, arriving late to a meeting, escaped and she managed to bring out that issue single handed and four more in the spring of 1914 - one of which was confiscated for publicising mass poisonings at a rubber factory and other industrial hazards.

During the war women comprised 40% of the Petrograd industrial workforce. As inflation mounted, bread queues lengthened and wages were held down, so their fury mounted.

Street demonstrations had been occurring in several major cities before February 1917, but on international women's day they took a new turn, becoming city wide actions. Thousands came out on strike, railroad cars were overturned and police attacked in their



Demonstration, March 1917, demanding votes for women

"The success of the revolution depends on how many women take part in it", wrote Lenin. Trotsky also regarded the extent to which women had broken from the old beat-tracks and that "archaic, stiff and stagnant institution the family," "the most reactionary and benighted nucleus of the class system" as a barometer of revolutionary change. The position of women is the most graphic and telling indicator for evaluating a social regime and state policy".

Surely enough the main phases of the movement of the mass of women workers in Russia did reflect and were a force within the main stages of the revolution.

STRIKES

Beginning with the massive wave in 1910, continuing throughout the war period - when there were 40% of the industrial

1917 with demands for bread and peace, women workers were an important part of the mobilisation of workers which led to the seizure of power in October 1917.

Subsequently their struggles in the civil war and in mass organisations of women in the party reflected the determination of the new dictatorship of the proletariat to transform the family and social relations even under conditions of great want.

FAMILY

With the restoration of the family under Stalinism the position of women again epitomised the political counterrevolution.

The programme of the second Congress of the RSDLP in 1903 on the initiative of the Bolsheviks, included demands for complete equality of rights between men and women and for 10 weeks maternity leave, workplace creches, half hour allowances for nursing mothers and female inspectors in workplaces employing women [the latter because of the widespread abuse of women workers by male inspectors

In the backward Russian economy women formed only a small part of the industrial workforce and were only sporadically involved in the strikes and the revolution of 1905.

The bourgeois women's movement had grown in strength since the 1890s but the Bolsheviks were adamantly opposed to it because of its separatism and reformist stress on individual rights. Only a handful of working class women attended the 750-strong All-Russian Women's Conference in 1908.

Kollontai had persuaded the Bolsheviks to attend at the last moment and their class analysis of women's emancipation was received with bitter hostility.

BOLSHEVIK

Kollontai, who later became a leading Bolshevik and whose writings about the personal transformations necessary for socialist women remain brilliant, had to flee from Russia during that conference.

She alone among the Bolsheviks (and she wavered between Bolshevism and Menshevism until 1917)

ance of work amongst women at that time.

200-300 women textile, cardboard, rubber, tobacco, footwear and domestic workers attended her women's club - one of the few forms of political organisation permissible under the prevailing conditions of illegality.

In 1909 the 1st International Conference of Socialist Women was held in Stuttgart followed by another in Copenhagen in 1910. There, Clara Zetkin, editor of the German socialist women's paper *Die Gleichheit* (Equality) since 1889, and who later played an important part in mobilising women against the imperialist war, the question which split the Second International, argued for a special organisation amongst women.

If the mass of proletarian women were to be brought to socialism, account must be taken of their political backwardness, their emotional peculiarities, their two-fold burden in the home and in the factory, in short, all the special features of their existence.

Other points of contact with them must be sought and somewhat different ways and means of



women's oppression - suffragettes march in New York, 1917

In preparing for the marches on February 23rd the Bolsheviks had been opposed to strike action. They wanted to encourage discipline and self control in the demonstrations and issued instructions that the party committee should be obeyed.

As Trotsky wrote later, however, the February events were:

"...a revolution begun from below, overcoming the resistance of its own revolutionary organisations, the initiative being taken over of their own accord by the most oppressed and down trodden part of the proletariat - the women textile workers, among whom no doubt were many soldiers wives."

The March strikes for pay and the eight-hour day which soon turned into a struggle not just against the employers but against the newly elected Menshevik and Social Revolutionary Soviet leaders, so involved great numbers of women. At the Folik factory a 100% wage rise for men and 125% for women was won and new trade unions were formed among laundry and restaurant workers in order to get representation on the Soviet.

A demonstration calling for women's suffrage, organised on March 8th, by bourgeois feminists and Mensheviks, attracted 35,000, while soldiers wives marching for government grants in early April drew 100,000.

AGITATION

On March 11th the Petrograd Executive Committee of the Bolsheviks placed Vera Shutskaya in charge of agitation among women.

A women's bureau was formed part of the Petrograd Committee which each district committee had to elect a representative.

There was to be no independent women's organisation whatsoever. Instead, all work was to be carried out in full agreement with the Petrograd Committee.

These special forms of organisation around women still aroused a great deal of controversy in the party, with accusations that it looked like 'feminism'.

At Lenin's suggestion a working women's conference attended by all agencies was organised and a Bolshevik resolution that all industrial organisations among women should be carried out under the guidance of Bolshevik organisations was passed in the face of Menshevik arguments that it should be independent and not subordinated to any political party.

Rabotnitsa was resumed in May and in June organised an international anti-war protest attended by 100,000 and another large protest against the cost of living in July.

JULY DAYS

In the repression of the July days it was the only Bolshevik paper still being printed. July saw an important development for women workers as for workers generally. For when the Mensheviks

and Social Revolutionaries tried to blame the Bolsheviks for the abortive uprising, workers began to see their treacherous and counter-revolutionary role.

The conference of Petrograd Working Women organised in October by *Rabotnitsa* and attended by 500 delegates representing 80,000 workers, was cut short by the seizure of power.

The purpose had been to prepare non-party women for the coming uprising and to acquaint them with the programme of the new Soviet government. But now the real task of transforming the role of women could begin.

MARRIAGE

Within six weeks of the revolution, ecclesiastical control of marriage was replaced by civil registration and within a year the new Matrimonial Code established equality of rights between men and women in marriage and abolished the legal distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children.

Women could choose their own name and nationality, divorce was obtainable by mutual consent and later by the decision of one party, and abortions were legal and free.

Alimony had to be paid for six months only after a separation if one partner was unemployed or unable to get a job.

The involvement of women in these questions was intense. Already in November 1918 *Rabotnitsa* convened the first All-Russian Conference of Working and Peasant Women in Moscow.

Because of the difficulties of communication in the civil war, agitators were dispatched all over Russia to inform women about the conference and facilitate the election of delegates. 300 were expected but 1,147 came.

Problems of working women in Soviet Russia, the family and Communist government, social welfare, organisational problems, prostitution, child labour and housing were discussed.

PARTY COMMISSION

The idea of autonomous women's sections was resolutely opposed and instead a central commission for women was set up and then a Working and Peasant Women's Department of the Communist Party, Genodtel, which had branches throughout the Soviet Union.

One of the first tasks of Genodtel was to mobilise women for the civil war. Women joined the Red Army and lead a section of guerillas against the White Guards as well as serving as red nurses, digging trenches and carrying out political and agitational work in the front line.

Despite the severity of the economic problems and deprivations many creches, kindergartens, public laundries and canteens were established and experiments in the design of domestic housing were

These public facilities were essential to the building of socialism for as Kollontai, now Commissar for Public Welfare urged;

"...domestic labour takes up all [a woman's] time, takes away her strength, prevents herself giving herself up to direct, active participation in the struggle for communism and construction work."

Rabotnitsa itself closed when the government was moved from Petrograd to Moscow. Then *Pravda* ran both a women's page and a peasant's page, but in 1920 *Kommunistka* (Communist Woman) was started.

In the civil war, with the urgency of winning all sections of workers to the Communist cause, work amongst women assumed double significance, the necessity to win women to the Communist cause.

But women's issues were by no means limited to women. Already in 1918 the Petrograd Committee of Trades Unions, faced with growing unemployment and the demand by men workers that they should have the jobs and women should be fired first led to the decision that no sexual discrimination was permissible and that the most needy workers should be those to get the jobs.

"Only such an attitude will make it possible for us to retain women in our organisations and prevent a split in the army of workers."

HARDSHIP

It was during the period of greatest hardship therefore, that the greatest attempts were made to change the position of women.

Despite the economic and social compromises necessary to the survival of the new proletarian state the objectives of socialism were continually discussed.

But with the treacherous abdication from driving forward the international revolution under Stalinism and the espousal instead of "socialism in one country", even the economic recovery was used as an argument against the replacement of the family.

From 1926 onwards abortion was made illegal, penalties for failure to pay alimony were introduced, divorce became more difficult and expensive, coeducation was abolished and the women's section of the party and all mass organisations of women were dissolved.

'PROSPERITY'

Krupskaya, Lenin's widow, wrote in the mid-30's that because the country had become rich, mighty and prosperous, the questions of the family and of abortions appeared in a new light.

In the new conditions there were no material reasons why women should not be able to, and enjoy having children, and since every woman was a mother or potential



Clara Zetkin



Trotsky

mother, she was the natural person to bring up her children.

Stalinism in this way opportunistically negated the comprehensive aims and theory of socialism by restricting its view to the solution of immediate problems.

The revolution however, did produce chaos in personal and social relations, not least of which was the problem of thousands of homeless children. Trotsky recognised that:

"The old family continues to dissolve faster than the new institutions are capable of replacing it." while at the same time the continued generalised want meant that it was impossible to provide childcare, eating and laundry facilities of sufficiently high standards to:

"...deal the deathblow to the closed-in isolated family unit, completely supported on the bent shoulders of the housewife and mother."

But Trotsky appreciated the progressive nature of the social crisis and even of the anarchic individualism resulting not just from the forces of war and revolution but also from critical thought, the conscious study and valuation of family relations and forms of life. The Stalinist bureaucracy resting

on the gains of the revolution while at the same time feeling insecure in its betrayal of them, seized upon the restoration of the family as an instrument of counter-revolution.

As Trotsky wrote: "The most compelling motive for the present cult of the family is undoubtedly the need of the bureaucracy for a stable support of authority and power."

Trotsky had supported the need for women's organisations within the new dictatorship:

"You must be the moral battering ram which will break through the shell of conservatism, rooted in our old Asiatic nature, in serfdom, in bourgeois prejudices and in the prejudices of workers themselves, which have arisen from the worst aspects of peasant traditions."

Under Stalinism these organisations were abolished and with them the determination to drive the revolution through to the full achievement of socialism.

Thus comes about the irony that feminists who out of petty bourgeois tendencies join the Communist Party today, find themselves ensnared in an organisation whose survival depends on the shackles of the family.

WRP Perspectives dodge basic issues

REDGRAVE, RYDER, & ARITHMETIC

"Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with," the Mock Turtle replied; "and then the different branches of Arithmetic - Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision."

(Lewis Carroll, 'Alice in Wonderland')

The 'Draft Resolution on Perspectives' presented by the leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party for 'discussion' leading up to their Second Annual Conference on August 28th is a breathtaking essay in political fraud and evasion.

Virtually every one of its eight pages contains slanderous accusations - with neither details nor evidence - on the political work of the Workers Socialist League.

But what it does not contain is any assessment of the politics and practice of the WRP since its first 'annual' conference (in December 1974!) before which the opposition which later went on to found the WSL was illegally expelled.

Nothing short of a book could refute in detail the slanders, insinuations and simple falsehoods with which this resolution is crammed.

INVITATION

But any member or supporter of the WRP who takes seriously the invitation of the leadership to 'read, study and discuss' and 'propose amendments' to the resolution is in duty bound to take up at least the following issues:

1. The resolution claims: "Our (the WRP's) work in building up our trade union factions and our industrial papers, and also the 'All Trades Union Alliance' must centre on breaking the unions from the state and fighting for democracy within the unions."

Why then did WRP Central Committee member Tom White stand for election to the class-collaborationist Ryder 'participation' committee in the British Leyland Cowley plant (and get elected, with the support of the right-wing and the capitalist press, to the accompaniment of a violent national press witch-hunt against the WSL).

DEFENDED

Why did the WRP defend his position when he was elected as an alternate member? And what has he been doing on this committee?

One direct result of the Ryder committees has been the drive to closure and sackings at Export Packing Services (Banbury) through the withdrawal of British Leyland contracts - after this was agreed on the Cars Council, the supreme 'participation' committee.

Three or four hundred workers face the sack at the hands of a scab management-run structure to which a WRP Central Committee member was elected with the full agreement of the WRP.

Is this how the WRP fights for 'democracy in the unions'? Why does the resolution contain not a word on this disgraceful action?

(For full details see *Socialist Press* of Nov. 26th, Dec. 10th and 31st., 1975).

'GAG' RULE 14

2. Why have WRP members in trade union branches and Trades Councils joined hands with the Stalinists and right-wing in rail-

roading through the notorious TUC 'Rule 14' for Trades Councils, which forbids them to collaborate with any organisations whose policies are 'contrary to those of the TUC'? (For details see *Socialist Press* of March 24th and April 21st, 1976).

This rule will be used with a vengeance the moment any section of workers appeals for trades council support in a wage struggle which threatens to break the TUC-government 4½% pay cutting policy.

Trades Councils will be forbidden by rule to support such workers in struggle. Rule 14 is part and parcel of the truncheon with which

campaign to keep *Workers Press* alive, the utterly bogus character of this claim was proved.

The WRP could raise, in three months, neither a fund of a few pounds a head, nor circulation by less than one copy per member (taking their own targets) if the membership claim of December 1974 bore any relation to reality.

What has happened to these "members"? Why did the vast majority of them neither contribute to party funds nor sell the paper?

Were they ever, themselves, more than slips of paper signed up without a shred of political agreement?

Why does the resolution contain

(the international 'front' of the WRP) have omitted all mention of the need for revolutionary socialist parties in the Middle East states?

5. *News Line* has revived - and extended - the slanderous campaign against Joseph Hansen and George Novack, leaders of the American Socialist Workers Party, as being 'accomplices' of the Stalinist GPU since before the murder of Trotsky by Stalin's agents in 1940.

CANNON

But the slander does not stop there. *News Line* has even quoted a



Miss Redgrave CBE, on Southall anti-racialist demonstration

the TUC bureaucracy seek to bludgeon the basic organisations of the trades unions into accepting pay cuts and keeping the Callaghan-Healey leadership in office.

What is the meaning of the WRP's verbal campaign to 'Force the Labour government to resign' when they join hands with the policemen who protect it?

"NOT PRAGMATIC"

3. The resolution claims that: "...the changes we have made in our Press and party organisation are therefore not pragmatic adjustments to changed political circumstances, but the highest point of the practice of cognition."

Possibly. But certain questions - never touched on in the resolution - remain to be answered.

The *Workers Press* was founded in 1969 as the political paper of the then Socialist Labour League. It collapsed early this year because neither the necessary funds nor the circulation targets could be met.

At the December 1974 conference of the WRP a membership of over 8,000 was claimed. But in the

not a word on the material development of the WRP cadre in the last year?

4. The character of the *News Line*, successor to *Workers Press*, raises a whole number of questions. On the Middle East issue it has given totally uncritical support to the nationalist leadership of the PLO and Yasser Arafat, including their dangerous 'appeals' to Egypt's Sadat and to Brezhnev to 'mediate' in the Syrian-right wing war on the Palestinian and Lebanese workers.

Similarly it has carried not a breath of criticism - but a great deal of praise - for the anti-communist Gaddafi regime in Libya (a regime which is known to give money to fascist organisations).

DISCUSSIONS

Why is this? Is this flagrant opportunism connected with the claims of the WRP leadership in aggregate meetings that they are engaged in 'political discussions' with the PLO leadership?

Is this why recent statements from the International Committee

letter by the late James Cannon dealing with Stalinist infiltration of the Trotskyist movement, which it describes as "politically odorous" and links directly to the accusations against Hansen and Novack.

Does the WRP now wish to insinuate that James Cannon was also a GPU agent? Is this their "highest point of the practice of cognition"?

EXCLUDED

6. Why have the WRP and their collaborators in other countries made a regular practice of excluding political opponents from their 'public' meetings?

In Britain we have seen elected trade union delegates kept out of 'All Trade Union Alliance' conferences. What is the WRP afraid of?

7. *News Line* has carried not a word of comment on the WSL book 'The Battle for Trotskyism', in which a detailed documented account is given of the bureaucratic methods and threats applied to those who tried to discuss vital political differences in the WRP



Banda

before the arbitrary expulsions of 1974. Why is this?

And why, while it strains every muscle to gag political discussion within the Trotskyist movement, does the WRP leadership permit *News Line* to carry paid advertisements for a pamphlet by a genuine Stalinist agent, Mr. Monty Johnstone, the British Communist Party's main professional slanderer of Trotsky?

Johnstone's *Trotsky and World Revolution* carries a preface which is mainly devoted to a dishonest attack on the WRP.

And it explicitly revives the old Stalinist slander that the Trotskyists and their supporters in the Spanish Civil War were doing the work of the fascists!

Yet it gets a block advertisement in the classified adverts columns of the *News Line*!

LEADING LIGHT

8. One of the leading lights of the WRP Central Committee recently wheeled out to repeat the slanders against Hansen and Novack is Miss Vanessa Redgrave, (see her 'Open Letter' in *News Line* of July 17th).

Miss Redgrave is not only famous as an actress and Central Committee member of the WRP. She is well known for sending her children to private school.

She is also the proud recipient of a CBE (Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire - motto: 'For God and Empire'); Sovereign: Her Majesty the Queen).

The *Times* of February 14th 1968 makes instructive reading. Page 1 reports an additional 10,000 US troops being sent to Vietnam. Page 2 carries a photograph of Miss Redgrave displaying a patriotic grin together with the insignia of her CBE, just received at a Buckingham Palace investiture. Two weeks later she was writing protest letters against the US war in Vietnam. A few months later John Lennon of the Beatles returned his MBE (a lower decoration of the same order) in protest against British government support for US genocide in Vietnam and, in particular, the Mai Lai massacre.

But Miss Redgrave retains this reactionary trinket (though we have no means of knowing if she now sports it at WRP Central Committee meetings).

Yet the WRP conference resolution hypocritically quotes Trotsky's contempt for those who are "tied to the apron-strings of the bourgeoisie".

"CONVERTED"

WRP members would do well to ponder the question of those who are 'converted' to revolutionary socialism but hang on to such decorations as the CBE.

The Order of the British Empire



Gaddafi

was established in 1917, at the height of the imperialist war, to reward the staff officers who were directing the carnage, and the speculators who were making 'patriotic' fortunes out of it.

Since then it has been the reward of thousands upon thousands whom the British capitalist state has wished to 'dignify'

Two of Miss Redgrave's fellow-members of the Order merit particular attention.

One is Major-General Richard Clutterbuck OBE, author of numerous books on 'counter-insurgency', frequently (and correctly) denounced in the WRP press as a spokesman for military savagery against the workers' movement.

He helped direct the war against the Communist movement in Malaya in the 1950's, in which British troops beheaded Malayan partisans as an 'example' to the peasants.

INTELLIGENCE

Another is Sir Maurice Oldfield, who got his CBE in 1956. He was for decades a leading official of the British Intelligence Services.

He was in line to head SIS, but resigned in protest against Wilson's refusal to associate the various intelligence and political police services into a joint agency, along the lines of the CIA, to carry out its work more efficiently.

It would be difficult to find a more sinister and dangerous reactionary in this country.

We hold no brief for the politics of John Lennon, which are those of protest and mysticism.

But we say that it was a correct and elementary step in solidarity with the Vietnamese people to reject his 'honour'.

And the fact that Miss Redgrave, complete with such a blood-stained bauble, sits on the Central Committee of the WRP indicates an obscene contempt for principle.



Healy

9. One further lie must be nailed. The WRP Conference resolution makes great play (p.11) over the need for "political direction" in trade union work, and attacks the Workers Socialist League and the 1974 opposition in the WRP (the 'Thornett clique') for allegedly wishing to make it 'autonomous'.

The truth of the matter is that the first document produced by Comrade Alan Thornett in the struggle within the WRP in 1974 contained a major section dealing with the complete neglect of trade union work by the WRP leadership. (see 'Correct the Wrong Positions of the Party - Return to the Transitional Programme', in *The Battle for Trotskyism*, pp4-6)

The document pointed out that the Trade Union committees of the WRP were moribund, that the national committee of the ATUA had ceased to function and that there had been no national conference of the ATUA for over two years.

CAMPAIGNS

It pointed out too that opportunities for political campaigns in trade union elections had been simply passed up, and that the Political Committee was simply allowing the trade union factions it had itself set up to atrophy and die.

These charges have never been refuted by the WRP leadership, then or since. They continue to treat the need for systematic, political work in the trade unions with cynical contempt.

They refuse to direct the membership into a fight for the demands of the Transitional Programme - instead they expel anyone who attempts to put them forward even within the party.

Indeed we challenge the WRP to produce evidence of any fight carried through anywhere by their members for any of the transitional demands.

MEETINGS IGNORED

The reality is that many WRP members up and down the country simply do not bother to attend trade union meetings. For them it is not a question of trade union work being 'autonomous' or not - it just does not exist!

And parallel with this, the *News Line* regularly carries the most hypocritical and treacherous statements of trade union bureaucrats without comment and as good coin.

As for the charge that Thornett wanted to make trade union work "autonomous" - this is a new invention by the WRP leadership.

Any reader with the energy to plough through WRP leader Banda's turgid diatribe *Whither Thornett?* or any of their polemical material against the WSL will find not a single reference to such an allegation.

How is it the WRP has taken nearly two years to spot such a glaring supposed attack on Bolshevism?

But the question of practice in the trade unions goes right to the heart of the WRP's sectarian political degeneration.

PHRASES ONLY

The resolution contains a number of phrases about the intention of the WRP leadership to "fight the union bureaucracy", but scarcely a word about any achievements, the problems, or the development of the WRP's actual work within the organised working class.

It is a document not of scientific fighters for a revolutionary leadership, who take up real battles against the bureaucracy, but of witch-doctors who hope the bitter crisis of political leadership in the working class can be solved by 'left' and 'philosophical' incantations.

NO BASIS

On this basis it is possible neither to recruit or to train cadres who can carry out the central task posed by the Transitional Programme - to wrest the leadership of the working class from the Jones, the Scanlons and the Benns and replace them with those who will lead a struggle to destroy capitalism.

An orchestrated fruitless 'discussion' on the conference resolution continues in the pages of the *News Line*. We have only dealt with a few issues which should be taken up. But members of the WRP who are serious about the fight to build a Trotskyist party must pose certain questions fair and square to Messrs. Healy and Banda:

What account can you give of the work of your trade union factions? What have they built? Why have you supported the TUC and the Stalinists in gagging Trades Councils with Rule 14?

And what 'philosophical' principles have led to placing your Central Committee member Tom White on a scab Ryder committee in British Leyland? What has he done there? How many other WRP members are organising sackings and speed-ups on similar 'participation' bodies?

LETTER: YES! THEY ARE BANKRUPT

Dear Comrade,

It is quite wrong to apologise to the Revolutionary Communist Group (RCG) for having accused them of 'bankrupt reformism' (S.P. 38).

For while they are right to oppose the I-CL proposal for 'positive discrimination' over redundancies, in the main their positions are both bankrupt and reformist.

At the 'Women and the Cuts' Conference in London in February they spoke repeatedly against the main resolution put forward by the IMG.

Although this was a long and rambling resolution and although we are extremely sceptical of either the IMG or the Working Womens' Charter actually fighting for these demands in practice, it did actually contain all the main transitional demands.

But the RCG argued against the resolution on the grounds that before any fight against the cuts and against the oppression of women could be taken up the correct theoretical and political basis must be laid by means of 'educating' the working class.

To this end they proposed a conference and a bulletin.

According to the RCG, workers will reach the revolutionary road by reading bulletins in their front rooms.

This idealist position ignores and abstains from the struggles which workers are willy-nilly involved in and is completely opposed to Marxist dialectics.

For it is not through theory alone but through the interaction of theory and practice that revolutionary preparation is made.

Given correct leadership, it is in the course of struggle and experience that workers become conscious of their objective situation and the necessary solution.

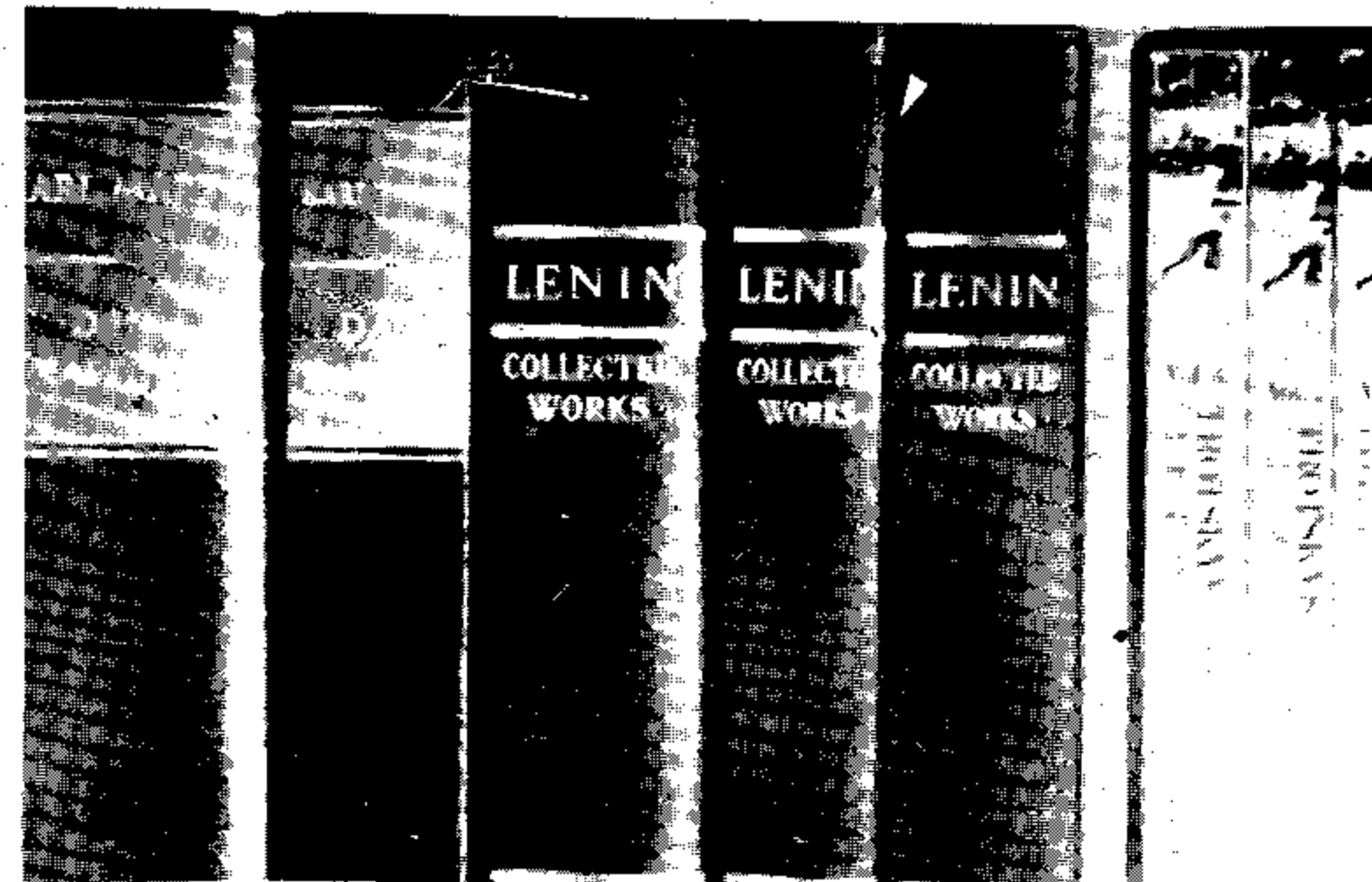
The correct theoretical and practical basis for revolutionaries to give this kind of leadership is Trotsky's Transitional Programme.

For the RCG the main problem is not so much the reformist bureaucracy but rather the backwardness of the working class, and they do not understand that it is through the fight against the bureaucracy that backwardness will be overcome.

They also distort the Transitional Programme by treating the demands individually rather than as a whole.

By this means in the pamphlet *Women and the Public Sector Cuts* they manage to accuse the WSL of reformism.

They quote from one of our leaflets that we must "fight to rec-



Front cover picture from the RCG's first journal.

"The sectarian looks upon the life of society as a great school, with himself as a teacher there. In his opinion the working class should put aside its less important matters and assemble in solid rank around his rostrum: then the task will be solved." - Trotsky.

ruit women into the unions" and accuse us of inferring, like the CP, that this will be the panacea!

This is a slanderous falsification, because they know perfectly well, and our leaflets make it clear that our purpose in drawing unorganised sections of workers into the unions is to strengthen the fight against the bureaucracy in order to develop the consciousness of these workers.

This is the complete opposite of the Stalinists' intention of bringing more workers under the control of the bureaucrats.

The RCG also oppose the demand for "an immediate injection of funds into the social services and for a programme of useful public works - on the grounds that those fighting for this slogan may chauvinistically want to take the funds from some other service (!) and may not necessarily understand that the cuts derive from the contradictions of the capitalist system itself.

They claim that the demand:

"Fails to lay the basis for the political independence of the working class from the bourgeoisie and its state, and it fails to defend and unite the whole working class against the effects of the capitalist crisis."

Here again the RCG is completely distorting the method of the Transitional Programme as used by the WSL. We do not make this demand in isolation, but in conjunction with others, such as 'open the books', and for the expansion of services according to need based on a workers' plan.

In arguing for such demands our aim is precisely to develop workers' understanding of the way in which the capitalist system based on production for profit shackles the

development of the productive forces, wastes and under-uses resources, while the socialist solutions necessary must be internationalist and achieved through international revolution.

At the same time we attempt to develop the independent strength of the working class by insisting that workers' plans for public works, that the sliding scale of wages and expenditure, and that the opening of the books, should be carried out by elected committees of workers and housewives, pensioners, etc.

It is through experience, rather than through preaching, that we seek to develop the conscious and independent fight for socialism in the working class and to defeat reformism.

By abstaining from struggle and from its idealist belief in the potency of 'education' the RCG is most certainly reformist and bankrupt, as well as anti-Marxist.

Yours fraternally,

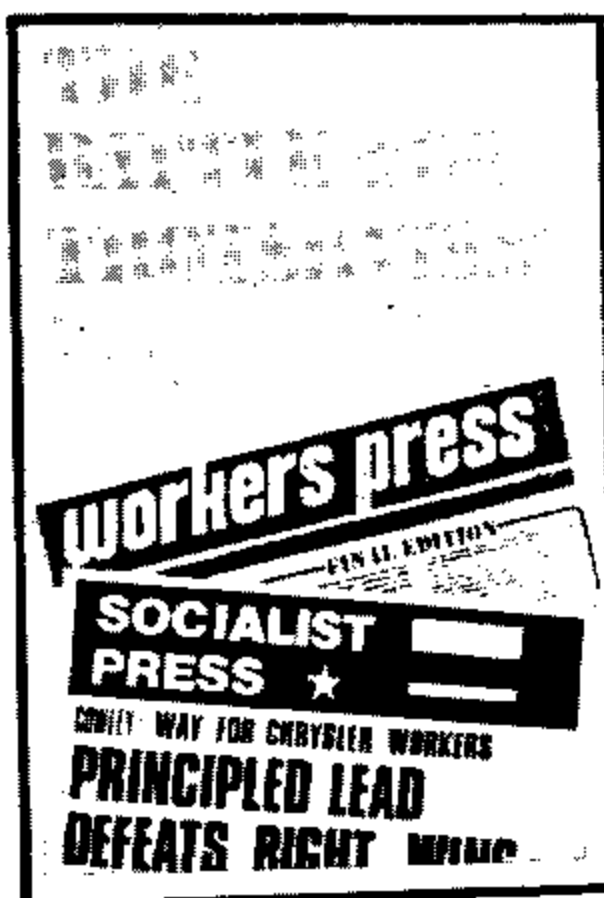
London WSL member.

EDITORIAL NOTE.

The comrade's point in this letter is accepted but we make it clear that our apology in the last edition was not a retreat from such a political analysis of the RCG, but a correction of one particular article in which a factual error had appeared.

Since an excessive amount of column space has now been devoted to this topic we feel we must now regard this issue as closed.

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INDUSTRIAL NEWS

NALGO LEADERS TRY TO HEAD OFF FIGHT

The Bedford branch of NALGO has been quick to respond to the Department of the Environment Circular 45/76 - Local Authority Current Expenditure 1976/77. In a letter to other NALGO branches support is urged for the following motion.

"This branch calls upon the National Executive Council to convene a Special Local Government Group meeting in accordance with Rule 57 (a) (ii) to consider the following motion:

"This Group meeting is totally opposed to the Government Joint Circular dated 25.5.76 and instructs the National Local Government Committee to draw up a plan, for national action in opposition to the circular."

In the same mailing from NALGO headquarters is a four page letter from General Secretary, Geoffrey Drain in which he "reiterates previous advice to branches on those aspects of public expenditure restraint affecting staff."

If the situation wasn't so serious Drain's advice would be laughable, interspersed with such gems as "improve consultation before any cuts"; "Make sure you inform the local authority that cuts will lead to deteriorating services"; "repudiate criticism of staff where real cause of poorer service is unfilled vacancies" and so on.

But when it comes to action, Drain informs the members that the National Local Government Committee has decided that the special meeting called for by Bedford would be "inopportune"!

Coming as it does in the same mailing as the Bedford resolution, Drain's advice is very opportune for those who would prevent the mounting anger of NALGO members from turning into action.

NALGO branches should convene special meetings as soon as possible to vote support for the Bedford resolution and discuss local strike action to stop immediate cut-backs.

WARWICK JAMBOREE

A special meeting of the Warwickshire NALGO branch, called on July 19th after rank and file members had collected the necessary signatures, was commandeered by the National Executive, who attempted to turn it into a jamboree of left rhetoric and hot air.

Jack Bradburn, a leading member of the NALGO Executive spoke at length on the cuts and even said that any branch faced with redundancy threats could expect to receive sympathetic consideration from a request for industrial action to the National Executive.

These left noises clearly reflect a strengthening of feeling in the NALGO membership, feelings which the National Executive would like to direct into protests, complaints and endless "consultation" with the employers.

The contempt for the views of the membership is shown by the handed way in which the Warwickshire meeting, called by rank and file members to discuss a motion proposing strike action



Drain

The increasing possibilities of a militant response by NALGO members to further cuts in government spending has driven the union's bureaucracy and its allies to seek new methods of heading off any movement.

The latest idea is the establishment of a NALGO "Broad Alliance Group" dominated by Stalinists of the Communist Party, along with various 'left' and not so left Labourites, with the direct aim of countering the "rank and file" NALGO Action Group.

An attempt to launch a Southern District organisation of the Broad Alliance in Reading on July 10th, however, drew only eleven people.

There seemed to be general agreement with a CP speaker who spoke of Jack Jones and Geoffrey Drain as "totally committed left-wingers" denied the chance to follow this "true ideology" because of the "immaturity" of the working class!

When a WSL sympathiser, present as an observer, referring to the fact that Drain was howled down by the NALGO Conference in Eastbourne precisely because the

membership wanted action while Drain offered only words, found no support except from an IS member, who then went on to a confused speech calling for the meeting to affiliate to the NALGO Action Group.

The meeting's organiser, Stalinist Ron Knowles from Aylesbury at once warned that the meeting was "degenerating into a political discussion", calling for "politics" to be left out so that "common ground" could be found.

Knowles went on to advocate that the Broad Alliance should be "essentially bureaucratic in structure". He was immediately supported by another CP member who frankly pointed out that "we are all bureaucrats at heart".

Apparently however it did not occur to any of those present to draw the logical conclusion and rename the grouping the Bureaucratic Alliance!

"Non-political" and rank-and-file groups of this kind are a complete distraction for NALGO members. The central fight must be for the training of new leadership in the fight for local and national industrial action to stop the cuts and force a sliding scale of public sector spending to defend against inflation.

JAGUAR JOB FEARS

A big question mark hangs over the jobs of Coventry's Jaguar workers following the decision by British Leyland to build their proposed new paintshop at Castle Bromwich, Birmingham rather than Brown's Lane, Coventry, the main Jaguar plant.

In a letter to Jaguar workers on July 15th management promised that the 600 workers directly affected would be "redeployed" and that the future of Jaguar in Coventry is assured.

Workers at Brown's Lane, however, are sceptical about the assurances and stewards have mounted a 24-hour watch on steel stocks bought for the construction of the paintshop.

Similar action is being taken at the Kingsfield Road Service Centre which is to close, work being transferred to a new Service Centre proposed for a site near the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham.

the Triumph plant at Canley, Coventry, to Solihull.

The question Jaguar workers must ask is: is car production to be transferred from Brown's Lane as well?

Stewards have so far called in Coventry's four Labour MPs who have been assured by Derek Whittaker, managing director of Leyland cars, that the future of Jaguar in Coventry is assured.

But even Geoffrey Robinson, MP for Coventry North-West and a former Jaguar manager said after the meeting that he was far from happy about the assurances. (It was Robinson who arranged for the construction of the new paintshop in 1974.) All the MPs said they were still worried.

The stewards have a right to fear rationalisation and redundancies. It is not enough, however, to call in the MPs. There must be an immediate demand for the opening of Leyland's books - workers have a right to know what plans are being made.

If the local Labour MPs are serious about defending jobs they

LOBBY THE TUC

The TUC Congress starting on September 6th will be the scene not simply of more betrayals by the union leaders, but also of lobbies by several organisations.

Since the Special TUC which accepted the wage-cutting 4½% deal on June 16th, the first round of new spending cuts, which every union leader knew were coming but purposely concealed, has been announced.

This has stepped up the pressure from members of those unions which will make up the bulk of the admitted 70,000 coming redundancies, and has even forced some union leaders like Alan Fisher of NUPE to declare against the cuts. This opens the possibility of conflict between him and Jones and Scanlon, who have consistently supported the cuts.

The depth of the betrayal of the June 16th Special Congress is shown by the latest unemployment figures - standing at 1½ million, a post war record. In this is included a huge number of youth on the dole - over 200,000 without jobs.

The International Socialists are organising a Right to Work March from London to Brighton where they will lobby the TUC on September 9th.

This march is along the lines of their previous march, against "excessive overtime", for a 35 hour week, and a number of other mainly straight trade union demands.

HOT AIR

None of them in any way direct the working class to the fight for workers control as a transitional step towards the struggle for nationalisations, and towards state power. Without this, the IS talk of 'socialism' remains simply hot air.

The call by the Workers Revolutionary Party and their Young Socialists for a lobby against youth unemployment puts forward such correct calls as "full training on demand" at "trade union rates of pay." But this is coupled with the incorrect, sectarian-propagandist call to "force the Labour government to resign!", detached from

any programme for action.

Indeed the demands advanced by the WRP are all simply governmental demands - which without programme for local, particular struggles, become simply abstractions.

It is important to direct every struggle towards the question of government, but this must be connected with the immediate struggles of the working class.

For a real fight to begin, the demand for work-sharing on full pay must be put forward wherever redundancies are declared.

The betrayal of the working class has not just taken place at national level, but at factory level also, where leaderships have come out in favour of voluntary redundancies or simply allowed redundancies or closures to take place.

OCCUPATION

Similarly, if the employers claim they cannot pay, the demand must be 'open the books' of that particular firm, backed by occupation. This directs towards the necessity of nationalisation without compensation.

The demand for a programme of public works to create new jobs ties in with the fight of the social services unions, and the struggle for a sliding scale of state expenditure on social services.

Both these demands show the necessity for a massive government injection of finance and programme of nationalisation of building and supply industries, which would open up new jobs for employment of youth at trade union rates.

RECRUITMENT

The WSL will be lobbying the TUC on September 9th on this programme of demands, linked to the necessity of new leadership in the unions and the recruitment of unemployed workers and youth into the unions.

Only in this way can youth and workers opposed to the TUC betrayals be enabled to fight inside the unions alongside employed workers on the central political questions in the struggle against unemployment.

ICL JOBS FIGHT

700 workers face the sack at the giant I.C.L. factory in Winsford, Cheshire - out of a workforce of 2,000. This will put unemployment up to Northern Ireland proportions, with nearly 20% of the working population without jobs.

industry managed by the unions."

Attempts to coordinate the activities of the nine unions involved will be made early next week. If they are to be of value they must combine the fight for occupation with demands that ICL open their books to elected trade union committees.

The starting point for this investigation must be ICL's links with the giant Plessey corporation, which owns nearly 25% of ICL and which has just reported profits of over £10 million.

Bus Strikes Suspended

At a mass meeting last Monday, July 19th, Coventry's bus crews voted to call off their lightening one-day strikes. A management/union working party has been set up to discuss the claim by the busmen for a reduction in the lunch hour. The crews will meet again after about a fortnight.

Strike threat against cuts

Proposed night-staff cuts in Coventry's 13 old peoples homes will mean that each home would be left in the care of one person during the night.

The fifty workers at the homes, members of the T&GWU and NUPE have threatened strike action unless

The ghost of the 1930s has become a living reality for this town once a booming overspill area for Liverpool's younger families.

I.C.L. workers (mainly ETU, AUEW and staff unions) were not surprised, it has been well noted that meetings at national level between employers and national officials have been taking place over a period of six months, details of which were never made public.

Recently I.C.L.'s unions condemned this secret cabal. The struggle for democracy within the unions is of first importance with such conspiracies afoot.

Local district officials are making the ritual statements of horror (Granada TV reports them as saying they would contest the numbers involved) but all the signs point to them simply wanting a quiet and dignified funeral.

Mass meetings held last Thursday unanimously rejected the redundancy threat - Jimmy Young ETU Steward told *Socialist Press*:

"All unions involved should fight together, I will be fighting for an occupation of the factory linked to the struggle for work sharing

RIGHT WING FLOCK TO PARALYSE TRADES COUNCIL

MASSIVE ATTENDANCE BY MANAGEMENT-UNION DELEGATES

In a grand display of bureaucratic manoeuvres the long awaited reconstitution meeting of the disaffiliated Oxford and District Trades Council took place on July 14th in the Oxford Town Hall.

The old Trades Council had been disbanded because of its strong fighting policy and because the right wing and the Stalinists had lost their majority on it.

Although the number of delegates from each branch to the new Council had been reduced by the TUC, there were 149 of the 169 registered delegates in attendance at the reorganisation meeting.

The reason for this was the joint right wing and Stalinist campaign using the Tory *Oxford Mail* to conduct a witch hunt in the town. Virtually every union sent circulars to their local branches telling them to affiliate and to send the maximum number of delegates, and

most right wing full time officials worked flat out for 2 months to ensure that the delegates were the 'right' people.

It was clear when the meeting assembled that it contained not only many people who had done absolutely nothing in the trade union movement in the past, but also a hefty contingent of people who spend most of the time fighting the working class management from the hospitals (NALGO) and from the car plants (ASTMS), well versed in forcing in speed up on the tracks.

In the election for officers the right wing and the Stalinists had an agreed joint slate. The right winger John Power, who was elected president by 88 votes to 57 for the previous president Gerry Casey, hadn't been to Trades Council for many years. Two Stalinists were elected vice presidents, one by a majority of only 12 votes. A right winger, Chris Luker, was elected secretary with 92 votes to Dave

Pinnington's 55 votes. For assistant secretary, right winger Keith Dancey got 89 votes to Pat Lally's 50 votes and another rightwinger Mick Brazier was elected treasurer with 91 votes to Bill Sallis' 55 votes.

On the constitutional decisions, resolutions opposing rule 14 (rule 15 in the model rule book) were ruled out of order by the TUC. The joint Stalinist/right wing motion to include the optional clause to rule 15 which reads "The Council has right to refuse to issue credentials to, or to withdraw credentials from, a delegate who has disrupted work of the Trades Council", was carried by 70 votes to 66.

Various other bureaucratic rules were adopted. That Council meet monthly instead of fortnightly, and that the meeting by shorter was decided - in other words that Council be transformed from a fighting organisation into an ineffective body.

OFFICIALS SNATCH DEFEAT FROM JAWS OF VICTORY

The three week old strike against victimisation at Christopher Relf's in Redditch is over. The TASS official has sent his members back to work until a local conference takes place. The blacking is off, though two leading members remain suspended.

This is a dispute which has shown very clearly the contrast between the readiness of workers to stand by trade union principles, and the readiness of officials to sabotage their struggles.

For the first week, the shop-floor workers were out in sympathy with the strikers, despite instructions from their official Alf Cotton to return to work. Cotton's political hostility to the "Broad Left" leadership of TASS appears to be such that he will do anything to

work, and then rang round the country telling shop stewards committees that the dispute was over!

But the blacking of Relf's products, packaged car components, continued at Leyland's Cowley, Longbridge and Dreads Lane plants, with the result that Relf's factories at Redditch and Alcester remained at a standstill. A continuous picket resulted in even milk and mail being stopped.

The only threat to unity came from Hopwood Parcels, the haulage contractors employed by C. Relf. The drivers, whose "shop steward" admits to being "against trade unions", took a load out by night and unsuccessfully tried to unload it at Cowley.

They then began to cross the picket by day and load up their trailers. Since nothing could be unloaded at Cowley, the result was

that all the trailers were full and not available for other work.

They then appealed to both the TASS members and the Unipart Service shop stewards at Cowley to lift the blacking to save them from being laid off!

SOLID

At the end of a fortnight's strike the TASS members were solid and the blacking was still total. Efforts were then made by Mr David Buckle, T&GWU District Secretary in Oxford, to force Cowley to lift the blacking.

Buckle ignored the trade union principle at stake, arguing that if the AUEW shop floor workers were back at work, why should T&G drivers suffer?

These arguments were correctly rejected by the shop-stewards at Cowley.

FEAR

However the TASS official was able to use the fear that the blacking might be lifted, to persuade the workers to return to work.

He told them that if no settlement is made at the local conference, the strike can be restarted.

This ignores the fact that the whole solid and principled position that existed has been given away for nothing.

As a result, two TASS members will be lucky if they keep their jobs and the organisation of white collar staff in Redditch will have suffered an important setback.

Move Against Racism

A meeting of trade unionists, Labour Party members and socialists was held at the Sponcroft, Smethwick on Thursday July 15th to discuss opposition to the spread of racist ideas and organisations in the area.

The meeting adopted a programme which recognised the need for positive alternative policies to protect jobs, living standards and social services.

This was condemned as "sectar-

ian" by members of the Communist Party who said it would exclude "non-working class opponents of racialism". They have since set up a joint committee with the vicar of Dudley!

The programme adopted at the Sponcroft meeting also supported the right of black workers to organise self-defence, but recognised the need to force the labour movement as a whole to accept their responsibility to protect the black community.

A committee was elected to organise work around this programme.

HOSPITAL STRIKE

Cont'd from front page.

He called on the Labour government to stop refurbishing British industry at the expense of the social services and start instead a programme of public works to fight unemployment and provide more hospitals.

This was in stark contrast to the contributions of local left MPs Lena Jaeger and Jack Stallard.

REFUSED

Although both MPs refused point-blank to link the fight to save the EGA with the fight against the cuts in public spending this flew in the face of the mood and approach of the day of action.

The strike had been built around demands of 'No to all closures', 'a £1,000 million injection into the NHS, a workers' enquiry into the financing and planning of hospital and health services'

It was only when a speaker from the 'Save the EGA Campaign', a WSL member, took the floor that this perspective was put forward.

While the chairwoman attempted to shout her down she pointed out that over 100 hospitals are threatened with closure in London alone and obviously the central point of the lobby was the question of fighting all cuts in public spending.

This drew loud cheers and applause from the marchers, though the point was ruled "out of order" by the Stalinist chairwoman.

ASTMS

It was taken up again however, when another member of the WSL speaking on behalf of the local ASTMS branch and with the full support of the meeting, challenged the chair, demanding that the meeting be given a firm assurance by the MPs present that they

would vote against the cuts in public spending to be proposed in the next weeks.

Amid loud demands for such commitment from all parts of the floor the Stalinist chairwoman refused to accept such a demand and closed the meeting!

This of course was much to the relief of the MPs present who were clearly completely unwilling to lead any opposition to the £1,000 million cuts.

After this day of action, occupation of the EGA must be followed forward with full strike action at all London hospitals in support.

The unity around the day of action has shown that there is no longer a case for each hospital looking over its shoulder to what support others will give before embarking on action.

The basis has been laid for workers' enquiry to find out the estimate for repair of the EGA. The lift has risen from £15,000 to £50,000 this year.

BOOKS

The books of the Area Health Authority must be opened to elected committees of trade unionists, to prepare the way for a workers' plan for the health service, linked to the abolition of all private practice, inside and outside the NHS.

The campaign around the EGA has also shown the role of the 'lefts' in the fight against the cuts.

Every 'left' MP has refused to join the fight, not a single trade union MP from the NHS union turned up for the lobby, while Alan Fisher, the NUPE General Secretary who two weeks ago called for "guerrilla" strikes against the cuts has told his members NUPE does not approve of strike action in defence of this particular hospital.

The strike action on July 14th was the best answer yet to the hypocrisy.

SEABOURNES STRIKE

Drivers at the Nuneaton depot of the Seabourne Shipping Company have returned to work after a two-week strike over union recognition - the outcome of which is far from clear.

At a mass meeting at the company's Barking depot, workers voted for a resolution which, as verbally presented by management, included recognition.

When the resolution appeared in written form however, it simply offered recognition of the right of an individual to be a trade union member.

Many workers felt this was the same as recognition, though the Nuneaton steward argued against this interpretation, pointing out

the difference between the two formulations.

But on the basis of the confusion created, the workers decided to return to work. Management have so far avoided taking a clear position on whether the union is recognised.

What is certain is that the massively successful blacking tactics taken by the Nuneaton workers and the wide support gained by the trade union movement in the management attempts to bring the strike to an end.

In addition management have already all but recognised the right of the Nuneaton steward to be elected by his direct.

The workforce is now clearly in a strong position to force management to concede in practice recognition many workers already convinced they have



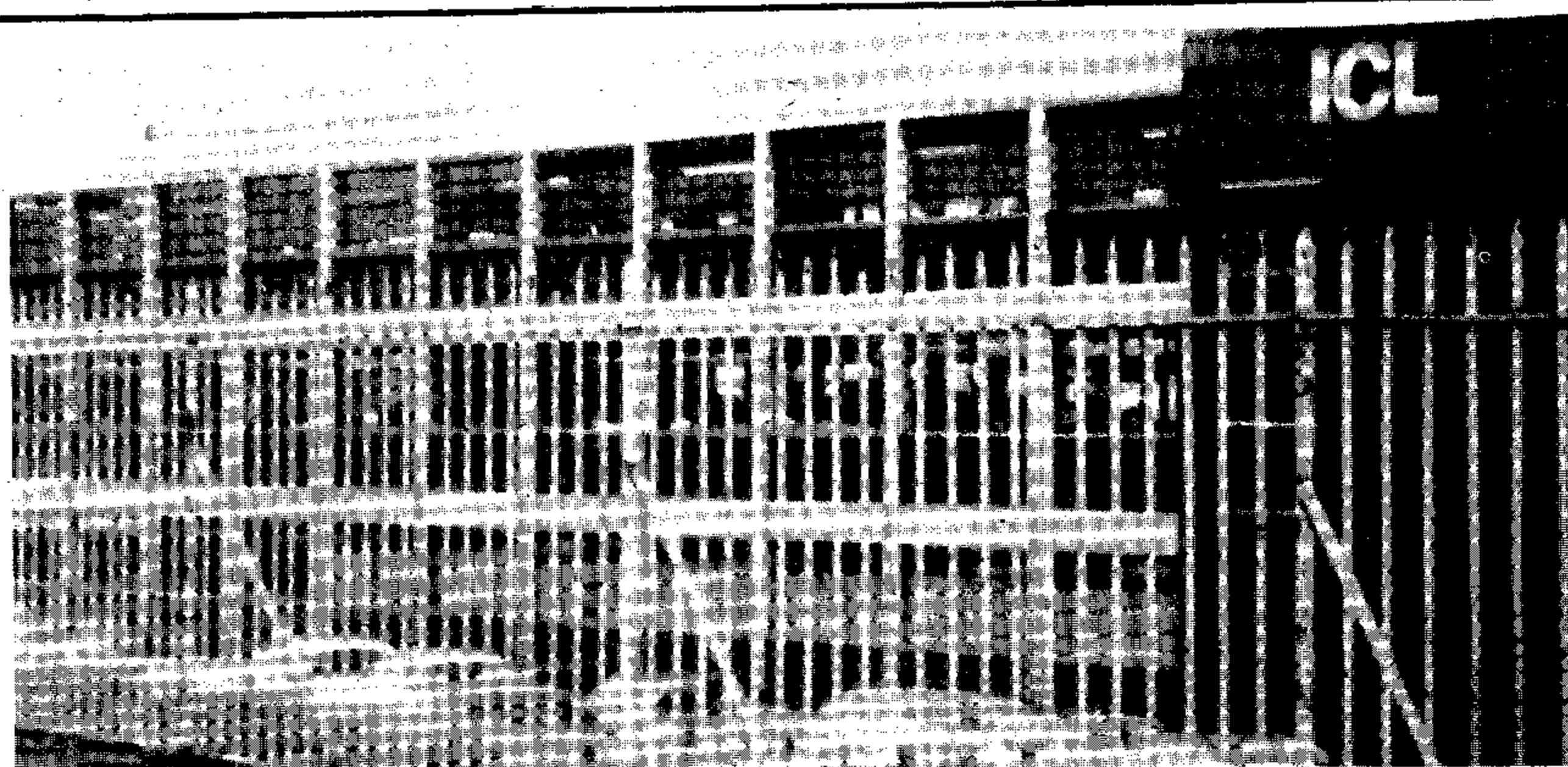
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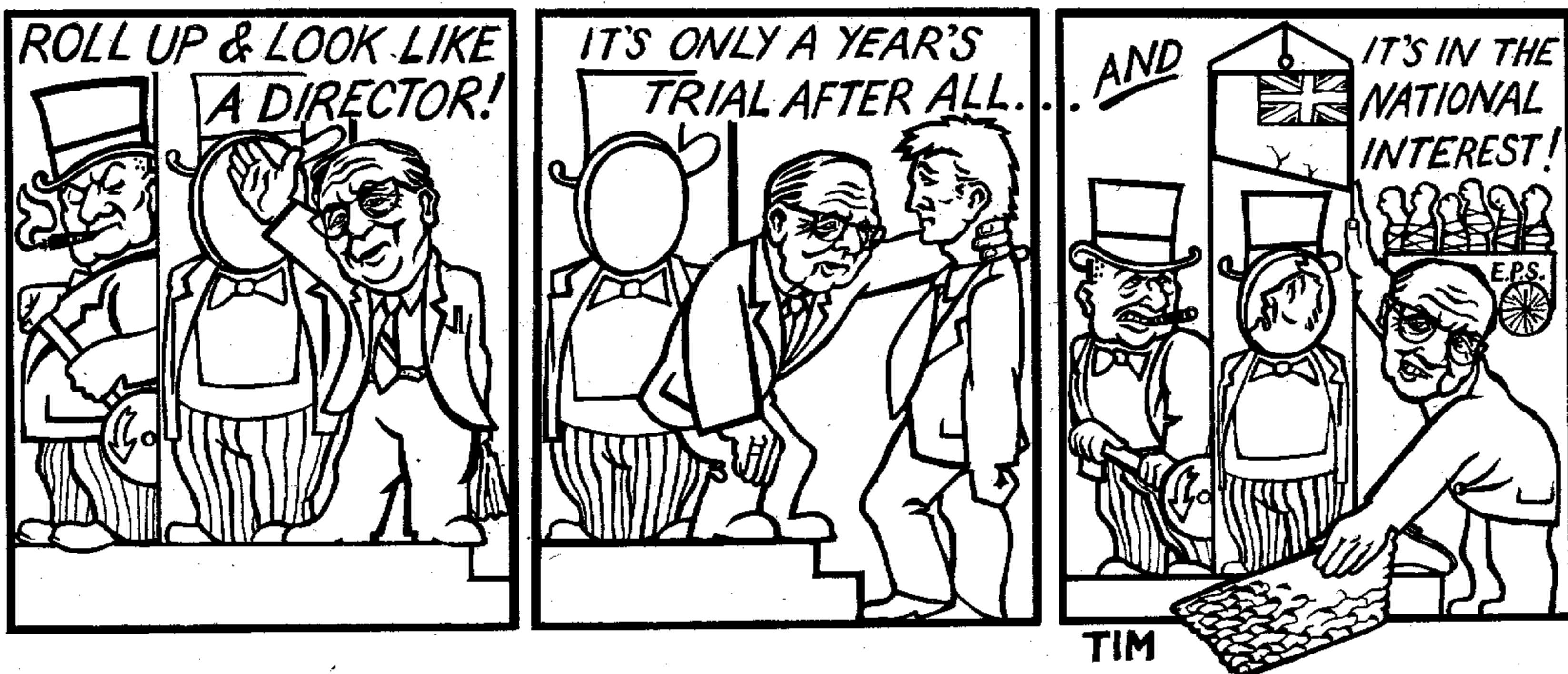
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The ICL factory at Winsford

THE WORKERS' PARTICIPATION MACHINE.



700 LOBBY AGAINST RYDER

Huge hostility both to the effects of Leyland's Ryder rationalisation and speed up plan and to those convenors and full time T&GWU officials who are collaborating with management to implement it was voiced in a massive demonstration through Oxford on July 15th.

700 workers - nearly all the available workforce from the Export Packing Services factory near Banbury - travelled over in fleets of coaches and cars to march from the Cowley car factories to lobby the T&GWU District Office, demanding to see District Secretary David Buckle.

Buckle had earlier endorsed Leyland's proposal to withdraw contract union work from the EPS plant to Leyland's Number 2 Factory in Cowley - a plan which means almost certain closure for EPS and immediately threatens 400 jobs.

Placards drew attention to the role of the officials - one reading "Job Protection: T&GWU have scores of well-paid officials - where are they?" The march shouted slogans against "worker participation" which ties in convenors and right wing stewards with these management plans, and called for the complete nationalisation of both EPS and British Leyland.

The demonstration brought

enthusiastic support from Cowley car workers, some of whom marched some of the way to Transport House.

One EPS steward told *Socialist Press*:

"This question of the officials has started as a local issue, but it must become a national question. It's high time the unions were controlled by the members on the shop floor."

Another steward stressed the huge response to the struggle - pointing out that an estimated 90% of EPS women workers had turned out on the march.

Buckle was "not available" to the lobbyists when they reached District Office, but as a magistrate his response to the march, divulged later to the Tory press,

was simply to refer the leaflet issued by the EPS workers to the union's legal department!

Clearly no support can be expected from such appointed officials, nor from those extreme right wing and Stalinist stewards and convenors who sit on the Ryder participation committees.

OCCUPATION

EPS workers must therefore continue to fight for the support of the workforce in the Cowley factories, and at the same time prepare for full-scale occupation of their Chipping Warden factory to prevent the first redundancies taking place, back the demand for the opening of the company's books and begin the fight to force nationalisation.

The T&GWU Daventry District Committee, covering EPS, has now set up a meeting between EPS stewards, stewards in the BLMC Export Packing plant at Cowley, (to which the work is being transferred) and the full time officials.

This decision is to be welcomed, but EPS workers should be warned of the danger of this being used as a delaying tactic to divert their struggle for jobs.

FUND

Latest contributions to the July Fund include Oxford PSF, £13; North London, £4; Hull, £15.25; Oxford Bookshop, £10.40; South London, £8.00; Birmingham, £10.50; Banbury, £3.25; East London, £50; NHS, £20; Aylesbury, £2.50; Oxford General, £33.50; Coventry, £1.90; Liverpool, £8.25; collection, £1.50.

Total so far: £335.95.

Comrades must take up a really determined fight if we are to reach our £600 target by the end of the month.

All contributions should be sent to:

Socialist Press Monthly Development Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

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The Struggle for Socialism in Spain

Kenilworth Hotel
97, Great Russell St., WC1
Friday 13th August at 7.30pm

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MASS SLAUGHTER BY LEBANON PHALANGISTS

For the past month, fighting in the Lebanon has centred around the refugee camp of Tel Al - Zaatar, near Beirut. The camp has great symbolic as well as practical importance for both sides.

As one of the main pockets of Palestinian resistance it remains a thorn in the flesh of the right-wing Christian Phalangist movement and their Syrian supporters.

The Syrians, in particular, have found the Palestinians and the left wing Moslems to be far more tenacious enemies than they expected.

This has led them to ever more blatant attacks on Moslem-held areas which have recently approached genocidal proportions. To support the Phalangist advance on Tripoli two weeks ago, Syrian armoured units launched an artillery attack on two Palestinian refugee camps on the outskirts of the city.

In the Tel Al - Zaatar conditions are barbaric. There is no electricity and little water. Every attempt to evacuate the more than 1,000 wounded has been answered by heavy fire from the Phalangists.

TRAPPED

At the weekend 500 refugees had been trapped by the collapse of a shelter under Phalangist shelling, and yet, despite repeated claims of victory from the right wing, the Palestinians have held on through assaults which numbered at least into the fifties, before it ceased to be possible to count them.

Meanwhile, left-wing forces under Kamal Jumblatt have begun to set up local civil administrations in all areas under their control to combat the breakdown of services.

This has been taken as an answer to similar moves by the Phalangists in the 20% of the country which they dominate.

The fierce struggles of the Lebanese and Palestinian masses have made life difficult for the bourgeois Arab regimes, who see them as an obstacle to accommodation with the principal imperialist powers.

On July 12th, the Arab League met in Cairo to cobble together a "compromise solution" which involved a Pan-Arab force gradually replacing the Syrians as "keepers of the peace".

Syria's announced willingness to go along with the plan was an indication of the sell-out involved.

The plan collapsed when the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) insisted that the first task of the force must be to lift the blockade on Tel Al - Zaatar.

The PLO have now rightly denounced the Arab League as "a cover for Syrian military intervention."

CONDEMNED

Last Thursday, Egypt's President Sadat turned verbally on Syria, calling for the withdrawal of Syrian troops and condemning their attacks on the Lebanese leftists and Palestinians.

But such sabre-rattling is very much in the tradition of speeches on anniversaries of the Egyptian revolution, and the PLO are well aware that Sadat will not lift a finger to prevent a massacre of the Palestinians.

It is an open question whether the Soviet Union, who have mouthed support for the PLO and are clearly embarrassed by the messy manoeuvres of their friends in the Syrian government, will step up the pressure for a withdrawal.

Either way the crisis of leadership in the struggle for Palestinian liberation cries out for the building of a Trotskyist leadership able to issue a call - over the heads of the bourgeois rulers - to the Arab masses to support their revolution.

STOP CUTS..... Cont'd from Front Page.



Healey

public spending and the government's commitment to reduce unemployment.

The events of the last week force us to ask if there is any limit to the attacks on the working class with which the union bureaucrats are prepared to collaborate?

The answer to that will clearly appear from their actions over the new spending cuts. The main TUC leaders have spoken against the cuts but have presented no perspective for any fight against them and are still quite happy to stand by their "deal" to cut wages.

The enormous pressure from their immediately threatened membership has forced the leaders of the public service unions to make less compromising noises.

"SUICIDAL"

Geoffrey Drain of NALGO has accused the government of following a "suicidal course" and talks of "the futility of pursuing the current policy", saying that the government must choose between employment at home and "the whims of speculators".

Alan Fisher of NUPE has realised that "all the assurances on growth targets and reducing unemployment are now in ruins". And David Bassett of the G&MWU described the policy as "an economic waste and a source of social bitterness".

But do these leaders have any intention to turn their words into actions against the cuts? Or will they continue to hold back and divert any fight which their members are ready to put up?

PARTIAL ACTIONS

Fisher has called loudly for "guerilla strikes" and of course all partial actions must be supported as a step to full-scale struggle.

But such actions as Fisher envisages are totally insufficient for the task involved.

To defeat the cuts will need all-out strike action maintained until its objectives are realised.

action using the fatuous argument that strikes would automatically involve spending cuts since no wages would be paid and so would assist the government in achieving its objectives.

While demanding that all those in the labour movement who have expressed opposition to the cuts take up a real fight against them, we also say that to base the fight on the programme of the 'lefts' in the Labour Party, the trade unions and the Communist Party would be fatal.

Their programme of protection through import controls and bailing out capitalism through the National Enterprise Board is a reactionary one, based on the idea that the interests of the working class can only be protected if capital is profitable.

The same error is committed when the Tribune group joins the CBI in condemning Healey's increase in employers' national insurance contributions because, they say, it will cut profits and so produce unemployment.

PROGRAMME

A programme giving a basis for a successful fight against the spending cuts must make clear that the defence of working class interests must be completely independent of the needs of the capitalist class.

And it must strive not for nationalist measures but for the maximum international unity of the working class not only against spending cuts but also all the other actions through which capital internationally is attempting to solve its crisis.

- Such a programme includes:
- a sliding scale of state spending.
- open the books of all public authorities.
- nationalise the suppliers and contractors.
- maintain and improve all social services.
- a programme of public works to create jobs.
- workers' control in the nationalised industries.

action?
Or will they continue to abrogate their responsibilities by saying that such things are the prerogative of the unions not the politicians?

Will they continue to refuse to fight to remove the Callaghan/Healey leadership which is a necessary part of stopping this government's anti-working class policies?

It is the answer to these questions, and not merely their votes in parliament, which will be the ultimate test of their commitment against the cuts.

ACUTE

The test is faced even more acutely by the trade union bureaucracy, especially by the leaders of the public service unions whose members are the first (though far from the only) workers to be "sacrificed" by the Labour government to the needs of international capital.

When these leaders scandalously "negotiated" a cut in the real wages of trade unionists for two years running, they claimed they were getting something in

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report