

SOCIALIST PRESS



Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League * No. 77 * November 30, 1977 * 15p

GRUNWICKS
New initiative
needed now

Ireland—Nationalism's Dead End p.6-7
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PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Firemen lobbying Callaghan at the EETPU Conference

As Terry Parry, General Secretary of the firemen's union calls on the Prime Minister, Callaghan, to plead for some way out of the strike, his members on the picket lines are growing increasingly determined against any compromise.

Members of the FBU, well into their third week on strike, are beginning to turn their anger against the government Ministers who refuse to allow them to be paid.

Wherever Callaghan travels he is met by lobbies shouting at him to get out. His arrogant replies only serve to stoke up anger against the Lib-Lab government among the firemen.

Need

Now that some of the strikers have learnt that to win their 30% claim, they must get rid of the wage-cutting coalition government, they must now go further.

They must face up to the need to build a new leadership in the FBU which is prepared to press home the fight and call on every other section of workers to follow the firemen's lead and take action on their own claims.

The leaders of the FBU know that the honeymoon days of the strike are running out fast.

Hostility

Their members can no longer be expected to behave like good lads on the picket.

Hostility has developed towards fire officers who scab on their dispute.

The initial tolerance towards the troops is also beginning to turn into bitterness, though much confusion remains.

Even some militants remain convinced that army scabbing on a firemen's strike is somehow different from them scabbing on other trade union disputes.

In this they reflect the

'CALLAGHAN OUT'



Callaghan

inadequacies of their union leadership, who have done nothing to strengthen the strike or spell out to their members the issues involved.

Roundly booed

When Parry rose to speak to the firemen who marched through London at the weekend he was roundly booed. He has opposed the strike from the beginning. Now he is sitting and waiting for it to reach a crisis so that he can move to stifle it.

Firemen are right to boo Parry. They are right to heckle Callaghan.

But they and the whole working class must also turn their attention to the leaders of the other unions with wage claims outstanding.

At the centre of the problem is the 12-month rule designed to prevent workers fighting shoulder to shoulder.

Pieced together

The Lib-Lab coalition was pieced together in March in a bid to enforce a third round of wage control on the working class.

As union conferences

SAY FIREMEN

Officials hold back pay strikes

roundly rejected any Phase 3 the sole remaining vestige was the TUC's stage-managed support for the 12-month rule.

Every union official now recognises that this rule is a key plank in supporting the Callaghan-Steel coalition, and is determined it should remain intact.

As a result they are now fighting might and main to prevent a unified movement of the working class.

Instead they are allowing isolated struggles to come under the hammer of government resistance one by one.

*Lift workers are on strike. But their EETPU leaders, (just as Socialist Press predicted last week) only made the dispute official in order to sabotage it.

Within days the claim had been reduced from 130% to 13%. The employers offer of 9 to 11 percent was suddenly within the officials' reach.

*Journalists on the Daily Mirror are fighting for a massive increase of £3,000 a year—but again refusing to confront the question of the government.

*Raleigh workers in Nottingham are demanding £27. There are 5,000 workers on strike over the claim.

*Rolls Royce workers at Willesden have been on strike for eleven weeks over a 17% claim.

All these strikes are important. But vital groups of workers, in NUPE, the NUM and other public sectors are being held back by their officials.

But even after 17 out of the union's 18 regions have voted to reject a 10% pay offer to local authority workers, NUPE leaders have made no moves towards strike action on their 30% claim.

Instead they have donated £10,000 'conscience money' to the isolated firemen.

To build support and mobilise other sections on their own claims, firemen must call in each area for councils of action, comprising local union branches, stewards committees, tenants associations and labour movement political organisations.

Moves towards such a council of action have already begun in Aylesbury where

the Trades Council passed a motion for the local FBU calling for support.

Councils of action can both provide the practical support that is necessary and enable the political problems of the action to be fought out.

Cease talks

If firemen are to win their claim they must demand that Parry ceases any talks with the government until the full claim is met.

Hints are being dropped that the government may offer certain gimmicks to get around the embarrassment of breaking the 10% limit.

Ideas include extras for travelling to work, payment for issuing certificates of inspection or even an immediate cut in the working week to 42 hours, with payment of 6 hours overtime.

All such phoney 'fringe' deals must be rejected.

Power workers who based their claims on such deals were manoeuvred into defeat.

The firemen's claim—limited though it is by the lack of a cost of living clause—must be stuck to in full.

Smith's 'sugar coated poison'

The slaughter of hundreds of Zimbabwe and Mozambican freedom fighters, civilians and children by Rhodesian armed forces came one day before racist leader Smith was hailed from Whitehall to the White House as making a major move for 'peace'.

The attack on the camp 60 miles inside Mozambique left men, women and children dead and dying in the hundreds.

Planes bombed the camp. Helicopters then flew overhead, machine gunning anything that moved. Parachutists were dropped to complete the massacre.

The claim by Rhodesian security forces that they killed more than 1,000 people in return for one of their own soldiers shows how unprepared the camp was.

Set 18 miles outside Chimoi it ran schools for children, many of whom were killed, and provided homes for hundreds of refugees from Zimbabwe.

'Poison'

This attack had already taken place when Smith invited 'moderate' black Africans to reach a constitutional agreement with him.

The deal was described by the Patriotic Front, behind news broke of the massacre as "sugar coated poison".

Smith's move was a tactic to outwit David Owen and Andrew Young, who are trying to impose their own neo-colonial solution on the country.

It has shown yet again how, despite the imperialist readiness to talk about settlements Smith has no intention of yielding an inch to a form of black majority rule.

The difference between Smith's plan—for an 'interim' settlement based on an agreement with the non-guerrilla nationalist groups—and the British-American plan is that the latter would involve interim British colonial dictatorship and a political role for Nkomo and Mugabe, the political leaders associated with the guerrillas, who would themselves be disarmed.

Smith himself is quite prepared to do a deal with the same leaders, but up to now the evidence is that they have rejected it.

These other leaders Bishop Muzorewa, the Rev. Sithole and Chief Chirau

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USA MASS STRUGGLES



Iron ore workers march on day 98 of their pay strike

While US employers in the basic industries step up their offensive against the working class, bitter struggles are underway among miners, steelworkers and dockers.

Eleven of the 160 strikers at the Justus mine in Stearns, Kentucky, who have been out since July 1976 demanding the United Mine Workers union contract, were jailed last month following a vicious police attack on picket lines on October 17.

150 pickets had attempted to force a halt to scabbing at the mine—but were attacked by 80 police in full riot gear.

Those arrested included 40 women who are to go on trial on November 28.

Armed guards

The Stearns strike has been the scene of continual violent confrontations, with the company hiring armed guards to beat back the strikers and protect scabbing operations.

Kentucky circuit judge JB Johnson, the man who jailed the pickets, had sanctioned the guard's use of firearms, simply stipulating that they should use no more than shotguns and sidearms!

Meanwhile the UMWA leadership remains passive on the struggle. At the same time they are allowing negotiations with the coal bosses to drift aimlessly towards deadlock.

UMWA President Arnold Miller has suspended talks with the bosses' organisation, the Bituminous Coal Operations Association, declaring that the main obstacle to agreement is the question of medical benefits for miners.

Concessions

But the employers are seeking a wholesale package of concessions from the UMWA, including an end to the right of union safety committees to close

dangerous pits; a cut in manning on mining machinery; a no-strike guarantee backed by punitive penalty payments; and continuous seven days a week, fifty two weeks a year operations with no premium payments or fixed holiday periods.

The current contract expires on December 6. Miller has been talking in terms of "no contract, no work"—but no serious preparations for strike action have been made.

The solid resistance of the Stearns miners, and a ten week unofficial strike earlier this year by thousands of miners defending their medical benefits are a pointer to the possibility of a struggle against the local bosses' ultimatum if the obstacle of the UMWA bureaucracy could be overcome.

Meanwhile another union bureaucracy—the International Longshoremen's Association leaders—are preparing to wind up a nine-week official docks strike that has paralysed East Coast ports.

The strike centred on the issues of containerisation and

the renewal of the dockers' master contract.

Wage increases of 30% over three years have apparently been won but a sticking point has been employers' refusal to guarantee jobs and wages against the effects of containerisation.

The concept of three year, all-embracing and legally enforceable "master contracts" is one that British employers would dearly love to import.

In practice it means that whatever the sell-out

embodied in the final ILA deal, East Coast dockers will be tied to it for the next three years.

ILA leader Gleason was last week confident that the whole affair could be concluded today, with the deal being put to the vote in individual ports.

In Minnesota, 18,000 iron-ore workers have been on official strike for over 15 weeks on a pay claim, despite efforts of steel union boss Lloyd McBride to force in a "compromise" proposal from the employers.

12,000 workers marched through the local town of Virginia on November 6 in a show of strength, which culminated in a 2,500-strong rally addressed by leading Steel and AFL-CIO bureaucrats.

This indication of militant struggle among steel workers is in sharp contrast to the passive acceptance by USWA officials of lay-offs and plant shut-downs elsewhere in the industry.

The fight for a principled leadership inside the US labour movement is essential.

In every struggle the treacherous role of the existing union bureaucracy in seeking to shackle the working class to the strategy and even the political parties of the ruling class is plain to see.

Programme

A programme to defend jobs and living standards must be raised, along with the demand that the unions locally and nationally break from the Democrats and the Republicans in order to build a Labor Party.

GREECE SWINGS TO THE LEFT

Increasing hostility to the main Greek bourgeois party led by Prime Minister Karamanlis was indicated in the results of last week's General Election.

But the conscious attempt by Stalinist and left-reformist parties to avoid a direct challenge to Karamanlis meant that no credible alternative government party stood opposed to the increasingly repressive and austere policies of Karamanlis' ruling "New Democracy" party.

Biggest electoral gains in

the leftward swing was the heterogeneous "PASOK" grouping, whose social base spans radicalised peasants in the countryside, petty bourgeois layers in the towns, and certain sections of skilled and other workers.

Mish mash

PASOK's programme is a mish-mash of utopian socialism and unbridled chauvinism in regard to the Cyprus question. It opposes both the Common Market and NATO, and is commonly equated with the British Tribune Group.

PASOK almost doubled its vote in this election, taking 25.3% and gaining 76 parliamentary seats.

The other workers' party to gain from the election was the Moscow-led Communist Party (Exterior) which won 9.3% of the votes and increased its parliamentary seats from 5 to 11.

Part of the reason for this increase of support for one of the most diehard of parties defending Stalinist orthodoxy must be the decision of the self-styled "Eurocommunist" Communist Party of the Interior to enter a Popular Front electoral bloc with four bourgeois parties, calling itself the "Alliance of Progressives and the Left".

Sharp setback

This bid for bourgeois respectability met a sharp setback as polls showed support of only 2.7% of the electorate—bringing a loss of four parliamentary seats.

As the CP Interior leaders cuddle closer to their "own" bourgeoisie, their slender base of support is beginning to crumble.

PASOK on the other hand, gained support both from Karamanlis' "New Democracy" and from the liberal bourgeois party headed by George Mavros, which slumped from 42 to 15 seats in parliament.

But the other side of this left swing was a significant growth in support for the extreme right National Front.

Class tension

In their first appearance after splitting with Karamanlis the NF gained five seats and 6.8% of the votes for their demand of an amnesty for the Junta's supporters.

Karamanlis has thus retained power under conditions of increasing class tension in Greece, in which the brazen Popular Frontism of the CP Interior has been rejected and the brazen left demagoguery of PASOK



Karamanlis

It will be necessary to ensure in the struggle for demands to protect the working class that the PASOK and Stalinist leaders are exposed as determined not to challenge Karamanlis or give the slightest independent lead to Greek workers.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report.

Diplomatic manoeuvres continue following Egyptian President Sadat's trip to Israel. Syria however seems to

Sugar strikers face troops

For more than three months Guyanese sugar workers have been on strike demanding back pay of £50 which is owed to them under a profit sharing scheme. But the main issue of the strike has now become that of scab labour.

The 'socialist' government of Forbes Burnham reacted to the workers' demands by mobilising 6,000 troops and civil servants to scab on the striking sugar workers.

The agricultural workers union is demanding the withdrawal of the scabs before they will negotiate.

The strikers have been supported by oil workers in Trinidad who have refused to deliver oil to Guyana until Burnham withdraws the scabs.

Burnham shows no sign of budging, but seems determined to crush independent trade unionism altogether.

This position fits in with the rightward shift in his foreign policy. In recent months he has been wooing the Carter administration, though only a few months ago he was publicly accusing the CIA of trying to overthrow him.

At present the 'opposition' led by Cheddi Jagan, which last year was prepared to enter a coalition government with Burnham, has been opportunistically taking advantage of his rightward shift.

Jagan, however, has shown conclusively in the past that he is not prepared to lead an independent struggle of the working class.

The Guyanese working class must reject the sham 'socialist' alternatives offered by both the major parties.



Muzorewa with Callaghan

ZIMBABWE... from front page

have all welcomed Smith's announcement.

He knew they would, since he has been involved in secret negotiations with them all for the past few weeks.

The talks had already established that a public commitment on the vote was all the leaders required in order to rush into open negotiations with Smith.

In exchange for Smith's announcement they have all agreed to discuss constitutional safeguards for the political and economic privileges of the whites.

The British American plan also tacitly supported by the

settlement which involves the Patriotic Front.

The exclusion of the Patriotic Front leaders from an agreed settlement would, they fear, make a prolonged civil war more likely, opening up the danger of the liberation struggle turning into an anti-capitalist one.

Appealing

Thus, although the Patriotic Front leaders have claimed they reject the imperialist plan they and their squabbling allies in the 'front line states' are still in general lining up behind it.

In effect they are appeal-

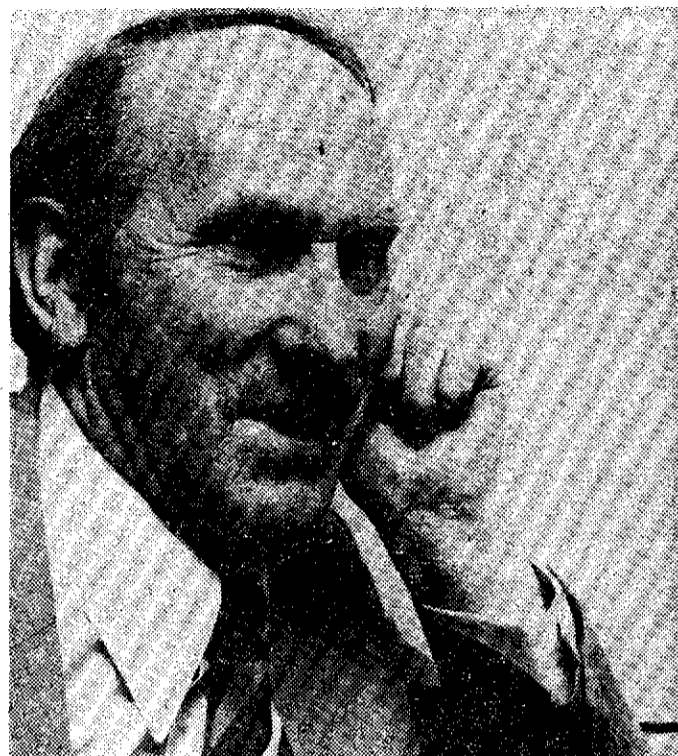
ones who can install them in power in place of Smith or a Smith-Muzorewa-Sithole alliance.

Increasingly all sections of the black leadership are revealing their opportunism and their readiness to compromise the national liberation struggle of the Zimbabwean people.

None of them can be trusted by the Zimbabwe workers and peasants to fight uncompromisingly for their independent interests. They will need a Trotskyist party fighting for a socialist Zimbabwe and against all forms of unprincipled alliances with the bourgeoisie if this is to be

INTERNATIONAL

Crisis for Irish Labour Party



Matt Merrigan

Since its rout in the elections of June 16 last, the Irish Labour Party has been in disarray.

Its policy of sharing power and governmental office with the right wing conservative Fine Gael party resulted then in a loss for Labour of three seats (from 20 to 17).

Fine Gael's representation fell at the time from 55 seats to 43, while Jack Lynch's Fianna Fail increased its seats from 66 to 84, giving it the biggest majority in its history.

At the time of the elections, *Socialist Press* refused to call for a vote for Labour because of its open declaration that it would form a coalition government with the bourgeois Fine Gael.

Critical support

We did give critical support, though, to those candidates who made opposition to the coalition part of their election programme—for example, Noel Browne and Matt Merrigan, who stood as Independent labour candidates.

Browne in fact was elected to the Dail (parliament) in the Dublin Artane constituency, having secured 5,601 first preference votes. Merrigan failed to be elected for Dublin Finglas, but won 1,512 first preference votes.

Some time after the election, Browne, Merrigan and their supporters in the Dublin based Liaison Committee of the Left were expelled from the Irish Labour Party for having stood against official Labour Party candidates. (Ironically, Browne had originally been adopted as official candidate in Artane, but his nomination was overturned by Labour's top brass).

Formation

At the beginning of October this group—numbering at most 300—held a public meeting in Dublin to discuss the formation of a new political party. A short time ago the party—named the Socialist Labour Party—was formed on what seems to be a vaguely left social-democratic platform.

Many of the policies are taken over wholesale from the electoral positions of Browne and Merrigan: opposition to coalitions with Fine Gael or Fianna Fail; opposition to the National Wage Agreement (Ireland's Social Contract); opposition to the more overt examples of state repression in the North and South; opposition to the dominance of the Catholic Church and to the lack of basic rights for women, eg contraceptive facilities, divorce, etc.

All of these points are of course supportable for socialists—but on their own they are certainly inadequate to the needs of the Irish working class.

The programme advanced by the new party is left reformist and contents itself with securing certain minimal gains.

Claw back

But in a situation of generalised economic crisis where capitalism not only cannot grant any new demands, but must claw back reforms won in the past, minimal programmes are in truth useless.

What is needed instead is a programme of transitional demands which extend a fight for democratic rights into a struggle for state power itself.

Browne's party will not, nor can it elaborate such a programme precisely because it wants to channel the independent strengths of the working class into parliamentary by-ways, "left" though these may be.

Restlessness

Its formation at this period is symptomatic of the growing restlessness within the Irish working class, their disenchantment with the impotent official Labour Party and their desire for a party which can lead them out of the present situation.

It is too early to say with any certainty precisely what role this new group will play in Irish politics.

Most likely it will end up as a pressure group to the left of the official Labourites, but most certainly it will be unable to provide the revolutionary leadership which alone can solve the economic and political problems



In a week when it was announced that 10,000 political prisoners have been released in Indonesia, a picket was mounted outside the Indonesian Embassy in London to protest against the continued detention of tens of thousands of others.

SOARES THREAT TO QUIT

With only a few days to go before the end of Premier Mario Soares' ultimatum to the opposition parties, the Portuguese political situation seems to be heading towards a new crisis.

Soares says he will resign if the other parties—the Social Democrats, the Democratic and Social Centre and the Communist Party—do not agree to support the government's programme.

Exclusion

The programme includes an explicit exclusion of further nationalisation and further measures to hand back nationalised property to the capitalists and the payment of compensation to others, the establishments of limits on the agrarian reform and on the right to strike.

There is also a further programme of IMF-inspired economic austerity measures including the limitation of wage increases to 20% (when inflation is running at over 30%), measures to 'improve work discipline' and lessen absenteeism, measures to de-restrict the capitalists' freedom to sack workers and the maintenance of unemployment at its present official level of about 14% of



Eanes

the labour force.

Taken together this programme represents a huge attack on the gains made by the Portuguese since the overthrow of the Caetano dictatorship in 1974.

Line up

The Portuguese Communist Party is, according to its

recent conciliatory statements, apparently ready to line up behind this anti-working class programme and join a government of national unity under Soares.

To the two bourgeois parties, however, even the programme is not enough. Far they have implied that they are not prepared to operate in Soares' plan.

And Soares himself refused to contemplate a government of workers' parties with the CP. If he cannot get a grand popular front he demanded he will, he said, resign.

The right wing chose November 25 to organise a series of demonstrations to celebrate the anniversary of the overthrow of the 'left wing insurrection' in 1975.

Political crisis

And President Eanes used the occasion to hint again that, if the political crisis is not resolved itself quickly, he might assume the special powers that the constitution allows him.

That the right is unable to talk so brazenly the responsibility of the leaders of the workers' party not only of the Socialist government but also of the 'opposition' CP which in the last few months has waged a bitter war on all signs of militant action by the working class.

IN BRIEF

VIETNAM

The military dictatorship has published the rules for the 'return to democracy' which is supposed to begin next year with 'free elections' to a constituent assembly. The elections will take place while many opposition leaders remain in prison or in exile. People who are illiterate (30% of the population) are not allowed to vote, and to get on the lists it is necessary to get 40,000 signatures and have committees in 12 or more departments. This automatically excludes most organisations to the left of the CP. The CP itself, for long a supporter of the military dictatorship, but now not quite so sure, has criticised the ground rules but is going to participate nonetheless.

PERU

The visit of Vietnamese CP leader Le Duan to Peking has highlighted the differences between the Chinese and Vietnamese bureaucracies. Le Duan was received with a good deal less public warmth than such recent visitors as Tito and the Cambodian party chief, Pol-Pot. He did get a banquet at which he publicly thanked 'the Soviet Union and other socialist countries' for their help to Vietnam; and at which he adopted the Soviet bureaucracies 'world formula' against imperialism rather than the Chinese alternative of the third world against the superpowers.

HOLLAND

After the definitive breakdown of coalition talks between the Labour Party and the Christian Democrats, a programme was agreed between the leaders of the Christian Democrats and the right wing VVD Party for a coalition which would exclude the Labour Party. This has since run into problems from the 'left wing' of the Christian Democrats who worry about the coalition's ability to control the labour movement without Labour in power. So Holland, seven months after the elections still has no government. The weakening effect of this on the bourgeoisie was seen when national negotiations between the unions and the employers about wage increases for 1978, broke down after 20 minutes.

COLOMBIA

The ruling Conservative and Liberal Parties go into the pre-presidential election period increasingly divided; while the agitation by the working class for wage increases has resumed with a series of large demonstrations in all the major cities.

ETHIOPIA

The West Somalia Liberation Front is reported to have won what was expected to prove a decisive battle in its struggle with the Ethiopian military dictatorship backed by the USSR and Cuba.

CP BACKS STATE CRACKDOWN

Italy's 'Red Brigades' have once again claimed responsibility for a continued wave of terrorist attacks.

Last week attempts were made to kill or injure an editor of the Fiat-owned newspaper *La Stampa* and a director of the part-nationalised company Ansaldo, who is a member of the Italian Communist Party.

In the face of events of this kind the Italian Communist Party has lined up completely behind the repressive policies of the bourgeois state which are directed by Interior Minister Cossiga (who is the brother in law of CP secretary general Enrico Berlinguer).

After the latest series of attacks, the CP had gone further down this treacherous path.

In an interview last week in the Milan Daily *Corriere della Sera* the party spokesman on law and order, Ugo Pechioli, spells out very clearly the way in which the Italian CP has abandoned every shred of Marxism in its



Berlinguer

total collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

Pechioli is now calling for the mobilisation of the masses to defend the bourgeois state and its repressive apparatus.

"The defence of the democratic state", said Pechioli, "cannot only be delegated to the police and the courts. If violent groups or their accomplices exist in a factory they must be denounced by other

"We should strive for the inhabitants of the suburbs the big cities to tell the authorities what they have learned, that they tell the about what they see".

Pechioli claims he is talking about the people becoming 'informers and spies' but he then suggests that local committees are set up to assist the police and security forces of the state.

"For the popular front and for the State, terrorism is an enemy which must be fought by every means".

Pechioli went on to support the illegal operation of the state security organisations. "An efficient information service is indispensable and no one imagines that can operate in an entirely legal manner".

To ask of a secret agent that he works openly without formal respect for the law is contradictory, ridiculous".

Thus the Italian Stalinists driven on by the logic of the long-term alliance with Italy's Tory Party, the Christian Democrats, now begins to exceed even the Tories their defence of the state machine.

JOBLESS UP AS SLUMP DEEPENS



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report.

Capitalism is inflicting a new age of mass unemployment upon the working class. Last week the European Economic Community announced that the number of workers registered as unemployed throughout the EEC had reached 6 million. Even that vast figure is an underestimate.

There are further millions of jobless in the rest of capitalist Europe, including probably 2 million in Spain and Portugal.

In the United States 8 million are without jobs and countless millions of others throughout the rest of the capitalist world.

About 1,500,000 of these millions are in Britain where unemployment has doubled since the Labour Government took power in 1974.

Monstrous

Last week's figures show that this monstrous number shows no sign whatever of abating. The number of wholly unemployed in fact fell by a negligible 500 which the Government, clutching at any straw, saw as a 'positive' sign.

The other 'hopeful sign' pointed out by the Ministry of Employment was that this month there were 2000 more

jobs on the list of registered vacancies—2,000 jobs to be shared among one and a half million workers!

The week also saw economic news which made it clear that there is no prospect of the problem of mass unemployment being solved by capitalist system.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (the club of the rich capitalist countries) held a conference in Paris at which its 'experts' produced figures to show that the rate of growth of capitalist economies was everywhere lagging far behind the predictions made a few months ago.

Bleak prospects

And the figures showed equally bleak prospects for the future.

The *Financial Times* summed up the mood of the conference by saying:

'Failing any new expansionary measures, the OECD

secretariat has painted a gloomy picture for 1978, involving lower growth of industrial production, a stagnation of investments, rising unemployment and a sharp decline in world trade which could lead to much greater protectionism'.

Raging

'Protectionism' is the polite word for the trade war which is already raging between the major capitalist countries, desperately searching for a bigger share of the world's diminishing mass of profit.

Although in general the frightened economic authorities of the capitalist world have stopped this trade war from taking the form of an increase in tariff and custom duties on trade, it is still there in the form of the increasing number of 'voluntary' restrictions on exports, which the United States in particular is trying to impose on a growing number of countries.

The textile industry in Latin America has already been stunted by these arm twisting methods. And the British government, which has rejected the reactionary nationalist demand for import controls which comes from the Labour Lefts and the CP, has instead wrested 'voluntary' limitations from Hong Kong and Japan of exports of such products as TVs and cars.

The capitalist states are increasingly throwing around accusations against each other (and against the workers' states) of 'dumping' (selling goods below the cost of production).

Committees of the United States Congress are at present investigating accusations of dumping and demands for protection based on that and other grounds against goods which account for two thirds of the exports of the EEC to the US.

This trade war was highlighted in different ways this

week by two events: the first was the announcement of the half yearly financial figure for the British Steel Corporation. The loss for six months amounted to over £200 million or nearly £13 a second!

At the same time the Bethlehem Steel Company in the US, which is similar in scale of production to BSC, announced losses which were almost double this.

Dumped

Both British and American producers blame the situation on cheap 'dumped' imports from Japan and are threatening to step up protection against Japanese steel.

The capitalists' answer to the crisis of the steel industry—which is part of the crisis of the whole capitalist economic system—is to bargain with each other about whether it should be Japanese, American or European workers that are forced to bear the bulk of the costs.

Separate fight can only lead to failure

The size of this year's NUS Women's Conference was an indication of the weakness of the women's campaign and the refusal of the Broad Left leadership to take women's issues seriously—only about 150 delegates and activists turned up.

There were discussions on important issues like women in Northern Ireland; lesbian parents; sexism in education; and rape.

But these debates were overshadowed by the two demands which have dominated the women's conference for the past 3 years: for greater status and for autonomy.

Any decisions taken remain totally useless while the Women's Conference is purely advisory, and while its resolutions are not discussed at national NUS Conference.

All motions passed at women's conference which conflict with NUS policy should be automatically given priority for discussion at the national policy-making conference.

Without that status, the NUS Women's Conference will remain a token gesture from the Broad Left-dominated executive.

Closed

Over the past 3 years, the NUS Women's Conference has voted to be closed to men—and this year was no exception.

Excluding men from the Women's Conference can only detract further from the fight to make women's issues an integral part of NUS policy.

Women alone can never challenge the material roots of their oppression—that struggle can only be undertaken by the whole labour and student movement with a principled leadership which, unlike the present NUS leadership, recognises the importance of women's rights.

NUS conference delegates in December should support an amendment to delete the demand for autonomy of the Women's Conference from this 'Women in Society' motion.

But it is vital that the substantive motion is passed so that an effective campaign for women's rights can be built throughout NUS.

POLITICS SHUNNED BY SWP'S CONFERENCE

No call to pull out army



Rank and File's hatred of bureaucracy is not enough.

No call for the withdrawal of scab troops from the firemen's strike was made last Saturday by the Rank and File delegate conference in Manchester organised by the Socialist Workers Party.

The opening speaker, a Strathclyde fireman, never even mentioned the troops.

And another later referred to them not as scabs, but as "squaddies".

Restricted

The motion that was adopted was completely restricted to proposals for "solidarity", urging delegates to "raise financial support"; "ensure proper fire cover" at work places; "support demonstrations and pickets";

"campaign for solidarity action"; and strengthen "rank and file support committees".

No demand was made of those union leaders who are deliberately holding back action on wages.

Let off hook

Miners leaders were let off the hook for refusing to proceed with their 135% claim.

No mention was made of the Lib-Lab coalition government or its role in enforcing wage control.

It was left to the movers of amendments based on the policies of the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement to make these political points and offer a clear programme for struggle.

Alan Thornett from BLMC's Cowley Assembly Plant moved an amendment calling for a campaign in the

labour movement to break the Lib-Lab coalition and remove the Callaghan-Healey Labour leadership.

He was the only speaker to protest at the invitation to BBC televising cameras that had been extended by the publicity-hungry SWP organisers.

Conspicuous by their absence however were the conference's most eager publicists on the left, the International Marxist Group, whose paper, *Socialist Challenge* had been trumpeting praise for the conference and calling for support for weeks beforehand.

In the end four IMG members were spotted in the 400-strong audience which itself was considerably smaller than the last conference.

The drop in numbers was matched by a certain loss of

control by the SWP-run Rank and File committee.

In two shock votes on policy amendments, the platform was first defeated and then scraped through by a whisker.

As a result the long-standing SWP demand of a flat £15 across-the-board pay rise was scrapped, and the call for "wage increases at least large enough to restore 1974-75 living standards" was adopted.

Narrowly defeated

And the call for work-sharing on full pay as the policy to combat sackings and unemployment was only narrowly defeated.

A further amendment, calling for cost of living clauses in all pay settlements and "automatic increases in

social spending to compensate for inflation" received only 50 votes, after the platform had first distorted the amendment, and then made it plain they saw it as an issue of confidence.

The conference's emphasis away from political questions and towards pure trade union militancy was reflected in the smaller number that voted for a break in the Lib-Lab coalition.

And there was nothing to suggest that this latest Rank and File conference would do any more than its predecessors to assist the course of the struggle against the trade union bureaucracy.

Only the construction of a new political leadership on a programme to regain and defend living standards can fulfill the tasks now confronting the working class.

NEC BACKS 10% LIMIT — NOT FIREMEN

The National Executive of the Labour Party refused to give support to the firemen last week and instead called for urgent talks with the Prime Minister, Callaghan and the Chancellor, Healey, over the 'rigid application' of the ten percent limit.

The starting point for these talks is complete subservience to the pay policy.

Ruled out

A motion put by the Labour Party Young Socialists executive member, Nick Bradley was ruled out of order.

It was a mild enough motion. It did not even specifically call for the money to be paid.

It simply expressed 'concern' and said the FBU claim was 'justified by the terrible drop in living standards that working people have suffered in the last few years.'

In its search for a 'reasonable' defence of the firemen the motion even pointed to the electoral support that paying the claim would bring.

It was all in all the sort of motion that even right wing bureaucrats are prepared to support.

But it was much too strong meat for the Labour executive.

The motion was not accepted as an emergency because the FBU had not asked the NEC to intervene.

Hailed

So, despite the fact that a position in favour of the strikers would have been hailed by every fireman on every picket line, this gave the executive chaired by 'left' talking Minister Joan

Lestor, bureaucratic room for a way out.

Instead Norman Atkinson, searching into the depths of his 'left' reputation to come up with something, proposed that an NEC deputation—Lestor and General Secretary Ron Hayward—meet Callaghan and Healey in private.

This motion was hailed with relief. All but three members of the executive voted for it, and those that opposed it (including Shirley Williams) were all hardened right wingers.

LPYS backing for Lib-Lab coalition

'Our criticisms do not mean that we want to bring down the Labour Government, we want to strengthen it and keep it in power.'

This was the conclusion drawn by Tony Sauniois LPYS National Committee member after a harrowing account of the vicious attacks by the Coalition Government on workers' living standards, and a rousing description of the mass mobilisation of workers growing daily, against these policies.

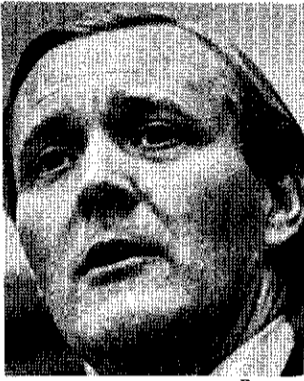
This Militant double-think was apparent again and again during the LPYS 'Young Workers' Conference at Islington on Saturday November 25.

It came not least from the main speakers, Tony Benn, Minister of Energy, and Bob Wright, Assistant General Secretary of the AUEW.

He agreed that it was only through mass struggles that workers' gains could be achieved. But he conspicuously slid around the challenge that he should therefore fully support the firemen and other current disputes. He rejected any

If the 'lefts' that generally dominate Labour's NEC are not prepared to come out in full support of the firemen then there is nothing, absolutely nothing, that will force them to break from complete support for the coalition and its policy of wage cuts, job cuts and cuts in public spending.

The Tribune Group has just increased its affiliation fee by 50%. Neither this, nor cosy chats with Callaghan are able to save them from complete and utter political bankruptcy.



Benn

programme for the 'lefts' to overthrow Callaghan and Healey.

Unity

He claimed that a split in the Labour Party would destroy the unity which made the British Labour movement the strongest in the world!

Benn was given a friendly reception by YS and Militant members present, and applauded as he left the room to return to his ministerial 'duties' of organising productivity deals for the miners and other plans to strangle the working class.



Swapping yarns on wage control? Callaghan and Chapple at the EPTU Conference.

'THEY HAVE STOLEN THE TORY PROGRAMME' SOBS MAUDLING

Suddenly the chances of Labour being massacred at the next election look less clear cut.

With the critical struggle against the 10% limit already launched, the working class has shown its determination to resist the wage cutting policies of the coalition, and provide an immediate threat to the Coalition itself.

But middle class elements who oscillate between Tories and Labour are showing doubts that the Tories will offer anything except an intensification of the class war.

Every poll now published shows the Tory lead cut.

The reaction of Tories is shown in an 'open letter' Reginald Maudling has written to his constituents—or at least those of them who read the Times.

The Tories want power.



Maudling

They fear that the Labour Party will be forced into concessions unfavourable to capitalism. At the same time they recognise that the Labour-Liberal coalition is managing capitalism more effectively than they could—by assuring the complete acquiescence of the TUC.

Maudling reflects a dilemma and the unhappiness it is causing inside the Tory Party. He points out that the present programme of Government contains more proposals for nationalisation.

Maudling goes on: 'As for the powers of trade unions, the Government are no longer trying to extend them.'

'Indeed, to the contrary they are fighting the battle of Parliament and the people will against the organised and unscrupulous industrial muscle of some trade unions.'

Optimistically, Maudling reckons that the Government will hold its pay policy. 'The Conservative Party with a dilemma. If he support him (Callaghan) he succeeds, he will be in a position to call an election and in a very strong position indeed to win it. Yet what alternative do the Conservatives have? ...'

'We shall not get much benefit from pointing out that the leopards have changed their spots, that they are doing now what we have advocated for some years.'

Despite his warning of an economic recovery would lead to an outbreak of 'Beverly, Footery and Scargillde' the main line of Maudling's plaintive letter is that since the Labour Party is not putting its name to even wage and job cutting policies that the Tories advocate a that there is therefore little effective opposition that they can make.

Ministers break ranks—over EEC, not pay

Seven Cabinet Ministers and 170 other Labour MPs proved conclusively last week that they do not go into Government lobbies on tram lines!

All seven Ministers abstained on the vote for direct elections to an EEC Parliament while 70 odd Labour MPs summoned up the courage to vote against it.

Four Ministers—Benn, Shore, Orme and John—actually sat unblushing in their seats while the vote was taken. The earth did not open up and swallow them.

Despite the two line whip Leader of the House, Foot, also abstained.

In the best traditions of undercover leftism, the MPs had swallowed the camel of IMF policies inflicted on the working class and were now straining at the gnat of direct EEC elections.

It was a safe stagemanaged rebellion. A massive majority was assured since the Tories, Liberals and Nationalists were all supporting the elections.

Just to be on the safe side, the MPs had taken the precaution of confessing to Callaghan about their bad



Peter Shore

attack of principles at a Parliamentary Labour Party meeting.

Callaghan, assured of his majority and conscious of the important role that his 'lefts' play in confusing the working class, handed them their escape route.

He told them abstentions 'on conscientious grounds' were permissible.

Tribune Group MPs are expected to seize on this precedent and apply to Callaghan for permission to kick over the traces on other matters of principle. Just so long as the Coalition strategy for suppressing the working class is not disturbed.

PRESS GANG SHARK PRACTICE

A wounded shark is in severe danger of being torn to pieces by its fellow hunters, should it happen to get wounded while they are feeding.

Much the same casual butchery is also the practice of Fleet Street.

The Mirror Group has shown what sharp teeth it has by sacking every single one of its 420 journalists over their pay claim.

But the dispute has made a wound in the soft underbelly of the IPC paper, and the blood has drawn the other Fleet Street papers towards the kill.

Most of the nationals are covered by a sort of cannibal gentlemen's agreement that they will not increase their own print run when one of the other papers is off the streets due to a strike.

But since the Mirror Group left the security net of the Newspaper Publishers Association its fellow carnivores

have ditched their scruples and set out to pick up some of the easy pickings of *Daily Mirror* readers suffering from withdrawal symptoms.

But as in all the best suspense stories a hero rushes to the rescue in the nick of time.

And when the threatened victim is one of capitalism's own presses, who better to snatch it to safety from the jaws of disaster, than a full-time official of a print union?

Bill Keys, General Secretary of SOGAT, whose services to the newspaper bosses most recently include attempted sabotage of the Darlington strike, instructed his members not to handle more copies of any other paper than normal.

The 'solidarity' of this action is tempered by the fact that print union leaders are now trying to co-operate with the *Mirror* to find a way to scab on the dispute through linking up production to Manchester.

Victor Matthews, the man who bought the *Express* in the summer, burst on to the front page for the second time in a few months to protest against 'unwarranted interference' by Keys.

With tears rolling down his face, businessman turned ace reporter Matthews wrote:

'His instructions do not take account of the welfare of Beaverbrook staff, whose own security has been in jeopardy for years through financial difficulties, or the right of small shop-keepers—who are already fast disappearing—to sell the newspapers that give them a living ...'

'Mr Keys should know that we shall continue to uphold the right of management to manage and right of workers to work.'

Not a word about his profits. But then Matthews, like his fellow sharks in the business, does not want to show all his teeth at once.

That really would frighten the fish.

Class lines drawn on racialism

In an important step forward, Oxford City Labour Party has set up an Anti-racism sub-committee.

Last week a public meeting was organised by the committee. Main speaker was Paul Rose MP, who is one of the few Labourites with a kind of record of anti-fascism.

But as he denounced 'sectarianism' as a 'crime', Rose revealed that his ideal 'united front' against fascism would include Tories and Liberals!

The 60-strong meeting, however, was more in favour of platform and floor speakers who demanded the campaign centre on the labour movement and ending the Lib-Lab coalition that created the conditions for fascists to operate.

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Ireland

ROOTS OF TODAY'S CRISIS

Part Five DEAD END OF NATIONALISM

In a contribution to the debate on the national question at the Second Congress of the Communist International, a Jewish delegate from the Bolshevik Party, Mereshin, said:

The transfer of power from the hands of the big bourgeoisie into the hands of petty-bourgeois groups forming democratic republican states, does not reduce national tensions but on the contrary sharpens them in the extreme.

*Minutes of the Second Congress. Vol 1 p.163
New Park Ed.*

The events in Ireland immediately following the 1921 ceasefire with the British are graphic confirmation of Mereshin's statement.

Dominion

The Treaty proposed by Lloyd George in 1921, giving the southern, predominantly Catholic, twenty six counties of Ireland dominion status within the Commonwealth, while retaining control of the six North Eastern counties, was accepted by the Dublin-based Dail by 64 votes to 57 on January 4 1922.

That vote was a reflection of the conflicting class forces which had fought alongside each other in the National Liberation Movement of the preceding year.

The 64 pro Treatyites—led by Arthur Griffiths, Michael Collins and Liam Cosgrave—represented the bigger farmers and businessmen who had thrown in their lot with Sinn Fein in the 1919-1921 period.

Fearful

Having secured as much political independence as they needed, and fearful lest a movement of the working class go too far and drive them out as well as the British, they decided to accept the terms of the Treaty in an effort to stabilize the situation.

The anti-Treatyites, led by Eamon De Valera, were more representative of the interests of small farmers and small capital.

For them the Treaty was initially too much to stomach: they reacted strongly against the proposed

partition of the country, as well as against the clauses in the treaty which stipulated they would have to take an oath of allegiance to George V even after independence was granted.

The pro and anti-Treatyites were ultimately bound together by their desire to establish an independent capitalist Ireland. (De Valera himself found no great trouble in accepting the provisions of the Treaty later on).

Open access

But at the start of 1922 they differed on how that was to be achieved. The Griffith's faction wanted open access to British markets; De Valera was for protectionism which would allow some accumulation of native capital.

By April 1922 sporadic attacks of shootings had taken place between the I.R.A. and the Free State Forces, as the pro-Treatyites were known.

By June, those shootings had escalated into all-out civil war with the Free States using British artillery to bomb Dublin's Four Courts—the I.R.A. Headquarters at the time.

Tensions

The tensions within Ireland were not to be lessened by the establishment of a 26 county state; as Mereshin foresaw, those tensions were to be sharpened 'in the extreme' in the years which followed, as the Free State Government prosecuted the war against the I.R.A. with greater determination and ferocity than the British had ever shown.

Ambush

On August 15 1922 Michael Collins was shot in an ambush in Tipperary, and his death stung the government into greater repression.

Military courts were set-up by the Minister of Justice, Kevin O'Higgins—Ireland's Mussolini—to try, arrested I.R.A. men.

In the three weeks from November 17 to December 8 1922 nine volunteers were executed on the orders of this court—among them well-known I.R.A. leaders such as Erskine Childers, Liam Mellows and Joe McKelvey. Internment camps were thrown open. At the start of

July 1923, after the Civil War had ended, there were 11,316 prisoners in jail.

Faced with such and with dwindling support from the war-weary population, the I.R.A. conceded defeat and on May 24 1923 De Valera gave the order to dump arms.

Determined

The ceasefire did not lessen the tensions, for the Cumann na nGaedheal party which formed the government were determined to wipe out the I.R.A. for good. It wasn't until early 1924 (after a mass hunger strike by prisoners during October 1923) that I.R.A. men began to be released from jail.

Even after being released they were systematically harassed. On April 3 1925, the Dail passed the Treasonable Offences Act—popularly known as O'Higgins' Murder Bill—making any attempt to take up arms against the state punishable by death.

O'Higgins, who signed the death warrants of 77 republicans, was later shot in an I.R.A. ambush in July 1927.

In December 1925 the Free State Government officially recognised the border, and thereby sanctioned the existence of the Northern Ireland state—a further slap in the face for the die-hard republicans.

Defeat in the Civil War and the ensuing governmental measures told heavily on the I.R.A. and Sinn Fein. In March 1926, a motion by De Valera to the Sinn Fein Conference proposing that Sinn Fein should take their seats in the Dail if the oath of allegiance was removed, was narrowly defeated.

Warriors

Shortly afterwards, De Valera split off from Sinn Fein to form his own party Fianna Fail ('Warriors of Destiny'), weakening the orthodox republican movement even further.

The new party won 44 seats in the June 1927 elections, against 47 for the governing Cumann na nGaedheal party, and on August 12 1927, they took their place in the Dail as the opposition party, following a proposal to remove the oath of allegiance.

In a snap election held that September Fianna Fail



Armed members of the IRA patrol

won 57 seats, while the government took 62. The demise of Sinn Fein was almost complete. In the September elections it failed to stand a single candidate. Four years previously 44 of its members were elected on abstentionists, anti-Treaty tickets.

With the right wing of the anti-Treaty movement now organised in Fianna Fail and ensconced in the 26 county parliament, Sinn Fein and the I.R.A. were forced to turn to the left. In November 1927, the I.R.A. Army Convention decided to support the ten-year-old Soviet Union in the event of an Anglo-Russian war.

Under the leadership of Peadar O'Donnell various radical republican groups were set up.

In 1927, a league of Republican Workers was established; from 1928-29, O'Donnell attempted to set up the radical Saor Eire group.

In June 1929, a Workers Defence Corps—made up of I.R.A. volunteers and trade unionists—was established.

This body actually held a national conference in July 1929, at which it rechristened itself the Irish Labour Defence League. On March 13 1930, the Revolutionary Workers Group was established as an avowedly Communist organisation, which published a paper entitled *The Irish Workers' Voice*.

A plethora of radical organisations were set up—The Friends of Soviet Russia, the Irish National Unemployed Movement, the Womens' International League for Peace and Freedom, the Irish Workers' and Farmers' Republican Party etc.—clearly a product of the economic crisis which had set in with the 1929 Wall St. crash.

Red smoke

For most of this period, though, there was more red smoke than fire. None of the organisations had a programme capable of integrating political and economic demands, of giving a proletarian class solution to the national question.

The left-republication movements never went beyond the limits of a radical nationalism, and were thus organically incapable of utilizing the favourable conditions of the early thirties in a revolutionary way. Just as in the 1916-20 period the national question was separated off from the working class agitation of the time, so in 1929-32 were these two movements cut apart.

Whereas in 1916-20 such separation was the conscious policy of the Sinn Fein leadership, in 1929-32 the left Republicans (O'Donnell, George Gilmore, Michael Price) honestly sought to bring the two questions together. That they failed to do so was an expression of the fact that they did not break qualitatively with republicanism and adopt a communist programme for resolving the problems.

The opportunities did exist at this time for the unification of the working class—North and South, Catholic and Protestant—on the basis of an anti-imperialist, socialist programme.

Sectarian

And again it was in Belfast—where sectarian rioting in 1920 had crushed the momentary class unity of 1919—that Protestants and Catholics began to come together to fight for their common class interests.

The issue which was to bring these workers together was the question of the Outdoor Relief (O.D.R.)

Under the Northern Ireland laws of the time, an

unemployed worker was entitled to benefit only if he met a number of stiff requirements; if he had been in work and paying contributions for the preceding two years, if he passed a means test and if 'he was genuinely seeking work'.

Given the near-permanent state of high unemployment in Northern Ireland during the twenties, very few workers were actually entitled to benefit.

In Britain, those denied benefit usually received outdoor relief—a form of charity doled out by local Poor Law Guardians. In Belfast, ODR was allowed only to a handful of applicants, and was awarded in kind rather than in cash.

A series of demonstrations during 1925-26 won a minor concession whereby all heads of families qualified for ODR.

The rates were at starvation level.

A couple with no children got eight shillings a week; with one child, twelve shillings; with two children, sixteen shillings; with four or more children, a maximum of twenty four shillings. For this the husband had to per-



De Valera with US Irish leaders in 1919



The streets of Dublin in 1922

← TO →

PUT HIM IN

GET HIM OUT

VOTE FOR GRIFFITH

The Man in Jail for Ireland.

Printed at the Press, 30 Upper, Upper Street, Dublin

Election poster for Griffiths

1938 gave Finna Fail a greater majority than before.

De Valera's successes, the exodus of I.R.A. men to Spain during the 1936-7 and the prospect of a Second World War only served to isolate the I.R.A. further.

Directionless, the I.R.A. leadership under Sean Russell embarked on a bombing campaign in Britain during the period 1938-9.

The results of this—civilian deaths in Coventry and the consequent hanging of the alleged I.R.A. men Barnes and McCormack—only served to hasten the disintegration of the now thoroughly demoralised volunteers in Ireland.

Twilight

And when war broke out in September 1939, it looked very much as if the 'Twilight of the Gunmen' had begun.

Fantastic schemes for securing arms from Nazi Germany were hatched. Russell actually met Nazi Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop in August 1940 and together they launched 'Operation Dove'—a mission designed to provide the I.R.A. with arms.

This collapsed though shortly after it was launched—Russell died on a U-boat which was heading for and as none of the I.R.A. staff in Ireland had even a hint of what Russell was planning, there was no way that the Germans could have landed arms and have them distributed.

Such ideas were obviously the product of men desperate for action; men who felt that with Britain at war they could take advantage of the situation and free Ireland once and for all.

Repeating

For them though, it was simply a question of repeating 1916—tactically altered, of course, but along the same lines.

But if the Easter Rising and the failure to secure German arms then can be regarded as a tragedy, one can only look on Russell's plans as farce, more befitting a 'Punch' cartoonist's view of the I.R.A. than a serious struggle against imperialist rule.

Throughout the war years, the I.R.A. edged closer to chaos: the Russell escapade was followed by the 'Stephen Hayes' affair, when the I.R.A. Chief-of-Staff suspected of being an informer, was interrogated by other I.R.A. leaders—Sean McCaughey among others—and would undoubtedly have been shot was it not for the fact that he escaped.



The hated Black and Tans

The upheaval and suspicion within the top ranks of the I.R.A. only served to demoralise the army further.

From 1945-52 the I.R.A. underwent a slow, agonising process of reconstructing their forces.

Working around the Anti-Partition League which was then agitating in the North, they managed to bring into the movement fresh forces—most notably in Belfast—prepared to engage in a further round of armed struggle. From 1951-54 a series of arms raids were staged in the North, in preparation for the campaign that was to begin in December 1956, with a series of co-ordinated attacks on RUC Barracks.

These attacks, known as Operation Harvest, signalled a generalized I.R.A. offensive—confined exclusively to the North—which lasted on and off until 1962. In truth though, the I.R.A. campaign—which limited itself mainly to country areas such as South Armagh, South Fermanagh and East Tyrone—was of any success only for the first six months of 1957.

Defensive

From August 1957 to March 1962, they were mainly on the defensive as both Northern and Southern administrators opened up internment camps and threw suspected I.R.A. men into them wholesale.

Lack of arms, casualties suffered (in one operation at Edentubber in November '57 the I.R.A. lost five men when a mine they were laying exploded without warning) and police arrests joined to wear the I.R.A. down.

During all of 1959 there were only 27 incidents; in 1960-76; whereas the first month of the campaign—December '56—had alone produced 25 incidents and 1957 saw 341 reported I.R.A. attacks.

Dwindled

The '56-'62 campaign thereby dwindled to a halt, although formally it ended on February 26 1962.

The ceasefire statement noted that a major factor in deciding to end the struggle had been 'the attitude of the general public whose minds have been deliberately distracted from the supreme issue facing the Irish people—the unity and freedom of Ireland'.

How this "distraction" had taken place and what—if anything—the IRA had done to check it, was never made clear.

In truth though the 56-62 campaign faltered because the IRA had no policy other than moral exhortations to the Catholics of the north to "do their bit" for "the old cause".

Instead of scrutinising their own policies, the IRA leadership contented themselves with blaming the very people whose support they wanted and needed, but whom they had never tried to involve in any mass way in an anti-imperialist struggle.

After 1962 there was some attempt to analyse the failings of the past, but this merely took the IRA in the direction of the Stalinist stageist conception of social revolution.

Reformed

Men like Cathal Goulding—now head of the Official IRA—developed under the influence of British Communist Party member Roy Johnston, the 'theory' that first Northern Ireland had to be reformed, then class unity between Catholics and Protestants forged, then end partition and then have a socialist revolution.

It may seem odd that a military man like Goulding, who had led arms raids in the early fifties, could so easily adopt such an utterly reformist quasi-pacifist perspective.

In truth, the transition was not so difficult—for both the IRA and Stalinism share a common petit-bourgeois base and both are intensely nationalistic in outlook. (It is perhaps no coincidence that virtually at the same time another petty-bourgeois nationalist—Fidel Castro—was likewise describing a path to Stalinism).

Attractive

Goulding therefore had to make no qualitative break with republicanism in order to embrace Johnston's ideas, which in the period of demoralisation after 1956-62 must have appeared attractive to people disenchanted with the traditional IRA emphasis on the gun as the means of freeing Ireland.

And when the Civil Rights agitation began in 1967-8, the revamped Northern republicans must have thought that this—the struggle to reform Northern Ireland—was at last a confirmation of their theory.

But with the pogroms of 1969, and the introduction of troops in August of that year it became clear that Northern Ireland was not going to be reformed—it could only be destroyed.

And that was to have repercussions within the republican movement which was now beginning to think about taking down the guns which had lain on the shelves since 1962.

spread barricades were erected in the staunchly Protestant Shankill Road—an indication of the class unity existing at the time.

On October 14, the Guardians offered to double the rates and to modify the means test.

Although these concessions did not meet the strikers' demands, they represented important gains, and on Monday October 19 the strikers returned to work.

As in 1919, this class unity was to prove extremely fragile. Sectarian riots in 1935 reversed the modest but significant steps in the direction of such unity in 1932.

But both 1919 and 1939 prove that working class unity can be forged in and that it is not a utopian dream as the I-CL, RCG, or IMG would believe.

Striven

That unity is not spontaneously given to the working class of Ireland—it must be striven for conscientiously. The battles over Outdoor Relief are of significance precisely in that respect, for that unity did not emerge overnight but was prepared for by the activities of the Revolutionary Group in the years preceding.

Although their programme was severely limited, (and was ultimately—via the formation of the CPI—to prove treacherous) their achievements of that period remain today an important example of what could be achieved by a communist organisation in Ireland. Although the polarisation of the Catholic and Protestant working class has undoubtedly intensified as a result of the events since 1968, we in the WSL still see a possibility of the revolutionary reunification of the working class throughout all Ireland.

Extends

Such unity can only be forged on the basis of a revolutionary programme which extends beyond economic issues alone. The RWG were unable in 1932 to point out the real political lessons of the 1932 strike, caught up as they were in the single issues of the ODR. Nor were the left Republicans—who tried to form an anti-imperialist 'United Front' in 1934 (the Irish Republican Congress)—capable of such a development.

As a result both organisations were unable to intervene decisively in political events in the North or South.

When the Spanish Civil War erupted many of the best militants from each group went off to fight with the

International Brigade.

Growing support for De Valera's Fianna Fail Party isolated Sinn Fein and the I.R.A. even further. In the February 1932 elections, Fianna Fail romped home with 72 seats to Cosgrave's 57. Shortly after, on July 1 1932, the De Valera Government defaulted on the payment of land annuities to Britain, thus beginning the 'Economic War' which was to last until the end of the '30s.

Again, this move satisfied many republicans—except those on the left, who called for the nationalisation of the big ranches, and who stirred up small farmers in support of this demand.

For De Valera such agitation was distinctly troublesome, and after a brief honeymoon period of tolerating the I.R.A., he decided to go after it with vigour, and on June 18 1936 banned it as a legal organisation. The following year a new constitution claiming legal jurisdiction over all Ireland was adopted; and on April 25 1938 an Anglo Irish agreement was signed whereby Ireland gained possession of the ports that had been ceded to Britain under the terms of the treaty.

Elections held on June 17



Collins - his assassination in 1922 sparked more repression.

LESSONS FROM EPIC STRIKES FOR UNIONS

Pat Lally reviews "The Hotel Strikes, Lessons for Unionisation"—a new pamphlet published by the Hotel and Catering Workers National Action Committee. Available from the Action Committee at 21, Scala St., London, W1P 1LU price 35p plus 15p post and package.

This pamphlet is more than a record of the 6-month strikes for union recognition fought out by TGWU Catering workers in Sheffield, Oxford and Birmingham from last autumn until August this year.

In placing those struggles firmly within the context of deepening collaboration between the labour leadership and the employers, it draws immediate connections with both Grunwick and Desoutters recognition strikes, and raises questions which extend far beyond the fight for basic union rights.

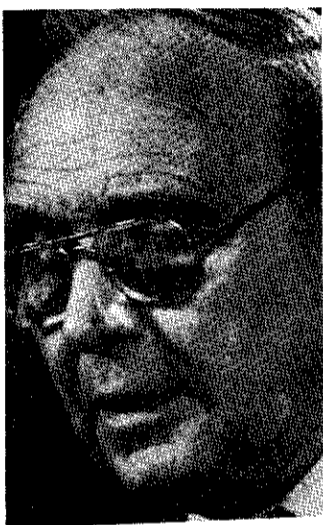
Respectability

The whole industry is a combination of prestigious 5 star rated respectability and pay and working conditions which compete with the lowest and worst there is to be found.

The problems are legion. Tied accommodation, deliberate recruitment of immigrant workers and the constant threat of the withdrawal of work permits, and a high proportion of 'traditionally' low paid women workers, combine to make effective union organisation difficult.

It is within this section of the working class that unionisation has dramatically increased in the last few years, forced on by mounting inflation and unemployment.

A major part of these new union members have turned towards the TGWU—the country's biggest union which has grown by nearly a quarter of a million since 1974.



Jack Jones

But, like so many more, those new recruits in Trust House Forte and Linton Lodge hotels quickly learnt that joining is only the beginning of a solution. For the majority it brought bitter realisation of the chasm which separates the union membership from control of their organisations and the ability to mobilise its strength in support.

It is this central issue of leadership which runs consistently throughout the pamphlet.

Not fighting

Jo Tosti, reinstated as Shop Steward in the one successful strike at the Linton Lodge, writes in the foreword

'Throughout the disputes, it was very clear that the union bureaucracy was not fighting for their members. The will of the membership

was overruled by Jack Jones in what is supposed to be the most democratic union in the country. The policy of the TU bureaucratic leadership was always one of accommodation with the management of THF at national level. They were not prepared to fight against the victimisation of their shop stewards, but on the contrary worked towards the demoralization of their members in dispute to facilitate a sell out which they succeeded in doing with THF.'

Determined

This analysis is confirmed by the events. Faced by a determined and powerful employer in Trust House Forte, properly prepared for the confrontation it had provoked, the TGWU leadership from Jack Jones in Smith Square to his assorted appointed time-servers in the Regional and District offices proved pathetically incapable even of defending the elementary principles of the organisation on which their parasitic existence depends.

Just as with the TUC and APEX over Grunwick, the policy on which victory turned, and was clearly seen to turn when begun in even a limited way, was the blacking of supplies and services.

Unlike Grantham and Murray, Jones did not need to be prompted by John Gouriet and NAFF; the 'legal complications' surrounding this action arose from within the union itself.

Not that NAFF were dis-

IN REVIEW



Top: police in action outside the Randolph Hotel, Oxford, in May 1977, where 39 arrests were made, as fascists breached the picket line. Above: scabs and fascists watch from the steps.

interested bystanders. Whenever the freedoms of the likes of George Ward or Sir Charles Forte are threatened by the exploited labour on which they depend, these middle-class anti-union fanatics reach for their cheque books and lawyers.

A mass campaign of national and local press publicity against the strikers was the visible expression of their support; many things point to a much closer connection behind the scenes.

Alan Law, interviewed on ATV last week about his super tough image against employers:

'I knew perfectly well I would have to be tough and ruthless with my own members. We've weeded out the ones who couldn't stand the pace just as we weeded out the employers who couldn't stand the pace, until we've reached a situation which is 99 per cent perfect.'

It was NAFF's industrial arm, Self Help, run by fascist Lady Birdwood, which set up the open provocation to break the Randolph's picket line in early May.

Three hundred trade unionists and students responded to the call and faced the picket-busting Special Patrol Group. A total of 39 were arrested.

The real bankruptcy of the union hierarchy was effectively exposed only through the continual turning of the fight back into the union. Every avenue was explored and the demand for support raised at every possible opportunity.

At each crucial point 'talks' and 'negotiations' between the union leaders and management would con-

veniently cut across action being carried out. Eventually the strikers were forced to stage an occupation of Jack Jones' office in Transport House which completely confirmed that delays and sabotage of supporting action was being orchestrated nationally.

Distance

A particularly important lesson was the drawing out of one TGWU full-time official who had for many years formally taken his distance from the extreme right wing in the union.

Alan Law was, in effect, the one-person-strike-committee at Birmingham's THF Night Out, and proved the only bureaucrat to begin to implement union policy of blacking THF owned establishments along with regular mass picketing.

His demagogic statements to the newspapers established him as the 'champion' of the workers cause.

Telling point

But the pamphlet makes the telling point

'The place to launch a campaign was not the capitalist press but throughout the Transport and General Workers Union. If Alan Law was really serious about taking on the THF empire and defeating it he had to mobilise the full force of the union on a national scale. He proved unable to do this because it would have involved him in a struggle against Jack Jones and the national leadership of TGWU; against the union's bureaucratic apparatus of which he is himself a part.'

Predictably Law was soon to call off the blacking in favour of ACAS talks as a preparation for winding down the strike and a management buy-off.

Strikes which leave the participants unemployed and the workplaces without a single union member are, unquestionably, very hard to present as anything other than comprehensive defeats, and in many ways the THF struggles are no exception.

But at the same time they have become a part of the history of the working class in those areas and some blows have been struck against the forces which conspired to bring those defeats about.

Momentum

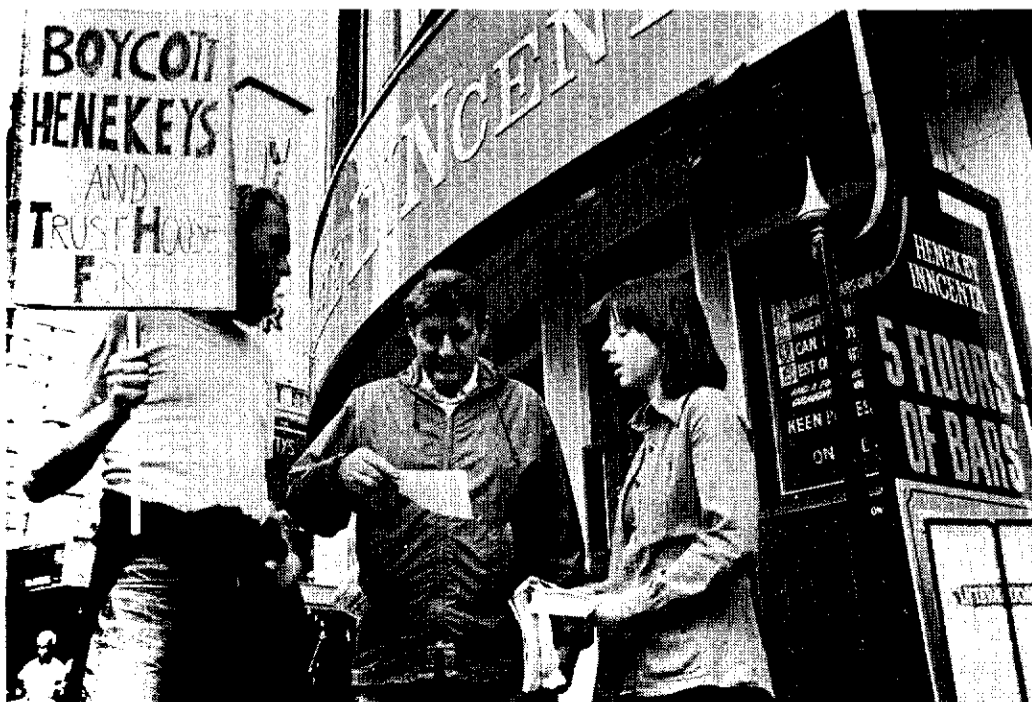
Within every industry, with the fight for improved wages gaining momentum, the theme of betrayals and sellouts of the bureaucracy is in the sharpest contrast to the courage, self-sacrifice and fighting capacity of the workers themselves.

Weakness

It is this weakness of leadership which must be overcome, as the pamphlet concludes

'In every dispute the task for management is to find the point beyond which the union leadership will not go. The only leadership capable of defending the working class is one that has no such point, which will fight with all means possible to defend the workers, and which will be replaced if it does not do so.'

'As the hotel workers view the betrayals at Grunwick and Desoutters, as they see official after official reaching the limit of action they are prepared to sanction, the hotel workers must see clearly that what happened in their strikes is not an isolated story of individual betrayals. It is a crisis of leadership as deep as the class struggle itself. Solving that crisis of leadership remains the most important task of the working class today.'



Some of the many Trust Houses Forte workers who can bear testimony to the hostility that the firm has for workers who join a union. Sacked workers picketing Henekeys, in Leicester Square, London, in July 1974.

STAKHANOV—STALIN'S TON-UP MERCHANT

On the night shift of August 30/31 1935, at Central Irmino Colliery in the Donetz Basin, the 30-year-old miner Alexei Stakhanov produced 102 tons of coal.

It was fourteen times the standard or 'norm' for a single shift.

Stakhanov, who died three weeks ago on November 5, had been preparing his assault on the record for some time. As an individual achievement it is in fact less impressive than it has been made to look.

Stakhanov did not work alone but with two assistants who installed the wooden props while Stakhanov devoted his whole time to heaving coal.

The norm for the shift was based on each worker constantly and inefficiently shifting between each task.

But the performance of Stakhanov and his helpers was still a dramatic improvement in productivity and it was seized upon by Stalin's bureaucracy as a model.

Stakhanovism was born. In each major industry an equivalent individual record was selected and given massive publicity in the press.

Heroic

All workers were encouraged to follow the example of the heroic record beaters.

In November of 1935 the first All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites assembled in the Kremlin and was addressed by Stalin:

"Is it not clear that the Stakhanovites are innovators in our industry, that it contains the seed of the future rise of the cultural and technical level of the working class, that it opens to us the path by which alone can be achieved those high indices of productivity of labour, which are essential for the transition from Socialism to Communism and for the elimination of the distinction between mental and manual labour?"

1935 was the second year of the Second Five Year Plan

during which industrial output was supposed to more than double with more emphasis being put on consumer goods than in the first plan.

Substitute

But despite several years of massive investment in industrial machinery, the productivity of labour still failed to grow at the pace which the bureaucracy demanded. The leaders like Stalin and Molotov complained that the Russian workers still lacked skill.

Trotsky, in *The Revolution Betrayed*, argued that this was "only half the truth, and the smaller half. The Russian worker is ingenious and gifted. Any hundred Soviet workers transferred into the conditions, let us say, of American industry, after a few months and even weeks, would probably not fall behind the American workers of a corresponding category.

"The difficulty lies in the organisation of labour. The Soviet administrative personnel is, as a general rule, far less equal to the new productive tasks than the worker."

If that was the problem then the answer was clear—the introduction of workers' management in industry.

Machinery

This, needless to say, could not be contemplated by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Stakhanovism therefore was part of their substitute.

Stakhanovism was also intimately bound up with the

re-emphasis of piecework and individual material incentives to work.

The Stakhanovite pioneers received enormous wage bonuses. Stakhanov and his emulators in the coal mining industry were soon earning 1600 roubles a month compared with 500 roubles before, and an average wage of about 250 roubles.

These enormous wages were reduced later as norms were increased but still the Stakhanovites (who in some cases were half the workforce of a factory) got material privileges, often at the expense of the lower paid.



Stakhanovism was supposed to represent improvements in productivity due to improvements in work organisation, rather than mere physical effort.

But very frequently it degenerated into a manic pursuit of speed-up. Managements often reorganised production to facilitate dramatic individual achievements by part of its labour force which would get them favourable publicity.

Such things as this, Trotsky observed,

"explain the fact, at first glance astonishing, that a growth in the number of Stakhanovists was frequently accompanied, not with an increase, but a decrease of the general productivity of the enterprise."

In other ways, too, Stakhanovism did not always improve the performance of the economy. Unplanned increases of output often caused shortages and bottlenecks in other areas of the economy.

And, since the piece rates increased wages even more than the increases in productivity, Stakhanovism often put up the money costs of production and thus upset the financial aspects of the plan.

But in spite of these widespread problems Stakhanovism was certainly one of the reasons why productivity rose in the Soviet Union during this period.

Grotesque

But it was a grotesque lie for Stalin to refer to this as "preparation of the conditions for the transition from socialism to communism", as it was for the president of the State Planning Commission, Mezhlauk, to say in 1936 that "the rouble is becoming the sole real means for the realisation of a socialist principle of payment for labour".

In fact piecework, as Trotsky pointed out, was a capitalist principle of payment, even though it was on

the basis of socialist forms of property, and Stakhanovism "to a great degree comes down to an intensification of labour, and even to a lengthening of the working day".

Speed-up, piecework and new privileges for the Stakhanovites, therefore, often met with the hostility of the workers.

There was brutal repression against workers accused of resisting the new methods to impose speed-up.

Many were accused of sabotage and even of the murder of Stakhanovites. But in the factories, as in the whole country, these years were to see the ruthless repression and extermination of all opposition. As the leaders of the revolution and count-



Stalin depicted on a propaganda poster of the 1930's

less thousands of Soviet workers and peasants were sent to their deaths or to prison, Stakhanov was for years presented by the press as a superstar of the Stalinist economy.

In 1943 he went to Moscow to take up a job in the administration of the coal industry ministry. Then in 1957 until his retirement three years ago, Stakhanov was manager of a coal mine in the Donbass region.

The movement named after him did not survive beyond the Second World War.

Management

But the nature of bureaucratic management of the economy which relies on individual incentives and bureaucratic hectoring of the workers has not fundamentally changed.

The Soviet bureaucracy remains as hostile as ever to anything which would release the full productive power of the socialised economy of the Soviet Union—the democratic management of production by the working class.

That will not be possible without the revolutionary overthrow of the bureaucracy for which a Trotskyist party must be built.

Meanwhile it will still need its latter-day Stakhanovs.

OUR POLICIES

Work sharing on full pay

A new series on the fight for Transitional Demands

There are 16 million casualties of capitalism in Europe and the USA—16 million workers without a job.

For every single one of these workers it seems there is not a job but a speech.

Labour ministers deploring the 'waste' of unemployment, trade union leaders declaring the statistics 'unacceptable', businessmen viewing the ranks of the unemployed with apprehension and urging governments to get the wheels of industry moving.

No reliance can be placed on anyone who aims to correct unemployment as an independent fault. Unemployment is built into capitalism as pain is part of cancer.

The demands we make are therefore not simply demands to end unemployment but demands which lead forward to the overthrow of capitalism itself.

Trotsky takes as his starting point the demand for the right to employment.

"The right to employment is the only serious right left to the worker in a society based upon exploitation".

(Transitional Programme) But this "right to work" is simply a starting point, not as the Socialist Workers Party have adapted it, a starting and finishing point.

Trotsky uses the demand as a propaganda rallying point from which to build.

We demand that all available work is shared equally through the workforce—that hours are cut to the level demanded by production and that there is no loss of pay or bonus.

The demands that Trotsky put forward in the Transitional Programme are as relevant today as they were in 1938 when they were first adopted by the founding conference of the Fourth International.

Sliding scale

They are a sliding scale of hours and a programme of public works—policies to unite the employed and unemployed.

A sliding scale of hours, or as it is more usually known, work sharing on full pay lays down a principle that the working class do not accept or share responsibility for unemployment.

The employer will protest. It will ruin him. "Common sense" dictates a compromise, that the working class shoulders part of the effects of the crisis; that it helps the capitalist survive so that at least some jobs are left.

Common sense

But we are not dealing with the employers' "common sense" or partial solutions. Our demand goes beyond defence of the existing workforce to include the unemployed.

The fight must be taken up for the whole labour movement to take responsibility for the unemployed, for more workers to be taken onto the pay-roll of the companies—for work to be shared equally among all who want it.

Capitalists cannot run business under such conditions.

Then let these businesses be taken away. The workers

must demand nationalisation without compensation under the control of the workers.

The battle needs to be taken up as much against the union leadership as against the employers since the bureaucrats who run the unions want no part of such far-reaching demands.

Alongside the demand for work-sharing on full pay we must put forward a demand for a programme of public works.

At present there are in Britain not only 1.6 million unemployed but also more than 300,000 young workers on "job creation" and "work experience" schemes.

These schemes pay less than union rates, are of short duration and create unemployment among direct council workers.

Programme

Our demand is for trade union control over the programme of works, for full union rates of pay and for the absolute right of every worker to a job.

A programme to tackle unemployment is not difficult to conceive. When building workers are unemployed, building materials stacked miles high in builders merchants yards and schools and hospitals desperately short of buildings, the answer is as clear as ABC.

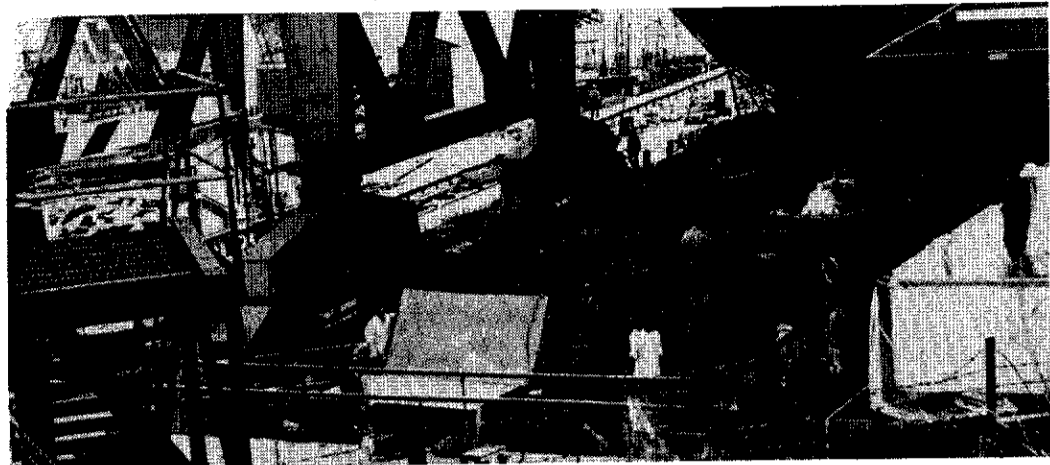
But the challenge to the deliberate unemployment caused by capitalism requires nothing less than these revolutionary demands: the control of the means of production by the workers, the control of businesses and a direct challenge to the government.



PHOTO: Laurence Spatham, IFL.

Labour Party Young Socialists lobby of Parliament—trailing in to hear more 'left' speakers

INDUSTRIAL NEWS



TYNESIDE JOBS BLACKMAIL

While the press last week exulted at the capture of a £100 million order for ships for the Polish Government, workers were not so enthusiastic.

It appears there is a snag in the deal. The 'socialists' of the Polish government say they won't sign any firm orders unless the workers who are going to produce the ships give a firm commitment not to take industrial action which might hold up their delivery.

During the week therefore, the Government has faced the workers in Clydeside and Tyneside shipyards with the following choice: agree not to strike and to increase productivity, or else no orders

and (by implication) no jobs.

These terms have already been accepted by shop stewards at Govan shipbuilders who pressed acceptance of the terms through a mass meeting.

At Swan Hunters on the Tyne however, the government and union bureaucracy has not had such an easy ride. 1700 outfitters have refused to call off an overtime ban in support of a parity wage demand.

The calling off of the ban has been made a condition of the yard getting the order. The main agent of the employers in these 'negotiations' is a member of the board of the newly nationalised British Shipbuilders, Mr. John Chalmers.

Mr. John Chalmers, the management negotiator is none other than 'Brother' John Chalmers the general secretary of the Boilermakers Union!

In similar ways in different industries the international crisis of capitalism is forcing reformist and Stalinist leaders to come out openly as agents of management and defenders of capitalist 'viability'.

Construction

The problems now facing workers can only be resolved through the construction of a new leadership prepared to struggle on a principled programme in defence of jobs and wages.

NUM LEADERS DUCK PAY FIGHT

Since the massive vote against the productivity deal in the mines, NUM leaders have sat back and avoided pressing the £135 claim.

The vote against the productivity deal was a vote for the £135 claim. Yet Gormley and the NEC are now simply waiting for next March so that the miners' claim will not conflict with the 12 month rule, knowing that strike action as spring begins would have little effect.

Miners at the militant Betteshanger Kent pit spoke to *Socialist Press* of two methods that have been used to hold off the struggle.

Fictitious

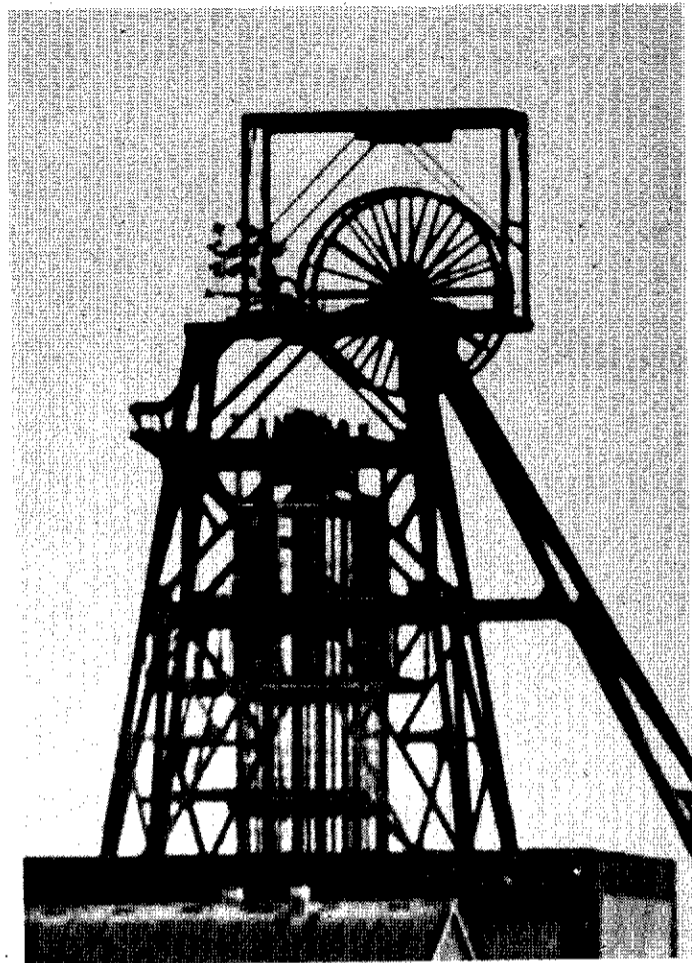
Firstly, miners have been softened up by fictitious overtime known as the 'golden hour', whereby anyone underground can stop on for an extra hour a day.

Previously this could only be done in an emergency. As well as diverting the struggle to increase basic rates this practice attacks the hard-won 7½-hour day.

The second assault on the wage claim is in the form of attempts to negotiate local incentive schemes.

The Executive of the NUM is split down the middle on recommending these. But several Executive members including South Derbyshire delegate Ken Toon are in favour of giving local areas the go-ahead to negotiate local incentive schemes.

Ron Clark, another right winger, is following another tactic and calling for a ballot on strike action.



He reckons to use this to divide the membership, hoping the result will be a 'No' vote.

Firemen's fight

However, miners are aware that the firemen's fight affects their dispute: as one miner said 'Wait till the firemen win. Then see if Len Clark will propose a ballot'. 'Everybody is watching

the firemen', said a branch official. But more than watching is of course necessary.

The Betteshanger NUM branch were last week planning action in support of the firemen.

A levy of 10p per member towards the firemen's strike fund was to be imposed and each branch was planning to 'adopt' a fire station.

Their aim is to help with finances, producing material and generalising their struggle bringing in the miners' experience of fighting government.

Miners saw the parallels with their battle with Heath in 1974:

'It was just like this in 1974—its exactly the same as with the Tories'.

Government

The need is for the firemen to smash the 10% and bring down the government.

The Kent miners 'adopt a fire station' policy is an embryo of how this can be done.

But such a link up needs generalising into full Councils of Action which can develop as the alternative basis of workers' power in local areas.

Also the best support miners can give the firemen is by striking on their own claim.

Yet no NUM officials—not even the left-talking Arthur Scargill—are pressing it.

Kent miners were aware of the need to 'watch Arthur'.

Bought off

'Scargill's not God', said one, 'I don't think he is doing anything against the delay'.

Others argued that there were forces who wanted Scargill into Gormley's job so he could be bought off.

Gormley is reportedly looking for the 'golden handshake' with a couple of directorships already lined up.

NUM branches should be pressing for strike action now and for building true Councils of Action to link up with the firemen's struggle to bring down the government.

UNION OFFICIALS WIND UP CUTS PROTEST

Last November, a body of officials from various public sector unions called a national demonstration in London against cuts in social services.

80,000 trade unionists came—the largest demonstration since those called against the Tory Industrial Relations Act.

November a year later—the same steering committee names a 'week of action'—most inappropriately, as no constituent unions were this time allowed to take any strike action.

Members were asked last week, as during the other 51 weeks of the year, to engage in local protests against the cuts.

Nationally, a mere 5,000 tickets were issued for a lobby of Westminster limited it was gravely asserted, in the interest of "public order".

Under this deliberate misleadership, not astonishingly, the lobby failed to achieve even 5,000 delegates.

At a meeting afterwards, numbering about 200 in Central Hall, Westminster, ASTMS NHS official Reg

an exhortation to 'work and work' against the cuts.

Albert Spanswick, General Secretary of COHSE, detailing the horrifying scale of cuts in the Health Service, was heckled with "What are you going to do?"

He announced decisively: "We must compel the Government to plan... and to bring North Sea Oil under public ownership".

The 'left' position was given to Bernard Dix of NUPE, speaking last after an FBU delegate had collected £115 from the meeting for the firemen's strike.

His subject: "The fight against the cuts is inextricably bound up with the fight for more pay".

The militant conclusion Dix arrived at was that all firms should be brought under public ownership. Unfortunately he forgot to mention how such a plan could be carried out or how he proposed to fight.

NUPE officials are perfectly placed to lead a fight for pay backed up with a fight against the cuts.

NUPE has actually lodged a 30% pay claim against Government policy and rejected a 10% offer for council



Bernard Dix

These forces could be fighting with the firemen.

But on the subject of NUPE's pay claim and on how Dix would work for strike action in his own Executive the audience heard not one word.

No questions were accepted—the meeting was duly closed. All wrapped up for another year.

Only a fight for all-out national strike action to stop the cuts can prevent this dwindling charade of protest, and open the door to a real defence of jobs and public

Hull AUEW fights pay limits

Struggles are continuing in the AUEW against Hugh Scanlon's manoeuvre at September's TUC, in which he defied conference policy to cast the union's 1.2 million votes in favour of the 12-month rule.

Now a recalled union conference is to be held.

Hull AUEW District Committee last Wednesday passed a resolution to that conference, spelling out a rejection of Scanlon's back door wage controls:

This Branch calls upon all delegates at the recalled conference to reject the 12 month rule which fetters any return to free wage bargaining.

As our membership's interests lie in protecting their standard of living we call upon conference to implement the following policies:

1. Complete support and official backing for any section of the AUEW who oppose any further erosion of living standards.

2. Confidence to campaign now for all gains to be protected by cost of living clauses in all wage negotiations in the form of a sliding scale of wages.

3. Cost of living index to be compiled by a committee of brothers and sisters at conference level and reviewed

monthly.

4. Branch also calls for serious consideration as to alliance with any other section of the Trade Union movement that oppose the deterioration in living standards.

5. Copy to District Committee.

The Hull policy should be taken up throughout the AUEW.

Victory at Sheffield

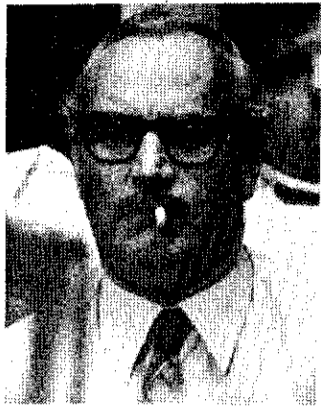
THE STRIKERS at James Engineering in Sheffield have won their demands for reinstatement and full compensation for loss of earnings during the nine-week strike.

They return to work in a position of some strength despite the actions of the strikers' full time official, Boilermakers' district delegate Ben Nuttall in undermining the strike as reported last week.

Indeed he has now refused to pay the men the strike pay that he had promised would be paid to them once the dispute was over. The fight must now be taken up in the Boilermakers' Union in Sheffield to keep Nuttall to his word.

NEW KANGAROO COURT SET UP BY TGWU

In a move described by the 'Daily Telegraph' as designed to "assert the authority of the union" the Oxford District Committee of the TGWU is making preparations to discipline leading militants in the British Leyland Cowley Assembly Plant.



Oxford TGWU District Chairman, Bill Roche JP.

At an emergency meeting of the District Committee last week a motion was submitted from the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the District Committee asking for powers to be vested in itself to conduct a disciplinary hearing involving certain members of the District Committee.

Hearing

The far reaching motion which was carried by a large majority says the following:

"This specially convened District Committee meeting authorises its Finance and General Purposes Committee to conduct a disciplinary hearing under the Union rules in respect of those delegates who caused disruption and disorder at the District Committee meeting held on the 20th October 1977.

The disciplinary hearing, if agreed, shall also deal with those members of the District Committee whose conduct, both at their place of work and within the District Committee, have brought the Union into disrepute.

Furthermore, this District Committee authorises its Finance and General Purposes Committee, where it finds members to be in breach of Rule 11 to make such recommendations as it deems necessary, to the Regional Committee, for disciplining those members".

According to delegates at the meeting the chairman ruled that only the F&GP can prefer charges.

Executioner

This means that the motion sets up the F&GP as prosecutor, judge, jury and executioner.

It gives the same four people the right to select those to be charged; prefer the charges; conduct the hearing; and recommend disciplinary action to the Regional Committee.

In the case of the Oxford District Committee, the whole committee who are conducting the hearing are laying the charges. It is therefore impossible to argue that they can be to any degree unbiased.

A hearing set up in this way cannot be designed to disperse trade union justice.

It is a kangaroo court and the purpose of kangaroo courts is to act on predetermined decisions and to persecute people.

The purpose of this particular set up is not difficult to find.

Next Monday is voting day in the shop floor ballot for convenor and deputy convenors of the Assembly Plant.

Witch-hunt

As things stand most workers active in the trade union movement in the plant are convinced that present convenor and arch right winger Reg Parsons will lose the election and that Bob Fryer, removed as convenor in 1974 after a TGWU Regional Inquiry and a national witch-hunt will be elected convenor.

It is expected that the names of those to be charged will be announced before the election along with the nature of the charges.

It is also expected that the list of names will include leading contenders in the election who will then be forced to participate in the ballot with charges hanging over them.

It is presumably hoped that this will provide the witch-hunt material necessary if the right wing are to regain their positions.

The problem for the right wing is that most workers in Cowley have seen it all before. There is always a witch-hunt before every election in the plant.

Problem

This year, with militancy high and with wages and working conditions rapidly deteriorating it will be hard to make a witch-hunt catch on.

The other problem the right wing have is the reaction of workers if militants are

victimised.

The local Oxford Mail has mentioned two names as targets for the disciplinary hearing—Alan Thornett, chairman of the TGWU 5/293 Branch and Tim O'Sullivan, chairman of the TGWU 5/55 Branch.

The result of this was a lobby outside the District Committee meeting of 40 workers from Alan Thornett's Transport section along with workers from other parts of the Cowley Assembly Plant, in particular the Princess track.

The Transport Department made their position clear in a statement to delegates:

"Dear Brothers and Sisters, This delegation in attendance tonight, which following a mass meeting represents the whole of the Transport Department, wishes to make this point:

TGWU members in the Transport Department are completely fed up with con-

tinuous witchhunts against Alan Thornett. He has represented our interests in the Transport Department for the past 15 years and all we ask is that we be allowed to continue to elect the stewards of our choice.

Only recently he was undemocratically barred from a meeting of shop stewards on the plant, now we fear that further such action could arise from this District Committee meeting.

The Transport Department is not prepared to tolerate any further witchhunts, personal vendettas or undemocratic actions.

We request that a delegation of shopfloor members from the Transport Department be allowed to attend tonight's meeting, purely as observers. We also request that such representatives be allowed to attend as observers any meetings which materialise from tonight's meeting".



Edinburgh hotel workers join picket of national pay talks with Centre Hotels

STEP UP BUS FIGHT

After nine weeks of one day a week lightning strikes, South Yorkshire PTE have refused to improve on a derisory ten percent offer to Sheffield bus crews.

On the insistence of full time official, Keith Garner, management's latest offer was put to a ballot vote in Sheffield and rejected by 900 votes to 500.

Garner, backed by Regional Official Jack Green, saw the ballot in support of the claim as an opportunity to force acceptance of the 10%.

By adding in the separate votes of Rotherham and Doncaster garages (who had already voted to call off industrial action) they discovered a 57 vote majority across the district for accepting management's offer. They declared that Sheffield would be breaking the union constitution if it did not settle.

One day strike

Sheffield shop stewards reacted immediately by calling a one day strike the following day while the full time official and shop stewards from Rotherham and Doncaster met management.

Determined Sheffield stewards have the membership's support, and must step up the action. One day strikes must be turned into all-out action.

Strike committee

If the bureaucracy attempt to discipline stewards or remove credentials the stewards must be elected as a strike committee, and a campaign launched throughout the TGWU in the area in their defence.

Other bus branches must be contacted and an all out fight waged for the full claim and against the 10% limit.

It has significance beyond that of one branch. Centre Hotels branch were always the key to leading the fight for the £50 minimum wage backed by the necessary strike action.

Sufficient

The importance of cracking the Centre Branch has long been recognised by the GMWU leadership. They sent National Officer Cooper to negotiate the wage increase for the group, whereas Regional Officer, Romp, and his messenger boy Tilston, were considered sufficient to crack the resistance in the Rank Hotel branch and to knife the Metropole strike.

Cooper delayed negotiations saying that he was pressing for a £20 across the board rise and so managed to break up the threat of a common movement on the £50 claim.

Romp and Tilston have been busy for over a month delaying negotiations and gaining acceptance for wage increases of 10%.

Little alternative

When the Wages Council rise of ten percent was then presented as the finished position, leading stewards felt they had little alternative but to accept. Given the activity of the GMWU it is hardly surprising that they capitulated.

Throughout the last eight weeks the strike at the Metropole has brought militants from around the country together in a fight for wage increases which has threatened the bureaucracy and the future of the Wages Council.

The lengths to which these leaders have gone to strangle the movement shows the importance of directing that fight against the bureaucracy, if decent wages are to be won.

The rank and file coming together is only the beginning.

The question is now posed of how completely the GMWU leadership in the London region will be able to reassert its hold.

It is essential that militants tested out in the hotel struggles throughout the last year direct their fight to breaking that grip.

The Hotel and Catering Workers National Action Committee could be the focus for that struggle. All hotel militants should contact the group at 21, Scala Street, London W1P 1LU

EETPU RIGHT WING IN RULES JAMBOREE

It was quite a conference for Frank Chapple, ultra-right wing leader of the Electrical and Plumbing Union.

After his publicised speech against wage control, Chapple steered the rules revision conference away from any hint of trade union democracy.

Defeated

Attempts to restore the election of full time officers and remove the ban on

conference two thirds of which had given wage-cutter Callaghan a standing ovation.

Big tasks confront electricians if they are to break free from this vicious right wing bureaucracy.

O'FISHALL

Your "man at the top" is away this week having been among those union bureaucrats given a free seat on the first Concorde flight to New York.



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report.

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OFFICIALS STAB GRUNWICK STRIKERS

A new low was hit last week in the 66 weeks of bureaucratic betrayal in the Grunwick dispute.

Four strike committee members who had staged a hunger strike outside TUC headquarters demanding action to cut off essential services to the factory heard that the TUC General Council had yet again voted to ignore their appeal and to refuse any action in support of the strike.

Suspended

Meanwhile, APEX leaders suspended the hunger strikers from the union for four weeks and stopped their strike pay for what APEX deputy general secretary branded:

"A self-defeating course of action designed to embarrass the TUC".

This scandalous action by APEX bureaucrats was backed up by a series of insults from other TUC leaders.

Len Murray, assured the hunger strikers that no action would be taken, despite the form of words unanimously adopted at September's TUC Congress.

He then asked why they did not clear off the TUC's steps and stage their hunger strike outside the Grunwick factory, where it would be "more appropriate" and where presumably TUC leaders and Ward could each calmly watch the hunger strikers starve to death.

"We've done all we can", lied Murray. "We've done our best," admitted Stalinist Ken Gill.

Confrontation

The fact is that the TUC have done their best to sabotage and derail the dispute, to isolate the strikers and to avoid the confrontation with the courts that is necessary to ensure blacking action to shut down the Grunwick operation.

A recent strike committee bulletin pointed out:

"After 65 weeks of historic struggle, we have been told that no official action will be taken to cut off essential services . . . our hunger strike was a desperate last-minute appeal to those who have the power to end this dispute to use it."

The TUC is the right target for the hunger strikers. But as the vigil came to an end with an astonishing and deplorable handshake with



Murray

arch-scab Len Murray there is a danger that the fight against these bureaucrats will be relaxed.

The TUC has the power to shut off supplies. They could mobilise millions of rank and file trade unionists to do the job.

These workers must be

alerted to the treachery of their leaders.

Mass lobby

A mass lobby calling on all those thousands who regularly attend Grunwick mass pickets must be called to confront the TUC General Council early in the New Year. This would be of far more value than yet another mass picket.

This should centre round a national petition demanding the union leaders challenge the courts and black all services.

Every union leader, official, Trades Council delegate and shop steward should be approached and asked to sign. Lobbies of union committees should demand official support for the petition.

Pressed for support

Left talkers like Arthur Scargill and Tribune MPs should be pressed for support wherever they go.

MIRROR WRITERS FIRM ON £3000 PAY STRIKE

The claim for an extra £3,000 a year by journalists on the Mirror group of newspapers in London epitomises all the strengths and weaknesses of the drive for higher wages.

The journalists have given the claim almost total backing, rejecting a management ultimatum which brought production to a halt last week by 199 votes to one on the *Daily Mirror*, by 53 to none on the *Sunday Mirror* and by a similar margin on the *Sunday People*. A closed shop agreement has ensured the effectiveness of any action.

Scabbing deal

Colleagues in Manchester who are not in dispute told management, who were trying to arrange a scabbing deal with union officials that if it went ahead: "You will only do it once".

But journalists are refusing

to face the political nature of the task they face in winning their claim and the challenge to the Government which it represents.

The claim follows a deal with the NGA earlier this year which bought out 90 jobs by offering a flat wage of £174 each.

Technology

NUJ members who have accepted the prospect of new technology but rejected redundancies, decided to draw up a flexibility claim.

They costed such things as constant availability, disruption of family life, creating ideas for a story, and unpaid overtime and came up with a bill for an extra £5,845 a year which they then reduced to £3,000 on top of the £7,400 average wage now paid.

The management offer, which has now been withdrawn on Government instructions, has been described as in the order of £1,700 but was even further

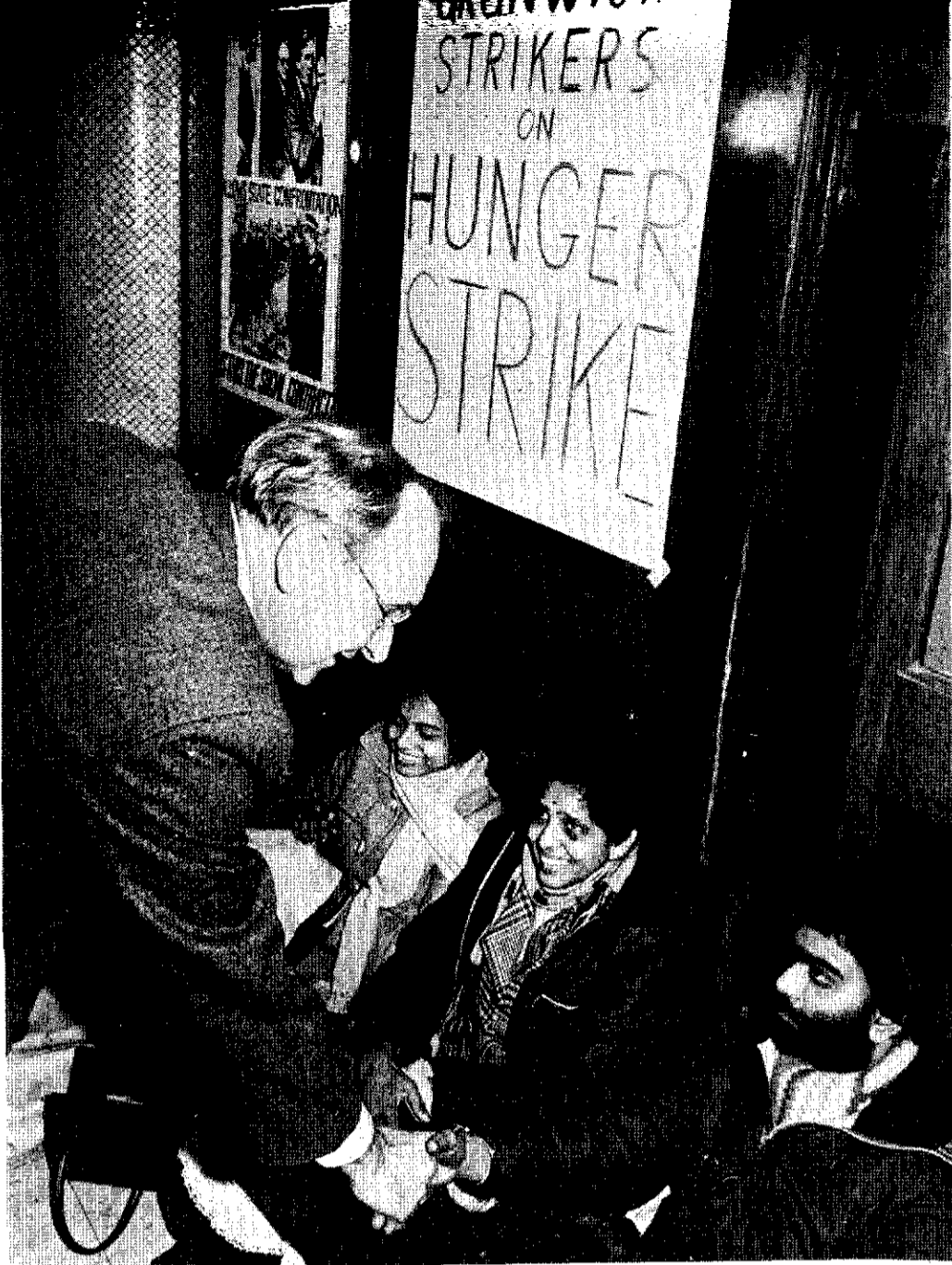


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Jones—who has lifted not a finger during the strike—offers no more than a handshake

The strike committee has said that they will now "seek unofficial action" and:

"Call on trade unionists everywhere to protest against the savage act of censorship that was the suspension of the hunger strikers and two officials of the strike committee".

This fight must be stepped up in every union. As other sections of workers are coming into sharp conflict with the pay policy, the Grunwick betrayal is just a part of TUC attacks on every worker.

Prominent on last Wednesday's 200-strong picket were Rolls Royce pay strikers from nearby Willesden.

Strikers from Grunwick, Rolls Royce and local fire stations should be fighting now to set up a local Council of Action, with a view to mobilising other sections of workers on their own claims.

Confidence

Such action can maintain the confidence of the strikers and where possible might achieve unofficial blacking action.

Full daytime picketing must be resumed in place of the current 2-3 hours each morning. TUC leaders must be made to see that the strikers are determined to win, despite 66 weeks of betrayal.

FUND

With only two days to go to the end of the month we are still £35.85 short of our £600 target. Every effort must be made not only to raise the outstanding amount but to go as much over the top as possible.

Among the latest donations sent in were Hull £8.05; West London £10; East London £2; Central London £26.25.

All donations to the £600 Monthly Fund should be sent to: Socialist Press Monthly Fund 31, Dartmouth Park Hill London NWS 1HR

journalists, who are the weakest section, win.

The confused situation is reflected by the fact that journalists are turning up for work every day and going through the motions of putting a paper together.

They cannot go out of the building on jobs because the cashier's department is closed and will not pay expenses. Even the library has been instructed not to give them information.

Responsible

This state of affairs does not seem strange to some of the *Mirror* journalists. They were partly responsible for electing the Fleet Street leadership which opposed free collective bargaining at the NUJ annual conference in April.

For the *Mirror* journalists a break with this kind of double think is essential. Their target must be, not convoluted clauses in justification of their claim but an open assault on the wage

cutting policies of the Lib-Lab coalition.

Fleet Street journalists are often objectively opposed to the working class. The *Mirror* journalists could now cast a blow in its support.

Westminster Press management are expected to reject a 'compromise' offer by print union leaders for tacit agreement on an NUJ closed shop agreement at Darlington.

Joe Wade, General Secretary of the NGA has said that his union is prepared to consider some degree of escalation for the strike if this happens.

There is no reason to believe that he will not find another excuse for the NUJ to stall off sympathy action as has happened since September.

The strike, the longest in the NUJ's history, is now 26 weeks old.

NUJ members in Darlington and London must call for strike action throughout the group in support of their claim and must stop trying to outwit Westminster Press.