

# SOCIALIST PRESS



Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League \* No. 252 \* June 25, 1981 \* 20p

Affiliated to the Trotskyist International Liaison Committee

## CIVIL SERVICE STRIKE Supplement

The rise and fall of Bani-Sadr.....p.3

# TORIES WON'T CHANGE

### Wages down

With civil servants and ambulance crews still taking strike action in pursuit of adequate pay increases on the last pay round, top bankers are calling on the Tories to lower their pay limits still further.

The Bank of England bulletin has stated that wage awards would have to be "negligible" for "a number of years" if British employers are to increase their profits.

With inflation still near the 12% mark—and likely to rise higher as the pound falls on the foreign exchange markets—workers face more rate and rent increases brought on by Heseltine's latest cuts.

Living standards cannot be defended as long as this government remains in office.

### Unemployment up

Sir Keith Joseph has claimed that despite mass unemployment, workers are unemployed on average for "only" 5-6 months.

Yet the fact is that while Tory ministers prattle on about the recession "bottoming out" and a possible rise in industrial production, most economic surveys show that unemployment will continue to increase.

The Cambridge Economics group now predict unemployment soaring to 3.4 million by 1983—and continuing upwards to the 4 million mark thereafter, as the death of weaker sections of industries is combined with the introduction of job-slashing new technology in the stronger sections.

And while the Tories talk

of handing over hundreds of millions of pounds to British Rail and the Coal Board, they are making it clear that such money is conditional on the axing of tens of thousands more jobs in these basic industries.

There is no way out for the working class through compromise or concessions to the employers: look at BL, where Edwardes has used union officials to help force through a vicious package of new working conditions—and cynically followed up with a new spate of plant closures!

3 million new jobs can only be created by the establishment of a planned socialist economy that will utilise and expand the existing forces of production. But this demands the removal of the Tory government.



### Social service cuts

Since he was appointed Environment Secretary, millionaire Michael Heseltine has waged war on jobs and services in local government.

He has cut and hacked hundreds of millions from local authority budgets. His latest scheme seeks to strip off a further £900 million and reduce council spending to a figure below that of three years ago (1978/9).

In Lothian in Scotland workers are preparing for strike action to resist Heseltine's ultimatum that the Labour council chop no less than £53 million off its budget—decimating 6,000 jobs and laying waste services in the area.

To back up his threats, Heseltine is seeking dictatorial new powers to override elected local councils and lay down maximum



levels of rates—forcing Labour councils to implement his full package of cuts.

The Tories feel confident that public sector union leaders will once again retreat before such a fight without resistance.

Yet only mass action to confront and bring down the Tories can prevent the wholesale demolition of local government services in the headlong pursuit of private profit.

### Hunger strikes

Impervious to continued protests from a growing body of opinion throughout the world, the Tory government remains intransigently opposed to the slightest concession to the demands of the eight Irish republican hunger strikers.

Four brave men have already died; hundreds of thousands of Catholics have demonstrated their support in the North of Ireland; first Bobby Sands and now Kieran Doherty and Paddy Agnew have won elections North and South of the border; and claims that the republican prisoners were simply an isolated handful of gunmen have been crushingly refuted. Yet the Thatcher government remains obdurate.

Deaf and blind to reason and to protest, the only language they understand is the language meted out each day on the streets by the army and the sectarian RUC—the language of brute force.

In fighting for solidarity with the Irish prisoners, we are at the same time fighting for the defeat and removal of the Thatcher government.

# FORCE THEM OUT!



We've seen Social Democrats and "wet" Tories do it; TUC leaders in Congress do it; on the Peoples March bishops (applauded by the Communist Party) did it; last weekend Eric Heffer added his twopenny-worth.

What are they all up to?

They are appealing to the Tory government to "change course", begging for a "U-turn", and looking desperately for any hint of a concession.

They are hoping against hope that their windy protests will be sufficient to shake Thatcher's iron determination to drive up the rate of profit at workers' expense.

They are hoping above all that their voices of sweet reason will prevail, and thus defuse what still threatens to be an explosion of working class anger against this hated government.

Vain hopes! The arm-waving and tub-thumping of reformist leaders, their gallons of hogwash about "unacceptable levels of

unemployment" and "irresponsible" Tory policies, are recognised at once by Thatcher for the empty gestures they are.

This government has set itself the task of frogmarching British industry back to profitability. If that means bankrupting weaker employers, laying waste whole areas of former industry, throwing millions onto the dole and destroying the social services, then the Tories are ready and willing to undertake that task.

Thatcher's arrogant disdain for her more weak-kneed ministers and back benchers was summed up by her speech to the CBI leaders last week.

On the eve of a much heralded cabinet debate on economic strategy she defiantly announced that there would be no change. And—surprise, surprise!—the next day saw unanimous endorsement of her position.

This is a government inseparably wedded to the interests of the British capitalist class—the most wealthy bankers and industrialists.

It will not be forced off course without the mass action of the working class.

But there's the 'ub. While

Thatcher's gang speaks unambiguously in the name of capital, the TUC and Labour leaders shrink at each stage from spelling out policies necessary for the working class.

Instead they offer us a programme of pleading, pressure and supplications while the Tories force home redundancies, cuts and plunging living standards.

### Protest

As the TUC plans out its next year of protest and petitions, and as Labour leaders prepare their plans to knife last year's democratic reforms, workers must ram home the most basic lesson of all.

We can't change the Tories; but through the mobilisation of the industrial strength of the working class we could force them out of office, and create entirely new conditions to press home demands for socialist policies to meet the crisis.

The Workers Socialist League remains committed to the building of a revolutionary leadership to spell out and develop the fight for such policies.



# Trotskyists stand in giant US car plant election

Reprinted from 'Fighting Worker', paper of the Revolutionary Workers League

Militant auto workers at Ford Motor Company are currently waging a spirited campaign for the upcoming UAW Local 600 elections.

The United Front Slate is made up of black and white workers, production and skilled and also includes a leading woman militant. Its candidates are running on a class-struggle programme, which includes not only union democracy and a militant struggle against the company, but also a number of key transitional demands.

## Workers' party

The political part of the programme centres on the slogan of a workers' party based on the unions, but it also refers to the need for a workers' government.

The United Front Slate was formed at the beginning of the year by two caucuses in Local 600: the Committee for a Militant and Democratic UAW (CMDUAW) and the 600 Organizer.

With the participation of several independent mili-

tants, the slate programme was negotiated and hammered out.

The process of reaching out and recruiting other unaffiliated militant workers then began. As we go to press, the United Front Slate has 19 candidates running from five of the 14 units of Local 600.

Local 600, the largest local in the UAW, has approximately 28,000 active members. The large majority of the membership is based in the gigantic Ford River Rouge complex.

For the past several years workers in Local 600 have endured increasingly severe 'boom-or-bust' cycle attacks

by Ford.

Massive and prolonged layoffs have been routinely combined with periods of 58-64 hour work weeks of compulsory overtime.

The Rouge complex itself combines technologically advanced plants with some of the most archaic and obsolete plants in the

advanced capitalist world. Ford has attempted to 'solve' this problem through layoffs and plant closures, a brutal campaign of speedup, discipline and racist discrimination.

The union bureaucracy at every level has proven supremely unwilling and unable to mobilise the membership to fight any of these attacks.

To plant closures the Local 600 administration has blusteringly responded that they will not be tolerated—except where they occur—and practically begged the company to impose wage and benefit concessions instead.

To the wage concessions recently wrested by Ford from workers in the Steel Division, the union bureaucrats simply argued the company line: 'Take a pay cut or lose your job'.

CMDUAW is a caucus based primarily in the Assembly and Engine plants, composed of black and white production workers.

It stands on a revolutionary programme of transitional demands and is politically supported by the Revo-

lutionary Workers League.

The 600 Organizer is a caucus-type organisation composed mainly of skilled trades workers in the Tool and Die unit of Local 600. It publishes a newsletter of the same name, which has taken positions for economic militancy and membership control of the union, against protectionism and for the immediate formation of a workers' party based on the unions.

CMDUAW differs from the 600 Organizer in the higher level of its political programme and its tenacious struggle to win workers to that programme. In addition, CMDUAW has an intense commitment to and history of fighting racism and of working to build the leadership of black and women workers.

But even as fraternal struggle continues over these issues, both caucuses have proven definitively that the principled unity of militants in struggle can be a powerful weapon for the working class.

As a final comical footnote, the Rouge Militant Caucus (RMC), the only other opposition group in Local 600 which remains to some degree independent of the bureaucracy, continues to sink deeper into sectarian isolation and irrelevance.

Supported—or rather strangled—politically by the Spartacist League, the RMC has found itself in a genuine quandary over having to refuse an invitation to join the United Front Slate without any principled justification for the refusal, while its tiny periphery either shrinks into inactivity or

comes over to the United Front.

In February and March 1981 the RMC tried to generate copy for the SL paper *Workers Vanguard* by calling on Rouge workers to join it for a sitdown strike in the plant cafeteria.

When less than half a dozen workers showed up for the sitdown, RMC decided instead to call on Rouge workers to join the SL's so-called "anti-imperialist contingent" at the 3 May 1981 anti war demonstration in Washington.

When that clearly wasn't working, RMC decided to run two of its supporters for President and First Vice President of Local 600.

Running only for these offices and not for any of the unit committee (steward) positions

guaranteed the RMC supporters would not "have their hands tied" leading the day-to-day struggles of the working class. It also freed their hands to engage in a propaganda struggle not against the company and the union bureaucrats but against CMDUAW and the United Front Slate.

Meanwhile, CMDUAW and the United Front Slate continue to build the real struggle to remove and replace the sellout bureaucrats who run the UAW at all levels.

This struggle is part and parcel of the struggle for militant strike action against layoffs and plant closures, for political strikes against imperialist wars and interventions, and for a workers' party based on the unions, to fight for a workers' government.



**NEW!**

Socialist Press pamphlet on South Africa  
Price 60p (incl post) from WSL,  
BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX.

## S. Africa: more repression of trade unions

As crowds of demonstrators marking the fifth anniversary of the Soweto riots ran into a barrage of police violence last week, South African cops arrested another leading black trade unionist and imposed a five year banning order on a student leader.

Thami Mazwai, news editor of the 'Sowetan' daily newspaper and a prominent member of the black media workers' union MWASA was detained last Thursday. The 'Sowetan' has emerged as the most popular paper among the black working class: it took the place of 'The Post' which was closed down by the apartheid regime after a two-month strike by MWASA had halted its production.

MWASA—which seeks to organise not only journalists but also printworkers and even newsvendors and cleaners into a single media union—has waged an outspoken struggle against apartheid.

As a result it has suffered a heavy toll of arrests and banning orders. Its latest union journal contains an article in tribute to no less than nine black journalists under banning orders and thus debarred from attending MWASA's own congress.

An article by Thami Mazwai is sharply critical of black boxer Peter Marheula for engaging in a fight with white challenger Laciari.

Another article focusses attention on the programme for action on South Africa passed by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in London last November.

MWASA is plainly looking towards the international labour movement for active solidarity. We urge readers (particularly those in print and media unions) to seek resolutions of support for MWASA.

Students, too, should be mobilising in support of their victimised fellows in South Africa.

School students have been staging boycotts and protests against the detention without charge of student leader Aziz Jardine.

And the president of the students union at the University of Witwatersrand, Sammy Adelman, has been subjected to a five year banning order—barring him from attending public meetings.

The attack on Adelman appears to be the result of the invitation he issued to US radicals Jane Fonda and Tom Hayden to give a lecture in South Africa.

Both the film star and her politician husband were twice prevented from entering South Africa last week.

\*Messages of solidarity should be forwarded to MWASA, 609 Lenton House, Wanderers Street, Johannesburg, South Africa.

## POLAND: CRUNCH COMING

As the ominous July 14 opening of the Polish Communist Party Congress looms ever closer, speculation is growing as to the proportion of the existing Central Committee that will get re-elected.

Some oppositionists are expecting no more than 20% to emerge unscathed from the mood of criticism and independence that is running through the working class membership of the 3-million strong party.

Party leader Kania and Prime Minister Jaruzelski have each been re-elected with near 100% support from their local parties. But Warsaw and Katowice have yet to vote—along with other important industrial centres.

The barrage of Kremlin propaganda threatening and hinting at a possible invasion if matters go contrary to the wishes of the Moscow bureaucrats seems directed to a large extent towards intimidating militants into re-electing the old leadership.

But at the same time the tone of the Soviet pronouncements is growing ever more reminiscent of that adopted by the Kremlin in the weeks prior to the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Then, too, the invasion took place in the final stages of the run-up to the Czech party congress.

Top Kremlin spokesman Leonid Zamyatin has said on television that: "The time has come to be active in order to pull Poland out of a catastrophic situation."

Yet the success of this threatening tone is indicated by the fact that it is not simply emanating from the bureaucracy: it is now being echoed by some Solidarity leaders, in particular Lech Walesa.

"The government must rule and it must be strong. Let's give them a chance", he urged in a speech last Saturday.

Walesa has always tended to respond to the economic crisis of the Polish bureaucracy by trimming back some of the most militant demands raised by Solidarity members and most recently offering to set aside wage demands for a period altogether.

There is no doubt that the invasion threat is a very real danger to the Polish working class.

It is by no means obligatory for militants to rush prematurely into such a confrontation.

But far from arguing for support to the Polish bureaucracy, a revolutionary leadership should be spelling out the danger of invasion, and openly warning and preparing the working class to meet this threat while seeking ways and means to establish active solidarity in action with the working class in the rest of Eastern Europe and the USSR.

**Trotskyist International Liaison Committee**

**Summer School 1981**

**JULY 16-26**

**"The Crisis of Imperialism and Stalinism"**

Seven days of lectures and discussions on basic questions of Marxism and the fight to reconstruct the Trotskyist Fourth International, ending with the Fusion Conference of the British WSL and ICL.

A series of more basic lectures and discussions will be held simultaneously with the main lectures.

There will also be films, fringe meetings on various topics, an Irish evening and other more informal activities as well as a grand social on Saturday evening.

Total cost, including transport by approved means, is £22 for the week. Further details can be obtained from the Workers Socialist League, BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX.



# THE RISE AND FALL OF BANI SADR

JOHN LISTER looks at the background to the impeachment of President Bani-Sadr of Iran last weekend.

## BANI SADR

"This is not an election but a new revolution". That was the proud boast of Abolhassan Bani-Sadr as he swept to office as President of the Islamic Republic of Iran in January 1980.

Bani-Sadr secured no less than 75% of the votes cast, defeating his nearest rival by 5-1. No other candidate got as much as 5% of the vote.

Bani-Sadr at first basked in this success.

Enjoying at first the full support of Ayatollah Khomeini, he was at once installed as President, as Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, and given power to assemble a government even before election to the legislative assembly.

He declared his intention to build a unified and authoritative central state apparatus to administer the crisis-ridden Iranian capitalist economy.

He went further—and pronounced the fundamentalist Islamic Republican Party to be "dead". He stated that he intended to silence its members, exclude the clergy from the government and disband the Revolutionary Council, in a return to orthodox forms of capitalist rule.

No less attractive to worried sections of the Iranian capitalist class was Bani-Sadr's pledge to crush the challenge to centralised state control posed by the struggles of national minorities in Kurdistan and Azerbaijan, and to repress the most militant left wing organisations and committees that had sprung up in the factories and working class neighbourhoods.

Yet now, 18 months later it is the bigots of the Islamic Republican Party who have the upper hand, and have co-ordinated the campaign that has ousted Bani-Sadr from his position of control, and brought his impeachment before a clergy-dominated Iranian parliament.

What went wrong for Bani-Sadr?



Bani-Sadr's troops gun down Kurdish militants

From the outset his popular support rested on extremely fragile foundations. Khomeini—himself apparently on the point of death when Bani-Sadr was elected—apparently saw his secular candidacy as a means of controlling the increasing militancy of Iranian workers and students.

And Bani Sadr was also the obvious representative of the "liberal" Iranian bourgeoisie. Pledged to re-establish secular control after the chaotic state apparatus and restore some semblance of rational operation to the crumbling economy, he seemed their best hope of restored profits.

Bani-Sadr had indeed emerged as the man most likely to rebuild the bridges to US and world imperialism.

He had made no secret of his hostility to the prolonged occupation of the US embassy and his determination to bring the "hostage crisis" to an end. This too offered Iranian capitalists the hopes of renewed opportunities for expanded trade.

On the same basis he won some support among

sections of the army—who looked both to the consolidation of the centralised state military machine and reestablishment of links with imperialism as their best prospect for advancement.

But these hopes and plans were all to founder in the choppy and contradictory seas of the Iranian struggle.

### Mobilisations

The hostage issue was not quickly resolved. On the contrary, as US threats and reprisals grew in scope, so did anti imperialist mobilisations by the Iranian workers and students on the streets of Tehran.

Carter's abortive attempt

to free the hostages by military means simply brought the whole situation to boiling point.

Though Bani-Sadr and Khomeini had both been united early in 1980 in toning down Iranian demands in exchange for the hostages, Khomeini was soon to sense the way the wind was blowing and make appropriate noises.

Bani-Sadr—slower to adjust—emerged from the affair with little credit in the eyes of the masses.

At the same time, his relationship with the armed forces was not entirely satisfactory. Appointed Supreme Commander by Khomeini in February 1980, he took over just in time to

carry the can for repressing agitation within the army for elected soldiers' councils.

### Forefront

As Supreme Commander he also placed himself firmly at the forefront of brutal military moves to crush the national liberation movement of the Kurdish people.

In May 1980 he ordered the bombardment of the Kurdish city of Sanandaj—bringing the deaths of over 300 people.

Unable even then to repress the Kurds, he made blustering threats to mobilise all 36 million Iranian people in defence of the "unity" of Iran against the rebels. Such threats achieved nothing



Bani-Sadr

except further illustrating the gulf between Bani-Sadr's pledges and his ability to carry them out.

And of course as Supreme Commander Bani-Sadr was duty bound to commit himself to winning the war against the Iraqi invaders who launched their attack in September.

His failure to achieve anything like the victories he had promised further discredited him in the eyes of an increasingly disaffected military establishment.

Nor did his political moves prove any more successful. Having prematurely pronounced the Islamic Republican Party "dead" in January, he was forced to watch it win substantial ground in the legislative assembly elections in the Spring, and in August elect a Prime Minister—Mohammed Ali Rajaie—with whom Bani-Sadr declared he "could not work".

### 'Westerniser'

By that point the writing was already on the wall for Bani-Sadr. His associate Sadeq Gotsbdeh was under heavy criticism from an increasingly cocky and self-confident clergy, and Bani-Sadr himself was increasingly denounced as a "Westerniser".

The liberal bourgeoisie was losing out heavily to the fundamentalist bigots, and a recovered Khomeini was more and more distancing himself from his one-time favourite protegee.

Bani-Sadr floundered on however, seeking to mobilise sufficient reactionary mob support to smash the powerful left wing forces of the Fedayeen which had cemented an alliance with the Kurdish nationalist struggle.

But despite his offer to lead lumpen gangs onto the university campuses to flush out the Fedayeen, Bani-Sadr's campaign proved indecisive. The Iranian left increasingly branded him as "worse than the Shah".

### Opportunity

It is against this background of antagonising the revolutionary left, the rabid right and the liberal centre of Iranian society that Bani-Sadr ran into the most recent spate of challenges to his authority.

His attempt earlier this year to agree a truce with Iraq failed miserably and offered the clergy a further opportunity to drive home their attack.

Little by little his powers and influence were stripped from him. His close ally was ousted as Governor of the

Central Bank. His newspaper was closed down.

A meeting addressed by Bani-Sadr at Tehran University broke up in violence between the President's revolutionary guards and hecklers. The clergy began making allegations that this incident proved Bani-Sadr to be "creating disunity" and "provoking clashes" with his opponents.

### Impeachment

He began to be openly accused of siding with ex-members of SAVAK, with "anti-revolutionary" and "bankrupt nationalist" elements. He in turn hit back, alleging that there was a plot to remove him from office and urging Iranians to "resist tyranny".

Accused of fomenting a coup d'etat he was stripped of his post as Supreme Commander. His staff began to be arrested, and moves for his impeachment came to a head.

As his "trial by Parliament" was fixed for Saturday June 20, it became known that Bani-Sadr had—perhaps wisely—disappeared from public view for the previous eight days, and airports, docks and border posts were placed on alerts to prevent his escape.

In the downfall of Bani-Sadr the Iranian masses have not lost a friend. His defence of limited democratic rights against the Islamic bigots based not on the interests of the working class but on the requirements of Iranian capitalism: his most vociferous and fleetingly successful campaigns were aimed not at the defence but at the crushing of the rights of his left wing and Kurdish political opponents.

### Attacks

But the period of Islamic reaction that will follow Bani-Sadr's demise offers only the prospect of further draconian attacks on the rights and living standards of the Iranian working class.

Women and gays in Iran face further persecution and oppression; socialists and communists and independent organisations of the working class face increased harassment.

Only the building of a revolutionary Marxist leadership to mobilise the class strength of the Iranian proletariat in the struggle for a workers' and peasants' government can offer to the masses any light at the end of this long tunnel.



Bani-Sadr with Iranian troops in front lines near Korramshahr



Mullahs' rule will intensify oppression of women



# PLIGHT OF WOMEN

# WORSE WITH TORIES

Mary Ann Todd reviews the CIS Report 'Women in the '80s', price 95p.

There is a steady, quiet—for the most part unpublicised—escalation of the oppression of women taking place under the Tory government.

The CIS report *Women in the 80s*, gives an overall picture of the deepening of isolation, despair, poverty and abuse that the Tories are inflicting on the mass of working class women as they seek to drive up the rate of profit for bankers and industrialists.

The attack hits individuals usually hitting hardest at the least organised, least articulate women who have been conditioned to accept oppression as their lot—almost as if they are to blame.

The report itself quotes one woman (Carol):

"You end up thinking it's yourself and that you are totally inadequate. It happens to a lot of women because we haven't any outlets."

The report shows how the Thatcher government is playing on the feelings of isolation and uselessness that women are forced into.

## Statistics

But what is seen by one woman as just another burden to bear is in fact happening to thousands, and in some cases, millions of other women, nationally and internationally.

This is shown by the wealth of statistics, graphs, facts and figures contained in the report.

Each set of figures is used not as a bald statement but is brought to life by comments or a story showing the kind of individual impact of each attack—whether it is unemployment, racist laws, cuts, price increases or homelessness.

The statistics provide the most overwhelming evidence that this bankrupt system has nothing to offer women workers exploited both in the home and at their place of work.

On **JOBS**, for instance, the Report illustrates some grim facts. From 1973-77 unemployment among black women has increased elevenfold (1,110%), while among white women it has increased six times over (605%).

Short time working has increased ten-fold from 50,000 in 1979 to 500,000 in 1980.

## No job

A South London study of youth unemployment found that 70% of black girls had no job since leaving school as compared to 20% of white girls, 30% of white boys and 40% of black boys.

A study of 150 unemployed school leavers found that 45% of girls as opposed to only 16% of boys were likely to get depressed.

For many girls, depression means being confined to the house during school holidays or at weekends.

In 40% of cases, according to a study by the Women's Bureau, the girls were



earned on average only 72% as much as men in full time work, while part time women workers earn on average only 60% of full time men.

Low pay is rife: in 1979, 4.4 million women grossed less than £60 per week.

## More tax

And some women's jobs are particularly exploitative: in 1970 average earnings in hairdressing were 75% of average women's earnings, while by 1980 they had fallen to 60%.

In addition, average take home pay buys less now than it did in 1974, and poorer families pay more tax.

The Report looks at PRICES, pointing out that in 1979/80, British Electricity Boards made a combined profit of £641.8 million. Yet in 1980 117,180 households were disconnected from electricity supply.

It is largely women who have to cope with families with no electricity.

Bus and rail fares rose by 24% in 1980—restricting women's mobility, often forcing them to walk to the shops and schools.

School meal prices, too, were raised to 50p in May 1980 and as a result the proportion of children taking meals fell from 63% to 24%.

It is the mothers who are then forced to make packed lunches or prepare meals at home.

In 40% of cases, according to a study by the Women's Bureau, the girls were

overcrowding or poor conditions.

The 1974 Labour government spent only 96p on housing for every £1 it spent on defence.

But by 1983/4, the Tories plan to spend only 33p for every £1 on arms.

The pressures on families fall particularly hard on women in the home—in soaring statistics of violence.

25% of all violent crime is wife assault. Yet in 1978 only one refuge was available for every 60,000 battered women, while only 16% of women in refuges who try to obtain local authority housing get it.

Some may say the statistics point to attacks on the whole of the working class, not to oppression specifically against women.

But the Report shows, with simple clarity what lies behind the words when we say that women bear the brunt of unemployment, cuts and other attacks.

## Hemmed in

Through the Report we see that for increasingly more and more women all they can look forward to is to be hemmed in at home, trying to cope with the mounting difficulties of raising a family on a low income, often in terrible housing, with no play facilities and no escape.

It points to the fact that women are not only under material pressure but are subject to the guilt that comes from being unable to provide for their children.

It is the mothers who are then forced to make packed lunches or prepare meals at home.

In 40% of cases, according to a study by the Women's Bureau, the girls were

for two days").

It is the kind of despair and hopelessness that drove a young mother to jump off her high rise flat balcony with her two toddlers just last month after struggling to get transferred to better housing and "failing".

It is the hopelessness that means so many women seek relief through repeated prescriptions for valium and yet even 'mothers little helpers' are becoming prohibitive with prescriptions £1 a time.

The irony is that the Tories are carrying out these attacks under the guise of being the champions of the family.

Patrick Jenkin is quoted from the 1977 Tory Party Conference as saying:

"Loyalty to the family ranks highest of all, higher even than loyalty to the state".

You can bet he wouldn't say that to absolve the rising number of women shoplifters, thinking of their families—or the tenants who cannot pay the rent and get in arrears.

At the same time as using propaganda to elevate the whole notion of the family, the Tories are piling on the pressure to make family life for working class women a crippling burden.

The reality (and the Tories know it) is that for the vast proportion of people, bourgeois family life is not working.

One in every four marriages end in irretrievable breakdown. The crux of the Tory philosophy is that it ought to work, and if it doesn't it is the "failure" of the individual.

(usually the women).

They are determined to ensure that life outside their "normal" conception of the family is as difficult as possible—with no jobs, no housing, Social Security "sex snoopers" and a pittance to live on.

A large proportion of the book is spent examining the different aspects and effects of unemployment for women.

It has some excellent figures on the hidden unemployed, pointing to working wives.

## Abuse

It is difficult to read the Report and remain indifferent to the picture that is presented.

But anger, disgust and knowing of the escalating abuse to some many millions of women doesn't solve anything, and hasn't prevented any of the attacks.

As the Report states: "The story of 1980 is one of major setbacks for the trade union movement. Job losses, wage cuts, speed-up and victimisation have been occurring to an unprecedented extent . . . the massive increase in unemployment over the last 18 months has seen little successful resistance from the trade unions".

We know as Trotskyists that the central reason for this is the crisis of leadership within the labour movement.

The Report makes some references to this, in statements such as:

"... of course the union in a workplace can be effective only if the membership is active, but union officials are sometimes notorious for obstructing action in pursuit of improved pay and conditions".

And in a paragraph on a South Leeds trouser factory: "When management tried to impose a wage cut of £18 per week by altering the production norms so that none of the women could earn the bonuses they depended on for their weekly wage, the women walked out. They were ordered back by the union official who the women claim was 'hand in glove' with management".

But the references are anonymous, the finger isn't directly pointed.

So though the Report loudly applauds the fighting spirit of those women who have struggled and does stress that women are willing to fight against all odds, it does not say why the four major struggles they refer to, as examples of women fighting back, Chix, Meccano, St. Benedict's and Longworth, suffered different forms of defeat.

In each case it was the refusal of the trade union leaders concerned to take the fight the necessary steps forward to win the battle—and leaving the women struggling in isolation.

As Mrs Suguidivi said in the Chix dispute: "What we need to win is not more money or newspaper articles, it's people down on the picket line helping to turn back lorries."

Without support of other workers it will be impossible for small groups of women

workers to win their dispute even for the most basic rights.

This means mobilising the trade unions—which are controlled by a leadership which for the most part stands opposed to giving such support.

That is the major factor in why the Tories have been able to get away with it for so long.

The Report has some important observations about positive discrimination and women's involvement in the union:

"Unions often measure women's participation in the union by the proportion of women integrated into the bureaucracy of the union—the committees, the conferences and the working parties—rather than the level of activity on a rank and file basis. Women are active in their workplaces.

Most trade union members do not see their union in terms of national structure. They judge it on how it operates to secure better pay and conditions . . . Industrial action is by far the best education for trade unionists.

If women union members were encouraged both locally and nationally to use direct action in pursuit of claims then involvement in the union structure would follow."

## Absence

Unfortunately the report gives very few indications of the forms of direct action necessary to defeat the Tory attacks. If it had been more specific—especially in relation to demands on the trade union bureaucracy—it is doubtful whether NUPE or the Bakers Union would have funded it.

There is also a conspicuous absence in the Report of any reference to the Tory attacks on abortion rights.

But then the report was sponsored by the British Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches.

Possibly because of this, the section on violence against women is centred very much on events in Leeds and there is no other reference made to other questions of sexuality affecting women in the 1980s (eg the question of pornography, prostitution or the oppression of gay women).

## Factual picture

Also omitted is the wholesale attack on nursery provision and the vociferous militant action organised by women in nurseries up and down the country in response.

The Report's strength is the accurate, researched factual picture it presents of women in the 1980s in Britain, suffering the effects of the Tory government's policies.

Its weaknesses are the weaknesses which encourage reformist bodies like the Equal Opportunities Commission to offer to fund its production: it cannot tell us what to do to end this oppression, how to bring down the Tories or show the necessary programme for struggle for a socialist society.



# Youth must fight cheap labour scheme

By Mick Liggins, chairperson, National Council for Young Workers

Many of us will have witnessed at labour movement conferences the spectacle of genuine militants and trade union bureaucrats alike labelling the Government's Youth Opportunities Programmes as cheap labour schemes.

Our attitude towards YOPs has to go much further than this.

YOPs embrace 440,000 workers who have never been in contact with the trade union movement at all and are one of the most blatantly exploited sections of the working class.

## Approval

Despite the criticisms of YOPs voiced by the majority of unions, TUC General Secretary Len Murray lined up openly with the Tories, the CBI and a dozen or so top employers to show his complete approval of the YOPs in a recent full page advertisement published in the *Daily Mirror*.

It called on employers to 'give our youth a chance' by taking them on at their firms for up to one year. How can they lose? After all instead of the bosses paying these workers, the government will pay the bosses to hire them!

Trade union leaders, for all their verbal criticisms are in fact participating in the setting up of YOPs. They are taking a fight up in the unions not for decent jobs, but for co-operation by stewards with the YOPs.

Readers of *Employment News* will have seen the rapid growth of these schemes. But we need to be informed more of the truth of YOPs to be in a position to fight them.

## Control

YOPs were set up by the last Labour government, with close co-operation by the trade unions. Both were looking for a way of covering up the rapid rise of youth unemployment brought about by Labour's right wing economic policies.

Under the Tories the whole basis of the YOPs schemes has changed. Run by the Manpower Services Commission, the schemes are under the direct control of the government. This is split into two main categories.

Of the 440,000 workers, 65% are on WEEP schemes (Work experience on employers' premises). These are youth who go into firms and work up to twelve months.

One example of this is GEC who have over 300 YOP workers—whilst at the same time laying off and not replacing adult workers who work full time.

The other one is the YOPs 'training workshops'. An example of this is the M.W. Hamptons factory in Leicester. In 1979 it went bust and closed down, sacking all of its workers. They were replaced by a YOPs workforce, costing



80% less in labour costs.

The factory has 80 YOPs workers, and is split into five different sections: a beginners section who 'learn' drilling and welding in order to make trailers and horse boxes to be sold privately; an assembly section; and a spraying section. Two other sections are a woodwork and upholstery section, both producing for private sale.

The allowance for YOPs is £23.50 for a 40 hour week. The workshops are run very much like normal factories with some exceptions. Whereas in a normal factory you have foremen, in a YOPs workshop you have supervisors who have the power to sack, suspend, or fine workers on the spot. (These foremen are recruited through the unions).

## 'Training schemes'

The WEEP schemes last anything from six weeks to 12 months. They are supposed to be 'training schemes'.

These consist, for example, in an engineering factory of one month 'learning' drilling, or welding 'courses' based 99% on production.

In a council direct works scheme, 'training' would be 12 months cutting grass, digging holes or stacking bricks.

According to MSC sponsors, recruitment is based on four categories:

1. 'Extra sub normal (ESN)'
2. 'Lowest normal achievement'
3. 'Intelligent but'
4. 'Acceptable, intelligent, unlucky'.

'Special provisions' are made for the first two categories. In the Hamptons factory, the ESN's were used for washing up, cleaning toilets, sweeping the factory and a special patch was reserved for them outside so they could do gardening.

The LNA's are moved around from scheme to scheme, rejected by the supervisors, until their time runs out or they are sacked.

The 'intelligent but's are usually the youth who have been in trouble with the law.

As for the 'unlucky' ones—well they must be victims of the system and presumably the rest are not.

It should be quite clear from this brief description just what these schemes are.

The Tories won't pay youth on the dole, so they

are making them work for their dole money instead.

If you refuse to go on a YOPs scheme, your dole money is stopped for six weeks. In reality they are

compulsory.

It's not good enough simply to stand up and call the YOPs 'cheap labour'—as they obviously are.

With trade union bureau-

crats quite happy to give critical support to the YOPs, we have to give these youth some direction and leadership. We must attack the whole basis of YOPs.

## Fines

The problems that face the youth in fighting back are enormous. As they are paid an allowance and not a wage they are not covered by the Employment Protection Act. This then makes it legal to deduct fines from the allowance. (Fines were used in the Leicester factory to discourage mass meetings).

In November 1980 the workers were due to get a 7% rise. This was stopped by the government. Action on a local level was laughed at by the MSC—since they said it was the government who had stopped the pay rise and to fight them you had to have a national strike.

This was largely true. The only action we could take was on issues at the employers' discretion such as fines.

For the WEEP workers, the situation is worse. In some cases there are ones and two's working at a place and it is impossible to reach them. Some youth

have even been taken into the army.

The only way that a fightback can take place is through united action by the trade unions. This does not mean just condemning the schemes: it means taking up the fight to unionise the YOPs.

On the WEEP schemes workers should take up the fight to black all workers who are not paid full union rates and at the same time get the YOPs workers into the unions.

## Unionisation

This has been done to some extent in the co-ops and the NUT has taken it up in some places.

A new body has been set up to co-ordinate action on a national scale, the National Council for Young Workers.

It is campaigning for full trade union rates and rights and for unionisation of all YOPs.

Trade union branches and Labour Party wards should be affiliating to this body and keep contact with the YOPs on a national scale.

# PRESS GANG

The last thing that a bankrupt city like New York needs is a visit from the heir to the throne of what is still laughingly referred to as the United Kingdom.

That lesson was underlined last week as the visit of the Prince of Wales became a hugely successful circus for supporters of the Irish hunger strikers.

New York meanwhile was left staggering at the £150,000 bill for providing wall-to-wall policing to protect the Prince.

Charles, ironically, had gone to New York, not to bankrupt the city, nor to publicise the struggle of Irish Republicans, but to raise money for the Royal Ballet.

Rich New Yorkers forked out between \$600 and \$800 each to sit in the same theatre as the Prince and maybe even to brush against him in the corridor.

But the visit was a total disaster for British imperialism.

Prince Charles spent the whole of his visit scanning the horizon for some point on which he could focus without staring straight at an anti-imperialist slogan.

On land, in the water, in the air, even at the ballet, he was hounded by demonstrators supporting the hunger strikers.

Pictures that flashed

across the world were not of our gracious future King being greeted by cheering masses—but of cop chiefs nervously playing with their revolvers and peering around looking for assassins.

The British press could hardly ignore the visit (how else could they explain why Lady Diana was not accompanied as she paraded her fashions at Ascot?).

Moreover, Edward Koch—the Mayor of New York—who needs Irish votes to win his next election—was already haranguing against Britain's role in Ireland before Prince Charles arrived. (Although he absolved the Royal Family from all blame for the murderous policy carried out in their name).

Koch also revealed that Charles had mumbled some sentiments about hoping everything in Ireland would turn out all right.

So what was the press to make of this embarrassing debacle?

## Low key

The papers reported the demonstrations in a low key and demoralised way.

The *Daily Express* did its best to counter-attack with a story headlined 'Royal escort scandal'.

But this story was so hilarious that it probably held the British Royal Family up to more ridicule.

A policeman detailed to

guard the Prince tore off his uniform as soon as he was off duty and joined the anti-British demonstration!

(Despite the life and death nature of the struggle, comedy is somehow never far away. The British government has now sent 'two officials' to the US to counter the propaganda successes of Irish Republicans—conjuring up pictures of Thompson and Thomson from Tin-Tin).

The 'serious' papers cannot afford the luxury of hit and miss attacks.

## 'Royal creep'

The *Sunday Telegraph* made standard noises in its editorial:

"Disgraceful though it is that the Heir to the Throne cannot visit a great city of Britain's closest ally without shouts of 'British murderer' and 'Royal creep' being hurled at him, nobody is going to confuse this carefully orchestrated abuse with the attitude of the American government or of the American people at large."

But a half page article in the same paper by Henry Miller plumbed the full depths of the humiliation.

He said: "Relatives of the men who starved themselves to death in the Maze Prison near Belfast were among the demonstrators, and their bitterness undoubtedly intensified as they gazed

through the windows of Avery Fisher Hall and watched elegantly clad guests at a pre-ballet reception."

Some guests were pelted with eggs, and during the ballet protestors shouted at the Royal Box.

The response of one woman—according to the *Telegraph*—epitomised the reaction of the bourgeoisie wherever in the world they are disturbed at play.

She called out: "Kill the bastards. They are ruining the evening."

Miller went on:

"In truth, many people considered the whole visit whacky and could not understand the justification for such an expensive security operation... They could not fathom why his first visit to New York should have been for such a purpose as helping to raise funds for the Royal Ballet, the English Speaking Union and the Metropolitan Opera Association."

"The New York Post had pointed out that the visit raised \$250,000 and cost \$300,000, and asked 'Is it churlish to point out that without the visit, the city could have given the ballet company 250,000 dollars and still have come out ahead?'"

For the hunger strikers and the struggle against imperialism in Ireland, however, it was money well spent!



# LCI: Mansfield demo to proceed

We reprint here a press statement issued by the West Midlands Labour Committee on Ireland on behalf of the LCI National Committee.

"The Labour Committee on Ireland intends to hold a public demonstration in Mansfield on Saturday 4 July to protest at our Party's collaboration with the Tories on Ireland.

Recent political pronouncements of Mr Concannon show that he feels entitled to visit constituencies other than his own and to declare publicly that as Labour's spokesman he stands foursquare behind the Tory, Mrs Thatcher, on Northern Ireland.

## Same rights

Obviously other members of the Labour Party enjoy the same democratic rights and therefore we feel entitled to visit other constituencies (including Mr Concannon's) to declare publicly that we do not back Mrs Thatcher's policies on Ireland nor Mr Concannon's

record.

Contrary to local press reports which have described our demonstration as an "IRA march", membership of the LCI is restricted to individual members of the Labour Party.

This demonstration is merely a marginal activity compared with the main thrust of our campaign which has been to promote debate on the question of Ireland within the democratic machinery of the Party.

## Challenge

It is precisely our success in developing a challenge within the Party which has led to the orchestrated hysterical response to our demonstration.

It does not surprise us that support for a counter-demonstration has come not only from Concannon's cohorts in the Labour Party, but also Tories, the local Rugby Club and NF ele-

ments.

The threat of violence from these groups has been used by the police to ban us from marching through the town centre—a ban which we find an unacceptable infringement of our democratic rights.

The Chief Executive of Mansfield District Council has also been pressurised to refuse us an assembly point.

For our part we challenge Don Concannon MP to debate with us at the end of the demonstration.

We call on all Labour Party members to join us in this demonstration to criticise Mr Concannon's disastrous record on Ireland and his attempts to suppress our legitimate protest against his collaboration with the Tories."

\*It is reported that the Labour Party National Agent David Hughes sent the West Midlands Regional Organiser

## Labour Committee on Ireland DEMONSTRATION

Sack Concannon!  
Break Bipartisanship!  
Support the Hunger Strikers!  
SATURDAY 4 JULY

Assemble 2.00 p.m.  
Mansfield BR Station

Bring your Labour Party and Trade Union banners

to see the West Midlands organiser of the LCI to try and persuade her to call off the demonstration.

He told her that if the march went ahead the Labour Party faced the prospect of seeing its members fighting each other in the streets!

Socialist Press has been assured that members of the Labour Committee on Ireland have no intention of

initiating any violence on the 4 July demonstration.

It would therefore seem more appropriate for the Labour Party's West Midlands Regional Organiser to pay a visit to Mr Concannon and his supporters and tell them that they must respect the democratic rights of those who wish to oppose the record of Concannon without being subjected to threats of violent attack.



Concannon

# FORCE MPs TO BACK CUTS FIGHT!

There is no purpose in seeking a logical argument with the Tory government on their latest proposed cuts in local government spending, argued GLC Ken Livingstone last week.

"If the government seeks to destroy local government, then we shall demand of members of the Parliamentary Labour Party that they make the proceedings of parliament inoperable in order to prevent the legislation being carried."

This call, made at a meeting of Britain's largest council, is an important break from the limited perspectives offered up by Labour council leaders in previous rounds of cuts.

By refusing to acknowledge any division between Parliament and local government, Livingstone correctly throws the spotlight onto the PLP, which has so far been all but inactive on the issue of Tory cuts.

## Betrayed

Indeed workers seeking a road forward against the cuts have found themselves betrayed on all sides. Public sector union leaders have sat back and watched jobs being slashed by the thousand; councillors 'left' and right alike (including Livingstone's own council in Camden) have imposed cuts and rate/rent increases—blaming them on the Tory government, and members of Labour's NEC and PLP have made tub-thumping speeches while offering no lead whatever to mass action to defeat Thatcher.

Livingstone has said that he now expects the PLP to back his call for a campaign of disruption in Parliament: it remains to be seen

whether right wing Shadow spokesman Gerald Kaufmann will in fact do anything as positive as this.

But whether Kaufmann acts, it is clear from past experience that even a small number of committed Labour MPs could throw the machinery of Parliament into crisis—witness the filibustering of anti-abortion legislation.

## Mass action

The demand for action to block the Tory offensive must therefore be levelled at every Labour MP, in particular those who put forward the most vociferous anti-Tory rhetoric.

But it must also be coupled to the preparation of mass action on a local level to resist the cuts, closures and rate/rent increases which the latest Tory measures are designed to impose.

For Livingstone to point the finger at Parliament is correct: but were he to seek by this means to duck the responsibility for mounting a mass campaign in London in confrontation with the Tories, he would be doing the workers' movement no favours at all.

Certainly there appear to be signs that Heseltine's latest ultimatum demanding a further cut in council spending and his preparation of new legislation to control council budgets is forcing Labour councils into an impossible corner.

Last week Labour leaders of 77 major urban councils agreed that they would refuse to comply with Heseltine's demands for them to submit new, revised budgets cutting a total of £800 million.

Instead most will resubmit the budgets unamended, while the GLC will send in a budget revised upwards to

take account of the Labour council's election pledges.

The Tory squeeze on local government is of course only one aspect of their overall attack on the rights and living standards of the working class.

With anger running high over wages, unemployment and the cuts already imposed, conditions are favourable for a determined fight against further punitive rises in rates and rents.

Enough is enough. There have been too many retreats.

The whole labour movement must be put on a war footing and mobilised to bring down the Thatcher government.

# Scarman whitewash begins

The first week of the Scarman inquiry into the Brixton riots has painted a graphic picture of the heavy police task-force sent in to harass and arrest black workers and youth.

Day One saw Deputy Assistant Commissioner Leslie Walker point out that apart from the ethnic groups "one's also got to consider the ordinary citizen in Brixton."

This gulf in the eyes of the police between the "ordinary" (white) citizens and the supposedly criminal (black) elements has emerged as a consistent note in the inquiry.

Local police commander Adams used an analogy from military warfare to explain why police made no effort to inform community leaders of their operations.



Brixton the morning after the riots

"No good general ever discloses his forces as a prelude to any kind of attack".

He admitted that in one month-long operation in Brixton in 1978, 120 SFG officers had set up road-blocks and stopped 1,000 people.

It was subsequently disclosed that though only 100 of these 1,000 victims were charged with any offence, all of their names and addresses have been kept on police files.

Detective Chief Superintendent Plowman admitted that the 'Operation Swamp 81' exercise, which helped spark off the Brixton riots, had been aimed primarily at harassing blacks.

He claimed that the majority of "footpad robberies" were committed by black youth aged 12-17. "I would expect my officers to be looking at

black youths lounging about on street corners and giving rise to the suspicion of involvement in these crimes", he said.

Rastafarians in particular, it seems, annoy Chief Supt. Plowman. He described Railton Road—at the centre of the riot area—as a "squalid area", where "Rastafarians with an anti-authority attitude gathered."

Yet he went on to claim that nobody but "criminals" would have noticed that Operation Swamp 81 was taking place.

Having admitted that the entire operation was focussed on arresting black youth, Plowman then attempted to deny discrimination:

"I don't go around Brixton discriminating against black people and I don't expect my officers to do so either."

But he went on to claim

again that:

"a vast majority of these crimes are committed by black people."

The "anti-authority attitude" which Plowman finds so unacceptable among black youth, however, is readily tolerated when it is a question of plain clothes police touting unauthorised weapons.

Two journalists told the inquiry that men behind police lines were seen carrying weapons. Caroline Tisdall spoke of two men carrying iron bars, and BBC correspondent John Clare described three men carrying both police shields and assorted weapons—an axe handle, a wooden staff and a two foot length of rubber piping.

Plainly sections of the police have drawn their own lessons from the Blair Peach murder in Southall and

equipped themselves with suitably unorthodox implements with which to club youth on the streets.

The Scarman inquiry itself can be nothing more than a travesty which excludes in advance any serious investigation of why the anger of a whole community—black and white—suddenly erupted.

It is boycotted by a long list of local labour movement bodies, and functioning primarily as a whitewash exercise for the police.

But the ineptitude and transparent racialism of the police witnesses and the small amount of impartial evidence so far produced underlines the necessity for a full labour movement inquiry into the police action and into the steps the workers' movement must take to protect the black community from further harassment and violence.



# ISTC goes unilateral

Calls for unilateral nuclear disarmament and a withdrawal from the Common Market were carried against opposition from the platform at last week's conference of the steel union ISTC.

The union's traditional stance has been to back the right wing call for multi-lateral disarmament, and to seek only a referendum on the question of withdrawal from the EEC.

But the conference, changed in mood and composition by the wholesale redundancies sweeping through industry, reflected the leftward shift on such policy issues that is running through the workers movement.

But the union's right wing Executive Committee had by no means lost control of the conference.

They successfully held the line in opposition to the Wembley conference proposals on Labour's electoral college. And they defeated moves to have the conference decide whom to support in Labour's deputy



Bill Sims

leadership—leaving the decision in the hands of the union's right wing Labour conference delegation.

This defence of right wing positions was not matched by any marked enthusiasm from delegates, however, as shown by the handful that turned out to a fringe meeting addressed by Dennis Healey. Even the *Financial Times* felt obliged to point out that this was "sparsely attended".

### Unusually militant

On other issues even ISTC leader Bill Sims was driven to make unusually militant noises in order to head off growing militancy.

To applause, he announced that the union's executive had submitted a resolution to both the TUC and the Labour Party conference calling for the re-nationalisation without compensation of "hived off" steel plants.

And he won support for his call on the TUC to break all links with the Tory government.

"I have a clear message to that sleeping giant the TUC. We should dissociate ourselves from the government; we should fight them."

But Sims' fight is restricted to strong words: on the urging of the union's executive a resolution calling for a general strike to halt the Tory offensive was overwhelmingly defeated.

And while many crocodile tears were shed over those made redundant while ISTC officials have contented themselves with haggling over compensation, the executive successfully intervened to ensure that a motion calling for full union rights to be extended to unemployed members was remitted rather than carried.

# One day strike to fight victimisation

TASS members throughout Lucas are to strike on Friday for the reinstatement of Mike Cooley.

Cooley, who is the most renowned figure in Lucas Aerospace, has been sacked after refusing to take a transfer to a job in the personnel department.

He was the only one on his section that Lucas claimed could not be found similar employment.

Cooley is chairman of

TASS in Willesden, chairman of the Lucas Aerospace JOC, and a member of the TASS National Negotiating Committee.

He was one of the leading figures who drew up the workers' plan for socially useful work to replace the Lucas Aerospace programme of armament manufacture.

This attack on such a leading trade unionist is only the latest in the management's attempts to smash union organisation in Lucas.

In April, Bob Traynor, a senior site representative for

APEX at Fazakerley was called in and told that he had been made compulsorily redundant.

The APEX members went on strike and he has since been reinstated.

The Lucas management have felt emboldened by Thatcher's policies to impose massive redundancies, speed-up and wage cuts on the workforce.

Thousands of jobs have been lost over the last year and more redundancies have been announced—particularly hitting Birmingham.

Members of the staffs will be especially hard hit. That is plainly why management have decided to victimise the most well-known white collar trade unionist in Lucas

### Pushed back

The company have already been pushed back on one such victimisation by supporting strike action. If Friday's strike produces no concessions an all-out strike may be necessary to force Cooley's reinstatement.

# Lee Jeans: co-op red herring

After 20 weeks sit-in strike action, the workforce at Lee Jeans in Greenock are wondering what else they need to do to win their struggle against plant closure.

They have occupied the plant since February; they have forced their union—the Tailors and Garment Workers—to declare the struggle official; they have won huge popular support from the labour movement; and they have now got dockers blacking imports from the plant's owners, Vanity Fair Corporation.

Transport workers, too, are blacking the goods, and there is a statement of support from USDAW, which organises shop and warehouse staff.

But the 170 women still actively involved in the fight have not yet been able to force the employers to cave in. Resting on alternative production at plants in Ireland and Belgium, they have relied on the patchy trade union organisation in the distribution and retail trade to continue their sales in Britain and Scandinavia.

With the whole British textile industry in profound recession and many factories on short time (as little as 2 days per week), any call for solidarity strike action by other NUTGW members would meet at best a mixed response.

In this situation the workforce at Lee Jeans has yielded to pressure and set up a committee to examine the possibility of establishing a cooperative.

There is no scope for the establishment of islands of "socialism" in the midst of a capitalist slump. At best a



Lee Jeans occupiers

cooperative would mean workers themselves deciding to inflict on themselves the kind of speed-up and redundancies that the employers are trying to enforce elsewhere.

Such a venture would be a disaster—wiping out many jobs immediately while still leading almost inevitably to a financial collapse along the lines of previous cooperatives.

Meanwhile the fight to tighten up the blacking of Vanity Fair products and establish a boycott of Lee Jeans by the labour movement is continuing.

### Extended

The campaign should be extended to force a halt to Lee Jeans advertising in cinemas and newspapers.

The Lee Jeans closure, like others in the textile industry, confirms that such jobs can only be saved if workers take a stand and fight to mobilise mass action aimed not simply at

individual employers but at the Tory government—drawing on the support of trade unionists in the supply and distributive industries.

### Halt production

The NUTGW, which faces near-extinction if a fight is not mounted in defence of jobs, must be made to take steps to halt production of V1 products in Ireland, or, if that fails, consider moves in conjunction with other unions to halt the distribution of all brands of jeans to retailers in Britain until such time as the entire Lee Jeans workforce is reinstated in the Greenock plant.

Donations and messages of support should be sent to Ellen Monaghan, 55 Cambridge Road, Greenock.

# Maxwell to talk to NUJ July 2?

It begins to look as if millionaire 'socialist' Robert Maxwell may at last be prepared to open talks with the NUJ over the four-month-old strike at Pergamon Press, Oxford.

He has written to NUJ General Secretary Ken Ashton proposing to meet both him and the union's President on July 2.

### Phone call

This development followed on a phone call between Ashton and one of Maxwell's right hand men—Sam Wright, personnel director of BPC (which Maxwell now owns).

Ashton pointed out that since Wright had just negotiated a house agreement with NUJ members at Maxwell's Exeter establishment, it might seem logical also to engage in talks over the nine NUJ members in Oxford, whom Maxwell sacked for taking part in a strike over pay and conditions.

It appears that Maxwell has responded to this, along with considerable other pressure to negotiate.

The National Executive of his own union ASTMS has told Clive Jenkins to press Maxwell to negotiate.

### "Any time"

A delegation from Maxwell's CLP which had been due to press the same point called off its visit on the basis that Maxwell assured them he was willing to meet NUJ officials "at any time".

And leaders of the print unions have for some time been committed to securing negotiations.

But the talks are still two weeks away, and plenty of manoeuvres can occur between now and then. The strikers, encouraged by the level of support and now by Maxwell's latest move, need moral and financial backing.

Messages and donations to the Pergamon Strike Committee, 5 Union Street, Oxford.

The Labour Party Women's Conference passed an Islington Central motion calling for a demonstration for a woman's right to work.

This was despite opposition from Marie Patterson of the TGWU. She tried to incite the trade union delegates against the motion—on the grounds that its suggestion that "nothing had been done" to highlight women's unemployment was an insult to the unions.

It was hard to fathom the real reason behind her opposition, other than fear of a repeat of the aggro between the TUC and feminists on the anti-Corrie demonstration.

The show of opposition from Marie Patterson (supported by Mel Read of ASTMS) was useful in showing that this demand won't be easy to win, and will be achieved not by lobbying sympathetic women in the bureaucracy but by gathering strong rank and file support for the demand that the demonstration be called.

### Resolutions

Islington Central women's section has resolved to keep up the campaign, and is writing to conference delegates asking them all to send resolutions to the NEC for action to be taken.



Jo Richardson

Apart from anything else, the resolution is a challenge to those who claim that the Women's Conference is not ignored by the Party leadership.

Women's Fightback held the biggest fringe meeting at the Labour Party's Womens Conference. It was attended by 150 women despite the fact that Tony Benn, who was to speak, was still in hospital.

The meeting was entitled 'Can Labour Lead Women Against the Tories?'

Elsie Broad, from the Royal Pride strike, told how she had come into conflict

with the boss she had worked for over the last 15 years, joined a union, gone on strike, joined the Peoples March, and become interested in socialist politics.

She recalled how Labour canvassers had come for her vote in the council elections, seen her Peoples March t-shirt and assumed she would be voting Labour.

"I told them—when I see the Labour Party down on our picket line, I'll consider whether I'm voting Labour".

### Anti-feminism

Other speakers were Barbara Switzer of TASS and Jo Richardson MP, who in the short time left both echoed Elsie's words.

"If Labour fails to lead women against the Tories", Barbara said, "it does not deserve to exist."

At the CLPD Women's Action Committee meeting that evening, Militant emerged as the standard-bearers of committed anti-feminism.

They argued against positive discrimination for women, and against all the changes that had been proposed to make the women's organisation more democratic, from the bone-headed standpoint of counterposing bread-and-butter struggles to a fight to understand and overcome our oppression as women.



Please send me more details about the Workers Socialist League.

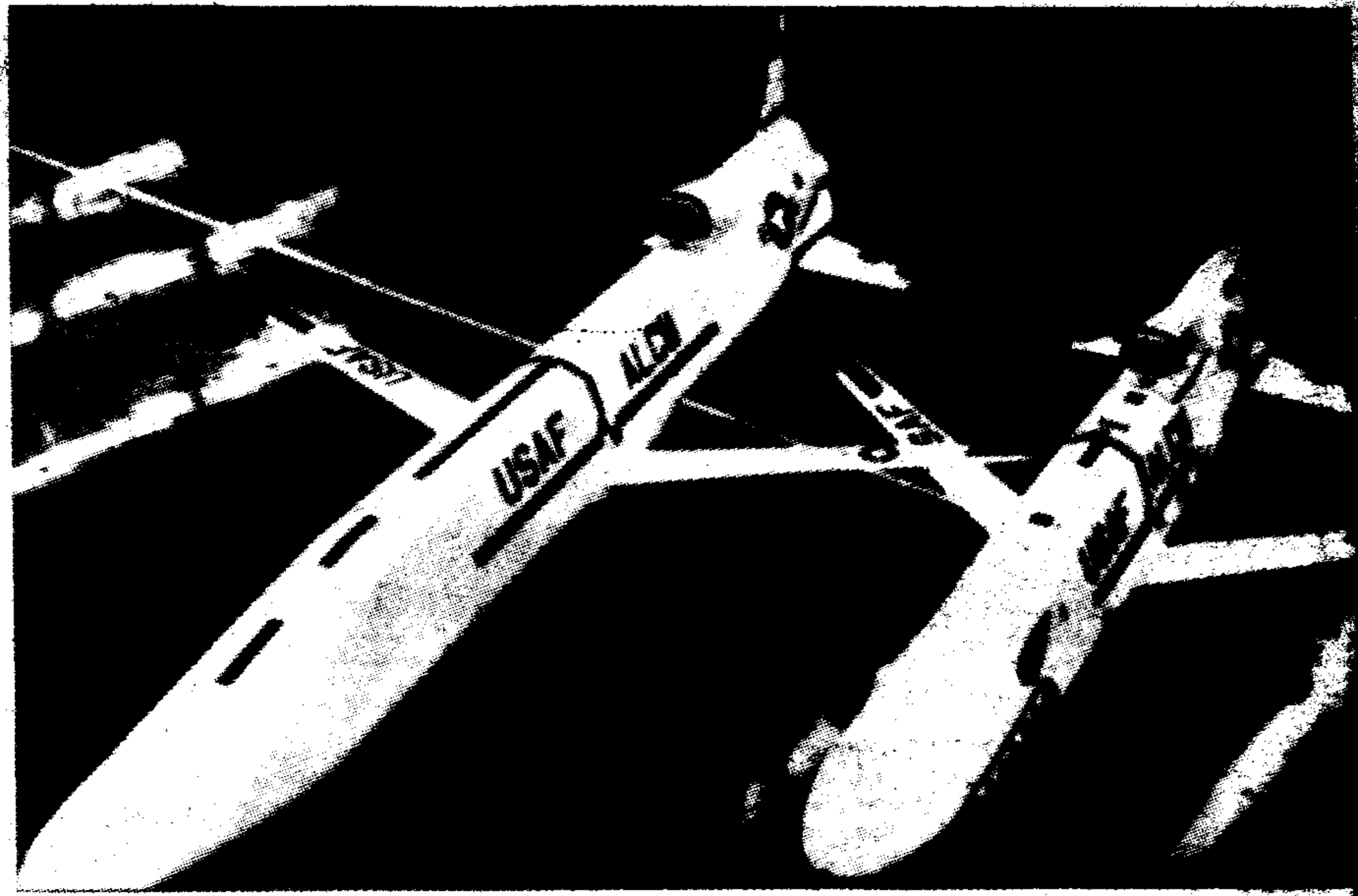
Name .....

Address .....

Send to WSL, BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX.



# SOCIALIST PRESS ★



**Dirty tricks at TGWU**

Resorting to skulduggery where they are not confident of winning support, the TGWU bureaucracy this week attempted to manoeuvre all discussion on Labour's deputy leadership off the agenda of the union's conference.

An Executive resolution on support for the Labour Party was withdrawn and submitted for compositing in order to ensure that an amendment pledging the union's votes to Tony Benn would not be debated.

And three emergency resolutions supporting Benn were ruled out of order by the Standing Orders Committee.

The only hope of obtaining a discussion on the issue as we go to press hangs on the ability of Broad Left supporters later this week to successfully defeat the platform and secure a reference back of the Standing Orders Committee's proposed agenda.

Monday also saw a lobby of Rover carworkers fighting the closure of their Solihull plant.

Asked by Cowley delegate Alan Thornett to say whether the TGWU would give official backing to these workers if they occupied the factory, automotive negotiator Grenville Hawley declared:

"I doubt if that support would be refused."

# WHOSE FINGER ON THE U.S. NUCLEAR BUTTON?

We could all be much closer to a sudden nuclear war than anybody believed.

Alarming new evidence that the captains and crews of the United States' 42 nuclear submarines have the power to unleash a nuclear strike on the USSR without reference to Washington was revealed last week.

A leading US admiral blurted out this disturbing fact to a CBS news team compiling a 5-part documentary on 'The Defence of the United States'. The documentary has been showing each night last week.

It will add to the gloom of those already horrified at the prospect of Ronald Reagan and Al Haig taking charge in the White House—and shake the nerve of many who glibly dismissed the danger of a war.

The fact is that the submarines are often out of direct contact with the Pentagon and the White House. For this reason they are not dependent upon any coded signals or security "keys" for the ability to fire their missiles at Soviet targets.

## "Integrity"

The only reassurance the US war chiefs could offer was to insist that a submarine commander alone could not as an individual

successfully fire his lethal volley of missiles.

He would need the cooperation of the submarine crew in implementing the launching procedure and activating the warheads!

The ultimate safeguard, viewers were told, is the "integrity of the crew". This will be small comfort to the tens of millions of workers in the USA, Europe and the deformed workers' states who could find themselves plunged into armageddon by a "rogue" submarine crew armed to the teeth with Polaris and Poseidon missiles.

## Illusion

Nor was there much consolation for anyone cherishing the illusion that adequate shelters will enable

them to survive such a holocaust.

The same CBS documentary examined the probable effect on Omaha Nebraska (next door to the US Strategic Air Command) of a 15 megaton nuclear strike.

## "Dry-roast"

A crater three-quarters of a mile across would be opened up, while the fireball would "dry-roast" even those people in deep shelters, the programme revealed.

Two million people in the vicinity would be dead within a fortnight.

So one crazed or malevolent US submarine commander and crew—acting alone—could trigger off a conflict in which tens of millions would die across

three continents.

Margaret Thatcher is insistent that British imperialism, too, should possess the same "Dr Strangelove" capacity for instant and arbitrary slaughter.

In excess of £5 billion is to be spent purchasing Trident submarines and missiles which, like their present day US sister ships, would be out of anyone's control.

Thatcher and Reagan must be stopped. That requires the building of a determined anti-war movement in the working class of Britain and the USA, committed to break up the anti-communist NATO alliance and forcing the unilateral disarmament of the imperialist warmongers.



## Mitterand wins

THE electoral landslide to Francois Mitterand's Socialist Party this weekend gives them a dominant position in the National Assembly.

SP votes together with those of the Communist Party and Mitterand's "left" bourgeois allies, the Radicals of the Left (MRG) will total some 325 out of a total of 479.

The representation of the old Gaullist RPR party has been nearly halved—from 155 to 82—while the UDF of former President Giscard d'Estaing tumbled from 119 seats to 63.

But the electoral victory out of the right by no means guarantees that Mitterand will implement his pledge. Only militant action by the French working class can force through the necessary socialist policies in France.

# Coventry: follow up anti-racist success

Some 4,000 young people from the Coventry area turned out last Saturday to a Gig Against Racism featuring The Specials and Hazel O'Connor.

The size of the crowd in the Butts Stadium was ample proof of the overwhelming rejection by young people of the recent spate of racist and fascist violence in the town.

## Stabbed

The previous week no less than five black youths had been stabbed by racist thugs. Rumours had been rife that the fascists had obtained tickets to the gig or were planning to stage a counter-demonstration elsewhere while it was on.

In the event a few isolated fascists were spotted hanging around on the fringes of the gig, and there were stories of two coachloads being seen on the edge of town: but the event passed off without major disruption, providing a major victory for the anti-racist

campaign. This success must be made the basis not of future complacency but of increased vigilance and a confident campaign within the local labour movement to mobilise defence squads capable of driving the fascists off the streets of Coventry.

# Swindon anti-racist march

The sharp increase in racism and fascist violence in many areas of the country has brought varying responses locally.

Typical of the problems facing those who attempt to mobilise anti-fascist forces along class lines and on a "no platform" programme have been events in Swindon over past weeks.

A month ago a West Indian youth was stabbed to

death in the town—the culmination of a campaign directed against the sizeable ethnic minority.

Set up to organise opposition was a body called the Swindon Community Action Committee, dominated by Bishops, Canons and vicars of varying degrees of reverence.

## Preaching

Giving it and its staunchly moralist and pacifist perspective credibility were the Communist Party and the right wing in the unions.

public activity since the decision was taken at a conference on June 6/7 to launch the new movement—leafletted the gig, to explain to those attending what the new movement stands for and what it is doing to support the anti-racist struggle in Coventry.

Apart from preaching (literally) about the evils of violence, the Committee held a 'March for Racial Peace' last Saturday.

## Strong points

Sensitive to the dangers of the post-march Rally being turned into an embarrassing challenge to their strategy (a Brixton speaker was planned) an undertaking was demanded that no speaker would criticise the police.

At the rally, though, some strong points were

made, notably by an IW militant and an unemployed West Indian youth.

The only speaker to raise the role of the cops in actively or passively defending fascists was from Oxford Trades Union Council.

The real hostility which exists against the police was confirmed by the enthusiastic response, particularly from the large numbers of black youth in attendance.

These youth must be the basis of a genuine anti-fascist movement to drive the Nazis out of Swindon.

# FUND

We're still not getting the response we desperately need if we are to make it to our fund target on time. Only £24.75 arrived towards our monthly fund target of £850 last week instead of the £200 we need every week if we are to achieve our target.

It is now getting very late. By the time this issue appears there will literally be only a few days to the end of the month.

Please do not leave it any longer. We are still £500 short of our target. Send us a donation without delay to:

Socialist Press Fund  
BM Box 5277, London WC1N 3XX