

Shirley 3

Vauxhall joins the fight Strike now for pay and 35 hours

UNION OFFICIALS representing Vauxhall workers have called for strike action to force the car firm to offer more than a 5% pay rise. This new strike call could extend the Ford workers' breach of the 5% limit into a complete demolition of the limit — and of any other attempt at pay curbs.

Ford have already offered 8% increase, with a promise of more if the unions agree to new speed-up measures. But the workers are still out for the full claim: £20 on the pay, an hour off the day.

The wage control swindle is running out of steam. Workers who said three years ago that the £6 limit was fair enough are now more and more convinced that the main function of pay curbs is to help profits at the expense of wages.

LIMITS

The exceptions made to the pay limits have underlined the point. Top civil servants, nationalised industry bosses, judges, and armed forces chiefs were given increases averaging over 30% under Phase 3; policemen were given 40%, while the Government went all out to keep the firemen within the 10% limit.

Managers could find ways round the pay limit more easily than workers could: during the year 1977, for example, managerial salaries increased by 30.6% before tax while overall earnings rose 10.2%. And trading profits have been rising about 30% a year.

Millions of workers know that Ford workers are spearheading the fight for us all against the 5%. This support was best shown by Motor Show workers' blacking of Ford.

If Vauxhall and other

groups of workers come out alongside Ford, the movement can gain such strength that it will win not only wage increases well over the 5% limit, but also the 35 hour week.

The key problem is still rank and file organisation. The vast majority of Ford workers are sitting at home, with no information on the progress of the strike and the negotiations except through the press and TV. Active involvement in the running of the strike is confined to the union officials, some of the stewards, and a tiny minority of militants. This is a recipe for helping the union officials to push through a sell-out just as soon as they are ready to do that.

And the active minority who are trying to organise things differently are getting attacked by the senior union representatives. In the Morning Star [17th October] Bernie Passingham and Vic Barnes, secretary and chairman of the Ford Convenors' Committee, attack "various organisations ... currently seeking financial support from trade union branches".

Their target is clearly the Ford UK Workers' Combine, a militant group which has — through the default of others — taken the lead in spreading support for the Ford workers' claim. What the strikers need is more activity like the Ford UK Workers' Combine's, multiplied a hundred-fold across the country!

DONATIONS to the official strike committee: J. Davies, secretary Official Dagenham Estate Strike Committee, 6 Stockdale Rd, Dagenham, Essex. For the Ford UK Workers' Combine: 25 Dearmer House, London SW2.

workers' ACTION

No.121

Oct.21-28, 1978

10p



TUC seeks a new deal

THE TRADES Union Congress rejected the 5% limit by an overwhelming majority. Union votes made sure that the Labour conference voted 2-1 against "any wage restraint, by whatever method".

So what do the TUC leaders do? They crawl up to the Government and try to fix up a new deal.

Len Murray and his friends are too nervous to actually suggest the new 'responsible' figure which the Government wants. With the Ford strike going on, they know they couldn't pull that one off. What they are saying is that the Government should 'give something in return' for a promise to be 'responsible'.

What are they asking the Government to give? Price controls, a promise to increase National Health Service

spending, and a promise to 'encourage' a 35 hour week.

But remember the Social Contract of 1974 which started off the present rounds of pay policy. That was a 'deal' where, in exchange for workers holding back on pay, the government said it would keep down prices and unemployment and maintain public services.

Instead, we got lower real wages, high unemployment, and severe cuts in health services, housing, and other social provision.

Price controls are a sham: not just because the Government doesn't want to apply them, but because they can't work anyway. Any capitalist economy, especially one like Britain which imports a lot, simply cannot control prices. Firms have always proved they can get round controls

if they want to.

Any promise from Callaghan to boost NHS spending wouldn't be worth a light. The big threat he used at the Labour conference was that if wages rose above 5% he would cut back even further on Government spending. It's a policy which the bosses and bankers are urging all the time, and they won't let up their pressure.

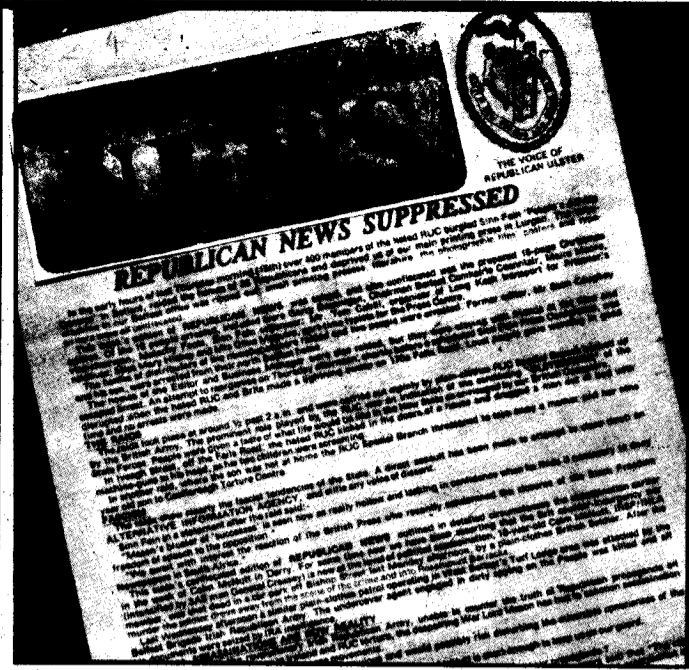
The bosses are dead set against the 35 hour week, too. It would cut into their profits, and Callaghan is not going to go against them on that. A promise for the future would be meaningless. Thousands of workers are already fighting for the 35 hour week now. The demand is in the Ford claim, the British Oxygen

continued
back page



INTERNATIONAL
ANTI-APARTHEID
YEAR 1978-9

DEMONSTRATE!
SAT. 21 OCTOBER
ASSEMBLE: 1.30PM SPEAKERS CORNER
MARCH TO TRAFALGAR SQUARE



Raids force paper to be written on the run



ON OCTOBER 10th, thousands joined a march in Derry to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Civil Rights march that heralded the start of the troubles in the north of Ireland.

That first march was one where the Catholic population of the North stood up and declared that it wasn't prepared to tolerate any longer being treated as second class citizens condemned to the worst housing and massive unemployment, and denied equal voting rights. The response to those simple demands was stoning by the Unionists and baton charges by the RUC.

Ten years on, that repression continues.

Concessions to the Catholic population have always unleashed violent opposition from the Unionists or the British state forces occupying the North East of Ireland. The British response has always been to appease the Unionists and maintain their allegiance by tightening the oppression of the Catholic population.

In the face of the repression (which utilised a massive deployment of British troops and SAS 'dirty tricks' experts, internment without trial, constant searches, harassment, arrests and brutality, and the use of stringent 'anti-terrorist' legislation) the resistance of the Catholic population stiffened. And instead of demanding civil rights in an Orange state, they took up again the old demand for full Irish nationhood. Defence forces sprang up in the ghettos, and the Provisional IRA gained mass support.

The war of the last ten years has continued unabated. Now the British state is turning to a new strategy. The savage attacks faced by the Civil Rights marchers have been replaced by methods of black propaganda to write off those fighting for Irish independence as criminals.

The latest campaign of the British occupation forces is directed against Provisional Sinn Fein's

Belfast paper *Republican News*: which in itself shows that political repression and not 'anti-terror' is the name of their game.

First moves against the paper were British Army raids on the paper's Falls Road office, often timed for the day before the paper's weekly publication to cause maximum disruption.

Dawn raids on contributors followed. Then newsagents and local distributors of *Republican News* found themselves charged with terrorist-type offences — against which it is virtually impossible to defend oneself in the no-jury courts.

The manager of the paper, its printer and various other people were then arrested and charged with IRA membership — though the printer was actually a well-known SDLP member. After that, the printer refused to handle any more Sinn Fein posters.

Republican News now often has to be put together and pasted up 'on the run', as army units conduct regular searches of

supporters' homes.

Thus *Republican News* has virtually been driven underground — and it has all been achieved without any adverse publicity about the suppression of press freedom.

Similar tactics have been used to force many Sinn Fein groups underground. The pressures put on families by RUC raids and frame-ups have driven many supporters out of political activity — as one Republican militant put it "The RUC are intent on poisoning the water in which the guerrillas swim. They're aiming for a separation of the Republican movement from the people of the ghettos."

The direct but not very visible political repression practised by the British Army and the RUC must be publicised in the labour movement in Britain. All too often still, British workers hold the naive idea that the Army are 'keeping the peace' in the north. The case of *Republican News* should dispel that one, and lend

weight to the demand: troops out of Ireland! Let the Irish people as a whole determine their own future!

★★★
Demonstrators calling for 'Troops Out of Ireland', Self-determination for the Irish people and support for Irish prisoners of war, got a good response on October 14th from the Irish community in Kilburn and Cricklewood.

Though small, the demonstration had contingents from Provisional Sinn Fein, the Irish Republican Socialist Party, United Troops Out Movement, Brent East Labour Party, and a number of socialist groups.

The demonstration finished off with a street meeting in Kilburn where Ken Livingstone, Labour parliamentary candidate for the constituency, called on party supporters to take up the question of Ireland and oppose the Government's role in propping up the Orange Six-County state.

PF

CHOICE OF TWO TORIES — RIGHT-WING AND YET MORE RIGHT-WING

THE TORY PARTY conference at Brighton should have put paid to the myth of the Tory Left.

Edward Heath, who is strangely labelled as the leader of moderate resistance to right-wing Thatcherism, came out more decisively than ever before against the present Conservative Party leadership. His chosen issue was not Margaret Thatcher's racist outcry against black immigrants, nor her attempts at an alliance with the Loyalist bigots in Northern Ireland, nor the Tory plans to sell off council housing on a large scale.

He decided to make his stand against Thatcher and Joseph by proclaiming support for the 5% pay limit.

The clash within the Tory party arises from their efforts to define a new policy after their humiliating defeat in 1974. From 1965 (when Heath took over the Tory leadership) to 1972, the Tories preached a policy very similar to the present Thatcher line: more free-market capitalist competition, less state spending, no aid for lame ducks, no state wage controls.

In 1972 the miners' victory and the Rolls Royce collapse forced the Tories to reverse that policy. The state propped up Rolls Royce. State spending started to rise again. Pay curbs were brought in.

Almost everyone in the Tory Party is convinced that the

Industrial Relations Act was a disaster. Apart from that, Heath thinks that the policies of 1972-74 were right... while Thatcher and Joseph think that the policies of 1965-72 were right.

Joseph, especially, argues that a Tory government needs a more hard-faced approach, so that it can continue to steer its course unmoved by companies collapsing, unemployment rising, and workers rebelling. He tries to provide the necessary stiffening by boosting the traditional right-wing values of free enterprise, the survival of the fittest, big rewards and harsh punishments.

This message makes some sense for people like George Ward (who figured at a Tory con-

ference fringe meeting) and the recently-sacked Mecca boss Eric Morley, who condemned the Confederation of British Industry as "faceless wonders". But, as the big-business journal *The Economist* has pointed out, "a huge swathe of big business in fact finds some of Mrs. Thatcher's and Sir Keith Joseph's pronouncements on wage bargaining increasingly chilling."

The leading capitalists generally support incomes policies. They work — or at least, they have worked, up to the present 5% limit. Even the Tories' phase 3 survived the 1974 miners' strike in sufficiently good shape to be used successfully against the engineers' 1974 pay claim.

To increase profits — and that is their constantly-reaffirmed aim — the Tories will have to push down wages. To cut state spending, they will have to limit wages in the state sector. The Thatcher-Joseph policy means worker-bashing just as surely as the Heath policy. It means picking out crucial groups of workers and trying to defeat them in open battle, as Heath did with the power workers, the post office workers, and the miners in 1971-2.

From the capitalist point of view, the Thatcher/Joseph alternative has the advantage of avoiding the accumulation of anomalies which is inevitable under incomes policy, and allowing exceptionally profitable firms to dodge trouble by paying over the odds. But it is a more risky policy than wage controls which have the authority of the law and some appearance of fairness.

Heath's challenge represents the voice of big business caution. It only appears to be 'left' because it is close to the policy pursued by the Labour Government since 1974. For that same reason, it is a minority voice within the Tory Party: the Tories cannot hope to win the election by putting forward policies which the Labour Government has administered more successfully than the Tories ever managed.

Nevertheless, once in power the Tories could turn out to be much more 'Heathite' than 'Josephite'.

The splits in the Tory party testify to the strength of the working class and the weight of the blow dealt to the Tories by the struggles of 1972-74. The real lesson for socialists, however, lies in the fact that Heath has been able to appear 'left-wing' because the Labour Government has been so right-wing. The power which battered the Tories in 1974 was not sufficiently well-armed politically to stop the Labour leaders enforcing a re-run of one version of Tory policy.

Don't join the holy war against inflation

CALLAGHAN, the TUC leaders, and *Tribune* have invented a new kind of double talk.

When the Labour conference voted against wage restraint, Callaghan said it was a call to 'find a new way to curb inflation'. When the TUC conference voted down the 5% limit, the TUC leaders said it meant a 'more flexible policy'.

When *Tribune* reported the Labour conference resolution rejecting all wage controls until there is a 'planned socialist economy', they interpreted it as meaning wage controls are OK if there is reflation, import controls, and an expansion of the National Enterprise Board.

Working-class demands are translated into the language of "efforts to solve the country's economic problems" — and then into calls on the working class to make sacrifices to help those efforts! At best: 'more flexible' sacrifices.

The 'battle against inflation' is the ideal banner for a would-be united crusade of all classes against shared economic difficulties. It appears that inflation is

an enemy equally dreaded by all classes. The multi-millionaire in his penthouse suite resents it just as much as the worker on the car assembly line or the old age pensioner in the basement flat.

Yet, as with every other battle for the 'national interest', the burden of the struggle is by no means borne equally by all classes. When the economists examine inflation, they declare that its causes are wage increases and government spending. The remedy: fixed ceilings on wage increases, cuts in social services. The result: inflation continues, but the working class is worse off and the multi-millionaires reap bigger profits!

There is a partial connection between wages and inflation. Under conditions of stagnant capitalism, the state is bound to respond to wage increases with inflationary policies, on pain of provoking a serious slump.

But smaller wage increases do not guarantee less inflation: increased paper money supply, expanded public and private credit, and world market influ-

ences can still lead to soaring prices. And, once capitalism has lurched into stagnation and crisis, there is little to choose between 'deflationary' and 'inflationary' policies: they are just two different ways of making the working class pay the price of the capitalist crisis.

Wage controls *may* (and may not) allow the capitalist state to slow down inflation. They certainly allow the capitalist state to boost profits at the expense of wages.

Divide

Capitalists and workers both see inflation as a problem. But the problem looks quite different from different sides of the class divide.

Inflation is a problem for the working class if prices outstrip wages and living standards fall. 'Inflationary' (i.e. big) wage increases are a problem for the bosses if wages outstrip prices and profits fall. High inflation is also a problem for them if it means a more unstable system.

The bosses have favoured mild inflation which keeps profits up, allows markets to remain buoyant, and lets wages get eroded between settlements. Callaghan sees his job as keeping inflation down and making British industry profitable.

For the working class, there is a different answer: we should demand agreements guaranteeing that wages, pensions and grants and other benefits are increased automatically to keep pace with inflation.

That answer does not figure in the TUC's plans. Instead they are pressing for price controls. This policy has an appearance of being fair to all classes, and the bosses' federation, the CBI, opposes it.

But at the end of the day these price controls would be a sham. Outside the situation of a war economy — with overseas trade cut to a minimum, massive state intervention, rationing, and rigid controls on trade union action — there is no hope of controlling prices under capitalism.

The market system which is at the core of capitalism works through millions of daily, often

small, buying and selling operations, many of them protected by business secrecy. The Government cannot and will not act against that market system. It could never monitor, much less control, the thousands of manoeuvres to evade the price limits. There is no way that, faced with a major firm declaring that it had to break the controls in order to get viable profits, the Government would act decisively against that firm.

For the *Morning Star* the 'battle' to control prices is a "good start", "for it is an immediate and direct way of intervening against inflation". This view leads them straight into the web of wheeling and dealing and illusory attempts to steer the capitalist economy in the 'right' direction.

A planned socialist economy could control inflation; even the bureaucratic planned economies like the USSR can do that. But the holy war against inflation, under capitalism, is just a way to get workers to sink our interests in another 'national unity' swindle.



GAY-BAITING IS OK, SAYS PRESS COUNCIL

The Press Council has decreed that gay-baiting is acceptable journalistic practice in Britain.

Recently it rejected a complaint from the lesbian organisation Sappho about the sensational front-page 'exposure' in the *Evening News* earlier this year of lesbian mothers who had conceived through artificial insemination.

The *Evening News* blew it up as an "extraordinary and disturbing case", implying that any woman who wanted a child, but not directly by a man, must be a dangerous freak. They treated the matter as a piece of juicy gossip, with absolutely no regard to the feelings of the women or the children involved. And they used subterfuge in sending along reporters who claimed to be lesbians wanting artificial insemination for themselves.

Yet the Press Council rejected Sappho's complaint, saying

the *Evening News*'s methods were legitimate "in cases involving the public interest or the exposure of crime... the invasion of privacy by deception can only be justified when it is in pursuit of information which ought to be published in the public interest."

LESBIAN

The 'public interest' angle pushed at the time was that children brought up in a lesbian household would be harmed by the lack of a father figure. Yet one in ten of all families have no father. There is no outcry about all those single mothers. On the contrary: about 45% of them are living on supplementary benefit, and the *Evening News* has published no front-page "exposure" about that "disturbing fact".

The difference is that those

women are supposed to be without a man through misfortune rather than through choice. Those 'hard luck' cases are no threat to the upholders of the Family, Law & Order, and the importance of the Father Figure.

Equally, the millions of lesbians — and, statistically, there must be millions of them — who are forced by social pressures into marrying, hiding their lesbianism, becoming the reluctant instrument for a man's sexual pleasure, and having children in those circumstances, cause no outcry or front-page exposures.

The lesbian mothers were obviously considered a "disturbing case", needing to be exposed 'in the public interest', for no other reason than that they challenged the norm of the dominant male as lord and king of the family household.

CLARE RUSSELL

Money privilege replaces white skin privilege

LAST WEEK the Rhodesian transitional Government of Smith, Muzorewa, Sithole and Chirau announced plans for ending official racial discrimination.

Schools, hospitals and residential areas previously open to whites only are to be opened to "people of all races" — as long as they can pay what it costs.

These plans are to be implemented around December or January after approval by the November sitting of Parliament.

The proposals are the least that Smith could have done in response to the pressure of the US and Britain, and the growing power of the Patriotic Front — which is now estimated to control nearly half of Zimbabwe.

Although designed to meet black aspirations, the reforms are careful to allay the fears of the lower echelons of the white settler class. Thus racial segregation will be 'replaced' by segregation according to the 'ability to pay'. And the average white income is *eleven times* the average for blacks.

There will be a three-tier education system. Existing state-run white schools would become high fee-paying schools; black schools in urban areas would have very much lower fees; and schools in the "tribal lands" would be non-fee paying.

In addition, private schools would continue to operate as at present, and there is ample provision for 'community schools which will have the right to maintain cultural or religious identities'.

The health service will keep its present structure, but whites-only

hospitals will be open to blacks. As with education, the 'right' to use these services means little to those who cannot afford them. These proposals will only affect the tiny black petty-bourgeoisie which is so necessary to the plans of Smith, the USA and Britain for a "compromise solution".

The Land Tenure Act of 1969, by which 45 million acres are allocated to 270,000 whites and 39.9 million acres are allocated to 6,340,000 blacks, is to be effectively junked by a series of legislative moves.

All races

Already early in 1977, white farming land was declared non-racial, leaving only white urban land and the tribal lands subject to the legislation. Now it is proposed that white urban land will be open to all races, with the proviso that to "maintain standards" only one family is allowed to occupy one property.

This, too, only formalises what has happened already under the pressure of the war, as blacks with the necessary cash have moved into properties in white urban residential areas.

Of course the new legislation does nothing to restore to the blacks the land that was taken from them: they have to buy it back.

Whether or not these small concessions are enough to entice members of the Patriotic Front from their war to take back Zimbabwe rather than buy it back, remains to be seen.

TURNING A BLIND EYE TO IRAN'S TORTURE CHAMBERS

DAVID OWEN and Jimmy Carter claim to be champions of 'human rights'. When it comes to protesting against the outrages committed by the governments of the Soviet Union and its satellites, glib phrases about democracy and freedom tumble tirelessly from their lips. But when it comes to Iran... Last year's Labour Party confer-

ence did not discuss a motion on Iran submitted by Wolverhampton South West; but some time later the Party's International Department wrote to David Owen, the Foreign Secretary, informing him of the resolution.

"This Conference" ran the resolution "deplores the British Government's policy of encouraging the

export of arms to Iran, a country with an international reputation for ruthless political repression and torture, whose despotic leader undermined a democratically elected government in 1951 with the help of the Central Intelligence Agency. It therefore calls upon the Government to reconsider this policy."

Owen's reply, which we reproduce on this page, is arrogant, lying, cynical — and of course completely uncaring about 'human rights'.

He makes three points:

1. That the Shah's authority has deep historic roots and is widely accepted in Iran.
2. That the government of

Muhammad Mossadeq was dictatorial — indeed more so than the Shah's regime.

3. That Iran's close economic and political ties with Britain are a good thing and are enough reason for accepting Iran's internal regime.

Owen well knows that the 'authority of the Shah' is not at all rooted in the depths of Persian history. On the contrary his father, Muhammad Reza Khan, came to power only in the early twenties — with the help of the British. General Ironside noted in his diary when he heard of Reza Khan's coup. "So far so good... I fancy that all the people think that I engineered the

INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT
ID/1977-78/111

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London SW1A 2AH
7 February 1978

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL
LABOUR PARTY

Thank you for your letter of 11 January asking for my comments on a resolution about Iran remitted via the Standing Orders Committee of the Party.

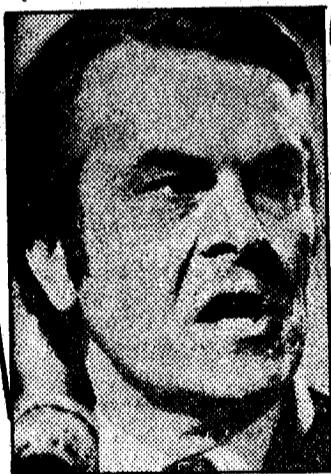
The resolution is based on a questionable premise. It seems to me a gross exaggeration to say that Iran has an international reputation for "ruthless political repression and torture". If I may quote myself, answering a question on this subject in a television interview last November, "I think you have to look at the culture, the tradition, the history, the whole business of the authority of the Shah in its origins in Persian history, if you are going to really take a balanced view". In so far as the description in the resolution has ever been applicable to Iran in modern times, it was more true of the dictatorial regime of Dr Mossadeq which was overthrown following the uprising in 1953 (not 1951).

However that may be, Britain's relations with Iran are conducted today on the basis that the two countries share a wide range of common interests and responsibilities. Iran plays a key role in promoting security and stability in the Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean area which is of vital importance to Western oil supplies and to our trade. In this connection Britain has certain obligations to Iran as an ally in the Central Treaty Organisation, which we regard as an important force for stability in the Middle East. In recent weeks the Iranian Government have taken up a moderate and statesmanlike attitude on a number of current issues of major concern to us, including the price of oil, Rhodesia and other African questions and the Middle East problem.

Although the above comments do not apply to Britain alone, Iran's importance to us may be judged by the facts that in 1977 she took over £650 million of British exports and supplied over a quarter of our crude oil imports. Thousands of jobs in this country are attributable to contracts in Iran.

None of this affects the deep concern I feel and have expressed about the human rights issue in Iran and elsewhere. I have discussed it with the Iranian Government at the highest level, and I believe that there have been certain, if limited, improvements in this field over the past year.

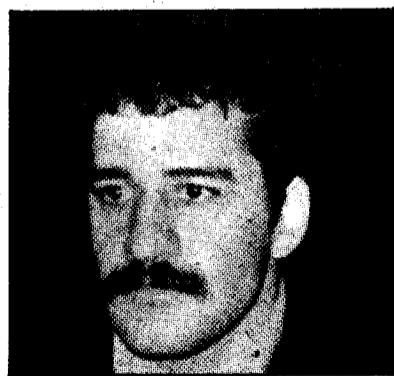
All these factors are taken into account in reaching decisions about the provision of defence equipment, which is the subject of the resolution. I do not believe that the policy advocated in the resolution would promote Britain's best interests as I have described them or would further the extension of human rights in Iran.



(DAVID OWEN)



This is what David Owen is defending in your name



MOHAMAD MONIRZAD entered Ahvaz University in 1972 as a medical student. After a year he decided to leave university and go to Palestine in order to join Iranian militants active in the Palestinian movement. He was arrested crossing the border into Iraq.

"I was surrounded by SAVAK thugs: they kept kicking and punching me, and calling me all sorts of insulting names. My face was covered in blood. I had become their football.

They fastened my legs to a bed and started whipping me in turn. When my feet were swollen, they made me run around while they whipped me on my body. When I stopped running

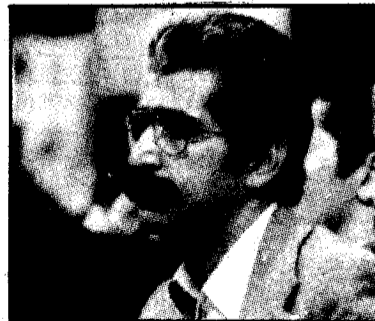
they grabbed my hair and plunged my head into a pool until I had almost drowned. They tortured me until midnight, each of them trying to find new methods. I had become like a lump of meat covered in blood under their feet. ... The next day they could not whip me on my feet because they were bleeding. So they tied me on the bed and started whipping me on the back.

The next day, at Komiteh prison in Tehran, "They used an electric probe on my face, eyes and testicles. ... They held me in solitary at Komiteh and Evin prisons for five months and tortured me several times. Then they sent me to Qasr to serve my three year sentence."

SAEED SOLTANPOUR is a well-known poet and theatre director. In 1972 he was arrested while preparing to stage a performance of Brecht's 'The Dreams of Simon Moshar'. He was held for 45 days by SAVAK.

A month after he was released he staged the play in Tehran University, until the hall was closed down by SAVAK.

In 1974 he was arrested again



and held in Komiteh for seven months. When he arrived there "I could see the torture room through a small window. The bed was in the corner. They always had someone tied to it. I had seen swollen hands covered in blood, muscles torn to shreds, large mosaic-like patterns of blood, walls covered with whips, cables and tongs, the electric stove, the leather stool and the primus stove.

It was my turn. After a savage beating he lost consciousness. When he came to he was dragged into the corridor where he caught sight of an old friend: "I saw his face. It was as if I was seeing him in a distorting mirror. His face looked half a meter long. His legs were even more strange, all swollen and bloody, like two pillows

covered in blood. Less than a week later my feet became infected. The awful pain and fever began. I was writing in pain in my cell for four days before they eventually took me to the police hospital.

A cold-faced major came in. His lips moved "the anaesthetist isn't in. Do you want me to extract the pus like this?" They took me into the operating theatre in a wheelchair. The doctor took a large syringe and extracted the pus three times with a thick needle and emptied it into a basin. The next day they anaesthetised me. On the following morning they took off the bandages and I saw that the sole of my feet had gone. There was a bloody hole on the sole of my feet; out of which they pulled several meters of gauze."

HOSSEIN TAVAKOLI is a victim of SAVAK activities in Britain. He was a student at Bradford University, and now serving a two-year sentence in Iran for alleged political activities against the Shah's regime while studying at Bradford.

Tavakoli is not the first Iranian student from Britain to

oup d'etat. I suppose I did, strictly speaking."

The massive demonstrations that have rocked Iran throughout this year are ample evidence that what David Owen calls "the authority of the Shah" is certainly not widely accepted.

The statement about the Mossadeq premiership is even more outrageous. Whatever the faults of that regime, in its two years in power (1951-53) it was the only Iranian government ever to institute elections. That's how dictatorial it was!

But Owen's hatred for all that Mossadeq stood for is not surprising. He follows perfectly in that line of Labour leaders which administered the plunder of Iran's oil wealth through the Anglo-Iranian oil company — until Mossadeq said No.

Mossadeq's plan to nationalise the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company drew a typical response from British imperialism. In March 1951 Attlee's Labour Government rejected the terms of the proposed nationalisation; and it was Labour Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison who ordered a gun-boat to blockade the Abadan oil terminal and who instigated a world-wide oil blockade of Iran in an effort to bring the Mossadeq government to its knees.

When the Tories took over they asked the US to get rid of Mossadeq. The US obliged ... but only when it could see a way of exploiting the situation to its advantage. In 1953 the Shah, backed by the CIA, deposed Mossadeq; in 1954 the Iranian government came to a new arrangement on oil production: there would be a National Iranian Oil Company owned by the Iranian state, but this would lease operations to a consortium of British, French, Dutch and US companies in which the US companies would get over a quarter share.

In recent years, the arms connection has come to rival the oil connection. And when a British-made tank mows down demonstrators in Tehran or Tabriz, we see David Owen applauding the achievements of British salesmanship.

And then there are the political lies he mentions. For example in the Gulf States: it was mainly Iranian troops that took over from British troops in Oman, where they were backing up the reactionary Qaboos regime in its war against the Dhofari liberation forces. Another is Iran's role in the Horn of Africa. And Iran acts as a rocket base directed against the USSR.

On account of this, says Owen, "Britain has certain obligations to Iran". Yes, the British ruling class has a big debt to the Shah. No-one can deny it. But the British working class should only have hatred for this brute. Our obligations are to the workers and peasants of Iran — people whose poverty has put a few crumbs on our tables whether we like it or not.

be arrested on returning to Iran. Sadegh Zibakalam was also jailed for two years on returning from Bradford University in 1974. Javad Sanamrad is another Bradford student to be jailed on his return to Iran.

Clearly, SAVAK agents are busy in Bradford.

What Iran's opposition wants

THE BRITISH PRESS tells us that the opposition to the Shah is based on religious bigotry and a reactionary backlash against the 'modernisation' of Iran.

The fact is that the demands of the mass demonstrations have not been the slogans of religious bigotry, but the release of political prisoners, the end of martial law, and the overthrow of the Shah. As the Iranian workers get organised and take the lead in the movement against the dictatorship, socialist ideas will gain strength and push aside clerical influence.

Even now, the most popular Muslim leaders base their appeal to the Iranian people not on religious ties, but on a courageous opposition to the Shah and a programme of democratic reforms.

In this interview [from *Le Monde*] the ayatollah Khomeini, the foremost leader of the Muslim opposition, outlines his ideas.

■ ■ You often speak of 'Islamic government' for Iran. What do you mean by that? ...

□ □ ... As the first step, our objective is to make the country independent and to eliminate foreign domination, as well as the forces in the pay of foreigners... After that, we would have to devote all the resources of our country to the improvement of the condition of our people, of the working people who today are

oppressed and maintained in poverty and disease.

The second stage will be the complete purging of traitors, of corrupt people, and of profiteers from the ministries, from the administration, and from public concerns. Responsibilities must be handed over to capable, honest and patriotic people...

It is indispensable that the Pahlavi dynasty should be eliminated. In fact no reform is possible with this dynasty and its servants.

□ □ What other economic reforms are you thinking about?

□ □ The peasantry will be restored to a central place, while under the 'white revolution' of the Shah and the United States their position has been destroyed...

□ □ What do you think about the rumours that the Shah will quit and his son will take over?

□ □ Our opinion on this question is the same as the whole Iranian people's: no satisfactory solution to the problem of Iranian politics is possible without the disappearance of the Pahlavi dynasty, both the Shah and his descendants.

□ □ President Carter sets himself up as the champion of human rights. How do you explain the fact that he supported the Shah after the 'Black Friday' massacre on 8th September?

□ □ Over recent months there have been massacres in all the

towns of Iran. There were several thousand dead at the latest demonstrations in Teheran, in September. Some people have said there were ten thousand dead, and Mr Carter, who does not hesitate to give vigorous support to this or that prisoner in the Soviet Union, backed the Shah completely through all these massacres.

It is the same with the government of People's China. Its president, despite this violence, paid a cordial visit to the Shah, though he did not dare to travel the streets of Teheran. The Kremlin bosses have the same attitude.

□ □ Shi'ism is often presented as being backward-looking and hostile to progress. As proof are cited the status of women, the wearing of the veil, and the attacks on banks and cinemas. What is your view?

□ □ It is the Shah who... to divert the youth from the essential problems of the country, is encouraging certain dirty and corrupting cinema programmes...

It is the same issue with banks, which are factors of usury and speculation in the destruction of our economy. It is for that reason that people set fire to these instruments of impoverishment and economic decay, although the clerics have never called for this...

The participation of women of

all sections of society in the recent demonstrations, which we call 'the referendum of the street', demonstrates the falsity of the allegations [about attitudes to women]. The women were alongside the men in the struggle to demand their independence and their liberty.

■ ■ What relations do you want to establish between Iran and the western countries...?

□ □ ... In my opinion, the maintenance of prosperity in the West cannot be accomplished at the price of the impoverishment of the rest of humanity. We ask all the great free nations to help us to liberate ourselves from those who only want to get profits by pillaging our resources.

■ ■ If the Shah holds to his promise of 'free elections', which candidates will you support?

□ □ If the Shah were willing to accept the principle of free elections, he would already have conceded to the popular will indicated in the great mass demonstrations in Teheran and in all the major towns of the country.

David Owen's letter, reports on SAVAK [left], and extract from Gholam-Hossein Sa'edi [below], from the Bulletin of the Campaign against Repression in Iran [Box 4, Rising Free, 182 Upper Street, London N1].



Marital law was declared at 6am that morning. In spite of it huge numbers of people gathered early in the morning in the main square. Some hadn't heard of the declaration, others were defying it. Twice the troops ordered them to disperse. The people stayed where they were.

Then came the order to shoot to kill. But the front lines were made up of women, and the soldiers refused to shoot them. One soldier shot his commander, then turned the gun on himself.

The soldiers could not get past the barricades. So they shot us from a fleet of helicopters. Hundreds fell dead and wounded on the street...

By 11am there were queues of people outside the hospitals. They had come to donate blood for the wounded.

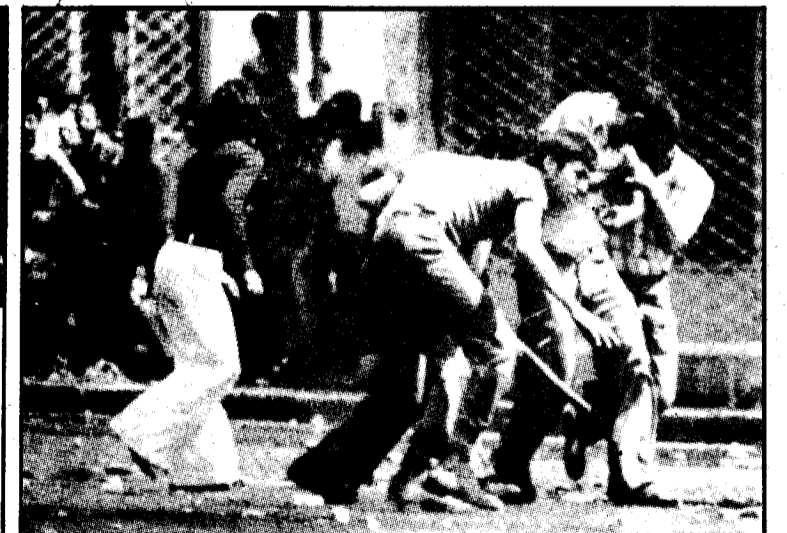
Suddenly an ambulance raced up to the hospital. The doors burst open

and SAVAK agents jumped out. They turned their guns on the queues of blood donors and shot them. They stormed into the hospital and beat up the people inside, seized the blood bottles, threw them out on the street, and then forced people to leave the hospital...

By 5pm on Black Friday the shooting had stopped. People came out of their houses and started queuing outside the bakeries. They were queuing to buy bread, that's all, but the soldiers came and shot at them too. The bakeries were forced to close and thousands went hungry that night.

When the shooting was finally over, the troops brought in fire engines to wash the blood from the streets.

An eye-witness account of 'Black Friday', September 8th: from "Women's Voice".



Optimism comes by decree

In Iran you cannot write a play in which a tailor, a taxi-driver, a government employee, or someone from any guild or profession would be portrayed negatively. That is because the ruling establishment considers optimism and hopefulness towards the status quo as a way to achieve conciliation between the people and the government.

No-one has the right to criticise anyone, or to violate rules set by authorities, except the establishment itself which constantly violates everybody's rights and considers this violation its inalienable privilege.

All expressions of courage are doomed, because there may be those who think that someone else besides the government has permission to have courage...

How is one to express this or that subject, and, with the assistance of what words? Most words must be suppressed automatically, not because they are ugly, filthy and de-

formed, but because they might be associated with an historical issue or event, or with a familiar face. What remains when words are suppressed?

Censor

When the government wants the word 'cheese' to be thrown out of public memory, it simply sends out an order that the word 'cheese' should never appear in print. Then what can the writer use in lieu of 'cheese'? 'Butter'? 'Brick'? 'Cement'? 'Yoghurt'? However, these substitute words themselves might become 'censor words' too.

The polycentric apparatus of censorship, however, tries to appear clever. It destroys on the one hand and creates on the other. It forbids the free thinking of individuals and makes its own thinking prevail instead. It suppresses genuine works of culture and creates an artificial

and irrelevant 'national' culture.

Thus the government orders artificial books, artificial films, artificial theatrical productions and artificial art exhibits. Meanwhile, it is constantly engaged in the creation of festivals: the Art Festival of Shiraz, the Festival of the Ministry of Culture and Art, the Toos Festival, the Festival of Fold Culture.

Feasts

All these festivals take place behind closed doors. In other words, the actual inhabitants of the country are not allowed into these festivals, and if allowed, they refuse to participate in them. The guests and clientele of all these festivals are invariably a special limited group of people, who travel from one festival to another, or from one art exhibit to another. The expenses of these festivals are prodigious. With the money

spent annually on such festivals, hundreds of irrigation canals could be cleared up, hundreds of villages reconstructed, and unused waste lands could be fertilised to provide bread and food for masses of starving people...

There are also humiliating celebrations and commemorations held in honour of past literary and scientific figures with invitations extended to well-known or unknown foreign Iranologists and rotten domestic litterateurs who deliver their lectures and attend glorious feasts.

Fraud

But all these manoeuvres and devices cannot disguise the effects of censorship. In the eyes of the people of Iran, this official pretension to love culture and promote art is a fraud.

Gholam-Hossein Sa'edi

IDA HADJEBI-TABRIZI is one of Iran's 4,000 women political prisoners. She has been in jail since 1972 serving a seven-year sentence for 'anti-state activities'.

Social workers strike for local agreements



SOCIAL WORKERS in three areas, Newcastle, Southwark and Tower Hamlets, have been on strike since August. Now their comrades in Lewisham have voted to join them on strike.

BOB SUGDEN spoke to **WILL FANCY**, a member of the Lewisham branch executive of the local government union Nalگو, a supporter of the militant Nalگو Action Group, and a former member of Nalگو's National Executive Committee.

The social workers are striking over the point blank refusal of the employers to negotiate on a local basis on grading questions for basic grade social workers.

Local government has a national system of salary scales — but the application of grades to a particular job is usually settled locally.

Only a few groups of local government workers are tied to a national fixed grading: they include social workers, residential child care staff, nursery nurses and staff, and, less rigidly, telephonists and typists. All these groups are among the lowest paid.

While other groups can get pay rises through local negotiations over grading, social workers are tied to the national Whitley Council machinery. They have been falling behind. The Nalگو national confer-

ence in June 1977 agreed to press for local negotiations. The Local Government group meeting repeated this policy in 1978 and censured the Local Government committee for not doing enough to implement it.

Newcastle and Southwark came out on strike on August 13th — Tower Hamlets a week later. In Lewisham there was a one-day unofficial strike, which was subsequently made official, followed by a ban on writing court reports and dealing with councillors' enquiries. From 13th September, no new work was accepted, and on the 27th September there was a 2000-strong demonstration of social workers in central London. Official strikes started on 11th October.

At present, the picketing is affecting all departments. The Town Hall TGWU branch, the building unions and the UPW are refusing to cross picket lines, and Nalگو members are restricted to the buildings that they normally work in.

It is a lesson learnt from the other boroughs out on strike — social workers have little strength without picketing!

Of course there are many exemptions — the people who receive social services are not the enemy!

Social workers are also discussing strike action in many other areas: Leeds, Bradford, Strathclyde, Rochdale, Sefton, Cheshire, Brent and Greenwich as well as five other branches in Tyne and Wear.

For strike action, the local Nalگو branch as a whole has to vote support. After that the case is submitted to the national Emergency Committee, and only then can the members affected by balloted for strike action.

The Nalگو leadership nationally has gone along with the action very reluctantly. Nalگو, was actually one of the few unions officially to support a Phase 4!

Examples of this conservative influence were pressure on Lambeth social workers to accept a compromise deal, and the Brent social workers being refused the right to ballot last month.

Recently, we have seen the emergence of the All London Social Workers' Action Group (ALSWAG), the Residential Workers' Charter, and the Nursery Nurses Action Group, all of them rank and file groupings and all supported by the Nalگو Action Group. Some of these groups are even more ground down than the social workers, which is why the emphasis has tended to be on grading claims.

Lewisham Nalگو has invited a speaker down on the Ford strike. It is no coincidence that this groundswell of militancy has occurred at the same time as other sections of labour are moving, and many Nalگو members are angry that Nalگو is one of the few unions to support incomes policy.

ABC trial— secrets even if everyone knows

AYIOS NIKOLAOS in Eastern Cyprus is now 'location 1'; No.9 Signals Regiment, 3rd Squadron, is unit 'A'; Col. H A Johnstone is 'Colonel B'.

The Aubrey-Berry-Campbell trial at the Old Bailey is becoming a sort of machine for manufacturing official secrets. The three defendants are accused of breaking the Official Secrets Act by having a discussion between themselves (Aubrey and Campbell are journalists, Berry is an ex-soldier from Signals Intelligence) and by collecting information (15,000 documents were seized by the Special Branch from Campbell's flat).

The defence case focuses on showing that many of the alleged secrets involved are information available in public sources, or elementary deductions from that information. The prosecution insists that the matters involved are secret — whether publicly known or not!

In court, the defence lawyers have been spelling out the information available from the house journals of the Intelligence Corps ('Rose and Laurel') and the Signals Corps ('Wire').

For example, only certain signals units get mentioned in 'Rose and Laurel'. They have a disproportionate number of

intelligence officers, and intelligence officers in positions of command. Intelligence corps officers visit them regularly. They have an interchange of personnel.

Yet the identity of signals intelligence units is an official secret.

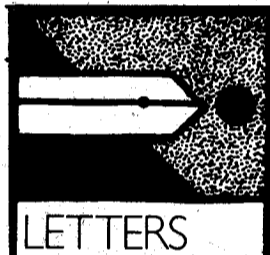
On a less serious level, the defence showed that Col. B is described in these house journals as the 'godfather' of the 'communications underground'...

The business of pretending that facts available to any spy with a few pence to spend on some magazines, or even widely known, are official secrets, has its comic side. It also has a sinister side.

The effect is to create a mass of 'un-facts'. It is something like 'un-persons' — Trotskyists in the USSR, or illegal immigrants in Britain. Everyone knows they are there, and plenty of people even know a lot of details. But to identify them brings trouble down on your head.

'Un-facts' are not entirely new in Britain. The whole D-notice system is concerned with creating 'un-facts'. But the more 'un-facts' there are, the longer the shadow of the police.

BRIAN O'CONNOR



Comrades,

WA has over the years consistently fought against racism and the oppression of women and gays. It was all the more disturbing, then, to see an adapted 'Captain Marvel' cartoon printed on the front page of last week's issue.

The image was deplorable, both intrinsically and in relation to the Ford strike. Intrinsically, because a more moronic celebration of white male supremacy could hardly be found. And in relation to the Ford strike, WA has itself pointed out that, in Dagenham at least, black workers probably form the majority; on top of that, although the vast bulk of strikers are male, the active support (or opposition) of strikers' wives could be crucial to the outcome of the strike.

Whatever the motive for printing this cartoon — and it is open to criticism on other grounds, too — it is worth remembering that the gap between the paper's intended message and the means used to express it is not so great that images (or words, for that matter) can be used without attention to the values implied by them.

JAMES RYAN

REPLY: Comrade Ryan is being far too literal. The victorious figure is not meant to be a typical Ford worker, still less an amalgam of the typical Ford worker and his wife — any more than the 5% monster he is holding up by the pants is supposed to represent the typical Labour Cabinet Minister [though it might be argued that it is not all that unlike Denis Healey!].

The irony whereby the comic-strip super-lone-law-enforcer becomes the collective might of a group of workers who have just seen off anti-working-class law seems to be lost on Cde. Ryan. But we make bold enough to presume that Ford strikers got the point...

workers' ACTION

supporters' groups

exist in most major towns. For more information, or to subscribe to Workers' Action, complete this form and send to the address below:

NAME

ADDRESS

- I want more information
- I want to subscribe for 25 issues/50 issues.

Subscription rates: Britain and Ireland, 25 issues £4, 50 issues £7.50. Rest of the world: Surface mail, 25 issues £4.50, 50 issues £8.50; Air mail, 25 issues £6, 50 issues £11. Cheques etc payable to 'Workers Action'.

SEND TO WA, Box 1960, 182 Upper St, London N1.

Breaking the Law

Last Sunday (October 13th) Birmingham lorry drivers decided to get rid of full-time TGWU officer Alan Law.

A meeting of 300 members of the TGWU 5/35 branches (covering road haulage in the Birmingham area) voted overwhelmingly to ask the Union to appoint a new official.

This decision follows months of chaos in which the branch has been virtually paralysed. Meeting after meeting has been taken up arguing over allegations of ballot-rigging, misappropriation of funds and general high-handedness by Law. Even now the truth of these allegations has not been fully established.

The branch decided in June to press for the establishment of a committee of investigation to deal with ballot-rigging charges and the role played in it by Law and the regional Secretary Brian Mathers. It was to consist of one national officer, one national commercial transport committee member, and five members of the branch. But

the Regional Committee refused to act on this.

They used the excuse that two members of the branch had called in the police, and claimed that the affair was sub-judice.

The union auditors are presently checking the 5/35 branches' funds. There has been a special 7p-a-week levy on members since 1971 to finance strikes and other activities. Over the years this should have accumulated to some £80,000. Yet when the old branch was split into 4 sections at the beginning of this year there was only just over £4,000 in the fund.

Members of the old branch committee claim they never authorised spending that would have gone anywhere near the missing £76,000.

In this atmosphere relations had grown so bad between most shop stewards and Law that the branch really had no alternative but to demand his replacement.

This proposal will be put to the Regional Committee on Wednesday

October 18th and is likely to be accepted by them and by the general Executive Council.

But we will now probably never know exactly what has gone on. The lessons to be drawn are clear — if the TGWU had regularly elected and recallable officials the issue could have been sorted out much more easily. It would also have involved the members much more in running their union and made for more of a collective leadership in the branch.

It is this that will be a big problem in the future if the West Midlands are to keep up with road haulage workers around the country, let alone retain our position as wage-leaders in the Midlands.

Law's methods, whatever else one might say about them, certainly got results. The members he chose to fight for got relatively high wages. But the force that made Law so powerful was the strength and militancy which he channelled. Now, that will have to be organised for itself.

NUT, the union where calling 'order' is out of order

THE EXECUTIVE of the National Union of Teachers is applying pressure on branches to adopt the now-notorious "Rule 8", which strengthens the power of the bureaucracy through a change in Standing Orders.

On October 11th, 270 members of the Hackney Teachers' Association attended a special meeting to vote on whether Rule 8 should be accepted by the branch. The meeting took place under a threat from the NUT Executive "that should Hackney Association continue to refuse to accept the mandatory model Standing Order it be suggested that the present Hackney Association be disbanded and a new Hackney Association be established on the basis of members prepared to accept the mandatory Standing Order."

What is it that the Executive are so keen to push down members' throats?

Rule 8

It is a rule which dictates that any challenges to the chairperson should not be taken at the time but at the next meeting. For most local associations this means an interval of one month by which time the query may be irrelevant or the chairperson can again rule the challenge out of order, putting off the challenger for another month!

As an example of what can happen under this rule, Manchester Association now allows no challenges whatever to the chair.

This patently undemocratic rule was passed at last year's NUT Conference as part of the Executive's memorandum, slipped in by the union tops to control and contain any challenge to

the rulings of the local union strong-men (who in many cases are head teachers). It was passed in a conference heavily weighted towards the less militant rural areas.

Under the threat of the big stick Hackney Association decided to accept the rule. The bureaucracy was given a helping hand, too, by the Association's officers. They have been acting as if the rule was already in operation, though the branch has twice rejected it before.

Voting was 157 for, 68 against, and 24 abstentions. This was technically just short of the two-thirds majority required, but was

accepted by the meeting as being carried.

Militants in the union must campaign to get rid of this rule and the various other undemocratic rules within the NUT. Essentially this means building strong local caucuses of militants where possible, and galvanising the supporters of the Socialist Teachers' Alliance and Rank & File Teacher into effective action.

The need for a strong rank and file group within the NUT to counteract the weight of the bureaucracy is underlined by the latest NUT executive decisions, which strengthen their drive

against democracy in the union.

Apparently they are now asking local associations if they sponsored the recent *Teachers Against the Nazis* conference. The intention appears to be to take action against these Associations.

But the way to change the situation isn't just to fight for union democracy as good in itself. Teachers should be drawn into action around the issues which are crucial to them, such as cuts and closures, class sizes and salaries. Thus we can show in action why we need union democracy so much, and how the executive is crippling our ability to fight back.

MIKE FOLEY

STA—WE'RE DOING WORSE BUT WE'LL BE DOING THE SAME AGAIN

"There are few possibilities to really organise mass action on salaries and cuts. This weakness reflects the overall relationship of forces in the trade unions. In the coming months, this situation is likely to continue in broad outline."

This resolution, carried at the Annual General Meeting of the Socialist Teachers' Alliance on October 14/15, tried to explain why there were only 60 militants there, while 200 had attended its founding conference two years ago.

But the argument is a weak one.

Certainly, the NUT bureaucracy in the past 4 years has been able to curb militant unofficial action, and has effectively thrown the left onto the defens-

ive. But while Rank & File Teacher has begun to learn from some of its earlier ultra-left mistakes, and has continued to build local caucuses, the Socialist Teachers' Alliance has avoided the difficult tasks of organising militants locally for a fightback.

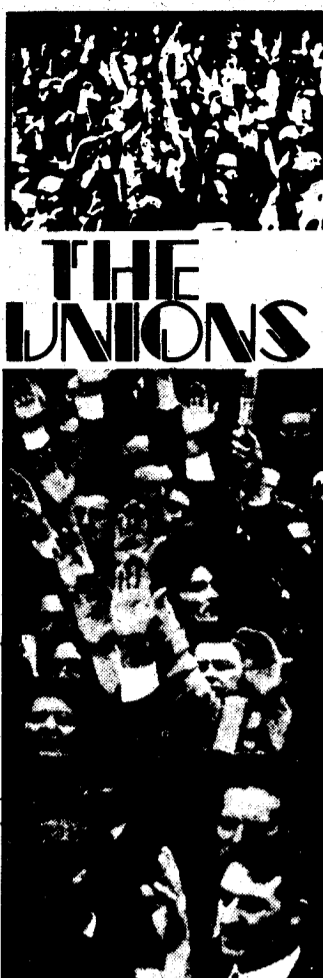


Struggles on social issues, women's oppression, racism and the politics of education, as well as union elections, have been counterposed to the humdrum struggles over wages and conditions.

The STA conference voted for perspectives and an organisational structure much the same as those of last year which have contributed to its decline. An

alternative motion placing the emphasis on building strong local groups and an election of a political leadership accountable to a delegate-based National Committee was lost.

The argument against a change of direction was put by IMG members [the dominant tendency in the STA]. They said that such a structure, however desirable, was not suitable because the STA has not matured yet. Their attitude, and the focus on more conferences on social issues like the Politics of Education, will condemn the STA to remaining as an educational talk-shop, an organiser of relatively large educational conferences, but one which is unable to mobilise its supporters to take effective national action against the union bureaucracy, or



even to attend its own AGM and debate its own policy and perspectives.



One hopeful sign, however, is that under the impact of the right-wing offensive Rank & File and the STA have begun to work together at several levels. This year the two groupings have agreed on four resolutions to the NUT Conference, covering salaries, racism, women's rights and education cuts. In Inner London, a joint Left slate has strong prospects of winning against a leadership which has done nothing about school closures and cut-backs on jobs.

S.M. CHEUNG

LOSINSKA LEVERED INTO POWER

KATE LOSINSKA — a Labour Party member, a close friend of Reg Prentice, and a self-proclaimed Tory supporter — has clawed her way back into a position of power in the civil service union, the CPSA.

In so doing she has undermined the build-up of the civil service unions' campaign against the 5% limit for public sector workers. One of the major civil service unions will be effectively out of action for two months, as the internal constitutional crisis over voting irregularities gives the top union full-timers a free hand in pay talks.

Elections in the CPSA are by branch block vote. According to CPSA rules, a nomination made by a branch is the same as a promise to vote, unless it is changed by a properly called meeting.

After her defeat in the contest for vice-president at the last CPSA conference, Losinska alleged that branches had voted contrary to their nominations, and called for an investigation. The conference Presiding Officer's report came out on July 14th, stating that there were irregularities, but not recommending that the elected vice-presidents — Peter Coltman and Reg Williams — be removed from office.

According to CPSA rules, the Presiding Officer's statement should be 'binding on all members', and that is the end of it. But on Friday 13th October, under the threat of legal action from Losinska, union president Len Lever ruled that Coltman (a



Kate Losinska: back on top

long-time CP member) should be removed from office and replaced by Losinska.

If the vice-presidential election results had been changed to give every candidate the votes of all the branches who nominated him or her, then Coltman would still have beaten Losinska. But Lever ruled that the voting figures should be changed only when a branch had voted differently from its nomination — not when it had simply failed to vote. That ruling gave Losinska the lead over Coltman.

Then Lever ruled that the

National Executive Committee election was also invalid (on the grounds that Coltman had not been able to stand for it), sacked the left-wing NEC, and called for a new ballot.

CPSA activists are convinced that this move is timed to break up the growing militancy of the rank and file over pay, and to cut out the possibility of the left-wing NEC giving a lead to that militancy. The right-wing gutter press have avidly exploited the issue; they have gone on a red-baiting binge and are clamouring for postal ballots — and completely distorting the facts.

The *Daily Mail* (October 16th) stated that the irregularities were "due to some delegates taking advantage of the block voting system by ignoring their branches' instructions about how to vote and voting for their own far-left candidates instead."

Out of the 24 branches involved in the irregularities, five are left-wing ones which nominated Coltman and did not vote for him; nine are right-wing Ministry of Defence branches which failed to vote for one or another of the right-wing candidates (Losinska and Elliott) — but only one of which voted for Coltman; and the remaining ten are a mixed bunch, including Mrs. Losinska's own branch — which voted for Elliott but not for Losinska, although they had nominated both!

Most of the voting switches were probably due to leaflets distributed at the conference revealing that Losinska's campaign was financed by the extreme

right-wing group Trumid.

This, then, was the big red plot! Distortions drip easily from Losinska's mouth as once again she mounts a campaign to win personal power and destroy the CPSA as a militant union.

NEC elections are now to be re-run, based on the old nominations, through branch meetings over the next two months. Revolutionaries organised around *Redder Tape* and the Broad Left need to prepare a united campaign.

The key issue is pay, and the need for a special delegate conference on pay to plan action against the 5% norm. This has to be linked to a campaign to expose Losinska's connections with Trumid, and her action to put the union in the hands of the full-time officials at a crucial moment.

To call a special conference, support must be gained from branches representing over half the CPSA membership. It is a tremendous task, but it is possible. The CPSA Area Committees need to organise membership rallies and speaking tours to explain the new right wing offensive, and how it must be defeated along with the 5% norm.

The left also needs to start a campaign against the whole system of branch block voting — a system that is bound to open the way for corruption — and for a system of election based on rank and file members voting in branch meetings during work time.

STEPHEN CORBISHLEY

EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Paid ads (including ads for publications) 8p per word, £5 per column inch — payment in advance. Send copy to Events, Box 1960, Rising Free, 182 Upper St., London N1, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

Saturday 21 October. Ford UK Workers' Combine strike benefit. 7pm at North East London Poly, Green-gate, London E13. 'The Singing Strikers' and 'Belt & Braces'. Admission £1 at door.

Saturday 21 October. Anti-Apartheid demonstration. Assemble 1.30 at Speakers Corner, Hyde Park.

Monday 23 October. 'Home Soldier Home' at Aston University Students Union council chamber. 8pm. Film showing supported by Birmingham Poly SSA and Aston Univ. Socialist Unity.

Tuesday 24 October. 'Home Soldier Home', showing at Warwick University Students Union. Lunch-time.

Sunday 29 October. London Workers' Action meeting: 'Fighting racism and fascism'. 7.45pm, 'General Picton', Wharfedale Rd/Caledonian Rd, London N1.

Saturday 4 November. Leicester NAC demonstration: 'Out-patient abortion now, free abortion on demand, a woman's right to choose'. Assemble 2pm in Victoria Park, Leicester.

Saturday 11 November. 'Occupations, criminal trespass, and the use of the law' — national conference of the Campaign against the Criminal Trespass Law. At Conway Hall, London WC1. Credentials £2 from CACTL c/o 35 Wellington St, London WC2.

PUBLISHED by Workers' Action, Box 1960, Rising Free, 182 Upper St, London N1, and printed by Anvil Press (TU). Registered as a newspaper at the GPO.

WORKERS' ACTION

TUC seeks a new deal

continued from p.1

workers' claim and the British Leyland Cars claim. It is something we can win now if there is a united fight.

But the TUC leaders are not just asking for useless promises; they are actually demanding productivity deals and two-yearly wage agreements.

Productivity deals already figured in Phase 3, often as an escape valve to allow larger rises to more militant sections of workers and stop the demands spreading to other workers. Where productivity deals are not completely fake, they mean harder work and lost jobs. And they would help the Government save face on its wages policy.

That's what the TUC want to see, and it would mean that the fight for real increases in basic pay would be headed off.

Now that the 5% limit has collapsed, many workers are moving against the 12 month rule to bring their claims forward. To adopt a two-year rule now would be sabotage. The TUC's idea is to find a formula which allows for big pay increases, but spreads them out over a longer period so that the problems for the bosses and the Government are postponed into 1979. But what is 'free collective bargaining' if it doesn't mean fighting for improved wages and conditions when we need them and have the best chance of getting them?

The only type of 'rule' we need is one we impose on the bosses: to index wages to the cost of living, so that they rise between settlements — £1 for each 1% rise in the cost of living.

The TUC leaders are trying to be responsible to the Labour Government that has shown that its responsibility is to the bosses and bankers, not the working class.

The TUC leaders got a slap in the face from Callaghan after the TUC conference. They thought they would only have to keep the lid on for one month before the election. Then they were told it would be at least six months ... Angered by Callaghan's dirty trick, the union leaders have opened the valves on the boiler of working-class militancy a few turns, to give the Labour politicians a warning.

Even now they are trying to find some other deal to sell. For them, getting a Labour Government elected at all costs, regardless of workers' interests, is the important thing. It is their way of keeping their foot in the door and having a say in 'running the economy'.

For the working class, to get involved in running 'the economy' — the capitalist economy — is to get involved in organising our own exploitation. It is an economic system which has profit as its central driving force and lifeblood, and everyone who gets involved in working the system always ends up pushing for bigger profits as the precondition for everything else.

Breaking the 5% limit is a first step in hitting back at the rule of profit. But if we allow the union leaders and the Labour Government to fix up a new class-collaboration swindle, then it will be a short-lived victory, and a much smaller one than it could be.

By joining Ford workers in their struggle now we can win serious wage increases, and also more lasting improvements like the 35 hour week. We can give new life to the struggle to build a socialist opposition inside the labour movement, and to the fight to put the TUC crawlers out in the cold, shown up for what they are: traitors!

BL bosses' reply to pay claim 7,000 jobs must go

BRITISH LEYLAND bosses last week gave their reply to the Combine Committee's claim for £100 a week for line workers and a 35-hour week: they made another call for job cuts.

Through the columns of the *Birmingham Evening Mail*, BL bosses stated that 7,000 voluntary redundancies before the end of the year would be their price for steps to pay parity and for productivity bonuses. Five or six thousand jobs have already been lost in BL job-cutting exercises this year, on top of the 3,000 sackings at Speke.

This new ultimatum comes just before BL bosses and union representatives meet next weekend (21st) in Luton.

About 40 senior stewards from BL plants will be there, as well as full-time union officials, but for the workers they are supposed to represent the discussions — on BL's "Five Year Plan" — are completely secret.

It is reported that the meeting will discuss plans for an 18% cut in the BL workforce, "reassessment" of track speeds, and a 50% cut in rest allowances. For the union representatives, the bitter message will be sweetened by

having free and unlimited bar facilities at their disposal during the meeting...

But BL workers just face one threat to their jobs after another.

A uniform job grading system for BL has been worked out at national level (that is, in secrecy, as far as most BL workers are concerned) and agreed by the TGWU. The proposed rates are:

Grade 1	...	£84.76
Grade 2	...	£80.71
Grade 2a (production workers)	...	£79.05
Grade 3	...	£71.66
Grade 4	...	£65.00

These rates represent only a partial move towards parity (the present rate for line workers at the highest-paid BL plant, Canley, is £84), while there will be hundreds of injustices in the new grading scheme. And the cost is: 7,000 jobs.

However, it looks as if the Communist Party — which is strongly represented among BL senior stewards — may go for acceptance of the parity scheme and the productivity deal.

"It is confidently expected"

states the *Morning Star* of October 16th, "that some concessions will come on granting pay parity before the original planned date of November 1979, and that a bonus scheme can be struck, leaving battle to be joined for a direct wage rise — 19th per cent — and the 35-hour week". And the Longbridge Works Committee put the issue like this in a leaflet: a clenched fist is all very well, but unless you know how to open your hand at the right time you will never be able to pick anything up.

The cost of 'picking up' the parity scheme and a productivity deal will, however, be such decimation of the BL workforce, and such a shameful defeat in the struggle to defend jobs and conditions, that talk about "battle" for a 19% rise and a 35-hour week will be quite meaningless.

That is why a recently-formed nationwide militant grouping — "BL stewards for the November Review" — is making its central pay slogan "£100 for production workers". It will be campaigning against any separate deals on parity and productivity, for defence of jobs and conditions, and for the full combine committee claim of £100 and a 35-hour week.

off from the CGT in 1947.

Already, before the January 1976 elections, Touzet and the Ford bosses had discussed the hiring of Dominique Pionat, a former extreme right-wing student activist. "More CFT-minded? Prepared for that sort of activity; will build up the required anti-CP movement".

Pionat is still at Bordeaux, in the personnel department.

Other phone conversations discussed ways and means of building up the CFT and FO, while reducing the strength of the CGT.

"Base ourselves on the middle ranks [cf how Galtier launched the independent union at Simca (which later became part of the CFT).] The head of the independent union at Simca was the head of the social welfare department; you have to provide the necessary means. Don't do it by halves".

"Pionat is on the files. To refuse dubious hirings [CGT]" ... "Problem of setting up a CFT structure: have to recruit foremen as the backbone of it. But nothing for the moment... Monsieur Blanc (the general secretary of the CFT) could propose three trained people..."

The phone conversations date from 1975 and 1976. The CGT still holds the majority at Ford Bordeaux; they got 48% of the vote in the election for trade union delegates this month, and 55% among the manual workers. But the Ford bosses have not given up.

As *Rouge* reports: "Two CGT candidates faced heavy pressures to withdraw from the elections. In the local press, they have stated that the local CSL [ex-CFT] official threatened them with the sack."

Between Ford bosses and Ford workers, there is no fair play. There is only class war.



IN FRANCE

THE FORD BOSSES have been telling Ford workers to return to work as a fair exchange for the bosses' willingness to negotiate without regard to the 5% limit. But, while they are making their speeches about responsibility, recently-revealed documents show Ford coldly planning to smash trade unionism in their French factory at Bordeaux.

The French revolutionary daily *Rouge* has published extracts from notes of managers' phone conversations in which they discuss efforts to suppress the Communist Party-led CGT union and build up a semi-fascist scab union, the CFT (now called the CSL).

The French Ford bosses go about their business in the same class-struggle spirit as was revealed in secret documents from Dagenham management which we published in *Workers Action* in June. At Dagenham, the bosses congratulated themselves on dealing with militant shop stewards with the help of "a new

TGWU District Official who was not dominated by Plant shop stewards".

At Bordeaux, the same philosophy is applied under different conditions. Trade unionism is generally much weaker in the French car industry than in the British one. In Peugeot-Citroen and in Chrysler, the plants are dominated by the CFT/CSL, which acts as little more than a company police force.

The Communist Party-led CGT, however, has a majority among the 3,600 workers employed at Bordeaux making Ford gear-boxes. After the elections for trade union delegates in January 1976, the notes of a conversation between the Bordeaux factory managers and Michel Touzet, a regional official of the Mines and Metals group of the French bosses' federation, ran as follows: "Objective No.1: the CGT must not gain any more ground. Get a proper spread [FO+CFT]".

FO is a right-wing union federation, formed as a Cold War split-

SPEED-UP COSTS LIVES

ONE ELEMENT of the Ford bosses' latest offer is a promise of more pay if the unions agree to measures which will speed up the work, cut rest breaks, and increase productivity.

It is not the usual sort of 'productivity deal', and in fact Ford generally disapprove of such deals. They prefer to impose speed-up in a more straightforward way. When they increased work rates by 22% on the Cortina line last year, the Ford managers put it like this: "There is no tangible benefit to you or me, but we all have an interest in ensuring that the company is efficient and profitable, for that is what secures jobs."

The 'tangible benefits' go to Ford's owners and shareholders; and that is equally true when wage rises are offered in exchange for speed-up. For every capitalist, maximising the use of his fixed capital and speeding up the turnover of his capital are major objectives.

A 10% or 20% increase in work speeds — even if it goes together with a 10% or 20% increase in wages — helps with those objectives and boosts his profits.

For Ford workers, such wage

rises would be no equivalent for the cost to their health and nerves involved in any speed-up.

Already, in the Body Plant at Dagenham, 80 to 140 eye injuries are reported each month. In the USA, 65 car workers drop dead in the factories each day. There are 63,000 disabled, and 1,700,000 with impaired hearing.

The direct connection between speed-up and damage to workers' health is shown in a comparison between Britain and Germany. Ford constantly tells British workers that their productivity is lagging behind the West German plants, which are staffed by immigrant workers who live in terror of deportation and have weaker trade union representation than British workers.

Figures compiled by *Labour Research* show that the accident rate last year was 23.8 per million hours worked in West Germany, to 10.9 in Britain. In 1976, the figures were 27.1 to 14.3; in 1975 they were 32.5 to 11.00.

Ford workers must make sure that the union leadership don't sell out the workers' conditions and health as their contribution to 'responsible' free collective bargaining.

MICHAEL O'SULLIVAN