

workers' ACTION

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BY A small majority, the miners have voted to back the Government's wage control policy.

That means that by the end of the year miners' wages and standards will be back where they were in 1971 — before their two spectacular victories put them into the league of the "well paid" worker.

Few among the 53% who voted 'Yes' can have been happy at the loss of these hard-fought gains. Some did so out of loyalty to the National Executive, and for fear that a 'No' vote would bring down the Labour Government and bring back the Tories. Probably most of them felt that in the circumstances — isolated from the TUC and 'public opinion' — there wasn't really any alternative.

Much of the emphasis in the militant areas was on the justice of the miners' claim for £100. We do not for one minute question the justice of this claim. More to the point, we doubt whether 53% of the NUM questions it.

What they no doubt did question was whether, isolated from the working class, they could win it. And whether "social responsibility", at a time when they see workers all around them making heavy sacrifices, did not outweigh the justice of their own claim.

Reduce

What they failed to understand — and this should have been said more clearly by the NUM left — was that their "social responsibility", that is, their responsibility to their class, is precisely to smash the Government's policy.

Just how devastating this policy will be for the working class is shown by its effect on miners' wages. If acceptance of the 4½% pay deal will reduce miners to the position they were in before they found and used their great industrial strength, then what will it do to other workers?

When the miners in 1972 and in

Miners go back to square one

1974 fought and breached the Tories' pay dam (first the 7% norm, then Phase 3) it was clear that they were fighting for the whole of the working class. Not only did those struggles unleash a huge wave of sympathy and solidarity action, but the victories the miners achieved were followed by the rest of class, which overran the routed Tories and pushed forward their own claims.

Today again the miners could link up their struggle with the growing anger of workers, and create in action an alternative policy: a policy of **NO SACRIFICE FOR THE BOSSES' CRISIS.**

Despite the setback of the ballot, militants should still press the demand for the £100 claim for face-workers. Gormley is saying that the ballot result gives him the right to delete that claim from the agenda of the Union's forthcoming conference.

Any such move should be resisted.

Arthur Scargill, President of the Yorkshire miners, says that his members will continue to campaign for the £100. Nor should militants allow the concession of calling this a "target": either it's a claim or it's not! For the moment, the victors are jubilant: the City is joyous, the right wing breathes a great sigh of relief, the Labour Government smiles broadly and the NCB wipes the sweat off its brow.

Future

But as Bill McClean, Scottish miners' vice-president, pointed out, Gormley and his followers on the Executive cannot help but be "very uneasy about the future". A closer look at the figures reveals why.

Last time the majority for the Government's policy was 60%.

Since last summer, miners have seen inflation rise unchecked, unemployment given a boost by Government spending cuts, and employers around the country 'having a go' at militants and at shop floor union organisation. They've seen the working class pushed onto the defensive.

Also, the biggest percentage defeats for the militants were among the men who don't produce coal at all: the Durham Enginemens voted by over 77% for the Government, the Cokemen 79%, the Power Group by over 80% and the clean-collared officials and staff voted Yes by nearly 87%. This last group alone accounted for 12,950 votes cast for wage control, in a ballot whose majority was only 13,150!

Paul Adams

Syrian troops, Out of Lebanon

SIX years ago this September, King Hussein of Jordan unleashed his army against the armed Palestinians in Jordan. For something like a month the battle raged, but the forces were uneven. Lightly armed guerilla fighters faced tanks and mortars which cut swathes through the flimsy, densely populated Palestinian area of Amman, regardless of the non-combatant casualties.

Hussein wanted to destroy the power of the guerillas who were posing an increasing challenge to his regime and thwarting his attempts to reach an agreement with Israel.

When the fighting was over, the battered Palestinians were once again refugees, driven from the towns of Jordan into camps in the north, and then eventually pushed out of the country altogether.

That was Black September 1970. Now the Palestinians face the grave danger of a 'Black June' 1976.

The Syrian Army has invaded the Lebanon to impose Syria's will on the Palestinians and their allies in the Lebanese civil war, the Moslem left.

Though a few months ago it seemed that President Assad of Syria was going to support the National Movement (the Palestinian-Moslem coalition), it has become very evident that he is more concerned to prevent it gaining control of the country.

Such control would give the Palestinians an independent base from which to continue their long struggle to regain their country, purloined and occupied by Israel. For his part Assad wants to see any anti-Zionist activities kept under his control. It is this control that he is now attempting to impose, using the full force of his army.

The Syrians invaded Lebanon during the middle of last week, and at first met with little resistance from the forces of the National Movement, who were clearly hoping that diplomatic pressure from other Arab states would induce Assad to withdraw.

This pressure was applied. Egypt, Iraq, Libya and Algeria have all condemned the invasion. But Assad has gone on with it.

As troops continued to push toward the Lebanese capital Beirut, Syrian planes and artillery have shelled Palestinian and left wing positions. In Beirut heavy fighting has broken out between the Palestinians and Saïqa (a supposedly Palestinian armed group in fact largely composed of Syrians). At one point in the fighting it seems that Saïqa opened fire on the Palestinian refugee camps around the capital with mortars and rockets.

In a desperately far-fetched attempt to justify the invasion Sami Attari, leader of the Syrian Baath Party, declared that the major Palestinian guerilla group, Al Fatah was "a miserable tool in the hands of the US and Israel".

In the confusion following the invasion, one thing is certain. Syria is out to control the Palestinians, even if it means destroying their liberation movement itself. If Syria succeeds, it will be the end of the only area from which the Palestinians can operate with some degree of freedom.

The irony of the situation is that it was to Lebanon that the Palestinians went after the defeat in Jordan. Now, for very similar reasons, the tragedy of Amman may be repeated in Beirut.

NO LIMIT! NO DEAL! Lobby the TUC, June 16th

BUILD DEFENCE SQUADS!

Stop racist attacks!

'THIS RACIST MURDER WILL BE AVENGED. WE'LL GET YOU, RACIST SCUM!'

In foot-high letters, this slogan was daubed on a Southall pavement next to the blood-stained railings where Gurdup Singh Chaggar was stabbed to death last Friday night.

Whatever turns out to have been the motives or the circumstances leading to the death of Gurdup Singh Chaggar, those stark words well express the mood of angry and beleaguered immigrant communities up and down the country.

The wave of racist attacks which has swept the country over the last month is now breaking over the solid rocks of immigrant resistance.

A meeting called on Sunday by

Southall reportedly broke up after Asian youths, tired of hearing discussions of appeals to 10 Downing Street, stormed out of the hall and marched to the local police station. Two of them were grabbed by police, but after a three-hour picket they were released.

That night and the following day there was a series of confrontations between white and Asian youths, leading to the much-publicised injury of a white teenager.

WORKERS ACTION does not condone indiscriminate acts of revenge by immigrants on whites.

But we unreservedly condemn the hypocritical press and parliamentary homilies, which mention racist violence for the first time

to fight back.

In the weeks following the press campaign against the Malawi Asians there has been a mounting crescendo of attacks by fascist thugs on the Asian community — which went completely unreported in the national press. Only when the Asians begin to hit back do the tired hacks of Fleet Street seek to preach racial harmony.

For the immigrant communities of London, Blackburn, Bradford and Birmingham, assaults by fascists have been a daily occurrence.

In Bow, East London, a building worker — Rawal Singh — was attacked twice in a fortnight. Just over a month ago he was beaten up

stitches were put in a cut over his eye. His sight was damaged so that he could not work.

Ten days later he was walking home with his wife when he was assaulted again. "They seemed to be waiting for me. They started to throw bottles at me. Then they punched me and kicked me."

His wife ran to nearby houses to call for help, but nobody would open their door to her. So she watched helplessly as the men drove a knife into her husband's throat. The police arrived before the attackers managed to kill him, so obviously someone in the street had called them, but had been too scared to come out and help.

There were no arrests. . .



ABOVE: the four Asian youths arrested as they marched to the Southall police station, then released after a mass sit-down protest blocked the road for three hours. Mass action counts for more than all the 'moderate' pleadings. And community defence is the only effective answer to racist attacks

CARVALHO'S RED CARNATIONS — A FRAIL DEFENCE

ON JUNE 27th, Portuguese voters will go to the polls for the second time in two months.

At the elections for the Legislative Assembly on April 25th, the workers' parties, the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the groups of the revolutionary left, gained 53% of the total vote.

This result was a considerable disappointment to the 'forces of order' in Portugal and abroad, who had confidently expected a majority for a 'centre right' government of the open bourgeois parties the CDS and PPD, which could have significantly stepped up the attack on the gains the Portuguese working class has made since April 1974.

Now the elections for the Presidency of the Republic present the opportunity for a re-run of this decision. And the actions of the major workers' parties, particularly of Mario Soares' SP, are contributing directly to aiding the right in this project.

The Socialist Party is supporting the candidacy of Army chief of staff General Antonio Ramalho Eanes. In Soares' words, "Portugal needed a candidate who could insure

the cohesion and unity of the armed forces". Eanes is the "hero" of the crushing of the November 25th paratroopers revolt and the mastermind of the purging of the army which followed it.

Eanes is a resolute and implacable foe of the working class. He is determined to "restore production" and create a "disciplined professional army". That is to say, he aims to take back the gains industrial and agricultural workers have made, drive down real wages, and turn the army into a completely reliable weapon for use against workers in struggle.

Despite his close involvement in the Spínolista attempted coups of September 1974 and March 1975, Eanes is still maintaining a facade of devotion to democracy, a ploy in which he is assisted by the leaders of the reformist parties.

Both Soares and CP leader Cunhal signed a new pact with the military before the legislative assembly elections, giving the military a continuing 'special role'. Both support the idea of a presidency with wide powers to intervene in the political life of the country,

including the power to summon and dismiss governments (as Eanes put it "I won't spend my time cutting tapes and receiving garlands").

Though the Communist Party is putting up a civilian candidate for the presidency, it played with the idea of supporting Eanes, and was only dissuaded by the pressure from its rank and file and the possibility of collecting a large slice of the SP's rank and file voters outraged by Soares' support for the "hero of November 25th".

The CP statement announcing its candidate Octavio Pato, a leading figure on the right wing of the party, was typically evasive: "The central Committee of the PCP has decided for the present not to support any military candidate. This however does not stand in the way of the Party supporting a military officer once one is elected president of the Republic."

Immense dangers face the working class from the powers of the presidency and from this would-be Bonaparte. A massive vote for Eanes, delivered by combining the votes of the right wing parties and the SP, will give him a 'popular

mandate' to do what he likes. His decision to hold onto the post of Army Chief of Staff gives him the key lever of power.

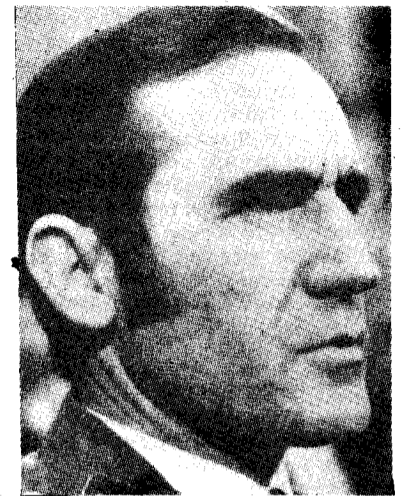
Should the working class threaten the power of the bosses, a 'legal' presidential coup is a distinct possibility. Any genuine revolutionary doctees should be sounding the alarm and rallying the working class against this. But many of the 'revolutionary' groups are failing miserably in this duty.

The PRP and the MES have given their support to the candidacy of Otelio Saraiva de Carvalho.

Carvalho's candidacy is in fact a glossy diversion for the working class at this time; and as a potential president, he is unstable and beyond the control of the working class. His campaign, with its red flags and red carnations and talk of 'Popular Power', has clearly been a morale-booster to many workers, especially to disillusioned SP rank and filers. 70,000 workers in Oporto turned out to support his rally there. But it is a dangerous illusion to look to his candidacy, and not to the action of the working class itself, to restore the pre-November situation.

Worse still is the politics of wishful thinking that underpins the campaign — that some left-leaning soldier will effortlessly bring in socialism, borne aloft by popular feeling. November 25th should have shattered that illusion; and the 'normalisation' of the army since then makes it even sillier. The substitution of a military figure (whose 'leftism' in any case is shifting and unreliable) for the action of the working class itself is wrong at any time. Right now, when the working class needs to prepare itself against the coming assaults and work for the maximum unity in action to hold onto its gains, such politics is doubly wrong.

Any revolutionaries who hitch up to Carvalho's campaign are disenfranchising revolutionary politics — boycotting themselves — and at the same time shirking the urgent tasks posed by the present situation. And it doesn't help simply to insert the word 'critical' before the word 'support' as the IS group in Britain has done in its justification of its endorsement of the PRP's support for Carvalho.



Soares (top) has pledged SP support for Eanes (below)

The sort of campaign that is needed was indicated by the manifesto issued by two Trotskyist groups, the PRT and LCI, in support of the candidacy of Arlete Vieira da Silva. It calls for a CP/SP government "without generals and capitalists" based on the majority these parties have in the Legislative Assembly. It spells out no political support for these parties' policies, but calls on them to break with their military and bourgeois allies and denounces the pact they signed with the military, and the powers conferred on the Council of the Revolution and the President of the Republic.

The candidacy of Arlete da Silva was, however, withdrawn early last week. The LCI held a press conference where they apologised and said they discovered she had been lying to them about her background and was not suitable to stand.

This is a big blow to the prospects of mounting an independent revolutionary campaign. But it doesn't in any way invalidate the programme they put out — which further calls for a united front of the workers' parties around a series of immediate and transitional demands which meet the pressing needs of the working class in the coming period. Nor does it excuse the stance of the PRP and its IS followers.



ITALY — CAN COMMUNIST PARTY PACIFY THE WORKERS?

THE ITALIAN ELECTIONS on June 20th will be taking place against a background of stark economic and political crisis for the ruling class.

Paolo Baffi, the new governor of Italy's Central Bank, spelled out the economic measures Italian big business urgently needs to meet the crisis. Major government spending cuts and the cutting down of the system of threshold payments to workers. He called for a deal with the trade unions similar to that of Britain.

Just as here during the last two general elections, none of the parties have been very eager to spell out their economic measures. 'Parliamentary democracy' means keeping mum about things like that until after elections. Likewise the full seriousness of the economic situation is being shrouded for sudden and dramatic unveiling by the new government.

But the political crisis of the ruling class is open for all to see.

The Christian Democrats, who have ruled Italy since just after the war, are in chaos. A series of financial scandals centring around the Lockheed bribes affair revealed the corruption which characterised their rule at both national and local government levels.

Split

The party is split between a reforming wing and the old diehards. Though the 'reformers' gained a narrow majority at the last party congress, they have been

unable to get the Christian Democrats into any presentable shape for an election.

The Italian bourgeoisie desperately wants an incomes policy. To achieve this it needs a tame and quiescent labour movement — and that means having a government that enjoys the support of the trade union leaders. The Christian Democrats don't have a hope in hell of this. So, despite angry noises from the USA and Germany and worried mutterings in NATO, the Italian bourgeoisie is prepared to consider some form of 'power sharing' with the Communist Party (PCI).

Alliance

Yet the Christian Democrats are as yet in two minds about an alliance with the PCI. They know that a PCI-supported government would be driven rightwards by the policy of managing Italian capitalism in time of crisis. They know that the PCI has espoused a programme even more right wing than that of the British Labour Party — a programme that enshrines the 'historic compromise' with the Christian Democrat, and appeals for the avoidance of "social tension".

But they also know the combativity of the working class and the PCI's own rank and file.

This year has already seen strikes, occupations and general strikes. The metal workers' struggle, for instance, lasted for seven months, only ending on May 1st.

The excitement and tension within the working class is mounting as the prospect of the PCI and the Socialist Party gaining a combined electoral majority looms larger.

Patriotic

Italy's bosses are acutely aware that such an outcome to the election will encourage a wave of occupations and strikes on a scale similar to the mass upsurge of 1969.

It is the workers, not the leaders of the PCI, that the bourgeoisie has to fear.

Meanwhile the PCI is trying very hard to present itself as a responsible and patriotic party able to unite all Italians. Its list of candidates includes, according to its paper 'Unita' "... 120 workers, peasants and labourers engaged in production; 150 are intellectuals, teachers, university instructors and members of the liberal professions; about 50 are middle sized entrepreneurs; 45 are commercial artisans and shopkeepers."

The slate includes many non-PCI names — and not normal fellow travellers but respectable bourgeois figures like Altiero Spinelli, a member of the European Economic Commission, and Nino Pasti, former air force Chief of Staff.

Noted economists and Catholic laymen and journalists are also included (much to the consternation of the Vatican).

The PCI has proposed a national government — "a broad united government coalition composed of all the democratic and popular parties, including the PCI" which would remain in office "for some years" until the country was released from "the grip of the crisis." Then the people could choose again which road they wanted to follow in the long term.

Thus the PCI postpones the question of even the most watered down 'socialism' until after the crisis is solved, until after an election 'some years' distant.

In the meantime, pro-capitalist economic policies will be followed. The electoral programme states "Not only the particular social function of the small and middle sized enterprises must be recognised, but also the freedoms of initiative of all private enterprise."

This programme, however, is not the entire horizon of the expectations of Italian workers. They expect concrete gains from 'their party' in government, not calls to sacrifice.

In these circumstances the groups of the far left stand to gain. Lotta Continua, Avanguardia Operaia, Partito di Unita Proletaria and Gruppi Comunisti Rivoluzionari have combined to present a common list — Democrazia Proletaria. The real test for these groupings will come after the elections and will centre on their ability to relate to the mass base of the PCI in crisis.



Berlinguer

PROPPING UP THE GOVERNMENT

It's not bluff but it is blackmail!

AS THEY TOURED the Union conference halls trying to sell their deal with Healey, the TUC leadership — Jones, Murray and Scanlon — have had one major argument that have perpetually returned to. And the same argument will be the keynote of the recall TUC on June 16th.

IF the militants have their way, we are told, if they push forward with wage claims that break Labour's incomes policy, then they will place in doubt the very existence of the Labour Government. The left and the militants, the argument goes, are playing right into the hands of the Tories and threatening to bring back the bad old days of Tory government.

Similar arguments have been marshalled by the Tribune Left MPs. For fear of bringing back the Tories they have been prepared, after perhaps a little public soul searching, to connive at the Labour Government's attacks on living standards, on wages, on jobs and on social services.

IS Jack Jones bluffing when he says that the Labour Government is in danger of falling if groups of workers break through its incomes policy; if Labour councillors refuse to implement cutbacks and sackings? No, in fact. He is not.

THE Labour Government, in alliance with the TUC leadership, is the most effective government for the employers and bankers — so long as it can hold down wages, conditions and social spending. The bosses recognise that a Tory government could only have implemented the same attacks on the working class in the face of wholesale resistance from the labour movement.

BUT once the Labour Government fails to do its job of holding down and policing the working class, they will look to blunter, more drastic weapons to be deployed against the labour movement.

BRITISH capitalism is operating with little leeway. It cannot afford to make a 'special case' for the miners or any other group of workers. It cannot afford to let up on wage cutting and unemployment. The Labour Government is under sharpening pressure from the world banks and the British employers to go even further with its policy of stripping bare the scanty social and welfare facilities on which workers depend.

IF at the coming NUM Conference delegates insist on pushing ahead with a 33% wage claim; if building workers go into battle for major increases and a big cut in hours, then the bosses' strategy of depending on a Labour Government and the trade union leaders can come crashing down.

IN a situation of successful action by workers to defend living standards and class organisations then the mechanisms exist for the employers to boot out a Labour Government that no longer serves their interests.

IN strict parliamentary terms the Government's majority is virtually non-existent without deals between Labour and the Nationalists and Powellites. And the experience of the runs on the pound against the Labour Government in 1949/50 and again last week shows the power that big business and commerce has to back its demands and insist on sharper attacks on living standards. It can act to break the morale and confidence of the Labour Govern-

ment and to create the climate where the Government would have to step down.

THIS week, faced with another run on the pound, Healey and Callaghan reckoned they couldn't, despite all the pressure from the bankers, get away with stepping up their attacks on the working class. This week too, the spectre of a National Government was raised. But with the pay deal almost in the bag, Labour was left in government to deliver what it still can deliver for the bosses.

FACED with this situation, should workers pull back from action that can only increase the instability of the Labour Government? In a situation where the Government is claiming that local authorities are overspending to the tune of £350 to £450 million against current planned cuts, should local Labour councillors accept their job of pruning and pillaging social and welfare services?

WE SAY they should not. We insist that workers must take action to defend living standards in the face of inflation, and to regain the losses we were conned into in the past year. We insist that Labour councils should refuse to implement cuts in social services. We support all struggles against wage restraint, cuts and redundancies.

AND IF the Labour Government falls in the process, then we say that the responsibility for this rests with the policies that the Labour Government has pursued.

THE working class must take no responsibility for the

policies which set out to impoverish our lives. If the Labour Government falls because of new speculation caused by workers' action to defend living standards or because of principled voting by the Left MPs in Parliament against these policies, then the responsibility and the blame have to lie with those who framed those policies — the Government itself.

WE must not subordinate the defense of our living standards and organisations to the maintenance of an anti-working class Labour Government.

BUT isn't the Labour Government a 'gain' of the working class? Shouldn't we preserve it against the Tories at all costs, while fighting to change its policies and leadership?

THE Tories are more clearly and wholeheartedly the party of big business. The Labour movement, through the trade unions principally, can place limits on the scale of anti-working class policies that a Labour Government can implement (in the way that 'In Place of Strife' was stoned). And it is, after all, the government formed by the Parliamentary Labour Party — the only weapon the working class has so far created which can intervene in decision making at the level of Parliament.

THIS Labour Government came to power as the direct result of working class mobilisation against the Tories. Since then, its policies have been accepted by most workers, in an atmosphere of crisis and instability, as a lesser evil compared with the attacks and measures a Tory Government would enact, and with a feeling that there were no possible alternative policies.

BUT in fact the Government has been prepared to operate FOR the employers and financiers AGAINST the working class. It has presided over the greatest cuts in British working class living standards since the 1930s. Such a Government has clearly ceased to be a 'gain' for British workers.

IF the Labour Government had pursued policies in the interests of workers — if it had set out to use the instability and weakness of the employers against the employing class — then it could rightly claim the loyalty of socialists and trade unionists in these measures.

BUT this is not the case. We do not call for a campaign to bring down the Labour Government. But we do recognise that every step made by workers to defend their jobs and conditions is in conflict with the policies and further stability of the Government.

The first responsibility of the working class movement lies in the maintenance and improvement of conditions, of wages, of welfare services. If the Labour Government falls in the process, then it is their responsibility, not that of trade unionists and socialists who refuse to pay for the crisis of British capitalism with their living standards. It will be their responsibility to continue to defend and maintain real wages and jobs against whatever government should follow.

IF we don't, we are simply submitting to the blackmail of a Labour Government rather than the bullying of a Tory one.



Militants didn't hold back from attacking the Government and its laws when the Tories were in — now the story is different.

PROPPING UP THE POUND

Labour: the bankers' obedient servant

"People are very disappointed with the Chancellor. The message was that he is not taking any action — and action is needed. People just do not like it."

THUS spoke a currency dealer when Dennis Healey announced that he did not intend to immediately introduce new cuts in spending on social services. But after a week when the pound lost 5 cents value against the US dollar, who are the "people" this dealer is talking about, and what "action" are they clamouring for?

Put simply, the value of the pound against the currencies of the stronger capitalist countries represents the confidence that the international finance and money markets have in British capitalism's ability to push up its profits — to turn itself therefore into a good investment for the money dealers.

For that reason, any sign of resistance by workers to attempts to push up profits at their expense can only cause concern to the banks and finance companies looking for profitable and stable outlets for investment.

It is not a matter of 'nasty foreigners' as the Labour Left or the Morning Star would have us believe. Capitalism is an integrated world system where money flows in search of profit and stability.

In order to attract investment, in order to avoid escalating import bills because of declining currency values, Governments are forced either to toe the line laid down by the owners of cash and investment funds in Britain and the rest of the world, or directly challenge their power once and for all.

Call for blood

When the Yorkshire Area NUM complained last year that MPs they had sponsored were not voting for their policies, the press broke into a concerted attack about "undermining the sovereignty and deliberative independence of Parliament." But when the dealers in London and abroad demand that the Labour Government eats further into

workers' living standards, demanding their rights as paymasters, the press leapt to support them and call for blood.

As one banker said of the decline of the pound last week "confidence in the UK economy has ebbed so far that half measures will not suffice to change the picture." And by half measures he was talking about 1½ million workers on the dole, a decline in real wages by more than 5% for most workers last year, and the systematic annihilation of social services.

The 'full' measures being demanded are various, but they all come down to the same thing. The Economist — the weekly employers' journal — thinks that social spending cuts are too easily slipped out of by local authorities. It argues for a 5% ceiling on new money supply next year, and once the cash runs out, it hopes the government and local authorities will have no option but to close down amenities and services.

Woodrow Wyatt, whose right wing ravings are granted a full page of the Sunday Mirror every week, has schemes for a further £5,000 million in cuts, hoping for redundancies and sackings — and 'harder work' — throughout the public sector. The Tories are braying for new (unspecified but enormous) cuts in social spending to appease the bankers and financiers.

The status of the pound sterling as a world reserve currency, a currency which is traded in and held by banks and governments, makes it particularly susceptible to the moods and appetites of the currency dealers. Once already this year we have seen a run on the pound.

Yet for all their lamentations about these 'blows to British pride', certain banks and employers obviously find a drop in the pound useful. Devaluation always helps to make their goods more competitive on the world market. And

at a time like this, they naturally welcome its use in helping to shove the trade union leaders and Labour Government into embracing more drastic measures against the working class to push up and maintain profits.

Already this Spring, the earlier run on the pound helped to speed through the 4% pay limit deal.

Last week showed that even this capitulation has not satisfied fully the currency pushers and bankers.

The Bank of England, in the past month, has clearly stood aside and allowed the pound to fall. It could have held its price up by buying pounds on the market. But it obviously hoped to use the falling pound to bargain for tighter wage control and more cuts in social spending.

But it's a delicate game. A sudden fall in the pound might be useful for a short term tactic of railroading a panicky trade union leadership into hastily clinching a drastic wage cutting deal.

But the Labour Government knows the

limits of this tactic (and that is one of its uses to the employers at the present time). Callaghan and the more far sighted employers can see that a further and deeper collapse of the pound will seriously jeopardise the TUC's chances of maintaining the pay deal and keeping the rank and file reined in, as prices of imported goods take a sudden leap and impel workers to seek compensation in higher wages.

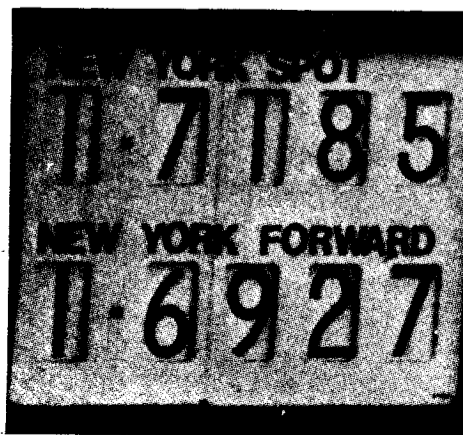
Scoured

Callaghan's problem in the last week was that he couldn't take the 'action' that the dealers were calling for without endangering the pay deal from its outset. A week before the special TUC recall conference that was all set to launch the deal was just not the time to bring in Healey's contingency plan for a further £2000 million cut in public spending, however much he may have resolved to shore up the pound.

That, and not any desire to offend the bankers and financiers to whom the Labour Government has been the most obedient of servants, is why Callaghan and Co. found themselves incapable of immediately paying the tribute demanded, and scoured the world's markets for more loans and credit.

And what should workers do? The fall of the pound undoubtedly affects us: since March, that factor alone has pushed up prices by 4%. But if we play the bosses' game and make sacrifices to please the speculators, we'll lose out both ways.

Our best defence is to demand that for every rise in prices, we get automatic compensation. For every 1% rise, we need an extra £1 in our pay packets.





"We were right to think that people were willing to fight"

BILL FORD (below right) — a member of the occupation committee at Moray House where the campaign first started talks to **WORKERS ACTION**.

WORKERS ACTION: How did the campaign start?

BILL FORD: When many of the students at Moray House realised that they were facing the dole next year. This did not only apply to the teachers, but to social and community workers as well. In Scotland, 2,300 of us face being unemployed. That's about 60% of those leaving teacher training colleges this year. The cuts are also affecting the students who are not leaving this year. At Moray House student numbers are going to be cut by 27% next year by reducing the intake. This is bound to affect the staff as well — some of them will also be without a job.

On May 12th an 860 strong general meeting voted for a Socialist Society motion calling for an occupation to close down the college. The priority then was to make sure this initiative was supported by other colleges.

Q. What obstacles did you find in spreading the campaign?

A. During the first week we sent 'flying pickets' round to other colleges and got 11 others to occupy. We then began to turn our attention to the English colleges. In most of the colleges we approached the biggest problem was the lack of any clear political leadership. Time after time we contacted places to get them to come out in support only to hear from their union executive that 'the student's aren't ready for action yet'. This is the same sort of response as we got from the NUS national executive. It took them 7 days to get round to supporting the Scottish occupations. It should be their job to lead the campaign — not to trail behind it.

Fight

But we were right to think that people were willing to fight. This has been shown by the enormous support for the occupations. In 3 colleges, for example, the union executives have been forced to resign for not respecting the decision of a general meeting to occupy.

Q. Do you claim 'special case' status as teachers?

A. At Moray House we want to stress our total opposition to any special case argument. From the start we have argued that our aim is to attack the Labour government's cut-backs in social spending. We want to draw all those affected into that fight, and not just limit it to teachers. The students at Moray House are demanding the reversal of all public spending cuts and the right to work for all.

The EIS and the NUT have consistently argued against education cuts and teacher unemployment by using the 'special case' line. This will cut no ice with colleges like Moray House and Queen Margaret's, which train social and community workers. Queen Margaret's also trains dieticians and nurses.

We will not accept any offer on our jobs which is at the expense of other sections of workers.

By 1980 by far the largest item of public expenditure will be interest repayment on capital the government has borrowed from private banks and insurance companies. It's these parasites who should pay for the crisis — instead they are holding us to ransom.

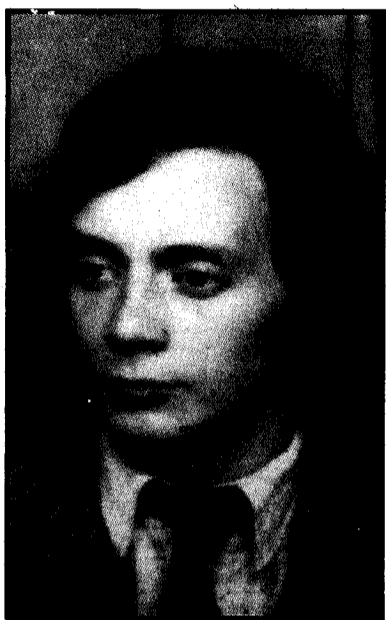
Q. What is the political basis of your campaign?

A. We are told we're being "unrealistic" in fighting the cuts. The government tell us that the economy can't stand firm without us 'making sacrifices'.

Any economy that has to reduce the living standards of the majority of the people in the interests of a privileged minority, that reduces health and education in the interests of private 'investors', is worthy on no-one's sacrifice.

We are being realistic when we say that there is a desperate need for an improved education programme and that there is no 'surplus of teachers'.

When we voted to occupy we knew that one localised struggle could not be successful. But a mass worker-student campaign based on direct action could soon defeat the present government's



policies. We see what we started as an integral part of building that campaign.

We also know the difficulties in getting genuine trade union support. We expect nothing from the trade union leaderships, who are so busy selling out their members to Healey. We look towards building links with rank and file trade unionists in a joint fight against the cuts. That is what we are aiming for.

Q. What sort of tactics have you used so far?

A. We have daily meetings in the occupation and regular general meetings. Both of these formulate policy for the occupation and the campaign and can demand the immediate recall of the occupation committee if they don't think the committee is doing its job properly.

We have carried out one-day lightning occupations of the Council offices and the Jobs Centre. We have also sent out flying pickets to other colleges, the mines south of Edinburgh (where we raised over £100), hospitals, building sites, and local factories. The support has been tremendous.

Visits

Obviously we have tried to get support from the teaching unions. Visits to all the local schools led to a meeting of 400 teachers in Moray House last week. They decided to support us and called for an immediate renegotiation of the Scottish teachers contract, a reduction in class sizes and class contact hours to make more jobs for teachers. They also condemned the statement by the EIS that Scottish teachers are a 'special case'.

A direct result of this meeting was the unofficial action taken by 15 schools in the Edinburgh area on May 26th. We need to build on this support and not allow it to disappear.

We are calling for the setting up of a genuinely representative 'fight the cuts' committee involving all public sector workers. This is the way to make sure the campaign has a useful lasting effect.

To build such a committee we are calling for a local trade union delegate conference which will mobilise for the Day of Action. This will be a national focus for the whole campaign. But it must not be seen as the end of it as well. Already in Moray House we are drawing up plans to keep the occupation going over the summer. We need national backing for this.

Q. What do you hope will come out of the conference on June 4th in Manchester?

A. We know that the Yorkshire colleges are not very happy with the way the NUS Executive are running the campaign. Neither are we... this conference must be more than a talking-shop. It must decide on positive action to carry the campaign into the labour movement. This means approaching the rank and file of the unions — not, as the NUS leadership say, 'meeting as one union executive with another'.

We will be urging all Scottish colleges to adopt a tough line at the conference.

EDUCATION: THE UNKIND CUT OF ALL

CUTBACKS IN education are not new. The latest round of cuts is an extension of the process begun during the period of office of the last Tory government. But anything the evil Tories did, Labour is out to show it can do ten times better. Or worse, if you happen to be a teacher or a schoolkid.

Margaret Thatcher, then in charge of education, gained a large measure of her present notoriety for restricting the supply of free school milk. But less conspicuously, she initiated the rapid drop in the number of teachers, proposing that numbers be cut from 526,000 (where they stood in 1969) to 510,000 by 1980.

That was Thatcher's estimate. Under Labour, 4 times as many teachers will have disappeared from the schools in that eleven years. Whereas Thatcher planned for a cut to 97% of the number in 1969, Labour's plans will reduce the number of teachers in the 1980 classrooms to a mere 90% of the 1969 number. One teacher in ten will have been eliminated.

And there the numbers will stay for another ten years, according to the predictions of the Dept. of Education and Science. (DES)

The next round of cuts came in 1973 when Tory Chancellor Barber took 10% off the education and libraries budget, reducing it by £183 million. At the same time, plans were launched to reorganise teacher training colleges and polytechnics. Some colleges were merged, and staff declined.

When Labour came to power, it was expected that they would restore the Barber cuts. This illusion was soon dispelled, though £31 million of what Barber had lopped off (17% of the total cut) was put back in.

Despite the visible deterioration brought by these cuts, they seem quite trivial now in the light of Healey's White Paper of March this year. He wants to take £1000 million off the next three years' education budget.

Less

At the end of this period, in the financial year 1979-80, less will be spent on education than in 1973-74!

This in itself sounds pretty horrific (imagine going shopping with housekeeping money that was just barely enough in 1970...) But the real savagery of these cuts shows up not in the figures, but in what they have done to the schools and colleges themselves.

Most visibly, the cuts have meant that there's been little or no money for school buildings or facilities — even preventive maintenance and repairs have been done on a shoestring or not at all.

More than 7,000 of the schools in use today were built before 1903, and many of these date back to the 1880s — with fittings and sanitation and furniture to match. When he announced these cuts, Healey said that there would be virtually no money for improving buildings or building new schools. Many local authorities that had plans for new schools (which must have been pretty urgently needed, if they were planned after Barber's cuts) have had to scrap them.

Conditions are often quite impossible. One case reported, for instance, is that of Elms School for the mentally handicapped in Lanc-

ashire, where a teacher has to cope with ten kids in a 13-foot square room cluttered up with tables and chairs.

Inflation has of course pushed up the cost of teaching materials used in schools. Annual supplies of books, paper and writing materials are getting smaller and smaller. Clearly, the Whitehall bureaucrats with their calculating machines haven't pondered the problem of what to do with art classes for the rest of a year after the paints have run out in February. In many areas parents are being asked to supply their kids with paper and pencils. And teachers often fork out from their own pockets for the inevitable collection of kids in every class who have come without these basic necessities.

If schools materials are regarded as luxury 'extras' that the teaching process should really manage without, that tells you how the budget-cutters regard school meals. Everywhere, the impression is: how little can we get with, without resembling a Victorian orphanage?

In some places smaller portions; in others, using the previous day's scraps; in most places, cutting down on expensive items like potatoes or fresh vegetables.

At one time kids from poorer homes could at least be sure of one decent, cheap meal at school. Now the price is beyond the means of many parents. With prices going up by 160% in some areas (Yorkshire is one), it's little wonder that food deficiency diseases like rickets are re-appearing after years of apparent extinction.

Cut

But after the buildings, the books, the furniture and the food had been pared down and standards brought as low as possible, other ways still had to be found to save yet more money. The most obvious was to cut down on teaching staff, making the ones that are left carry all the work.

A few years ago, teachers were almost guaranteed a job. Full-page newspaper adverts exhorted women to "come back to teaching". The NUT set itself to reduce class sizes to less than 30 and to reduce class contact hours so that teachers could do their marking and preparation in school time and not take hours and hours of overtime home with them every evening.

Teachers are still desperately needed. In the figure for every education authority you'll find one for unfilled staff quotas. Strathclyde for example, is understaffed by 1,400 teachers.

But now, whenever a vacancy appears, the only people the work is offered to (or rather, foisted on) are the remaining staff in a school. In primary schools, it is quite common for kids in a class whose teacher has left to be simply split up between the other classes in that year.

Meanwhile, there are 4,000 teachers out of work. That figure is expected to rise to 15,000 by the Autumn. And according to DES figures, 10,000 newly qualified teachers each year between now and 1979 are expected not to be able to find jobs.

The largest education authority in the country — Inner London's ILEA — is planning to cut down on teaching staff by a third in the next



8 years. This year they are only offering 80 jobs! Surrey is planning to get rid of 350 teaching jobs by September. Trafford have cut £½ m off their education budget and are axing 95 teaching places. In Sheffield there have been 1,500 applicants for only 80 jobs. In Leicester 1,000 applicants are chasing 100 jobs. And so it goes on, all over the country.

Of course, the DES don't intend this situation to last indefinitely. To match the cut in teachers, they will be cutting out on teacher training places.

If the revolt of the student teachers doesn't stop the rot now, and if organised teachers don't put a spoke in the plans, it will soon be too late. By 1981 the number of teacher training places will have been cut from the present 110,000 to 60,000. In the next couple of years college intake is set to drop from an annual 30,000 to a mere 12,000. Thirty training colleges are being closed down altogether: not only will there be less teachers, but fewer jobs for the people who train them.

Those who complain about the declining standards of education (and usually blame this on 'progressive teaching methods') should think what it means to have to cope with classes of 40 or 50 kids (and sometimes more). Already, there are 110,000 classes with more than 30 kids in them — most of

DEST



DESPITE THE DETERMINATION shown by student teachers resisting the cuts and fighting for jobs, it is unlikely that their campaign will continue at its present level of militancy for much longer.

Soon the college term will end and most of them will be returning to their homes, scattered to different parts of the country. This makes it all the more urgent that some positive results emerge from the campaign very quickly.

The most important task is to ensure that this present round of occupations isn't the last in the fight against the cuts. The experience of previous years has shown that the NUS Executive will not be easily drawn into launching a new campaign when students return to their colleges in the autumn. This time the initiative must be taken out of their hands. Colleges involved in the present campaign should set up a national body to plan for further action in October. Over the summer there is plenty of time for delegates from the colleges to meet, exchange experiences, and hammer out a plan for a nationally co-ordinated campaign. The initiative to form

DETERMINATION IS NOT ENOUGH

this should be taken now before the enthusiasm melts away over the summer.

In many areas the campaign has enabled students to make links with local labour movement bodies who support their action. These too must not be allowed to fade away. They must be strengthened by the formation of local 'Fight the Cuts' committees, drawing in workers and students, local Labour parties, women's groups, black organisations, and other bodies who have an interest in opposing the cuts. Where possible they should be formed out of the local Trades Council. If that cannot be done, then colleges or rank and file groups of workers should take the initiative. The experience of Moray House [see interview] shows how this can be done.

It is important that these committees have a clear idea of what they

should be fighting for. Workers Action believes they should fight for the following demands:

- * Support for the continuing occupations, in particular the Day of Action and Lobby of the Recall TUC on June 16th.
- * No covering for jobs lost due to unfilled vacancies or redundancies
- * Cut the hours — not the jobs. For a ban on all overtime and a campaign for a 35 hour working week.
- * Labour councils should refuse to implement the cuts, and pay the crippling interest charges on loans from banks and finance houses
- * Open the books so that we can see where the money that there is really going and what plans are being laid for the future

*The Labour government should protect social services from inflation by automatically increasing social expenditure to keep up with the cost of living. This will only keep things as they are. We also demand the restoration of all cuts in social service services, and more money to be put in so that we can have better health and education facilities, better pensions and unemployment benefits.

To those people who say that this programme is unrealistic and that there's not the money to pay for it, we argue that such steps are vital to protect the jobs and living standards of workers. Anyway the money is there — but locked up in the big banks and finance companies. It is the vast interest payments to these companies which accounts for the greatest proportion of public expenditure on the social services. If Labour was really determined to adopt policies which were in the interests of workers and students it would release these funds and free itself from these crippling debts by nationalising the banks and finance houses.

Conference calls for Day of Action to build trade union links

400 delegates from student unions met in Manchester last Saturday to decide how to carry forward their campaign against the cuts. Most of the delegates were from occupying teacher training colleges, though some were from colleges and universities which were not occupying.

The conference was called by the NUS Executive, who saw it as being only for those places with teacher training courses. Implicitly this was an acceptance of the notion that the whole campaign was just concerned with education cuts. But most of the colleges see their campaign as part of a wider fight against the Healey cuts, and this difference was reflected in an argument during the early part of the conference about which delegates should have voting rights.

Sticking to their original idea, the Executive proposed that only colleges and universities with teacher training courses should be allowed to vote. This would have led to the ludicrous situation of taking votes away from places like Herriot Watt University and Edinburgh College of Art (which are occupied) and giving them to places like Edinburgh University (which are not occupied).

But the Executive had mistaken the mood of the conference. Unlike the usual NUS conference, it was composed of student activists elected from General Meetings and occupation committees. They reflected the militant mood of the occupations and rejected the Executive's ruling, giving each union represented 3 votes.

The resolution was in fact defeated in favour of a more militant amendment coming from the occupying colleges. The Executive motion called for a national day of action on June 15th, and then went on to list proposals for action, most of which (such as leafletting the public) the students were already doing. It also argued explicitly that the campaign should be restricted to the issue of education cuts.

This was thrown out in favour of a motion put forward by all but two Scottish colleges and about 40 English ones. It opposed the 'special case' argument, pointing out that a fight against these cuts demanded the support of the whole labour movement, which could only be got if the issue was broadened out to draw in other sections of workers affected by the Healey measures.

Calling for the formation of joint action committees to carry the campaign forward, it stressed the need to set up in the localities Fight the Cuts committees which could draw in the widest sections of the labour movement.

As part of this programme to link up the student campaign with the trade union movement, the amendment called for a local Day of Action on June 15th to build up to a national demonstration on June 16th on the same day as the meeting of the recalled TUC.

Two other amendments which could also have boosted the campaign were narrowly defeated. One called for a national co-ordinating committee to be set up to run the campaign; the other for a special NUS Conference during the summer. Both of these were further expressions of the dissatisfaction felt with the way the Executive had so far failed to lead the campaign. If they had been passed they would have put the initiative where it really belongs — with the activists in the local unions.

Failed

Having failed to get their way early on, the Executive then proceeded to try to bore the conference into submission by producing endless reports from the localities. But the delegates had come principally to decide on what to do next — not to listen to what had already happened. Requests from the floor finally got a debate on the resolution from the Executive — and the amendments to it.

and given little publicity when it was finally published.

Now teachers and students have begun to realise what the cuts will mean to their jobs and the education system as a whole. They are beginning to fight back. In some areas teachers have staged stoppages against the cuts and refused to teach classes which are too large.

And the mass of student teachers are occupying against the cuts and unemployment.

One of the Labour MPs who did not support the Healey cuts, Stan Newens, said at the time that "the education cuts would be devastating, causing a severe deterioration in standards for a whole generation and a return to the 1930s when only the people who could afford a decent education got one."

Unhappily Newens and other Tribune MPs then went on to give a vote of confidence in the government which was proposing to carry out these cuts.

For the sake of the future of a "whole generation" of children and teachers these cuts must be fought. And they must be fought by the working class: for it is workers, who cannot afford to buy a decent education, who will suffer.

The action of the student teachers in the last month has shown us the way to do this — by direct action, not by reliance on people like Newens who utter fine words

them in primary schools. To eliminate this problem would necessitate 584,000 teachers by 1980. Instead there will be just 460,000.

Bad though things have been in the schools themselves, it is only from figures like these that the full measure of the damage being planned really comes across. And that is because most of the cuts haven't actually bitten yet — Healey's haven't started to take effect, and a recent government circular to local authorities complained that the cuts were not being implemented to the full: they had 'overspent' by between £350m-£450m in the last year on various things, and education accounted for £135m.

The circular warned the councils to bring their spending into line with the cuts planned for next year, and said that if they didn't the government would not help them out with any more money to

Knew

them out with any more money to pay for the deficit.

In fact the DES knew several years ago that if the cuts went ahead at the rate planned, thousands of teachers would be put out of work. A report done 5 years ago predicted a sharp rise in unemployment among teachers this year. The



NUS President Charles Clark

The immediate task is to put the decisions of the conference to work. Constitutionally the conference was not a policy making body, and as such is not binding on the NUS Executive. They have shown no great enthusiasm for the June 16th demonstration or the ideas approved by the delegates. We can place no confidence in them to make June 16th the success it must be. It's up to the activists in the localities to use the local day of action to day before to really build support for the national demonstration. It means working flat out to get commitments of support from all the students in the areas and local trade union organisations. If this is done, we can go forward from there to create the Fight the Cuts committees which must be built up out of this campaign.

JO THWAITE (Delegate to the Conference from Moray House, Edinburgh)

NO WAY FORWARD

THE spectacle of thousands of students occupying against the cuts and unemployment has thrown the leadership of the National Union of Students into confusion. The NUS Executive is dominated by the Broad Left, which is controlled by the Communist Party and includes a motley collection of Labourites and 'non-aligned' students.

When the occupations broke out in Scotland the NUS Executive took a week before it could bring itself to issue a statement of support, and even longer to get around to organising any national support. Since then they have consistently pushed the line that student teachers are a 'special case', even though this line of argument has been opposed by the occupying students.

Instead of trying to find ways to broaden out the campaign into the labour movement, the bureaucrats of the NUS Executive have tried to limit the campaign as much as possible. This even goes for the forms of action that they have proposed, restricting themselves to calling for a Day of Action and refusing to call out the universities and polytechnics in support. At this time of the year it would not be easy to get these places out — but the effort should be made. The Executive haven't even tried to do that.

Other leading political groups in the NUS have also been inadequate in res-

ional Socialists and the International Marxist Group both have members on the Executive and have a substantial number of delegates supporting them at every NUS Conference. Yet all they have managed to do in the present situation is put forward their own pet 'hobby horse' in a manner unrelated to the actual development of the campaign.

The IS put out an 'Occupation News' bulletin which went in for a lot of full-some praise for the actions of the student teachers. The only trouble was, it put forward no ideas for developing or continuing the campaign except ... joining IS's own and declining Right to Work Campaign. The fact that this is little more than an IS 'front' with no base in the labour movement did not deter them. All they were really saying, then, was that to fight the cuts students should ... join IS.

Ground

The IMG responded to the situation by producing a pamphlet which basically argued for what they refer to as a "class struggle tendency" in the labour movement to fight the right wing. They see the present occupations as laying the ground for the development of this tendency.

Quite what this idea means isn't at all clear, but they seem to see it as a

fight against a supposed "right wing clique" in the labour government. In practice this comes down to lumping together everyone you can find on any sort of basis which seems to oppose the Labour Government and then turning these people into a mass campaign to drive out the right wing.

This conception is totally vacuous. It ignores the fact that people who can be gathered together on one issue may well support the government on other issues, and lets the IMG off from the difficult task of posing any clear alternative policies of their own.

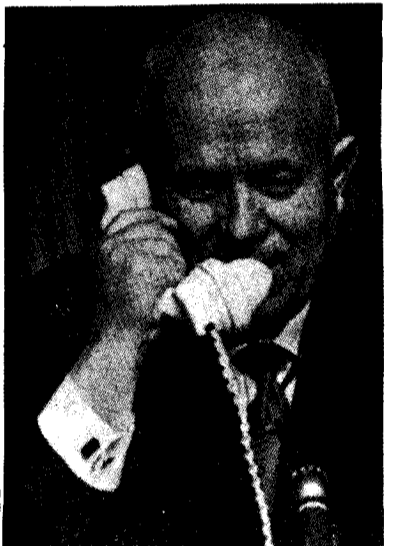
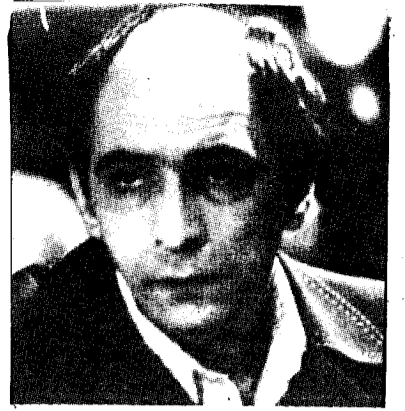
All the IMG could put forward initially was the demand for a Scottish Assembly of Labour. They seemed to have no idea of what this should be for, and subsequently dropped the demand when it became clear that the campaign wasn't just confined to Scotland.

In practice, they have concentrated on the task of pushing the NUS leadership to the left and have done so while arguing against the vital necessity of building local anti-cuts committees. Their passive preaching about making the NUS leadership fight provides a sharp contrast to the mindless militancy approach of IS who simply advocate 'spreading the struggle' without any particular aim being put forward for that struggle.

Neither of these approaches offers a

20 years after Khrushchev's speech

AN APPEAL TO THE COMMUNIST PARTIES



Leonid Plyushch (top), Dubcek (centre) and Khrushchev (bottom)

SOON THE CONGRESS of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union will begin. Your representatives will be present at this. I shall use this opportunity to direct these words to you in the name of those communists in opposition to the existing regime in the Soviet Union. I should like to remind you of certain tragic events in the history of the world communist movement.

I know that eye-witness reports from the underground movement do not carry any conviction for you. I shall therefore try to base my appeal to you solely on those facts which are universally accepted and that you can read for yourselves if you study carefully the documents of the 20th and 21st Congresses of the CPSU, the historical studies by Soviet historians written during the Khrushchev 'thaw' period, and the underground writings published by people who have remained communists.

In the '30's the Comintern (the Communist International) did not so much concentrate its forces against the Nazis, but rather against the Social Democrats, whom it characterised as Hitler's accomplices. In this way the working class was split and its struggle against fascism impeded.

In 1939 the CPSU concluded a pact of peace and friendship with fascist Germany. Molotov declared at the time that in the previous three months the situation had made a 'dialectical turn'. Now Britain and France were the aggressors. Many western comrades adopted the CPSU's new line. For instance, T. Dreiser raged at the fact that the USA was prepared to help Britain and France. The blindness of the Comintern went so far that it split the Polish CP just at the time it should have been uniting the greatest forces against fascism.

Gang

After the War the Stalin gang acted in the same way in relation to foreign communist parties. The Yugoslav communists can thank their determination and their geographical situation for the fact that they avoided such criminal intervention in their internal affairs. But remember the fury of the lies that were hurled at the Yugoslav communists: "Tito, a Gestapo agent", "Tito, friend of fascism", and so on.

It might be objected that all this lies in the distant past and that since the 20th Congress the CPSU has been following in the footsteps of Lenin.

But think of the fate of Czechoslovakia. The moment the Czech Communist Party decided to

THE OPEN LETTER from Leonid Plyushch to the Western Communist Parties before the 25th Congress of the Russian Communist Party is an important document.

It reveals tremendous strengths in the man. Recently released from imprisonment in a Russian 'psychiatric hospital' and allowed out of Russia, Plyushch has refused to be recruited to the anti-socialist, anti-working-class chorus of Russian emigres and dissidents. He has not, for example, teamed up with writers like Solzhenitsyn and Maximov around the journal "Kontinent", which is funded by the extreme right-wing West German press-lord Axel Springer.

Plyushch's letter stands as an indication that the Stalinists have not been able to stamp out completely the ideas and the aspirations of the communist movement. Despite the tremendous difficulty in obtaining any information in Russia today about the debates and arguments in the years after the Revolution, Plyushch shows that certain threads of those arguments still exist in opposition circles.

Plyushch, for example, is right about the role Stalinist-dominated CPs played in the rise to power of the Nazis. He is right to point out that the leadership of the October Revolution perished in the mass purges of the 1930s.

Rule

A considerable body of opinion both in Russia and the West holds that Khrushchev, by his speeches of denunciation at the 20th and 22nd Congresses, started to dismantle the system of repression and police rule created by Stalin. Sections of the Russian opposition, like Roy Medvedev, and the ex-general secretary of the CPGB, John Gollan, have argued that the problem is that Khrushchev's policies have yet to be pushed far enough.

Plyushch stands in harsher judgment on Khrushchev. He is right that Khrushchev never raised the question of the usurpation of the power of the workers' councils (soviets) on which the Russian workers' state of 1917 was based. He is right that Khrushchev never considered putting

the butchers on trial, and that exiled nationalities have not to this day been allowed to return to their homelands.

Despite the experience of persecution in the name of socialism, Plyushch argues the need not just for more changes at the top, but for "the passing of power from the hands of the Party and Soviet bureaucracy into the hands of the working class".

But Plyushch shares the deep distrust of the Russian working class, the pessimistic elitism, which is common to the vast majority of the known Russian opposition.

Power

That opposition, loosely formed, and primarily intellectual-based, embraces all those in Russian society in pursuit of democratic reforms. It ranges from counter-revolutionaries and anti-Marxists to gradual reformists and figures such as Plyushch. Social isolation, the brutality meted out to workers showing signs of organised self-activity (as for example in the bloody bread riots in Novocherkassk in 1962), and, for the majority, a fear of the effects of workers' power and control on their marginal privileges, has led most oppositionists, including Plyushch, to focus away from the Russian working class as a force for changing society. In case of Plyushch, he wants power to pass to the working class, but has no faith in the working class itself.

In a recent interview with the French paper "Informations Ouvrieres", Plyushch was asked about the Trotskyist program for the rebuilding of soviets from below, for the reassertion of workers' control from below, for the revolutionary uprising of the masses. He said: "I wonder about this. The masses have no political consciousness whatsoever... There might be a chance if there were a war. But war is too monstrous and it would not bring democratisation".

The Russian Right look to trade embargos inspired by reactionary US Senators to push their cause. Plyushch, turning his back on the Russian working class, places his hopes on the experience of the Dubcek movement and on the Italian

tread the path of independence, the country was occupied by Soviet troops. You can all read the documents of the 'Prague Spring' and see proof of how the charges made against the Czechs were nothing but lies. I will mention only the most important thing: Dubcek had the complete support of the people and the party

The occupation of Czechoslovakia was clear proof to everyone of the big-power chauvinism of the Soviet regime. The

events of 1968 serve as a warning and a threat to the independence of nations. I shall also refer to the internal political situation in the Soviet Union.

Unfortunately the 20th and 22nd Congresses did not mention the fate of communists. The leaders of the CPSU were afraid to mention the tragic fate that befell millions of non-party workers, peasants, and intellectuals. They decided against any public trial of the butchers of the Soviet people. The

and French Communist Parties.

This is very understandable. In the strictly censored mass media of Russia, only the critical positions of the Western CPs and of Dubcek have the faintest hope of trickling through. Even Western CP papers are not available in Russia if they contain material criticising the internal policies of the Russian leadership.

But Plyushch has put his faith in the wrong perspectives.

Dubcek in Czechoslovakia was a reforming bureaucrat, forced by the pressures, stagnations, and frustrations of Czechoslovakian society to democratise far beyond his original programme. By the time of the Russian invasion in 1968 Dubcek found his proposals for extending management rights and privileges in direct conflict with the aspirations of the developing factory committees of the working class in Czechoslovakia. In Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia of 1968, the reforming aspirations of the bureaucracy have come into direct conflict with the interests and the organisations of the working class.

The Western CPs have no commitment to working class power. In France, and particularly in Italy, they are prepared to share power with right-wing anti-working class parties. To woo right-wing coalition partners and win respectability, they have taken up the cause of some of the Russian dissidents. They do so in the interests of their own prospects of government office, not in the interests of the Russian working class.

Noble

Plyushch's struggle has been a noble one. Against fantastic odds he has maintained a socialist conviction and developed some elements of an understanding of the nature of the Russian regime. A future issue of Workers Action will take up the recent history of workers' struggles in Russian and Eastern Europe. It is to this struggle, not to appeals to the Italian CP or to new Dubceks, that those forces seeking to overthrow the Russian bureaucracy must turn.

Stalinist Gestapo silenced all the leaders of the October revolution and the civil war — party leaders, leaders in the Soviets, the trade unions, the Comsomol (CPSU youth section), and commanders of the Red Army. The Bolshevik party was destroyed physically and morally by the Party of Stalin. The purges even claimed in their systematic rooting out anyone with an independent thought in his head.

It was said at the 20th and 22nd Congresses that Stalin's secret political police (GPU-NKVD) had set themselves as a power above the Party. But no-one mentioned the usurpation of the power of the Soviets by the top party bureaucracy. In the Soviet Union the peasants and the intellectuals have no power over the government. Remember the 'palace revolution' of 1964 when Khrushchev was replaced without the people knowing. I also want to remind you of the terrible crimes of the Stalinist Party.

At the end of World War 2 many people from the Caucasus, the Crimea, and the lower Volga were accused of "acts of treason" against the Party and deported to Central Asia and Siberia. Today some of these are being allowed to return to their homelands. But the Crimean Tartars, the Meshiks, the Greeks, and the Volga Germans still do not have the right to return to their homelands. Their leading activists were persecuted, imprisoned, and interned.

The fate of these people is also a lesson to others. In the '60's there grew up in the Soviet Union a democratic movement. The proponents of this movement demanded

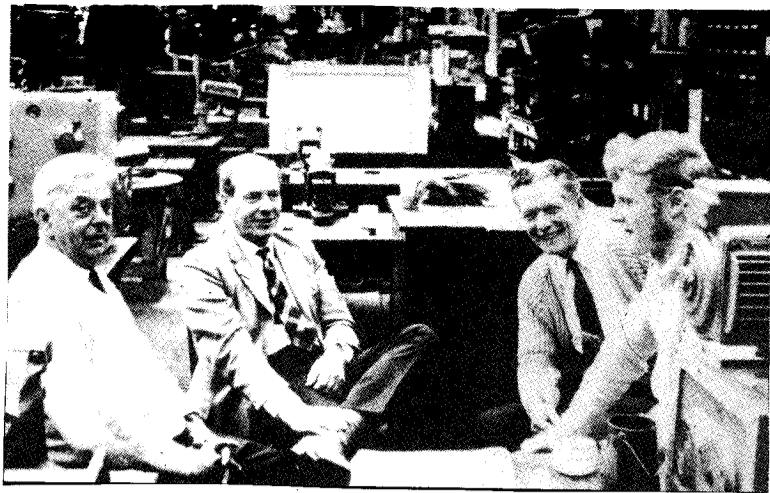
the restoration of the political, economic, and national rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These rights are also contained in formal terms in the Soviet constitution, which recognises the freedom of speech, the freedom to vote, the freedom of belief, and the freedom of every nation to determine its own life. The democratic movement contains communists and non-communists.

We oppositional communists hold the view that the democratisation of the Soviet state will entail the passing of power from the hands of the bureaucracy into the hands of the working-class. We believe that there is no chance of capitalism being restored in the event of such a democratisation. We appeal to you. History has taught us the bitter lesson that there can be no normal development of the state where there is no opposition. We turn to you to campaign for the release of all political prisoners throughout the world and particularly in the 'socialist' countries.

You communists from capitalist countries struggle for a humane, democratic, communist society. But the inhabitants of your countries are able to analyse events and choose their path accordingly. The communist parties of the so-called 'socialist' countries have discredited the ideas of communism and continue to do so.

Only if you wage a determined and uncompromising struggle for the democratisation of the 'socialist' countries and for an amnesty for the political prisoners of these countries will you be able to spare your compatriots the horrors of Stalinist dictatorship. Socialism without democracy is anti-socialism.





Engineers' sit-in strike, Manchester 1972: criminal trespass, if the law is changed

Bosses tighten up the trespass law

IN A NOTE to its affiliated trade union organisations, the National Council for Civil Liberties has warned them of "dangerous implications for trade unionists" in the new proposals of the Law Commission on the law of trespass.

The Law Commission proposals include the abolition of the charge of conspiracy to trespass under which trade unionists even planning to occupy a factory can receive heavy sentences.

But they also propose a series of modifications which arm the state and the employers with legal weapons against workers fighting for their jobs. They clearly demonstrate that the law is in no sense impartial — it is there to defend property: the bosses' property, that is. Workers' defending their only property, their ability to work, don't get such protection!

The new proposals define serious penalties for "violent entry, trespassing with an offensive weapon and obstructing an officer of the court."

"Violent entry" is defined as including "threats" or attempting to gain entry if a person knows that there are persons on the premises opposed to the entry. It means that a constable could arrest anyone without a warrant who he has "reasonable cause" to suspect of such an offence — which carries a maximum penalty of TWO YEARS' prison.

Violence is further stretched to include "splintering a door or a window or its frame". If the offence is committed during an occupation by two or more workers or there is an agreement by several workers to occupy a factory, then there could also be a prosecution for conspiracy.

The clause on "offensive weapons" defines it so loosely as to make it applicable to any items — tools, even coins — which workers are likely either to carry or have to hand in a factory under occupation.

"Obstruction" is defined even as passive resistance to an officer of the court. So workers who refuse to leave an occup-

ied factory when asked to do so by a court bailiff could be arrested, again without warrant, could face six months in the nick — without the right to trial by a jury.

These proposals are all clearly aimed at strengthening the bosses and their state for the battles to come. It is vital that workers take up the battle against these proposals as well as against the existing conspiracy and trespass laws, under which Des Warren is now serving his third year in jail, a living reproach to the self-defeating indifference of the trade union movement.

The ruling class knows only too well the serious situation of British capitalism and the drastic medicine it intends to dole out to the working class. At this moment, 100 colleges are occupied by students demanding an end to the government's spending cuts. Thousands of homeless families have to "trespass" their way into empty houses just to get a roof over their heads; cuts in spending on housing will swell their numbers. The recent AUEW conference has given the go-ahead to official union support of any factory occupations undertaken in defence of jobs.

The bosses have two ways of dealing with their coming crisis: force and fraud. As the fraud of the TUC/Labour Government incomes policy begins to wear thin, the ruling class will resort to force more and more. Already, under the benevolent eye of Labour's Home Secretary Roy Jenkins, paramilitary police strike-breaking squads are being trained; special patrol groups are being mobilised and armed.

These new proposals of the Law Commission are a 'legal' weapon aimed at the heart of the working class movement. The campaign must be stepped up against them — in workplaces, trade union branches, trades councils, in the Labour Party and the LPYS. We must demand that trade union leaders and Labour MPs oppose these new proposals and mobilise the labour movement against them.

UCATT conference: an advance for the left

LAST WEEK'S UCATT conference, despite the exhortations of Mr. Len Murray, marked a step forward for the left.

A resolution was carried committing the union to disregard Healey's wage limits and to press ahead with claims for £2 an hour for craftsmen and £1.90 an hour for labourers. Existing rates are 92½p and 78½p respectively.

Conference also voted for a campaign for a 5 hour cut in the working week. At a time when more than 200,000 building workers are unemployed, such a policy is a vital part of any programme to fight redundancies. And the Conference threw out a right wing bid to call on the Building Workers' Charter to disband itself.

But the story does not end there. Although the Executive was instructed to "disregard anybody setting a ceiling on wage increases" George Smith, UCATT General Secretary, made it quite clear that the only thing he will be busy disregarding is the conference itself.

In a series of remarkable outbursts, made before the vote had been taken, Smith made it clear that the Executive considered the vote to be 'academic' because they had no intention of carrying it out.

Smith and the Executive are to try and get their way by arranging a vote in branch meetings. They hope that they can swing the membership, with the help and encour-



George Smith

agement of the employers press, by arranging such a ballot and in that way avoid the call to action issued by last week's conference.

George Smith, among whose claims to fame is the circular he once issued condemning the Shrewsbury 24 as criminals when they were about to stand trial, must be challenged and defeated by a concerted campaign in UCATT to throw out his ruling — and him with it!

The fight to democratise the union and win decent wages and jobs for its hard pressed members is clearly now one and the same fight.

The Union's conference has made clear its preparedness to go for a claim that can win real improvements for the members. To press forward with that claim, a concerted campaign must be waged in the branches against the practices and policies of George Smith & Co, and for the thorough democratising of the Union.

The maximum unity must be forged nationally and locally of those rank and file militants who want to lead a campaign to kick out the treacherous leadership of George Smith.

THE UNIONS



The right wing are worried about the Building Workers Charter group. On present showing they have little to worry about. In the 1972 National Builders' strike the Communist Party-dominated Charter group put itself on ice in search of alliances with progressive officials in UCATT. Such policies, and the subsequent dormancy of the Charter group, has allowed Smith to keep on top. That why the fight against Smith and the UCATT right will have to clearly differentiate itself from the policies and past of the officials 'lefts' in the Union.

Automat strikers still strong — its now 5 months

THE STRIKE at Automat, Swinton has now been going on for over 20 weeks — that's five months in the worst weather you can imagine, picketing from 7.30 in the morning til 5 in the evening with no let-up for the 24 AUEW members still on strike. And even though it's now June, they say "it's still pissing down on us".

I asked June, Carol and Betty what they had expected when they first came out on strike, and they said they'd thought in would be all over in less than a week, but now "we have a sneaking feeling we could still be here at Christmas. The boss, Chamberlain, just won't listen and is so stubborn he expects to get his own way however much it hurts him."

But the strikers are stubborn too. Betty said "It's important to win this time for the sake of the youngsters in this area who'll be needing decent jobs here in the future."

Automat is a one-man business run by an absentee boss who turns up every 3 months with champagne and chocolates if the workers have achieved his targets. He's still living in the past and runs the 200 workers as if he was the lord of the manor, hiring and firing them at will.

No-one earns the same basic wage, nor are they supposed to know each other's wage; and if the manager feels like it he might call them in individually for an extra quid or two "but don't tell your mates".

It's rumoured that the bonus scheme is based on neat appearance and attitude to the foreman, but no-one is absolutely sure, and it certainly doesn't apply to Chamberlain who looks like a tramp and has earned the nickname 'Mighty Mouse' for his rudeness.

Five months ago he thought he could get away with his usual dictatorial practice of sacking trouble makers, nine of the workers who had just joined the union. At that, all 50 other AUEW members came out in solidarity — so he sacked them too.

The trouble is, say the strikers,

"we were his best workers", and he can't get the same targets out of his scabs. But with two luxury hotels in Cheshire bringing in a nice bonus for his, he probably isn't feeling the pinch yet.

He's fed the scabs with the line that the pickets are 'threatening their jobs', and that if the strike goes on he might have to close the place down. But the strikers say they know he has plans to expand Automat.

In fact it is the strikers, not the scabs doing their jobs, who are under pressure locally, with the scabs (many once close friends and neighbours of the pickets) abusing them to other local people. "They walk past us in the street and tell their kids to stop playing with our kids at school."

All this harassment gets the strikers down, particularly the younger girls who've only just left school and get it from their parents too. Betty said "Naturally I'd rather be in there working than out here picketing. Since there are so few of us we've no chance of a rota and have to be here every day, all day. It's pretty boring — and it's hard to explain to your kids why you're sitting outside, why we can't go for a holiday this year, why they can't have new shoes..."

Betty's brother had been out of work for 18 months; they all knew people in the area who couldn't find work. Unemployment in Swinton is terrible, most wages are low and many school kids can expect to go straight on the dole.

"In any case, Automat was a good place to work in some ways. Most of us started years ago, straight after school; we've had breaks to have kids, and then knew that we could speak to the section worker who would find us a job when we wanted to go back. Lots of women at Automat worked there on and off for years, so you knew everyone and there was a happy, home from home atmosphere — so long as Mighty Mouse stayed away."

SUE ARNALL talks to the pickets at Automat, Manchester's long-running strike for basic trade union rights.

Why had they worked at Automat, getting low wages and living under a boss who could take it into his head to sack them at any time?

Until recently, he got away with paying low wages because it was a place that was convenient for local women with kids: a pretty good case for the demands of the Working Women's Charter, which sets out to get adequate maternity leave and maternity pay for all women workers so they won't be held to ransom by some tin-pot boss. The convenience that kept these women working for a take-home pay of about £11 a week, staying loyal because the job was handy, has cost Chamberlain nothing. He does well enough to keep a huge house with 2 housekeepers and grounds large enough for a bungalow used for storing his booze!

But there was a limit to the abuses that these workers would take. With times getting harder, 'Mighty Mouse' tried to speed up the work, keep their noses to the grindstone, show them he was boss. And they in turn needed protection against instant dismissal, and some decent wages to keep up with inflation — so they started the Union. And that led them onto a collision course with the feudal lord of Automat.

It's vital that this simple attempt to wrest some control over their work situation should succeed, and that this eccentric dictator be forced to concede defeat.

Solidarity action from other unions is being sought to block Automat products at Chloride and GEC. And the strikers are hoping that local Manchester factories will support the mass pickets called regularly to put pressure on the scabs and to show that the pickets are not on their own.

workers' ACTION supporters' groups

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Write for details of meetings & activities to:
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WORKERS IN ACTION

JBH SUPPORT FLOWS IN— BUT NOT FROM UNION

AS THE STRIKE at J. Blackwood Hodge (JBH), Northampton, in defence of jobs and union organisation, goes into its 3rd week, support is growing locally for it, and action is being taken to extend the solidarity necessary for a swift victory.

On Monday, representatives from the strike committee visited a JBH plant in Barnsley, where the workers came out for the afternoon and are considering further support.

In Northampton itself, money for the strike fund is flowing in from union branches and factory collections. Last Saturday night a social organised with the aid of the local LPYS raised £60 for the fund.

But support has not come so readily from one of the most important places — the AUEW District Office.

The role of the District Secretary has in fact been downright obstructive. Despite such strike action being official union policy, the Secretary, Ward, has consistently failed to reassure the men and women on strike that their action would be made official, and failed to argue strongly for official recog-

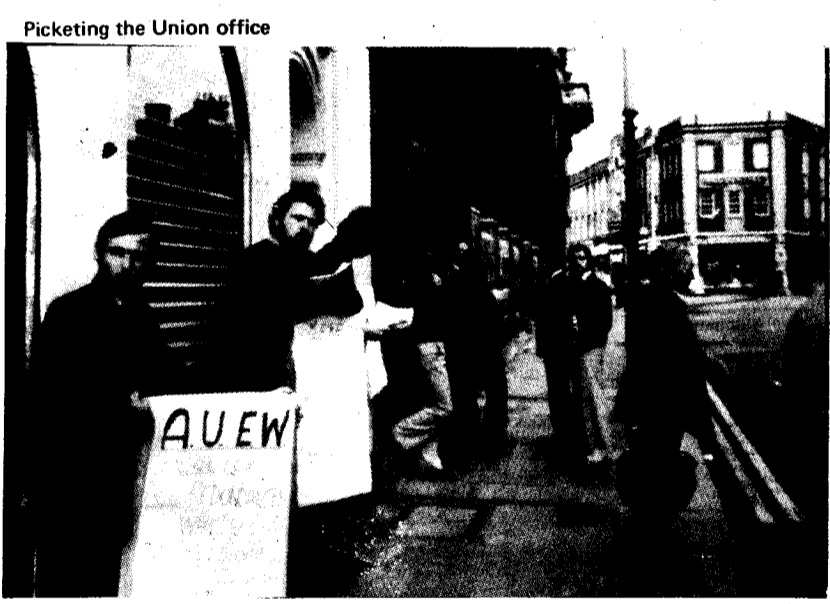
ognition at the District Committee. Rather, he has tried to wrest control of the strike from the strike committee, and he has refused the strikers access to union paper and duplicating facilities.

No-one should be surprised at his response, judging by his past record and . . . the JBH calendar hanging up in the District Office. Over the past months, redundancies have gone through with his collusion at Light Production, and the union at Airflow Streamline was smashed after the leading organisers were sacked just before Christmas.

The strike has shown up other lay officials. The AUEW branch President, having continually crossed the JBH picket line, has resigned from the union now, as has one of the stewards.

Trade unionism is clearly weak in Northampton. The struggle at JBH is an important one, not only for the workers there but also as a guide and inspiration in future battles against the bosses and their trusty officials.

ROSS CATLIN



Picketing the Union office

TRICO LOBBY FORDS STEWARDS

WOMEN on official strike at Trico in Brentford, Middlesex, have amazed management by their militancy and ability to fight in the face of great odds.

As the strike enters its third week, the initial enthusiasm of the 400-odd women involved has settled down to determination to fight it out for their demands for equal pay.

The female operators at Tricos get about £6.50 a week less than the male operators, with whom the women are claiming parity. Both work for a firm which has a reputation for generally poor rates and bad conditions in the area of the Great West Road.

In the first week of the strike the men operators joined the women on the picket line, so that all production workers have come out except for 4 women scabs. Production is at a standstill.

The men came out on hearing that management intended to achieve the parity demand by lowering their rate to that of the women!

Negotiations for equal pay have been going on since last September, and when the district secretary of the AUEW reported to the women on 24th May, the management was prepared to make no offer at all. Three days later on May 27th the strike was made official.

Management are trying to use the men still inside (there are 400 women out, from a workforce of about 1500)

to divide the workers on the picket line. For instance, they are holding meetings with workers inside the factory and resorting to numerous lies and distortions. The latest allegation is that the management have agreed to settle — when in fact they unofficially said they would give just 30 of the women equal pay.

The dispute has been to ACAS, with no result, and management are now talking of taking it to an industrial tribunal.

So far the women have stayed solid and united, picketing the factory from 7am til 5, and they've been successful in turning lorries away so that the company is now starting to lose orders. On Wednesday (9th June) the strikers are planning to lobby a big meeting of Fords stewards and convenors at Westminster, to ensure Ford workers black all supplies from Tricos — who make car accessories, in particular windscreen wipers.

Since the strike began, about a quarter of the women have joined the union (AUEW).

Trico is a company that is used to walking over people. These women that have stood up to it should get the full support of all trade unionists.

Send your messages and financial help to: Trico Strike Fund, c/o AUEW House, Roger Butler, 1 Woodlands Road, Southall, Middlesex.

WHY BLACK DEFENCE IS NECESSARY *from p1*

In Stepney, five Bengalis were attacked in the course of a week as they came from Commercial Road bus stop through York Square on their way home from work.

On Saturday 15th May about 20 youths aged between 14 and 18 chased two Bengalis until they managed to jump into a taxi. The gang carried sticks and broken bottles. The following evening on two separate occasions isolated Bengalis were again threatened. Then at 9pm on Monday 17th May Rahman Farjar was attacked by a dozen youths, who used broken bottles to split his head open. He had to have several stitches.

On the same night three or four minicabs operating from a firm on Whitehorse Road were seen cruising round the area. At one point, three of them were parked in Aston Street, where many Bengalis live. They seemed to be using their car radios to coordinate the action of the youths attacking the Bengalis.

Sharks

When asked what they were doing there, they became aggressive and made racist remarks about immigrants living in the area. The minicab firm is owned by a member of the National Front; residents in the area feel the minicabs are like cruising sharks.

Tower Hamlets Borough, where these incidents occurred, tells you a lot about racialism. It is an area of mounting decay and dereliction. 30,000 jobs have left the borough in the last ten years, and more are to follow. Appalling housing and social services, compounded by savage cuts, are being inflicted on the overwhelmingly working class population.

The rate of unemployment, already twice the national average, is expected to be 50 per cent worse than last year. At least 20% of school leavers will still be out of work come September.

Racialism is rife throughout the schools and unions. Resolutions have come from the Labour Party wards calling for immediate immigration controls and a clampdown on immigrants coming to live in the borough.

This, together with a complete lack of real activity on the part of the labour movement over the vital questions facing the working class

— housing, jobs, wages and public service cuts — is an ideal breeding ground for the virus of fascism.

The National Front and other fascist groups have been systematically destroying the traditional labour organisations, both from within and without — by spreading racist propaganda inside the union branches, by attacking Labour Party supporters, by attacking Labour Party agents and by burning down Party headquarters.

But the local Labour leaderships still peddle the spineless line that appeasement is the best policy, that resisting attack will only provoke more attacks. In this way they leave the road open for the fascists to strut through the streets, attracting unemployed youth with their bravado and promises of action.

The immigrants are an easy scapegoat. The National Front are even able to present themselves as 'champions of the working class' — after all, they have little competition from Labour!

In many areas now, the black communities are beginning to fight back. They know from bitter experience that they can expect no protection from the police.

In Bethnal Green, Pakistani youths are now defending themselves against racist attacks, and in Barking, following the example of Southall, Asians are starting to take on the white mobs which until now have been wrecking their houses and shops with impunity.

Racist

In the area of York Square in Stepney a group of about 30 black and white militants has successfully driven the racist youths from the streets.

In Southall, the West Indian Standing Conference has called for the organisation of joint West Indian, Asian and white groups to patrol the streets. This, in contrast to the attitude of the established leadership of the Asian community (who regard the urgent task of the moment as having talks with the Prime Minister) is a welcome step.

It must be our aim to unite in action the black community organisations with the local labour movement and socialist organisations in defence of the black communities.

SOUTH LONDON W.A. supporters should join the march in Brixton against police violence and harassment of the black community, leaving from the Tate Library at 2pm on Saturday June 12th.

All other London supporters should be on the demonstration against Cuts and Unemployment organised by the labour movement in East London, and which is in danger of attack or attempted infiltration by the National Party. Leaves at 2pm Saturday from Rathbone Market, Barking Road, Canning Town.

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PUBLIC DEBATE BETWEEN I-CL and IMG 'Building a Trotskyist International' WITH SPEAKERS representing the leaderships of both organisations

AT the CONWAY HALL, on Friday June 25th at 7pm. • Admission 10p

The I-CL and the Fourth International

30p

EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Send copy to 'Events', 49 Carnac Street, London SE27, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's issue.

Monday 14th June. 'Save the ELIZABETH GARRETT ANDERSON Hospital' meeting, 7pm at 30 Camden Road, London NW1

Tuesday 15th June. WEST LONDON WORKERS ACTION Readers' meeting. 'Revolutionaries and the Labour Party' with speaker Simon Temple (Norwood CLP). 7.30pm at Room 217 Hammersmith Town Hall, King Street, London W6.

Tuesday 15th June. CARDIFF WORKERS ACTION Public Meeting on the Middle East, with a Palestinian speaker. 7.30pm at Rhymney Hotel, Aclam Street, Cardiff.

Thursday 17th June. READING SOCIALIST FORUM Public meeting: 'The Menace of Fascism'. Speaker Dick Pratt (Birmingham WA Supporter). 7.45pm at T&GWU offices, King's Road, Reading.

Friday 18th June. LEICESTER NAC Benefit Concert. With Frankie Armstrong and Leicester Women's Theatre. 7.30pm at AUEW Hall, Vaughan Way.

Tuesday 22nd June. Joint WORKERS ACTION/WORKERS LEAGUE meeting on 'Ireland — what is happening and why the troops should be withdrawn'. 8pm at Princes Room, EALING Town Hall.

Thursday 24th June. LEICESTER ANTI-FASCIST COMMITTEE. 'Fight Fascism and Racialism'. 8pm AUEW Hall, Vaughan Way.

Saturday 26th June. TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT Open Forum in support of the Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland. Speakers Tony Cliff, Eamonn McCann, Pat Arrowsmith, Colin Sweet, Ken Livingstone, Mervyn Metcalf. 10am to 5pm at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

Sunday 27th June. LEICESTER NAC Working Conference on Outpatient Abortion Clinics. 10am to 5pm at AUEW Hall, Vaughan Way. Creche provided.

Sunday 27th June. Manchester Trades Council SPANISH SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE. 10.30am to 4pm at AUEW Offices, The Crescent, Salford. Delegates credentials 50p from Frances Dean, Room 165 Corn Exchange, Manchester 3.

Tuesday 29th June. TOWER HAMLETS Action Committee on Jobs. Assemble 6pm at Tower Hill to lobby Parliament.

DEFEND THE HANDSWORTH 28 Defence costs for those arrested at the anti-fascist demonstration at Winson Green are rising, and money is urgently needed. Messages and resolutions of support from trade union and labour movement bodies especially welcome. Send to the Handsworth 28 Defence Fund c/o Lozells Social Development Centre, 1 Finch Road, Birmingham 19

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