

workers' ACTION

No.59

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10p

46 WEEKS' STRUGGLE, BUT THIS STRIKE COULD BE WON IN DAYS

THE STRIKE at Grunwicks Film Processing company is in its 45th week. Yet it could be won in a matter of days if the trade union leaders did the job they're paid for.

The strikers, who are demanding union recognition so that they can improve their lousy pay and end the Dickensian conditions at Grunwicks, got a standing ovation at the APEX conference last week. And they have a lot of support in the labour movement in West London where the factory is.

This is a strike which even the Union leaders probably want to see win. And members of the Government, for their own reasons, would like the Grunwick bosses brought to heel. As Denis Howell told the APEX conference "this employer has sought to undermine all the procedures for arbitration and conciliation which Parliament has provided."

Len Murray went to meet the strikers several months ago. Cabinet Ministers have graced the picket with their presence.

But the officials of the labour movement are so rotten with petty routine and so sunk in the habits of spinelessness that they are not giving the help they could.

APEX could call on its London members to strike in support of the Grunwick workers. It could arrange finance support to relieve the strikers of all money worries. It could call on other unions to isolate the firm completely — to cut off its chemical supplies, to cut off its power and water supplies, its phone and its mail; to treat the bosses like the untouchables they are.

That sort of action — sharp, bold, decisive action — could win the strike in days. Possibly in hours.

Possibly the employers would give in the moment such arrangements were made.

Instead, there is a lot of talk about "support till victory", about asking the government to change the law so that the Post Office workers can black Grunwicks' mail order work without Tom Jackson being bothered with injunctions; and in a few more months a committee of the TUC might get around to talking about referring it to another committee to think about action, or anyway to talk about thinking about action.

Meanwhile the pickets are out day after day, harassed by the police and attacked by the firm's bully boys. The latest victim has been Mrs. Jayaben Desai, one of the strike leaders, arrested and charged with assaulting a director of the company and with threatening behaviour. Mrs. Desai is all of four foot 10" tall; police took no action when she was hit by a director's car some months ago while on picket duty. Nor when one of the pickets was dragged into the factory by manage-

ment thugs and beaten up.

On June 13th there will be a mass picket to open a Week of Action. The GMC of Brent East Labour Party has voted to support it. So have union branches in the area and in the London region.

There must be massive support for the June 13th picket. And trade union branches, Labour and Young Socialist organisations and shop stewards committees should organise to take on picket duties, especially at night.

The week of action should be used to get in large scale financial support; for delegations from the strike and its supporters to meet workers in the area and see what they can do for the strike; and for urgent pressure on the official labour movement to put the boot into Grunwicks.

But the best action of all for the "week of action" will be action to cripple Grunwicks here and now.

Contact the strikers c/o Brent Trades and Labour Hall, 375 High Road, Willesden, London NW10

SUPPORT GRUNWICK WEEK OF ACTION

ON THE MASS PICKET JUNE 13

AMIN: RACISM'S FANTASY OF THE 'TYPICAL BLACK RULER'

No one can doubt that the Amin regime in Uganda is based on an all-pervading terror. Anything from 25,000 to 300,000 Ugandans have been casually done to death, while Amin's Army favourites line their pockets.

But the gathering mountain of reports and comment on Uganda does not content itself with probing the atrocity of this regime. The concentration of attention on Uganda and on Amin himself is bent less on anger at the butchery or sympathy with the victims than on the crudest anti-African racism.

Amin and his regime are being used to bring to life again all the old colonial myths and prejudices. The object is to head off any growth of solidarity with the struggle for black majority rule in Southern Africa. And to provide a justification for any military intervention by imperialist forces in Africa.

A clear expression of this was given in the speech in Parliament recently of Tory MP Michael Brotherton. Referring to the Amin regime he declared: "This is the way black Africans conduct their affairs. ... Giving them a Speaker's chair and a mace does not make them like us. These are people who are totally different from us."

Not only from "us", it seems, but also totally different from those African regimes Brotherton respects and supports: "I cannot help drawing a contrast between Uganda and Rhodesia. In Rhodesia a moderate government of a multi-racial (!) state is trying to maintain law and order by normal Western methods."

Never mind the fact that

800 black Rhodesians a week are fleeing across the Botswana border from Smith's "security forces". Never mind that many black African leaders have condemned Amin as "genocidal", "shocking" and "shameful" and clearly don't "conduct their affairs" in the same way.

The key idea for Brotherton and for the press campaign on Uganda is the phrase "normal western methods".

But "normal western methods" slaughtered millions in Germany and German occupied territories a gener-



ation ago. "Normal western methods" keep 18 million Africans in virtual slavery in South Africa today. "Normal western methods" meant torture and tyranny in Spain, in Greece and in Portugal. "Normal western methods" brought napalm genocide to Vietnam and Cambodia. "Normal western methods" are those of torturers in Chile and Paraguay, in Iran and Indonesia, in Brazil and ... in Northern Ireland.

"Normal western methods" are no guarantee of justice; they only mean a technical sophistication that

Contd. page 4

MARCH AND RALLY

REMEMBER SOWETO!
REMEMBER SOWETO!
REMEMBER SOWETO!
REMEMBER SOWETO!

SATURDAY JUNE 18

Assemble: Speakers Corner Hyde Park 1 pm.

Tebello Motopanyane, former Secretary General South African Student Movement (SASM)
Nkosazana Dlamini, former Vice President South African Students Organisation (SASO)

POLISH REGIME CRACKS DOWN ON WORKERS DEFENCE COMMITTEE

A major crackdown seems to be in preparation in Poland against the Workers' Defence Committee [KOR], as support for workers imprisoned for their leadership of the strikes of last June spreads.

For a time it seemed that the authorities would try to avoid the problems which a major round-up and trial of the KOR activists would present. Instead, KOR would be dealt with quietly, with plenty of harassment and an attempt to defuse support for the victimised strikers by releasing all but a few. Meanwhile, mass opposition to the regime would be kept down by big loans to avoid further big price rises and austerity measures.

Brutality

But though the activities of the KOR have been hushed up, they were meeting with increasing support. They had activists in a number of provincial cities, and were in contact with the workers at Radom and Ursus whose action last year led to nationwide strikes that won reversal of the announced price rises within 24 hours. Some 30 workers' commissions, modelled on the Spanish example of illegal unofficial trade union activities, had reputedly been established in Warsaw. And student support for the victimised workers was growing fast, even before the death in suspicious circumstances in May of Stanislaus Pyjas, a Cracow University student who had been organising a petition calling for an inquiry into police brutality during the strikes.

Thousands of students demonstrated with black flags at Pyjas' funeral. And seven members of the Workers' Defence Committee were arrested on their way to this demonstration.

Revolts

Two days later another 16 were rounded up, followed by nine others. Eleven have now been charged with "activities that can do considerable harm to the interests of the Polish People's Republic". And a massive press campaign has been opened up against them. The attacks have relied heavily on anti-semitism — always a potent ideology in Poland. And the workers they sought to defend — five of whom are still serving long sentences — are dismissed as "common criminals" and "hooligans".

Although some members of KOR have linked with a newly-formed Human Rights Committee in Warsaw, most of its members have rightly focused on the working class as potentially the most powerful force for opposition to the regime. And this focus

has no doubt been a big influence on militant students.

The Polish ruling bureaucracy lives in a state of constant and immediate fear of the working class. Twice in six years it has had to back down hastily before massive, angry workers' revolts.

In the winter of 1970/71, shipyard workers at Gdansk, Gdynia and Szczecin spear-headed a revolt that led to prolonged street-fighting. Communist Party buildings were burnt (while Party members in the shipyards hastened to give up their Party membership, with all its usual privileges.)

The strikes and revolts centred on demands for lower prices and higher wages, but in the course of the struggle many political demands were put forward, particularly for independent trade unions. (Szczecin yards alone sent 4,000 demands to that year's National Congress of Trade Unions.) And rank and file strike committees independent of the Party-dominated official unions were formed.

Response

Tanks had to be brought in to quell the fighting in a massive bloodbath. And new faces were installed to head the regime, which now granted 40% wage increases and lower prices. Over the next years the militants were shifted to other jobs or promoted and sucked into the re-established hierarchy.

But the workers knew their strength. And when huge price rises were suddenly announced last June, their response was immediate.

Workers at the Ursus tractor plant near Warsaw ripped up railway lines and held the Paris-Warsaw Express to ransom until the rises were cancelled. In Radom, food stores were looted and the Communist Party HQ was fired. At Szczecin and Gdansk, using the same meeting places and some of the techniques remembered from 1970, sit-in strikes took place. The strikes spread like wildfire all over Poland.

Strong

Despite mass sackings and a number of jailings in the aftermath, the Polish workers are increasingly strong and confident. Even Party members are affected by the general mood: in a survey of attitudes among 2,800 workers in the country's largest factories, Party members were among those who said that the Party ruled Poland in the interests of the police, that workers were exploited by an exploiting group, that the trade unions were good for nothing but mobilising people to work, and that their conflicts with the

authorities should be resolved by striking and taking direct action (including go-slows, absenteeism and even industrial sabotage).

So far, such actions have not been employed on behalf of their victimised and jailed comrades, or those of the KOR activists who have been arrested for defending them. (The jail hunger strike of Radom worker Czeslaw Chomiczki was supported only by a sympathetic public hunger strike demonstration by writers and professionals)

No doubt this strengthened the hand of those elements in the ruling bureaucracy who were pushing for strong repressive measures against KOR.

It remains to be seen whether Poland's jackboot bureaucrats will succeed in isolating KOR and avoiding a workers' defence of the Workers' Defence Committee. And we should bear in mind that the labour movement in this country could itself affect these events by a vigorous defence of victimised Polish worker-militants and those who have been repressed for supporting them.

RUSSIA INVENTS ANOTHER 'SPY LIE'

IN AN ominous warning to Russian civil rights campaigners, a charge of treason has been brought against Anatoly Shcharansky.

Shcharansky was arrested in March, two weeks after an accusation against him in the official press that he was working for the CIA.

The Article under which he has now been charged, 64a of the Criminal Code, covers treason, espionage and "rendering aid to a foreign state carrying on hostile activity".

In fact the chances of Shcharansky doing such a thing must be remote. Since he applied for a visa to emigrate to Israel [which is the easiest way to leave Russia] and, on being refused, began to campaign for civil rights, he has been constantly under police watch. People who work or spy for the CIA have to keep lower profiles than that.

If the Russian police really believed he was a spy or CIA agent, they would have arrested him as soon as they knew such a thing, rather than waiting to write about it in the papers and then waiting two more weeks to arrest him and two and a half months to charge him.

He is about as likely to be

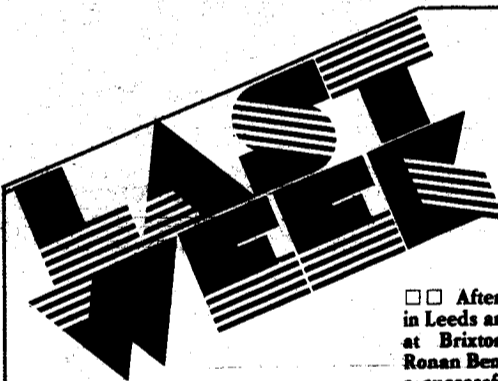
a CIA spy as are Crispin Aubrey, John Berry and Duncan Campbell, charged under the 'spying' section of the Official Secrets Act, likely to be KGB spies!

Meanwhile, publication of a new draft Constitution of the Soviet Union threatens to give a veneer of "legality" to the bureaucracy's police actions.

The existing 1936 Constitution lays down a wide range of "rights" which the regime never intended to honour and which have been flagrantly contravened both by specific laws and by the actions of the repressive state machine.

These contradictions will now apparently be ironed out by a blanket get-out clause which says that "Use of rights and freedoms by citizens shall not be harmful to the interests of society and the State..."

As in fact the "use of" all the stated freedoms of speech, of movement, of assembly and of the press is all harmful to the interests of the ruling bureaucracy which has usurped political power in the "Soviet Union" for the past 50-odd years, the new Constitution will be as sick a joke as the old one was.



■ ■ One in four babies is born under weight, and the number is going up. Since the 1950s, the numbers have gone up by about 6,000 babies a year.

Underweight babies run higher risks of handicap. Child Poverty Action Group, which published these findings in a survey it commissioned, also stated that there was a clear link between birth weight [and also the development of a child's brain] and the mother's diet. CPAG put the increase down to the disappearance of old welfare foods such as cod liver oil. "Some babies do not even start life equal", commented CPAG director Frank Field.

□ □ If you've sometimes wondered why the Irish don't look fondly at British rule, consider this: one third of the inhabitants of a sizeable town in County Mayo are still paying ground rent to ... Lord Lucan!

That fact is of course a little stunning, since His Lordship did a bunk after the gory murder of his kids' nanny. But would it be any less so if he hadn't, and had simply continued his law abiding and useful life as full-time backgammon player?

The fact is that whole tracts of land in Ireland were given to British aristocrats by the imperial rulers rather like OBEs are handed around today. And many of their descendants are still collecting the ground rents on this land.

Mother England may not rule any longer but she still picks up her pension.

□ □ After a week's stay in Armley jail in Leeds and two weeks in top security at Brixton, Huddersfield anarchist Ronan Bennett has been released after a successful appeal against deportation under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Successful appeals are rare. As his solicitor explained, "We were given no particulars of the evidence the police had against my client, either before or at the hearing. We could only play it by ear. In normal cases a man charged with offences is told what the evidence is against him. In these cases he is not."

■ ■ 4,000 families in Merseyside and Sunderland got a very special Jubilee present this week: the sack from Plessey of one or more members of the family.

With unemployment running at 11% of the workforce in both areas, whether the sacked workers are men or women it's going to mean a big drop in living standards for their families.

□ □ The Labour Party, claimed The Sun early last week, had been completely possessed by the Reds, as was proved by the fact that Reg Underhill's red-hunting document was being shelved.

Later in the week, under the elegant headline "Stuff the Knockers", The Sun was castigating anti-Jubilee campaigners in just the same terms. You'd think, then, to find widespread Republican sentiment riddling H.M. Labour Government. Not a bit of it, of course; leading Red take-over man on Labour Party's NEC, the very man who announced no action on the Underhill Report, one M. Foot, has very, very recently protested his faith in the British monarchy. Even under a "Socialist Republic", according to the Red Foot, we'd still have the Queen...

■ ■ On the subject of Red takeovers of the Labour Party, remember the Deep Sproat affair? Now the Birmingham Post and Mail has paid libel damages and costs to the ten MPs named by Tory MP Iain Sproat as being "crypto-Communists" and "part of a fifth column" and little more than under-cover political agents. The Birmingham Post had gleefully reported Sproat's idiocies and has now paid up. But the idiocy of Reds on the NEC is still with us.

□ □ Meanwhile, the House of Commons Committee of Privileges is looking into NUPE's instruction to its sponsored MPs to support the Union's opposition to the Cuts in Parliament.

It seems it may be a "gross" breach of Parliamentary democracy for a Union to decide to give its MPs the push if they work against its policies. But it's quite alright for hundreds of MPs to collect perks and bribes (known politely as "retainers") from companies in return for Parliamentary services rendered. And, presumably, to be given the push if they fail to do so.

■ ■ We know how the other "half" lives, but just what sort of creatures are they? Is it true that the rich are like you and me — richer? Or are they so clever to turn upside down those values and reactions that most working people regard as being "human nature"? If you're not sure, take a look at this case from last week's courtrooms.

A man had raided a large number of Building Society offices in Yorkshire and managed to get away with £4,000-£5,000 — the sort of sum your average top executive or big shareholder can rake in in a month. He hadn't bashed anyone, and he'd taken the money in the hope of using it to get specialist medical treatment abroad for his four-year-old son.

A pretty sad case, you'd think. In a society run by our "half" this man would get help, if not actually a medal for his courage and enterprise.

But the other "half" has other values, according to which money and property are pretty sacred things. So the Judge gave him three years, and pronounced that the poor fellow's efforts on behalf of his child had been "appalling crimes".

EDGE HILL JUNKS ITS ABSENTEE MP

IF Sir Arthur Irvine QC MP is to be believed, "an unholy alliance of Trotskyists, Liberals, academics and other political undesirables" have decided that, come the next election, Irvine won't be standing for Labour any more.

Plot or not, by a vote of 37 to 3 the GMC of his Constituency Party (Liverpool Edge Hill) declared that Sir Arthur himself is a political undesirable.

GMC Secretary John Sharpey-Shafer has commented "Sir Arthur is confused. A Liberal-Marxist-Trotskyist plot is an original idea, but it is complete nonsense". In fact, opposition to Irvine goes right across the political spectrum in the local party.

Plesseys

Sir Arthur hasn't asked a question about his constituency since 1947, and in the seven months from September to March last he spent a total of 12 hours in Edge Hill (when he stopped off at the Adelphi, a sort of provincial Ritz).

More than one in ten Merseysiders are on the dole. But workers facing redundancy see no sign of life from Sir Arthur. He has said that he takes the "keenest interest in the Plessey situation" where the jobs of 1,100 of his constituents are for the chop this week. But Doug Mallard, Chairman of Plessey Shop Stewards Committee, had the following to say about his MP: "I'll be bloody blunt and frank. I've never, ever seen Arthur Irvine in all the time I've been senior negotiator at Plesseys. He's never been involved in this redundancy fight or in the one before. It's scandalous."

Irvine's political record has always been atrocious. And now it's being noted that his mental processes have slipped with the onset of old age.

Sons

Irvine has threatened to resign, but hasn't done so yet. He enjoys the 'club' atmosphere at Westminster as well as his MP's salary and he'd forfeit these all the sooner if he goes now. A by-election is therefore a possibility, but by no means a certainty.

Should a by-election take place, two of the candidates are expected to be sons of Sir Arthur, intent on keeping the seat in the family. Michael Irvine is already on the Tory short-list, and second son Robert, who may stand as "indep-



Irvine—rarely seen in Edge Hill

endent Labour", made his first appearance in Edge Hill last week, when he turned up in the Labour Club offering drinks and dinners...

But will Edge Hill CLP's hard-won new candidate be opposed from the left?

'Class struggle'

The last-ever issue of *Red Weekly* had this to say: "Members of Edge Hill Labour Party are correct to sack Irvine for his laziness. Hard work, however, is not the only criterion for a political representative. Much more important are the current political issues, in particular the anti-working class policies of the Labour Government. That is why the International Marxist Group and Big Flame have agreed that in the event of an Edge Hill by-election they will support a revolutionary socialist or "class struggle" candidate."

Apart from failing to explain whether or not revolutionary socialists are the same as "class struggle" ones, there are a number of things wrong with this statement.

Firstly, "hard work" versus "laziness" wasn't the only issue in Edge Hill, but rather the fundamental question of political accountability. The CLP has struggled for the right to get the candidate it wants; *Red Weekly* supporters in

the CLP, such as they are, won't be helped to win Labour Party militants to the IMG's politics by a rival IMG/Big Flame candidate.

To make things worse, *Red Weekly* is not proposing a clear revolutionary socialist programme for this Edge Hill candidate, but a programme of a nebulous "class struggle left wing". That a "class struggle tendency" does not exist except in the imagination of the IMG is indicated by Stetchford IMG candidate Brian Heron's statement that "We are running this campaign to illustrate what a class struggle candidate could be like — to encourage the process."

Certainly there are many workers opposed to the government's policies, or to some of them. They exist both inside and outside the Labour Party. But to aim to consolidate this group around a watered down catch-all programme will in no way serve to clarify these workers and win them to revolutionary socialist politics.

In Edge Hill the faults of this IMG tactic (which rivals IS's sectarianism with its own "soft" substitute for Labour) is compounded by a third strand of confusion. This has to do with the IMG's attempt to rope in the ideologically eclectic ultra-left Big Flame group. This seems to be taking precedence over the work of developing the IMG's very slender roots in the local labour movement.

What are **WORKERS ACTION** supporters doing in Edge Hill?

We will be supporting the Labour candidate, at the same time as putting forward our revolutionary programme in the campaign. We will work to get the CLP to commit itself to local workers' struggles (we have already intervened to get support for the Plessey struggle, and hope to win it to support the Merseyside anti-fascist committee in the struggle against a fascist candidate).

This is the serious approach revolutionaries should take, and one that will make it possible to build a solid and lasting revolutionary current in the local labour movement. It will survive long after the IMG's latest craze has been thrown on the scrap-heap along with their many previous stunts and 'projects'.

BAS HARDY

Liberal!

Earlier in the evening John Wilson, successful GLC candidate in a constituency where the National Front received more votes than anywhere in London, attempted to defend his action of shaking hands with a NF supporter at the count.

His arguments of "converting the Front by talking to them" somewhat contradicted his other plan of "ignoring them so they'll go away" — but that is often the case with such liberal 'common sense' approaches.

The whole method will be strongly challenged at the next ward meeting, where a motion condemning the Front and calling for a speaker from the Campaign against Racism in the Media, will be discussed.

IAN HOLLINGWORTH

RIGHT WING MANOEUVRES IN NEWHAM LP

UPROAR broke out in Kensington Ward of Newham North East Labour Party last Thursday [June 2nd] when an attempt was made to nominate Julian Lewis for the short list of candidates for next year's council elections.

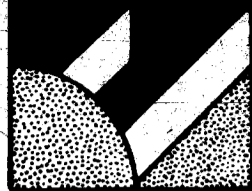
Lewis it was who brought a successful High Court action against the CLP last February, blocking its AGM [which has yet to be held].

The nomination was made by Eddie Lee, ward Secretary, and it is a mark of the deceitful manoeuvres of the local right wing that this nomination was endorsed by 20 votes to 10 by ward members thinking themselves Prentice supporters, when even Prentice himself has disowned the actions of Lewis.

And they went on to nominate Mr. S. Jones, local Labour Party member who has openly advocated voting

Our rulers celebrate another

Editorial



25 years on top...

AT Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital near London's Euston Station, the workers have been in occupation for months. They have worked out rotas, organised support campaigns, and generally managed the hospital.

This has been a bold, creative working class action, attracting widespread working class support and powered by a growing working class consciousness.

Yet this week the hospital is festooned with red, white and blue bunting, with union jacks and insignia celebrating the Queen's silver jubilee.

Anyone ignoring the fact that even militant workers have shown enthusiasm for the jubilee is turning his back on reality.

If the British monarchy didn't already exist, very few people indeed would vote to set one up. In that sense the flags and rosettes don't denote a conscious choice for monarchy and against republicanism. Rather, they are a sign that the monarchy has become, like the nationalism it personifies, a fixture in the "common sense" of most British workers. So much so, indeed, that alternatives are not so much unthinkable as never thought of.

Of course it would be very different if kings and queens still ruled "by divine right". If the monarchy intervened actively in political life, the contradiction between the feudal hereditary principle and bourgeois parliamentary democracy would be explosive.

But that contradiction is just as real and just as true even when it is kept to a minimum.

It is a truism that the British monarchy is strong because it is weak. Neither is it seen to overstep its limits into bourgeois political life; nor is it itself tainted by the odium of politics. H.M. is never blamed when H.M. Government is an object of hatred or contempt.

But the monarchy is not only strong by default, because it does nothing. If so, one would oppose it merely as a symbol of ancient privilege that is outdated even under capitalism.

The monarchy has positive strengths as well as negative ones. These are its strengths as a bourgeois institution. And as such it is a modern and active enemy of the working class.



The monarchy symbolises — or, which is worse, helps to create — a national "unity" between workers and those who sit on our backs and exploit us. Such "national" sentiments are directly harmful to the working class struggle.

The Queen symbolises all the traditions of our rulers — the imperial tradition of colonial domination, the tradition of inherited privilege and property — and serves to turn them into "universal" traditions for every class. Thus the traditions of the working class — our long struggle for the vote, for trade union rights, for better working and living conditions — are buried and forgotten. The millions of unnamed working class heroes who won what rights and standards we have today are ignored, while imperial warmongers like Clive of India and Winston Churchill are revered.

The monarchy also symbolises continuity: masking the great upheavals and revolts of British history which have swept away aristocratic power, trimmed back monarchy itself and won universal suffrage. And the monarchy stands as **abulwark against further change**, a possibly crucial rallying point for the forces of the state against a working class assault.

Thus the Silver Jubilee is a celebration of its stability and strength by the **bourgeois establishment**. For 25 years the capitalists and their monarchy have hung on, have not been swept into the dustbin of history, though they have belonged there for most of this century.

It is not an occasion for working class celebrations.

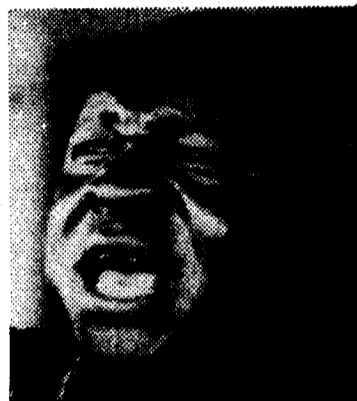
... and we're still paying the price

The Royal salaries and percentage increases during Phase Two of the Social Contract.

	1975 (£)	1976 (£)	% increase
Queen	1,400,000	1,665,000	+ 19%
Queen Mother	95,000	140,000	+ 47%
Duke of Edinburgh	65,000	85,000	+ 31%
Princess Margaret	35,000	50,000	+ 43%
Princess Anne	35,000	45,000	+ 28.5%
Duke of Kent	35,000	45,000	+ 28.5%
Princess Alexandra	30,000	40,000	+ 33%
Duchess of Gloucester	20,000	25,000	+ 25%

AMIN: R FANTAS THE 'TY BLACK

During the Sixties, Israel took on the main role of training and equipping the new Army. In 1968, now Army commander under the regime of Milton Obote, Amin visited Israel and was



given several Sherman tanks that had been captured from Egypt in the June 1967 war.

But relations with imperialism cooled when Obote began to show hostility to Britain over its softness on Rhodesia and South Africa, and when he stopped helping the Israeli attempts to weaken the Sudanese regime. When in 1970 Obote nationalised 85 foreign companies in Uganda, the imperialists decided to get rid of him.

Amin's January 1971 coup was carried out with the foreknowledge and almost certainly the assistance (at least in planning) of Israel and Britain. The British govern-

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removes the corpses hygienically and sound-proofs the torture rooms.

The continent of Africa knows these methods from centuries of the slave trade followed by super-exploitation of its natural resources under repressive colonial rule; through the bloody suppression of countless rebellions.

Amin himself is the direct creation of "normal western methods". The mad dog is the spawn of the rabid bitch of British colonial policy.

In 1946 Amin joined the King's African Rifles, the force who job was to keep the people of East Africa in suppression. He won promotion for his "instant obedience, fierce regimental pride and reverence towards Britain and the British", in the words of the *Sunday Times*.



Amin was further promoted to Sergeant Major for his part in Britain's campaign to defeat the Mau Mau rebellion in Kenya, when British forces slaughtered more than 11,000 Kikuyu tribesmen between 1953 and 1956. "Sergeant Major Amin distinguished himself by leading attacks on the terrorists (sic) and reportedly torturing and killing men suspected of having Mau Mau sympathies." (*Ney York Times*). These, too, were "normal western methods".

By the early sixties Britain had lost the battle for Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika, its East African territories. Now it aimed for close economic ties. And loyal helpers such as Amin were promoted again, now to the top ranks, to give Britain continuing ties with the military.

SMITH'S RAIDS KILL 1,000 CIVILIANS

trouble. About two years ago, the Zimbabwe guerillas' war of independence was confined to the north east. Now it has spread to the whole country. In the east a large area is under the effective control of the liberation forces and schools have been shut or are working outside the control of the white authorities.

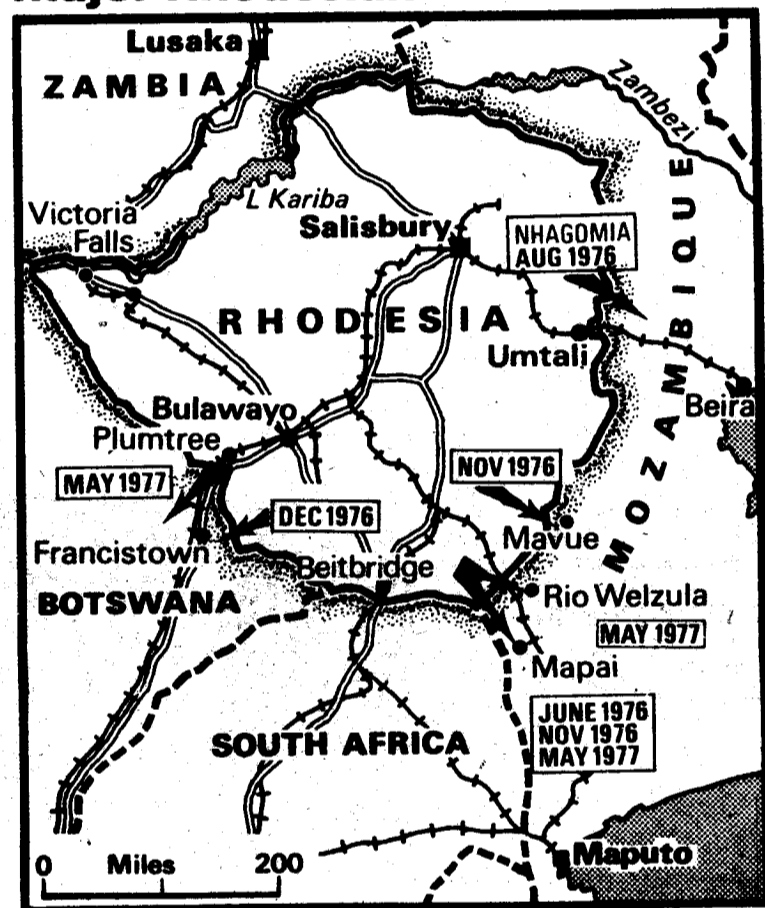
Working on the Vietnam model (the same which provided it with the term "hot pursuit" to justify border raids) the Smith regime has a policy of moving the inhabitants of "operational areas" (areas where the guerillas are active) into fenced-off so-called protected villages. The idea is to isolate the guerillas,

but instead it has increased the resistance and hostility of the villagers themselves, who in many cases have torn down the wire fencing.

And last week Rhodesia's main rail link with South Africa was blown up, just two days after electricity pylons serving Salisbury were wrecked.

Meanwhile the British and US governments are trying to demobilise the Zimbabwe forces by diplomatic pressure, so that a "peaceful" pro-imperialist solution can be imposed which will make a politically independent Zimbabwe the economic colony of imperialism and a harmless neighbour of South Africa.

Major Rhodesian raids



THE Smith regime's marauding troops have been forced to retreat from their mini-invasion of Mozambique — but not before Smith's bandits had murdered dozens of civilians, destroyed vehicles, railway stock, a radio station and an important bridge over the River Punque.

And three towns in Mozambique's Manica Province were vandalised.

Although this was the most publicised invasion, it is only the latest of many. According to an Mozambique army spokesman quoted by *The Observer*, there have been 120 attacks by Smith's forces across the border and about 1,000 civilians have been killed. But, they have not, as they claim, escaped unscathed: Mozambique forces claim to have shot down three fighter-bombers and a helicopter in Tete province, and captured some Rhodesian troops.

The distinctive feature of last week's raid is that Smith played it for as much publicity as he could get. In his situation, such military initiatives have a profound diplomatic and political significance.

By means of this provocation Smith hoped not only to placate his extreme right (like the army commanders and those who recently broke away from his ruling Rhodesia Front party) but also to capture the sympathy of those in South Africa who are doubtful of Vorster's policy of "throwing Smithie to the lions" in the hope of gaining a tame and peaceable black neighbour in his place.

His message to Vorster is clear: the whites are putting up a big fight for Rhodesia, and if they go down, the victorious black forces will make an uncomfortable neighbour for South Africa. And the message to Vorster's right wing is: the whites are fighting, and if Vorster were to help us some more before it's too late, rather than pressuring us to settle, we can win.

Another bonus for Smith from his noisy border raid is that it could delay the settlement negotiations and let him play for more time, in which he hopes to get into a stronger negotiating position.

Yet the signs are that within Rhodesia Smith is in growing

LEYLAND BRIBES—ANOTHER REASON TO END PARTICIPATION

When the *DAILY MAIL* splashed the Leyland 'slush funds' story across its front page a couple of weeks ago, there is no doubt that it was hoping to bring down the Labour government.

TRIBUNE considered that "if the letter the Daily Mail had published had proved not to be a forgery, there is little doubt what the consequences would have been. This article would have been addressing itself to a coming general election rather than the iniquities of the Daily Mail."

And the *NEW STATESMAN*, in an editorial entitled "The Coup that Failed", was just as certain: "Had the letter been genuine, there would have been no defence. A vote of censure would surely have been carried in the House of Commons, followed by a general election which could only have ended in defeat for Labour."

More probably the CBI and top bosses would have held back the Tories from such a course — the City has made it clear it prefers a Labour government to the class confrontation a Tory win would bring. But it's fairly clear, that such a chain of events was envis-

aged in the Mail's malign plans. And it wouldn't have been the first time: the Mail is notorious for its "Zinoviev letter" stunt, another forgery, which brought down the first Labour government in 1924.

The Daily Mail is not interested in the bribery and corruption practised by private capitalism. It paid little attention to the revelat-

**'Communists' back
Leyland blackmail
see page 6**

ions of BP's slush payments in Italy (£800,000 paid to right wing parties there between 1969 and 1973). Nor to the dealing of Lonrho and of Slater Walker. It published none of the perfectly genuine letters that shuttled between Tory Minister Maudling and the convicted international swindler Jerome Hofman.

Corruption only excites the Mail to big headlines and fiddled evidence when the "guilty" party has connection with Labour, socialism or state control — which the

ignorant scribblers of the Mail think are all the same thing!

Thus their *World-Wide Bribery Web by Leyland* headline hovered between the banner of "Exposed — the amazing truth about Britain's state-owned car makers" and the opening words of the article: "British Leyland, the nationalised car manufacturer..." And the Editor did not fail to draw his idiotic conclusion "The root cause of this kind of bribery is state control."

Of course, the root cause of this kind of bribery is nothing of the kind. In fact the Mail's own lead article explained the reason for the bribery. It was "...to win overseas orders".

In an unplanned, chaotic, competitive economy (fundamentally unchanged by the existence of state-owned pieces within the jigsaw of capitalist production) goods are not produced in order to meet definite needs. They are produced for profit. Sometimes they fulfill a real need, sometimes they don't. Sometimes too few are produced, often too many. Millions upon millions are spent on marketing, advertising and, to

by P. Ali

make things less hit-and-miss, on "buying the buyer".

As long as production is blind, anarchic and subject to an uncontrollable market, companies will seek every possible way to outbid their rivals. They may do this by flattery, by a lunch paid for out of tax-free expense accounts, by a holiday provided free of charge, or — crudely and unceremoniously — by stuffing the buyer's suitcase full of banknotes.

RISK

One way or another it is normal for capitalism to depend on various forms of buttering-up and bribery to oil the wheels of commerce. Despite the high talk of free competition, bribery will remain normal so long as the economic system is one dictated by the logic of profit.

The recent Lockheed scandals and the scandals surrounding the French aircraft company Dassault

are ample evidence that bribery and corruption are by no means necessarily linked with state ownership. In fact the common link between Lockheed, Dassault and Leyland lies not in the form of their ownership (though fundamentally they are all capitalist companies) but in the size of the enterprises.

Twentieth century capitalism differs from the capitalism of Karl Marx's time in the degree of its centralisation and concentration. The growth of huge trusts (whether state owned or not) or monopolies has not meant the end of competition but it has meant a change in the way in which it operates. On the one hand competition is eliminated in certain areas of production, while on the other hand the competition between the now larger units of production is sharper, more hostile and more deadly than before.

In addition, with monopolies come monopoly profits, allowing for slush payments on a massive scale.

With millions — even billions, as in the case of Concorde — being spent on the production of a single prototype, capitalism has only two choices: either be honest, leave things to chance and open persuasion and risk wasting the huge investment; or bribe the necessary intermediaries and have the process more under control.

The working class system of running production is the only way to get clear of these kind of

ACISM'S SY OF PICAL RULER'

ment showed its delight by being the first to recognise the Amin regime, and was not in the least nonplussed by his abolition of Parliament and of all political parties, his outlawing of the trade unions and the complete suppression of the non-government press. In fact, repression was the rule from the first days, though perhaps it was then carried out by "normal western methods".

It was not repression, but different policies that cooled Britain's ardour for Amin. He gradually began to pursue policies on his own account, seeking prestige and respect elsewhere than in Whitehall and Tel Aviv. He expelled the Asian community in Uganda and, under the influence of the Libyan leader Ghaddafi broke off relations with Israel. Later he expropriated some more British companies operating in Uganda.



Today, Uganda's strategic position in Africa is also a matter of interest to imperialism, now that the Suez Canal has been re-opened, bringing a struggle for influence in the Horn of Africa which controls the southern entrance to the Red Sea. Russia has established ties with Ethiopia, and it has also

become a major source of weapons for Uganda, including Mig jets.

Amin is in fact playing things both ways: Ugandan troops were sent to help the CIA-backed Zaire regime recently. But imperialism would prefer a regime that played things wholly its way. It is increasingly eager to "settle the Uganda situation"

This is why, of all the bloody and barbarous regimes in the world, Amin's is the one we hear about day after day. And, while unspeakable tyrants like Geisel of Brazil and the Shah of Iran are welcomed and honoured in London, Amin is considered as being beyond the pale.

The fact that he is too crude and careless to hide the blood helps to single him out as the world's No.1 barbarian. Yet it is doubtful if he really merits such a title: the competition is all too stiff.



Socialists should condemn the blatant racialism behind the press's anti-Amin campaign. We should warn against and oppose any imperialist intervention in Uganda as in the rest of Africa: however evil Amin's regime, imperialism has a great deal more blood on its hands and has no right in Africa. And we should keep in mind that the Commonwealth gathering which Amin 'threatens' to attend is as dirty a gathering of cut-throats and robbers without him as with him.

Socialists, however, have every reason and a great deal more right to condemn Amin: his 'anti-imperialism' is phoney and he is feared and hated by the workers and peasants of Uganda, and in particular the Acholi and Langi who have suffered the most, and the Asians who were driven out.

ANGOLA-IS IMPERIALISM PLANNING TO INVADE?

ACCORDING to the Sunday Times [May 29th] a four-pronged invasion of Angola is being planned under the code name of Cobra-77.

The paper reports that the plan involves:

■ a South African assault from bases being organised in South African-held Namibia;

■ an assault from Zaire, which will link up with the forces of the Angolan guerilla armies of the FLNA and Unita which were defeated by the now ruling MPLA;

■ an attack by the organisation — FLEC — which is fighting for the secession from Angolan rule of the northern Cabinda area;

■ and a sea-borne invasion using (to quote a Unita official) "ships supplied by friendly African states".

This report has received little corroboration, but what is clear is that certain elements of the report are true.

Although South Africa was forced to withdraw its invasion force from Angola, it has not demobilised the bases within Namibia from which they had operated. It is estimated that South Africa has 50,000 troops there, at present occupied in fighting SWAPO, the Namibian liberation movement.

Secondly, FLEC (the Liberation Front of the Cabinda Enclave) does receive support from France and from one of France's staunchest African allies, President Senghor of Senegal. (So far Senegal has refused to recognise the Neto government in Angola.

France's support of FLEC is given in the hope of gaining oil rights in Cabinda, which are at present monopolised by the American company Gulf Oil. Gulf, even during the civil war, recognised the MPLA and paid it royalties on the oil production. (While the US government was supporting the MPLA's opponents.)

forces backed by imperialism

Meanwhile the Neto regime is emerging from a short but bloody struggle on its left flank.

It is not certain that the supporters of former ministers Nito Alves and José van Dunen were planning a coup against Neto when they briefly seized Luanda's radio station and prison, freeing Alves and van Dunen who subsequently got away. Neto has since tried to brand the rebels as rightists and reactionaries and sought to link them with the Unita/FLNA.

Both are in fact former MPLA leaders, and though Alves, a staunch Stalinist, took a leading part in the suppression of the MPLA left and in dismantling the "Popular Power" movement, he had lately turned to advocating "popular power". Given his record this was clearly a demagogic pose. And now that he has lost out in the MPLA's power struggle we may well see him adopt a different pose, whenever and wherever he shows up again.

COUP

The strategy of trying to separate Cabinda from the rest of Angola is almost a replica of the similar strategy used by imperialism in the Congo to separate copper-rich Katanga from the newly independent territory.

This lesson of the Congo needs to be taken seriously — whether or not much credibility can be given to the Sunday Times story — as it shows that the newly won independence of states like Angola in no way rules out further military confrontations with imperialism or



MPLA leaders at independence

choices. Under socialism competition will be replaced by cooperation. Instead of the laws of the market and the profit imperative deciding what should be produced, such decisions will be made

ing class being drawn into complicity in the corruption of the bosses.

"It doesn't take much imagination to foresee a situation in which, because workers' jobs under capitalism depend on the success of private enterprise, workers' representatives on the boards of companies would find themselves protecting jobs by rubber-stamping or even pushing for corrupt dealing if it guarantees bigger sales.

"The fact is that you can't mix with capitalism at that level without getting fouled up in its mess."

BLAME

Despite all the flurry of revelations about revelations that followed the discovery that the Mail's prize letter was a fake, despite the hundreds of apologies and denials, it still stands (as Leyland Chief Executive Alex Park admitted at the time) that Leyland has been involved in wide-scale bribery and corruption.

So what does the workers' side in the Leyland participation scheme have to say about the corruption that greases the company's sales? In particular, did they know about it? If they did, why didn't they reveal what they knew? Or did they go along with it?

The Morning Star, the paper of the Communist Party which sup-

ports participation at Leyland, of course does not feel that these questions need answering. The fact that the Daily Mail was out to "besmirch the name of the British car industry's publicly-owned sector" is used by them to distract attention away from the question of workers' participation in general and the responsibility of leading CP members like Derek Robinson for this policy.

For socialists, workers' participation is always wrong. The power within a firm can only be 'shared' by the workers on their side trying by their own strength and independent organisation to counter the power of the employers on the other side. There can be no amicable sharing, according to some supposed unity of interest. Yet that is what workers' participation preaches: in a word, class collaboration.

Because of this policy of participation the workers find themselves taking joint responsibility for the successes and failures of the company. This must mean — at least for the participating convenors and senior stewards themselves — taking joint responsibility for such sales techniques as bribery and corruption, where this goes on.

The only way the workers' representatives can avoid taking the blame for such actions is by not knowing about them. But if they don't know about them, then the only argument the reformists put forward in favour of participation that the workers' side will be

given full information — is proved a phoney.

Therefore either the workers' representatives involved in the board-room collaboration at Leyland knew about the bribery: in which case they should make a clean breast of it, resign and stop the participation. Or they didn't know about it because their glass-of-sherry chums among the Leyland Executive didn't tell them: in which case they should end the participation scheme, which was wrong from the start, because it does not even offer the benefit these same convenors and senior stewards claimed it would.

Either way the message is clear: end participation now!

RELY

Instead of the participation scheme the Leyland workers should now rely on their own strength and on their own independent organisations to fight for the Leyland books to be opened.

In a recent leaflet, the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement had this to say about the Leyland revelations:

"The CDLM is convinced that the only way to tackle this is the demand for ending of business secrets — opening of all books and files of the employers. At BSC Greenwich recently, workers occupying the factory in defiance of jobs obtained evidence that BSC management are in contact with the Right wing Economic

League and had kept extensive dossiers on workers at the plant (with the help of the police Special Branch).

"We call upon the trade unions and the Combine Committee within Leyland to demand that the management monopoly of information is brought to an end and all information made available to elected committees within the unions. All dossiers, files, accounts and financial arrangements with suppliers and distributors must be opened up to trade union inspection."

In Cowley where the stewards' committee has an "Open the Books" sub-committee this struggle will be an important part of the fight against the bosses and against the participation scheme. In many of the other plants, however, the bribery revelations have brought forth nothing but a cynical yawn and the response "Of course they do it; they're all crooked. So what?"

Cynicism about the bosses is one thing. But what about the convenors? What they have been up to is a live issue.

In every plant the demand must be put forward that the participation representatives of the workforce appear before mass meetings and make a clear statement on the bribes: did they know it was going on or not? Will they now withdraw from participation — now that everyone can see that the workers are being taken for a ride and are nowhere nearer total disclosure than they ever were?

Daily Mail
Exclusive Exposed—the amazing truth about Britain's State-owned car makers
WORLD-WIDE BRIBERY WEB BY LEYLAND

democratically by the mass of the workers, according to their understanding of their needs. Meanwhile, under capitalism, by involvement in the choices of capitalism — however much workers are told to cherish the good fortune of their boss — is a diversion from the fight for such a rational system. In March 1976, when the Lockheed scandal broke, WORKERS ACTION warned against such involvement: "One danger of participation schemes is of the work-

"There is no doubt that the way in which the piecework system developed in the Midlands led to the emergence of a band of shop stewards who for their eloquence and forcefulness are renowned. Brought up on a diet of day to day shop floor bargaining in an era when production at any price led to undisciplined attitudes and bad practices, it is not surprising that they developed a strong taste for the exercise of power. Redirecting their energy into more fruitful areas, for example the Participation system, has proved predictably difficult. The power and ability of shop floor leaders in Leyland Cars is a potential asset. It has not yet been properly used to the mutual advantage of the Group and its employees." (From the Leyland Joint Management Council 1977 Concept Study)

Shop floor

Workers' Action has outlined in previous editions how any attempt to make Leyland Cars competitive on the world market can only be successful if accompanied by a massive defeat of the Leyland workforce and their organisation.

In particular, management have to neutralise or smash the shop floor organisation that developed in the '50s and '60s under piecework conditions, and which remains a thorn in their side today under Measured Day Work (MDW).

MDW and later the Ryder participation scheme were specifically intended to do this, but neither has been notable successful. In particular, management still have two major obstacles to overcome before they can introduce the kind of "rationalisation" (i.e. lower manning levels and speed-up) which they want, and which the NEB has threatened to make a "condition" for the provision of further funds.

Mutuality

Firstly, mutuality — the system whereby manning levels and work conditions are mutually agreed between managers and stewards on the shop floor — must go. The Joint Management Council report is explicit on this: "In Ford and Vauxhall management are free to use work study techniques to determine line speeds and to establish manning levels after appropriate consultation. In Leyland Cars, although practices vary from plant to plant, there is widespread opposition to work measurement and to the setting up of manning levels on anything other than the 'Persian Market' principle"

Secondly, management want a common bargaining date and centralised, group negotiations on wages — corporate bargaining. If they can succeed in these two areas, management's way will be clear for a large-scale pruning and increased exploitation of the workforce.

Since last summer the Leyland bosses — aided and abetted by the employee "representatives" on partic-

ipation — have been engaged in a "softening up" process, aimed at persuading the workforce that the kind of "rationalisation" outlined above is, if not desirable, then at least inevitable.

Where persuasion has failed, blackmail has been used. 'Accept our terms of the new Mini project goes out the window, and so do all your jobs' has been the constant cry from management and their "participating" allies.

Last August, taking advantage of the submissive mood among the workforce after an unpaid layoff, the Longbridge Works Committee called shop meetings to endorse a resolution calling for "total commitment" to the New Mini (ADO88) project, including manning levels and production targets that would mean cutting the 18,000 Longbridge workforce by half. At the same time management released a 9-point plan containing "tentative" proposals for ending mutuality, massively increasing productivity and mobility, and introducing corporate bargaining.

The next phase of the offensive came this January, when workers throughout Leyland Cars were presented with a package deal ("The Security of Earnings" document) including a marginally improved sick pay scheme, a strike penalty clause on layoff pay and a common review date for wages throughout the Combine (corporate bargaining, again...)

As usual the proposals were accompanied by dire warnings about the future of the company.

This time, though, it did not work. The deal was massively rejected at shop meetings in every Leyland



Derek Robinson

'Communists' back Leyland's blackmail

Cars plant in the country with the single exception of Llanelli. At several shop meetings motions were carried calling for the disbanding of the "Ad Hoc" Committee of unelected participators who had drawn up the document.

Clearly, more drastic methods were going to have to be employed to break the re-kindled militancy and determination on the shop floor. At the end of March all new capital spending projects (including the New Mini plant at Longbridge) were frozen for the three months prior to a review of all Leyland business.

Management claimed that this move was due to a "cash flow" crisis resulting from the toolroom strike. In fact, of course, it was yet another example of their usual blackmail tactics.

These matters rested until last month, when a leaflet produced by the Communist Party was distributed on the

gates at Longbridge.

The leaflet outlined 5 possible plans that the Leyland Review had come up with: "We Communists who work in Leyland say that only Plan A is acceptable to the workforce in Leyland, indeed to the people of Britain, because of the economic, social and political consequences of the four other alternatives."

Plan 'A'

The leaflet goes on to call for "a mighty campaign around the demand that Plan A is implemented"

This was the first that the Longbridge workforce had heard about the outcome of the report (officially known as the "Joint Management Council 1977 Concept Study") — although two CP members, Derek Robinson and Peter Nicholas, are on the Joint Management Council!

Suddenly, shop meetings

were called by the CP-dominated Works Committee, at which the shop floor was asked to endorse a "Campaign for Plan A" — still without being told anything about what "Plan A" entailed! A petition was also already in circulation, calling upon the Government to "implement Plan A" and stating that "we have given commitments regarding productivity and work methods."

When asked for details of "Plan A" and the mysterious "commitments" referred to in the petition, stewards said that the "employee representatives" on the Joint Management Council had been sworn to secrecy so that Ford and Vauxhall wouldn't find out any industrial secrets!

In fact, this whole campaign is a massive diversion, with the CP taking the lead in putting its weight behind the management's blackmail closure threats. The report is itself quite clear that "Plan

A" must go ahead, and obviously the other 'alternatives' were put in as red herrings. Management know this, the NEB know it, and so does Robinson and the CP.

The report states that "Alternatives B and C, by concentrating on specialist cars, pose grave doubts about the ability of (Leyland) Cars to survive if the market makes the expected shift towards smaller more economical cars. The already increasing competition in specialist car sectors will become greater and the likely victors will be those companies with a volume car base."

In other words, Plans B and C, which would remove Leyland from volume car production altogether, are non-starters.

Disruption

The report goes on: "The single factor dominating all the alternatives is employee relations. If by moving to alternatives B, C or D our employee relations would improve 'at a stroke', then the decision would be obvious. However, all evidence suggests the opposite and any action of the severity envisaged in B, C or to a lesser extent D and D1 [drastically reduced volume car production] would generate such reaction that it would be counter-productive."

Elsewhere the report states that "the possibility of widespread disruption... possibly of the situation becoming completely uncontrollable" would be "very high" if any plan other than "A" was introduced.

So why the "mighty campaign" for a decision that is already a foregone conclusion?

First, it draws attention away from the Leyland Shop Stewards Committee's much vaunted "campaign against the Social Contract", of which nothing has been heard since the April 3rd Conference.

At stake

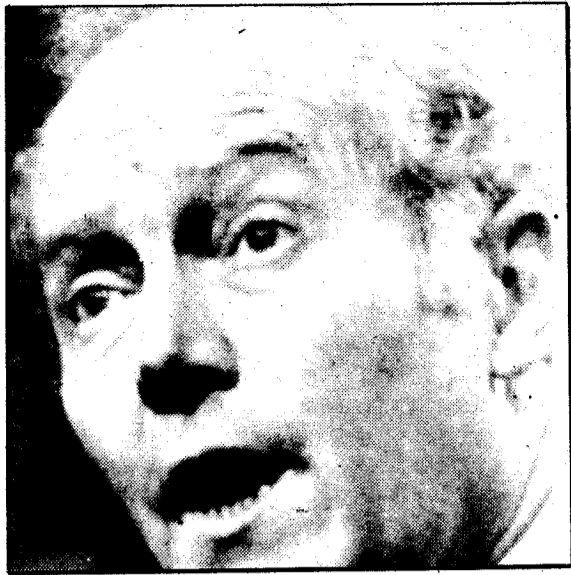
Second, it gives Robinson and his fellow participators a carte blanche to capitulate to management's demands on the Participation Board and the National Cars Council, by claiming that Leyland's future is at stake.

Finally, and most important, it is a deliberate diversion away from the coming attacks on mutuality, manning levels, track speeds and local wage bargaining.

In all of this Robinson and the CP are consciously acting as the management's stooges.

That is why Workers' Action supporters at Longbridge are arguing against any commitment to "Plan A". Instead of the secret deals of the "participators", Leyland workers must demand that the company's books be opened to workers' inspection. Most of all, a rank and file fight-back against the coming "rationalisations" must be organised — and that means taking on the Communist Party as well as the management and the Government.

JOHN DONOVAN



"We have made sacrifices but let us not make the most stupid sacrifice of all. Let us not deliver to Margaret Thatcher the work we have done. Let us not give Mrs. Thatcher the benefit of North Sea Oil and the gift of an improved balance of payments. That would be a very stupid sacrifice indeed."

With these words David Basnett, General Secretary of the nearly 900,000 strong General and Municipal Workers Union, urged the Union's conference at Southport to agree to a third round of social contract wage curbs. And whether or not this argument clinched the debate, Basnett won a massive majority for his "Phase 3 at a price".

notional

According to Basnett's reasoning, only another round of pay curbs can keep the government in. How then does he account for the huge by-election defeats for Labour? How does he account for the fact that if there were a general election today, Labour's defeat would be on a scale unprecedented since the war?

Presumably Basnett agrees that the first two rounds of the Social Contract have reduced Labour's popularity. But he sees light at the end of the tunnel, or, as he might put it, black at the end of the pipe-line — to provide a new boost to Labour's fortunes and establish it for years as "the party that brought us from the three day week, rising unemployment and sky-rocketing prices to the paradise of petro-pounds and full employment".

He is wrong. Or rather he is dishonest. He must know that Britain's chronic economic decline can be reversed for a period on one condition only: that the working class's living standard goes down. That is what the social contract meant in 1975 and in 1976, and that is what it will mean for a third time in 1977.

The "gains" from that period of sacrifice, however (and it is not Basnett and his officials who have sacrificed their living standards however much he repeats the word "us"), are not merely short-lived. They are entirely notional. They are to be had only if the working class is strong enough to separate the capitalists from the profits they have made at our expense.

Yet the years of the social contract have decreased the ability of the working class to do just that.

In fact the biggest sacrifice the working class has made over the years of the Labour Government has been to give up what real political independence it had — above all within the trade union movement and on the shop floor.

right

And here we come back to where the argument started. For that sacrifice — as well as pushing down our living standards — has produced a drift to the right not only within the trade union movement, but also at the level of political movements. Hence the threat of Margaret Thatcher, hence the threat of the fascists of the National Front.

Thus the only hope of keeping Mrs. Thatcher out — or more realistically not

If there were no Mrs. Thatcher Basnett would have to invent one

Rounding off his reply to the debate on the Social Contract, Basnett repeated what is fast becoming a modern myth of trade union talk: "Do those who argue for a free-for-all" he asked "argue that it will improve our members' standard of living? It would trample on the low paid and put jobs in jeopardy."

The "wages free-for-all" phrase is heard at every trade union conference these days.

It conjures up — and it is meant to — an image of workers fighting each other for wages.

If, on the contrary, the talk was more on fighting the

employers for wages, the solution of pay restraint to help the low paid would look absurd and obscure. Far more obvious solutions would present themselves — such as ways of organising and mobilising to push wages up in the wake of the better organised workers.

And the targets set would not be those of holding back the better paid, but of establishing in struggle a decent national minimum wage, and inflation-proofed automatic rises on wages and on all state benefits, pensions and grants.

allowing her to stay in for long — is for Labour and the trade union movement to solve the problems that confront the working class now. Any other policy will ensure the Tories future success and also help disarm, demoralise and disorientate the working class.

First and foremost that means rejecting the Social Contract and the principles that underlie it; it means imposing on the employers through the force of a mobilised working class a wage system that in addition to giving workers a substantial rise will guarantee increases in real wages in accordance

with any rise in the cost of working class living; it means imposing on the employers a system of work-sharing under workers' control to bring into the ranks of the employed those seeking work.

The GMWU leaders have said what they think of such an anti-capitalist approach to solving the current crisis. They are against it. The Labour leaders have said what they think of it. They will do all they can to stop it.

But the rank and file trade unionists and the rank and file of the Labour Party can be won to such a policy. And they must be.



THE UNIONS



'Orderly' means a 12-month rule

The GMWU Conference agreed to a further round of wage curbs and committed itself to "an orderly return to free collective bargaining". The TGWU, whose conference will be decisive for the future of an official third round to the Social Contract, has also come out in favour of "an orderly return".

What does "an orderly return" mean? According to the *Financial Times*, Jack Jones construes the phrase to mean "holding the line on Phase 2"; practically, this means sticking to the 12-months-between-settlements rule, so that for many workers the Phase 2 curbs will be extended for anything up to another year (if their deals go through this July).

In a wider sense, this "holding the line" will be a formula for the union leaders to retain their control over the rank and file. And having done that, they will have a far better chance of steering their members into accepting such norm as will undoubtedly be cooked up between the TUC and the Government, even if they fail to settle on a rigid Phase 3.

Above all the trade union bureaucracy does not want to see a return to the 1976-72 situation, when they largely lost the initiative to the rank and file.

When they read, as did Basnett last week, for any sacrifice to save the Labour Government, they have something quite different in mind from their members' instinctive class opposition to the direct representatives of the bosses.

For the union bureaucrats, the return of the Tories means both an end to their exalted position as business partners in Great Britain Limited; and the loss of their close control over the rank and file. There would be an upsurge of rank and file militancy and a period of sharp class confrontation. Such a period could only mean a repeat of the experience of the early seventies.

Although that period saw a rise in wage levels, the bureaucrats look back on it in horror at their relative loss of authority. And their motto is "Never again!"

Tyndale 'Open letter' makes wrong appeal

WITH THE PRESS solidly against them, the sacked Tyndale teachers have decided to pay for space in the *Times Educational Supplement* [TES] for an Open Letter to the ILEA.

Unfortunately, this Open Letter (which is being circulated for signature by other teachers) contains precisely the sort of appeal which isn't needed.

The advert will contain facts and information, which is fine. But the Open Letter itself concentrates on the "unfairness" of the sacking by one party to the dispute [the ILEA] of another party [the teachers]. The implication is that if the blow had been administered by an independent body it would have been quite acceptable!

And it goes on to plead with the ILEA to be "big enough" to

"find a place" for the Tyndale teachers on account of their energy and "commitment to the disadvantaged child" — rather than to reinstate them because their sacking for taking strike action was wrong and a threat to other organised teachers.

In fact the Letter doesn't say clearly that the teachers were sacked for going on strike and actually hints that ILEA were mainly motivated by fear of "a campaign being mounted against them" [the teachers] if they are allowed to teach again.

Basically the Letter appeals to the ILEA to be nice and decent. But this is unlikely to have any effect on the ILEA, and will divert the campaign from the main issues (now primarily the right to strike). If the Tyndale teachers are to gain the kind of

support that will win their reinstatement, they must get these issues across to as many teachers, parents and trade unionists as they can.



WORKERS ACTION supporters involved in the Tyndale Defence Campaign feel strongly that the Open Letter is damaging and should not be signed. But we do urge teachers to support the Campaign in the following ways:

■ Show the Tyndale Film [super 8mm or video] at your school or union branch. It's available from the Tyndale Defence Committee [TDC], 32 Clifton Court, Biggerstaff Street, London N4. [Tel: 01-263-2536].

■ Get the Tyndale teachers to speak at your workplace or union branch.

■ Sell the book: "William Tyndale — the Teachers' Story", £1.25, from TDC.

■ Affiliate your organisation to the TDC. Get the weekly campaign bulletin.

■ Get Bankers Orders and petition forms from TDC and distribute them at work.

■ Build up support for a lobby of NUT Headquarters [Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1] on FRIDAY 17th JUNE, 4.30 onwards.

PETE FIRMIN

[See Back Page for other news on the Tyndale re-instatement campaign.]

WORKERS IN ACTION

21 MORE BLACK TEENAGERS TRAPPED IN CONSPIRACY DRAGNET

Over 100 Lewisham police were involved in a dawn raid early on Monday May 30th, when 21 black youths aged between 14 and 21 were rounded up.

In an operation reminiscent of the smashing of the Kray gang, the youths were dragged from their beds, stripped and searched. A girl friend of one of them was carted off as well.

On Wednesday when they got to court, many of the defendants appeared with ripped clothes and blood on their shirts.

Six have been denied bail, and 14-year old Floyd Robinson was remanded "in care". Bail for the others was fixed as high as £1000.

The charges are the notorious, and vague, ones of conspiracy and "sus" (suspicion) — charges where hearsay evidence can secure conviction, where the defendant is plainly guilty until he can prove himself innocent. Conspiracy is a crime in itself — even if the "plot" is never carried out!

At a peaceful street meeting organised in the campaign for the 21, Lewisham police blatantly compounded their record of conspiracy and violence — arresting Peter Chapple, John Deason and Peggy Eagle (a local SWP member).

Chapple, who was jailed for "malicious damage" for his part in the 'Free George Davis' campaign, was charged again with malicious damage: he "maliciously" slammed the police-car door as he was bundled away, thereby smashing a window. So say the police. More objective observers suggest that the police slammed the door on him, while he was half in and half out of the car.

Chapple is also charged with obstruction, as is Ms. Eagle.

Deason, who was recently acquitted following a shameful frame-up of the Right to Work marchers, was charged with threatening behaviour, because he was talking "threateningly" into a megaphone.

Lewisham police station was immediately picketed until the 3 comrades were released on bail.

Activities being organised in the campaign to defend the 21 include a picket of Camberwell Magistrates Court (Camberwell Green, D'Eynsford Road, SE5) on Thursday June 9th at 9.30, when the hearing of some of the 21 is due; and a public meeting to organise the campaign on Thursday June 16th at Goldsmiths College Small Hall (Lewisham Way, London SE14).

BOB SUGDEN

WINNING SUPPORT FOR SACKED TYNDALE TEACHERS

250 teachers lobbied the Inner London Education Authority after school on Wednesday 25th May, in protest at the sacking of 6 teachers from William Tyndale School, Islington.

These teachers have just been sacked for striking in September 1975 as a last resort to achieve a comprehensive public inquiry into their school — which had been the subject of a vicious attack from right wing local councillors, school managers and parents.

The attack centred around the use of so-called "progressive" teaching methods used at the school. And many people now mistakenly believe that the 6 Tyndale teachers have been sacked as "bad teachers" rather than for striking.

Those fighting to get the 'Tyndale 6' reinstated are aware of this confusion, and are preparing for a long haul — to get across to other teachers the facts on how the school actually was run, and to get across the fact that the teachers have been sacked for striking.

It is now generally agreed that such work needs to be done before embarking on strike action to win reinstatement.

Such an approach contrasts with the tactics adopted by the Socialist Workers' Party as their contribution to the campaign. Having called for a lobby of the ILEA as soon as the sackings were known (allowing time for only about 100 teachers to be mobilised) they then put out a strike call for May 25th, without even informing all the Tyndale teachers.

This strike call in fact over-estimated the support at the present stage, and brought in threatening letters from Fred Jarvis, General Secretary of the NUT. Eventually it had to be withdrawn, and probably the whole business meant lost support for the lobby and the Defence Campaign.

The campaign is now working to build up support for strike action, probably some time in July. At the picket, £1200 was pledged for the Defence Fund and plans were laid for an Open Letter to appear in a full page advert in the Times Educational Supplement on July 1st. [see page 7].

IAN HOLLINGWORTH

FIVE CAMPAIGNS FOR LEFT ACTION

"For LEFT ACTION to be an effective challenge to the talk-shop politics of the 'Militant'-dominated LPYS leadership new young activists must be recruited to the Young Socialists prepared to campaign on the initiatives of Left Action".

This was the mood of the conference called by revolutionaries in the LPYS to build up the paper *Left Action*.

The conference itself, held on May 28th, was attended by supporters from 25 YS branches. That itself was an indication that its aims can only be realised in a limited way. But the conference did succeed in laying down a clear basis to build up from — one of unity in action around 5 campaigns in and through the YS: on racism, on youth unemployment, on women's rights and on solidarity with liberation struggles in Ireland and in South Africa.

Coupled with this there would be an open debate in the pages of *Left Action* on matters of difference between its supporters.

The sharpest dispute at the conference was in the debate on the political basis of the paper, on what form of

AS PLESSEY AXE COMES DOWN

KIRKBY OCCUPIED FOR BETTER PAY-OFF

THE fight of the Plessey workers on Merseyside against redundancies has been resumed. The struggle started last March and has broken out now as the 90-day redundancy notices are taking effect.

The company is trying to stall by offering the Kirby workers, who are mainly women EEP TU members, redeployment. Some of them have been promised a transfer to Edge Lane, another Plessey plant where redundancies are taking effect. But according to chief shop steward Lil Allen the jobs the company is offering are unacceptable anyway: "Wiring girls were being offered assembly work at £20 less than they were getting here", she says.

One of the main problems of the fight-back is the lack of cooperation between the unions both at the Kirby site and throughout Merseyside. For instance the original occupation at Kirby which started last March when 200 women workers took over the plant collapsed when the TGWU members accepted the redeployment scheme they'd been offered and

decided to resume work.

According to Lil Allen the new occupation will continue until the offer of severance pay is improved. "The company should be made to pay. Hygena are paying £1,200 for a job." At Plesseys it's a different story: a week after the start of the occupation Kirby workers got a letter from management saying they should collect a redundancy cheque ... for the minimum severance pay required under the law. And those working at Plessey's for less than two years won't even get that pittance.

Unfortunately the Merseyside workers are isolated and weakened by the surrender of other plants to the bosses' blackmail: the Sunderland workers whose factory is being run down until November when it closes have called off their strike and accepted redundancy. Even at Edge Lane 700 of the 1,000 scheduled for redundancy have applied for voluntary redundancy, leaving only the Edge Lane and Huyton electricians on strike ... for better severance money.

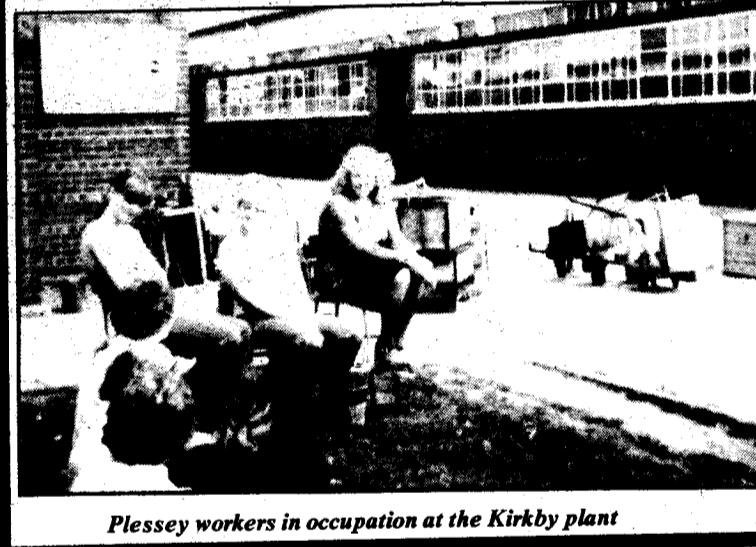
The unions involved in this

fight were the EEP TU, the AUEW, TGWU, ASTMS and TASS — some of which actually claim to be "left wing" unions. TASS is completely dominated at the official level by the Communist Party. Yet none of these unions put forward a perspective for a struggle for jobs rather than redundancy pay. They totally accepted the redundancies as such.

This doesn't only mean that they lead the workers into a battle for the wrong objectives, but they lead them into a battle which inevitably would lead to divisions within the work-force, as the payments are different for every single worker.

The fight shouldn't be over severance pay at all, but for jobs. The bosses' plans should be opposed by the workers' demand for work-sharing on full pay under union control. The government should be called on to nationalise the company without paying the bosses any compensation. The occupation and the organised strength of the workers should be used both to resist the bosses' plans and to establish control over the plant whether or not it is nationalised.

BARBARA WOJIECHOWSKA (Send donations and messages or support to: Lil Allen, c/o Plessey, Dixon Lane, Kirkby, Merseyside.)



Plessey workers in occupation at the Kirby plant

ADS

JUST OUT: *Spartacist* 23. Five international documents. Send 40p to IS-M, BCM Box 4272, London WC1.

SPARTACUS, monthly paper of the German Trotskyist organisation Spartacusbund. 35p.

PERMANENTE REVOLUTION, organ of the Internationale Kommunistische Liga of Austria. 25p.

LA CLASSE, monthly paper of the Lega Comunista (Italy). 15p.

LUTTE DE CLASSE/ CLASS STRUGGLE, bilingual Trotskyist magazine published by Lutte Ouvrière (France). 40p.

All available from Phoenix Pamphlets, 98 Gifford St, London N1 0DF. Add 15% per order p&P, minimum 6½p.

EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Paid ads (including ads for publications) 8p per word; block ads, £5 per column inch. All payments to be made in advance. Send copy to Events, 49 Carnac St, London SE27, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

FRIDAY 10 JUNE. The Tyndale Film. 6.30pm at Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, WC1 (off Russell Sq.). Entrance free, collection to support William Tyndale teachers.

TUESDAY 14 JUNE. Cardiff Workers Action Readers' Group meeting on "The Social Contract". 7.30pm at Rhymer Hotel, Adam Street.

SATURDAY 2 JULY. Open Conference of NUT members. 10.30am to 5pm at Students' Union, Birmingham University. Open to all individuals, entrance fee 50p. Information from 23 Kenilworth Gardens, London SE18.

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unity is needed for joint action by the supporters of Workers' Action, Red WEEKLY AND Chartist involved in *Left Action*.

Workers' Action supporters argued that differences between the tendencies to the left of *Militant* and *Tribune* are very important and can't be avoided. Simon Temple of Norwood YS pointed out that such differences included issues like how MPs should vote in votes of confidence; what demands to place on 'left' MPs; Scottish nationalism, the Common Market and many other questions. His conclusion was that unity is possible, but that it is necessary to lay down a clear and limited basis for united actions which could draw working class youth into political activity.

On the other side John Parkinson, a Red Weekly supporter from Preston N. LPYS, argued that *Left Action* needed an "action programme" to provide a "comprehensive alternative" to the politics of *Militant* and *Tribune*; and that the differences between the tendencies in *Left Action* were being overstated.

Workers Action supporters respond-

ed that a joint "action programme" evading a number of key issues, based on differing understandings of work in the LPYS, of the Militant, and of the Labour Party itself was not an "action programme" at all but a lowest common denominator agreement which would not only fail to answer Militant's politics but would actually be unclear and politically dishonest.

The Conference rejected the idea of an "action programme" in favour of establishing *Left Action* as a genuine united front based on joint actions which the paper would initiate and report.

In a later debate on what activity to undertake there was a far wider degree of agreement, showing the possibilities that do exist for *Left Action*.

To launch our central campaign for the next few months, *Left Action* will be producing a special issue on racism to counter the arguments of the racists. And the paper itself will be more regular and, hopefully, bigger.

NIK BARSTOW
Left Action EB