

workers' ACTION

No.66

Aug. 13-20

10p

STOP THE FASCISTS IN LEWISHAM

CLIFTON RISE, S.E.14

1pm SAT 13TH

IN BRITAIN, the Jubilee is streamers and street parties. In Northern Ireland — thousands of soldiers lining the streets.

To make Northern Ireland safe for a token visit by Britain's queen, 600 extra soldiers have been sent to help the 32,000 soldiers and police already on alert.

She will visit the town of Coleraine, which is almost entirely Protestant, and will give a garden party at Hillsborough for some members of the Six Counties upper crust. People have been advised to keep well away from where the queen will be, unless they have a special invitation.

She is to be greeted on setting foot on Irish soil by a salvo of artillery fire: but the location of the guns which will salute her Britannic Majesty is a closely guarded military secret!



Last weekend over 200 houses were raided in a drive against Republicans. People are now being held on seven-day detention orders. Usually these orders are for three days.

In Britain, the Jubilee has soothed the divisions between the profiteers and the poor, the millionaires and the misery-stricken, with a "shared" celebration. In Northern Ireland it exposes and inflames the bitterness of national oppression and communal hostility.

Roughly four out of every ten people in Northern Ireland detest the monarchy as a symbol of foreign rule and as a piece of ancient social junk.

The British people cut its tyrannical monarchs down

- 800 years of British invasions
- 300 years of colonial conquest
- 56 years of partition
- And 8 more years of war...

IRELAND'S BITTER JUBILEE

to size centuries ago, and the monarchy now exists mainly for ceremonial and decorative purposes, though it retains some powers the bosses might try to revive and use in times of heated class struggle. The mass feeling for the monarchy in Britain is easy-going and sentimental, because it is a matter of whimsy and play-acting. In their bones most people know it is not for real. The queen belongs to the world of Christmas

trees and birthday cakes.

In Ireland the monarchy translates into a symbol of Britain and British oppression — a living and threatening symbol of inherited power, wealth, privilege and status. To the Catholics in the Six Counties the queen is the symbol of age-old oppression. The British Army is its very real presence.

Already, as we go to press it is reported that the Army has marked the queen's visit appropriate-

ly — by shooting down a 14-year old Catholic youth. And the rebellious Catholic community is marking it with yet another upsurge of anti-British protest and struggle.

That is why, after eight years of war, it still takes 32,000 heavily equipped men to make a few sealed-off acres of the Six Counties safe for the British queen.

The British ruling class crowned Elizabeth II queen of Northern Ireland, queen of the statelet which it arti-

ficially cut out of the Irish nation. But that crown is maintained not by ceremonies but by the guns of the British Army. Ireland unfree will never be at peace!

BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND!

GRUNWICK

THE MASS PICKETING MUST GO ON

ON FRIDAY 29th July the Grunwick strike committee was pressurised by the leaders of their union, APEX, into calling off the Day of Action scheduled for Monday 8th August.

The strike committee and Brent Trades Council still called for mass support on the picket line. About 3,000 people turned up on the 8th. But there was no repetition of the tremendous display of class solidarity of 11th July.

This bureaucratic sabotage is a real danger for the Grunwick strikers.

"If we don't have mass picketing we will get stuck in legal procedures and will find ourselves going through

another winter standing outside the gates of Grunwicks", said Mahmood Ahmed, secretary of the Grunwicks strike committee.

It is twelve months since the Grunwicks workers started their strike for union recognition: for the right to organise together in order to improve their sweatshop wages and conditions.

At the beginning all the trade union leaders supported them, in words at least. The Labour Government's legislation was supposed to guarantee workers the right to unionise if they wish, and not to be sacked simply for

trying to organise a union. If Grunwicks cowboy boss George Ward was allowed to get away with defying that, then all the laws which were supposed to be the trade unions' reward for the Social Contract would be reduced to waste paper.

It should have been easy for the strength of the official trade union movement — backed by the sympathy of the Government — to crush a backstreet profiteer like George Ward. But the trade union leaders have been afraid of mobilising workers to support the Grunwick strikers. On the other side, Ward and his friends have been determined and

aggressive militants for their class interests. In the courts they have found support from judges with similar attitudes.

The mass picket on 11th July probably scared Ward. But it certainly scared the leaders of APEX, the strikers' union, and the post office workers' union UPW even more.

So what was the result? The APEX leaders threatened the Grunwicks strike committee that they would cut their strike pay if they didn't cancel the August 8th Day of Action. The UPW forced the Cricklewood postmen who had been locked out because they refused to

handle Grunwicks mail to return to work. On the same day, 29th July, the Appeal Court ruled that the decision in favour of the strikers by ACAS, the Government's arbitration service, was invalid.

The Court of Inquiry which reports on 18th August may come out in favour of the strikers. But Ward has already said that even if it does, he won't pay a blind bit of attention!

Once again, at Grunwicks, the trade union bureaucrats could snatch defeat out of the jaws of victory. And that would be a defeat for the trade union rights of every worker.

THE RESULTS of the Israeli elections in May this year took the US and other governments by surprise. The ruling Labour Party was defeated by Likud, the right wing coalition led by Menachem Begin, former leader of the Irgun terrorist organisation, which was responsible for more than one massacre of Palestinian Arabs.

US President Carter still says that negotiations for a Middle East settlement may get started by October, but the fact is that Likud's victory probably makes another war inevitable. The USA has stepped up military and financial support for Israel.

After the Yom Kippur war in 1973, the Arabs used their control of a large part of the world's oil supplies to put pressure on the imperialist governments to organise a peace settlement in the Middle East. It became urgent for imperialism to defend its overall interests — and to distance itself from the Zionist settler state of Israel.

In the drive for a settlement, increasing pressure was put on the Israeli Government to relinquish most of the territories conquered in the 1967 war, including most of the West Bank of the Jordan.

Latterly there was apparently serious talk of setting up a mini-state for the Palestinian Arabs on the West Bank of the Jordan. The important Arab governments had all given their support to this strategy, orchestrated by the powerful government of the USA.

Home

This solution — so the leading imperialists believed — might placate the Arabs, settle some or most of the Palestinian Arabs driven from their homeland by the Zionists, and stabilise the Middle East. Jimmy Carter committed himself in March and April this year to supporting "the right" of the Palestinian Arabs to have 'a homeland'.

Though the defeated Israeli 'Labour' Government opposed a mini-state for the Palestinians, it appeared resigned to relinquishing the conquered territories and to falling into line with the demands of the USA.

The victory of Likud was partly a result of the electorate's uneasiness with the Israeli Government's 'soft' response to pressure for a settlement, and alarm at the talk of a Palestinian mini-state. As in other "settler" societies, when there is any threat to the position which the settlers have established and maintained at the expense of ousted or oppressed people (as in Zimbabwe or South Africa), it is those who most strongly and unashamedly assert the right of the settler society to exist who come to the front, pushing aside 'moderates' or 'liberals' like the Israeli Labour Party.

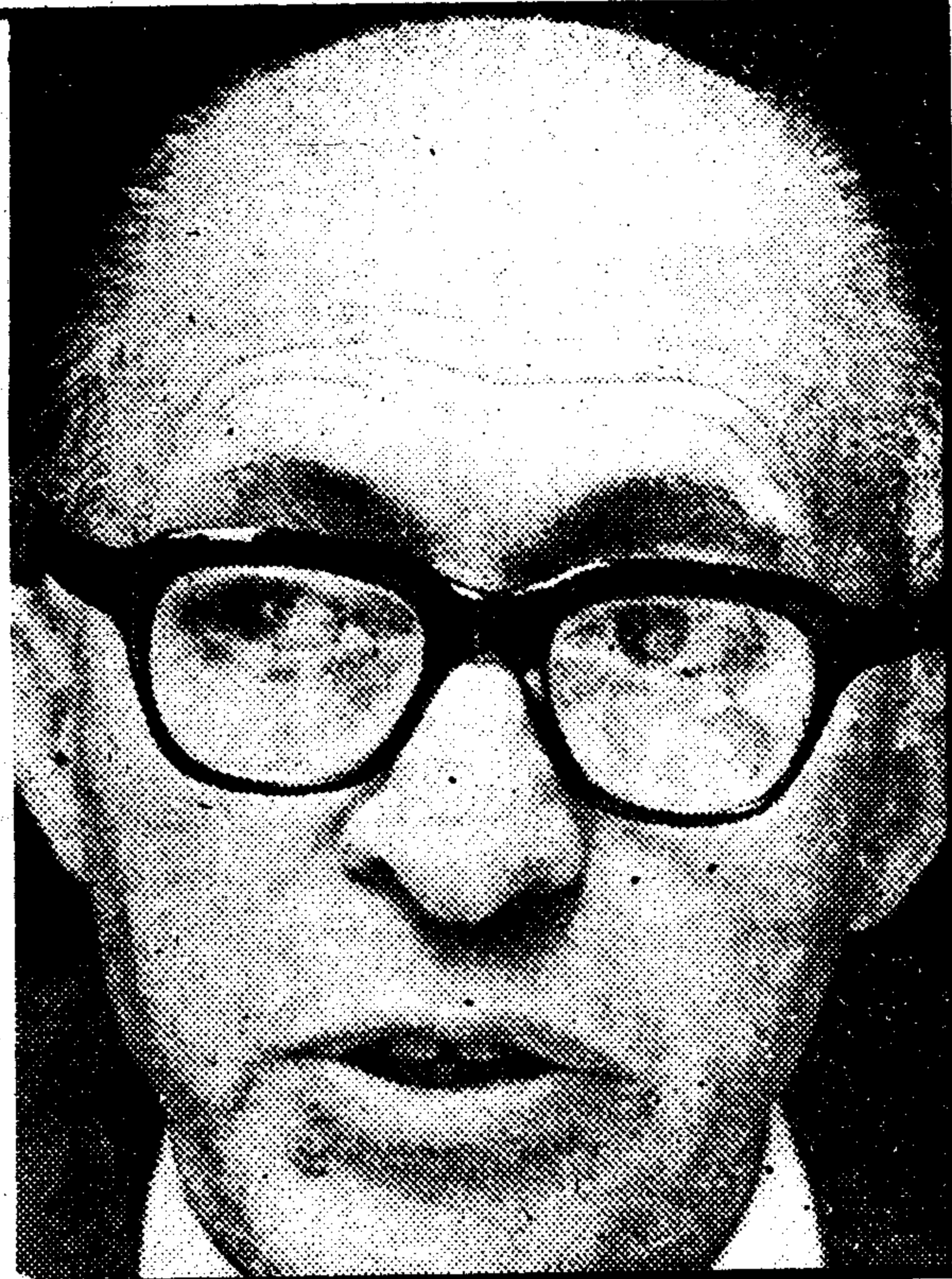
Annex

Likud is committed to permanent annexation of the West Bank, which it believes to be Jewish territory by right, and which it refers to by the Biblical names of Judea and Samaria. Zionist zealots had been setting up Jewish settlements in the occupied area so as to "create facts" with which to confront opponents of Zionist annexation of the West Bank. The Labour Government rather half-heartedly declared such settlements illegal.

Two days after the election, Begin made a symbolic visit to camp Kadum, an 'illegal' settlement. He said in a speech, "This is the liberated land of Israel. This is the liberated land of Judea and Samaria, and their return is absolutely not negotiable".

The present Government of Israel is determined on the unconditional annexation of the West Bank. While the ultra-Zionist Likud might find it easier than the Labour Party to give back Sinai to the Arabs, its frank annexationist intentions for the West Bank rule out any easy settlement. For the

Begin stirs up threat of war



Arab Governments, Likud's victory upsets their plans to reach an accord with Israel with the US government acting as broker.

The Carter administration, which talked in the spring of the rights of the Arabs (though it did not talk of their right to live as equal citizens in all of Palestine) has done a political U-turn, apparently in response to the pressure of the powerful Jewish-American community.

Ethnic groupings play a major role in US politics, lobbying and trading their support for favours. For example, the Irish nationalist movement has drawn heavily on American-Irish support since the middle of the last century. Without the political and financial support of the US Jewish community, it is doubt-

ful if the state of Israel could have come into existence at all.

After the May elections, the Jewish-American community instantly stepped into line behind the new Israeli government. Rabbi Alexander Schindler, head of the 'Conference of major Jewish organisations', flew to Israel for talks with Begin immediately after the surprise election result.

Lobby

Begin visited America for talks with Carter. Jimmy Carter, who had been talking of an Arab mini-state in the West Bank in April, suddenly discovered what an attractive personality

the previously-spurned "former terrorist" Begin was.

"A man who has demonstrated a willingness to suffer for principle, a man who has shown superlative personal courage in the face of trial, challenge, disappointment, but who has ultimately prevailed because of the depth of his commitment and his own personal characteristics". Perhaps not surprisingly, Begin found Carter "a man with a good heart".

This humiliating about-turn by the US President, in face of the support of the powerful Zionist lobby for Begin's government — and thus for its annexationist policies — was transformed by the public relations industry into "a dramatic personal encounter" of two great men. It wasn't the wire-

pulling and manoeuvring of the US Zionist lobby (which in world war 2 fought against the US being opened to European Jewish refugees because it wanted them to go to Palestine instead) — it was all a matter of the impact of Begin's personality on Carter...

The following day the State Department announced an arms sale amounting to \$250 million, including \$107 million in easy credit for Israel.

A spokesman for the Palestinian Liberation Organisation in Beirut characterised the present position of the Israeli government, which includes a refusal to go to peace talks in Geneva if the PLO attends, as follows: "This is not a peace plan, but a war plan".

War

General Ariel Sharon, an articulate and outspoken ally of the Likud bloc, agrees. "The next one", Sharon told the US journal *Newsweek*, "will be quick as lightning, and so devastating that it will take the Arabs ten years to recover. They will be so groggy that they won't even have the incentive to apply another oil embargo. That's when we will solve the Palestinian problem, not on the West Bank, which will be annexed by Israel, but on the East Bank, where the Jordanian monarchy will fold and the Palestinians will take over".

Carter still claims that peace talks will go ahead in the autumn. After the Likud victory and the meek stepping into line of the US government, a new war is at least as likely as peace talks. A crushing defeat for the Arabs may now appear to the Carter administration as the best road to "a settlement" — one which is in line with both the interests of imperialism and of Zionism.

Frank Higgins

An agent not only for Labour

Peter Marriner, the election agent for the Labour candidate in the Ladywood [Birmingham] by-election, has resigned after allegations that he is a fascist.

The allegations were made by Raghieb Ahsan, candidate for 'Socialist Unity' (a bloc around the IMG). Mr Marriner resigned an hour before the press conference at which the allegation was made.

Marriner did not deny his fascist connections — which are well documented, and include one photo of him on the platform at a fascist rally in Trafalgar Square in early 1976. He claimed he had associated with fascists while doing research on the extreme right for an academic purpose. The Labour Candidate, John Severs, has however denounced the allegation as a "monstrous smear" against Marriner.

Workers' Action's investigations leave us in no doubt that Marriner is a fascist. His account does not explain him being on the Trafalgar Square platform, and in fact Marriner has been

known for a long time to people on the left who make it their business to monitor the affairs of the fascist groups.

Marriner — under pressure — has been a valuable source of information about the affairs of the fascist groups. The anti-fascists are quite certain, though, that while Marriner can be 'squeezed' for information, he is fundamentally a fascist.

Marriner has maintained membership in the Labour Party for a number of years. For a few months from late 1974 to mid 1975, he was a probationary member of Workers' Fight, a Trotskyist organisation which became part of the present International Communist League. A spokesman for the I-CL told us:

"Marriner was one of a group of gay comrades who had had discussions with Workers' Fight. He presented himself as someone with an especial hatred of fascism. But he never became more than a marginal member of Workers' Fight, and after a few months of probationary membership he was lapsed. In early 1976 the I-CL discov-

ered that Marriner was associating with known fascists, for example, Martin Webster, National Activities Organiser of the National Front. After checking Marriner's background, the I-CL decided to make the facts known to the labour movement in Birmingham.

Marriner's fascist connections have been known on the far left in Birmingham since then. Marriner, however, maintained his credibility in his right wing Labour Party because he is ambiguous and, apparently, efficient at electioneering.

Marriner is therefore a man who has maintained an ambiguous position over a period of years. To the left and the Labour Party he presents himself as an anti-fascist. Certainly he has been a source of information about the affairs of the fascist groups. It is most likely that Marriner also gave information about the left to the fascist and Nazi organisations.

The classic problem with the 'double agent' is that he must do enough, or appear to do enough, to satisfy both sides.

The picture that emerges is hazy — but the main outline is very clear. Marriner has at-



Stand up to racism, Labour will be told

ANTI-RACISTS in London are planning a lobby of the Labour Party Conference in October. It will demand the implementation of the resolution on racism passed at last year's Labour Party conference, the repeal of the immigration laws, and a serious fight against fascism.

Last year's resolution had several faults. For instance, it did not clearly call for the end of all immigration control. But it was a major step forward. It demanded the repeal of the 1968 and 1971 Immigration Acts. It supported black self-defence, the expulsion of fascists from the labour movement, and called on CLPs to support local anti-racist committees.

But it has remained a dead letter.

Faced with the racist upsurge over the last two years, the NEC first tried to avoid taking any action. Even when they were finally forced to move, the campaign they organised was scarcely visible.

They issued a couple of leaflets, one of which explicitly supported strict immigration controls. They organised jointly with the TUC a demonstrat-

ion last November, at which one of the main speakers was the custodian of the Immigration Act, Merlyn Rees, who had only that week brought into use its deportation procedures to kick out American journalists Philip Agee and Mark Hosenball.

In the last nine months all they have done is issue a circular to CLPs calling for local campaigns.

Norwood Labour Party has been trying since January to discover what the NEC is doing to organise a campaign along the lines of the conference resolution. We have had no reply... and no action either!

But the racist menace has not receded. "National Front News" has been able to boast, after the council elections in May, of the hundreds of thousands of votes they got. In Bristol they are organising armed groups to attack the black community, while they plan their "biggest ever" march, in South London, this Saturday, the 13th.

Yet the NEC still refuses to support anti-fascist demonstrations, and leading Labour Party officials have repeatedly warned party members to stay away from them.

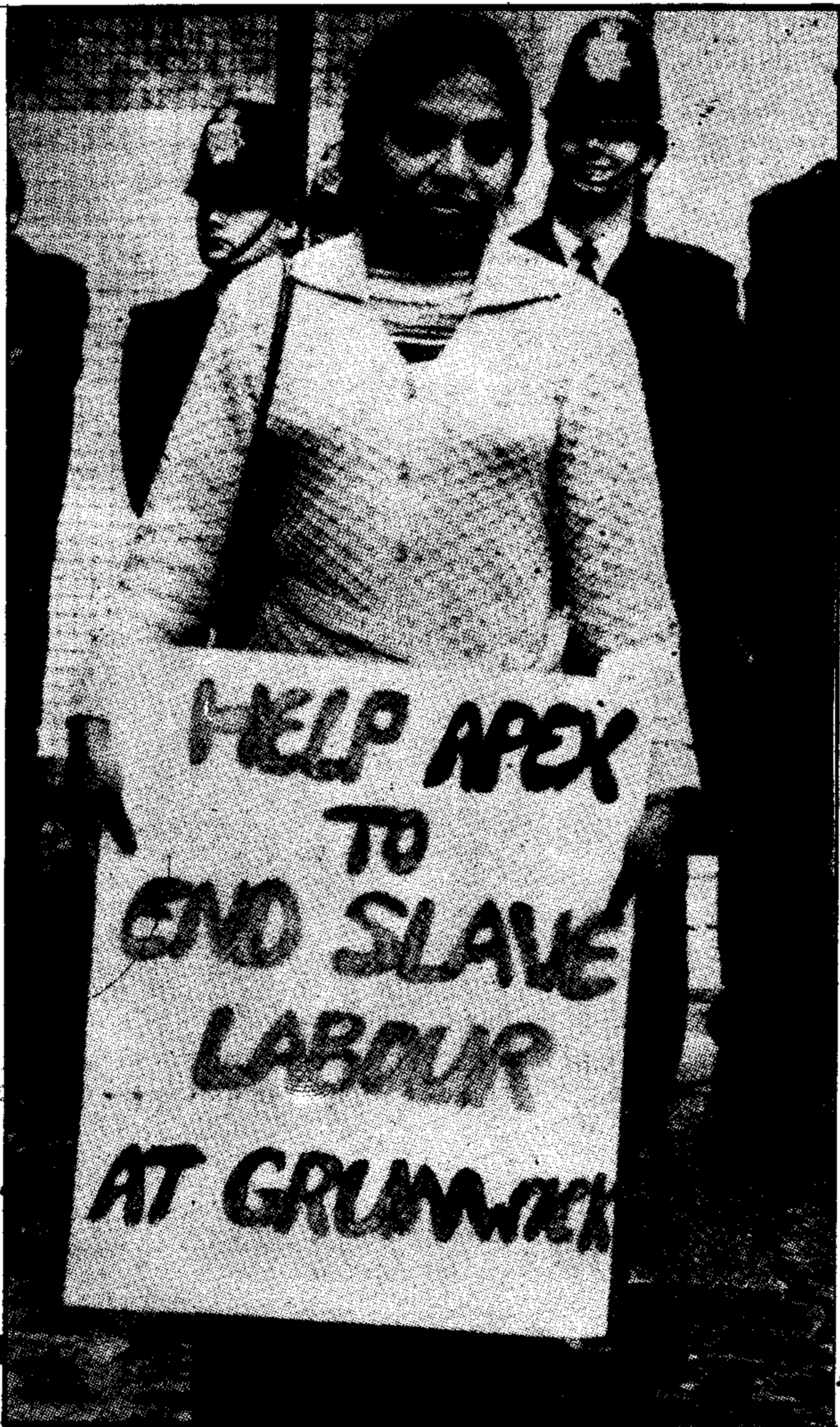
The Government claims to oppose racism, but continues to operate the Immigration Acts. Immigration control, even when painted up as a Nationalities Act, is automatically and inevitably racist. As its starting point, it defines immigrants as "a problem". That, in effect, concedes the whole argument to the open racists, for whom the "problem" is that so many of the immigrants have dark skin.

Reject

In view of the NEC's record over the last year, Norwood CLP has already decided to move the rejection of the section of the Annual Report dealing with the supposed anti-racist campaign. Apart from Norwood CLP, several other organisations have already supported the lobby. They include Brent East Labour Party and the London Anti-Racist Coordinating Committee.

Workers' Action calls on all its supporters to gain sponsorship for the lobby, and to organise the biggest possible attendance in Brighton at 11.30am on Tuesday October 4th.

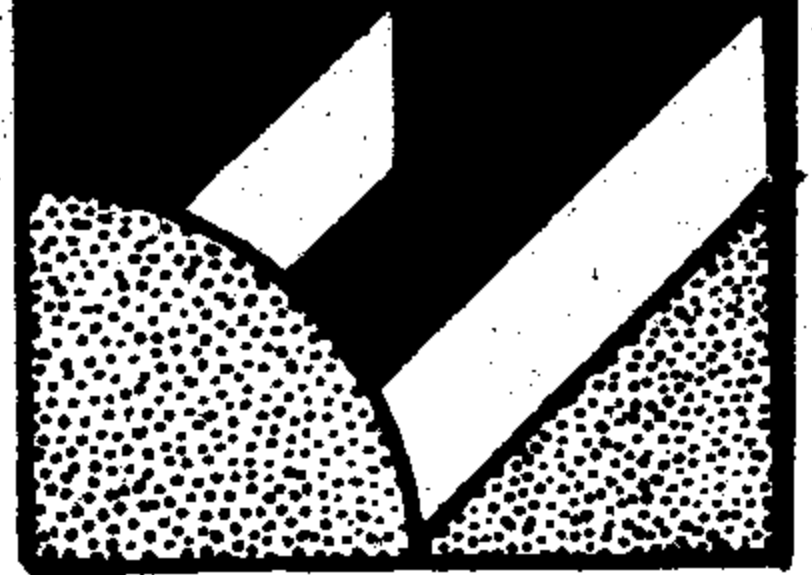
SIMON TEMPLE
[Norwood CLP]



Labour enforces laws that say people like this Grunwick striker are "a problem"

WAGES - DEMAND THE ONE-MONTH RULE!

Editorial



TWO YEARS of pay curbs ended on 1st August. Their balance sheet was grim: 1,600,000 unemployed, and enormous social service cuts. According to official figures, the real value of take-home pay for the average worker fell about 14% between December 1974 and February 1977; and the lower-paid suffered worst.

Now the anger against pay curbs has risen so high that the Government has had to drop them. Thousands of workers are putting in claims to claw back the drop in living standards over the last two years.

Leyland, Longbridge, shop stewards are claiming "a substantial wage increase" and consolidation into the basic wage of the £6 increase. The Rover group have a different claim: £15 increase, £75 minimum wage, automatic cost of living increases, plus consolidation.

Chrysler Linwood stewards are demanding the restoration of 1974 buying power, which means about £20 increase. The Fords claim calls for 15% increase, 80% pay for all lay-offs, and a 37½ hour week.

Dockers at Southampton, Hull, Liverpool, and the Royal group in London have voted to support the National Port Shop Stewards' Committee's demands: £100 basic wage or 20% increase. Manchester and Preston have yet to meet on this question.

ASLEF's claim for train drivers calls for restoration of 1975 buying power and consolidation of increases won in Phase 1 and Phase 2. Shell refinery workers represented by the T&GWU and ASTMS have a claim estimated to amount to a total 30% increase: a substantial wage rise, a shorter working week, consolidation, and cost-of-living increases. ICI clerical workers represented by ASTMS have a similar claim.

The Merchant Navy and Airline Officers' Association claim also includes cost of living increases. One of the biggest claims is at

Yarrows shipyard: 50% increase across the board, and a 35 hour week.

John Methven, leader of the bosses' association, the CBI, declared: "The one big black cloud is what happens to pay".

Higher pay means lower profits. And that spells danger for capitalism. But the only alternative is for workers to go on meekly bearing the cost of the bosses' crisis.

That alternative is the alternative the CBI wants: and the Labour Government and the TUC are backing it, too. The Government wants a rule saying that workers can only have a wage increase once every twelve months, and no more than 10% rise in earnings (which means only 5 to 7% rise in wage rates). The Government dare not make these limits law, but it promises to enforce them itself in the public sector. The TUC is likely to make the 12-month rule its own policy.

Several of the current claims either defy the 12-month limit or have evaded it by postponing the claim date beyond the end of Phase 2. A higher level of rank-and-file organisation and determination than has so far existed will be needed to push forward with these claims against Government and TUC opposition.

But the "12-month rule" cannot be accepted. Prices will still be going up, not every twelve months, not even every month, but every week and every day! Speed-up and sackings will go on all the time, too. A "12-month rule" simply gives the bosses a permanent advantage in the class struggle, by removing our ability to strike against them when it is the best time for us.

What we need to deal with inflation is a "one-month rule", of a different sort: agreements which guarantee cost of living protection each month, with £1 wage increase for every 1% rise in the cost of living.

Similar ideas exist in many of the claims that

have already gone in. And despite what some on the left — like the Socialist Workers' Party — say about demands for cost-of-living agreements being a diversion from the fight for big wage increases, those claims including cost-of-living protection also include big demands for immediate pay rises.

We need those immediate big wage rises. The principle is simple: to make good the loss in living standards over the last two years; to guard against further losses in the future; and on top of that, where possible, to seek real improvements.

That principle must be fought for in the Labour Party and in the trade unions. But if the Labour Government and the TUC come out against these major wage claims, we cannot afford to give them up. Maximum coordination of struggle, and maximum solidarity, will have to be the rule.

The demands for consolidation are also necessary: Increases under Phase 1 and Phase 2 were mostly paid as supplements, without changing the basic rates. That means often that holiday pay, overtime pay, bonuses, etc, all tied to the basic rate, have not been increased.

One major item which should be central to workers' demands now does not, however, figure very much in the current claims. That is the question of a shorter working week.

An unemployment figure of 1,600,000 is a social disaster — and also a deadly threat for those at work. In some sectors of industry today there is still relatively full employment, and you don't yet hear the reply "If you don't like it, there are ten others waiting to take your job". But those who are short-sighted and selfish today will be sorry tomorrow.

A fight for a maximum 35-hour week and for ending overtime work would allow the ending of unemployment — and should be a central concern for trade unionists.

THREE AND A HALF YEARS OF THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT:

WHO HAS GAINED THE

'WEALTH AND POWER'?

THE LABOUR Government came to power on a programme which committed it to achieving "a fundamental and irreversible shift of wealth and power in favour of working people and their families".

Three and a half years later, it is obvious that any "shift of wealth and power" has been in precisely the opposite direction.

Unemployment is now over 1,600,000, the highest figure since the war, when only two years ago Labour and trade union leaders were talking of a million unemployed as "unacceptable". Real wages have been cut by at least 15% since Labour came to power, despite election pledges against incomes policy. In a series of White Papers, thousands of millions of pounds have been slashed from the social services.

Wilson, Healey and Callaghan have justified this massive attack on working class living standards with the argument that a promised land of economic prosperity lies round the corner if only workers will make sacrifices now to get British industry "back on its feet".

Callaghan has pushed his projections of the golden age forward to the early 1980s: the prospects of a flourishing British capitalism are as far off as ever. Three weeks ago, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development said that in the foreseeable future unemployment and inflation would continue to go up in the major capitalist economies. The OECD report rather halfheartedly projected single-figure inflation for Britain by



Chancellor Denis Healey

the second quarter of 1978, but only if workers would accept more wage cuts at the altar of profit. They called for "a substantial squeeze" on real take home pay in 1977.

But of course, Wilson, Callaghan and Healey's intentions were never anything other than shoring up British capitalism, irrespective of its short- or long-term prospects. Tied hook, line and sinker to the interests of the bosses, they didn't have any choice.

The Labour Government inherited a British economy reeling under the blows of the international recession. Investment was plummeting, there was an acute balance

of payments problem, and the British state was up to its eyeballs in debt. The limited pick-up in the world capitalist economy in 1972-3, which had generated "reflationist" policies by the major capitalist governments, was not backed up by any real increase in production of any significant level, and had caused massive inflation. By the time the £6 limit was introduced the **Financial Times** Groceries Index was showing a 30% increase for the preceding 12 months.

From the standpoint of the ruling class, the only way out was to trigger off an increase in capital investment. The rate of profit has been steadily declining. So to encourage capitalists to invest, the rate of profit had to be boosted. That meant increasing exploitation, both by holding down wages and by cutting social services.

As well as finding resources for a new period of investment, the ruling class also had to begin to undertake a massive restructuring of British industry. So decrepit was the British economy that even if there had been a really significant boom in world capitalism, the British bosses would have been in no position to reap the benefits. British industry had to be rationalised to make British goods competitive on the world market.

These twin considerations dictated the policy of the Labour Government.



The first problem the Government faced was the level of militancy in the workers' movement. Heath had been driven out by the miners, and the Industrial Relations Act had been shattered.

The trade union bureaucrats stepped to centre stage as the guarantors of British capitalism. With their credibility having been boosted by the struggles against Heath, the bureaucrats were in a good position to line up with Wilson and Callaghan against the working class.

Smiling complacently behind mouthfuls of "moderation", Murray, Jones and company have policed two rounds of wage-cutting and have actively scabbed on any rank and file resistance. They have been Labour's substitute for the National Industrial Relations Court, showing no less partiality as arbiters of the class struggle than their periwigged forebears.

The first year of the Social Contract was a relatively informal affair. Healey announced that wages were not to rise above 10% and expected workers to act accordingly. But a series of strikes

threatened to annihilate the 'Contract', culminating when railway workers gained a 30% rise after the threat of a NUR national stoppage.

If the Labour Government alone could not ensure wage cuts, the TUC would have to help out. The £6 limit, which came into operation in August 1975, was the means by which they did this. The General Council, followed by the TUC Congress, voted to support the Government White Paper and incomes policy was back with official trade union blessing.



Jack Jones

On June 16th the following year, it took only a couple of hours for the trade union leaders assembled at a TUC special conference to agree to the 4½% limit which followed the £6 policy.

What was done for the other priority of Labour Government policy, the attempt to rationalise British industry? By mid-1975, the worst of the recession was over, and production started to pick up in the US, West Germany, and Japan. But the upturn was hesitant. With profits too low to finance new capital investment, the pick-up took the form of a re-building of raw materials and stocks,

and utilisation of slack capacity.

At the beginning of 1976, the Government stepped in to 'rationalise' the steel industry and the Chrysler car company. The price was massive redundancies, supported loyally by the trade union bureaucrats. The Labour Government's plans for the 'regeneration' of British capitalist industry are showing little success: but even if they did succeed, then short of a massive boom in the world economy, they could only mean more attacks on the working class and more unemployment.

At Leyland, a condition of the Government salvaging the company was the "workers' participation scheme" laid down in the Ryder report. "Participation" was presented as the sugar on the pill of the Social Contract, as a way for workers and the unions to have more say in the running of industry. In fact it means co-opting shop stewards and unions into taking official responsibility for the management of the firm according to the laws of profit.



Most of the rest of the "Government's side of the Social Contract" has been either directed against the basic class interests of the working class, or of very limited value.

The present inflation figures give the measure of the value of the vague promises of "price control". The Employment Protection Act

1975 is currently being reduced to waste paper by just one determined profiteer, George Ward of Grunwicks. The arbitration service ACAS, and all the other bodies of industrial conciliation, have functioned to channel working class militancy through the safe portals of class collaboration.



The Equal Pay Act (which became law in 1970, but did not come into effect fully until 1975) and the Sex Discrimination Act 1976 did represent some advance, and encouraged millions of working women to understand that equality is their right.

But that right will be won only through rank-and-file struggle, not through the operation of those Acts. A report published by the National Council for Civil Liberties in February this year found that only 28% of Equal Pay cases were decided in favour of women. The other 72% went in favour of the bosses.

The record of the Labour Government has been a sordid one of propping up capitalism at our expense. All the promises of prosperity got us nothing but wage cuts and expanding dole queues.

We now have to learn the lessons of Labour's rule:— only an independent fight for the interests of the working class can defend us against capitalist attacks. Class collaboration has got us nowhere.

GORDON BREWER



Dockers' pickets during their 1972 struggles when the Tory attempts to shackle the unions through

THE STATE of Massachusetts, USA, has in effect declared innocent the victims of one of the most notorious frame-up trials in American history. August 23rd has been declared a day of memorial for Nicolo Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti — 50 years too late. For Sacco and Vanzetti died, victims of anti-red hysteria and racial and religious bigotry, just fifty years ago.

FIFTY YEARS ago this August 23rd, two Italian-born anarchists were strapped into the electric chair in Boston, Massachusetts, USA, and electrocuted by order of the Mass. Supreme Court. They were Nicolo Sacco, a shoemaker, and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, a fish-peddler.

During the seven years they were in jail before their execution, the names of Sacco and Vanzetti became a byword in the US and international labour movement for ruling class justice and the use of the courts to frame up and lynch rebel workers. Sacco and Vanzetti themselves believed they were victimised because they were foreign-born radicals. They felt themselves to be representatives of one class, the working class, being judged in the hostile courts of their class enemies. They conducted themselves as class-conscious men throughout their long years in jail fighting for their lives.

They insisted on seeing themselves as class war prisoners. "I am and remain for the emancipation of the working class", said Vanzetti firmly in 1926, after the Massachusetts Supreme Court had refused a new trial.

Sacco and Vanzetti were arrested in May 1920 and charged with armed robbery and murder.

This was the period of the anti-Bolshevik hysteria usually linked with the name of Palmer, then US Attorney General. Thousands of socialists, radical trade unionists, communists and anarchists were harassed and jailed, or, if foreign-born, deported. There were lynchings by vigilantes and murders of prisoners by police.

In May 1920 a radical friend of Sacco's and Vanzetti's, named Solseda, was

By
Frank
Higgins



Sacco and Vanzetti: found innocent fifty years too late

found dead outside a building where the authorities had detained him. Alarmed, Sacco and Vanzetti attempted to borrow a motor car to move incriminating radical literature. This attracted the attention of the police to them. They were arrested and charged with shooting the paymaster and a guard on the main street of South Braintree, Mass., in April 1920.



Judge Thayer

The actual charge against them played less part in the court hearings than did the fact that they were foreigners and anarchists.

The legal case against them rested fundamentally on identification by eye-witnesses. In addition, ballistic experts gave evidence that was interpreted by the prosecution as proof that a bullet used in the robbery had been fired from a gun found in Sacco's possession. Modern experts consider this to be inconclusive; and Sacco had a weighty alibi. At the time of the robbery he had been in Boston making arrangements for a passport at the Italian Consulate. The Consulate corroborated his account.

False

No matter, Sacco and Vanzetti had given false information about themselves to the police. They had carried guns and the police said they had got the impression that Sacco and Vanzetti had been inclined to use them when they were apprehended.

All this showed clear 'knowledge of their own guilt'. But, the defence counsel explained, these things had a different explanation: Sacco and Vanzetti were

aware of being foreign-born anarchists, the sort of people who were being arrested, jailed and deported daily in 1919-20.

This explanation was as good as an admission of guilt to the prosecution, which appealed to the religious, political and national prejudices — Protestant Anglo-Saxon and Irish Catholic — of the New England jury, against Sacco and Vanzetti, Italian anarchists, who opposed the ruling class, and who had opposed world war 1.

In July 1921 they were found guilty of first degree murder.

Secret

Light is shed on the character of this trial by a secondary part of the Sacco-Vanzetti case. Vanzetti was tried for and convicted of an armed robbery carried out in December 1919. Sacco was not tried, for he could prove he had been in the shoe factory on the day of the robbery. The conviction of Vanzetti rested entirely on evidence of identification by eye-witnesses. Statements now available, but kept secret until Vanzetti had been long dead, made by private detectives immediately after the robbery in 1919, vary greatly from the evidence given in court on the basis of which Vanzetti was convicted.

The conviction of Sacco and Vanzetti aroused a great protest throughout the USA and around the world, which quickly became a campaign to save them. Millions of workers protested and demonstrated "For Sacco and Vanzetti". In Britain the TUC, the Labour Party, and hundreds of local organisations of the working class protested, as did the working class movement in many countries. Opposition to the legal murder of Sacco and Vanzetti spread from the labour movement to include wide layers of liberals and others.

This seemed only to strengthen the relentless bloodthirstiness and obstinacy of the Massachusetts establishment. The US Sup-

reme Court refused to interfere. In 1925 an already condemned man, Madeiras, made a confession which led to much circumstantial evidence indicating that the South Braintree raid was the work of professional gangsters. That made no difference.

An advisory committee set up by Governor Alvin T Fuller in mid-1927 showed unmistakably the attitude of the ruling class to Sacco and Vanzetti. It consisted of the President of Harvard University, the President of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and a retired judge. It whitewashed the trial and the convictions to

After it, he said: "Now we are not a failure... Never in our full life could we hope to do such work for tolerance, for justice, for man's understanding of man as now we do by an accident. Our words — our lives — our pains — nothing! The taking of our lives — lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish-peddler — all! That last moment belongs to us — that agony is our triumph".

Sacco and Vanzetti's revolutionary attitude made the trial a test case, a trial of strength. Sacco and Vanzetti looked to the labour movement for their freedom.

There were mass demonstrations, and strikes and



Vanzetti and Sacco

the best of its abilities.

Even this committee felt obliged to answer widespread criticisms of the judge, Thayer, by censuring him for a "grave breach of decorum" in uttering prejudiced remarks outside the court against Sacco and Vanzetti.

The committee concluded, nevertheless, that this prejudice had not influenced judge Thayer in court!

After seven years of refined torture, during which all the possible legal appeals were exhausted, Sacco and Vanzetti were, according to the American practice, brought to court for sentence.

Before the sentence, Vanzetti said to the judge:

"You are the one that is afraid. You are the one that is shrinking with fear, because you are the one that is guilty of attempt to murder"

great meetings. But the protests and the opposition of the American labour movement were not strong enough to stop the work of the executioner. With virtually martial law in force in Boston, Sacco and Vanzetti were electrocuted in the early hours of the morning of August 23rd, 1927.

Fifty years later it is admitted by the authorities that two 'innocent' men died on that day. That isn't much use to Nicolo Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti. And indeed it is not much use, either, to the thousands of black victims of racism who right now are in jail in the USA.

Perhaps fifty years from now the State of California, in which is situated Soledad Prison, will issue a 'not guilty' verdict on George Jackson, who was murdered in jail in 1971.



shattered the Industrial Relations Act

Don't write off 'United Troops Out Movement'

Dear comrades,

I found your article on the 'United Troops Out Movement' in *Workers' Action* 63, sectarian. The political objections to the UTOM were inadequate: UTOM must be criticised, not for its domination by a "rotten bureaucratic bloc", but primarily for that bloc's failure to learn the lessons of the past. More importantly, your decision to withdraw from UTOM appears to amount to giving up the fight for your ideas in a negative and unconstructive way.

The forces represented at the UTOM conference may have been unimpressive both politically and numerically — but they are virtually all there are. *Workers' Action* supporters cannot cut ourselves off from them without seeming to become 'voices crying in the wilderness'.

Outside articles in the paper, what intervention do you propose on the question of Ireland? The article simply concludes with an air of resignation as to the possibilities of building a strong anti imperialist movement in Britain.

It might make more sense if *Workers' Action* decided not to participate at national level, while *WA* supporters in the localities fight for our conception of a genuine united-front solidarity movement centred on the working class. In many cases, groups like the IMG will collaborate with us on this, despite their policy at national level. And if this work at ground level occurs, we may find ourselves in a stronger position at the November conference of UTOM. The alternative is impotent isolation.

Gerry Hall

REPLY: We certainly do not refuse to participate in the 'United Troops Out Movement' just because of the bureaucratic nature of the recent conference. It is rather because the proposals carried there do not provide the basis for a genuine united front or for a serious orientation to the labour movement on the question of Ireland.

In fact they are just a repetition of all the worst features of the old 'Troops Out Movement': an individual membership structure with no formal provision for organisations to affiliate [i.e. in no sense a united front], initiatives centred on two or three 'big' events a year without any clear direction for activity in the localities, slogans which do not provide the basis for clear united action by different political tendencies, and a leadership which still stands by the "semi-political party" conception of TOM in practice.

In this situation a national orientation to UTOM would not

bring us any nearer to rooting an Irish solidarity movement in the British working class, rather, it would just lead to a replay of the old scenario.

It would, however, indeed be sectarian if this meant that *Workers' Action* did not take part in any of the specific local or national initiatives called by UTOM or its branches.

This is, however, not the case.

For example, *Workers' Action* is supporting the call for a Tribunal on British War Crimes in Ireland, in which UTOM is also involved. We also support and even initiate activities such as local labour movement conferences on Ireland, and fight to build united front committees where feasible.

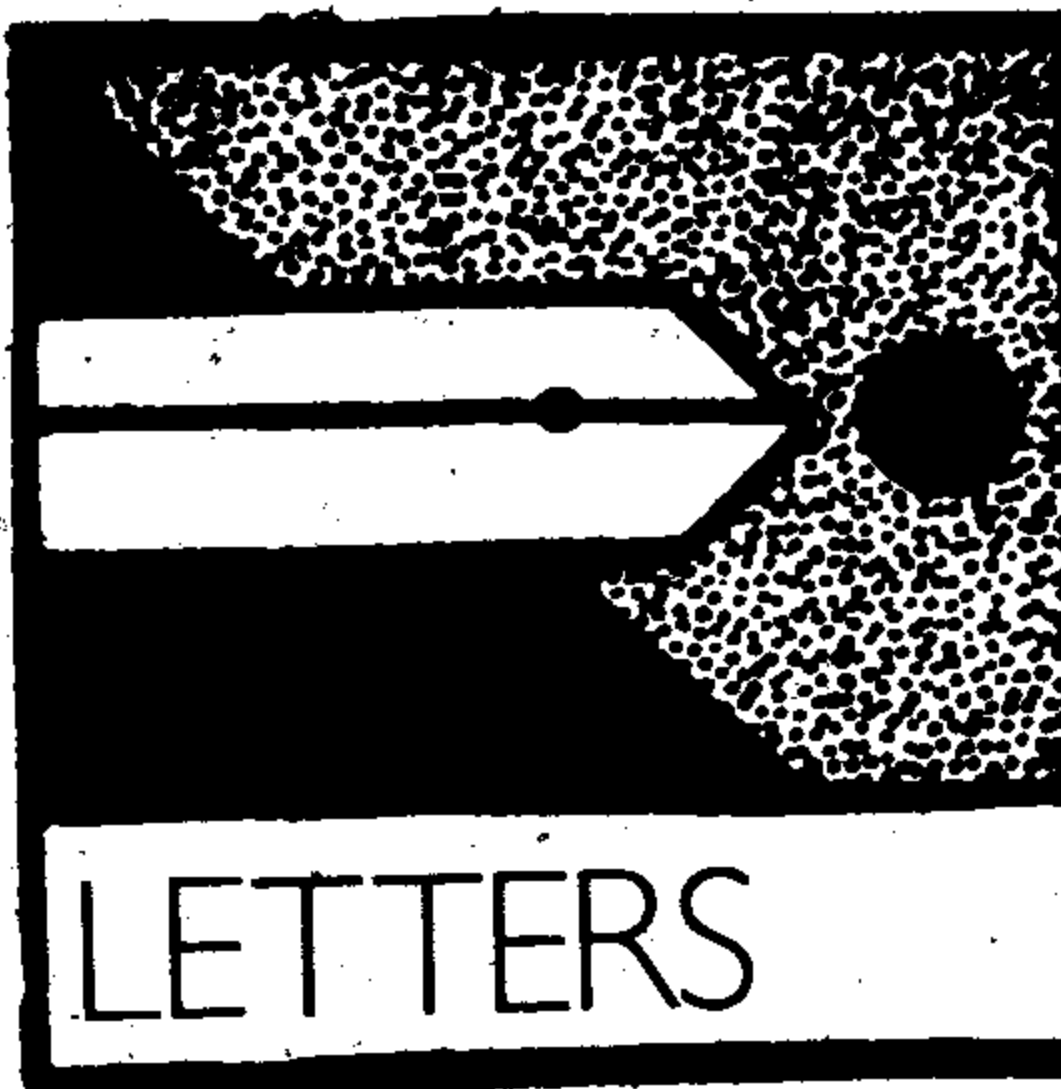
This would not, however, be helped by waging a long factional struggle [which would be nec-

cessary in order to get our conception of a united front accepted] within a body which in any case represents little outside a section of the organised revolutionary left.

Does this mean isolation from those forces active on the question of Ireland? Does it mean doing nothing? The answer on both counts is no.

We will take part nationally in any useful initiatives on the issue of Ireland, whether they are initiated by the UTOM or anyone else. We will fight in the unions, Labour Party, and *YS* for united-front activity, in collaboration with UTOM branches insofar as they are willing. We will at the same time continue to make our own propaganda in solidarity with the anti-imperialist struggle in Ireland [propaganda whose content is in any case different from that of UTOM and the IMG].

We will not, however, subordinate these tasks to a nebulous organisation such as the UTOM, which is just destined to repeat all the mistakes of the past.



Vital Michalon (above) was killed, and 20 others severely wounded, in clashes between police and demonstrators when 20,000 protested on 31st July against the French nuclear reactor at Malville.

Not the only alternative

Dear comrades,

I am no expert on the technical questions of nuclear power. But to my mind Neal Smith's arguments in *Workers' Action* 64 & 65 are simply contradictory.

Nuclear power, Neal Smith says, is "less hazardous" than other forms of energy. In support of this assertion he cites the facts that uranium mining is safer than coal mining and that deaths through road accidents are 500 times more numerous than deaths through radioactive leakage.

This, surely, misses the point which Neal Smith makes in the first part of his article: that nuclear power is considered dangerous, not so much because of any casualties it has already claimed, but because of the enormous proportions which accidents could take, and the very large risks for the future arising from radioactive waste.

In the second part of his article, Smith says that "by the time the containers (de-

signed for the waste) break up ... the radiation levels would be no greater than we already receive today", because the containers are "designed to last for hundreds of years".

But in the first part he has already pointed out that waste remains dangerously radioactive for, not hundreds, but tens of thousands of years!

Smith's other argument is that nuclear power is "the only viable alternative" if humanity is to find sufficient energy to avoid "the end of industrial society and its collapse into primitive barbarism".

Further on in his article, however, Smith poses the question of whether various new, non-nuclear forms of energy could be developed sufficiently. "The increasing volume and seriousness of research in this area suggests that it will indeed be possible", he replies. But in that case it is not true that nuclear power is "the only viable alternative".

RAY SAUNDERS

Old mistakes - or a new one?

Dear comrades,

Your article in *Workers' Action* 65 criticising the IMG's latest turn in producing *Socialist Challenge* is in an important respect inadequate.

You quite rightly draw a parallel between the politics of the IMG's earlier paper, *The Week*, and *Socialist Challenge*. You are correct to criticise both of these attempts on the part of the IMG to substitute itself for 'broad left movements'. However, your argument amounts to just suggesting that history is repeating itself.

Though similar politics are behind the two papers, *Socialist Challenge* is a response to pressures felt now which need to be addressed. To put it bluntly, you do not speak to the problems of the people — IMG, *Workers' League*, *Big Flame* — who support *Socialist Challenge*.

The need felt today on the left (reformist and revolutionary) and in the labour movement generally, for unity in the face of creeping reaction, is considerable. It is this pressure, I believe, that is behind the move to start *Socialist Challenge*.

What is wrong with IMG's latest response to this pressure is that it confuses limited issue unity with programmatic unity, the united front with the party. Not only within the IMG, but between the *Workers' League* and the *Big Flame* and the IMG, considerable programmatic differences continue.

While it is conceivable to have a very general united front of left tendencies and parties on a range of issues, such limited agreement, however extensive, is still not programmatic agreement. No tendency should subsume its own programme completely, like the IMG is doing with its move from a party pap-

er, *Red Weekly*, to a united front paper, *Socialist Challenge*, unless it does not fully believe in that programme or sees it as marginal.

Such liquidation is; it is true, a repeat of the IMG's behaviour with *The Week*. But it is today's repeat performance, and the new circumstances in which it is taking place, which need to be looked at for the critique you make to be pertinent. The *Workers' Action* article correctly identifies the political error, but does not speak to the actual experiences and pressures today which have caused it.

SAM RICHARDSON

REPLY: The fact is that the switch from *Red Weekly* to *Socialist Challenge* was a move from an IMG 'Party paper' to a 'united front paper' only in the most formal sense. Despite the fact that *Socialist Challenge* includes some contributions from non-IMG people — which is not at all bad thing in itself — editorial control is still firmly in the hands of the IMG, as was also the case with *The Week*.

Both with *Socialist Challenge* and with *The Week*, the IMG has been diluting its politics, not so much for the sake of any 'actual united front' they hope for or 'project' in the future: the 'replacement leadership' or the 'class struggle left wing'.

That is the political essence of the matter. As to what motivates the IMG in their policy, the thesis of a 'felt need for unity in the face of creeping reaction' seems too simple. The drive towards unity on the left is certainly less strong now than, for example, in 1968, and the last few years have seen further splits on the left and an accentuation of the isolationism of the SWP (IS) and the WRP.

Rather the IMG policy seems to be a reflection of the line since 1974 of their sister organisation in France, the LCR, which is motivated by a wish to escape from the isolation they think the revolutionaries are threatened with by the rise of the reformist Union of the Left.

"WORKERS' ACTION TENDED TOWARDS SYNDICALISM"

Dear Editors,

It is with disappointment that I have been reading the coverage *Workers' Action* has given to the Grunwicks dispute. While it is true that *Workers' Action* called for support for mass picketing, pointed out the attempted betrayals of Jackson and Grantham, and drew out lessons about the present trade union leaderships and racism, its comment on many of the wider implications of the dispute was weak.

Unfortunately the far left in Britain has historically suffered from seeing the trade union struggle as the centre of the fight for socialism, leaving out a lot of important politics about such things as the state, ideology etc. Regrettably *Workers' Action* did not have lead articles on the way the mass media distorted the strike, it did not have whole articles linking the way the Labour Government was trying to sell out the strike with its class collaboration over the Social Contract. It did not give much prominence to the bourgeois nature of the Court of Inquiry, nor to the repercussions a defeat at Grunwicks would have (a political victory for

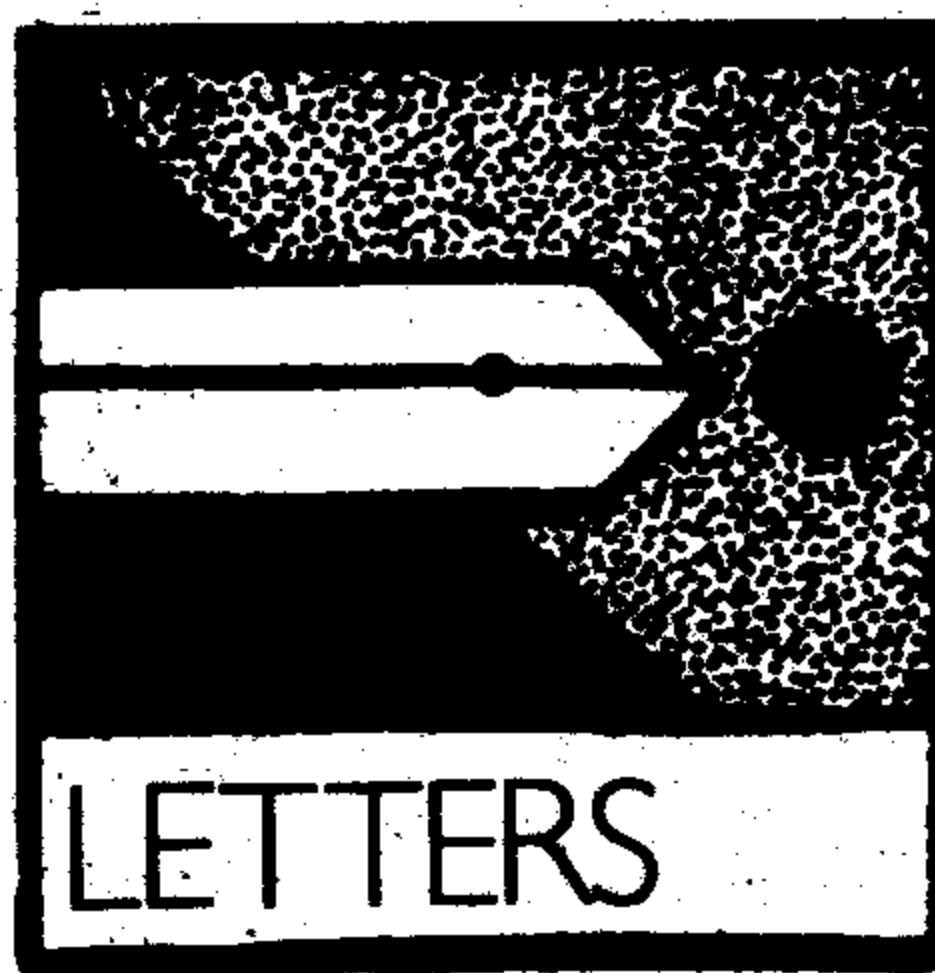
the Right, allowing repression against trade unionists in the future easier), nor to the way the police showed themselves as a class tool of the bourgeoisie by their clear support of Ward.

Ironically that 'rotten bloc' newspaper *Socialist Challenge* did draw out these political points, — or at least made them as obvious as they could be made without getting pedantic, while *Workers' Action* tended towards Syndicalism. Mindful of *Workers' Action's* reckless 'holier than thou' attitude towards *Socialist Challenge* and its project of revolutionary regroupment, all I can say is people in glass houses need to be principled about throwing stones.

GEORGE RICHES.

REPLY: Syndicalism? In *Workers' Action* (for example in Alan Carter's article in no. 63, and many others) we have analysed the political implications of the Grunwicks dispute in some detail — at least as much so as *Socialist Challenge* (which we criticise, by the way, not for its coverage of Grunwicks but for other reasons). But it is for our readers to judge.

What basis for unity?



REPLY

Dear comrades,

Your long-awaited reply to my letter on revolutionary unity represents a big step forward from the positions advanced in the Editorial I criticised. Unfortunately, if you are aware of the change, you do not admit it. On the contrary, you pretend that your Editorial hardly mentioned the Menshevik/Bolshevik split of 1903 which I took as my starting point. No matter. Your readers can judge for themselves if they look back at *Workers' Action* no. 60.

The important thing is that you now recognise that at least some tactical differences can be "contained and tolerated within a revolutionary party". Furthermore, you implicitly recognise that a revolutionary party can contain some *programmatic* differences. For you correctly point out that the Bolshevik party had a programme that was not so much "vague and general" as *wrong* on the crucial question of what was later called the 'permanent revolution'. Yet, again correctly, you argue that Trotsky (who was *right* on this programmatic question) should have been in the Bolshevik party presumably arguing for his positions from inside.

So, in answer to your questions, "What kind of unity? What kind of party?", I would say that both the experience of the building of the Bolshevik party and your own evaluation of what Trotsky should have done, fly in the face of your "criteria" and your practice on this question.

For the fundamental questions on which the Bolsheviks were united against the Mensheviks and Trotsky from 1903 were not "common conceptions of programme, strategy, and tactical aims", but centred around one question: what kind of party do we need to put our common conceptions into practice?

In the light of the kind of programmatic, strategic, and tactical debates that took place in the Bolshevik party from 1903 to 1917 on Economism, Historical Materialism, Bourgeois Democracy, the State, Soviet Power, and the April Theses, how can you possibly pretend (as you appear to) that the differences between the IMG and you are *more* fundamental than these, which were contained within the ranks of the Bolsheviks, and which gave rise to so many of the classic texts of Marxism?

Surely the lesson is clear. Those who are serious about building a revolutionary party and who agree on what kind of party we need, *must* find a way to unite our forces and challenge bourgeois political, economic, social and ideological domination?

In short, since Trotsky should have united his organisation with Lenin's despite quite serious programmatic differences, why should not *Workers' Action* unite its forces with those of the IMG, despite differences on much less momentous questions?

Then you would truly be following the "intransigent Lenin", who knew both how to be intransigent and how to be flexible.

PAUL HUNTER

Comrade Paul Hunter thinks it is possible to decide whether or not the supporters of *Workers' Action* should fuse with the IMG by making a purely formal measurement of the degree of formal differences. This is a static and empty exercise which breeds confusion instead of clarity.

It ignores the whole history of the two tendencies. By formal comparison it covers over the fact that it is possible for two tendencies to hold the same positions formally but in fact to be far apart. Using this tool of analysis, you would have to conclude that before August 1914 Lenin was closer to Karl Kautsky than to Rosa Luxemburg.

Comparisons can of course be useful. It was meaningful to compare Lenin, Luxemburg, Kautsky and Bernstein, and identify Bernstein as the odd man out. Meaningful — but not enough.

Formal comparisons simply do not tell you enough about the three-dimensional reality of a political tendency.

Both the IMG and *Workers' Action* are formally much closer to the Militant tendency than to the Provisional IRA (though we would hardly fuse with either the one or the other). In the real political world, however, we are a great deal closer to the Provisional IRA than to Militant — because of the fact that we put a serious emphasis on the Leninist position on national liberation struggles (a position which, as it happens, formally we share with Militant...)

In 1940 the American Trotskyist movement split after a long factional struggle. Trotsky had from the beginning argued that a split was unnecessary. After it had occurred, he was asked in an interview:

"In your opinion, were there enough political differences between the majority and the minority to warrant a split?"

Trotsky replied: "Here it is also necessary to consider the question dialectically, not mechanically. What does this terrible word 'dialectics' mean? It means to consider things in their development, not in their static situation."

"If we take the political differences as they are, we can say they were not sufficient for a split, but if they developed a tendency to turn away from the proletariat in the direction of petty bourgeois circles, then the same differences can have an absolutely different value, a different weight..."

In Britain now it is not a matter of the IMG veering politically towards the petty bourgeoisie (though it does not have a serious and responsible attitude towards the working class and the workers' movement). We are in a situation where there are a large number of political groups standing on a common 'Trotskyist' tradition — but also having various concrete political or tactical differences, which are held to by groupings with an entirely separate existence, in some cases decades old.

This situation will not be changed by calls for unity. The IMG appeals to unity will not even succeed in starting a serious discussion of the questions in contemporary politics that separate us, and certainly will not create unity.

If unification is possible [and it is not at all clear that it is] it could only be as a result of a process of clarification and discussion.

The IMG leadership is not too keen on this discussion, eager though it is to talk of unity. The *Workers' Action* Editorial Board re-

cently proposed to the IMG that it discuss with us the 'European Perspectives Document' drafted by the Fourth International (United Secretariat) for their 11th World Congress. They refused on the grounds that our characterisation of the USFI and the IMG as a politically unstable and vacillating (centrist) tendency ruled out any such thing.

Nonetheless the IMG leadership are prepared, apparently, to unite with the *Workers' League* — a tendency much further from the IMG than *Workers' Action*. So it seems that the IMG leadership uses a different instrument to make its political measurements than the one Paul Hunter recommends.

It is difficult to understand Paul Hunter's historical references; he seems a bit confused.

The division between Lenin, Trotsky, and the Mensheviks was not posed clearly as a question of "what kind of party" was needed. The account that locates the split of 1903 in the Lenin-Martov dispute about the definition of a party member is based on hindsight. The 1903 division no more than foreshadowed the divisions that hardened later. Lenin actually lost the vote on the definition of what a party member was, and was prepared to accept party discipline — the split occurred on the initiative of the Mensheviks, on a dispute about the composition of the Editorial Board of *Iskra*.

Only in the struggle against those who wanted to liquidate the underground party after 1907 was the question "What kind of party?" posed as Paul Hunter poses it. But on this Lenin and Trotsky were united as members of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, and allied with Plekhanov and the "Pro-Party Mensheviks".

It is therefore nonsense to say that the Bolsheviks were united against the Mensheviks and Trotsky by a view of "the kind of party needed to put our common conceptions into practice".

□ They were able to unite against a section of the Mensheviks who wanted to liquidate the underground party.

□ Lenin did not believe he was doing anything in the way of party-building other than apply in Russian conditions the conception of the party held by German Social Democracy.

□ The key division was not on how to build a party that could implement the "common conceptions" of the Bolsheviks, the Mensheviks, and Trotsky. The fundamental divisions were on the basic conception of the character and potential of the Russian Revolution, its inner dynamics. Formally the Bolsheviks were closer to the Mensheviks on this than to Trotsky. But the essence was the stress on independent working class initiative, shared by the Bolsheviks and Trotsky in contrast to the Mensheviks' pedantic and passive assignment of the leading role in the coming revolution to the bourgeoisie.

Paul Hunter seems not to notice what is pertinent in the history he is discussing. Formally the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks had an identical position on the character of the Russian revolution — both said it could only be a bourgeois revolution.

It was the different conception of the dynamic of class forces that fundamentally divided Mensheviks and Bolsheviks. Formally they had the same programme. But the formalities don't even begin to tell us enough to allow us to differentiate those who were to lead the Russian Revolution from those who were to dawdle or serve the counter-revolution.



THE UNIONS LINEUP FOR AUEW VOTE



THE RIGHT-WING candidate in the coming AUEW presidential election is Terry Duffy. The three main candidates who oppose him from more left-wing or militant positions can be judged in one very revealing way: by their actions during the engineers' strikes at Heathrow and at British Leyland earlier this year. Both these strikes challenged the Social Contract, and in both cases the AUEW Executive lined up with management and told the strikers to go back to work.

Bob Wright is standing for president as the candidate of the Communist Party-dominated Broad Left. As a member of the AUEW Executive that ordered the Leyland and Heathrow strikers back to work he has a lot to answer for. He also helped to push through the sell-out at Chryslers to the Varley-Riccardo plans which resulted in the loss of 8,000 jobs.

In his election address, Wright blames the Common Market for the loss of British jobs and capital. For Wright, the Common Market is a convenient scapegoat on which to blame all the problems facing workers, such as redundancies, instead of taking a stand

on such issues now. Wright also claims to favour more democracy in the union, and favours full amalgamation of the four sections of the AUEW.

Also standing for president is Roy Fraser, who led the Leyland toolmakers' strike last March. He is chairman of the recently-formed engineering craftsmen's committee, and has not put out an address. Fraser was one of the strikers threatened with the sack by management and then told by his own union executive — which includes Bob Wright! — to return to work.

Ian Morris is the other main candidate of the left. He was one of the leaders of the Heathrow engineers' strike. Like Fraser, he was told to go back to work earlier this year by his own union executive when striking against the Social Contract.

In his address, Morris calls for a united rank-and-file fight-back on wages and the cuts, against unemployment and for equal pay. He also calls for a president elected from the shop floor. Morris is the only candidate to call clearly for action at a rank and file level to reverse the current attacks on the working class.

LINDA COLLINS

Co-Op sends lorries through picket line

A WORKER on the picket line at the CWS packing branch, Manchester, was knocked down and injured by a lorry on Friday 5th August, as management tried to defy the strike by the Co-Op workers, all members of USDAW.

The strikers are demanding the reinstatement of 10 flour packers sent home on 4th August. The packers were refusing to work on new metric machines which involve dealing with heavier weights.

Negotiations between the union and management on extra pay for the heavier job had not been completed. More money for working on the new machines is also one of the demands of the strike.

After the packers were sent home on 4th August, the rest of the workers stopped work immediately, and mounted pickets as from Friday morning. It was on Friday morning that the management tried to bring out some lorried that they had managed to get loaded up

inside.

Messages of support and donations to: John Douglas, 137 John Nash Crescent, Hulme, Manchester 15.

A Critique of the politics of the Communist Party of Great Britain

British Road to Nowhere

A PAMPHLET
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WORKERS IN ACTION

CLIFTON RISE, S.E.14 1pm SAT 13TH

STOP THE FASCISTS IN LEWISHAM

This Saturday [August 13th] the National Front plan to hold a national march through the streets of Lewisham and Deptford, to "clear the streets of the black muggers and their red friends". This is their response to the attack by local police on the black community, when, after weeks of surveillance, they picked up on May 30th at 6 am 60 black youths, subsequently charging 21 of them with "conspiracy to steal from persons unknown" and "loitering with intent".

The response of the labour movement to this threat from the fascists has been twofold, though the proposed actions are not mutually exclusive.

The All Lewisham Campaign against Racism and Fascism plans a march starting at 11am at Ladywell Fields (adjacent to Ladywell SR station). This

march was scheduled to go to New Cross, and finish up near to where the NF is due to start. It has been re-routed by the police, although there is considerable pressure from local Labour Party and trade union bodies in favour of the original route.

The other move, initiated by the far left, but also having considerable support from other bodies in the labour movement, aims to prevent the fascists marching by taking and holding the point from which the NF proposes to assemble: thus the plan is to assemble at Clifton Rise on the West side of New Cross station at 1 o'clock to prevent the planned fascist activities from getting underway at 2.30.

Although Workers' Action supporters will be participating in both events we believe that the main thrust should not be simply

to protest, but to take the measures necessary to prevent the insult of fascists parading through the streets of Lewisham. We therefore believe that the maximum possible support must be given at Clifton Rise, SE 14, at 1 o'clock next Saturday.



The trial of the "Islington 18" at the Old Bailey resulted in the defendants, all young blacks, being found innocent on most counts. There were convictions against only nine, and only on minor charges.

The 18 faced 'conspiracy' charges, in an obvious attempt by police to 'get their own back' after last year's Notting Hill Carnival.

Now we have to make sure that the similar 'conspiracy' charges against 21 black youths arrested in Lewisham also fail, and that the police are not able to get away with any racist persecution in the wake of this year's Carnival, coming up at the end of August.

BRITISH LEYLAND

Corporate bargaining is a bad bargain

The centrepiece of the offer made last week by British Leyland management for all the factories in the company, was "corporate bargaining" — that is, that negotiation for all the factories should be done centrally, taking power away from local militant shopfloor organisation.

Apart from that, the 'deal' proposed an incentive scheme, and wage parity between different Leyland factories to follow — sometime. At present wages in Longbridge are £7 below Rover Solihull and £11 below Jaguar Coventry.

In terms of straight wage increases, the 'deal' offered nothing. In all, the proposals were nothing we hadn't heard before.

The British Leyland senior stewards turned the proposals down — but not for the right reasons. Few stewards realise that the strength of shopfloor organisation is at stake. Most opposed the deal either because they are from well-paid factories where parity is not an issue or because they reckon that a move to "corporate bargaining" in stages rather than at once would enable us to win more 'buy out' money.

This is the line of the Communist Party which is influential on the Stewards'

Committee. The Morning Star on 5th August said that "stewards believe that an immediate jump to corporate bargaining... is too sudden and drastic."

The management may well come back with the deal unchanged or only slightly amended and get it accepted next time. Certainly the Joint Shop Stewards Committee response gives no grounds for confidence in their ability to formulate and fight for a claim for the whole of Leyland. Their bureaucratic and cowardly attitude over the toolmakers' strike earlier this year is proof to the contrary.

It then comes down to the shopfloor organisation in the plant.

In Longbridge, however, both the stewards and shop meetings have approved the claim formulated by the Works Committee, which comprises the convenor and a senior steward from each union in the factory.

The claim seems to be a 'clever' way of getting over £20 a week increase in wages — but at the cost of selling our present one-plant agreement, agreeing to an incentive scheme, and permitting unspecified changes in the shift system. The straight wage element of the claim is still only descr-

ibed as "a substantial increase", though the Morning Star talks about £15.

The claim says nothing about parity, simply assuming that it will come with the move to corporate bargaining. But if corporate bargaining brings parity, it certainly won't bring it about without delays and evasions. Without the parity element, the claim will be far short of the £20 after tax (about £30 before tax) increase which, according to the Longbridge unions, we need to get back to 1974 living standards.

In those few shops where the claim was rejected, it was the fact that it did not say anything about parity, and the lack of a definite wage increase demand, which decided workers to reject it. The proposal of an incentive scheme is, however quite popular; but an incentive scheme would combine the worst elements of both piecework and Measured Day Work. Any increases gained under it would be tied to productivity, and could be lost immediately if we went onto short time.

What we need is an adequate immediate increase, plus a clause guaranteeing cost of living adjustments as there is in the Rover claim and one of the proposed claims for Cowley.

Coventry's George Ward is Communist Party's local candidate

WORKERS AT the Forward Trading Company, Coventry, a small clothing manufacturing firm, are on strike in a small-scale repeat of the Grunwick dispute.

18 of the 27 workers, nearly all Asian women, joined the Transport and General Workers' Union last November. After the union tried to investigate conditions at the factory, four union activists were sacked on July 15th.

The strikers' demands show how bad conditions have been in the factory. They are:

1. Reinstatement of the sacked workers.
2. That workers clock in and clock out so that an accurate record of their hours is available.
3. Standard union rates of pay and full negotiating rights.
4. Proper holidays.

Wages at present are mostly about £15 to £18 for a 42-hour week. One worker on piecework sometimes gets £8 for "42 hours" work! There is one week's holiday in the summer, and two days at Christmas.

The owner of the factory is Surinder Singh — a leading member of the Communist Party in Coventry, and a CP candidate in the local elections! The CP is now talking about expelling Mr Singh. But up to now they have been happy to have this sweatshop owner in their ranks. No doubt it all helps to "build the broad anti-monopoly alliance!"

Messages of support and donations to Mrs Dahmi, 2 Brewster Close, Stoke Hill, Coventry.

DAVE SPENCER



EVENTS

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

TUESDAY 23 AUGUST. Trade Union Conference on Grunwicks, called by South-East region TUC and region no.1 T&GWU. 3 delegates each from major trade union bodies; credentials from J Dromey, 13 Plympton Rd, London NW6 7EH.

SUNDAY 4 SEPTEMBER. International-Communist League public meeting on "The Transitional Programme and Trotskyism Today". Speaker: Ian Macaulay. 8pm at the 'Roebuck', 108a Tottenham Court Rd (Warren St underground).

SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER. Rally to launch the Manifesto of the International-Communist League: "The Fight for Workers' Power". From 2pm at the Co-Op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Rd, London N4.

SATURDAY 5 NOVEMBER. Working Women's Charter day school on women and the trade unions.

WEDNESDAY 16 NOVEMBER. Lobby of Parliament on the question of unemployment, organised by the Labour Party Young Socialists.

— Advertisement —

INTERVENTION NUMBER ONE contains Marxism, Method and Revolution, by Ken Tarbuck. From Intervention, 539 Battersea Park Rd, London SW11. 40p post paid.

MANIFESTO of the INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST LEAGUE

The Fight for Workers' Power

35p plus 10p post from ICL, 98 Gifford St, London N1 0DF.