

# workers' ACTION

No. 68 Aug.28-Sep.3, 1977 10p

Lobby of TUC  
in support of  
the Grunwick  
strikers

4pm, Monday 5th September  
Winter Gardens, Blackpool

## GRUNWICK

THE COURT OF Inquiry into the Grunwick dispute will probably be releasing its findings on Friday 26th August. This will mark the end of the "wait and see" period forced on the strikers by union officials scared of rank and file action.

APEX officials are convinced that the Inquiry will come out in the strikers' favour, calling for their reinstatement (though it will probably make some criticism of APEX's handling of the dispute). But even if they are right, Roy Grantham and the other APEX leaders know full well that Grunwick's boss George Ward has no intention at all of reinstating those on strike.

And that is where the strikers' problems begin. They will need to re-mobilise the massive support they have received over recent months if they are to win reinstatement. The imposition of blacking on services to the company will be the major problem, and more difficult to achieve than the re-launching of mass pickets.

The strike committee realise this. They are meeting the APEX NEC next Tuesday, 30th, and demanding that APEX submit an emergency motion to the TUC Congress at the beginning of September calling for blacking all services (electricity, water, telephone, as well as mail).

The Cricklewood postmen

who have blacked Grunwick's mail are bitter about the way the UPW leaders forced them to call it off. They will need much wider support from other postal workers to back up their willingness to impose blacking once again, and stop them being isolated and axed by their 'leadership'.

That is our responsibility — to see to it that the workers in the front ranks of the struggle to win the Grunwick dispute get such massive support, from all sections of the labour movement, that they are not isolated. With a united fight, the Grunwick bosses could be brought to their knees in short time.

Other services present a greater problem. While local Trades Council leader Jack Dromey (a member of the CP) and the strike committee have been talking for months about the need to cut off all services, very little has been done in terms of contacting the workers who could do this. A resolution to TUC Congress, even if passed, is only a first step to any action.

If the Grunwick strikers are to win, then the labour movement must realise that whilst TUC resolutions are useful and necessary, they are no substitute for mobilisation of the rank and file strong enough to resist stabs in the back by trade union leaders.

# WE

# HAVE

# TO WIN

# IT NOW

### The airport strike

## They've waited five years for this claim

THE LABOUR Government has decided to fight the first battle over its new wage guidelines against the air traffic controls assistants.

The leaders of the TUC, and the assistants' union, CPSA, do not relish this showdown with the Government. But the rank and file members of CPSA who are

involved in the dispute voted 507 to 98 to strike over the bank holiday weekend. Such is the feeling that the CPSA is worried about preventing any action before the start on midnight Thursday.

The air traffic control assistants' claim was put in in 1972! After a job evaluation exercise carried out

over three years ago, a settlement was finally agreed, to run from 1st January 1975. But Phase 1 and Phase 2 controls have prevented the money being paid out.

The sums involved are between £500 and £1,000 for back pay, and up to 17.6% increase in basic money for

these grades.

It is clear that the Government intend to fight against a claim whose justice was recognised back in 1975, even at the cost of almost complete shutdown of air traffic over the British Isles.

Despite the TUC support for the CPSA claim, Murray does not want a fight now, especially before TUC Congress meets. Nor does the CPSA leadership fancy taking on the Government.

As the CPSA general secretary said in a circular to CPSA branches: "It appears we are the first trade union to come into conflict with the Government over the interpretation of its policy. This is not of our choosing". And the deputy general secretary, Alastair Graham,

was nearly begging the Government on Sunday to allow the CPSA to rephrase its claim within Social Contract terms.

For the moment, though, the CPSA members will not be held back.

The Labour Government is not concerned with the details of this claim, whether it is an anomaly or not. For the Government anything above 10% or below 12 months is out — especially in the public sector.

It is the Government's obstinacy that is to blame for workers losing their holiday flights over the weekend. Solidarity is needed to make sure that obstinacy is broken, and the "10%/12 months" rule with it.

STEPHEN CORBISHLEY

# SWEAT SHOP OF THE ORIENT



## CIA moves Agee on again

PHILIP AGEE was deported from France last week. A Spokesman for the French Government said he might prove to be the cause of embarrassment with a friendly power. In other words, the CIA asked the French Government to throw him out. More unceremonious than his treatment in Britain, where the Labour government's compliance with the CIA vendetta was disguised with talk of 'national security' and semi-judicial hearings. More unceremonious and brutal than Britain's treatment — but also more honest.

IN 1918 the deposit which a parliamentary candidate must forfeit if he gets less than one-eighth of the vote was set at £150, and it has not been changed since. Now the press is talking of raising it to discourage the National Front from fighting elections. In today's money, the 1918 £150 is worth £1,100, and such a cost might discourage frivolous candidates. But legal penalties for losing an election discourage not the frivolous but the poor — frivolous and serious alike. The Labour Government should scrap the deposit system, not strengthen it.

LAST SUNDAY the News of the World gave much of its front page to an account by Mr P Marriner of his infiltration of the Labour Party. Marriner, who recently resigned as Labour agent in Ladywood, has now admitted that he is a long-time fascist, a supporter of the Nazi British Movement, once headed by Colin Jordan. He worked in the Labour Party, he said, to be close to former MP Brian Walden, because he thought Walden might be a source of information which could be of use to Marriner's white kin and kin in Southern Africa. Walden commented that he, Walden, did not have access to any special information of this sort. It sounds like the kind of story someone might make up to satisfy the conspiracy and kith-&-kin minded idiots of the NF and the BM. The News of the World did not tell its readers how far it went towards paying the £2000 Marriner was said to be asking on Fleet Street for his "story".

RIOT POLICE recently broke up a demonstration for equal rights in Pretoria. A common enough event in apartheid South Africa — except that this was a demonstration of white women, demanding equality with white men. No nation which oppresses another can itself be free, wrote Karl Marx. Nor can a race which oppresses another.

THE SCENIC hills and oriental atmosphere, combined with all the sophistications of a Western metropolis, make the British Colony of Hong Kong a tourists' dreamland.

The Manhattan-like skyline of its banking district and its dynamic Stock Exchange — third largest in the world after New York and London — indicate its importance as the financial centre of the Far East. Its free port status, with minimal Government interference and 15% maximum taxation, make it the natural haven for numerous speculators and multinational firms.

### CHAOS

Reality for the local population of 4½ million — 98% of them Chinese — is less glamorous. The workers have long hard hours, few holidays, and minimal protection from the chaotic booms and slumps.

The government does not keep unemployment records, nor provide any social security. It boasts that the average wage levels are the second highest in Asia after Japan: but the 'aver-

age' hides enormous differentials, and the cost of living here is nearly as high as in Britain, while rents are astronomical because of the scarcity of land.

The relatively high wages compared to the rest of the Orient reflect a trend which is now becoming critical for the economy. Unlike the rest of the Far East, Hong Kong is totally urbanised, and produces no "primary" commodities for export. Instead it has led the field in low-cost manufactured goods, mainly in textiles, electronics, and plastic goods.

Now it is steadily being pushed "up market" by South Korea and Taiwan where wages are lower and exploitation is even fiercer. Relying on a more experienced workforce and more intensive investment, local enterprises have tried to move into high-quality products, especially textiles, for the EEC and USA markets. The USA and the EEC have retaliated by imposing import controls.

This week's signing of a textile agreement with the USA provoked the headline, "US Axe Falls on our Textile Exports" in the local English daily, the

South China Morning Post. The growth rate is to be cut from 6.25% to a mere 1.5% annually, with further restrictions on "sensitive items", that is, the high quality products.

The present terms with the EEC are even more severe, and will undoubtedly be further tightened up in negotiations in September.

This downturn in the colony's no.1 export industry is bound to affect the whole economy, which is barely recovering from the world slump in trade. Being squeezed between low-wage economies like Taiwan and the home industries of the big Western powers, the local bourgeoisie is caught in a dilemma. Its "up-market" strategy is hampered by the colony's reputation of "sweated labour". This explains the colonial government's recent attempt to push through some social welfare and labour protection legislation.

### GRAFT

The level of this is indicated by one rule that all employees must have one week's holiday a year. Even that has provoked an uproar from factory owners who complain that they can't afford it — and the Far Eastern Economic Review has pointed out a major loophole.

There are no clauses forbidding factory owners from hiring workers on holiday from another factory! Given the economic reality, most workers have no choice but to do precisely that when they are "on holiday".

The colony's other distinction, apart from its extremely high rates of suicide, heroin addiction, and prostitution, is corruption. An anti-corruption commission had to be set up four years ago to appease public opinion when Peter Godber, Hong Kong police chief superintendent, fled to Britain with millions in his bank accounts.

Similarly a Securities Commission had to be set up after the rapid boom and crash of the stock market in 1973, rumoured to be engineered by "insider trading". Last month the Government finally decided that legislation against "insider trading" is "impractical".

### HEROIN

Last year a commission report on sales of shares of one major local firm, Wheelock Marden, was suppressed. Subsequently, the Far Eastern Economic Review disclosed that "two of the three most senior directors had between them sold over 20 million shares shortly before the group published an interim statement forecasting a dramatic and unexpected slump in profit".

While the anti-corruption commission has purged some more obvious excesses, it dare not dig too deep, especially into

the past, for fear of exposing very senior officials, including ex-Governors of the colony.

Licenses for taxis, minibuses, hawkers, bars, dance-halls and even driving have traditionally been a lucrative source of graft for the police, while senior offices find it even more profitable to run directly smuggling syndicates, especially in heroin where there are very high profit margins. This week there has been outrage in the local press because one in six restaurants are operating illegally, without a licence. One restaurant has been fined 25 times in 17 years! The owner claims that he will have to close business for a year before his application can be processed, especially if he is unwilling to bribe his way through the red tape.

The working class has always preferred to avoid dealing with Government agencies, and to rely on overtime or a second job rather than bureaucratic welfare schemes which are little more than window-dressing for the outside world. But the traditional extended family is breaking up under the impact of industrial life and Government housing policy, where huge estates consisting of small units — typically 20 feet x 20 feet — are the norm. The increasing demand for nursery facilities, as more and more mothers take on factory work with no grandparents looking after the children, is not being met.

### CHINA

About 20% of the estimated working population is unionised. Of the two trade union federations, one, the larger, is pro-Peking, while the other is pro-Taiwan. Both federations are tightly controlled to serve their respective political masters, and are generally unresponsive to the needs of their members.

The future of the working class here, and the struggle against the colonial regime, is intimately linked to China itself.

The colony's only major period of working class struggle was in the mid-1920s, when it was part of the wave of general strikes along the China coast from Shanghai to Canton. When the powerful but inexperienced Chinese working class was defeated in 1927 because of the disastrous policy which Stalin imposed on the Chinese Communist Party, the colonial government was able to reassert its tight control over the Hong Kong working class.

Today Peking relies on Hong Kong for much of its revenue, owning numerous banks, department stores, and factories here, as well as supplying the colony with over 20% of its imports, from food to petroleum.

LITU-TSE

## TRANSPORT HOUSE ON THE DIZZY HEIGHTS OF TOLERANCE

THE 'REPORT of the Special Committee to examine documents on entristment', circulated to Constituency Labour Parties in July, will figure on the agenda of many General Management Committees during September.

The Report is very far from hard-hitting. It is drafted so as to be vague enough to keep the issue of 'red infiltration' alive while not launching an immediate and premature witch-hunt. For the present the National Executive Committee has decided that the 'Militant' tendency — the main target of the report — is more of a help to them as a tame 'Marxist wing' than an embarrassment.

"In the last decade", the NEC has claimed, in a statement quoted in the Report, "the Labour Party has reached new heights of tolerance and understanding of differences even within its own ranks. The threat of discipline and expulsion has never won one political argument and never will".

These fine words will have a rather different sound in the ears of the several hundred who have suffered expulsion from the Labour Party in recent months. Some have been expelled because of their views. The report states that the

National Executive Committee urges tolerance and believes that Trotskyist views cannot be beaten by disciplinary action" — but covers itself by also declaring that "in no way would it condone anyone in the Party creating organisations which were designed to undermine the Party's constitution and objectives of creating a democratic Socialist society". The report implies — without arguing clearly — that it considers that Trotskyist tendencies are such organisations.

In addition, CLPs are "reminded that branches of the LPYS are responsible to the General Committee".

Right-wing organisations in the Labour Party, like the Social Democratic Alliance and the Campaign for a Labour Victory, are not covered in the report. Nor are their connections with wealthy anti-socialist backers, of the sort that enabled Julian Lewis in Newham North-East to spend hundreds of pounds on his pro-Prentice campaign (see Tribune, 22nd July).

GMCs should endorse the Report's call for tolerance. But they should also make precise what 'tolerance' should mean, in resolutions calling for the right of all socialist currents of thought to exist within the Labour Party, without any of the restrictions.

STOPPING  
THE NAZIS

Editorial

# THE ARGUMENT OF FORCE MUST ALSO BE WON

"PUNK PARTIES" was one of the many insults used in the past week to try to lump together the Nazi Front and those who fought to stop it marching and meeting.

Cartoons, speeches, and leading articles in supposedly serious newspapers all chorused the same message: after the battles of Lewisham and Ladywood, the militant left has "sunk to the level" of the fascists, because it used violence against them instead of relying on votes or arguments.

The violence of the left against fascism is, however, based on a recognition that the major argument of the fascists is force. They aim to recruit and to grow largely by appearing strong: they offer frustrated and inadequate individuals the illusion of master-race superiority by giving them the chance to bully and kick around those of another race, which then appears "inferior".

At a later stage they aim to gain the support of important sections of the ruling class as contenders for power because they offer physical forces against the working class movement. Meanwhile, their ability to recruit and keep those forces depends on being able to make a show of strength.

Words and votes didn't stop Hitler or Mussolini. They won't stop Tyndall and Webster. But if they are prevented from marching and holding rallies, their main strategic line of advance will be blocked. If they are beaten and demoralised and made to look pitiful (something, incidentally, that a state ban cannot achieve) then their argument of strength is lost.

Opposing political forces do not become equal by virtue of fighting on the streets. That is an absurd notion. Nor is the violence of the left 'the same' as that of the fascists — for them, violence is their daily fare, employed in dark back streets or bleak housing estates by lynch-gangs against defenceless Asian families.

All violence is not equal. Nor does it get equal condemnation in the press — or we'd hear a lot more about what goes on in the back of police vans, and the citizen who "has a go" to stop a thief by physical force would not be applauded as a hero.

If a street fight in Lewisham can put an end to bookshop burning and 'Paki-bashing', should not the left be applauded for achieving a reduction in violence of the worst sort?

To read the comments of the past week, one would think that the ruling class were pacifists, and that violence — indeed, an occasional street fight — is the worst thing it can contemplate happening. One would think they never went to war, that bombs and armies were anathema to them, and that concentration camps would be fine just as long as they could be set up in a peaceful, legal, orderly manner.

The labour movement and the black community, both of which might end up in such camps, cannot afford to take that view.

If we don't stop the growth of the National Front now, there will come a time when no left wing or trade union meeting, no picket line, will be safe from attack, where paper sellers will have to be ready to defend themselves and where black people everywhere will live in constant fear, as do many already.

If the Nazi Front is allowed to become a major political party, that will bring a big shift to the right in the politics of the other major parties and in British political and cultural life. And if it is allowed to come to power there can be no doubt that it would model its regime on Hitler's Third Reich.

All this may be beyond the power of the Times or the Guardian to imagine. For the labour movement and the black community, these are possibilities — it must come to terms with and fight to the death to prevent.

# ONE IN TEN WHITES STILL VOTED FOR NAZI FRONT

LABOUR comfortably held its seat in the Ladywood, Birmingham, by-election, with 53% of the vote [8,227]. Only 43% of the electors voted. The swing to the Tories was 9%, less than in the other recent by-elections, but enough, if it were repeated nationally, to give the Tories a majority of around 100 in the Commons.

The Liberal candidate, who came third in the last general election, was pushed into fourth place by the candidate of the fascist National Front. With a drop of 8.4% in the Liberal share of the vote, he lost his deposit.

Of the two revolutionary candidates, the SWP's Kim Gordon got only 1% of the vote (153), despite the fact that the SWP had a great amount of national publicity in connection with anti-fascist activity in the week before the election. The "Socialist Unity" (mainly IMG) candidate, Raghib Ahsan, did much better with 3.4% (534). The difference may reflect the fact that Socialist Unity's was the better-organised campaign, with some roots locally (Raghib Ahsan is a shop steward at Rover, Solihull).

The National Front got 5.7% of the total vote (888), a smaller percentage than in other recent by-elections.

However, between four and

five voters out of every 10 in the constituency are of Asian or West Indian descent. As targets for the NF's racist abuse, they will certainly not have provided the NF with votes. The NF vote must have come entirely from the white half of the electorate.

The NF share of the white electorate must have been much higher than 5.7%, perhaps double that figure. Or more than double: immigrants are reckoned to use their votes diligently, and the 'white' vote from which the 888 came may have been less than half the total votes cast.

In fact the NF must have got roughly 11-12% of the votes of those whites who voted in Ladywood.

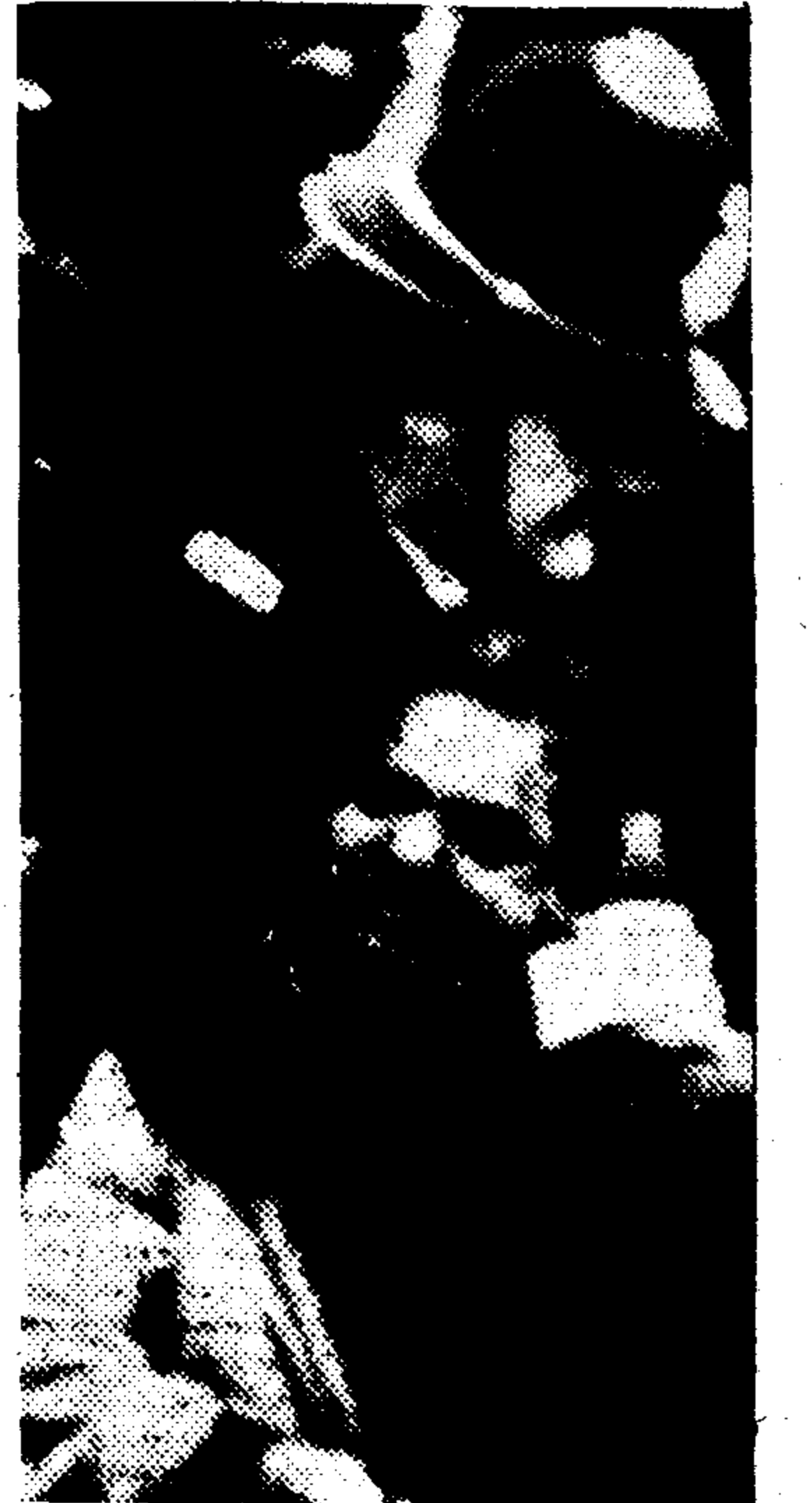
Even taking into account that Ladywood is the sort of area where the NF can hope to do best, the vote for the Nazi candidate is a reminder yet again that there is a serious possibility that the NF will emerge as the third capitalist party at the next general election, in which the NF plans to contest 318 seats.

The NF appeals to confused and backward people, to the disgruntled no-hope-and-no-fight-back section of the white population, to people who are willing to believe the fascist claptrap that the blacks and As-

ians are responsible for the social decay and dislocation which capitalism has created in Britain today. Such people always count more in an election, when all that has to be done is mark a piece of paper, than in a real struggle, as in Lewisham on August 13th.

Nevertheless, votes of the size of the Ladywood NF vote can help transform the NF into a national political force more weighty than fascism has ever been in Britain.

The labour movement must not let itself be lulled by the press into dismissing the threat posed by the National Front. Only a reorganised and regenerated labour movement, posing a working-class socialist answer to capitalist decay, can cut the ground from under the feet of racist demagogues. Here and now we are strong enough to harry, harass, and stifle the Nazi Front whenever it attempts to meet, to speak, to sell its filthy literature or to march.



Police clash with the black community in Ladywood 3 days before the by-election.

# ELVIS PRESLEY (1935-58)

THE death of Elvis Presley looks like being a bigger commercial success even than the death of James Dean.

In a way it was the logical next step in his career. After the rebelliousness, the inventiveness and all the explosive vigour had been relentlessly squeezed out of his music, leaving the King of Rock 'n' Roll to do bad cover versions of Tom Jones and Chuck Berry songs, the Elvis legend badly needed a boost.

It was getting it all last week, with fans flocking to the Elvis mansion, buying up his records as fast as the shops could lay hands on them, and even threatening suicide.

Elvis's first recordings, and arguably his best, were made after he joined the Sun record company in 1954. Records like *That's all right Mama*, *You're right, I'm left, she's gone* and *Trying to get you* had the combination of style and delivery that were the Presley hallmark: an amalgam of white country music with black rhythm & blues and gospel.

This was also the time when Elvis' sexuality was notorious — its open energy a liberating



force, but for the unfailingly sexist lyrics. (Such as *I gotta woman who —*

*Never runs in the streets, Leaving me alone, She knows a woman's place Is right back there in the home*)

But Elvis was only able to make a nationwide, and international, breakthrough when he teamed up with 'Colonel' Tom Parker, the song-writing team of Leiber and Stoller, and the

massive record company RCA Victor, in 1956.

Paradoxically, the records that appalled the older generation, offended conventional morality and boosted the 'rock revolution' — records such as *Heartbreak Hotel*, *Hound Dog* and *Jailhouse Rock*, — could only happen after Elvis' personal rebellion had been subordinated to his chequebook.

The 'rock revolution' forged ahead, as other singers cashed in on the marketability of black songs sung by white artists (exemplified by Pat Boone's slicked-up version of Fats Domino's *Aln't that a shame*). Singers such as Gene Vincent and Eddie Cochran continued to express the raw rebellion of white youth estranged from the society their parents had given them (as in *Summertime Blues*). But the controllability, or 'purchaseability' of this revolution is expressed — *I'm gonn' to rip it up — where? — at the ball tonight!*

For Elvis, the milestone in the taming process came when he was drafted into the US Army in 1958. The rebel ex-truck driver became the clean-cut all-American kid, less sexy but just as sexist —

*[I want a good luck charm Hanging on my arm ... To have, to hold, tonight]*

The last phase of Elvis Presley's career, the phase of villas and cadillacs of the established idol, of overweight and drugs, was separated by a tide of saccharine mediocrity from the time when a generation of youth identified with The King.

If this tale demonstrates anything, it is the flexibility and resourcefulness of this capitalist system, which can take a phenomenon that seemed to be a rallying point for a lot of threatening anger and cure this disease with the universal antidote of cash.

BOB SUGDEN

# FIGHTING BACK IN A RACIST SOCIETY

FOR FLEET STREET, the problem to be solve in the aftermath of Lewisham and Ladywood is how to stop violence and disorder. To their mind, the 'extremists' of Right and Left have suddenly invaded the streets to turn them into battlegrounds.

For black youth, and for socialist militants, it is a different story. There has been violence on the streets for a long time: the violence of the police, and the violence of the fascists. What is new about Lewisham is that the fight-back against that violence has really got under way.

For the fascists, violence against blacks and leftists is the core of their activity. Their strong-arm exploits are not accidental excesses, they are their pride and joy. The essence of fascism is that it mobilises frightened members of the middle class and backward workers into an army of thugs which can strike more directly and brutally against their chosen scapegoats — Blacks, Jews, and Reds — than the lumbering apparatus of a parliamentary state. And for them 'Reds' includes the whole organised labour movement.

The police, the official representatives of the state, are also, in their own way, permanently on the offensive against the more oppressed, or the more militant, sections of the working class. The police arrests of pickets and defence of scabs at Grunwicks are the best-known recent example of this.

A series of cases have proved that corruption runs broad and deep

through the police force. Racism is no less rife. The blue uniform and the truncheon attract men and women willing, and sometimes eager, to use the force and power of 'the Law' against people they consider below them in the social scale. The discipline and the hierarchy of the police force reinforce its brutal authoritarianism.

The state which employs and organises the police is a racist state. A web of immigration controls define black immigrants as 'a problem', and give rise to dozens of deportation cases — most of which get much less publicity than when the victim is white-skinned and well-connected, like Philip Agee.

The exploitation of the working class, and the super-exploitation of the black working class, give rise to the social conditions which generate racism and violence.

The racism and violence of capitalist society, expressed through the police or through the fascists, cannot be soothed away little by little. Least of all can it be disposed of by trying to shut up the 'extremists' so that 'moderates' can be left to live quietly together!

It has to be fought — by direct action on the streets against the fascists, by labour movement support for black self-defence, by campaigning for the release of the dozens of young blacks victimised by the police, and by propaganda and organisation in the labour movement and in the factories.

IF YOU WANT PEACE BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE, PREPARE FOR WAR AGAINST CAPITALISM.

The  
the  
and  
fire

# RACISM IS VIOLENCE

**THE LEWISHAM 21** case is only one of a long series of police victimisations of young blacks. These are some of the other cases in recent years.

**KENSAL RISE 10.**

10 black youths in North London arrested in a police round-up; four charged with 'suspicion of loitering with intent', six with 'conspiracy'.

**TENNYSON 6. July 1977.**

The police go on the rampage in Nottingham after they are called in about a window broken during a cricket game. The arrests are mostly for 'assaulting the police'.

**ISLINGTON 18. January 1977**

Arrests in North London, apparently in retaliation for the Notting Hill Carnival the previous August. The Old Bailey jury finally refused to convict on the most serious 'conspiracy' charges.



Photo: Minda

## Insults, violence, wrongful arrests and false charges

**NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL, August 1976.**

Over 100 arrests made during clashes provoked by the massive police presence at the Carnival.

**HARLESDEN 6. June 1976.**

Arrests at a police raid on the Burning Spear Club, North West London.

**RAILTON 4. June 1976.**

Arrests after onlookers intervene against racist police harassment of a 61-year old West Indian in Brixton.

**WOOD GREEN 18. May 1976**

Some young blacks from a crowd coming away from a

school sports meeting go into a newsagent to buy sweets and refreshments. The shopkeeper locks them out, saying "I'm not serving you black bastards". The police arrive and make arrests.

**CHAPELTOWN 12. November 1975.**

The police try to stop bonfire night celebrations in Chapelton, Leeds. Fighting breaks out and arrests are made.

**DALLOW ROAD 7. July 1975**

Youths intervened to assist one of their number, a 15-year old girl, after the police had arrested and brutalised her.

**STOCKWELL 10. October 1974.**

All arrested at Stockwell tube station, South London, while returning home from the Caxton Hall Disco.

**CRICKLEWOOD 12. October 1974.**

Police invasion of the Carib Club, North West London. Fighting lasted for over an hour. Police lined the stairs and beat the youngsters as they left the club.

**SWAN DISCO 7. September 1974.**

Police invasion of the Swan Disco in South London results in a running battle between the youths and police.

**CLIFF McDANIEL. April 1974.**

In Hornsey, North London, Cliff McDaniel, a schoolboy, is beaten and arrested by police during his lunch-break. A number of witnesses are present.

**BROCKWELL PARK 3. June 1973.**

Three young blacks picked on at random by police in a running battle at the Brockwell Park fair, South London.

**OVAL 4. March 1972.**

Four brothers arrested by London Transport police whilst leaving the Oval tube station, London.

**METRO 4. May 1971.**

Fighting broke out between police and young blacks when police tried to invade the Metro Club in Notting Hill, London.

**MANGROVE 9. August 1970**

25 arrested after a demonstration protesting at the police harassment of the Mangrove restaurant.

## LEWISHAM = OLD SCORES, NEW SCARS

THE ANGER of local black youth against the Lewisham police, which exploded on the streets on August 13th, was not just built up by the 'Lewisham 21' arrests, but by a whole experience of racist harassment.

As far back as 1972, Lewisham council passed a motion of no confidence in the police and called for a full public inquiry to examine the 'breakdown of relations between police and the immigrants'. As a result, many local police chiefs were moved out.

**MONDAY, MAY 30th:** More than 60 people were arrested between 5.30am and 6am, mostly black youths aged 16-21. Chris Foster was frogmarched into the road in his underclothes; Cathy Cullis, a young white girl, was stripped to her underwear in a police cell, while police joked about the 'disease' she had caught living with black people.

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1st:** 21 of the 60 young blacks appeared at Carbone's magistrat-

es' court, charged with "conspiracy with persons unknown to rob persons unknown in the Greater London area between April 1st and May 21st". Chris Foster's father, David, a bus inspector and ex-policeman, was told by a policeman that the dawn swoop was called Operation 39/PNH, or 'Police Nigger Hunt'.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 4th:** Three people arrested at a protest meeting against the arrest of the 21.

But in May this year, a draft report for the local Community Relations Council read:

"Over the last six months there has been a growing concern by members of ethnic minority groups over increasing allegations of police irregularities, racial insults, physical violence, wrongful arrests and false charges all over London".

That was how the scene was set for the series of events which led up to the demonstration and counter-demonstration of August 13th.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 9th:** Second court appearance. One lawyer tried to get an injunction against the Socialist Workers Party to stop them 'harassing' the parents of the young people involved. The magistrate replied that he had sympathy with the application, but no power to grant it.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 18th:** Another defence meeting is broken up by the National Front.

**SATURDAY, JULY 2nd:** The National Front mount a concerted attack on a local demonstration in defence of the 21; one demonstrator is hit by a bag of caustic soda. No press outcry or publicity, no talk of 'a new horror weapon'....

**SATURDAY, JULY 23rd:** Another demonstration in defence of the 21, without incident.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 13th:** NF try to cash in on the 'mugging' scare created by the police swoop.

boot,  
knife  
the  
bomb

LAST WEEK, petrol was poured through the letter box of 'Centreprise', a left wing bookshop in Hackney, and set on fire, devastating the interior of the shop. New Beacon bookshop, Unity books, and Bogle l'Ouverture in Ealing have also been attacked this year, and a socialist bookshop in Bradford was wrecked in July.

Police 'suspect right-wing activists'. At Bogle l'Ouverture a leaflet was left with the signature of the National Party.

Many other premises associated with the left or the black community have been attacked by the fascists. In Edinburgh, in May and June this year, four Asian shops were firebombed, an Asian shopkeeper was beaten up and told to go back to Pakistan, and a Sikh temple had its windows broken and was daubed with racist slogans.

Tottenham Law Centre was ransacked on May 7th. The defence of anti-fascists arrested on April 23rd in Wood Green

had been organised from there. Hackney and Haringey Community Relations Commissions had also been attacked.

The fascists are at their most vicious and dangerous, however, when they attack people rather than property.

On many occasions, they have attacked left-wing or labour movement meetings. The worst brutality was early last year when they broke up a National Council for Civil Liberties meeting in Manchester, severely injuring two socialists and permanently damaging the sight of one of them.

That case is only one of many. On 30th July this year, fascists broke up a Young Communist League day school in Leeds, and a 13-year old girl had her leg broken. The same day, in the same city, they attacked a 'Right to Work' street meeting, and one socialist was taken to hospital with a suspected fractured skull.

On 22nd July, fascists went on the rampage round the pubs in Bradford. Twelve blacks and socialists were hospitalised. Eight people were arrested — only one of them from the fascists!

Fascists have also set out to attack individual socialist activists. Mike Power, a member of the Communist Party in Lewisham, had bricks thrown through the windows of his house on Saturday 13th August and again on Monday 15th August.

In Leeds, a member of the Socialist Workers Party was beaten unconscious on 1st July and left with a swastika daubed on his shirt. Eight days later, the fascist British National Party attacked 'Socialist Worker', causing injuries to one comrade for which he had to be admitted to hospital.

In October last year, two Workers' Action supporters in East London had a fire-bomb thrown into their house during the night.

Not only the revolutionary left have been victims of the fascists' attacks. Labour Party offices in Tower Hamlets and Stepney have been vandalised by fascists, and Tower Hamlets Labour agent Bob Searle lost three teeth when he was assaulted by fascists in April this year. In Leeds, thugs of the National Front and the British National Party attacked election workers of the Labour Party and the Communist Party after the count in the county council elections this year. Two were hospitalised.

The prime targets of the fascists, though, are black people and workers in struggle. In April this year, NF thugs in Birmingham joined management-organised scab forces in an attack on pickets at the 'Night Out' club. And during the summer of 1976 four Asians were killed on the streets of



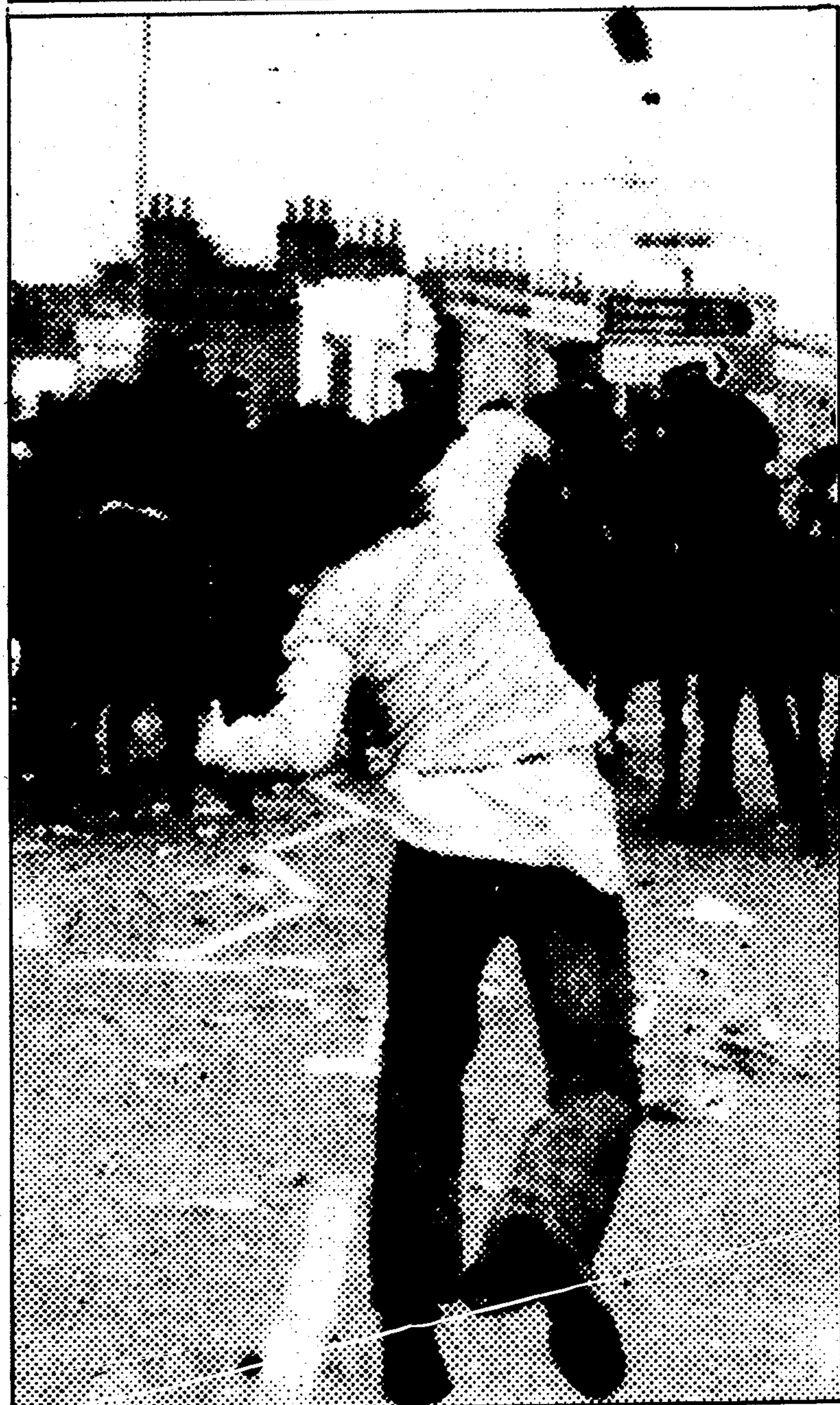
Photo: Minda

London in racist attacks.

The staple activity of the fascists is still the brick through the window and the beating-up in the street. Already, however, the knife and the fire-bomb are among their weapons: and they will be used more and more unless we can mount such a show of anti-fascist force as will send them scurrying back to their sewers for good.



Photo: Minda



## Left reformists on Lewisham:

THAT the National Front was stopped from marching through Lewisham has not just called forth hysteria in the offices of the national dailies. It has also sent the editors of **TRIBUNE**, **LABOUR WEEKLY** and the **MORNING STAR** running for cover, trying to steer a course between condemnation of the police, condemnation of those who fought to stop the Front physically, and pleas to the government and police to do something.

All three papers call for the fascists to be banned. **Labour Weekly** carries an editorial under the heading "Ban Front rallies to stop the violence". It states "Now after Haringey, Lewisham and Birmingham, there is ample evidence that public displays by the National Front are bound to lead to civic disorder and should not be allowed."

**Labour Weekly** here uses the argument that the NF should be banned because it is a threat to "law and order", not because of its politics. Implicit is an assumption that law and order is something good in itself — so good that its preservation is a matter 'above politics', to be defended equally from left and right.

**Tribune** is far more realistic on this point, but for the wrong reasons. It argues that "the danger inherent in banning demonstrations is that it can be and often is the signal for all demonstrations to be banned. That is something that people on the left should keep uppermost in their minds when they argue that they can tell which body should or should not be banned."

True — but only because it means that the bourgeois state is entrusted with the business of stopping the fascists. Yet **Tribune** does exactly that.

The only difference is that instead of a ban they call for a government campaign against "incipient fascism" and for Rees to "lecture their (the police's) leaders on the duty they have to reduce the level of provocation."

For the **Morning Star**, a ban is the final aim of their campaigning against the fascists. CP chief Gordon McLennan, writing before the Lewisham demonstration under the headline "Unite to ban the Front", says "It must therefore be the immediate strategy of anti-fascists, recognising deliberate fascist provocation, to react in a way that ... isolates the racists and fascists and makes more possible the securing of a complete and effective ban on all racist activity and propaganda."

On the Monday following the demonstration they could only

# A solution of milk, water and wishful thinking

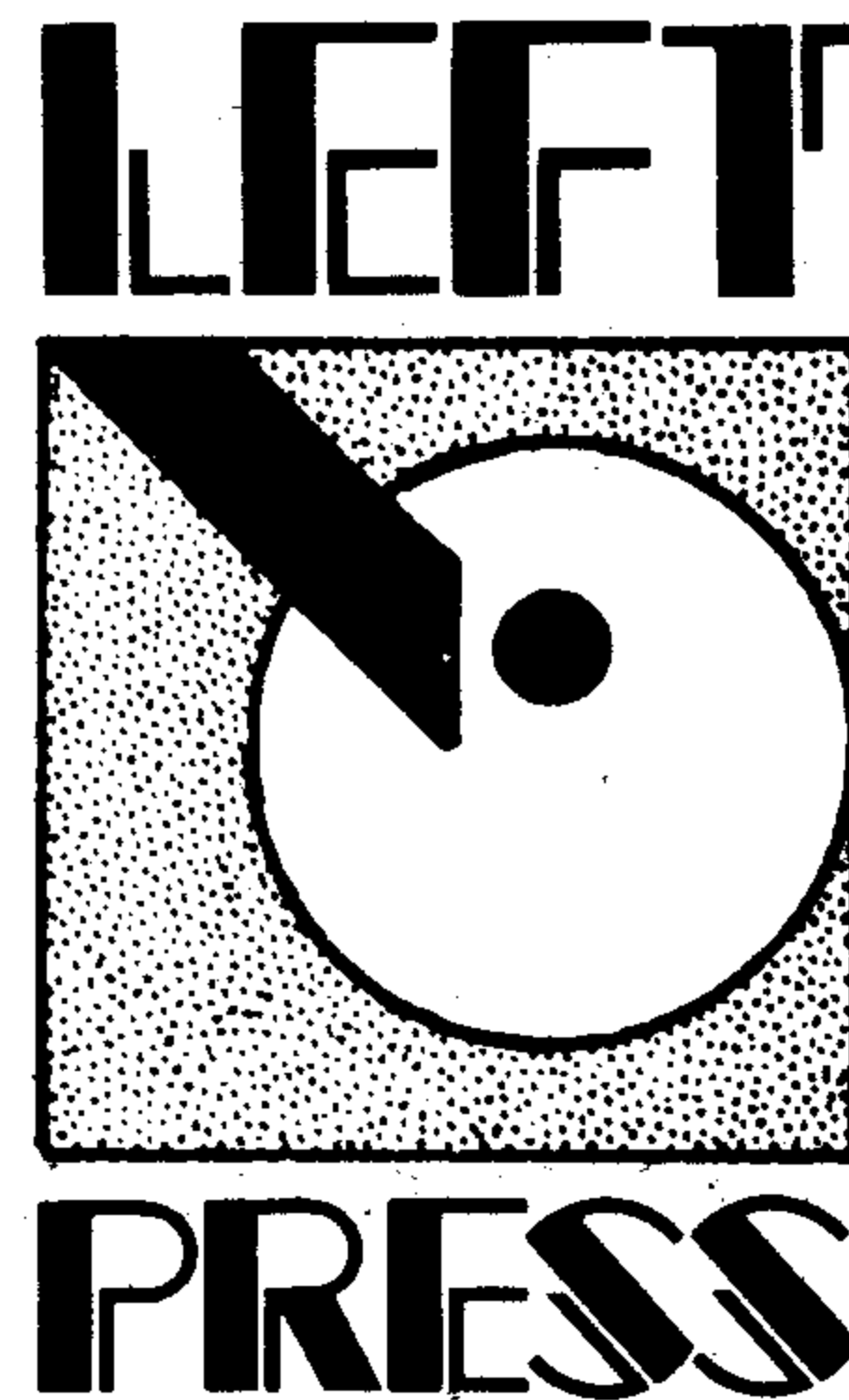
therefore respond in two ways. The first was to whine about how nasty the police had been and how they should have done something against the Front. "Its (the NF's) marches must be stopped by the police... Not once did any policeman or officer seek to have racist posters removed. Not a policeman budged when Front marchers chanted racist abuse or Front leaders hurled menacing threats at church leaders."

This is all based on a touching faith in the potential, if not actual, independence of the police: "Commander McNee is right to say the police should not take political positions but wrong to say they do not."

The second aspect of their reaction to the events was to attack those who had tried to confront the fascists physically. The same **Morning Star** counterposed "ritual confrontations and street fights between police and handfulls of protestors" to their idea of the "broad democratic alliance".

Which of these stopped the fascists from marching down Lewisham High Street? Skirting the question, the **MS** later in the week carried this comment on the Ladywood demonstration, from local CPer Mike Power, whose home had been attacked by fascists: "The SWP's harassment of the Front is damaging the struggle against racism". And he practically blamed the SWP for his home being attacked by fascists: "The ultra-left provocation is creating a situation in which we will not be able to work politically ... I am now engaged in self-defence work against hooliganism."

What do these papers have to



say to blacks under double attack from the fascists and the police?

None of the three deny that the police and blacks don't get on. **Labour Weekly** blatantly supports the police in their "attempts to curtail street crime by any means necessary", coming out with a line on "mugging" that wouldn't look out of place on a Front leaflet. But, they think, the police could improve their relations with blacks if it banned the Front.

**Tribune** says "it is for Mr. Rees to insist that the police change their attitude to the immigrant community", while the **Morning Star** talks about applying the Race Relations Act.

The young black women living in Deptford who were interviewed in the **Morning Star** on Saturday 20th had little to say for the paper's pet solution. Having been subjected to many racist attacks, they were determined to fight back. We leave the **Morning Star** to condemn itself in its attempts to ride two horses: "They did not originally intend to demonstrate against the National Front last Saturday but in the end nearly all of them joined the rally on Clifton Rise."

"They were amazed to see so many white people demonstrating against the Front in their local streets. They had feared there would be more Front members than anti-fascists on the streets, and were relieved to find it was the other way round" — no thanks to the **Star**, of course (and what of its description of the "handfulls of protestors" at Clifton Rise in the report that Monday?).

The interview went on "One of them said bitterly 'If they come back, they won't go away in peace but in pieces' — hardly the sentiments of the "broad democratic alliance" so beloved of the CP... Surely this is nearer to "ultra left provocation"!"

THE discussion in WORKERS ACTION on the benefits or otherwise of nuclear energy is to be welcomed. A serious discussion of this issue on the British left is long overdue, not only as an interpretation of the anti-nuclear power movements in other countries [eg France, Australia, W.Germany], but also because it is highly relevant here.

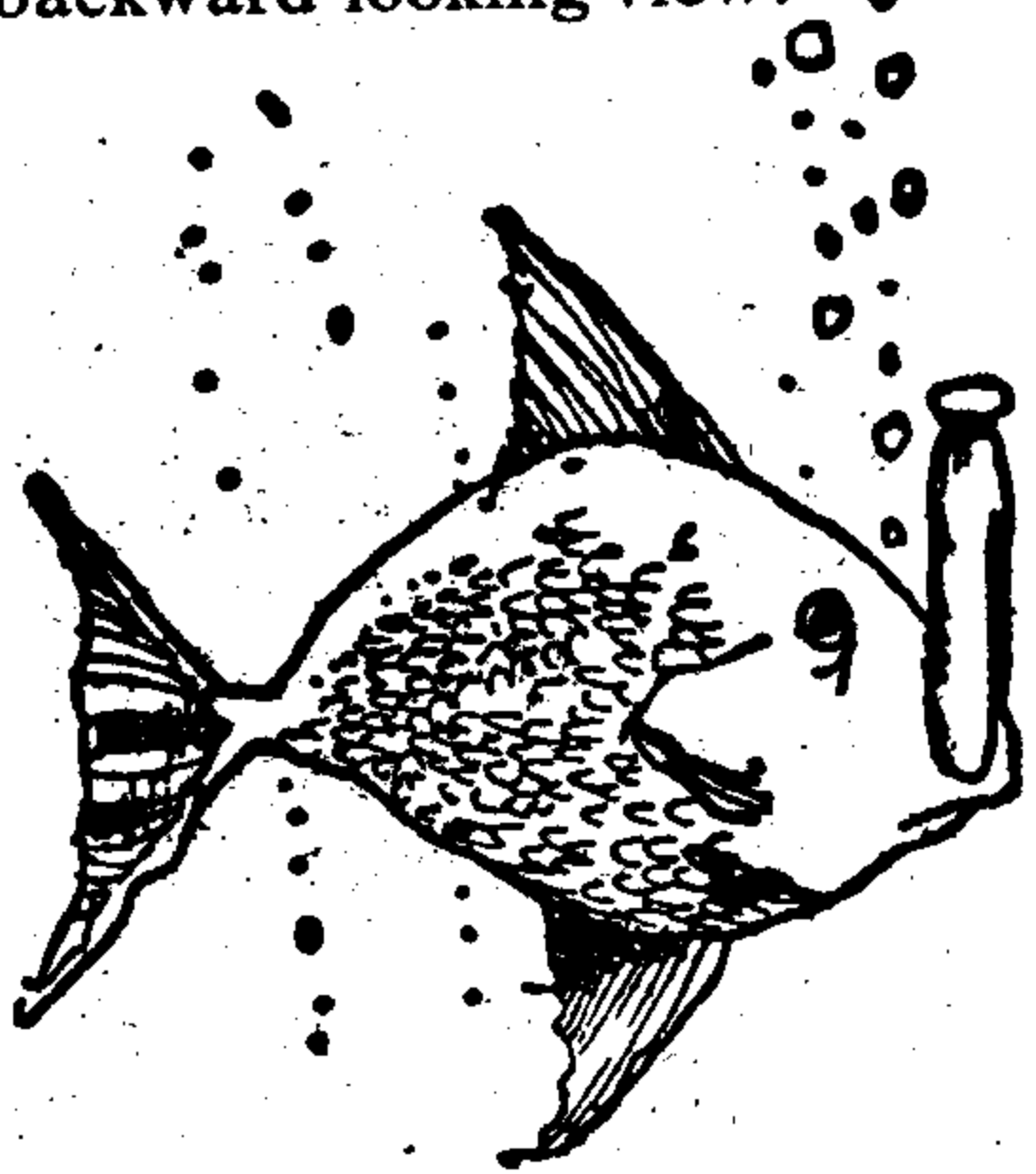
For instance, it was revealed last week at the inquiry into the expansion of the Windscale reactor that the army would be moved in to run it in case of a strike — and the reaction to this plan was minimal compared to what would have been said in response to such a revelation about any other industry.

Unfortunately, many of the points made by Neal Smith in his discussion article are either wrong or misleading.

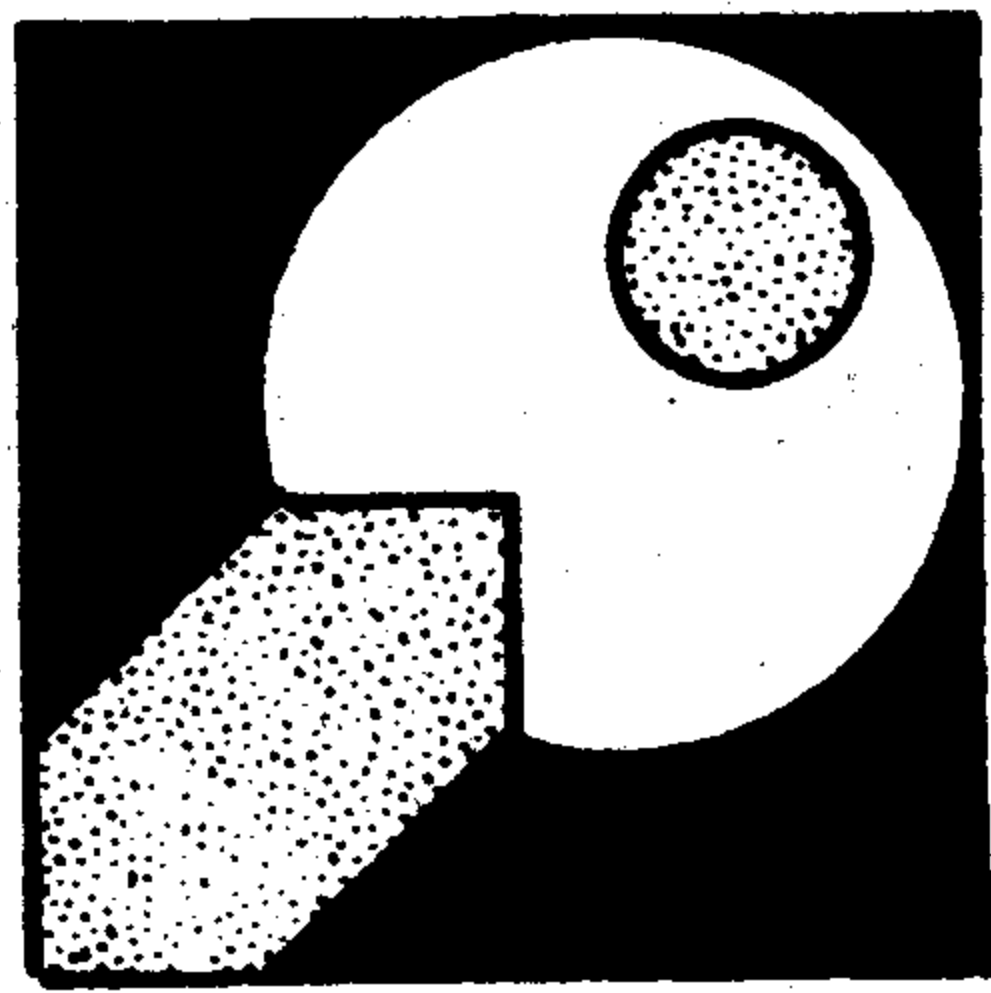
His argument is summed up in this sentence: "The danger of all-out opposition to nuclear power is that, whatever our intentions, we line up with mystics and reactionaries."

Yes, there is such a danger. The position taken by much of the European far left on nuclear power is indistinguishable from that of the 'ecology' movement whose ideology favours individualised production that would take humanity back hundreds if not thousands of years.

But surely Marxists are capable of taking an "anti" position which is different and independent from such a backward-looking view!



Marxists favour new technology which benefits society. If it saves work, we demand that what remains is shared out and hours cut. If it is unsafe, we demand that workers determine and control standards and safeguards.



## Discussion

PETE FIRMIN

replies to  
NEAL SMITH

on  
Nuclear Energy

But if we believe a particular form of technology is **intrinsically** unsafe, then we would be perfectly correct to **oppose** its use totally.

Socialists are not indifferent to the question of energy resources. Nor do we dispute that the chief present fuels — coal, oil and gas — are limited and irreplaceable. (They can also be far more valuably employed for other purposes, eg in medical technology.) Alternative long term energy resources must be developed, and they must be adequate to fuel an expanding and progressive technology.

However, Comrade Smith is **wrong** on two counts when he says that "nuclear power is the only viable alternative"

Firstly, assuming that by "nuclear power" Cde. Smith means power obtained by nuclear **fission** (as is the case with all reactors at present) then this cannot be a **long-term** solution, since the world's known supply of

# It's only a stopgap and there are other ways

uranium will run out in about 40 years if it is used at the **present rate**.

Secondly, there are other viable sources of energy.

While Cde. Smith argues that such alternatives as wind, sun and the tides are usually the province of 'ecofreaks', this should not prevent us from taking a serious look at them. (And Cde. Smith admits that a lot of big money is going into doing just that.)

## Fusion

Harnessing the winds and the tides is unlikely to ever produce more energy than that needed for individual homes, so at most they could only become subsidiary energy sources. But the radiation reaching the earth from the sun is about **50,000 times** greater than man's current rate of energy consumption. Covering substantial desert regions with solar batteries would provide humanity with sufficient electricity for as long as it can survive on the planet, and do so very cheaply.

Another possible source of energy is nuclear **fusion** (the same process which provides energy in the sun) which is completely different from the nuclear **fission** used at present. The basic material of this is not uranium but a particular form of hydrogen.

Pound for pound of basic material, nuclear fusion produces five times as much energy as nuclear fission, and there are some 35 billion tons of the basic material in the earth's oceans. This is enough to supply ample energy for the foreseeable future, and would not reduce the oceans significantly as the type of hydrogen used accounts for only one part in 6000.

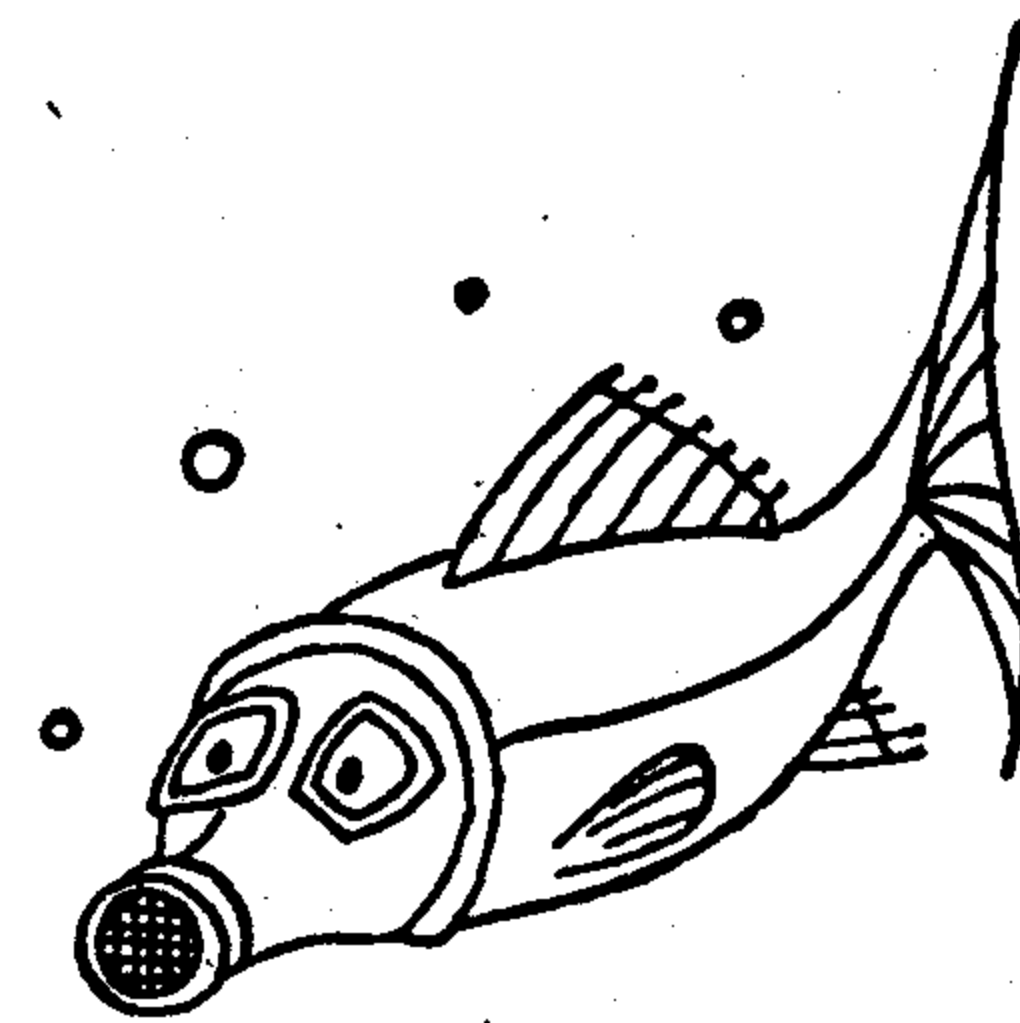
Nuclear fusion does not have many of the disadvantages of fission, since no radioactivity is released, and any malfunction simply leads the reaction to collapse and go out, whereas the

fission reaction **can** go out of control and explode.

A big expansion now of the present nuclear fission programme will mean that the necessary resources will not be put into developing these other energy sources.

Neal Smith says that nuclear power is less hazardous than fossil fuels (coal, gas, oil), but he produces little serious evidence to back this up. For instance, he says that coal mining is far more hazardous than Uranium mining. This is perfectly true, but it is a completely **worthless** comparison, since to the best of my knowledge no-one has ever claimed otherwise! Uranium **mining** is safer for physical reasons (it's easier to get at), and the uranium itself is relatively harmless until it has gone through the refining process, after which it is made suitable for the nuclear reactors — and also becomes radioactive.

As Ray Saunders points out (WA66), Cde. Smith's other comments on safety do not relate to future possibilities in terms of catastrophes nor does he look seriously at the present dangers.



Smith's comparisons with rate of death through snake bites and car crashes do not relate to the real dangers of radioactivity since this is a **long term** hazard for humanity as a whole rather than a matter of statistically comparable instant deaths.

We do know, for instance, that in the same period that the use of nuclear power has grown rapidly the incidence of leukaemia in the general public has doubled. Radiation is **continually** seeping into the soil and water, to

be eventually taken in by humans. All the long term effects of radioactivity are not yet known, but there is no doubt as to its effects in causing cancer and genetic damage.

Possible future dangers cannot be ignored, even if we leave out the minor but real possibility of a reactor exploding (in fact at least one such explosion has happened so far.)

For instance, a nuclear reactor has a life of about 20 years, and then becomes a ruin which has to be disposed of. In West Germany, where the nuclear power industry is second only to that in the USA, even the courts are demanding "catastrophe plans" and protection against reactors bursting and releasing radiation.

## Glib

As Comrade Smith says himself, the big problem is waste disposal. But he is far too quick to say the problem is about to be solved, simply on the basis of the 'blocks of glass' method — which even those developing it don't believe is a satisfactory solution.

The fact is that the disposal problem is far from solved. In West Germany, for instance, one of the state governments has stopped all progress on fission reactors because the present method of waste disposal is inadequate.

Some materials would have to be sealed away for **millions** of years, in which time unforeseeable geological changes could render the safest container vulnerable.

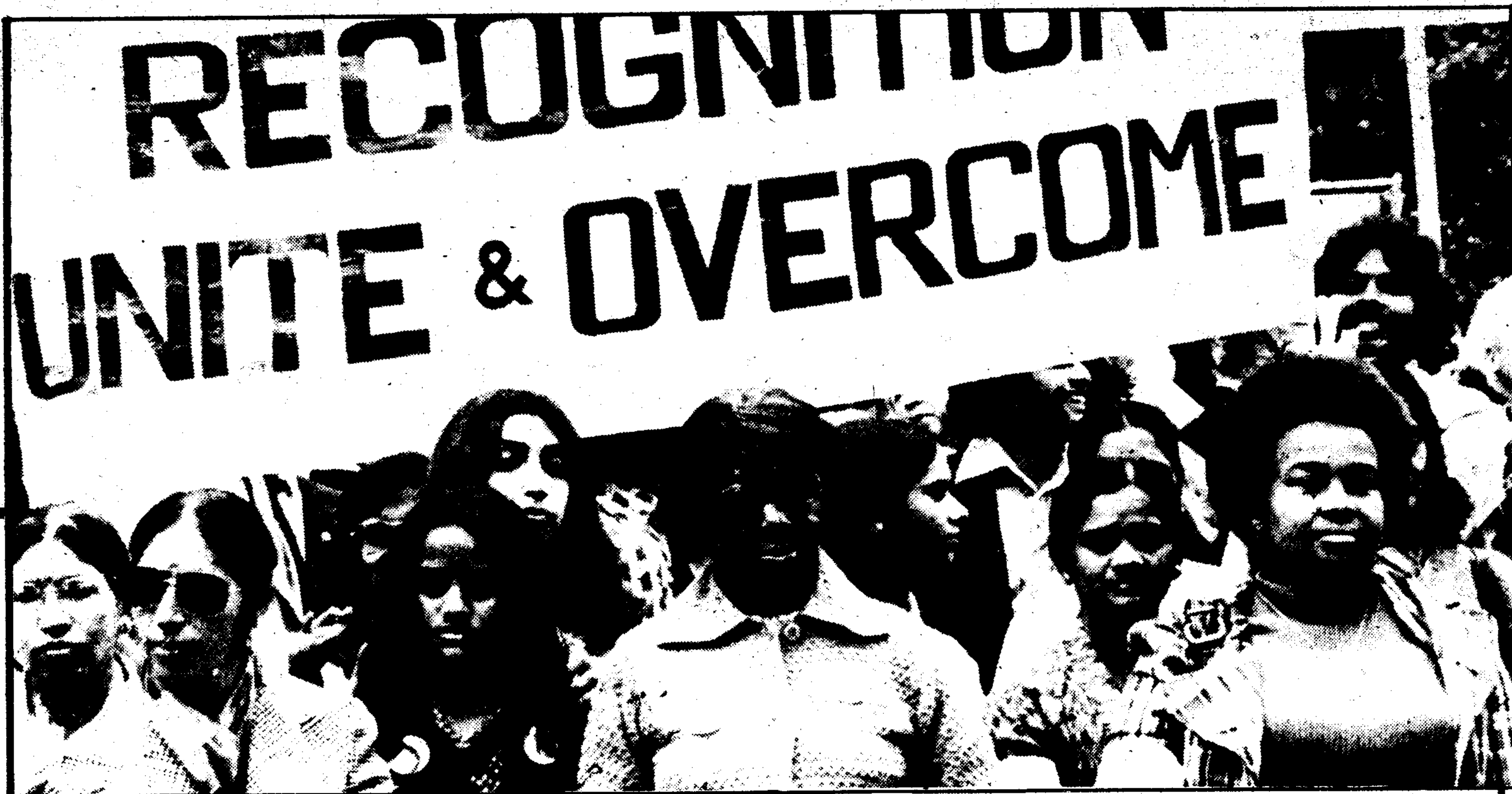
The problems involved are much greater than Cde. Smith rather glibly pretends, and a serious analysis is necessary to decide whether nuclear fission can be safely used at all as an energy source.

Such an analysis cannot be avoided by simply denouncing all opponents or sceptics as "demagogues" and "ecofreaks".

## workers' ACTION supporters' groups

Basingstoke, Birmingham, Bristol,  
Cardiff, Chester, Coventry,  
Edinburgh, Huddersfield, Leicester,  
Liverpool, London, Manchester,  
Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Newtown,  
Northampton, Nottingham,  
Rochdale, Sheffield, Stoke

Write for details of meetings & activities to:  
WASG, 49 Carnac Street, London SE27



## British Timken strike runs up against Gov't limits

2,000 workers have returned to work after eight days on strike at British Timken, Northampton, the country's biggest producer of tapered roller bearings. It was the first major dispute at the plant for 16 years. If successful, it would have given a major boost to union organisation in Northampton, traditionally a badly-organised and low-paid area, as well as challenging the Government's 10% guidelines.

The workforce had decided to forego their Phase 2 increase and demand 17% to make up their drop in living standards. They struck on Wednesday 10th August, after turning down a 10% offer from management: 5% Phase 2, 3% productivity, and 2% consolidation.

The strike was solid despite large-scale non-unionism in the plant, and on Friday 12th workers at the Timken plant in nearby Daventry struck for similar pay increases.

But the strikers got no help from the AUEW district office, notorious for a series of sell-outs over recent years. The strikers got support from rank-and-file trade unionists, but before much could be done the stewards had been persuaded by the Department of Employment that they could expect no more than management offered. At a mass meeting on Thursday 18th the strikers voted to accept this.

The need is more urgent than ever to build links and organisation at rank and file level, in order to turn the tide of defeat for engineers in Northampton.

ROSS CATLIN

## Coventry 'Mini-Grunwick' strike wins

A FIGHT for union recognition has been won by 32 Asian women at the Forward Trading Company, a small textile firm in Coventry.

Last November, some of the workers joined the TGWU. The managing director, Mr Surinder Singh, refused point blank to recognise the union.

On July 15th he made six workers redundant on grounds of shortage of orders. Four of these workers were active union members, and one a shop steward. They claimed that the real reason for the sackings was an attempt to smash the union.

The women struck a week later. Mr Singh issued a threat to the workers that unless they returned immediately and unconditionally, he would move production to other premises.

This Mr Singh was actually a long-standing member of the Communist Party! Even now, the CP has merely 'asked him to leave', and politely accepted his resignation, instead of booting him out in disgrace.

What were the conditions under which this 'Communist' expected his workforce to exist? Mr Singh kept no accurate

record of hours worked. A lot of overtime was worked, but pay-slips bear no information other than gross and net pay. Mr Singh regards any complaints about pay or conditions as 'rudeness'. The average wage for a 40-hour week is between £15 and £18, sometimes even lower, as in the case of one woman who received £8 for a full week's work.

There was no hot water in the lavatory, nor any toilet rolls. In the morning the workers only had a 15-minute break; at midday only half a hour, and no time at all in the afternoon. They had to sit at their machines to eat their hurried lunch, as there was no canteen or rest room. Mr Singh only allowed one week's holiday in the summer and two days at Christmas.

The demands of the strikers were at follows:—

1. The reinstatement of all sacked workers;
2. An accurate record to be kept of hours worked;
3. Standard trade union rights, and full negotiating rights;
4. Proper holidays.

Workers on the 11th July Grunwicks mass picket. 32 Asian women workers at a Coventry factory have won union recognition in a small-scale repeat of the Grunwicks dispute.

In a press statement, Mr Singh said: "I do not think there has been any exploitation in our place. I would not say they have got the same conditions as Rolls Royce or GEC, but it is a small firm and I do not think they would expect it. These women are not able to work in English factories as they are not trained and most of them speak little or no English. They should be really grateful to those who created the jobs". This 'phil-

anthropist' owns a £20,000 home.

Mr Singh has now agreed to recognise and negotiate with the union, the workers have returned, and a Wages Council inspector is to visit the factory. But Mr Singh's pride and wallet have taken such a blow that he still talks about moving to smaller premises, maybe even outside Coventry, and sacking some or all of the workers.

T.T.

## IAN MORRIS STILL AT RISK

JACK GATSKY, ex-shop steward and leader of a recent 16-week long strike of maintenance engineers at Heathrow, has been reinstated in his job. He was suspended and then sacked, after his remarks to the press calling for a public enquiry into safety standards at Heathrow. For daring even to imply that safety standards might not be everything they should be, Gatsky lost his job. Ian Morris, a fellow shop steward, is still suspended for being outspoken enough to support Gatsky.

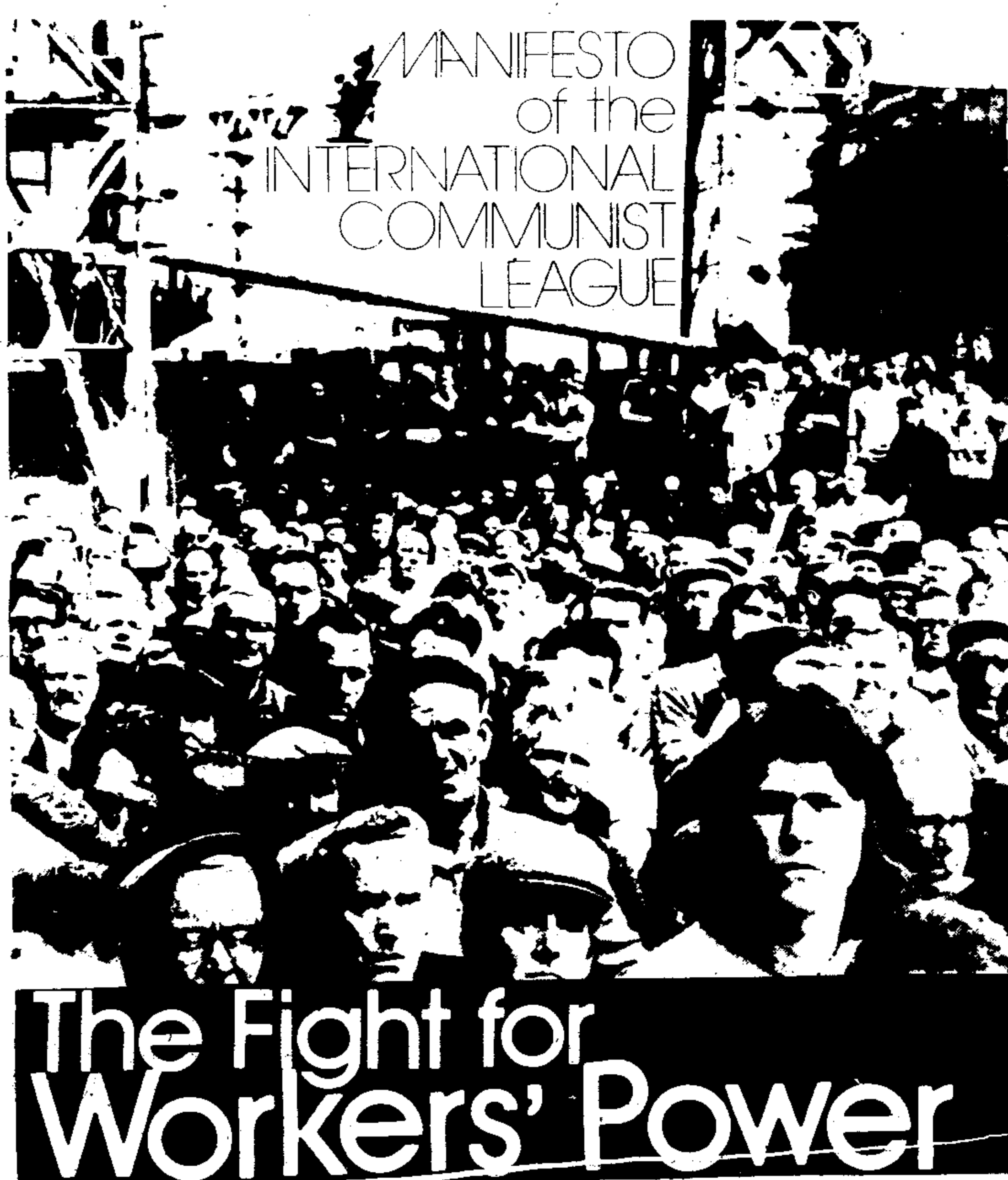
2,000 maintenance engineers voted by two-to-one at a mass meeting on August 16th for all-out strike action for Gatsky's

reinstatement — which, as they saw it, was also "to safeguard their own interests".

But Gatsky backed down and apologised to British Airways, "I am not a licensed engineer and therefore not called upon to make decisions on matters of safety standards". Gatsky is now permanently transferred from shift work to day work, which automatically loses him his stewardship.

The danger now is that the airline's heavy-handed treatment will be the prelude to isolating Morris, who is standing for president in the coming AUEW elections, and who was also among the leaders of the strike earlier this year.

LINDA COLLINS



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

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.

WEDNESDAY 31 AUGUST. Grunwick strike support meeting, with speakers from strike committee. 7.30pm at the International Community Centre, Mansfield Rd, Nottingham. Sponsored by Nottingham Trades Council.

SATURDAY 3 SEPTEMBER. Meeting for rank-and-file militants in the Co-Op, called by Co-Op Workers'

## EVENTS

Liaison Committee in Manchester. 12 noon at New Cross Labour Club, Mill St, Ancoats, Manchester. Further details from Mike Reppion at 122 Stamford Street, Old Trafford, Manchester 16.

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).

MONDAY 5 SEPTEMBER. Lobby of the TUC Congress, called by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions. 11am, Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

MONDAY 5 SEPTEMBER. Lobby of the TUC Congress in support of the Grunwick strikers. 4pm.

MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER. Huddersfield council of Labour week against racism. Monday: Multi-cultural evening, 8pm, Poly Great Hall. Wednesday: Anti-Apartheid movement meeting with national and local speakers on South Africa. 8pm at the Friendly & Trades Club, Northumberland St. Saturday: March against racism. Assemble 2pm at Cambridge Road Baths.

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 Road, London N4.

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

JUST OUT: "Campaign against Racism and Fascism. CARF". 12 pages, bi-monthly, price 10p; available from left bookshops & from Anti-Racist, Anti-Fascist Coordinating Committee, Flat 3, 5 Huntley St, London WC1.

Published by Workers' Action, 49 Carnac St, London SE27. Printed by Azad (TU) 21 York Way, London N1. Registered as a newspaper at the GPO

## THE POLITICS OF Militant

A Workers' Action pamphlet. 20p + 7p post from 49 Carnac St, SE27

# WORKERS IN ACTION

## Longbridge

# The £31 which is really £13

THE RED REVOLUTION broke out last week when the Longbridge Works Committee put the figures in its proposed wage claim. Or so one would think from the papers, which headlined the '£31 claim'.

In fact, the figure is lower than many expected, at £13 (20%) on the basic. The rest of the £31 consists of:

- £6 that we're already getting, to be consolidated; and
- a one-off payment of two extra months' wages in return for a single agreement for the whole of Longbridge. This is a step towards corporate Leyland

bargaining, which would undercut shop floor power for good.

There will also be negotiations for a productivity buy-out for the ADO 88 programme, which includes new shift arrangements.

The £13 rise falls very far short of restoring pre-Social Contract wage levels (estimated as a rise of £30 before tax). Apart from the consolidation, all the other elements are tied up in strings and thoroughly objectionable.

By contrast, there is a good chance that at Cowley an adequate claim will be adopted. The Assembly Plant T&G branch (5/293) has thrown its weight behind the following demands, and the Body Plant branch has adopted something very similar:

□ An increase of £33.64 across the board, reaching a total of £100, to regain what has been lost since 1974.

□ A cost of living clause: 1p in the pound increase for every 1% rise in the cost of living.

□ Consolidation of increases under Phases 1 and 2.

□ To call on the union to set up its own cost of living index on which the cost of living clause should be based.

Under a corporate bargaining system, it is doubtful whether such a claim would get past first post. As things still are, it has a good chance of acceptance. If Cowley were to win anything like this, plants like Longbridge would be pulled along in its wake, if only by the parity principle.

It's a clumsy system, and it isn't at all ideal. Far better a united struggle of all Leyland plants together. But that isn't what corporate bargaining would mean — it would mean that plants like Cowley wouldn't get a look-in.

For this reason we must fight to stop corporate bargaining, rather than selling the present position for the odd two months' extra pay. And when other plants like Cowley go ahead with a decent claim, we must give them all the support and solidarity they need.

Jim Denham

## Bosses provoke £20 strike

WORKERS at Leyland's two Jaguar plants in Coventry have struck for a £20 a week wage claim, in defiance of management's attempt to impose on them a Phase 2 rise of 5%.

The decision to strike was taken by section meetings in the plants at Browns Lane and Radford. They have yet to receive the support of the toolmakers. Their action was provoked by management's statement that they were going to impose immediately the 5% increase (backdated to April 1st) on workers regardless — thus unilaterally putting the workers on the wrong side of the 12-month rule with their £20 claim.

The workers had refused to settle under Phase 2, putting off the negotiations until August. By then, as a result of the Desoutter strike in North London for union recognition and the Lucas toolmakers' strike, many of the Jaguar workers had been laid off on 80% lay-off pay. Management have now neatly avoided having to pay out 80% lay-off pay to the rest of the workforce that would shortly have to be laid off.

The workers had hoped that if they were laid off on 80% pay they could delay making a decision on action over their claim for £20 a week and staff conditions until the TUC Congress in September and its decision on the size of claims and on the 12-month rule.

Management at Jaguars has used the Government's pay guidelines as a convenient pretext for provoking a strike — unfortunately before the Jaguar workers have gained the necessary preparation, organisation, and militancy for a real confrontation with the employers and the Government over their £20 claim. But now the fight has started, the Jaguar strikers need the support of all other workers.

LINDA COLLINS

# THE THREAT BEHIND THE F.T. DEFEAT

THE THREE-WEEK dispute at the Financial Times ended on Monday August 22nd with a defeat for the workers involved, members of the NGA.

They agreed to let the question of money docked from their pay packets for rostered days off be arbitrated by ACAS, and to give a promise of no industrial action and no union meetings during work hours while arbitration is in progress. The disputed money for the period 2nd to 12th August will be paid into a joint NGA chapel/Financial Times management bank account, as management were previously insisting.

The dispute had implications beyond the money involved. Behind it lay management's attempts to force the NGA to accept 'new technology' and the

resulting job loss.

With the rejection of the 'Programme for Action' on new technology by all the unions bar the journalists' union NUJ, management have had to try other approaches.

The Financial Times' attitude was spelled out in a circular sent round to the unions in June.

... We shall seek to negotiate improved efficiency and reductions in manning levels of departments where possible on the basis of our existing equipment and of productivity agreements which will yield genuine benefit... Only by the great savings which should arise from the introduction of new technology can any substantial increase in payments to staff become justifiable. Indeed, if our financial situation deteriorates, we may

have to press for agreement on the Development Plan even before these problems are overcome nationally'.

The NGA dispute bore all the marks of a management intent on provoking a showdown. Using the summer months when the FT is slim and advertising revenue low, the management dug their heels in.

The dispute began when the management claimed that the printers were taking rostered days off without their permission. The printers claimed that an agreement had been reached between the head printer (now dead) and the NGA FoC whereby if there was no work to do (because of fewer pages) the men did not come in but were still paid.

The management claimed

that they had no knowledge of this situation, which had been continuing since 1975. They refused to make further payments to the men on the grounds that the extra time off was not covered by any company-recognised agreement.

When an internal settlement failed, the Appeals Committee was set up, with representatives from the management and the union, and Sidney Kessler, Senior Lecturer in Industrial Relations at City University, as 'independent' arbitrator. The Appeals Committee reported that until an agreement could be reached, the disputed money should be deposited in a joint account in the names of the NGA Chapel and the FT management.

The NGA Chapel refused to recognise this decision as binding, and were backed by the NGA national council, which also decided to back their members' understanding of what constituted the 'status quo'.

The main dispute then centred around the period between August 2nd and August 12th. The NGA said that 'status quo' meant the men should be paid. The management said the money for that period had to go into the joint NGA/FT fund.

Incensed by the attitude of the union, the management last week decided to escalate the dispute. As well as locking out 232 NGA members at the St Clement Press (the newspaper's subsidiary printing company), they also served a week's protective notice on 300 other workers, members of SOGAT, NATSOPA, SLADE, AUEW, and EEUPTU (not on any members of the NUJ).

NATSOPA's response to the lay-offs at St Clement Press was to instruct its members at the FT to cross the picket line.

The NGA said that they didn't need to ask for support from other unions because they were strong enough to go it alone. The defeat shows the blindness of that approach. And the defeat could be a defeat for all print unions in the fight to save jobs.

CLARE RUSSELL

## Press empire resists closed shop

NOW IN ITS twelfth week, the journalists' closed shop strike at North of England Newspapers in Darlington has reached stalemate. Supported by 250 members of the print unions NGA, SLADE and NATSOPA, the NUJ chapel have now stopped the Northern Echo and its sister papers — something the 1926 General Strike failed to do. But victory is not yet in sight.

The company, part of the Pearson Longman finance and publishing empire which also owns the Financial Times, are throwing all their resources into this fight. They are backed by a special fund drawn from local press managements throughout the country specifically to defeat NUJ closed shop claims, and Pearson Longman's vast resources are at their disposal. They have declared themselves ready to close the Darlington papers for good rather than instruct one scab to join the NUJ or leave the company.

In negotiation the management have consistently refused to discuss the closed shop at all. They want the union to undertake never to challenge their right to decide what to publish and what to suppress, and 'in return' they have offered a system of wages arbitration under

the auspices of ACAS. But they will not contemplate allowing the NUJ to develop its own industrial strength.

Last week a meeting of representatives of all the NUJ chapels in Pearson Longman's local newspaper chain voted for a plan of phased escalation of the dispute. Beginning with the evening papers, the journalists want to see the whole of Pearson Longman's NUJ membership, including the Financial Times and Penguin Books, progressively called out over the next few weeks. Despite the reluctance of some NUJ members to come out, this plan must be put into action immediately.

But there are signs that the NUJ Executive is getting cold feet at the thought of a major dispute. Even if they declare themselves 'in principle' in favour of escalation, they won't move without the agreement of the TUC Printing Industries Committee, which includes all the print unions. And they, in their turn, are even less keen to put their full weight behind Darlington.

Pearson Longman management have decided to turn a local dispute into an all-out battle over trade union organis-

ation — and they have thrown all their national resources into that battle. An equally serious response from the unions could now inflict a major defeat on a management at present confident enough to provoke a simultaneous dispute with the NGA at the Financial Times. They have succeeded for years in dividing their workforce from each other. But solidarity action now could finally lay the basis for an effective combine committee, as well as strengthening the position of individual chapels through the right to form closed shops.

The Darlington strikers still need money — and financial support has been falling off over the holiday period. Send donations to NUJ Strike HQ, 7 Victoria Road, Darlington (phone 0325 50282).

JAMES RYAN  
STOP PRESS: The NUJ NEC, on Tuesday 23rd August, passed a resolution supporting 'in principle' the extension of the strike to the rest of Pearson Longman. But the resolution said plans for extending the strike should be worked out together with the TUC Printing Industries Committee — and the NEC already knew quite well that the rest of the PIC was against extension!

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