

# CHARTIST

LABOUR'S REVOLUTIONARY VOICE No. 25 DECEMBER 1974 Price 5p.

After bankers budget Labour government must be told:

## NO MORE TORY POLICIES

A CAMPAIGN of organised economic sabotage is being launched to turn the newly elected Labour government onto a Tory course. The Confederation of British Industry, the banks and big business tycoons like Sir John Pilkington are refusing to invest, threatening mass unemployment, demanding huge cash handouts and the abandonment of any nationalisation proposals.

Worse still, virtually the whole of the Labour Cabinet is accepting the dictates of this tiny ruling class minority and jettisoning any commitments contained in the 10 October election manifesto to implement socialist measures.

This is gross betrayal of the interests of the 10 million workers and Labour supporters who turned out at the polls to return a majority Labour government.

- Instead of a 'fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of wealth and power' to working people, Chancellor Healey provides lavish cash gifts of £1,600m to big business.
- Instead of control over prices, Healey lifts even the minimal controls of the Price Code and allows companies to claw back in increased prices, 80% of wage rises.
- Instead of the promised wealth tax, Healey imposes increased indirect taxes on those who have no wealth.

### RESIST

To workers who resist the impact of runaway inflation by fighting for higher wages, Healey and Premier Wilson bring out the spectre of the Great Depression and 1930s mass unemployment to hold back struggle.

Now Shirley Williams, Labour's Prices Minister proposes a back-door incomes policy. She is suggesting prosecution of those companies who fail to hold down wages, giving way to militant workers fighting to keep pace with price rises. This would amount to a form of wage control even more naked than the threadbare 'social contract.'

Labour's retreat which is assuming the character of a

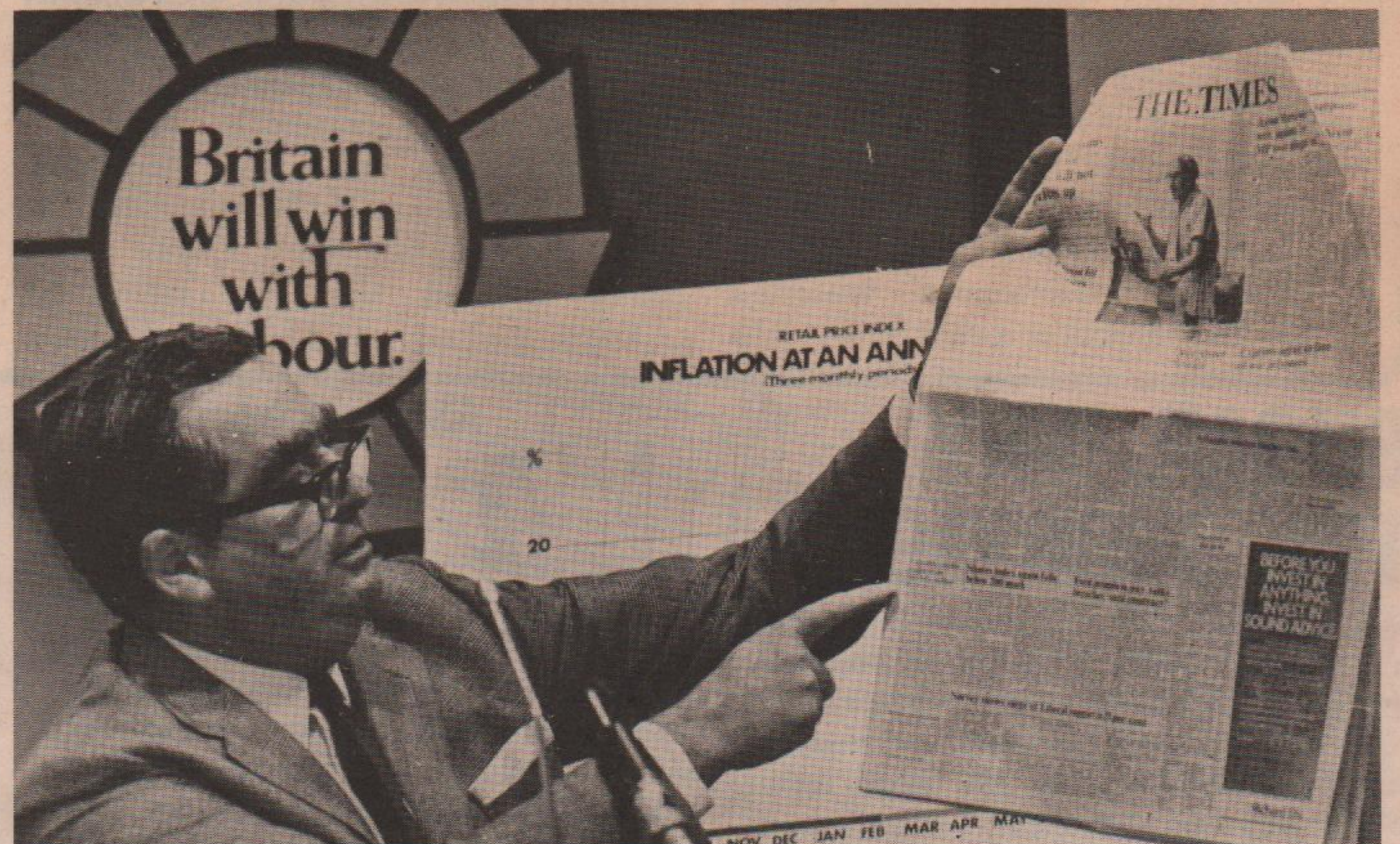
stampede must be stopped. Central to this fight is the issue of Labour Party democracy.

Last year's party conference demanded the ending of all relations with the apartheid South African police state. But against this democratic decision, Wilson asserts the opposite. He attacked the NEC for rightly condemning the Cabinet's decision to stage joint naval exercises with South Africa. Later the 'lefts', Wedgwood Benn, Judith Hart and Joan Lester completely recanted, fully accepting the reactionary doctrine of 'collective responsibility'. With the Clay Cross councillors who refused to raise rents under the Tory 'Fair Rent' Act, conference decisions are again overturned. This time by Housing Secretary, Anthony Crosland who merely lifted their disqualification from office but not their £7,000 surcharge.

The scrapping of discussion on the 432 constituency resolutions on this year's conference agenda and the abandonment of any pretence to party democracy reveals the extent to which this government has departed from the wishes of the workers who built and have always supported the Labour Party.

### BETRAYALS

In the face of these betrayals, workers throughout the country are demanding: To whom is this Government responsible? To the organized workers' movement, the Labour Party and all those who voted for it? Or to big business? Who decides policy? Labour's democratic Conference—or a bureaucratic clique? The



Chancellor Denis Healey: Cash hand-outs for the rich while prices soar

CHARTIST demands a full policy-making Conference and the subordination of the Parliamentarians to Conference decisions.

Such naked defiance of the decisions of the party rank and file opens the way for a reversal of the overwhelming opinion of the Labour movement against entry into the capitalist Common Market... on any terms. As the 'Times' remarked "Mr. Wilson and Mr. Callaghan are slowly, nuance by nuance, moving into a position where they will ask the L.P next summer to support United Kingdom membership of the EEC."

These retreats, taken with the chorus from Labour ministers, especially Tribune Employment Secretary, Michael Foot, against miners, Rolls Royce workers, and thousands of Scots workers for breaking the social contract are the product of one thing; the refusal of the Labour government to tear itself away from the decaying, crisis-wracked system of British capitalism.

Miners who voted 61.5 per cent against the NCB speed-up productivity deal have shown the way ahead. So too have Scottish workers. It is not by a 'social contract' with

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capitalist bankruptcy that the economic crisis can be ended but by a 'socialist contract', such as Clause 4, carried through by the struggle of the working class.

A system which cannot provide decent living standards, jobs, homes, schools and hospitals must be swept aside. This Labour government, placed in office by the overwhelming industrial strength of the working class must mobilise this power against the capitalists and their state apparatus. Only by taking full economic and political power into its hands can Labour act as a workers' government and carry out the mandate given it by the working class.



# THE CHARTIST

Monthly Journal of the Socialist Charter Movement.

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## Healey's budget places Labour on Tory road

MR. DENIS HEALEY'S November budget has clearly sketched out the road along which the Labour government hopes to travel. On the one hand, the proposed relief on stock appreciation profits and the lifting of Price Code restrictions alone will give big business £1,500m. On top of this, extra cash will be transferred into the coffers of private capitalist enterprises; through such devices as the proposed increase in the allowance for industrial buildings.

On the other hand, Mr. Healey intends to limit the 'growth' of public spending to 2.75 per cent a year for the next four years. Local authorities are being told not to increase their spending. Taken with galloping price inflation this will mean a CUT in local authority spending by 20%. The pension increases will not be taking effect until next April, by which time the value of the 'increase' will have been reduced to nil by rising prices.

### Crisis

The central message of government policy is that the Wilson government intends to make working class people pay for the crisis of capitalism. By permitting spiralling price rises which erode the value of our wages and imposing huge cuts in the standard of living by dispensing with vital social services such as council housing, free health facilities and cut-backs in education, the Labour government welches on all its election promises. It's

no wonder the post-budget issue of 'The Times' should report with such obvious glee that:

"Every measure that he (Mr. Healey) took to ease the financial position of companies directly or indirectly comes out of the pocket of ordinary consumers. In so far as companies are freed under the revised price code to pass on an extra £800m in price increases, the purchasing power of personal incomes is correspondingly reduced."

'The Times' article goes on to say in so many words, "Well done Mr. Healey."

As we have often said in the pages of the 'CHARTIST', the Labour Party is not wholly a tool in the hands of the capitalist class, even in spite of Mr. Healey's blatantly pro-big business budget. The Labour Party is also the vehicle through which the trade union movement, and the working class in general, places its demands for social change on the capitalist system. In this sense, those few Members of Parliament and the majority of the rank and file of the Party who have hurled the accusation of 'Tory budget' at Dennis Healey

have been able to make certain telling criticisms of the road that Wilson, Healey and Co. are attempting to take.

The most important of these is the question, what has this government done to make industry responsible to the interests of the overwhelming majority of people in this country? What efforts have been made to put a short leash on people like Sir John Pilkington. The decision to boost the financial resources of his own firm by holding back £159m. of investment in a new plant on Merseyside has thrown the prospect of thousands of new jobs out of the window.

Or the Hawker Siddeley company chairman, Sir Arnold Hall, who can decide with the collusion of only a handful of his director buddies that 2,500 aircraft workers at Hatfield and Kingston, Surrey, are due for the chop because the projected HS146 was not considered to be a 'commercial proposition'.

The honest answer is of course no effort to constrain these capitalist class wreckers whatsoever. While the Labour government proposes to dole out millions of pounds

at the expense of worker's living standards, we have not been given a specific guarantee that our right to work and secure employment will be assured. Even the extremely modest proposals in Labour's manifesto for the creation of a national planning authority in the form of a National Enterprise Board have been virtually overthrown, by the budget's adoption of Harold Lever's state-supported loan scheme. Such grants to industry will be executed through the banks and financed once again out of the pockets of workers in the form of higher interest rates on local authority loans and increases on the interest rate of mortgage repayments.

### Unemployment

The blunt fact of the matter is that the budgetary proposals are the direct opposite of everything that working class people and the Trade Unions built the Labour Party for. Mr. Healey's threats of mass unemployment in his budget speech in the Commons will soon be a reality—on 1930's scale! Present government policies, the budget cuts as well as the Social Contract must be defeated! There must be no more cash hand-outs to the bankers and industry tycoons. The Labour government must launch a new course to wrest control of the economy from the capitalist wreckers. Workers have shown an unparalleled willingness to take on the class enemy. Let this Labour government provide political leadership to our class to crush the monopolies power, otherwise they must be removed.

## SUGAR, WHY THE SHORTAGE?



A Message from Mr Cube.

Don't buy me now. Buy me next month, when I'll cost twice as much.

MILLIONS OF housewives are now faced with a quadrupling of the price of sugar and a shortage which could well become permanent by January. A 2lb bag now costs anything between 19-28p and further massive increases are in the pipeline. Despite huge subsidies to Tate & Lyle and British Sugar Corporation (BSC) from Prices Minister Shirley Williams—these monopolies—who control 70% of the British market—continue to raise prices.

The shortage cannot be blamed on the poor sugar cane crop in some exporting countries or increased world demand. Much of this has been brought about by lack of planning and the financial chaos and trade rivalry on the world market. Commodity speculation and developing trade war in the search for profit means the 'third world' sugar producers are being driven to the wall.

### Responsibility

It is the 'free enterprise' system which is responsible for this situation. In defence of this system Tate and Lyle (chairman Sir John Lyle—£30,000 a year) and other capitalist monopolies spend millions attacking Labour's nationalisation plans.

Added to this is the policy of the Common Market which dictates that all sugar must be purchased internally. This means double buying—first from overseas then the EEC. Britain's cheap food policy of the 1950's

and 60's is finished for good, with no guarantees for sugar imports (75% of domestic demand is from abroad). Labour Minister for Agriculture, Fred Peart continues to manoeuvre with the Brussels bureaucrats in the Common Market for future guarantees under the Common Agriculture Policy. Apart from the fact that sugar prices on the Stock Markets are now over £600 per tonne—grotesquely inflated by speculators and trade hoarding (Tate & Lyle has 200,000 tons of sugar in reserve)—renegotiation with the Common Market Commission on trade and agriculture arrangements and a new sugar deal, however dressed up, can only mean one thing, sugar at an impossible price, if at all.

On top of this the new sugar deal will be used by Wilson and co. as yet another argument in the fight for a 'Yes' vote in the EEC referendum.

There is no need for any sugar shortage or massive price rises. The real policy on sugar, like all food production, must be for the Labour government to build new mutual trade relations with the West Indies—especially Cuba—and to nationalise all the sugar refining monopolies in Britain under the control of workers in the industry. In this way sugar refinery workers' jobs, like those at Silvertown East London, can be guaranteed and the price of sugar cut and stabilised.

## UPW Leaders Compromise on London Weighting

by Adrian Plainton (UPW)

YET ANOTHER London weighting fight has been betrayed. This time it is post office workers. In a special issue of "The Post", Tom Jackson, Union of Post Office Workers' (UPW) leader placed full responsibility for fighting for an increase in London weighting back with the respective London branches.

Prior to the settlement the London District Council at its half yearly general meeting on 3 October, re-affirmed UPW conference decisions. These were to attain an immediate single rate increase of £400 for the whole of the London membership in the London Postal/telegraph region. It was demanded that the whole of the claim should qualify for calculation of overtime rates, night duty allowance and other payments.

Ignoring this and basing his arguments on other London allowance sell-outs and the intransigence of the Post Office, Jackson came up with this compromise:

"An increase in London weighting allowance to Inner, £441 a year and Outer, £283 a year. After superannuation deductions the weekly amounts will be inner £3.58 and outer £2.96. And the crunch: "Although the revised allowances will be reckonable for superannuation purposes, the increase over the present allowance (Inner £242, Outer £118) will not be reckonable for overtime, premium payments, night duty and Sunday pay, bank and public holiday payments, long

hours gratuities and shift allowances."

Workers who now work extra hours due to inflation and staff shortages will no longer be properly compensated.

The final settlement is a complete betrayal of the interests of London post office workers. It flies directly in the face of the demands of the London membership expressed by the District Council. As with all other London weighting settlements—except GLC workers—it stinks of division. Not only between inner and outer London, but also between grades and unions.

Worse still, the deal prepares the way for a complete flat rate, prior to the abolition of London weighting altogether.

We do not want some meagre cost of living allowance or 'thresholds' which end in November. Nor do we want even London Weighting at the rate we were getting prior to the deal. What is needed is a decent wage (without having to work overtime) bound to a sliding scale of wages. This sliding scale must be based on a price index calculated on essential items, which we as a class spend our wages on—rent, food, transport, clothes etc. Unlike the current index worked out by government bureaucrats it should be based on surveys carried out by the trade unions, housewives' committees and Labour Party ward organisations.



# A vote against the 'social contract' as Miners reject NCB deal

by Graeme Atkinson

THE MASSIVE REJECTION of the National Coal Board's Productivity scheme represents a major victory for the rank and file in the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). It also means a significant defeat for the Social Contract, sending shivers down the spines of both the ruling class and the Labour Government, with share prices tumbling the day the ballot result was declared.

The question posed now, though, is: What is the next step? Opinion within the NUM leadership is divided. The Scottish NUM is opposed to productivity dealing in any shape or form, while other left-wing leaders, like Yorkshire President Arthur Scargill, have declared in favour of a "National Productivity Agreement".... a re-vamped version of the 1965 National Power Loading Agreement. Already Michael Foot has urged the recommencement of talks between the NCB and NUM to obtain a deal on increased productivity and, equally quickly—in the wake of the ballot result—the NUM's right wing, led by Gormley and Clarke, has jumped on this band wagon. The danger is that they will overturn the ballot result, through lack of any serious alternative policy on the part of the left in the union.

If Gormley and Co. carry the day, the result will be measured in terms of enormously increased production by fewer workers. There will be a wave of pit closures. Already, the NCB has allegedly drawn up a list of 90 pits designated as 'uneconomic' and destined for pit closure.

## 'Divide and rule'

The magnificent unity of the rank and file, built up in the struggles of 1969, 1970, 1972 and 1974, would be smashed. It is this which occupies the minds of the NCB chiefs in particular and the ruling class in general. As the Financial Times stated bluntly before the recent ballot: "The government's policy is to 'divide and rule'—to divide the NUM politically over the productivity



Miners from all over Britain lobbying their executive committee meeting in London

issue and to divide it industrially by concentrating a considerable amount of the miners' wage packet, and therefore his potential militancy in the pits and in the individual coalfields. In this way, the national solidarity of the NUM would be broken and the chance of it being able to challenge and defeat a Government would be considerably reduced."

The need for a clear alternative strategy is now crucial. The miners are in a very strong position. While the employers and Labour leaders shout for increased production and the need for coal, the NUM Conference demand for a 'substantial' wage-increase is getting drowned in a welter of words about keeping within the terms of the Social Contract. NUM Conference delegates voted against all forms of wage restraint whether wage-freeze or Social Contracts, compulsory or voluntary. Now, sections of the NUM leadership are turning their backs on the decision of Conference. Former "left", Lawrence Daly, has played an especially obnoxious role. It was Daly who moved TUC Congress resolution in favour of Labour's wage restraining policy, in clear defiance of his own union's declared policy.

This unprincipled manoeuvring must be stopped. The rank and file has decisively rejected productivity deals. A figure of £30 as a possible wage demand is being

bandied about. This cannot be won without a political struggle against those Labour and trade union leaders who seem intent on making workers pay for the capitalist crisis. The miners strike installed the Labour government. Arthur Scargill has declared his opposition to wage restraint. This is a step forward but more is necessary. The rank and file must re-assert its control of the Union and force the leadership to carry out the democratic decisions of Annual Conference.

## Grip of capital

An immediate battle for workers' control of the industry must begin and above all, the NEC must prepare a workers' plan for such a programme and also must lay the ground for serious struggle to win the 'substantial' wage increases demanded by the NUM conference. Equally, the miners must demand that the Labour government acts in their interests by scrapping NCB bureaucracy and nationalising all those parts of the industry still in private hands—distribution, machinery manufacturing and open cast mining—and smashing the grip of private capital which has bled the coal industry white. The pit closure massacres of the 1960s must not be allowed to happen again. Those policies, instead of productivity and holding down wages, should be Labour's social contract with those who put the Labour leadership in office.

# Scots workers point way forward

Mark Douglas

IN THE most militant traditions of 'Red Clydeside'—upwards of 20,000 ultra-low paid workers mainly in the public sector have taken rolling strike action throughout West and Central Scotland. The action coincides with the return of the new Labour Government and is a major blow at the wage-fixing social contract.

Demands for a flat rate increase of £10 p.w. from 4,500 Hoover engineering workers, 300 workers in the Mines Safety Appliances factories around Glasgow, 300 Glasgow cleaning workers and 120 sewage workers all combined with over 4,000 teachers in 100 schools staging selective actions for a £15 per week interim increase.

The most militant sector of the strike wave has been the 6,000 Road Haulage drivers fighting for a £1 an hour, 40 hr week, a highly

exploited group who have been forced to work up to 30 hours overtime on top of a basic of under £30 p.w. to ensure a decent living wage. Their victory on the £40 for 40 hrs demand after effective picketing and solidarity actions from private sector drivers has given a lead to haulage drivers all over the country. The road haulage industry throughout Britain is now in turmoil as their English and Irish brothers take up the fight for parity and an end to low pay.

Transport workers on the Glasgow buses and underground have been demanding a £5 interim rise pending a flat rate increase. 3,000 busmen across Central Scotland are in action for a £35 for 35hr standard.

Many other groups are active in this wave of 'unofficial' strikes

which the trade union bureaucrats have refused to lead against the wage-fixing 'social con-trick' of our Labour leaders.

Clearly the 'social contract' holds no water with these Scottish workers. The fight must extend to all for the £40 for 40 hrs basic. In the struggle against inflation with the 'thresholds' ending in November the fight for a 'nil-norm' rising scale of wages clause is the only means to defend wage gains. Automatic monthly wage increases to correspond to the soaring cost of living should be calculated on the basis of a worker's price rise index determined by local and national committees of trade unionists and housewives, Co-op members, etc. Only in this way can all workers be protected from the savage rise in the inflation rate.

# Car workers face new attacks

By Don Flynn

THE DIRECTORS of Ford Motor Company, in their Detroit headquarters, are currently drawing up plans which will throw the whole burden of the crisis in the world industry onto the backs of the car worker. This fact is spelt out in statements accompanying reports of a drastic 48 per cent fall in third quarter earnings for this year. Net earnings for the first nine months have been \$339m against \$850 of last year.

Ford's statement that the 'objective is to find substantial additional savings throughout the company's operations...' will serve as an ominous warning to the 70,000 Ford workers in Britain. It comes a month after national union negotiators and management signed a deal permitting a reduction of manning on the production lines, work-study and speed-up, and the introduction of 'lead operators' to oversee increased work loads.

In America new car sales have shown a drastic decline according to figures for October released by the Detroit 'Big Three'. General Motors reported 327,000 sold in that month compared to 479,000 in October 1973—a 31.8% drop. The other two major companies, Ford and Chrysler, were down 17% and 12% respectively.

The car industry directly or indirectly affects one job in six in the United States. The slump in sales has led to massive lay offs in the Big Three. Approximately 85,000 are reported to have been 'temporarily' laid off over the last nine months.

Car sales have slumped in all major European and North American countries owing to massive increases in car prices. The quadrupling of oil prices has added to the depression in sales.

Layoffs in Germany, France, Spain and Italy in Europe indicates that it is the car workers on the production lines who are receiving the first blows from the world capitalist recession.

## SPLIT IN LAMBETH LABOUR GROUP

BY 32 VOTES to 23, the Labour group of councillors on the Lambeth Borough Council, South London, have voted to suspend 15 of their number from membership of the group. This disciplinary action was taken because of the rebel councillors insistence on publicly challenging in the council chamber a plan which involved the scrapping of a pledge, only 18 months old, to provide an "open space" in the Herne Hill area, not far from Brixton. Almost every councillor of one Labour Party, Norwood, has been suspended, along with several others, including the Chairman of the Vauxhall Labour Party; they now have 14 days to appeal to Labour's National Executive.

Paul Moore, one of the suspended 15, told the CHARTIST: "I believe the Labour group officers are using this issue to clear the decks. They know there will be disagreements coming up on other issues—such as rent and rate increases—and they want to stamp out the opposition now."



# CHAOS IN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

## AS RECESSION BITES— BUILDING WORKERS FACE NEW JOBS & WAGES FIGHT

THE BUILDING industry is now on a crash-course for the biggest slump in history. 60,000 jobs have been lost compared to a year ago and this swells the total number of unemployed building workers to over 130,000. 1 out of 5 unemployed is a building worker. The number of building firms and suppliers going bankrupt multiplies every day.

While the number of hotels and offices being built remains steady, housing starts are down by 50% overall. The enormous £1,200m cutback in public expenditure imposed by the Tories last January has still not been restored by the Labour government. So work on hospitals, schools, roads, universities and other public works continues to dwindle.

### Investment tumbles

As a high investment industry employing the second highest amount of labour in Britain (almost 1m) the construction industry is the first to feel the hammer blows of the international capitalist recession. As investment tumbles down to record levels, with CBI forecasts predicting ever lower downward trends, the price of every kind of building material is soaring—bricks, cement, plaster, piping, timber, steel and of course oil. This spells bankruptcy and colossal reductions in the number of workers employed.

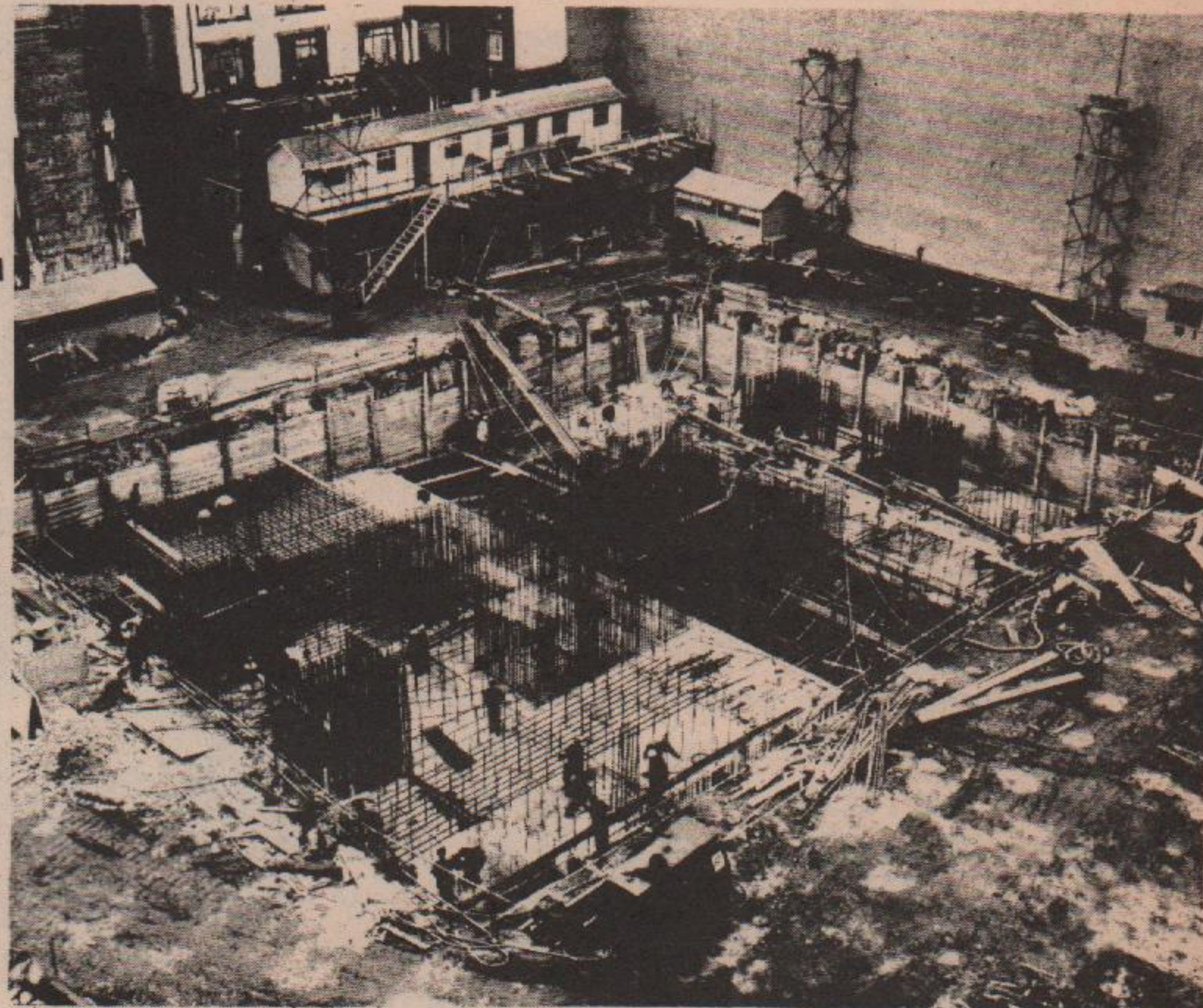
The National Federation of Builders Merchants has confirmed that hundreds of small firms face imminent bankruptcy. The London

Brick Company—the world's biggest manufacturer of bricks—is to close three of its yards, it was announced at the end of October, making another 1,000 men redundant on top of the 700 laid-off in July. The firm has cut back production of 11 million bricks per week because of the house-building slump and has a massive stockpile of 300 million bricks. On 10 October British Gypsum, Britain's leading producer of plaster and plasterboard announced lay-offs and production cuts which in Scotland amounted to a 50% cut back and the introduction of a four-day week.

Mr. Richard Hermon, Director of the National Council of Building Material Producers, announced cuts between 10 and 25% in the production of all building materials. "The position could be far worse by the end of the year" he said.

But the most serious development for all workers and their families is the slump in house building which fell to record lows throughout the last 3½ years of Tory government. In 1973, 293,600 houses were completed—the lowest for 14 years. Council house completions were the lowest since 1947! The last eight months of a Labour government has done absolutely nothing to reverse this trend or protect

By Mike Davis & Frank Westerman (TGWU)



230 builders were killed on sites last year

the thousands of jobs under the axe. In fact unemployment and the fall in house-building has worsened. Private housing orders in June to August period were down 55% compared with the same period in 1973, the Department of Environment recently reported. Public works new orders were down 22% with total new orders 26% down on previous years figures.

This catastrophic situation spells danger a thousand times for every single building worker.

The problem of unemployment is aggravated by the excessive amounts of overtime being worked because of low basic wages. Many workers on sites up and down the country have recently experienced arbitrary termination of overtime working and consequent loss of pay. In a situation where overtime permits have been handed out like confetti building workers now face a drastic reversal and enormous reduction in real wages. Yet a glaring contradiction in the industry is that whilst many sites are laying off men, cutting overtime working and many big companies like Taylor Woodrow, Laings and Wimpeys and the London-based Trollope and Colls are cutting back on new jobs by up to 25%, many other sites are working 7 days a week and practically round-the-clock.

### Profits before safety

Besides growing recession with its consequent chain of bankruptcies, declining building starts, redundancies and appalling low basic wages—labourers are paid 67½p an hour, craftsmen 80p an hour—building workers are also subjected to intolerable working conditions, criminal safety negligence on the part of employers and untold site hazards.

Accidents involving building workers are higher than in any other industry. In his annual report for 1973, Mr. Bryan Harvey, chief inspector of factories, condemned the building companies for the worst industrial accident record. Altogether in 1973 there were 36,000 reported accidents on construction sites and 230 fatalities, compared with 35,000 accidents and 190 fatalities the year before. The number of deaths is almost half the 549 for all industries. Building workers

don't need to be told by Mr. Harvey that it is management's drive "for profit rather than safety" that is responsible. Action is needed.

### Class Law

After pleading guilty to stealing a tin of ham, a building worker was fined £40 by South Western London magistrates (South London Press 21.6.74).

After pleading guilty to failing to clear a danger area of explosive material, which led to an explosion in which 6 workers were killed and 26 injured, Imperial Metal Industries (Kynoch) was fined £10 by Birmingham magistrates (Financial Times 29.6.74). The company, a subsidiary of ICI (trading profit last year of £489m) had been warned of the danger by factory inspectors before the explosion, but took no action.

Conditions on some sites are so bad they take you back to the days of the Ragged Trousered Philanthropists. Thousands of sites still exist without even the most basic amenities of health and safety. (Those who complain or stand up to the management—are branded as troublemakers). Most sites, especially the unorganised, resemble commando courses. If the nails don't get you the crane or stray brick will. A dozen helmets between 60 men, no walkways on sites or access points for ambulances etc., in case of accidents, timber and steel acro bars lying everywhere, no hot water, rickety unsafe scaffolding, holes not fenced off, ladders not tied in, trenches not shored up, insufficient toilets, and no hot water...the list of hazards and filthy working conditions is endless. The whole mental outlook of the construction bosses is more in keeping with 1874 than 1974. But building is the industry where capitalist profiteering has always been at its most naked and brutal. A factory inspectorate of 500 for a quarter of a million workplaces is a drop in the ocean.

### Spread of 'lump'

The most basic safety and health regulations just don't exist. The only laws that exist are those of the jungle. With an organised site there is a basis for enforcing the factory Acts. But where the Lump—labour-only sub-contracting and the self employed building worker thrive, organised trade unionism is jeopardised. Permanently on the run from the Inland Revenue, and seeking the quickest route to a big wage, the Lump

## 'SHREWSBURY 2' CLASS WAR PRISONERS



Des Warren



Eric Tomlinson

reduced or set aside the effect must be to destroy the deterrent effect."

This is the language of Tory class 'justice'.

At the UCATT conference this summer the executive was severely censored for 'its failure to wholeheartedly defend our members, uphold trade union rights, or to alert the whole trade union movement to the need to actively defend these.' The censure resolution went on to demand that the executive mobilise 'all the resources of the union to win the TUC to bring the utmost pressure on the Home Secretary to release our members and others from jail', and repeal all anti-picketing laws.

The two must not be allowed to spend another day behind bars. It is a monstrous scandal that a Labour government is presiding over their imprisonment. The Labour government through Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, must be made to release them immediately.

TWO BUILDING workers are now languishing in jail under a Labour government. Des Warren and Eric Tomlinson, serving three years and two years respectively for picketing during the 1972 strike had their sentences confirmed in October by three High Court judges.

Originally 24 building workers were charged under the 1875 Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, on 'offences' arising from the historic 1972 strike. The Tories spent almost £4m to convict these men as a lesson to other workers. That they were victimised to 'deter' other workers from picketing was spelt out by Lord Chief Justice Widgery at the Appeal when he summed up by referring to the workers as 'classic examples' of punishment to deter others. He finished:

"If it is known tomorrow that the Court of Appeal has decreed that these sentences should be





UCATT secretary George Smith speaking to a demonstration of builders demanding 'Free the Shrewsbury Two'.

# LONDON COUNCILS RETREAT ON FARES AND RATES

by Paul Moore

WITH CYNICAL disregard for their election pledges of only 18 months ago, the Labour group on the Greater London Council have voted by more than 5-1 to increase London Transport fares by a mammoth 36%. Only 10 Labour councillors opposed the increase: we print their names and constituencies below. At the same time, every London borough is now discussing how they can prune services to avoid DOUBLING the rates which every householder pays, thus taking away in one bite from every working class family another £1-£2 per week, or even more—snatching back, in effect, the increases in London allowances which many workers in the capital have just received.

compensate for the various social problems.

The crisis has shown up more clearly the political bankruptcy of those Labour councillors who think they can achieve big reforms by working within the system. Some, who spoke of reforms only a few months ago, are now scuttling around looking for services to cut. The GLC is already cutting back, and that means old estates may turn into slums without being modernised, or Victorian school buildings remain standing.

Several factors lie behind the Council's cash crisis. Inflation, of course adds 20% to start with. London allowance wage increases for council employees is another factor. Social problems—bad housing in particular—are not getting any better, and London has 50% of the whole country's homeless families. Yet despite all this extra pressure on London, government grants are actually less than elsewhere. Not all local council's money comes from rates: outside London 60% or more comes from government grants, but in London this shrinks to 40%, because of the complex formula for working out the grants, which takes into account the amount of valuable property in London, but doesn't

Others who realise that 90% of the rate increase is, in their terms unavoidable, are already weeping crocodile tears to cover up their treachery. FOR THERE IS NO REASON WHY RATES SHOULD GO UP OR SERVICES SHOULD BE CUT. An alternative is possible now. The Labour government must act to nationalise the banks and insurance companies. Then instead of money going into property speculation from these organisations, compounding the Labour councils problems, the cash can be put into local government. Houses could be built, estates modernised. But instead Chancellor Healey tells us that the rate rises are 'unavoidable'. In that case, the councils must tell Healey that it is unavoidable they DON'T increase rates. Could he collect hundreds of millions of pounds from a few hundred councillors? Resolutions are already going forward to next year's London Labour Party conference with this in mind. The NUR Southern District Council for example is opposing rate increase and cuts in services. But the time to force councillors to act is within the next few months. By March the rate rises will be ready and it will be almost too late.

The GLC Councillors who voted against the London Transport fare increase. Is your councillor's name there?

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Frank Archer    | Erith & Crayford |
| Dudley Barker   | Croydon N.W.     |
| Tony Banks      | Fulham           |
| David Chalkley  | Deptford         |
| Dick Collins    | Alderman         |
| Maureen Harwood | Alderman         |
| Ken Livingstone | Norwood          |
| Ben Mason       | Edmonton         |
| David White     | Croyden Central  |
| Robin Young     | Walthamstow      |

are being denied investment funds by the prohibitively high interest rates of the banks and money-lenders. On another level the gigantic construction companies conduct a campaign of organised economic blackmail and sabotage. For example, Islington Council had tenders far above original estimates for a local building programme. In this way, the price-fixing activities of the big monopolies are throttling local authority building while the 'lump' erodes the direct labour force.

## Way forward

No amount of incentives and cash hand-outs can boost investment if the capitalists cannot maintain their profit rates. Only by taking full control over all building, confiscating the property of the monopolies and nationalising the land, banks and finance houses can the Labour government end the anarchy and crisis in the construction industry. Without a state bank and control over the money supply no effective plan to

meet social needs is possible.

The deepening class war in the industry and the threat of mass unemployment means that building workers will be thrown into the vanguard of the fight against the capitalist crisis. George Smith and the other union leaders must be made to abandon their defence of the 'social con-trick' and launch an immediate national struggle to win the full claim and ensure the release of the Shrewsbury 2. In place of the Social Contract Labour must be told to implement Clause 4—the Socialist nationalisation clause of the Labour Party constitution—as the only means of defending the interests of building workers. The building of a new leadership committed to the above policy is an absolute priority. The Building Workers Charter group must set itself this task. Not only the future of building trade unionism and the defeat of the 'lump' is at stake in this fight, but the livelihoods, housing needs and living conditions of the whole working class.

gle for jobs, wages and conditions, against not only the construction bosses, and their creature 'lump' labour, but also against a perfidious and right-wing union leadership. With the capitalist vice of galloping inflation and recession threatening to impoverish millions the UCATT claim has a more than passing significance.

## UCATT claim

UCATT has put in for pay increases ranging from 87.5% to 107% to bring basic rates, before tax up to £1.50 an hour for craftsmen and £1.40 an hour for labourers. This has met with the fierce resistance of building employers who are eagerly grasping the Labour government/TUC wage-cutting social contract as their main weapon against the unions' demands.

But on the issue of defence of jobs and the right to work, UCATT and TGWU leaders are silent. UCATT and TGWU leaders have no policy to meet the slump. The UCATT conference demanded a 35 hour week—which is part of

the present claim—a demand fought for in the 1972 strike.

## 35-hours

Again, a 35 hour week would be a vital step forward in the struggle against redundancies, serving as a gain which inflation could not take away. But it is clear union leaders have no intention of launching any real fight or preparing building workers for the enormous tasks which the impending recession poses. The struggle now must be to prevent any further redundancies in the industry and for full employment of those already idle. Slogans to compliment the 35 hour demand should include work or full pay and a sliding scale of hours to ensure not a single building worker is unemployed.

Hospitals, schools, publicworks and above all homes, are desperately needed. There is absolutely no shortage of workers willing to build. Only the anarchic laws of the capitalist market which subordinates all production to the maximization of profit for a handful of monopolists, stands in the way.

Local authorities who have massive housing waiting lists—in London 190,000 are on the lists—

worker, is an ideal 'fifth column' for the employers. By working in the rain and dark regardless of site conditions and at speeds which produce nothing but jerry-built properties the Lump worker makes site organisation virtually impossible.

The primary reason for the spread of the Lump is the disgusting low basic pay rates in the industry. The responsibility for this situation lies squarely on the backs of the main building workers' unions UCATT and the TGWU. It was in the late 1950's and early 1960's that the Lump first started to grow, originating on the motorway jobs and small housing projects. One of UCATT's predecessors, the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, constantly bewailed its fate, but turned a blind eye to the Lump. Militants in the industry were abandoned in struggle after struggle. Absolutely no leadership was provided by the union bureaucracies too busy signing deals for pennies and half-pennies.

**"Building is the industry where capitalist profiteering has always been at its most naked and brutal.... the only laws that exist are those of the jungle"**

The 1960s had been characterised by numerous localised strikes such as at the Shell Centre, Horseferry Road, the Barbican and St. Thomas's hospital where ASW members were sacked, disowned by the union bureaucrats, and replaced by lump labour. These betrayals greatly contributed to the growth of the Lump. They were long bitter strikes in which the workers involved suffered and are still suffering. Many workers, demoralised and disillusioned, left the union seeing the lump as the only way to improve wages.

The 1972 strike—which lasted 12 weeks and involved over 300,000 workers—marked the first step forward for years. Despite being stabbed in the back by the union leaders, eager for a quick compromise, building workers revealed an enormous potential for united struggle. 1972 was a real turning point.

Whilst the employers did everything to encourage the 'lump' the treacherous policies of the builders' union leaders not merely failed to provide any clear lead but in practice actively held back movements to improve wages and conditions and take on the 'lump'.

So today building workers again enter the arena of national struggle



# ITALY: TIME RUNNING OUT

by John Quirke

SINCE THE COLLAPSE, on October 3rd, of the "centre left" coalition government led by Premier Mariano Rumor, there has been no formal government in Italy. The collapse marked an end to Italy's thirty-sixth government since the war. The present impasse is a result of continual failure of the parties of the old "centre left" coalition, the Christian Democrats, Socialists, Social Democrats and Republicans to agree on a common programme for dealing with the crisis of Italian capitalism. The government crisis is only aggravating the already dire economic crisis and plunging Italy into a virtual state of paralysis.

The Italian economy at the moment is on the verge of collapse and bankruptcy. With a low rate of industrial investment, stagnating productivity, and a rate of inflation for the last twelve months of 20.3%, the highest in Europe. Inflation is being intensified by the inability of the Italian ruling class to stem the working class struggles for increased wages. It is estimated that unemployment will stand at 1,125,000 by the end of the year.

## Trade deficit

Agriculture is in a state of decline, thus making Italian capitalism more dependent on imports. This is resulting in a deterioration in its balance of trade and payments, situation. The trade deficit for the first nine months of this year is £3764m, and getting worse. Just prior to the fall of the Rumor coalition, Italy had to stake its entire gold reserves in securing a massive loan from the Common Market, to offset its Balance of Payments deficit. Italian capitalism is being priced off the world market.

In order to solve the economic crisis the Italian ruling class are attempting to make the working class pay. Firstly, they have introduced severe restrictions on imports of manufactured goods



Fiat workers demonstrate against threat to jobs.

and meat to cut back workers' consumption. Secondly, last June they introduced the "New Austerity" measures. These have cut £53m from domestic purchasing power, raised taxes, increased petrol prices and fares (increased tariffs for public services), and led to higher prices on all but the most basic consumer goods.

The massive Fiat Motor Company which employs 200,000 made a loss of £12m in 1973 and the figure is expected to be even higher this year. As a result 65,000 workers are now on a 3 day week until next February.

But the Italian working class is not prepared to sit back and accept these attacks on their living standards. This was shown by the response of workers to a recent 4 hour general strike called by the Trade Union Federations over wages and unemployment. In all the major cities and towns in Italy thousands of workers, students and housewives mounted mass demonstrations. This reaction of working class anger was similar to the mass demonstrations mounted earlier in the year against fascist murders and bomb outrages.

The tremendous strength and combativity of the working class

which has continued to develop since the mass strike wave of 1969, is being held in check by the leadership of the Communist Party who called the recent 4 hour general strike merely to let off steam.

The C.P. is carrying out a policy of class collaboration and maintaining the existence of crisis ridden Italian capitalism. This is being done through a programme called the 'Historic Compromise' which aims at an alliance of Communists, Socialists, Christian Democrats with the aim of establishing 'advanced democracy'.

A further example of the treacherous role of the C.P. can be seen in the position they took to the introduction of the 'New Austerity' measures. They called for a 'new model of development'—an overhaul of agricultural industry, improved social services, government investment in southern Italy and a selected expansion of credit facilities. This is nothing more than a programme for the continuation of capitalism.

## Class collaboration

However much the C.P. show their moderate policies and their willingness to maintain the capitalist system, the ruling class are not yet prepared to call the Stalinists into the government.

While the C.P. continues its policy of class collaboration, the dangers of a military/fascist coup continue to mount. The recent exposure of conspiratorial moves by army tops to install military rule is a warning. So too, is the menacing growth of the fascist M.S.I. and other neo-fascist organisations, prepared to use the bomb and the bullet to smash the organisations and democratic rights of Italian workers.

The C.P. with its mass base in the trade union movement is in a position to resolve the crisis in the interests of the working class. All class conscious workers must demand an immediate break from collaboration with the class enemy and launch an independent working class struggle for power. There is no other road.

## FRANCE: Giscard Sends in Troops

Martin Cook

conciliatory image, breaking away from the previous hard-line Gaullist governments. But the lull did not last long, despite concessions such as the payment of a year's pay to redundant workers (which comes in next year).

A harsh austerity programme was brought in to deal with the "energy crisis." Inflation is running at 14% and unemployment of half a million is a quarter up on last year. The unions' leaders were forced to lead a counter attack of some sort to keep the movement under control.

They chose the public services which have better trade union organisation and cannot easily go bankrupt. For a month or two

now, there have been a whole series of one and two day strikes covering most major industries in succession. Railwaymen, gas and electricity power workers, miners, hospital staff, civil servants and printers have been involved. The government and the right wing Force Ouvriere Unions have denounced the stoppages as politically motivated—which the CGT & CFDT deny, despite the obvious challenge to "buy off" the movement. Meanwhile, workers have occupied the 4 works of a major printing company whose insolvency threatens 6,000 jobs.

The workers' upsurge meant that Communist and Socialist leaders Marchais and Mitterand had to give a sharp refusal to Giscard's invitation for bi-partisan foreign policy talks. The invitation shows also that the President and his government are really on the run, completely undecided on how to combat the unions' offensive.

## SPAIN: Edging Closer to Revolution

By Chris Knight

EVERY REVOLUTION is sparked off, at a certain point, by a clash between factions within the old regime. In this light it can be said that Spain edged significantly closer to revolution last month.

As all sides prepare for the death of General Franco, the clash between 'centrists' and 'ultras' within the ageing military police regime focuses around one issue: how to avoid the fate of the Caetano regime in Portugal? Reforms or repression?

Last February 12, Premier Carlos Arias Navarro—recently appointed on the assassination of his predecessor, Carrero Blanco—announced a plan for permitting political 'associations' within the framework of the only legalised party, the Falange. The idea was to allow the rival factions of the ruling class to 'let off steam', to fill the vacuum which would be left by Franco's departure, and to reduce pressure from the ominously growing militancy of the working class by affording some semblance of 'democracy'. The plan was—and still is—supported by a sizeable section of the country's business community deluding itself with the hope of bigger profits in a partially democratised 'strong state' playing a lucrative role in the E.E.C.

## Fears

The 'ultras'—old style Falangists in the state bureaucracy, landowners, army and navy chiefs and others—had their fears from the outset. These were confirmed a hundredfold by the example of Portugal, which showed how even the slightest 'democratisation' or loss of nerve from above could invite an explosion, confronting the state with the working class parties, unions and other organisations as an immediate threat to the rule of Capital itself.

At the end of October, the 'ultras' attempted to strike back. But though they secured the sacking of the relatively 'liberal' Information Minister, Pio Cabarrillas, the result was an unprecedented barrage of hostile press comment, the protest resignation of Finance Minister, Barrera de Iñino, and a wave of other resignations from official governments posts. At one stage—early last month—it looked as if the 'ultras' would ride out the resignations and even force the Premier himself to resign, with the regime taking a violent lurch to the right.

Recently, a section of the Army became involved fearing the consequences of too sudden a shift to the right. At a shooting party given by a banker in the northwestern town of Leon, and attended by a number of senior army officers, as well as the Premier, it was agreed that the 'ultras'—including Navy Minister Admiral Pite da Veiga—should be defied. Thus stiffened, the Premier has refused to resign, and an official commission, set up to study his proposed law on 'political associations', is expected to report as this paper goes to press.

FRENCH PRESIDENT Giscard d'Estaing has recently sent troops into the post offices to break picket lines and clear out striking postal workers who had occupied them. The month-old strike has threatened with bankruptcy many businesses which cannot receive payments. But the government dare not give in for fear this would spark an avalanche of claims from other public sector workers.

Meanwhile, the main unions, the Communist Party-led CGT and the Socialist Party aligned CFDT called a one day general strike on November 19th to force the government to negotiate with the postmen. This could develop into the biggest conflict since the "May Events" of 1968.

Giscard, who only just scraped home in the Spring Presidential elections against the Socialist Mitterand, tried right from the start to project a "liberal"

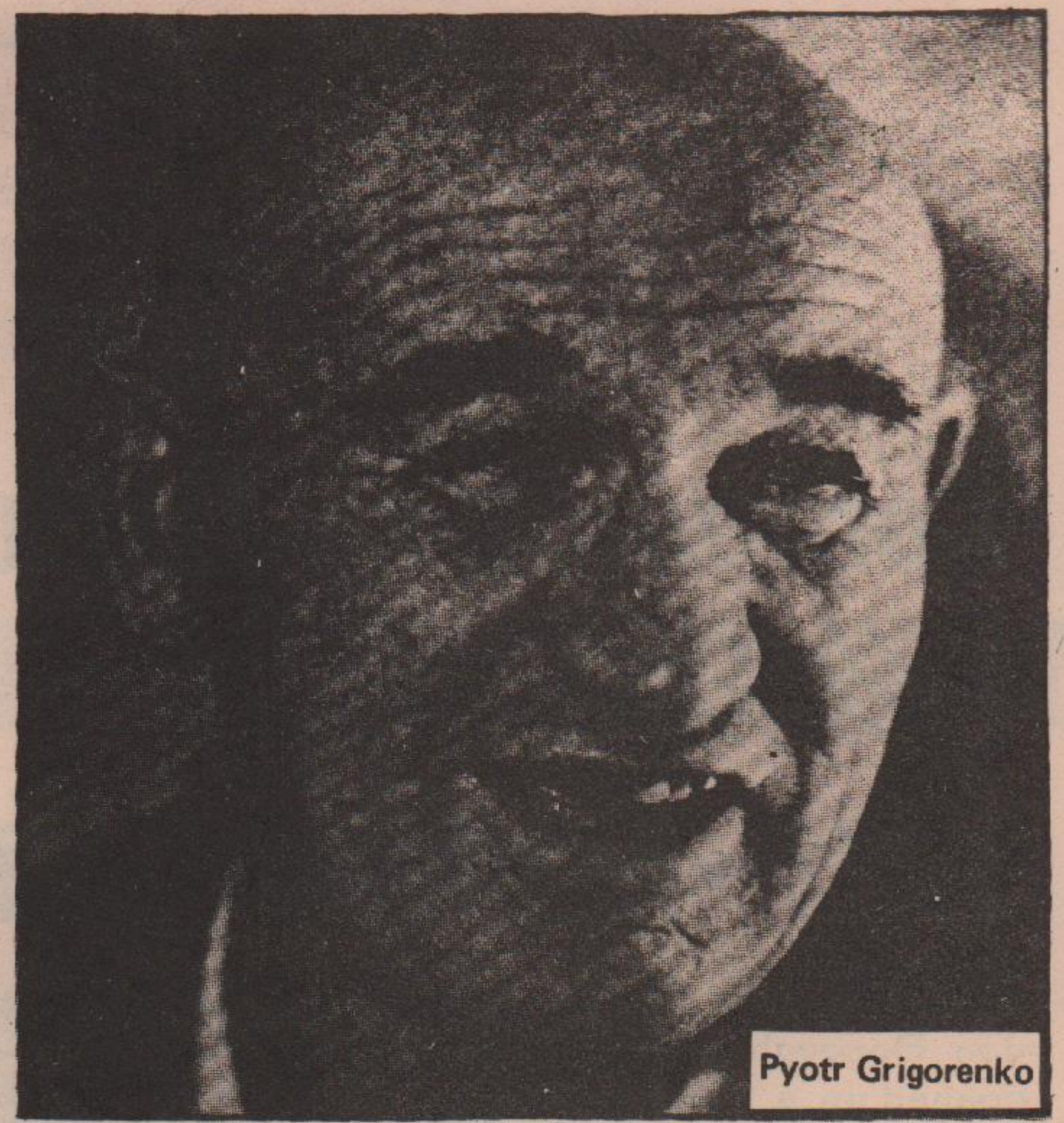




book review

# Documents of the struggle

by Graham Durham



Pyotr Grigorenko

SINCE THE victory of the Stalin faction in the late 1920s, the impact which the policies of the Soviet Union have had on revolutionary developments abroad is difficult to under-estimate. Many of the defeats suffered by the world proletariat during this time stem from the criminal vacillations and zig-zags of the Soviet bureaucracy. In addition, the belief that socialism cannot work, which has been fostered by bourgeois propagandists, has permeated deep into the working class in many countries. This belief largely stems from the terror and repression which existed throughout Stalin's domination in Russia and the 'Communist' parties of the world and has continued in the period since his death.

While the combatting of this view is a crucial task for revolutionaries, the problem is made worse because many writers claiming to be Marxists, and some claiming to be Trotskyists, have attempted to 'prove' that the Soviet bureaucracy is a ruling class and that capitalism has been restored in the USSR. All of these analyses are based on a rejection of the Marxist method of scientific analysis which defines societies primarily by the mode of production. In the Soviet Union the existing mode of production is characterised by centralised planning, the abolition of private property—socialised relations of

production. For this reason it is wrong to talk of capitalist restoration, which could only be imposed by force, or of ruling classes with regard to the Soviet Union. For revolutionary Marxists the fight against these purely ideological reactions to the Soviet Union, which are steeped in a pessimistic view of the role of the working class, takes on an even more crucial form than the battle which Leon Trotsky fought in the 1930's to defend the Soviet proletariat against the attacks of various 'state capitalist' theoreticians.

The recent publication of dissident documents written and circulated with the USSR can only help to dispell the official Soviet view of a 'progression to socialism.' While the world capitalist media has given vast coverage to recent exiled Soviet artists—particularly Solzhenitsyn—little attention has been brought to bear on those revolutionary Marxists still being harassed and tortured by the Brezhnev regime. In particular the plight of former Red Army General Pyotr Grigorenko—incarcerated in a psychiatric prison hospital since 1969—highlights the fear which the Soviet bureaucracy has of criticism.

Samizdat is the name given to the uncensored sheets privately circulated in opposition circles—a tradition ranging from the early anti-Tzarist propaganda, through

the Trotskyist 'Bulletin of the Opposition', to the recent 'Chronicle of Current Events'. Central to this 'Samizdat' collection is the essay 'Memoirs of a Bolshevik-Leninist', written by a member of the Left Opposition who survived the purges and prison camps. These memoirs provide an illuminating account of life in the Opposition circles in the 1920s and subsequently in the prison camps. In particular, an account of the funeral of the leading Bolshevik A.A. Joffe which took place in 1927 demonstrates the resolve of the Oppositionists at this time. The remarkable survival of opposition even during the most savage period of repression—the years 1945-53—is also described by many who took part.

As well as these historical studies, the book reproduces many documents current in opposition circles in recent years. These range from those on the right wing of the protest movement who have rejected Marxism, such as Andrei Sakharov, to the writings of Grigorenko between

1966-69 and those who have followed him since his imprisonment.

The book as a whole, along with similar published works, serves as a reminder of the struggle being waged in the USSR between the revolutionary representatives of the proletariat and the parasitic bureaucracy which feeds off the economy. The political revolution necessary to restore workers' control and socialist democracy in the Soviet Union would undoubtedly follow any permanent conquest of power by the working class in the west. Just as the crushing of the Czechoslovakian challenge to Moscow domination in 1968 provided a powerful boost to the Soviet opposition movement, so the impact of a wave of revolutionary activity in the West will spell the end of bureaucratic power. In overthrowing the bureaucracy and regenerating the movement towards socialism in the USSR, the Soviet proletariat has the gigantic historical gain of the October revolution—the abolition of capitalism—intact and in its favour.

## MIDDLE EAST: Austerity measures as Zionists prepare for new war

by Clive Pullinger

FOLLOWING LAST year's October war in the Middle East we said in the CHARTIST: "After the war-fever has settled down and Israel's youth and workers begin to suffer the economic consequences of the recent fighting, this consciousness (that Zionism offers no way out for the Israeli people) will begin to take root." The savage "austerity" measures imposed by the Israeli Government in mid-November bear out this perspective. And the response of Israel's workers has given the lie to those who deny the existence of the class-struggle in Israel. What is the background to these events?

Israel's economy has always been in a very unique position, with the state relying heavily on support from the imperialist countries and unable to trade with hostile neighbouring nations. Due to the continual possibility of a new war with the Arab nations the Zionists have kept up their huge spending on armaments. The

rise in prices of basic commodities on the world market, especially oil, has had a serious impact. And not least, the imperialist nations which in the past have subsidised Israel to an enormous extent no longer have the funds they once had.

It is in this light that we must see the decision of the Israeli government virtually to halve living standards overnight. In one stroke the Zionists devalued the Israeli pound by 30 per cent, froze bank credit, doubled the price of bread and tripled the

price of sugar. Social services spending is to be cut by £50 million and a wage-freeze is being considered.

Demonstrations and riots immediately met the government announcement. As a result, in a Tel-Aviv working class district, 32 people were arrested, among them Shalom Cohen, a leader of the "Black Panthers" who organize the particularly-oppressed so-called "Oriental Jews". The only "union" in Israel is the Histadrut, set up in 1902 to prevent Jewish employers from employing Arab



ISRAELI ARMORED UNITS ON MILITARY EXERCISES IN THE JUDEAN HILLS

workers. This has always been not a real union, but part of the Zionist state. Yet even this body has been forced to condemn the "austerity" measures, and may prove to be no longer quite the reliable instrument of Zionism that it has been.

Israel's position is rapidly becoming untenable in the Middle East. The huge "diplomatic success" of Palestine guerilla leader Yassir Arafat at the United Nations last month reflects this changing balance of power. Now the Zionists are once again resorting to war-preparations, which they hope will divert Israeli workers from the class-struggle at home. But a new war will only exact a still higher price in wage-cuts, unemployment, bankruptcies and price-rises for the workers of Israel, heightening the class struggle still further once the war-fever has cooled down. The conditions are maturing which will make it far easier for Israeli socialists to campaign against Zionism and its policies of endless war-mongering, winning Jewish and Arab workers to a united fight to overthrow the Zionist state and replace it in Palestine by an Arab and Jewish workers' state as part of a Socialist Federation of the Middle East.



## Confusion on National Front at Hackney anti-racialist conference

SOCIALISTS IN the North London Borough of Hackney have opened up a campaign against the fascist National Front and for the repeal of the 1971 Immigration Act. This area of London, the scene of violent clashes between workers and the followers of Mosley's fascist movement in the thirties and fifties, has seen a renewed push for mass support by the National Front in recent months. Standing candidates in two of Hackney's three constituencies, the fascists attempted to blame the desperate shortage of decent housing and the crisis in the borough's welfare services on Hackney's large West Indian and Asian communities.

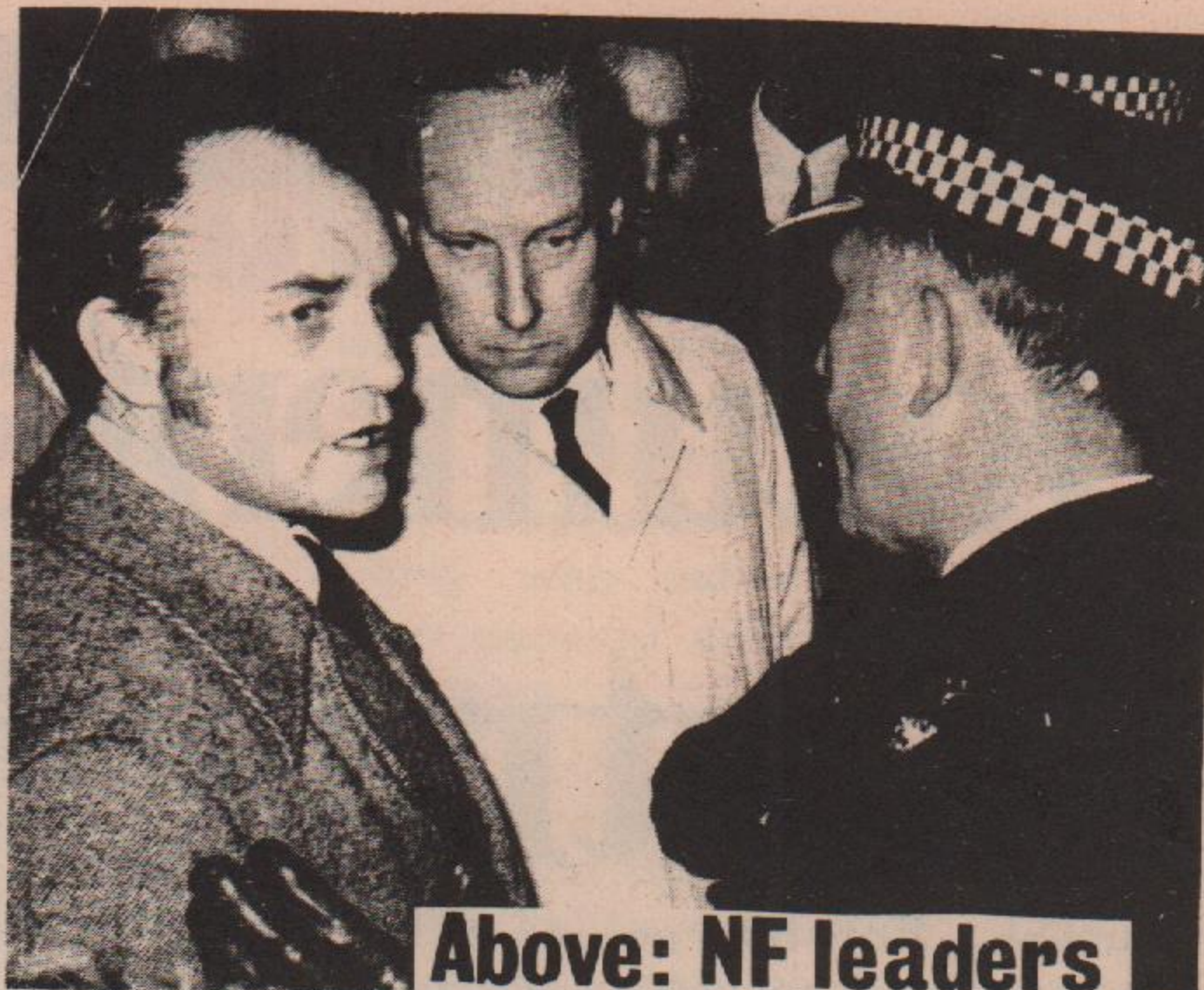
### NF VOTE DOWN

The National Front candidate for Hackney North and Stoke Newington failed to increase his share of the vote (less than 4 per cent) in the General Election. He quite correctly put the blame for this on the various working-class organisations which actively participated in restricting his campaign. The chief body responsible for anti-fascist and anti-racialist work in the area is the Hackney Committee against Racism. On October 27, this Committee held a one-day Conference. Well attended by about 200 delegates and visitors, the conference spent most of the morning session debating a resolution on racialism and fascism, together with three

amendments. The resolution was sponsored by Communist Party members and spoke of calling on "all progressive organisations" to unite in the fight against racialism. This was presumably an invitation to local Liberal Party and 'liberal' Conservatives to join in the committee's activities. The meeting finally deleted the phrase and substituted "Labour movement organisations." During the debate Chartist Don Flynn, on behalf of Stoke Newington LPYS, insisted that it was impossible to struggle against racialism successfully without fighting for the overthrow of the system of exploitation which cannot exist without racialism.

A resolution moved by the Stoke Newington LPYS and supported by the North London Socialist Charter, calling for an action programme based on forcing Labour and the Trade Union movement to overturn the Tory's 1971 Immigration Act and to enforce a ban on the fascists of the National Front with the mobilisation of workers and trade unionists against their demonstrations and meetings, was defeated. Though this motion won the support of several of the LP and trade union delegates at the conference, a vague and confusing mish-mash of statements put together from other amendments won the day.

An amendment from the International Marxist Group which



Above: NF leaders Tyndall and Reid in Hackney at the General Election

marginally improved the resolution was passed. Many of those who spoke in favour of this amendment called on the Labour Government to ban the National Front, a demand not in the amendment. However another amendment from the Hackney North and Stoke Newington Young Socialists which included this demand was defeated.

### POLICY

We hope that our readers in the Hackney area will participate in the activities of HCAR and fight for a policy around the slogans:

- Repeal the 1971 Immigration Act!
- Labour, ban the National Front!
- No office for Fascists in the Labour movement!
- No platform, no free speech for Fascists!

## ENQUIRY INTO VAUXHALL YS

AS we explained in last month's issue, the Vauxhall Young Socialists are under attack by the local Labour Party right wing, in conjunction with the officials of the London Region of the Party. This attack results from a leaflet put out before the General Election calling for the removal of George Strauss as Labour MP and his replacement by a socialist and anti-Common Market Labour representative. The latest stage has been the setting up of an enquiry into the YS and its activities. Kevin Moore, Chairman of the YS branch, told us: "The Enquiry is a mixed group of people but clearly, a couple of its members are working hard to try and catch us out on some small point by asking us the most detailed questions possible. But the truth is that our MP is unpopular with a large section of the Labour Party for various reasons, and only a few weeks before we put out our leaflet, this dissatisfaction was widely reported in the local press."

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### FILM on battered wives

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## STUDENTS FIGHT EDUCATION CUTS

ON FRIDAY THE 15th of November, forty thousand students marched through central London demanding the full restoration of education cuts and the removal of discretionary awards and a full grant for all students.

Prentice, the Labour Minister of Education, has repeatedly refused to restore the cuts in educational capital expenditure imposed a year ago. Staff-student ratios have been increased, and in Birmingham polytechnic courses have been scrapped. Canteen prices have increased. A chronic shortage of housing has led students to occupy their colleges. Furthermore, students are demanding that free nurseries be provided for parents of young children who want to work or study in colleges.

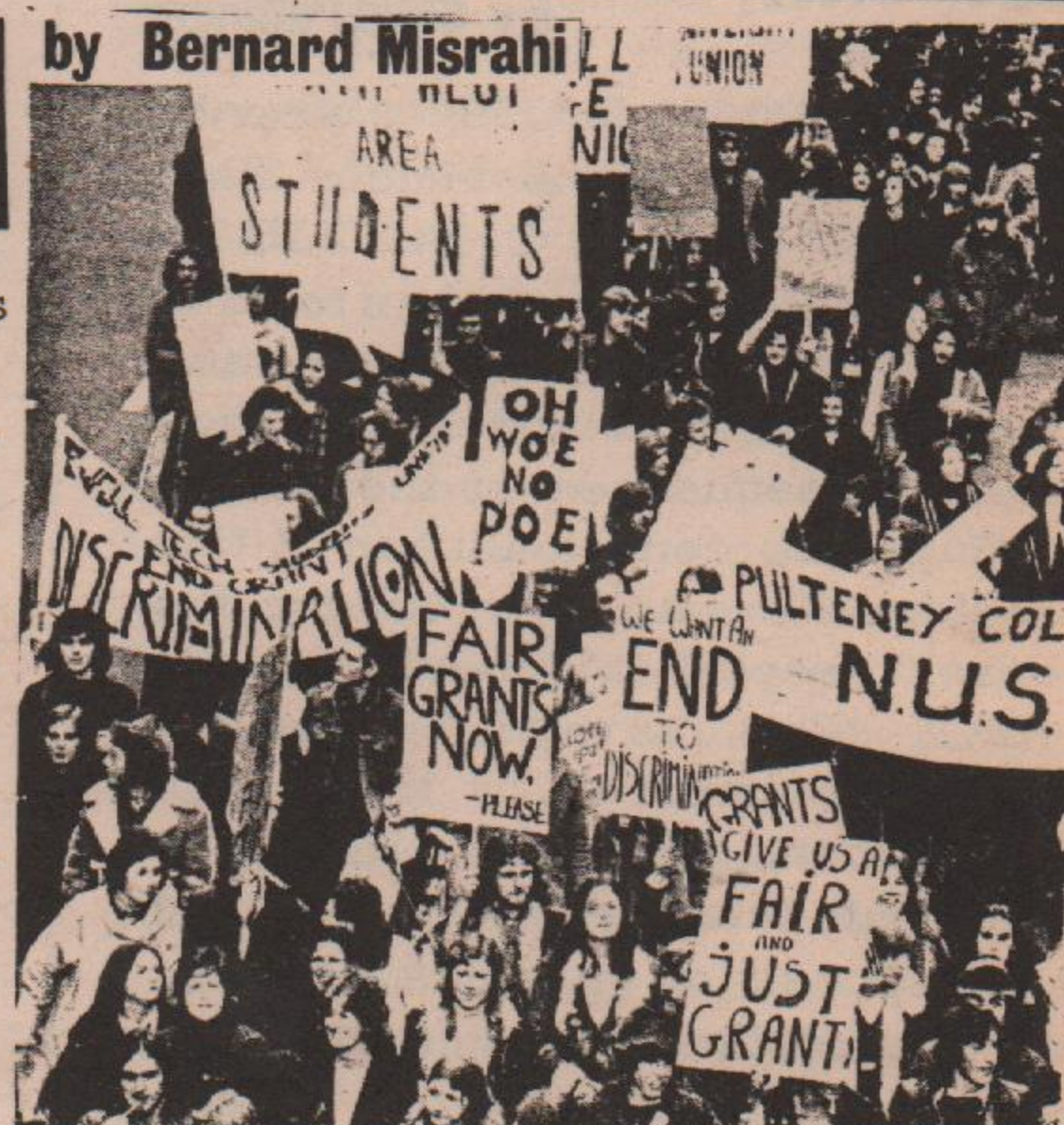
Also, most students don't get the full mandatory basic award of £605. Many students rely on their parents to make up their grants to this amount.

But parents often can't or won't pay and their children resent having to ask them. Married women rely on their husbands in the same way. And when students are on full-time, but non-degree courses (e.g. 'A' levels) it is often up to the 'discretion' of the local education authority as to how much they receive. Sometimes they get nothing. So many working class youth can't afford to study.

All this has provoked an unprecedented wave of militancy throughout the country. Sussex university, Hackney FE college and many other places have been and are occupied. At Kingston poly, students and would-be students brought their children in, and turned a committee room into a creche as part of their nursery campaign. The National Union of Students (NUS) 'Week of Action' is over but the action will continue.

There has to be a tremendous injection of money into all sectors of education. We need nurseries, better refectories and libraries, and adequate housing for all colleges. There must be a minimum grant of at least £35 for ALL students. This should be linked to a workers' price-rise index worked out by committees of housewives, students and trade unionists, to monitor the increase in all essential items.

These cuts are part of a drive by the Labour government to make British capitalism profitable by reducing 'inessential' expenditure and make students and workers pay for this society's inability to provide even a barely adequate education system. The NUS must fight alongside the labour movement and demand that the Labour government repeals these cuts and establishes a decent education



system. Labour councils must immediately pay the full mandatory award to all students. Students must continue with their turn to the unions and win the support of campus workers in particular, whose jobs are threatened. Fifty years ago, students scabbed on workers during the General Strike. In the coming struggles, students will have the chance to fight on the right side.