

# RED WEEKLY

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With the election almost upon us and the capitalist press screaming about 'national unity', *Red Weekly* fights for a workers' solution to the crisis. Help us in this fight. Rush all donations to: Red Weekly Fund - Drive, 97 Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

## THE ROAD TO WORKERS VICTORY—

# FROM UNITY AT POLLS TO UNITY IN STRUGGLE

HEATH HAS LAID BARE THE REAL ISSUE OF THE election. Meanwhile the Labour leaders fumble around in a pathetic 'Britain will win with Labour' binge.

In his weekend speech, Heath rejected unemployment as the cure to inflation. He spoke of a nightmare of nationwide factory occupations if the Tories tried to pull that stroke. Heath and the employers know full well that the real question is how they can prepare for the battles that are coming.

by BOB MURPHY

Meanwhile Wilson cooks up stories about a drop in unemployment, and Healey comes out with the blatant lie that inflation is down to 8 per cent! All to convince people that battles and confrontations are things of the past. A Britain unified behind Parliament and a Labour Government will see us through, they claim.

This is the supposed meaning of the social contract—a fair and united society. But the social contract is already shop-soiled.

The Ford workers' strike is the thin end of the wedge. And last week's miners' conference tossed the peace-making productivity deal back at the employers.

No, Harold, the issues are clear. Your class collaborationist dreams of unity and the New Jerusalem convince no-one.

The economy is in tatters. Profits have been slashed by almost 50 per

cent from last year. Prices continue to rise at more than 20 per cent. Hundreds of firms face bankruptcy.

The employers have no intention of sitting around passively whilst their life-blood dries up. No unity calls by the Labour leaders can get round this.

The election will come and go. But workers will still confront the same problems. Now the important question is for the working class to get the best conditions to forge solutions to these problems.

By relying on their own strength the miners showed the way. By defeating the Tories at the polls that unity can be most effectively used.

The lessons of the last election must be learnt. In voting Labour the working class will go to the polls united. After the election that unity will be an important step to *united action* to solve the crisis in our interests.

## THE ELECTIONS WHERE WE STAND

In this election the IMG is for the return of a LABOUR GOVERNMENT. Not because a Labour Government can achieve socialism, or because parliamentary elections decide crucial questions, but because the return of a Labour Government will give a big boost to the confidence and militancy of the working class in struggles to come.

If a new Labour Government is formed as a result of this election, we will take part in the fight for such a Government to act in the interests of the working class rather than in those of the capitalist employers.

But we believe that, as always in the past, the Labour Government will in fact pursue the interests of the ruling class, as it is already trying to do with the social contract.

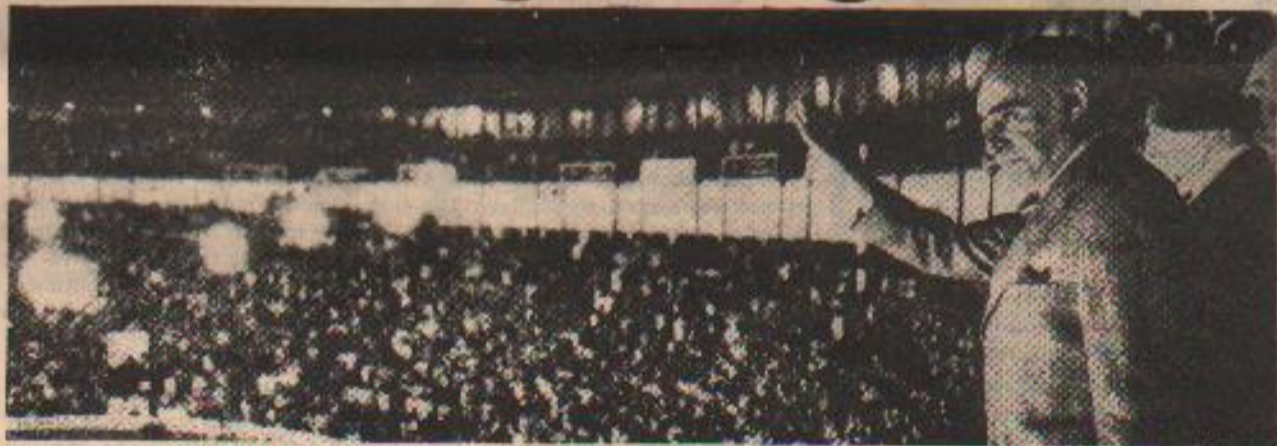
That is why the workers' movement urgently needs to thrash out a programme of struggle against *whatever* Government comes out of this election. This means the fight for a planned economy based on nationalisation of all major industry under workers' control without compensation.

Where candidates of the revolutionary left (such as the WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY) are standing, we call for a vote for them against Labour. A big vote for revolutionary candidates is the best way of demonstrating both determination to fight the ruling class and political opposition to the pro-capitalist policies of Labour's present leadership.

We also call for a vote for EDDIE MILNE, the Independent Labour candidate in Blyth. A vote for Milne will show that workers are opposed to Labour's involvement in property speculation and capitalist corruption, and will help carry forward the fight for democracy in the workers' movement.

We do not think that the Communist Party represents either a mass current within the workers' movement or a serious left opposition to Labour's reformism. We therefore do not call for a vote for Communist Party candidates.

## PORTUGAL: mass action blocks right-wing threat



Spino's presence at a bull-fight organised by the 'Veteran's League' became the occasion for a big right-wing rally last week. Now Spino is gone, but the right-wing threat is very far from dead.

MASS MILITANT action by the Portuguese working class has dealt a shattering blow to the reactionary forces that have been jockeying for position since the fascist regime was overthrown on 25 April.

Taking up a call from Portuguese President Spino for the 'silent majority' to speak out against 'extremism,' right-wingers were planning a massive demonstration in the capital city of Lisbon for Saturday.

### ROAD BLOCKS

Late on Friday night, responding to appeals broadcast by the trade unions, workers set up roadblocks on all the roads into Lisbon. All incoming traffic was thoroughly searched, right-wing demonstrators denied admission to the city, arms seized, and anti-fascist leaflets distributed.

For several hours the right-wing appeared to have gained the upper hand in the Government. The Minister of Information (a Spino supporter) broadcast a statement calling for the dismantling of the barricades and proclaiming the intention of the Government 'to do whatever is necessary to allow the demonstration in favour of His Excellency the President of the Republic to take place in order and dignity.'

French journalists, hearing rumours that Spino had taken over

full governmental powers and that Prime Minister Goncalves (a supporter of the left-wing of the Armed Forces Movement) had been arrested, contested official Government spokesmen, who refused to deny or confirm these reports.

Some time in the early hours of the morning, faced with the massive and determined mobilisation of the workers who maintained their roadblocks, the balance shifted away from Spino. The workers' roadblocks were then reinforced by armed soldiers, and a massive military swoop arrested some 500 well-known reactionaries—former fascist politicians and military men, big land-owners, and businessmen.

### DANGER

Spino and his supporters in the Government have gone, but the danger from the right is far from over. The impact of the growing economic crisis that is hitting the country, and the fear of the middle class of the growing strength of the workers' movement, could easily swing the pendulum back towards the right.

The most influential organisation in the Portuguese workers' movement—the Communist Party—is incapable of meeting this threat. They have backed every move by the Government to undermine the power of the workers' organisations—including the notorious trade union law (which makes the Tories'

Industrial Relations Act look like a piece of cake). They have steadfastly opposed every action taken by sections of workers against the growth of reactionary forces (the national newspaper strike to back workers demanding the firing of a pro-fascist manager, the mass demonstration of shipyard workers).

If the Communist Party carried out a partial about-face in the present situation it was only because they understood that *their* heads were on the chopping block, and that tens of thousands of workers would go into struggle no matter what the CP bureaucrats said or did.

The *Morning Star*, paper of the British Communist Party, now lauds Spino's resignation as a 'big blow to reaction.' But it was not so long ago that the British CP, and their counterparts in Portugal, were eagerly licking the boots of this veteran of Franco's and Hitler's armies, praising him as an 'ally of democracy.'

The only way to defend democracy in Portugal is through the mobilisation of the Portuguese workers, peasants and rank-and-file soldiers in the fight for a socialist Portugal. That task can only be carried forward by the forces of the revolutionary left, now reinforced by thousands of workers, who, over the past few weeks, have consciously gone into struggle against the wishes and advice of the Communist Party bureaucrats.

Chris Balfour

## Labour and Ireland

Red Weekly hears from three Labour candidates who—while they may differ from us on the necessary solutions—agree emphatically that the issue of Ireland is an important one in this election



JOHN LEE (Birmingham, Handsworth)

'I profoundly disagree with what has basically been British policy in Ireland—that is the buttressing of the Protestant ascendancy.

'I don't think there can be any solution which does not include immediate British withdrawal—as immediate as immediate can be. The Irish people must have the right to self-determination, which can only come about through a united Ireland.'



JOAN MAYNARD (Sheffield, Brightside)

'I think the Irish question is very important. We talk about Chile, which is a long way away; but Ireland which is just across the water—we hope it will just go away. Well, of course it won't—it's of our own making—we've been there for about eight hundred years.

'The Irish people are struggling against the same sort of people that we're struggling against. After all, the British soldiers are really there to protect the interests of British big business.

'I would like to see us announce the date for withdrawal. And I think that we ought to withdraw not only in a military sense, but in the political and economic sense too.'



JOCK STALLARD (St Pancras, North)

'The Irish question is missing from the election, but it is actually a very important issue. The real problem is partition, and we must work towards the reunification of the Irish nation.'

# POWELL'S WAGON TRAIN STARTS TO ROLL

Enoch Powell's hopes of riding a reactionary loyalist charger into the flank of the British working class began to take shape during the course of the last week.

In his election campaign, he has stooped to grovelling and fawning before the worst sectarian conceit of the loyalist supporters. He talks about the six counties as 'this jewel' and describes the sectarian actions of the loyalists as exhibiting 'shrewdness and wisdom'. He promises rapid fulfillment of the loyalists' sectarian dreams. Elect me, he is telling them, and the insurgent Republican minority 'in a long low drawn out growl will slink away'.

This is to be done through the implementation of the Ulster Unionist Manifesto, which he describes as a programme of 'peace and reconciliation'. This programme crudely spells out the need to hand everything over to the loyalists: 'without that programme and its fulfillment, there can be no peace and there can be no reconciliation'. In other words if the 'croppies' won't lie down before the loyalist steamroller, they will have to be beaten into submission.

### WELL RECEIVED

Powell is being well received by the loyalists, who feel themselves to be on the up and up as the Labour Government falls over itself to hand out concessions. Powell proposes to exploit these concessions to wrench out even more. Thus the recent extension by the Labour Government of the police reserve, in response to the clamour from the loyalists for the return of the B-Specials, drew this from Powell: 'Very good. Much obliged. One out of ten. But the pupil will have to do better next time'.

To this the Labour Government has no answer. Having conceded the point of principle—the existence of the Northern Irish

state—the handing over of control of the state machine to the loyalists logically follows.

This accounts for the really pathetic failure by Merlyn Rees, Minister of State for Northern Ireland, to challenge Powell. Rees tries to play on the contradiction between Powell's advocacy of the loyalist cause and his support for economic policies which would produce unemployment. But what Rees fails to face up to is the fact that Powell actually has an answer of sorts to unemployment: make the nationalist minority pay, kick them out of all the jobs (and council houses) and reserve them for the protestants. This is what the history of the Orange state is all about.

### DANGEROUS

For all his attempted challenges to Powell, Rees actually steadies the ladder which Powell is climbing. Without the presence of British troops, without the arming of the loyalist vigilantes, neither the loyalists nor Powell would be anywhere.

Rees only indicates the general failure of the Labour Party to effectively oppose Powell's forward march. This is an extremely dangerous situation for the British working class. For Powell has every intention of trying to use his success in the six counties to split up, disorganise and defeat the British working class.

Powell is already using this election as a platform to begin that job. For example, he has demanded that the Irish in Britain be registered as aliens, taking the first step towards using the Irish as a political war-cry in the same way that he has already used black immigrants in this country.

Unfortunately, sentiment for this policy already exists inside the British working class. The only way to combat this is to build a movement inside the working class in this country which is in support

of the Irish people and their right to self-determination.

Powell himself has every hope of winning forces inside the heart of the working class. This is in fact vital for him in order that he can implement his strategy of strong state action against the working class. But Powell hasn't got his own organised force. Instead a whole variety of right wing groups, spear-headed by the fascist National Front, are organising under Powell's cover.

In its election campaign the National Front has made one of its main planks the issue of Ireland. The N.F. plays up the issues which

Powell raises and attempts to make them count inside the working class. A vital part of the fight against Powell is therefore the fight against the National Front. If we can prevent the Front from organising militant action on the streets, and connect the reactionary ideas which Powell raises with the fascistic nature of the National Front, we can begin to neutralise the reactionary sentiments inside the working class which Powell wants to exploit and strike a blow at his whole strategy. But we can only do this if we make Ireland central to our fight against the N.F.

BRIAN GROGAN



Powell—reaching out to win forces inside the heart of the working class

## DEBATE

# Ireland and the elections

Dear Red Weekly,

Alan Jones's article in Red Weekly (12 September) smacks of chauvinism. Great Britons of left or right have no business lecturing the Irish how to vote—especially not for the Labour Party.

The Labour Government has carried out a great fraud on the Irish. It came to power in the February election with the support of Irish voters, making a fistful of promises about ending internment, sending political prisoners back to Ireland, and so on. All these promises have gone up in smoke.

Instead more women are interned than ever before. Rees allows the British Army to call the tune; he caved in completely to the loyalist rebellion at Easter, and he is now busy re-arming the B-Specials as fast as he can under the guise of the 'third force'.

Enoch Powell himself said a few weeks ago that the Labour Party's record on Ireland was 'better' (i.e. more chauvinist, more unionist, more brutal, more imperialist) than the Tories.

A fascist called Devonald Lewis, who stood as Tory candidate last February on a 'back Powell—halt immigration—bring back hanging' ticket, is now urging voters to support the Labour candidate in North Islington, a renegade Irishman called O'Halloran. He says O'Halloran should be supported because he is a 'British constitutionalist' who has the guts to stand up to the thugs of the IRA, and because he is being opposed by the 'extreme and subversive' Irish Civil Rights Association.

And what about the IMG? The IMG is standing on the same platform as Stalinists and fascists like Devonald Lewis in opposing ICRA.

It makes a bitter mockery of the editorial comment on the Irish struggle in Red Weekly of 27 July 1973, which said: 'The task of the British left is not to prattle historical nonsense, or to moralise, it is to solidise'. What is your solidarity now?

Long ago Marx remarked that chauvinism against the Irish was 'the secret of the

political impotence of the English working class', despite its organisation. This is the famous letter to Meyer and Vogt of 9 April 1870, in which Marx says how the working class in every industrial city in England is divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. Today you must add black proletarians to the Irish camp.

In this situation Marx insisted that the duty of the International, not merely for the Irish but the English workers themselves, was to 'put the conflict between England and Ireland in the foreground, and everywhere to side openly with Ireland'.

Why is the IMG not supporting ICRA, the one organisation that is standing up for Ireland?

Alan Jones has turned Marx upside down. He tries to browbeat the Irish into giving up their own campaign on the grounds that 'it is the struggle of the British working class which is the only potential ally the Irish people have'. The CPGB, the Militant, IS, the WRP all say the same!

Ever since 1968 these English groups have been telling Irish workers to... wait. Wait for the British working class. Wait for the British to solve Ireland's troubles.

But the British working class has been no help at all. You must face the facts, the British working class is racist and chauvinist. Name one single action that even a tiny minority of British workers have taken since 1968 to help the Irish.

The Irish are completely right to rely on themselves, and to use the coming election to build up their own strength in Britain. Real Marxists would help them, not make their task more difficult.

If it was not for ICRA, Ireland would not even be an issue in this election. After six years of imperialist butchery in Ireland, the solidarity movement of the English left is in a sorry mess.

If Irish workers decide to go it alone, the English left has only itself to blame. 'Nothing succeeds like success'.

A. Teague

**RED WEEKLY REPLIES:** We welcome comrade Teague's letter. While we disagree with its central point—its support of the ICRA campaign—it does provide us with an opportunity to clarify our positions on the tasks of British socialists in regard to Ireland, and the related issue of Ireland and the British election.

But first, a brief aside on comrade Teague's amusing amalgam between us and the Islington Powellite, Devonald Lewis. What on earth is the comrade trying to prove? We were opposed to the Sunningdale agreement. The Powellites were opposed to Sunningdale. (We hope comrade Teague was opposed to Sunningdale.) Were we therefore also wrong on Sunningdale?

We agree with comrade Teague about the Labour Party's record on Ireland, and about the need to 'put the conflict between England and Ireland in the foreground'. We have made many similar points in our press and other publications. Already in our election campaign we have intervened vigorously at Labour Party meetings against Wilson and his ilk on this very question. However we part company with comrade Teague when he argues that supporters of the Irish struggle should therefore

# ANTI FASCIST ROUND UP

## Fascists try for Orange base in Glasgow

Michael Brooks, a Belfast councillor and Orangeman, is to contest the constituency of Govan in Glasgow for the National Front in the election.

It is ironic that this first open attempt to mobilise a reactionary current inside the working class takes place in Govan, for Govan, along with Clydebank and Scotstoun, is the home of the famous UCS yards, whose struggle over redundancies came to symbolise the immense strength of the West of Scotland working class movement.

But however strong the masonry, it is useless if the house is built on foundations of sand. The NF realise that the key to bringing this particular house down, or at least opening up huge cracks in the floor, is the issue of Ireland.

In the past the Orange Order and the trade union movement have co-existed in the old industrial areas of Scotland, albeit rather uneasily. Ireland, it was argued, was about religion and thus irrelevant, or even dangerous, for the organisations of the working class.

The initiative of the NF in Govan is therefore only an attempt to deepen and widen the *already existing political split* inside the heart of the organised working class. If the workers movement fails to take a position on the question of Ireland and politically confront the reactionary nonsense of Loyalism the poison of fascism will gain its first footholds uncontested.

It will then only be a short step from winning such support at the polls to building up an active fascist movement in the streets of Scotland.

### STOP THE NF IN GOVAN!

Public meeting sponsored by Clydebank Trades Council, Scottish Immigrant Labour Council, IMG and others.

Thursday 3 October at 7.30 pm in MacLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street.

When the NF confirmed that they were fielding a candidate, the AFC moved into top gear. The petition gives the electorate a chance to vote against the NF, and it is along these lines that it is being promoted in the busy town centre, in the work-places, and among the labour organisations of Basingstoke. Already well over 1,000 signatures have been collected.

According to the local paper, the NF 'will not be intimidated by the militant tactics of the AFC. But ... they will not be holding any public meetings during the election campaign!'

### South Shields NF candidate seeks police protection

Eighty people attended a South Tyneside Anti-Fascist Committee public meeting on Thursday, 26 September. The theme of the meeting was 'What is the National Front?'

The National Front are standing a local Alderman, William Owen, in South Shields in the General Election. In February Owen polled nearly 2000 votes. The local anti-fascist committee is determined to reduce this figure and to wipe the Front off the map in the North East of England.

Following a highly constructive discussion, chaired by Michael Peel, a former miner at Westoe Colliery, the meeting raised £36 which will be used for an intensive leafletting campaign against the National Front during the election.

The meeting immediately provoked a furious response from Alderman Owen, who told the local press that he will be asking the Returning Officer to declare the election null and void if any leaflets attacking him are distributed during the election campaign. Undeterred, members of the committee began the leafletting last Saturday around the area in which he lives, to such an effect that Owen has now issued a statement that: 'In view of the hostile atmosphere being created by the distribution of these leaflets, I have asked for police protection for the rest of my campaign.'

ism is that Alan Jones is telling the Irish to wait for the British working class to act on Ireland. On this we feel that comrade Teague is completely confused, and therefore misunderstands comrade Jones's arguments.

If Alan Jones had in fact stated that the Irish workers should not do anything which would alienate the British working class, then comrade Teague would be making a valid criticism. But what he actually wrote was that Irish republicans should not be indifferent to the course of the British class struggle.

As we argued in the 19 September issue of Red Weekly, it is in the interests of both the Irish people and the British

working class that the Labour Party—that false friend of both—should be in office where its true colours are best visible. This is precisely what Alan Jones argued in his article when he wrote of the ICRA campaign that 'it will not help the class struggle in Britain, but neither will it help it in Ireland'; and that 'a defeat for Labour would weaken the position of the Irish people and not strengthen it'.

To reduce this to stupid remarks about 'lecturing' the Irish on the need to wait for the British working class to act is to do a serious disservice to constructive polemic on this important political issue.



Millions of TV viewers saw IMG member Brian Grogan haul Harold Wilson over the coals in Ireland at an election meeting in Hornsey last Friday. Taking the fight to Labour in this way is much more effective than the moral gesture proposed by ICRA.

# IN FOCUS

## LABOUR AND THE COMMON MARKET

The outbursts of Shirley Williams and Roy Jenkins over the Common Market are not unexpected, but they do give a very good indication of what is going to come after the election—particularly if a Labour Government is elected.

It is clear that for the most important sections of the British ruling class, membership of the EEC is a decisive question. They will pull out all the stops—including getting the Jenkinsites to bring down a Labour Government, and if necessary split from the Labour Party—to keep Britain in.

Certainly they will exert the most intense pressure to ensure that Wilson & Co.—having got themselves more or less impaled on the referendum hook—merely fudge up a few tiny changes in Britain's terms of membership, and then declare these to be a great victory justifying a YES vote to stay in on the 'renegotiated' terms. Wilson and Callaghan can be expected to excel themselves in servile obedience to this project.

However the EEC remains a time bomb which is ticking away beneath the Labour Party. The opposition of the working class to membership of the Common Market remains intense. Because of this a large group of bureaucrats, right up to the level of the Labour direct interests of the ruling class and oppose membership on virtually any terms.

No matter how much Wilson may wriggle and manoeuvre, the reality is that the two sides of this particular puzzle simply will not fit. Even if the bureaucrats can all be whipped into line, and it is far from sure that this can be done, the opposition of the working class remains.

### HIGH RISK

For the ruling class there is a frighteningly high risk that any referendum, no matter how it is worded or what Wilson advises, will result in a vote against membership of the EEC. If that happened the cat would really be amongst the pigeons. Imagine the reaction of the working class if the referendum had a majority for withdrawal and then the capitalists cobbled together some government which refused to implement it.

However if no referendum is held then there is no doubt that a row is going to be unleashed inside the Labour Party on a scale which not even Wilson can view with equanimity.

Faced with the importance of such an issue and the fact that the campaign on the EEC is a tool for developing the internationalist consciousness of the working class, it is vital that the revolutionary left has a clear position on the question of the Common Market. Despite appearances, the EEC is a fundamental class question of not merely national but international dimensions, and for this reason it is capable of polarising British society politically in a way no simple industrial struggle can.

### IMPERIALIST SYSTEM

The EEC is a key part of the world imperialist system. It represents the development of a much stronger European competitor to US imperialism. This is why the EEC plays an important role in an inter-imperialist competition in which the working class should take a position of 'a curse on both your houses'.

But the Common Market also plays a vital role in strengthening the imperialist system as a whole. It is for this reason that the United States did not oppose but supported the formation of the EEC.

The collapse of the EEC and the reduction of European capitalism to unintegrated individual capitalist states, breaking the structures necessary to create a European concentration and integration of capital which constitutes the essence of the EEC, would considerably weaken world imperialism. It would alter the world relation of forces in favour of the colonial revolution and the workers states—even leaving aside for the moment the question of the European working class.

For this reason socialists must be for the weakening and destruction of the EEC, and against Britain's membership. In this struggle the revolutionary left must fight for:

- \*Immediate withdrawal of Britain from the EEC.
- \*The expulsion of Jenkins and the pro-Market MPs from the Labour Party.
- \*An emergency Trades Union Congress and emergency Labour Party conference before any referendum on the Common Market in order to decide upon a vote against membership.
- \*For a working class united front for withdrawal from the EEC—no co-operation with bourgeois forces.
- \*For the establishment of rank and file workers' co-operation on a European level.
- \*For a European Congress of Labour.
- \*For a United Socialist States of Europe.

Alan Jones

### NF on the run

The NF is really having a bad time in this election. It is putting up 90 candidates, but only in a few areas is it prepared to show its face. The impact of the anti-fascist movement is such that wherever the NF appears it meets with hostile pickets and demonstrations.

So the NF is relying instead on TV and radio to project itself. But even here it is facing difficulties. For now the Labour Party itself, under the immense pressure of the anti-fascist movement, has refused to appear on the South East section of the BBC news programme *Nationwide* because the National Front is participating. So Reg Prentice and Joan Lester will not appear.

London, however, is seeing some of the rare appearances of the NF. On Monday, 7 October, all the London NF candidates (presumably for self-protection) are participating in a rally at what has come to be the NF's 'home'—the Conway Hall. This meeting starts at 7 p.m. And in a very little publicised meeting this Friday at the same place, NF candidate Dr. Baxter is showing his wares. See you there.

### Hide and seek in Basingstoke

The National Front in Basingstoke hoped that their passivity would lull the local Anti-Fascist Committee (AFC) into inactivity, leaving them in peace to conduct a 'respectable' racist campaign. But this was not to be.

Far from abandoning its work, the AFC consolidated its support and prepared for the election. Pamphlets were produced and circulated to local trade union organisations, and a leaflet was drawn up in case the NF should stand.

The AFC also launched a 'Petition Against Fascism', calling on the local Council to deny the NF the use of its facilities.

support the ICRA campaign.

Comrade Teague sees in our refusal to support ICRA a retreat from, and a bitter mockery of, our previous position of unconditional solidarity with the Irish struggle. A serious charge—but in our view unjustified. We think it flows from a confusion on what solidarity actually means.

Our position has always been that the main task (not the sole task, comrade Teague) of British revolutionaries is to solidarise with all those struggling against British imperialism in Ireland. We have always argued against the positions of the Workers Revolutionary Party and the supporters of Militant, whose main emphasis has always been on criticism of the national liberation forces (usually as a cop-out for doing anything practical in support of that struggle).

However we reject the view that this should limit us to supporting every political initiative of the Irish republican organisations in Britain. This is not our idea of solidarity.

In our view any socialist organisation worth its salt would have definite ideas of its own on how to build the most effective solidarity movement in Britain. And it would quite correctly fight for leadership of that movement on that basis, even if at times this brought it into conflict with Irish republican groupings. For instance, would comrade Teague argue that solidarising with the republican struggle obliges us to take up the Provisionals' demand for a phased withdrawal of British troops from Ireland?

Comrade Teague's other main critic-

# NATIONALISATION

## Bosses on the offensive — what's Labour's answer?

by  
Sam Boyd

While the polite debate on nationalisation has been raging inside the Labour Party, the ruling class have been flying the flag with their own methods of 'persuasion'.

Readers will have noticed that Aims of Industry, along with Mr. Cube from Tate and Lyle, have been buying up pages of adverts in the national press to vent their capitalist spleen against the threat of nationalisation plans.

The ruling class are worried. As the economic crisis brings financial disaster to more Court Lines and more Ferrantis, and as unemployment soars over the one million mark this year, workers will reply with a wave of factory occupations and nationalisation demands that go far beyond the intentions of the law-abiding and reasonable Mr. Benn. Naturally, the bosses are having nightmares.

### FIRST AID

In the past while individual capitalists have opposed nationalisation—the ruling class has generally been quite relieved to hand over ailing and unprofitable companies to the State for first aid. After the war, the Labour Government nationalised the coal industry, railways, canals, broadcasting, airlines, cables, electricity, and gas. The ruling class agreed to these proposals because these industries were declining and under State control could continue to provide private industry with cheap subsidised services.

However, when Labour proposed to nationalise the road haulage business and the iron and steel industry, which were profitable, the employers set to work. The Economic League and Aims of Industry held 7,000 open-air meetings and 30,000 bus-stop and factory gate meetings in their campaign against road haulage in 1947.

The insurance companies, who also felt threatened, had set up 400 anti-nationalisation committees by the end of 1949 and 4,000 employees were persuaded to work after office hours to produce propaganda against the Government.

However, while these details give us an idea of what is to come from the bosses, recent moves by the massive Guest, Keen and Nettlefolds company also raise important questions for the workers' movement.

GKN decided to mount a little propaganda operation of their own in the battle against nationalisation. They conducted a poll amongst their employees asking whether they would prefer GKN to stay in the hands of its owners or be turned over to State control. When the survey was finished, GKN paid £50,000 for adverts in all the national papers proclaiming gleefully that 73% of GKN workers were against nationalisation.

The GKN questionnaire was a typical piece of advertising technique, i.e. plain deception. First they conducted a national survey. The firm's 80,000 employees all received a copy of the annual company report, written by GKN chairman Sir Raymond Brookes—the most influential hard-liner in the bosses' association, the Confederation of British Industry. GKN then commissioned a survey of their workers' opinions on the thoughts of chairman Brookes. The questionnaire included such gems as: 'One of the points that the chairman was trying to make

was that the interests of employees and shareholders are the same. I am not asking whether you agreed with this—but could you tell me whether this point comes across to you?'

After over 70 questions along these lines, workers were eventually asked if they thought nationalisation of GKN was a good idea or a bad idea. Seventy-three per cent said 'bad'. This was the magic figure GKN eventually published.

They omitted to publish the fact that 53 per cent said nationalisation would make no difference, in answer to another question.

### BRYMBO PLANT

Some time later, GKN did the same operation on just one of their plants—Brymbo steelworks in Wales.

This plant was not chosen at random, however. Until recently it was part of the nationalised British Steel Corporation, but the latter had announced that after 1980 it would run the plant down, meaning massive redundancies. GKN promptly bought it back—at the bargain price of £20 million, compared to the £42 million GKN received in compensation when the plant was first nationalised.

The Brymbo workers were all told that the results of the GKN survey would be kept confidential. But just a few weeks later GKN were trumpeting out the fact that 97 per cent of Brymbo workers thought nationalisation was 'bad'.

They did not, however, give similar publicity to the remarks of Alf Matthias, secretary of the works trade union consultative committee: 'Any of the men who voted for remaining in the GKN group, did so in the belief that a positive response from the workforce would make their jobs secure. We are concerned only with safeguarding our jobs at the plant and many of us are in favour of the principle of nationalisation.'

Even on professional survey grounds, the GKN exercise was a farce. Michael Rines, editor of the Institute of Marketing's journal, was so incensed that he has filed a full complaint with the Advertising Standards Association.

### LABOUR PARTY

In comparison with these poisonous little exercises by the employers, the Labour Party has launched no massive campaign in the workers' movement to explain their proposals on nationalisation.

What is more, the proposals as they stand are virtually useless. What is needed to stop the massive rise in unemployment is a real assault on the power of the bosses. Yet Labour neither proposes an end to compensation payments nor an overall plan for the nationalisation of all the major and most profitable companies under workers' control.

In the coming struggles against inflation and redundancies, there can be no doubt that this debate will be taken up in earnest in the trade unions. But it won't be at the invitation of Benn and the Labour Party, and certainly not as a result of GKN's little stunts.

It will be taken up because the reality of massive redundancies, and the failure of the Labour leaders to begin an attack on the ruling class, will force the working class to take up the cudgels themselves.

When the decisions are taken in the mass meetings in the occupied factories, and when the cry has gone out for nationalisation under workers' control, it will be the workers themselves who will build their own organisations to force the employers to act only according to the wishes of the working class. Then GKN and their friends in Aims of Industry can stuff their questionnaires.



Arthur Scargill leads the Yorkshire delegation out of the conference last Thursday

## 'Fair old rumpus'

### at miners' conference

All hell broke out at last week's special delegate conference of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). Miners' leaders from Yorkshire walked out after NUM President Joe Gormley refused to allow resolutions on the controversial proposed productivity deal with the Coal Board.

After what Arthur Scargill, the Yorkshire President, described as a 'fair old rumpus' between him and Joe Gormley, the Yorkshire delegation left the hall to join the lobby of hundreds of miners outside. Teams had come from as far away as South Wales, Yorkshire and Scotland to call for rejection of the deal.

Carrying official Yorkshire NUM posters, the lobbyists kept up a continued chant of 'No deal!' as delegates arrived at the hall. Lawrence Daly, the union's general secretary, once darling of the left but now a firm supporter of the deal, came in for special treatment. As he made his way past a protective police cordon, he could only utter 'I've got the message'.

Inside the conference itself, Gormley and Daly tried to cool down the situation by agreeing to postpone the pit-head ballot on the deal which was to have taken place next week. Now there are to be further negotiations with the NCB for a new formula.

But it's unlikely that the Coal Board will agree to much more. The latest scheme was only accepted by Gormley himself after two previous proposals from the NCB were considered inadequate. The present offer would give face-workers an extra £2.50 for every five per cent above 75 per cent of an agreed target, amounting to £12.50 a week extra for face workers who achieve 100 per cent.



But the picture isn't as rosy as it seems. Some miners will indeed get large increases of up to £12.50. But because the increases will be calculated on the basis of output of face-workers, there will be massive discrepancies. Output per manshift can be as different as 11 cwt one week, and 40 cwt the next. And that in one pit.

Imagine the differences between pits with different geological conditions—workers in pits with bad 'faces' will be seriously discriminated against. Areas like Lancashire and Scotland will be particularly hard hit.

### CLOSURES

The bulk of the rest of the men will get bonuses calculated on the basis of 50 per cent of the face-workers' bonus. So the discrepancies will extend to all other categories as well. But that's not all. Any big drive for higher productivity in the pits is bound to add to the long list of industrial accidents. As usual the thirst for profitability comes much higher on the NCB's list of priorities than the safety of

the men.

Finally, the NCB's plans for coal production next year are 120 million tons of deep mined coal. The target for 1985 is exactly the same. With an increase in productivity this can only mean only thing—redundancies and pit closures.

This scheme is a return to the policies of the fifties that ate away at the miners' living standards in the fifteen years after nationalisation—policies which the NUM has fought against for years. As Bill McLean, secretary of the Scottish miners put it: 'The policy of the union for decades has been to establish a day wage structure for all workers in the industry. This was finally established in 1971. It means that all miners doing the same job in any part of the British coalfields are paid the same rate. This has led to unification of the membership. This productivity scheme is a move to divide the membership and to destroy the power of the union.'

### PLAN

The NUM Executive will meet again this Thursday to consider where to go from here. The left



# SMASH THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

'The present crisis is a capitalist crisis, and the capitalists must pay for their own crisis.

The working class should never stop trying to improve its standard of living as long as capitalism exists.'

-Dennis Skinner, Labour M.P. for Bolsover

JACK COLLINS  
(Kent Area delegate, NUM executive).



'I ADVOCATE THE RETURN OF A LABOUR GOVERNMENT THAT WOULD UNITE THE WORKING CLASS IN ORDER TO DEFEAT CAPITAL AND BEGIN TO CONSTRUCT A SOCIALIST SOCIETY, BUT INSTEAD WILSON PROMISES THAT THE BRITISH PEOPLE CANNOT EXPECT TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVING STANDARDS OVER THE NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS. IF THAT IS ALL HE HAS TO OFFER, WITHIN AN ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY SUCH AS OURS, THEN HE IS A COUNTERFEIT SOCIALIST. SUCH AN ATTITUDE PROVES ONCE AGAIN THAT IT IS VITAL THAT THE WORKING CLASS IN ELECTING A LABOUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD DEMAND THAT THE LEADERSHIP BE CHANGED, AND THAT THOSE WHO ARE PREPARED TO IMPOSE 'SOCIAL CONTRACTS' MUST BE CLEARED OUT, TOGETHER WITH THE PROMARKETEERS AND OTHER IMPOSTERS. ONLY THE NAME 'SOCIAL CONTRACT' IS NEW—THE IDEA IS ANCIENT. IN A CAPITALIST SOCIETY IT MEANS THAT THOSE WHO PRODUCE THE WEALTH ARE TO BE HELD BACK IN ORDER THAT PRIVILEGE AND PROFIT CAN EXPLOIT THEM FURTHER.



' I AM A FIRM BELIEVER IN THE CLASS STRUGGLE AND I FIGHT WITHIN THE LABOUR PARTY FOR WORKING CLASS POLICIES. THE WORKING CLASS ARE EXPLOITED UNDER CAPITALISM—WHEN YOU FIGHT FOR HIGHER WAGES YOU MUST FIGHT FOR THE HIGHEST WAGES POSSIBLE. I AM STANDING AS A WORKING CLASS CANDIDATE REMINDING THE WORKING CLASS THAT IT WAS THEY WHO BUILT THE LABOUR PARTY. THE LABOUR PARTY BELONGS TO THEM AND IT'S UP TO THEM TO SUPPORT IT.



HARRY SELBY  
(Labour MP for Govan)

'The Social Contract, and, for that matter any suggestion at all of restricting wages and working conditions in order to try to solve the present capitalist crisis, is opposed by the National Committee of our Union. We have always opposed wage restraints, incomes policy, and any restraints on free collective bargaining. That remains the feeling of the mass of the membership of the Union.'

ERNIE ROBERTS (Assistant General Secretary, AUEW)



**'Labour parades the Social Contract as a plan which can work miracles if it is only given a chance'**

# SOCIAL CLAPTRAP

LABOUR PARTY LEADERS FROM ACROSS THE WHOLE spectrum of political views inside the party are fond of proclaiming *their* version of Socialism. Time and again, the same old goals and aims are chanted, whether it's weary old Clause 4, or the most recent stirring lines, enunciated by Tony Benn in 1973 and now safely inserted into the padding of Labour's Election Manifesto: '...our objective is to bring about a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of wealth and power in favour of working people and their families.'

This sort of line has been trotted out so often it's become an addicting drug for ageing social democrats, and the occasion for a laugh from sceptics and battle-weary militants in the workers' movement. But some things are changing.

Among the Labour Party 'lefts' today there is a new debate about the means of achieving Socialism. Superficially this might look like a re-run of the Labour Party debates in the 1950s when the Bevanite left-wing fought the right-wing union leaders and Gaitskell over the question of nationalisation. But the present debate is taking place in a very different situation—one of unprecedented economic crisis facing both the ruling class and the working class.

## NOT IMPRESSED

More important, it is happening in a very different way. The trade union leaders are not just jostling around in the backrooms, but are full political participants in the debate. Furthermore, despite all the differences between the 'lefts' and the 'right', all the political forces in the trade union bureaucracy and in the Labour Party have been able to close ranks around the magic formula of the 'social contract'.

Since Labour came into Parliament in March they have waved their social contract around like a new toy: 'Here is the great scheme to solve the crisis'.

They are fighting the election on the same ground. Just as the Scottish Nationalists declare Scottish oil can solve all problems, so Labour parades the social contract as a plan which can work miracles if only it is given the chance.

But the working class, in spite of the decision of the TUC to back the social contract to the hilt, has not been impressed. From April to August this year, almost exactly the period of the Labour Government, 3.5 million days have been lost in strikes. This is a 35% rise on the same period a year ago, under 'Stage Two' of the Tories' incomes policy. The number of strikes has risen by 12% and the number of workers going on strike has risen by 22%.

What these figures show is that while the resistance of the bosses has

made strikes protracted and bitter, the trade union chiefs have not been able to deter workers from militant struggle on the wages front. Faced with roaring inflation, workers have opted to defend their living standards with the strength of their own organisations against all the appeals of the social contract.

The Ford workers have reduced Labour's credibility to shreds by deciding against any reliance on the social contract. (Predictably, Wilson's reply to the Ford workers was 'I want them to go back to work'.) The ruling class, too, have lost any faith they may have had in the ability of Labour and the TUC to work in concert on behalf of the employers: wages have been rising at a rate of 35% a year since Wilson came in.

For all this, the working class in this country, as it girds itself for the coming confrontations of the winter and spring, now has the lowest level of real income of any working class in the Common Market countries. On average, their living standards have fallen 2½% since Labour came in, and they are now falling at an annual rate of 5%.

**'Working class struggle for the reformists, was a battle fought out between the employers and the unions, and had nothing to do with politics and the struggle for socialism.'**

Workers are going to face a rate of inflation of over 25% in the coming year, and unemployment will rise to more than 1½ million. On top of all this, any Government returned in this election will be forced to carry out sweeping spending cuts and thus add to the snowballing crisis in our social services.

What then, is this magical 'social contract' that can crack such tough nuts?

The social contract results from the tremendous shake-up the old relationship between the trade union leadership and the Labour Party politicians is undergoing as a result of the economic crisis.



In the 1950s, certainly, trade union leaders exercised tremendous influence on the political make-up of the Labour Party leadership. T&G boss Arthur Deakin and his allies intervened to save Gaitskell and the Labour right from the threat of Bevan and the 'left'. But the design behind these moves was to *maintain* the old division of the workers' movement between the trade unions and the Labour Party, not to change it.

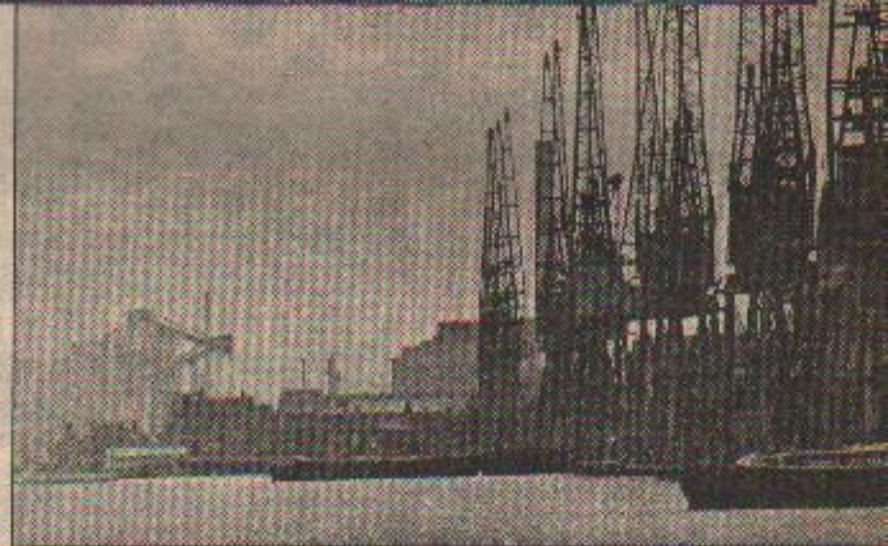
## CLASSIC REFORMISM

This division was based on the classic reformist approach of Labourist thinking. 'Politics' was all about reforms which were to be won in Parliament and carried out through the ruling class state machinery. The trade unions limited themselves to the struggle over wages and working conditions, and were not to openly interfere in the political arena of Parliament, which was the preserve of the Labour Party.

The relationship between the trade unions and the Labour Party consisted of Labour representing the broad needs of the trade union bureaucracy, in exchange for the latter's aid in securing the working class vote for Labour. Working class struggle, for the reformists, was a battle fought out between the employers and the unions, and had nothing to do with 'politics' and the struggle for socialism.

This approach was reflected in former T&GWU leader Frank Cousins' speech to the Labour Party conference in 1956, when he said: 'I told you last year not to tell the unions how to do their job. And I am certainly not going to tell the Labour Party how to do its job.'

This state of affairs could only work effectively as long as the capitalist system could more or less deliver the goods to the working class in the form of social reforms. In the 1950s, the period of the post-war boom, the trade unions could secure rising living standards on the wages front, and Parliament, along with the



ruling class state, could deliver full employment and a stream of such social reforms. This was the case even though the Tories held office uninterruptedly through the 50's. In this situation, the split between the job of the politician and that of the trade union chief in the bureaucracy of the labour movement could continue.

## CRISIS

But now we are in a situation of big crisis. The economy is not expanding at all. For the Labour Party leaders and the trade union bureaucrats, a crisis is never the occasion for an all-out assault on the root of the problem—the capitalist system. Such people can see no further than trying to screw a few concessions out of capitalism for the working class. They never question the capitalist system itself.

This means that if the cake of capitalism isn't growing, then the working class must tighten their belts. Only by going on a diet can the working class ensure that the employers start getting fat again and revive the possibility of bigger cakes and bigger slices all round at capitalism's table sometime in the future. This is the idea that lies behind the 'social contract'.

Wilson has said more than once that the working class can expect no rise in its living standards for the next two years. (It will not have escaped his notice that living standards are, in fact, already *falling* for the first time since the last war.) In this situation, say Wilson and the TUC, we must work together to ensure that the impact of the crisis is doled out as equally as possible amongst the working class.

## HEAT OFF

This means that the well-organised sections of the trade union movement should accept an incomes policy to take the heat off the employers' profits and investment. In return, for the rest of the low paid and poorly organised, Labour promises a programme of social measures and concessions.

No one in the workers' move-

ment should have any illusions that this is anything other than a plan to bale out the bosses. After all, Len Murray, General Secretary of the TUC, and Wilson have been openly vying with each other in making the sweetest overtures to the employers. Murray said at the Brighton TUC: 'We are on the side of enterprise. We want to work with management...' Wilson himself said this week: 'We want to make industry more successful, we want private enterprise to be profitable...'

**'Only the outright expropriation — without compensation — of assets and profits from capitalist employers could hope to bring an immediate surplus that could pay for a social plan in the interests of the working class.'**

Of course, the way in which the Labour and trade union leaders try to sell the social contract makes great play of social reforms that voluntary incomes policy can supposedly secure for the working class. Limited and unlikely though they are, the social gains on low pay, discrimination against women, house-building and rents, food subsidies, social services and cuts in defence spending are a definite *social plan* for the working class, which alter the attitude of the working class towards the wages struggle.

The social contract thus gives the trade union leaders a new and far more directly political role. They now have to lead their members on the basis of a clear *political* platform with what claims to be a plan for working class social advance.

So militants in the trade unions who understand that the social contract is in reality a plan to extricate capitalism from the crisis at the expense of the working class cannot be



Any real workers' plan, would have to deal with the resistance of the bosses and the armed forces of the state. This is the key question Labour plans leave out, assuming the armed forces to be neutral.

# R WORKERS' PLAN?



content with working to smash the social contract on the wages front. For the bureaucracy can always reply 'What do you propose, then, to do about the low-paid and poorly organised? How do you propose to solve inflation and unemployment? What about education and housing? How can we get nationalisation?'

## BADLY DISGUISED

In other words, militants must not stop short by saying that the social contract is an incomes policy badly disguised which can be effectively smashed with big wage claims. To do so is to play into the hands of the trade union bureaucrats and Labour leaders in their new 'political' role.

This danger arose classically at the recent conference of the National Union of Miners in Llandudno. The 'lefts' at the conference—Scargill, McGahey and Co—failed to provide any other perspective in opposition to the social contract except wages militancy. Similarly, at the NUM special delegate conference last week on the NCB's productivity deal, the only aim put forward by the militants who correctly walked out of the conference was to defend the union from attacks on its all-round ability to fight militant and united wage struggles. They did not propose an all-round programme for the mining industry, and on energy policy in general, which could become a programme of struggle not simply for the NUM, but the working class as a whole.

## LABOUR FAKES

When the response to the social contract stops short at 'super wage militancy', the right wing of the bureaucracy can have a field day. Joe Gormley, for example, could back the social contract against the 'left' in the NUM while accusing them of being only interested in the wage claim and not the 'struggle for socialism'.

The Ford workers are giving a lead to all the working class, in not giving a fig for the sort of social contract Lab-

There is clearly an urgent need to develop a wider programme for the struggle against the social contract. The fight must be developed for a *comprehensive workers' solution* to the crisis, for a *workers' plan*.

Over the last year, the left wing of the Labour Party has become more vocal than ever about the need to progress towards socialism. Tony Benn said at the last Labour Party conference in 1973: 'The crisis that we inherit when we come to power will be the occasion for fundamental change and not the excuse for postponing it.'

But despite all the strong language, Wilson's ploy of putting Foot, Benn and Heffer into the Labour Government has effectively shut them up. The Government White Paper on Industry, so dreaded by the employers, contains no threat of nationalisation for the major and most profitable capitalist concerns. The entire Labour 'left' has been lined up behind the social contract.

## SOUPED UP

In defending the social contract the 'lefts' do not usually use the same arguments as Wilson and Gormley. For the Wilsons and the Gormleys, socialism is just a souped up welfare state, with full employment and rising living standards—all realisable, they claim, under capitalism.

Foot, Benn and Heffer argue that socialism at least entails the removal of industry and finance from the hands of the capitalists. They also argue that this needs a planned economy instead of one dominated by capitalist profit.

The 'lefts' see their present support



our and Jack Jones are trying to sell them. However, they have no answer to Labour or the union leaders when they are accused of sabotaging the fight for 'justice, social equality and socialism', as the Labour fukes like to call their pro-capitalist plan.

**Martin Jukes, director general of the Engineering Employers' Federation, Britain's largest employers' association, stated in an interview on BBC radio:**

*"The Social Contract is valuable as far as it does produce wage restraint."*

**He obviously doesn't see the Social Contract as contributing to the struggle for socialism! Neither should his employees!**

for the social contract as a step along this road. The argument runs: 'Labour can only fulfill their side of the social contract by carrying out a wide extension of public ownership. Only when a Labour Government can get its hands on the assets and profits of the major firms will there be the cash for a massive programme of social reforms in the interests of the working class.'

## PROBLEM

However, there is a problem here. Nationalisation measures have been taken before by Labour Governments, but they have always paid compensation to the capitalists for the full value of their factories and shares.

For instance, the mines have made millions of pounds in surplus since they were nationalised. But most of it was siphoned off immediately in compensation and interest payments. (In 1963, £50 million of a £72 million surplus was eaten up by compensation and interest.)

Only the outright *expropriation*—without compensation—of assets and profits from capitalist employers



*'For the Wilsons and the Gormleys, socialism is just a souped up welfare state with full employment and rising living standards'*

could hope to bring an immediate surplus that could pay for a social plan in the interests of the working class.

But that would demand the Labour lefts dropped all their present kowtowing before Parliament and the law.

The notion that, after paying off compensation, the nationalised industries could eventually turn over a vast surplus to the social services doesn't wash either. Nationalised industries have so far rarely made an operating surplus at all because 'public' industries *subsidise* private industry—for example, by producing low-price essential services or goods (coal, transport, electricity) for capitalist business.

The only means of carrying through effective socialist measures is by relying on the strength and organisation of the working class. But by giving verbal support to the social contract the 'lefts' bolster up one of the most dangerous weapons designed to sap the strength of the workers' movement.

Labour's actual proposals for nationalisation can guarantee far less than even the Labour 'lefts' hope for. As more Court Lines and Ferranti's occur, the Labour Government proposes that the capitalists will be baled out time and again to keep them in business with huge dollops of 'public money' that has already been taken in taxes from workers' pockets.

Against the miserable proposals of the Labour Party, the unions should advance a trade union plan for the nationalisation of industry under workers' control. However to be effective such a plan would need to be a programme for the nationalisation of all major industry, and the banks.

It would refuse to pay compensation. It would end the present system by which nationalised concerns support capitalist business with cheap fuel, steel and transport.

## EXPROPRIATION

It would prevent the employers in industries which remained in the bosses' hands from sacking workers and raising their prices to meet the new economic situation. It would begin to work out the priorities for production on the basis of the needs and desires of the working class, not on the 'need' of the capitalists for a fat profit. It would guarantee the working class a rising standard of income, along with all necessary social and cultural services.

All this, of course, would be a beautiful state of affairs. And no doubt it is the goal the Labour 'lefts' hold in their minds' eye. The problem, of course, is *how* such a plan could be created and implemented. After all, such a plan envisages the expropriation and destruction of ruling class power and is bound to be met with vigorous opposition. The experience of Chile vividly shows that the ruling class has no respect for the authority of any Parliament if it ceases to serve their interests.

Such a plan could only be drawn up by the workers' organisations and implemented through *workers' control*. The working class, organised through a national system of democratic workers councils, and backed up by working class self-defence org-

anisations, could impose *its* plan on the ruling class and smash any attempts at capitalist sabotage. Such a system, linked to a Government which was based on and responsible to the organisations of the working class, would really open the road to a socialist society.

## COMING STRUGGLES

In the coming months, thousands of workers are going to be involved in the most vicious confrontations with the bosses over wage claims and redundancies. The Labour Party, if it comes into Government, will wave the social contract and demand 'fair play' from the working class. The union leaders will try to smash the most militant struggles.

Militants should fight against the coming redundancies on the principle that the working class should take no

**'Against the miserable proposals of the Labour Party, the unions should advance a trade union plan for the nationalisation of industry under workers' control. . . . such a plan would need to be a programme for the nationalisation of all major industry, and the banks.'**

responsibility for the chaos and disaster the employers' capitalist system produces. The principle of *work or full pay* has to be fought for; *no redundancies* and *no reduction of pay if the working week is cut*. Workers should occupy factories if redundancies are threatened and demand that the Government *nationalise the entire firm under workers' control, with no job loss*.

These proposals can be wedded to the fight for socialism if the workers' movement develops its own organisations which owe their allegiance not to Parliament and the law, but only to the working class. No longer should the bosses, backed up by the Government, the civil service, and the law, be allowed to exert a stranglehold over the fate of jobs and workers' living standards. This control must be in the hands of workers themselves.

In the coming months, militants will be debating the way forward against the social contract, and the ideas of Labour's left wing. But the atmosphere won't be anything like the gentlemanly corridors and tea-room of the House of Commons. It won't even reflect the restrained bustle of Transport House. The debate will occur on the picket line, in the occupied factories, shop stewards' committees and trades councils. Out of it can come the beginnings of a socialist society.

**TIM HALL**

# PARLIAMENT USELESS - IN LONDON OR EDINBURGH

The election in Scotland



A workers' government would give all-out support to the struggles of women like these shopworkers for equal pay

Excepting abortion and contraception, Labour has turned out a series of promises for women that embrace most of the issues raised by the women's movement. In their bumper bundle, they include child care, family allowances, equal pay, etc.

Implicit in Labour's proposals is their acceptance of the need for state responsibility in big areas of family life. Recognition is one thing. The immediate implementation is another.

That Labour has been forced to include these points does show that there is a growing awareness and understanding of them in the Labour movement.

However, this carrot is tied very firmly to the inevitable stick. "Such proposals cost money" says Labour. "We understand—and think you will too—that their timing depends on how quickly we can get on top of the economy".

As Labour's only plan for 'getting on top of the economy' is the social contract, the message is loud and clear. You want these things. Then you have to observe the social contract. You should also make sure that your menfolk observe it.

This package is designed to put a block on the militancy of women, and seeks to counterpose their interests to those of male militants fighting the social contract. This exposes not only the contradictory nature of Labour's proposals but also shows their hypocritical and opportunist nature.

The same method lies behind the approach to pensions. Labour suggests taking the twenty most highly paid years of a worker's life as the basis of working out their retirement pension. But if a woman hasn't worked for twenty years, her pension is based on her husband's earnings. This ties the pensions of most women to the earning power of their husbands.

Worst of all are Labour's proposals for putting their programme into practice. All they can lamely suggest is a series of parliamentary acts. Their pride and joy, the White Paper on sex-discrimination will—so they inform us—outlaw sex discrimination through independent inquiries and not rely on private prosecution. All they are offering here is another toothless Race Relations Act.

The most successful fights against racism have taken place when workers as at Imperial Typewriters, have organised themselves to fight it. Where immigrants have relied on the Race

## LABOUR TRIES SOCIAL CON-TRICK ON WOMEN

Relations Board, they have got nowhere.

Then there is the stark lesson of the Equal Pay Act. In the four years since the Act was passed it has been unscrupulously used by the employers to dodge paying women the full rate. Thousands of women have been re-graded out of the orbit of the Act and have no legal claims to equal pay.

Many women covered by the Act have still had to fight to get the 90 per cent by the end of 1973. Without these fights the '90 per cent' would simply have remained a bright promise.

Labour also ignores the material basis of the oppression of women. It ignores the responsibility of many women for children. It does not face up to the fact that so many women are financially dependent on men for a large part of their lives. To have any meaning their anti-discrimination proposals must be tied in with equal pay. That means closing all the loopholes in the present Act and instituting a trade union inquiry into the changes made by the employers into job grading and description.

This has also got to be linked to the question of low pay—two-thirds of working women are not even covered by the Equal Pay Act. Unless a vigorous fight is conducted for a national minimum wage with a sliding scale to compensate for increases in the cost of living, women will remain on the bottom rung of the economic ladder.

Adequate nurseries and creche facilities are other vital measures to ensure that women can take the necessary steps forward to equality. Formal equality, without the means to exercise it, is no more than a con and an insult.

In March this year, the London Trades' Council produced the Working Women's Charter. Labour's programme for women includes many of the demands of the Charter. This can give the Charter campaign a real boost by opening up these questions and gaining wider support for them in the labour and trade union movement.

What we have to ask is how can these proposals be put into practice? Reliance on Parliament—as past practice shows—is useless.

The Charter campaign has to be taken into the broad trade union movement. That means getting active support for the struggles of women—both at home and at their work place. A workers' government that really wanted to fight against sex discrimination would give all out support to the struggles of women and use its legislative powers to give them backing.

Labour has no intention of doing that, which means that other workers must throw their full weight behind the fight of women workers and demand that Labour ratifies the gains made by these independent struggles.

LINDA SMITH

The last election showed that the Labour Party is in deep trouble in Scotland.

The election of the seven Scottish National Party (SNP) MPs in the rural north was a shock, but it was the loss of working class support in the industrialised west of Scotland—areas like Govan or Hamilton—which gave the Party leadership its biggest worries. The failure of the Labour Party over the last three decades to in any way get to grips with the basic problems of the Scottish working class is the root of Labour's crisis in Scotland.

### THREE GENERATIONS

For three generations Scottish workers have suffered from high unemployment, low wages, and decaying facilities in social services like housing or education. They have literally been forced to leave their homes in search of their jobs. As a recently published report by the Scottish Council put it "...unemployment (and they could have added ban housing or emigration) continues unabated as though regional policy had never existed".

The recent development of oil off the Scottish coast brought only huge profits for the oil monopolies. Indeed, the union busting attitudes of these firms, combined with their ruthless exploitation of temporary migrant labour is a grave challenge to the organised strength of the Scottish working class.

The SNP has been able to take advantage of these huge problems and give what appeared to be a sound answer to them: separation, and the use of 'Scotland's oil'. There is no doubt that in the absence of any clear alternative for dealing with the situation from the leadership of the Scottish labour movement 'devolution' did appear to large sections of workers as some magical solution to the problems that they face in the region.

It was this lack of any effective programme and its disastrous consequences at the polls which provided the background to the special Scottish Labour Party conference held in Glasgow six weeks ago. This conference decided to support the setting up of a directly elected assembly in Scotland, with legislative powers.

Despite the smoke and noise of the battle over the question of the Assembly inside the Labour Party, and the boasts of those who back the pro-devolution policy after their victory, the truth is that the Assembly will solve nothing for the working class in Scotland.

### VOTE-GETTER

Like true social democrats, the Scottish Labour Party determined its attitude towards the Assembly on the basis of its use in winning votes. Many agreed with Alex Donnet, right wing leader of the General and Municipal Workers Union, when he argued that he was in favour of the Party supporting an Assembly for the one reason: it would help Harold Wilson get re-elected as Prime Minister. What all this chatter shows is the real crisis that the Labour Party in Scotland (and in the rest of Britain) faces in trying to hold on to its

working class support in a situation where its old policies are increasingly seen by both the working class and the ruling class as irrelevant to the crisis which is racking British capitalism.

For the Labour Party, the idea of a Scottish Assembly is just a continuation of these old policies in a new form. It remains wedded to a programme that counts on Parliament to solve everything and is totally class collaborationist.

But what the experience of the fight at the UCS shipyards showed (despite the reformist leadership of the campaign) was that the real power to solve Scotland's problems lies in the mobilised and organised strength of the working class, not in a Parliament, whether at Westminster or Edinburgh. In a situation of increasing working class struggle (it was impossible to get on a bus or buy a pint of beer last week in Glasgow because of strikes) the Labour Party prefers to base itself on the power of the capitalist state, and work to tart-up the capitalist Parliament, rather rely on the power of the working class.

Even the experience of the last few years in dealing with the oil monopolies should have shown the uselessness of legislation against organised capital. To give just one example: official planning permission at the Nigg Bay Dry dock only allowed for 600 local workers, but today there are 3000 migrant workers employed there.

### CONTROL

Despite all the flowery speeches about using the Scottish Assembly as a means of 'giving people more control over their own lives' the Assembly as planned would only be yet another barrier separating the working class from any effective control over the real forces which control their lives—real forces like the banks and big business. Instead of confronting this real enemy, the Labour Party see the Assembly as a means of collaborating with them, by giving more volume to the familiar cry of the Scottish Labour Party of 'attracting investment to Scotland' and of selling the rather limited scenic attractions of the industrialised west to yet more businessmen.

The Assembly as proposed will provide no solution whatsoever to the real problems that the working class in Scotland face. That solution will only emerge from the workers of Scotland using their own strength and basing themselves on their own power. An Assembly called by the Scottish TUC with delegates from factories, tenants' committees and other working class organisations would be a body that could really start to carve out a way forward.

But even a more modest venture, like a conference of oil and oil related industry workers which took up the demands of total unionisation, on the siting of work in areas where the working class is already living, of the opening of the books of the oil monopolies, and of a workers' plan for energy, would represent a much bigger step towards solving Scotland's real problems than a the sand years of Assembly debate.

COLIN McPHERSON

## DEMONSTRATION: Labour's promises for women - vote and fight!

- \* Grant the SEI women's demands - equal pay NOW
- \* Free nurseries for all
- \* Smash the social contract
- \* For a workers enquiry into regrading

2pm Saturday 5 October at the Department of Employment, 8 St James's Square SW1, then march to Transport House. (Nearest tube Piccadilly Circus)



# LABOUR DEMOCRACY

## A HEADACHE FOR THE MACHINE

Only days before the official announcement of the election date, Brightside Constituency Labour Party in Sheffield came to the end of the long battle to oust their MP, Eddie Griffiths.

Griffiths had been one of the staunchest right-wingers in the Parliamentary Labour Party. He had attacked the miners' strike earlier this year, he was an out-and-out supporter of wage restraint, and on the important issue of the steel industry he seemed more concerned with the employers' interests than either saving workers' jobs or extending nationalisation into the heavy engineering firms in the heart of his constituency.

The local Party has now replaced him with Joan Maynard of the farmworkers union, a left-wing member of the Labour Party National Executive.

### CORRUPTION

Earlier this year Eddie Milne, Labour MP for Blyth was also ousted by his party. Milne had not got on with his agent and the

local Party, we were told. But the real reasons were quite different. His interest in the affairs of the region had brought him up against the corruption that was rife in the North-East Labour Party.

From then on, Milne waged a campaign on inner-party democracy and consistently raised the call for a Labour Party inquiry into the corruption charges. Milne stood as an independent Labour candidate in the February election—and won.

Now both Maynard and Milne are contesting seats for this election. Maynard, who was the most energetic supporter on the National Executive for Milne's call for a Labour Party inquiry into the North-East, stands as an official Labour candidate; Milne remains an independent. But both will be standing as the result of a consistent campaign on the importance of democracy in the labour movement.

### SOCIAL CONTRACT

At a time when the Labour Party is fighting the election on the central issue of the social contract, this is all the more important.

As Joan Maynard told *Red Weekly*: 'If the '64-'70 Labour Government had had a real commitment to working people, and if they'd legislated that commitment with the same force that the Heath Government legislated for the ruling class, then I think we'd have a majority Labour Government today. I think the Labour Government must be responsible to and accountable to the organisations of the working class ... I think one of the ways of doing this, and it's not an easy one, would be for the NEC to recall the Party Conference if the Parliamentarians were not carrying out the programme.'

Undoubtedly Joan Maynard would not accept the implications of all these positions—a real accountability of a Government to the working class does not involve just the Labour Party conference but above all the replacement of the parliamentary system by workers' councils—but the whole way Maynard has come to be a candidate, and the views she fought for in support of Eddie Milne, begin to pose real problems for all the bureaucrats.

## Eviction Election

Squatters began erecting barricades in Elgin Avenue, Paddington, last Saturday. This event—part of a 'day of action and explanation'—backs up the campaign by the 250 squatters and families to force the issue into the election—'turn the election eviction into an eviction election.'

In Paddington the housing half of the social contract means the organisation by a Labour GLC of the biggest ever eviction in Britain. 'This,' said the squatters' spokesman, Piers Corbyn of the IMG, 'will clear a few illusions in the social contract. Our struggle is part of the struggle to smash it—no to wage restraint, housing for all! A big victory for Labour creates the best conditions to struggle for such demands. So we say "Vote Labour" too.'

Squatters have already thoroughly leafleted Harold Wilson's and Michael Foot's London election meetings. Next Monday, 7 October, they will be picketing Transport House from 5-6.30pm along with building workers and students on the slogans: 'No evictions by Labour! Housing for all! For a crash programme of public building and take-over of speculators' empty property to solve the housing crisis!'

### NOTTINGHAM RED CIRCLES:

Wide-ranging series of discussions based on the politics of the Fourth International. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month at 8 pm in the Lion Hotel, Clumber Street.

**RALLY AGAINST NF:** Saturday 5 October, 12 noon at New Speakers' Corner, Birmingham Town Hall. Supported by Yorkswood Site, Pat Hickey (UCATT Conveator), Brian Chambers (AUEW Dist Sec), Birmingham Committee Against Racism, IMG, IS, Big Flame.

**MARCH AGAINST THE NF** organised by Haringey Trades Council Committee Against Racism and Fascism, Saturday 5 October assembling at Bruce Castle Park at 2 pm. Speakers from trade union and political groups.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK** Socialist Medical Association seminar, Saturday 3 November from 10 am to 5.30 pm at the Assembly Hall, Unity House, Euston Road, London NW1. Details from Organising Secretary, 54 Finchley Court, Ballards Lane, London N3 1NH.

**GUINEA, ANGOLA, Mozambique** Medical Action blood donor session, Sunday 6 October at 11 am in the Province of Natal Clinic, Lamb's Conduit Street, WC1. Appointments can be made by phoning 734 9541, but donors can attend any time.

**S.E. ESSEX RED CIRCLE:** Wednesday 9 October at 8 pm—'Fascism: What it is and how to fight it.' At 39 Kennel Lane, Billericay, Essex.

**TROOPS OUT NOW:** prepare for 27 October national demonstration on Ireland. Demand: British troops out now; self-determination for the Irish people; smash British imperialism in Ireland. Rally at Clerkenwell Green, Sunday 27 October at 2 pm. March to Fleet Street, Whitehall and Smith Square

## CANTEEN STRUGGLE BOILS OVER

Refectory workers at Birmingham University are waging a real fight back against deteriorating conditions.

The workers are complaining about the University's miserly attitude to employing adequate staff.

The refectory workers have put forward the following demands:

—A sliding scale of wages, i.e. wages adjusted upwards on a monthly system based on a price index mutually agreed between Management and Union.

—A return to full staffing in the Refectory to be decided by mutual agreement of Management and Union.

—If the Management can show that full staffing is not possible then workers must share wages saved.

—Equal pay for equal work.

—Free nursery facilities for University workers.

—Double time overtime payment for full-time workers after 35 hours per week and after an 8 hour day for part-time workers.

—Time off for shop stewards to undertake Union business.

—All Union-Management agreements must be submitted to be approved by a mass meeting of Refectory workers.

—An end to the continuing abuse of women workers by the Management.

As part of their campaign the workers staged a strike on 12 July—Degree Day at the University. On Monday they organised another one-day strike, which was combined with a demonstration.

# WHAT'S ON

**LONDON IMG** election meeting: 'Vote Labour against the Social Con-Trick'. Wednesday 9 October at 8 pm in the Institute of Education, Malet Street (Tottenham Court Rd, Goodge St, and Warren St tubes). Speakers: John Ross (IMG) and Ford worker.

**SOCIALIST WOMAN FORUM:** 'Labour's promises for women'. Tuesday 8 October at 7.30 pm in the Roebuck pub, Tottenham Court Road (Warren St tube).

**LONDON RED FORUMS:** A comprehensive political education series, every Tuesday at 8 pm in the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road, N1.

**TYNESIDE IMG:** Public meeting—'On what basis should socialists support the Labour Party?'. Thursday 3 October, 8 pm at the Adelaide Hotel, New Bridge Street (behind Manors Station), Newcastle.

**NORTH OF THE RIVER** on election night, 10 October. Come to 12 Tolmers Square for TV, sounds, refreshments, etc. at invitation of Euston/Camden IMG from 8.30 pm onwards. Modest entrance fee to help build *Red Weekly*. Transport home will be arranged.

**FUND-RAISING PARTY** on election night, 10 October. TV coverage—expert opinion!—music—booze—etc. 5 Hayter Road, Brixton SW2 (near Brixton tube), from 9.30 pm. Entrance 25p.

**IMG GAY GROUP:** Contact J. Mills, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds for further information.

On the occasion of the 1st anniversary of the October War

### THE FOURTH ARAB-ISRAELI WAR ... ONE YEAR AFTER

Panel and discussion:

—an Egyptian view

—an Israeli view

—a Palestinian view

—a Western view

**New Theatre, London School of Economics, Houghton Street, W.C.2. — Monday 7 October, 7 pm**

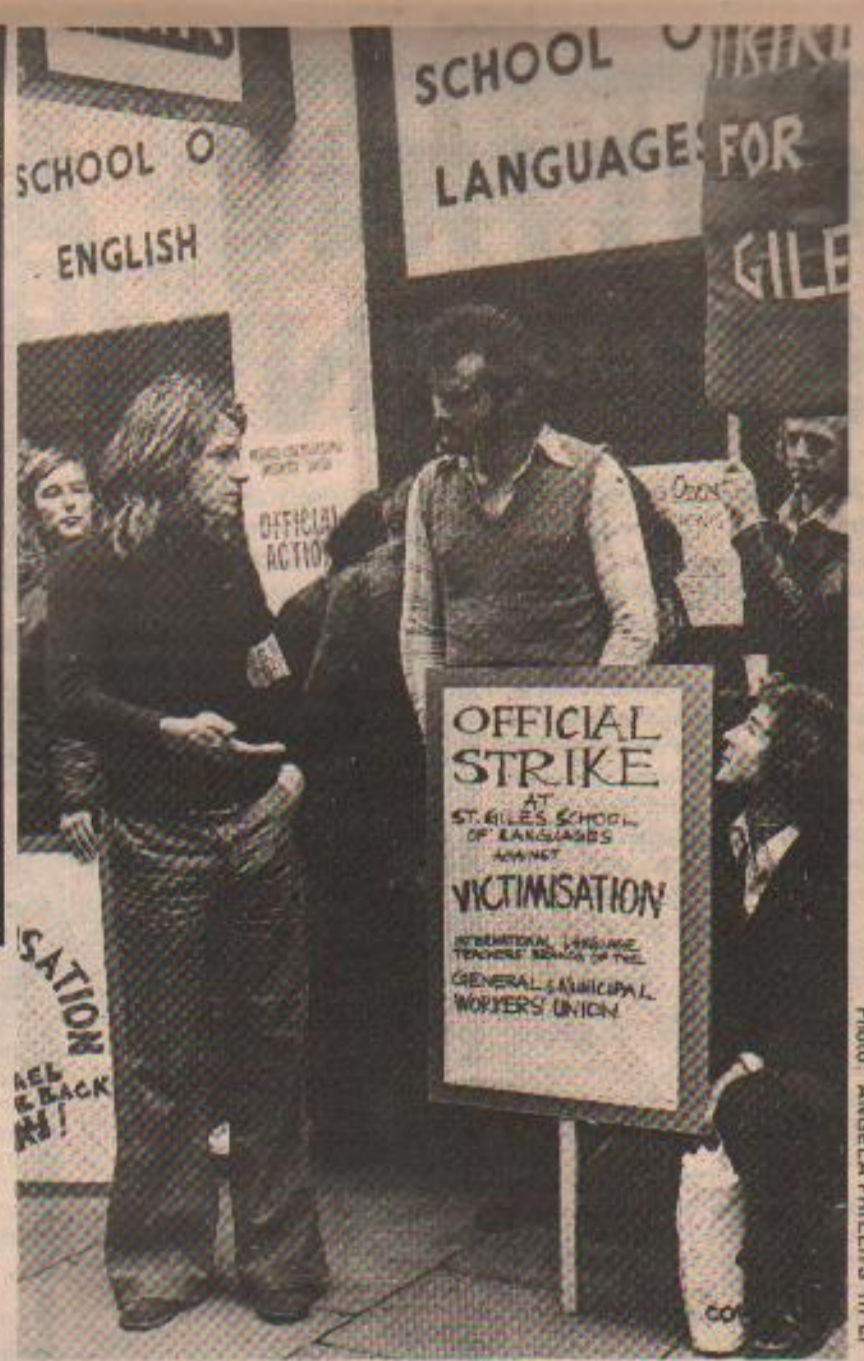
Organised by Palestine Action Campaign, 101-3 Gower Street, London WC1

**BENGALI FRIENDS** in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and *Lara* (Fourth International paper), contact: Bengali, Mullveden, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

**LIVERPOOL RED BOOKS:** Revolutionary literature—Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Eastern Europe, Third World, Ireland, Women's Liberation. 81a Renshaw Street, Liverpool. Tues-Fri: 12.30-3. Sat: 11-3.

**WATFORD RED FORUMS:** Fortnightly in the Green Man, Watford High Street. Next meeting—Monday 14 October, at 8 pm.

**SOUTHALL RED FORUMS:** Every Friday evening at 8 pm in the 'Featherstone Arms', Featherstone Road, Southall (near Dominion Cinema).



IMG Militant, Mike Cunningham, (left with armband), on the picket line at St. Giles'.

## A STRIKING VICTORY IN ANY LANGUAGE

The staff at St. Giles foreign language school in London's Oxford Circus downed pens last week in support of victimised teacher Michael Cunningham. Within a couple of days management had caved in.

Cunningham had been involved since May in unionising staff at similar colleges throughout the country. In the last five months, over 400 teachers have joined the International Language Teachers' branch of MATSA, the white collar section of the General and Municipal Workers Union, in response to awful pay and conditions.

But as in most places with no tradition of trade unionism, the employers have taken a firm stand against the unionisation. They are terrified that a well organised labour force would eat into their massive

profits. The fifty officially recognised schools alone bring in an estimated £20 million of foreign currency.

A number of teachers have been victimised, but their latest attack was on the Chairman of the branch, Michael Cunningham, by the 'subtle' manoeuvre of telling him that there would be no work for him after his department closes down in three months' time.

Only a few weeks ago management had told Cunningham that his employment would not be affected. The union said immediately that it would make any strike action official. The next day it was.

The victory of the St. Giles teachers will give a real boost to the unionisation programme. And their increased strength can be used to good effect in sorting out a united claim.

## RACIST BUSMEN RIDE AGAIN

The 9/112 branch of the Transport & General Workers' Union in Leeds has re-affirmed its decision against the wearing of turbans by Sikh busmen. Huddersfield busmen, however, have passed a resolution condemning this position, and a delegation of busmen from Bradford and Huddersfield turned up to the 9/112 branch meeting last Sunday to leaflet the Leeds busmen.

The latter have played right into the management's hands. Leeds City Transport has now put forward a proposal whereby they will make concessions to the busmen over conditions if 9/112 branch allows the Sikhs to wear turbans. The LCU management have understood how and why their workers are divided—and how they can use the racism of the white workers to weaken the combined industrial strength of the union on Leeds buses.

It is therefore vital that the TGWU in Leeds and other T&G branches should come out in support of the Sikhs and against the attitude of the 9/112 branch. The TGWU bureaucracy has still said and done nothing about the problem. Its fear of its racist membership means that it is sitting back while a whole branch may be destroyed.

The only answer is a fight against racism in the TGWU as a whole. The self-organisation of black workers in the union and a campaign against racism are now absolutely crucial for the future of the TGWU in Leeds.

Martin O'Leary

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# CUTTING A SLICE OUT OF STUDENTS

Only a few months ago students won the biggest-ever increase in their grants. Yet the effects of inflation mean that by January this will have gone up in smoke. Here RICK SISSONS, IMG Student Organiser, outlines the kind of response which will be needed to organise a successful defence of students' living standards.

It took the National Union of Students three years of campaigning to raise students' living standards to a level which was still below the 1962 equivalent in real terms. Yet even the recent £105 grant increase will disappear within the next few months if inflation reaches the widely predicted 20% mark.

Moreover married women and working class students still do not receive a full grant. Thousands receive discretionary awards from their local authority, but some may be lucky even to get that this year Leeds Council was only forced to pay after a massive student protest.

Inflation has always hit hardest against those sections of society living on fixed incomes—pensioners, the unemployed, and students surviving on State benefits or grants. There is only one way to fight this—through the demand for a sliding scale.

This would mean an immediate percentage increase in the grant for every percentage increase in a student cost of living index. This way the real value of the grant can be maintained.

Does this stop further claims for a higher grant? No—quite the reverse! The sliding scale merely defends gains already made. While it may give immediate cover against inflation, it does not improve the basic levels. Thus a campaign of direct action must continue for:

- \*Abolition of all discretionary awards.
- \*An end to discrimination against married women.
- \*Full and higher grants for all students.

## CUTBACKS

However the erosion in students' living standards has another side.

## NALGO prepare strike action

The first week of the university term will be far from quiet. Students may face financial problems, but so do the staff. Already selective strikes are planned by members of NALGO.

The dispute has arisen over a pay deal agreed on 16 May which gave administrative and clerical staff a starting salary of £918. Not a great deal to ask for, one might think. But it was too much for the universities to bear. Having accepted the agreement they thought about it and scabbed. Instead they proposed the princely sum of £783! At the same time, they reduced the upper limit by £400 to £1400.

This is just another desperate attempt by the college authorities to cut corners and save costs. The direct action to be taken by NALGO offers the possibility of building a student-worker alliance against this state policy, which is the root cause of the problems that students and campus workers face.

Unfortunately the strike will halt the payment of grants to students and wages to other college workers. This action will not win NALGO support. Instead the only work they should carry out is the making of these payments. It is not in the interests of NALGO members to make those people suffer who are already bearing the brunt of the spending cuts.

A joint campaign must be launched by all those actually fighting the reduction in education expenditure. This joint action would be best organised via joint campus meetings of all campus workers and students.

## Victory for Leeds

Students in Leeds have begun the fight against the local Council's policy of education on the cheap with a resounding success.

After hearing that the Council had made a cut of £33,000 on discretionary awards—meaning that many students would have to finance themselves if they wanted to study—the students held a brief occupation of the education offices on 19 September. Then they followed this up with a mass picket of over 400 students when the Council's education committee met on Monday 23 September.

The Councillors were only able to talk with great difficulty above the noisy demands of the students for the reversal of the Council's decision, an end to the system of discretionary awards, and full grants for all students. Eventually they decided they would reverse the cutback on grants—because 'we didn't realise how much hardship our ruling had caused'.

At a meeting held afterwards, the students discussed what they had learned from this first struggle. Two things were obvious: firstly, that direct action was the only way of forcing the Council to change its policies; secondly, that the attack on discretionary awards was merely the tip of the iceberg. There are clearly many more cutbacks on the way—at a time when conditions and facilities are already at an all-time low.

It was agreed that in order to fight for a decent education students in colleges in Leeds will have to organise together with teachers, lecturers, campus workers, school students and all others affected by the Council's attempts to run down education in Leeds. To this end the Leeds Area of NUS is going to mount a campaign—leafletting schools, speaking at union meetings of the NUT, AITU, and NUPE, etc.—to organise these groups on the basis of an action programme against any cutbacks.

For what the State gives with its left hand, it snatches back with its right.

The root of the problem is that while the capitalist class wants and needs to expand higher education to provide industry with skilled labour power, it cannot find the money to pay for this policy. The huge economic crisis in Britain has resulted in the welfare state getting short change. The result is a process of rationalisation and cutbacks within higher education—a strategy of education on the cheap.

What flows from this strategy is the ending of subsidies for housing, and food, as well as the chopping of building programmes. Labour have carried out these policies just as faithfully as the Tories ever did.

In particular, Labour has done next to nothing about the Tory education cuts announced last December. They have only managed to salvage 17% of the £180 million chopped in Barber's budget. It was also the Labour Government which refused to meet the NUS claim in full and which still allows discretionary awards to flourish.

The aim of all such policies is to shift the burden of paying for education onto college workers and students. Poor facilities, lower staff-student ratios, higher rents and prices, job loss and low wages are now occupational hazards of college life.

Hence the college authorities seized upon the grant award as a good excuse to propose big rises in rents and prices for the new academic year. At Essex University the administration proposes to double the



student rents, while at Sussex the authorities propose to raise prices by 12½% and rents by 29%. These are not isolated examples. Students all over the country face similar demands.

## RESPONSE

What should be the response of socialists? For the Communist Party and the Broad Left dominated NUS executive, the solution is simple—an alliance with 'progressives' to win friends and influence people in high places. In their game of pressure politics, 'progressives' equals Labour MPs and Vice-Chancellors.

It is true, of course, that the college principals and Vice-Chancellors certainly do not like cutbacks—which make for militant direct action—upsetting their quiet life. But they are realistic people. If the State cannot pay, then they intend to make sure that somebody else does—students and campus workers.

## 'PROGRESSIVE ALLIES'

Thus we see the 'progressive allies' of the CP actually proposing and implementing the cutbacks! The choice is clearly between an alliance with those supporting education on the cheap or with those fighting against these policies.

Such a fighting unity can be built around demands like:

- \*A freeze on college prices and rents.
- \*Higher wages and no redundancies for college workers.
- \*College facilities to match student intake.
- \*No cuts in education spending, by either Tory or Labour.

## HOUSING

At the start of the term the issue which will highlight the spending cuts will be the accommodation shortage. Every year lack of student housing

has worsened. 1974 will be no exception.

Students have to take a stand. They did not cause the problem—they have no responsibility to solve it. Demands should be raised which call for:

- \*All students to be housed, at last year's rent.
  - \*For the authorities to subsidise rent levels.
  - \*For the Council to take over empty property to provide housing for all.
- These demands will only be won via direct action. Tactics like occu-

the police at Essex University with over a hundred arrests.

The reign of the liberal academic and administrator has come to an end. Financial constraints have limited the authorities' room for manoeuvre. If they are to survive education must be rationalised, but that can only be carried through with a defeated, docile student body. As Lord Annan said in vindicating the repression used at Essex against student direct action: 'This is a challenge no university should refuse to meet'.

## Swansea – tip of the iceberg

The witch-hunt against six Swansea students and two lecturers continues unabated. On Monday it was confirmed that the students have definitely been suspended for a year.

The victimisations have come after a fight by students and staff in the philosophy department for the past two and a half years to alter the examination structure. As for the lecturers, both played a prominent role in an ASTMS strike earlier this year, and one was actually told that his contract was being ended because of his record of trade union activity.

The authorities are desperately trying to root out the 'troublemakers' before the start of term. The administration needs to make sure that the students and

staff know what to expect if they fight back against the proposed increases in prices and rents. Likewise if the students and staff cannot defend themselves now, then what chance have they in the near future.

However the issue is wider than just Swansea. The successful victimisation of the eight will encourage vice-chancellors and principals elsewhere to take similar action. Swansea is the first example this academic year, and the term is only a week old! The trend has to be nipped in the bud. This is a fight that must be taken up by all students and staff.

Send donations and messages of support to the Defence Committee, c/o A.Morgan, 14 Bryn-y-more Crescent, Swansea.

pations of college property or squatting empty buildings proved successful last year. They can again.

## LESSONS

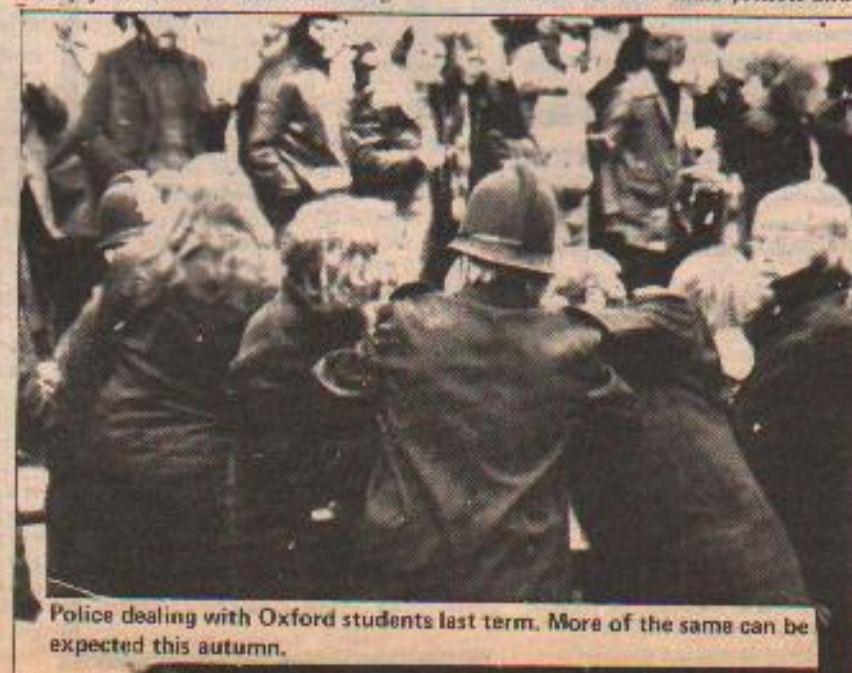
To fight effectively, students must learn some lessons from last year's struggles. It is vital to realise that the authorities have upped the stakes. Oxford, Essex and Kent saw a new determination by the college administrations not to make concessions. This process culminated in the confrontation between mass pickets and

However, the wider use of the law is also a further example of moves within society as a whole to strengthen the State apparatus. The Special Patrol Group's attacks on picket lines, the joint army-police manoeuvres, and repression against weak sections of the population all come into this category.

But along with this repression the authorities will be trying to build a moderate alliance of students, campus workers, academics and the administration to police their own members. During the struggles at Oxford, Essex and Kent such groupings began to emerge. It is upon this base that the authorities want to build in the coming term.

Already the first shots have been fired with the attempt to victimise six students and two staff members at Swansea University. This case and any further ones must be taken up immediately. A defeat in one college weakens the whole of the student body in its efforts to organise against the cut-backs.

Students and campus workers have no responsibility to bale out the sinking bulk of capitalist higher education. Instead they must jointly organise direct action to reject outright the State's policy of education on the cheap. It is only in this way that students will be able to defend their own living standards and make real gains next term.



Police dealing with Oxford students last term. More of the same can be expected this autumn.

# FRELIMO VICTORY DASHES IMPERIALIST HOPES

The independence agreement for Mozambique signed in Lusaka on 7 September is a landmark in the struggle to liberate the entire African continent from the rule of colonialism and racism.

On Wednesday 25 September members of FRELIMO, the guerrilla movement founded ten years ago to fight Portuguese control of the territory, assumed two-thirds of the posts (including the premiership) of the new Government, which will lead the country to independence on 25 June 1975.

The original hopes of Portuguese capitalism have thus been dashed. Four months ago the head of the Portuguese junta, General Spínola, issued a 'blueprint' for the advance to self-rule in the African colonies which sought to frustrate the process of decolonisation. A direct hand-over to the liberation movements was to be avoided by the establishment of 'self-determination based on the full functioning of a democratic system' following a cease-fire.

The aim was firstly to disarm the freedom fighters, and then to encourage the emergence of groups—particularly from amongst the African petty bourgeoisie—willing to make concessions to Portuguese and international imperialism. Liberally funded by

ruptured by a series of detonations. In the centres of Lourenço Marques and Beira, FRELIMO, demonstrations mushroomed, demonstrating clearly that the movement—whose main focus of military activity had been the rural areas of North and West—had not neglected the necessary political preparations amongst the urban African proletariat.

## NEGOTIATIONS

In the face of this onslaught, the manoeuvres projected by Spínola never got off the ground. In August COREMO, a group led by ex-members of FRELIMO who had seceded from the latter during the internal crisis of 1969-70, announced the formation of an alternative coalition group consisting of five small parties with tenuous roots in the urban African petty bourgeoisie. Nothing more has been heard of this grouping, while FRELIMO has been capable of organising rallies numbering thousands of people in the urban areas.

Moreover, significant sections of the quarter million-strong white population, notably the students and members of the Mozambique Democrats, aligned themselves publicly with FRELIMO. In this situation Spínola had no alternative but to negotiate directly with the liberation fighters.



Cement wagons lie crippled by the side of the road to the Cabora Bassa dam after the explosion of a mine by FRELIMO guerrillas. The continuation of such actions after the April coup sealed the fate of Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique.

contract labourers every year, constituting 25% of their total work force. The Cabora Bassa dam on the Zambezi in Tete province is to be linked by high level cables to the South African power system, to which it is projected it will export a large part of its output.

The problem for FRELIMO is that this dependence is two way. Undoubtedly the loss of income involved in the simultaneous severing of all these links would temporarily have grave economic effects on the new state. It remains one of the clearest indictments of the leaderships of the African states further to the north that they cannot be relied upon adequately to compensate for the losses involved in such actions.

## CLASS NATURE

The second big question mark hangs over the class nature of the new regime. Undoubtedly FRELIMO, in its leadership and fighting units, has represented one of the most explicitly anti-imperialist and popularly based movements on the continent. As pointed out above, it has consistently outmanoeuvred those forces based amongst the aspiring African petty bourgeoisie, and has built a firm base amongst the urban proletariat and the rural peasantry of the country.

Nevertheless, one disturbing feature of the statements following on the Lusaka talks has been the lack of

any firm commitment by FRELIMO to thoroughgoing change of the social and economic system.

There is no doubt that the peace agreement will be the signal for an all-out offensive by imperialist interests to ensure a continuing stake in the territory. This will take many subtle forms and will constitute a severe test of the FRELIMO leadership's ability and willingness to live

up to the socialist phraseology which it has increasingly adopted in recent years.

Acting as an important weight in the scales here must be the extensive degree of mass mobilisation which FRELIMO has encouraged during the course of the struggle. To impose a simple neo-colonialist solution will not be at all easy in a territory whose population has such a long history of struggle. In this respect the advent of independence for Mozambique stands in marked contrast to the experience of the majority of the African territories to its north.

Nor is it possible to ignore the effect which this event will have on blacks in Rhodesia and South Africa. Already in the former, the ZAPU-ZANU guerrilla alliance has won some notable advances in the North Western part of the territory.

In South Africa the recent wave of strikes by black workers marks the revival of the movement temporarily squashed after Sharpeville. That the impending independence of Mozambique will act as a rallying point for the masses of southern Africa as a whole was shown beyond doubt on 25 September, when South African police had to break up two large pro-FRELIMO rallies, one in Durban and the other at the black University of Turlloop in the Northern Transvaal.

Indeed, perhaps the most important result of FRELIMO's victory will be the stimulus it provides to the unfolding struggle against the remaining white racist regimes of southern Africa.

## From Tony Southall in Zambia

their imperialist backers, these groups would then compete in the 'democratic arena' with the liberation movements.

### NEW FRONT

Now this formula has been completely junked for Mozambique as well as Guine-Bissau. Prime responsibility for its defeat rests with the leadership of FRELIMO who, instead of falling for Spínola's ploy, responded by stepping up the war.

A new front was opened in the crucial Zambezi province—which incorporates some of Mozambique's main strategic communications, and was the chief area for the vast white settlement projected after the successful completion of the Cabora Bassa dam project. Rail communications with the dam site, with the Moatize coal mines, and with Rhodesia were continually dis-

rupted by a series of detonations. In the centres of Lourenço Marques and Beira, FRELIMO, demonstrations mushroomed, demonstrating clearly that the movement—whose main focus of military activity had been the rural areas of North and West—had not neglected the necessary political preparations amongst the urban African proletariat.

What are the longer term prospects for FRELIMO rule in the new state? The first crucial question for the new Government will be its relations with the white racist states of Rhodesia and South Africa. An application of complete economic sanctions to the former would immediately block the outlet via Beira for 90% of Rhodesia's trade. The Smith regime has however just announced the completion of the rail link via Beit Bridge with South Africa, which should enable it to somewhat reduce its dependence on the route.

Again the links with and dependence upon Mozambique by South Africa are marked. The port of Lourenço Marques carries a large part of the trade for the Transvaal industrial heartland of the Republic. The gold mines of South Africa are dependent on Mozambique for about 100,000

# Spanish workers prepare for general strike

by Jose Manzano

General Spínola is now ex-President of Portugal. Mobilisations by Portuguese workers have toppled him from his chair on high.

Just across the border in Spain, General Franco is beginning to wet his pants at the prospect of massive workers' struggles there. The illegal Workers' Commissions have put out a call for a 24-hour general strike some time over the next few weeks.

The Spanish Communist Party, which dominates the Workers' Commissions, are using the planned stoppage as pressure on a section of the ruling class. The CP is after a repeat performance of the Portuguese events which brought Spínola to power earlier this year.

No street demonstrations have been called, no rallies planned. The idea is that the Spanish working class will show 'responsible' opposition to the dictatorship.

and persuade all 'progressives' to ally against the dictatorship.

But it's unlikely that the stoppage will be limited to token pressure. More and more, Spanish workers are taking militant



General Franco.

industrial action both to improve their living standards and to fight against victimisations. Most important, when strug-

gles have broken out, they have very quickly spread. When workers struck at the Elsa glass factory, fifty other factories came out in solidarity. In some cases, solidarity strikes have raised their own demands. At Harry Walker's, for instance, workers first came out in support of strikes at two other factories, and then by decision of a mass meeting stayed out for a wage increase and a shorter working week.

In such a situation, the 24-hour general strike won't just be a day off. No matter what the intentions of the leaders are, there will be demonstrations and mass meetings all across the country.

Here in Britain, we must be at the ready. Preparations must begin now for militant and practical solidarity with our Spanish brothers and sisters. We too must play our part in bringing Franco's regime to its final end.

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# RED WEEKLY

## Right-wing witch-hunt against NALGO militants

The right in the national executive of NALGO (National and Local Government Officers' Association) have launched a vicious attack on militants within the union, in particular the Nalگو Action Group.

Late last week five members of the NEC, led by John Fraser of Leeds branch, issued a press statement claiming that the union was in danger of being taken over by 'extremists'—pointing the finger at NAG and the International Socialists in particular. They are calling for a union enquiry into NAG's activities, and have written to every district council repeating their warning.

It is quite clear why these right wingers have chosen this particular moment for their actions. They hope to inflict a political defeat on all militants in the union, following on the defeats suffered by the rank and file in the London Weighting and National Pay Claim struggles earlier this year.

Certain aspects of the London Weighting campaign have scared NALGO's rather timid leadership; in particular the way that certain sections of the union membership, most notably Islington branch, started to organise and act independently of the 'official' leadership. Such developments—which played an important part in bringing about the defeat of an NEC motion to call off the struggle at the union

conference in June—pose a real threat to the traditionally passive and paternalistic union bureaucracy.

It is significant that the five NEC members have chosen to wage their campaign through journals like the *Local Government Chronicle*, which caters for the middle and upper management grades of the state machinery. A large section of the NALGO leadership come from these grades, and see their interests as being very closely tied to that machinery. The development of struggles in the union thus not only poses a threat to their 'leadership' positions but also attacks the 'smooth functioning' in their eyes of the local government machinery.

It is not clear at the present time how far these scabs want to take their attacks. However, there is certainly a definite link between their activities and the way in which management has used the same period of lull in Southwark to victimise two NALGO members in the Social Services Department, Peter Cooper and John Pratt.

The most energetic and broadest based defence of these two militants is necessary. This is the best way to show that the rank and file, far from being demoralised by the recent defeats, is ready and willing to organise to defeat these new attacks from the management and its allies in the union bureaucracy.

Alan Bennett



# LABOUR'S ANTI-SOCIAL CAR-TRICK

The Ford strike, for a special premium payment for three shift working, centres around an old bone of contention.

Thirteen years ago, the press operators' day and night shifts were changed to a round-the-clock three shift system.

Along with this the management agreed to pay an extra shift allowance of £1.25 a week and also put the workers on a guaranteed week.

### CONDITION

Although a condition of three shift working was that it would run for a trial period of a year, and if the workers rejected it they would have the right to return to the old system, Fords went back on this agreement.

At the same time management withdrew the pledge of the guaranteed week. Now after 13 years of inflation the three shift workers are just £1.27 better off than their two shift counterparts.

The reason that this dispute has flared into the open now is that the last *real* advance in wages at Ford was that gained by the nine week official strike in 1971. Government wage freezes since then have meant a steady erosion in *real* earnings for the workers.

After the downfall of the Tory Government and the ending of Phase Three, there have been a whole series of sectional disputes. Now there is the most serious one of all, the four week strike in the press shop.

### CLAIM

The ball was started rolling by the press shop stewards in late July. Just after this, the Communist Party leadership in the body building plant began to float the mysterious idea of an Interim Wage Claim.

This idea was pushed during the period of the social contract and in the run up to the General Election.

However, when the press shop came out, resulting in the laying off of all the body plant workers, not a word came from the CP stewards. No attempt was made to link this with a struggle for their Interim Award. They did not even try to organise a struggle against the layoffs.

The management were quick to see that neither the CP stewards nor the trade union officials wanted to fight now on the press shop claim. The company are therefore trying to use this to turn the laid-off workers against the press shop strikers.

That is why they have nipped so smartly by offering to negotiate on the Interim Pay Claim, providing the strikers go back to work.

### ATTACK ON MILITANTS

Mr. Todd, an official of the IGWU, put the company's offer to a mass meeting of press shop workers. He asked the strikers to accept the offer, and attacked the strikers at Halewood.

But Arthur Flicker, spokesman for the press shop workers, called on the strikers to reject the company's offer—and they did by an overwhelming majority.

Since that time union officials and other trade union representatives on the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee have joined with the capitalist press in trying to get the press shop workers back into the factory. William Cleasey, convenor at the Ford's Basildon Tractor plant, has added his two-pennorth by saying that the men should return '... to avoid needless

hardship being inflicted on thousands of fellow Ford workers.'

Unfortunately the Halewood men have succumbed to this pressure and the pressure from the Labour Party, who want things quiet on the industrial front during the election period.

### COMPANY'S RELIEF

No positive recommendations were made at the end of the Halewood strike, no doubt to the company's relief. They realise that after being out so long for nothing the workers will not be so enthusiastic to come out again.

The Dagenham press shop was to have another meeting on Wednesday 2 October. But the situation remains the same. Ford's remain adamant that there will be no negotiations until there is a return to work.

Mrs. Castle's Department of Health and Social Security is doing its bit on the strike-breaking front. They have refused to make any payments to laid-off workers and are treating them as strikers. Orders to adopt this policy have come from high up in the Department. No doubt Castle is aware of its strike-breaking implications, and how it is being used to split the workforce.

Steve Harper, a Ford's worker laid off in the dispute, says: 'The press shop workers must continue their strike. The laid-off workers must start a fight now for an Interim Wage Claim, a guaranteed working week and the continuation of thresholds after October. There must also be a campaign to insist that Castle instructs the DHSS to pay both strikers and laid-off workers.'

John Rogers

## Women fight on against officials

At 11 o'clock last Sunday night, women strikers at Salford Electrical Instruments in Heywood, near Manchester, occupied their factory.

Once inside they padlocked all the gates and took over the switchboard to stop all incoming and outgoing calls.

The next day another 100 women strikers manned the picket lines.

The women say they are staying in until their demands for equal pay are granted.

The response of the male workers to the women's action was however deplorable. When the male scabs arrived for work the next day and found the gates locked they broke in through the back to get into work.

Although at the time of writing the occupation and counter-scabbing has been going on for two days, the local AUEW official has yet to appear on the scene.

Again an excellent opportunity presents itself for the union to take up a real fight on behalf of women workers. Instead it has stood idly by whilst its male members carry on strike-breaking.

### Liverpool

The determined fight of 150 women workers at the Wingrove & Rogers factory in Liverpool is still going on.

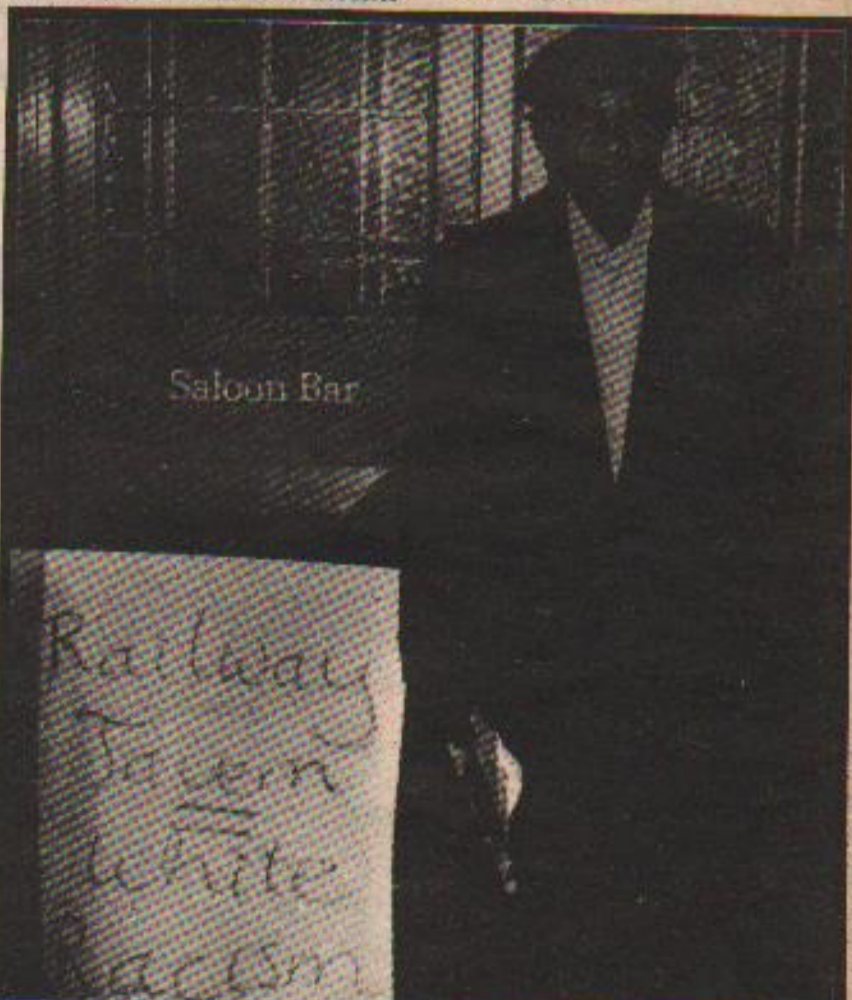
The strike began in late June after management refused to pay a bonus that they had been waiting for for over a year. Nor did the women get their promised threshold payment.

The strike is being supported by about 160 women workers. Fifty of the original workforce are still scabbing they are kindly escorted into work each morning by a posse of 50 coppers.

Although their union, the AUEW, is paying strike pay—which is augmented by levies on workers in other factories—all-out support from the union has been negligible.

The union has still failed to organise mass pickets. No steps have been taken by the union to organise solidarity stoppages in other plants throughout Liverpool. Unless more active support is given to these workers there is a danger that their three month long strike can begin to peter out.

Here is an excellent chance for the AUEW to live up to all its solemn pledges about equal pay and equal rights for women workers. A show of massive strength by the union at Wingrove and Rogers could not only win that dispute, it could also give a big boost to trade unionism amongst that large section of women workers still to be unionised.



Alfred Quest, a 64-year-old Jamaican hospital worker and NUPE member, was one of those who supported a picket last Friday outside the Railway Tavern in Mile End, where the landlord's attitude is that, 'I don't serve black people'. Action against this racist outrage has brought together a number of local militants who are now re-forming an East London Anti-Fascist Group.

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