RACIST RID THE WORKERS!

MILITANCY—that is the best antidote for the poison of racism. 300,000 building workers are on strike throughout Britain and on many sites while workers have fought and organized in impromptu unity with Asian and West Indian workers. Our picture shows a section of a mass London strike meeting in the Surrey Lane site, the biggest GTC housing contract in London. [Picture courtesy Morning Star]

FACTS you should know

CLAIM—Immigrants are crowding into Britain.

FACT—More people leave Britain every year than come in. The difference between the numbers emigrating and the numbers immigrating is, on average, 70,000 a year. In other words, even if all 40,000 Ugandan Asians come to Britain, there will still be 20,000 more emigrants this year.

This is not a new situation. From 1951 to 1961 the net outflow from migration was 1,934,000.

CLAIM—Immigrants help create unemployment.

FACT—The areas with fewest immigrants—Wales, Scotland and the Northern Region—have the heaviest unemployment.

CLAIM—Immigrants take more from the social services.

FACT—Immigrants make fewer demands on the social services. A special study by the National Institutes of Economic Review in 1967 showed that the combined cost of health and welfare services, education and child care and national assistance and insurance in 1956 was on average £32.40 per head for the population as a whole but £42.70 for the immigrant population.

More important, immigrants put more into the social services than they net out of the population. The reason is that many immigrants, especially West Indians, are young, single males who make one demands on the social services than families with children and old people. As a young single man pays as much in national insurance contributions as a married man, immigrants actually help subsidize the social services. Without immigrants, these services would be even more starved of funds.

A bigger paper

by the Editor

RACISM IS RILING THE WORKERS' PUSH!

SOCIALIST WORKER goes from strength to strength and the paper will expand to 16 pages a week.

And the editorial staff will be strengthened by Paul Foot, who will join the paper in early October as a full-time reporter and feature writer.

One of the best-known members of the International Socialists, Paul Foot has won a deserved reputation as a brilliant and forceful journalist.

His exposures of the capitalist system and those who run it have become required reading for tens of thousands of socialists. His remorseless criticism of the "business interests" of the Labour Party and Maudling were a key factor in that top Tory's resignation.

Now Paul Foot has accepted an invitation to join Socialist Worker on a full-time basis. He commented this week:

"Out more than two years now a corrupt and reactionary government has been sustained by a corrupt and reactionary press. We desperately need a mass circulation workers' paper which tells the truth about the government and the monopolies which support it.

"Socialist Worker has grown hugely in the past three years because it has campaigned consistently against the government, against the machinations of the Labour and trade union leaderships and for socialist organisation and socialist propaganda among militant rank and file workers.

"It is great news that the paper is now a daily and that the 14-page paper will have a new and improved news service, reporting and analyzing in greater depth on the struggles of working people.

"It is a big development. An exciting development. Socialist Worker, with your support, will become an even better weapon in the hands of militant workers.
ROCO: NOTING THE GUNFIRE

by Norah Carlin

The recent attempt on the life of Hassan II of Morocco, hit British headlines when some of the army rebels involved took refuge in Gibraltar. Socialists need not sympathise with the rebels, whose aims were reactionary in the extreme.

Hassan's regime has been shambolic and corrupt. Since he came to the throne in 1961 he has ruled with the support of a loyal army, a rich, rural landowner who are heavily dependent on French capital for their luxurious way of life, their markets and their prestige tourist industry.

From 1965 to 1970 the Moroccan parliament was suspended, and the introduction of a new constitution in 1970 had no change.

A year ago, an assassination attempt by a Rebel officer to danger the garden party at the royal palace of Skhirat, was a coup into a programme of reforms. A few notoriously corrupt ministers were sacked during the coup, and a new referendum on a new constitution held, with raised and a new government formed.

But at the same time, student strikes were taking place and the already savagely put down, and the king, according to some, began to change the social basis of his regime.

BOYCOTT

Hassan also invited the two opposition parties, the Socialists (Independent Socialists Party and the UNFP (National Union of Popular Forces) into ‘conversations’ with him. Both parties refused, and boycotted the constitutional referendum. They are waiting for next spring’s parliamentary elections, which they will use to try to challenge the king by demonstrating the extent of their popularity.

Both parties do enjoy considerable support in the army, however, in the 1970s to fight for Moroccan independence from the French, lost its support in the army. This depends on the smaller merchants and shopkeepers in Morocco.

The UNFP, founded as the Popular Wing of the independence movement, draws its support mainly from the urban workers and the peasantry. At one time it cooperated with the Communist Party in elections.

Both opposition parties have strong links with the trade unions, which played an important part in the independence struggle and since the 1930s has been a central figure in the countryside as well as the towns.

But neither party was involved in the events of 17 August. The assassination attempt seems to have been directed at the king’s attempt to open the ‘front’ to the left. Just how rectorial it was can be shown by the involvement of the Minister of Defence, General Oufkir.

Oufkir is a new of an army officer who begins the French against the Viet Minh. His political rise was assured by 1960, when he became head of the Moroccan security police. It is widely believed that he got this position through the influence of the French, who wished after Morocco became independent in 1956 to have ‘this man in a position of power.

In 1964 Oufkir was responsible for shooting down demonstrations students in the streets of Casablanca, and in 1965 he was a central figure in the notorious Ben Barka affair.

Ben Barka, leader of the UNFP, was kidnapped in France with the aid of the French police, interrogated there by Oufkir in person, and has never been seen again.

As Minister of the Interior, Oufkir was responsible for the repression which followed the September assassination attempt, though it is now claimed that he had promised to go to the rebels if they had succeeded.

When men like Oufkir turn to the popular wing of the independence movement, draws its support mainly from the urban workers and the peasants. At one time it cooperated with the Communist Party in elections.

THIRTY-SEVEN: Russian intellectuals have signed a letter to the Czech Federal Assembly asking for the release and habilitation of those arrested in the recent political trials. The letter, which is being circulated in Moscow, states: ‘We once with regret that the Soviet Union, which four years ago sent its troops into Cissolovakia, thereby lost the responsibility for the present situation.

MOUW AMANGI, Commander-in-Chief of the UPA, a minority people fighting for the right to establish a state independent of India, has been held without trial by the Indian authorities since March 1969. He is reported to have been in China, but since he was not armed when arrested, the only ‘crime’ he could be charged with is that of leaving and re-entering his own country.

As the Indian authorities seem prepared to let him rot in jail indefinitely, friends in Britain are writing to him (Mouw Amangi, c/o The Sudanese Union, Nongping Socialist Jét, Nongping, Assam), asking for information about his health and welfare.

SPANISH painter Salvador Dali, who once had a reputation as a non-conformist, has announced that he is handing over all his paintings to Spain’s fascist state. He is at present painting a picture of Franco’s ‘grand-daughter’ on horseback.

His former collaborator Andre Breton, painted a long time ago that Salvador Dali was an enigma of ‘Arte Dolebro’.

THE Far Eastern Economic Review reports that in Hong Kong, the cult of the personality of Kim II Sung has grown to epidemic proportions.

Visitors to his native village find that there are posters and buttons to honour anecdotes in a whole series of different languages. The last extraordinary item is the ‘killing rock’.

According to the guide, the young Kim used to like sitting on this piece of granite behind his home and antim the azaleas. One day he tore his trousers and decided never to slide any more. And the future, victorious leader of the Korean people went to his mother: ‘We are too poor for me to wear out my trousers sliding down the rock’.

But Mrs Kim, the mother of the Korean people, told him to carry on sliding so that he could grow strong.

‘Our wise and incorrupt leader went on sliding and grew strong, and was thus able to liberate his country from Japanese oppression. The rock celebrates this spectacular event in the history of the Korean people.’

Rosa Luxembourg

by PAUL FROLICH

Rosa Luxembourg was one of the greatest figures produced by the international working class movement. Both a profound and original thinker and a brilliant speaker at party group and mass meetings, she embodied all that is best in the revolutionary tradition.

For more than 30 years, until her murder in Berlin in 1919, she was continuously in the forefront of the working class struggle against资本主义.

Unavailabe in English for many years now, this definitive edition is a new translation from the third, revised, German edition which appeared in 1967 under the guidance of the author’s widow.

PRE-PUBLICATION OFFER £1.00 (10p postage and packing) on all orders paid in full by 19 July. Books will be dispatched on publication. This offer will be withdrawn on 19 July at £1.50. Hamburg 25.7.85.

PLUTO PRESS

6 Cottons Gardens

London E2
Frank speaking

LOOKS as if Major-General Frank Kitson's ideas on the major role of the Army have achieved another striking success in Northern Ireland, Kitson, former commander of a brigade in the Six Counties and now commander of the infantry school at the appropriately-named Warmingham Barracks, has outlined in his book on Low Intensity Operations tactics for dealing with "urban guerrillas"—people fighting to free their territories from British domination.

Among such attractive ideas as the use of scientific torture and the planting of spies, he advocates "black propaganda"—the direct lie fed to the friendly press in order to undermine the morale of the enemy. Following the success of his ideas during the interrogation of internes and the massacre of Bloody Sunday in Derry, the Army has now adopted a further suggestion, a secret black propaganda department.

The department has had an immediate victory. Last Wednesday ITN featured as its second main lead item on News at Ten a story about three small girls, aged about 8 years, who were trampled in a large stampede in a market in Northern Ireland. The report caused a sensation, and the girls were already known to be famous.

If the Army was wise it could only be that the Holy Ghost has been up to tricks again. For the story was a total fabrication. Even the Royal Ulster Constabulary, not renowned for its additions to the truth, issued a statement saying the story was totally false. Neither paper carried a denial.

ANY dockers expecting support from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in their battle against the container workers will have to think again. The Confederation of British Industry has set up a two-day conference on containerisation on 12-13 September in Leamington as part of the British contribution to an international exhibition on containerisation.

Twenty-two experts from British firms engaged in the container business will outline their views on the system designed to screw more profit from fewer workers. Anglo-Russian cooperation in the container field goes back to 1968 when a working group was set up by the CBI and the Soviet Committee for Science and Technology to examine possibilities for industrial and technological collaboration.

Pat Beaver 200m breast

The working Togetherness Campaign, the love-your-boat campaign backed by the right-wing Rotary and similar outfits, which has been buying expensive space in the press, has signed up two trade unionists in their bid to hoodwink workers.

Among people advertised as writing pamphlets to back up the campaign are the late Lord Ham, former president of the National Amalgamation of Dockers and Dockers and Car (if you haven't guessed) Frank Chapple, general of the Electricity Union. Our Frank is writing on 'Conflict and Co-operation in Industry'. No prizes for guessing who he is in favour of.

A MEMBER of the Lowestoft UCATT strike committee visited Great Yarmouth in Norfolk last week during the workers' strike and saw two men tiling the roof of the local Labour Party headquarters. Looking at them for support, he asked them which building they were from.

"Union?" they asked incredulously. "We're in a union—don't believe in 'em."

Which is interesting, considering that two of the three Eastern Region Officials of UCATT live in Yarmouth and are members of the Labour Party management committee. When approached about the two 'hands' tiling the roof, the UCATT man on the picket line defined cheerfully agreed: "Yes, I understand they aren't in a union."

Pat Beaver 200m breast

Socialist Worker

Know not to fight bores

[In July, the TUC and the CBI established a Joint Standing Committee to set up and oversee the new conciliation and arbitration service. The TUC representatives on the JSC are the Chairman of the General Council, and the General Secretary, Mr A W Allan, Mr T F O'Connor, Mr R W Cooper, Sir Robert Holmes, Mr J L Jones and Mr H Scanlon.]

We report in the general Council to Congress which also tells us that this joint TUC-CBI enterprise "can make an important contribution to the promotion and maintenance of industrial peace".

It is an old idea, this partnership of labour and capital in the attempt to sort out disputes among their employees. But the right wingers have been preaching it for more than a hundred years.

It is no surprise then to find Alf Allen on such a committee. He reluctantly agreed to the deregistration of his union only when faced with expulsion from the TUC. Walter Anderson, one of the men who takes his turn to attempt to sabotage even a token fight against the Industrial Relations Act, is in his natural home on the JSC and so, of course, are two of the Barons of Sidcup and Didsbury.

But what about the 'lefts'? What are Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon doing on this committee for 'the promotion and maintenance of industrial peace'?

It is not allowed their mates to be elected with a view to fighting the right wing, to preventing the 'service' from carrying out its function of clamping down working-class struggles. All of this is laid down in the Bill of 1974 and the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1975.

It is argued by some that the conciliation and arbitration service ought to be supported because it represents a 'defence' for the employers, and so for the government in this case. Support for this claim the General Council reports that, as part of the deal, 'the CBI...had advised employers not to use the Act without carefully considering all the possible implementations and it believed that genuinely independent conciliation might remove much of the threat of the Act'.

This 'concession' means absolutely nothing. Of course the employers will carefully consider whether or not it is in their interests to use the Act—apart from the fact that they can get away with it at a low cost. If they think they can in any case they will do so, notwithstanding blandishments from the General Council.

The way to stop them using the Act is to make it too costly by setting up a workers' action committee at each case. That is what the right wing on the General Council are out to sabotage and that is what the 'lefts' are helping the right to sabotage by lending their support to this spurious conciliation and arbitration service.

Far from representing a defence for the employers, the TUC-CBI agreement is a modest victory for Heath, Carr and Davies. To the extent that it can be made to work it will weaken the efforts of organised workers to maintain and improve wages and conditions.

There is indeed a need for the TUC to set up some joint Standing Committees, A, JSC etc. It is a question of employed workers in the struggle against redundancies and unemployment is needed. So is a JSC to unite organised workers in opposition to the Balfour Report, centralisation, and the government's attacks on people, for regular pension increases to keep up with prices and so on.

And if there are TUC leaders who really believe in the 'common interests' of workers and employers, let them test the matter by proposing joint action with the CBI on these questions. We all know what sort of response that would get.

The politics of conspiracy

The ACOUJTAL of Peter Hain on three of the four 'conspiracy' charges brought against him by the South African-financed 'private protection' company defences.

The fact remains that Hain was convicted on one count under the infamous, judge-made conspiracy law. The last time this law was successfully used to try to convict any defendant was during the squatters campaign of 1946. The fact is that 'conspiracy' charges cannot be brought unless a real conspiracy is proved for a specific charge. The object of such prosecutions is invariably to restrict political activity that is inconvenient to the ruling class. We can be sure that this is the other means of "legal means", it will be reported to and more and more often. A united defence, employing all available political methods, is the answer.
On the threshold of new pay danger

by Chris Harman

Building workers: threshold agreements could whisk away increases won in the strike

 threshold agreements are in the news. They are high on the agenda of the discussions between the TUC and Heath and they have been put into effect in a number of recent railway deals.

The idea of such agreements was first mooted by the TUC some months ago. At the time, Heath said that the railways were doing well enough and that it was difficult to see any reason for increasing the average rate of pay. The government has now agreed to go ahead with the scheme.

The TUC has also announced that it will consider the possibility of similar agreements in other industries, such as the steel industry.

The Threshold agreements are based on the average earnings of railway workers and are designed to ensure that increases in pay are linked to increases in productivity. While this is a positive move, there are concerns that the agreements could lead to a decrease in the overall rate of pay increases for workers.

Minimum

The minimum is a central demand of building workers. It is their principal demand and their strike is precisely to achieve this. The deal seems to come for craftsmen, although not for labourers. But, although the other rates under a further agreement with the TUC will not be approved until after the next TUC conference, this agreement with the TUC is an opportunity for all workers to put their own demand for the minimum wage in the TUC agenda.

If this is not brought into effect, then the TUC will return to its pre-1972 wage deal for a further agreement. If this is not done, the TUC will be unhappy with this agreement and will try to negotiate a new agreement with the TUC.

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Price rises

Moreover, the official retail price index does not measure the rate of growth of the cost of living, which is now at 10 per cent. The rate of increase in the cost of living is now at 10 per cent, which is in line with the trend in the past few years.

Closed doors

And for a married man with two children, total tax and national insurance contributions will rise from about £3,500 to nearly £4,000. In other words, he will be worse off by about £500, or if you put it in terms of prices, he will be paying more for about one-third of his bill.

The whittling-down of meetings of the National Economic Development Council, which has been our major concern, has been our main concern. But it is not the only reason why the official price index is misleading.

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IT IS TIME for an interim balance sheet on the dockland struggle for survival now that the official strike is over and the National Port Shop Stewards Committee has failed to convince the dockers to continue the fight unofficially.

The Aldington-Jones agreement was a sell-out because the compromise forced on the dockers was out of tune with the actual relations of forces between them and the employers. If they had not been led by Jack Jones, they could have won all the demands for job security put forward by the National Port Shop Stewards Committee.

Jones was successful in his treachery because he sold the majority of dockers from the vanguard, the militants. This is the old story. The sell-out also guaranteed to mobilise the backward sections of the membership against the advanced section. But the important question is: Why did the militants allow themselves to be divorced from the mass strike, why did they fail to keep the mass of dockers marching in step with them?

Touched the nerve

The answer boils down to the non-involvement of the rank and file in action during the three weeks of the official strike. The picketing of Chobham Farm, Millwall, Cold Stongage and the Hays Wharf complex in London won over from only hundreds of dockers. It involved only the militants.

Later, with the arrest of the 'Pentonville Five', the entire dockers' community united spontaneously. The action was simple and touched the nerve of every worker. The dockers were the only dockers, with all levels of consciousness, from the most backward to the most advanced, mobilised and moved; they were united as a army.

When a relative small section of an army is in motion, it is natural that the leaders do not look over their shoulders to see if the rest of the forces are following suit. When a general assault is taking place involving clear, direct issues that stir every soldier, again the leadership does not need to look over its shoulder. The first two stages of the struggle, therefore, did not prepare the militants to plan and arm themselves for the third stage.

The enemy, represented by Lord Aldington, with fifth columnist Jack Jones, planned a zig-zag counter-attack. The rank and file leadership had to fit its strategy to the enemy's changed tactics.

Whatever tactics industrial militants choose, the central aim must be the active participation of workers. The absence of the majority of workers concerned, Workers' leaders can change tactics, can manoeuvre, can adapt themselves to changing tactics and the rules of the game. Not only can but must, otherwise they are certain to be soundly beaten. But all the tactical decisions must be subordinated to one central, strategic theme: raising the consciousness of the workers and the organisation of the workers concerned.

In terms of this strategic measuring rod, the militant dockers failed during the three weeks of the official strike. It was an extremely poor showing in contrast to the official strike in 1970.

A few days after the 'Pentonville Five' were freed and the official strike was called, I wrote in Socialist Worker: 'During the five days they struck the rank and file showed itself in all its glory while the trade union bureaucracy, including Jack Jones, showed their complete bankruptcy. Now the dockers' strike is official, the danger is that those bankrupt full-time officials will take over the running of the strike. It is even more important now that the Joint Shop Stewards Committee is central in actively running the strike, in publicising the issues and in developing the strategy and tactics of the struggle.'

SADLY, it has to be recorded that the militants did not take the initiative in running the dispute. They were not able to involve the mass of the rank and file.

For example, only a few hundred militants were concerned in picketing open ports. The stewards should also have organised two or three mass demonstrations, involving thousands of London dockers, to Transport House, demanding that Jack Jones call on the railmen for solidarity action, as they had given the miners during their strike.

Education in ideas

Jones did everything to sabotage the dockers' struggle. He did not call on the Irvine driver members of the TGWU, or on the NUR and ASLEF to black all goods coming through the open ports. Internally, he prolonged the official strike in order to tire the dockers. The final draft of the revised Aldington-Jones agreement was ready at least one week before the end of the strike. Even the timing of the mass meetings was arranged by Jones to defeat the militants, with Tilbury voting before London and Hull.

Education in action is linked with education in ideas, with the question of communication of propaganda. The organised militants should have produced leaflets and posters and then more leaflets and posters to give a clear message to every docker.

How many dockers know that Lord Aldington is a former deputy chairman of the Tory Party? (Ted Heath is one of my best friends' he told the Sunday Times on 20 August.) How effective it would have been to show that Lord Aldington, as vice-chairman of GEC, presided over the sacking of 50,000 GEC workers in the last few years—the same man looking after 'dockers' security'.

A man demonstration, with one of its themes 'Down with Aldington, the man who sacked 50,000 GEC workers', would have been most effective and would have helped immolate dockers from the grey promises of the same lord.

Above all, how many dockers knew of the secret survey by the National Ports Council that estimates that the number of registered dockers will fall from 41,000 today to less than 20,000 by 1975? It expect a loss of 5000 jobs in London, a similar number in Liverpool and approximately 1500 in Hull, Grimsby, Immingham, Fleetwood and the small Lanseashire ports. Contrasted with this loss of 12,000 jobs, what Aldington-Jones offers is next to useless.

The non-involvement of the majority of dockers during the official strike and the lack of printed propaganda among the dockers are part and parcel of the same problem.

The Aldington-Jones strategy was, first, to divert any demands away from the state. The kernel of the negotiations will be voluntary bargaining with individual employers. Secondly, the agreement is very complex and vague. In order to break through this artificial fog, the shop stewards should have made specific and generalised demands on the government that could not have been evaded.

For example, perhaps it would have been worthwhile emphasising the need to implement the shadowed law proposal for a five-milewide corridor each side of the Thames as an area confined to registered dock work. If the Liverpool dockers' demand for £600 for 10 hours' a reply to technology change was not taken seriously, then a call for a payment of £800 per year to dockers' maintenance would have fitted the bill.

In the face of the shadowy acceptance of Lord Vestey that he cannot afford to employ registered dockers, the demand for the nationalisation of the docks, and the dockers' workers' control would have been a tough, realistic counter. Such demands should have been the centrepiece of a series of massive demonstrations directed against the government.

DOCKERS will discover the hard way that the promised increase of £600 is simply a cruel joke. Only a small number—mainly the best paid—will benefit from this amount. And even if grievance is paid, it will quickly come under attack.

After years of struggle, workers have to apply for supplementary benefit which is calculated on the basis of the money they have in the Port Office or the bank. For example, dockers who earn £2500 will have £7 a week deducted from their weekly entitlement of £94.5. This is another point that should have been widely publicised by the stewards. Average grievance pay will be about £200 and with today's escalating prices that will hardly cover one year's subsistence.

Cut in wages

Aldington-Jones promised the end of the Temporary Unattatched Register. But at the conference the shop stewards expect that as a result of the other recommendations the need for work-sharing will extend beyond the three months' 'normal period'. When Whinney Phase One was introduced, the dockers were only short-term employed. But since then many dockers on work-sharing and unattached register for six, nine or even 12 months.

Aldington-Jones promised 290 guaranteed new jobs but on the very day the dockers went back to work 231 jobs, the impending closure of Nelson's Wharf at London, employing 17 registered dockers, was announced. For the port employers and for Aldington-Jones, work-sharing means wage-sharing—a cut in dockers' wages.

The dockers will pay dearly for Jones' 'promise'. Again, as in the past, perhaps triggered again by a conflict in an individual dock, in this case, will be even more bitter than before.

Militants must be clear that the ruling class is highly centralised and has great ability to control. To stand against the bosses and their agents it is necessary for militants to learn the lessons of the last few months and discuss seriously and systematically the question of tactics and strategy necessary to defend the right to work and fight for decent wages and conditions.

The militants need to start a massive and scaled attack as quickly as possible. They must flood dockland with leaflets and posters arguing a strategy of contending and strengthening the struggle to stop the murder of their industry in the interest of profit.

Militants must involve rank & file
A YEAR has passed since the Blackpool Trades Union Congress threw over the previously “permissive” TUC policy on the Tory anti-union laws. Under the influence of Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones, Congress decided that “members” to member unions not to register was no longer adequate in view of the large number of unions who were saying that they would ignore it.

Instead unions were instructed not to register and, by implication, not to go to the NBR, or pay fines. It was an important decision, but no powers of discipline were taken.

Six months later the policy was unceremoniously dumped by those with the power if not the authority to do so—the General Council. Majority. Members of that committee were reported to have been badly bruised in a plush’s rush to obey the government-ordered cooling-off period on the railways and pay the massive fines levied against the dockers’ fight for the right to work.

Yet this is the so-called general staff of the trade union movement we are talking about, a body of men and the occasional woman who guided Congress decisions and led the fight to make them a reality.

Contrast

The first time they came face to face with the reality of the Industrial Relations Act, they petitioned all their empty speeches and ran for cover.

What a fantastic contrast with the behaviour of the dockers who defied “the line” and who struck five of their members were released from jail.

What a contrast with the fighting spirit of the one million office workers who have been kept in virtual slavery and ensured the five were freed within as many days.

But the TUC’s behaviour has not been inconsistent over the past year. Behind the rhetoric of Congress decisions the TUC leadership has been systematically undermining them.

Having allowed an infamous Bill to become an infamous law by refusing to organise massive action against it, they developed the internal logic of their position—by doing precisely nothing.

Right at the beginning of the year, Vic Feather was doing other things apart from making speeches about how “the unity of the trade union movement has stabilised and destroyed the Industrial Relations Act.” Off the record he was telling union leaders the EC was going to have a meeting with the TUC to push for the abolition of the Act.

What was the TUC’s contribution to the struggle? It refused even to organise a meeting of the transport unions to plan solidarity action. It was left to individual unions to instruct their members not to cross picket lines.

One thing underlined the TUC’s pusillanimity on the miners’ struggle—a rather superficial acquaintance with working class history.

Memories of the 1926 General Strike are the constant backdrop to the discussions on the General Council and its “unionism” and the General Purposes Committee. The trade union movement is said to be in the same state as in 1927. They conveniently forget the main truth of the 1926 defeat, that it was self-inflicted.

Danger

Frank Chapple’s every speech at the meetings centres on the terrible danger of using working-class strength for political purposes, as if politics was the sacred prerogative of MPs and employers. Time and again he returns to the dread danger of precipitating mass struggles against the elected government of the land.

But this system of ideas alone did not lead to the turncoats on the question of obeying the state’s cooling-off periods and paying the fines it levied to cripple union action.

This was shifting. Those who pursue power and influence alone have little room for principles.

And the truth of the matter is that Jones was interested in the numerical strength that might be had through the Act and its agency stops. He did not want another union scooping up membership with Tory influence. And when it came to the question of refusing to pay the L33,000 fine, he did not keep the matter within his own union. He took it to the General Purposes Committee of the TUC.

They suggested non-payment, thanks largely to the persistence of Hugh Scanlon, but referred the matter to the full General Council.

The “inner council” of the TUC engineered it so that the matter would come again be thrown back to the General Purposes Committee.

Second time around, this body advised Jones to pay.

Jones himself had managed tolicence own Transport and General Workers Union executive into agreeing to pay on the casting vote of the chairman. He had the cheque signed and delivered before he had formal authorisation from the trade union movement’s general staff, the General Council.

Hugh Scanlon and Lawrence Daly alone put up any fight on the General Council, both of them saying quite rightly that there should be a meeting of the General Council had no power to reverse Congress policy. But Scanlon was fighting as a diplomat. His task was to suggest that if the TUC paid one union’s fine, it should pay everybody’s. The idea was to make the bill so expensive that the TUC would not dare to pay the fine installment.

Scanlon made no attempt to put these vital questions before the mass of the trade union movement.

And he had been careful in his conduct of the engineers’ struggle to avoid getting his own union in the same position as the TGWU.

At no time in the course of that week of aspect surrender to the Tory government did any of the members of the so-called general staff bring any of the arguments against paying fines out of the open. Left as well as right was bluffed within the system of ideas that trade unionism is about elections, negotiations and barter.

Fortunately for the working class movement, the dockers were around to pick up the dying flame of official opposition to the Tory government. They defined the infamous court. They took TUC’s “moral” decisions and put them into practice.

When the first three of their ranks were faced with jail, what did the TUC do? Did it campaign and organise for solidarity action? Did it try to show in action that the slogan “an injury to one is an injury to all” is more than mere words? No answer is required.

Victor Feather got on the telephone and begged and pleaded with the three to go in front of a court, any court, to appeal the jailing order. He offered to pay their legal expenses if they did.

"Are you mad?" he was told when they declined. But the dockers and other workers were prepared to give the "injury to one" slogan real practical meaning. The state machine retreated swiftly.

In the period that followed, when the press was busy vilifying the dockers’ struggle, when workers was being played off against worker, did the workers put one out one? No. The Genec and their hands and faces would go away.

And when improperly, the action was called off, Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones, unashamedly, until the Morebrop Purposes Committee moved in the face of the stoppage.

Climax

William Higgin of the railway executive present—even when he has been suspended. His contribution could not take in support of the action and he is supposed to have given the go-ahead for the action of the policy of their leader Jack Jones.

JUST FOR THE TIMES

"We in the Union of Post Office Workers have been continually faced with staff associations, organisations despaired of making the trade union movement, very often the creatures of the employer. The demands in the last year or two made by our members that staff associations cannot fulfill the role of the trade union movement. It is imperative that we should come together and be a whole, accepting the instructions of this Congress on which I hope this Congress will give the trade union movement this morning.—TOM JACKSON, General Council member, speaking at the TUC 7 September 1971.

"Yes, the UPW is prepared to go to the National Industrial Relations Court even if the TUC sets us not to. This is because a non-TUC affiliated body, the Telecommunications Staff Association, is about to claim recognition under the new Industrial Relations Act.—TOM JACKSON, General Council member, speaking at the TUC 7 September 1971.

"The troubles identified by the Industrial Relations Act have been satisfied and destroyed by the unity of the trade union movement."—Vic FEATHER, 16 April 1972.
IT WILL BE a busy weekend for Victor Feather, CBE. On Saturday he will meet with George Smith, CBE, chairman of this year's Congress and together they will go through the agenda.

The purpose of the exercise will be to decide who will actually speak in the main debates. This process is officially known as 'catching the chairman's eye'. It is a somewhat inaccurate description of events—as is shown by the fact that although the good Lord Cooper, chairman of last year's Congress, was present, the belligerent backbencher on the left of the house who could not be stopped from talking at any time during the nine hours of the debate on the Industrial Relations Bill, 13 of them were never mentioned by the General Council.

Oblivion

At the 1971 special conference on the same issue, there were again 21 objections to George Smith's nomination. And at the 1969 special conference, when the Labour government's anti-union legislation in Place of Strife, the TUC union bosses did even better. Of 20 nominees, General Council members managed to get four of them.

And in none of those three historic sessions did one single ordinary rank and file union delegate get a chance to get called. At the TUC, the working man is as good as dead for oblivion or payola.

The final words of the backbencher who is now called the chairman of the Select Committee on Privileges Committee, are that he might be allowed to make a speech provided he does not introduce any discussion of equal pay or government legislation. The backbenchers have to agree to factory safety committees, and, therefore, the chairman of the Select Committee on Privileges Committee. They should be the subject of sufficient TUC resolution to get them.

The TUC bosses have simply gone away. They have stopped being all in all, in order to give their confidence in the system.

Nor is there to be a council of management to draft any objections to the Select Committee on Privileges Committee. The Select Committee on Privileges Committee is a body in a way that is acceptable to those in charge. It should be based on the standing orders committee and on the ordinary proceedings of the annual congresses to devise a minimum union and to abandon or their initial intentions. This year you are unexceptional.

What the TUC bosses have not achieved is to achieve this kind of a smooth transition of Congress and the TUC. They have the strength and the patience to postpone any ideas for a complete reversal of Congress policy.

Task

The business nature of the whole machine would have plenty of time to adjust. They cannot do it now. And it will be much more difficult to pay the present situation.

The task ahead is to consolidate against retreats and collaboration and the Tory Act, and the whole gamut of reactionary policies they pursue to uphold their world system, and, indeed, organisations outside the TUC, within each and every union, for more democracy and involvement.

It needs councils of action to take the Act and any future retaliation which will surely come when the voluntary pay policy is abandoned by the Tories or their successors.

To tinker around looking for another gnat 'left' hope to replace Jack Jones would be a worthless farce. Stage armies might be all right for the corridors of power. They can never fight to change society.
A quiet night for the Army in Unfree Derry

YOU’RE an Irish cunt, Wot are you?” shouted the soldier into his megaphone, as he kicked my legs. I was unable to see the wall against which we were clustered and spread out across a wall in Fort George.

Behind us military police with batons and regular soldiers with self-loading rifles walked up and down the road, with their position your eyes go numb and your legs start to buckle, unable to support the weight of your body. ‘Stand still, fucker’, I still had my hand on the wall and I couldn’t do, not absolutely certain, that I wouldn’t do it.

My friend Dermie and I had been pulled out of our car at midnight on an army road block on the North Road, north of Derry. We were held at gunpoint there for a few minutes. I think that we were put into a box in the back, not absolutely certain, that I wouldn’t do it.

Mc Cann, Socialist: What are you doing? What are you doing? ‘You’re the guy who called on soldiers’. You were going to do something he added. ‘You’re the guy who called on soldiers’.

But just as I was about to leave, he added, ‘You’re the guy who called on soldiers’.

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WHEN THE UNIONS HOLD THE REINS

Review by Roger Rosewell

MY GENERATION, by Will Paynter, Allen and Unwin, £1.50

THE RELATIONSHIP between active trade unionists and the political organisations to which they belong has always been a question of tremendous importance to revolutionary socialists.

Under the leadership of the Labour Party and the TUC, socialists have always argued that the trade union and political struggles cannot be separated. From these they have rightly insisted that the political organisation must demand first allusions to the often narrow and restrictive interests of a particular trade union and industry.

The recent autobiography by Will Paynter clearly shows the dangers when this doesn’t happen.

Paynter was a long-standing member of the Communist Party who was also general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers from 1939 until his retirement in 1968.

But the Communist Party did not direct his trade union work, and this book frankly describes how, in effect, the opposite took place.

In the 1950s, for example, Paynter led several attacks against unofficial strikers. He writes in his book: “The point stressed all the time was that the union existed to redress grievances and should be given the chance to do that before action was resorted to. The problem was not only discussed within the union but inside the Communist Party too.”

“I argued the position not only in South Wales but also in London, with Harry Pollitt and other leaders coming to South Wales for discussions.”

In 1956, the Chinese organization and that unorganized movement and leadership among workers outside the union was destructive and not constructive.

The Communist Party at that time accepted this reasoning and did what it could to reduce this kind of internal conflict which disrupted unity and strength.

This situation remained until the recent unofficial strikes of 1970 and 1971 and this year’s tremen-

PUPPET

A revolutionary, faced with such a situation, would publicly dissociate himself from those policies that he believed to be wrong and then stop all financial and file membership for support. Under no circumstances would he allow himself to be used as a puppet by the right wing.

In Paynter’s case, however, none of this applied. In 1968 he finally confirmed the logic of his past statements by resigning from the Communist Party and joining the Labour government’s Commission on Industrial Relations.

While it is true that the Communist Party cannot be completely blamed for Paynter’s final betrayal, they cannot escape from some share of responsibility. For instead of disciplining and expelling him, the leaders of the Communist Party first tolerated and then covered up for him.

PAVED

The Party leaders refused to act against Paynter because they had chosen to try and win influence through the trade union bureaucracy rather than by the development of a revolutionary film movement.

The trade union was not confined to the miners’ union.

Long before the newspaper’s unions had become a fact of life and set the headlines and paved the way for the practicing of a métier in which the Communist Party, the TUC were among the first ever to negotiate long-term productivity deals in British industry. Again no action was ever taken by the party.

The degeneration of the Communist Party is directly shown in these and many other examples.

Paynter’s book is an interesting contribution to the history of this process.

Printed by Briant workers in occupation

DOWN in the Old Kent Road the Briant Cobby British occupation continues. Two issues of the Briant News have been produced, and now the occupation has produced its first outside job. It is Leo Tolstoy’s classic anarchist text The Slavery of Our Times.

It is published by veteran militant John Lawrence, who said: “I’d intended to publish it anyway and I’d been looking around for a printer. Then the occupation started and I thought they’d be the ideal people to do it. They jumped at the idea.”

“I wanted $50 but they’ve done 2,000. The whole idea is that there’s a bunch of workers down there and they’re going to the reading room to consult the gosuer or anyone—just themselves.”

The pamphlet was written in 1900, just before Tolstoy’s death. It is one of the best explications of Christian radicalism in its most extreme and logical form.

Sales from sale of the pamphlet will go to the workers at Briant. It is available from John Lawrence at 29 Love Walk, London SE5, and Houseman’s Bookshop, 5 Camden Road, London N1. Price 25p.
Anger after council’s reachery

by Ethel Singleton

LIVERPOOL—Enraged tenants clashed with police in the council chamber yesterday as the Labour council agreed by 80 votes to 43 to implement the so-called ‘Fair Rents’ Act.

Since the elections in May the council had steadfastly resisted its outright refusal to implement the Act. In fact the first statement from the leader of the council immediately after the election was: ‘We have won this election on the council estates throughout Liverpool because of our stand against the Housing Finance Bill.

When the council came to the crucial motion prompted by the chairman of the housing committee to ‘authorize all necessary steps to be taken to apply the provisions of the Act’, the chamber was packed.

Abuse

The packed gallery erupted and white flurries of abuse from tenants who had marched to the town hall roared and shouted outside, the fury of the tenants, factories workers, dockers and trade union representatives in the gallery came to a head. The Tory opposition leader said that the whole council had ‘bowed the knee to the Tory opposition leader said that the whole council had bowed the knee to the Tory opposition leader. The council had bowed the knee to the Tory opposition leader.

The rent battle was described by the Labour judge on the Labour bench. The Lord Mayor then moved to unlock two policemen at the chamber door, while 50 police who had been conveniently situated in an ante-room entered the chamber.

The opposition to the rent battle was led by the tribune section who claimed that they faced a wage cut under the deal. ‘Kidd had offered a flat rate payment system of £44 a week, with no increase in the cap, a £5 lump sum for £800, maximum of £400, and an additional £10. Junior Labour councillors abstained.

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The Rents Battle

Pay offer

COVENTRY—Workers at the British Leyland Motor Corporation last week to continue their 12-week old strike, against the advice of Transport Union officials.

Opposition to the proposal to end the strike was led by the tribune section who claimed that they faced a wage cut under the deal. Kidd had offered a flat rate payment system of £44 a week, with no increase in the cap, a £5 lump sum for £800, maximum of £400, and an additional £10. Junior Labour councillors abstained.

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TRADE UNIONS STABBED AT DEMO

by Mike Miller

Belfast—Since Operation Motorman, little publicity has been given to the activities of the British Army in the former no-go areas of Belfast and Derry.

At first, the army maintained a fairly low-key approach. There was little resistance and the SDLP were unsure about cooperating with Whitsun.

But now the SDLP has given Whitsun a virtual carte blanche to proceed with his renewed repression. And, as the determination of the minority not to be beaten back into total submission grows, the army has taken on many of its old characteristics.

The first move by Whitsun after the invasion of the soge areas was to set up a system of roadblocks, checks and complaints against the army. The system is being used at all, it must be under severe strain since the recent gaffe of army atrocities.

This was followed by a warning that a bomb had been placed in a post box and that they sent one soldier to look around.

Having failed to get a postal service for the reason for his visit, the soldier refused to answer and quietly made off. Thanks to a nearby chemist who picked up the bomb, the post office was cleared in time.

The army's usual official was forced to conclude that the army wished to maintain its facade for political reasons. His complaints to the relevant officials were never replied to.

In BELFAST, released informers have been forced to protest against the army's heavy-handedness.

A large number of Catholic schools have declared that in the army as military posts. Teachers and parents are refusing to send their children back to school next week because classroom conditions have been described as unsafe, according to statistics of English school districts.

In spite of numerous complaints, the army has not taken any action. When a large number of people gathered to protest against the army in the Catholic area of the Bon Secours Hospital in Penrith, they were attacked by young children, bundled into the back of a Ford Transit van and driven away for more beatings away from the gates of the hospital.

On Monday night, after a soldier was injured in the Falls Road, the army ran amok, firing hundreds of rounds into the air. Two men and a woman were shot dead. Allegations of indiscriminate shooting are being 'looked into' by the army, of course.

Mourners—A new weapon has appeared on the streets of Belfast— the general purpose machine gun— capable of firing 1500 rounds. People on Belfast's Shankill Road will soon be one less left to complain.

Brian Parkin

Upper Clyde bosses set yet another deadline for unions

by Dave Lyddon

Business Corporation, which has a three-year contract to supply British Leyland with garage boxes.

But the Thornycroft factory is employers and workers forays to the Leyland combine.

Thornycroft Ltd has been asked to accept no redundancies and hand over notices of redundancy. They also want an assurance of future work from Eaton's. A workmen's cut production by 15 per cent.

But 14 August they had got on further in negotiations—so they occupied the works. The Leyland combine committee has told them that no British Leyland plant will accept Thornycroft-gear garage boxes until the jobs are guaranteed, nor will they handle supplies from alternative sources.

But the committee's decision to picket Leyland's head office in London's Berkeley Square, and the mixed response to a call for a one-day strike last Monday is now a substitute for a determined fight to end the threat of redundancies.

The Thornycroft fight will not be won in Basingstoke alone, or in the streets around Berkeley Square. Co-ordinated mass action throughout the combine is needed for that.

Car men fight no sackings' fraud

Glasgow—Another deadline has been set by the former Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' yards.

The Upper Clyde shipbuilders' yards Corporation gave the unions a midnight deadline for acceptance of a contract agreement which included penalty clauses, a single employers' association, the government-appointed chairman of Gowan Shipbuilders, John S. Gordon, is to be employed by the remaining workers at the Suncroft, Gowan and Linthouse divisions of LCS. It has been promised £5 million in loans and grants to assist the corporation areas have already been threatened with redundancies. These corporations have been threatened with redundancies since they have refused to pay rent increases.

LEEDS—The Labour-controlled Garforth council, near Leeds, is still refusing to implement the Housing Finance Act, despite pressure to do so from the regional officer of the Labour party, Harold Sims.
This WEEK again the builders' strike is growing in scope and intensity. Some 300,000 workers are now involved in all-out action for £35 for 30 hours.

As the strike goes on, the union leadership is pushing increasingly for comprehensive local settlements to end the strike in individual companies. These not only set the full claim short but they are of considerable value to the employers in weakening the strike movement.

The moves for local agreements have even been praised by the Morning Star. In its editorial the paper stated that builders were earning up victories with these moves. But workers in Birmingham and in Edinburgh have totally rejected this approach.

In Edinburgh a mass meeting overwhelmingly defeated an official proposition for a local Scottish agreement. At the Birmingham march and mass meeting last week UMOU Midlands Region Secretary Ken Barlow said that the region would not sign any such agreements, but regional agreement on the full terms of the strike would be defeated.

What concerns the Midlands region is that national agreement on the full terms of the strike will be vital for local agreements will not be binding.

The other main danger of this trend is that it encourages the big building employers to split the difference between their last offer and the Cameron settlement. If the employers can actually get the way to a national settlement below the Cameron figure.

At the mass meeting last week the Birmingham building workers also decided to start putting all-out pressure on the employers to concede the full claim. Following the meetings on the dockers, they have also extended them packing to the sites of building materials such as cement works.

DANGERS

The compensation agreement suggested in Scotland does not give anything like a £30 basic. It appears an £30 with the help of part of the bonus guaranteed. Because of the change in the value of wages, the deal will only be worth a basic of £25 for about 15 weeks.

And for the first year the bonus will be calculated on the first 15 weeks, there is no agreement on the full terms of the new agreement. The deal does not involve any real progress to a new deal week either.

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DANGERS

The compensation agreement suggested in Scotland does not give anything like a £30 basic. It appears an £30 with the help of part of the bonus guaranteed. Because of the change in the value of wages, the deal will only be worth a basic of £25 for about 15 weeks.

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