

Workers' fight

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COLLAPSE OF FERRANTI SHOWS MEANING OF LABOUR'S MANIFESTO:

BAILING OUT

THE BOSSES

THE COOKIE crumbled even before Labour's election manifesto was out! With the refusal by the National Westminster Bank to extend Ferranti's £18 million short term debt, the giant electronics firm simply came to a halt.

But while the manifesto has fine-sounding things to say about "public ownership" and redundancy, when the crunch came, it was the same old story: Labour stated that it would take action after consultation... under the 1972 Industry Act. An act proposed and passed by the Tories!

With that Labour passed its own judgment on its own manifesto and its own promises.

The Industry Act 1972 allows the government to encourage investment and promote employment and modernisation particularly in "the regions" and the older industrial areas. Basically it is a way of pumping more money into the employers' pockets.

Now the Labour Party manifesto is most emphatic that the Party will "not confine the extension of the public sector to loss-making and subsidised industries." It sounds as if those are to be nationalised in any case, as a matter of course... except that we know that's not so. So why all this pussy-footing?

Labour should expropriate the millionaire Ferranti. It should nationalise the business without compensation. It should cease production of the company's major line, that is, missiles and military electronic equipment, and provide work or full pay to the 16,000 work force.

Bailing out

A rationally run electrical industry could certainly find useful employment for all of them.

There's no point going about demanding "healthy order books", as Bob Wright of the AUEW Executive does. If that means anything, it is a recipe for more Government expenditure on bailing out private businesses, and more spending on weaponry.

Wright should be demanding "work or full pay" for his members. But although he is well acquainted with the Labour Party, he knows they won't buy that. Although it's in the manifesto, "Redundant workers", so the document says, "must have an automatic right to retraining, with redundancy leading not to unemployment, but to retraining and job changing". And,

Trade Union representatives outside the DTI for talks to save the jobs at Ferranti.



NURSES: militancy pays off

THE nurses' 30% pay victory was the result of militant action, rather than the slow deliberations of the Halsbury Committee.

It was the boycotts, overtime bans, and strikes which made nurses a "special case" — not the articles praising their dedication and bemoaning their low pay.

Hours

Despite the victory, the Halsbury Inquiry failed to meet many of the nurses' demands. It rejected completely the demand for a cut in hours, and it is the long hours which will still force nurses out of the NHS into private wards and agency

work. Also, while producing a few mild words of complaint about the Whitley Council system of negotiation which has helped keep nurses' pay low for the last 20 years, the Halsbury report said nothing about developing a more direct method of wage bargaining.

A traditional feature of health service pay awards was repeated. The better paid nursing staff — Chief Nursing Officer, Tutors, etc all received higher awards, tutors received a 53.7% increase, and Chief Nursing Officers £20

Jack Sutton

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usual bailing out of the bosses and footing the bill for their failure.

Thorn

But the Ferranti case is not isolated and it will be repeated in both large and small units of industry up and down the country. For instance, Thorn

TV has just announced a planned cut in their workforce of 1300.

As the banks tighten their lending systems more firms are bound to go bust — and some banks too. As the squeeze on the larger firms gets harder, they in turn will squeeze the smaller ones for payment of bills and other debts. The result is likely to be a great number of failures with resulting redundancies.

So long as Labour limits itself to pious phrases and no more, so long as it sees the "solution" in terms of making industry more productive,

more competitive, and more profitable, it will find its time absorbed in trying to wipe up the mess the capitalists make.

A party claiming to represent the interests of the working class should be fighting for "Work or Full Pay": it should be extending nationalisations without compensation and with shop floor control in the workers' hands. The Labour leaders will do nothing in that direction unless they are forced to. And the only thing that will force them that way is the independent action of the rank and file.

CARWORKERS ACTION SPREADS

FORDS

The 52,000 Ford production workers are threatening strike action. They have been left behind as other carworkers have gained higher wages, particularly Chrysler workers' recent £9 per week rise. At the same time Fords made £46 million profits last year.

The company's reaction was immediately to pin notices in the 22 factories stating they would not budge and would stop production in many plants unless the strike threats were withdrawn. This follows a similar message to representatives of the 6,500 skilled men at Fords.

Already unofficial action has been taking place. At Halewood, 800 press shop workers are on strike, demanding "preparation and clean up" pay, £3 a week already given to production line workers. A mass meeting on Sunday 15th September voted to continue the strike, and 8,000 are now laid off.

Meanwhile, 4,000 night shift workers in the paint, trim, and body stamping plants have been

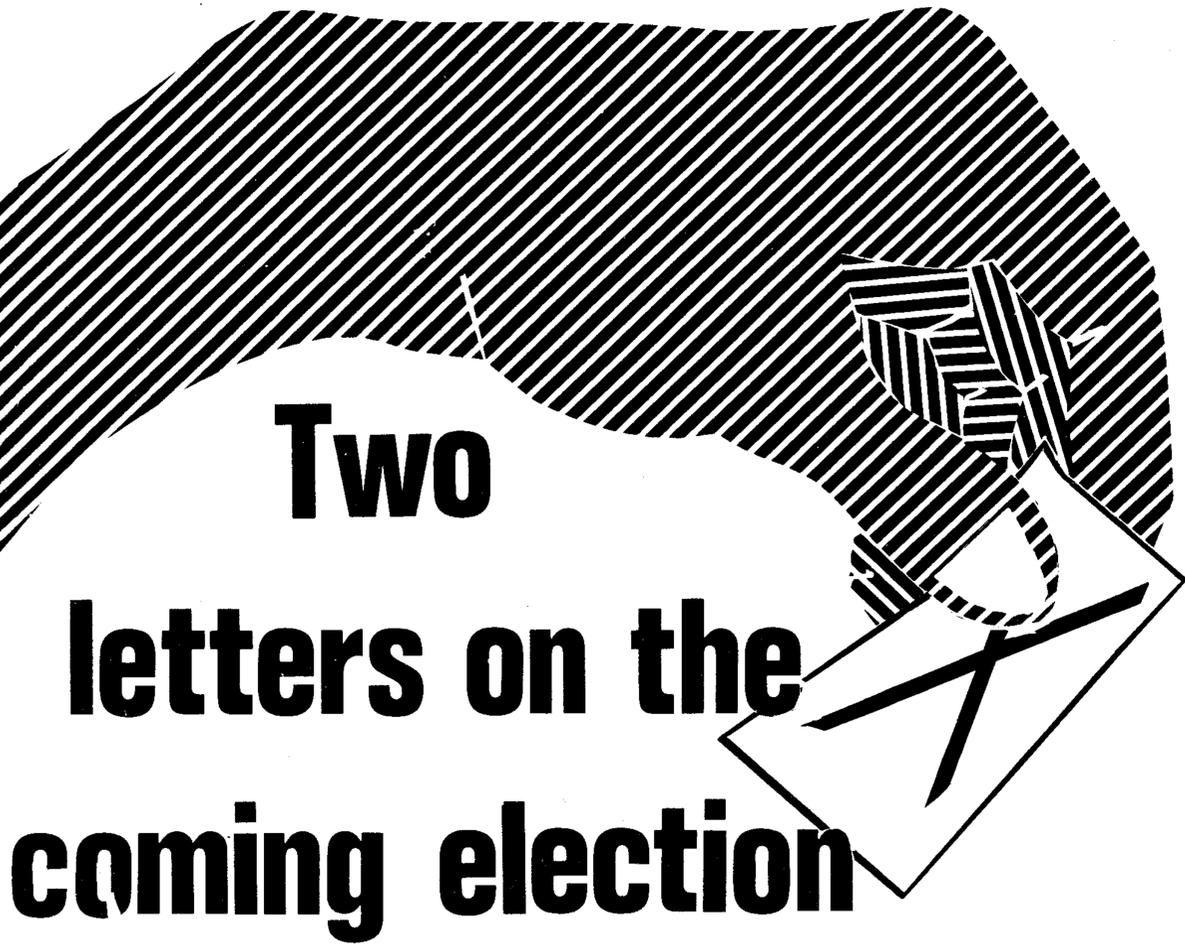
boycotting Friday night working. They want a four night week of 10 hour shifts, not a five night week of 8 hour shifts. Craftsmen at Halewood, 1,600 men, have also threatened an immediate work to rule, and a strike at the end of the month over their pay claim.

CHRYSLER.

Workers at two of Chrysler's subsidiaries, Hills Precision (plastics) and Auto Machinery (nuts and bolts) have settled after strikes for an immediate 50% parity with Chrysler production workers, the rest promised for next year. Chrysler electricians have also settled, accepting a £3.57 pay rise backdated to June 1st, which brings their basic wage to £54.5 a week. Chrysler's 320 toolroom workers, however, are not at all satisfied with the firm's offer, and have been on an overtime ban for two weeks. They are threatening strike action from this week.

VAUXHALL. Vauxhall's 26,000 hourly paid workers are demanding an interim pay deal. This is hardly surprising when Chryslers workers at Dunstable earn £8 a week more than neighbouring Vauxhall workers in Luton.

Contd. on back page.



Two letters on the coming election

1.

YOUR paper, the Socialist Worker and Red Weekly, all say vote Labour. You are wrong, because what all of you should be saying is, *only* vote Labour if the constituency Labour Parties insist on their candidates giving a pledge covered by a £50,000 bond, that they will actively pursue Left wing policies. Such a bond would deter traitors to us, like Wilson, Jenkins, Prentice, Callaghan, etc, spitting in our faces and pursuing Tory policies.

J PREEN

REPLY

IF only... if only we could compel the Labour politicians, by means of a £50,000 bond (deposited with some leading capitalist bank, no doubt) to pursue left wing policies.

Unfortunately it's not so easy. Bro. Preen wants Labour candidates to be accountable to their electors — that is the essence of it.

For that to be politically effective in the way Bro. Preen wants, it would be necessary for the members in the constituency Labour Parties to have a clear idea of what 'left wing policies' are. Otherwise the MPs simply evade the issue with left talk and double edged policies, or with excuses. "Of course we carried out left wing policies", they cry. "Mind you, there were economic difficulties, there were hard times, we couldn't do all we promised."

For that to be politically effective, the members of the constituency Labour Party would have to be prepared to break with the official machine of the Labour Party which would not tolerate either left-wing action or being bound by their electors.

EFFECTIVE

For that to be effective, they would have to break with Labour not just out of being fed up, but out of a clear sense of an alternative, a militant way forward to socialism.

For that to be effective — in short — the working class would have to reach the stage where it was prepared to throw off the Labour Party and create its own revolutionary socialist party. And then we would not be supporting Labour, bond or no bond!

Unfortunately, we're not at that stage yet. The way we can fight and prepare now is to explain patiently, persistently what real socialist policies are, to try to build a tendency in the labour movement which can help workers to see through the pretences of people like Wilson and eventually throw them out.

2.

A VERY big question has been facing the English left since the beginning of the year — why should Irish workers in Britain be asked to support the Labour Party?

The Labour Party has proved no different from the Tories in Ireland — in fact worse.

They are responsible for butchering the Irish — just like the Tories, and just like previous Labour governments which revived the S.A.S., brought in the 1949 Ireland Act (thus tightening the screws on the Six Counties), and which carried out bloodbaths in Malaya and Aden.

Why should the Irish forget that two Labour Party leaders, Barnes and Henderson, were in the English cabinet which shot James Connolly?

TACTICS

Just look at the record of Reginald Paget, the former Labour MP for Northampton. Speaking last year in the debate on the N.I. Emergency Provisions Bill, he said: "I would have martial law. For people caught in possession of arms I would have court martial and execution of the sentence within hours. That is the only means of controlling a situation such as this. If we mean to win, that is what we should do."

"My hon. Friend can use any pejorative words he likes. He can call the tactics 'Nazi-like' or otherwise. The German Army was very effective in protecting itself in occupation, and on the whole did so according to the laws of war."

The so-called Left Winger Eric Heffer is no different, for all his 'workerist' speeches. Last year he said "our working class in uniform are being attacked by mad dogs on both sides".

What should Irish workers do with Paget and Heffer? Vote for them? With Heffer as your Labour left, the whole party stinks.

Last year there was not even any debate on Ireland at the Labour Party conference.

PRISONERS

How about the motion on 'Political Prisoners' scheduled for this year's conference (or non-conference). "This Conference", it declares, "deplores the existence of political prisoners, as a contravention of the Declaration of Human Rights of the U.N.... and urges the Government to bring pressure to bear on countries where there are political prisoners to expedite their release".

Political prisoners are bad — in other people's countries! Harold Wilson and Co. are so two-faced they need two blades to shave

with. "Those who live by the sword...", Callaghan warned the Turks in Cyprus. This from a minister of the most militaristic, imperialist nation in the world! Where in the world have the English not entered with a sword, and called it peace?

In Ireland the Labour Party is and always has been a party of Special Branch agents, jailers, militaristic butchers and chauvinist Orange bigots.

Everyone can see that the Labour Party is now repeating the history of German Social Democracy — stern measures against the left, capitulation to the right.

"The British Empire is ruled by the most astute ruling class in the world; the British working class is



Connolly dying

the most easily fooled working class in the world", wrote James Connolly.

"God help the poor Irish as long as they remain yoked to such a combination". (Workers' Republic, Sept. 18, 1915)

Since Connolly's time the English Left has bent over backwards to yoke the Irish to the Labour Party. Their line is that the future of Ireland rests with the British working class movement.

But, as Lenin said, "Marxists must state what is". The English working class is racist and chauvinist to the core. The English working class wanted the Winchester 8 prisoners hanged.

CRUSHED

Compare English working class history with that of the French, the Italians, the Spanish, even the Germans, let alone the Irish — the English are a conservative people, they have never carried out large-scale rebellions and revolutions since the days of Cromwell.

By contrast, Irish workers produced James Connolly — the greatest socialist in the 'British' Isles, shot dead by the aid of the Labour Party. They produced the Irish Citizen Army, which Lenin called "the first Red Army in Europe" — crushed by the aid of the Labour Party. The Irish workers have a revolutionary history. They are quite capable of looking after themselves. Look how half a million people of the north have been able to stand up against insurmountable odds, and lick the enemy — one sixteenth of the

population of London, and they've got the British Army on the run!

The English Left has not fought against racism and chauvinism within the English working class. They don't seem to know that racism and chauvinism breed fascism, not communism.

Today everyone knows that the CPGB is not a revolutionary party (neither are the IS, Militant, and a whole load of others). But it was racist and chauvinist at its very beginning, in 1920.

There is not one single reference to the struggle going on in Ireland in the official report of the conference that founded the CPGB, the Communist Unity Convention, which was held in London on July 31 and August 1, 1920.

And this was despite the overwhelming Irish vote for independence in 1918, the mass arrests in 1919 and 1920, the Black and Tan atrocities, and the expulsion of Catholic workers from the Belfast shipyards only days before. Some party!

It is exactly the same today, only worse. Compare the zeal and energy that has gone into mobilising thousands upon thousands in defence of the Vietnamese and now the Chileans — compare that with the miserable turnout against England's own crimes against the Irish.

The leaflet for the September 15th demo in support of the

own hands first! When can we expect these groups to say to their own fellow Englishmen as they say on behalf of Chile — "Send no arms to the military murderers".

In 1925 Trotsky noted that "the most radical elements of the contemporary British Labour movement are mostly of Scotch or Irish race. The union in Ireland of social with national oppression, in face of the sharp conflict of an agrarian with a capitalist country, gives the conditions for sharper changes in consciousness".

Why should Irish workers, who



Chilean people, sponsored by both the CPGB and the IMG, reads:

"End the state of internal war.

Close the concentration camps.

Release all political prisoners.

Restore political freedoms.

Restore trade union rights.

Stop starvation, unemployment, and genocide".

What about Ireland, you Englishmen? What about your own nation's crimes? Clean your

SINCE 1972 all sorts of fascist scum have come to the surface of British politics. The National Front is the biggest of these outfits, but there are plenty of others. Through the efforts of Enoch Powell, of successive Labour and Tory Governments, and of the capitalist press, racialism has become a "respectable" type of politics. Thus the fascist organisations themselves are able to pose, in a way they have not managed since the 1930s, as respectable and even 'radical' in image.

Naturally and correctly, the left in the labour movement has not taken all this lying down. Most sections of the revolutionary left have, absolutely correctly, adopted a policy of never letting the NF or other such outfits hold a single meeting or march that can be stopped. For fascism is the deadly enemy of the workers' movement, as Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco have all proved. It would be the sheerest folly to let their latter-day heirs crawl out unimpeded from under their stones.

REGIME

Yet the left, while correctly attacking the National Front as a "Nazi Front", has so far been pretty quiet on a very big issue that is raised if we use that label. For the original Nazi regime found its downfall in the second world war, and it would be all too easy for workers, students, and others, wanting to smash the new growth of fascism we are now seeing, to be taken in by the Big Lie — peddled even today by significant forces on the left of the labour movement, for example the Communist Party — that it was in the interests of the working class to help and support the British, French, and American "democratic" capitalists during world war 2.

MILITARY

The main excuse that was used, by the 'leaders' of the workers' movement, to justify copping out of the class struggle during the last War was, that what the War involved was the defence of 'democracy' against fascism. Of course, when today we have lots of nice 'democratic' British coppers defending the National Front against anti-fascists, and when Kevin Gately gets killed in the process, that story isn't going

to sound too good to people facing charges by 'democratic' mounted police. Nevertheless it is worth examining what really was involved in World War II, and what the policy of the labour movement should have been.

According to Clausewitz the great German writer on military matters — whose

THE growing anti- has sometimes t impact on the mind "on the cheap" by we fought against! DAVID HAINES dangers of this app



sections that look to Trotsky for guidance, should be honest and admit that they have failed miserably in this task.

Meanwhile, as Connolly said, why should Irish workers remain yoked to such a combination? The links between Irish workers and any British socialist party should, he said, be "fraternal and not organic" (Forward, May 27, 1911).

When the same question cropped up in the First International in 1872, Engels fought hard to defeat the attempt to bring Irish workers in England under British jurisdiction. Engels

regarded this move as "an insult to Irish workingmen".

"If members of a conquering nation called upon the nation they had conquered and continued to hold down to forget their specific nationality and position, to 'sink national differences' and so forth, it was nothing else but preaching to them submission to the yoke, and attempting to justify and to perpetuate the dominion of the conqueror under the cloak of internationalism. It was sanctioning the belief, and

Trotsky admits are more radical, be yoked to a racist, anti-Irish, imperialist party? "Whoever gives his little finger to the devil of chauvinism is lost", Trotsky warned in 1933. In 1938, in the Transitional Programme, he insisted that "an uncompromising disclosure" of all forms of racism and national arrogance was "the most important part" of the struggle against imperialism and war.

We can only say that the English left, including those

Fascist movement tried to make an
of older workers
referring to "what
in the last war".
explains the
roach.



"normal" times, deceit, trickery, blackmail and all the other weapons in the diplomatic bag are used by the employing class, and their politicians to get what they want from rival capitalists and from looted colonies alike. But in the normal run of things, particularly in the 20th century, "normal", "peaceful" times come to an end, and the employing class has to go to war to get what it is after.

For example, during the 1960s the American ruling class launched a massive war in Vietnam with the aim of preventing the people of that country kicking out the corrupt ruling class headed by Diem and Thieu. In 1956 Britain, France, and Zionist 'Israel' invaded Egypt to get back control of the Suez Canal, and to intimidate the Arab people. In 1914, Britain, France and Czarist Russia fought Germany, Austria and Turkey for control of the Balkans, the Middle East and several other parts of the world.

BANDITS

Just the same sort of thing was involved in World War 2, but on a larger scale. Because Britain, France, and the USA won World War 1, they had most of the colonies and captive markets during the 1920s and 1930s. The German colonialists had to hand over their part of the spoils after 1918, and Italy never got much of a look-in because it developed late as a capitalist country. But once Hitler had smashed the German labour movement, the German employing class looked for a change of the situation where other imperialist bandits had all the swag and they had none.

This naturally made it look as if German imperialism was the "aggressor" in World War 2. Things were very similar in the US-Japanese contest for control of the Pacific Ocean and the countries bordering it; in both cases, the successful robbers tried to make out that the up-and-coming rival gangs were the ones causing all the trouble. That it was imperialist robbery as a system which was to blame was explained only by the small and isolated forces of the Trotskyist movement; all other tendencies in the workers' movement gave in, to some extent or another, to imperialist lies and deceit, even when they didn't join in the lying chorus themselves.

ideas Marx, Engels, Luxemburg, and Lenin all admired and used — "War is the continuation of politics by other means". By that he meant, the aims and interests of the people and classes who launch and run wars, during those wars, are the same basic aims and interests that they had before the war. In

So the real picture behind the 'democratic' facade worn by Britain, France, and the USA was the enslavement of most of the world. The war was waged by those powers to defend their colonialism; if in the process the USA managed to help itself to quite a few bits of the loot previously held by its allies, that only goes to show that there really is no honour among thieves.

In such a situation, the labour movement cannot, for its own sake, afford to side with one of the robber gangs against the other.

Of course, British and American workers quite rightly detested and wished to smash the regimes of Hitler, Mussolini, and the Mikado. But to do so at the expense of collaborating in the continued enslavement of British India, of Latin America, of French holdings in Africa, at the expense of bringing Anglo-

and America (as well as most other 'democratic' countries) systematically tried, during World War 2, to convince the working class that their rulers' time of difficulty was precisely the time to give up the fight against them.

In doing so, the official leaders served only to deceive the working class in the interests of the employers. To the extent that British and American workers were tricked into supporting the war, to that extent the German, Italian, and Japanese workers — whose organisations had been smashed — were divided from their class brothers in the Allied countries, and left as isolated individuals to confront the stark choice between their own rulers and the tender mercies of Anglo-American imperialism bent on "unconditional surrender". To the extent that workers in the UK and USA were deceived

proved by the memoirs of Anglo-American military and political figures which have appeared since — the Trotskyists, the sole voice opposing nationalist and chauvinist hysteria, were absolutely correct to diagnose that western imperialism would try to take advantage of the war to strengthen their position vis-a-vis the USSR and the colonial peoples, and also to smash the workers' movement in those countries, such as France, Italy, and Greece, where capitalism was sorely pressed as the war drew to a close. The live testing of US atom bombs against Japanese cities is now universally acknowledged to have been intended also to intimidate and threaten the USSR and the colonial peoples.

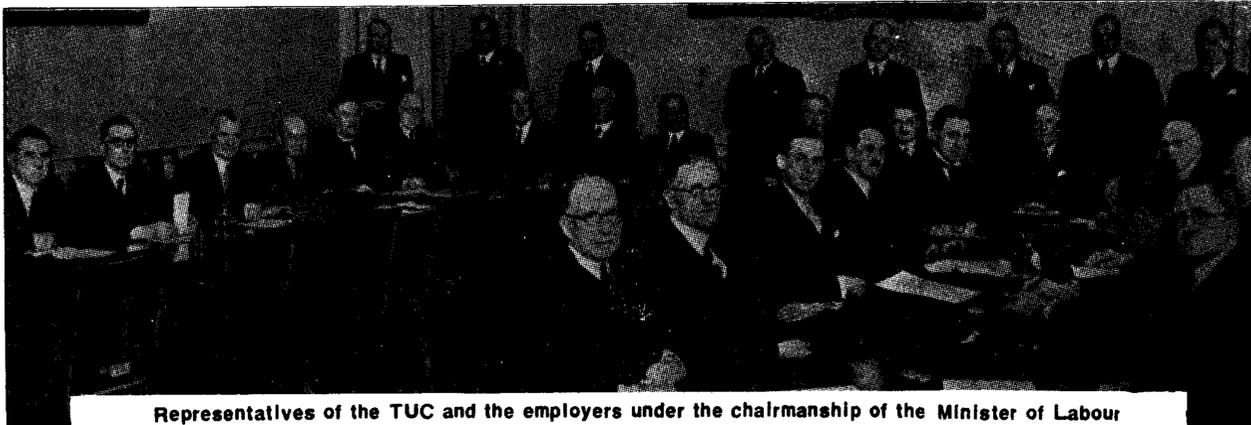
It is of course true that the aims of imperialism were by no means fully achieved. It is true that attacks on bourgeois

loyal services it was rendered by the local "Communist" Parties.

If the workers and colonial peoples managed all these things despite being deceived and tricked by their own leaders, there can be no doubt that with honest and courageous policies there would have been an excellent chance of getting rid of capitalism for good.

SUPPORT

That is the best answer to the argument that the Soviet Union needed the 'democratic' capitalists to defend itself. A revolutionary policy could have ended world capitalism for good. Wouldn't that have been a better way of defending what needed to be defended in the Soviet Union — the nationalised property relationships and the planned economy — better than trying to buy the



Representatives of the TUC and the employers under the chairmanship of the Minister of Labour

American forces within striking distance of the USSR at the cost of US imperialism obtaining nuclear weapons with which to threaten progressive movements throughout the world, and at the cost of giving up democratic and trade union rights in the imperialist 'mother countries' themselves — such was a cost that should never have been met.

In any individual factory or firm, class conscious workers would take advantage of their employers' difficulties to get more concessions from them. Such a policy is obvious and correct, and in the same way when the whole system and all the employers are in trouble, that is just the time for the workers' movement to press ahead and get ready to get rid of them. Yet the leaders of the labour movement in Britain

into supporting their rulers' colonialist war aims, to that extent their capacity to resist the attacks then taking place on civil liberties in their own countries was cut down: facing attacks on the right to strike, suppression of the working class press, arbitrary imprisonments without trial, union busting and witch-hunts of trade union militants, the labour movement was hardly in a position to resist while all its leaders told it that British and American employers and governments were specially nice and would never do such things.

ATOM BOMBS

To the extent that the workers' organisations collaborated in their rulers' imperialist enterprise, not only was colonialism militarily strengthened but the divisions between the workers of the colonial powers and the oppressed colonial peoples were widened and the whole struggle for world socialism was put back. The fact that a number of colonies gained independence in the wake of world war 2 is not proof that the war had a liberating effect. Rather it showed how far imperialism was incapable of containing the uprising of the colonial peoples. It would have happened earlier but for the policy of class collaboration at home and in the colonies.

Furthermore, the defence of the USSR and the liberation of the countries enslaved by western colonialism — both aims rightly supported by all class conscious workers — were in no way advanced by British and American workers' supporting their employers' war. On the contrary — as is

democracy in Britain and the USA were not successfully carried through to the end. It is true that America's colonial and anti-Soviet plans for the war's end fell apart in the face of the mass revolts in the US army in 1945-46. It is true that the colonial peoples, particularly in Asia, took a hand quite uninvited in the running of their own affairs, and started to throw out all the colonialists, 'democratic' or otherwise.

But all these things were achieved despite and against the treachery of the official leaders of the workers' movement. Immediately after 1945, the colonial revolution went ahead against the opposition of the 'Communist' Parties in colonialist and colonised countries alike. Later Communist Parties did lead important struggles against imperialism in China, Indochina, Malaya, Korea, and the Philippines, but only after they had largely missed the chances presented by the weakness of imperialism at the end of the war, and even then with only grudging support from the Kremlin.

REBUFFED

Although the workers' organisations were misled and deceived, attacks on civil liberties in the West were largely rebuffed. The tremendous heroism and self sacrifice of the Soviet people defeated the Nazi onslaught in Eastern Europe and pre-empted Anglo-American plans for that part of the world. The workers' upsurges in Britain, France, the USA, and Italy at the end of the war created very serious problems for the imperialists; in France and Italy capitalism survived only through the

goodwill of British and US imperialists by offering them the servile support of the labour movement. In any case, the Soviet Union did face the greater part of Germany's military might without much help from the "Allies". The Soviet people defended themselves against imperialism despite the lack of war preparations, despite the military blunders of the Stalinists, and despite the terrible undermining of their will to defend the first workers' state by the anti-socialist policies of the Stalinist leadership.

DECADES

So now, thirty years on, as fascism re-emerges in Britain other West European 'democracies', as the NF cowers behind lines of 'democratic' fuff-men, as in Ireland British 'democratic' squaddies murder, jail, and savagely torture, it is worth taking a quick look back to world war 2. At that time, the leaders of the workers' movement — Socialist and Communist alike — came to the aid of the employers in their hour of need. The result has been to ensure three further decades of colonialist looting, of widespread famine and disease, of bloody repression and war (in Korea, Mozambique, Algeria, Vietnam.....), of enslavement of whole peoples in South Africa, Brazil, Palestine. In the struggles ahead, such 'leaders' should be shunned like the plague; that way, and only that way, the working class will get rid of all its oppressors, throughout the world, for good.

too common among the English working men, that they were superior beings compared to the Irish, and as much an aristocracy as the mean whites of the Slave States considered themselves to be with regard to the Negroes.

"In a case like that of the Irish, true Internationalism must necessarily be based on a distinctly national organisation... The Irish sections in England could not be separated from the Irish sections in Ireland". (Marx and Engels on Ireland, pp. 302-4)

If the cap fits, wear it. We say that in the coming election, Irish workers should reject the Labour Party and use the campaign to strengthen anti-imperialist Republican politics in the Irish community in Britain. The best way that the English Left can help in this is by supporting the ICRA candidates. This will sort out the sheep from the goats.

R.A.

REPLY

IT is absolutely true that the "Labour Party has proved no different from the Tories in Ireland". It is also true that the whole British working class movement, not just the Labour Party leaders, has time after time gone along with the actions of the British capitalist class in suppressing the Irish people.

If we are revolutionaries, though, our job is not just to see that reality but to change it. How?

One way some people try to change it is by turning your back on the Labour Party and the millions of workers who vote for it, and shouting loud curses. You can 'punish' the Labour Party by withdrawing from it the vote of some thousands of Republican sympathisers in England.

But the fact is that the Labour Party leaders can endure louder curses, and much harsher punishments, and still continue to

serve British imperialism. ICRA running candidates may force a few Labour MPs to express a bit more "concern" about Ireland in the pre-election period; but it will not change the policy of the Labour Party.

In fact, turning our back on the Labour Party will make life easier for the Pagets and the Heffers and the Ormes, because it will give them a free run among the majority of the working class.

FIGHT

The best way to fight them is inside the labour movement. We should say to the workers who vote Labour: yes, we will vote Labour with you. But just to vote Labour and leave it at that will only get you another version of Tory policies. To get even the most minor concessions out of Labour governments on social and economic questions in Britain we have to fight every inch of the way. And at the same time we should fight for Labour to end its anti working class policies in Ireland and withdraw the troops.

In trade union meetings, ward and constituency meetings, in Young Socialists meetings, in election hustings and leaflets, we explain the need for British workers to support the Republican people of Ireland in their fight to throw out British imperialism.

RECOGNISE

If British socialists are silent or evasive on the question of Ireland for the sake of not offending the chauvinism of British workers, then we are traitors. But at the same time we must recognise that the working class starts where it is, not where we would like it to be. Unless we can relate our socialist propaganda to the present activity and concerns of the working class, we will not break workers from chauvinism however principled we are.

We are certainly not advising workers to vote Labour on the grounds that Labour is good for

British workers (and never mind Ireland)! Labour governments have used troops against strikers in Britain as well as against the Irish people. The policies of Labour governments have been reactionary both in Britain and in Ireland. We advocate voting Labour, not to support those policies, but to help in fighting against those policies in the labour movement.

If the ICRA campaign were a campaign directed towards demanding that certain constituencies dump their candidates and adopt candidates standing on a Republican or Troops Out platform, then the matter would be different.

DUTY

It would be the duty then of British revolutionaries to encourage British workers in the Labour Party to adopt the 'Irish' candidates, and to vote for them, as a demonstration of solidarity.

We think Irish workers in Britain also should vote Labour, and should press within the Labour Party and in election meetings for Labour to withdraw troops from Ireland. To condemn actions of the Irish people in



Heffer

struggle on the grounds that they make life difficult for British socialists would indeed be chauvinism. But we criticise the ICRA election campaign, not on the grounds that it makes life difficult for the Labour Party leaders, but on the grounds that — contrary to its intentions — it makes life easier for people like Heffer, Orme, and Rees.



That's not fair -- that's blackmail

Contd from front page.

The meeting of the Ancillary Staff Council on Friday 20th September — to be held in North Wales so as to avoid pickets and demonstrations! — will decide on the pay claim and the tactics to be adopted. But many militants already know that Alan Fisher intends to do nothing until after the elections. NUPE will pour £60,000 into Labour's campaign, and hope the Social Contract will give workers in the health service, and local authority manual workers, the £30 basic they are demanding.



Dresser Engineering workers occupying.

THE November deadline for threshold payments is leading to more struggles by workers to win such agreements. In Bracknell, the subsidiary of a large US company, Dressers Engineering, was occupied for two weeks by workers demanding local bosses pay up on the threshold agreement signed earlier this year. The management had paid out the first £1.20, and then refused any extra payments. After fruitless negotiations with what the men regard as "bad and shabby management", the men occupied. Initially the men, all in the AUEW, except for two EPTU members, wanted £1.68, but then during the occupation they put in a claim for £3.00 to meet the cost of living rises.

The occupation was maintained on a 24 hour rota basis, with the gates blockaded, in response to police visits and rumours of an "invasion" from the bosses the workers threatened to strip the machines.

Support came from the local District Committee of the AUEW and from workers in nearby factories. Victory came on 16th September, when management offered £2.80 — £1.60 for threshold payments, and £1.20 for further help with the cost of living.

It is expected that the next round of negotiations, in January, will be for an extension of the cost of living agreement. T.R.

NUT LEADERS ACCEPT DIVISIVE OFFER

AT a meeting of the Burnham Committee last Monday, the NUT Executive provisionally accepted a three-tier London Allowance for teachers — £351 per year for Inner London and six Outer London boroughs, £267 for the rest of Outer London, and

£141 for a 'fringe' area (as yet undefined) of teachers who never asked for a London Allowance in the first place.

It only remains for a special conference of the NUT to ratify the decision and we shall all, no doubt, be told that the London Allowance issue is dead. The

special conference will be a national one, and it would not be surprising if delegates from outside London vote for acceptance of what, on the face of it, seems quite a generous offer. But what are the facts?

First, it is true that many teachers will be receiving an allowance for which they did not ask. The whole of Surrey is included in the 'fringe' area, and teachers there must be feeling good. However, while the fringe areas are getting more than they asked for, the reverse is the case for the majority of Outer London boroughs. All Outer London boroughs were included in the union's original claim of £350 for all London teachers. By a strange coincidence, the six Outer London boroughs who did get included in the £351 area just happen to be the most militant outside the Inner London area.

original claim called for backdating to November 1972 — yes, London teachers have been waiting 22 months for a settlement — and what have they got? The old Allowance for both Inner and Outer London was £118 p.a., so that £351 represents an increase of £232 and £267 represents an increase of £149. These increases are backdated only to March or April this year! The original claim would have meant a lump sum payment (after tax) of £284 for all London teachers. As it is, those proposed for £351 will get £77, and those for £267, £50 — not much for almost two years' intermittent struggle.

Ballot

The All London Action Committee is organising a picket of the special salaries conference on the 28th. Letters were sent out to schools in those Outer London boroughs left 'out in the cold' spelling out the details of the offer, and informing them of the support they could expect from Inner London where, for instance, North London Teachers' Association is already pledged to unofficial action, the details of which are to be decided at a special general meeting on 23rd September. Haringey Association also voted 31 to 19 to reject the pay offer and demanded that the proposed ballot on strike be carried out.

The determining factor at this stage will be schools in the £267 band, so as to convince teachers on the £351 level of the need for solidarity action.

The London Allowance campaign must not, however, be seen as a thing apart from the other issues facing teachers: the cuts in educational expenditure,

working conditions in schools, the need for a teacher's charter and the national salary claim. London schools are still 290 teachers short at secondary level alone.

The Houghton enquiry into teachers' pay is due to be published towards the end of the year. All the major teaching unions have made a provisional agreement to submit evidence around a claim for a starting salary of £2000, with the top of the teaching pyramid (i.e. those furthest from the job in the classroom) taking home £9000 p.a. The differences between the salary scales under this new scheme would be a minimum of £400, at least double what they are at present. It is clear why groups like the National Association of Head Teachers or the Assistant Masters' Association should like this claim; why the ordinary class teachers who make up the great majority of the NUT should like it is less clear.

Picket

There is only one way to influence 'impartial enquiries' into teachers' pay, and that is by concerted rank and file action, including strike action, official if possible, but unofficial if need be. The nurses have shown that it can be done. It is up to teachers to follow their lead. The extended strike weapon has not been used for a long time. A real fight for solidarity action from key sections of industry (as with the miners' support of the nurses) has not been waged.

Support the mass picket of the NUT Salaries Conference, Central Hall, Westminster, Saturday 28th September. Be there at 9 a.m.

Ian Hollingworth

LIGHTNING STRIKES HITS IMI

WHEN craftsmen at Imperial Metal Industries Witton plant in Birmingham put in for a £15 a week on the basic rise and backed it up with a series of one day lightning strikes, the bosses felt they had to make an offer.

Offers

Determined, however, to split the workforce, management's offer varied from section to section. The offers ranged from £2 to £4.50 — in each case with strings. These offers were rejected, with the toolsetters walking out on the 11th and the millwrights supporting them by blacking their work.

With the lightning strikes taking place, IMI laid off the vast majority of production workers (mainly in the Transport and General Workers' Union) although they were willing to work, and although there was work to do. Once again it seemed the employers wanted to stir up resentment in certain sections and use it against others.

But the response of the

production workers was to feel resentment towards the IMI bosses. They decided on industrial action from the week beginning the 16th September in order to change their guaranteed week agreement. According to this agreement, 34 hours were guaranteed as long as there were no strikes. Now they want a straight guarantee with no "ifs" and "buts".

The treatment of the craftsmen has been very different. They were told that they could come in while the T&GWU members were striking for the improved guarantee.

Split

Unfortunately, while the employers' attempts to split the workers have failed dismally, the T&GWU site chairman, Des Davies, is hardly helping things by refusing a joint struggle with the AUEW craftsmen on behalf of his members who have use the opportunity to put in for the same as the engineers.

John Bryant
Jenny Jones

Building workers fight for right to organise

220 building workers (UCATT, T&G, and AUEW construction section) on the M153 Motorway site, Ellesmere Port, are now entering their 10th week on strike. Jim Murphy, the site convenor, said that they are demanding that all should be reinstated and that there should be a proper bonus scheme for the job.

Lump site

The main contractor, Sir Lindsay Parkinson, have made their anti-trade union attitude clear right from the start of the job. Originally it was a lump site, with few basic conditions. When this was changed, the bosses adopted a policy of dragging out negotiations (12 months for a proper bonus scheme) and harrasing the stewards (stopping their time; harrasing, then sacking, one). When the joiners, on June 24th, voted to work 'off bonus', 16 general section members were sacked; when all the joiners went on strike-lumpers were immediately called in, and drove through the picket. At this stage, all workers on the site struck.

The strike has had to contend

with a number of difficulties. One of the main ones was it not being made official until the 8th week, and only then after much pressure from the strike committee. The local Labour MP has also only recently been forced to offer help. Parkinson's, in addition, have consistently refused to make the site safe during the strike, thereby directly endangering local children (the strikers themselves have had to do the minimum safety work). Parkinson's have also got those strikers instructed by the strike committee to find other work, blacked off other sites.

Official

The recent decision to make the strike official is obviously a step forward. But Parkinson's (or any other contractor, if they get out of the job) still need to be defeated. This strike, over basic trade union rights, is important to win. Send donations and messages of support to:

R.S.Walls,
24, Crescent Rd,
Wallasey,
Merseyside.

J. Bloxam

Divisive

It is also true that the original limit imposed by the Pay Board have been broken. That in itself is an answer to the argument that unofficial action achieves nothing! However, as Dick North, editor of *Rank and File* and a member of the NUT Executive, pointed out, the employers have been less concerned with coughing up a bit of extra cash than they have with imposing a tiered system which will split London teachers and make further united action more difficult.

It is the nature of the offer as a splitting tactic, more than just amounts of money involved, that is what is really wrong with the offer.

On backdating, the NUT Executive has quietly retreated. The

ON Saturday 14th September, the third day of Tyndall's "tour" of the North West, the NF held a public meeting in Blackburn, which is supposed to be one of their strongholds. At short notice, 70 anti-fascists turned up to try to prevent the National Front spreading their racist poison.

Despite disagreements as to the tactics to be employed, 40 or so comrades succeeded in filling the back five rows of the hall, with only 33 NF supporters filling the remaining 300 seats. Just before the meeting was due to start five comrades were arrested by the police officers. Those noble defenders of the right of all scabbing scum to preach fascist ideas acted on the explicit directions of Kingsley Read, Blackburn NF chairman, and no-one else. Following a burst of heckling as Tyndall was introduced, the petty Fuhrers could no longer put up with it and called the local police force in again to clear the hall, directed again by Mr Read.

Committees

Only 33 turned up to listen to the NF, which could be claimed as a victory. But obviously in future anti-fascist turnouts, the local committees should work out the necessary plans beforehand, instead of discussing them in a car park an hour before the fascists are due to start their meeting.

A.S.

On Friday Tyndall spoke at a National Front meeting in a hotel in Bolton, to endorse the local NF parliamentary candidate. Half an hour before the meeting was due to start, about 100 anti-fascist demonstrators had mounted a picket across the doors of the hotel.

Fifteen minutes after the

NF opposed in Lancs

scheduled meeting time, about 20 NF supporters had gathered. Then the police went into action, arresting 14 anti-fascist demonstrators

and clearing a way for the fascists. About 100 other NF people did get in, though, creeping in through some back door or sewage pipe.

NALGO National pay deal is a wage cut

THE long-awaited sell-out of NALGO's 20% national pay claim for local government clerical and white collar workers has at last come.

Appropriately enough, it was arranged at Brighton on September 5th, shortly after the TUC's acceptance of the social contract, which no doubt helped. The settlement recommended to, and accepted by, a national delegate meeting on the appropriate date of Friday 13th, is for an 'overall' increase claimed to be for 14%, ranging from 11% to 13% for most members, including slight weighting in favour of the lowest paid (20% for the lowest grades — i.e. £135 on salaries of £672 to £837, compared with 11% — i.e. £600 on £5,367). The offer previously rejected was said to be for about 11% all round — so in effect, an extra two and a half per cent plus the social contract was enough for the NALGO negotiators, who had been committed by the national conference to fight for nothing less than the full 20%.

This would have meant, of course, having to organise a real fight against the social contract and mobilising the membership

nationally, as has been done in London over the weighting claim earlier this year. The NALGO bureaucracy had no intention of allowing this to happen. For example, an action committee elected by the Liverpool branch to fight for the 20% national pay claim was never even allowed to meet by the local officials.

Cut

In real terms, the deal means a pay cut for NALGO members, who have waited a year for it. To keep up with the rise in living costs would have needed the full 20% plus threshold agreements, instead of something like 20% including the existing threshold payments which NALGO has got. NALGO has shown other workers what the social contract really means — now be warned! What NALGO members need now is a new claim for at least 20% plus threshold payments — that is a sliding scale of wages, after the existing threshold agreements expire at the end of October. And this time there must be a real national rank and file mobilisation to win it.

John Strauther

SOCIALISTS have always realised that the conditions under which the working class is forced to live are dictated by the needs of capital. This week a report by the Arthritis and rheumatism Council emphasises exactly that point, in terms of workers health.

Apparently rheumatic illness is high on the list of workers' complaints to the doctor, whereas such aches and pains are hardly heard of among the high and mighty.

According to the report's division into social classes, semi-skilled and unskilled workers are the more affected compared with the "favourable health experiences" of patients of other social classes.

Not only rheumatic complaints, but nearly all other diseases follow the same pattern for working class patients. This is the practical effect of the declining standards of the National Health Service and the maintenance of private patients' privilege. DAVE RUSSELL

THE 200 women strikers at Wingrove and Rogers, Liverpool, are still in need of support. The negotiations which began last week have not, at the time of writing, made much headway. Scabs continue to get into the factory, aided by a mounting police guard.

The urgent need is to increase the size of the picket line at the gate in Dornville Rd, between 7.15 and 8 every morning. All trade unionists and socialists in the area should make it a priority to mobilise for this. Donations and messages of support are also needed. B.W.

MEETINGS

LONDON Workers Fight readers' meeting: "The Labour Party and the General Election". Speaker Clive Bane. 8pm, Sunday 22nd September, at the 'George', Liverpool Rd, N1.

LIVERPOOL Workers Fight readers' meeting: "The Labour Party and the General Election". Speaker Martin Thomas. 8pm, Wednesday 25th September, at Stanley House, Upper Parliament St, Liverpool 8.

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