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Tories

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BLOOD ON HIS HANDS!



Demonstrate Sept 11

Assemble 1pm Clerkenwell Green, London

**No more Chiles! Hands
off Central America!**

EDITORIAL

Plane truth

269 PASSENGERS and crew died in the the Korean Airlines jumbo jet shot down last week under mysterious circumstances by a Soviet fighter deep inside Soviet air space.

It was a dramatic indication of the recklessness for human life, the habitual brutality, the uncontrolled ferocity, which flow from the very nature of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

Nobody but a crank could imagine that the Kremlin leaders, seeking to halt new missile deployments in Europe, had anything to gain from the deliberate destruction of the airliner.

Whatever the sequence of events that led up to the firing of the fatal missile, it is self-evident that even had the whole jumbo been packed to capacity with camera-toting CIA agents, the worst possible response (had Soviet procedures offered any flexibility) was to shoot down an unarmed civil aircraft — thus fuelling an immediate and universal escalation of cold war propaganda to the benefit of Reagan the the hawks in the imperialist governments of the West.

But we cannot be surprised at the initial scandalous silence, followed by lumbering and inept attempts at a cover-up, on the part of the Kremlin chiefs. The gang of bureaucrats who masquerade under the stolen banner of 'communism' in the USSR, Eastern Europe and other deformed workers' states are the political descendants of Joseph Stalin, whose ruthless suppression of every form of political opponent and brutal indifference to the fate of millions is well known.

They have never known — probably by now cannot even imagine — any sort of democratic accountability for their actions, any system of having to answer for what they do to the workers and peasants of their countries. They are used to 'explaining themselves' by means of the policeman's boot and baton.

When Andropov and his fellow-leaders attempt to respond to this crisis by at first trying to hush up the affair at top level, and then by simply brazening it out and seeking to ride the storm of international anger, they are just doing what comes naturally.

But don't let the appalling conduct of the Soviet bureaucracy fool anyone into thinking that Reagan and Thatcher are remotely concerned for the passengers. (Or even for the truth: it took them several days to admit that a US spy plane was operating in the area).

They are revelling in an ideal opportunity to stoke the fires of anti-communism, to bolster their own arguments for a further escalation of the arms race.

Nothing could be more cynical. The whole scenario of the night encounter between an 'off course' airliner and Soviet fighters, six miles above some of the most sensitive Soviet military installations, is a scenario of growing military and political tension consciously fuelled by Reagan and by Thatcher.

Reagan's hands are not clean. They are dripping with blood. It was Reagan who set out to raise the stakes in the nuclear poker game, by equipping the USA with new first-strike weaponry — Cruise missiles, Pershing IIs, Trident, and the new giant MX missile.

It is Reagan — backed by Thatcher — who has insisted upon sitting Cruise missiles in Europe as a new threat targeted on the USSR.

It is Reagan who has banged the military drum, dispatching fleets to cruise off the Nicaraguan coastline, sending thousands of troops for 'manoeuvres' in Central America, stationing aircraft carriers to menace Libya, and arming bloodstained dictators around the world.

Reagan's military actions are deliberately designed to create a climate of suspicion, fear and anxiety — and to further the strategies and ambitions of the US bankers and military top brass.

Death and suffering are a daily by-product of the operations of the US ruling class. Millions die agonising deaths in the plundered Third World through avoidable famine and curable diseases, while in the advanced capitalist countries farmers are paid not to produce and drug companies vie to promote the latest marketing gimmick. Thousands die and are maimed in factories and workplaces world-wide as victims of the multinationals' ruthless will to sacrifice human life to profit.

And deaths arising from US political strategy are even more visible.

In Chile, deliberate US 'destabilisation' of an elected government paved the way ten years ago for a vicious junta that drove one million into exile, murdered thousands, and destroyed the country's economy.

The 'psychopathic killers' running the El Salvador military — as even a former US Ambassador described one of them — are trained, financed, armed, 'advised', and propped up by the US.

When Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza and his National Guard unleashed murderous war against the Sandinista revolution, the US was right behind them — as it had been right behind the Somozas' brutal rule for over 40 years. Washington abandoned Somoza only when it was clear that he was going to lose. Now the US pumps in money, guns and 'advisors' to help ex National Guardsmen waging counter-revolutionary war against the new Nicaragua.

Reagan deplores Kremlin brutality: but the murdering military dictatorship in Turkey is the apple of his eye, keeping a strategic country safe for NATO. The same US administration which professes horror at the death of 269 on the KAL airliner remains doggedly committed to the diplomatic recognition of the defeated genocidal Pol Pot leadership of Kampuchea — which killed an estimated three to four million people.

No: Reagan's hands drip with blood. The British ruling class not only supports US imperialism, but has its own, longer, blood-stained record.

The answer is to stop the arms race. And to do that we must disarm and overthrow Reagan, Thatcher, and the class they represent.

Gays suffer from Brighton backlash

WE ARE extremely angry at the attempt to attack the rights of lesbians and gay men to live openly in society by suggestions that homosexuality is linked in any way to sexual abuse of young people.

The 'popular' press has acted in a totally irresponsible and shameful manner in the way in which it has linked the rape of a young boy in Brighton to paedophilia and then to homosexuality, as if being gay is the start of a slippery slope which leads on to child molesting.

The fact that the 'popular' press and sections of the media have fanned the flames of bigotry against gay women and men is clearly demonstrated by the increase in recent weeks of attacks on gay people and on gay pubs and clubs. In Brighton the right of lesbians and gay men to live their lives free from harassment, abuse and violent assault has been seriously threatened.

Prejudice

All this demonstrates clearly how much prejudice continues to exist against homosexual women and men. That people, in 1983, are prepared to believe that there is a link between gays and sexual attacks on young people shows how much work has yet to be done in terms of general awareness that lesbians and gay men are equal in every respect to non-gay people.

The public does not assume that every time a heterosexual man assaults or rapes a young girl, that this proves the corrupt nature of heterosexuality.

It is also a sad reflection on the attitudes of the 'popular' press that the sexually-motivated murders of two young women, Caroline Hogg and Susan Maxwell, have almost faded into insignificance in contrast to the lurid reporting of the hunt for the Brighton

The Labour Campaign for Gay Rights responds to the press comment on the rape of a young boy in Brighton.

attackers.

Labour Campaign for Gay Rights believes that the age of consent should be equal between heterosexuals and gays.

The argument about whether relationships between people under the age of consent can be non-exploitative is a different issue which relates no

more to gay women and men than to their heterosexual counterparts.

We call on the Labour Party and Trade Union Movement, together with everyone whose mind is not clouded with bigotry, not to allow the recent events in Brighton to be used to attack the rights of gay people. Rather, we must redouble our efforts as a movement to ensure that there is accurate information generally available about homosexual people and an end to all legal discrimination.

On the question of paedophilia, we believe that it would be a serious attack on civil liberties for paedophile or-

ganisations to be banned. We believe that this act would open the door to attacks on the rights of other organisations campaigning for changes in society which are generally unpopular. Such a ban would undermine the rights which are essential to maintain any democratic society.

YCND hits back

MEMBERS of the disbanded YCND National Committee have been organising to get YCND reinstated.

An emergency resolution has been drafted to go to CND's December conference, calling for a recall conference of YCND.

The committee set up by Bruce Kent as the 'safe' alternative to the YCND NC was formally set up to organise a recall YCND conference. But in fact the committee does not seem so keen on holding a conference.

The reasons are obvious. On the one hand a conference which elects a new National Committee and makes policy can only constitutionally do so if YCND were reinstated as a recognised 'specialist section' of CND. On the other hand, it seems likely that a recall conference would elect a very similar NC — since Kent's brand of politics are not widely supported amongst youth CND activists.

Meanwhile a Truth Kit is being compiled to answer Bruce Kent's allegations; it will be sent out to YCND and to CND groups.

Two lobbies are also planned: one of the TUC on September 8, and the second of the CND council meeting on October 15.

Already London Region CND has passed a resolution supporting YCND and condemning the witch-hunt; it is important that supporters in other regions do the same.

The fight against Kent's witch-hunt can best be carried through by continuing and stepping up the campaign to build and strengthen local YCND groups.

Claimants fight Police Bill

A LOCAL group of the National Campaign Against the Police Bill is to be set up in Oxford following a conference there last Saturday, 3rd, to discuss lessons of the massive police swoop on claimants there last year.

"Operation Major may be a year old, but the struggle for police accountability and a better deal for claimants goes on".

This statement by Alan Jarman, of the Oxford National Council for Civil Liberties group, was the keynote of the one-day conference.

The conference was called by Oxford Claimants Defence Committee to mark the anniversary of the grim day when 236 mostly homeless claimants were arrested at a fake DHSS office in Oxford.

Approximately 100 delegates from unemployed groups, Labour Parties, and trade union branches, plus many individuals, heard Chris Holmes, director of CHAR, the Campaign for the Homeless and Rootless, attack the government's

record of massive cuts in public spending on housing. Over the last four years it has been halved.

Holmes said that this was one of the major reasons for homelessness in Britain.

Ted Knight from Lambeth Borough Council also spoke, and the leader of the Oxford County Labour group told the conference that the national leaders of the Labour Party had failed — even after six months of writing — to respond to his requests for them to lead the fight to get a public inquiry into Operation Major.

There were workshops on most of the issues raised by the police/DHSS combined operation — on the media, on the use of computers for monitoring, and on social security and poverty.

The workshop that generated a way forward for campaigning was the one on police accountability. A speaker from the GLC Police Committee and the National Campaign Against the Police Bill called for a fight against this Bill, which will criminalise whole sections of the community.

Shooting down Scargill

THE CONNECTION between the shooting down of a South Korean airliner and the decision by the TUC to talk to Tebbit about its own execution, might not seem obvious.

That there is a link was shown, as so often, by press coverage of this year's TUC. (Do not confuse press coverage with reporting. The press 'covers' the TUC rather as the police 'observe' street demonstrations — truncheons drawn, and ready to hit a few heads at the first sign of trouble.)

The week started with the crying question on every Sunday front page. Did Arthur Scargill personally shoot down the jumbo jet? Or had he merely provided the missile?

Either Scargill denounced the Soviet Union, or he would be deemed to be complicit in what was immediately branded as an act of international terrorism.

This 'guilt by non-dissociation' has been the keynote of the week. Frank Chapple, by some harmony of history, became the TUC's chair for the year when it finally called a halt to even a verbal fight against the Tories.

The chief obstacle to this position was obviously the forces led by Arthur Scargill. The Russian question was therefore a stick with which Chapple would discredit his opponents in advance.

Hence, when Chapple links the two issues ('Some trade union leaders will travel half way across

Daily Mail
EXPRESS
Press FINANCIAL TIMES **Gang**
The Daily Telegraph
Sun

By Patrick Spilling

the world to sympathise with communist dictatorships, yet seek to prevent the TUC from talking to the elected government of Britain), he was reflecting the sentiments of every rank and file newspaper editor in Fleet Street.

The Daily Mail led its front page on Chapple's call for Soviet observers to be banned, under the headline, "Russians keep out".

Campaign

The press campaign has the purpose of stamping all those who fail to endorse Reagan's war-cries as being in favour of the shooting down of civilian airliners. And as so often, the press was precisely in tune with the most right-wing elements of the TUC — Chapple and Kate Losinska, the president of the CPSA.

The short-term purpose was to ensure that the forces of the Left — arguing against a dialogue with Tebbit — would be isolated by being as pro-Red and unpatriotic. Red-baiting and jingoism spreads perhaps more quickly through the ranks of the trade union bureau-

cracy than anywhere else. If the government is really desperate to end an official strike, it utters the magic words 'national security' and watches as the officials bury their members under red, white and blue 'get back to work' posters.

The long-term aim, however, is still more important. It is to break the link between the TUC and the Labour Party. One important by-product of talking to Tebbit would be to strengthen the hand of the SDP, who are making the running in calling for the link to be broken.

Coverage

The Guardian has long been giving massive coverage to every call by Dr David Owen to the TUC leaders, and the campaign is beginning to bear fruit.

It has spread from the Guardian to the more intelligent of the High Tory papers in Fleet Street, who see the importance of the TUC initiative in talking to Tebbit as a way of dividing and weakening the labour movement

in the longer term.

The Daily Express, under the headline 'Cutting the Labour Link', made it the subject of its main editorial comment on Tuesday, praising Chapple's speech as being 'of immense significance'.

It said, "The TUC should revert to political independence. Those leaders such as Arthur Scargill and Moss Evans who continue to talk in terms of the class war and the glories of nationalisation are yesterday's men with the day before yesterday's ideas."

"The TUC's real function, as outlined by Frank Chapple, is to protect its members' interests."

"It will do that best by promoting the country's efficiency. The unions ought to be thinking about how to increase tomorrow's dividends for everyone, not raking over the reasons for Labour's past failures."

For the Daily Express, this is political sophistication. They recognise that the trade union movement has more to fear from the enemies within — like Chapple — than from a direct attack from the government.

The relentless anti-Soviet propaganda — blurring every question of progressive and reactionary nature — and the continual branding of militants in Britain as traitors, has the object of developing the influence of their own fifth columnists for the press and the Tories within our ranks.

We can spot them easily enough. We don't need a spy-plane. We do need some strategy to root them out.

Work-in turns out for support

THE workers at Thornton View hospital in Bradford are continuing to hit back at management, and the occupation is gathering strength in the build-up to the demonstration on September 10.

Thornton View's first hospital of many in Yorkshire earmarked for closure. With the resistance to the closure growing daily, the lead given by the mainly women workers should provide a focus for everyone looking for a way to stop the cuts and closures.

Managers have tried a whole series of manoeuvres, tricks and harassment in an attempt to discredit and break the occupation. They have failed miserably at every turn.

Smear

Their attempt to use the local press in a smear campaign backfired when relatives agreed to patients being interviewed. The press coverage changed totally, in support of the occupation.

Next, they tried harassment of the NUPE Branch Secretary, by refusing to let him to the hospital during working hours. The Administrator agreed that this was contrary to agreed procedures, and said that agreements were not valid during industrial disputes.

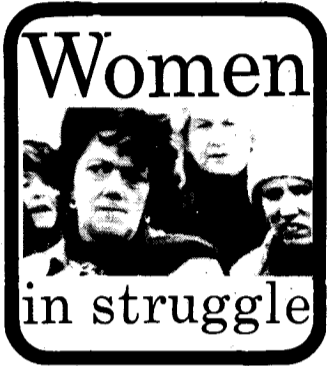
The Branch Secretary insisted on the status quo being observed under the agreed grievance procedure, and management have now backed down.

Intimidating letters to all staff, including the local GP, telling them they should not be in the hospital outside worktime have strengthened the workers, who insisted that the union officials challenge management's right to send such letters.

They also pressurised the officials to write to all union members, confirming that they could continue to picket, and would have full union backing in the case of any harassment or victimisation.

Window

Since a Senior Nursing Administrator leapt through an open kitchen window, no managers have been allowed into the hospital. The local nursing officer broke an agreement to phone



by Jane Goss

before arriving, and has been refused entry ever since.

The workers have gone from strength to strength. The pressures of continuing normal working routine, attending occupation meetings, picketing, as well as carrying out normal domestic chores and child care arrangements puts tremendous demands on the women in the hospital. But they are determined that Thornton View will not close.

They have been leafletting all the local hospitals this week, in a concerted effort to get other hospital workers to promise to take supporting strike action.

Workers at Hindle's Gears, who have been out on strike for 12 weeks have been on the picket line to give support, and the hospital workers have also gone to their picket line.

A demonstration through Bradford on Saturday 10 is planning to link up with the march by Hindle's workers on the same day.

The links between the workers who recognise that they're fighting for the same basic rights of employment and services will be a strong message to the Tories.

Meanwhile, the District and Regional Health Authority are faced with figuring out their next defensive move.

The fight at Thornton View is the first major occupation in the National Health Service for 2 years. It is vital that it receives the total support of the labour movement. The Tories have made clear their intention to dismantle the NHS. They will be watching the situation in Bradford. It is up to us to ensure that what they see convinces them that they will not succeed in a bid to privatise health and destroy our health service.

How should the media handle

rape?

The rising tide of violence against women has brought with it a rising tide of reportage in the press and mass media — much of it wildly sensationalised.

Many women are understandably angered by the coverage of rape and other male violence in the press: But there are also real problems which must be confronted by even the most enlightened journalists.

For instance, rape is a major event: like any other serious crime it is — or ought to be — 'news', and as such ought to receive adequate attentions. A rapist on the streets is a menace to women in general: they should be warned of the danger.

But at the same time prominent reportage of rape in a particular area, or nation-wide, sensationalised coverage of crimes such as those of the 'Ripper', can create a climate of intimidation and fear amongst women, and intensify reactionary social pressures for women to remain 'safely' in the home (though in fact a large percentage of rapes actually take place in the victim's own homes, not by strangers but by men known to them).

Another problem is that in exploiting the 'news' value, the sensationalism of a particular rape case, editorial staff (largely male) tend to emphasise more the sexually titillating and incidental aspects, and downplay the sheer horror, the violence and the injuries brutally inflicted upon the victim — which do not make such readily saleable 'copy'.

The issue of rape has been discussed from many angles by the women's movement; but there has been insufficient debate on rape reporting in the National Union of Journalists and other media unions.

A recent leaflet, produced jointly by Birmingham NUJ with The Birmingham Rape Crisis Centre, attempts to rectify this and open up discussion on the correct approach of individual journalists to the problem of rape reporting.

But it is plain that the leaflet leaves out any discussion of how the Union itself could take up the fight for the establishment of adequate standards, and against the trivialisation or exploitation of rape by news editors with a cynical view to boosting circulation figures.

What do readers think? To open up further discussion, we are reprinting below the text of the Birmingham leaflet, and invite letters or discussion articles.

Rape and the media

RAPE IS a sordid and vicious crime; it is degrading and emotionally shattering. No journalist approves of such a crime, but many feed off it. Few people who work in the media are naïve enough to deny that sexual crimes, like murders, are often seen as 'good copy'; they sell newspapers and keep viewers' attention. They also offend and denigrate women.

There is nothing new in this. Victorian newspapers were, if anything, far more macabre and melodramatic in reporting such crimes. The problem is that we are still writing such stories today. Was it the Yorkshire Ripper or Jack the Ripper? Read today's popular papers and see how sub-editors still highlight the most titillating aspects of sexual crimes, and downgrade other details which are often more relevant to the story. Surely in the 1980s, journalists are now ready to junk such outdated and insensitive reporting?

As journalists we pride ourselves on our ability to reflect and relate to our audience. Why then do we persist in alienating half of them, women who do not see sexual crimes as cheap titillation?

This pamphlet has been drawn up by NUJ members in Birmingham after consulting with the Birmingham Rape Crisis Centre. It aims to show how insensitive reporting offends women. It also suggests how we, as journalists, might change our approach to rid ourselves of the outdated news values of a repressed Victorian society. All the descriptions we have used are taken from recent newspapers.

What to avoid

Labels which suggest innocence or guilt in a sexual crime.

If a woman is raped coming home from a party, we often see headlines which include descriptions such as 'Party Girl', 'Goodtime Girl' or 'Disco Girl'. These descriptions all imply that the crime was somehow more acceptable. If we use the word 'Virgin' however, we imply that it is unacceptable. All rape is unacceptable.

Description of mode of dress. If we say that a woman was 'mini-skirted', 'bra-less' or was wearing a 'skimpy tee-shirt', we imply that this provoked and even justified a sexual assault. Too many journalists, particularly men, jump to the conclusion that a victim 'was asking for it'. What rubbish.

Trivialisation of the offence. A headline in the Daily Star read: 'Bubble and Shriek: Why Bill scalped the Missus'. This was a report of a horrifying attack on a woman, whose husband beat her up and then cut her hair off with kitchen scissors. Another recent headline described the rape of an office worker as a 'Bust up in the office'. Sub-editors may indulge their fantasy at such puns, but they should remember that the main characters in their stories — the victims — are not fictional.

Descriptions of occupation. Journalists tend to be obsessed with occupations, particularly in court cases. Obviously in rape cases, it is an offence to identify the woman, so journalists are even more inclined to use occupations as a form of identity. Some occupations, however, once again imply guilt on the part of the victim. This is true when we speak of 'barmaids', 'waitresses' or 'prostitutes'. Nobody who is raped should have any guilt at all; all the guilt is with the person who did it.

Location of the attack. Some reports imply that women should not have been



More copies from NUJ, 23 Clevly Drive, Chapel End, Nuneaton, Warks.

where they were when they were raped. Whether she was attacked on a canal tow path, or in a public lavatory, many women consider it a gross insult to be portrayed as helpless little things who are only safe locked up at home behind doors. Women have a right to go to the same places as men.

Identification. Some victims can easily be identified by press reports, even though it is illegal to do so. If you say that the victim was a widow, the mother of three children and lives in a fourth floor flat near the city centre, her right to anonymity can be breached. The Rape Crisis Centre have spoken to victims who have been identified by such unnecessary detail.

What to include

Some facts can actually make

women more aware of the dangers of rape, and also prevent us from seeing the crime as some kind of stereotype.

The setting. The idea of the dirty old man posing in his raincoat behind a park bush does not tend to be the 'norm'. It may make mundane reading, but most rapes occur in ordinary places like car parks, underpasses and college campuses.

In many cases, the attacker is known to the victim. Where possible, given the laws of contempt, this should be brought out in the story so that people become more aware of the fact.

Rape in itself is news and does not need sordid, sometimes titillating, embellishments. Sometimes, however, more acknowledgement could be made of the injuries caused by the attacker, rather than concentrating on his sexual motives.

Labour Campaign for Gay Rights
fighting in the Labour movement for lesbian and gay male liberation

To join or affiliate, write to Chris Richardson, 21 Devonshire Promenade, Lenton, Nottingham NG7 2DS. £5 for individuals, or for affiliated organisations, per 1000 members. £2 for low-waged individuals. £1 for unwaged. Add 50p if you want the special issue of Gay Socialist.



Women won't wait!



Priorities

New issue — 10p plus 12½p postage from 10B Landseer Road, London N19

International news

Israelis muzzle W. Bank press

THE HOT summer in Palestine is usually the least active period politically.

West Bank, schools and Universities are on holiday and demonstrators have usually been deterred by the last wave of arrests, beatings, prison sentences, fines and killings used by the military authority to oppress the spring wave of struggles.

This cyclical wave of struggles and oppression has become almost monotonous in recent years.

This summer the new Israeli defence minister and darling of the USA, Moshe Arens, is trying to use this quiet period to tighten his grip on the Palestinians.

Some week ago, after an armed settler was killed in the Al-Halil market, he utilised the opportunity to take hold of the city's central bus station, in order to achieve the settlers' old ambition of an area in the heart of the Arab city.

An Israeli government communiqué, stressing that 'Jewish blood' will not be shed in vain, gave the green light to the fascist death squads.

Masked gunmen entered Al-Halil university, killing 3 students and wounding dozens with indiscriminate shooting.

The response of the Israeli army, as usual, was to unleash a new wave of oppression on the Arab population.

A curfew was again declared in the Al-Halil area and in the city of Kalkilya, from where two of the killed students came.

Our correspondent in Haifa reports on a new clampdown on the Arabic-language press

A woman was killed by 'unidentified' Israeli gunmen while taking part in a protest demonstration in Nablus.

Some 20 students from the Bir-Zeit University, who were arrested in the university after the army had surrounded it in response to a protest over the Al-Halil murder, now face 1½ years in prison for taking part in the demonstration.

Another victim of the new wave of oppression might be the 'A-Sherá' magazine appearing in Jerusalem.

Life has never been easy for Jerusalem Arabic paper publishers. The occupation forces have been constantly using all kinds of oppression, including strict censorship; arrests and beating of journalists; house arrest of editors by military decree; and special military decrees to stop the selling of a paper in some regions or for some time.

But a public eager for political news and discussion has multiplied the number of West-Bank papers and magazines, while a whole layer of intellectuals, experienced in the struggle against the occupation, have always found new ways to give life to their papers.

Among these papers 'A-Sherá' was a newcomer, not well financed, appearing every two weeks in the last period.

At the beginning it survived the oppression by not speaking so much directly about the Israeli occupation.

Instead it gave its readers more of a political analysis, writing about 'American policy' and specialised in exposing the reactionary forces in the Arab countries and also in occupied Palestine.

It also carried detailed reports of the trade union movement in the occupied territories and other mass organisations like the network of volunteer-work-committees developing now in every refugee camp and village.

In Palestinian affairs it was bringing an even-handed collection of all views expressed publicly by all the tendencies within the PLO.

Tendency

It rejected the bad tendency of both right and left to get away from political discussion into blaming each other as somebody else's 'agents'.

In its front pages and leading articles it campaigned for the positions of the Palestinian left. It exposed the plans put forward by the arab reactionary regimes, like the Fahd and Fez plans, as a thin cover for their servitude to imperialism.

It called recently for a political solution to the problems



Repression by the Israeli state can't stop the Palestinians fighting and thinking...

inside Fatah, for implementation of democratic reforms in the PLO as raised by the Fatah opposition, and for a co-operation with Syria and the Lebanese national movement against the Israeli aggression, while keeping the in-

dependence of the Palestinian revolution.

In the last issue of A-Sherá, in an article explaining the establishment of a joint political and military command to the Popular Front put the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front, it writes:

'It is impossible to achieve national liberation in third world countries, except through a complete break from the capitalist market and the clear connection to the socialist revolution in order to confront the economic and social domination coming out of the links with the imperialist market... And this calls for the vitality of the working class taking the lead inside the national alliance. the leadership of the working class, which is the class revolutionary to the end, in a vital condition to the success of the Palestinian revolution to achieve its aims of liberation, democracy, socialism and unity...'

'One of the conditions for victory is the existence of the basic tools for victory, the revolutionary party and the united national front. And while the PLO constitutes the frame of a front for the national forces in the Palestinian arena, ... the party of the Palestinian working class will be made of from all parts of the working class and from all the Palestinian Marxists.'

'The party of the working class in its class structure will be ideologically bound to Marxism, Leninism and to Leninist organisational principles.'

By August 16, the Israeli authorities announced they had abolished the licence of A-Sherá, and added they would not renew it.

But under the Israeli occupation a growing sector of the Palestinian masses actively and consistently struggle for national liberation, and also come to understanding of their class interests. The true revolutionary voice is sure to continue and come out of the depth of that struggle.

Out of the Begin mould

by Arye Ben-Shmuel

WHEN Menachem Begin became Prime Minister of Israel there were dire warnings of the holocaust to come. Wasn't Begin the one-time leader of the Irgun, the Revisionist Zionist terrorist outfit? Wasn't he an ardent supporter of Zionist settlement of the West Bank and of an Israel whose boundaries would not be finally accepted until they stretched from the Nile to the Euphrates?

Begin has come and gone. The holocaust came too but not yet over — the shattered buildings and bleeding bodies in Lebanon are a thing of the present.

The West Bank settlement also continues — huge sums of money are devoted to attracting Jewish settlers to the area.

And while the Sinai was returned to Egypt, Israel has annexed the Golan Heights and extended itself into Lebanon. In addition, war with Syria constantly threatens.

In this Begin's actions were not out of tune with the actions of the Labour Alliance in the preceding decades of Israeli history. Where he differs is that he — like other Revisionist-Zionists — was less inclined to operate merely as a puppet, governing some distant outpost of Washington's empire.

Begin's successor, Shamir, comes from a similar mould. He was a leading member of the Stern Gang which, in the days of the British mandate, 'out-Irgunned' the Irgun as one writer recently put it.

But it is not the past that will determine Shamir's policies. Firstly, he will find it difficult to hold the present governing coalition together. It is not excluded that a new 'national' government will soon be formed.

It is unlikely that Shamir himself will remain Prime Minister for long.

Secondly, he is faced with an intensification of the Lebanese war, and with it proof positive that Begin's policy (which Shamir supported after signing of the Camp David agreement, which he opposed) has failed.

Thirdly, the Israeli economy is in much poorer shape than usual and thus the pressure from the US will be all the more telling.

Both these factors indicate a possible mending of bridges between Israel and US imperialism.

Despite new fighting No break in Lebanon stalemate

by Andrew Hornung

AFTER what appeared to be initial victories in West Beirut, the Lebanese Army — which is primarily Christian, particularly its officers — stands powerless to intervene in the battles going on in the Chouf and Aley mountains.

Some Muslim leaders have claimed that the defeat in Beirut was the result of a trick — the breach of a ceasefire agreement — other sources have claimed it was an orderly and anticipated withdrawal.

Certainly the supporters

of the Gemayel regime hoped that the Beirut victories were a sign that the army, which fell apart in the mid-70s and is now full of new recruits, would be tough enough to take on the opposition militias.

But fighting in the capital is very different from fighting in the mountains and in the capital the Muslim and leftist militias were much weakened by the withdrawal of the PLO — something that is less of



Israelis still occupy a quarter of Lebanon

a factor where the battles are currently raging.

The Israeli pullback to the Awali River means that they still occupy about a quarter of Lebanon. According to the Financial Times, the 6,000 strong Multinational Force made up largely of roughly equal numbers of American, French and Italian troops (there are 101 British 'observers') are only there for symbolic purposes: 'It is not there to fight for President Amin Gemayel's embattled regime...'

Troops

The fact is that these troops are doing just what the FT claims they are not there to do. They have collaborated

both with the army and with Christian militias in rounding up opponents; they have also participated in the shelling; the US troops have been using helicopter gunships too.

Syria hopes to use the current situation to install a pliant regime in Lebanon. This is what it has wanted to do all along. It is doing that by means of supporting the opposition to Gemayel and the apparently militant opposition within Fatah.

It wants to prove to Gemayel that he cannot win without Damascus agreeing and secondly that Syria has sufficient influence within the oppositional parties and militias (as well as the Palestinians) to guarantee the existence of a new, pliant regime.

**Labour Movement
CAMPAIGN
for Palestine**

Contact. Andrew Hornung (secretary), 76 Carysfort Road, London N16.

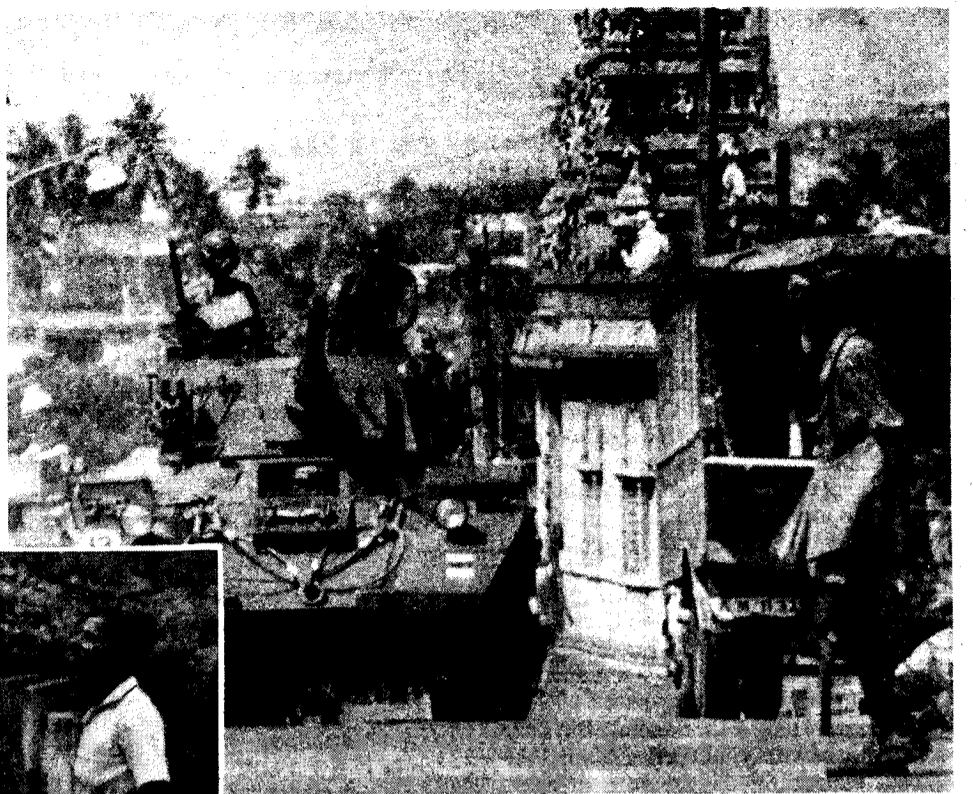
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CONSPIRACY

Demonstrate in support of the Newham 8: Saturday September 2 assemble 1pm at Plashet Park, London E12.

International news

On-the-spot report

Crackdown follows Sri Lanka pogrom



Violence against Tamils has included atrocities

Bloody slaughter against the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka in late July was followed by a mass flight of Tamils to the north-east and a ban on three left parties.

Trotskyists in Sri Lanka have sent us this on-the-spot report.

hoodlums took place in the presence of the police and armed forces, whose personnel in many places gave directions to the hoodlums. At the same time as the pogrom began in Colombo the armed forces massacred hundreds of Tamils in the Tamil areas of the North.

In fact, even the government's own newspapers reported that in the city of Trincomalee (East Srilanka) about 130 men of the Srilanka navy walked into a Navy armoury, picked up weapons they wanted and went on for shooting practice into the bazaar area. They returned after killing as many Tamils as they could.

On July 25 when the pogrom had been raging for well over 14 hours, 35 Tamil prisoners, convicted or awaiting trial for offences under the anti-Terrorist Act, were slaughtered allegedly by Singhala prisoners who had 'overpowered' their guards.

Slaughter

The truth is that this slaughter was done by soldiers who had been stationed near the prison gates. If more proof is needed that the government directed the murders, the killing of 17 Tamil prisoners the next day provides it. Once again it was soldiers who did the killings.

The official government figures say that 279 people were killed during this pogrom and 85,000 persons displaced. But the truth appears to be that several thousand Tamils died at the hands of the Singhala goondas and of the armed forces and that over 100,000 Tamils were rendered homeless.

Jayawardena allowed the pogrom to go on for five days before he decided to speak to the nation. At the very first news of the pogrom the Presi-



The armed forces have massacred hundreds of Tamils

dent should have spoken to the Singhalese people and appealed to them to stop the violence against the Tamils. Jayawardena did not do that. What is the reason?

The answer is that he gave the Singhala goondas time enough to do their work. Only when he was satisfied that these Singhala goondas had done their work did Jayawardena speak to the nation.

He did not express one word of sorrow for what had happened to the Tamil people and their property. Instead Jayawardena blamed the Tamils and their movement for separatism. He announced stringent laws to ban the advocacy of separatism.

Its supporters were to be deprived of civil rights, including the right to sit in Parliament. This meant driving main opposition party out of Parliament.

Anti-Tamil

Jayawardena said that the pogrom against the Tamils has been caused by ill-feeling and the suspicion that has grown between the Singhalese and Tamil people for several years.

There is no general Tamil animosity towards the Singhalese.

The truth is 3 decades of anti-Tamil policies by successive capitalist governments (UNP, SLFP, and the 'left wing' SLFP-LSSP-CP) have built up anti-Tamil sentiment among considerable sections of the Singhalese people.

Jayawardena maintains that the antagonism of the Singhalese to the Tamils was caused by the movement for a separate Tamil State since 1976. It is true that the representative party of the Tamils, the TULF, adopted Tamil Eelam (separate Tamil State) as their goal in 1976.

But this demand was made after 3 decades of refusal by successive Singhala capitalist governments to grant the just demands of the Tamils which included: (1) Recognition of Tamil also as a national language together with Singhalese, (2) Ending of discrimination in employment and the grant of government

land in colonisation schemes, (3) Ending discrimination in admission to higher educational institutions.

Successive capitalist governments responded to these and similar just demands by sending police to break up peaceful demonstrations organised by the Tamils to further their demands. Police violence against the Tamils escalated and the armed forces tortured and killed Tamil youth.

In this context the unification of Tamil parties and groups in the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) took place in 1972 and in 1976 the demand for a separate Tamil State was adopted.

But although the Front wielded very wide influence among the Tamils and won 17 seats in the 1977 parliamentary elections, becoming the mass Parliamentary opposition, yet this party did not take a single step to achieve a separate Tamil state. In fact the Front sought to cooperate with the Jayawardena regime, while the government was resorting to military-police suppression of the Tamils in the North.

There was never any reason to expect that this government would consider favourably the demands of the Tamils.

In an interview with the correspondent of the London 'Daily Telegraph' last July Jayawardena explicitly stated his intentions towards the Tamils.

'It is no longer possible to argue, debate or talk with them (terrorists, i.e. the TULF). He said he would be soon initiating intensified anti-terrorist efforts and had not ruled out the possibility of imposing martial law throughout the troubled Northern regions... The President disclosed that in the next two or three weeks he would be calling a round table conference of party leaders excluding the TULF... The primary object of the conference was how to eliminate terrorism. President said: I have tried to be effective for some time but cannot. I am not worried about the opinion of the Jaffna (Tamil capital) people now'.

Specifically referring to the TULF Jayawardena said: 'They used to speak on behalf

of terrorists. But now all that is going to cease... On the terrorist issues, these we are going to deal with ourselves without any quarter being given'.

It was not at all a coincidence that Jayawardena started talking about martial law in this way at a time when his government was imposing more and more burdens on the people.

Diversion

The government has struck savagely at living standards through devaluation and increases in the prices of consumer goods. An anti-Tamil pogrom is an effective diversion of the Singhala people from the blows struck at their living standards by the government carrying out the instructions of the imperialist IMF.

This anti-Tamil pogrom was precisely what Jayawardena and his like-minded Tamil-baiting Cabinet Ministers needed.

In the eyes of a large section of the Singhala masses the anti-Tamil pogrom was a significant achievement for the Singhalese. It may well be that for these masses they have found in Jayawardena a second Dutugemunu, the legendary Singhalese King who defeated and killed Elara the Tamil King and whose victory established the hegemony and sovereignty of the Singhalese people over Srilanka. And though the pogrom damaged the image of Srilanka internationally, for Jayawardena, locally and nationally, it was his finest hour!

Drive out

Jayawardena is driving the elected representatives of the Tamil people out of parliament. Of this he said in his message to the nation that his 'government cannot see, any other way in which we can appease the natural desire and request of the Singhala people to prevent the country being divided, and to see that those who speak for division cannot do so legally, (our emphasis).

Appearing the Singhala racials logically flowed from the Singhala chauvinism of Jayawardena and his party, the UNP.

The new law makes it illegal to demand, call for, or support a separate Tamil state. Penalties include up to 30 years jail - and even death, for activity in a separatist movement.

An 'offender' is liable for the deprivation of his civic rights, confiscation of property and being debarred from practising a profession. By this same law any member of parliament who fails to take an oath disavowing ad-

herence to separatism loses his seat. This means that the TULF will soon be out of parliament.

Just as 35 years ago Jayawardena's party disfranchised 1 million Tamil plantation workers he has now disfranchised the entire Tamil people of Sri Lanka.

This infamous law, depriving the Tamil people of a fundamental democratic right is unprecedented in any country which had or has any semblance of parliamentary democracy.

Jayawardena has taken the opportunity to strike directly at the working class and the left by accusing - baselessly - three left parties of seeking to overthrow the government, under instructions from the USSR.

Jayawardena has a wider aim here than to destroy the left. He hopes to win for himself and his regime the approval of US imperialism and to qualify for larger and larger doses of imperialist 'aid'.

Jayawardena and his ministers will soon learn that the Tamil problem remains and is more complicated than before. With thousands of Tamil refugees returning to Jaffna and the Tamil area, a de facto Tamil separate state has been created.

Today the struggle against the oppression and subjugation of the Tamils is posed sharply as an urgent issue before the working class and the left parties in Srilanka.

Obviously this is not a struggle separate from the struggle of the workers and toilers of the whole of Srilanka for the ending of the strengthened Jayawardena dictatorship. Thus there is an urgent need of forging a strong link between the oppressed Tamils and oppressed workers and toilers of the whole of Srilanka.

But will the Tamil people and their organisations on the one hand and the oppressed Singhala masses and the left political parties on the other see the problem as it is posed?



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Industrial Special

The birth of the shop stewards' movement

ON JULY 22, 1972, the National Industrial Relations Court ordered the imprisonment of five dockers for defying an injunction under Edward Heath's Industrial Relations Act.

It was the age of Gary Glitter and T. Rex. Donny Osmond was number one with 'Puppy Love'.

Leeds had beaten Arsenal in the FA Cup Final. Roberto had won the Derby and Muhammad Ali's comeback continued as he stopped Al 'Blue' Lewis in eleven rounds in Dublin.

It was also the finest hour of the modern shop stewards' movement.

As the dockers were hauled off to Pentonville Jail by the tipstaff the cadre of working class rank and file leaders who had developed through the long boom went into action. Stewards committees, union branches and trades councils laid plans for emergency meetings.

Group after group of workers came out not 'spontaneously' but because they were given a lead by their stewards. The links were there, the wheels clicked into place.

With 250,000 workers out on strike and the numbers increasing every day, the TUC called a one-day General Strike. The government and judiciary caved in.

In the hot summer of 1972 the British labour movement had what is most lacking in the unions today: a strong stewards' organisation in the workplace, able to mobilise the membership independently of the top official leaders of the trade unions,

By John McIlroy

A contribution for the discussion at the September 17 'How to fight the Tories' conference, on rebuilding shop stewards' organisation.

able to push the union leaders into action by the very strength of that mobilisation and — this is the crucial point — able to mobilise their members, not only on the bread and butter sectional issues of wages and conditions, but on class-wide issues, in this case the use of state laws to fetter the unions.

The stewards organisations which had developed since the war were the crown jewel of British trade unionism and the hope of socialists.

Shop steward organisation had serious weaknesses and limited political horizons. 1972 was the high point, never attained again. It is only in the limited sense of a shared set of understandings, an awareness of the necessity for links with other workers, a striving to build those links, that we can talk of a movement.

Today we are faced with the need to re-construct rank and file organisation within the workplaces and across industry. We need to start with the memory of Pentonville but go far beyond it. We need to build on a new political basis. To do that we need to assess our experience of shop floor organisation in the past.

Development of shop stewards

Engineering was always the heartland of strong workplace organisation.

The formal system in the Amalgamated Society of Engineers was for the union outside the workplace to lay down rules and custom.

If employers did not accept the conditions the union laid down society men shouldn't work there. But this system was always supplemented by informal bargaining within the shop. Given the control the craftsmen had over their job a whole range of custom and practice flourished and district committees began to appoint delegates within the workplace.

From the 1880s the development of new technology — the introduction of capstan and turret lathes, machine grinders, the radial arm drill, all capable of being operated by the semi-skilled — undermined the position of the time served craft worker.

With increasing international competition from Germany and the USA in the period to 1914 the employers pressed for drastic changes in the organisation of work. They attempted to weaken the unions, the barrier to putting less skilled workers on the machines at lower rates and to introducing piecework.

Bargaining

Disputes over these issues gave stewards a greater bargaining role. Stewards received a further fillip from the 1897 agreement which broke the closed shop, lifted restrictions on overtime and the number of apprentices and brought in payment by results with job prices to be fixed in the shop.

That was where the locus of activity shifted. The Dis-



March against the Tory anti-union bill, 1971: a strong stewards' organisation moved against the government

trict Committee could no longer uphold the craft rules. In strong workplaces the stewards could.

The introduction of new tools and the growth of management techniques led to numerous disputes over discipline. The piecework system provided a negotiating role over money for stewards.

So in the years to 1914 the shop stewards system developed as a means of workplace negotiation and as the guardian of job controls.

These developments were not limited to the ASE. Tom Bell of the Scottish Ironmoulders recalled that in the West of Scotland in the early years of the century, 'Every foundry had a shop steward. Within three hours of starting a job your card was collected.'

Nor were stewards limited to the skilled unions. As early as 1872 the functions of stewards in the Tyneside and National Labourers Union were extended from recruitment and collection to negotiation. In the upsurge of the new unionism after 1889 the rules of the Gasworkers, the National Amalgamated Union of Labour specifically provided for stewards.

Tom Bell's judgement was true of many unions: the shop steward was an integral

part of the trade union machinery especially to the engineers prior to the war. Most unions had their delegates on the job or in the shop for the collection of contributions checking up on defaulting members for reporting changes in the condition of work and as a link between the union branch and the work'.

In engineering, stewards had a greater negotiating role. Committees were established. GDH Cole describes stewards — all those years ago — being given an office, access to all departments and full facilities for negotiation with the rate fixers.

Not only was workers organisation at the point of production a tremendous gain. It was soon asserting its independence from the bureaucratized full-time officials.

The years before 1914 saw a tremendous struggle in the ASE between a leadership attempting to impose central negotiating and the Districts attempting to maintain local autonomy. This led in 1912 to a Delegate Conference which insisted on the resignation of the Executive. When they refused to go the delegates tunneled their way into the union headquarters and physically turned

them out.

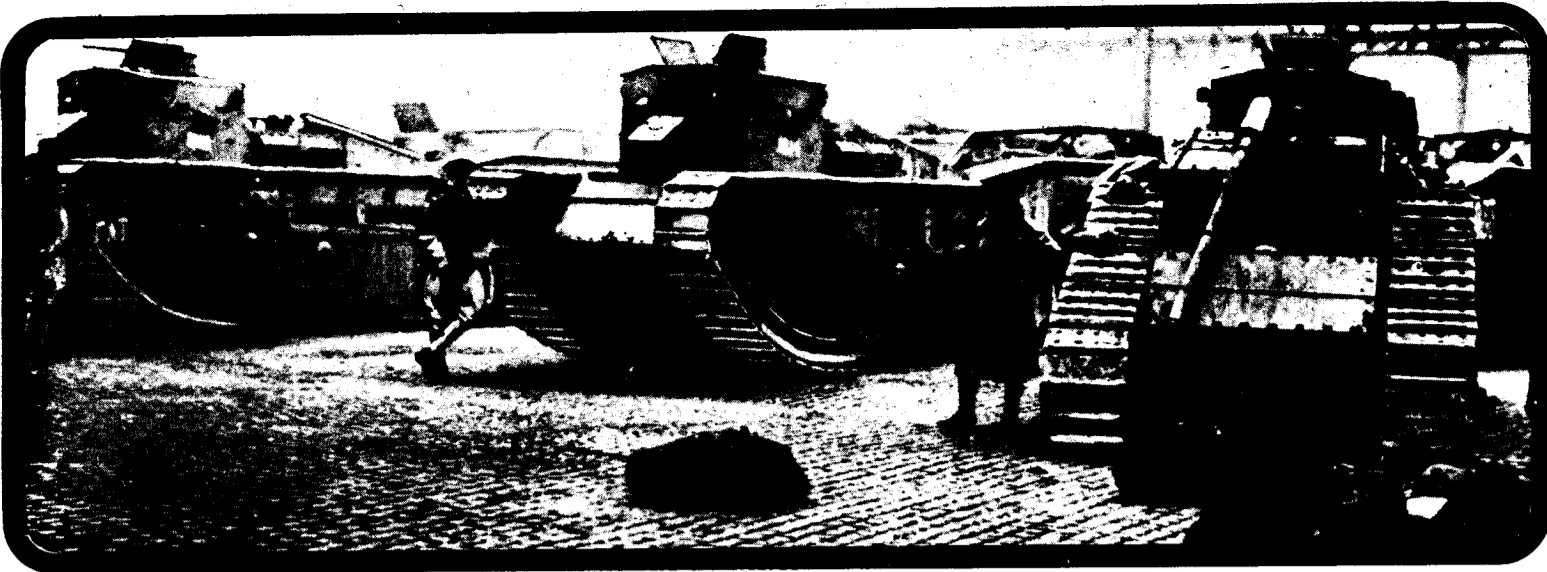
The militancy of the 'Great Unrest' saw the establishment of rank and file vigilance committees in many unions. Many of the emerging shop stewards were attracted to the socialist organisations, the British Socialist Party and the Socialist Labour Party.

The outbreak of war in 1914 intensified many of these tendencies. A conference of trade union executives agreed with the government 'there shall in no case be a stoppage of work upon munition and equipment of war or other work required for a satisfactory completion of the war'. This Treasury agreement was given legal force by the passing of the Munitions Act which also provided for prosecution of workers.

With the union leaders now a part of the machinery of state, the rank and file filled the gap. With more time full employment they possessed the capability to defend themselves independently of their leaders. New issues in the workshops — crucially the dilution of skilled trades by employment of less skilled workers — gave a further boost to the development of stewards

Engineering was first heartland

Continued inside



Tanks in Glasgow Saltmarket, 1919, sent in against unemployed munitions workers



Shop-floor organisation continued to grow in the '70s. Above: L

The birth of the stewards' movement

on a basis which spread beyond the workshop.

The Clyde Workers Committee gave the first formal declaration of independence of the rank and file which was to be the first plank of the movement. 'We will support the officials just as long as they rightly represent the workers. But we will act independently immediately they misrepresent them. Being composed of delegates from every shop and untrammelled by obsolete rule or law we claim to represent the true feeling of the workers. We can act immediately according to the merits of the case and the desire of the rank and file'.

The constitution of the committee outlined its aims as:

- a) To obtain increasing control over workshop conditions;
- b) To regulate the terms upon which the workers shall be employed;
- c) To organise the workers upon a class basis and to maintain the class struggle until the overthrow of the wages system and the establishment of industrial democracy has been obtained.

250-300 delegates met each weekend. There were delegates from engineering, shipbuilding, the miners, railways and shops. But many represented militant minorities rather than fully fledged workplace organisation. The crunch came over the key issue of dilution. Despite the socialism of the leadership they failed to put forward a class policy which could unite skilled and unskilled workers and point a way forward by arguing that the upgrading of the unskilled should be under the control of workplace committees and that all workers should receive the skilled rate. Instead, they argued that they would only accept dilution if all industries and national resources were taken over by the government under a system of joint management with the unions. This was a pie in the sky 'socialism now' approach.

The government realised the need to remove the committee and adopted a stick-and-carrot approach. Half a dozen plants were selected and dilution implemented in each. When the government could point out that it was in and working smoothly they moved to crack the tougher nuts.

Kirkwood, convenor of the Parkhead Forge was forbidden to move to other sections in the workplace. The members struck. But they had been isolated. Kirkwood and eight other CWC leaders were arrested and deported from Clydeside and opposition to dilution collapsed.

The Clydeside Committee had failed to build bridges to the rest of the industry — and to the unskilled.

The centre of struggle shifted to Sheffield. Here the principle of dilution had been accepted but negotiation over its implementation had stimulated workplace organisation. In Sheffield the majority of District Committee members were stewards, there was greater co-ordination between craft organisations than on the Clyde and closer links with the unskilled.

In October 1916 Hargreaves a local fitter — supposedly exempt, was conscripted.

Hargreaves

A mass meeting launched the Sheffield workers committee which gave 7 days notice of strike action if Hargreaves was not released. 12,000 workers struck. A few hours later, Hargreaves was released. But the workers refused to return until he was presented to a mass meeting 2 days later. This success spurred further action.

The number of stewards in the Sheffield District rose from 60 to 300. The committee was expanded to include the unskilled. The idea was that the District Stewards Committee should stimulate workshop committees covering all grades and a national committee.

A national stewards meeting

was to be held at Easter 1917, but in March a strike broke out when a Rochdale firm sacked 500 engineers for refusing to train women transferred from shell production to commercial work. 200,000 workers struck in Lancashire, Sheffield and Coventry.

The government tried to crush the movement as it had on the Clyde by arresting eight of its leaders. In response one hundred delegates from 34 different districts met for three days and set up a national shop stewards leadership. After negotiations the arrested men were freed pending trial and the strikes petered out.

Shop stewards against war

Now the impact of the Russian Revolution, war-weariness, peace propaganda and severe food shortages all led to a growing working class opposition questioning the continuance of the war itself.

This mood found a focus when at the start of 1918 the government introduced the Military Service Bill to take men from the munitions factories to the trenches. The National Conference of the shop stewards movement, meeting on January 5 and 6, 1918, decided to sound out the feeling in the districts. The conference recommended strike action against the Bill and called on the government to consider peace terms.

Clyde, Barrow, Coventry and London supported the call but crucial districts such as Sheffield and Manchester who had tested workshop opinion said, 'They were opposed to strike action against the war'. The movement drew back from a confrontation with the state into a sectional demand for exemption for the skilled.

Despite its involvement in the 40 hours strike on Clyde in 1919 the stewards movement never recovered the initiative and disintegrated with the collapse of war production and full employment.

Two elements

The shop stewards movement contained two elements: a militancy by privileged workers to defend their threatened position and, within that, strains of opposition to the trade union tops, the war and the state.

In the end the former tendency won out.

None the less, the movement was important in popularising and illustrating key ideas which were to remain vital as a bequest to future generations; the idea of a movement; of powerful organisation at the point of production, where the workers are strongest; and, going beyond this, an organisation to link workplaces at local and national level and establish an independent bulwark directly answerable to the workers against the official union leaders who tended to be

incorporated by the employers and the state.

Where they were weakest was in sometimes believing that a small but key section of workers could take successful action by themselves; in their neglect of work within the wider union; and in their lack of examination of wider political problems. They never solved the key problem of how socialists could establish a bridge, both organisationally and ideologically, between day to day militant trade unionism and the problem of removing the exploiting class from power.

In a limited way the British shop stewards had developed one essential of a socialist approach, the idea of workers councils. What they lacked was an understanding of the need for a political party which could mesh with and develop further the rank and file movement and prepare the way for the conquest of power.

Many of the leading shop stewards were now to take that struggle further by joining the new Communist Party.

ment consisting of a number of considerable shops or departments... an inclusive body was often constituted to represent the trade unionists in the works as a whole. Sometimes the convenors from each of the shops were appointed usually by a meeting of all the stewards in the establishment to form a works committee'. (GDH Cole, *Workshop Organisation*).

In 1920 an agreement with the Engineering Employers Federation gave shop stewards formal recognition and a place in procedure. But this system with its close parallels in present steward organisation was short lived as unemployment soared.

As the Sheffield stewards leaders, J.T. Murphy said, in 1922, 'In England we have had a powerful shop stewards movement. But it can and only does exist in given objective conditions. These necessary conditions at the moment in England do not exist. How can you build factory organisations in empty and depleted workshops while

which would stem from struggle over these issues on the future Labour Government. It stated clearly the necessity for the removal of the capitalist system, constantly warning that the question of Government was vital (a warning that might be observed by today's neo-syndicalists such as the SWP).

This is not a question outside trade unionism by the central question for trade unionism on every side it is realised that trade unionism is not enough and that only a workers government can solve these problems (report of First Minority Movement Conference).

The story of the Minority Movement is a big subject and deserves to be told in detail, elsewhere. At its foundation it grouped together representative of 200,000 workers and the depression the Minority Movement did not concentrate purely on the 'little things' on factory issues but not concerned on the democratization of the union and the TUC and the forgoing of links with workers

The Minority Movement shows is possible to organise militarily even in difficult economic conditions

At the workplace level itself, the war-time experience represented a development. As Cole points out, 'while the number of stewards was thus rapidly increasing throughout practically the whole range of the munitions industries, their positions and duties were also rapidly transformed. The wartime steward became, to a large extent, a negotiator on workshop grievance, a representative of the workers by whom he was appointed in dealing with the foreman and with management over all manner of workshop problems...

More and more the stewards undertook these daily problems of workshop administration calling in the union official only when they were unable to bring about a direct settlement by formal or informal negotiation... It became more and more necessary for all the stewards to act in regular cooperation and to devise a common organisation within each department and for each establishment as a whole.

Develop

Consequently, shop stewards committees, workshop committees and works committees all alike based on the shop stewards system began to develop on a considerable scale...

Usually the stewards in a particular shop appointed from their number a secretary or convenor who had power to call meetings of all the stewards... In the large establish-

you have a great reservoir of unemployed workers'.

Unemployment was 27% in engineering in 1921. After the employers' victorious lock-out in 1922 the AEU, as it now was, had lost a quarter of its 1920 membership.

In industry generally the erosion of shop floor strength led to dependence on national collective bargaining and the official union leaders were back in the saddle.

The shop stewards leaders were ruthlessly victimised. As early as 1920 Arthur Gleason wrote, 'The unofficial shop stewards movement is at ebb tide because of the percentage of the unemployed in the metal trades. The man at the gate determines the status of the man at the bench.'

It was precisely during this down-turn that Communist Party militants were able to take up and transform the earlier traditions of rank and fileism. They provided in the Minority Movement, which they sponsored, the clearest programme yet developed for an organisation within the unions which can act as a bridge from the trade union organisation of today to the working class organisation of tomorrow.

Founded in August 1924 the programme of the movement began with demands for improvements in hours and wages, the spread of trade unionism, the democratisation of the union and the building of factory committees. It then went on to place demands

in other countries.

But the Minority Movement was soon derailed by the defeat in the General Strike and the degeneration of the Communist Party. For reasons of Russian foreign policy the CP in the mid-20s got too close to those who sold out the General Strike then, from 1928 to 34 it tried to build its own sectarian trade unions, ducking out of the mass movement.

Tide

From the beginning of the Minority Movement we can learn that it is possible to organise the hardest militants together even when the economic tide is firmly antagonistic. That it is essential to do this on a firm political basis and that it is essential to give such a grouping trade union wide, class wide and international perspectives.

The re-emergence of shop steward organisation from the middle thirties as the economy picked up has grim lessons for Thatcher today. Far from producing a lasting change in attitudes the beating that they had taken produced in trade unionists a vociferous determination to take advantage of the new economic conditions. The story will put the present trials and tribulations of the shop stewards movement into its proper historical perspective.

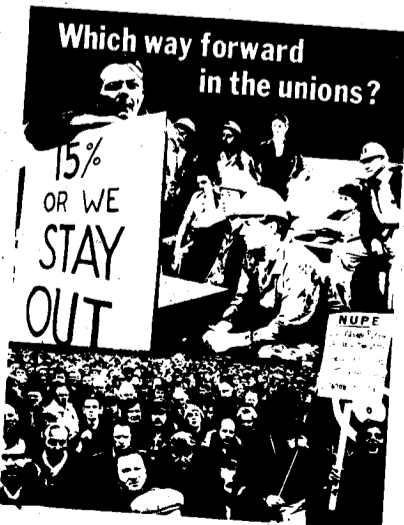
From the mid thirties there was a renewal of shop steward activity. AEU Districts showed a large increase in the number

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...mass meeting

...nt (cont'd)

of accredited shop stewards from 1934.

But — and here is another vital lesson for us today — the real force for the renewal came from the ability to implant trade union organisation in the 'new' industries such as vehicles and aircraft production and from the unskilled. These were often organised by the left, as in the strike which organised the Press Steel Fisher Oxford for the TGWU in 1934 (the AEU declared the strike unconstitutional). By 1938 there were 100 TGWU stewards in the factory and two and a half thousand members.

Forefront

The roots of renewed confidence could also be seen in the other industries, in the London Busmen's rank and file movement, and in the Rank and File activity on the railways. In the forefront of the turn were the engineering apprentices who were involved in two waves of strikes during

...ed it ...nts, ...ditions

1937. Richard Croucher shows the broadening out of shop stewards activity at the strongly organised factories. ... the main matters reported on were the employment of unskilled labour on toolroom machines, back pay for five workers on being reclassified as tool-makers payment for a shop steward suspended from work, reinstatement of a girl sacked for fighting and a wages dispute in the battery shop... between 1935 and 1937... doubt partly through publishing their successes in the pages of their lively journal, the stewards were able to develop membership to an exceptionally high level approaching 100%... the questions they were able to take up in 1937 were wider also in terms of the numbers involved. The matters dealt with included an increase for capstan setters in one department the provision of inadequate sanitation in another a number of problems relating to the cable shop, the factory holiday rota apprentices wages, a wage increase in the milling shop and two sectional piecework disputes. (Engineers at War).

However, factories like this were the exception. Prior to the war, raising grievances remained a dangerous business. But there were major achievements in the thirties, such as the key strike at Hawkers Brockworth factory in 1935 which laid the 'basis' for a national aircraft shop

stewards movement. This in turn established the Aircraft Shop Stewards National Council with its own paper, New Propellor. The flames were rekindled. What was done in the 30s provided a platform for a new take-off when war commenced.

Once more trade union leaders were restored to the corridors of power they had vacated in the '20s.

With the trade unions' arch-bureaucrat, Ernest Bevin, at the Ministry of Labour for the Churchill/Attlee Coalition government, the trade union leaders were even more thoroughly integrated into the state in World War 2 than they had been between 1914 and 1918.

Anti-strike legislation (Order 1305) was introduced. Employers immediately took advantage of the situation to victimise shop stewards, and there were numerous strikes over this issue. In 1941 the Essential Works Order gave some protection to jobs. Offensive strikes began.

The great majority of workers supported the war, but there was discontent with the way it was being run. Croucher quotes one observer:

"Clydeside workers are also having a war of their own... they cannot forget the numerous battles of the last thirty years and cannot overcome the bitter memory of industrial insecurity in the past ten years, and their distrust of the motives of managers and employers".

The average number of strike-days in 1939-45 was well above the level of the depression years of the '30s, although most strikes were short, sharp and successful.

The Aircraft Shop Stewards' National Council now attempted to embrace all engineering workers, and renamed itself the Engineering and Allied Trades Shop Stewards' National Council.

Its April 1940 conference was attended by 283 stewards from 140 factories, and the sales of its newspaper expanded. The Communist Party, which initially opposed the war, was an important influence on this movement.

After the German invasion of Russia in June 1941 the Communist Party switched to supporting the war. It opposed strikes and backed productivity drives.

Legitimate

This, together with the general anti-fascist sentiment which the ruling class exploited, ensured that no movement similar to that of the first war emerged.

In some situations the Joint Production Committees set up to draw the stewards into collaboration with management served to legitimise and strengthen the stewards' organisation, however. The stewards were involved more than ever before in the actual organisation and control of work.

A major breakthrough compared with the first war was that most stewards' committees were joint committees on which the skilled sat with the unskilled.

Committees had their own libraries and published their own annual reports, although facilities on the whole remained poor.

Shop meetings and report-backs were regular and central to maintaining roots in the membership. Most stewards, given the personal and social as well as industrial nature of their members' problems during wartime, developed a close rapport with them.

Factory bulletins and newspapers had a tremendous flowering in this period. Combine committees provided organisation outside the plant in firms such as A V Roe, Daimler, Duntlop and Vickers Armstrong.

As the war ended, employers attempted to take back many of these gains. In many factories there were redundancies. Another parallel with today: some stewards committees attempted to respond to redundancies with plans for alternative production.

The movement of 1918 had not been recaptured, still less the aspirations of the Minority Movement.

Long boom

The war had ensured that shop stewards representing their members would be once more an essential feature of industrial relations. But the influence of the CP made it probable that it would be on the basis of sectional organisation limited to industrial struggles and with powerful tendencies towards collaboration with the employers and government in the 'national interest'.

The long boom was now to turn that probability into reality.

In the 20 years after the war, the number and organisation of shop stewards expanded continuously.

In 1947 the AEU recorded 19,000 stewards. By 1962 it was about 32,000. In 1961 the total number of stewards in the UK was estimated at 90,000. Research for the Donovan Commission seven years later put the figure at 175,000.

That research also recorded a spread of the shop steward from engineering into the distributive and service occupations. 45% of stewards were still in the metal industries, but 36% were outside manufacturing, including 12% in transport and communication.

The shop steward in the early '60s was a representative identifying closely with his or her work group and bargaining directly on their behalf.

The steward bargained over a whole range of problems affecting the control of work — its organisation, the degree of effort, the level of overtime. S/he was particularly powerful where bargaining was over money, as for example with piecework systems.

Power

In those circumstances, s/he was able to develop a whole range of custom-and-practice controls, which acted for the benefit of the work group and could be exploited on its behalf in the high-demand market conditions of the long boom.

Full employment swung the bargaining power to the shop floor. In short, sharp, unofficial strikes, small groups could jack up their earnings.



NUPE recognised shop stewards for the first time in 1970

In what was called 'wage drift', increases at the local level outstripped the national agreements which continued in the post-war period.

Shop stewards gained some autonomy both from the union and from higher management. As national agreements were increasingly irrelevant, so was the outside structure of the union.

Publicity

Joint committees of stewards with strong support from the membership were able to establish their own funds, produce their own publicity, and link up across plants.

"Our evidence is that more than two-thirds of shop stewards have at their place of work a committee in which they meet with management to discuss and settle problems, and that two-thirds of these committees are multi-union. Where that is so, the committees are not easily made responsible to a trade union authority outside the

factory" (Donovan report).

"In effect the shop steward organisation at Ford was thus involved in an attempt to establish standards for the rest of labour informally on a 'custom and practice' basis and in the face of disapproval of top management — even if it met with frequent concessions from lower level supervision" (Turner, Clack and Roberts, 'Labour Relations in the Motor Industry').

"In short, it appears to me in the light of the undisputed facts disclosed in this inquiry that there is a private union within a union enjoying immediate and continuous touch with the men in the shop, answerable to no superiors and in no way officially or constitutionally linked with the union hierarchy" (Report of court of inquiry into dispute at Briggs Motor Bodies Ltd, 1957).

Union officialdom, employers, and the state were alike hostile to strong independent workplace organisation. Lord Carron, president of the AEU, said of shop stewards in 1960:

"These men are werewolves

who are rushing madly towards industrial ruin and howling delightedly at the foam on their muzzles which they accept as their only guiding light".

A 1960 TUC report on shop stewards showed the same attitude less graphically. "Unions should be more vigilant, and if after a warning a steward repeats actions contrary to rules and agreements, his credentials (which are his opportunities to do good or in a few cases to do harm) should be withdrawn".

In the same year, a TUC general council member denounced combine committees as 'a challenge to established union arrangements' attempting to 'usurp the policy-making functions of unions'.

Sometimes — as at Ford in 1962 — management were able to push through a hard-line and weaken shop floor organisation, demonstrating the inadequacies of sectionalism. More often they successfully accommodated the stewards' challenge.

Continued over

Labour movement CONFERENCE

September 17

September 17, 10.30am-5pm
University of London Union
Malet Street, WC1

Called by
Socialist
ORGANISER

How to fight the Tories



*So the Tories are back. The bland phrases in their Manifesto are already turning into renewed attacks on jobs, on union rights, new cuts and the privatisation of vital services.

*Already even as Tebbit prepares new ANTI-UNION LAWS — the TUC right wing have run up the white flag. But Arthur Scargill and Ken Livingstone have correctly pointed to the need for mass, direct action by the labour movement on the streets and picket lines. Our conference will focus on the problems, policies, and tactics for achieving this kind of fight.

*Against previous CUTS, many union leaders wrongly argued we wait for a returned Labour government while Labour councils blamed lack of union action for implementing Tory policies. A new 5-year mandate for Thatcher makes this a plainly useless policy: instead we need occupations, supporting strikes, the extension of struggles on a national level — and we must learn lessons from such struggles in the past.

*PRIVATISATION in British Telecom, the NHS and other services threatens jobs, working conditions and union organisation. But the action

against privatisation so far has been either localised and isolated or largely focused upon protest. We need a plan of action NOW, before the whole public sector is carved up by the bankers.

*The SHOP STEWARDS' MOVEMENT has come under fire in the engineering industry — but has developed in the NHS in the course of last year's pay fight. What policies and politics are needed to rebuild and extend the stewards' movement and defend its independence of full-time union officials and management propaganda?

*New, more radical BROAD LEFTS have been emerging in many unions: but under fire from employers and the right wing, some — like the CPSA Broad Left — can crumble. How can we link Broad Left activity at national level to day-to-day struggles in the workplaces and develop a consistent, principled leadership?

*Many on the left of the LABOUR PARTY who had fought for left policies and accountability — fell silent during the election — despite the right wing sabotage. How can we develop an organised, and politically-confident left in the Labour Party capable of standing ground under pressure? What kind of perspective should be put forward by the left to go beyond the limited "Alternative Economic Strategy" which so plainly failed to convince a sceptical electorate?

*With five more years to work on restoring "Victorian values", Thatcher's blows will again fall hardest on WOMEN. Why won't the Labour Party and unions develop the special strengths and fighting capacity shown by women workers, and take their special problems seriously?

*BLACK WORKERS too are beginning to organise against tacit and open racism from the bosses, the state, the police and — most scandalous of all, from the labour movement. How can we help develop that struggle?

*Thousands of YOUTH are now faced with another 5 years — seemingly a lifetime — on the dole. Millions of adults are on the same scrapheap. How can we act at rank and file level to remedy the criminal failure of ILUC and Labour Party leaders to organise and mobilise the unemployed? How should the unions respond to the new threats posed by Tebbit's so-called "Youth Training Scheme"?

*OUR CONFERENCE "How to Fight the Tories" will attempt to promote discussion and give some answers to these and other questions facing the labour movement.

Open to delegates and observers from all labour movement bodies.

Credentials (including discussion papers) £2.50 (employed), £1.50 (unemployed).

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Socialist ORGANISER

Industrial Special

The birth of the shop stewards' movement

(continued)

By the mid '60s, however, with the UK's economic situation getting worse, 'disorder' in industrial relations was increasingly seen as a key obstacle to the preferred solution — wage-cutting through incomes policy.

Attention focused on the steward, notably in the Donovan report.

Donovan pointed out that "for the most part the steward is viewed by others and views himself as an accepted, reasonable, and even moderating influence, more of a lubricant than an irritant".

Their strategy was to strengthen this side of the steward's role. Employers and unions should work together, the report argued, "To recognise, define and control the part played by shop stewards in our collective bargaining system".

Shop floor organisation was inevitable — and it could be helpful. The point was to control and influence it.

The steward could be civilised and drawn away from his or her members by the creation of written agreements, to codify and pin down 'custom and practice', which the stewards would then have to enforce. The replacement of piecework by measured time systems, work study, and job evaluation, could undermine the power of the section steward and formalise and rationalise the link between work and payment.

Written procedures would legitimise management's deci-

sions because they had been taken after discussion and negotiation. They would draw the steward into more 'rational' argument, and also pull bargaining up from the machine row to the committee room.

Formalised bargaining at plant or company level would lead to a centralisation of power at committee level and a loss of power at section level. The development of full-time stewards; the management-run closed shop with deduction of dues at source; the extension of facilities for stewards; time off for training in industrial relations — these would encourage more 'rational' behaviour, and distance the stewards from their membership.

Incorporate

By the end of the '60s trade union leaders, too, had replaced their earlier hostility to workplace organisation by an attempt to incorporate it.

Jack Jones, on becoming TGWU general secretary, declared support for "a system where not a few trade union officials control the situation but a dedicated, well-trained and intelligent body of trade union members is represented by hundreds of thousands of lay representatives".

The election of Hugh Scanlon as president of the AUEW further symbolised a takeover by a generation who believed in the



1972: printworkers rally to support dockers

shop steward system, from those nurtured in pre-war defeats.

Even the GMWU leadership came to terms with decentralisation — shocked by its loss of members to the TGWU in Ford, and by the revolt of its members against the union in the 1970 Pilkington strike, when strikers tried to set up a breakaway union. National and regional industrial conferences to involve workplace representatives were introduced in 1969, and a majority of lay representation on the Executive provided for by 1975.

The union leaders were, of course, not trying to strengthen the stewards. They were trying to neuter and integrate them. A more controlled steward system means a less controlled, more powerful union leadership.

The shake-up in industrial relations, the 15 years of incomes policy under both Labour and Tory governments from 1964 to 1979, and the large-scale increases in union membership — all led to a further increase in the number of stewards, to their progress into new areas, and to changes in their organisation.

In 1973 the Commission on Industrial Relations claimed that "there were well in excess of 250,000, and perhaps approaching 300,000, shop stewards in 1971".

One study in Sheffield found that the introduction of productivity bargaining in 1968-9 doubled the number of stewards on the Engineering District list.

But the main developments were in the public sector. In the late '60s authorities began introducing incentive schemes for manual workers in local government and hospitals. Agreements recognised stewards for the first time in local government in 1969 and in the Health Service in 1971.

NUPE stewards

NUPE, the largest public sector union, recognised stewards for the first time in 1970, and by 1981 claimed 23,000. Steward systems were introduced on the docks, on ships and in schools.

Workplace representatives in textiles and shops began to call themselves stewards in 1977. NALGO introduced a shop steward system.

An increasing hierarchy and professionalisation of stewards went along with this growth.

Brown, Ebsworth and Terry estimated that in 1976 there were around 5,000 full-time stewards covering manual workers in manufacturing. Their study showed that in manufac-

turing 62% of all workplaces employing more than 500 workers had full-time convenors. In engineering the figure was 69%, and in the public sector 21%.

Clegg estimates that there were 10,000 full-time stewards in 1973.

Increasingly, decisions were taken not by the individual stewards and their members on a section, or by a group of stewards in a department, but by senior, often full-time, stewards and the stewards' committee at the level of the workplace — or even of the company.

Full-time

Full-time stewards often hold no sectional responsibilities, and no longer share to the same degree the insecurities and work experience of their members.

Involvement in higher union bodies and participation schemes meant that life became one long round of meetings and courses, with perks attached. This was likely to estrange them from, and weaken, workplace organisation.

Some observers saw the success of Labour's Social Contract (1974-5) in its ability to secure growing control of the official unions over workplace organisation. While union leaders were involved in the Social Contract at the top, workplace leaders were incorporated at the bottom.

It was not as simple as that. The strategies of the state and the employers did have a tremendous degree of success. By 1980 much of the structure of workplace trade unionism was management-moulded, management-sponsored.

The bosses had developed the understanding that the workplace organisation, just like the wider union, could be used against rather than for the worker — could be used by capital for its own purposes.

Donovan's insight into the ambivalence of the steward's role, and the strategy of the 1974 Labour government derived from it, yielded tremendous dividends to capital. This is central. But it has to be seen against the political background.

Alternative

Strong roots in the membership had allowed the stewards to organise the early '70s wave of struggles. But, paradoxically, the favourable economic situation was both an aid and a hindrance.

On the one hand it gave the workplace leaders the muscle to go forward. On the other hand, the ability to do so and to go

round the union leaders (or force them reluctantly to trail behind) reinforced the limitations of the workplace leaders' political tradition, to ensure that no adequate alternative political leadership was thrown up. They never felt the need for it, and unlike the '20s there was no strong revolutionary party able to win the key layer of stewards to consistent revolutionary politics.

As issues arose the activists turned not to trying to control the Labour Party, or to supporting a new party, but to industrial means, to direct action, alone. Despite the efforts of revolutionary groups, no viable, even embryonic, rank and file organisation, not even a small-scale pallid reflection of the Minority Movement, was established.

It was the ability of the state and the employers to use these crucial political weaknesses against the rank and file leaders which was in the end to undermine their basic strength.

By the late '70s, it had become clear that militancy within normal bounds, plus Labour voting according to tradition, could produce no more than Wilson attacking the unions instead of Heath. As it became clear that the economic situation in the late '70s really was worse than

wise, their arguments were not strong enough to carry their members with them and stop the official leadership going with Wilson.

The election of the Thatcher government opened up the use of mass unemployment to undermine shop floor strength.

Building on the work of Wilson and Callaghan, the bosses have victimised steward after steward, pushed back or intimidated one workplace organisation after another.

We have to provide the answers. We have to provide them urgently.

We must base ourselves on, and learn the lessons from, the hopeful signs amid the general retreat: on the recent victories of the Michelin and Greenings workers; on the ability of the NGA workers at the Financial Times to resist the TUC and come away with £17 more than the General Council wanted them to accept; on the resistance of the Ford workers over the Paul Kelly sacking, and the Leyland workers over washing-up; in short, on the minority of workers across industry who are prepared to fight.

We have shop stewards in more workplaces than ever before. We have got to get them

Dispelling the illusion that 'militancy is enough'

that of the early '70s, then all the movement's limitations came to the surface.

The delusion that 'industrial militancy is enough' was dispelled. Vast layers of the militant labour movement had always been vulnerable to appeals to support 'the national interest' etc., and this now took its toll.

The 1972 upsurge halted when the dockers were released. The 1974 upsurge was halted by Wilson.

What was missing was a leadership which would have been able to take the movement forward, to bring down Heath in the first case, to hammer Wilson and establish a workers' government in the second.

Shop floor leaders had no answers to the arguments of Murray and Wilson that wages cause inflation, that this was the reason why the economy was in trouble, that an incomes policy could help, and so on. Least-

moving again — this time on a clear-cut basis of independence and socialist policies.

We have to build a movement that can do everything that the movement to free the Pentonville Five did — and more. We have to answer the central questions of viability, unemployment and union democracy.

We are in no position to declare a national rank and file movement right now. But we have to do everything possible to develop groupings such as Health Workers for the Full Claim and the Leyland Action Committee, which are the seeds of such a movement.

We have to do this with our feet firmly planted in the workplaces, and our heads working for a rethink and transformation in the wider labour movement. We have to make sure that this time, a militant upturn means more than just more militancy.

Join the Labour Party

Socialist ORGANISER

Scargill gets it right

BREAK LINKS WITH TORIES!

By Harry Sloan

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SPOTLIGHT

Book review

Probing deeper on El Salvador

ENRIQUE BALOYRA is a State Department advisor who has studied El Salvador

For Baloyra, the "bad guys" of Salvadorean history are the close knit oligarchy of land-owners who have pushed the peasantry off their land, dominate the financial institutions, and created a repressive "reactionary despotic" state necessary to hold down peasant unrest.

The reliance of the economy on one or two export crops has made it particularly susceptible to world trade crises.

Unemployment and under-employment on a massive scale lead to social unrest and the impossibility of a stable democratic regime that would not pose a grave threat to the oligarchy's economic power.

Mix

In the face of popular protest against oligarchic rule it has been necessary since 1948 for military governments in El Salvador to mix "repression with reform".

Limited trade union rights, some elemental social welfare, controlled political expression

Paul Muddle reviews a new book on El Salvador which shows that imperialism has more options than just one.

and the development of an economic infrastructure were intended to buy off urban workers and the middle class.

No-one, however, challenged the fundamentals of oligarchic rule. When military radicals linked to the middle class have attempted any form of agrarian transformation (as happened in 1972, 1976 and 1979-82) the oligarchy has unleashed paramilitary terror, economic subversion and army conspiracies.

Baloyra (rightly) sees no umbilical cord linking imperialism to the big land-owners. Oligarchic domination of the land denies imperialism markets



FMLN: is a deal with imperialism ruled out?

and creates political instability in an area of extreme strategic importance.

Carter, and even Reagan, have promoted land reform (primarily for political and not economic motives) and urged a transition to democracy. Baloyra applauds such efforts but sees them as insufficient.

In attempting to reconcile the Christian Democrats and the far right whilst excluding the reformist left of the FDR Baloyra believes that Reagan is pursuing the unattainable.

Baloyra recognises that under certain circumstances imperialism would have to support the most reactionary ruling classes but argues that another alternative is available in Central America.

Support for the "obstructionist" right, he argues, should be ditched. Instead, negotiations should be employed to produce an alliance between the "democratic left" of the FDR and the Christian Democrats.

Such a set-up could bludgeon the oligarchy into accepting reforms and steal the thunder of the far-left.

"Any attempt to create a

centre in Salvadorean politics will have to include the FDR. This entails bringing the groups under the FDR umbrella back into the political process.

This cannot come about without a restoration of the rule of law, and this restoration cannot come about without a confrontation with the rightist element

On the other hand, this restoration could be completed even if one or more of the guerrilla groups continued fighting... the powers of the state could be used to deal with problems... including the neutralisation of those who continue to try to destroy the regime...

(pp.156-7)

Baloyra points out that under such circumstances most guerrilla leaders would be happy to lay down their arms and quotes several to this effect.

He concludes by lamenting that:

"The ideological make-up of the Reagan administration makes it unlikely that the administration will perceive an alliance between the Social and Christian Democrats as a viable and legitimate option.

This is the greatest but not the only mistake that the US could make..." (pp.183-4).

The fact that a US policy advisor could contemplate a solution involving the FDR must alert those who harbour illusions in the current leadership of Salvador's revolutionary front.

When considering the struggle in Central America it is usually the case that the left regards the local ruling class (or "Oligarchy") as the direct agents of imperialism.

Such a view is part of the heritage that simplistic third-worldism and Stalinism has bequeathed to Marxism. It substitutes simple formulae for dialectical analysis.

In El Salvador, US support for the Christian Democrats, espousal of land reform and "democracy" and occasional championing of human rights has clearly brought imperialism into conflict with the extreme right led by D'Aubuisson and his Arena party.

If Marxists persist in seeing imperialism as a simple struggle between monopoly capital and the third world masses we will never be able to explain such phenomena as those or penetrate the complex of class relations in "third world" countries.

While it is true that the simplistic explanations of revolution in the third world proffered by the "New Right" in America can be countered by equally simple arguments, people like Enrique Baloyra make up a more sophisticated and perceptive current amongst the American ruling class which presents a deeper analysis and which needs to be considered by Marxists

Theoretical simplification of the relationship between imperialism and the third world leads us to underestimate the vitality of the middle classes and their capacity for an alliance with imperialism.

If Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" teaches us anything it is not the inevitability of socialism in the third world but the need for vigilance against the middle class.

There is nothing inevitable about socialism in the very unfavourable conditions of the

third world. Working class socialist revolution there is only a possibility which may be fought for and won. An irrefragable precondition for socialist revolution in the third world conditions is that the Marxists there keep their ideas and working class perspectives clear and that they resist both the lure of oversimplification and the pressures of cross class populism which express themselves through the crude non-Marxist oversimplifications.

Film Review

THE COLOUR OF RESISTANCE

by Andrew Hornung

"THE Girl with Red Hair" (Dutch film - English subtitles) tells the story of Hannie Schaft who joined the Dutch resistance to German occupation in 1942 and was executed by the Germans in 1945.

The film is told in the form of a flashback. A former comrade-at-arms of Hannie's tries to get the leader of their resistance group - now disbanded following a trilateral agreement between the government in exile, the resistance

and the Nazis - to intervene with the authorities to have her released from prison. He brushes off the suggestion.

The story of Hannie Schaft's entry into the resistance, her exploits and her attempt to kill Nazis and collaborators for their crimes even after the trilateral agreement brought

about the official end of armed underground activity is told in a dour and unembellished way.

The 'exploits' Hannie and her lover, Hugo, undertake do not involve the missiou-impossible type of heroics of many such films. The idea is simply to get up close to your target while he walks along the road or she steps into a car and shoot to kill.

In a sense that is director Ben Verblong's technique too. There are no sideways glances - no information about the Dutch resistance in general and hardly any about the group Hannie Schaft was in; there are no broader observations - about the period, about the politics behind the resistance; there are no more than hints of other issues - how useful was this form of resistance, was Hannie right in saying that the Dutch authorities would not punish war criminals, and so on?

The starkness of the film is emphasised by its colour... or lack of it. As if the entire film were shot through an orange filter, the images are a chiaroscuro of browns, greys, grey greens... and her red hair. Given the additional labour of reading subtitles, this makes the film sometimes quite difficult to watch.

Facts &



Figures

THE figures behind the pressure to change Labour's policy on council house sales: owner-occupied dwellings have risen from 43% of the total in 1961 to 56% in 1981.

However, council housing has also risen as a proportion of the total, from 27% to 31%.

Privately-rented dwellings were 31% of the total in 1971, and 13% in 1981.

THE figures for house-building tell another story. Up to 1978, the number of houses and flats completed for local authorities was around the same as the number for private owners. There were exceptions, like 1972 and 1973, when councils completed only just over half as many dwellings as private

owners, but generally around 150,000 to 200,000 houses were completed each year in each sector.

Since 1978, new council houses have become a rarity. In 1982, only 34,000 new dwellings were begun in the public sector in Britain. (The decline in Northern Ireland has not been so steep.)

Private house-building has declined a bit, too, but not nearly so much. About 160,000 were started in 1982.

AVERAGE council rents (for England and Wales) have gone up from £6.48 per week in 1979-80 to £13.55 in 1982-3. That's an increase of over 100% in money terms - and about 65% in real terms, allowing for inflation.

IN 1981, there were 50,000 council dwellings in 'serious disrepair' in England. That's 3,000 more than in 1976.

But the number of owner-occupied dwellings in 'serious disrepair' had increased from 371,000 to 539,000.

MEANWHILE, around 400,000 construction workers are estimated to be unemployed. 25,000 jobs were lost in council direct labour organisations between 1979 and 1982.

Trotsky on Stalinism

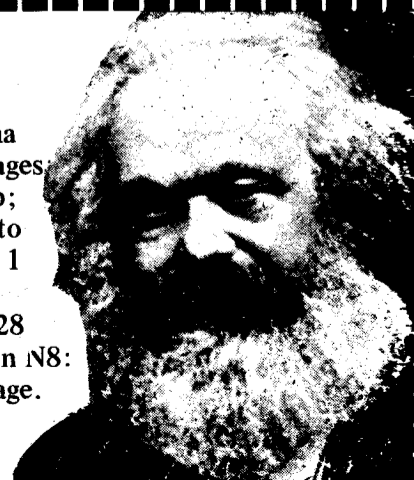
The classic Marxist analysis of Stalinism is Leon Trotsky's 'Revolution Betrayed: What is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?' Available via Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8: £2.50 plus 50p postage.



BOOKS

Critique of the Gotha Programme, 30p; Wages price and profit, 40p; Communist Manifesto 60p; Capital volume 1 £3.95. Available c/o Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8: add money for postage.

by MARX



Socialist ORGANISER

Where we stand

*Organise the left to beat back the Tories' attacks! No to attacks on union rights; defend the picket line; no state interference in our unions! No to any wage curbs. Labour must support all struggles for better living standards and conditions.

*Wage rises should at the very least keep up with price increases. For a price index calculated by working class organisations, as the basis for clauses in all wage agreements to provide automatic monthly rises in line with the true cost of living for the working class. The same inflation-proofing should apply to state benefits, grants and pensions.

*Fight for improvements in the social services, and against cuts. Protection for those services against inflation by automatic inflation-proofing of expenditure. For occupations and supporting strike action to defend jobs and services.

*End unemployment. Cut hours, not jobs. Fight for a 35 hour week and an end to overtime. Demand work-sharing without loss of pay. Organise the unemployed - campaign for a programme of useful public works to create new jobs for the unemployed.

*Defend all jobs! Open the books of those firms that threaten closure or redundancies, along with those of their suppliers and bankers, to elected trade union committees. For occupation and blacking action to halt the closures. For nationalisation without compensation under workers' management.

*Make the bosses pay, not the working class. Millions for hospitals, not a penny for 'defence'! Nationalise the banks and financial institutions, without compensation. End the interest burden on council housing and other public services.

*Freeze rent and rates.

*Scrap all immigration controls. Race is not a problem: racism is. The labour movement must mobilise to drive the fascists off the streets. Purge racists from positions in the labour movement. Organise full support for black self-defence. Build workers' defence squads.

*The capitalist police are an enemy for the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as a bosses' striking force: dissolution of special squads (SPG, Special Branch, MI5, etc), public accountability, etc.

*Free abortion on demand. Women's equal right to work and full equality for women. Defend and extend free state nursery and childcare provision.

*Against attacks on gays by the state: abolish all laws which discriminate against lesbians and gay men; for the right of the gay community to organise and affirm their stand publicly.

*The Irish people - as a whole - should have the right to determine their own future. Get the British troops out now! Repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Political status for Irish Republican prisoners as a matter of urgency.

*The black working people of South Africa should get full support from the British labour movement for their strikes, struggles and armed combat against the white supremacist regime. South African goods and services should be blacked.

*It is essential to achieve the fullest democracy in the labour movement. Automatic reselection of MPs during each Parliament and the election by annual conference of party leaders. Annual election of all trade union officials, who should be paid the average for the trade.

*The chaos, waste, human suffering and misery of capitalism now - in Britain and throughout the world - show the urgent need to establish rational, democratic, human control over the economy, to make the decisive sectors of industry social property, under workers' control. The strength of the labour movement lies in the rank and file. Our perspective must be working class action to raze the capitalist system down to its foundations, and to put a working class socialist alternative in its place - rather than having our representatives run the system and waiting for crumbs from the tables of the bankers and bosses.

Agenda

LEGGIN' it for peace. East London Youth CND march, September 17-18, from Kelvedon Hatch Civil Defence HQ to London Fields, Hackney. For details contact E. London YCND, 39 Albion Road, London E17.

POLISH Solidarity Committee (Glasgow): working conference in Glasgow, September 17-18. Proposed sessions include: Czechoslovakia 1968 and Poland 1980-1; peace movements in Eastern Europe; solidarity work. Contact Gordon

Morgan, 59 Durward Ave, Glasgow G41 (041-649 8958).

LONDON Cuts conference organised by the Southwark Campaign Working Party: Sunday November 6, at County Hall, London SE1. Contact: Southwark Campaign Working Party, Town Hall, London SE5.

BANGLADESHI Divided Families Campaign demonstration against racist and sexist immigration laws. Saturday September 3, 2pm from Mancunian Way, Oxford Road, Manchester.

VOLUNTEERS wanted! Wirral Trades Council have acquired a building at Central Station, Birkenhead, for use as a trade union, unemployed, and Labour Party resource centre, and need help to get it into a decent state to move in. If you can help out in any way, contact Paul Davies, Transport House, Berner St, Birkenhead.

LONDON Labour Campaign for Gay Rights now meets regularly every 4 weeks at Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont St, WC1, at 6pm. Next meeting September 11. Gay Young Socialists meet at Gay's The Word at 6pm: next meeting September 18, on the Police Bill. Contact: London LCGR, Mike Haran 659 2938 or Chris Beer, 785 9515. GYS:

Socialist ORGANISER

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE MEETING

Socialist Organiser's Labour Party conference meeting this year will be on building Labour Party workplace branches and the fight against the Tories. Speakers will include activists who have had direct experience of building workplace branches.

TUESDAY OCTOBER 4, 5.30PM
KING'S HOTEL, BRIGHTON

Martin Goodsell, 13 Buxton Road, London N19. National LCGR: Chris Richardson, 21 Devonshire Promenade, Nottingham NG7 2DS.

LAMBETH Labour Campaign for Gay Rights: open meeting on Lambeth council and the local gay/lesbian community. Friday

September 23, 8pm at Lambeth Town Hall.

LABOUR and Ireland: meeting with Tony Benn organised by West London Labour Committee on Ireland. Monday September 19, 8pm, Venture Community Centre, Wornington Rd, London W10.

Where to find Socialist Organiser

SCOTLAND

Glasgow. Next meeting Thursday September 8, 7.30 at Club Room, Block 40, Stirlingfauld Place, opposite Citizens Theatre (nearest Underground, Bridge St). 'A Strategy for Fighting the Cuts'. Speaker: Ian McCallman (Glasgow district Labour Party, nominee for Glasgow district Labour panel, in personal capacity).

Contact: Stan Crooke, 34 Garturk St, Glasgow G42. SO is sold at West End bookshop, Rutherglen shopping arcade (Friday lunchtime), Coatbridge shopping arcade (Saturday lunchtime), and Maryhill dole (Tuesday morning).

Edinburgh. Contact Dave, 229 4591. SO is sold at Muirhouse (Saturday 10.30-12) and at the First of May bookshop, Candlemaker Row.

NORTH-WEST

Rochdale. Next meeting Monday Sept. 12, 8pm at the Castle Inn, Manchester Rd.

Manchester. Contact Tony, 273 5691. SO is sold at Grass Roots Books, Newton St, Piccadilly.

Stockport. Meetings every Sunday, 7.30pm: contact 40 Fox St, Edgley, Stockport. SO is sold at Stockport market every Saturday, 11 to 12.30.

Wirral. Next meeting Thursday September 8, at Wallacey Labour Club, Church Rd, Seacombe. 7.30 business, 8pm discussion on 'The issues at TUC and Labour Party conferences'. Speakers Col Johnston (Wallasey delegate to Labour Party conference) and Dave Curtis (Wirral branch NUR).

Liverpool. Contact 733 6663. SO is sold at Progressive Books, Berry St, and at News from Nowhere, Whitechapel.

Hyndburn. Contact Accrington 395753.

Stoke. Contact: Paul Barnett 151 Broadway, Meir, S-o-T. (328198).

YORKSHIRE AND NORTH-EAST

Huddersfield. Contact Alan Brooke, 59 Magdale, Honley.

Socialist Organiser Annual General Meeting: Sunday October 30, 10.30-5, County Hall, London SE1.
National Socialist Organiser dayschool, Saturday October 29, in London.

Read all about us!



36p including postage from Socialist Organiser, 28, Middle Lane, London N8 8PL.

Huddersfield HD7 2LX.

Harrogate. Meets every other Sunday evening: next meeting September 18. Contact Mark Osborn, 522542. SO is sold outside the market, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday lunchtimes.

York. Contact 414118 (98 Hull St). SO is sold at Coney St on Saturday mornings, at the Community Bookshop, outside the dole office most mornings, and at the University on Friday mornings.

Sheffield. SO is sold outside Boots in Fargate (Saturday 12 to 1) and at the Independent Bookshop, Glossop Rd. Contact Rob, 589307.

Durham. SO is sold at the Community Co-op, New Elvet. Contact Andy, 64088.

Leeds. SO is sold at Books and Corner Books, Woodhouse Lane. Contact Garth, 623322.

Hull. Meets every Wednesday 8pm. Details from SO sellers. Childcare available.

Halifax. Contact 52156. SO is sold at Hebden Bridge Books.

WALES AND WEST

Cardiff. Contact 492988.

Bristol. Contact c/o 28 Middle Lane.

Taunton. Contact c/o 28 Middle Lane.

MIDLANDS

Birmingham. SO is sold at the Other Bookshop, Digbeth High St. Contact Godfrey Webster, 169 Barclay Road, Smethwick.

Coventry. SO is sold at the Wedge Co-op, High Street. Contact Keith White, 75623.

Leicester. SO is sold at

Blackthorne Books, High St. Contact Phil, 857908.

Northampton. Contact Ross, 713606.

Nottingham. Meets every Thursday evening, 7.30 at the International Community Centre. SO is sold outside the Victoria Centre (Saturday 11 to 1) and at the Mushroom Bookshop, Heathcote St. Contact Pete Radcliff, 585640.

SOUTH

Oxford. SO is sold at the Cornmarket (Saturday 11 to 1) and outside Tesco, Cowley Rd, Friday 5 to 7. Also at EOA Books, Cowley Rd.

Basingstoke. Next meeting Thursday September 8: 'The Struggle in Central America'. 7.30. Chute House. SO is sold at 'Good News' in London St.

Harlow. Contact c/o 28 Middle Lane.

LONDON

North-West London. Contact Mick, 624 1931.

Islington. Next meeting Sunday September 11, 7.30 at Caxton House, St John's Way, N19. The Youth Training Scheme: speaker, cllr Pat Longman. Sunday September 25: Debate with Socialist Action on the Common Market. Contact: Nik, 278 1341.

South East London. Next meeting Tuesday September 13, 8pm at the Lee Centre, Aislbie Rd, SE12. 'Fight Hospital Closures'. Speaker: Andrea Campbell (CoHSE Broad Left, in personal capacity).

Hackney. Contact Andrew Hornung, 76 Carysfort Rd, London N16.

Haringey. Contact 802 0771 or 348 5941.

Tower Hamlets.

Next meeting Monday September 12. Business 7.30, discussion 8.30 on 'Where next for the unions after TUC '83'. Speaker: a TUC delegate. For venue, contact Susan on 377 1328.

Richmond. SO is sold at Richmond Quadrant every Saturday, 11.30-1.30. Further details, contact Nick De Marco, 876 6715.

Hounslow. SO is sold outside All Saints Church, Hounslow High St., Saturdays 10.30 to 12. Contact Chris, 898 6961.

Southwark/Lambeth. Meets every other Wednesday at Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, London SE5. Business 7.30, discussion 8.30. Next meeting September 7.

Orpington. Contact c/o South East London.

SO is sold at the following London bookshops: Collets, Central Books, The Other Bookshop, Bookmarks, Bookplace (Peckham Rd, SE15), Kilburn Books, and Reading Matters (Wood Green Shopping Centre).

NORTH STAFFS Labour Against the Witch-hunt public meeting with Peter Tatchell and Stephanie Grant. Friday September 23, 7.30 at the Guildhall, Newcastle-under-Lyme.

HORNSEY and Wood Green LPYS public meeting on 'Labour and Sinn Fein'. Speakers: Jeremy Corbyn MP, Sarah Roelofs, representative of 'Veterans against the War'. Monday September 26, 7.30 at Stroud Green school, Woodstock Rd, London N4.

Socialist Organiser Alliance

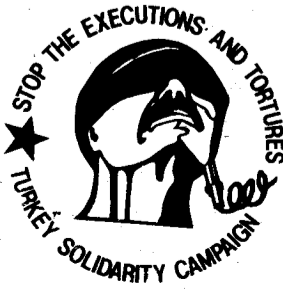
Become a supporter of the Socialist Organiser Alliance - groups are established in most large towns. We ask £1.50 a month minimum (20p unwaged) contribution from supporters.

I want to become a Socialist Organiser supporter/ I want more information.

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Address

Send to Socialist Organiser, 28 Middle Lane, London N8 8PL.



Rates: £5 for three months, £8.75 for six months, and £16 for a year.

Bundle of 5 each week: £12 for 3 months. Bundle of 10 £21 for 3 months.

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Subscribe

Stuck on glue?

THE subject of glue sniffing may induce alarm or excitement (according to who you are!)

Much of the alarm is caused by ignorant scare-mongering by papers or politicians. GS is not necessarily worse than other types of drug use, legal or illegal, but there is still cause for some concern.

People who get high by sniffing adhesives are actually breathing in vapour from the solvents that the glues are dissolved in. People also breathe solvents from other products. So we should talk about 'solvent inhaling' (SI), rather than GS.

The solvents commonly inhaled** (see table) are all organic chemicals (from substances produced by living things) which turn into vapour easily.

The most common solvent that gets you high is alcohol. Alcohol can be inhaled (hence the term 'snifter') but is usually drunk.

Solvents

Some of these solvents are similar to anaesthetics. Inhaling them causes lightheadedness, giddiness, confusion and drowsiness. Larger amounts can cause hallucinations, unconsciousness, and, in overdose, death — just like alcohol (also an anaesthetic). Other effects may also occur, e.g. headaches and vomiting (familiar to some alcohol users). Regular sniffers often have symptoms like a permanent cold and cough, with a rash around the nose and mouth and general listlessness.

There is no firm evidence for any permanent damage, particularly with acetone or toluene. Only with fluorocarbons (aerosols) is there a serious risk from the solvent itself. Sudden death sometimes occurs after inhaling these. Also, directly inhaling the spray may coat the lungs, causing suffocation.

Addiction to solvents is rare, though inhalers may become psychologically dependent.

But there are health risks

SCIENCE

By Les Hearn

with even the safest solvents.

First, some inhalers put the substance in a plastic bag which they hold over their mouths and noses, or even put over their heads. This can lead to suffocation, particularly if the victim loses consciousness.

Second, unconscious inhalers can vomit and then choke.

Third, loss of co-ordination and hallucinations can cause accidental injury and death. Disapproval of GS often leads inhalers to use dangerous areas, like derelict buildings or canal banks.

The number of injuries from SI, while trivial compared to those from, say, alcohol consumption, is worrying. So what can be done?

Attempts to prosecute shopkeepers who sell glue to youngsters may just push kids onto other more dangerous products, like aerosols or petrol. Making SI itself a criminal offence would just result in a lot of kids having records.

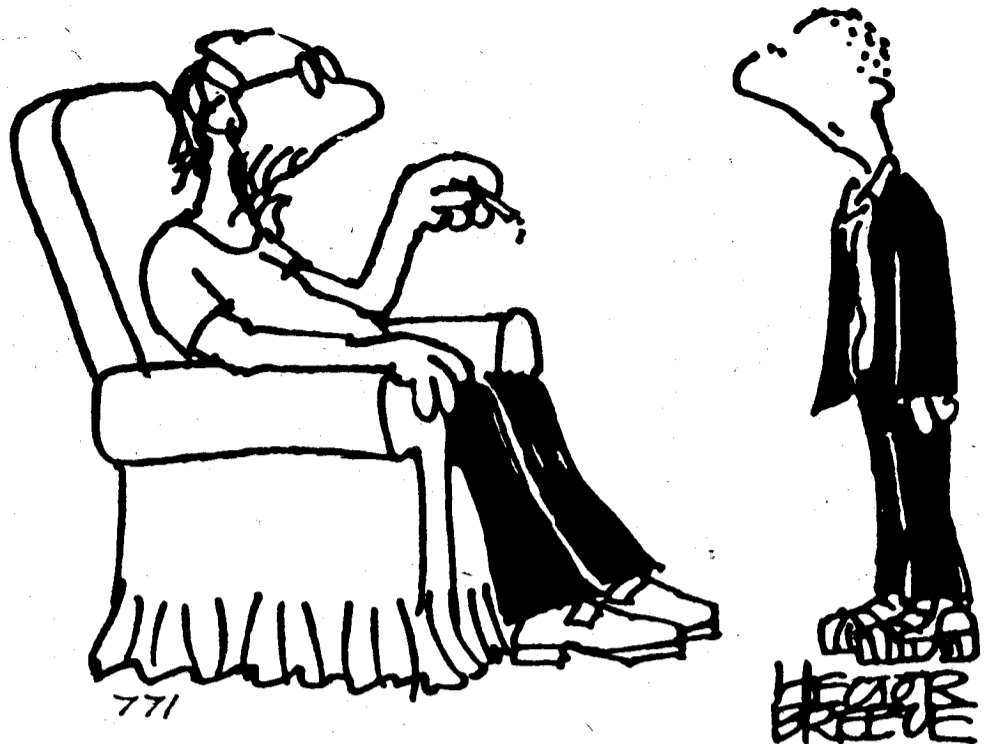
The drug counselling organisation Release has a different approach. Their 1981 pamphlet, 'Sniffing Glue*', describes clearly the health

*available 46p post paid from Release, 1, Elgin Ave., London W9 3PR.

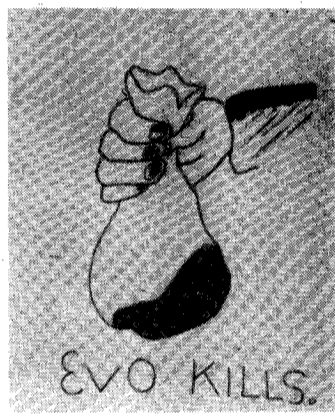
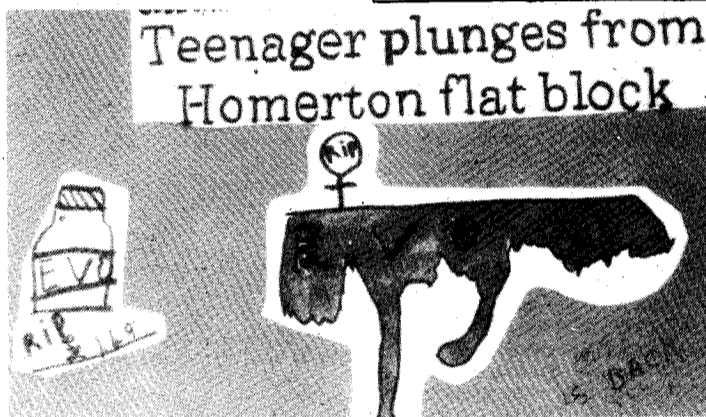
**

- Products/Solvents
- Adhesives/acetone, toluene
- Dry cleaners/tetrachloromethane, etc.
- Hair lacquer/methanol, alcohol
- Lighter refills/butane
- Nail polish remover/acetone, amyl acetate
- Aerosols/fluorocarbons
- Petrol/benzene, etc.

problems and dangers of SI and explains how to deal with accidents. It warns against using glue to avoid your problems, but doesn't criticise people who inhale solvents. And it gives a list of do's and don'ts for those determined to go on with it.



"Because smoking pot is an established social custom, and sniffing glue isn't, that's why!"



Why do the kids do it?

by an East London Community Health Worker

tend to be regular sniffers. Boys and girls usually outgrow the habit by 18.

Young kids tend to be frightened of GS but social pressures prompt most working class kids to try it before they reach twelve.

The most popular way to glue-sniff (in East London anyway) is to put Evostick into an empty crisp bag. One deep breath will keep you high for up to 40 minutes.

Boredom

So why do youngsters sniff glue? Well, why do adults drink and use drugs? When I talked to kids about it, the most frequent answer is sheer boredom. In Hackney and Tower Hamlets with unemployment at 20 to 25% and all the local industries eroded, school has little relevance to youth. They see older brothers and sisters slog away to get qualifications, and then be on the dole for a couple of years. They start getting into trouble at school, so they stay off whenever they can.

There is then nothing to do except hang around the streets or go to a squat where GS alleviates the boredom.

How can we help kids stop sniffing or stop them starting? It is useless for an adult to just tell kids not to sniff because it is dangerous.

Accident

On one estate, a group of kids got together after one of their friends had a serious accident while high on glue. This accident frightened the children enough to want to discuss it, and what glue does to you.

We began to talk together with the youth who had had the accident about GS. We got literature from various sources, although very little was aimed at kids. They decided to do some posters about sniffing (some shown here) and as we did them, we discussed the whole cult of GS.

Deaths

It is impossible to 'scare' or reason with them why they should not sniff glue as there is no substantial evidence of permanent damage. Most deaths have been from accidents.

One of the most useful things was to teach the kids some practical first aid. Because of the adult reaction to GS, when something does go wrong, kids tend to run off in panic and leave the person who has had an accident alone. When help arrives, it may be too late.

Suffocating is always a risk. Putting glue in polythene bags, large or small, is very dangerous.

Just teaching kids to dial 999 or get some help from an adult can remove some of the risks.

GS usually only gets prominence in the papers when something tragic has happened. Kids are branded as delinquent or trouble-makers if they are known glue sniffers. Thus the victims of the system are blamed for its problems. The moves in Scotland towards making GS an offence will just bring kids into collision with the system for trying to forget the deprivation and despair that faces them. Under conditions where government policies put kids on the dole with no hope for the future, GS will not disappear. And if it did, something else would just replace it.

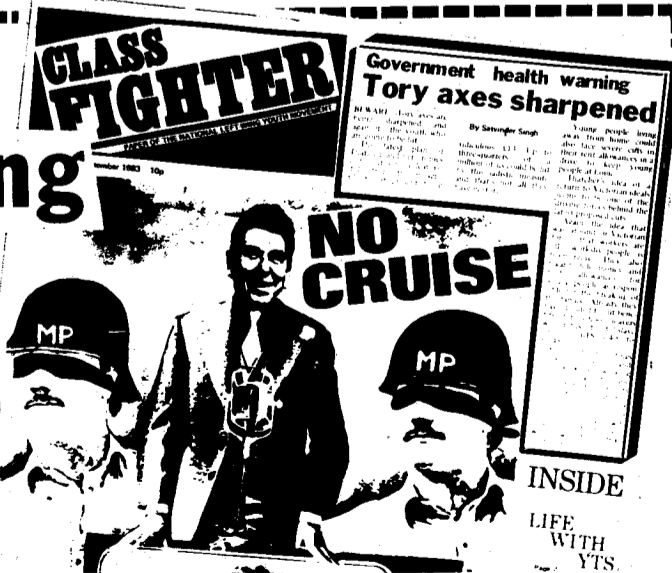


TROOPS OUT NOW!

Join the Labour Committee on Ireland.
BM Box 5355, London WC1N 3XX

CLASS FIGHTER

Organising youth to fight the Tories



OUT NOW — Class Fighter no.13. Articles on FE students, Brixton Sounds, Kent's gagging of Youth CND. Also featuring Saul's Moles. 10p plus 12½p postage from 214 Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

Get out your Youth CND banners and bring them down this Sunday, 11th, to the 'No more Chiles' demonstration (1pm, Clerkenwell Green, London). This is the demonstration which Bruce Kent has been going on about in his attacks on

Youth CND — nothing to do with nuclear war, he says. Y. t there are nuclear warheads on the US fleet stationed off Nicaragua.

YCND groups are to march behind the West Midlands banner.

Techs are starting back either next week or the week after. There are likely to be long queues of new students all waiting to register — and buy a left wing paper. Make sure you're there, armed with a 'Join the YS' leaflet.



OLDHAM council for racial equality has produced a report on passport checking and Surveillance of black people by government offices.

The major point to come out of it is that DHSS staff in particular are being used as Immigration Police.

Surveys conducted by the C.R.E. in 1981 and 1983 show that there is widespread checking of the passports of black people mainly by government employees dealing with benefits.

Passports are usually asked for deceptively - for instance by saying that they are to 'check identity', when they are really for Internal Immigration surveillance.

Passport checks are also known to occur in education authorities, hospitals and local authorities. Oldham CRE are calling for a campaign based on long and short term demands including:

- *The DHSS should accept statements made by black claimants as they do white claimants;
- *Wherever a passport is requested it should be challenged and an explanation demanded;
- *An end to the link between welfare benefits entitlement and Immigration Status;
- *the revoking of the NHS Regulations on charges for overseas visitors.

REGGAE artist Peter Tosh has refused to play concerts in Israel because of its links with the regime in South Africa.

Israel is known to have trade Alliances including the selling of arms to the regime in South Africa.

There is no way I can sing and speak about equal rights and justice and help for the oppressed in a country that is supplying South Africa with the guns to suppress the black people and continue the Apartheid.

Tosh is expected to lose \$80,000 as a result of this stand, but in reply he said, 'When it comes to my message, money is secondary.'

Many supposedly progressive groups still tour Israel, and some groups play in South Africa. Tosh's stand will hopefully expose the Israel-South Africa links and will refuse to play there until the links are broken.

TWO brothers from Barbados have won their fight to stay in Britain. The rule at first used by the Home Office to deny their right to stay was that they had no 'United Kingdom ancestry'.

Their grandmother was born in Sri Lanka and their mother was married in Barbados.

What changed the Home Office's mind? Could it have been that these Barbadian brothers are white?

Can we see the Home Office allowing black and Asian people also to stay? I unfortunately doubt it.



Hindles Gears strikers from Bradford lobbied the TUC. They have been out over pay for more than five months. Donations: c/o AUEW offices, 2 Claremont, Bradford, Yorkshire

Victory at Greenings

"HAVE the will to fight", is the message from the marathon struggle to save jobs at Greenings in Warrington.

These were the words used by convenor Arthur Conheny in an interview with Socialist Organiser in August, when the dispute seemed destined to go on indefinitely.

And it was the fighting spirit of the strikers that has eventually prevailed over management after nearly six months in dispute.

Last week saw the announcement of full reinstatement for

over 300 Greenings workers - saving the jobs of many who were slated for compulsory redundancy.

And the trade union rights and working conditions which the strikers were determined to defend have been incorporated in the return to work agreement.

The battle comes at a time when victories against the Tory/management offensive on the shop floor have been few and far between.

The leadership at Greenings, however, not only dug in but effectively secured the com-

mitment of the membership, who actually gained in strength as the dispute progressed.

As Arthur Conheny told us in August:

"There are issues you can live with and accommodate to. But sometimes there is no choice but to fight. As Martin Luther said, 'Here I stand: I can do no more'."

"We think if we stand our ground and slog it out with them we can win".

... and at GKN!!

THE 8-week strike at GKN Pistons in Northampton recently ended in success for the workers.

Management had started by insisting on a 7% wage cut. They ended by offering a 5% rise.

The reasons for the victory were probably the widespread local support for the dispute, and the promise of supporting industrial action from the sister GKN plant at Kings Lynn and blacking of GKN products elsewhere.

The strike committee wanted to continue the strike while the management were on the ropes in order to force concessions on new stewards, health and safety reps, and a new bonus scheme. But full-time union officials said

the strike committee was out of order. The original failure to agree was over money only, and that was that.

This attitude of 'playing to Queensbury - or EEF - rules, is typical of the trade union bureaucracy, and could allow the management to hit back after a breather. However, the workers are now aware of their own strength and have set an example to others locally and nationally.

The support committee will now seek to publicise the lessons of this dispute, and to help GKN workers if the takeover of AE Engineering by GKN leads to threats of job losses.

Graham knifes CPSA ballot

IN MAY this year, the annual conference of CPSA passed an amendment to the constitution allowing the establishment of a political fund, as well as a motion calling for a campaign for a vote in favour of affiliation to the Labour Party.

However, since that Conference also saw the return of a right-wing dominated NEC, most activists were cynical about how vigorous such a campaign would be.

The requisite membership ballot for setting up a political fund will now be held in the second half of October, with

by Mike Grayson

the result due to be announced on November 9.

It appears that the 'campaign' will take the form of 'a major leaflet' (to quote the union newspaper, Red Tape), which has yet to be published.

Meanwhile, CPSA's General Secretary Alistair Graham is using his regular column in Red Tape quietly to knife the chances of a vote in favour of affiliation.

In the latest issue, he tells the membership, 'The Labour Party is poised between the slow crawl back to popular support, with a new moderate leadership and better thought-out policies, or it faces the quick slide to extinction...'

Hardly the words of someone arguing for Conference policy!

As yet, the Broad Left too has produced no campaign material on this issue, and it looks as if the 'campaign' will be left in the hands of rank and file activists in the branches.

Whichever way the vote goes - and it is difficult to be optimistic in the present circumstances - the establishment of Labour Party workplace branches in CPSA offices will take on an added importance.

Strike against Post Office sacking

by Alasdair Jamison

ALL collection and delivery of mail in Basingstoke has been suspended since Saturday, September 3. The postal section of the local UCW branch is on strike - fighting for the withdrawal of a sacking notice against its Secretary, Alan Fraser, a Socialist Organiser supporter.

Although management say that the sacking is about attendance, on which Alan's record is not very bad, the background of the case shows the bosses real motives.

Alan, in co-operation with others, has greatly improved the organisation and effectiveness of

the branch.

Post Office management have recognised his effectiveness in their own way, by running a long-term campaign to sack him, including a failed attempt based on the forging of his signature on absence sheets.

Picketing of the head Post Office has been heavy, resulting in a retreat by police. On Monday morning they half-heartedly tried to enforce the 'six pickets' rule, but abandoned the attempt when faced with the prospect of having to physically move a dense mass of pickets.

On that morning, a strongly attended mass meeting of the Postal section voted unanimously

to continue the action in favour of reinstatement. A strike bulletin has been established, and outside support, in the form of letters, money and delegations to the picket line is flowing well.

During Monday, delegations were received from G&M Hospital workers, Young Socialists, Labour Councillors, and NGA members. Delegations from Trades Council, Labour Party, and more health service workers are planned for Tuesday.

Morale among the strikers is high; the picket line gives a strong impression of determination; and, as the first issue of the strike bulletin says, 'anything short of full reinstatement is totally unacceptable'.

Cutting supplies

THE strikers at Industrial Pyrometers in Birmingham are still solid after 12 weeks in dispute. They are concentrating on getting the firm's products [instruments used widely in the pottery and engineering industries] blacked wherever possible.

They have also succeeded in getting the firm's supplies blacked by British Oxygen, thus cutting off the gas needed for IP's welding.

Support, donations, etc., to D.P. Hyde, 19, Phillip Sydney Rd., Sparkhill, Birmingham.

A QUESTION OF SOLIDARITY
Independent Trade Unions In South Africa



90p

Bob Fine

Published by Socialist Forum for Southern Africa Solidarity. Available (at 90p plus 20p post) c/o SO 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

THE BOMB
Start the steps to survival

YOUTH CND

'TUC must put its paper policy into practice': Youth CND lobby of TUC, Thursday, September 8.

For details, phone Southwark YCND, c/o 703 9011.

Nigg picket beats back bosses

THE AGGRESSIVE mass picketing by 2,100 striking oil platform workers has forced retreats by management at Highland Fabricators in Nigg Bay, Scotland.

On August 31, management abandoned their attempt to re-open the yard using the scab labour of 1,600 selectively 're-employed' workers.

Even management's own claims indicated that only 400 of the 1600 they wanted had signed up to return to work, while a 300-strong mass picket walked up and down outside the yard, outnumbering a squad of 116 police.

Management cancelled the buses that bring workers into the yard, and waited for London talks with national union officials on the Friday.

There, they climbed down on their sacking of all 2,100 men, and on three of the 'non-nego-

tiable' 24 conditions they had insisted upon as a basis for a return to work: the sacrificed clauses were those specifying the right to sack at will, clocking in, and shop steward representation.

But among the remaining 21 points were the imposition of 'economic' bus fares, and sufficient further attacks on working conditions to secure an unanimous vote for rejection at a mass meeting on Monday.

A confident meeting shouted 'rubbish' as frightened union officials tried to argue that the company might seriously intend to carry out its threatened closure of the yard.

The action — which has boldly defied Tory anti-union laws — is an example to the workers' movement across the country: the strength of the shop floor has limited officials' ability to deliver a sell-out settlement.

Stand up, the real right wing!

THE LABOUR leadership contest took an instructive turn this week.

Arch right winger Frank Chapple of the EETPU poured scorn on Roy Hattersley, praised Neil Kinnock, and said that he personally had voted Shore for leader and Kinnock for deputy.

And 'Forward Labour', a newsletter associated with the right-wing Labour Solidarity grouping, came out for Kinnock as leader and Hattersley as deputy.

Clearly there is a good deal of mutual venom between Roy Hattersley and his former associates who now lead the SDP — or (like Chapple) semi-covertly support it.

The SDPers see Hattersley's policy as 'fake rightism' — windy phrases covering concessions to the Left. When Hattersley, trying to broaden his base in the labour movement, talks about legal sanctions against rac-

ism in the police force, their blood must boil!

And plenty of right-wingers see Kinnock as a good option — a man with the makings of a new Harold Wilson or Ramsey MacDonald.

It should be instructive for all those who have seen Kinnock as the 'realistic' left candidate for leader. That sort of 'realism' is another name for cutting your own throat in deference to the entrenched position of the powers-that-be.

In the Labour Party mandating meetings coming up this month, the vote should be: Heffer for leader, Meacher for deputy.



Hattersley: 'fake rightism'?

Picketing against privatisation

by Gerry Byrne

LIFE is certainly full of surprises for Wandsworth Council tenants — you don't know from one week to the next who'll be emptying your bins, cutting the grass, or sweeping the streets... or if it will be done at all.

The latest one to be sprung on us is the privatisation of the housing department.

The council invited in Grand Metropolitan — who are already making a dog's breakfast of the dust — to do a feasibility study on the merits of privatising housing management. Roehampton district was chosen as the guinea-pig.

In typical Wandsworth Tory fashion, this was done without any consultation with tenants or their representatives.

Rumours were rife, but nothing was known for definite until last week when workers in the Housing Office were informed that Grandmet were coming in the following week.

Because of looming threats to their jobs — the caretakers have been given three months' notice of redundancy — the housing workers have built links with the tenants' associations.

A joint tenants/district housing office working party has been set up to look at ways of improving the service to tenants by the existing council workforce.

So last Wednesday, August 31, a demonstration of over 50 tenants from the estates in Roehampton was there to meet Grandmet's representative.

Housing District workers walked out to join them. A secret ballot organised by NALGO throughout the Housing Department had voted overwhelmingly — ten to one — for non-cooperation with Grandmet.

In the event the Grandmet man did manage to slip in after the demonstration had dispersed. From then on, the tenants

decided to keep up the picket while the office was open.

On Thursday, when the Grandmet rep arrived, escorted by District Housing Officer Mr Stickle, there was no way he was going to be let in.

That same day, Mr Shepherd, Director of Housing, came down to address — i.e. intimidate — the workforce.

Wandsworth has a long record of summary sackings, stopping wages for work-to-rules, and other arbitrary ways of dealing with industrial action.

So, while the workers are still supporting the protest, it has fallen on the tenants to keep Grandmet out.

We have kept up the picket

for a week and no further sign has been seen of Grandmet. Leaflets are going out to every tenant in the District, and a petition against privatisation has attracted lots of support from local people who come across us while shopping and paying their rent.

The council is obviously concerned about our continuing presence. At every meeting with tenants' representatives they try to wheedle them into calling it off with flimsy offers of 'guarantees'.

As far as we're concerned, the picket stays until we have assurances in writing that the study and the proposed privatisation are scrapped.

Step up fight at Carousel!

NEW initiatives are necessary if the Carousel dispute in Glasgow — a fight for better working conditions, union recognition, and reinstatement — is not to end up as a drawn-out war of attrition.

Last Saturday (September 3) 30 tins of flour were delivered by Carr's to the factory at six o'clock in the morning, thereby avoiding the pickets. This is enough for several months' work.

Saccomando, the factory's owner, has also had Dynorod and his own employees busy cleaning up the factory, both inside and outside, in order to counter the threat of it being closed down for breaking health regulations.

The scabs have clearly decided whose side they're on. Even when the weekly mass pickets of up to 100 people is being held, the fools choose to ignore the picket line and carry on working.

With the summer now over, the demand for the ice-cream confectionery produced by the factory has obviously dropped. And with this, also, has dropped Saccomando's vulnerability to picketing.

Saccomando himself is now visibly more confident. For a fortnight after he knocked down 2 pickets in a car, he kept his head down. But with a full supply of flour again, and the pickets facing worsening weather conditions, Saccomando is again in a more buoyant mood.

Seven weeks on into the dispute, the pickets remain solid in their determination to win. While prolonged picketing of the factory, possibly over a period of months, could bring the strikers victory, a better chance of victory is offered by a more aggressive short-term strategy.

The strikers' own union, the T&G, in particular needs to step up its support. Although the strike has been declared official and the strikers get union strike pay, the Glasgow TGWU District Committee has failed to make a serious effort to mobilise members for the picket line.

And the Glasgow Trades Council, which will be hearing the strikers' case on Wednesday, should also be mobilising its affiliates for picketing, rather than just passing the usual innocuous motion of support.

Saccomando's outlets are mostly small cafes and shops. Since these cannot be blacked by unions, as no union members work in them, consumer boycotts should be organised. This is best done by unemployed workers' centres and Labour Party Young Socialists branches organising leafletting of any shop or cafe in their area which receives supplies from Carousel.

And those unionised firms known to be suppliers to Carousel need to be systematically chased up to prevent a repeat of last Saturday's blow for the strikers, by getting all supplies to the factory blacked.

Battle of Britain's

200 TGWU members have been on official strike at Britain's toy factory in Walthamstow, East London, since July 29.

Their struggle is for a reduction in the working week from a compulsory 50 hours to 49, and for an increase in pay for the women workers.

While the strike is solid, and support is coming from other sections of the labour movement locally, management have escalated the situation by importing scab labour in an attempt to break the strike. At least some of this has been recruited through the office staff, who have refused to support the strike.

Management's action has only helped to strengthen the resolve of the strikers to win a demand which was achieved by the vast majority of the trade union movement decades ago.

Donations etc to Britain's Ltd Strike Fund, c/o TGWU, 205 Fore St, Edmonton, London N18.

LABOUR PARTY AGAINST THE WITCH-HUNT!

Join LABOUR AGAINST THE WITCHHUNT
Membership open to Constituency Labour Parties, trade union organisations, Labour Party affiliates, and individuals.
Fee. CLPs and unions £10, wards £5, individuals and other organisations £3. Write to:
LAW, 11 Wilderton Road, London N16.

A LABOUR CND DEMONSTRATION

NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE NO DEFENCE

Peace March

AT THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

SUNDAY OCT 2ND

ASSEMBLY: 130- THE LEVEL, B'N'TON.
RALLY: 2-30- SEAFRONT (METROPOL)

INVITED SPEAKERS AT RALLY INCLUDE:

TONY BENN · KEN LIVINGSTONE
HELEN JOHN · CATHY ASHTON!
RICHARD BALFE · LIZ FREUTHAL
KEN CAMERON & OTHERS

SUPPORT LABOUR'S POLICIES · NUCLEAR ARMS · NO CRUISE TRIDENT BASES · JOBS NOT BOMBS



Socialist ORGANISER

CHILE

CHILE. Ten years after the murderous military coup that ousted Salvador Allende's reformist 'Popular Unity' coalition and installed Pinochet's US-backed junta, the very mention of Chile still strikes a chord in the international workers' movement.

There have been other coups, crackdowns, waves of slaughter and repression in various Third World countries (and in Turkey) since then — each with its tragic toll of working class casualties and martyrs; but still Chile holds a special place — it is to the modern workers' movement almost what the crushed Spanish revolution was to the last generation.

It was a bitter and vivid example of the implacable hostility of US imperialism to governments which annoy the multinationals. It underlined the extent to which US administrations will go to undermine and destroy their chosen enemies — using the international banks and trading networks for this very purpose.

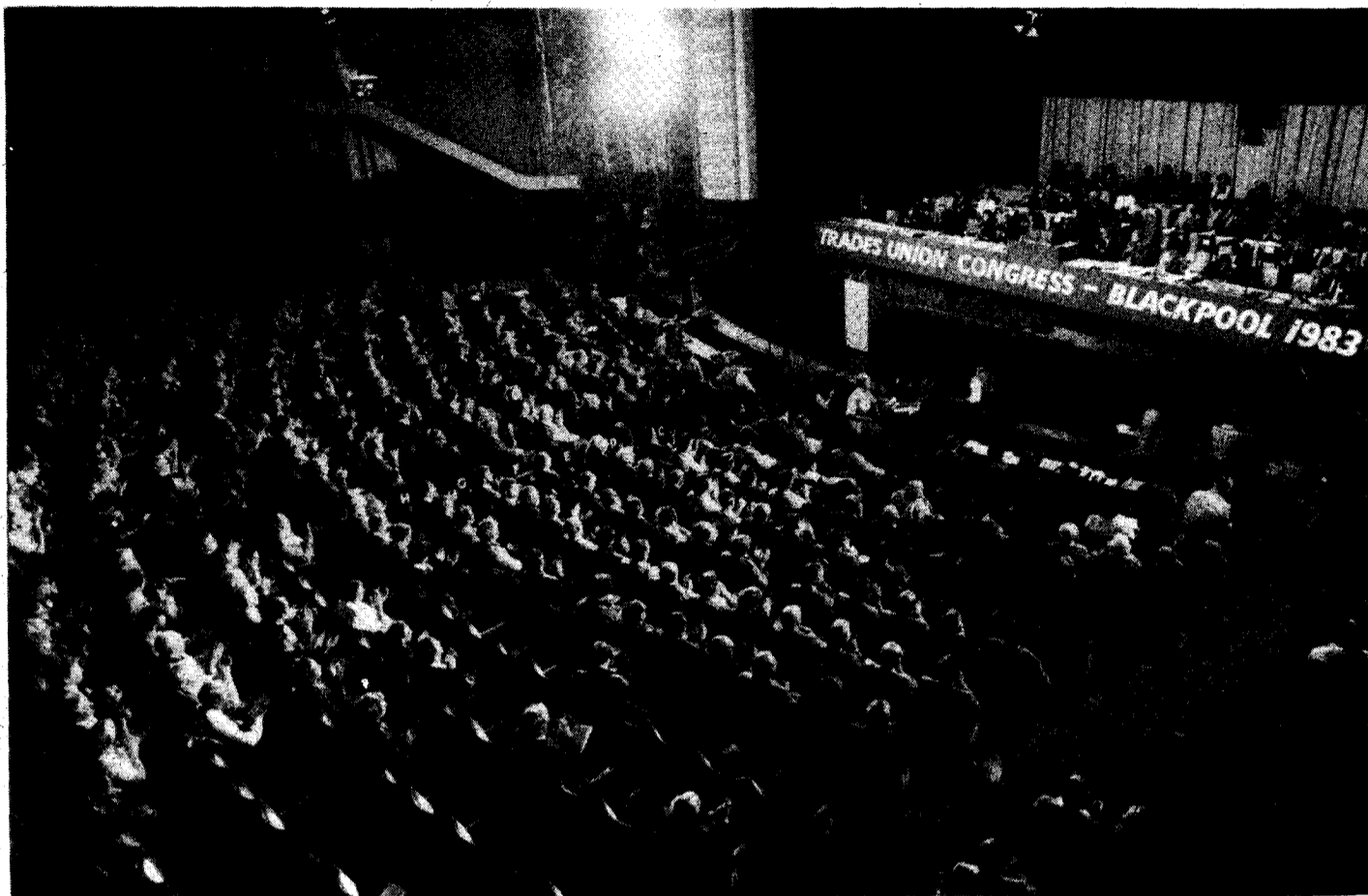
But the bankers and the generals are not all-powerful. If the Allende government — instead of trying to implement its reforms within the existing system — had been ready to arm the workers and mobilise the rank and file soldiers against the generals, then it could not have been crushed as it was.

And today the Chilean working class is mobilising again. The tenth anniversary of the coup will be marked by huge demonstrations in Chile. Already successive protests have forced the dictatorship onto the defensive. When the army shot down 26 people on the streets last month, it did not halt the mobilisation.

Now Pinochet has been forced into 'talks about talks' with the opposition Democratic Alliance.

The Democratic Alliance aims to reassure the generals and the capitalists that it has a 'safe' alternative to the junta. But it represents the top crust of the opposition — not the aspirations and interests of the workers and peasants in revolt against Pinochet.

Socialists in Britain have a duty to do all we can to support the Chilean workers. We can start with the Chile solidarity demonstration this Sunday, September 11 (1pm from Clerkenwell Green).



The bureaucrats' flag is purest white...

White flag over Blackpool

THE WHITE flag of 'realism' was hoisted above this year's TUC Congress by a revamped, right-wing led crew of capitulators and

collaborators, who have voted two-to-one to drop the TUC's ban on talks with anti-union hit-man Norman Tebbit.

Where, then, will youth who rightly object to the slave labour wages and conditions of the YTS schemes turn, now that union leaders have once again thrown in their hand with the Tories and the employers, and given their approval to the Scheme?



Duffy: what a nerve!

panacea peddled by Duffy and his right wing cronies. Now they do not even hold this limited ambition: their message is one of surrender, abject and total surrender to the Tories.

Yet even while these worthless bureaucrats strut and posture in the Blackpool Winter Gardens, strike backroom deals to exchange votes, and manipulate each other in and out of seats on the General Council, shop floor workers in Greenings in Warrington and GKN Northampton have notched up significant victories by adopting the very approach decried by Duffy and co. — walking out and standing firm against management. In Nigg Bay and Bradford determined fights are still in progress.

After this year's appalling Winter Gardens circus is over, it will remain, as before, the task of the rank and file to take the initiative in the fight against Tory policies as they bite into jobs and hard-won public services.

To discuss the experiences of such struggles in the recent period, and attempt to organise for the battles to come, we urge readers to attend the conference called by Socialist Organiser on September 17 in London (see pages 3 and 9).

Re-run

As a delegate from the NGA pointed out, YTS is:

"nothing more than a sophisticated and cynical re-run of the old Youth Opportunities Programme".

At the end of the year, the exploited youth will be back on the dole — many of them more cynical and alienated from the unions than before.

The "realistic" approach of seeking to talk the Tories out of their anti-union offensive, and make the best out of their plans to lower wages and destroy conditions, has been a discernible current within the TUC for years: it is by no means simply a 'reassessment' after the June 9 election defeat.

Ever since Thatcher's rise to office in 1979, the TUC right wing and important sections of the so-called 'left' have shrunk from any serious, concerted challenge to the barrage of spending cuts, closures, and anti-union legislation.

Nerve

Now Duffy has the nerve to complain that "the unions have been marking time for the past few years, waiting for the early return of a Labour government!"

That has been the standard

"We want talks to lower the temperature, to get away from confrontation and to remove some of the legal and financial pressure on our movement", argued AUEW President Terry Duffy.

The reality is that talks will do none of these things: they will simply disarm and demoralise the workers' movement while boosting the morale of the Tories.

"We will do all we can, by principled opposition and reasoned argument (!), to lessen the impact (!) of what the Government has in mind", added SOGAT 82 leader Bill Keys. Such talk must be music to the ears of every anti-union employer.

Betrayal

Clive Jenkins echoed Keys' claims that the proposed talks do not mean "betrayal and complicity" with Tebbit's plans.

But delegates did not have to wait long to see evidence that this is untrue.

Keys rose to the microphone again to argue the case for continued TUC involvement in the Tories' so-called 'Youth Training Scheme'. It is the "duty" of the unions to "help contribute to its success", he declared.

"We cannot walk away from the young of this nation. Where do the young people go to, if we as a British trade union movement walk away from them?"

FUND: On target!

THE first week of September has brought us £248.60, just £1.40 short of £250 — so we're on target for £1,000 this month!

Over a third of the money came from Cardiff SO supporters, who sent £90. Hull supporters sent £38, Harrogate supporters, £14.50, and Basingstoke supporters £1.50.

We also had some personal donations. Thanks to P. Allen and M. Jones of Manchester for a large cheque — £50; to Ian Nichol, £20, Sue Carlyle, £13.60, Steve Battlemuch, £10 and Ann Duggan, £5.

And the first of the sponsor money from the Islington cycle ride has come in: thanks to Nik for collecting sponsor money from Harry Pearce, Terry Grant, Harry Stock, Frank McGuinn, Dave Ellis (Islington Building Works Dept) and Ian Draper (Clerkenwell LP) — and thanks to each of these for your £1s!

That still leaves many groups who haven't contributed to the fund yet this month. And donations from everyone will be needed to keep us on course to raise £1,000 — or more.

And there's no excuses for not knowing what to do to raise funds. Every group can write in for a sponsor form for Pete Firmin's gallant attempt to swim the first 1½ miles of the English Channel (and back again), which he'll be doing at Labour Party Conference. Patrick Spilling and all the other major Fleet Street hacks will be there, writing front-page stories about this heart-warming deed by the 33 year old lad from Neasden. So don't miss out on playing your part in this major event!

Sponsor forms from, and donations to, 214, Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

Group	August & Sept.
Glasgow	15.50
Edinburgh	26.00
Liverpool	
Manchester	50.00
Rochdale	
Stockport	
Wirral	10.00
Durham	
Hull	10.00
Harrogate	14.50
Huddersfield	
Hull	38.00
Leeds	
Leicester	
York	10.00
Birmingham	65.00
Coventry	166.10
Northampton	10.00
Nottingham	38.90
Basingstoke	1.50
Oxford	73.40
Cardiff	120.47
N/W London	10.60
Hackney	
Haringey	50.00
Hounslow	11.00
Islington	11.00
S/E London	30.00
E London	33.60
Southwark	20.00
Others	126.09