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DON'T WAIT TILL PHASE THREE

DESTROY WAGE CONTROLS NOW!



GANDHI'S SHIP FLOUNDERS

Against all predictions, especially her own, Indira Gandhi is losing the Indian election campaign.

Her reason for calling it was to try to clothe her dictatorship in some kind of 'democratic' respectability. Everything was planned so that the election should be little more than a formality; a few opposition leaders were released from jail but thousands more remain inside.

By springing a quick election, Gandhi hoped to leave the opposi-

tion parties unable to organise effectively.

EXPERIENCE

But in fact the best organiser the opposition has is the masses' experience of Indira Gandhi's oppressive and arbitrary rule.

The success of the opposition in the campaign is certainly not due to its own merits. The main opposition party, the Janata Party, is, as Gandhi herself says, a 'hotch potch of opposing creeds

and ideologies' from social democrats to ultra right-wing Hindu nationalist fanatics.

Janta hasn't a single policy — except opposition to Gandhi's rule. Yet this has been enough to secure huge attendance at Janata rallies. Indira Gandhi's own rallies have been smaller and disrupted by opposition. On one occasion last week she was forced to abandon her speech.

The defection of Agriculture Minister Ram to the side of the

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Last week saw an explosion of working class militancy, a direct challenge to the moves of the Labour government and the TUC to prop up private industry at the expense of workers' jobs and living standards.

On Friday 6,000 workers at British Leyland's Longbridge factory defied convener Derek Robinson and downed tools.

Carrying improvised placards and banners they marched through the factory to where TUC chiefs Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon were sat side by side with management in a national-level BLMC 'participation' meeting.

And they demanded Jones and Scanlon come out and explain why they are continuing with the wage-cutting policies of the social contract.

This huge spontaneous movement took place at the same time as a ban on overtime and a work-to-rule was imposed by engineers at GEC Coventry.

RESOLUTIONS

And it came amid a continuing series of resolutions from shop stewards committees, throughout industry expressing hostility to the social contract.

These moves confirm the massive feeling within the working class on wages — so overwhelmingly a frustration at continuously falling living standards that even the feeble statements against the social contract from Derek Robinson triggered off a shock wave throughout the trade union movement.

And this movement within the working class has at its forefront the demand to end the social contract now.

At Longbridge, for example, the next pay review for the 6,000 demonstrators is not until November — and they still have not received their stage two increase of 5% sold to them by Derek Robinson.

READY TO FIGHT

When these workers call for 'an end to the social contract now' they are therefore calling for a fight to improve on the 5% deal and break down the TUC pay limit, with a view to restoring free collective bargaining.

It is with a view to stemming this movement, the real threat to the social contract, that leading TUC figures have now weighed in with statements defending continued wage control.

These leaders include 'left' talking NUPE General Secretary Alan Fisher — his membership ravaged by public spending cuts embodied in the social contract, UPW leader Tom Jackson (fresh from signing away his members' right to strike, and publicly opposed to

any return to free collective bargaining) and USDAW leader Lord Allen, on top of the carefully-phrased speech by TGWU's Jack Jones who called for a "defence of living standards within the social contract".

There is no doubt that the right wing remains determined to do a further deal with the government to hold down wages. What might be less obvious is that Robinson, an Executive member of the Communist Party also subscribes to this view.

His first much publicised statement on wage control threatening that if there wasn't "greater flexibility" under future pay restraint there would need to be a return to free collective bargaining, was made after a BLMC Combine Executive meeting.

JOINT LETTER

But even as he spoke, Robinson knew he had already sent a joint letter co-signed by BLMC managing director Derek Whittaker, calling on Industry Secretary Eric Varley that Leyland wanted greater flexibility in the next stage of pay regulations!

Viewed in this light, Robinson's statements were entirely consistent with the needs of Leyland management. As the *Morning Star* reported he said that the pay limits had put



Leyland workers on low pay, which "increased their resistance to productivity".

And in British Leyland, which is planning (through the participation machinery) to impose speed up to double the average output per worker, any resistance to increased productivity is a danger.

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S. AFRICA YOUTH REVOLT

SPAIN: STALINISM TO THE RESCUE

Both in South Africa and in Zimbabwe the black youth are playing a central role in the revolt against the racist regimes.

Last week the Students Representative Council in Johannesburg black suburb of Soweto once again took their protest onto the streets.

Shouting slogans against the Bantu education system and against the continued detention of hundreds of their comrades, they organised several demonstrations of school students, who burned books and examination papers in the school yards.

The police replied rapidly with rubber bullets, tear gas and arrests. They have also imposed a daytime curfew.

Any black student in the streets and not at school risks arrest. Since there are in any case far too few school places in Soweto this means effective daytime house arrest for anyone boycotting school or not having a school place.

In Capetown's black suburbs the struggle is if anything even more developed. There, the students have never returned to school since last year's boycotts and demonstrations.

Teachers now report an average secondary school attendance of only ten percent.

The role of youth in Zimbabwe was also highlighted last week when 400 teenagers left their school and crossed the border to Botswana to join the liberation struggle.

Smith's claim that they were abducted at gunpoint by terrorists was uncritically accepted by virtually all the capitalist press.

White faces went red when, in front of the world's TV cameras, the students calmly proved that they had gone of their own accord because they could no longer put up with the oppression of Smith's racist rule.

But this policy, opposed by the Labour Party's right wing, has played into the hands of Peres, who, it now seems, has been given the support of Moshe Dayan and

It now looks as if Rabin may be toppled as leader of the Israeli Labour Party. Elections for the post take place at the end of February, and there are three contenders: Rabin himself; Peres; and Abba Eban, Foreign Minister.

The General Election follows on May 17th. Whatever the outcome of all this in-fighting, one thing is clearly unchanged: none of the contenders and none of the parties have any intention of forging any class unity between Israeli and Arab workers as the only measure capable of solving the Middle East's economic and political problems. Labour

The acute political crisis of the Spanish ruling class has prompted Stalinists both in Spain and internationally to come rushing to its rescue.

The fortnight in which the government seized on the pretext of the wave of political killings to arrest huge numbers of militants of left parties, was chosen by the Soviet Union and all the other workers' states of eastern Europe to announce the re-establishment of full diplomatic relations with Suarez' fascist government.

In concrete terms, this is a mere formality, since trade and other relations have existed for many years.

But politically it was obviously planned as a major boost to Suarez' fake 'democratisation' plans.

As a *quid pro quo* for this gesture of world Stalinist support, Suarez has effectively dropped

Spain's claim to the £1,500 million gold reserve shipped to Moscow by the Popular Front government during the civil war, which was spent on armaments and other supplies for the republican forces.

Suarez has also taken steps which may result in the rapid legalisation of the Spanish Communist Party which, with the tiniest of reservations, has supported the government crackdown of the last two weeks.

Parties no longer have to get direct approval from the Ministry of the Interior. They must now register their statutes with the government which has six days to decide whether they might be totalitarian or under the orders of a foreign political organisation.

In that case, the government will submit the statutes to the Supreme Court for a final ruling on legality.

The Socialist and Communist

Parties have already registered under this reactionary law, which is designed to keep illegal any organisation claiming to be revolutionary socialist.

Suarez is well aware that his major allies against revolution are the reformist and Stalinist leaders.

But it still doesn't appear quite that way by the more confessedly fascist sections of the right. Manuel Fraga's neo-fascist Popular Alliance, the groups of the Falange such as Blas Pinar's New Force and large sections of the officer corps are utterly opposed to the formal legalisation of workers' parties and wish to maintain capitalist rule in Spain without any concessions to bourgeois democracy.

The army Chief of Staff General Vega Rodriguez last week announced that 'in exceptional circumstances the army could be compelled to fill a political vacuum', adding merely that it wouldn't go

so far as to overthrow a 'legitimate government'.

But it is unlikely to hold back the far right, particularly since it was immediately followed by the killing of another policeman in Barcelona, responsibility once again being claimed by 'GRAPO' whose identity remains as mysterious as ever.

The 'rescue' of the head of the Council of State and the General kidnapped by 'GRAPO', and the capture of a number of members of this alleged "extreme left" organisation, was presented by the government as a great triumph.

THERE ARE PRESENTLY three thousand agents of the CIA and its sister organisation the DIA (Defence Intelligence Agency) active in Spain, according to a report last week in the Madrid daily *Informaciones*, quoting sources close to the Spanish 'security services'.

ISRAEL: LABOUR CRISIS

The present governmental crisis in Israel has left the Israeli Labour Party facing one of the gravest moments in its history.

The crisis itself has its origins in an apparently trivial event. At the start of December the United States delivered three new fighter jets to the Israeli government.

The planes were half an hour late in arriving and by the time all the US personnel had been properly welcomed it seems as if the Jewish Sabbath had actually started. Outraged by this breach of the Holy Way, a right wing religious sect tabled a motion of no-confidence in the government.

The motion was debated in the Knesset (Israeli parliament) on December 14, and the government managed to secure its defeat by 55 votes to 48.

During the debate however, 9 of the 10 members of the right wing National Religious Party (NRP), who form part of Israel's coalition government, abstained on the vote, showing thereby its opposition to the policies of the Rabin administration.

On December 20th, Prime Minister Rabin, leader of the Labour Party which dominates the coalition sacked the three NRP Cabinet ministers.

This move left his administration a minority government, capable of



Israeli soldiers beating young Palestinian demonstrator mustering only 57 votes out of in the Knesset.

The day after the dismissal of the NRP, the Rabin cabinet resigned, thereby forcing a general election. By this time the crisis had been further exacerbated by the resignation of two Cabinet ministers from the Independent Liberal Party.

This now leaves in power a caretaker government which is a coalition of the Labour Party and the "left wing" Mapam Party.

There has been considerable speculation as to why Rabin provoked the crisis in the first place by sacking the NRP ministers. It has been suggested that by forcing

an early general election Rabin will nip in the bud the growth of the newly formed Democratic Movement for Change, which had threatened to draw support away from the Labour Party.

Another reason has been suggested also — the need for Rabin to consolidate his own position as leader of the party against the threat of Defence Minister Shimon Peres, who lost the leadership election by a very narrow margin just 2½ years ago.

Peres' policies are even more right wing than those of Rabin, and are marked by his absolute refusal to concede any part of the West Bank to Arab Rule, and his

advocacy of more stringent economic measures.

His growth in influence now is the corollary of a decline in Rabin's standing, both of which are a product of the severe economic crisis which now grips the country.

Inflation is running at 38%; there has been a gradual drop in the exchange rate of the Israeli pound of 23%; economic growth in 1976 was only 1.3%; and the annual balance of payments deficit now stands at 3,223 million dollars.

In this context Peres, in conjunction with his political ally Moshe Dayan and the extreme right wing Likud Party, has been calling for a more drastic attack on living standards as the only way to solve Israeli capitalism's problems.

Rabin has responded by getting the unions to agree to a wage freeze until the May election.

By cutting himself off from the NRP Rabin has left himself little room for manoeuvre.

Apparently he has now made a bureaucratic turn leftwards on the question of returning the West Bank to Jordan. This has been done to try and secure support from the Mapam Party for a new coalition government.

IN BRIEF

ITALY

THE MOVEMENT OF occupation in Italy's universities, which began three weeks ago in Palermo, spread last week to embrace Rome, Naples, Bari, Cagliari, Florence, Milan, Pisa and Bologna.

The movement — against massive overcrowding on the campuses, discrimination in teaching and exams, graduate unemployment and fascist provocations in the universities — brought out tens of thousands on a demonstration through Rome on February 9th.

Many students expressed strong criticism of the Communist Party's policy of an 'historic compromise' with the Christian Democratic government, and demanded joint action with workers and unemployed.

CLASH ON MEKONG

THE LAOTIAN government last

week delivered an 'energetic protest' to the right-wing Thai government in Bangkok. This followed an exchange of fire across the River Mekong, which forms the frontier between Laos and northern Thailand. Plans for the withdrawal of US forces from Thailand were recently 'postponed' once again.

CHINA

AN INTERESTING sidelight on developments appears in the 20th January edition of NATURE magazine. InSCIENTIA SINICA v.XIX No 5 (a Chinese scientific journal) the article: "Devote every effort to running successfully Socialist Research Institutes of Science" contains a correction slip, pointing out that "the arch unrepentant capitalist roader in the Party Teng Hsiao-ping" should read just "Teng Hsiao-ping".

EGYPT

PRESIDENT SADAT, blaming last month's mass protests against his government on 'communists and Nasserites', has responded with a huge wave of repression. Thousands have been arrested. And a new law has been enacted (and confirmed through a mock referendum) which punishes with hard labour for life 'crimes' such as premeditated striking, organising any political group other than the three parties officially sponsored by the state, agitation and impeding the authority of the government.

HOLLAND

THE STRIKES WHICH BEGAN last week against the employers' plans to abandon the 7-year-old limited agreement to tie wages automatically to the price level are beginning to have some effect.

Employers have already made the concession to keep the limited sliding scale, but only as long as inflation does not exceed 6%. It is not yet clear whether the union leaders will accept this inadequate concession. But the strikes continue for now as other demands — for a real wage increase and measures to expand employment are discussed.

WEST GERMANY

THE SECOND ROUND OF this year's wage talks is heading for deadlock. Unions representing 2 million public service workers have rejected an offer of a 5% increase. Last month, metal workers settled for an agreement worth over 8%.

ARGENTINA

ALTHOUGH THE VIDELA dictatorship is claiming more successes against the 'left' Peronist guerrillas, the Montoneros, it is

facing increasing opposition from the workers, especially in the public services.

Electric power workers have refused to work the longer hours demanded by the new labour laws and the government has threatened to fine them by docking their wages.

CUBA-USA

CASTRO'S FULSOME WORDS of praise for President Carter and US envoy Andrew Young's soft pedalling of the question of Cuban troops in Angola (which, he says, are a 'stabilising factor') heralds the imminent resumption of full diplomatic ties between the two countries after 16 years of American economic and diplomatic embargo. The last anomaly in Castro's otherwise complete line-up with the Soviet Union on 'peaceful co-existence' will then be removed.

TURKEY: N.E. COALITION NEAR SPLIT

Since the October general strike forced the defeat of proposed legislation to set up special courts, the National Front coalition government in Turkey has gradually been losing its grip on power.

This was clearly reflected in the speech two weeks ago in which Prime Minister Demirel referred to the difficulties of governing, and talked of an early general election.

A week later Demirel had discussions with top military chiefs and talked about the prospects of imposing a fresh curfew and further military intervention.

ATTACK

Meanwhile the other coalition parties have begun to attack Demirel and announced they are 'considering' whether to remain in the government.

But the biggest threat to the government remains the growing strength of the working class. Dozens of strikes have broken out both before and since the general strike. The inability of the coalition government to introduce special laws to repress these struggles drove the bourgeoisie to rely increasingly on fascist forces and military intervention to preserve its power.

KILLED

In the last two months alone 35 workers have been killed in clashes — as against a total last year of over 135 — with thousands wounded.

In many cases armed battles have taken place on the streets, lasting for hours. Even the general secretary of the bourgeois party the RPP has been attacked by fascists.

The impact of the economic crisis on Turkey is severe. Inflation is now at more than 30%, while 5 million are unemployed: a huge trade deficit is

accumulating and the IMF has refused to give any credit to the regime. These factors all spur on the attacks of the bourgeoisie.

The continuing talks between the government and the Common Market — seeking to prevent protective measures which would hit Turkey's textile industry — and the policies of the NF regime on Cyprus and the Aegean Sea help to deepen the splits among the coalition parties.

Meanwhile the US has imposed a military and economic embargo on Turkey in an effort to force the Demirel government to concede some part of occupied Cyprus — but opposition to such a step is threatening to break up the government.

As this crisis deepens RPP leader Ecevit, the main bourgeois opposition leader, did not respond to Demirel's talk of an early election. He is clearly biding his time until the Demirel coalition falls of its own accord.

SUPPORT

But the leaders of the Communist Party in Turkey continue to support Ecevit — in this way failing to oppose the government measures to preserve its rule.

And while the Moscow-line Stalinists following a popular-front position abstain from the fight against Demirel, the Maoists have gone back even further back in the history of Stalinist betrayal, and adopted the ultra-left theory that reformist organisations are "social fascist".

This theory was the reason why last week the Maoists physically attacked a 100,000-strong demonstration organised by TOB-DER (Teachers Associations) and TUM-DER (Public Sector Workers Associations) against inflation.



Maoists attack



In an armed confrontation the Maoists broke up the march. 60 people were wounded. And the next day Demirel's regime used the event as a pretext to outlaw the two associations — a step they had failed to impose before.

Class unity must be achieved in Turkey.

*Build united workers defence squads against fascist attack!

*For an all-out general strike to bring down the NF coalition!

*For an independent Cyprus. All troops out of Cyprus now!

OMAN: OVER TO UNCLE SAM

The departure of British troops at the end of next month from their base at Masiri, off the coast of Oman on the south of the Arabian peninsula, has been the cause of some controversy in recent weeks.

Widespread reports appeared in the British press and elsewhere at the end of January that Sultan Quabus of Oman was about to grant the base to the American navy, to allow them to maintain their hold on the western side of the Indian ocean.

As a result of these reports, the ultra-reactionary Quabus felt it necessary to summon to his — would you believe? — Winter Palace, a correspondent of the *London Times* to tell him that a base was 'out of the question'.

However, since the Sultan also said 'if a friend asks us for an aircraft to land, in normal circumstances, we would have no objection', the *Times* man did not go away quite convinced. Of course 'the question of how extensive such facilities might be' was left 'open'.

These events are an important part of the re-alignment of power politics in the gulf area. The Oman regime remains largely a puppet of the British, with 500 'seconded' troops, including commander in chief Perkins to remain after the 'official' troops have gone.

However, the Labour government, which cheerfully carried on the war against Dhofari liberation forces since 1966, is now not much good as a puppeteer.

The Americans are therefore largely taking over. Air controller at Salalah airport will in future be from Pan American instead of the RAF. However, even the reactionary Quabus feels it necessary to deny that he is going in completely with the Americans.

Latest reports do seem to indicate that the guerrilla fighters in Dhofar, in Western Oman, have diminished in strength since last year.

The withdrawal of 3,000 Iranian troops must show this fairly clearly. However, the fact that the 500 British are remaining shows that the possibility of popular uprising against the execrable Quabus has by no means been discounted.

AFRICA: COUP ATTEMPTS

Ethiopia's left-talking military dictatorship, known as the Derg, seized power during a popular revolution against the Emperor's autocracy in 1974.

Since then, the lack of any social base of support in the country has torn apart the Derg in a series of internal struggles between 'left' and 'right'.

The original 120 members of the Derg have been reduced to half that number as a result of these struggles.

These conflicts reached a climax, though certainly not a conclusion, in a bizarre gun battle in the government palace on February 3rd.

Seven members of the Derg, including the head of state General Teferi Bante, were killed.

Reports do not make it clear if the dead belonged to distinct factions or whether, as government statements later claimed, they had all been executed for crimes against the 'revolution'.

They were accused of being 'reactionary anarchists' and of sympathising with the left-wing Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Party, the Eritrean Liberation Movement and the ultra-right wing Ethiopian Democratic Union.

At least it seems that for the time being the battle has strengthened the positions of the rival Colonels Mengistu and Atnafu. They received messages of congratulation from Libya's Col. Gaddafi and Cuba's Fidel Castro.

But the permanent state of conflict within the Derg reflects the fact that in three years of power they have done little or nothing to resolve Ethiopia's monumental social and economic problems.

As a result, opposition from right, left and from the Eritrean liberation movement has been mounting and the Derg has been unable to control it.

The same day as the Derg gun battle a group of soldiers in the Sudan mutinied in the southern town of Juba.

This was the scene last year of a wave of arrests after President Numeiry had claimed that a military coup had been planned against his regime.

Last week's mutineers were reported to have expected to get

help from the Ethiopian military regime (if so, they chose a bad day) and from Numeiry's arch rival Colonel Gaddafi.

On the West of the continent in the tiny republic of Benin (formerly Dahomey) another 'Marxist-Leninist' military regime was threatened two weeks earlier by forces whose identity remains a mystery.

The government, in a series of contradictory statements, has said that a plane landed at Cotonou airport filled with white imperialist mercenaries.

They were routed by Benin forces and fled back to their plane which then crashed trying to take off. It still has not said where they came from.



WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist organisation fighting to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class to lead the mounting opposition to the betrayals of both 'left' and right wing Labour and trade union leaders and the Communist Party, as they attempt to enforce wage control, sackings, speed-up and public service cuts.

As workers take up the struggle against these policies they are forced by the sheer weight of forces opposing them to confront political questions. Only with an understanding of the role of the labour bureaucracy and a programme to unite the broadest sections of workers in struggle can a way forward be found.

The Workers Socialist League is the only movement that sets out to do this, fighting consistently in the working class for transitional demands, which go beyond simply trade union militancy to raise the political questions to workers and prepare the forms of organisation and the knowledge necessary for the struggle for socialism.

As a result we have been at the forefront of struggles against the cuts, against wage control, for unionisation, and against redundancy. We have done more than any other tendency to fight the introduction of 'workers' participation' in industry. And we have strongly supported the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, which has set out to show the link between the reactionary policies of the Social Contract and bureaucratic dictatorship in both the unions and the Labour Party.

But our practical struggle for the continuity of the principles and method of Trotsky's Transitional Programme is in no way a task confined to Britain. It requires an attention and involvement in the struggles of the working class internationally, and the fight to reconstruct the Trotskyist Fourth International.

So there has been a consistent drive within the WSL to deepen and enrich the movement's understanding of the history and the present crisis of the Fourth International as an essential part of our initiative towards its reconstruction.

We urge all readers who agree on the need for revolutionary leadership and the demands we put forward to find out more about the WSL and join our fight in the Labour movement.



CAMPAIGN GROWS AGAINST POLICE HARASSMENT

Lawyers working on the defence of the 18 Islington youths facing high court trial on charges of conspiracy to rob are convinced that the case will become one of national if not international fame as a major confrontation by the police on the black community.

It has the full force of the police's rabid search for revenge after their routing at the Notting Hill Carnival.

CP's platforms for Tories

It is now clearly national policy for the Communist Party to provide 'fraternal' platforms for Tory Party speakers on issues where — it is said — there can be 'unity' on common policies.

The latest in a growing series of such meetings took place (in a Church Hall) in Golders Green last week. The subject was 'Racialism, how to fight it' and, under a Stalinist chairman, the time was equally divided between speakers from the Communist, Labour Liberal and Conservative Parties.

The CP speaker, Vishnu Sharma — an Executive member and the hardened workhorse of the CP's Popular Front antics in all manner of fraudulent 'fronts' against racialism — seemed unable to disguise his embarrassment completely.

And indeed, in their search for a Tory with anti-racialist credentials the Stalinists of Golders Green had been only partly successful.

The specimen they had invited, a Mr. Pritchard, spoke glowingly of the need to take pride in one's own

The Defence Committee is rapidly gaining support. It has been successful in pressing for bail for several more of the youth, in helping several families to change their solicitors and in demanding that the solicitors work in coordination over the defence.

Parent's evidence of the intimidation and brutality by means of which 'statements' were forced from the youths in the police stations will be crucial to the defence, as it was in the Leeds Bonfire Night Trial, a very similar

racial and cultural 'heritage, whatever it might be', and went on to deplore the 'negative side of racialism' (presumably he chooses other platforms to enthuse about the 'positive side').

The answer to racial violence, he said, was 'a strong moral tradition'.

None of this prevented Sharma from delivering warm praise for the 'splendid composite resolution' on racialism passed at the last Tory Conference, adding only that it was a great shame that the 'grass-roots level' of the party did not always live up to its principles.

The only ghost of a principle in this obscene gathering came from a delegated speaker from Barnet Trades Council, who had been mandated to say that the Council opposed the formation of joint platforms with Tories.

Such platforms will, however, multiply. They are the expression in practice of the Popular Front policies spelled out in the new draft of the CP's 'British Road to Socialism': for a 'broad democratic alliance' which will be 'an association of class forces', including 'parts of the capitalist class'.

case.

In that trial the police charges were disbelieved on 24 out of 26 counts and 11 out of 12 accused were acquitted.

EVIDENCE

There is no shortage of evidence of police brutality in this case. One parent found a youth at the station bent double, his head wet from being forced down a lavatory.

One youth was eyewitness to another: "They started beating him up by his neck and by the time they reached his stomach he was signing".

There are reports of drunkenness among the police and it is claimed one was drinking vodka as he administered blows. It is clear that police rely heavily on informers and one of the youths was arrested as a consequence of refusing to act as an informer.

PARENTS

Many of the parents have themselves been harassed. The arrests were made by six unidentified police who broke into the houses, turned them over, pushed aside the parents and took off the youths.

The Defence Committee is calling on the local labour movement to join with it in carrying out a workers enquiry into the actions of the police, especially the two leading officers, Inspector Millman and Sgt. Gallagher, and also the racism of the local magistrates court.

IMPLICATIONS

They want to publicise the implications of the case not only for black youth but for the working class as a whole.

But they also want to turn the tables not only on the police but on the complicity of the Labour government.

Because of the rate of unemployment one local employer is able to offer only £23 for a 40 hour week. Government-sponsored job creation schemes and 'community industry' are un-unionised and pay £16 and £24 respectively.

HOUSING

Bad housing conditions and family strain cause homelessness and many of the unemployed do not register because of the way they are treated in the dole.

The Defence Committee is calling for an increase in the direct labour force and a programme of public works at proper union rates.

This demand, together with the call for a workers' enquiry into police behaviour must be supported by the entire local labour movement.

*Home Secretary Rees must end police brutality and harassment — for a local labour movement enquiry into the actions of the police!

*No cuts — expansion of youth provision and housing and improvement of schools to meet youth's needs!

NO CP ANSWER ON YOUTH JOBS

The opportunism of the Communist Party was shown in full light at the "Emergency Conference on Youth Unemployment" in London on February 13th.

Bob Wright, contender for the General Secretaryship of the AUEW who has no record whatsoever of initiating action against the social contract expressed his pleasure that it was now in shreds.

Jack Dromey, leading London Stalinist, ranted against the damage wreaked by the social contract, the destruction of branch and work place life through the removal of negotiating, and the danger of unions being incorporated in the state.

These postures came from leading members of the very Party which has constantly held back the fight to break wage control and which argued in favour of the Ryder participation plan and even the fringe benefit contract, so overwhelmingly rejected throughout the car industry in recent weeks.

Many speakers called for action and an end to rhetoric, but in fact the only action proposed was a series of propaganda demonstrations and pickets in the coming

ised cheap labour 'job creation' and 'work experience' schemes, but also the drop in apprenticeships, low pay and sheer length of the dole queues.

Pious sentiments about the need for an alternative economic strategy including the reactionary policy of import controls, were expressed, and the need for a society which made a rational use of the world's resources and which rewarded workers for the wealth they produce.

But there was no hint of a strategy to force such policies through.

In contrast to this bankruptcy the WSL calls for trades councils and public sector unions to organise strike action to force through a programme of useful public works at proper union rates, based on an investigation of real unemployment and numbers of perspective school leavers.

We call for a comprehensive and compulsory system of apprenticeships and day release, and for all-out opposition, backed by strike action to natural wastage, redundancies etc. and instead for work sharing on full pay including part-timers.

We also call for the full involvement of youth themselves in these



Bob Wright (centre)

months. These demands were put to the meeting without any discussion at all and no chance of amendments.

Such policies in no way met up to the anger from the floor of the meeting about conditions facing youth, particularly the non-union-

policies and the unionisation of all unemployed workers including school leavers. Labour MPs must fight for all these policies both inside and outside Parliament against the policies of Callaghan and Healey and the social contract.

STEP FORWARD IN FEES FIGHT

The struggle against the proposed student fee increases was given a boost at the weekend.

Last Saturday over 200 students attended a conference called by Middlesex Poly and discussed ways of fighting these proposals.

An amended motion was passed which called for the initiation and coordination of nationwide occupations to begin by 21st February.

The existing NUS strategy confines the present struggle to a few token protests: a picket of the ILFA on March 1st; a "day of action" on March 2nd; and a national demonstration on March 9th.

The conference clearly indicated its support for such activities — but pointed out how hopelessly inadequate they were.

saving device cobbled together by the Broad Left leadership within NUS.

In contradistinction to this woolly strategy the conference called for initiation of nationwide occupations around the following demands:

- A rejection of the proposed increases;
- For a reduction of all fees to the level paid by home students in 1976/7 as the first step towards the abolition of all fees;
- No discrimination in education — end the quota system;
- For a rejection of all cuts and a sliding scale of public expenditure to maintain education services.

Again these demands stood in sharp contrast to official NUS policy. Trevor Philips of NUS Executive spoke at great length on



Grants demonstration, 1974.

a refusal to call for a rejection of all fees increases.

This refusal was based on the spurious grounds that the universities need the extra income from fees increases.

Since the government pays these increases for home students, Philips argued that we would only be depriving the universities of much needed income if we called for a rejection of all increases!

In this way the NUS Executive merely drives a wedge between home and overseas students and



Students join trade unionists in Aylesbury cuts demonstration.

deprives the struggle of one of its weapons — student unity against increases.

This attempt at sabotage was greeted with the derision and contempt it deserved.

Students must now agitate for occupations and direct action as soon as possible on the demands outlined above.

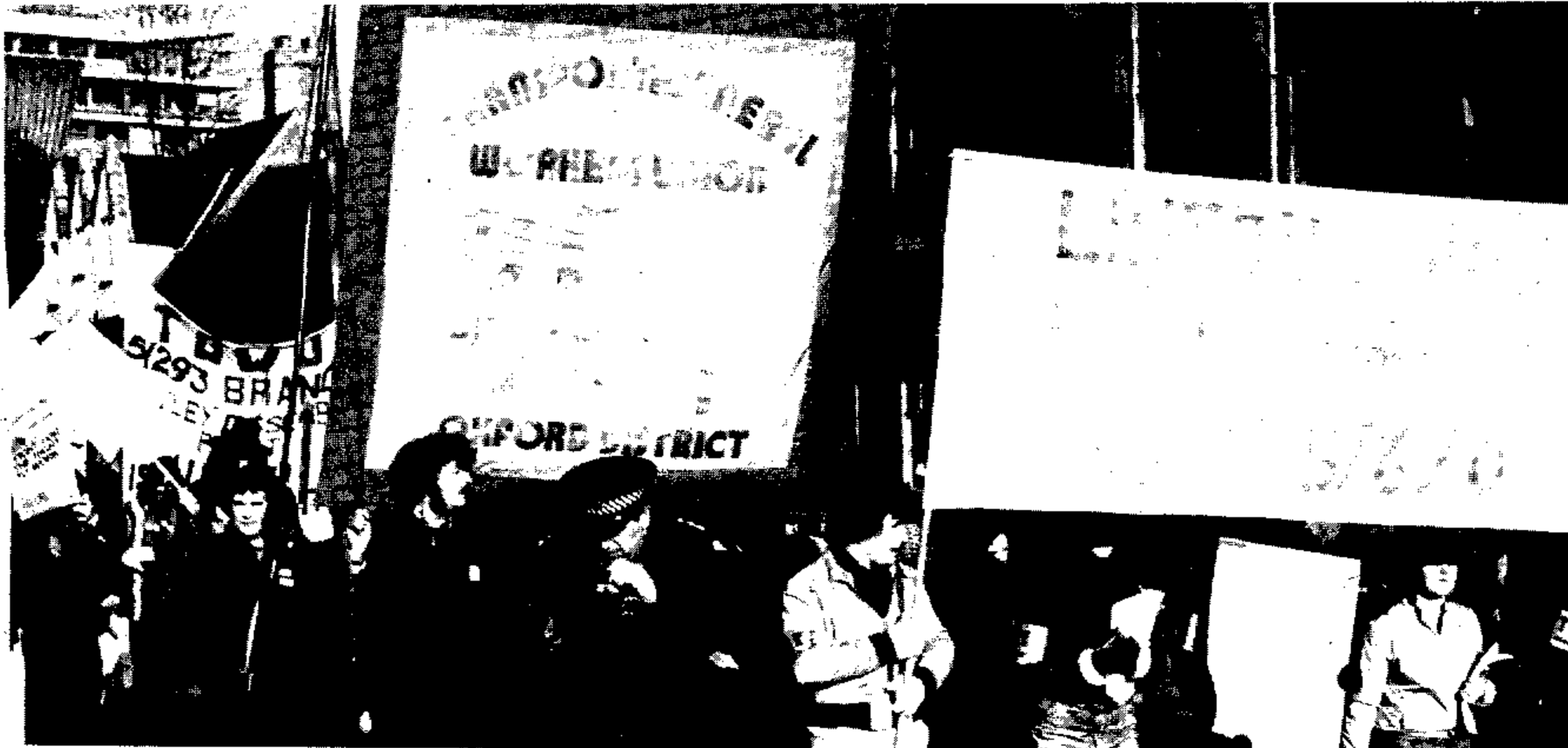
The LSE are now in occupation and Essex are to occupy from 21st February. Unfortunately the conference failed to agree on the establishment of a national committee to coordinate a series of national occupations.

This failure is quite serious since the full potential of the conference will not now be tapped.

Nevertheless, by making clear its opposition to existing NUS policy, and its determination to fight fee increases, the conference has provided a basis from which a national struggle can be waged.

But that struggle can only be successful if students raise demands to change the existing NUS leadership. The opportunity to further that struggle is the NUS Conference on March 28th.

HOTELS BLACKING ACTION 'ILLEGAL' ~ TGWU



March in support of strikers at the Oxford Hotels.

10 WEEK COWLEY PAY STRIKE

The strike by 56 workers at the Parts Division of British Leyland's Cowley plant, which has put some spare parts into the category of rare collectors' items, is now in its tenth week.

And in the words of the senior steward of the TGWU, Pat Evans, "It's the strongest strike I've seen in Cowley since I've been here".

The militancy of the workers, which has led them to walk out four times over a claim for extra payment for extra work, has shown up not only the mood of workers throughout Leyland, but also the length to which the tentacles of the Social Contract can stretch.

The strike has led Leyland to lock out 600 other workers. It began in early December after workers were taken off the clock.

Though they had finished the work for the day, Leyland refused to pay them for the afternoon they were not present.

Leyland breached an agreement by which Parts workers did not clock out after overtime, and under which senior stewards were to be consulted before workers there were taken off the clock.

(The flexible hours worked by the section made life easier for the

management by allowing parts to be selected in time for other workers to clear them before the end of the day).

But now the issue of whether workers should clock out after overtime has been superseded by the issue of what will happen to the backlog of orders that has built up.

Leyland offered first £6 and then £12 for the original dispute, admitting that it was practically their fault the workers had gone home. But they have refused to offer any extra pay to deal with the backlog of orders.

Workers there are paid according to how many orders they complete. After the strike, during which time the company claims to have scrapped the original orders, these orders would simply demand twice as many parts.

Workers would be expected to complete up to double the amount of work in eight hours before completing their measured day work target.

Pat Evans said workers were sticking to their demand for more money for the same number of hours - because of this extra work - and refused to be put off by the size of the issues they have raised.

"I've never known such strength of feeling. The strength of the case is that they are right.

Blokes only see it as a sectional issue but it's getting a hell of a big issue. It's getting like a quagmire. It's the same issue in every plant. They are saying we'll only work harder for more money."

The importance of the strike is also being played down by the mass media. Not only have the major issues of principle not been raised, but the fact that fleets of cars - including police vehicles and some of Leyland's own fleet of vehicles are off the road because they cannot get parts is not mentioned.

What has emerged is the mystery 'X' factor, never understood by union officials or Labour mock 'lefts'.

That extra ingredient, which has pushed to one side questions of the social contract, is the strength of the working class.

At the Parts Division of Leyland, as is now flaring in other factories throughout the country, that strength is turning on the offensive.

A clear illustration is the attitude of the workers locked out because of the dispute. Pat Evans said:

"I haven't known anyone who has come up to me and been hostile. The impression I get is that although the blokes are unhappy they've got a lot of sympathy. When they go back they will face the same problem."

Strikes at the Randolph Hotel in Oxford and the Grosvenor House in Sheffield have now seen revealed the full weight of the deceit of Transport and General Workers Union leaders.

Three weeks after every relevant union layer had agreed to call a national black of Trust House Forte hotels - a move that would bring a quick end to both disputes - the strikers were told that the union has absolutely no intention of putting these demands into effect.

It took an unannounced visit to Transport House in London by a delegation of strikers to have their worst fears confirmed.

The national organiser told them bluntly. They would not call a national black because in the opinion of the union this would be "illegal".

Such is the desire of the union officials to avoid a clash with the law which could recall some of the major union battles against the Tories that they will twist and turn to prevent any action against it.

The effect on the strikers was immediate. Some who had wavered after 12 weeks on strike resolved that they would continue the struggle - not only against the employers, but also against the union officials.

Fellow workers at Gardner Merchant canteens in Cowley who were set to walk off the job in support of Randolph workers were ordered to stay at work by the district official in Oxford, David Buckle.

This was, he said, because "talks" were about to start. Those talks lasted just long enough for the

management to show the union officials what contempt they held for the union.

They would not hold any talks in which district officials were involved. The "talks" which were the reason why action had to be withheld did not even reach the stage of discussing the shape of the table!

The unions reaction was to agree to come back and try to hold more talks - two weeks later - at a time when every day's delay was crucial.

Buckle's tune now changed. Other TGWU members were now "free" to take sympathy action. Again there was a clear refusal to call out any other workers or to take any action at all that would have real effect.

The whole angle of TGWU policy is now to reach a stage where they can claim that other workers "did not support" the strikers.

Strikers at both hotels - and at the Linton Lodge in Oxford where the fight has been on for one week longer than that at the Randolph, have condemned the decision of national officers to ignore the demands for action sent up by every democratic layer necessary.

In Oxford a demonstration has been called for 11.00am next Saturday at the Linton Lodge to march past the Randolph and to hold a rally at Ruskin College. That demonstration must be given full support.

The twists and turns of the union officials are on the same level as the threat by the director of the Linton Lodge to sell his hotel or close it rather than admit the union and take back the sacked workers.

Both are extra obstacles to winning the strikes - but obstacles that must be overcome.

SHEFFIELD MARCH BACKS HOTEL STRIKERS

300 workers marched through Sheffield on Saturday on a demonstration called by the Sheffield Trades Council in support of the 40 workers at the Grosvenor House Hotel who have been on strike for 10 weeks to win recognition.

The limited response to the demonstration was due mainly to the continued unwillingness of the local TGWU officials to mobilise any support for the strikers.

At a meeting after the demonstration, Bill Owen, TGWU District Secretary spoke about the rights of workers to join the trade union of their choice and said it was "unfortunate" that the contract of employment required 50% union membership before the union had the right to negotiate for all members.

The leader of the strike committee, Margareta Petrovic, spoke about the strength that had been achieved on the picket line and the need to strengthen it and extend the picket.

She said that the only way to win the strike was through national blacking and that the union officials

She said that it was important that the strike was won because if it were defeated then there would never be a union in Trust Houses Forte.

There was a delegation of the Oxford Hotel strikers on the demonstration and one of the strikers from the Randolph spoke in support of the Grosvenor House workers.

He stressed the need for solidarity between the two groups of strikers and the need for regional blacking of Trust Houses Forte in preparation for national blacking.

The clearest show of solidarity came after the demonstration when the union officials and labour leaders had gone home.

This was at a meeting called by the strike committee together with workers from Gardner Merchants, a subsidiary of THF.

At this meeting the strikers decided to extend their picket to firms with Gardner Merchants canteens.

The first one-day picket will be within the next two weeks and the Gardner Merchant workers have pledged not to cross the picket line.

They also stated that they would already be out on strike in



WHAT LIES BEHIND IMG OPPORTUNISM?

"A bad workman blames his tools", goes the old adage. But how should we describe a workman who throws aside the specialised tools designed for his trade and instead picks up the first implement that comes to hand — like a mechanic tuning an engine with a mallet?

This is the kind of question we must confront when we look at the latest gyrations of the International Marxist Group as shown in the bevy of wrong and opportunist positions which fill the February 3rd edition of *Red Weekly*.

There are too many blunders here, on too wide a range of issues, for them to be ascribed simply to a series of 'mistakes'.

METHOD

They are linked by an underlying wrong *method* of analysis which has disorientated the IMG at this point of rapid sharpening of the class struggle in Britain.

The IMG has set aside the scalpel of Marxist analysis for the hatchet of vulgar impressions.

For example, in a week in which the wages struggle has come to the forefront even in the bourgeois press, and a whole range of industries have been convulsed by a continuing series of strikes by workers in many cases defying their union officials, the IMG parliamentary candidate for the Birmingham Stechford by-election, Brian Heron, tells bemused *Red Weekly* readers in an exclusive interview that:

"The present retreat (!) exists because many workers, even militant workers, don't see any alternative to the Social Contract."

STEWARD

Heron is referred to as a shop steward at Leyland's Longbridge factory. The convener there is Stalinist Derek Robinson — foremost union advocate of the Ryder 'participation' scheme and increased productivity.

And in the very week that Heron was interviewed, workers all around him in that factory were voting by an 800 majority to defy a stewards' recommendation for acceptance and throw out a proposed 'fringe benefit' deal which included savage penalty clauses.

The deal had been cooked up by Leyland management with assistance from Robinson and the appointed 'Ad Hoc' committee of collaborating Leyland conveners.

doggedly insists that the working class is on the retreat.

But it is not just Heron. Whenever IMG members find themselves in industrial situations they seem to lose all sense of direction. Another example is the IMG members and supporters in Rovers, who have fallen into an even worse trap.

It is well known that the principle strategic objective of British Leyland management since they managed to force in Measured

contract — through which the entire working class is "united" under TUC negotiations with the government.

At the present time corporate bargaining has been thrown out by Leyland workers along with the 'fringe benefits' deal, but management will clearly not settle for that.

Indeed, it looks as if the next battles in Leyland will take place against policies proposed by the IMG!



The NAC Tribunal — uncritically backed by IMG

Its rejection, throwing into question the credibility of Robinson and the whole 'Ad Hoc' committee, opens up the chance of a real struggle in Leyland for new leadership.

The feeling was building up on the shop floor which was to erupt in the massive spontaneous strike and demonstration by 5,000 Longbridge workers as Jones, Scanlon and Varley arrived on the plant for talks on productivity.

Yet Heron nowhere refers either to the question of working class leadership or even once to the Longbridge struggles. He puts no programme to direct these forces.

Instead, ostrich-like, ignoring the tumult and feeling around him, he

Day Work six years ago has been to consolidate that gain into a corporation-wide pay structure, aimed at ending the power of shop floor workers in individual plants.

Leyland would then follow such a victory by proposing a rationalised grading structure to remove contentious areas which can lead to plant-level conflict over wage rates.

So imagine the delight of those who plan Leyland's strategy against the Corporation's 160,000-strong workforce when they discovered that both these two objectives are called for within a resolution adopted as policy by a full meeting of shop stewards from the 11 Rover factories within British Leyland!

CONTRADICTION

The resolution laying down these two "demands" is a contradictory one which on the one hand rejects Leyland's notorious 'fringe benefit' proposals, but on the other hand supports one of its main planks — corporation-level bargaining.

But what really makes this move amazing is that it now emerges that the motive force behind these two "demands" was not the right-wing or the Stalinists — but the IMG group in Rovers! And the February 3rd *Red Weekly* not only carries the resolution in full, but also carries the endorsement of their correspondent Charlie Gallagher.

This is obviously not a considered position of the IMG — indeed it is extremely hard to tell where their leadership stand on this issue — since on the same page of *Red Weekly* appears an article written by an Oxford IMG member which flatly contradicts the line of the Rover IMG group and attacks corporate bargaining.

This second article makes the correct point that the end result of such a wages system is to place all negotiations in the hands of the national officials. Such a fact does not seem to have percolated through to his Rover comrades.

But the logic of corporate bargaining has much wider implications than that. When the IMG comrades argue that corporate bargaining "unites" workers in common struggle they open up a dangerous analogy with the social

current wage struggles (the arguments and rationalisations used by strikers) for the *content* (the determination of the mass of the working class to find some way of breaking the 4½% pay limit).

This is not new. It is consistent with *Red Weekly's* assessment of the wages struggle in December. In a paper headlining on the miners' early retirement claim, and ridiculously claiming this represents a threat to the social contract, we find this:

"The IMG needs to step up massively the intervention on all questions facing the working class:

- *Cuts
 - *Women's oppression
 - *Racism
 - *Unemployment"
- (*The Choice is Yours*, Dec. 9th). So while Gormley's fringe benefit fraud is given some free front page credibility, the real struggle on wages did not even rate a mention in this major fund appeal! Why not?

Let us look at the topics listed.

'ACTION'

The IMG leadership has obviously just taken a superficial glance around to see where the 'action' is (i.e. where the biggest demonstrations are to be found).

They managed to spot the November 17th march on the cuts; the confused ranks of the National Abortion Campaign and the Working Women's Charter; the massive anti-racist marches of 1976; and the certainty of increasing unemployment.

But, at that time, they could see no 'action' on wages. So they left it out.

Lacking any serious industrial cadre or assessment of the real movements within the working class, the IMG are forced to resort to this kind of impressionist method.

And having drawn up their fixed schema for the way the struggle will develop, they are completely thrown when it goes in another direction.

WORSE

But there are worse repercussions from this wrong assessment. In their desperate anxiety to get in on whatever action is taking place on their chosen four topics, the IMG start to water down and drop their programme in the name of "unity".

This has led to a craven capitulation to the Communist Party and the labour bureaucracy by the IMG in their work for the Rally 'One Year After the Sex Discrimination Act and Equal Pay Act'.

IMG members on the Rally Planning Committee backed a motion to exclude putting a position on the social contract and the role of the present leadership of the working class — leaving the field free for 'left' talking Stalinists, Labour MPs and union officials to participate.

And at the same time the IMG has given enthusiastic praise to the National Tribunal for Abortion

FORM OR CONTENT?

To see matters in this way is to completely mistake the *form* of



Fraser



Mandel

SOCIALISM BY NUMBERS

Why You Should Be A Socialist By Paul Foot,

Published by the Socialist Workers Party, price 35p. Reviewed by Alastair Green.

New Year's Day saw the "transformation" of the International Socialists into the Socialist Workers' Party. By heavy recruitment of new members this organisation of syndicalists and agile opportunists hopes to displace the Communist Party as the 'recognised' left party.

Paul Foot's pamphlet, *Why You Should Be a Socialist*, is intended to persuade the SWP's fellow travellers to enrol in the crusade. It is impossible to review such a book without looking first at the origins of IS's new 'turn'.

The upsurge in working class militancy over the past few months (starting with the anti-racist activity of last summer) has brought new forces to the declining IS, whose activity and size (the organisation claims 3,000 members) makes it a pole of attraction for certain militants and left-wingers.

The fact that it has no clear revolutionary programme to distinguish it from the Stalinists and the left bureaucrats has made this accretion of forces easier.

All that is required to join the SWP is a vague belief in socialism and a liking for activity.

The quick growth of the group and a recovery of confidence by its demoralised membership persuaded the IS leadership that the time had come to make a bid for the big time.

SIX MONTHS

At the September 1976 'Party Council' (a leading body of the SWP which meets every three months) the decision was taken to launch the Socialist Workers' Party over the 'next six months or so'.

Things have evidently gone so well that a mere three months sufficed and the 'new' party has been launched without the promised 'founding event of some kind'.

It is highly symptomatic of the IS that the decision to proclaim the revolutionary party could be taken without the convention of a national Conference.

Despite admittedly 'slender' forces the resolution of the Council insisted that 'in the short term (!) we have to replace the Communist Party'.

Tony Cliff, leader of the SWP and prime exponent of the 'state capitalist' theory of the Soviet Union, is of the opinion that 'we are in the same league' as the CP.

VOTES

He bases this assertion on the higher vote that IS obtained in Walsall North when compared to the CP candidate at the last General Election.

And he adds to his case the claim that the CP and the SWP have a similar active membership. This is the launching pad for his bandwagon theory of revolution.

'A mass revolutionary party of sorts' is needed to take advantage of the impending revolutionary situation:

"The conclusions for us are clear. If, when the revolutionary crisis comes to Britain we have 40,000 members there is no question that we can grow to 400,000 or perhaps half a million.

If on the other hand, the revolutionary organisation has only a few thousand members, it is even possible that the party appears as irrelevant and does not grow at all. A certain size is necessary for take off". (*Socialist Worker*, 8.1.77)

With a philistine disregard for politics Cliff reduces the crisis of working class leadership to . . . recruitment! The sort of party he is after is clearly shown by his reference to events in Portugal:

"At the same time, the purpose of recruitment must be clearer now than ever before. The events in Portugal, where a revolutionary

party (?) has been, and is being, frittered away (!), underline the key role of a revolutionary party in transforming a revolutionary situation into a victory for the working class".

Never mind the quality - feel the width! It was not the politics of IS's ally, the syndicalist PRP, that mattered - they weren't big enough.

The fact is, that politics are decisive in a revolutionary situation. The Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries were far larger than the Bolsheviks in February but they lost the day in October - and not for lack of paper sales.

Sober reality will dispel these misty fantasies about half a million members. In terms of a firm base in decisive sections of the working class there is no comparison between the IS and the CP. The CP is far better placed in bureaucratic positions in the unions to derail struggles than the SWP is to initiate



Foot

them. By contrast the SWP lacks a stable, authoritative core of militants in leading positions in important industries.

The IS has been notorious for its steady consumption of trade union militants who are recruited on a non-political basis, promising help and support in the pursuit of militant action.

Paul Foot in the last chapter of his pamphlet argues for the 'lonely hearts club' conception of the party as the organisation which helps unite the activists - "for the socialist who argues or organises on his own, life becomes increasingly difficult. People see him as a bit of a crank".

But without a political struggle against a trade union outlook, without a fight to get a politically educated membership such militants easily drop out of politics or drift towards the Stalinists.

Vaunted Birmingham AUEW workers, big Coventry Chrysler branches . . . are examples of important groups of workers whom IS failed to hold or develop.

Nowadays the SWP has no significant presence in the mines, in British Leyland or Fords, or in transport.

RIGHT TO WORK

The SWP claims to be the only organisation fighting on the issues facing the working class today. They point to the Right to Work campaign and the 'Campaign against Racism' as the sort of work that has forced IS to recognise its true role as the party.

The Right to Work campaign is the gimmick designed to replace the ill fated Rank and File Movement:

It is a protest movement, condemned by its lack of clear political perspective and programme, and by the lack of any forces in the unions capable of carrying out even its limited demands (such as an overtime ban) to an existence of angry demon-

strations and wasted energy. It constitutes a diversion from the serious work that remains to be done in building a revolutionary alternative in the unions.

The 'Campaign against Racism' was very useful in giving some confidence to a flagging IS membership. The divisions over the Right to Work marches were forgotten in an almost concentration on anti-racist work.

What distinguishes the IS position on racism is its complete failure to connect the growth of racism and the fascists with the Tory policies of the Labour government.

NO LESSONS

In a single minded fashion the connection between racism and Nazism is pounded out. What matters for IS is anti-fascist activity irrespective of whether political lessons are being learnt by those mobilised.

What is most significant about this "fighting organisation" is its absolute failure to take up any fight over the central question of wage control.

In the last few issues of *Socialist Worker* there has been increasing reference to the Social Contract as the opposition in the working class began to emerge in the open. "Smash the Social Contract" is tacked on to the end of titles of public meetings.

But the fact remains that on this issue, which is rapidly emerging as the question in the workers' movement, and the point of sharpest conflict with the reformists, the IS/SWP have simply waited on events and abstained from the necessary fight.

Hardly a mention is given to the situation today. Instead we are regaled with three chapters on the statistics of inequality and the superiority of socialism.

STATE CAPITALIST

This is followed by a chapter expounding the view that the Soviet Union is 'state capitalist', to ensure that the SWP is not associated with the Stalinist bureaucracy.

The last two chapters of the booklet, although occupying only 18 out of 93 pages, reach to the heart of things.

Foot scorns any mention of a fighting programme that could mobilise the working class on the political struggle against the employers and their Labour government - there is literally half a sentence observing in passing that a 35 hour week and an overtime ban would be useful in combatting unemployment.

All he calls for are 'an organised rank and file movement' and a 'strong socialist party'.

In a hypocritical obeisance to internationalism Paul Foot says that the confidence to argue the international case depends fundamentally on socialist organisation across national boundaries.

REFUSED

The IS has always refused to establish clear international links on the basis of common politics.

Instead they have retained 'fraternal' relations with an assortment of Maoists, half anarchists and syndicalists who have big working class organisations and are 'doing' something.

The book ends with a rousing call to join the SWP, on the basis that all who oppose capitalist barbarism must stand up and be counted.

But no amount of energy, of 'the commitment of workers who laugh and love', will allow the IS to jump over its own head.

Without political clarity and a working class cadre this jamboree will waste those workers' commitment and dissipate their energies in protest actions and the abstract preaching of socialism.

It is the most crude type of bourgeois ideology. Engels showed its limitations:

"At first sight this mode of thinking seems to us very luminous, because it is that of so-called sound commonsense. Only sound commonsense, respectable fellow that he is, in the homely realm of his own four walls, has very wonderful adventures directly he ventures out into the wide world [of research]. And the metaphysical mode of thought [empiricism], justifiable and necessary as it is in a number of domains whose extent varies according to the nature of the particular object of investigation, sooner or later reaches a limit, beyond which it becomes one-sided, restricted, abstract, lost in insoluble contradictions.

In the contemplation of individual things, it forgets the connection between them; in the contemplation of their existence, it forgets the beginning and end of that existence; of their repose, it forgets their motion. It cannot see the wood for the trees". (*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, Pathfinder, p.41)

EMBARRASSMENT

There is little doubt that acute embarrassment at the wrong orientation they have adopted will bring belated empirical adjustments to the IMG's line on many of these questions.

But there is absolutely no doubt that without a radical change in their method of analysis, similar episodes will continually recur.

In this the IMG are the legitimate British representatives of the so-called 'United' Secretariat of the Fourth International within which empiricism is the predominant doctrine.

The origins of this method in the USec go back to the impressionism of Michel Pablo, formerly the Secretary of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International.

Working solely on the basis of superficial impressions, Pablo developed in the early 1950s the theory that "objective processes" - specifically an impending Third World War - were forcing the development of "revolutionary tendencies" within the mass Stalinist parties of Europe. He claimed that:

"this [Stalinist] movement will develop revolutionary tendencies, not through the conscious will of its leadership, but through the pressure of the situation evolving towards war". (*For a Devisive Turn in France*, 1952).

FALSE

On the basis of this completely false analysis, Pablo proceeded to advocate the deep entry of Trotskyist forces into these mass CPs - "entry *sui generis*" - threatening to totally liquidate the Trotskyist cadre and its independent programme.

This line led by 1953 to a split in the Fourth International, the effect of which continues to this day. Those who backed Pablo in the split now lead the majority faction of the USec.

And while these leaders (most notably Ernest Mandel) have verbally abandoned some of Pablo's more ridiculous positions which led up to that split, none have probed to the roots of the method that led him to such wrong positions, and them to defend him.

As a result, empiricism flourishes today not only in the IMG, but also, for example, in the USec party in Portugal, the LCI, which went so far as to join a "United Revolutionary Front" with the Stalinists in defence of the bourgeois sixth provisional government!

MARXISM

This is why we insist that while it is possible for many of the cadres of the USec to be won to a position of revolutionary Marxism, it is only possible if they are prepared to undertake a serious reexamination of the history of the Fourth International and the questions of method raised by that history.

Only in this way can empiricism be consciously fought and the tool of Marxist analysis brought into play.

By John Lister

Rights - an event whose completely reformist orientation has spurred on a wave of resignations from the National Abortion Campaign, and exposed the complete inadequacy of "single issue" campaigns.

And if the IMG stand shoulder to shoulder with the Communist Party on these policies, they manage to stand to the right of the Stalinists on the question of the Bullock Report in yet another article in the February 3rd *Red Weekly*.

Hoping that dropping the Trotskyist programme will bring them closer to some imagined group of workers confused by Bullock, the IMG article astonishingly calls for:

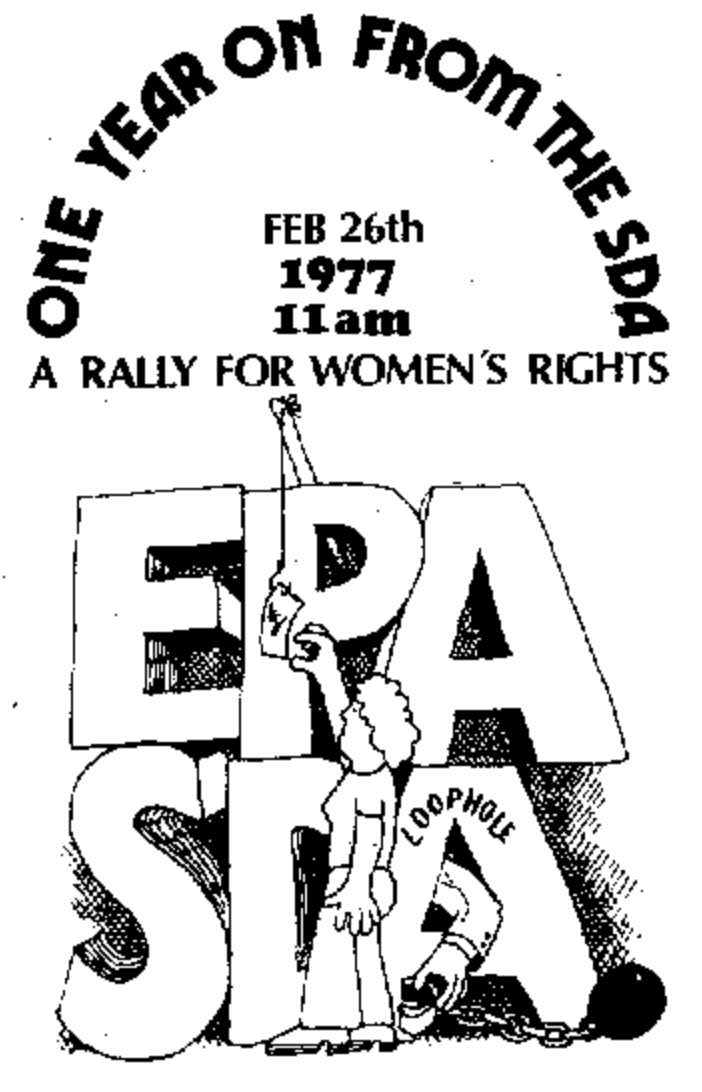
"Full implementation of the original TUC proposals".

Even Bert Ramelson, CP Industrial Organiser, condemned these proposals as 'class collaborationist'. The reason is clear. The TUC openly argue that their position is based on the concept that:

"The TUC believes . . . that it is very important to establish the essentially joint interest of labour and capital in the enterprise [!], and that management function is carried out within a framework of policy making in which the workpeople, using the machinery of their trade unions, can formulate and express their interests in the direction of a company's affairs".

(General Council Report, 1976, p322, my emphasis).

Marxists of course reject such an approach. Labour and capital have distinct and opposite class interests which cannot be welded into one.



The Bullock proposals, far from offering any avenue towards workers' control, are proposals for more sophisticated control over the workers within privately owned enterprise.

Yet the IMG article does not even call for nationalisation! Instead they give credibility to the TUC objective which is simply that of wedding workers to management:

"Only with a system of parity representation can trade union representatives be expected to feel any sense of collective responsibility for board decisions."

(TUC, p.323, my emphasis)

The IMG in this article therefore throw aside the essence of the demands of the Transitional Programme - the struggle at each stage for the complete political and organisational independence of the working class from the employer and the state and for committees to fight for workers' control over management.

In place of this they substitute the craven reformism of the TUC and the reactionary so-called 'Institute of Workers' Control'.

THREAD

Running as a common thread through this catalogue of errors by the IMG each one of which has the effect of bringing workers more under the influence of the right wing and Stalinist bureaucracy, is their leadership's fundamental inability to analyse the class struggle from the standpoint of Marxism - which demands efforts to probe beneath surface appearances to grasp the real motor force of change - and continuously testing theory in practice.

If this method is not adopted, and instead impressions are taken at face value from empirical 'facts' and built into an abstract schema, any movement must lose its political bearings.

Such a method is not Marxism.

WILSON'S FIRST 'SOCIAL CONTRACT'

of England but international speculators, that the policies on which we had fought the election could not be implemented, that the government was to be forced into the adoption of Tory policies to which it was fundamentally opposed [by] the sheer compulsion of the economic dictation of those who exercised decisive economic power."

"FORCED"

Notice that Wilson shifts immediately from describing the capitalist opposition to Labour's programme to accepting that the government was being "forced into the adoption of Tory policies" and that he blames not so much British capitalists' interests (against which he might be expected to act) but foreign speculators "beyond his control".

In other words, Wilson's position shows that a reformist government will only adopt socialist policies if the capitalists agree! The same reactionary logic underlies today's savage attacks by the Callaghan-Healey government.

Immediately after its election therefore, the 1964 Labour government refused to implement even such a minor, humanitarian and emotive a reform as the raising of the old age pensions.

But of course the TUC bureaucracy failed to challenge their betrayal on this issue. The only lead in opposing Wilson and campaigning for the pension increase to be implemented came from the Young Socialists under the political direction of the Trotskyist Socialist Labour League, (SLL) who organised a series of lobbies and protests.

The trade union bureaucracy were not, however, put off moving closer to the Labour government.

"LEFT"

After all in a cabinet including Callaghan as Chancellor, George Brown as head of Department of Economic Affairs and Gunter as Minister of Labour, was the 'left' Frank Cousins, General Secretary of the TGWU as Minister of Technology!

As the SLL's paper, the *Newsletter* put it:

"The presence of Cousins in the government . . . is a sign not of the progress of the lefts but of a final step by a left opportunist to play his role in serving capitalism, in this case by collaboration in the deception of the workers about the character of the Labour government."

The key question for that government in its struggle to restore capitalist profitability was, then as now wages.

Yet the trade union leaders approached the question of wage restraint, more warily — or with more appearance of wariness than they do today.

But the parallel is also striking. Just as the resolution passed at the TGWU Biennial conference immediately prior to the signing of the social contract laid down eight stringent conditions including "lower unemployment, massive

While Callaghan and Healey today carry out a historic level of betrayal, implementing their package of Tory policies under the name of a Labour government, the scale of this treachery flows from the depth of the crisis — not from anything new within the Labour leadership itself.

Indeed the same policies, with the same arguments to back them, have been trotted out time and time again by preceding Labour governments — not one of which has broken in any way from seeking to maintain and simply "reform" capitalism.

The Labour leadership are caught in a vice — leading on the one hand a party with a working class base which wins its electoral support by promising reforms; yet on the other hand at the same time being committed to running a crisis-ridden capitalism which cannot concede reforms.

Wilson's 1964-70 Labour government — Britain's fifth Labour government — in this way followed the line of its inglorious predecessors. It came to power in October 1964 at a time of rapidly maturing economic crisis — a crisis which could only be deepened by concessions to the working class.

While Wilson at once dropped all attempts to bring about these reforms, the strength of the working class both within the unions and within the Labour Party left the social democratic leadership paralysed in its efforts to solve the crisis on behalf of capitalism.

NO LOYALTY

It is for this reason — not because of any shred of loyalty of the Labour leaders to the workers' movement that had put them in office — that the Wilson government ultimately failed the bourgeoisie and failed to bring in anti-union laws.

This first article will deal mainly with the early years of the government, centring attention on struggles over wage control and productivity.

A central question facing the Wilson administration was its relationship with the trade union bureaucracy and its ability to cultivate a close working bond with reactionary leaders such as Woodcock (TUC General Secretary) Cannon (right wing leader of the ETU) and Frank Cousins (TGWU General Secretary).

Of course trade union bureaucrats have always been at home with class collaboration and have always been thrilled at an invitation to Buckingham Palace.

During both the First and Second World Wars they have acted as steadfast front runners and agents for the bourgeoisie in policing the working class. Such attitudes die hard in the TUC.

However they did after that period return for a while to a minimal pretence of defending their members' interests and wages. But under Wilson this was to be thrown aside.

1964-70 was a courtship stage. While the trade union bureaucracy was prepared to cuddle close to the Labour government, they were still prepared at times to complain that it had gone too far, to register a fairly sharp verbal protest.

Much of this protest was but the hot air of left talk, but in that period, the trade union leaders did have some qualms about the total signing away of the unions' independence from the government.

Following the end of the Tory pay pause in March 1962 the TUC had refused to accept any responsibility for the government's policy of restraint on wages.

The *Rookes v. Barnard* High Court decision had weakened the legal position of unions, threatening the closed shop and making union officials liable for damages following industrial action.

The trade union movement, including its leadership, was for this reason wary. But while remaining on its guard, the movement was also strong. The boom period had strengthened the ability of the shop floor to make gains and the shop stewards movement had emerged, powerfully representing and expressing this strength of the working class.

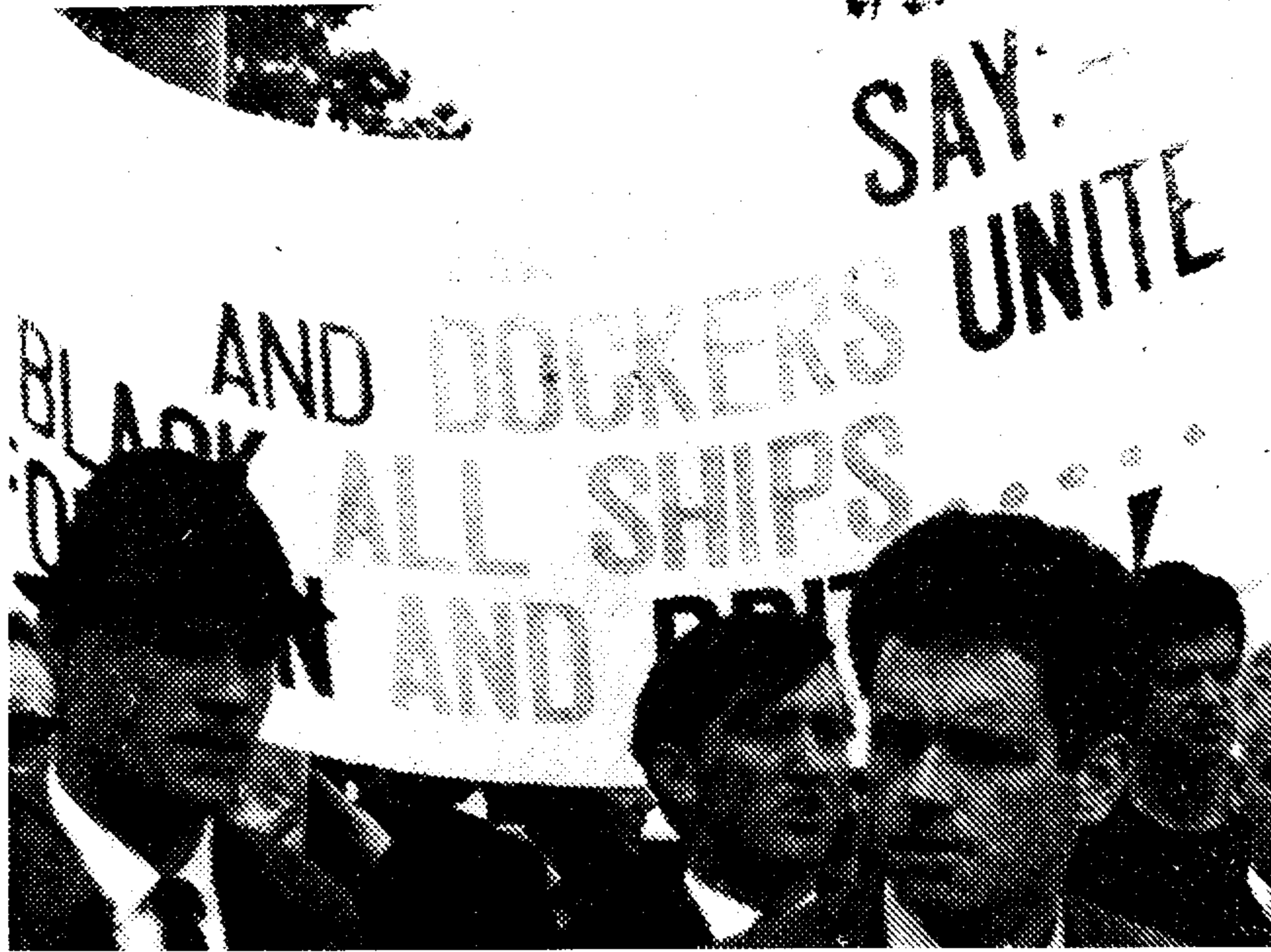
It was the shop stewards movement, the independence of the

working class that the bourgeoisie and the Labour government needed to suppress.

In October 1964 the Labour government was formed with a Parliamentary majority of a mere six seats.

It faced a situation of financial crisis with a balance of payments deficit of £800 million. Wilson, who had no intention of carrying out the manifesto pledges if it meant the slightest challenge to capitalism, later wrote that:

"We had now reached the situation where a newly elected government with a mandate from the people was being told not so much by the Governor of the Bank



SLL demonstration to back seamen. May 1966

SPOTLIGHT

ON REFORMISM

On February 19th an attempt will be made to get a particularly sinister piece of Labour Party history to repeat itself.

On that day "moderate" Labour MPs, local councillors and party workers from all over the country have been called to a meeting in London to set up a pressure group for anti-Socialist views in the Labour Party.

It is based on the Manifesto Group of right-wing Labour MPs, and aims to have a broader appeal than Prentice's Social Democratic Alliance.

The Chairman of the meeting will be right-wing Transport Secretary, William Rodgers.

Just seventeen years ago, in

William Rodgers who organised a letter from 15 parliamentary candidates in support of Hugh Gaitskell against the Labour Party 'left'.

From this letter came a committee including Roy Jenkins, Anthony Crosland and other well-known right wingers which produced a manifesto.

And immediately after the victory of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the 1960 Labour Conference, Rodgers' manifesto turned into the Campaign for Democratic Socialism, of which Rodgers was full-time paid Chairman.

In the words of journalist Richard Fletcher it was "the most effective pressure group the Party had ever seen"

Within a year, the Labour Party

nuclear policies of NATO, partly as a result of the thousands of pounds poured by the CDS into leaflets, journals, the salaries of a full-time executive and the expenses of a large team of field workers.

REFUSED TO PUBLISH

Yet in his article 'Who were they travelling with?' (commissioned by the *Sunday Times*, which then refused to publish it, Fletcher points out that the CDS never had a single subscription-paying member.

Rodgers told the committee that the money came from a number of small donations 'together with a large sum from a source which wished to remain anonymous'.

The reason why the source wished to remain anonymous seems clear. There is little doubt that the money came from the CIA, most

THE REAL INFILTRATORS

probably via one of its front organisations, through which it has financed right-wing subversion in the labour movements of the world ever since the 1940s.

Fletcher's article (now published by Spokesman Books as part of *The CIA and the Labour Movement*) reveals nothing which was not already known, but it does pull together a lot of evidence to show how the right-wing Labour Party leaders have been consistent collaborators with the CIA.

This collaboration took place especially through three magazines — Sol Levitas's *New Leader* in the United States, Rita Hinden's *Socialist Commentary*, and Melvin Lasky's *Encounter*, all of them financed in one way or another by the CIA.

The *New Leader*, along with



public spending increases" and "strict price controls", so the TUC in 1965 argued:

"The justification for trade union participation in an incomes policy lies in the contribution that it will make to the attainment of economic and social policies which will lead to more substantial and lasting benefits for their members.

The General Council have made it clear to the government and to the representatives of the employers' organisations that trade unions would co-operate in a prices and incomes policy only if it appeared to them likely to secure broad trade union objectives more effectively than present policies".

WOLVES

Casting independence to the wolves they try to argue that the wolves would gratefully give them presents in return!

Understanding this, the SLL in the Newsletter of November 1964 made this comment.

"Wilson, Callaghan and Brown hope to chain the unions to a wage freeze. A meagre rise in pensions, to be given next year is used to bait the trap."

Here is the forerunner of Healey's fraudulent talk of "tax cuts".

But, the Newsletter pointed out: "Woodcock's extreme caution in talking about wage freezing reflects the doubt in the minds of some union chiefs about the dangers of trying too soon to push the rank and file into the incomes policy trap."

These doubts reflected in the TUC decision. The union leaders were only prepared to accept a "voluntary" wages policy [again a familiar note today!] And the TGWU went so far as to vote against acceptance of the wage norm of 3-3½% in 1965.

As Wilson commented on Cousins of the TGWU:

"His life's work had been based on the doctrine that a trade union leaders job was to get more wages for his men; even a voluntary incomes policy seemed incompatible with that life long objective".

Cousins was later to resign from the government in June 1965 over his opposition to wage restraint, an opposition which he was not prepared to turn into a full scale fight against the policy. He was prepared to let other bureaucrats destroy this "life's work" even if he would not do the job himself.

AXE

Today's TUC leaders of course are fully prepared to swing the axe themselves against free collective bargaining and the jobs and conditions of their members. This is another indication of the increased depth of today's capitalist crisis and its impact on the reformist leaders.

The Wilson government continued its Tory policies. A central role was played by the National Board for Prices and Incomes under the Chairmanship of the Tory Aubrey Jones — with, as vice chairman, the Managing Director of Esso Petrol.

Price and wage increases were referred to this body with the usual result of the former being agreed and the latter being turned down, including the claim of the exceedingly low paid agricultural workers. In January 1966 the Board recommended no improvement on British Rail's offer of 3½% on basic rates.

The NUR in reply went to the point of calling national strike action — which was of course sold out at the 11th hour by Wilson's intervention which secured agreement on a productivity deal.

Productivity dealing was a hall mark of this government's attack upon the working class.

Wilson hoped to raise the rate of exploitation and ease the crisis of profitability by increasing productivity.

The agreement which spear-headed this attack on the working class was at the Fawley oil refinery which involved higher pay and shorter hours in return for abandoning trade union practices and safeguards.

government's responsibility and they cannot remain at arm's length from the government".

Yet Wilson faced a strong and buoyant working class, a working class ready to fight.

Despite the mandate given in the 1966 General Election which gave the Labour Party a massive majority of 110 in the house, the Labour government continued to attack the working class.

In May of that year the seamen's strike attempted to break through the wages standstill.

As Wilson saw it the strike was: "a test of the government's determination to preserve the criteria we had laid down for an incomes policy".

In other words it was a test of the government's resolve to defend capitalist profitability at the expense of the working class.

The strike was long and bitterly fought. Like many of the events of this period it reveals threads we can follow through to this day.

the seamen's strike was weakened.

Despite the CPs reactionary role in these events, the seamen's strike was the occasion of a massive witch hunt against the Communist Party and all on the left.

Wilson spoke of a "tightly knit group of politically motivated men" and revealed that police surveillance was kept on leading militants and Communist Party members.

The device of the witch-hunt, then as now, was an important tactic for the government and the ruling class in building up hostility to "unofficial" "unconstitutional" strike activity.

This witch-hunt was a necessary prelude to the second phase of the Labour government's attempt to break the strength of the working class — its industrial relations bill. (The story of this struggle will be appearing in our second article).

But the seamen were beaten. Wilson unashamedly admits having intervened to organise a right-wing caucus in the NUS Executive.

norm" with exceptions.

Wilson reports:

"In July 66 the TUC began to express deep reservations about incomes policy. Cousins stated that the TGWU would not observe the freeze. Now other leaders were joining him. Even right wing members of the Council expressed doubt."

Finally, of course, all these toothless mouthings and gestures ended and the TUC acquiesced to the wage freeze.

In Parliament, though 47 'left' MPs condemned the government's wages policy, they did not fight for Wilson's removal.

Instead they simply argued in the time-honoured bankrupt style we see today for the nationalist demand of import controls — and for cuts in defence spending.

In September 1966 at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton, Wilson was heckled first by protestors against his backing for the Vietnam war and then by a lobby of car workers facing short



This was seized upon by the government in its drive to 'modernise Britain' (ie raise the rate of exploitation).

Cannon of the ETU, a vicious right winger and professional anti-communist, led a campaign for productivity deals, wages policy and against so called "restrictive practices"

Supported by sections of the trade union bureaucracy, the Labour government continued to hold down and attack wages.

They had other help, too. The Communist Party in the AEU voted for incomes policy in the spring of 1965, in practice endorsing George Woodcock's line that:

"The trade unions share the

The Communist Party, as ever, held back from fighting to the finish.

At the time the CP had considerable power on the docks, (except for Liverpool and Hull, where the SLL, working within the 'blue union', the National Association of Stevedores and Dockers) had a large following.

Stalinists like Jack Dash in London who purportedly represented rank and file dockers in effect abstained both from launching any real fight against the Devlin plans to decasualise the docks and from the fight to bring out the dockers in support of the seamen.

The dockers' leaders allowed ships to be moved in port so that

He did this because his police surveillance revealed that the left were planning to argue for a ballot of the entire membership and a recall delegate conference.

Such an excessively democratic plan was obviously a threat to the right.

In 1966, as now, the question of democracy in the unions and the fight against wage control are closely linked.

Yet the trade union leaders would not give unanimous backing to the attack on wages.

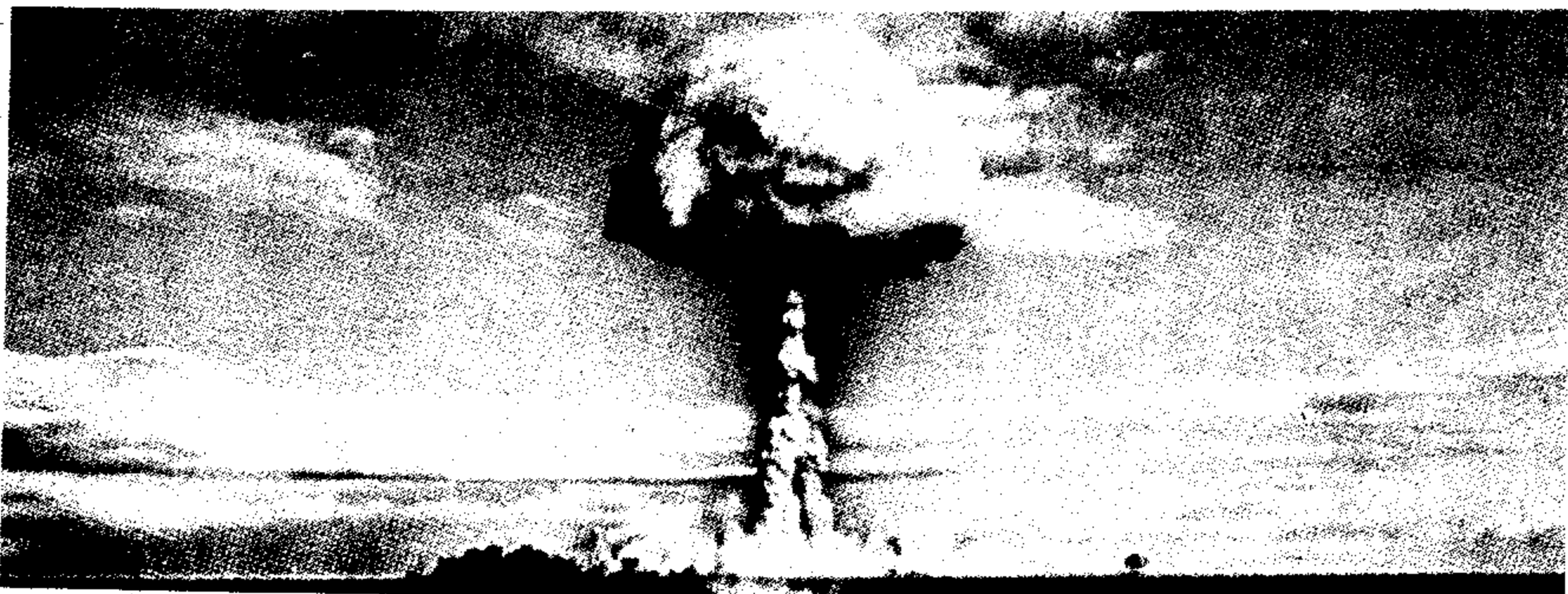
In July 1966 there was a wages standstill; this was followed from January to June 1967 with severe restraint; and from July 1967 to March 1968 there was a "zero

time and lay off in the Midlands.

The pressure of the rank and file was constantly growing. Unofficial bodies of stewards in the car industry and on the docks made the government aware that they could not sufficiently hold down wages so long as there was an independent trade union movement free from the controls of the bureaucracy.

It was to attack this movement, suppress this militancy, that they commenced the second major thrust of their assault on the working class. Wilson's government brought forward "In Place of Strife", a battery of laws to shackle the unions and directly curb their power.

By Di Parkin



Rodgers' campaign restored Labour backing for NATO

renegade Trotskyist James Burnham, was in the vanguard of the formulation of the US government's cold war policies after World War II.

CIA director Allen Dulles wrote for it; so did Hugh Gaitskell; and Dennis Healey was its London correspondent for some years after 1952.

Socialist Commentary has for years been the house journal of the Labour right-wing. Fletcher reveals that it recently had a financial reserve of £75,000 — remarkable for a magazine whose circulation

has always been as dismally low as its quality.

Fletcher also describes the conferences financed by the Congress for Cultural Freedom and other CIA fronts at which Labour right-wingers such as Gaitskell and Healey rubbed shoulders with

"the chairmen of the world's largest capitalist organisations, monarchists, ex-Nazis, commanders of the American and German forces the Crown Princes of Europe and CIA agents."

Fletcher's conclusion that these

for socialists' illustrates the naivety of his political analysis.

Such people are the natural allies of a right-wing Labour leadership who act as the agents of the capitalist ruling class in the labour movement.

They must be driven out of all labour movement organisations.

The usefulness of Fletcher's facts is that they show how reformist leaders like Rodgers act not merely as agents of alien class forces, but as their conscious and paid agents.

BOOKS

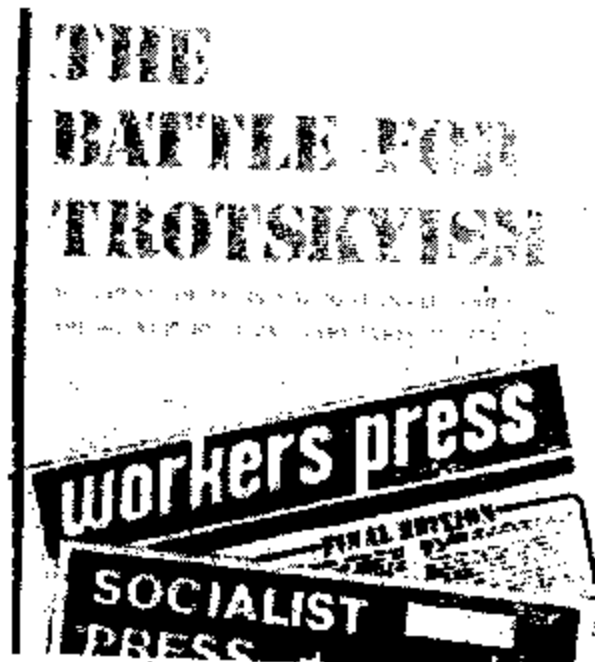
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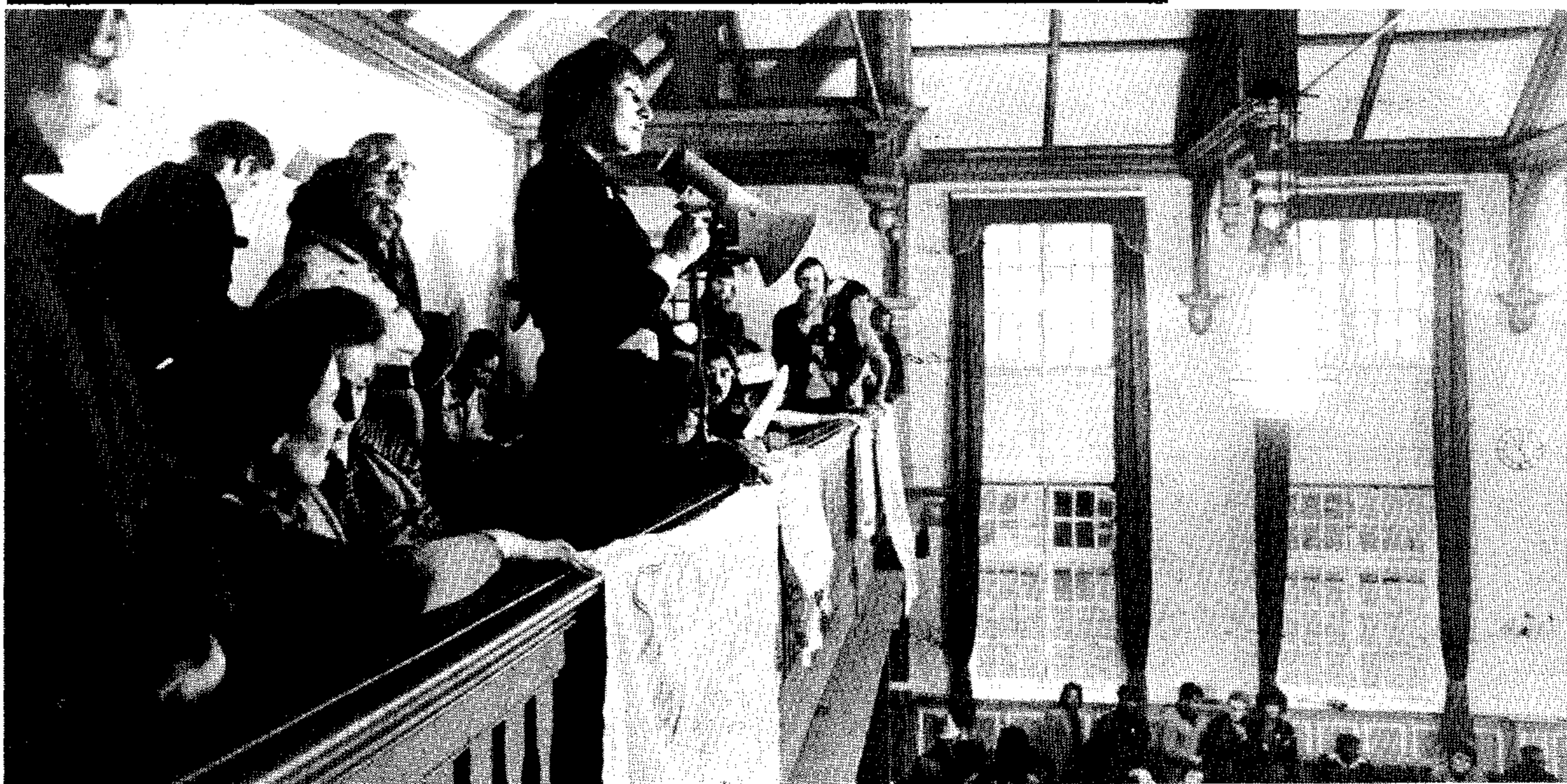
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INDUSTRIAL NEWS

SUPPORT EGA — BUT HOW?



Health workers occupy AHA meeting

STRIKE LEADERS BACK CLASH

Recent 'sensational' reports in the press about the deteriorating condition of many hospitals have served to underline the importance of the forthcoming Conference of London Area Stewards in the Health Service (CLASH).

The Conference, to be held from 2pm to 6pm on Wednesday, 23 February, will provide an opportunity for stewards and lay officials in health service trade unions in London to discuss the next stage in the defence of the NHS.

The programme provides for an examination of experiences in fighting the cuts and for the establishment of united policies for future action.

The second half of the meeting will be devoted to the need for a standing link-up between all NHS Joint Shop Stewards Committees in London.

The most recent meeting of the organising committee for the conference, was attended by a group of stewards and lay officials who played a prominent role in the three-day strike in January of ancillary workers at five East End hospitals.

Denis Renton, GMWU at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, G. Waller, GMWU at the Metropolitan Hospital, and the secretary of the Central Hospitals Branch of the GMWU, gave a report of the action which, according to one estimate, involved some 1500 hospital workers.

The ancillary workers' strike (first reported in *Socialist Press* 51) centred on staff cuts which had resulted in under-manning and local management's attempts to impose new rotas on the catering staff in the District without any discussion with the unions, threatening loss of overtime pay amounting to between £4 and £20 a week.

The united action of the ancillary staff eventually resulted in the reinstatement of the suspended porters although, apparently with the help of the full-time officials of COHSE and the GMWU, the management was able to secure a return to work without agreeing to drop the proposed new rotas.

Negotiations since the strike have resulted in present staff obtaining protection for their regular hours but new staff will receive only basic pay. The GMWU stewards expect that further struggles around the same issues lay ahead.

ancillary workers throughout the NHS in the coming period unless united action is taken to defend living standards against the effects of 15% inflation and the treacherous collaboration of the trade union bureaucracy with the Labour government.

The CLASH organising committee, built around the South Camden Joint Shop Stewards Committee, has therefore quite rightly made the overtime question a central topic of the conference.

Maurice Kolander, NUPE Branch Secretary at St. Bartholomew's will speak at the meeting, which is expected to be well supported by the shop stewards who were involved in the dispute.

The organising committee meeting also received reports of support from a number of other JSSCs and hospitals. At one Area JSSC, however, members of the Communist Party had voiced opposition to the conference.

Their opposition appeared to have been based on the inclusion in the main resolution of too many points of programme.

Such complaints are absurd in view of the appeal by the organising committee for all supporting bodies to submit alternative documents or amendments to any of the three resolutions.

This democratic approach contrasts sharply with that of the Communist Party inspired and dominated Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions.

As on previous occasions, the LCDTU has refused to allow any motions or amendments to be moved by labour movement organisations at their conference on the cuts to be held on Saturday 26th February.

The main CLASH resolution has been circulated throughout London together with the programme and proposed constitution.

The programme also includes a report by Arthur Churchly of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital on the first ever occupation in Britain of a hospital threatened with closure.

The conference for all London NHS shop-stewards and lay officials will be held at Bonham Carter House, 52, Gower Street, London WC1. Further details from: Terry Prosper, Secretary.

NHS IN CRISIS



HACKNEY — A DEATH TRAP

Don't have a heart attack in Hackney!

This was the grim message from a nurses' steward at the Hackney hospital.

He claimed that patients admitted with cardiac arrest now stood a massively increased chance of not recovering, because of lack of equipment.

Seven wards are now closed in the hospital, including some which have recently been decorated at a cost of £18,000!

The much-publicised tour of the hospital by Department of Health worthies not long ago can be seen to have had no beneficial effect on the service to patients.

The Hackney area is one of the most viciously attacked in London at the moment.

The Metropolitan Hospital has just been closed. The AHA did not even have the usual excuse of needing to close it as a "health risk" or as "inadequate".

It was universally recognised as an extremely good, pleasant hospital by both staff and patients.

Although there was a strong feeling by the staff for a fight against the closure, the union leadership maintained it was all useless. Many of the workers had

Those London health service workers and trade unionists who attended yet another "Support the EGA" conference on Saturday 12th February in the hospital's elegant boardroom must be wondering just where the EGA shop stewards stand on defence of their hospital.

This conference was originally initiated by the International Socialists (now the SWP) to mobilise shop stewards *outside* the health service, but representing groups of workers in the EGA locality.

It ended up, however, not as a delegate conference of shop stewards, but as an ad-hoc roomful of EGA supporters, some from the health service, most from various left groups.

Three EGA stewards shared the platform, supplying information on the occupation which was already common knowledge to most present.

Most illuminating were the questions raised from the floor about the occupation and the role of the consultants.

Workers looking to the EGA stewards for a lead were disappointed to learn that they have *not* confronted the problems which will arise when the AHA cuts off the hospital's power and/or supplies or the workers' wages.

'NO HOPE'

And Pam Jones, NUPE steward, stated clearly that the occupation had "no hope of continuing" without at least passive support by the consultants.

So the fate of the EGA, the defence of jobs of ancillary workers and nurses and of the health service of the working class are to be subjected to the whims of the doctors, who see their class interests as identical to those of the AHA which is enforcing the closure!

The motion put to the Conference by the EGA stewards was a retreat from that passed at the Dec 11th EGA support conference — it had been weakened, and *missed out altogether* the call for support for the CLASH conference on 23rd February.

Despite the EGA stewards' ruling that no amendments would be taken to their resolution, the Conference was finally allowed to pass a *recommendation* that the NECs of ASTMS, NUPE, COHSE and NALGO should be bombarded with resolutions from branches, etc. demanding they call *official strike action* beginning on the day the patients are moved out of the EGA.

LEADERSHIP

A lobby of the NECs of these unions on 27th March on this demand should be a major focus for EGA supporters now.

The motto on a large stained class window (donated by a satisfied patient) in the EGA boardroom states:

"There is no death — all noble souls live on enshrined in hearts they loved to aid and bless".

We must disagree with these genteel sentiments.

What faces the NHS now is indeed its death if hospital closures are allowed to go ahead.

The health of the working class depends not on "noble souls" but on the action of workers.

And the EGA cannot "live on" in any number of rat-infested wards in the Whittington hospital, but only in its own hospital on the present site.

We apologise to readers for the lower than usual typographical quality of this edition of *Socialist Press* caused by the breakdown of two IBM composing machines. We would like to thank Ann Ward and Rye Express without whose help this edition could



Trico equal pay victory

BACKCLOTH OF STRUGGLE TO WAGES CONFERENCE

Bang on time! The March 27th recall Conference on Wage Control and Union Democracy is ideally placed in the light of the current wages offensive right across the working class.

This was the keynote to the discussion at last Saturday's meeting of the Ad Hoc Organising Committee of the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement which has called the conference.

The committee discussed reports on the previous day's explosion of militancy at Leyland's Longbridge plant in the light of the overall sharpening of the wages struggle.

IMPLICATIONS

Such movements confirm the necessity for serious discussion on the political implications of the fight to end wage control, as correctly anticipated by the Campaign Committee.

It was reported that so far several union branches had voted to support the Conference - these being TGWU 5/293 at BLMC Cowley; Export Packing Services, Banbury, TGWU 5/104; Rotherham AUEW/TASS; Blackwells Oxford ACTSS 5/833; London Hotels GMWU; and Sheffield TGWU 9/236.

But with the main hall at Digbeth Civic Hall booked for the Conference it is clear that the campaign must be stepped up in all areas if the potential support is to be fully mobilised.

INTERVENTION

The Committee further agreed that an intervention should be attempted at the Conference on the cuts called by the Stalinist-led Liaison Committee for

the Defence of Trade Unions, to expose its complete failure to put programme or perspective for a fight now to defeat the social contract.

And proposals were discussed for an initiative to oppose the present witch-hunting moves within the Labour Party aimed at repressing any serious opposition to the Callaghan-Healey government.

Wherever possible CLPs will be urged to call public meetings to oppose the NEC decision to pursue an enquiry into the notorious Underhill report on "entryism".

As the working class begins now to move into struggle in opposition to its traditional leaderships, the role of such a body as the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement in raising the political implications of each field of struggle is one which stands to considerably increase.

Various proposals as to the form in which the Organising Committee should attempt to consolidate itself as a body after the March 27th Conference were discussed, and will be raised again at its next meeting on Saturday March 12th.

Labour movement bodies wishing to send delegates or observers to this meeting, or wanting further information on the CDLM and copies of the Conference resolution are urged to write to Secretary Kevin Lee, 44, Devonshire Rd., Handsworth Wood, Birmingham 20.

Individual militants wishing to attend the Conference are also urged to do so and to fight for support within their union branches and other bodies.

Now is the decisive four weeks of the campaign for this conference. We call on all members and supporters to give it their full and active support.

At the same meeting the CDLM Committee discussed plans for distribution of a special leaflet prepared to support Alan Thornett in the coming election for TGWU General Secretary.

70,000 of the leaflets have been printed and already there has been a strong response to the challenge of making workers aware that there is an alternative to Moss Evans, the chosen "likely winner" boosted in the capitalist press.

In particular tens of thousands of these leaflets will be distributed in the Midlands and among TGWU members in London.

But the Committee still urges all militants who want to participate in a serious fight against the reactionary "social contract" drawn up by Jones and defended by all the "main" contenders in the leadership elections to take copies of the leaflet and to campaign with them in their factories and union branches.

towards Phase Three was followed up by a vote against the social contract also. However, the NUM leadership has proved itself consistent at evading a fight for the wage demands called for by their members.

While £135 is a perfectly reasonable claim and to be supported, it is of particular importance to insist that any increase that is won is protected against inflation through a sliding scale of wages providing increases in line with the cost of living as assessed by trade union committees.

And it is even more important that Notts miners and other areas bombard their leadership with demands that this claim is taken up now as part of the struggle of all workers against the reactionary 5% TUC pay limit.

STEEL JOBS SOLD OUT

In Sheffield the fight against sackings has been dealt a heavy blow, all the more so as it has been delivered not directly by the employers but by the local Confed. leadership and the Communist Party.

After nine weeks of official strike action in defence of 400 jobs at the Capital Tool Works, 3,000 Edgar Allen Balfour workers have gone back to work on the recommendation of their stewards' committee with the factory closed and not one job saved.

This sell-out deal accepted the complete closure of the works and arranged for those workers who had not already taken voluntary redundancy to be redeployed to fill vacancies in other factories either in the Edgar Allen Balfour group or other Sheffield engineering firms.

This deal, cynically presented by the Stalinists of the CP as a major victory, meant in reality the loss of 400 jobs to Sheffield and the placing of about 100 sacked workers at the top of the dole queue.

Not only does this mean the loss of jobs but sets a precedent for mass sackings throughout the area for many firms are on short time.

There is little doubt that "redeployment" will become a new weapon in the arsenal of confusion and betrayal utilised by full time

officials and Stalinists to undermine a principled defence of jobs.

The course of the dispute clearly revealed the treachery of the Stalinists. From the first they resisted any broadening of the strike action beyond the Capital Tool Works itself and only reluctantly brought out the other factories. Then forced to take action across the District they confined this to a half-day protest strike.

From that day, having put up a show of District support, not one step was taken to win the strike and preparations were begun to agree to a further meeting with management. The deal was done on the Saturday and announced on local radio even before the talks were over, and a mass meeting fixed for the Monday gave no time for any opposition to be organised.

Throughout, the CP had the passive support of the SWP who while expressing reservations about the extent of District support never once challenged the Stalinists' leadership politically. For both, the occupation, the opening of the books of Edgar Allen Balfour or the nationalisation of the firm under workers' management were considered impossible demands to fight for.

The Right to Work campaign even issued a leaflet claiming that the deal was "a great victory" and that "the closure of the works... is now without loss of jobs", and spoke for the sell-out in the final mass meeting.

CDLM MASS LEAFLET BACKS THORNETT



As the leaflet points out: "For two years now the power of the TGWU, in the hands of Jack Jones and his army of appointed officials, has been used not to defend the interests of the working class but to prop up a Labour government which is attacking the working class."

The result is plain to see: wages held down by TUC dictate to a 5% increase whilst the value of the pay packet is slashed by massive price increases; 1½ million unemployed with more sackings to come as huge public spending cuts are implemented.

This is the reality of the Social Contract. The longer it lasts the more living standards will fall. It is for this reason that the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement is urging all TGWU members to vote for Alan Thornett for General Secretary in the coming election."

It makes clear the conditions in which the election takes place:

"As we in the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement have pointed out, increasing bureaucracy is the trend not just in the TGWU but throughout the labour movement. The authority of full time officials is strengthened whilst the power of elected shop stewards is undermined. Collaboration with employers, participation in management and the centralisation of

bargaining in the hands of the officials are all part of this".

And it explains why a leaflet is necessary if Thornett is to be seen by workers as a serious candidate:

"As General Secretary his position would be to use the strength of the TGWU not, as Moss Evans did recently at Rubery Owen, to hammer down workers on behalf of an employer - but to support workers in struggle against the employers."

We have published this statement to help offset the intervention of the press and TV in this election.

They want elected a candidate who will support the Social Contract or who will confine any action on wages or cuts to simply protest. To achieve this they have used the technique of presenting only two "main contenders", hoping to reduce the votes which go to the rest".

The leaflet also includes pointers on the rules of the election to assist those workers who may have to challenge branch officials in order to get a ballot paper.

Copies of the leaflet, at £3.00 per 1,000 can be obtained from the Secretary, CDLM, Kevin Lee, 44 Devonshire Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham 20.

TGWU General Secretary Election VOTE THORNETT

AGAINST THE SOCIAL CONTRACT!
FOR SUBSTANTIAL WAGE INCREASES NOW!
FOR COST OF LIVING CLAUSES TO MATCH THE FULL RATE OF PRICE INFLATION!
TO RESTORE ALL CUTS IN PUBLIC SERVICES!

For two years now the power of the TGWU, in the hands of Jack Jones and his army of appointed officials, has been used not to defend the interests of the working class but to prop up a Labour government which is attacking the working class. The result is plain to see: wages held down by TUC dictate to a 5% increase whilst the value of the pay packet is slashed by massive price increases; 1½ million unemployed with more sackings to come as huge public spending cuts are implemented. This is the reality of the Social Contract. The longer it lasts the more living standards will fall. It is for this reason that the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement is urging all TGWU members to vote for Alan Thornett for General Secretary in the coming election. It makes clear the conditions in which the election takes place: "As we in the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement have pointed out, increasing bureaucracy is the trend not just in the TGWU but throughout the labour movement. The authority of full time officials is strengthened whilst the power of elected shop stewards is undermined. Collaboration with employers, participation in management and the centralisation of bargaining in the hands of the officials are all part of this". And it explains why a leaflet is necessary if Thornett is to be seen by workers as a serious candidate: "As General Secretary his position would be to use the strength of the TGWU not, as Moss Evans did recently at Rubery Owen, to hammer down workers on behalf of an employer - but to support workers in struggle against the employers." We have published this statement to help offset the intervention of the press and TV in this election. They want elected a candidate who will support the Social Contract or who will confine any action on wages or cuts to simply protest. To achieve this they have used the technique of presenting only two "main contenders", hoping to reduce the votes which go to the rest". The leaflet also includes pointers on the rules of the election to assist those workers who may have to challenge branch officials in order to get a ballot paper. Copies of the leaflet, at £3.00 per 1,000 can be obtained from the Secretary, CDLM, Kevin Lee, 44 Devonshire Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham 20.

£135 BLOW TO NUM

'MODERATES'

Joe Gormley's statement last week that he would not be able to carry support for a stage three of wage control through the NUM Conference only stated the obvious following as it did hard on the heels of the Nottinghamshire Area NUM vote for a demand for £135 per week for face workers.

But only a couple of weeks before Gormley himself (who had even opposed fighting for early retirement) had put his name to a deal with the NCB making

limited concessions on early retirement - if Phase Three allows!

In other words, Gormley, after carefully staging the 'retirement' issue as a diversion had already conceded that there would be a Phase Three, only to be forced into the open by the movement of his own members.

The heavy setback to the "moderates" who lead the Notts Area NUM administered by the £135 demand at a time when the TUC was negotiating



STRIKE WAVE SHUTS LEYLAND

As we go to press every single model produced by BLMC except the TR7, MG and Allegro has stopped production through strike action.

There are 27 disputes taking place in Leyland, nailing the lie put round by groups like the IMG that the class struggle has gone into a lull.

The working class is asserting its independence from employers at a time when every major trade union leader is saying that we have a common interest through the social contract, 'participation' or Bullock.

The major disputes are as follows:
At Castle Bromwich Body Plant 1300 paint shop workers are striking

At Cowley, 56 mechanical maintenance engineers started an indefinite strike last Thursday over company moves to worsen conditions of work. After this had been through procedure union officials recommended the men accept the conditions. They voted against this advice, closing Marina production.

Toolroom workers all over Leyland have been voting, in most cases unanimously, in favour of their own unofficial committee's call for all-out strike action from Friday 18th February.

Even if other disputes were solved this would close the whole of Leyland



Leyland Cars

and picketing in support of 30 fellow workers. They had refused to accept alternative work in a different department - "body in white" production - when they became surplus to requirements in the paint shop.

This dispute has stopped the Mini at Longbridge, the Maxi and Princess at Cowley, and the new Rover 3500 at Jaguar.

At the Canley Triumph factory 300 paint shop workers are striking against the use of industrial engineers thus closing production in the plant.

quickly because the workers include millwrights, jigfitters and some others who deal directly with production breakdowns.

Toolroom workers want separate talks over wages, claiming parity of earnings throughout Leyland, which could raise some wages by more than £10 a week.

The claim must be supported despite the danger of corporate bargaining, because it contains a potential attack on the social contract.

WAGES... Cont'd from front page

In fact such resistance has now reached the point of open revolt.

As Varley sat down to discuss increased production with Jones, Scanlon, selected Leyland conveners and 'participation' representatives, along with top Leyland management in Longbridge, a massive wave of strikes throughout the combine had paralysed production of all but two models in the Leyland cars range - and one of them was halted when half its workforce joined the factory demonstration!

An indicator of this developing mood on the shop floor was the overwhelming rejection of Leyland's so-called 'fringe benefits' proposals which included a savage no-strike clause.

Robinson, who had enthusiastically given his personal endorsement to the rejected proposals clearly felt he needed to regain some credibility amongst militants.

His carefully staged statement on wages therefore straddled two camps. Seemingly very militant, he managed yet again to peddle the line of the management.

But the move misfired dramatically and Robinson's talk of workers "raring to go on strike" found a ready response in the factory.

Workers rushed to put Robinson's vague rhetoric into practice. Walk-out followed walk-out, and line after line ceased production.

In this blast of hot air, some TUC leaders hastily altered speeches to make them sound vaguely like opposition to pay restraint.

But at the same time, the TUC continued its talks with the government on stage three. *Not one* leader has broken ranks to denounce or walk out of these proceedings.

Instead all are looking for a story to cover up their eventual acceptance of a stage three.

In this they will need most of all the support of the Communist Party which has already used its network of bureaucratic positions in the unions to

help preserve phases one and two of wage control.

This is why the Conference this month of the CP-dominated Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions will aim at diverting from a fight to end the social contract now. Instead its purpose, as summed up by Robinson, is:

"Our aim is to bring as much pressure as possible to influence the policy of all unions concerned".

But a genuine fight for the restoration of free collective bargaining must begin with full support now for all workers (such as the BLMC toolroom workers) in struggle against the social contract.

One obstacle to clarity within the movement against the social contract is the notion that the government is "breaking its side of the deal".

This idea has been fostered by union leaders who argue the deal sought to "fight unemployment", and "bring down inflation".

living standards.

The recall conference on Wage Control and Union Democracy on March 27th is therefore particularly well-timed to meet these new developments, and to give direction to the fight for:

*Action NOW for substantial wage increases with cost of living clauses ensuring wages rise automatically with the cost of living as assessed by elected committees of trade unionists and housewives.

*Defend all jobs - work sharing on full pay.

*Strike action to stop all cuts in public spending. Full backing to any section in struggle against the cuts. For a sliding scale of public spending.

This was never the case. The system remains one of capitalism, of private enterprise, in which all the means of production and the control of them is in the hands of the capitalist class, whose only concern is their profits.

The social contract claimed to find a "common interest" between these capitalists and the working class. Such a common interest does not exist. The contract never represented anything more than a concession to the interests of capitalism.

It was because we saw this from the beginning that the Workers Socialist League has always opposed the social contract, lock, stock and barrel.

And for the same reason we supported the conference on Wage Control and Union Democracy called by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement last October - seeing that the working class would in the next period enter struggles against the social contract in which the central question would be an *independent policy* for the defence of jobs and

INDIA... Cont'd from front page



Mrs Gandhi addressing party workers

Janata was another severe blow which unleashed further waves of opposition within the Congress Party.

In particular the old local Congress bosses are making increasingly insistent demands as a condition of their further support.

Gandhi was forced to delay the publication of the Congress

election manifesto so that virtually all reference to her hated son Sanjay and his demagogic Youth Congress was expunged. Yet it is on Sanjay Gandhi that she has come to rely more than anything to maintain her dictatorship.

It is now evident that Sanjay's 'popularity' depended more on money than on his policies, such

as forced sterilisation of the poor, which have aroused bitter resentment.

So Indira Gandhi's means of political support are being torn away as her experiment in 'democracy' threatens to get out of control. She has already publicly compared the present situation to that just before the emergency, thus hinting that she would not stop short of calling off the elections once again. But it now looks very unlikely that she could succeed.

The possibility that the Gandhi ship is sinking is shown by the fact that even the rats are packing their bags.



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The Indian Communist Party, which gave her dictatorship its craven support, have been making their sharpest criticisms to date; and they have called on their supporters to vote for 'democratic and progressive' forces.

It hasn't yet let them into the secret of who those forces are.