

workers' ACTION

No.127

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10p

Bread strike

SHUT DOWN THE FLOUR MILLS

THE NOOSE is tightening around the necks of the two big bakery firms still holding out against the Bakers' Union £10 claim. Pickets on the flour mills can stop the supplies that allow Rank Hovis and ABF to produce some bread, and block their most profitable business.

More of the independent bakers have been forced to settle. Firms who control 30% of bread production have settled for amounts between £8.50 and the full £10, while RHM and ABF are trying to hold out on their £5.50 offer.

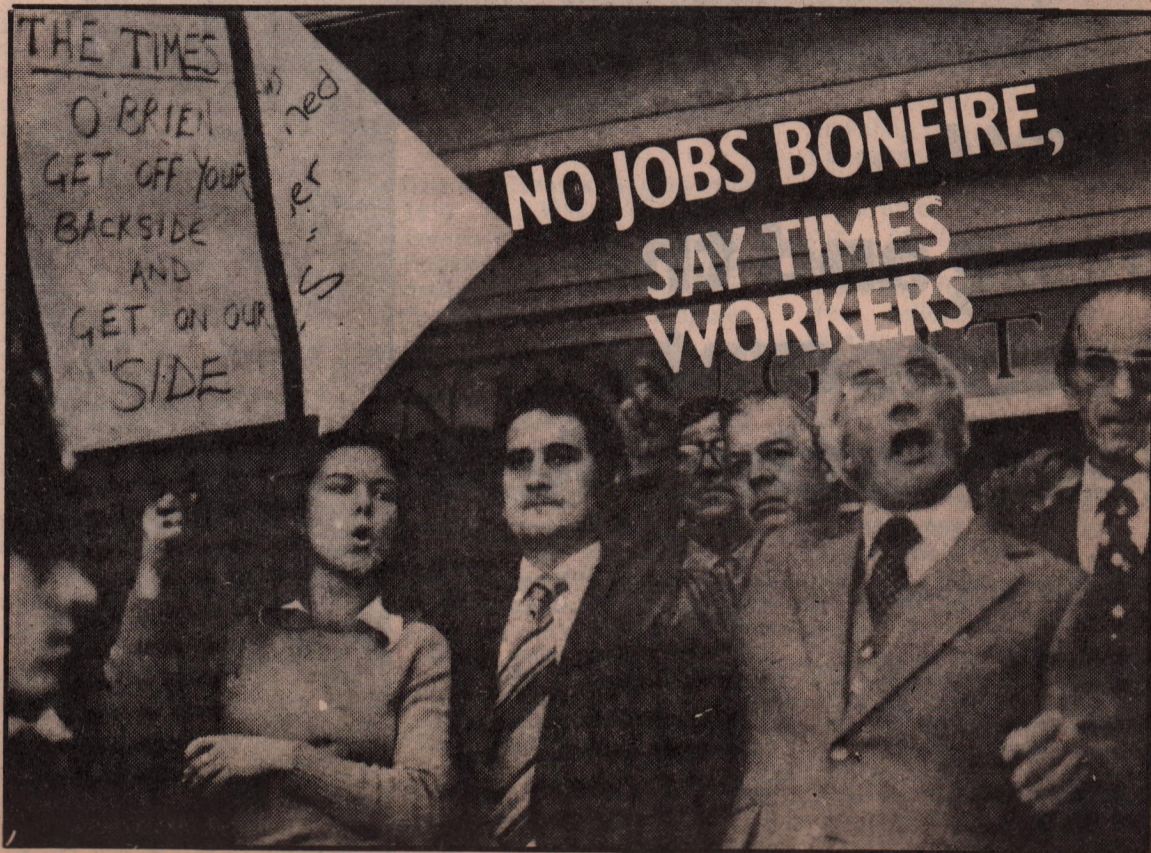
Much of the RHM/ABF bread still getting out comes from dwindling stockpiles of frozen loaves. But, despite instructions from shop stewards in the mills, flour is still being moved, using non-union labour and scabs driving unmarked tankers who are paid £100 or more a load. This has to be stopped. The GMWU nat-

ionally has given the bakers official support, and there needs to be action on it.

With continued clashes with police on the picket lines, and with the flying pickets, new militants are taking the lead in many areas, rather than the officials. Often women workers and black workers who are given little consideration by the official union structure have come to the fore.

Now this rank and file leadership must be organised. There should be strike committees in all bakeries, regional coordinating committees of shop stewards, and a national shop stewards conference of the Bakers Union.

The bread barons' factories and flour mills must be brought to a halt. And that action has to be organised from the picket lines, not from armchairs in the union offices.



'HUSSY MUST GO' was the cry on a demonstration of Times workers on Tuesday 28th, two days before the lockout deadline. Duke Hussy is the chairman of Times Newspapers, the man who delivered the 'buckle under or we close' threat to the workers.

After the demonstration, more than 2,000 people packed into Central Hall, Westminster for a rally called by Natsopa. Left wing MPs and leaders from the print and other unions all came to pledge their support for the Times workers.

Many speakers urged workers to

lobby their MPs. But the biggest cheer from the audience came when Ron Thomas MP declared that the essential battle would be waged on the industrial front.

Jack Dunn, from the Kent miners, was also loudly cheered when he said new technology must benefit the working class and not the bosses' profit accounts. There must be more newspapers, not less.

George Willoughby (SOGAT), Reg Williams (CPSA) and Denis McShane (NUJ) pledged support from their unions.

Alan Sapper (ACTT) compared

the threat at the Times with events at Technicolour in Rome. After an 8-week lockout management sacked all the workers and then re-opened, re-employing only those workers that they wanted back in.

The weakest speech came from Natsopa leader Owen O'Brien. His slogan was 'negotiation, not dictation'. He announced that he has agreed a disputes procedure with the management if only they drop their lockout threat.

More on the Times: see centre pages.

MAO AND HUA-TARGETS FOR TENG

WALL POSTERS have appeared in Peking attacking Mao, the Cultural Revolution — and the current top leader Chairman Hua. Thus the pace of 'de-Maoisation' has been stepped up, and the factional struggle within the Chinese leadership has apparently sharpened.

The coalition leadership which took over after the downfall of the Maoist "Gang of Four" struck a compromise between rehabilitated victims of the Cultural Revolution (like Teng Tsiao-ping) and people who owe their power to those stormy last years of Mao (like Hua Kuo-feng). The two groups needed to stabilise popular unrest and economic chaos, and begin a drive to industrialise.

Material incentives were used to buy time to work out compromise solutions for the short term; a limited purge of regional supporters of the "Gang of Four" was carried out. A Party Congress and a National People's Congress were held to consolidate the compromises worked out.

Now those compromises are no longer enough. The technocrats around Teng are setting a furious pace for modernisation, stressing material incentives, and

opening up China to investment from and trade with the capitalist powers.

Others may prefer a slower pace of change, but have no answer to the arguments that China cannot afford to take her time to re-equip the army, to industrialise, and to catch up with years of neglect in scientific research.

Teng, who now seems to be 'on top' in China, has long been one of the most resolute opponents of the ideas typified by the Cultural Revolution: i.e. autarchy, hostility to science, and reliance on state-organised willpower to ensure economic development.

In 1967, as Party Secretary, he was no.2 on the Cultural Revolution's purge list. After the Tien An Men square demonstration in April 1976 — when 100,000 occupied China's equivalent of Red Square, mourning Chou En-lai's death — he was purged again. The Tien An Men demonstration quickly became a protest against the whole bureaucracy, and was followed by similar protests in other cities. Wu Teh (Mayor of Peking) and the "Four" blamed it on Teng, who was unable to mobilise support for him-

self because by then the whole bureaucracy was alarmed.

Now the Cultural Revolution is a huge embarrassment. The 'technocrats' are out to discredit it. Last month there were reports that Liu Shao-chi was alive and well in Peking. Liu, the former Head of State and the No.1 "capitalist-roader" toppled by the Cultural Revolution, had long been thought to be dead or exiled in some remote province.

Then came official news that Wu Teh had been sacked as Mayor of Peking. Wu has long been known as an opponent of Teng with strong sympathies for the "Gang of Four". He was responsible for suppressing the Tien An Men demonstration.

Wu was responsible for suppressing the Tien An Men demonstration; and his dismissal came together with the new official verdict that the Tien An Men demonstrators were heroic revolutionaries struggling against the Gang of Four. But Wu, and several more powerful allies, are still on the Politburo.

In the next stage, one of the national dailies carried a first-ever criticism of a famous article

continued on page 2



CHINA

Teng and the technocrats lean to the West

continued from page 1

written in November 1965 and regarded as the official launching of the Cultural Revolution. This unmistakable curtain-raiser led to the most recent wall posters.

Judging by the past, wall-postering by the 'masses' signals the end rather than the beginning of a power battle. Over the years, those defeated in a faction fight behind the scenes within the bureaucracy have become the silent victims of wall-poster campaigns. They never have the right to debate and answer the criticisms.

This has happened to Teng himself (twice); to the "Gang of Four", and to the one-time successor of Mao, Lin Biao.

Alongside the re-writing of the political record, shifts in state policy have gone ahead rapidly. Following the introduction of material incentives and wage rises for industrial workers, and promises of better prices and consumer goods for the peasants (both introduced to boost productivity), education has been re-structured back to formal exams and academic competition for entrance to universities and research institutes. The People's Militias have been gradually disbanded and the overmanned People's Liberation Army streamlined, with promises that the best Western weapons will be bought.

After a year or so of carefully testing the diplomatic waters, there have been visits by Hua to Yugoslavia, Rumania and Iran; Teng's tour of South East Asian states; the military and trading visits to the EEC; and, of course, the major peace treaty with Japan.

All these moves (and the hostilities with Vietnam) are aimed

against the Soviet Union, which remains enemy No. One as it was in Mao's era.

Previously, the regime traded in a sporadic and conservative fashion. It preferred to buy specific pieces of Western technology and pay with hard cash (e.g. the Rolls-Royce Spey engine). Now it is prepared to ask for credit terms and expand the volume of trade considerably.

In a seven-year deal with Japan China is paying with coal and crude oil for manufacturing plant technology in steel and petrochemicals. Other deals may include the purchase of railway and coalmining technology from Britain, though the Chinese insist that the Harrier jump-jet must be part of the deal.

Pan American Airways have taken up an offer to build a chain of luxury tourist hotels, and a Hong Kong consortium will be building an electrical power station in Canton.

How should socialists view these developments?

The Cultural Revolution, in its time, was the major inspiration for Western Maoist groups and even 'libertarian' groups like Big Flame. It also caused groups like the SLL (now WRP) and a majority of the USFI at the time to have illusions in the Maoist "mass line".

Today, the Maoist groups are in disarray — some soldiering on and some, like the CPBML, supporting Albania. As yet none of them has concluded that capitalism has been 'restored' in China the way that Mao and the CCP concluded that Khrushchev 'restored capitalism' in Russia.

But the present split in the Chinese leadership throws light on the previous ones. The divisions are not between capitalist-roaders and revolutionary Marx-



Liu [above, with Mao], no.1 'capitalist-roader' of the Cultural Revolution, is now restored to official esteem, and the no.2 former 'capitalist-roader', Teng Tsiao-ping [top], is in command. Premier Hua [middle picture], who came to prominence through the Cultural Revolution, himself, seems to be going along with the policy shifts.

ists. All the factions share the same narrow nationalism, distrust of the masses, and the perspective of building and consolidating their power against the interests of revolution beyond China's borders (and of course within them, too). Today they visit Iran; under Mao they befriended dictators from Chile to Pakistan.

Since the CCP leaders lost a lot of their support among the peasants and workers with the failure of the Great Leap Forward in 1959, they have been faced with the problem of controlling the masses and carrying through industrialisation and modernisation. Their attempts to do this bureaucratically are doomed to fail; either through economic penetration by imperialism, or through the emergence of a faction advocating submission to the Soviet Bloc, or — most decisively — through a revolutionary uprising of the masses.

To make the third alternative a reality, and to debunk the Maoist myths, is the duty of revolutionaries in Hong Kong and China, and in the West.

CHEUNG SIU MING

Dec 2nd

Countdown to Iran's day of reckoning

WITH Iran's newspapers still shut down, news of the struggle has been cut down to a trickle. The oil companies say that oil exports are now nearly back to normal. But strikes are still continuing, in certain oil fields and refineries and in other sectors, and there are demonstrations almost daily in defiance of the martial law.

The struggle is due to hit a new peak with the opening of the Muslim holy month of Moharram on 2nd December. Ayatollah Khomeiny, the leader of the Muslim opposition, has called for a tax strike and action to halt oil exports. (Some reports say he has called for industrial sabotage by those forced to work at gunpoint.) He has also called on his followers to prepare a list of army commanders responsible for massacres "so that, when the time comes, the people can settle accounts with them."

On Sunday 26th there was a nationwide general strike, in protest at the killing of demonstrators in Mashhad the previous Monday. There were demonstrations in many cities, and in Tehran, Gorgan, Isfahan and elsewhere twelve people were reported to have been killed by the army.

The previous weekend there

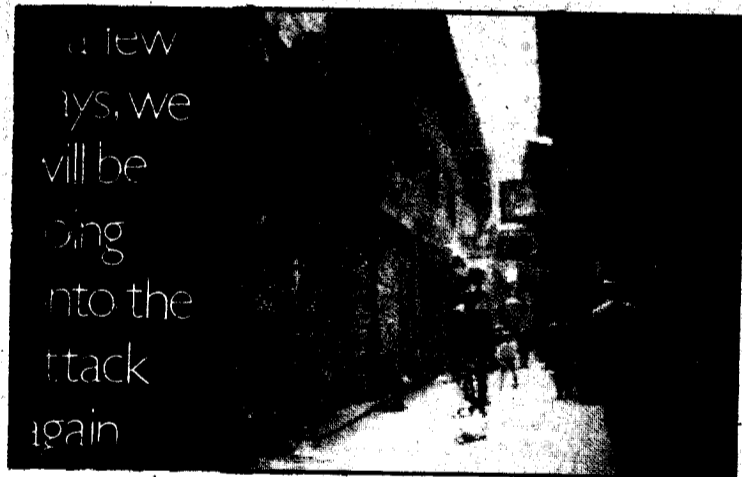
were major demonstrations in Yazd, Shiraz, Tehran, Qom and Mashhad. About 40 people were reported killed.

The army's repression seems only to lead to renewed protests. But the generals are in no position to try to wear down the movement gradually. Strikes are still paralysing the economic functioning of the country.

Gas production is shut down. Electricity supply is only partly functioning; troops have been sent in to run the power stations. Newspapers, telecommunications, and hospitals are still on strike.

The state machine itself is affected by strikes of the employees in the Planning, Justice, Commerce, Labour and Finance ministries. And the Tehran bazaar, after re-opening for a few days, is now shut down once again. [See below.]

The most important question, though, is what the workers on strike are doing to organise themselves and ensure the necessary supplies for themselves during the strike. Workers' councils are needed for those purposes; they are also crucial to the chances of taking the present movement beyond the overthrow of the Shah, to the overthrow of the whole exploitative and unequal system which the Shah has presided over.



The leaders of the bourgeois opposition to the Shah are the merchants of the Tehran Bazaar.

Many of these 400,000 merchants are substantial businessmen. Between them they control over 60% of private import-export trade and almost all domestic trade.

In the summer of 1977 they formed the Society of Merchants, Traders and Craftsmen, and denounced the 'Chamber of Guilds' imposed on them by the Shah. Since then they have provided the major financial support for both the National Front and the Muslim opposition.

In the 24th November edition of the Paris daily Le Monde, Paul Balta recounted his discussions with leaders of the bazaar movement.

"Why are you against the Shah?"

"Why did the Americans want to get rid of Nixon after the Watergate affair? It's a moral question. The Shah wants us to be like sheep. He tolerated neither our support for Mossadeq (the nationalist prime minister overthrown in 1953) nor our participation in the National Front.

"He has committed innumerable crimes against the people: he is selling off the country and its wealth."

Aside from the political problems the bazaar traders have economic grievances. 'The role of a sovereign is to reign, not to get involved in business.' One trader explained: 'I wanted to set up a steelworks. I was told that I would get authorisation if I gave the Shah's brother a share.'

Others added that they had had the same problems, for match factories, brickworks, and shoe factories.

They also resent the appearance of the new bourgeoisie based on oil [which they call the 'petrobourgeoisie'], favoured by the court and often linked to the multinationals. 'They compete with us disloyally', said the bazaar men.

They point out that the authorities refuse to renew work permits for dissidents, and that the trade tribunal (dominated by SAVAK agents, according to the bazaar leaders) then uses the fact that they are in breach of regulations to close down their shops for three, six, nine months or longer.

On top of that, taxes have been raised by 20 to 50%. In reprisal, the bazaar men are mounting a 'tax strike'.

"In a few days, we will be going onto the attack again" said one. "In Moharram (beginning December 2nd) the revolution will break out, starting from the bazaar."

The bazaar merchants' opposition to the Shah clearly has different motives and different objectives from the workers'. So far, because of the still-primitive state of working class organisation, the class differences have been blurred over in the common battle against the dictatorship.

As the struggle proceeds, the merchants could find themselves faced with a different sort of revolution — one starting from the factories, refineries, and oilfields and ... not from the bazaar.



AFTER THE FIGHT AT FORDS

AFTER THE FORD workers had squeezed between 10% and 16% rises out of their bosses, the Labour Cabinet could only think of resorting to 'sanctions'. They almost admitted it was only a reluctant gesture.

The 5% is finished as a strict ceiling. Three years ago, millions of workers did accept that it was fair to impose a limit of £6 for everyone. Now that myth has collapsed. Anyone can see that wage increases are not decided according to justice or fairness, but are a matter of what you can get, given your strength of organisation and the degree of the bosses' resistance.

Swamped

The Labour leaders have told us many times that 'free collective bargaining' would mean 'the economy' (meaning the bosses) being swamped by a wage explosion. It was never true. The rule, as long as capitalism survives, is that the employers' wealth and greater concentration gives them the advantage in the wages struggle. They need no protection!

The rule that the employer has the advantage is doubly true when the employer is the state. And it looks like the Government's strategy for the coming months will be to use its strength as an employer to keep down wages in the public sector, while only mildly complaining about private employers who pay out more than 5%.

They know the TUC leaders, having shocked themselves by their vote last week against a joint Government-TUC statement, are keen to avoid trouble. A tacit, informal 'incomes policy' can be worked out to hold at least until the general election.

Many settlements have already been made which go over the 5% limit. Kodak

workers accepted 13%, including an 8% productivity deal. Vauxhall workers accepted 8½%, BOC settled on 9½%, and 16% was won for 48,000 heating and ventilation engineers and plumbers.

Even the Government admits that only 500,000 workers have so far accepted 5% deals. Workers who are not straightforwardly breaking the limit are looking for ways round it. The seamen are being offered 8.75% and shop workers between £5.50 and £6.55, under the 'low paid' clause.

Other special case arguments abound. Ambulance-men want parity with the firemen and policemen, a £65 minimum wage, and a 35-hour week. Nurses, agricultural workers, and several groups of skilled workers want exemption from the 5% rule. The *Financial Times* estimates that over 1½ million workers are already looking for let-outs. The real 'special cases' could be the unions which accept 5%!

The Bakers' Union is actually fighting the 5% now. Close behind them could be

the tanker drivers, whose negotiations have just broken down. Shell, Esso and BP stewards are due to meet later this week and formulate their plans for action. Like last year, the Government will try to rely on its master plan for the army and oil monopolies to organise scabbing jointly.

The miners' claim worries the Government less. The bonus scheme has had a corrosive effect on militancy in the pits, and the settlement date is still four months away.

Tame

Where the Government is acting tough is with the one million local authority manual workers and health workers. The Rate Support Grant to local authorities is being raised only 1.6%, and there is a ceiling of 10% on increases in local rates.

A similar tough line will probably be taken with 600,000 civil servants, who will be putting in a claim based on the official Pay Research Unit recommendat-



Bill Sirs

ions of increases ranging from 10% to 30%. The Civil Service Department have contingency plans, after a study made earlier this year, for the operation of key computer centres during a strike.

The major battle lines are being drawn between this Labour Government and organised workers in the public sector. Even the tame steel union ISTC, which has agreed to massive shedding of jobs over the past years, is demanding 12½% (4% of which is to be used on shortening the working week).

Many of the public sector union representatives were among the fourteen TUC General Council members voting against the TUC/Government statement on pay a couple of weeks ago. But they have not been pushing for active TUC support for the bakers — nor preparing to get active TUC support for their own members when the time comes.

In effect the TUC — unwilling to accept the 5%, but also unwilling to wage war against Callaghan and Healey — has adopted a line of letting every union get as much as it can... on its own. Thus the hypocrites who have been preaching for so long about free collective bargaining meaning 'the weakest go to the wall' are encouraging precisely that same 'weakest to the wall' situation.

But any workers fighting for better pay represent the interests of all workers fighting for better pay. And if enough people recognise that, the 'weakest' may turn out unwilling to 'go to the wall' ... and not so weak after all.



PRESSURE MOUNTS FOR A.N.L. CONFERENCE

Leaders of the Anti-Nazi League are under growing pressure to answer for their policies and to allow a democratic structure to be set up to run the League. At the National Working Council of the ANL, held in Birmingham on Sunday 27th November, a resolution calling for a national conference of the ANL to be held by January in order to elect a steering committee and decide policy was defeated, but only by 52 votes to 34.

That there was a vote at all showed how heavy the pressure is. When the National Working Council was established it was made clear that it wasn't going to discuss the ANL's policies. It isn't an elected body; chosen delegates from branches are invited by the organisers.

Despite this a number of branches had come to the meeting with resolutions calling for changes in the way the ANL is being run and its policies. The Birmingham district of the ANL put a resolution calling for a conference to elect a leadership and to work out a platform for active opposition to the NF on the

streets, to carry out a 'No platform for fascists' policy, not to rely on state bans, and to support black self defence.

Peter Hain, chairing the meeting, declared the section of the resolution outlining a platform out of order on the grounds that it had 'been discussed at the ANL's last conference'. A proposal from Liverpool district ANL then became the main focus of opposition to the ANL leaders. It called for a new conference to be held by the end of January.

The main defenders of the way the ANL is being run at present were SWP members. They recognised that the ANL contained two very different strands, one which wants to fight the fascists and one which wants simply to say how nasty fascism is, without taking any action. Their conclusion was that this alliance had to be held together at all costs.

Paul Holborrow argued that the ANL must be kept together till after a general election, because the most important work it could

do was mass propaganda against the NF, and that democratic discussion in the ANL would blow it apart.

Many of those attending the meeting felt that the ANL's vagueness severely hindered activity. A letter of protest from 30 ANL members in Cambridge who had attended the picket of the NF Remembrance Day march was raised at the conference. It pointed out how that demonstration had not been seriously built for, and raised a doubt as to whether the ANL leaders were even really in favour of having the demonstration.

The likes of Ted Willis, Willis Hall and Michael Parkinson may have left the ANL, but there appear to be still enough people involved in the running of the League to provide as much 'moderation' as they could possibly want to see. A conference of the ANL to bring its leaders to account is still needed and ANL branches, many of which were not represented at the Birmingham meeting, should call for one to be held to work out a clear policy for action.

DOUG MACKAY

N.A.C. CONFERENCE TOLD

STILL ONLY 15 OUTPATIENT ABORTION CLINICS

THE National Abortion Campaign has mobilised tens of thousands on the streets against the attempts to restrict abortion rights through Parliamentary bills proposed by James White and William Beayon. But an ongoing campaign will still be necessary to fend off likely attacks from future parliaments, whether the Government is Tory or Labour.

Opening the NAC Trade Union conference last Saturday (25th), Dr. Berry Beaumont pointed out that four anti-abortion MPs have come in the top ten in the ballot for private members' Bills. Now is the time, she said, to make Labour MPs vote not with their 'consciences' but according to Labour Party policy.

Outpatient abortion clinics will be a major theme of NAC campaigning in the coming months.

These clinics make it possible for abortions to be early, safe and less distressing. But there are still only fifteen in the whole country.

Some unions have policy in favour of abortion rights but do little about it. Sue Owen (CPSA) explained how members were forming a women's group to fight for women's rights within her union.

The Action Proposals adopted at the end of the conference called for a national demonstration against any future restrictive legislation, a campaign for the provision of adequate NHS day-care abortion facilities, a fight to defend and improve the Health Service as a whole, and support for the international day of action on abortion on 31st March next year.

SUE CROSS

Using machines to eat up jobs

What is the new technology?

Traditionally newspaper articles have been 'set' in metal type. A 'proof copy' is then printed and read for corrections. The type is corrected and put together into a page.

Under the new systems articles are typed into a computer, using a 'visual display terminal' — a sort of sophisticated typewriter which shows what you are typing on a screen like a television screen. The article can then be called back from computer storage for sub-editing and corrections.

Page lay-out can also be done on the computer. Then the computer switches the page onto a photo-typesetting machine, which prepares pages ready for printing at a rate of 3,000 lines a minute.

The whole process from the journalist's draft to the printing press is thus streamlined drastically.

Some newspaper bosses want to go further by having journalists type their copy directly into the computer, rather than leaving that job to the compositors who traditionally do the work of type-setting.

Computer-based techniques can also drastically streamline clerical work.

Why do the bosses want it?

The newspaper industry has suffered from the rise of television. The papers which are left after closures and mergers are quite prosperous, however. But they face problems from rising newsprint prices and from the fluctuation in advertising revenue during industrial recessions.

So the bosses are trying to cut labour costs and tame the traditionally strong but narrowly craft-minded print unions. They want new technology as a means to that end ... and only as a means to that end.

What do the workers want?

None of the Times workers are opposed to new machinery. They are opposed to job cuts, increased work loads, and destruction of their trade union organisation.

A petition circulated by militants in the Natsopa Clerical Branch puts forward the following main demands:

- No job loss;
- Adequate safety protection. For example: no-one should sit in front of a Visual Display Terminal for more than 40 minutes without a break. (The civil servants' union CPSA has an agreement with the Post Office setting a 50-minute maximum spell on VDTs).
- A shorter working week; no regular overtime.
- Training and re-training programmes.



THE TOP PEOPLE'S PACK OF LIES

CLARE RUSSELL replies to the Times bosses' adverts.

The newspaper business is more vulnerable than most to industrial disruption. If we lose part or all of a day's production, we can't simply produce more next day, to catch up.

Yet since the beginning of 1978 alone, we've lost more than 12 million copies through unofficial stoppages. If this continues, our newspapers will simply bleed to death.

It is also true that if workers lose part or all of a day's pay, then they can't simply earn more the next day, to catch up: no-one takes strike action lightly.

The unions point out that most of the disputes at Times Newspapers have been provoked by the bosses.

The bosses found out about the Times' lockout plans on October 15th. Natsopa alone received no less than 27 documents together with the bosses' demand that they reach agreement on them by November 30th or face a lockout. And the plan outlined in the documents amounted to the complete destruction of all the safeguards and conditions which Fleet Street workers have won over the years.

It scarcely fits in with the bosses' picture of themselves as seeking nothing but sweetness and light.

Moreover, they are far from 'bleeding to death'. The Thomson organisation, which owns the Times, made £1,200 trading profit out of every employee last year.

Is there an alternative? Yes there is. We've made fair and wide-ranging proposals to the unions who represent our staff.

1. We want to set up a system, that will be honoured by everyone, for resolving disputes.
2. We want to replace old machinery and equipment, and to phase in gradually some of the 'new' technology.

Fine words from bosses whose present lockout is in breach of the existing dispute procedure! And they omit to mention the main content of their 'proposals' —

which should more properly be called an ultimatum.

They insist on slashing jobs, increasing work load, and making sure that managers can rule over the workers like dictators. This has nothing to do with reducing strikes or modernising technology. Increased profits are the name of the game.

Times Newspapers demand:

- The right to hire and fire at will.
- If one chapel takes industrial action, all other chapels will not be paid.
- Compulsory overtime.
- The right to tell any worker to do any job.
- Management to define staffing levels.
- No pay for covering for sickness and holidays.
- The right to use agency temps at any time.

It will mean 'better pay, benefits, cleaner and easier working conditions.'

It is true that the bosses are offering pay rises. Quite rightly from their point of view, they reckon that such rises are a small price to pay for smashing trade union strength. When the rises have been etched away by inflation, as they soon would be, the power to win new pay rises will no longer be there.

Working conditions could be made better and easier by the 'new technology'. But they certainly won't be under the new regime that the Times bosses want.

They want to use the 'new technology' to force people to work at the pace set by the machine. But people forced to work at

a visual-display terminal, without any of the little pauses you can have when working at a typewriter, suffer from eye strain and nervous stress.

And conditions certainly won't be improved for the people who will end up on the dole as a result of the job cuts the Times bosses want.

Easy enough to see how our proposals will benefit the newspapers...

What they mean is, it's easy enough to see how the proposals will benefit them, the bosses. As far as they are concerned a good newspaper is one that brings in big profits.

The way that 'new technology' has in fact been introduced has led to newspaper quality — for readers, as opposed to shareholders — becoming worse, not better. In Thomson regional newspapers, for example, (according to a NUJ report) these are the results of going over to photocomposition: "Copy required much earlier ... copy lost in the computer ... difficulty in getting corrections ... more difficult to change or revise copy once it has been set."

New technology need not lead to these results. The reason why it has done is that it has been introduced without consultation with — still less control by — the workers who must actually operate it. It has been introduced that way because the bosses' main aim is to use 'new technology' as a weapon against the workers. Yet for new technology to help in producing good newspapers there must be workers' control.

THE OWNERS of the Times and the Sunday Times have made it clear that they are sticking to their threat of closing on November 30th.

The main board of Times Newspapers has issued a statement saying that they "reaffirm not only their agreement with the aims of the Executive Board but their total support for the action it is taking to achieve them".

Among the Board members is Lord Greene, formerly TUC chairman.

As against the firm stand of the employers, the unions appear un-coordinated and ill-prepared. The bosses have be-

come more and more confident that the closure of the Times will last no longer than two months, and that then they will quite easily be able to shed all the unwanted workers and reopen with a smaller workforce.

They expect that their main problem could be finding enough workers when they reopen!

The only union with a consistently hardline stance has been the National Graphical Association (NGA). They have the most to lose. NGA General Secretary Les Dixon has said

IF THE WIN, V

The 'new technology' has wonderful potential. A lot of purely routine work could be eliminated. A very limited extension of existing technology could allow anyone to receive news reports and features at home, on the screen or in printed form, just by pressing a button on a television set, and to get cross-references, back-references, and different accounts just by pressing another button.

Communications facilities could be opened to millions of people, instead of being almost entirely the monopoly of the wealthy classes.

New technology under workers' control

S ON ALL

that he will not enter into talks until Times Newspapers lifts the suspension threat and agrees that only NGA men should typeset copy for the paper.

Thomson regional newspapers have been alerted to give support, although Les Dixon stated: "I cannot say at the moment whether this will be in the form of an all-out strike".

But there are no plans for united action of all the press unions. It could be easy for the management to pick off the less well organised sections of workers. The bosses have been juggling with the 54 bargaining units trying to secure agree-

TIMES BOSSES WE ALL LOSE

wouldn't mean job cuts. It would mean re-training of the workers, and the production of a far greater range of papers.

But the Times bosses want new technology as a weapon against the workers. At the Times the issue is not for or against new technology. It is for or against job-slashing and union-bashing.

All print and media workers should support the Times workers. If the Times bosses win, other bosses will follow their example.

Unity among the print unions is essential. All are threatened. A competitive scramble to secure particular jobs to

one union or another will only help the bosses. A democratically elected joint union committee should be set up to direct the struggle. Solidarity action should be organised in other Thomson newspapers and in Fleet Street, to show the Times bosses that the workers have the power to win.

The Times bosses are prepared to sit through a long lockout, trying to wear down the workers. The best way the workers can counter this by occupying the Times, taking control of its facilities, and producing a strike paper at the service of the labour movement.

Support



Workers

WE OUT LOCK OUT!

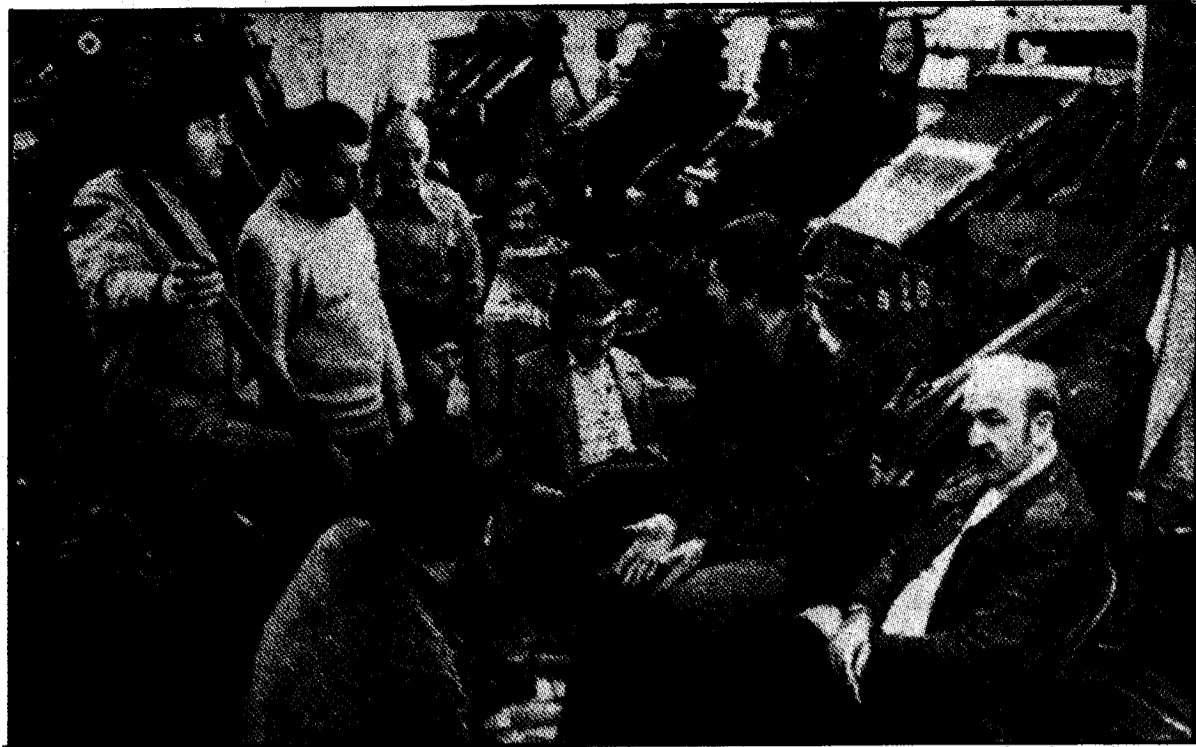
ments. Already one group of workers — SOGAT department — have signed an agreement.

NATSOPA stands to lose members both on the machine side and the clerical side. The Times management intend to farm out work in the subscription department, for instance, to outside contractors.

Like other unions, Natsopa intend to levy the membership in the event of a lockout. And they are leaving union-controlled job vacancies elsewhere open during the lockout so that Times workers can be put into temporary jobs.

This idea has been well received by Times workers. It is not difficult to see why: in the event of a long lockout they want to be assured a regular income. But in terms of keeping up solidarity it could be disastrous — particularly when the union has offered the Times workers no concrete plans for action.

Many clerical workers could just accept the redundancy money and find new jobs elsewhere. In fact there is a rumour that Natsopa is negotiating the running of extra copies of other



German printworkers occupying their workplace

Germany:

50,000 JOBS TO GO, BUT UNION LEADERS STILL DRAG THEIR FEET

IN 1966 Axel Springer, publisher of Europe's biggest circulation daily paper *Bild*, pronounced that as far as technology in the print industry was concerned "We haven't progressed since Gutenberg".

But then things changed rapidly. Between 1970 and 1976, 34,000 out of 224,170 jobs were lost in the German printing industry. About 50,000 more jobs are expected to go in the next ten years.

In 1976, the main print union IG Druck put in demands for:

- * A 35-hour week for all print-

workers;

- * the retention of craft pay levels for those doing typesetting, including new recruits;

- * compositors rather than journalists or secretaries to be employed for typesetting;

- * a 20-minute break in every hour for people working on the new machines.

Later the leadership of the union dropped the demand for a reduction in the working week for all print workers, and retained it only for compositors.

The print bosses' association rej-

ected all the union's demands ... and the union then waited a year before doing anything.

In the last two months of 1977 negotiations resumed, but the printers also began to refuse to work overtime and protest strikes took place. In mid-January the strikes escalated — with no papers appearing in Munich on one day, and none in Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Dusseldorf another day. (West Germany's papers are regional.)

On 25th January 1978 the IG Druck leaders negotiated an agreement with the bosses which fell a long way short of the union's demands. The agreement, due to run until 1988, provided that compositors be reserved work on the same pay scales for 5 years after the reorganisation of a workplace. Typesetting under the agreement would only be reserved for compositors till 1983.

This agreement was initially accepted by a majority of the union's main negotiating body, but later the same body refused to ratify it after intense pressure from the members.

On 27th February 1978, further one-day strikes took place in 25 workplaces, and on 28th an unlimited strike began in four of the country's major publishers.

In response to this the bosses began an unlimited lock-out in Munich. On 2nd March they locked out for one day all those who struck on 27th February. New strikes took place in response and on 14th March the bosses began a national lockout (although many firms did not fall in with it).

Although the IG Druck conference had previously called on the executive to look into the possibility of occupations in response to lockouts, the union leaders' only response was to bleat about the lockout being unconstitutional.

On the 19th a new and final agreement was reached, but it is little improvement over the January settlement. Compositors are to keep typesetting jobs for eight rather than five years after reorganisation, but wage rates are still to be negotiated. It is clear that this settlement will not prevent the vast majority of redundancies arising in the print.

The key fault for this lies with the union leadership which, while representing all printers, refused to push a united fight against redundancies with demands defending jobs of all printworkers. And which refused to escalate the fight against the bosses once it was obvious they would not back down, and instead spent its time working for whatever settlement it could sell to its members.

PETE FIRMIN

USA:

AFTER THE CUTS, MORE CUTS

American newspapers are several years 'ahead' of Britain in introducing 'new technology'. Computerised photo-typesetting is now universal, and 'direct input' is well established.

Does the reduced workforce have an easy and prosperous life as a result? Not at all — American newspaper bosses are still attacking the unions.

In 1975 the *Washington Post* smashed the press operators' union. This year the *New York Times* tried to do the same thing, demanding a 50% workforce reduction in their pressrooms.

It had nothing to do with new technology. The technology of the presses has changed very little over twenty years. The only difference is that today the presses run twice as fast ... and the bosses want to have only half as many workers.

The *New York Times* newspaper bosses did not win what they wanted. After an 88-day strike they signed a contract guaranteeing work for all presently employed press operators until 1984. The unions, however, conceded that the pressroom workforce would be reduced 30% through 'natural wastage'.

The *New York Times* strike turned out differently from the *Washington Post* dispute because there was unity between the different print unions. Only the International Typographical Union failed to give official support to the press operators' strike. The ITU, the union hardest hit by new technology [like the NGA in Britain] is a shell of its former self, tied down by an agreement with an eleven-year no-strike clause!

Talks are now going on for a merger of the print craft unions.

newspapers to give employment to the Times workers!

But Natsopa militants claim, the Times leaders claim that they are placing themselves at the disposal of the Times workers!

Their sudden support for "chapel autonomy", however, is something of a shock. For many years now the leadership of this union has been 'branching' and expelling people for taking unofficial action. (The most recent case is the Usher Walker dispute.) While calling a demonstration in work time on November 28th on the Times issue, Natsopa officials threatened their members with

'branching' unless they made sure there was minimum cover on their jobs while they attended the demonstration!



The Thomson organisation is a large multi-national. It has lucrative oil interests as well as newspapers. It will be hurt by the loss of revenue from the Times and (if the NGA acts) from its regional newspapers, but not disastrously so. It can sit out a long battle.

There is only one way to win the Times lockout quickly, and that is to spread the dispute to the whole of Fleet Street.

IN Workers' Action no. 117 Collin Waugh described the Garvey movement, the bold expression of black militancy in the USA in the inter-war period. James Davies' article in WA 120 reviewed the policies towards black nationalism which Leon Trotsky and the American Trotskyists worked out on the basis of the experience of the Garvey movement and other militant black movements of that period.

In the late 1950s and early '60s, a new voice of black self-assertion was heard: Malcolm X, who was a Minister of the Black Muslim movement. In this article James Davies reviews the history of the Black Muslims and the reasons for their rapid rise and decline. A second article will describe Malcolm X's ideas and activity, especially after his split with the Black Muslim leadership.



"THE BLACK Muslim movement was destroyed the moment Elijah Muhammad cracked the whip over Malcolm's head, because it was not the Black Muslim movement itself that was so irresistibly appealing to the true believers.

"It was the awakening into self-consciousness of 20 million Negroes which was so compelling. Malcolm X articulated their aspiration better than any other man of our time..."

Eldridge Cleaver — at one time a Black Muslim minister himself, in San Quentin jail — pinpointed two reasons for the Black Muslims' decline, especially among black prisoners.

Reason number one "is that Allah has failed to come". The Muslims' insistence that you had better join up before 'judgment day' had at first brought recruits; but as time went on and "Allah failed to come", it brought demoralisation and decline.

HERO

"The second major reason", Cleaver went on, "was the split in the Nation of Islam that developed over the callous ouster and subsequent murder of Malcolm X, who was the universal hero of black prisoners. Malcolm died at the hands of assassins dispatched from some dark corner of the kingdom of this world. But the onus of his death rests

THE BLACK MUSLIMS

Black man against the white devil

squarely on the shoulders of Elijah Muhammad and the princes of the Nation of Islam in the upper echelons of the hierarchy... To have paid out so coldly one who had worked so hotly to get the Nation over the hump brought about a doom in confidence and turned every Mosque into a ruin haunted by the ghost of Malcolm X".

The history of the 'Black Muslims', or Nation of Islam, went back to 1913, when Timothy Drew (born in North Carolina, and living in Newark, New Jersey) founded the first 'Moorish-American Science Temple'.

Taking the name Noble Drew Ali, he taught that black people were descendants of the 'Asiatics' of Morocco, and Islam was their religion. His organisation established a number of businesses and preached a mixture of self-help, Garveyism, and Drew Ali's own version of the history of the black people.

WAR

After the leader's death in 1929, there was a split. A faction gathered around W.D. Fard, who claimed to be the reincarnation of Noble Drew Ali.

Between 1930 and 1933 — when he disappeared — W.D. Fard gathered a nucleus of blacks around him in Detroit and Chicago. But when he disappeared the small movement split again: between those who thought Fard had been a prophet, and others, led by Robert Poole (later known as Elijah Muhammad) who believed Fard had been God.

With its male members' refusal to bear arms in World War 2, the cult suffered a severe setback. Elijah Muhammad was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in 1942 for encouraging draft resistance. During the war years more than one hun-

dred male followers were arrested for failing to register for the draft. They were each sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

After the end of the World War, and in particular after the Korean War, the Nation of Islam grew. According to the writer E.U. Essien-Udom, "In 1955 fifteen Temples were scattered in various parts of the country; by March 1959 there were thirty in twenty-eight cities of fifteen states and the District of Columbia; and by December 1959 fifty Temples were reported in twenty-two states..."

The reason for the sudden jump in the summer and autumn of

lost-found blacks of America.

The key to this doctrine's appeal is an account of world history according to which blackness is something to be proud of and whiteness something inextricably linked with evil. It is a message which at once ministers to the needs and to the experience of American blacks. In the words of Elijah Muhammad, "it gives [them] the desire to be clean, internally and externally, and to have for the first time a sense of dignity".

This emphasis on decency and self-respect was central to the outlook and attraction of the Muslims. It was the outward

not permitted intoxicants or 'unclean' foods.

The sect stresses the importance of family life, and declares that a woman's place is in the home. Sister Levinia recounts how this reactionary idea can be attractive to many black women: "Islam teaches women how to raise their children, how to take care of their husbands, how to sew and cook, and several domestic things which are necessary for the family. Islam helps men a great deal because it teaches them how to treat women".

Another sister explained why she had returned to the Muslims: "You could not go places without boys asking to sleep with you. I went to few parties. The boys were possessive. I did not like that. I did not go out with boys for this reason.

"In the Nation you are not afraid of the Brothers. They can take you to places without molesting you, and this is why I came back to the Nation".

The Black Muslim creed expresses black pride in the form of a wait-and-see religion. Its followers support their mosque, try to recruit more people, and develop the moral and material welfare of their co-religionists. But it looks to God, not man, for salvation.

So long as the American blacks could see no immediate way of improving their condition, the Muslims' focus on 'judgment day' was no drawback. Gradually, however, with the second round of civil rights legislation in the early sixties and the rising wave of black struggles, blacks demanded of their organisations



The Muslims under the leadership of Elijah Muhammad declined with the rise of campaigns for civil rights

1959 was the screening in June of that year of a TV film about the Muslims called 'The Hate that Hate Produced'. Suddenly the Nation of Islam was a household name throughout the United States.

It was the Muslims' bold inversion of the orthodox myths of white Christian America which earned them their support.

The Black Muslims believe that it is the white man who is 'coloured', that is, who has taken a colour other than man's original one. All humans are descended from blacks.

Some 6,600 years ago, a boy called Yakub threatened his uncle, saying, "Uncle, when I get to be an old man, I am going to make a people who shall rule you".

Yakub created various mutations of the black people. By a long process of grafting, he finally created a race of ugly devils, the whites, whom he called 'Caucasians'.

ASIATIC

Africans with kinky hair are, according to the Black Muslims, also a result of misdirected science; they are descendants of the tribe of Shabazz (whose home was in the Nile and around Mecca) who were lost for four hundred years when they were in slavery. They are thus "the lost-found members of the Asiatic nation".

Soon the rule of Yakub's creation, the white devils, over the Black Nation of Asia will finish. The people specially chosen to herald this apocalypse are the

mark of salvation from the degradation of the ghetto.

Malcolm X, while still a Muslim minister, declared, "Yes, I am what you would call an ex-convict. I am not ashamed of this because it was all done when I was part of the white man's Christian world. As a Muslim I would never have done these awful things that caused me to go to prison".

The Muslim's services are sombre and serious; they are told to wear sober clothes, to address each other formally and take leave with much handshaking, and — very importantly — to be punctual. They are

that they get off the sidelines and into the struggle.

For a long time the Black Muslims had proclaimed the need for the unity of blacks. Then, when a number of militant black political organisations and campaigns did grow up, the Nation of Islam, while still saying it wanted unity, retreated into sectarian criticism.

Gradually the movement that had done much to generate black consciousness in the US was undermined, as that consciousness demanded a more and more militant expression. Malcolm X was one of the most important voices of the new black militancy.



Malcolm X speaking in Harlem in 1963

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SEND TO WA, Box 1960, 182 Upper St, London N1.

I wonder if I could trespass upon the space in your letters column to announce to the revolutionary movement the sad news of the death of Heaton Lee, which occurred at the end of the summer of this year. I delayed writing until now because I hoped that it would be announced by a more authoritative source than myself. However, the fact that he was not a member of any of the current groups should not blind us to his contribution to our movement in the past. I wonder if I could give a brief sketch of his role, for the benefit of the younger comrades.

Heaton Lee was born, the son of a headmaster in a white secondary school, near Pretoria in South Africa in 1915. Coming from such a privileged background (half British immigrant, half Dutch) he became a surveyor in a gold mine in Johannesburg.

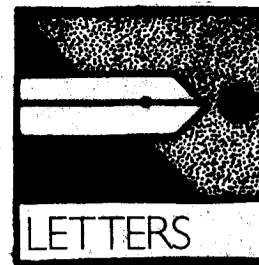
Whilst trapped underground during a fall-in, he was impressed by the sheer courage and endurance of the African miners, and became attracted to the revolutionary socialist point of view. In 1934, together with Ralph Lee, he tried to found the first African miners' union, in Johannesburg.

In 1937 they came to London along with Millie Lee, Dick Frieslich and Ann Keen, and in the summer they joined the Bolshevik-Leninist Group in the Labour Party, the "Militant Group" led by the late Denzil Harber and Starkey Jackson. When the split over the "Lee Affair" took place in the Autumn, along with the others Heaton was a founder member of the Workers' International League.

Though not so talented journalistically as Ralph, or so capable organisationally as Millie or Jock Haston, Heaton's contribution to the growth and influence of the group was no less than theirs. Living on a small part of his salary, he turned over the rest to the group.

During the war the WIL grew in

HEATON LEE



Health takes second place to wealth

A new hospital is to be built in Truro, Cornwall.

Can this be a change of heart by this health service-cutting government?

Unfortunately, no. This hospital, it seems, is a private establishment.

NHS private beds are being phased out. Meanwhile, private hospitals.

This is where Labour's reformist 'road to socialism' has brought it: instead of making health an unshakeable priority, it all depended on how well capitalism was doing.

As the NHS has fallen to pieces because capitalism couldn't 'afford' it, market capitalism has jumped in with private hospitals for the well-to-do. These fee-paying hospitals then speed up the deterioration of the NHS by creaming off the specialists and enticing away the state-trained staff.

DEATH OF A WARTIME TROTSKYIST

influence. By the end of 1943 its members had grown past three hundred, and nine-tenths of these were drawn from the working class. It had led significant strikes (against the united opposition of Tories, the Labour leadership, and the Stalinist Communist Party), and its influence within the trade unions was out of all proportion to its membership figures.

Sensing this, the government decided to move against it. By the time the blow fell, the WIL had united with the fragments of the old Harber organisation to form the Revolutionary Communist Party.

On Tyneside, Heaton Lee and Ann Keen had recruited Bill Davey, one of the apprentices' leaders. At the beginning of 1944 he led the apprentices' strike against being drafted down the mines in the notorious "Bevin Ballot Scheme".

Along with Roy Tearse, Jock Haston and Ann Keen, Heaton Lee was arrested and charged with aiding and furthering the strike (incidentally, this was the only prosecution ever made under that section of the Trades Disputes Act of 1927).

To the enthusiastic plaudits of the Communist Party, they were found guilty and jailed. Though Ann Keen was released immediately (her sentence had actually run whilst the court action was pending) the others were only released after a

campaign committee led by Jimmy Maxton was set up. Whilst in jail Ann Keen was tipped off by a sympathetic jailer that moves were afoot to deport Lee back to South Africa, and she was able to pass on the information to their solicitor who took steps to prevent the deportation.

When the Revolutionary Communist Party dissolved in 1949 Lee, like so many of the other old Trotskyist comrades, could not stomach the rump group set up under Gerry Healy's leadership with the blessing of the International Secretariat of the FI, and drifted out of the revolutionary movement. But he remained a staunch socialist to the end, even through these last years of awkward and painful illness.

In these times, when the British Communist Party is plainly on its last legs, and thousands of young people claim adherence to the revolutionary legacy of Leon Trotsky, it would be well to remember those who kept the movement alive in its darkest hours — through the defeats of the thirties, the witch-hunts

around the Moscow Trials, and the Second World War. Only by doing as Lee did — turning his back on his middle class origins and his face towards the working class — will the young revolutionaries of today take advantage of the possibilities opening up before them.

Fraternally
Al Richardson

■ ■ We gladly associate ourselves with comrade Richardson's tribute to Heaton Lee. We do not, however, share comrade Richardson's opinion of the British Section of the Fourth International in the late 1940s. Whatever the Healy group's errors at that period, and whatever its later crimes, it then represented the continuation of revolutionary politics in Britain.



The Trotskyist paper which Lee helped put out

The split in Trotskyism

Comrades, The centre-spread in Workers' Action No.123 "Why the Future Still Belongs to Trotskyism" leaves a lot of important questions unanswered. As you correctly point out in the opening paragraphs, the Fourth International was proclaimed once it was realised that the Comintern was a totally counter-revolutionary instrument in the hands of the Soviet bureaucracy.

It is therefore not surprising that one of the major questions that has confronted the Trotskyist movement since 1933 has been an analysis of the character and evolution of Stalinism.

PABLO

A high-point in that discussion came in 1951-53 when a tendency in the FI attempted to liquidate the Trotskyist movement on the basis of a revisionist and non-Marxist analysis of the Kremlin bureaucracy's role in world politics during the 1940s and early '50s. This led to the famous "53 split" between those defending the Trotskyist position on Stalinism as a totally counter-revolutionary current in the workers' movement, and the Pablo tendency who thought that under mass pressure the Stalinist parties could be forced to seize power and that deformed workers' states would exist for centuries.

Yet your article says not one word on this critical period. You state that this issue is at the root of the divisions among the Trotskyist groups today and continue "among the Trotskyist currents, there are very serious political accounts to be settled, and official questions to be unravelled."

PARTY

What are these serious political accounts and difficult questions that separate you from other "Trotskyist currents"? Surely if the differences are serious programmatic ones e.g. over an assessment of Stalinism, you are not debating with other Trotskyists, but with centrists. But perhaps you've invented a new category — centrist Trotskyists. Or on the other hand perhaps you do not understand what a principled basis is for revolutionary unity between organisations like the I-CL, WSL, LSA and the IMG (British section of the Fourth International).

Serious workers looking towards Trotskyism will, quite rightly, not wait around for you to 'settle accounts', but will look to organisations that in practice are fighting to build a united Trotskyist party and International.

Fraternally,
Mark Turnbull

REPLY: The WRP and SWP use Pablo as a lightning conductor to avoid accounting for themselves; comrade Turnbull, apparently, wants to heap blame on Pablo so as to exculpate the present-day United Secretariat.

The errors made by various Trotskyist currents in the 1950s and after were not the focus of our article in WA123; nor can we deal with them here. But it is a grotesque conspiracy theory to suppose that the International Secretariat of the Fourth International (the 'Pablo tendency') in the early 1950s was seeking to 'liquidate the Trotskyist movement'. Those who really saw no future for Trotskyism did not serve on the International Secretariat; they left the movement, as Michele Mestre, George Clark and several others did in 1954.

When the International Secretariat said that under mass pressure Stalinist parties might 'project a roughly revolutionary orientation', it committed no 'revision of Marxism'; it simply registered the realities of the Yugoslav and Chinese revolutions. And the thesis of 'centuries of deformed workers' states' was contained in no official document of the International Secretariat. It appeared only in an article by Pablo written some time

prior to the 1951-3 period which comrade Turnbull considers to have been crucial.

Since 1953 the Trotskyist movement has fragmented. The International Secretariat/United Secretariat has shown a political instability which can indeed be described as centrist. While condemning Stalinism in general, for example, it has made no call for a political revolution against the bureaucracy in Vietnam (and took several years to make up its mind to do so for China).

It is the International Secretariat/United Secretariat which has 'invented a new category'. While remaining independent of the Stalinist and social democratic bureaucracies, and while continuing to subscribe to Trotskyist principles, it has repeatedly tended to dissolve those principles down into 'advice' for those bureaucracies.

The problem is not that we have arbitrarily 'invented' peculiar neologisms. On the contrary, it is that the comrades of the IMG have obstructed political dialogue which might lead to the unity they claim to fight for, by entering into wearisome and pedantic quarrels over words. The comrades should drop the method of trying to conduct political analysis through application of formal logic to concepts abstracted from a different period and turned into static classifications.

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RALLY MAKES A Weak call for 35 hr week

The West Midlands Regional Conference of the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment on 'The 35-hour Week' last Saturday attracted 120 people to Birmingham, 100 of them said to be delegates.

Tony Saunols (YS N.E.C. delegate and a Militant supporter) gave the keynote speech. He went on at length on why the 35-hour week was a good idea — at the same time as talking about the need to make British industry competitive. Why, he wanted to know, does Japanese industry produce components which

Britain's industry doesn't. The guest speakers were Audrey Wise (Coventry S.W. Tribune MP) and Sid Harraway (one of the Ford unions' national negotiators).

ALERT

Harraway's monumental cheek in addressing a conference on the 35-hour week — the first demand he dropped from the Ford claim — was only surpassed by the bootlicking of the Militant who, one and a half hours of set-piece

speeches and anecdotes later, still hadn't mentioned Fords.

Militant's deference to officialdom was written into the resolution put to the conference: "We demand that the Labour Government introduce a 35-hour Act in Parliament and alert the workers to take action against intransigent employers." Only one speaker, from Rover Solihull, mentioned action by the rank & file.

A 35-hour week is the right demand. But even the best demands, directed at leaders who are tied hand and foot to capitalism, can only be auxiliaries to

rank and file action.

As part of our next wage claim the 35-hours is winnable and can be a great victory for our class. As an abstract principle, however, it can't even answer the problems of the next two to three years.

But for the Militant the 35-hour week turns out to be nothing but a neat partner to their No.1 slogan, 'Nationalise the 200 monopolies' — and both are benefits to be got from the same bosses' government.

ROB MCGONIGLE
RICHARD PAINE

EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Paid ads (including ads for publications) 8p per word, £5 per column inch — payment in advance. Send copy to Events, Box 1960, Rising Free, 182 Upper St, London N1, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

Friday 1 December. Black Women Speak Out: meeting organised by the International Campaign for Abortion Rights, with speakers from Zimbabwe, the USA, and Britain. 7.30pm, Seymour Hall, Shouldham St, London W1.

Friday 1 December. Spartacist public meeting: 'The Fight against Fascism: Anti-Nazi Rock Carnivals or Union/Black Defence'. 7.30, Labour Club, Bristol St, Birmingham. Further information, ring (021) 472 7726.

Saturday 2 December. Women in Iran. An Iranian socialist feminist, recently returned from Iran, talks about what is really happening. 7pm, St Ann's Hall, Venn Street, Clapham, London SW4.

Saturday 2 December. British Argentina Campaign conference. 12 to 6pm at Student Union, Brownlow Hill, Liverpool. All welcome: conference fee £1, to BAC, 52 Acre Lane, London SW2.

Saturday 2 December. Anti Nazi League trade union conference, 10am to 4pm at TUC headquarters, Congress House, Gt Russell St, London WC1. Three delegates each from trade union and workplace organisations: credentials from ANL, PO Box 151, London WC2.

Thursday 7 December. All-London Campaign against School Closures public meeting. 7.30pm, Friends House, Euston Rd.

Friday 8 December. Iran Solidarity Campaign public meeting, 6pm, Large Lecture Theatre, Polytechnic of Central London, 115 New Cavendish St, London W1.

Saturday 9 December. Iran Solidarity Campaign demonstration: 'Down with the Fascist Regime of the Shah; Cut all links with the Shah's Regime; Stop Arms shipments to Iran; US and British imperialist hands off Iran'. Assemble 1pm at Westminster underground station, march to no.10 Downing St.

Sunday 10 December. Liverpool Trades Council conference on Ireland. At AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant. Apply for credentials to the Trades Council, 70 Victoria Street, Liverpool 1.

CARF No.7 out now! Campaign Against Racism and Fascism, 15p. Articles on racism and the judiciary, the East End, racist attacks, Harambee, State Harassment, Blacks Britannica, Immigration and prisons, plus news, reports, etc. Available from progressive bookshops or from CARF, Box 35, 182 Upper St, London N1. Discount for bulk orders with cash.

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BAKERY STRIKE— WOMEN ONTO THE BARRICADES

"THERE AREN'T many women on the picket line because the information doesn't reach the women. Part of the reason is that there's no woman representative on the branch committee at the moment. But this is being changed. I've been nominated shop steward by my section".

Glynis Gabriel, a married woman with two children who is a packer at the Sunblest bakery in Cardiff, spoke to Workers' Action about the bread strike. She has a short reply to men who say women shouldn't be on the picket lines.

"We've got every right to do what male chauvinist trade unionists do. We pay the same subs and are entitled to exactly the same rights.

"We work in the bakery, so we should be in on whatever is going on. Every member should be there for at least two hours a day"

Glynis Gabriel takes home £34 a week for a nine-hour day, five days a week, including Sunday at double time.

"Men get the best jobs first, we just get the menial tasks. Men are on £1.03 an hour and I'm on 94p for running machinery on the same job.

"The bosses get around paying us the same rate by grading us differently. But we need to work to live. We're not working for pin money or bingo money.

"The cost of living is very high, but wages are low for all of us. If bread prices were directly connected to our wages, it would be about 15p a loaf! The bosses are making a lot of profit, and it's not coming our way. I'm going to stick out till we've got £10.

"But the union should take up more issues facing women, not just wages.

"We need nurseries for children, because we've still got to look after them when we get home. Many women don't even have the choice of going to work.

"The union doesn't know much about these problems facing women".

Round the picket lines

L'POOL SENDS SQUADS TO S.WALES

AT MERRITTS [Sunblest] bakery in Cardiff, management scabs are still producing bread. On Monday 30th pickets came from Liverpool to help, and there was a real battle with the police, though the bread still got out.

In Liverpool, the strike is really solid and flying pickets are on 24 hour call to go to any part of the city.

There will be more mass pickets of Merritts. And on Friday [1st] coaches from Swansea, Taffs Wells, Cardiff, and probably Liverpool are going to Tewkesbury to try to stop the flour mills there.

Clive Jenkins of ASTMS has instructed all his members [mainly managers] in the bakeries not to handle scab bread; and in Merritts one assistant manager has already walked out over the long hours they are being asked to put in... something like 18 hours, to produce the scab bread.

HOW NOT TO RUN A PICKET

FOREMEN AND supervisors at Suttons Bakery (Sunblest) in Coventry decided last Wednesday to join the bakers' picket lines. On Tuesday 28th they reaffirmed their decision despite a management offer of £20 a shift bonus if they would bake bread, and despite a vote by van salesmen to return to work on Monday 27th.

The van-drivers' vote follows Bakers' Union officials successful efforts to draw the sting from a mass picket at the bakery last Friday.

120 pickets had formed into four lines, with linked arms, to stop all vans coming out. Then the police tried to throw a scare

by arresting a worker who had picked up a stone (with no vans anywhere near) and charged him with possessing an offensive weapon.

That was enough for the officials. They told the pickets to stand well back from the gates, and to stop only vans driven by managers. Vans driven by scabbing van salesmen could be let through because the salesmen could be dealt with by their own union (the T&GWU) after the strike ended.

In fact the officials could not tell which vans were driven by management and which weren't... and so all the vans got past unchallenged.

The following Monday the majority of the salesmen reversed their previous vote to support the strike. Their leader, Des Drew, claimed that if they crossed the line and delivered bread, the bakery's supply of flour would soon run out and the van drivers could then claim £44 a week lay-off pay without breaking the strike.

This curious logic does not fit the facts. The bakery bosses are making sure of flour supplies, with scab drivers who are paid £120 a load.

ON TUESDAY 28th Bakers Union members from Preston picketed the Manchester headquarters of the United Road Transport Union. URTU has been notorious in the strike for defending scabbing by its members who work as delivery drivers. One URTU official announced that "Our men only take bread out which they know has been baked by Bakers' Union members, in defiance of their own union's instruction".

GARNERS MASS PICKET
Friday 8 December. From 6pm at the Whitcomb St restaurant (near Trafalgar Square).

HORNSEY LABOUR PARTY
Canvass for Ted Knight. Sunday 10th December, 10am, from Hornsey Labour Rooms, Middle Lane, N8.

Workers' ACTION

BL: CUT THE HOURS, SHARE THE WORK

AT A MASS meeting last Friday [24th], Longbridge convenor Derek Robinson announced that he was abandoning the British Leyland car workers' demand of £100 for line workers and a 35 hour week.

As he said on TV later, he thought it had been a great advance when the BL bosses offered 5% without their previous condition that all BL car plants must agree to the parity plan. So bowled over was Robinson by this generosity from the bosses that no hint remained of a fight against the 7,000 redundancies written into the parity plan.

BL bosses have offered to introduce the new minimum time rate when their new grading scheme is accepted, and then to back-date it to November. On the 35 hour week, they refused to negotiate at plant level.

Meanwhile Longbridge management are going ahead with cutting 1,332 jobs in Allegro production, and Robinson and the Works Committee are organising no resistance.

Because of this lack of leadership, there are a lot of volunteers for redundancy. But, as the Workers Action Longbridge bulletin says, "The only answer is to cut the hours and share out the work. For example, for a 25% cut back we should impose a 30 hour week and so on".

TEACHERS SET STRIKE PLANS

THE CAMPAIGN by teachers in Liverpool to fight the Liberal/Tory council's plan to scrap two city comprehensives and run other comprehensives without sixth forms alongside grammar schools took another step forward on November 16th. A meeting of the Liverpool NUT Action Committee, made up mainly of NUT school representatives, voted by 125 to 14 to call for two actions.

They are calling for teachers to refuse to take classes for a teacher who is absent for more than one day. And a meeting in school time is planned for January, to discuss a proposal for all-out strike action if the Department of Education and Science supports the council's plan.

Unfortunately the NUT's rules mean that there must be a round of votes before action is started. The Action Committee's recommendations for no-cover action must be agreed school by school before they can be introduced. If strike action is proposed in January, two-thirds majorities will be needed in the schools, and the NUT National Action Committee must give its approval.

BARBARA WOJCIECHOWSKA

CARDIFF BUS WORKERS ACT AGAINST ASSAULTS

CARDIFF BUS crews have finally decided to take action against violence on the buses. Feelings came to a head after an assault three weeks ago on a busman working a route through the Ely estate.

After a week of little action by the Council, management, or the union branch leadership, a group of busworkers collected enough signatures to insist on a special branch meeting.

A motion was passed demanding working radios and vandal screens on every one man operated bus. We decided to provide a partial service to the Ely area for two days and to hold a public meeting for the estate residents.

All future assaults were to be met with similar action, and a strike fund was opened to cover any loss of wages for the drivers.

Soon after a conductor was spat on. The management refused to take responsibility for the drivers being insured for the partial service we were prepared to provide, let alone paid for it. Our branch officers ordered a complete withdrawal of services throughout Cardiff for the rest of the day.

Cardiff City Council's transport

committee convened a special closed meeting the following week. Going by a report in the local press, they decided that we would not be paid for the period of the strike... but failed to comment about payment for a partial service.

The local press followed up by running a story on bus drivers 'moonlighting' as taxi-drivers, with a special selected quote from the taxi drivers' union representative about us withdrawing buses and then profiteering on the taxis. The story even found its way into the Daily Mirror, without of course any comment on our low wages or our generally hostile attitude to any such moonlighters.

But the branch has gained some experience of the potential power we have.

The lessons of workers' solidarity are even getting home to the racists who work on the buses. They had no reservations in their support for a partial service when a black driver was assaulted and subjected to racist abuse... although one racist still tried to cover himself by saying, 'Well, he's a black white, really...'

PAUL BYERS

Coventry NALGO says No to Pay Limit

Over 200 members came to the Coventry Nalگو branch last Wednesday, (22nd) and decided to completely oppose the 5% limit on wages or any other limit which further lowers our standard of living. We also supported the Warwickshire County Nalگو's call for industrial action if a satisfactory pay award is not forthcoming.

Clearly the success of the Nalگو pay claim will depend on the success of other workers in breaking the 5% limit. This means that we must campaign among Nalگو members to give practical support for other workers, like the bakers, immediately in struggle. Their fight is our fight.

The branch also supported the regrading claim of the social

workers, lodged with the Social Services Dept. on 20th October. It was decided that there would be one-day strikes and work-to-rule by all fieldwork staff. If no local agreement is reached by 18th January 1979, the fieldwork staff will be balloted for full industrial action.

Another issue in Coventry Nalگو is the question of the regrading dispute among Coventry technicians. Lab technicians (mostly women) are paid less than workshop technicians (mostly men). It seems that sex discrimination is at work again.

Parity with other regions may also be an issue. Coventry technicians are beginning to ask what fellow workers in other authorities are earning.

SID WEST

LIVERPOOL BLACKS SLAM BBC RACISM

FOR THE first time in several years, the black youth of Liverpool took to the streets in an organised way last Saturday, 28th.

They were protesting against an article published in the BBC's magazine *The Listener* of November 2nd. The article described Liverpool 8 (an area where many blacks live) as 'the red light district'. Liverpool's 'half-caste' population, it said, is 'the product of liaison between black seamen and white prostitutes'. They have 'no recognisable home life' and come to see themselves as 'nothing'.

This racism, worthy of the NF, came from a BBC reporter who

has been working with the Liverpool police on a programme for Nationwide.

The 300 marchers last Saturday, mostly young blacks, marched through the city and delivered protest petitions at the local BBC building and at Hope St police station. Slogans included: 'The police are racist', 'the BBC are racist', and 'Oxford out'. Mr Oxford is Liverpool's Chief Constable.

The demo was sponsored by the Merseyside Anti-Racist Alliance, the District Labour Party, the Trades Council, and many other groups.

KEVIN FEINTUCK