

Grunwick: Where are the TUC's action plans?

TWO WEEKS ago the TUC took a tough line on Grunwicks — in words. Len Murray and APEX general secretary Roy Grantham grabbed the headlines with speeches promising action by the whole trade union movement to win justice for the Grunwick strikers, who have been out for over a year battling to win trade union recognition and reinstatement.

Since the tough speeches Grunwicks has dropped from the headlines altogether. There has been a little news from the Grunwick bosses' side: they have brought in a generator in case workers cut off electricity supplies. From the strike committee, news that they are lobbying the TUC General Council. From the strikers' union, APEX, and from the TUC — silence!

Does this mean that behind the pious hullabaloo at Blackpool the real decision of the TUC and APEX leaders was to drop the question of Grunwicks?

Just what is going on?

The rank and file must organise to step up blacking action against the firm. The mass pickets must start up again despite the pressure from the trade union bureaucracy to "cool it".

workers' ACTION

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Con-trick takes its toll

CALLAGHAN can make as many speeches about the "benefits from North Sea Oil" as he likes, but the latest official figures of earnings, prices, and unemployment give a more reliable picture of the realities of this Labour government.

The price index has gone up over the last year by 17.6%. Earnings were left far behind, rising by only 8.8%.

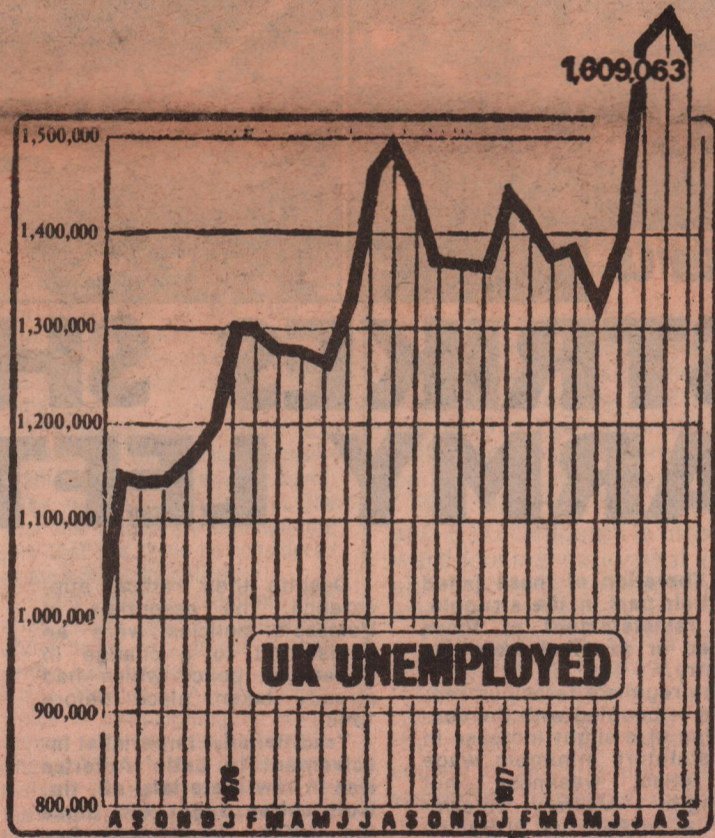
Basic wage rates only improved by 4.7%. Little wonder that 15.5 million hours overtime are worked each week, as workers try to keep up with price rises.

Adult unemployment was up 33,000 this month, although it is usually a time of year when unemployment falls. As winter draws on, unemployment will certainly increase.

Despite a slight drop in the overall numbers of unemployed — a drop accounted for by many school leavers beginning courses and a few finding jobs — it is the highest unemployment total for this time of year since the war.

What a triumph for the Social Con-trick!

More and more workers know this, and are starting to fight back against the continuing decline of living standards. The TUC and union leaders will try to isolate them. The job of socialists must be to support them and give them solidarity: their fight is our fight too. **No more Social Contracts, Phase 1, 2, 3 or anything else!**



ISRAEL STAKES A CLAIM IN LEBANON

ISRAELI troops and armoured vehicles crossed Lebanon's southern border on Tuesday 20th September and set up three permanent posts. Reports speak of 50 tanks and two battalions acting in support of right-wing Christian militias.

For nearly a year Israel has half-openly been supporting these militias, hoping through them to wipe out the Palestinian strongholds in southern Lebanon.

In this period Israel treat-

ed the area south of the Litani river almost as a part of Israel. The Syrians were warned that their troops would not be permitted to enter the area.

Syria's President Assad, who directed last year's invasion of Lebanon, has not responded to the Israeli attack: the 30,000 Syrian troops that make up the bulk of the Arab "peace-keeping force" have not moved despite the appeal for support from Yassir Arafat.

Meanwhile Camille Chamoun, noted leader of the Lebanese Christian right, is welcomed in Damascus to have discussions with Assad. And Israel's foreign minister Moshe Dayan is in Washington negotiating with Carter. All are willing to seek a solution for the Middle East at the expense of the Palestinian people, who were driven from their homeland thirty years ago and have been harried and betrayed ever since.

Hyde: The ban hits the left, too

THE BAN imposed by Home Secretary Merlyn Rees on marches and political meetings on council property in Tameside has been greeted by many on the left — most notably the Communist Party — as a victory over fascism. In reality Rees' use of the Public Order Act is directed as much against the left as the National Front.

From the time of its enactment in 1936, the Public Order Act has been used almost exclusively against the left. It was first introduced after the Mosleyites had been defeated at Cable Street, and its purpose was to eliminate mass working class anti-fascist mobilisations which the police could no longer control.

The present case is no exception. Chief Constable Anderton explained his call for the ban on the grounds that he could not prevent violent confrontations if the Front march went ahead. He would doubtless have liked to provide them with an escort, but the lessons of Lewisham and Ladywood are fresh in his mind — and in Merlyn Rees'.

Nor is it any accident that North West TUC secretary Colin Barnett, who had been fighting a losing battle in the trade union movement against mobilisation to confront the NF, leapt at the idea of a ban.

The National Front themselves, despite Martin Webster's blustering promise to demonstrate as an individual, are probably not too unhappy about the ban. Clearly an attempt to march on the 8th would have been most costly for them in terms of casualties and prestige. They've had a lot of press coverage out of the affair as it is — and, above all, the ban cuts both ways, doesn't it?

The left, too, has been denied the right to march or to hold political meetings on council premises in Tameside for the next five weeks. It can be expected that more such bans will follow in the months to come. These are not the most favourable circumstances in which to develop a mass anti-fascist and socialist movement. And it is in such a movement, and not in the capitalist state, that the guarantee against the rise of fascism lies.

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1200 seized as they mourn Steve Biko's death

ON THURSDAY 15 September South African police arrested over 1200 black students who had gathered to mourn the death of Steve Biko, the founder of the all-black South African Students' Organisation.

Those arrested were charged under the Riotous Assemblies Act. The men — 750 of them — were held in custody, while the women — 460 in number — were released on bail. Their trial is to begin in October.

Biko's death while in police detention happened two days earlier, and even in white circles many believe that he was murdered by the police. Demands for an investigation into this, the 25th death in police detention in the last 18 months, came from groups of white students, some newspapers, and the church. Those black leaders like Chief Buthelezi of the Transkei who have generally been pliant tools of the Vorster regime have also spoken out on the issue.

Biko had been arrested on August 18th in his home town of King Williamstown, where he was living under a government-imposed exile. (He was forbidden

to continue his studies, could not be quoted, could not travel beyond a radius of 10 miles without special permission, was forbidden to speak to more than one person at a time, and could not enter any publishing or educational premises). At the time of his death no charge had been made against him.

South African Justice Minister Kruger now says that had Biko lived he would have been charged with inciting arson and rioting. Kruger also claims to be in possession of "secret documents", which, as the 'Times' puts it, "link Mr Biko's Black People's Convention with the black consciousness movement". Which is rather like discovering "secret documents" proving the Labour Party has links with trade unionism.

For the first few days, the official South African version of the death of Steve Biko was that he died as a result of a 7-day hunger strike. Donald Woods, editor of the 'Daily Despatch' in South Africa, has revealed: "Steve and I had a pact... the understanding was that if ever he was detained, and if one of four specific causes of

death was alleged, I would know it to be untrue. The four were self-inflicted hanging, suffocation, bleeding or starvation".

The BBC in its news item just accepted the official story, announcing without qualification that Biko had died as the result of a hunger strike.

Kruger now lyngly denies he ever said that Biko starved himself to death. His latest account claims that the black leader was fed intravenously in his prison cell (not in hospital as an earlier official report had it).

Delegates to last week's Transvaal congress of the ruling Nationalist Party found the death of this important black leader the occasion for great mirth. After Kruger had stated that "Biko's death leaves me cold", other delegates joked about how "democratic" Kruger had been to give Biko "the right to starve to death".

This and other hard-line reactions seems to have outraged a section of "liberal" opinion in South Africa, arousing demands not only for an investigation into Steve Biko's death but into other cases of "death under detention".



'He taught blacks to be proud of their blackness and to realise an appreciation of their own worth in their own terms, to seek self-sufficiency, not to look to others for their liberation' — Steve Biko described by his friend Donald Woods.

IN October 1968, a military junta seized power in Peru. Proclaiming itself anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist, it won the approval of Fidel Castro, who said in a speech on 14th July 1969 that the new regime could lead the revolution in Peru. But nine years later none of the promises have been fulfilled, and the regime is crumbling fast.

The serious intention behind the military regime's left wing claims was to develop Peruvian national capitalism. But two major world recessions since 1969 have left little room for such development. Industrial growth in Peru has been less than it was in the 1950s and 1960s.

Real wages have gone down 30% since 1975, and unemployment stands at a staggering 50% of the economically active population. The regime's land reform — one of the strongest props of its radical reputation — has resulted in driving off the land hundreds of thousands of poor peasants unable to buy land on the terms provided for.

They have clustered into shanty towns on the outskirts of the major cities. More than half of the 4.3 million people of Peru's capital Lima live in such shanty towns.

A 24-hour general strike against these conditions took place on 19th July. It was the climax of a strike movement which had started in June after the government, under pressure from the International Monetary Fund, announced major increases in fares, petrol prices and food prices.

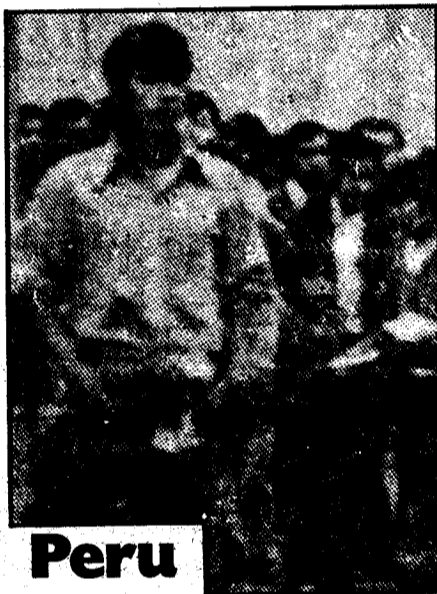


The government met the strike movement with bitter repression. According to government figures, six people died when police and troops opened fire on demonstrators in Lima; according to unofficial sources, at least 50 were killed.

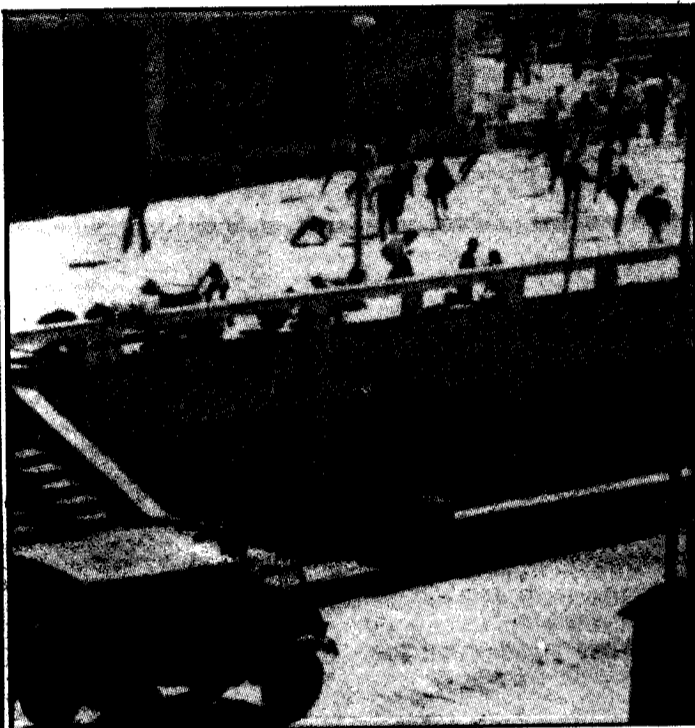
Immediately after the strike about 5,000 workers were sacked for their leading role in the struggle. But working class resistance has continued, with miners' strikes in the centre and south of the country — despite the fact that one trade union federation (controlled by the Communist Party) withdrew straight after 19th July from the coordinating committee which called the general strike. (The CP has generally supported the regime since 1968.)

The demands of the workers' movement are:

- wage increases to restore buying power;
- a freeze on prices of basic necessities;
- suppression of debts due from peasants under the land reform scheme;
- basic democratic rights;



Peru



STRIKES SHAKE ARMY LEFTISTS

■ liberation of those jailed for their part in the struggle, and reinstatement of those sacked or expelled from the country.

The regime's ferocious reprisals — coupled with the concession of a slight increase in the statutory minimum wage — reflect weakness, not strength. "Military reformism" — in Peru, or in Bolivia under Ovando and Torres — was intended to repeat the success of Peron in Argentina or Vargas in Brazil in creating an alliance between the industrial capitalist class and the labour movement, at the expense of the traditional landed oligarchy. It failed, just as the attempt at a re-run of Peronism failed in Argentina in 1973-76.

Peru's government, led by Morales Bermudes (who took over from the ailing Velasco Alvaredo — leader of the 1968 coup — in a new coup in August 1975) has promised a constituent assembly in 1978 and a return to civilian rule in 1980. In the meantime it holds on through increasing repression, while reversing some of Velasco's policies. (The fishing industry has been nationalised, and there is talk of doing the same for other industries.)

Despite their radical appearance, the essentials of Velasco's policies were an adjustment to a change in imperialist policy which had already taken place before 1968.

Traditionally, imperialist involvement in Latin America was in raw materials: oil, tin, fruit, coffee, sugar, etc. Since the 1950s, investment has shifted much more into manufacturing industry, as the rate of profit, worldwide, in the raw materials sector has declined.



The "military reformists" nationalised parts of the raw materials sector and broke up some of the large landed estates. This caused friction, of course, particularly when Peru nationalised the US-owned International Petroleum Company without compensation.

Mostly, however, generous compensation was given in a form which enabled the owners in the raw materials and agrarian sectors to transfer their wealth easily to the manufacturing industry sector. This shift was not at all against

the interests of imperialism. The *Wall Street Journal* was calmly explaining this fact at the very same time as IPC was furiously campaigning for US intervention against the Velasco regime.

The favoured form of industrial development under Peru's military regime has been joint enterprises in which both imperialist capital and Peruvian capital — usually via the state — have shares. In that way the regime hoped to secure for the Peruvian ruling class a section of the profits deriving from imperialist financed enterprise.

But, due to the effects of the world recessions, the profits have not been there in sufficient quantity. And despite the repression against the workers' movement in Peru, and the disorientation of parts of it by the regime's leftist image, the working class is ready to fight.

With Brazil's bloodstained military dictatorship also tottering, the truce which the Latin American ruling classes have been granted by the victories of hard-line reaction in Bolivia [1972], Chile [1973] and Argentina [1976] could well be brought to an end soon.

COLIN FOSTER

AFTER Sir Keith Joseph had hit the headlines with his attack on the Scaman Court of Inquiry on Grunwicks, Margaret Thatcher captured the front pages with her statement that she would opt for a referendum if a Tory government were threatened by trade union revolt.

The threat of a referendum in the case of a strike is not very serious — not because it would take too long to organise, as Jack Jones says, but because it would politicise strikes to the disadvantage of the government. More seriously, the Tories may attempt to use referendums on issues like incomes policy.

Referendums have often been a favoured weapon of right wing governments. They are generally the least democratic method of voting, because the government is heavily favoured by being able to choose for its own convenience the time, the issue, and the phrasing of the question. General De Gaulle ran France from 1958 to 1968 by repeatedly organising referendums posed in terms of "De Gaulle — or chaos".



James Klugman, the officially appointed historian of the Communist Party of Great Britain, has died at the age of 65, after a lifetime spent not in the service of communism and the working class — but of the Russian Stalinist bureaucracy.

His first notable book, "From Trotsky to Tito", was written in 1949, after Yugoslavia had broken away from subservience to Josef Stalin and the Russian state. It "proved", chapter and verse, that Josef Tito had been an "infiltrator" in the pay of capitalist states even while he worked underground in pre-war Yugoslavia, fought in the Spanish Civil War against fascism, and led the partisans who fought the German invasion forces and local Royalists in Yugoslavia.

Klugman was in a specially good position to "put it over" because he had served during the war as part of the British Army liaison with the partisans. He spun out the lies knowingly — and therefore all the more convincingly.

In 1955, when friendly relations were restored between the USSR and Yugoslavia, the CPGB formally withdrew "From Trotsky to Tito" from circulation. But Klugman was not in disgrace. Far from it.

When, in 1956-7, a great wave of revulsion shook honest members of the CP, who suddenly learned part of the truth about Stalinist tyranny, the cry went up in the CP for a honest history of the Party. After the noise had died down, in the wake of expulsions and resignations, the party appointed a learned historian to produce the 'honest history'. It was James Klugman.

In fact, in 20 years' work, Klugman got no further than the Party's first decade. And there is no chance that his death will open the way for the CP to finish the job in a halfway honest fashion.

How the police got Tony Anderson

TONY ANDERSON has been in Norwich jail since May, convicted of throwing a man through a plate glass window and assaulting two police officers. His nine month sentence is the latest stage in three and a half years' police persecution of this 21 year old black youth.

In summer 1973 Tony was coming home from party and a police officer said, "Come here, sunshine". When he said, "My name isn't sunshine", a second policeman punched him in the kidneys.

Tony was left huddled in pain in the gutter. Friends brought him home, and Tony's mother Mrs Kiffen, took him round to Tottenham police station to lodge a complaint. The police surgeon confirmed that Tony had been hit in the kidneys.

Superintendent Parkes from Hornsey police station, who was assigned to direct an internal police inquiry, assisted Tony's mother in putting her complaint — or so it seemed. But after the case had been dismissed, he pressurised Mrs Kiffen into sign-

ing an agreement to take the matter no further.

From then on, Tony was repeatedly in trouble. Police charged him with possession of drugs and being carried in a car he knew to be stolen; the case was dismissed. At a disturbance at the Tottenham Royal, he was the only one of 300 youths present who was arrested. He was fined £75 for threatening behaviour. Later he was fined £75 on charges of stealing chewing gum and a comic.

An incident outside Tottenham magistrates' court during one of these cases led to a second internal inquiry. As Tony came out of the court building, he found a policeman pointing a cine camera at him.

Mrs Kiffen told Tony to run, and she went up to the policeman, who hid the camera in his jacket.

The inquiry found that "this officer was waiting for a colleague (who was attending court) so that they could leave together to make an instructional film of a road speed meter device. To fill in the time, the officer was testing various camera angles... Finding one excuse not enough, the report continues: "There was no film in the camera, and this has been verified by a court official..." The court official has not been identified, nor has anyone said why there was no film in the camera if it was about to be used.

The incident that finally put Tony behind bars was in May this year, outside the Noreik Club in Seven Sisters Road. While Tony was watching from the other side of the road, a middle aged man was thrown through a window by some youths whom he had 'told off' for noisy behaviour.

The police seized Tony and manhandled him, causing considerable pain to an injured hand. Tony naturally resisted: at the trial the magistrate directed the jury that this could be considered as assaulting the police.

Mrs. Kiffen, together with other black women concerned about police harassment of their sons, has formed the 'United Black Women's Action Group' which is campaigning for a full inquiry into the case. The 'Islington 18', arrested in the same district, escaped conviction on the heaviest charges against them because of the major defence campaign launched for them: the same effort must be made to defend Tony Anderson!



Anthony Rodney is one of the 'Islington 18', arrested in a racist police round-up in January. Tony Anderson, another black youth from the same area, is now facing similar police harassment.

Democracy slaughtered to suit the Government

AMONG the advertisements in the back of this year's National Executive Committee report to Labour Party conference is a full page taken by the National Union of Public Employees.



The page is given over to printing a resolution submitted by NUPE for the conference, supporting the Tribune "alternative economic strategy". It was the only way NUPE

could bring the resolution to the notice of conference delegates, for it has been ruled out of order by the Conference Arrangements Committee.

Another victim of the way democracy has been slaughtered in preparation for this year's Conference is the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, Engineering Section. The Conference Arrangements Committee refuses to give details of all the resolutions it has chopped, but it is believed to have excluded at least 150.

Of the resolutions which got through, 79 call for MPs to be subject to regular re-selection by their constituency parties. 66 CLPs and the National Organisation of Labour Students have submitted an identical amendment to the Constitution, to make re-selection obligatory.

The last time any one resolution received so much support was at the height of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the early 1960s. Despite this, Walter Brown, the deputy national agent, told a meeting of the CLPs concerned last weekend that they would only get 11th priority for discussion time at Conference. This means that the issue is unlikely to be discussed.

Every effort has been made to ensure a quiet conference when a general election may be no more than six months away.

The left-wing majority on the NEC is, as everyone knows, in disagreement with the Government on many issues. But they have refused to challenge the Government even on the utterly diversionary issue of the Common Market.

As if one referendum on the EEC wasn't enough, four CLPs have tabled resolutions asking for another one. ASTMS calls on Conference to oppose direct elections to the EEC Assembly. But the NEC's statement to Conference spends 12 pages moaning about the EEC while always skillfully avoiding any practical conclusion which might embarrass the Government.

The NEC has not come to understand that the whole anti-EEC campaign is utterly reactionary, inspired by backward-looking nationalist ideas that the way out of capitalism's crisis is to have Britain for the British. No: they just want to avoid any trouble.

Democracy is being defied not only by suppressing debate but by flagrant defiance of accountability to Conference. Last year's conference voted for a Party anti-racist campaign, with the resolution including a call for the repeal of the 1968 and 1971 Immigration Acts. The couple of leaflets and pamphlets which finally appeared supported immigration controls. And there was very little more to the campaign than a couple of leaflets.

Hypocritically the NEC declares that "Many trade unions — and even Labour Party conferences — had passed resolutions against racialism, accompanied with much rhetoric about the Brotherhood of Man and the Common struggle of all Workers. This has begun to change... The campaign has intensified the battle against racism... But there is still a danger that the momentum achieved could be lost. Not just words, but positive action is needed..."

If only there had even been the right words, let alone the positive action! A few serious words about the brotherhood of man would be better than leaflets explicitly supporting laws to prevent people from other countries (especially those with dark skin) from coming into Britain.

The purpose of the NEC and the Conference Arrangements Committee is to keep the hatches screwed down in case there is an election next spring.

It is a doubtful enterprise even from a narrow election-winning point of view. Bureaucratic dictatorship makes for quiet conferences but not for energetic canvassing. But in any case what is the use of winning elections if Labour Party members lose the right to debate Party policy properly and to push Party organisations into active campaigning?

A leader of the Italian Communist Party, Lucio Lombardo-Radice, is quoted in the Italian newspaper 'La Stampa' as saying, "The term Marxist Leninist has disappeared from the Italian Communist Party vocabulary in a natural way, without prohibitions, like the disappearance of the term 'dictatorship of the proletariat'."

"Article 5 of our constitution, which requires members to adhere to Marxist-Leninist principles, is like a dead branch. It is necessary to cut it off to avoid misunderstandings."

The same theme was echoed by Geoff Roberts of the British CP, in a debate on "Trotskyism and Revolution" with Ernest Mandel at the Socialist Challenge 'Symposium' on 9th September. Making the reservation that 'Eurocommunism' upheld Lenin's insistence that "the concrete analysis of a concrete situation" is essential, he nevertheless admitted that "Trotskyism is the continuation of Leninism and the early Comintern".

The Socialist Challenge 'Symposium' not only witnessed the CP saying that Trotskyism is the continuation of Leninism, but also the IMG saying that their organisational principles are not those of Bolshevism.

In a much-applauded speech, IMG member Chris Roseblade said that new models of revolutionary militancy are necessary. Stalin meant 'man of steel', Kamenev 'man of stone'; Lenin took time off revolutionary organisational work only to devote himself to intensive theoretical study.

Some approximation of a Bolshevik tempo of work might have been possible for IMG members when they were students. Nowadays, however, more members have domestic commitments. And, said Chris Roseblade, the revolution isn't going to happen this year or the year after. So a more relaxed definition of revolutionary activity is necessary.

In 1916 Lenin said that he did not expect to see the revolution in his lifetime; and certainly the Russian socialists, too, had the problem of ex-student comrades who became less willing to be active as they grew older and the attractions of a comfortable, domestic middle class existence exert a bigger pull. The discomforts of revolutionary activity in Russia were, moreover, infinitely greater than they are in Britain. But it was the Mensheviks who tailored their organisational rules to the convenience of the not-so-committed.

The Chief Constable of Greater Manchester, James Anderton, has got Tameside District Council to ban a National Front march through

Hyde on October 8th. The march was to be called under the slogan "Freedom against Red Terror".

Anderton's move will delight those like the local CP who have been campaigning to get the march and a following meeting banned as an alternative to militant action to drive the fascists off the streets. According to the council decision, "all public processions in Tameside" will be banned on that date. Latching onto Anderton's request to use the powers of the 1936 Public Order Act, section 3(2), are local Tory councillors. One, Lawrence Bell, has stated: "We shall undoubtedly be accepting the Chief Constable's advice. I am against all forms of marching, whether by the National Front or the Socialist Workers, or trade unionists. It is a form of intimidation".

From the 'Morning Star', 19th September: "The German Democratic Republic has freed 90 political prisoners and transported them to the West, it was reported in West Berlin yesterday.

"Their release had been paid for in hard currency by West Germany under official agreements between the two countries, with the Bonn government paying about £42,000 for each one..."

Darcus Howe, editor of Race Today, has been released from jail, where he was to serve a three month sentence. The judge said he was releasing Darcus Howe because the case was "stale".

During last summer's upsurge of racism, Birmingham Trades Council President William Jarvis distinguished himself by endorsing Powellite calls for a stop to further immigration.

Last Wednesday, 14th September, Birmingham District Labour Party decided by 43 votes to 26 to put Jarvis and his co-thinker Barry Acker off the list of Labour candidates for the next district elections, because of their support for racism. The vote confirmed a recommendation from the District Labour Party EC.



Support and money are coming in from a wide variety and large number of organisations. Those who stand firmly committed to picket-line duties grow daily. Our work-in has won wide support...

We refuse to accept the AHA plea that Government policy makes it necessary to put cash before patient care. We reject the Government's entire programme of cut-backs in public expenditure, whether it be in health, education, transport or building.

We reject private medicine and believe that every NHS hospital that closes opens the door wider to paying hospitals. We want to see the NHS restructured, so that it is run by and in the interests of the working people of this country and is free to all at the time of need.

We call for a massive injection of funds into the NHS.

We want the NHS run on more democratic lines, so that the voice of the public, the health workers and the patients are all reckoned with. We believe that hospital closures are a false economy and ill-conceived.

The working people of this country are paying for an economic crisis which is not of their making. The right to a decent living, to decent shelter and to good health are rapidly becoming available only to those who can afford the price.

Meanwhile drug companies make millions out of the NHS; building workers are unemployed; brick mountains grow higher while countless numbers are homeless; workers of every trade are kept idle against their will; their demand for the right to work goes unheard, while factories remain shut.

When nurses take to the streets, when hospital workers break through artificial barriers and unite to defend their health service, insisting on providing patient care to the needy, then it is clear that they are calling a halt to the run-down of the NHS. If we be-

If we become isolated from our allies, from our patients, from the general practitioners, from consultants, from other workers, our work-in will fail. Our goal has never been to hold an empty building.

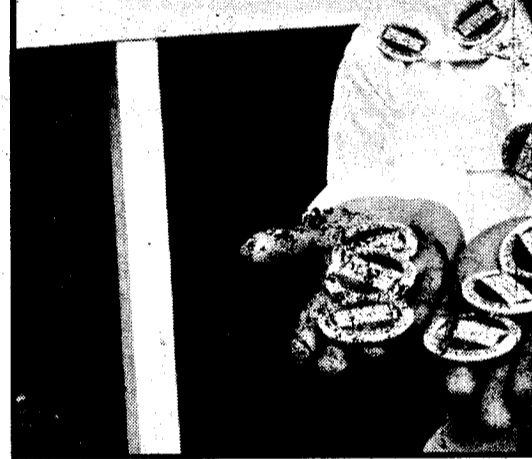
To succeed we need the help — the active help — of all who want to defend the NHS.

From the statement of the Hounslow Hospital Defence Committee.

FIGHTING



HOUNSLOW HEALTH CENTRE
EALING, HAMMERSMITH & HOUNSLOW
HOUNSLOW
HERE IS NO ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY SERVICE
NEAREST HOSPITALS:
WEST MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL, UXTON, UXTON, MIDDLESEX, TEL: 560 2121.
ASHFORD HOSPITAL, STAINES, MIDDLESEX



Kiss of death gets brush-off

Our work-in has won wide support, because staff made it clear that they are defending the National Health Service, defending the social wage of every person

On August 31st, five hundred demonstrators marched in support of the Hounslow Hospital 'work-in'. The demonstration attracted a lot of support — women's groups, ex-patients and local people marched together with the hospital's workers and many other trade unionists. The public service unions NUPE and NALGO, who are giving the work-in official support, were there in force. AUEW members, including the Ford Langley Shop Stewards Committee, and West London

Trades Councils, were there too. The march was led by a group of nurses and headed by a Musicians Union jazz band.

Hounslow hospital workers have been in collision with the Area Health Authority (AHA) for the last six months. Over that period the Authority have tried very hard to implement the planned run-down of the Hospital. They have used all sorts of dirty tricks and petty sabotage, such as not allowing out-going phone calls to GPs and cutting off the phones altogether.

Around 80 nursing and ancillary staff have disobeyed orders to report to the West Middlesex Hospital for work. Instead of cooperating with the run-down, hospital staff have decided to work on normally. So far, wages are still being paid and medical supplies and food are still coming in. But a spokesperson for the Defence Committee told us that these could be cut off at any time.

Already the AHA is on the defensive. A week ago it

suddenly moved its meeting from the local Civic Centre to Ealing Town Hall. It gave out that the Civic Centre had been double-booked, but the Defence Committee, which had organised a big lobby, are convinced that was just an excuse to avoid the lobby. If that is so, the move didn't succeed: a coach was quickly found, and the lobby went to Ealing.

The AHA meeting in fact voted to pump an extra half a million pounds into the Hounslow District budget. It could save the hospital for a time, but as yet no decision to do that has been made.

Hounslow is just one of three hospitals in the area prescribed the 'kiss of death'. The AHA want to close it and use it as storage space! Brentford is already closed (the defence committee there decided against militant action) but the third threatened hospital, South Middlesex, has decided to follow the lead of Hounslow and put up a fight for survival.

Report and Artwork by MINDA

Hounslow is a two-ward hospital for men and women, with a total of 66 beds. Many of its patients are elderly people who have no-one at home who could care for them. Some are post-op patients recovering from serious operations, and without cottage hospitals like Hounslow they'd probably be sent home too early. With little or not attention, many would die.

45 of the beds are occupied at present, and there would be a lot more if they had the consultants to deal with them. They only have one consultant — on half time. One of the Defence Committee told us "If we had more consultants we would have more patients here — if it meant getting them through the window, we'd get the patients in."

A warning about the effects of the hospital closures has come from one of the top

consultants in the area. He said in a letter to the Community Health Council "The situation is so serious, my prediction is that the hospital services for the elderly may break down this winter and we will be forced to refuse admissions of the elderly patients needing hospital care."

The London Ambulance workers know the effects of the "economies of scale" that are closing so many smaller hospitals. They said in a statement in July that "If you in an emergency ambulance in London, there is a one in six chance that the nearest hospital will be closed and that London Ambulance Control Officers will be arguing with the hospital that they should accept you against the risk of a longer journey."

They revealed that "a survey in January '77 showed 15% of the main accident and emergency departments in London were closed, either partially or to all patients."

They went on "But it is not only the closure of accident

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How Bury beat the Cuts

BURY'S TORY COUNCIL sat down a couple of weeks ago and reversed the main cuts that just a year ago they had insisted were essential. What changed their views on the £230,000 cut in the Social Services budget was a Nalgo non-cooperation dispute, a sit-in lasting seven weeks at one of the threatened institutions, constant TV and press attention, several large demonstrations through the town, and hostile observers at every committee and council meeting.

With a council majority of 38, the Tories no doubt hoped to ride out any short-lived storm. But drip by drip their resolve has been worn down.

The victory belongs mainly to the Action Group formed when the cuts were announced. It was made up of workers in the 7 threatened institutions, of people from local charities, of trade unionists and Labour Party activists. And it also included the people who used the services and depended on them: parents of children at the threatened Day Nursery, parents of handicapped children, the disabled who were to lose their bus passes.

Right from the start, the Group were agreed to fight for all the institutions and services that were threatened, and not to allow the campaign to be split or bought off by partial concessions.

Before the Action Group got on its feet, the Council managed to close an Old People's Home and a Day Centre for the elderly and handicapped. But from that point on, the council has been unable to implement the rest of its plans.

Nalgo's ban on its members cooperating with the cuts has meant that the other 5 institutions were kept running and no-one was moved out, despite management threats of disciplinary action, and threats from

By **SUE ARNALL**
[Bury Labour Party and Action Group]

the council to cut off food supplies.

The Nalgo members remained firm, too, when the council tried to make a deal, to trade off the children's home in exchange for closing the day centre for the elderly.

While the union held the line, the Action Group went to work to inform the labour movement and the people of Bury about the real, human cost of the cuts. The people to suffer would be the elderly waiting for hostel places that didn't exist any longer, the children moved to Homes outside the town, the disabled forced to stay at home or cut down on some essential to meet the cost of a bus fare.

A turning point came when the Group showed it wasn't afraid to take direct action. When last September Hill Crest, the half-way house for the mentally ill, seemed sure to close we decided to occupy it until the council backed down.

All the Action Group helped with the sit-in, with some 50 regulars doing the bulk of the work. The

Group was newly formed at the time and its members came from very different backgrounds. But far from any "moderates" in it being alienated, the Group emerged after a gruelling seven weeks of struggle far stronger, and convinced they could force a victory on all the other institutions.

At the Sefton Street Day Centre, the elderly and handicapped users now announced that they would follow suit to save their service.

The Action Group after that would focus attention on one issue at a time, gathering round itself growing groups of interested or affected people to take action on each place. It helped, for instance, to set up the Friends of Dora Butler to campaign for the retention of the Dora Butler Children's Home. In each case, more people were drawn into the campaign. And as the council conceded each issue, the Group was able to move its forces on.

Once Hill Crest had been saved, the next campaign was for bus passes for the handicapped: Here the Group approached the bus crews, trade unions, the disabled themselves, and the general public. Within a week of the old passes expiring, the Council was shamed into granting the passes again.

Now at last the Council has conceded that the Day Centre and the Children's Home are also indispensable. The sure sign of our sweeping victory is that the Tories are now trying to make a virtue of it for themselves, dressing up for next May's elections at 'the Council that cares'.



The Elderly

- BURY HOSPITALS' GERIATRIC WARD ARE FULL TO OVERFLOWING.
- 20,000 WILL DIE OF COLD THIS WINTER.
- HOW MANY OF THESE WILL DIE IN BURY?

The Young

- BURY'S DORA BUTLER CHILDREN'S HOME WILL CLOSE IF THE COUNCIL HAS ITS WAY..... BUT
- 18 LOCAL CHILDREN WAIT FOR A HOME EVERY WEEK.



Part of a display from Bury Action Group bulletin

TU DISTRICT
A. TEACHING
TAL
THIS HOSPITAL
NHAM ROAD
SHFORD 5118

off

emergency departments causing concern, but closing of whole hospitals in London. That is why London Ambulance Service supporting Health workers who are defending NHS and are preventing closure of hospitals such as Hounslow and South Essex.

week Hounslow mounted another demonstration. Some twenty members of staff plus supporters gathered from Trafalgar Square to Downing Street, carrying a skeleton and a cast body on an operating table. Some of the demonstrators were dressed up as patients, and they unrolled a long petition in support of the hospital.

Whether James Callaghan is aware of the two hoots that if Hounslow is closed, elderly patients in the area won't have a hospital to serve them, is another question. But every week a demonstration is held to build up and gain essential support for the hospital.

IN Socialist Challenge of 6th September, Tariq Ali discusses the International Marxist Group's attitude to the Labour Government and to the current crisis in the Tories' ranks.

Since 1973 the IMG has maintained that the British bourgeoisie needs a Tory government, as the pressure of the Left in the Labour Party and trade unions weighs too heavily on Labour governments. They explain the current Labour government as the creation of a small crypto-Tory right wing "clique" at the head of the Labour Party.

In 1975 and 1976 the IMG put forward slogans like "Sack the Wilson-Healey clique", and now aims to build a "class struggle left wing" uniting all those who oppose that "clique".

The IMG's approach is mistaken in analysis and opportunist in political conclusions.

All's article starts by asking "Is the British ruling class really losing its marbles?", and more specifically whether the "favoured ruling party of British capital" (the Tories) have lost theirs. The occasion was Keith Joseph's attack on the Scarman Court of Inquiry into the Grunwick dispute; and it led Comrade Ali to note "the declining political quality of this old bourgeois party. For by no stretch of the imagination could it be argued that Joseph's remarks were in the immediate interests of the ruling class."

This begs a number of questions. Firstly, is the Tory move to the right something radically new? No. The article reads as if Heath had always believed in "consensus politics". But the Seldson Group which is now proposing Grunwick boss George Ward for "Industrial relations advisor" to the Tory Party takes its name from a Tory meeting at Seldson organised under Heath's leadership.

Until the major defeat by the miners in 1972, the Heath government had pursued a "confrontationist" policy which had been planned before they came to power in 1970.

EVERYTHING FOR THE BEST - IF ONLY...

In any case, it is wrong to assume that the bourgeoisie always has a single inflexible policy, and still more wrong to see it as directly reflected in the agitational speeches of the Tory Party.

At present the alternative of 'confrontation' or 'consensus' depends on economic prospects and on whether the Labour Government can succeed in holding back the working class via the "12 month" and "10%" rules. Prior's policy of rapprochement with the trade union bureaucracy presupposes a fairly docile working class and some degree of economic revival. If, however, there is a wages explosion or a further lurch into economic recession, a more 'confrontationist' Josephite policy might become a serious option.

The conclusions of Comrade Tariq Ali's article form the opportunist sting in the tail of the incorrect analysis. They consist of advice to the trade union leaders (described in the article as "short sighted") on how to maintain the Labour government.

Its essence is captured in the following sentences: "Jack Jones and Scanlon used to say in the early days of this government that unless workers accepted wage restraint Labour would not stay in power. This was always an incorrect argument. Today the

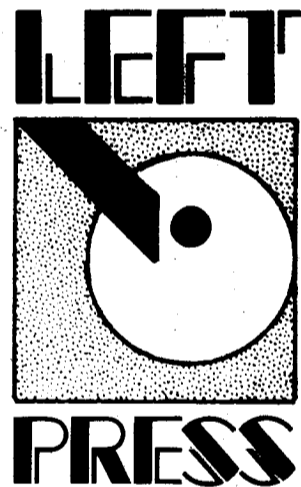
reverse is true. It is only by fighting Labour's policies that the trade unions could possibly keep Labour in power."

Revolutionaries say something different: the independent struggle of the working class, against wage restraint, must be supported and developed whether the government is Labour or Tory and whether the electoral effects are good or bad for Labour. That does not mean we want a Tory government; but a Tory return to power would be a very much "lesser evil" than the stifling of working class militant struggle.

Reformists say the precise opposite: they are not against workers' struggles, but those struggles must be limited and restrained according to the electoral needs of the Labour Party.

The IMG tries to find a middle position. Everything can be for the best, they say: the needs of working class struggle against capitalism and Labour's electoral needs coincide exactly! The riddle is solved: the best way to support the Labour Government is to oppose it. If only Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon were not too "short sighted" to see the answer!

In fact Jones and Scanlon are more clear sighted on this



point than the IMG. More strikes, or more successful strikes, do not automatically mean more votes for Labour — least of all when those strikes come up against a Labour Government.

The IMG's approach could be right only if their picture of the Labour Party were right. They recognise that "the Labour Government is today acting in the interests of the British ruling class" — but if that is due solely to a small right wing "clique" at the top, then the pressure from a "class struggle left wing" could make the Government change its class nature from one week to the next. Under pressure from the Left, the Labour Government will become a workers' Government and rally working class votes to keep it in power.

In line with this exercise in the politics of "wouldn't it be nice if...", the recent draft European Perspectives document of the USFI (to which the IMG is affiliated) advocated using the demand for the "replacement of more 'right wing' political leaders by more 'left' worker leaders (e.g. replace Wilson by a 'left' Labour leader in Britain...)" Our emphasis: note the nuance!

All this argument serves no purpose except to spread illusions in the leaders of the official Labour left, pretending that they are somehow fundamentally different from the current Labour leadership.

BY CRUSHING THE POSSIBILITIES of organised working class resistance, fascism laid the foundations of its economic police. It was an economic policy which especially favoured the bigger capitalists.

The medium and small capitalists also benefited from the destruction of the workers' organisations. In Germany, the political alliance of big, medium and small capital under fascist leadership was sealed in 1933; in Italy, Mussolini had to operate a policy of compromise from 1922 to 1925.

State intervention figured largely in fascist economic policy. The state launched huge public works and armaments projects, on which the big capitalists grew fat. But it was not a policy of nationalisations, still less of socialism. Indeed, de-nationalisation was more the rule.

Shortly after seizing power, Mussolini declared that "We must take from the state those functions for which it is incompetent and which it performs badly." He added: "I believe the state should renounce its economic functions, especially those carried out through monopolies, because the state is incompetent in such matters."

And later: "We must put an end to state railways, state postal services and state insurance."

SEALED

Much in these early speeches is camouflage. Mussolini, in an attempt to win the confidence of medium capital which was in alliance with the southern landowners, was at pains to play down the role of the state until he could be sure the political alliance of these groups with the big bourgeoisie had been sealed.

But he did destroy the state monopoly in insurance in 1923, turning the business over to private capitalism. In 1925 the state gave up operating the telephone system. The match monopoly was turned over to a "Consortium of Match Manufacturers".

German fascism on the eve of its power announced that "there will be an end to all attempts of recent years at nationalisation. State enterprises will again be transform-

In the second of three articles examining the reality behind the myth of fascism's "socialistic" economic policies, Paul Adams shows how Mussolini and Hitler in power used the state to help the big profiteers.

ed into private enterprises."

On this, the Nazis were as good as their word. As early as December 1933 Schmitt, the Minister of the Economy, announced that "the Reich proposes to give up the important share it has had for two years in the capital of certain great credit establishments."

By 1937 the process of the re-privatisation of the most important credit institutions was completed. The state had given up shares of between 33% and 90% in the Dresdner Bank, Donat Bank, Commerz und Privatbank, and the Deutsche Bank und Disconto Gesellschaft.

A similar policy applied to shipbuilding; previously municipalised industries like electric power generation and distribution were privatised; certain public shipping lines were given over to the private sector.

In each case the "public" treasury was milked to boost the profits of big private capital and aid the concentration into its hands of industry, finance and distribution.

Besides re-privatisation, two other processes helped heap riches on the big capitalists: "Aryanisation" and "Germanisation".

The first meant that businesses owned by Jews were handed over to private industrialists. The second meant the division among German capitalists of the spoils of military conquest.

In his book on the Krupp company, William Manchester

How Fascism teams up with Big Business

describes a scene that took place in May 1940 in Düsseldorf while the German army was marching into Holland: a small group of Ruhr industrialists was excitedly poring over a map of Holland while listening to the radio reports of the army's progress. Every now and again they held a discussion and shared out the latest prize and then telephoned the appropriate ministry to stake their claim.

In the summer of 1938, after the "Anschluss" of Austria which incorporated it into the German Reich, the Berndorfer Metallwarenfabrik of Vienna

was handed over to the Krupp company in Germany for eight and a half million marks; the firm's assets according to Krupp's balance sheets were worth twenty seven million marks.

LISTS

According to Manchester, "Even before the thrust into Poland the Führer had invited German tycoons to submit lists of properties lost in 1918, and Gustav Krupp had asked for restitution of his Lorraine holdings. The Weimar Republic had already compensated him for them..." But "With the crushing of all Allied resistance conditions were completely altered. One needn't have a legal claim to enemy property. It was necessary only to get there first and persuade the army's military government officers to intercede. This was, of course, outright brigandage."

The best known of the fascist economic measures are the great public works schemes. These were not an attack on private enterprise, but once again ways of putting the public purse at the service of private enterprise.

The public works schemes were of two types. Those that appeared to be concerned with welfare (though in most cases they were to do with war preparation of one sort or another); and those consisting directly of orders for arms. The German government's initial public works budget was 5.4 billion marks, its arms budget 21 billion.

In Italy the ascendancy of armaments over non-military public works was not established until about 1934. Between October 1922 and June 1934 Italian fascism had spent 43 billion lire on public works (excluding railways, which accounted for a further 28 billion). According to popular legend Mussolini got the trains to run on time; but whether that is true or not, by April 1935 the railways were 900 million lire in the red. But new lines were still being built.)

Big port improvements went

ahead in Genoa, Trieste and Venice, although the slump in world trade meant that these ports were almost deserted. Millions were consumed in building motor highways, though motor traffic was still very light. "Embellishments to the Eternal City" cost a further half billion lire.

Who gained from all these public works?

The cement monopolies made a fortune. Big contractors made millions. While the workers through their taxes bore the cost of the rail system, the heavy industrialists made a mint out of supplying track and rolling stock.

The use of forced labour in much of this work, often labour dragged from among the destitute peasantry, helped to swell the coffers of industry.

ROADS

The Nazis' first "work battle" was announced on May 1st 1933, the day the labour movement was silenced at a stroke. The second "work battle" was announced in March 1934. Each of these was an announcement that more millions of marks were to be showered upon the princes of industry. The Reich undertook to build, according to Daniel Guerin, "a 7,000 kilometre network of motor highways at the stromonic cost of a half million marks a kilometre. By December 1937, 2,000 kilometres had been completed and Hitler announced 'Every year we will complete another thousand kilometres'."

A billion marks was spent on railways although their deficit in 1935 was half a billion marks. As in Italy, civic "improvements", house building schemes and canal building, dragged the state into massive debt. Here also, forced labour was used, and slave labour from the concentration camps.

The state spent even vaster sums on armaments.

From 1934 onwards the governments of Mussolini began to cut down on non-military public works "for reasons of economy", and between July 1934 and March 1938 the government spent 36 billion lire on "extraordinary military expenses". The Finance Minister, Thaon di Revel, predicted that another 12 billion would be needed in the next financial year.

As soon as Hitler's party was in power in Germany, it plunged billions into rearmament. (Although German rearmament was banned, the technical basis of the arms industry was actively being prepared as early as 1920.) In an unpublished memoir, Ernest Haux (for years the chief accountant of Krupp) sums up the period with a simple phrase. With the advent of the Nazis, he says, a flood of credits came from Berlin and he was able to "screw the top on his bottle of red ink".

PLUNDER

William Manchester records that in 1935 Bertha Krupp made a profit after tax, gifts and reserves of 57 million marks; "three years later it was 97 million, and two years after that, 111 million."

These enormous profits were further boosted by direct state subsidies to big industrialists, to finance big schemes where risk was involved and to enable them to take advantage of technological developments and accelerate the concentration of capital.

But the big business paradise had to be financed. A whole battery of subsidiary measures had to be introduced to prevent this plunder of the exchequer from throwing the economy into complete chaos.



John Heartfield's "Hurrah, the butter is finished", an allusion to Goering's declaration: 'Iron always makes a country strong, butter and lard only makes people fat'. Fascism favoured heavy industry as against consumer goods.

Cannon and Stokes, Leicester

On strike against the 12 month rule

A MASS MEETING of the 450 workers at Cannon and Stokes, Leicester, voted unanimously to continue their 3-week old strike for £10 increase on their basic wage, with more for shift work, to bring their rates up to the average in the city.

At present skilled men at the factory, which produces parts for the aircraft industry, earn £50 for a 40 hour week, with semi-skilled workers on a lot less. Their last increase was 5% in March under Phase 2, which worked out at between £2 and £2.50. This means that the present claim is in breach of the 12 month rule.

But, as one of the stewards put it, "We would obviously have preferred it if the TUC had come out against the 12 month rule. But their decision in no way alters our decision to stay out until we get what we want".

A previous mass meeting passed a vote of no confidence in Hugh Scanlon for casting the AUEW's vote in favour of the 12 month rule.

One way round the rule would be to accept a productivity deal. £7.50 has been offered, of which £5 is for re-arranging tea-breaks,

and £2.50 is changes in bonus. The strikers have rejected this as not enough, and say they won't sell any conditions, though they don't mind if management call a satisfactory offer a productivity deal to put them straight with the Government.

Morale is high. All the manual workers are out, though staff are going in. The AUEW District Committee, after being lobbied by the strikers, is now recommending the dispute be made official.

A 24 hour picket is in operation, and nothing is going in or out. Drivers, especially from Rolls Royce, who are the main users of Cannon and Stokes products, have turned back willingly. Lay-offs are likely sooner or later at Rolls Royce, since RR have no other source for the parts they get from Cannon and Stokes. But the strikers insist they will not go back until they have won the £10!

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*, 49 Carnac St, London SE27, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 1-2 OCTOBER. Socialist Teachers' Alliance annual conference. From 10.30am each day at NUFTO Hall, Jockeys Fields, London WC1. Registration 50p.

MONDAY 3 OCTOBER. Campaign against Youth Unemployment lobby of Labour Party conference. Coach leaves Victoria BR station 9am.

MONDAY 3 OCTOBER. United Troops Out Movement meeting at Labour Party conference. Speakers will include Phil Flynn (Dublin trade union leader), Ken Livingstone (prospective parliamentary candidate for Hampstead), Mervyn Metcalf (Coventry Trades Council), and a Labour MP. 6.30pm at the Norfolk Continental Hotel, Kings Rd, Brighton.

TUESDAY 4 OCTOBER. Cardiff Workers' Action meeting, with a guest speaker from the International-Communist League on their recently published Manifesto. 7.30pm at the Rhymney Hotel, Adam St, Cardiff.

THURSDAY 5 OCTOBER. Abortion rights lobby of Labour conference, 12 noon at Conference Centre, Kings Rd. Coaches from London leave Hudson Place, Victoria, at 10am (price £1.50).

SATURDAY 8 OCTOBER. Nottingham Divisional Young Teachers Day School on Equal Opportunities for Women, 11am to 5pm at the Teachers' Centre, Cranmer Street.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY 21-23 OCTOBER. "Critique" conference on "The 60th anniversary of the Russian Revolution and the World Crisis". Registration £2.50: contact Critique, 9 Poland St, London W1.

SATURDAY 26 NOVEMBER. Working Women's Charter day school on women and the trade unions, at Friends Meeting House, Church St, Reading. Details from Anita Turnbull, Flat 2, 3 Coleridge Road, London N8.

THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL ON BRITAIN'S CRIMES AGAINST THE IRISH PEOPLE is being organised for Spring 1978. A "jury" of labour movement delegates, together with internationally-known figures, will hear evidence on the activity of the Army, the police, and the courts in Northern Ireland. Further details and sponsorship form, from 182 Upper Street, London N1.

Local authority
manual workers'
pay claim



THE UNIONS



We'll get nothing without a fight

THE TRANSPORT and General Workers' Union has joined NUPE in calling for a £50 minimum wage for public service workers. The other main union involved, the General and Municipal, wants £55.

The decision was taken at a meeting of T&G branch officers and leading shop stewards held at Transport House on September 15th. Their decision affects workers in the health service, the water industry, and, above all, one million local authority manual workers.

Apart from the £50 minimum, the nine points of the claim are:

- a substantial wage increase,
- consolidation of supplements into the basic rate,
- 35 hour week,
- average earnings when sick,
- penalty payments on behalf of workers not on bonus,
- 4 weeks' holiday after one year's service, and one extra day for each additional year;
- increase in sick leave from 6 to 12 months,
- increased shift pay;
- inflation protection.

It will be discussed with the other unions before being submitted to the employers. But their claims are similar and it is unlikely to be changed much.

There are several problems about this claim. Even using official figures, a £50 minimum would barely restore the real earnings of the lowest paid workers to the level of three years ago. Although the complexity of the various bonus schemes makes it impossible to calculate accurately, most workers would probably be worse off in real terms than in 1974-5, especially when higher income tax is taken into account. The GMWU's claim for

£55 should cover this, and ought to be adopted in the final claim.

Too often the demand for shorter hours and longer holidays has been used as a bargaining counter to be conceded in negotiations. It must be fought for as one of the central parts of the claim. But if a reasonable basic is not won, shorter hours could simply mean more money through overtime, not less work and more jobs.

The demand for inflation protection is very vague. What we need is at least £1 for every 1% increase in the cost of living, starting straight away (not after a 5% or 10% threshold). And these rises must be continuously consolidated into the basic rates.

While several points are unclear or inadequate, one is downright reactionary. The demand for penalty payments for those not on bonus schemes is an attempt to force employers to sign productivity deals. Over the last 10 years most local authorities have been able to use the miserably low wages as the basis for pushing through schemes which usually mean harder work and fewer jobs. Yet with 1.6 million unemployed, these schemes are to be pushed onto those workers who have so far resisted them.

Despite these faults, the council workers' claim could be one of the first big challenges to the government's attempt at a 10% pay limit. It is due for settlement in November, and as 'The Times' commented; "Public sector workers are subject to the influences of government cash limits and their claim will be a direct challenge to Mr Healey's counter-

inflationary policy" (17th September). Put another way — it will take a hard fight to win, and we will need all the support we can get.

Special case arguments won't impress the government, and won't get solidarity from other workers either. Unfortunately the T&GWU national officials don't accept that. Mike Martin (national secretary of the public services trade group) said after last week's conference: "We feel it would be wrong for [the government] to seek a uniform 10% wages policy, throughout the public sector, irrespective of the group of workers involved". This is no way to win.

Preparations should be made now for a serious national strike when the claim is refused (as it certainly will be). Whatever happens, militants in the public sector unions must fight to ensure that no deals are done over our heads by the national officials.

SIMON TEMPLE
[T&GWU, Lambeth Council]

Two dates for women in the unions

THE SOUTH-EAST London Medical Branch of ASTMS is organising a rally on 'Women and the Unions', to be held on Saturday 22nd October. A letter sent out by ASTMS outlines the objectives: "If women are to fight against growing unemployment, the blight of low pay, and achieve full and equal rights both at the place of work and in society in general, it is necessary that we organise ourselves, to make sure that the labour movement does more than simply give token support to these demands".

A blatant case of discrimination within ASTMS over women holding union positions and the appallingly low pay of women within the Health Service led to

the organisation of the rally by some women in the union.

There will be discussion on the problems that women face at work, the need for nurseries, how women organise inside the unions, low pay, equal pay, and the role of the Sex Discrimination Act and Equal Pay Act. The last session will be on organising the fight for real equality in the unions: how to organise, and what are the central issues?

To make this rally worthwhile, it has to be linked to ongoing efforts to organise caucuses in the unions fighting for women's rights.

The Working Womens Charter school on Women and the Trade

Unions, on 26th November, which covers some of the same ground as the ASTMS conference, has been called for precisely that purpose. It should be a necessary follow-up to the ASTMS conference, to work out detailed plans for organising in the unions.

ASTMS Rally: 1pm to 5.30pm, Saturday 22nd October, at Unity House (NUR), Euston Rd, London NW1. Tickets from ECG Department, Guys Hospital, London SE1, or phone Janet Maguire, 407 7060 ext. 3162.

Working Womens Charter school: 26th November, at Friends Meeting Place, Church St, Reading. Contact Anita Turnbull, 3 Coleridge Rd, London N8: Tel. 348 1760 or 340 8060 x 549.

Dockers give in to Phase 2

SOUTHAMPTON dockers' decision, last week, to accept a phase 2 increase of 5%, put the skids under the National Port Shop Stewards' Committee call for a national docks strike for 20% increase or a £100 wage. Liverpool dockers followed, last Sunday, 17th, also accepting a Phase 2 deal.

All the major ports have now settled under Phase 2. But a new round of annual negotiations will be starting early next year, with London the first of the major ports involved. Liverpool's and Southampton's annual claims will come up in the summer, the present agreements being backdated.

If the National Ports Shop Stewards Committee can do the necessary organising work between now and then, a national fight by dockers for better wages and conditions may be put on the agenda again. And more is at stake than just a few pounds one way or the other in the wage packet. The recently-announced implementation of abolition of the 'temporary unattached register', stemming from the Jones-Aldington agreement of 1972, caps a steady process of run-down of dockers' jobs, with port employers merging and trade moving out of the traditionally militant areas of London and Liverpool.

Only if the recently-revived NPSS can really become an effective fighting body at national level can this run-down be halted.

STEPHEN CORBISHLEY

WORKERS IN ACTION

Confrontations looming in the car industry

UNIONS TURN DOWN FORD PAY OFFER

FORD management's reply last Friday to the unions' pay claim was completely predictable. It amounted to peanuts.

The claim contained a number of points. A 15% wage rise, a threshold clause triggered after prices had risen more than 10% from October 1977, a 37½ hour week, 80% lay-off pay for both internal and external stoppages, and a number of other elements.

On the unions' own account, the 15% claim "if implemented in full will provide a small improvement in real living standards and halt the downward trend of recent years" — that's all. In this case, standing still means staying roughly 25%

down on 1974 real wages. If met in full, the claim would still leave a worker in Fords Britain 15% worse off than a worker in Ford Germany doing the same job.

Fords reply, however, was to offer roughly 8% pay rise and little else.

On the demand for time and a third payment for holidays plus a "13th month's" pay each year, to bring workers into line with conditions in Ford Germany, management offered to increase the holiday bonus from £35 to £50!

On the question of lay-off pay, management just offered to increase the lay-

off fund. This would leave intact the present situation where Ford workers can be sent home at will when convenient to management, almost like casual labour.

The bosses have not conceded on the 37½ hour week, despite the fact that this figure represents a climb-down from the 1976 demand for a 35 hour week. The urgency and importance of the demand was underlined not only by the present level of unemployment but also by Fords announcement last week of the building of a new European engine plant in South Wales which will replace both foundry and engine plant at Dagenham.

The union side rejected the offer. The chairman, Moss Evans, expressed disappointment and added that they would fight "with vigour" for a shorter working week. Beyond meeting with convenors before further negotiations on Wednesday, however, nothing has been done about preparing any fight.

A fight will certainly be needed, even for this present claim. It must be prepared for, both at a recall national shop stewards' conference and at shop and mass meetings in the plants.

JOE MACAULAY

LEYLAND: FIGHTING UNITY OR SELL-OUT UNITY

THE T&GWU's rejection of "corporate bargaining" creates a stormy situation in Leyland, in which the difference between fighting unity and sell-out unity will be crucial for workers in the combine.

The T&GWU stewards' meeting on 15th September voted to reject Leyland management's "corporate bargaining" scheme, which means taking negotiating power away from shop floor control, and putting it in the hands of bureaucratic national committees. The meeting, however, accepted 'evolution' towards one centralised bargaining system.



The 'working party' responsible for the Leyland negotiations is due to meet again very soon. The employers have several possible next moves. They could propose a modified 'corporate bargaining' project, sufficiently amended to get the consent of the TGWU. Alternatively, basing themselves on the fact that all the other unions involved (and in particular the AUEW), as well as the executive of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, have accepted the management proposals, they could use that union acceptance to put pressure on the TGWU to budge. Or they could take the risk of riding a small storm of local strikes, hoping to put further pressure on the unions after having defeated those strikers.

At present 9100 workers are on strike in the Leyland bus and truck division in Leyland and Chorley, Lancashire. After demanding a "significant" wage increase, the stewards had rejected a 7.6% offer and called a strike as from Monday 19th.

Two other possible strikes are in the offing. 4000 workers at Rovers Solihull have given notice that they will strike from October 17th unless management climbs down on plans to impose night shift working on the 3500 model. The company says extra production is needed; the stewards' committee has replied that the output can be achieved just as well without introducing a night shift. The stewards' committee has instead made its own proposal for a new shift system: each worker to do six twelve-hour shifts a fortnight.

The unofficial toolmakers' committee led by Roy Fraser have given notice of a possible strike from October 28th, for the same demand as they had in their strike this spring: that toolmakers should be able to negotiate separately, instead of being included in the general negotiations in each plant.

Although many militants are rightly critical of the divisive implications of the toolmakers' demand, if they go into action the toolmakers must obviously be supported against the bosses.



On top of this, feeling is once again rising for a stoppage at the Longbridge works, where a strike call by the works committee three weeks ago was sabotaged by a 'moderate' minority.

Fighting solidarity urgently needs to be built between these movements — or they could suffer the same fate as the recent thoroughly defeated strike at Jaguar, Coventry. At the same time Leyland workers have to avoid falling into the opposite trap of the fake 'unity' of corporate bargaining. One way or the other, the coming weeks will set the mould for the future in Leyland.

Bakers: a bigger fight to come

THE BAKERS' strike' has ended with a half victory. the workers demanded the right to take August Bank Holiday off without loss of pay. The employers conceded that there should be local negotiations on holiday

manning levels and gave a £10 lump sum payment.

Organisation and militancy built up on the Bank Holiday issue must now be applied to the bigger struggle looming over the bakers' annual pay claim.

Air strike is still biting

OVER 100 air traffic control assistants picketed the Civil Aviation Authority headquarters last Monday, 19th September. Coaches brought pickets from Heathrow, Bournemouth, and West Drayton branches, and 20 CPSA members at the CAA headquarters came out on strike in solidarity.

The strike's impact and support for it are growing despite the press blackout. According to available reports, British Airways is no longer attempting to keep to schedule, and no more than 50 or 60% of flights are operating — most of them international flights. The employers' loss is estimated by the strikers at £20 million.

The CPSA NEC has officially approached all the other unions in the air industry for support. At unofficial level, post office engineers and electricians are not crossing the Heathrow picket line. This action could lead to the immobilisation of the main computer in the near future.

In Birmingham a 24 hour picket has cut off fuel supplies for the airport after Birmingham T&GWU organiser Alan Law promised that his members would respect the picket line.

To help strengthen the strike at the smaller airports, the air traffic control assistants are organising mobile pickets to go to Gatwick, Stansted, Aberdeen, and elsewhere.

Both the union and the strikers, however, continue to insist that the strike is nothing to do with the 12 month rule. Even though this view has reason on its side, the fact is that the government has made the strike a test case for the 12 month rule.

Stephen Corbishley

Darlington strike stays solid

Compositors and readers at North of England newspapers in Darlington will stay out on strike, it was decided last weekend. Meeting on Saturday, FOCs of 65 chapels of the National Graphical Association in the Westminster Press Group — which owns the Darlington papers — decisively rejected attempts by the TUC Printing Industries Committee to order the Darlington picket lines.

This decision follows closely on the heels of the National Union of Journalists' Executive meeting last Wednesday, where the PIC ultimatum was also thrown out.

For nearly sixteen weeks 108 NUJ members in Darlington have been on official strike in defence of a closed-shop declaration. Under pressure, leaders of the major print unions decided eight weeks ago to call NGA, NATSOPA and SLADE members out in support. As a result all newspaper production was stopped, but management still refused to negotiate over the closed shop, preferring to subsidise the Darlington papers' losses. A

call from the Westminster Press NUJ Group Chapel to extend the strike throughout the combine was thrown out by the PIC earlier this month in favour of an instruction to the strikers to return to work pending mediation.

This shabby attempt at betrayal is now in tatters. The NGA executive, meeting this Wednesday can now be in no doubt about the determination of their rank-and-file members to defend trade union principle. If necessary, say the FOCs, they — like their NUJ counterparts — are prepared to cripple the whole of Westminster Press.

The demand on the PIC for escalating action throughout Westminster Press must now be hammered home. This dispute will make or break trade union organisation in local newspapers — affecting printers as well as journalists — and with determined action it can and will be won.

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