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TUC DUMP FIREFMEN TO PREPARE PHASE FOUR

The scandalous call last Friday by TUC leaders for firemen to return to work and accept the 10% pay limit is part of a major turning point in government and TUC policy on wages.

The decision makes it quite clear that no section of workers will be supported in fighting the pay limit.

Floating plans

Even while the FBU is locked in the fourth week of determined strike action for a 30% pay increase, union officials and government Ministers are floating plans for the next phase of wage control, when the 10% policy and the 12-month rule expires next July.

Last week brought a positive rush of speeches and statements along these lines. * Denis Healey, speaking last Wednesday to the Labour's

extreme right wing 'Manifesto Group', outlined proposals for a permanent Pay Board to monitor settlements, and a state mechanism to cope with "anomalies and differentials". There should not, he said, be any automatic return to free collective bargaining next year.

Healey followed this by the next day launching a series of talks with CBI and TUC leaders on a policy for long-term pay controls, which he hopes to write into the next election manifesto.

According to the *Financial Times* CBI leaders left the talks "encouraged by the fact that Mr Healey has started to move down the same road" as adopted at the CBI conference.

* That same day in Parliament Prime Minister Callaghan defended Healey's statements.

As for free collective bargaining, said Callaghan, "I ceased to worship that 10 years ago".

* Thursday also saw right wing NUPE leader Alan Fisher out their call for an end to annual pay bargaining and a turn to US-style three-year contracts. Left talking Arthur Scargill again failed to fight for a strike ballot.

* On Friday the TUC Finance and General Purposes Committee unanimously voted to call on the firemen to return to work, and decided that no support whatever would be given to the FBU—effectively backing the 10% limit.

* Chairing the meeting, GMWU General Secretary Basnett had already completed a major article for the *Sunday Times*.

6 million workers

This proposes the imposition of common review dates and a permanent review body to fix pay scales for 6 million public sector workers.

This move would create ideal conditions for the



imposition of wage controls. * Boiler-makers' leader John Chalmers joined in with a similar proposal to fix wages in British shipyards.

Determined

The real meaning of the TUC decision was summed up by Len Murray:

"We cannot envisage action that could be taken which would deflect the government", he said.

If the government can't be "deflected" from its policy, then it must be defeated.

But since the TUC is determined to protect the government, these leaders must end up accepting the 10% limit as well.

This latest turn of events is dramatic confirmation of the position argued by *Socialist Press* since the firemen's strike began.

We have stressed from the

beginning that the TUC remain hand in glove with the Lib-Lab coalition government.

Since the main plank of that coalition is the maintenance of wage control, this means that the TUC is forced to head off struggles that might breach it.

And it means that top union officials have already been sucked in to the long-term plans for a Phase 4, a Phase 5 and systems of permanent wage controls now being mooted by the CBI, by the Liberals and by their bedfellows in Labour's right wing.

The TUC decision has provoked verbal opposition from FBU leaders and certain 'left' bureaucrats, including ASLEF General Secretary, Ray Buckton, and Sheet-metal Workers leader George Guy

Certainly these leaders Council meeting December 21.

But the crucial issue is to mobilise other sections of workers on their own pay claims alongside the firemen.

This is why *Socialist Press* has consistently fought for the setting up of local councils of action, consisting of trade union bodies, tenants associations and working class political organisations in order to spread and strengthen the firemen's struggle in each area.

Such councils of action will also provide the basis for a fight for leadership independent of the trade union bureaucracy.

We have also highlighted the diversionary talk by 'left' Labour MPs aiming to portray the firemen as 'special case'.

Healey's speech and the position of the TUC now refute this line once and for all.

The fate of the firemen's strike will now clearly determine whether or not plans proceed for permanent wage controls affecting the whole working class.

If the firemen win it will crush Healey's plans and the coalition built to implement them.

A few 'lefts' have bleated complaints at Healey's plans. But their refusal to link this to mobilising to break the Lib-Lab coalition will make them accomplices next year's phase of pay limits.

Workers must demand that talk is turned into action split Labour from the Liberals and oust Callaghan-Healey leadership.

All those—'left' or right—who obstruct such action must be removed, and a principled leadership constructed in the trade union and labour movement.

A Caribbean Ireland?

150 British troops have been flown out to the tourist-rich colony of Bermuda this weekend, supposedly to keep "order" in the wake of the barbaric execution of two black workers convicted of murder.

Every Irish worker will know the meaning of such "peace-keeping" activities of the British imperialist army.

While posing as a 'neutral' force seeking to pacify two "warring camps", the role of these troops will, as in Ireland be to ensure the continuation of British rule.

And while firemen continue to man picket lines in their bitter confrontation with the 10% pay policy, they too are increasingly coming to recognise that the army is not a "neutral" force, but a direct, strike-breaking tool of the capitalist class.

Significantly the 150 soldiers sent to Bermuda were diverted at short notice.

They had just completed the rudimentary army "training" in firefighting, and had been about to take up scabbing duties in South West London.

In Bermuda they will be able to use their rifles rather than hose pipes, and will move in to protect Britain's

300-year domination of the island.

The surroundings may be different, but the army's job is essentially the same in both cases.

Though two-thirds of the 55,000 population is black, the leading governmental and administrative positions are held by whites, and whites—often expatriate British—also comprise a majority of the island's vicious police force.

The trade union and labour movement must unite to demand the withdrawal of British troops, and the breaking of the Lib-Lab coalition government that has sent them into action.





INTERNATIONAL

FACTORY CLOSURE HIGHLIGHTS IRELAND PROFITS

In a sharp, abrupt move announced last week, the Dutch-owned Ferenka company has decided to close down its steel cord plant at Annacotty, Co. Limerick, throwing 1,400 workers out of a job.

The ostensible reason for the closure is the dispute at the plant involving 900 members of the Marine Port and General Workers Union (MPGWU), which has cost £1.2 million in lost production in the past seven weeks.

Over two months ago, the men—formerly of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU)—switched to the MPGWU in protest at the hidebound conservatism of the ITGWU bureaucracy which has done nothing to protect workers' interests at the plant.

Militant sounding

The MPGWU—whose own leadership is no less conservative, but who indulge in more militant-sounding talk—was refused recognition by Ferenka management and this prompted strike action by MPGWU members.

Taking advantage of these "labour troubles", Ferenka

have now pulled out—although this decision has prompted an occupation of the plant by the workers on strike, who are determined to keep the factory open.

Open the books

The correct demands now for the workers involved are for the opening up of all Ferenka's books to reveal its operations in Ireland, and for the uncompensated nationalisation of this multi-national firm.

Predictably, the Ferenka decision to put up the shutters has scared the



Lynch

out of Jack Lynch's Fianna Fail government, which has grovelled at every opportunity before both national and international capitalism.

Tax-free concessions for companies investing in Ireland, coupled with relatively low wages and government handouts for capital equipment have combined to ensure that the "adjusted earnings rate of return" in Ireland is the highest in the world—at 29.5%, compared to the world average of 11.7% and the British figure of 5.5%.

Programme

Such a rate of exploitation is not confined to the south, but re-appears in the crisis ridden north, which also suffers the military face of imperialism—the British Army and its local henchmen, the RUC and the UDR.

What is clearly needed for Ireland is a revolutionary programme aimed at expropriating all capitalist concerns in the country as a whole and

driving out the occupying army in the north.

That opposition to imperialist exploitation is not just a six counties matter is shown by the Ferenka events; that the working class are willing and capable of fighting such

oppression is likewise clear. Both the eight year old opposition to the army, and the eight week old strike and occupation in Co. Limerick are eloquent testimony to that.

'Militant' tries to ignore troops

A good example of what type of programme the Irish workers do not need was afforded in the December 2 edition of 'Militant', the paper of the geriatric Labour Party Young Socialists.

Under the headline "A Challenge to Sectarianism", 'Militant' announced that the Labour and Trade Union Co-ordinating Group were standing a candidate in a by-election to be held in Ballymena, Co. Antrim, on 7 December.

The chosen one—a certain Eric Johnston—had his programme proudly presented in the paper.

Reformist

Allegedly concerning himself with "issues that concern ordinary people", Brother Eric puts forward a series of sub-reformist demands:

"All recreational facilities to be open seven days a week, and to be free of charge . . . the end to the hospital run down . . . Proper housing maintenance and estates to be designed with the interests of people (!) in mind" etc, etc.

Brother Eric is also against the 10% limit, for a shorter working week with no loss of pay, for "the nationalisation of the major monopolies under workers' management"

—all of which are perfectly supportable but which remain a dead letter as far as this pseudo-Trotskyist is concerned.

Eric is also against sectarianism and calls on Northern Ireland's trade union movement "to stop the killings". What killings are meant is deliberately unclear, making the demand a thoroughly pacifist call for "an end to violence".

Not mentioned

Most notably, though, the Army and British imperialism are nowhere mentioned in the policies put forward—a startling omission in view of the fact that Northern Ireland is now crawling with some 30,000 State-financed, State-armed thugs (UDR, RUC, British Army, etc).

The omission is undoubtedly determined by the fact that this sham socialist is standing in the staunchly Protestant district of Ballymena, where principled calls for immediate troop withdrawal are probably none too popular.

Toad

But to capitulate and buckle to loyalist opinion in this fashion is the behaviour of a toad, not the behaviour of a Marxist.

If Johnston feels he cannot criticise the Army at all in his platform, he—and the 'Militant' group which uncritically back him—should not stand at all.

Tories to lose 'who rules' election?

With Australia's general election now just a few days away (to be held on December 10), it seems likely that Gough Whitlam's Australian Labour Party will secure a narrow victory over the conservative Liberal Party which currently shares office with the Country Party.

This outcome will be something of a surprise, since Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser had called the elections confident that his party would romp home.

The last month though has seen a series of financial scandals involving the Liberals, and this has contributed greatly to the government's possible undoing.

Mid-way through November, the former Finance Minister and deputy leader of the Liberal Party, Philip Lynch, resigned in a row over land deal irregularities.

Shortly after, the Prime Minister himself revealed that he had set up a trust fund in order to avoid payment of taxes.

Legally there was nothing irregular in the set-up, but the revelation has incensed Australian voters who have had to put up with Government attacks on "tax dodgers" for the past two years.

The admission that Fraser himself was precisely such a "tax dodger" looks like costing him a good number of votes.

If Fraser does lose the elections, it will not be solely because of these financial scandals.

Above all, it will reflect the strength of Australia's working class, an important section of whom—the La Trobe Valley power workers—have just ended a three month strike for a \$40 wage increase.

Who rules?

Taking advantage of the crisis caused by the strike and lock outs, Fraser called the elections he's been angling for all year.

His main electoral theme has been—like Edward Heath in February 1974—"Who runs the country?", the unions or the government.

But this strategy seems like backfiring, as the workers of Australia seek to ditch the party whose programme is wage-cuts and unemployment.

Their alternative at the moment is the Australian Labour Party, whose own policies and structure is akin to that of the British Labour Party.

Socialist Press calls for a vote to the Australian Labour Party as a way of drawing the class line between the working class, and the direct representatives of the bourgeoisie—the Liberals and the Country Party.

Our support is of course critical, since the ALP's reformist appetite to administer the capitalist state means that it cannot satisfy the real needs of Australia's workers.

But if Fraser is booted out and Whitlam voted in, that would constitute a small but important step towards class independence for the Australian proletariat.



Treachery in Zimbabwe talks

The talks between black leaders and racist Premier Ian Smith aimed at an 'internal settlement' in Zimbabwe have opened in Salisbury.

The first session meant very little since, in addition to the representatives of the regime, it was attended only by the Zimbabwe United People's Organisation, a stooge organisation led by Chief Chirau ('Tribal chiefs' in Zimbabwe are in effect local authorities appointed by the Smith regime).

Gambling

The talks will not have any real political significance unless they include the other leader who originally supported them, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, leader of the United African National Council.

Smith is gambling on there being enough political support in the country for Muzorewa to stand together

to impose an internal settlement—that is, some kind of black-white coalition government recognised internationally but without the presence of imperialist troops which the British-American plan envisages.



Muzorewa

Muzorewa was not at the first session of the talks because he had declared a protest "week of mourning" for the massacres of the black Zimbabwean civilians

and freedom fighters in Mozambique in the last week of November.

In these raids the white Rhodesian army claims to have killed 1,200 guerrillas.

Muzorewa will almost certainly be back at Smith's conference table when the talks resume on Friday 9 December, though he has not as yet issued a reply to a letter sent to him by Smith in which he said:

"Because of your reluctance to participate in the new initiative (to which you agreed last week) another week will be wasted, resulting in many additional unnecessary tragedies. I ask you as a man of the church to search your conscience and ask yourself how your action can be justified.

"Finally, you request an undertaking that there will be no more similar massacres. As there has been no such massacre your question is irrelevant.

However, in case there is any misunderstanding let me

make it clear that the function of our security forces is to protect the civilian population of the country against terrorist attacks.

"If this should necessitate defensive action outside our borders, such as the recent operations, these defensive actions will be taken".

The massacre, by far the worst of its kind since the war began, has also had an effect in the camp of the Patriotic Front, the alliance of ZANU and ZAPU leaders Mugabe and Nkomo.

Suspicion

Relations between them have been strained since suspicion was aroused that Nkomo had taken part in the secret talks with Ian Smith arranged in Lusaka two months ago by international capitalist "Tiny" Rowland, the head of Lonrho.

Now ZANU are accusing Nkomo of having been unwilling to commit the

Portugal teeters on brink of new crisis

The deadline which Socialist Premier Soares set for getting the support of the opposition parties for his programme has passed.

And Portugal is once more on the brink of a political crisis. Both the main bourgeois parliamentary parties have implied that they will vote against Soares in the vote of confidence which he has now tabled in parliament.

May resign

If the Communist Party does not vote with him he will lose and be forced to resign. Even if the CP does vote for Soares, of which there is now a strong chance, he may still resign.

And such an election would take place in a situation of mounting working class anger at Soares' policies.

Only recently 350,000 workers marched through Lisbon to protest against the effects of his austerity proposals—in particular the massive 12% unemployment level—and the Agricultural Reform Law which provides for returning collectivised land to former fascist owners.

Opposition

The march also voiced workers' opposition to the negotiations now taking place with the IMF for a new loan—and the strings that are certain to be attached to it.

This would almost certainly force another indecisive general election, unless Soares manages to form a new government on another basis, as he optimistically says he might.

Political differences

The political differences between Soares and the capitalist parties revolve around economic policy.

Soares wants to implement a series of austerity measures which would create widespread unemployment, and no doubt many bankruptcies of small Portuguese capitalists as well.

It is their interests which the capitalist parties are protecting when they call the Soares programme "unacceptable" and as being "on its knees" before the International Monetary Fund.

These parties want to rescue capitalism in Portugal from its profound economic crisis through a policy even of more frontal assault on the working class and its organisations.

Indirect means

Soares like other social democratic governments in Western Europe pursues a policy which is no less directed towards the interests of capital.

But he is putting the interests of international capital first and is attacking the working class by more indirect means than the

capitalist parties want to pursue.

The Portuguese CP is lining up more and more behind Soares' anti-working class plans.

Despite the bitter enmity between Soares and CP leader Cunhal, the CP leaders are no more prepared than those of the SP to lead a struggle for the independent demands of the working class.

Their difference with Soares in recent weeks has been that Soares wants all the parties including the CP to support his programme from outside the government and to end even formal opposition; while the CP leaders want to form a governmental coalition of all the parties 'with no distinction of an ideological kind'.

But just like the Spanish and Italian CP's, the Portuguese Stalinists have now started to present an agreement on programme as a step towards this grand popular front alliance.

Parliamentary life

In a press conference last week Soares recognised this change in CP policy:

"In the present conditions in Portugal I cannot exclude the Communist Party from parliamentary life and force it into an extreme position.

On the contrary I must win it for democracy. Being the leader of a party of the left, I cannot make an alliance with parties of the right and exclude the Communist Party from that alliance."

The CP, he said, was a party:

"With great influence in the world of labour. And for the good of democracy I don't want it to polarise all the discontents which exist in the country.

And as I too am a leader of a party which has great influence in the world of labour, I must always maintain a dialogue with that party."

Soares described the CP's reaction to his ultimatum as being:

"Positive in certain respects. It is undeniable that they have shown a sense of responsibility.

An effort has been made but there is still a long road to travel for their positions remain very different on numerous questions.

You ask if I am ready to make an alliance with the Communist Party and I say 'No'.

We will not have a left majority neither in government nor in opposition.

Why? For one thing, because such an alliance, given the political and military balance of forces in the country, would risk provoking a coup d'etat in Portugal."

Soares went on to rule out a grand coalition of all four major parliamentary parties 'because the right refuses completely to allow the Communist Party to enter the government'.

Thus, says Soares, he must do what the bourgeoisie demands or it will do it itself—a position which the Stalinists of the CP have shown that they accept completely.

In supporting Soares over the last few weeks it has accepted the negotiations with the IMF and most of the anti-working class measures which the IMF is insisting on to reduce the balance of payments deficit, the government budget deficit and the rate of inflation.



PHOTO: Derek Speiser, IFL.

A picket of a film show promoting investment in Argentina stresses the mass repression being carried out by the Videla dictatorship.

VORSTER'S LANDSLIDE WIN FOR REPRESSION

The racist government has been unable to suppress the damning evidence about the security police which has come to light in Steve Biko's inquest.

In fact by flaunting its hideous cruelties throughout the election campaign the regime showed its arrogant contempt for the black population of South Africa and opponents of apartheid throughout the world.

Laughable verdict

The combination of evidence of the trial, the laughable verdict that no-one was

responsible for Biko's death, and Vorster's landslide election victory were a shameful demonstration of the single-mindedly repressive intentions of the white racists.

In their election the white population of South Africa voted as in the past they built their laagers (big fences to protect white settlements) to defend their white supremacy.

Vorster's Nationalist Party, which already had a huge majority in the all white 'parliament', got 134 out of the total of 165 seats.

Since the last election the former main party of the English-speaking whites, the United Party, has disintegrated. 17 seats were won (mostly in the smarter white suburbs of Johannesburg) by the so-called Progressive Federal Party.

Mining capitalists

This party, the darling of British 'liberals', is the property of the mining capitalists and sections of the white professional petty bourgeoisie.

Like the Nationalists it believes in white supremacy but clothes it in rather more tactful language than Vorster.

The main criticism which the 'Progressives' raise against Vorster and the nationalists is that their repression is carried out too provocatively.

Vorster's election was in part designed to demonstrate very plainly to world capital-

ism that he embodied the only practicable way of maintaining white supremacy, on which, despite all its hypocritical protestations, capitalism feeds in South Africa.

Parallel assemblies

It also provided Vorster with a clear mandate for his current policies of "constitutional change", involving the setting up of parallel assemblies for the Asian and coloured population, a fraudulent system of "local government" for the black townships as well as the continued denial of all political rights to blacks in "white" areas (87% of the country).

For the black working class the election must be taken as a warning.

It is a warning of the ruthless strategy of the racists. It is a warning that the kind of struggle represented by the black consciousness movement, of which Biko was a leader, is bound to be trodden contemptuously underfoot by Vorster's racists.

Essential prop.

A successful struggle against apartheid must be simultaneously a struggle against the capitalist system of which apartheid is an essential prop.

It must be a struggle of the working class organised in its own independent organisations.



Steve Biko



Crowds at Steve Biko's funeral

IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA

Right wing premier Jayawardene, after having himself voted virtually dictatorial powers through the parliament which his National Party controls with a massive majority, has now set up a special commission to investigate charges of corruption against former popular front premier Mrs. Bandaranaike. The main charge against her is that she amassed a personal fortune through irregularities in the administration of the 1974 Land Reform Act.

HOLLAND

Philip Agee, ex-American agent and author of a major expose of the CIA, is now being hounded out of Holland in the same way as he was hounded out of Britain and France earlier this year. He is appealing to the Advisory Commission on Aliens Affairs, maintaining that he has not violated the conditions imposed on his residence. One of the conditions was that he shouldn't 'damage Holland's relations with other countries'. It is clear that the US government's attitude is such that Agee's mere presence in a country will damage its relations with the Carter government. No 'human rights' it seems for this American citizen.

PERU

40,000 miners and metalworkers have threatened to go on indefinite strike from this week unless the 400 workers sacked from their jobs after the general strike in July are reinstated and exiled union leaders permitted to return to their homes and jobs.

CHINA

The rift between the Chinese and Albanian bureaucracies has grown to judge from the cool way in which the anniversary of Albanian national liberation was greeted in the Peking press and increasing attacks in the Albanian press against the 'three worlds' theory. Meanwhile the recent warm welcome given by Peking to the leader of the Cambodian CP has been followed up by an attempt to bring together the Cambodians with another ally, the left-talking military dictatorship in Burma.

CORRECTION

We apologise to readers for the misplacing of the titles of our In Brief articles on Vietnam and Peru in our last issue.

NEW SHOTS IN TRADE WAR

Scarcely a day goes by without some new shot being fired in the growing trade war between the capitalist countries. This week the European Economic Community half succeeded in intimidating its major suppliers of textiles into limiting their exports to the EEC.

Over the last month 12 such agreements have been forced by the EEC on a number of its suppliers. No agreement has been possible, however, with India, Brazil, Egypt or Pakistan.

These countries are now

therefore threatened with the unilateral imposition of import restrictions by the EEC.

The trade war shows itself not only in protective measures of this kind but also in competition for exports through dumping (selling at less than cost price), government export subsidies, and in the giving of export credits to companies.

The cut-throat undercutting of credit terms by the West European countries, especially on exports to the Soviet Union led last year to the conclusion of a 'gentlemen's agreement' between



French PM Barre meeting Soviet PM Kosygin in Moscow prompted Denis Healey to write a stiff protest to French premier Raymond Barre.

the major European capitalist governments to charge the same rates of interest.

Last week this agreement seemed to be on the point of breaking down as rumours spread that the Soviet Union had offered France a huge export order for machinery and equipment if the credit terms were better than those offered by Britain, Germany and Italy.

The French government were apparently on the point of agreeing; and this

GATT economists draws attention to the spread of protectionism and the dangers of its intensifying the world slump.

They argue pathetically that a way to avoid it would be for the "clarification of the rules" of trade and tariffs and to adjust balance of payments problems by changing exchange rates rather than by tariffs.

Gloomy view

The other document, GATT's annual report on world trade, takes an even more gloomy view. It says that world recovery and the growth of investment is already being seriously hampered by the growth of protectionism.

The evident threats to production and employment involved in protectionism cannot, however, produce a world-wide response to the crisis.

Under capitalism the contradiction between the world-wide nature of the economy and the restrictions of the nation state is expressed through protectionism.

It is inevitable that in a crisis capitalism will turn to destructive fratricidal solutions.

It is the task of socialists to fight against these solutions and against the

policies of the capitalists which turn worker against worker on a world scale.

Socialist solution

Such chauvinistic solutions (supported by the Labour Party and the Communist Party in Britain) are part of the capitalist solution to the crisis, a solution for which the working class pays on a world scale.

While "foreign" competition is blamed for sackings, in Britain, workers are duped into support for their "own" employer rather than action to force the nationalisation of any employer that demands redundancies.

A socialist solution must oppose every manifestation of protectionism, not in the interests of capitalist 'free trade' but of the militant and principled unity of the working class.

Teachers must break from NUT leaders' elitism

The Taylor Report on the system of governors and managers in schools has been greeted by howls of rage from NUT leaders.

In September when the Report was published after 2½ years work, NUT General Secretary Fred Jarvis described it as a "busybodies charter".

He said it treated the head-teacher as the "governors' office boy" rather than a person with "managerial authority" and would "hand things over to a committee made up largely of people lacking in professional expertise".

Equal representation

The main proposals of the Taylor Report are that governors' bodies should give equal representation to the LEA, schoolstaff, parents, pupils and the community and that they should be directly responsible for the running of the school in all its aspects, within the framework laid down by the LEA.

There would then be a clear line of authority from LEA to the governing body to the head and teachers.

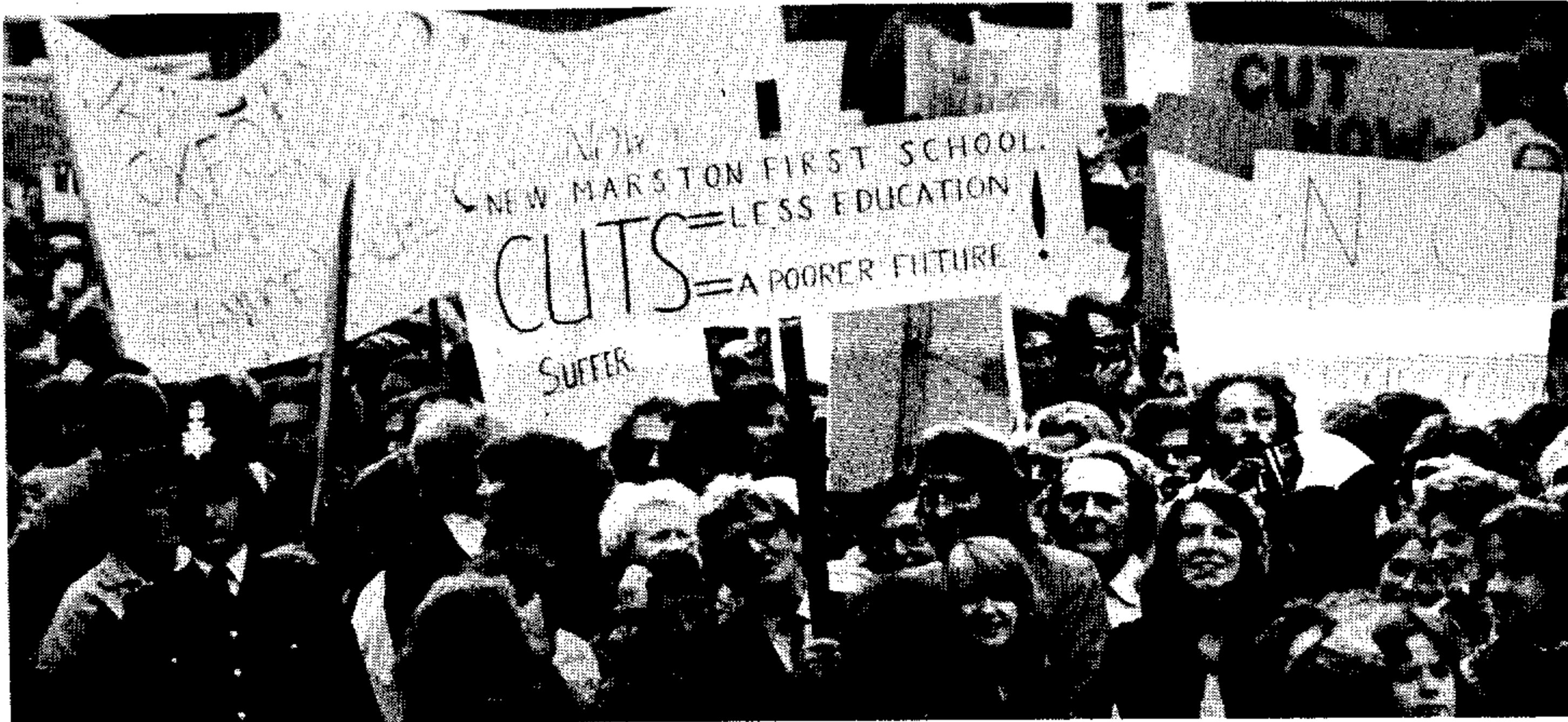
The Report rejects a division of function between the formal curriculum of the school for which, according to the NUT evidence to the Taylor Committee, teachers should be responsible and the 'hidden curriculum' (the general way in which the school is organised, its non-academic activities and relationships with the community).

No concern

The NUT leaders in their hysterical defence of bigotted and bourgeois professionalism show no shred of concern for the interests of the millions of working class children, whom so many of its members daily bore and confuse.

The interests of working class children clearly do not figure in the motives of the Taylor Committee either.

Its concern rather was to attempt to solve the crisis in education, a crisis expressed in mass truancy



Jarvis

and 'behaviour problems', in general dissatisfaction with schools, in protests against cuts and in the conflict between contradictory educational ideologies such as erupted over William Tyndale.

The Taylor Report sees a reformed "participatory" system of governors as a means of achieving improved back-up to the school in the community, of bringing more knowledge of the local area into the school, and of resolving conflict in an orderly way.

In the context of ever-increasing cuts this involves reconciling parents, staff and pupils to staff redundancies; falling standards of equipment, school meals and maintenance; large classes, etc.

The impossibility of this task makes the implementation of the Taylor proposals,

at least in full, extremely unlikely.

The minutes of governors meetings would also provide the LEA with the detailed recorded information about individual schools required by modern management methods in the vastly enlarged areas covered by LEA since local government reorganisation.

Appointees

Under the existing system of managers and governors, the same committee often serves a number of schools, 26 in an extreme case found by the Taylor Committee.

Such bodies have little intimate knowledge of the schools, and usually keep no minutes.

Most of the governors and managers are appointees of the local majority political party and merely restate the views of the local education committee.

A stunned silence greeted the Taylor Committee's question, 'What action by your governing body has made most difference to your school?'

Workers' control

But school governing bodies have not always been rubber stamping or fund raising stooges.

The school boards set up in many working class districts after the Education Act of 1870 were under working class control. By 1895 a quarter of a million

children over 13 were in highly successful 'higher grade' schools and being taught physics, astronomy, algebra and mechanics.

Ultra vires

So alarmed did the bourgeoisie become by this type of education being given to working class children that the financing of science teaching in elementary schools was ruled *ultra vires* by a test case, the Cockerton Judgement of 1899.

Shortly afterwards the 1902 Education Act abolished schools boards and put control of education in the hands of new education authorities based on larger and therefore probably middle class controlled areas.

In Leeds this provoked the biggest demonstrations since the 1830's.

No way

Control over poor relief and over council rents were similarly taken over by central government in the 1930's and in 1971—because certain Labour controlled authorities refused to abide by the restrictions centrally proposed.

There is no way in which education under capitalist rule can be fashioned to adequately serve the class interests of workers' children.

Only in a situation of dual power such as was achieved through mass struggle in France in 1968

and Portugal in 1974 were brief instances seen of school students redesigning their curricula to include education in Marxism and kicking out recalcitrant teachers.

The purging of revolutionary elements and the restoration of the examination system is still going on in Portugal.

No illusions

Fred Jarvis may claim to be afraid of a takeover by Tory Black Paper backwoods-men but he would be equally opposed to workers' control of education in a revolutionary situation.

Revolutionaries should have no illusions in the Taylor proposals.

But if they result in schools being less autocratically run by diehard head-teachers and in some cases brought up to date and made more interesting and relevant to students then we give them mild approval.

Certainly, all teachers must expose outright the reactionary motivations behind their leaders' 'professionalism', and take up the fight for a leadership that will link teachers much more closely with the needs and the strengths of the organised workers' movement.

NUT branches should discuss the best way of tackling this task—and the ways in which the fight to develop genuine workers control over education can be linked to the fight against the cuts.

Conference fights new Criminal Law Act

The mounting opposition of the working class to the battery of attacks by the Lib-Lab coalition found an expression at the recent conference of the Campaign Against the Criminal Trespass Law.

300 delegates—representing industrial workers, public service employees, students, squatters, Trades Councils and Labour Parties—packed Digbeth Hall, Birmingham, for a weekend conference two days before Part Two of the Criminal Law Act 1977 (Criminal Trespass Law) came into force on December 1.

Delegates were left in no doubt of the vital importance of occupations in struggle.

Workers who had been involved in industrial occupations spoke of the advantages of being inside the gates—protection from police harassment at the picket line, facility in refusing deliveries of goods and the warmth and comfort of strikers, particularly in winter.

Wider powers

The new act gives wider powers to the police to enter, search and arrest without warrant, restricts the right to jury trial, allows greater scope to private bailiffs and security companies, and makes passive resistance involved in occupations a criminal offence, providing for six month jail sentences and fines of £1,000.

WSL comrades urged the building of councils of action to oppose the implementation of this law, that trades councils should break Rule 15 to facilitate this, and for a clear political perspective of smashing the Lib-Lab coalition.

With tactical opposition from some NALGO delegates the following extract was included in the motion which was passed overwhelmingly:

"That law is made, interpreted and enforced by the ruling class to back up its anti-working class policies and defend its property and profits; and that the law is used not only to attack the ability of the working class to organise, but also to create divisions within the class by criminalising certain sections or certain actions and by feeding and stirring up prejudices, in order to confuse the real nature and purpose of law and make it easier to label militant action in defence of working class interests as 'criminal'."

For details of the campaign contact CACTL, c/o 35, Wellington Street, London WC2. 01-289-3877.

PHOTO: Ray Smith, IFL



A mass meeting at the Swan Hunter yard

LABOURITES ANGRY AT SHIPYARD VOTE

Last Monday's principled action by outfitters at Swan Hunter shipyard has unleashed a storm of abuse.

Their refusal to succumb to employers' blackmail and to call off their overtime ban even under threat of redundancy has infuriated leading Labourites.

Labour NEC member John Chalmers, who is also on the board of the newly nationalised British Shipbuilders, and who is also General Secretary of the Boilermakers Union, was possibly more annoyed than most.

Rationalisation

As a leading subscriber to Labour's reformist programme he had welcomed the nationalisation of the shipyards—setting aside the obvious fact that such nationalisation would inevitably be followed by rationalisation, speed-up and the sacking of thousands of shipyard workers.

As an employer's spokesman on the board of the new nationalised concern he was as keen as any capitalist to enforce a no-strike clause on the Swan Hunter workforce.

And as leader of the Boilermakers' Union he stands in complete opposition to any independent action by workers—which of course offers a clear lead to boiler-makers and to other sections of workers in the shipyards and elsewhere.

Other reformist spokesmen had less complicated reactions.

One Tyneside Labour MP described the outfitters' decision as a "kick in the teeth". Another thought it was more of a "kick in the

guts" after their campaign to get the shipyards nationalised.

Only Jarrow born John Evans MP seemed to find time to mention the role of British Shipbuilders' management, who had allowed the pay parity dispute to linger on for three months and attempted to end it with an ultimatum.

He was attacked by Chalmers who spelled out his position of complete class collaboration.

"It's our industry now and its an industry with a big mouth which will take a lot of feeding".

Bankruptcy

While Chalmers clearly feels at home with the capitalists on the board of British Shipbuilders, the corporation, of course is not now the possession of the working class or even slightly controlled by workers.

Like British Rail, like the National Coal Board or like the British Steel Corporation British Shipbuilders was nationalised only at the point where its private owners were verging on bankruptcy, lurching desperately from one government handout to the next.

And while steel, the principal component by volume in shipbuilding, is now produced by the 'nationalised' British Steel Corporation, there are a thousand



PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

John Chalmers

and one ways in which these 'nationalised' concerns are exploited by their capitalist management boards in the interests of the profits of private industry.

Hundreds of suppliers, bankers and other enterprises use the 'nationalised' industries as a source of revenue from sales or interest payments.

Chalmers, insofar as he is a functioning member of British Shipbuilders board and not merely a decorative topping to give the illusion of trade union involvement, must know all this. But he remains silent.

Occupy

His boilermaker members at Swan Hunter however, who are now being threatened with the sack, must line up alongside the outfitters in rejecting the employers' blackmail.

They must demand an elected committee be given access to the books of the 'nationalised' concern, to determine in whose interests the corporation is being run.

They must occupy to prevent redundancies being imposed and demand that if orders are short, then the reduced amount of work available be divided among each section of workers with no loss of pay.

Declare support

And in the meantime they must declare full support for the pay battle now being fought by the outfitters.

Union delegates to Labour GMC's must take the lead in demanding that those Labour MPs in Tyneside and elsewhere who have denounced the outfitters' vote must be thrown out, and representatives committed to opposition to the 10% pay policy and the Lib-Lab coalition elected in their place.

Labour's bus cuts protest

Barnes and Richmond Labour Party has taken up the fight against the plans of the Tory-dominated GLC to stop suburban buses from going further than central London.

This will involve half a million people each day having to change buses or transfer to the Tube, doubling fare costs, and the plan will cost £10 million to implement.

Inconvenience

Typically the Tories ignore the inconvenience this will cause to commuters, and the attendant problems of

garaging, staff facilities and finding suitable termini.

Despite the careful silence of the campaign on bus cuts implemented by the GLC when it was Labour controlled, it should be supported.

But it is essential that the fight is broadened to include the whole labour movement, especially TGWU busmen and union branches whose members will be affected by these cuts.

For this campaign to be fully successful, it will be necessary to demand an end to all business secrets. The opening of London Transport's books will reveal the need for long term planning of transport in the interests of the public and the transport workers, a need only to be realised by workers' control.

Inquire into LP's Coalition supporters

In between writing a major feature article for the 'Sunday Times' advocating permanent wage controls, General and Municipal Workers Union leader David Basnett has been campaigning for an inquiry into the Labour Party.

This call, first moved at the Labour Party Conference, has now been backed by the ubiquitous John Chalmers of the Boilermakers Union, by UCATT, the Post Office Engineers' Union and by the TGWU.

Rightly suspicious

It has been opposed by 'lefts' on the Party's NEC who are rightly suspicious of the intentions behind such an inquiry.

Particularly alarming is the way the GMWU resolution laments the fact that:

"We must recognise that the Labour Party is no longer a mass party in terms of membership. We must attempt to reverse the downward trend in Party membership and Party activism".

Yet it is plain for all to see that the most moribund and deserted Labour Party branches are those controlled by the right wing who reflect the political outlook of Basnett and his fellow bureaucrats.

And it is certain that the union officials who have now swung behind his inquiry call

have no intention of broadening the base of the Party by turning it towards the kind of socialist policies explicitly rejected by the Callaghan leadership and excluded by the Lib-Lab coalition deal.

Far more likely is that beneath a cover of concern for the fate of the Labour Party at local level, Basnett, Jones and Co. have a plan to increase their hold over constituency parties.

Waning membership

Basnett has never been seen to show the slightest interest in the "internal democracy" of the GMWU. Yet his motion calls "as a matter of urgency" for:

"An inquiry into the structure, organisation, finances and internal democracy of the Labour Party at all levels and relations with affiliated organisations and other Party interests".

Union bureaucrats know that with the waning membership and financial standing of the Labour Party, they are going to be the ones called on to cough up the bulk of the

estimated £5 million needed over the next two years to keep the party afloat and build its new headquarters.

Piper

They are setting out to ensure that the bureaucrats who pay the piper with their members' money call the tune on policy from the top (which they already control) to the bottom most ranks.

The only inquiry that ought to be conducted in every constituency is to demand that the local MP or candidate declare where he or she stands on the Lib-Lab coalition and the wage-cutting policies of the Callaghan leadership.

Those that support them should be removed at once. Those that claim to oppose them must be put to the test, and forced to declare openly that they will vote consistently against the Lib-Lab coalition in parliament, and that they will launch a campaign throughout the labour and trade union movement to remove the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

An 'inquiry' along these lines would create the conditions for a renewed struggle for socialist policies within the Labour Party and clear aside some of the dead wood right wingers and fake 'lefts' that have politically alienated thousands of Labour Party activists.

A REFRESHING BREAK from bourgeois legality was promised by the Oxford City Labour Party in the programme for its dismal 'Xmas Bazaar': "Also many stalls operated by the party branches, gifts, raffles and many side shows" (sic). Our eager correspondent however failed to find any trace of hooch on sale.



Basnett at the TUC

PRESS GANG Looking in the mirror

For journalists on the 'Daily Mirror' the TUC decision to ditch the firemen publicly must have had a special meaning.

They returned to normal work on the same evening that the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the TUC issued its stirring statement that the firemen could get lost.

Murray was reported as saying:

"The government is not likely to be deflected from its present course of action."

He was echoing a similar statement that the TUC Printing Industries Committee had issued over the Mirror pay dispute.

The PIC 'negotiated', if that is the word, a return to normal work for Mirror journalists who had taken action over a claim for a rise of £3,000 a year.

The journalists, appropri-

ately enough, learned of the TUC plan in a letter from management.

It said that in return for going back with no money and a promise of more talks the journalists would agree that negotiations:

"Will be so arranged that full production will continue at all times, and that the relevant and normally accepted deadlines will be kept".

The TUC formula also said: "The constraints of pay policy guidelines are also a factor" in the talks.

In other words they can talk without being able to take action and so long as they settle for 10% and productivity deals.

Whether this had some affect on Fleet Street journalists is not clear.

Normal work in Fleet Street generally means the normal run of witchhunts against any group of workers who take action.

In any event it would be difficult to argue for once with the assessment that Fleet Street headline writers made of the TUC blow against the firemen.

The Daily Telegraph said: "TUC spurns firemen in pay battle"; The Times: "TUC leaves firemen to fight alone".

The Daily Mail, which had been published in reduced form after action over pay by their own journalists said: "Firemen told: You are on your own".

The Mirror itself relegated the story to an inside page and headlined simply "TUC snub for firemen".

It was probably the weakest assessment of the historic betrayal by any of the Fleet Street papers.

Perhaps it was too dangerous to hold up a mirror to its own NUJ members. What is there to see is a horrible sight—the TUC without its mask.

Ireland

ROOTS OF TODAY'S CRISIS

Part Six: Irish Labour and Connolly's failure



Connolly

There is a myth that Irish labour was taken by William O'Brien after the 1916 rising in a rightward and different direction from that adopted by James Connolly before his execution.

But in fact Connolly's entire practice laid the basis for separating the national question from the class question. With the struggle for independence against Britain, the fruit of that practice was born out by labour abdicating the field completely to the petty bourgeois Sinn Fein party of Arthur Griffith.

As the national resurgence brought a clash with Britain nearer it became clear to Connolly that in the Labour Party based on the Irish Trade Union Congress he had helped to create an instrument which was totally inadequate to lead the national struggle in a socialist direction.

He swapped horses in mid-stream and went over to the nationalists.

Obscure

Various alleged 'Marxists' have attempted to obscure the lessons that should have been drawn from this by claiming that through Connolly labour participated in the 1916 Rising.

Labour's political relationship to the Rising and the subsequent struggle against the British however is well expressed in Connolly's decision to raise not the red but the green flag over Liberty Hall, headquarters of Connolly's Transport Union.

When a majority of the Executive objected, Connolly secured their reluctant acquiescence by informing some of them that an insurrection was about to take place!

Such was the reality of labour's participation in the

Easter Rising. It should not be thought that the Executive majority were opposed to Ireland's right to separate from England.

Far from it: in fact when union leader James Larkin spoke to the Dublin Trades Council just before his departure in October 1914 on a fund-raising tour of America he told them that "he hoped to bear a pipe for Ireland before he died".

Yet when he heard of Connolly's growing nationalism and military preparations Larkin intervened from America to say "the boys are not to move".

Gesture

The Rising was essentially a gesture. Connolly, the most clear sighted of the insurrectionists, knew it had no chance of success and made no serious preparations for it to be successful.

Three months earlier in his paper the *Workers' Republic* he had said that:

"The power of the enemy to hurl his forces upon the forces of Ireland would be at the mercy of the men who controlled the transport system."

The truth of this observation was to be acknowledged by General Macreedy, the British commander-in-chief in Ireland during the Independence war.

Precedent

A munitions transport strike begun in May 1920 seized on the precedent set by British dockers, who refused to load munitions on the ship "Jolly George" because the arms were for the use of the Polish government against the Soviet Union.

When British soldiers moved in to do the dockers work, railwaymen refused to move what the troops had unloaded.

This stoppage seriously disrupted British attempts to

put down the Irish revolt. In his memoirs, *Annals of an Active Life*, Macreedy conceded that:

"This state of affairs was a serious set back to military actions during the best season of the year."

This was 1920 when the working class that Connolly had despaired of was bearing the brunt of the British offensive.

But the understanding that Connolly had had of the strategic importance of transport in January 1916 appears to have deserted him by April.

Although his union did not dominate transport totally (there were also members of the British based NUR) Connolly's failure to call a transport strike—calling out the union which (in Larkin's absence in America) Connolly himself led—can only be explained by seeing the Easter Rising as a blood sacrifice, a romantic nationalist symbol to inspire a future generation, and not at all as a serious attempt at proletarian insurrection.

Executed

Besides Connolly, other labour leaders executed included Michael Mallin, Richard O'Carroll and Paedar Macken.

William Partridge, tortured in an English jail, died a year later. As well as those dead, a whole layer of the trade union leadership was arrested and incarcerated.

In short the aftermath of the Rising was to see Irish labour enter the Independence struggle and play the decisive part. But it played it as a decapitated movement.

It fought but the fight was carried on under the banner of Sinn Fein. And it was the petty bourgeois nationalists who reaped where labour had sown.

Tragically Irish labour had

been developing to the stage where it could consider insurrection.

When the bourgeois press labelled the Easter Rising as a 'Larkinite-Labour' affair as they did, this was not simply middle class malevolence on their part.

No other force seemed capable of offering such a challenge, and the idea that labour should subordinate itself to petty bourgeois nationalism appeared to cut completely across the grain of development up to 1916.

While Sinn Fein's paper sold 2,000 copies a week, the *Irish Worker* sold 30,000. While Labour had candidates on council's throughout the country, Sinn Fein was limited to two councillors on the Dublin corporation.

Popular

While the leaders of Irish labour could call strikes and lead thousands on demonstrations, Sinn Fein had next to no popular support.

As a national party Sinn Fein had been in decline since 1910, and in 1916—on the very eve of the Rising that was to propel it to power—it had so shrunk as an organisation that it was confined to one central branch in Dublin.

Only the efforts of British imperialism on his right and James Connolly on his left raised Sinn Fein leader Arthur Griffith to a political height that was quite beyond his own exertions, not to mention those of his near non-existent national organisation.

The process whereby Connolly could abandon his socialist colleagues and throw in his lot with confused

dreamers like Patrick Pearse and an old Fenian conspirator like Tom Clarke has been adequately described by Sean O'Casey in his little booklet on the Irish Citizen Army:

"It is difficult to understand the almost revolutionary change that was manifesting itself in Connolly's nature. The labour movement seemed by him to be regarded as a desecrated force, while the essence of nationalism began to assume the finest element of his nature... the high creed of Irish nationalism became his daily rosary, while the higher creed of international humanity, that had so long bubbled from his eloquent lips, was silent forever and Irish labour lost a new leader."

An accurate description is not however an explanation.

That must be sought in Connolly's politics. And not only Connolly's since the Labour Party that was created was not only the work of Connolly but if anything was primarily Larkin's.

Connolly was to turn away from what he had helped to build, while Larkin, when he returned from America too late to guide events, was to both reject and be rejected by the party he had largely created.

The Irish Labour Party developed out of the Irish Trade Union Congress and in fighting for its creation Connolly and Larkin had to do battle with those trade unionists who argued that labour in Ireland did not need its own party as long as the Irish Parliamentary party of Parnell, now led by John Redmond, was so active at

Westminster on behalf of the cause of labour!

To prevent the Congress moving towards setting up an Irish Labour Party, these advocates were prepared to enter into a bloc with a group of trade unionists in Belfast led by William Larkin.

Walker and his supporters agreed with Larkin that the working class needed its own party but they claimed it was more "international" for Irish labour to affiliate to the British Labour Party than to set up their own nationally limited organisation.

At the 1912 Congress Larkin and Connolly finally overcame the opposition to the formation of an Irish Party by forty-nine votes to nineteen with another nineteen abstentions.

Not until the following year's Congress were serious moves made to implement the resolution and the Party structure and rules were revealed for the Party's future problems.

Whole Class

Connolly and Larkin both shared the view of Karl Kautsky that the national sections of the Second International should be parties of the whole class.

This was a conception that Lenin too gave formal adherence to—while in practice building a very different kind of party, a programmatically homogeneous vanguard.

Lenin had fought against the ideology of the bourgeoisie whenever he saw it in the working class movement. He traced a line of continuity from the Economists through the Mensheviks and, after the



Members of the National Executive of the Irish TUC and the Irish Labour Party in 1914. Standing, left to right, James Connolly, William O'Brien M.J.Egan, Thomas Cassidy, W.E. Hill and Richard O'Carroll. Sitting, Thomas MacPartlin, D.R. Campbell, P.T.Daly, James Larkin, and M.J.O'Lehane.

defeat of the 1905 Revolution, through the Liquidators.

Lenin regarded these as organisationally representing the influence of bourgeois ideas within the workers movement.

Kautsky however saw opportunism not as something that could have a material base within the working class itself (ie a labour aristocracy) but merely a survival, a hang-over from pre-capitalist times that would be corrected with the development of capitalism by the growth of the proletariat.

To Connolly and Larkin, with their syndicalist background, this conception of a party, like one big union for the whole class was self-evidently the way forward.

And it reflected itself in the kind of party that Congress had set up.

Arguing in the Dublin *Trade and Labour Journal* in 1909 why Irish labour needed its own party, Larkin was clear that the Party had no separate and distinct function to play different from a trade union.

It was merely another working class organisation to hit the capitalists with:

"I am an industrialist and at the same time appreciate the fact that Labour can accomplish a great deal through the intelligent use of the ballot. Why use one arm when we have two? Why not strike the enemy with both arms—the political and the economic?"

Here the possibility of setting up a party is no more than an index of the class's evolving strength.

Despite the militancy of its leading advocates this party from its birth would only act as a passive barometer reflecting the ebbs and flows of the class's strength and consciousness.

If it raised that consciousness it could only be inside a reformist framework.

Transform

It lacked the programme that could transform that consciousness into revolutionary consciousness.

And it lacked it because it did not set for the proletariat the task of reconstructing society anew. For such drastic work the proletariat's party must have a programme for all the oppressed.

Significantly the Irish party limited membership to those who were members of affiliated trade unions. The small farmers organised in their cooperative societies were denied membership.

Founder

It was argued by the party's founders that the trade union base would be swamped if co-operative societies were allowed to join.

The same restrictions were applied to the various socialist groups as well, including even the Independent Labour Party of Ireland—of which the leading supporters of a Congress based party, Connolly, William O'Brien, Campbell and Johnson were actually members!

While the British Labour Party was established by both the Trade Union Congress and various socialist bodies, in Ireland the Party was based on Congress alone—the executive for both being one and the same.

Connolly declared that this would keep out:

"The professional politician who was doing as much harm as good in the British movement; by confining party membership to trade unionists the Irish Labour members would be responsible to the workers just as their leaders in the industrial fight were responsible."

(*Irish Worker*, June 20, 1914)

It must be said in mitigation that Irish labour at the beginning of the century had been most unfortunate in

some of its representatives. Yet the fact that Connolly couldn't envisage a professional politician that wasn't corrupt, and that he believed representatives could escape such temptation not under party but only trade union control reveals Connolly's rigid idealisation of the working class and its trade union consciousness.

This was at a time when his syndicalist prejudices were supposed to be far behind him.

This confidence that trade union consciousness flowed in an untroubled way into socialist consciousness partly explains why Connolly could fight for the party to be based directly on the trade unions yet take a complacent view of the importance of programmatic clarity.

Endorsed

The Party didn't adopt a socialist programme until 1918, six years after Congress had endorsed the need for a party.

Where Connolly did fight for a line of political demarcation it was against introducing into the working class ideas that he thought might undermine its fighting capacity and create division in the ranks.

The year 1904 was the one in which the Second International at its congress in Amsterdam adopted the resolution of 'one class, one party' and James Connolly in America having recently arrived from Ireland combatted opinions which he believed were positively harmful for realising the ideal of creating a party for the whole class.

Struggle

As the Amsterdam congress put it;

"In order that the working class may put forth all its strength in the struggle against capitalism it is necessary that in every country there exist vis a vis the bourgeois parties only one social party as there exists only one proletariat. Therefore it is the imperative duty of all comrades and socialist organisations to make every effort to bring about this unity on the basis of the principles established by the international congresses, a unity necessary in the interests of the working class before which they are responsible for all fatal consequences of a continued breach".

Whether Connolly was aware of the resolution when he polemicised against Daniel de Leon the leader of the American Socialist Labour Party is perhaps less important than the fact that he acted entirely in its spirit.

He felt compelled to protest at harmful preoccupations within the SLP which he was sure expressed the pressure of alien class forces.

One was the time given over by the Party to sexual questions, especially the general hostility to monogamic marriage and the other was the difficulty these days of picking up a copy of the *Weekly People* (the SLP's paper) without finding an attack on religion contained in it.

Absurdities

He objected to attacks on clergymen which were not, claimed Connolly, attacks on their economic absurdities—that would be proper for the party—

"but at his theology, with which we have nothing to do".

The issue is complicated by the fact that Connolly aimed some very pointed barbs at his opponents. De Leon was becoming anti-Catholic in an unprincipled way.

It is one thing to be anti-Catholic in Ireland where the dominant culture is Catholic, but in America, where it is

not, such hostility could well represent a susceptibility to the ruling class's ideology.

Connolly thought correctly that he detected in this an American chauvinism in the SLP that resisted the importance of doing work with the foreign immigrants from Europe, many of whom were Catholics.

Connolly's response was to prohibit the religious question. The party should have nothing to do with it, he declared, because it would divide the American from the immigrant worker.

He based his position on the Erfurt programme of 1891 which declared:

"Religion is a private matter for members of the party".

Unknown to Connolly, Engels had opposed this but Kautsky had suppressed his protest. Lenin a year later put forward the very different view that:

"So far as the party of the socialist proletariat is concerned religion is not a private matter. Our party is an association of class conscious advanced fighters for the emancipation of the working class. Such an association cannot and must not be indifferent to lack of class consciousness, ignorance or obscurantism in the shape of religious belief."

What a difference in outlook this little quote expresses. It tells us in its compressed way everything we need to know about the two very different parties that these two men built.

Connolly starts from and remains at the existing consciousness of the working class, believing that to maintain a relationship with that class, its lack of class consciousness must be confronted.

"The Socialist Party of Ireland prohibits the discussion of theological or anti-theological questions at its meetings public or private. This is in conformity with the chief socialist parties in the world which have frequently in Germany, for example, declared religion to be a private matter and outside the scope for socialist action."

(James Connolly, *The New Evangel*)

Regarded

Again on the question of women, Connolly regarded De Leon quite wrong when he claimed that a book by the German social democrat August Bebel on women, could win middle class women over to socialism and the cause of the working class:

"... on the contrary, getting involved in the sex question was going to weaken the political and economic struggle, as was going outside their own class for support... Bebel's 'Women' is popular because of the quasi-prurient revelations of the past and present degradation of womanhood, but I question if you can find one woman who was led to socialism by it, but you can find hundreds who were repelled from studying socialism by judicious extracts from its pages."



The uprising fails. Some of those taking part are marched under armed guard to Richmond Barracks.



James Larkin: "The boys are not to move," he said from America when he heard Connolly was making military preparations and turning towards nationalism.

Few of Connolly's friends supported him in this fanciful claim and it is difficult not to conclude that Connolly's knowledge of Bebel's book never went beyond as he put it, a few 'judicious extracts'.

Lenin gave his opinion in an interview with Clara Zetkin when he described the book as "gripping agitation that strikes out at bourgeois society".

These views Connolly brought from Ireland to America and he returned to Ireland with them quite unaltered—if anything more firmly entrenched.

His fear of going outside his own class for support meant, in an agricultural society like Ireland, having no perspective for socialist revolution at all.

At one and the same time he both overestimated the purely proletarian character that the Irish revolution must

assume, while underestimating the political tasks that that proletariat must carry out.

The key to Connolly's failure was his complete misunderstanding of the role of the party. He tied the Irish party to the trade unions because very simply that was the best way to ensure it accurately registered the rising spontaneity of the class.

As he passed through Liberty Hall on his way to insurrection his close friend and trade union collaborator William O'Brien asked him if there was any hope of success.

Connolly emphatically assured him that there was "none whatever".

But then what importance can be attached to the sacrifice of party leaders when the party itself is no more than a barometer of agitation?

If however the role of the party is seen differently, as the bearer of the class consciousness of the proletariat, as the conscience of its historic vocation then not only are its leaders valued rather less fecklessly—that is the least of it—but the party's tasks in relationship to the class are seen in a less passive, less fatalistic light.

Fortress

That homogenous mass that rises up the wall of the capitalist fortress until it laps over the citadel is recognised not at all as homogenous but composed of quite diverse elements that can only be won through the most advanced layers.

Only with such a vanguard party can the class constitute itself as a class. Only by going beyond spontaneous trade union struggles can the working class develop the consciousness of being the protagonist of a revolution which emancipates not only the workers but the whole of society.

Exclusion

Connolly defended the exclusion of farmers' cooperatives and socialist groups from the Congress-based Labour Party not because of programmatic differences but because of a fear that trade union affairs might fall into non-trade union hands.

In this way he showed how far away he was from Lenin's conception, and illustrated instead, by negative and tragic example, that Leninism is the Marxism of this epoch.

Mike Higgins reviews two pamphlets recently published on the Grunwick struggle. 'Battle of Grunwick' is published by Socialist Challenge at 30p. 'Grunwick' is published by Socialist Worker at 10p, (16pp).

IN REVIEW



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

BANKRUPT BOOKLETS ON GRUNWICK FIGHT

The hard fought and protracted struggle at Grunwick has always been an important test of strength for the trade union and labour movement. As the messages of support, resolutions and mass pickets continue to demonstrate, solidarity for the strikers is immense and widespread.

Yet for the strike to be successful this solidarity has always required a leadership to direct it into the correct channels; key sectors of the working class must be led to black all services and supplies to the company.

Recoiled

Without exception the trade union leaders have stub-

bornly recoiled from mobilising blacking action and refused concrete support to the mass pickets.

This comes as no surprise to us. It only serves to illustrate once again the total bankruptcy of the union bureaucracy which is chronically incapable of ensuring even the most elementary trade union rights.

The mobilisation of whole

sections of workers behind the Grunwick strike would at the very least challenge the reactionary policies of this government and would probably place the whole future of the Lib-Lab coalition government in the balance.

Swept aside

The 10% pay straight-jacket and 12-month rule, both concocted by the coalition and bureaucracy would be swept aside by such a mass upsurge of militancy and the role of the 'lefts' in and out of Westminster would be spotlighted for all to see.

But the fight at Grunwick has also put the plethora of radical left groups on the spot.

During the last few weeks

When Trotsky was attempting to give a general characterisation of centrism he made the point that, due to its formlessness, it could only be positively defined with great difficulty. What one could say with certainty, though, was that it was theoretically eclectic and 'played with all the colours of the rainbow'—in a nutshell it was 'nothing more than crystallised confusion'.

The guiding thread of confusion and accommodation to the bureaucracy is woven right through each of the IMG pamphlet's 13-odd pages of type.

IMG method

Rather than go through each of its 20 different, and largely unconnected sections, the method of the IMG will emerge more clearly from looking at a couple of points.

At the outset the pamphlet sets itself the task of 'mapping out the path of victory' (Page 3). For the IMG, this path doesn't just lead in the same direction as the strike committee's, it follows it inch for inch.

The section entitled 'Support Committees—the example of Manchester' demonstrates this perfectly.

The IMG was lyrical over the role of their only self-initiated support committee (which to all extents and purposes is now defunct). This has continually tailed the strike committee and uncritically reprinted and distributed its bulletins.

Quite wrong

They are quite wrong to assert that 'we have not hidden our differences with the strike committee' (Page 3), since apart from the IMG's demand for nationalisation, they have not had any differences.

The results of this method leads them to the disastrous

statement that the strikers 'were lucky in receiving a great deal of help from... Jack Dromey'!

Spelling out

Quite what form this 'help' took the IMG prudently avoid spelling out. In fact Dromey's role has been just the opposite.

He has acted consciously to constrain and limit the strike.

At key moments such as on the publication of the Scarman Report, when he should have initiated a break from the bureaucracy and fought for the independence of the strike committee from the APEX leadership, mobilising whole sections of the working class behind the call for blacking action, Dromey manoeuvred to head off any such moves.

So adamant was Dromey that these policies wouldn't even get a hearing, let alone be fought for, that he attempted to have the WSL banned from the strike committee headquarters!

More confused

The IMG's section on Scarman is even more confused. In the past, rather than call for a boycott of the enquiry, the IMG remained silent. When it was published, they actually called for the implementation of its findings.

As we have made clear in past issues of *Socialist Press*, these findings served to create a cover behind which the bureaucracy could manoeuvre in their bid to sell out the strikers. In themselves the report's proposals mean only sackings and no union recognition.

Through the distorting glasses of opportunism, though, things appear differently.

The main thrust of this

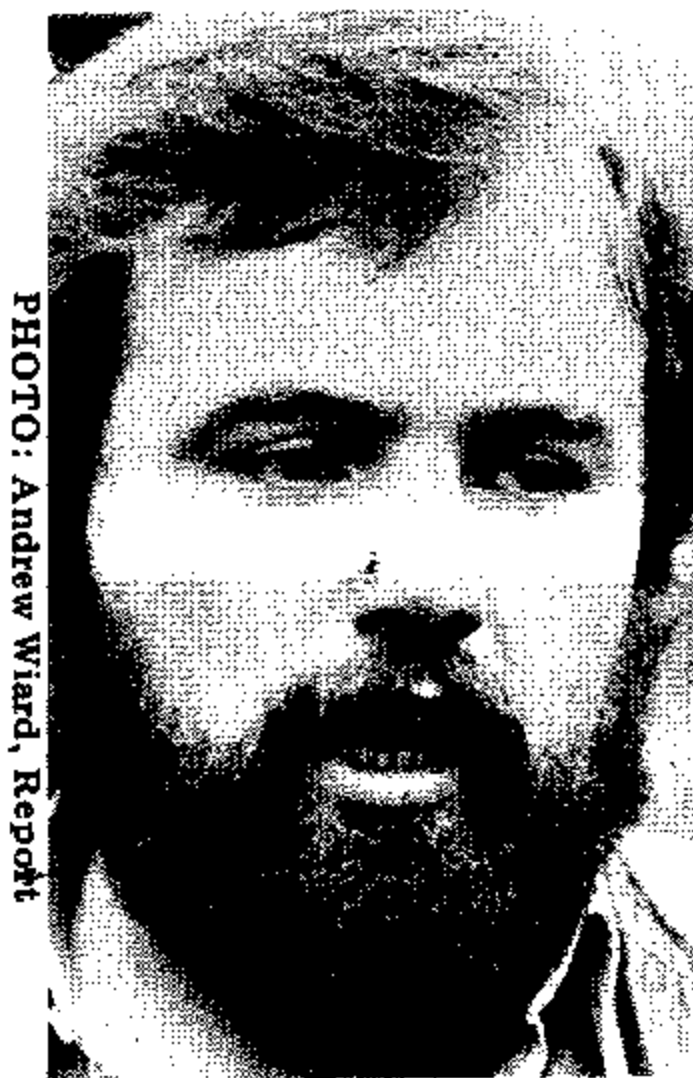


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Jack Dromey

section of the IMG pamphlet is to argue that in failing to accept Scarman's findings George Ward only proved himself a tyrant. The IMG view Ward consequently not primarily as a capitalist but as a chaotic despot. This tinpot employer is then seen as the main obstacle to reinstatement.

Follow this line of thinking a little bit further and you end up with the abstract demand for 'nationalisation under workers' control' touted by the IMG.

Little space

It is tempting to believe that the IMG, in giving little space to the question of nationalisation in the pamphlet, had begun to see the diversionary nature of this demand at the time it was raised.

More likely, though, it raised barriers in their moves to build an unprincipled, shapeless, anti-Trotskyist 'Socialist Unity' bloc.

After all, the IMG's latest bedfellow, Big Flame stated openly in last week's issue of *Socialist Challenge* that they want to produce the kind of publications that "even W.H. Smith would find hard to resist stocking".

Whereas *The Battle of Grunwick* does contain an interesting chronological table of events and a useful section on the laws of picketing, the Socialist Workers Party booklet—titled simply *Grunwick*—contains absolutely nothing to recommend it to anyone—apart perhaps

from the price.

For the SWP, mass picketing has always been the key to winning this dispute, and has always provided fuel to inspire *Socialist Worker* reporters.

Rather than seeking to draw out the lessons from the mass pickets, highlighting the role of the police and emphasising the need for political preparation and organisation, the pamphlet remains trapped in the grip of sensationalism with Councillors "white and drawn", police "having more fun beating up pickets and their supporters", MP's shouting "animals" to the police and pickets being "dragged off by the hair" (Pages 8-9).

Sabotage

Of course the pamphlet's main purpose is to propagandise the SWP's so-called 'rank and file' tactics. Seeing the union leaderships woodenly as 'right wing' and ready to 'sabotage the strike' they believe the answer lies in organising workers outside of and away from the bureaucracy and the official labour movement.

That this sectarian policy has some resonance amongst sections of the working class is without doubt.

But the signal lack of success of the SWP or its 'Rank and File' front organisation in disputes during the last period demonstrates that it offers no real answers.

As Trotsky said, "a conscious striving for unity on a revolutionary basis is peculiar to the vanguard of the proletariat." (*Crisis of the French Section*, p. 65).

Lead vanguard

The task of Marxists is to build and politically lead the vanguard of the proletariat. That is a political task shirked by both the IMG and SWP.

The questions of leadership, programme and theoretical clarity are as absent in *Grunwick* and *The Battle for Grunwick* as they are from any issue of *Socialist Worker* or *Socialist Challenge* you may pick up.



bornly recoiled from mobilising blacking action and refused concrete support to the mass pickets.

This comes as no surprise to us. It only serves to illustrate once again the total bankruptcy of the union bureaucracy which is chronically incapable of ensuring even the most elementary trade union rights.

The mobilisation of whole

a couple of pamphlets on Grunwick have appeared: one from the self-proclaimed "Trotskyists" of the International Marxist Group (IMG) the other from the "rank and file" specialists of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP).

To read the IMG's offering, *Battle of Grunwick*, is to learn something of the IMG's headlong dash towards centrism.

OUR POLICIES FOR WORKERS DEFENCE SQUADS

'Engels defined the state as 'bodies of armed men'. The arming of the proletariat is an imperative concomitant element to its struggle for liberation'.

Transitional Programme

As the class struggle sharpens the workers' movement comes under physical attack from two directions.

The state has, for the purpose of repression, trained armed bodies of men (the army, the police) whose job it is to protect the property of the ruling class.

Trained

The recent trend towards use of the armed forces as strike-breakers in industrial disputes (firemen, air traffic controllers) is only a few steps away from the use of these forces as direct agents of repression, a role for which they have been thoroughly trained over the eight years occupation of Northern Ireland.

At the same time we can see the expansion of special units such as the Special Patrol Group whose job it is to provide the sharp cutting edge in battles between the police and the working class.

The most recent example of the special role of the SPG was, of course, the attacks on the Grunwick picket lines on November 7th.

Self defence

At the same time the fascists are stepping up their physical attacks on the black community, socialist organisations and the workers' movement generally.

To deal with these attacks

the workers' movement must adopt a policy of self-defence.

In his book *Teamster Politics* Farrell Dobbs outlines the methods used by the American Trotskyists of the 1930's to defend their trade unions against fascist threats.

ness to take the necessary training for that purpose, and acceptance of the democratic discipline required in a combat unit.

'Moreover, its activities were conducted only with the consent of the membership of the trade unions involved, and under their control.

tactics to be used in fighting fascists were held, and an intelligence unit was set up to keep track of the fascists' movements.

A section of the guard dispersed one fascist meeting and followed this up in the union newspaper *Northwest Organiser* with propaganda



The Minneapolis Workers Defence Guard

The Trotskyists were then in the leadership of Local 544 of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Minneapolis.

Local 544 had led a number of sharp battles with the employers some of whom were now encouraging the fascist 'Silver Shirts of America' to start a campaign in the city.

In August 1938 in response to this threat, Local 544 decided to organise a defence force. From the start this was seen as being based on the widest possible support.

'The guard was in no sense an elite body. It was simply a businesslike formation open to any active union member. The only requirements for inclusion in its ranks were readiness to defend the unions from attack, willing-

'As in the case of Local 544 itself, the guard functioned democratically in its internal affairs. Steps taken to carry out its assigned tasks were decided through open discussion and majority vote. This procedure was also used in selecting leaders who were to have command authority during any combat.

'... structurally the body was divided into small units to facilitate rapid mobilisation in the event of a surprise attack on the union movement: Squads of five were the norm, with a member of each squad being designated captain. In a relatively short time the force thus organised was built up to about 600'.

Intelligence unit

Individual members contributed arms to the force; drill sessions and lectures on

designed to scare the fascists off.

So well organised and strong was the defence guard that a public display of force was enough to keep the fascists out of Minneapolis:

'... an emergency mobilisation of the defence formation was called at one hour's notice. Only three people knew what was up. As part of the test all others were left with the impression that a real crisis had developed. By the designated assembly time, just sixty minutes after the first call went out, about 300 members of the guard had turned out ready for action—an impressive performance'.

The mobilisation was held on waste ground in full view of the Minneapolis population who could see that Local 544 meant business when it came to fighting fascists.

Wider sections

Some months ago a sharp rise in racist attacks in Britain led to important developments within the black community. Many of the youth broke decisively with the traditional policy of demanding police protection against the racists and set up their own defence organisations.

The WSL welcomed this development but argued the need to extend the base of these groups to wider sections of the workers' movement.

'We of course, support the right of immigrant workers to defend themselves in whatever way necessary against racist and fascist attack. But we also have a political responsibility to attempt to direct these self-defence groups towards calling on the strength of the organised labour movement as a whole so that the most united class attack can be launched

Pitched battle between strikers and police in Minneapolis against fascist provocation and violence.

'If the black workers and youth have been the first target of the fascists, picket lines and trade union meetings will be next. Fascists have already attacked meetings on Ireland.

'WSL members and supporters in the areas affected must therefore propose at their union branches, trades councils and Labour Parties that a fight is waged for workers' defence squads organised jointly between immigrant and trade union organisations.

'Where possible we must fight for this within immigrant organised defence squads by attending as delegates from the trade unions and arguing that they unify with trade union bodies, particularly trades councils, in their fight against fascist attacks'.

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In this way we avoided

is not to be smashed, defence squads must be organised.

There is no blue print for their development. What we can say is that the most likely basis will be picket lines which in a situation of sharp conflict will need to be well organised and drilled.

Workers fighting to defend themselves must reach out to local trade unionists and seek to form a permanent defence squad drawn from the whole area and responsible for the defence of all under attack.

The scale of attacks at present make the emergence of workers' defence organisations on a mass scale unlikely.

Those that do arise will, in periods of less attacks, tend to die out.

This does not mean that we cease advocating workers' self-defence. For we start from the understanding that further attacks will come and any example of workers' self-defence will hold important lessons for future clashes.



PHOTO: Andrew Wlad, Report

Police clear route for fascists in Lewisham

mechanically counterposing non-existent workers' defence squads based on trade unions to the living organisations developing out of a real struggle.

Our policy is to demand the labour movement defends itself and other oppressed sections from fascist and state attacks.

We see the necessity of confronting the conservative trade union leadership at a national and local level.

But we do not wait for the trade union bureaucracy when attacks are taking place. We help organise and support such defence formations as emerge in the living struggle.

As the trade union bureaucracy begins to lose its grip over the class, workers will face increasing battles with fascists, hired scabs and the forces of the state.

If the workers' movement



Mass demonstration last year against racist attacks in Southall. Marches like this were the first in which masses of immigrant workers and youth were mobilised against fascism, creating a real possibility of workers defence squads.

INDUSTRIAL NEWS



Mass march of London firemen last week.

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Committee launched to back the firemen

Warley Trades Council in the West Midlands has moved to support the firemen.

After a debate which centred on the question of the Lib-Lab coalition government, and the lack of an alternative government which would reflect working class interests, the Trades Council voted by an overwhelming

majority to set up an emergency committee.

The committee, is open to representatives of all working class organisations, trade union branches, shop stewards committees and tenants associations.

Its job will be to organise regular financial contributions, and to organise leaflets and lunchtime factory meetings to support the fire-

men's case.

The first meeting of the emergency committee was attended by convenors from several important local factories, as well as Trades Council delegates and local firemen.

It drew up a list of all large factories in the area which are to be contacted to arrange for firemen to speak to mass meetings.

It has arranged for the production of 5,000 leaflets putting the case of the firemen in the context of the fight against wage control and appealing for weekly levies to be imposed in factories.

It is making preparations for a demonstration to be held jointly with other Trades Councils in West Bromwich.

CPSA's week of 'action'

Lots of speeches, hundreds of leaflets and militant—but unco-ordinated—industrial action that was the content of last week's CPSA-backed "week of action" by civil servants.

Last Wednesday (November 30) was perhaps the high point of the action, as civil servants in offices throughout the country staged a one-day strike in support of their demand for the immediate reactivation of the Pay Research Unit which assesses Civil Servants' pay.

Employment and Social Security offices in London were shut, and over 5,000 workers packed Westminster's Central Hall to listen to vacuous speeches from CPSA tops.

Suspended

The Pay Research Unit was suspended by the Labour government in 1974 when it introduced Stage One of its Social Contract.

The function of the Unit is quite simple: it provides information about pay rates in the private sector, and on the basis of this data recommends wage increases for public sector workers commensurate with the increases paid in the private

sector.

The government have declared that the Pay Research Unit will not be activated until April 1979, and that the pay settlement for April 1978 will be within the 10% guidelines.

Convoluting position

But given that non-public sector workers are going to secure average wage increases greater than 10%, the CPSA argue that their wages are being held down disproportionately, and that average increases should apply to them as much as anyone else.

This convoluted position is a distorted reflection of the fact that civil servants—like workers elsewhere—are beginning to fight against the wage cuts they've suffered in the post-1974 period.

Reactivation of the Pay Research Unit in itself is not going to compensate for that fall in living standards since all wage increases are lagging behind inflation.

Only a full sliding scale of wages to compensate for each increase in the cost of living as assessed by trade union run committees can achieve this end.

Civil Servants should now raise this demand to regain and defend living standards immediately.



Fisher postures for press cameras

NUPE stalls to isolate firemen

The decision last week by union officials representing one million council workers to seek more talks on their pay claim is a conscious move to sabotage the firemen's pay strike, and to preserve the 10% pay guidelines.

Last Monday NUPE announced that, while doing nothing to mobilise their own members alongside the firemen, they would, to preserve their 'left' image among NUPE workers, donate £10,000 of conscience money

GORMLEY MAKES A BID FOR LONG-TERM PAY CONTROL

The leadership of the NUM will make a decisive attempt this Thursday, December 8, to flout the decision of both their annual conference and of the national ballot, by introducing productivity deals in selected areas.

A meeting of the Executive is expected to approve demands from local officials—including those from South Derbyshire—that they start negotiating the very same productivity deals rejected by 57% of the membership in October.

Far-reaching proposals

This is nothing more than a device to avoid action over the union's £135 wage claim.

But it now emerges that Gormley and the NUM right wing have written into that claim far-reaching proposals that could end annual pay reviews altogether.

Proposals for US-style three year deals are being thrown around by officials desperate to take the heat out of miners' pay talks.

This, linked to a derailing of the £135 claim, would be the NUM leaders' contribution to the planned phases 4 and 5 of wage control.

Lawrence Daly—one time 'left' talking General Secretary—sat firmly alongside Len Murray last week as the TUC General Secretary announced the F&GP's decision to dump the firemen.

Determination

It was an outward, visible sign of Daly and Gormley's determination not to allow their members to move towards strike action at the same time as the firemen.

Gormley himself is now behaving as if there had never been either a vote over the productivity deals at the annual conference or a ballot.

The current issue of *The Miner* quotes Gormley as saying:

"There is undoubtedly strong feeling in this and South Derbyshire have already formally asked for permission to negotiate their own scheme.

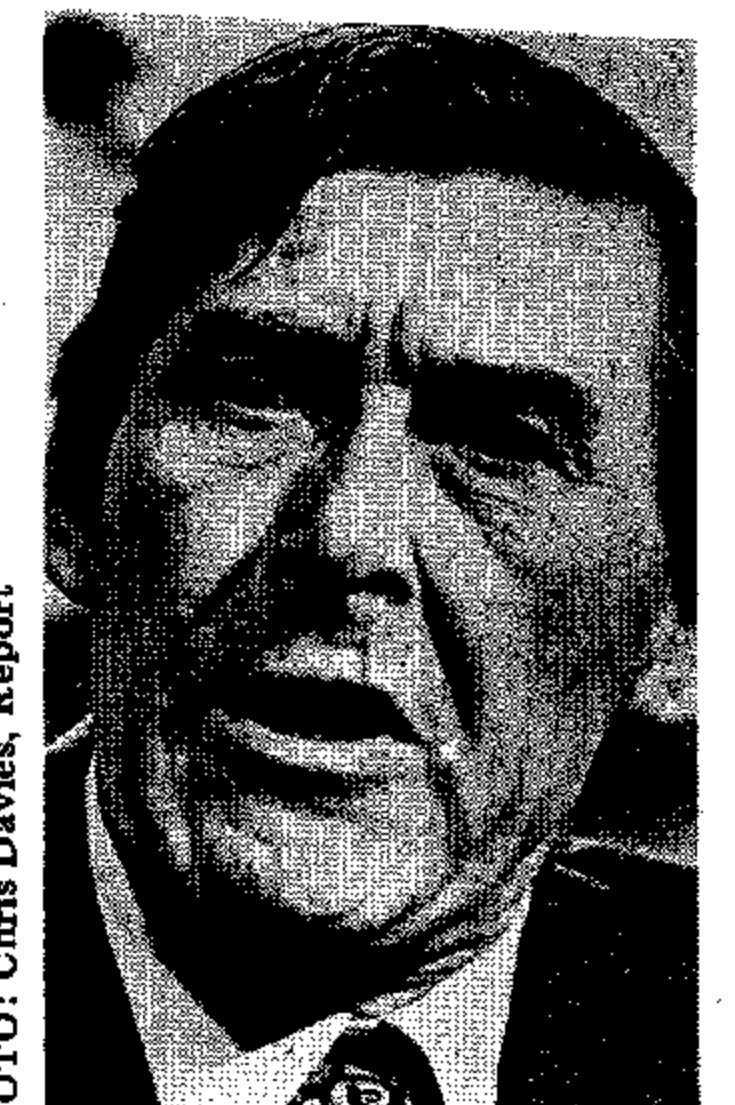
"Many of the areas who voted to accept the national incentive scheme feel that there is money in there for their members and it's only natural that they want to be able to get their hands on it".

So far, the reply from Arthur Scargill in any concrete form has been conspicuous by its absence.

The move is not just an assault on union democracy



Gormley



McGahey—where does he stand on £135 claim?

but a carefully conceived move to sabotage any attempts to call strike action over the £135 claim.

If Scargill is serious about leading a fight over pay then he must act now by calling for an immediate strike ballot.

The basis for the right wing move is the discrepancy between voting figures in certain areas.

In South Wales 83% voted against the deal, in Yorkshire 76% and in Kent, 71%.

Campaign launched

In all these areas—notably Scargill's Yorkshire—some sort of campaign was launched against the deal.

Other areas where no opposition was allowed to be voiced, showed much lower numbers voting against. In Nottinghamshire, 38%, in South Derbyshire 29%.

But the corporate nature of the vote is not one of the left's making. If areas go ahead in productivity schemes locally, Scargill must begin a campaign for strike action on the pay claim throughout the union, beginning in his own area.

No date set

The management and the union are to meet again on the pay claim but no date has been set or will be set until Gormley and Daly think they have got their way.

The simple fact is that for every 10% increase in output under the scheme, three per cent goes as 'incentives' payments and seven per cent as increased exploitation to the employers.

Should Scargill fail to lead an immediate and effective fight, a blow will be struck not only against the miners but against the firemen and the whole working class.

The miners' place is alongside the firemen in a united battle against the 10% limit, not alongside Len Murray in his fight against the firemen.

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

BUSES OFFICIAL IS VOTED DOWN

Jack Green, TGWU Regional Secretary for Passenger Transport was greeted with shouts of 'scab' and 'go home' last week.

Workers were incensed when he informed a mass meeting of Sheffield bus crews that he had gone over their heads to sign an agreement with South Yorkshire buses accepting a 10% wage increase.

Green informed the bus crews that despite a 2 to 1 vote for a ballot vote to reject the 10% he was bound to sign the agreement because the balance of votes in the District had gone in favour.

These votes included Rotherham and Doncaster garages who had earlier called off industrial action in the wage claim—against the decision of the stewards' committee.

Having done nothing to win the claim and fearing that Sheffield's example would encourage other bus crews to take action on their claims (West Yorkshire has rejected the 10% deal but is yet to decide what action to take) Green was forced to resort to this wretched manoeuvre to try to break the strike action.

But Green's appearance at the mass meeting only reinforced determination to

continue with the claim.

Sheffield busmen had already decided they would not accept a district-wide ballot and the mass meeting voted unanimously to reject the management offer and continue with the weekly one-day lightning strikes.

Highlight

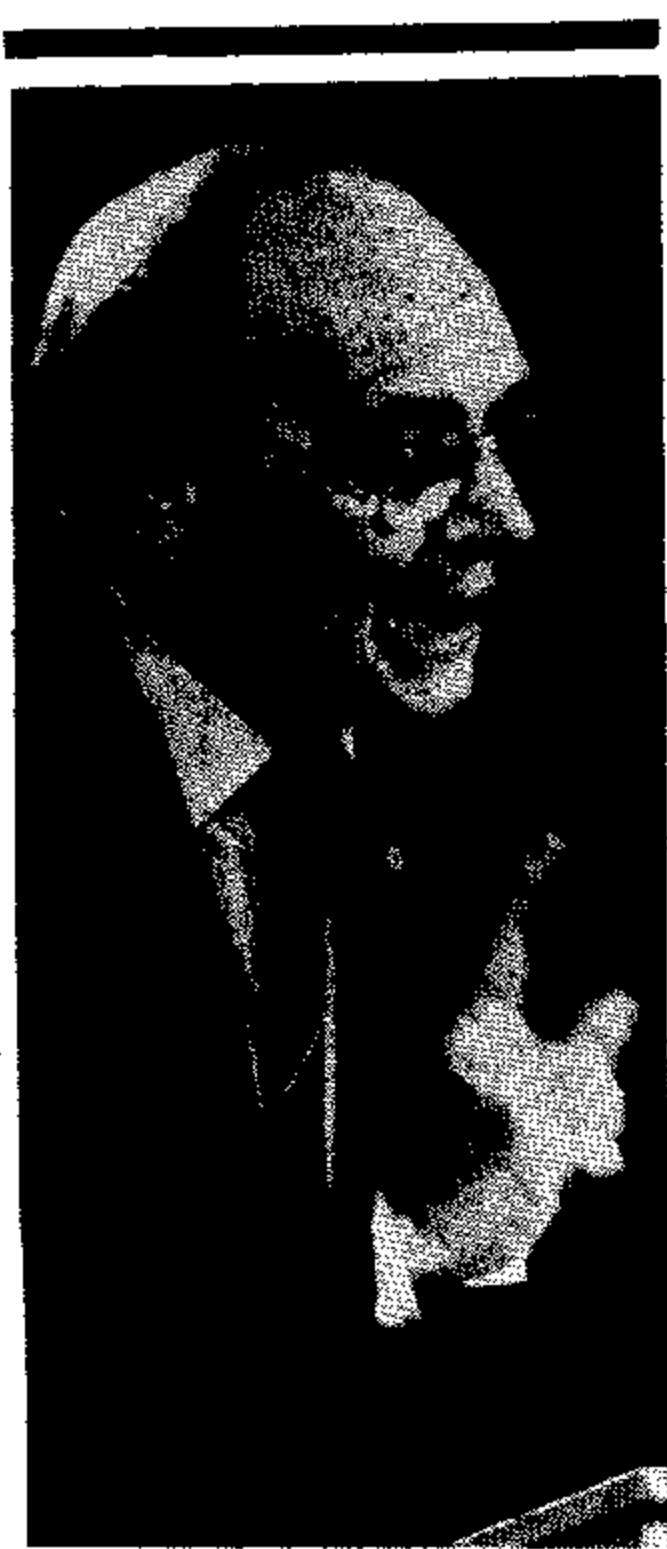
These moves highlight the need for the 12-month rule to be broken and for nationally co-ordinated strike action to break the 10% limit.

The full time officials have shown that this is the last thing they want. Clearly they must now look for ways to enforce their decision onto Sheffield busmen.

Co-ordination

Support for the stand taken by the TGWU 9/10 Branch is urgently needed. The shop stewards must take steps to contact other bus branches across the country, both to gain support against the union officials and to discuss what action other branches are taking on wages.

At the TGWU National Passenger Transport Trade Group committee meeting this month, the fight must be taken up for the breaking of the 12-month rule and the co-ordination of national strike action to regain and defend living standards.



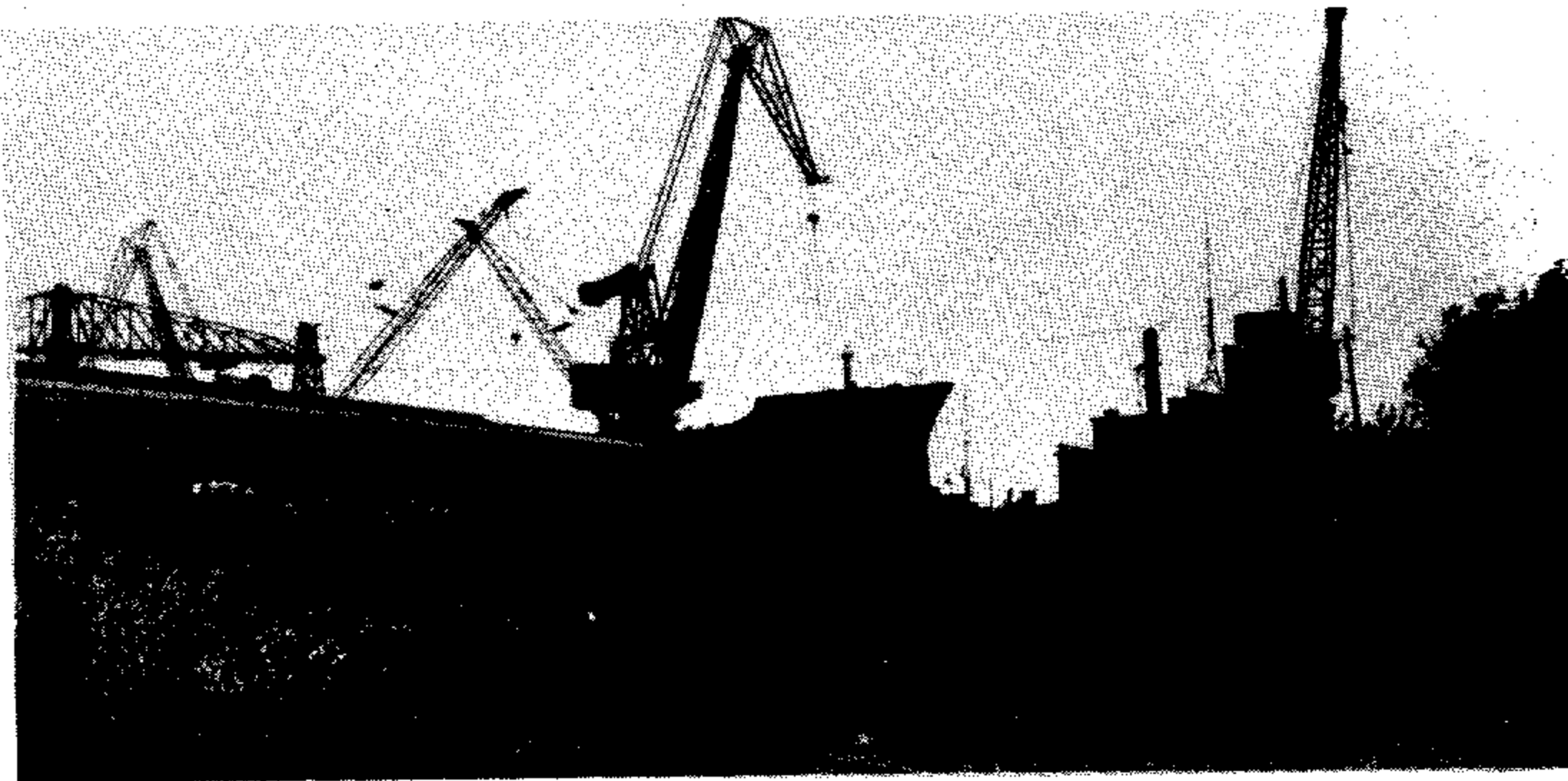
Jones

TGWU General Secretary Jack Jones last week announced a 14% pay increase to the union's army of 450 appointed full time officials.

That these reactionaries should receive an increase at all must have outraged thousands of TGWU members.

That they should break through the 10% limit they are so jealously preserving for everyone else makes it even more galling.

But to cap it all, the pretext Jones used for the settlement was that a 'productivity deal' had been done. Watch out for even more, even bigger, and even faster sell-outs in TGWU disputes!



Swan Hunter shipyard

STALINISTS SCAB ON TYNESIDE CONTRACT

Communist Party-led shop stewards at Govan shipyards today voted to scab on Swan Hunter outfitters by refusing to black work on the withdrawn British cargo vessel order.

And they went even further, demanding that the outfitters at Swan Hunter call off their 3-month old overtime ban which they had maintained despite government and employers' blackmailing threat of sackings.

Govan convenor, veteran Stalinist James Airlie, in a statement reeking of national chauvinism, stated the stewards' determination that the Polish order should stay in this country come what may.

The Govan stewards had themselves already agreed to accept the employers' no-strike ultimatum as the basis

for receiving their part of the order.

So while verbally "deploring" the reallocation of the order during an industrial dispute the Govan stewards have declared that they stand firmly on the side of management against the pay struggle by Swan Hunter outfitters.

All this is done in the name of Airlie's stated objective of proving that "the British shipbuilding worker is second to none".

Yet, prior to the Govan decision, other shipyard workers had registered their support for the outfitters' firm rejection of the employers' 'viability' argument.

A 24-hour strike in support of the outfitters was staged at Haverton Hill yard on Teeside. And on Wearside the 2,500 workforce at Austin and Pickersgill in Sunderland rejected the company's no-strike demands.

"Blacklegging"

Wearside Confed. secretary Harry Wilkinson stated that to accept part of the Swan Hunter offer would be "blacklegging".

And at Smith's dock on Teeside the call for the Polish order to be blacked has been taken up by TASS draughtsmen who have refused to work on the plans even if they are released by Swan Hunter drawing offices.

Under these conditions the Stalinists and others at Govan have set the pace in national level scabbing on the Swan Hunter workforce.

Meanwhile the Tory Press is furious that its efforts to pile additional blackmailing pressure onto the outfitters

has resulted not in a collapse by the workers but in a highly publicised rebuff for British Shipbuilders' management and for the government.

The *Sunday Times*, for instance, is demanding the government explain why they failed to understand the importance of the outfitters' unofficial action; why they publicised the ultimatum; and why a gamble was taken on getting the Swans men back to work.

Tenacity

The answer is clearly that both employers and government underestimated the tenacity of the outfitters in their pay parity demands.

Their strength now offers a lead to the entire working class, and must be backed by principled supporting action in every shipyard.

Though we do not advocate parity claims, the outfitters' struggle is one of the ways workers are fighting the 10% pay policy.

Bosses' blackmail, threatening sackings or closures if attacks on conditions are not accepted must be rejected in every instance.

The Govan stewards' scandalous decision must be overthrown and the Swan Hunter order blacked in every dock.

And jobs on the Tyne and throughout British Shipbuilders must be defended through the demand for work sharing for each trade without loss of pay—backed if necessary by shipyard occupations.

This way the government's blackmail can be turned against itself, and the interests of shipyard workers defended.

NUJ FACES CRUCIAL VOTE

As we went to press the National Executive of the NUJ were meeting to decide on a call from the Darlington chapel for escalation of their 27 week old strike.

Darlington journalists voted 79-1 with 5 abstentions to reject a management 'offer' that they return to work without a single concession to their closed shop claim and in doing so put print union leaders back on the hook.

The offer was taken 'without comment' to the chapel by NUJ General Secretary Ken Ashton after a meeting between print union leaders and management from which

strike representatives were excluded.

Joe Wade has said in a letter to the NUJ that his union would be prepared to discuss some form of escalation throughout Westminster Press.

Meanwhile he told his own union members he hoped the NUJ "will turn their attention towards achieving a settlement rather than escalating the dispute".

It is of absolute importance that a firm date is fixed for escalation throughout the group. A special delegates conference should then be called to spread the dispute to the whole Newspaper Society to uphold a vital plank of NUJ policy.

GRUNWICK LOBBY DEC 21

An attempt to reverse the TUC General Council's betrayal of the Grunwick strikers will be made in a lobby of the next General Council meeting on December 21.

But there are no indications that this coming lobby has been any more adequately prepared than previous efforts—despite the far higher stakes involved.

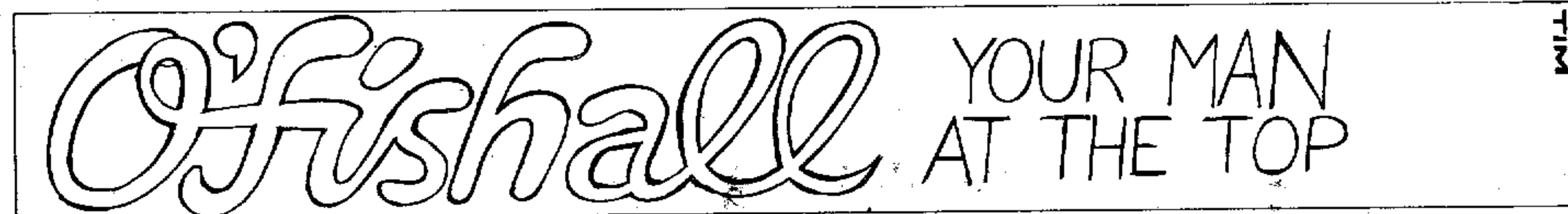
With APEX leaders having imposed a four-week suspension on the four hunger strikers from the strike committee, and the TUC refusing the slightest support, there is a real danger that the struggle will weaken unless a perspective is given.

Already the opportunists of the 'Militant' group and the self-styled 'Trotskyists' of the I-CL are describing the strike in the past tense. This view must be rejected.

Mass lobby

Full day-time picketing of the Grunwick plant must be resumed. A mass lobby of the first TUC meeting in January must call on all those forces that supported earlier mass pickets to rally in demanding all supplies to Grunwick be cut off.

And every labour movement body in the country must be pressed to declare support for any section that takes unofficial blacking action to help win the Grunwick strike.



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STUDENT BROAD LEFT BLOCS WITH TORIES



Sue Slipman (centre) applauded by predecessor Charles Clarke in March this year.

The Federation of Conservative Students, (FCS) are now so confident in the right wing policies of the Broad Left that they were walking around the NUS conference with stickers bearing a picture of NUS President Sue Slipman and the words "I'm a Tory too!". Sue Slipman is an executive member

Last Friday in Blackpool,

Broad Left Executive members of the NUS joined Tory students in a rapturous and sustained standing ovation for the coalition minister who has presided over the most vicious cuts in education since the war.

This response to a speech in which Shirley Williams had justified her massive cut-backs in education provision at all levels set the tone for a conference in which the now close-knit Broad Left/FCS alliance successfully moved NUS policy decisively to the right.

As Williams spoke, a conference delegate from Belfast College of Business Studies was being held by the Special Branch in Blackpool under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Blame

Broad Left executive members refused to support a call to picket the police station where Emmanuel Hands was being held and the following day Deputy President Pete Ashby blamed those students who had done so for the fact that Hands was still in detention.

The acute crisis in which the NUS finds itself was highlighted last week when

to unions.

Slipman's opening speech was almost totally concerned with attacking the left.

"There are those who wish to see students unions operating as political parties, imposing a narrow ideology on our members", said Stalinist Slipman.

Policy defeat

A major conference success of the Broad Left in cementing their alliance with the right wing was the defeat of the union's policy of "no platform for fascists", maintained since 1974 when it was supported by the Broad Left.

The "free speech for fascists" motion in the racism debate was jointly written by Tory and Broad Left unions.

The lack of any campaign at all on the central question of grants and cuts this year was crystallised in a policy which might have been written by Education Minister Williams herself.

Thrown out

Mass action against the cuts was thrown out in favour of lobbies, submissions and working parties and the thrust of the campaign is to be directed towards anomalies such as discretionary awards and the means test.

This has been the tactic the Tories have been advocating for some time as a means of diverting a mass mobilisation of the stronger sections of students.

At the same time the Broad Left have sought to divert the whole campaign to a debate about the need to "democratise" education.

'Racists'

The close connection with Williams was also highlighted by the Education Minister's reference to the 'racists' in students unions who have moved to ban certain activities of the Zionists.

This was closely connected with the Broad Left/Tory move to change the union's constitution to allow the suspension of unions who act against the Zionists.

The wholesale crisis which has now developed in the NUS provoking in itself major splits in the Broad Left, particularly over the "no platform" question opens up the opportunity for the intervention of revolutionary leadership on the basis of a programme to defend education and all other students' interests.

This must centre on the demand for a sliding scale of public expenditure, with committees of representatives of students unions and other unions in higher education, assessing the level of inflation.

Tripoli summit talks offer no lead

The Arab 'rejectionist' summit which ended in Tripoli on Monday 5 December concluded in some disarray, with a walk-out of the Iraqi delegation.

Iraq has always taken the most verbally bombastic stance against the Zionists, but the intensity of their rhetoric has often been in inverse proportion to their willingness to take action.

Correct

On this occasion, however, though the Iraqis themselves did not take up any more than a verbal fight against the Zionists and their friends, they were correct to say that the others at the summit had not taken up any fight at all.

The statement signed by

the Libyans, S. Yemenis, Algerians, Syrians and the PLO agreed to "freeze"—rather than end—relations with Egypt, and to remove the headquarters of the Arab League from Cairo.

Boycott

There was also a call for an economic boycott, but apparently only on firms actually trading with Israel.

The only stipulation of the Tripoli agreement that was not purely rhetorical was for economic and military support for the Syrians.

But in view of the Syrians murderous attacks on the Palestinians in the past this can hardly be seen as a step forward either.

One other important aspect of the Tripoli conference was the rejection of all



Arafat—a new line adopted? latest stand and move in the other direction.

the various sections of the Palestinians of "recognition, conciliation or negotiation" with the Zionists.

This appears to be a different line for Arafat and the other non-rejectionists of the PLO. Before Sadat's belly-crawling "initiative" these people seemed to be moving themselves towards a Geneva conference and other negotiations with the Zionists.

However in the complex shifting sands of Arab bourgeois diplomacy Arafat and Fatah could easily reverse this

A socialist programme is essential to mobilise the Palestinians and Arab masses against the Zionists and against their own reactionary bourgeois leaders.

The next turn on the diplomatic roundabout could find the PLO, (along, perhaps, with the Iraqis) joining Sadat on the road to treachery and compromise on the national rights of the dispossessed Palestinians.

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report



Shirley Williams

staff at the union's London headquarters went on strike over "job wastage".

This dispute—which resulted in Broad Left members of the Executive crossing the picket line and calling for scabs to replace the staff—is certain to continue since a conference motion on "priorities" decided to freeze vacancies.

Desperate state

The current lurch to the right by the CP-controlled Broad Left leadership is to a great extent a cynical response to the desperate state of the union's finances.

It seems likely that Slipman has done some sort of deal with Shirley Williams to delete the union's remaining principled positions and launch an all-round attack on "left wing extremists" in return for certain concessions including an increase in fees

Hart loses in Crown Agents fiasco

Judith Hart, Minister of Overseas Aid and Development has been overturned in her bid to cover up the actions of the Crown Agents ventures into massive speculation.

Labour MPs helped defeat the government on their handling of the affair in which more than £200 million was lost.

A public inquiry is now expected to replace the private inquiry which Hart insisted was the 'best' way of finding culprits to blame.

Dennis Skinner, Hart's fellow Tribuneite, led the attack on the government but all MPs left or right, Labour

or Tory are looking for heads to roll—as the *Sunday Times* put it, "people with faces, names and monthly pay-checks—not just long-gone Ministers".

But the Crown Agents, who sell British experience in the mysteries of speculation to foreign governments, were not victims of individual errors.

The crisis that overtook the agents in the property market and fringe banks was part of one of the sudden crises of capitalism that sweep through international markets.

MONTHLY FUND

The November fund closed over the top with a total of £622.25. And a good start has been made to the December Fund with £85.60 coming in during the first five days of the month.

The first donations to arrive were: Oxford £5; Coventry £2.35, South London £52; Leeds £10 and Hull £16.25.

It is important that a real effort is made to raise the fund in good time this month with the diversion of Christmas only a few weeks off.

All donations should be sent to:

Socialist Press Monthly Fund
31, Dartmouth Park Hill
London NW5 1HR

METROPOLE HOTEL AND ROLLS ROYCE JOINT BENEFIT

Saturday 10 December at 8 p.m.
School of Intensive English Studies
21, Star St., London W2.

With the

Broadside Mobile Workers Theatre
"Divide and Rule Britannia"

A play about the nature of racialism followed by discussion.

50p admission (all money to the strike funds).