

# workers' ACTION

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10p

ANOTHER internal Tory party document has been leaked to the press — and again it shows them as rampant union-bashers. Besides what one union leader call 'a battle plan for confrontation with the unions', the document contains plans for nationalised industry.

These plans advocate 'fragmenting' the industries, selling off profitable parts at a 50% discount to big business, and what the document itself calls 'a nasty little Bill' to limit the utility monopolies.

Only a month ago a report drawn up by a committee under Lord Carrington was leaked to the press. That document and the appendix to the recent document are very similar.

Both of them start out from three assumptions. The Labour Party is better at 'dealing with' the unions. The Tories are likely to face a big wave of resistance. Matched against a well-organised section of the working class like the miners, a Tory government would lose.

Carrington, who was Heath's 'general' at the time of the Tories' defeats at the hands of the miners in 1972 and 1974, agrees with the authors of the latest document that in the event of a general strike troops could not be used — though naturally if they thought their system was at stake they would stop at nothing to crush revolt. Both of them put a great deal of emphasis on preparation for a period of sharp class struggle.

According to the 'Economist', which splashed the report, the Tories want "a large, mobile squad of police prepared to uphold the law against violent picketing" — presumably an expansion of the present Special Patrol Groups. They also



propose recruiting "good non-union drivers ... to cross picket lines with police protection".

The leak has embarrassed a lot of Tories. They have underlined that the document was not 'official'. Whatever the document's status, however, as Labour's Industry Minister Eric Varley puts it, "Once again the true face of Toryism is revealed".

Varley's gleeful assault on the Tories began with the words: "Are you a steelworker, a railman, a civil servant, or a Leyland worker? If so the Tories regard you as easy meat and want to pick a fight with you".

The Labour Minister was referring to the league table of tough-nuts and push-

overs among unions in the report, a table concluding with the recommendation that the tough-nuts be paid off and the push-overs picketed on and given a battering.

But if you are a steelworker, railman, civil servant, or Leyland worker, you'll already know that the Labour Government "regard you as easy meat and want to pick a fight with you".

The thousands of steelworkers faced with the sack because of Labour's still plans, the railmen again threatening strike action on pay, the civil servants whose conference last week rejected Government pay curbs and job cuts, and the Leyland workers of whom 3,000 have just been sacked at Speke — these workers won't be thanking Varley and his government for their friendship and support!

The Tories' report is a measure of the organisational strength of the labour movement. The Labour Government's record is a measure of the movement's political weakness. With the assistance of the trade union leaders, the Government have been able to carry out worker-bashing on a scale which the Tories shrink from because of the reaction it might provoke.

## NEXT STOP FOR EDUARDES' CARVING KNIFE

AN ANNOUNCEMENT last week from British Leyland bosses confirmed that the sacking of 3000 workers at Speke no.2 plant was just a beginning.

At the Canley plant in Coventry [where the work previously done at Speke no.2 is being transferred] 695 jobs are to be cut. The bosses say the cut will be implemented gradually over the next 18 months

through natural wastage.

But what will happen when the TR7, now being transferred to Canley, goes out of production? Unless Leyland workers stand together against all job cuts, they will be carved up, bit by bit, plant by plant.

### Plans for Grunwick-style picket-busting on a grand scale

# ARE YOU EASY MEAT FOR THE TORIES?

## Quiet death for Pact

THE TAWDRY parliamentary alliance, the Lib-Lab pact, is dead. Liberal leader David Steel read the last rites on it rather than get caught up with Labour during the run-up to a general election.

In any case, the Liberals had nothing more to gain with the Budget debate over and defeat on the issue of Proportional Representation behind them.

They must also have been distressed by the fact that, as the Guardian pointed out, "In only one of the 20 by-elections where they have stood in this parliament did they improve their share of the vote".

For some socialists the question of the pact was of central importance. Its quiet passing suggests it was not.

In the same week as the pact's end was announced, Denis Healey wrote again to the IMF pledging the government to observ-

ance of the wishes of the international bankers. That second letter of intent was a far more fundamental piece of class collaboration than the Lib-Lab pact.

Of course socialists always fight for the organisational independence of workers' parties from the bourgeoisie — even when those parties, like Labour, are politically bourgeois agencies.

The Lib-Lab pact, however, did not in fact diminish the accountability of the government to the working class, or provide the government with any alibis for its performance. In sum: it was only the shadow of a real coalition: temporary and tentative.

The government's anti-working class record in the period of the pact was not determined by the alliance with the Liberals. To focus socialist agitation on the alliance was to take attention away from the Labour government's basic role as bailiffs for the bourgeoisie.

WHEN Michel Hidalgo, manager of the French team in the World Cup, arrived in Argentina, he had more to see to than just goals. In a last-minute concession to the campaign in France against the World Cup being played in a country reeking of torture and starvation, Hidalgo agreed to make representations to the Argentine government about the fate of 22 French people who have 'disappeared' in Argentina since the military junta took control of the country two years ago.

The French citizens who have fallen victim of the Videla regime are a minuscule section of the 10,000 people killed, the 7,000 imprisoned, the 22,000 abducted and the 300,000 in forced exile.

For the Argentine working class, fear is accompanied by hunger. Prices have gone up by 400% this year alone; one in five workers is unemployed; and real wages are half what they were in 1960.

Whether the public relations executives hired by the Argentine government or the world football authorities like it or not, the World Cup games in Argentina will highlight torture, murder and savage repression not only in that country but throughout Latin America — US imperialism's bloodstained backyard.

# The gaols behind the goals

SCOTLAND'S first game is against PERU.

On Tuesday 23rd May, elections for the Constituent Assembly that was to mark Peru's return to civilian government were postponed indefinitely. A state of emergency was declared by the country's military rulers. Constitutional guarantees were suspended. Weekly papers, not so far subject to censorship, were shut down completely. 100 leaders of the trade union movement, of left wing parties, were arrested, including revolutionary leader Hugo

Blanco. Police and troops patrolled the capital Lima, and streets in the main factory sectors swarmed with armoured cars.

These repressive measures were taken in the aftermath of a violent two-day general strike, the second in Peru in the last year, which left eleven people dead.

**OF ALL the Latin American regimes, ARGENTINA is most in need of the respectable cover it hopes to gain from hosting the World Cup.**

In addition to the state's

## Mass struggles shake the dictators

DESPITE the ferocious attacks on working class rights, organisations, living standards and jobs, the working masses in South America have fought back against the repression.

In CHILE the illegal trade union movement recently demonstrated its new-found strength and unity by staging a strike in the strategically important copper industry and a go-slow on the docks. **Just before Christmas '77,** Pinochet was obliged to release seven trade unionists who had been exiled to remote Andean villages.

Four weeks ago about 2000 people openly attended an unauthorised May Day rally in Santiago, the first such meeting since the 1973 coup. Although the police did not try to break up the rally, hundreds of workers were afterwards arrested for taking part in it.

The most important drive against repression has been in PERU.

Workers' struggles in July 1977 did force the regime to commit itself to handing over power to a civilian administration. However, these 'concessions' were also combined with a fresh batch of repressive measures directed against the workers' movement.

5000 trade union militants were sacked after the July general strike and a harsh new anti-working class decree on 'labour stability' was enacted. This gave employers the right to carry out mass sackings in the event of a strike or go-slow, to sack workers who 'show lack of respect for the employer, even away from the workplace' and to extend the probationary period for newly hired workers from 90 days to three years.

But within just ten months, the working class has pressed forward in another, two-day, general strike to demand the reinstatement of the 5000, higher wages in response to a

recent 60% price increase (which brings the total increase to 100% since January 1978), and rights to organise. Barricades were set up in working class areas of Lima.

The regime's response has been to sack hundreds more militants, and it is reported that at least some tens of workers were shot dead during the strike.

In BOLIVIA a hunger strike by 1300 people in January forced the military regime to grant a general amnesty of political prisoners, to release the hunger strikers who had been arrested and to reinstate tin miners who had been sacked. The hunger strike had been sparked off by the limited amnesty announced in December and won the support of the country's clandestine tin miners' union who threatened a 48-hour national strike.

The original amnesty was part of the regime's attempt to win respectability by handing over power to a puppet civilian government in August this year. This plan now seems threatened from all sides. Having seen the strength of the hunger strikers' movement, even bourgeois politicians who had previously supported the Army are now pushing themselves forward for election in July.

The government also lifted restrictions on the trade unions, and workers are now able to elect their representatives for the first time in three years.

There has also been a revival of mass struggle in BRAZIL. 40,000 workers have struck in the past month affecting twenty companies in Sao Paulo. The strike, lasting two weeks, was for wage rises breaking the Government's wage limits. Some of the strikers have returned pending negotiations, but Ford workers won immediate concessions aided by pressure from the US carworkers' union the UAW.



own large scale butchery, countless freelance right wing paramilitary outfits operate to mop up working class militants and political opponents of the regime.

Two weeks ago a respectable Buenos Aires newspaper, *La Prensa*, published a list of more than 2,500 names of people who have not been seen after being kidnapped by armed groups claiming to be members of the security forces. The list covered three whole pages.

Many of the 'disappeared' have ended up in the 60 or so concentration camps located in different parts of the country, mainly around existing military bases. Others have been murdered and their bodies have been secretly disposed of.

**THE BRAZILIAN people have lived under military rule since 1964. Renowned for its torturers and death squads, the Brazilian regime has run into difficulties of late.**

10,000 political opponents of the regime are currently living in exile. They have been deprived of their nationality, and their children have been denied Brazilian citizenship, in contravention of the Constitution.

Numerous organisations are now openly campaigning inside Brazil on the issue of an amnesty for the exiles and the country's prisoners.

The wide support for this issue, and the weakening of the monolithic face of the regime, is shown by the fact that in February the Brazilian Committee for Amnesty featured General Bevilacqua as a main speaker at its founding conference. The general is a former member of the Supreme Military Tribunal, holding office in the early years of the dictatorship.

The regime's first response to the growing call for amnesty was to deny the existence of political exiles. The Government stated that "any of these persons can return to the country whenever they want and defend themselves before the law here." In other words, throw themselves on the mercy of the military junta!

But the regime also went on to promise to consider the repeal of some of the 'Institutional Acts', which have set the framework for the 15-year old military regime.

**THOUGH not represented in the World Cup this time, the CHILEAN regime is a byword for bloody repression. After nearly five years of murder, torture, prison camps and victimisation of militant workers, opposition in Chile is just beginning to surface again.**

Most notable has been the campaign by relatives of disappeared prisoners. In July last year they staged a hunger strike, and under its impact General Pinochet gave an undertaking to the UN to 'investigate' the disappearances. Representatives from the group of relatives have since then travelled abroad to give

their testimony. Pinochet's attempts to ban their return were ultimately a failure, with relatives who stayed in Chile mounting street demonstrations against the regime's exclusion orders.

The Pinochet regime has also tried resorting to window-dressing, changing the name of the dreaded DINA secret police, and decreeing an amnesty for past 'political crimes'. The catch was that the bulk of the remaining prisoners are the unacknowledged 'disappeared' prisoners, and the Amnesty is being used to give immunity to none other than the DINA torturers!



Chileans on hunger strike in London to support the demand for information on their missing relatives. ABOVE: torture victim in Uruguay. TOP: the Videla team

# The tasks of anti-fascist unity

**THIS WEEKEND delegates will be meeting to discuss the formation of a national anti-racist and anti-fascist body. The conference is organised by the national and London coordinating committees of local groups.**

The lack of a dynamic national leadership of these groups has perpetuated, as well as reflecting, their difficulties in involving the mass organisations of the working class in their activities; many will be looking to this conference as a turning point.

The recent emergence of the paper CARF as a national publication has marked a step forward in this respect. And it would be tempting to believe that setting up a national centre at this conference would complete the job.

But this would be to ignore the existence of the Anti Nazi League (ANL). And to do that, given the explosion of popular support for the ANL, would be to doom the efforts of the committees to sterility.

After years of unglamorous day-to-day work, the anti-fascist committees have found them-

selves suddenly 'overtaken' by the rise of the ANL. At this weekend's conference, a major issue must be the committees' relation to the ANL.

There are those who believe that the ANL should be avoided like the plague. They cite the disruption caused in some areas by ANL groups of the local committees' ongoing work.

## Political

Noting the political weaknesses of the ANL, some anti-fascist activists conclude that the ANL, like a gale, will soon blow itself out, and once again everything will depend on the hard grind of the local committees.

Underlying this anti-ANL attitude is a feeling on the part of these activists that they are the people who know about anti-fascist activities, who have done the work over the years, and who should be getting the credit today rather than the ANL.

This is a narrow-minded and sectarian attitude.

Another group will be arguing for a policy of 'peaceful co-existence' between the two organisations. This is the 'official' line of the ANL leadership too.

For them, a division of labour should be agreed — and a division of politics. The ANL would continue as a mass organisation — like CND or the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign — its basis opposition to fascism and nothing else, and its structure remaining as loose as possible.

This approach involves the adoption of a giddy series of double standards.

Politics which most of the anti-fascist committees rightly reject as wrong, unprincipled and in the long term weakly ineffective (refusal to oppose immigration controls, refusal to confront the fascists on the streets, acceptance of police bans and a preference for famous sponsors rather than solid working class and labour movement support) cannot be acceptable for the ANL simply because it is bigger. On the contrary, the more influential it is, the more important it is for it to have correct politics.

Nor should it be assumed that such politics inevitably consign a political movement to back-room status: the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign, for instance, attracted hundreds of thousands to its "Victory" slogan who had shown little interest in the existing "Peace" demands.

ANL Press Officer Peter Hain told **Socialist Challenge** (11th May) that he saw those attracted to the ANL finding their way into the anti-fascist committees. "I hope that in the end this new constituency of people would be channelled into these organisations".

In fact this is unlikely to happen on any scale unless the

politics of the committees are fought for in the ANL.

Without abandoning any of their useful ongoing work, the national network of anti-racist activists can best go forward by

■ adopting a clear platform  
■ acting as a 'faction' of the ANL on the basis of such a platform.

That would mean local anti-fascist committees would affiliate to the ANL or unite with ANL groups where they already exist, and fighting for both local ANL groups and the national ANL to adopt a clear anti-racist platform.

- ★ No platform for fascists
- ★ End all immigration controls
- ★ Labour movement assistance for black self defence
- ★ Labour movement organisations to form workers' defence groups
- ★ No call for state bans
- ★ Scrap the 'Sus' laws; oppose police harassment of the black communities
- ★ Fascists out of the unions. Open racists to be purged from all positions in the labour movement.

## PRISONER IN HER OWN HOME

**SINCE her husband died two years ago, Miah Bibi has lived through a regime of daily terror.**

On the inside of her front door in Spitalfields, and across the hall carpet, there are scorch marks where burning petrol-soaked rags have been pushed through the letter box.

Not a day has gone by in the last two years without sticks, stones, mud, paint, paraffin and abuse being pelted at Miah Bibi and her two sons. Now they live behind windows covered in chicken wire, and a high wire-mesh fence has been put up around the garden.

But since the fence went up, the racist youths who have plagued the family now throw bricks at the upstairs windows.

Miah Bibi is a tough woman who hasn't been afraid to chase off her racist tormenters. But with no help from the police, she is virtually a prisoner in her own home.

The police take the line that there's not much they can do as people don't come forward to report racist violence to them. Yet Miah Bibi has reported many of the daily attacks on her, with no result.

Time and again the experience of besieged Asians in East London like Miah Bibi has been that the police only show interest in them if they take action to defend themselves. Asians who have gone out of their houses to defend their homes and children against attack have been threatened with arrest or taken in and questioned while the white thugs withdraw from the scene at their leisure.

Akiquir Rahman, secretary of the Bengali Youth Association, says: "We're frightened to go out at night and the streets aren't safe to walk in. It's getting worse every day."

The attacks on Miah Bibi may seem very similar to other incidents, reported in the national press, of youngsters in a neighbourhood picking on some defenceless, perhaps elderly, person and tormenting them. In fact, Miah Bibi's experience is of concerted racist violence aimed at her whole community, with the intention of driving people out by terror.

## Air-gun snipers torment E End black women

A 2½-year old girl and a pregnant woman are among the victims of a gang of air gun snipers who have struck four times in as many days in a couple of streets of East London.

All the victims were black. All were fired on from behind from a passing car carrying three or four white youths. Every attack was in broad daylight.

■ **ATTACK No.1:** Friday May 19th at 1.30pm. A West Indian Health Visitor was on a call in the Mile End Road when she was fired on. The pellets tore through her thick coat and two jumpers, breaking the skin near her spine. She had to have medical treatment.

■ **ATTACK No.2:** Friday May 19 at 3.30pm. 44-year-old Amar Singh was attacked in Bow Road after leaving the Post Office. He was shot in the back.

■ **ATTACK No.3:** Monday 22nd May. 19-year old Raja Begum,

who is 8 months pregnant, was shot in the leg as she walked home from the ante-natal clinic in Mile End with her young baby.

When Raja Begum got home after the shooting she found air-gun pellets in her front door. She is now too frightened to go out.

■ **ATTACK No.4:** Monday 22nd May. A few moments later, 2½-year old Rahina Rahman was shot in the back and lost consciousness for some minutes. She was also coming from the ante-natal clinic, together with her pregnant mother.

If these things happened to the white residents of Kensington or Hampstead there would be an outcry in the national press. But they are happening to Asians in East London and are virtually ignored except for the occasional 'background' piece in Sunday newspapers to explain why the Asian community is up in arms.

These are some of the attacks

During a dispute last January pickets were out at all entrances to the National Westminster Bank site at Allie Street, East London. Police arrived and arrested nine Asian pickets, leaving the white pickets alone. They were charged with obstruction and with building a bonfire on the picket line.

And last week seven of the nine were found guilty, fined £30 each, and ordered to pay court costs.

Before the hearing last week over 100 building workers from sites all over London marched behind Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council banner from Mile End to Thames Court. After the verdict UCATT Regional Officer Frank Taggart said "This judgment has taken away more rights than any picket ever had".

A petition signed by over a thousand trade unionists has been presented to the Home Secretary demanding an investigation into the police handling of the case, and UCATT have also been asked to investigate the trial.

FRAN BRODIE



Miah Bibi: barricaded into her East End home

the national press has ignored:

■ Mustapha Siddique stabbed in a sweetshop in Brick Lane after white youths entered and harassed customers. July 30th '76.

■ Abdul Rauf attacked by white youths last year. They approached him in Handbury Street, Spitalfields and slashed his face with broken bottles. He had to have his ear stitched back on.

■ Abdul Motim shot in the eye with an air gun in Woodseer Street, Spitalfields, seven months ago.

■ Rahat Ullah, 62 years old, badly beaten up by two men outside his home in Pelham Buildings, Woodseer Street, four months ago.

■ Hafizue Rahman, set upon by a gang of white youths two months ago and left lying unconscious in the gutter.

Asian homes, shops and workshops have also been targets of attack. Blazing rubbish was heaped up by the doors of seven Bengali homes recently. And one flat was vandalised just after an Asian family had been to view it.

## COURT FINES ASIAN PICKETS



London building workers march to protest trial of Asian pickets

# No white-wash for Labour

A TORY victory in the general election will be a defeat for the labour movement.

But every uncritical working class vote given to Labour — with its present leaders and policies — will be a defeat for the interests of the working class.

This is the problem that faces socialists and militants between now and the election. We are not strong enough to sweep the Callaghans, Wilsons, and Healeys aside. And we can't allow ourselves to be

so politically irresponsible as to keep our mouths shut, and accept their monopoly of working class politics during an election in which workers will vote in judgment on policies which have led to at least a 10% fall in their living standards.

Every worker who votes Labour from a belief that the Labour Party in office has done a good job represents an ideological and political defeat for the working class.

## Bail

Every worker who votes Labour because the 'terrible Tories' are worse is making a commitment to treat with sympathy whatever policies a new Labour government would attempt to inflict on the working class in the interest of the capitalists.

The election campaign of the labour movement is inescapably going to endorse and attempt to glorify the record of the past four years of Labour government. Therefore the official Labour election campaign will be a powerful force to tie workers to right wing policies of continuing to try to bail out capitalism at the expense of the working class.

The unity of the labour movement behind the Labour candidates is necessary for electoral victory. Unity behind

the official election policy is a defeat for the working class: it implies acceptance of the record and it implies continued passivity by the labour movement in the future.

Agreement or acceptance of the government's record is a force for that passivity when it endorses the way the Labour government has served the interests of the ruling class in the period since the trade unions forced the Tory government to resign and face electoral defeat.

One major reason why workers have accepted what the Labour Government has been doing has been the absence of alternative policies. Propaganda for the government record is propaganda for the political vacuum — and therefore against working-class self-reliance.

## Arm

The duty of socialists is to arm the working class politically so that it keeps the Tories out without allowing the Parliamentary Labour Party leaders and the right wing to turn the anti-Tory feeling to the service of the bosses by whipping up support or endorsement for the Labour leaders — whose policies have been the best ones available to the bosses since 1974.



# JOIN THE CAMPAIGN!

EVERY WORKING class vote which goes to the Labour Party on the basis of endorsing the government's record is a defeat for the working class, and a blow struck against the work of preparing working class self defence for the period after the elections — whoever wins.

Workers' Action agrees with non-revolutionary Labour supporters on the need to return a Labour government — but for our own reasons.

To honest Labour militants we say: We will help you to reelect a Labour government, and to get the biggest possible turn out for Labour.

But you yourselves surely see after the experience of the last four years the need to fight for socialist policies, the need to demand that the Labour and trade union leaders who talk about a 35 hour week should fight for it, the need to condemn the petty coalitionism with the downright capitalist Liberal Party, the need to have trade union branches adopt and fight for working class answers to the crisis, and the need to get leading labour movement figures, MPs and candidates, to commit themselves to working class policies.

In short, you must agree on the need to combine political preparation for a fightback against right wing and fake-left Labour leaders with the drive to keep the Tories out.

We may have disagreements on what the policies should be. We can discuss that, if we can agree on a campaign to counterpose socialist, working-class answers for the crisis to the capitalist policies of the right wing leaders who monopolise the official labour movement.

## Answers

The election period will focus attention on the political questions, on the government's record, and on the period ahead. Trade union branches, Labour Parties, and YSs should discuss these problems and give their answers — on unemployment, wages and prices, British repression in Ireland, racism, and the failure of the Labour government to deliver to women even the benefits promised in the Equal Pay Act.

Socialists in the Labour Party must differentiate ourselves politically. We must fight for maximum mobilisation for Labour in the election — and,

simultaneously, to create a socialist campaign of propaganda and action within the labour movement, utilising the questions raised by the bourgeois election campaign.

We propose to other tendencies and individuals in the labour movement a campaign between now and the election:

■ To fight the bankrupt reformist policies with the leaders and the gelded 'left' will peddle, packaged in anti-Tory demagoguery.

■ To launch a propaganda drive within the labour movement, to arm it with socialist policies for the struggle against the next government — Tory or Labour.

■ To prepare to overcome the shameful labour movement passivity of the last three years, whichever party wins the election. To stop the Labour leaders using pro-Labour feeling in the election as a weapon in the anti-working class policy they will conduct if they win.

■ To forge an alliance between socialists and militants in the trade unions and Labour Party in campaigns on Ireland, racism and fascism, and women's rights.

# FOR THE C GENERAL

## a campaign

- Vote Labour
- Condemn the government
- Prepare the

## A programme

■ NO MORE wage curbs! No more strike-breaking by Labour!

Wage rises should at the very least keep up with price increases. The same should go for state benefits, grants and pensions. Demand immediate

wage increases backdated to make up for the drop in our living standards over the last two-and-a-half years.

■ Start improving the social services rather than cutting them. Stop cutting jobs in the public sector.



Conference to plan the socialist campaign for the elections

SATURDAY, 8th JULY, IN LONDON.

For details write to:  
Workers' Action, [Labour Campaign for Socialism]  
Box 1960, 182 Upper Street, London N.1

# COMING ELECTION

## which says

## the its record the fight-back

## to fight back

■ End unemployment. Cut hours not jobs — work sharing with no loss of pay. Start now with a 35 hour week and an end overtime.

■ Nationalisation under workers' control of all firms threatening closure.

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

■ Freeze rents and rates.

■ Scrap all immigration controls. Race is not a problem; racism is. The labour movement must mobilise to drive the racists off the streets.

■ Purge racists from positions in the labour movement. Organise full support for black self-defence.

■ The capitalist police are an enemy for the working class. Support all demands to weaken them as the bosses' striking force: dissolution of special squads [SPG, Special Branch, [15...], public accountability, etc.

■ Free abortion and contraception on demand. Women's equal right to work, and full equality for women.

■ The Irish people — as a whole — should have the right to determine their own future. Get the British troops out now! Solidarity with the Republicans and socialists fighting to drive them out.

■ The black working people of South Africa and Zimbabwe should get full support from the British labour movement for their strikes, struggles, and armed combat against the white supremacist regimes. Black South African goods and services!

■ The chaos, waste, human suffering and misery of capitalism now — in Britain and throughout the world — show the urgent need to establish national, democratic, human control over the economy,

to make the decisive sectors of industry social property, under workers' control.

The strength of the labour movement lies in the rank and file. Our perspective must be working-class action to take the capitalist system down to its foundations, and to put a working class socialist system in its place — rather than having our representatives run the system and waiting for the crumbs from the table of the bankers and the bosses.

**MARCH 1974.** Labour Government takes office. It has been elected on a promise of a major 'shift in the balance of wealth and power in favour of working people and their families'. It is pledged to do away with government union-bashing, unemployment, and welfare cuts.

**APRIL 1974.** The government announces that it will honour obligations to send warships to the bloody dictatorship in Chile.

**JUNE 1974.** The government allows Irish Republican Michael Gaughan to die on hunger strike, rather than transfer him to a prison in northern Ireland.

The government announces an 'amnesty' for immigrants who have entered Britain illegally. Of the first 90 who surrender, 69 are deported — because they have overstayed their permit rather than entering illegally.

**OCTOBER 1974.** Labour re-elected.

**NOVEMBER 1974.** After 20 people are killed by bombs in Birmingham pubs, the government rushes in the 'Prevention of Terrorism Act'. This 'emergency' measure is still law. In its first 2½ years, 2251 people were detained (mostly with no charge being made), 81 were deported simply on the order of the Home Secretary. One man gets six months' jail and a £400 fine simply for selling a poster.

**MARCH 1975.** Government sends troops to break the Glasgow dustmen's strike.

**WORKERS' ACTION** wants a socialist transformation of society.

We favour the return of a Labour government, not because it will create a socialist society, but because keeping Labour in office is the best way for the working class — which is the only force able to create socialism — to learn enough by experience to go beyond Labourism and replace it by real working-class socialist politics.

Workers' Action wants a Labour victory even for Jim Callaghan's conservative Labour Party (small 'c' — but the other word, socialism, is not small but invisible). If Labour is kicked out of office now, the next round of class struggle will see the Tories in office and Labour (even with the same type of leaders and policies) regaining credibility by comparison with the Tories — just as in 1970-74.

Labour in opposition appears a lesser evil. It is, as such, a reserve force for capitalism.

In 1974 the 'first team' capitalist government went down before the working class. The 'second team' [Labour] came in. In the last four years it has done a better job for the ruling class than the Tories could ever have done.

So long as the majority of workers continue to support or tolerate the politics of Wilson, Callaghan, and Healey, a real socialist transformation of society will be impossible.

Socialists therefore can agree with reformist workers that it is better to return a Labour government. For us it is better to have a Labour government in office, consuming its credit with the working class, than to have a Labour Party 'in opposition', garnering credibility from the labour movement only

**APRIL 1975.** First big batch of social service cuts.

**JULY 1975.** Unemployment tops one million. The Government introduces the first of three yearly rounds of wage controls: the £6 limit. As a result, average take home pay drops 14% between December 1974 and February 1977 (in real terms).

**SEPTEMBER 1975.** Clay Cross ex-councillors are sued for £63,000 for defying the Tory Housing Finance Act. Labour government refuses Labour conference demands to lift the fines.

**OCTOBER 1975.** Government accepts recommendations of Parliamentary Select Committee to restrict abortion rights.

### Laws

**DECEMBER 1975.** The Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act become law. These, together with the Employment Protection Act (1975) are the showpieces of Labour's reforming efforts. The result? The bosses win in 70% of equal pay cases and 90% of sex discrimination cases (in 1976). Of 14,000 cases of unfair dismissal heard in 1976 under the Employment Protection Act, 63% are dismissed. Only 2% of applicants get their jobs back.

**JANUARY 1976.** Unemployment tops one and a half million.

to betray the hopes and the interests of the workers once it regains power.

On its record, and its likely programme in the coming election, the Labour Party does not deserve the support of the working class.

### Fake

The fact is, however, that Labour continues to have the support of the vast majority of the politically active members of the working class movement. Only a very small segment of the working class is ready to break with the politics of Labour and join the revolutionary left. The complete passivity of the established Left — the Communist Party, 'Tribune', 'Militant' — has meant that even within the Labour Party the left has been muted and compromised in the politics of the dominant right wing.

There is no credible working

class alternative in the election. While socialists in the Labour Party can understand and sympathise with groups like Socialist Unity and the Socialist Workers' Party who will be standing a few candidates on roughly socialist — though unclear — politics, in most cases their candidacies are so lacking in working class and labour movement backing as to provide no real way to organise against the Labour leaders.

We think that the political monopoly of the right wing and fake left can best be challenged politically from inside the labour movement and Labour Party.

The Callaghanite Labour Party should be returned to office because that is the best way to create conditions for the labour movement to draw the necessary conclusions about the politics of Callaghan and Healey, about the record of the last four years of Labour government, and about reformism in general.



Leyland boss Alex Park, union leaders Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones and Industry Minister Varley: a team of labour leaders and bosses working out plans to cut more jobs

# Labour's four years

**FEBRUARY 1976.** 'Prevention of Terrorism Act' is tightened up. Frank Stagg dies on hunger strike demanding transfer to Northern Ireland.

**MARCH 1976.** More social service cuts. £3,000 million to be slashed from public spending. 37 left wing Labour MPs 'revolt' — but toe the line when Wilson cracks the whip.

### Cuts

**APRIL 1976.** Callaghan replaces Wilson.

**JULY 1976.** Another £1,000 million of cuts.

**FEBRUARY 1977.** Journalists Philip Agee and Mark Hosenball are deported as security risks — with no trial, and no stated charges against them.

The officially appointed Bullock committee recommends 'worker participation' to make management of British capitalism more efficient. When the bosses say no to the scheme, the Labour government quickly shelves it.

**MARCH 1977.** Lib-Lab pact: bosses' reward to Labour Party leaders for their services. Liberal leader David Steel crows, 'The banks can now sleep safely'.

**JUNE 1977.** Government announces increased military repression in Northern Ireland: more SAS (army dirty tricks & assassinations de-

partment) operations promised.

**AUGUST 1977.** Massive police terror raids on Catholic homes in Northern Ireland to make it safe for a coat-trailing visit by the Queen of the Orange bigots.

**AUGUST 1977.** Official Scarman report comes out with mild criticism of Grunwicks boss George Ward and all-out condemnation of the mass picketing in support of the strikers.

**SEPTEMBER 1977.** Anglo-American plan for Rhodesia is announced. It provides for an interim government guaranteeing the property privileges of the whites.

**NOVEMBER 1977.** Special Patrol Groups go all out against Grunwick mass picket. 113 people arrested, 250 need medical treatment.

**DECEMBER 1977.** British troops sent to Bermuda to put down rebellion there.

**JANUARY 1978.** Firemen forced back to work after government has used troops to strikebreak for eight weeks.

**MARCH 1978.** All demonstrations in London banned for two months.

**MAY 1978.** 2000 police break up Leeds Trades Council May Day march.

'The Leveller' and 'Peace News' fined for naming Colonel B of Signals Intelligence.

The government announces that Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital will definitely close.

Over the last couple of years West Indian and Asian youth in Britain have started fighting for their rights in a far more militant way, especially against the National Front. As yet, however, this militancy has not expressed itself very much in political organisation.

One of the organisations that does exist is the People's National Party Youth Movement (UK). Formally it is the British youth wing of the ruling party in Jamaica, Michael Manley's PNP. In fact it is closely tied to the Labour Party Young Socialists and the Militant tendency who hold the majority in the LPYS.

Some members of the PNP Youth are dissatisfied with the policies of Militant and what they see as its opportunism towards Manley. **WORKERS' ACTION** spoke to JOSEPH ANASTACIO and PAUL ADAMS of Liverpool PNP Youth

■ How did the PNP form in Liverpool?

□ JOE: One Sunday morning I got a leaflet from the PNP and because of the present political climate turning more directly against blacks, I went along to see what this group was about. I would have turned towards any group that I thought had my interests at heart. It wasn't the association with the PNP in Jamaica that attracted me.

■ Who did the meeting attract?

□ JOE: Mainly students, some guys who had had union dif-

# WE NEED MALCOM X NOT MICHAEL MANLEY



PAUL ADAMS

ficulty at Fords, YS members and some black youth off the streets.

■ Had anyone at the meeting been involved with political groups before?

□ JOE: Not really. Black youth in Liverpool say "we've seen these groups before, they come and go". They don't relate to left politics in any clear sense.

■ You're going to try to get the name 'PNP' changed at the national conference. Why is this?

□ JOE: Yes. Quite a few people from the PNP who were at the LPYS national conference agreed with us on this point.

□ PAUL: It's more than just the name, the whole direction and policy of the PNP is wrong, at least we believe it is.

■ In what way?

□ PAUL: Well, the name and

the direct links (with the Jamaica PNP) will alienate many non-whites (Asian, Chinese) and also many black youths who are not of Jamaican descent. The PNP and Militant say that this association has attracted lots of youths. That is being opportunist. It may attract people from Jamaica, or who have a strong cultural identity with Jamaica, but as I said, what about people of direct African or Barbadian descent?

Liverpool has had a black community for over a century and has many youths of second or third generation, people like myself and Joey, who have a 'black identity' but not necessarily a Jamaican, or West Indian identity. Anyway, Africa is where we descend from, the West Indian thing is only because of imperialism. As James Baldwin wrote, 'the black man in the west is in reality a bastard'.

I don't see Britain as my country in any patriotic sense, but neither am I West Indian.

■ What do you think of PNP UK policy?

□ PAUL: They should not harp back to Jamaica, and in particular to Manley. They should denounce him. They claim to do this but in the Spring edition of the PNP Bulletin it says "Bob Lee, PNP Youth National Secretary, told Comrade (!?) Manley..." Well, he's no comrade of mine, or of the Jamaican proletariat.

In The Times today (14th May) there is a short piece reporting how Manley's 'socialist leaning' government had received an IMF loan on the usual anti-working class terms. He's devalued the Jamaican dollar. This paper, the PNP Bulletin, is their organ: it doesn't matter if they denounce him in private, it's what they put on the streets that counts.

■ What are your views on black autonomy?

□ JOE: One of the PNP's policies is a pledge to work with the LPYS (Militant). We in Liverpool believe blacks should form an autonomous movement and not be smothered by other organisations who use us to gain political credibility.

■ You don't see it as a purely class question, then?

□ PAUL: Ultimately racism finds its roots in class society, more specifically in capitalist-imperialist society. But it's not enough to go around mouthing that socialism is the only answer and arguing the case in the abstract. The proper strategy must be applied to prove this.

If the Militant's strategy is correct then the PNP is not needed — the multi-racial party is the Labour Party and so the PNP is simply being used to get black youth into the LPYS.

Black youth in Liverpool who do discuss and really question society see people like Malcolm X, George Jackson and the Black Panther party's self defence as the inspiration for struggle, not Manley or the PNP. In fact blacks in Britain are closer in socio-economic conditions to Afro-Americans than they are to black people in the West Indies because we are an oppressed racial minority in a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant dominated capitalist society. In the States the struggle started off as a nationalist fight but took on a more anti-capitalist edge.

We don't say we can transplant, say, Panther policy, and do all they did. The polarisation of classes is much more clear in Britain, our history is different from Afro-Americans', but we can learn from their mistakes and successes.

□ JOE: We want an autonomous black movement based on revolutionary Marxism. Only this way can black youth play a role in the vanguard of socialist revolution.

■ It was actually Militant who said it was wrong to build a black organisation?

□ PAUL: No, I don't think they said that, they didn't actually come out and say it but it would not surprise me if they did.

□ JOE: Talking to a girl from Militant about black self defence I asked her if they supported it and she answered point blank no.

□ PAUL: We argued that black self defence is the first step towards workers' self defence but she insisted that the labour movement and the trade unions were there to do that job. In reality it's not simply a matter of them coming in a militarist manner to protect the black community. Black self defence must be formed within, and with the support of, the community. And self defence must be a political force with a political directive i.e. recognising the need for oppressed people to mobilise independently of the state. But supporters of Militant say we call for separatism.

We don't deny the necessity

of blacks joining with the working class (or vice versa) against the fascists, but if and when the trade unions do organise to defend the black communities from fascist attacks socialists will be calling for the formation of workers' self defence and will be able to get across, must more easily, the class nature of fascism and not simply its anti-black aspect.

□ JOE: We want to form caucuses in the unions to fight in the unions for our rights. Again, we are accused of separatism and splitting the working class.

□ PAUL: Nothing can or will stop blacks from joining, say, the YS, SWP or whatever (unless those parties object), when the British labour movement really begins to form. The formation of a black Marxist party will not happen in isolation, it will have an effect on the left in general. Possibly it will help to break down barriers between non-sectarian groups. The political position of blacks in Britain as a prop and weapon for class divisions and reaction far outweighs our actual numbers. Our position and potential in society should be used. But it won't be if we follow PNP policy.

■ Why hasn't the PNP caught on much in Liverpool?

□ PAUL: One thing, the lack of association with Jamaica among large sections of youth, and the divisions within the black community. And of course, the present policies of the PNP don't help!

The PNP and Militant keep pressing the point about the labour movement and then being sectarian when people don't accept it. It may be correct in the abstract, but how do you explain to people who may have been denied proper employment all their lives, or who meet with racism in the trade unions, the need for work within the unions as the prime task? They know that the people who usually shout 'nigger' are working class.

It's a big jump from recognising the need for action to understanding the dialectic of social relations.

We believe the movement should be seen as an indigenous movement of black people in Britain having links with all progressive movements throughout the world and not tied specifically to one, especially when it's used in this opportunist fashion.

## Health and wealth in the north of Ireland

THE Workers' Research Unit (Belfast) was formed in the summer of 1977. It is not affiliated to any one political party; it sets out to report on matters of concern to Irish socialists.

So far the unit has produced three pamphlets — 'The Queen comes to Belfast', 'Repression', and the third mainly given over to 'Health and Wealth in the Six Counties'.

'Health and Wealth in the Six Counties' provides a wealth of factual information on health and medicine in the north east of Ireland. It includes sections on women and health, on hospital cuts, mental health, and the drug companies. It also gives a breakdown of certain health indicators according to class and region.

It finds that the north east of Ireland has the highest infant mortality rate (IMR — the number of children who die before reaching their first birthday) in northern Europe, over a third higher than England & Wales despite having been part of the NHS since 1949. Even southern Ireland, with no comprehensive health service, has a lower IMR:

Sweden	9.6
Finland	10.0
England/Wales	14.2
Rep. of Ireland	15.0
No. Ireland	19.1

IMR is generally taken as a clear indicator of general poverty and malnutrition as well as health facilities. In the north of Ireland it undoubtedly results from poor housing and high unemployment. But direct causes of infant deaths are just as important: where the UK spends less than 6% of GNP on health, Sweden spends more than 8%.

Within the general figure for health

spending, other clues can be found. Finland gives priority to ante-natal and obstetric care; Britain doesn't.

Certain parts of northern Ireland are worse than others. The report gives a detailed breakdown, with maps of the Belfast region showing the different rates for infant mortality, general death rates, and death rates from Bronchitis (a disease closely bound up with working and living conditions).

Fermanagh has an IMR rate over 1½ times the Northern Ireland average, more than twice the UK average, and more than 3 times the national average. "All of the areas with infant mortality rates of under 20 per 1000 live births are to be found in the eastern half of the province, whilst to the west all are above this level."

The social class differences in health are very noticeable when the figures for Belfast are analysed. In the predominantly working class areas of Belfast, eg Turf Lodge, Ligoniel, Lower Old Park etc., the IMR is 42 per 1000 or higher. This is an incredibly high rate — over four times the Swedish average.

The overall mortality rate in Northern Ireland than the UK average. In the working class areas of Belfast the total is higher than the Northern Ireland average.

"To sum up, the evidence shows that the Six Counties has a poorer health record than any other part of the UK: furthermore, within the Six Counties certain areas suffer more than others — west of the Bann, and the working class areas of Belfast."

MIKE FOLEY

★ ★ For further information: Workers Research Unit, c/o 52 Broadway, Belfast 12.

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Send to W/A, Box 1960, 182 Upper St, London N1.

Fleet Street posters ask:

# 'Who had their fingers in the till?'

There are rumours of corruption in the print union Natsopa. They come at a time when Owen O'Brien is up for re-election as General Secretary. O'Brien has held the office since Richard Briginshaw retired in 1975 and moved on to greener pastures at the House of Lords.

No-one has ever stood against O'Brien. This year someone will: Barry Fitzpatrick, Chairman of the Natsopa Clerical Branch.

He is reputed to be standing on an anti-corruption ticket. He has spoken on an ANL platform and is a keen advocate of the Chile Solidarity Campaign.

However, his positions on many vital issues such as wage restraint, redundancies and union democracy remain vague.

O'Brien has other problems too. There have been rumblings of discontent ever since reports in the press about the breakdown of merger talks between the NGA and Natsopa.

These articles reported the enormous amounts being doled out in salaries to union officials as compared with money spent on the other activities of the union. Natsopa officials are not required to reveal their wages publicly.



The rumblings became even louder when the Executive Committee said that there would be a 10p levy on every member because the union's financial

resources had fallen so low.

Throughout Fleet Street posters have appeared: Who Had Their Fingers in the Till? Concern centres not only on the officials' earnings but on money missing after a property transaction made in Lord Briginshaw's time and a trip to Malta.

O'Brien's replies far from stopping suspicion have only caused the flames to leap higher.

His article in the Union Journal said that money had been taken out of union funds by Lord Briginshaw to protect the "society's funds from sequestration under the Industrial Relations Act."

The Industrial Relations Act was repealed in 1974 — but only recently has some money been paid back into the account! And the background to the payments is a complete mystery.

O'Brien has also admitted that there is still a sum of £9,500 "subject to inquiry, part of which is being claimed as expenses".

Another fact which he admits is that Natsopa invested in Krugerrands (South African gold coins). So much for Natsopa's well-proclaimed long support for the Anti-Apartheid movement.

O'Brien and his supporters

know they are in trouble. The 'Governing Council' meeting [union conference] is coming up and there are several motions on the agenda concerning officials' earnings.

O'Brien has responded with a statement: "Wreckers at Work: Objective — destroy Natsopa!"

In the Times of May 27th he said "a slanderous campaign is being waged against Natsopa" and "we have been getting copies of the Socialist Workers' bulletin, and we can identify some of the people associated with this body from the malicious propaganda."



Briginshaw

## THE UNIONS



O'Brien and his supporters are desperately trying to paint all those who criticise the undemocratic regime in Natsopa as wreckers of the trade union movement.

They are trying to whip up a witch hunt against the left in the union.

But the growing knowledge of what the "leadership" of Natsopa has been up to all these years can stimulate the struggle for a union run on democratic lines and with a policy that will meet the increasingly severe attacks on all print workers by the bosses.

## Seamen pass a paper claim at conference

This year's National Union of Seamen conference was mostly dominated by the right wing.

They threw out the proposals for amalgamation with the TWGU, and succeeded in reducing the Executive Committee from 16 to 13.

A resolution calling for the election of all full time officials every five years was defeated.

The only real gain the left made on rules revision was a decision that rule books be printed in Arabic and Somali.

The pay policy document passed by conference called for £3 per hour, a return to free collective bargaining, time and a half for any hours worked over 8 per day and a 35 hour week.

But on the part of the leadership it was only a paper claim.

A claim for parity with other EEC seamen was also carried, but an amendment calling for industrial action to gain it was defeated, and the matter was referred back to the EC.

On the question of race dis-

crimination a Cardiff delegate called on the union to fight for equal pay for foreign seamen on British ships. The NUS has been guilty of condoning a handout from employers every year aimed at maintaining lower pay and worse conditions for non-British seamen.

The Cardiff delegate also denounced the National Front as a fascist organisation and an enemy of trade unionists and black workers. But General Secretary Jim Slater called for 'moderation' when dealing with the NF, and nothing definite was decided on this.

Resolutions from Leith and Aberdeen were carried calling for British seamen only to be employed on the North Sea supply ships, many of which sail under flags of convenience.

Although the right wing have gained more from the conference, it must be up to the rank and file at least to prevent a sell-out by the leadership on its own pay policy document.

GEOFF WILLIAMS

## SPILLERS 1 AFTER THE SACKINGS, SELL-OUT ON HOURS

A RECENT circular by the EC of the Bakers Union has confirmed the agreement with the bakery bosses over the Spillers closures.

The EC voting was 28 against and 70 for.

The agreement is supposed to give better conditions in return for the union accepting the Spillers closures. £4 out of the £7.85 of Phase 1 and Phase 2 supplements is to be consolidated into basic rates, and the agreement is supposed to introduce a 40-hour week without compulsory rest-day working.

The problem with the 40-hour week agreement is a clause saying that "under special circumstances" of continuous production the bosses can make you work more than the 40 hours.



Another clause says that the union has agreed to make sure that bread supplies will not be disrupted. What this means in practice is that overtime working continues as before.

So, after all the militant talk, no action. Just a complete sell-out to the bosses.

In Merretts bakery, Cardiff, for example, 12-hour shifts are still being worked. So much for

the 40-hour week.

The feeling on the shop floor here is very bitter, and there is talk of refusing to work the 12-hour shifts and demanding that the union leadership re-negotiates a shorter working week with no loss of pay.

GEOFF WILLIAMS

Anti-racist teacher victimised again

DAVID POTTER, a Hillingdon social studies teacher who successfully fought for reinstatement after being suspended for using Anti-Nazi League material in a politics lesson, now faces another attempt to get him out of teaching.

According to him "The Local Education Authority and the headteacher, Mr. B.C.Firth, have decided that the best way to exclude me from teaching is to set me up for a failure of probation, rather than tackle what is, from their point of view, the thorny problem of my using anti-racist material in the classroom and being an active trade unionist."

Though earlier reports on his work had noted "a very professional attitude ... a good relationship with all his pupils ... a pleasant atmosphere of work and interest and ... good order and discipline" in David Potter's classes, the Director of Education for Hillingdon is now reporting the opposite as a pretext for ousting him from teaching.

A Defence Committee has been set up; contact it at: 97, Coldershaw Road Ealing London W.13. Tel: 01-567-6561

## Basingstoke tenants in council protest

OAKRIDGE Estate, Basingstoke, is where the lucky get to move out but no-one move in.

The reason is simple — the council houses on this estate are rotting away just 12 years after they were built. Major structural repairs are needed to all the houses. But the council leaves complaints for over a year and then does the repairs piecemeal.

Everyone on this estate can tell a long tale of damp rooms, leaky roofs and rotting door and window frames.

Even sub-contractors engaged on the original building work, are saying they're surprised the houses have stayed up.

On May 22nd, tenants from the estate joined local socialists in a picket of the Housing Committee's meeting.

The picket, initiated by Basingstoke Socialist Unity, was eventually allowed to sit in on the meeting. There we learned that the budget for maintenance and repairs for the past year [1977] had been underspent by an enormous amount. The Director of

Housing tried to explain that this was due to as yet unrepresented bills.

When the 'confidential' items on the agenda were reached the public was asked to leave. Cllr. Rob Donnelly of the 4-strong opposition Labour Group moved that we should be allowed to stay, but was predictably outvoted by the Tories, who then threatened to call the police if we did not go. At that, the Labour councillors said they would leave if the police threw anyone out.

One embarrassed looking policeman arrived on the scene. But it was the Tories and the officials who left, while the Labour group and the pickets stayed in the committee room and held a separate meeting.

Later, two of the Tory councillors came up and complained to us that 'we often have trouble with the rest of the [Tory] group' and that they, too, wanted to be help the Housing Action Group!

CHARLOTTE DEWAH

## SPILLERS 2 They take the doughnut—we get the hole

AT Spillers Memory Lane cake plant in Cardiff the future is uncertain despite the bosses' promises of continued employment.

For now, the promise of cake production transferred from Middlesbrough seems to be keeping the place ticking over — in between the 'painting' that the workers are doing.

Already, the 'morning goods' production has gone; and last week management sneaked in, in the middle of the night, and removed the doughnut machine. The union knew nothing about it, and the three workers who came in the following day to use the machine simply couldn't find it.

If steps aren't taken to stop this sort of thing the workers could come in one morning and find nothing left!

GW

## FASCISTS BREAK UP SOCIALIST UNITY MEETING

National Front thugs broke up a socialist meeting in Waltham Forest, East London, last Thursday 25th.

40 fascists entered the Socialist Unity meeting as it was about to start. 20 comrades from a Socialist Workers Party meeting nearby came to help the 20 at the Socialist Unity meeting, but it was broken up. It re-started later.

Socialist Unity had already had the pub room which it initially booked cancelled after fascist threats.

A joint Socialist Unity-SWP-Anti-Nazi League meeting is being held in response. The attack underlines the need for the labour movement to organise itself in a united way to defend our meetings against the fascists.

Also last Thursday, about 7pm, Hormoz Rahimian, an Iranian active in campaigns against the Shah's regime, was attacked and stabbed on Islington Green, North London.

He was wounded in the face, back and legs, and had to have 20 stitches for head wounds alone.

Two people have been arrested for the attack, but it is not clear whether the notorious Iranian secret police, SAVAK, or British fascists were involved.

# WORKERS IN ACTION

## EVENTS

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

**SATURDAY 3 JUNE.** North West socialist feminist workshop on Ireland. 10am to 6pm at Bolton Institute of Technology, Deane Road, Bolton.

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY 3-4 JUNE.** National anti-fascist conference organised by the London coordinating committee and the paper CARF. At Middlesex Poly, Trent Park, Cockfosters, Barnet, North London. (Nearest Tube: Oakwood). Credentials: delegates £2.50, visitors £2, from CARF, Box 53, 182 Upper St, London N1.

**SUNDAY 4 JUNE.** Merseyside Workers' Action meeting: '1968 revisited'. Speaker: Bas Hardy. 7.45pm at Stanley House, Upper Parliament Street, Liverpool 8.

**SATURDAY 10 JUNE.** Women's Voice rally. 11.30am at the Top Rank suite, Sheffield. Tickets 50p from WV, PO Box 82, London E2.

**SATURDAY 10 JUNE.** United Troops Out Movement conference on the Role of the British Army. 9.45am to 5pm at Acklam Hall, Acklam Rd, London W11 (buses 15, 52, 295; tube, Ladbroke Grove). Entrance £1 (non-earners 50p). Evening social: 70p (35p). All-in ticket £1.50 (70p). Speakers include John McGuffin and Ken Livingstone.

**FRIDAY 16 JUNE.** Anti-apartheid rally on the 2nd anniversary of the Soweto events. 7.30pm at Westminster Central Hall. Adm. 20p.

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY 17-18 JUNE.** National conference of the Working Women's Charter campaign, at Manchester Poly, Cavendish House, All Saints. Further information: Pat Cross, Flat 2, 49 Spring Bank, Hull (telephone Hull 443 243).

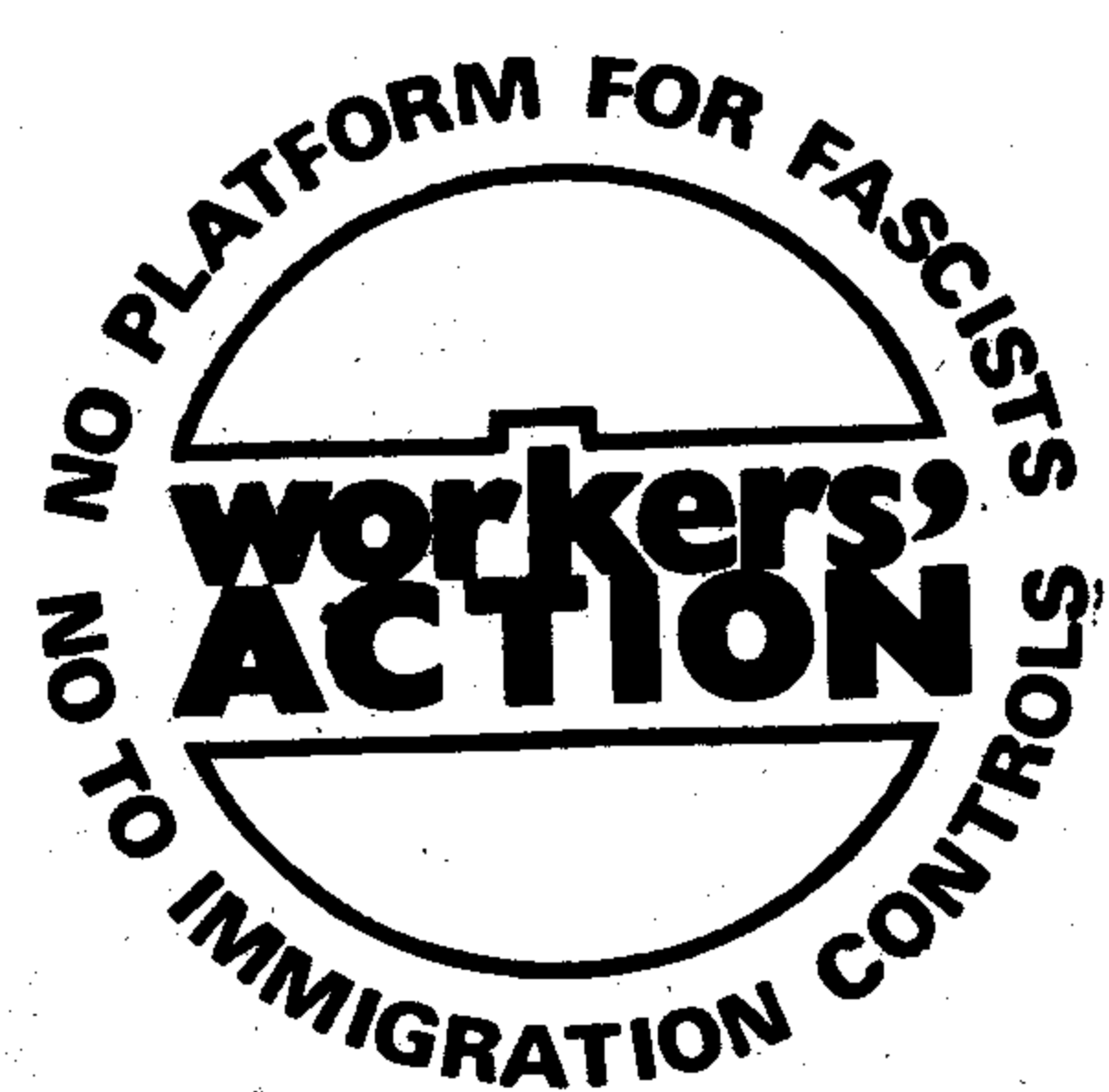
**THURSDAY 22 JUNE.** Garners support conference. 7.30pm at Transport House, Smith Square. Delegates' credentials from the Strike Committee, c/o TGWU, room 84, 12-13 Henrietta St, London WC2.

**FRIDAY-MONDAY 14-17 JULY.** Conference of Socialist Economists 1978 on *The Crisis of Capitalism and working class strategies in the 1970s*. In Bradford. Booking details from Teddy Brett, School of Social Science, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9QN.

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'Workers Action' sticker: 'No Platform for Fascists; No to immigration controls'. Order from Merseyside Workers' Action supporters' group, c/o 11 Buchanan Rd, Wallasey, Merseyside. 10p per sheet; all proceeds to the Workers' Action fund drive.

# Asian workers fight bosses and union in pay and recognition strike

Mills and engineering factories in Bolton have been leafleted by the 200 Asian strikers who walked out at the Bulmer & Lumb wool textile factory two weeks ago.

They asked for support on their picket, financial help, and support for a march through Bolton on Monday 29th.

Six weeks before the strike started, the Asian workers (who make up about 90% of the workforce) got together to draw up a charter of demands for improved pay and conditions and for union recognition.

£1.4m to £2.2m before tax. The workers gave a week's notice of their intention to strike if management failed to discuss their demands. Management responded by sacking Pravin Parmar, who was acting as convenor. Immediately, all the Asian workers including the women on the day shift, walked out.

A couple of white workers came out too, but the majority are still inside: management's bonus for playing divide and rule over the years: day shift against night shift, women against men, white against black.

The local officials of the Textile and Allied Workers' Union, have refused to make the strike official. Their only contribution has been to try to get the strikers back to work. In response the strikers have refused to let local official Joe Quinn negot-

iate for them, and are relying on their own organisation.

Bolton Trades Council is now offering to mediate between the strikers and the union.

Management is under pressure from other mill owners, who fear the strikers' example will be taken up in other mills, in most of which the union is not even recognised. So far, Bulmer & Lumb have agreed to re-organise the shift system to give a 40-hour week instead of the 48 hours that were compulsory before. They have also agreed to reinstate Pravin Parmar and recognise the union.

The strikers are demanding a basic pay rate throughout the mill, with one rate for machine operators and labourers. The present rate is 94p an hour for the night shift, with day-shift women getting just 80p an hour.

The strikers are keeping up a 24-hour picket rota and regular weekly meetings, and most of the strikers are actively involved in running the strike. They set up a strike fund two weeks before they came out, and now there are weekly pay-day collections in some other mills. Local Asian shopkeepers have supplied tea and coffee. £11 was collected at the last Trades Council meeting.

With some whole families on strike and no strike pay, money is still badly needed. Send donations and messages to: Mr. Bhagwanji Kanji, 44 Rosmond Street, Bolton Lancs.

ROS MAKIN

## Sacked

Conditions and pay at the mill have always been poor, but they got worse in the past year as management sacked a third of the workers. Meanwhile Bulmer & Lumb's profits rose from

## Refused

But so far, management have refused to move on the wage demands, and now ACAS has been brought into the dispute.

## Builders: the Communist Party is the obstacle

AT THE BIENNIAL conference of the builders' union UCATT, starting June 3rd, the Yorkshire region of the union will be making a call for an emergency debate on the wages question.

Two weeks ago the T&G rejected the employers' pay offer and started plans for industrial action. The seven man UCATT EC met to reconsider the position.

It issued a circular to members "to stay at work and ignore action planned by the T&GWU".

The leadership of the T&GWU — the most important union, after UCATT, in the building industry — had earlier accepted the employers' offer. This was only overturned by a national stewards' meeting, which

objected to the failure to consolidate supplements into the basic rate.

Then the 'Left' dominated UCATT Executive (with two CP members and two Left Labourites) called on its members to cross picket lines!

The T&G London stewards have postponed their industrial action, due to have started on 26th May, hoping for a policy change at the UCATT conference.

There is frustration at rank and file level, where workers feel that the offer falls short of a full 10%. This time of year, when most big building projects are starting, is the best time for industrial action. The London joint sites committee met on Thursday

25th, and delegates from 40 sites, involving 20,000 workers, voted overwhelmingly against the pay deal.

The main obstacle to a united fight-back is the policy of the Communist Party. Although it has a strong presence in the lay T&G national committee for the building industry, the CP has sided with UCATT. The *Morning Star* said nothing about the Executive's instruction to members to cross T&G picket lines.

CP militants in both T&G and UCATT in London are opposing the pay deal, but the party has persuaded them to hold fire, instead of giving a clear lead for a fight around the original claim of £80, a 35 hour week, and a fourth week's holiday pay.

CHEUNG SIU MING

# WA bulletin attacked

APPARENTLY as a result of the controversy surrounding the forced resignation of a Boilermakers' shop steward, the chairman and secretary of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee at Lansing Bagnalls, Basingstoke, has put out a notice attacking the Workers' Action bulletin in the factory.

The steward was hauled up on

without consulting the other stewards or the Boilermakers' local disciplinary charges together with another worker, and then pressurised by management into resigning 'in return' for the other worker keeping his job. The Joint Shop Stewards' Committee chairman was involved in backing up the management's pressure for resignation —

official, let alone the shop floor workers.

The fortnightly Workers' Action bulletin put out at Bagnalls attacked this example of bureaucratic trade union practice, just as it had attacked bureaucracy many times in the past.

Then last week a notice appeared denouncing the bulletin. Without mentioning any specific incidents, it declared that "An extremist ultra left-wing group calling themselves Workers' Action have seen fit to issue a paper which is obviously designed to disrupt the unions here at Lansing Bagnalls..."

"If these people really expect the majority of us to take seriously what is supposed to be a propaganda sheet from a political group then we would expect them to print the facts for a change... As usual with their ilk we doubt whether they have ever done anything for the membership in Lansing Bagnalls, other than in their extremist and anarchist way trying to disseminate [sic] the unions..."

The current issue of the bulletin replies:

"We see one of our main tasks as the spreading of trade unionism. Not the current trade unionism of Bagnalls, where the negotiating committee have the right under standing orders to withhold information even from their own stewards, but democratic trade unionism in which the decisions and policy-making come from the membership, not a small clique."

"We don't believe that anyone in their right mind... would regard these aims and arguments as extreme or anarchist. But if that indeed is what they are, then we are extremists and proud of it!"

## GARNERS: KEEP UP THE SUPPORT!

AFTER THEIR demonstration on May 20th, the Garners steak houses strikers are pressing ahead with plans for a conference on June 22nd and a benefit showing of the film 'Harlan County' on June 4th.

Picketing, in pursuit of the strikers' demands for union recognition and reinstatement in their jobs, is still effective in reducing the flow of customers at Garners restaurants. This means that the scab workers who are keeping the restaurants running receive very little in tips, and strikers are hopeful about increasing discontent in the scabs' ranks.

1000 supporters marched with the strikers on May 20th. But there were few banners from the TGWU, the strikers' union. TGWU Regional officials are blocking the strikers' demands for a regional levy and for the organisation of the mass pickets. To win the strike, the conference on June 22nd will have to take up these demands and call the regional leadership to account. In the meantime, support

is urgently needed on the picket lines from TGWU branches, Labour Parties, and YS branches, and the rest of the labour movement.

Garners' accountant Mr Carlos, already notorious for harassing pickets at the company's Gerrard St head office, has recently been seen wearing a National Front badge.

STEPHEN CORBISHLEY

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

\* Picket lines: help needed 11am - 3pm and 5.30pm-11pm at 399 Oxford St, 40-41 Haymarket, 56 Whitcombe St, 243 Oxford St, and 29 Cockspur Street.

\* Donations to the Strike Committee c/o TGWU, room 84, 12-13 Henrietta St, London WC2.

\* Garners support conference: 7.30pm, Thursday 22 June, at Transport House, Smith Square. Delegates' credentials from the Strike Committee.

\* Showing of 'Harlan County': 4pm Sunday 4 June, at the Scala Cinema, Tottenham Court Road, London W1.

## Chivalry at El Vino's — an excuse for treating women like children

ON THE DAY that the Sex Discrimination Act become law, a group of women went into El Vino's wine bar in Fleet Street and asked for a drink.

Quite normal, you may think. But El Vino's refuse to serve women at the bar.

Three years later a verdict was delivered on the affair by Westminster County Court. It went against Sheila Gray, the woman who brought the action under the Sex Discrimination Act.

Judge Ruttie, citing Lord Denning's judgment in the Appeal Court in 1977, said that 'it would be wrong for the new law to obliterate the difference between the sexes or the chivalry and courtesy which mankind was expected to show to womankind'. The reason why women were asked to remain seated was that they might be jostled and pushed in the stampede to get to the bar. (Very chivalrous and courteous!)

If they really wanted to be courteous, they could of course serve the women and not allow them to be elbowed out of the way! But as always the cant about chivalry is an excuse for pushing women into the back-ground.

Fine words such as chivalry and courtesy here hide a completely chauvinistic attitude towards women. The idea is that women are not quite up to a man's world; they are inferior and have to be sheltered and protected like small children.

CLARE RUSSELL