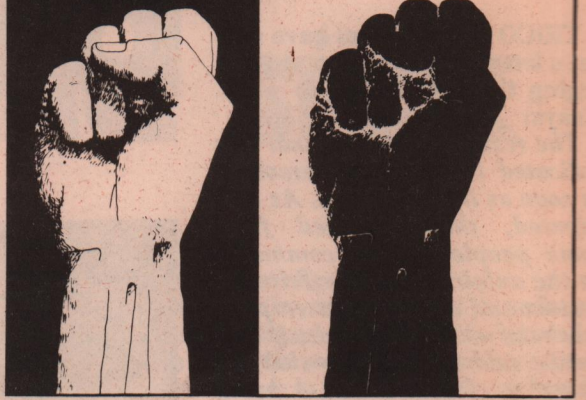


workers' ACTION

NO.28 September 2nd - 8th 1976 8p

March
against
racism!

Sat. 11 Sept.
2pm from
Whalley Range
Blackburn



THE T.U.C. meets next week at a time when the Social Contract between the trade union leaders and the Labour Government is under more strain than ever before.

One and a half million people are out of work — the highest number since the war. 150,000 of them are school leavers.

Prices are still soaring and wages are still falling behind. The cuts in the Social Services are biting further into workers' standard of living.

All this — and yet strike figures are at their lowest for 25 years. What a feather in the cap of the trade union bureaucrats! Now that they have pacified their members and shown their good faith to the bosses and their Labour government allies, they think they can go into a huddle with these people. And, they would have us believe (as undoubtedly they themselves believe) that out of such a huddle can come jobs for their members.

That's their total idea of fighting for jobs — whispering sweet nothings into the ear of the Labour government. Reflate the economy; impose import controls; get rid of foreign workers first; put a few coppers into training schemes. That's what they're saying.

And when the government pays no attention to these whisperings, they're quite willing to go along with pay curbs so that the bosses can get richer and the workers can get — perhaps — a few more crumbs off their masters' table.

Well, that's one way to 'fight for jobs'. It has all the appearance of seriousness: going to the top, getting to the economic roots of the crisis and so on.

The only trouble is — it doesn't work.

There is another way, which is simpler and more direct, and which everyone can join in. And it DOES work. And that is to tackle the problem head on.

- * BAN Overtime
- * DON'T cover for jobs lost through redundancies or natural wastage..
- * NO productivity deals — NO speed-up.
- * When faced with redundancies, DEMAND WORK OR FULL PAY.
- * CUT the hours — not the jobs. Fight for the 35-hour week.
- * DEMAND nationalisation of firms that declare redundancies and OCCUPY the bosses' factories to hold their property to ransom for our jobs.

It is action along these lines that can stop the rot and begin a real fight-back against unemployment. But this does not mean we can afford to ignore the TUC and leave them in their little dream-world while we get on with the real fight. The TUC can wield enormous power if it cares to do so. We must try to force it to act NOW to give official support to the policies outlined above.

That is why the Right to Work March and Lobby of the TUC on September 7th is of vital importance for every trade unionist who wants to do something to fight unemployment. Hundreds of young people and trade unionists will be on the march and lobby showing their contempt and anger for the sell-outs of the TUC.

YOUR PLACE SHOULD BE WITH THEM!

RIGHT TO WORK MARCH: leaves Charing Cross embankment, London, at 11am on Saturday 4th September. The lobby starts at 11am on 7th September.

March for the Right to Work

JOBS: STOP THE ROT

Insist
on
the
right
to be
heard

DESPITE THE importance of the Right to Work March and the need to make it a big success, this should not stop us from pointing out the faults that do exist in the organisation of the march and the Right to Work Campaign by the IS-dominated National Right to Work Council.

If the Right to Work March is to take full advantage of the opportunities open to it, it is vital to achieve the maximum possible unity of all those who are genuinely prepared to fight for jobs. This, necessarily, means a fully democratic movement in which different proposals for the demands and activities of the campaign can be discussed, and decided. It must also mean full rights for those who wish to emphasise particular aspects of the campaign (eg women's right to work) within its general framework.



For this reason the following aspects of the march are particularly disturbing:

* The ban on leaflets, banners, and contingents imposed on the Gay Workers and the Women's Right to Work contingent., and the exclusion of representatives of these bodies from the Council running the march.

* The rejection of an invitation from the Crawley Joint Shop Stewards Committee to a joint meeting on unemployment when the march makes its over-night stop there.

* The secrecy and mystery that surrounds the nature and composition of the National Right to Work Council, and the exclusion from it of a bona-fide delegate from Charlton Labour Party.



To correct these mistakes and really build the campaign, all bodies — trade unions, women's groups, Labour Parties, student unions — that support the march should be summoned to a delegate planning meeting as soon as possible (preferably within a month). This conference should be organised openly and democratically to decide the next steps of the campaign, to discuss its political programme and elect an open leadership.

All this is absolutely necessary if we are to build the campaign and nail as lies the CP's allegations that the Right to Work Campaign is



THE HOLIDAY atmosphere of the Notting Hill Caribbean Carnival was soured by the presence of over 1,500 police.

During the two days of the Carnival the cops were harassing young blacks under the pretext of searching for pick-pockets. The tense situation finally exploded when 10 cops dragged one young West Indian down a back alley. His friends start-

scale riot broke out. It lasted from 4.30 pm until late in the evening.

Hundreds of police reinforcements were drafted in to be met with fierce resistance from the young West Indians. All their pent-up anger and frustration against the treatment they are continually subjected to by the police boiled over. For once they were in a strong position — this time it wasn't the case of a lot of

Police charges were beaten back, and by the time the fighting was over 100 cops were in need of hospital treatment. Police cars were set on fire.

Many blacks were arrested — about 50 of them. And the cops seem bent on getting their ounce of flesh for the drubbing they received. In the first case up before the courts, an 18-year old Indian

a bottle of sherry out of a smashed-up shop window...The other 49 can expect sentences equally as vicious.

The black victims of the police must be defended. They were not 'black hooligans' on the rampage — but young kids protesting, some for the first time, and the violence that they get handed out daily by the police. This time, for once they

TRICO bosses try on bluff and bluster

TRICO management have sent out a letter to the women strikers urging them to return to work. It says:

The result of the Tribunal was indicated to all Trico personnel as soon as it was known. As anticipated, this produced from some people further comments on the unfairness of the Tribunal system and a general attempt to mock the whole Tribunal...It cannot be said too strongly that the question of the Tribunal being biased against trade union members is not true.

You will be interested to know that more employees have returned to work, both men and women, since the Tribunal finding. Not only have they seen it as important to resume earnings and their normal way of life as soon as possible, but they have also found it a straight-forward business in crossing the picket lines...

The police are always present in sufficient numbers to ensure that any employee who wishes to cross the picket line and join the ever-increasing number of people who are working, may do so without any personal risk. It is important that you join your colleagues who are working and help to bring about a situation where lay-off or redundancy would no longer be inevitable."

Mass

But this bluff and bluster has not succeeded in demoralising the strikers. They still refuse to join the scabs ("their colleagues"...) in returning to work. They gave their answer in no uncertain style to the management at a mass picket last Monday morning.

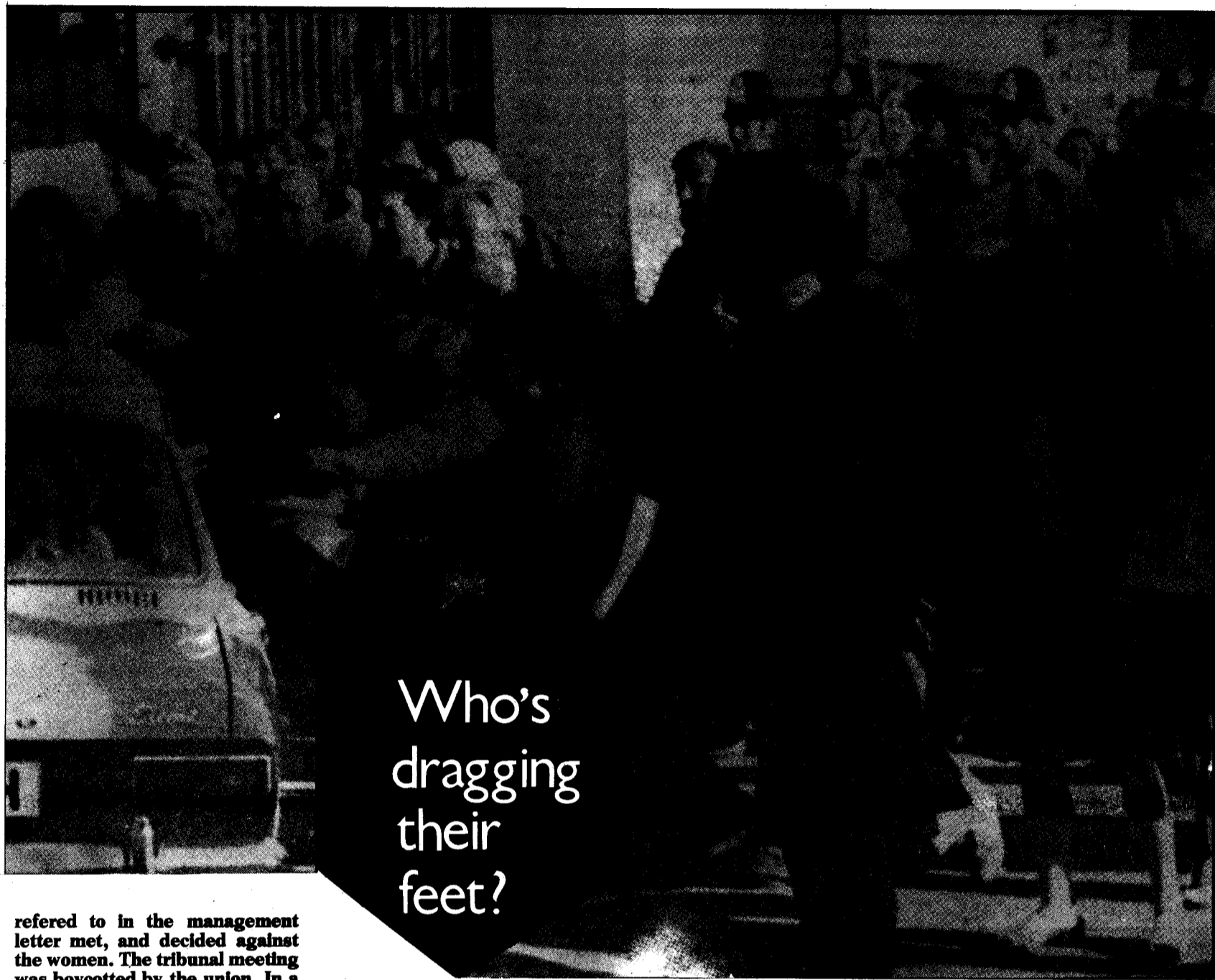
The pickets thumbed their noses at the Director as he went through the gate, and the waved their copies of the letter under his nose. That showed how little impressed they were with his threats of lay-offs and redundancies.

Support

A mass meeting is being arranged at the Trico plant in Northampton, where a lot of the work from Brentford is being farmed out to. Since their last meeting with the Brentford strikers, the women in Northampton (who are on \$11 a week less than workers at the other factory), have all joined the AUEW. Now the strikers are looking for their sisters in Northampton to give them a lot more support...

Support continues to arrive for the strikers from the trade union movement in London. Last week, for example, workers at the Martin-Baker engineering factory decided to donate the first week's increase under a pay deal to the Trico strike fund. The donation came to over \$460' and the Martin-Baker stewards have pledged that there is more to come.

It was during the same week that the local industrial tribunal



Who's dragging their feet?

referred to in the management letter met, and decided against the women. The tribunal meeting was boycotted by the union. In a joint statement by the Trico strike committee and the AUEW Southall District committee condemned the tribunal's decision and pointed out that it underlined the serious defects in the Equal Pay Act. The statement said that:

"It illustrates that, even where men and women are working alongside each other on identical work, they do not qualify for equal pay in law."

The statement added:

"This dispute is a milestone in the fight for equal pay for women and has been instrumental in highlighting the inadequacies, legal loopholes, and defects of the Equal Pay Act."

But after 15 weeks the Trico strikers are still not in sight of victory. They need serious blacking, not antics like those at Longbridge (see below). They need MASSIVE SUPPORT FOR THEIR PICKETS. Without these Tricos will not be a mile-stone on the road to equal pay — but a grave-stone for the women who work there.

FRAN BRODIE

FOR OVER A MONTH, militants at British Leyland, Longbridge, have been trying to get Trico products blacked at their works.

Trico wiper-blades are used on every Mini and Allegro, and the wipers are arriving at the factory all the time, and continue to be fitted.

At first, Communist Party members said that the Works Committee was taking the matter in hand. But wipers labelled 'Trico USA' or 'Trico Germany' continued to arrive and be used.

Then they said, 'Wait till the Tribunal. If it goes against the strikers, then we black.' The Tribunal did go against the strikers — but still no blacking.

Then the store-men at one shop decided to act. They refused to handle any Trico wiper blades.

The response of Derek Robinson (Convenor and CP member) was to tell the store-men to stop the blacking until an alternative supply could be found...

Since then he has been going round spreading the story that he would love to black Trico products — that the AUEW is all in favour of this, but that T&G members are dragging their feet. This is complete nonsense because blacking decisions are taken by shops — not by unions.

In fact, the larger T&G branch is supporting Trico by sending money, and their stewards are holding shop meetings to press for blacking.

Trico pickets shout at scab crossing the line in a car

WORKERS ACTION supporters' groups

Birmingham, Bolton, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Chelmsford, Chester, Coventry, Crawley, Durham, Edinburgh, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Newtown, Northampton, Nottingham, Oxford, Reading, Rochdale, Sheffield, Stafford, Stoke

Write for details of meetings & activities to:
WASG, 49 Carnac Street, London SE27

Name

Address

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TRICO — A STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL PAY
by MARY CORBISHLEY.

A WORKERS ACTION pamphlet describing the history of the strike, and the shabby record of Industrial Tribunals. It includes a background analysis of the fight for equal pay and the role of the Working Women's Charter.
ONLY 5p. OBTAINABLE FROM 49, CARNAC ST, LONDON SE 27.

The axe falls on Bury's old and sick



Demonstrators marching against the cuts in Bury

and sick

brandlesdolme Old People's Home in Bury, Lancashire, was closed last week, turfing out 28 old people who had expected to stay in the familiar surroundings of the Home among friends and people they have come to know, for the rest of their lives. The building is now empty and not being used for anything else.

A social worker connected to a local hospital told *Workers Action* that the most serious effect of the closure would be on old people needing hostel care on discharge from hospital. The waiting list was already far too long — and now there are 28 fewer places. She is having to discharge people who cannot care for themselves. Only last week one discharged person was found wandering the streets a few days later. When winter comes deaths must occur because of this closure.

Bury's Tory council says that the Government has told them to lop a million pounds off this year's budget, to be followed by 800,000 later on. So they have begun to dismantle the town's Social Services.

Of the 29 hostels or institutions, 7 are to be closed and sold to private buyers, saving the council 320,000.

In two weeks' time, the Dora Butler Children's Home will close. Purpose built 4 years ago, many of the children have lived there all their lives and know no other home. The local paper has been carrying reports of children in the area going round the streets asking local people to take them as foster children so that they won't have to move away from their friends and the area they feel attached to.

Whittle Pike, a therapy and training centre for 60 mentally handicapped adults, is to close this month. It's going to be used as a furniture store! And this is another purpose built centre, only 3 years old...

Strains

The parents of a doubly handicapped child we will call Pat told us of the strains the closure of Whittle Pike will put on them and their child. To care for Pat without the Centre involves her parents in constant attention, unable to go out day or night unless someone is found to stand in for them. If Pat goes to the Centre, her parents are free to go to work, see friends and have more patience and affection for Pat when she comes home each day. Pat herself is enabled to make friends, learn to care for herself and cope as independently as possible. *To shut Whittle Pike is to condemn both child and parents to a terrible isolation.*

Another closure will be Hillcrest — a hostel for 28 mentally ill adults. This is to close on September 15th and the residents believe it has already been sold to a private buyer. They each received a duplicated letter telling them they would have to move to other accommodation — many have heard nothing since, and are desperately worried: what 'other accommodation' is there for them? Many have been rejected by their families after serious breakdowns, and came to Hillcrest after long spells in a mental hospital.

Hillcrest was purpose built by Lancashire County Council about 5

years ago.

Jim, who has lived there for several years, says: "This has undone all the good work done here for me. I was in a mental home with geriatrics before — do I go back there now?"

Louise is an epileptic, who has fits and has attempted suicide. On each occasion she has been saved by the presence of the staff and other residents. Now it is proposed that she should go to live in a flat, and she is afraid that if she refuses then all help will be cut off.

Like many at Hillcrest, she fears that being forced out on her own may mean that eventually she will be unable to cope and will have to return to a long-term mental hospital.

Possibly the most drastic closure is that of Radcliffe Day Nursery. This is the only one in Radcliffe and caters for 50 children — with a waiting list of 90! Many of these children have been referred to the Social Services as being 'at risk' (of battering). Most were priority cases, having only one parent.

Hell

The Chairman of the Tory Council, Councillor Little, has said: "we will continue to carry out our statutory duty". But how? Bury was no paradise before, (7th in the 'league table' of provisions in Greater Manchester). Now, for those least able to make it, it will look more like hell.

In addition to axing homes, Little and his cohorts are also cutting back on field staff and grants to voluntary bodies. *They have even taken away bus passes from the handicapped!*

Since those cuts were announced at the end of July, there has been a mounting storm of protest and anger. Residents at Hillcrest occupied the Social Services office, angry parents marched about the nursery, mass meetings of 300-400 have taken place — sometimes two in a week. Bank Holiday Saturday saw a 2,000-strong protest march through Bury.

Social workers have written to the Minister, David Ennals, and succeeded in getting an official DHSS enquiry. Mike Noble (Labour MP for Rossendale) and Frank White (Labour MP for Bury) have called on Little to resign or reconsider the cuts, and Colin Barnett, Regional NUPE official, has called on his members not to cooperate with the council. Now both Nalgo and NUPE have blacked all work connected with implementing the cuts.

In Bury an Action Committee of social workers and people affected has been formed with the support of the local branch of the AUEW.

So far the Tories remain adamant, but it is possible that they may be forced to agree to save the politically 'sensitive' services, such as those for the old and the handicapped, whilst going ahead with the other cuts.

The Action Committee must stand firm on ALL cuts; and it is absolutely vital that members of the local public sector unions NUPE and Nalgo put into practice their unions' opposition to the cuts

JOHN ASTBURY
JANET PILLIA

JOINT STATEMENT BY SOCIALIST FIGHT, WORKERS' ACTION & IMG

Editorial

Mr. Kingsley Read, Chairman of the National Party, responded to the racist murder of an Asian youth with the jubilant cry to a large meeting of racists: "One down, one million to go!" The same Mr. Read, one of the two National Party councillors in Blackburn, has publicly said that the anti-racist demonstration scheduled for September 11th in Blackburn will not be allowed to take place — that the racists will forcibly prevent it. The National Front has said the same thing.

Blackburn is their citadel, a fascist base; the first of many they hope to establish by using racist agitation. Faced with a march through "their territory", they have picked up the old anti-fascist slogan of the 1930s and now hurl it at the anti-racists: "They shall not pass". They mean it. They have a real power base in Blackburn and we should take their words seriously.

Blackburn is a test case for the will of the left to move away from safe toy-town anti-fascist demonstrations and get down to the nasty but unavoidable work of sorting out the racist hate-mongers where they are strongest. Tendencies like the Communist Party and others who look to the police and the state machinery to settle the matter by anti-racist legislation or by 'banning' the National Party and National Front are living in a dream world.

Either the left and the labour movement will beat down the fascists now. Or Blackburn really is only the first of many areas where the fascists will put on muscle, using racism — muscle to be used later against the whole labour movement. Already in parts of East London fascist strength is almost at Blackburn level — and growing.

September 11th is the test.

Maximum national mobilisation is essential. The advanced labour movement must move from just supporting the right of blacks to defend themselves and go into vigorous combination with these black self-defence groups to smash the fascist threat.

September 11th must be the day when the fascist bully-boys who terrorise the local immigrant population don't dare to show their faces in the streets. It must not be a day when a small force of anti-racists marches on the sufferance of the police and under police protection. We must ram home to even the most bone-headed fascists that the labour movement is beginning to rouse itself to put a stop to their dirty work. We must encourage the immigrant population to continue and accelerate their fight back, by throwing maximum weight into the scales on their side.

We believe that fascists must be driven out of the labour movement, that all immigration-control legislation should be repealed, and that fascists should be driven off the streets and denied all rights to function politically or to express their views in any way. A mass national mobilisation to drive them off the streets in Blackburn on September 11th can also be a new starting point for a vigorous campaign to counter the fascists in the labour movement.

In this way we can begin to win support for policies which place the burden of the crisis not on black people but on the capitalist system itself — where it belongs. Policies of nationalisation of firms declaring redundancies, without compensation and under workers' control, of work-sharing with no loss of pay, policies which tie wages and benefits to the rise in the cost of living — these policies, which begin to impose some control by the working class over the economy, are the best answer to the racists. Mass action on these policies can throw back the attacks of the Labour Government, undermine the support of the fascists, and drive out the right wing and racist leaders of the labour movement.

Every socialist and communist, every working class militant who understands the suicidal divisions racism brings into the labour movement, and the threat of annihilation that a strong fascist movement would mean for the labour movement, should turn out at Blackburn. Approach your comrades, friends, workmates, and convince them to turn out. **HELP US TO ORGANISE**, a mammoth contingent to stamp on the arrogant racists in their Blackburn stronghold.

We say to the National Party and National Front that the march **WILL** take place — even if some now backing it withdraw. We will march in Blackburn on September 11th — **through the fascists and over them!**

The venom of Operation Cobra

LAST MONDAY *The Guardian* carried an account by Bill Anderson, a young South African who had served as a conscript soldier in Namibia and Angola. Now an exile in Britain, he describes the atrocities carried out by the South African army in Namibia during Operation Cobra, which took place in June.

In May, a state of emergency was declared in Ovamboland in northern Namibia (bordering Angola) and the area was put under martial law. Then Cobra was launched. Its aim was to clear a one-kilometre wide zone along the whole length of the border with Angola which would be a 'free-fire' zone: anything that moves within the free-fire zone would be shot.

In order to clear the zone the troops uprooted between 40,000 and 50,000 African villagers, transferring them to other parts of Ovamboland. The operation was carried out with ruthless brutality. The soldiers had orders to shoot anyone who ran away. Many villagers were killed and several thousand were arrested.

Sweeping arrests are common in Ovamboland as part of the search for supporters and members of SWAPO, the Namibian black liberation movement. Clearly, Operation Cobra had a double purpose: to clear out the population and to sift through it for SWAPO supporters.

Hence the extreme brutality of the operation. Most of those arrested were severely tortured. Anderson tells how South African soldiers would get tanked up in the drinks tent in the evening and then "torture would begin when the club closed. The screams would go on until well after midnight. Officers boasted in front of me of using the field telephone for electric shock torture to the genitals, nipples and ears." Children were not exempt.

Burnt

Detainees were beaten, some were nearly drowned being held under water or burnt with cigarettes. After being tortured for a couple of days they were either transferred to detention at the paratroopers' base at Ondongwa, or else sent for further torture to a special interrogation centre.

Other reports that have come out of the area confirm that the use of torture has become widespread and systematic.

The free-fire zone created by Cobra is now in operation. Every living creature has been cleared out and anything that moves is shot: early in August three young Angolan boys who strayed across the border on their bykes were shot.

The free-fire zone, intended to stop the movement of Swapo guerrillas over the Angolan border, is a technique pioneered by the British army in the Arabian Gulf, in the war in Oman in which the RAF and SAS were helping to prop up a reactionary feudal sheikhdom against the Popular Front for the

Liberation of the Arab Gulf. An area north of Oman was declared a free-fire zone and controlled by an electronic surveillance system. Anything that moved was detected by electronic sensors and the information relayed either to automatic weapons situated to cover a certain area with a dense barrage of fire, or to regular army units.

Almost certainly a similar system is being installed in the Ovamboland free-fire zone.

And it is being done with British equipment.

Workers Action reported in April how Marconi had, last December, signed an eight million pound contract with the South African government to supply the TROP communications system to link up South Africa's defence system with the central military command network based at Silvermine. At the time it was pointed out that such a sophisticated communications and surveillance system could easily be used to create an electronically controlled free-fire zone.

This is just what has happened — with the full knowledge of the

Labour Government. So much for the vaunted 'arms ban' on South Africa.

Operation Cobra and its aftermath shows that South Africa is determined to hold onto Namibia, although even according to the United Nations it has no right to be there at all. (Its mandate to control the territory, grandly bestowed by the UN, was withdrawn in 1966)

'Legal' or not, South Africa's rule has been characterised by the use of large scale forced population movement. During 1973 a 'reserve' system was set up; all Africans were forced to move into reservations (just like those of the American Indians), crowding the African majority onto just 39% of the land. On the 63,000 square miles allotted to the reserves, 45,000 are virtually waterless.

Ovamboland is one such reserve — cynically dignified by the South African government as a 'homeland'.

Their true home is the whole of Namibia, and the Africans, like those in South Africa and Rhodesia, are fighting to regain it. Despite the arrest of their leaders (two of whom, Aaron Muchimba and Hendrik Shikongo, are still under sentence of death), despite the casual, generalised use of torture against them, the arrests and the killings, that freedom fight goes on.

Bill Anderson's revelations about Operation Cobra show how thorough the South African regime intends to be in stamping out that freedom fight.



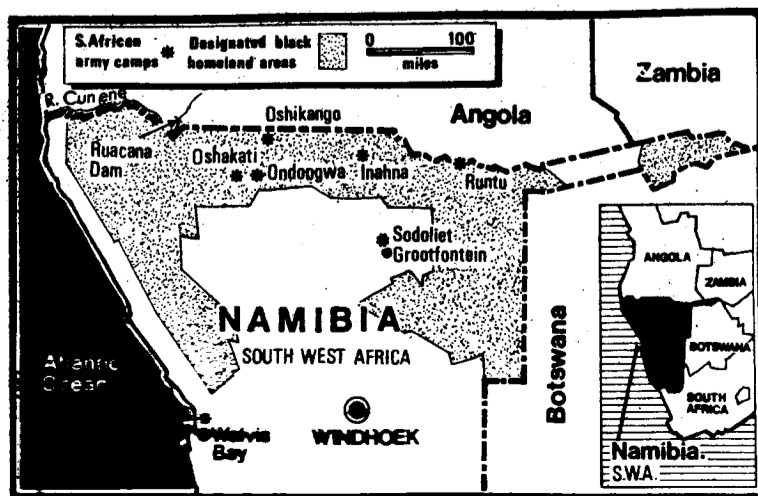
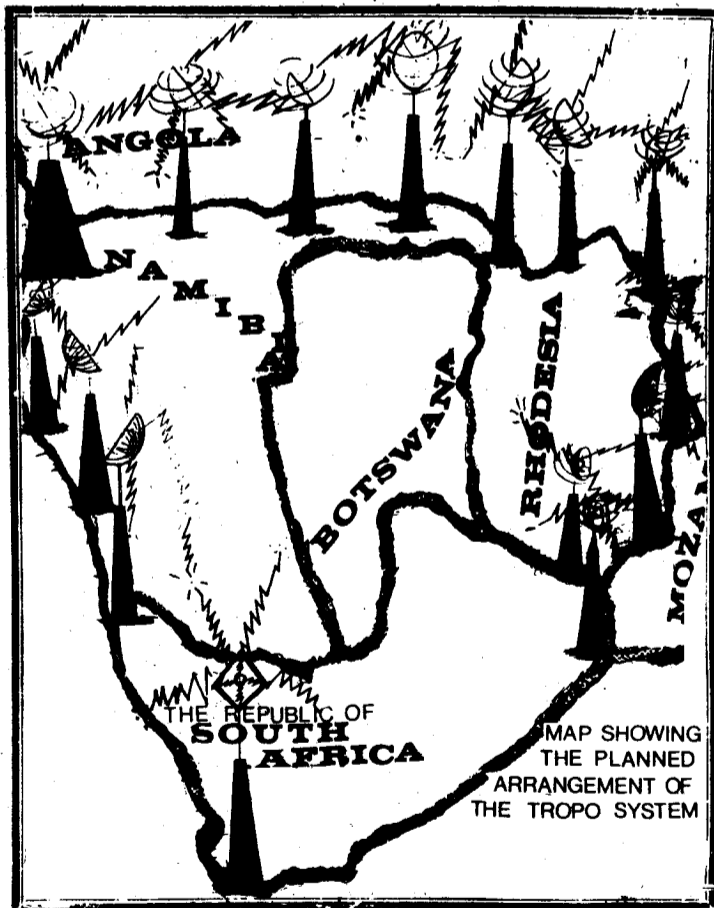
MORE THAN a thousand killed; thousands more injured; hundreds rounded up and carted off to Vorster's brutal jails for indefinite periods of 'interrogation'. Yet there is little sign of the revolt that started in Soweto in June fading.

South Africa's black workers have never lacked for militancy. They have formed illegal trade unions and mounted serious strike waves in defiance of repressive laws forbidding strikes. In 1960 they staged a serious revolt against the Pass Laws, cornerstone of Apartheid. Black students, too, have faced up to the police batons and dogs. The country's jails are full of brave men and women who have organ-

ised and fought back. What has been lacking is a prospect of victory in the foreseeable future.

Now the black masses have seen the elimination of white rule in neighbouring Mozambique and in Angola — where their own white masters suffered a humiliating military defeat. They see the white regime in Rhodesia fighting a doomed rear-guard action against encroaching guerrilla war. And they have noted the small concessions at home.

But they are not up against quarter million scattered farmers as are their brothers in Rhodesia nor facing up to a played-out absentee colonialism as we



Northern Namibia—the scene of Operation Cobra



Report by Neal Smith



SOUTH AFRICA: WHICH SIDE IS LABOUR ON?

Frelimo and the MPLA. No purpose would be served by denying that white South Africa is a mighty power. And its use last week of the Soweto Zulus against the general strike there shows, (though still on a small scale) what sort of cards Apartheid still has up its sleeve. A regime that has specialised in herding sections of the population around like cattle can always fall back on division and confusion.

We should have no illusions that the destruction of apartheid can be achieved with the support of the majority, or even a sizeable number, of South Africa's whites. The blacks will have to fight for it — and it will surely be a bloody fight. The 'bloodbath' long predicted for Apartheid's end threatens to come not from the mythical 'savage black hordes' unleashed on 'civilisation', but, as it has in reality throughout the whole history of imperialism, from the 'civilisers' themselves. The massacres of Soweto schoolchildren shot down by police, the massacres of Carltonville and Sharpville, have told us that.

Britain is one of the chief props of the South African regime, and as such, an accomplice to the slaughter. The British labour movement bears a heavy responsibility.

The Labour Government, like the USA and the EEC, keeps a foot in both camps. While issuing

stirring moral condemnations of Apartheid, they continue to give real support to the white regime. The degree to which support outweighs condemnation is shown by the fact that Callaghan's government still hasn't managed to utter an official condemnation of the bloody repression taking place right now.

Yet this Government supposedly has an official policy of favouring an end to apartheid, and majority rule in South Africa!

Ban

Britain is still the chief investor in South Africa, and one of its major trading partners. Despite the supposed ban on arms and military cooperation, military aid still reaches the white regime from Britain. Rolls Royce jet engines are sent there through Italy; Martin Baker rocket motors go via France; Marconi have a big contract for a sophisticated military communications and surveillance system (the 'electronic battlefield' that is to seal off the Namibian border); South African defence officials tour British military establishments with the approval of the Labour government. NATO maintains links with the South African armed forces, and apparently lets them use the NATO military satellite communication and observation network.

The Labour Government cannot plead ignorance of any of this *It is these connections that show who they really support.* They make little noises to placate important clients in the Third World. But they are terrified of actually jeopardising the enormous profits that British capitalism reaps from the exploitation of black South African slave labour.

Many reports have been produced documenting the sub-human conditions and starvation wages suffered by blacks working for British owned subsidiaries in South Africa — time and time again the government has refused to take any action.

It's not surprising that racists like Callaghan and Mellish should side with the white bosses against the black workers. But British workers, who have no vested interest in Apartheid and every interest in the victory of fellow workers, should take a hand in the matter. Solidarity action with those struggling against the same bosses would be more effective than all the sporting boycotts. Goods to and from South Africa can be blacked. Money can be sent for arms and equipment. The movement of all military and electronic equipment destined for South Africa can be stopped.

And we must keep up the pressure on the Labour government which so hypocritically claims to oppose Apartheid.

against it.

Labour's NEC are past-masters at the back-down game. We should demand of them that they don't just leave these proposals as good ideas on paper, but that they use the resources of the Labour Party, call meetings, rallies and demonstrations that would make it harder for these proposals to be swept under the carpet. And that they demand of the TUC that it organises industrial direct action where possible to implement any of the proposals that can be dealt with that way, thus dealing an immediate blow to the South African police regime.

LAST week the Labour Party NEC produced a document on South Africa drawn up by the Party's Southern Africa Trade and Investment Study Group under the chairmanship of Alex Kitson. It is not without faults, mainly being too mild in its criticisms of the practice of the present government. Nonetheless the proposals that it puts forward for the government to act on deserve wide support. They include:

- ★ Aid to the black liberation movement.
- ★ Cutting all military links with South Africa.
- ★ Banning further investment by British companies in South

Africa.

★ Withdrawal of all British banks.

★ 'an end to the export of capital goods to South Africa.

★ No more trade between the nationalised industries and South Africa.

★ Tightening up the arms ban.

★ An end to all trade promotion services.

It would be far better to press for the severing of ALL links (economic, military, diplomatic and cultural). But if the NEC proposals were adopted they would constitute a severe blow to the Vorster regime and a tremendous boost to the black militants in the front-line

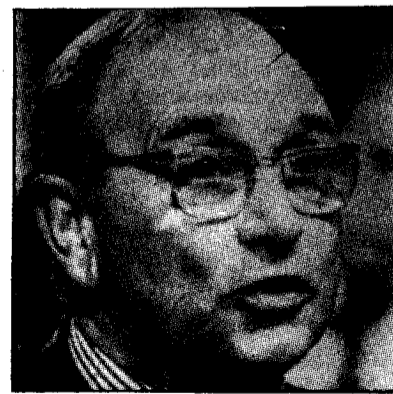
SALVING THE LABOUR PARTY'S CONSCIENCE

Last year's Labour Party Conference is chiefly remembered for Jack Jones' remarkable attack on Ian Mikardo at the Tribune fringe meeting. When Mikardo criticised the £6 limit — very mildly — Jones leapt up and shouted "I detest these attacks on the trade union movement."

Since then the Tribune MPs have gone as far as they dared, when, on March 10th, 37 of them abstained over the government's Cuts White Paper. Finding that any further fight would mean seriously counterposing themselves to the right wing, and declaring openly that the defence of working class interests came above keeping the Government in office, they then backed down.

They adopted the same logic as Jack Jones: social reform is desirable — but only after the Government has brought capitalism through its crisis at the expense of the working class.

Thus this year's Labour Party conference agenda shows the movement in a depressed state. There is the usual retinue of resolutions calling for large scale nationalisation and the ending of the capitalist system. Coventry North-West CLP declares that "a minority of money speculators, who control and manage investment and the use of credit instruments, dictate the life style of the community and distort and make nonsense of social democracy."



Union leaders like Jones will support the government.

But when the resolutions shift their attention from generalities about the socialist future to questions of what must be done now, a more right wing tendency is visible. On pay curbs, there are 7 resolutions uncritically supporting the government's policy, 5 supporting it critically, and only one (from Coventry South West CLP) opposing it.

On the issue of Party democracy, there continues to be some fight in the constituencies, despite the failure of the leading Tribunites to counterpose themselves to the right wing course of the

government.

After the rejection of Reg Prentice and Frank Tomney by their local CLPs, the issue has been revived once again with the pledge of Ann Holmes, seeking the Labour parliamentary nomination in Kensington, to be accountable to the GMC — a pledge condemned by George Brown on the grounds that it aimed to substitute Soviet for parliamentary democracy.

The Campaign for Labour Party Democracy secured support from 30 CLPs for its model resolution for re-selection of sitting MPs. (At present CLPs can only get rid of sitting MPs through a very long procedure, which the NEC can block at will, though it has not done so either in the Prentice or in the Tomney case).

However, none of those 30 resolutions appear on the conference agenda. The Conference Arrangements Committee has ruled them all out of order on the grounds that the issue was debated at the 1974 conference!

Agenda

Some of the more important resolutions which are on the agenda, such as Hackney North CLP's call for self-determination for Ireland and for Troops Out, may also fail to reach the floor of conference.

On racialism, however, there are a number of resolutions raising the question of ending immigration controls, and two — from Wallasey and from Norwood CLPs — raising, though not very clearly, the question of 'no platform for fascists'. The Norwood resolution also expresses support for black community self-defence activity.

Resolutions inspired by the Militant tendency, confine themselves to favouring anti-racist propaganda and advocating "a determined socialist answer to the crisis". But general good intentions about racial harmony will have little concrete effect in cowing the racist hard-core, in reorienting confused workers inclined to scapegoat immigrants for capitalism's problems, or in defending the black communities.

The Labour Party has already decided on an official anti-racist propaganda campaign, as from September 3rd. But any 'anti-racist campaigner' who falls on September 11th to make an active contribution to breaking the hold of the racists on the streets of Blackburn is doing no more than salving his or her conscience.

COLIN FOSTER

ARMY DEMANDS TOUGHER LAWS

WHILE THE British press was dipping into the syrup tin for suitable sweet phrases to heap on the Belfast 'peace movement', members of the 3rd battalion Parachute Regiment drove through the centre of Belfast cheering and shouting. They were on their way home from a four-month tour in South Armagh and were obviously pleased with their work.

Shot

This latest heroic chapter in the glorious history of the British army included the murder of Liam Prince, a Catholic schoolteacher whose car was riddled with bullets as he approached a Para roadblock when the Paras were feeling jumpy and aggressive; and the killing of George Johnston (an RUC reservist) at another checkpoint — he got into an argument with a soldier who picked up his gun and shot Johnston dead.

And, most recently, it included the shooting down of 12-year old Majella O'Hare in a churchyard as she was on her way to confession. (The Paras were lying in wait there for Seamus Reavey as he visited the graves of his three brothers who were murdered by Protestants in January; their murder, natur-

ally, led the Paras to suspect that any remaining Reaveys must need watching...)

But the Army top brass isn't satisfied with having a free hand to inflict terror on places like South Armagh. Frustrated in their attempts to defeat the Provisionals, they are demanding further repressive powers. They want either a return to no-trial internment, or a system like the one that operates in the 'Republic', where people can be jailed on the unsubstantiated word of a senior policeman.

The Tories, together with the Unionist hierarchy (which they'd like to bring back into the fold) have taken up this call. Tory spokesman on Northern Ireland Airey Neave has just toured the North, and in a radio interview with RTE (the Southern broadcasting authority) he advocated a new offence of "terrorism", so loosely defined as to require little proof.

But, as he made clear, his definition wasn't meant to include the Orange paramilitaries, Northern Ireland's most dedicated killers. While people charged with an "offence of terrorism" should be presumed guilty until proved innocent, he told RTE he wasn't prepared to sanction moves against the UDA leadership "until

there is sufficient evidence to show that they are guilty of an offence with which they are charged."

The British press (before it suddenly saw the light of the 'peace movement') fell in with this mood and started beating its own war drums. Not long ago we used to read of the British Army's "superhuman restraint" and were told "no other army in the world..." etc. Now the papers glory in British Army brutality instead of denying that they are capable of such things.

For two days in August the *Daily Mail* gave front page coverage to a minor riot in Derry. They claimed that the stone-throwers were trying to lure the army into the "notorious" Bogside so that they could be shot at by snipers. In fact the army, after deliberately escalating the conflict, retreated, drawing the

children to where they could be ambushed by soldiers waiting in a side street for that purpose.

What happened then is described by the *Mail* with evident relish: soldiers "grabbed six of the rioters, punched them, clubbed them, banged their heads against a wall, and dragged them off, bleeding and sobbing, to the cells."

The troops were led by a Lieutenant-Colonel Wilby, who was liberally quoted in the *Mail* to the effect that "a little rough treatment" was "all these young buggers understand."

Soon after this the Army warned the women of the Creggan (Derry) that if their children were not 'controlled' they would be arrested and held till they were collected. This, the Army said, was to ensure that they were not hurt or killed "by accident". Though public anger

forced the army to retract this monstrous statement (imagine it it Britain!) the message was clear: blame for injuries caused by the sort of savagery displayed at Derry would lie with the mothers of the injured.

So the Army can be tough with kids. But they have admitted that the Provisionals are stronger than at any time since the 'troubles' began. And the army officers are perplexed. Repression hasn't worked for them, but all their narrow minds can envisage for the future is more doses of the same medicine.

Meanwhile, the penalty for carrying arms has just been doubled to ten years, and soon belonging to an illegal organisation (the IRA will incur similar sentences, handed out in the jury-less "Diplock courts" — a travesty of justice even as we know it in Britain. That the twisted system of legal repression isn't yet airtight (they had to let Sinn Fein leader Maire Drumm out of their clutches this week when no-one could be found to testify against her) is no doubt a fact that it still exercising a lot of legal and military 'brains'.

For his part Rees, conscious that army policy has been ineffective, is hoping that sheer war weariness among the Catholics will make them abandon the Provisionals

Crush

Whatever the policy of the Northern Ireland Office, the army will certainly be more ruthless in trying to crush Nationalist resistance. This is especially true in areas like South Armagh, or Derry where the Provisionals have recently launched a new offensive.

Violence has always been endemic in the Northern Ireland statelet, and always will be until the British are driven out and their excrement, the Northern Ireland state, destroyed.



Part of last Saturday's peace demo in Belfast

Peace

at any price?

Articles by James Tandy

The present conflict in the north of Ireland has now gone on for longer than the Second World War. The people there would be strange indeed if they did not long for an end to it all. They would have to have hearts of ice not to be moved by the terrible 'accident' that killed the three Maguire children who were mowed down by a car whose driver (Provisional IRA Volunteer Danny Lennon) was shot dead at its wheel by the British Army.

The 'Peace Movement' that their deaths inspired has organised mass demonstrations. But do these, as the British press would have us think, spell the end of the Catholic support that has nurtured the Provisionals and kept them in the field? Do they mark the beginning of the end ('One small step', to quote the *Morning Star*) of the "troubles"?

The British press may blame Danny Lennon for his own death. But the 'peace' demonstrators did not. At the first demonstration at least, there was a great deal of hostility to the Army, who diplomatically absented themselves. "Tell Rees to get his thugs off our backs" journalists were told.

This is not the first peace movement in Northern Ireland. In 1971 a group of middle class women formed "Women Together", but it

never gained any widespread support. The "Peace Women" of Derry certainly had support in 1972 after the Official IRA had shot a young Catholic home on leave from the British Army. But all the patronising attention given to these women by William Whitelaw and the British news media could not keep the movement going. The fact was that the women's proposals were very similar to the Provisionals' minimum demands. They could not be achieved peacefully, so the military campaign was renewed.

Jobs

It is possible for people to desire peace, and at the same time also to desire the things that peace at the going price will not bring them. The Catholics who take part in these marches still need jobs, still need a decent house, and still need to be treated as equals in the society in which they live.

The Northern Ireland state was designed to deny them these things and they know that as long as it continues to exist, they can expect no change in their condition as second class underdogs. For all the war-weariness, the Catholics are conscious that if they let go the chance to destroy that state, they will be doomed to a never-ending round of sectarian misery.

Protestant women may link arms with them and sing hymns. But the Protestant state will take its savage revenge on the Catholic population if once it concedes defeat and lays down its arms.

No doubt even the British government itself would like to give the Catholics a decent deal — in its own capitalist terms, of course. But it must know by now, just as well as most Catholics know, that such a thing is ruled out by the 'standing orders' of the sectarian state they set up with which to continue to rule in Ireland.

The Provisionals, in fighting to end this State of permanent repression and endemic conflict, could be said to be the real peace-makers. They are fighting to establish a situation where peace can be realistically on the agenda.

As children we were told stories of little boys and girls who wanted something so much that it was magically granted to them. If the real world was like that we could wish away capitalism, imperialism and racism with all the other evils. Unfortunately, the capitalists, imperialists and racists have the money and the power — and the means to protect them with arms. They will have to be fought — and not only in Northern Ireland — before the conflicts they spawn are resolved.



Still the only protection for the Catholic community

Still occupying over cuts

STUDENTS at C.F.Mott College of Further Education are still occupying the college 9 weeks after they voted by 298 to 1 to take over the college in support of the anti-cuts campaign. During the summer, they are running a play scheme for local kids and working with the Job Creation Unit.

Vice-president Alison Barker is already organising for next term. They will be asking the teaching unions to support students on teaching practice who refuse to take classes over 30 or cover for teachers who are absent for more than 3 days. They also plan to visit Further Education Colleges and schools to help broaden the campaign.

Talking about the campaign last term, Alison said that "the sell-out by the Broad Left was probably the worst moment." She described how "we attended an N.U.S. Executive meeting in London, and when the questions became awkward, they moved into closed session." She said that she just couldn't believe their behaviour.

At the Teacher Unemployment Conference at Edgehill, Liverpool, on September 1st they will be calling for a National Co-ordinating Committee to be elected from the floor. This will almost certainly be opposed by the Broad Left-dominated N.U.S. Executive.

Alison is very bitter about the way they ran the last campaign. C. F.Mott was one of the 14 student unions which called for an emergency conference on their anti-cuts campaign. N.U.S. President Charles Clark sat on the document unconstitutionally sat on the document for 8 vital days, and then refused to do the bidding of the conference when it was finally called.

Alison thinks that this behaviour could cause a major upset at the Autumn N.U.S. Conference.

Ian Caren

The Labour Movement Delegation to Ireland sets out on 17th September. The Troops Out Movement, following up the impact of the minority report by three pro-TOM members of the Greater London Association of Trades Councils delegation to Belfast last July, has gathered some 50 delegates from trade union bodies, Labour Parties, and student unions, to visit Dublin and Belfast.

Workers Action has given its backing to the Delegation, and WA supporters are among those delegated. However, at the delegates' preliminary meeting in London on 21st August, it was clear that the TOM leadership's management of the delegation is showing many of the same features of bluff, bluster, bureaucratism and rigging as were protested against on the GLATC delegation.

The approximately 30 delegates present had an itinerary which gave lengthy details of proceedings in the Mansion House in Dublin, with various nationalist and semi-nationalist political figures, but almost no information about who was to be seen in the North. (A list of organisations written to was read out at the meeting). One hour only was to be

TOM Delegation

Discussion — not bally-hoo

allowed for delegates to discuss the political content of a report to be prepared by a Coordinating Committee; the possibility for minority views to find expression in the report was confined to "significant" (?) minorities. Report-back meetings were to be kept in the hands of TOM.

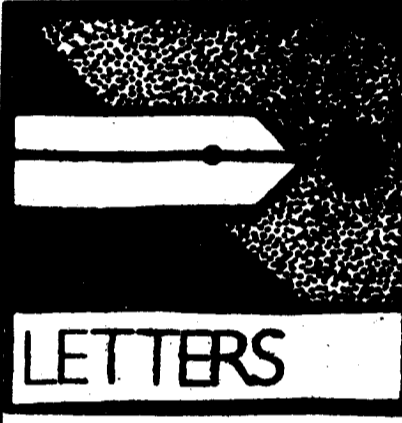
WA supporters combined with International-Communist League and International Marxist Group members, and some unaffiliated delegates, to argue for fuller discussion of the report and rights for minority views, and for the organisation of report-back meetings to be primarily in the hands of labour movement bodies

sending the delegates.

The delegation organisers announced an interpretation of report-back procedure with delegating bodies primarily responsible, and TOM only 'helping', and lost vote on extending the period for discussion of the report from one hour to two hours. However — thanks mainly to the support of a group of IS delegates — they won the other votes, including one on whether the delegation should try to see the Northern Ireland Labour Party and Harland and Wolff shop stewards' committee.

Work to organise report-back meetings should be getting underway now — and not only in those labour movement organisations which are sending delegates. Those meetings must be so organised as to allow a serious discussion of the problems in Ireland without Irish-nationalist and TOM self-glorifying ballyhoo which can convince no-one.

Colin Foster



Not quite like Butlin's

Dear comrades,

I have just spent my summer holiday as a guest of the government at Pentonville Holiday, and I'd like to tell W.A. readers about conditions there.

I was arrested on April 24th at an anti-fascist demo in London and charged with assaulting a cop. It was my word against his. Not surprisingly, I was convicted and sentenced to a month in prison and ordered to pay the cop £40 compensation. This was to be paid immediately, or else I would have had to spend another month in jail.

So, I was taken off to Pentonville. The first thing you have to face is the attempts of the screws to intimidate you, to break your confidence and dignity. They insult you and you have to take it. All your clothes and possessions are removed — you become a number in a badly-fitting suit of prison clothes. You see the Assistant Governor who also insults you.

The first night there were three of us locked in a small cell in the reception wing. One of the blokes cracked up that night. He sat talking to himself, kept walking up and down, moaning and banging on the door. Later I saw him in the mental wing of the prison hospital.



Demonstration for prisoners' rights on the roof of Peterhead prison, Aberdeenshire.

The next day I was put onto 'd' wing and given the job of cleaning. This meant that I had to clean the landing twice a day and serve food to the prisoners. For that I was paid the princely sum of 60p a week — rising after a month to 70p.

The routine was always the same. Up at 7am; working most of the day, with an hour for exercise in the afternoon; being locked in again at 5pm. To keep up 'entertained' there was cinema once a week and church on Sundays.

There was no contact with other prisoners — no TV. The only time we had for mixing was during exercise. The rest of the time most of the prisoners were locked up. The cleaners were the luckiest ones because we weren't locked up most of the time — not confined in a small space with someone else. Most of the workshops were working only a few days a week — some not at all. One man I met had done only one weeks work in a month.

Petty

On top of that, Pentonville is grossly overcrowded. (At least 600 prisoners too many, according to official estimates.) That means 3 men to a cell meant for 2, lousy toilet and washing facilities and so on. Tempers become quickly frayed, especially when you're continually being pushed around by the screws.

Some of the rules they have are amazingly petty. You can get nicked for virtually anything: for swearing, for cheeking a screw —

even if he deserves it. I saw one screw threatening to nick a bloke for assault even though all he had done was to accidentally bump into the screw. The prisoner was black — that made things that much worse for him.

A couple of weeks before I arrived, so I was told, there was a particularly vicious incident. One bloke rang his bell in the night to be allowed to go to the toilet. He was confronted by a drunken and angry screw who started to beat the living daylight out of him. As if that wasn't enough about half a dozen of the screw's mates came running up and also laid into the prisoner. Other prisoners heard him screaming. He was dragged away, bleeding and unconscious, to the hospital.

Half an hour later, a screw went into his cell and smashed the window. If questioned, they would say they had had to 'restrain' the prisoner, and that they had found him smashing the window...

Most of the screws are the same. Vivious thugs, fit only to lock and unlock doors and beat down the prisoners. Very few of them are at all sympathetic.

One last thing — the food. Everything is steamed — and nothing is ever wasted. Rotten eggs are served; the porridge reappears as "rice pudding"; the soup is often left-over vegetables; everything is either tasteless or foul.

I was released on August 14th. I've not booked for my holidays there next year...

MARK TRAQUAIR

Black defence

DEAR COMRADES, In issue 21 of WORKERS ACTION an article on black defence groups took the position that such groups needed to unite in action with local labour movement and socialist organisations in defence of the black communities.

Since then, however, there has been no attempt to link the two and in issue 26 in "A Scab by Nature", it is even suggested that whites are not ready or able to assist in this struggle.

While of course we give full support to black defence groups where they don't receive support from the labour movement, it is vital that black defence groups are oriented towards the working class and not left in isolation. Malcolm Woodhall

WORKERS' ACTION replies: We agree. In the editorial statement in WA 21 (reprinted as a leaflet) we called "for active support by the white labour movement for the defence of the black communities — for joint committees of defence that unite in action the labour movement with black community organisations". And in the statement on September 11th printed in this issue, we say "The advanced labour movement must move from just supporting the right of blacks to defend themselves and go into vigorous combination with those black self-defence groups to smash the fascist threat".

We do not believe that the article in WA 26 (which should have been credited as a contributed article by two comrades from Wallasey LPYS: our mistake) meant to say anything different. The comrades were arguing against the line put forward by tendencies like the 'Militant', that militant anti-racist activity should wait until massive black-white working class unity is created.

EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Block ads, £5 per column inch. Paid ads, 8p per word. Send copy to Events, 49 Carnac St, London SE27, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

MONDAY 6th SEPTEMBER. Big Flame meeting on "Struggles in the Black Community". 7.30pm at the West Indian Sports and Social Club, Westwood St., off Moss Lane East, Manchester.

TUESDAY 7th SEPTEMBER. "Support the Blackburn demonstration", meeting organised by Cambridge Campaign against Racism. 8pm, Mawson Hall, Mawson Rd, off Mill Rd. For tickets on coach to Blackburn, phone 311542.

THURSDAY 8th SEPTEMBER. Campaign to Repeal the Immigration Act regular weekly meeting 7.30pm at Inter-Coop, 31 James St, WC2. Contact CRIA at 92 Tavistock Rd, W11.

SUNDAY 12th SEPTEMBER. Chile Solidarity Campaign demonstration, starting 1pm at Clerkenwell Green.

SATURDAY 18th SEPTEMBER. RCG Public day school on 'The Crisis of Capitalism and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat', 10am to 6pm at UMIST students union, off Sackville St, Manchester. Further information from Day School (WA), 49 Railton Rd, London SE24 0LN.

Publications of the International-Communist League.

'International Communist' 1.....	30p
'The I-CL and the FI'.....	30p
'Permanent Revolution' 3.....	30p
'Lenin'.....	5p
'For a Rank and File Movement'..	10p
'The EEC: In or Out'.....	5p

Order from G. Lee, 98 Gifford Street, London N1 0DF. All cheques should be made payable to 'Phoenix Pamphlets'.

SPARTACUS, monthly organ of the German Trotskyist organisation Spartacusbund. From R. Engelhardt, 43 Essen, Postlagerkarte 064395A, West Germany.

BULLETIN OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST FACTION: Italian Trotskyist monthly. Antonella Marazzi, CP 30093, Roma, Italy.

LUTTE OUVRIERE, French Trotskyist weekly. LO, BP233-75865 - Paris Cedex 18, France.

REVUE QUAN SAT, organ of the Vietnamese Trotskyists. 48 Rue Mazarine, 75006 Paris, France.

WOMEN'S CHARTER, paper of the Working Women's Charter Campaign; first issue includes articles on Equal Pay, the Trico dispute, recent legislation, the CIS report etc, plus supplement on the National Working Women's Charter conference. Price 10p from J. Daniels, 16 Crookham Road, London SW6

REPUBLICAN NEWS, Irish Republican weekly. 170 Falls Road, Belfast.

WORKERS IN ACTION

DEMOCRACY FLOUNDERING IN THE NUS

GEOFFREY WILLIAMS (NATIONAL UNION OF SEAMEN)
TALKING TO
ROB MCGONIGLE.

In the merchant navy as everywhere else the workers are being forced to pay for the crisis. Here, reducing the workforce is no problem since the men are rotated, the lay-offs just get longer. Even while under contract you can get the sack for breaking petty rules, such as talking politics (or: 'upsetting the crew'). But this does not make each boat more profitable.

To that end, over the last two years, crews have been reduced by changing the names of grades to get round regulations (e.g. Able Bodied Seaman, AB, to General Purpose, GP). Also overtime, which cannot be refused, has been increased on

top on the minimum 70 hour week (50 hours standard over 5 days).

More fundamentally, the exploitation of third world, in particular Asian, labour has increased the bosses' profits dramatically. It is no exaggeration to describe these Asian-crewed and based ships as workhouses compared to home ships of the same company. Their wages are one quarter of their white counterparts. To reduce training costs, a few more men are employed; these poor standards have led to some quite dangerous situations. Even their food is weighed out according to a regulation long ignored on other ships.

Fight

No fight has been put up on their behalf by any of the European unions. The Swedish union, for example, has fought against Asian crews and has succeeded in banning them: but the multi-nationals have already found ways to use the differences to

squeeze both Asian and Swedish workers. Racialist exclusions can only increase the problem.

Blacking and general industrial action must be used internationally to outlaw the special exploitation of Asian workers. This should be linked to a general fight against long hours, overtime, etc, without loss in average wages, to create more jobs. The reaction to drop all Asian crews must also be fought. Their right to work must be defended.

Global

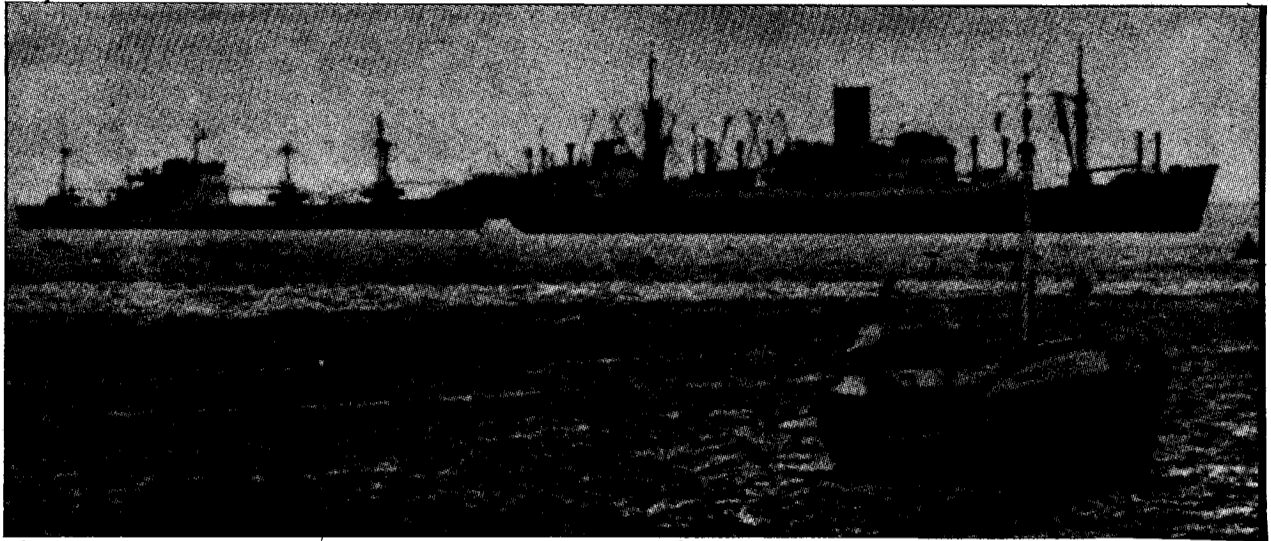
True, a lot of these global problems can never be solved in a capitalist system that ploughs US wheat into the ground, lets ships rust and men lie idle to maintain profits, while millions starve to death. This does not mean we can do nothing, on the contrary the fight against pay-

ing for capitalism's crisis becomes more important for it is only the winning of workers in struggle to the fight for socialism that gives any chance for these problems to be solved.

So: what is being done? The answer, in Britain, is virtually nothing. The National Union of Seamen is a closed shop that can't even get up enough energy to chase up its subs: I know one member £50 behind who hasn't even received a letter. Their occasional inspection of conditions has kept some owners on their toes, but these are sporadic. When contract status has been won, they ignore that fleet. Votes have to be taken on board in many cases, but rarely is there a union rep or a democratic set-up. The short assignment time of 6 weeks - 4½ months should not exclude the idea of ship-based branches. There has to be a general

fight against the bureaucracy for a more democratic union.

- We must call for:
- * A 40-hour week with no loss of average earnings.
 - * Overtime in excess to be banned, workers' control of emergency overtime. Overtime payments to be brought into line with other industries and a general stand-by payment.
 - And we must fight:
 - * Against all victimisation and for an end to the petty rules and regulations around the petty dictator captains.
 - * Against all discrimination and inequalities in wages and conditions, globally.
 - * For the right of seamen all over the world to work.
- The only effective way to fight is through blacking and picketing ships in ports, asking solidarity again from our docker brothers.



Ships queuing in the Thames estuary during the 1966 sea-men's strike

Equal pay strike at Jeavons

FOR THE PAST 3 weeks 100 women at Jeavons factory, Tipton, West Bromwich, have been on strike for equal pay. Male workers in the factory, doing the same job as the women, are getting £10 - 12 a week more.

When the Equal Pay Act came into force, management regraded the workforce so that men became skilled workers while the women were still classified as unskilled. In the last 7 months of negotiations with management, the women, all members of the T&GWU, have got nowhere. Finally they decided to go on strike.

This has been already made official at the local level (although blacking has not yet been called for) and pickets are out on the gate.

Picketing has been made difficult because the factory is divided into two plants, although there is one gate. One plant makes gas covers and fittings - that is on strike. The other makes gas-pipe fittings - they are not out.

Send messages of support etc to:

Terry Askey,
T&G House,
Victoria St,
West Brom.

Tension in the air in BLMC Longbridge

THERE HAS been a lot of tension at BLMC's Longbridge plant in Birmingham in the last few weeks. Negotiations are going on for the new annual agreements and for the longer term changeover to production of a new mini. Electricians and controllers went on strike over manning levels two weeks ago and won. Tool-setters are in dispute about having to train new workers as well as carry on their own work, without receiving extra money. Extensive lay-offs have occurred.

Last week a strike by 92 engine rectifiers began to obtain a plus payment of over £1 which would bring them into line with comparable sick relief and slipmen. More massive lay-offs on Thursday and Friday led to a march by 300 laid-off direct workers (production line workers) demanding 40 hours pay regardless of how much work the management could provide. They handed in a resolution to the works committee refusing to accept any new agreement which did not include "vast improvements" in layoff pay.

Despite the implications in press and TV reports, the real mood of the march was for "Work or Full Pay" and not against the rectifiers' strike. In fact the marchers discussed whether or not to go and picket gates where engines were leaving the factory, and decided against it only because other workers who would then be laid off did not see the dispute as they did and might then oppose the strike.

Pill

Since 1971 layoffs have been comparatively few at Longbridge? this was part of the sugar on the pill of Measured Day Work when it was introduced. But now the company is consciously going back on this, laying off large numbers in a selective way designed to set shop against shop and shift against shift. Another trick they have been using is to provoke a dispute when they decide to

lay men off (for whatever reason) so as to avoid paying out lay-off pay.

It is in this atmosphere that the two big sets of negotiations are going on. On the Annual agreement the works committee have decided that the union negotiators must work within the 4½% limit. They have done this without consulting the workforce at all in most shops, although in some of the few shops where meetings have been held the workers have opposed the limit. But all the leaders will say is, "Next year, free collective bargaining". Which is exactly what they said last year.

On the changeover in production,

the company have clearly decided to ride roughshod over the participation structure. They announced plans to stewards two weeks ago without any consultation and as a result many stewards and one member of the works committee, Jack Adams, walked out of participation. But they have taken this protest no further, preferring to sit back and hoping to be asked nicely by the company and the works committee to return to the fold.

It is so painfully obvious that the new plans will involve redundancies. A new, highly automated paint shop will hit not only Coventry workers (the new shop will replace work

done there) but Longbridge workers too, ousting some of the work done here. A proposal to build a new plant, which will largely replace the West Works at Longbridge, could mean up to 3,000 less jobs. The transfers of components work to Longbridge will mean massive redundancies at Rubery Owen, Birmingham, and also Llanelli and Swindon. Of course none of this is certain yet, but a pattern which is becoming clear is that participation means the bureaucrats help to attack jobs and wages. So it is not just a question of walking out of it - welcome though that was - but of isolating these leaders by organising a fight against the proposals as they emerge.

The starting points must be:

- * the rectifiers' dispute, which the district official and the works committee are trying to stop.
- * working out a means of fighting for full layoff pay.
- * an end to overtime, which is ridiculous in view of probable redundancies;
- * more immediately, a struggle to get Trico products blacked, which the works committee is also obstructing.

DICK BRADLEY

AUTOMAT strikers can't wait for ever

THE STRIKE at Automat, Swinton, over union recognition and victimisation is still on even though the strikers have been out since January.

A demonstration of support on August 18th showed that the labour movement in the area is firmly behind the strikers. About 800 trade unionists, many of them from the AUEW, marched through Swinton and heard local Labour MP Stan Orme, chairman of the AUEW Parliamentary group, pledge his support for the strike. Other messages of support came from the AUEW North West Area secretary, John Tocher, and Bob Wright of the AUEW Executive.

After the speeches the march went on to the factory, where the scabs had been given the day off and the place closed. Hanging from the roof was a large banner, saying - Automat Unity. We want freedom of choice. This had been put up by Automat Unity, a group of scabs

supported by the management. The 'freedom of choice' it refers to is the freedom to scab on fellow workers and opt out of the union.

The Automat Unity group has been vigorously condemned by local trade unionists. At a meeting of the Salford District Trades Council, the chairman, Frank Hankinson, said: "These people at Automat can't kid us by saying they have a trade union there, when they are under the hospice of the Managing Director, John Chamberlain." Apparently, Chamberlain is a member of Automat Unity...

Smear

At the Trades Council meeting a resolution was also passed condemning the Stretford Tory MP, Winston Churchill, for his repeated attempts to smear the strikers with red-baiting allegations.

But despite this support, Autom Automat management refuses to

budge. A meeting between the union and management under the auspices of ACAS folded when Chamberlain did not turn up - something that has happened before.

With his own company union, a steady trickle of scab recruits, and expanding order books, he must still be confident that he can break the strikers. A few months of standing on a largely impotent picket line - and he must hope they will give in. But morale amongst the strikers is still good even after 7 months.

For this magnificent show of determination to become a victory means much more support being given by the Manchester labour movement. In the past AUEW officials have talked about making the blacking of Automat really effective and calling out their members in the area in support of the strike. This is what is needed - the strikers can't wait for ever.

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