

# WORKERS' ACTION

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## Seamen vs. the TUC

# WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?

"The press is already telling lies and we are not even on strike yet. They say we are getting 80 pounds for a 40 hour week, but we work double that. It takes seven years at sea before you even get full pay. There is no guarantee of overtime. It all depends on the first mate. And we are on call 24 hours a day. And if there's any trouble the captain fines us fifty pounds on the spot."

But it isn't just the press that the seamen have to contend with. The decision of the National Union of Seamen to strike in support of their pay claim rocked the TUC Conference. But instead of doing what it's there for and organising nationwide trade union solidarity with the seamen, the General Council responded by threatening to chuck them out of the TUC!

And the people who sat down with the officials of the NUS and threatened them with expulsion from the TUC? Were they the TUC right wing? Not at all. They were Len Murray, Jack Jones, Hugh Scanlon, Lawrence Daly, and Terry Parry of the Firemen's Union.

**These plain-clothes policemen of the trade union movement stood in the front line of the class struggle ON THE EMPLOYERS' SIDE.**

The shipping employers held out until 10 years ago against any reduction from 60 hours in the basic working week of seamen. The shipping employers' lobby has seen to it that seamen still don't have the legal right to strike in foreign ports, and until 1966 they had managed to forbid the right to strike at all.

These are the bloodsuckers that Jones, Scanlon and Daly

are supporting against a section of the working class.

In the last ten years, there have been important changes for seamen. These have been the fruit of their 1966 strike. They certainly don't have Labour to thank: Harold Wilson's words attacking the seamen in 1966 have since become a by-word for all anti-working class witch-hunters. "A tiny band of politically motivated men", Wilson claimed, were running the strike.

Now, ten years on, the spearhead of anti-working class attack has shifted away from the Government to the leadership of the TUC.

In 1966, Wilson's speech gave workers a clear signal of whose class interests the Labour Government was protecting. Many workers stopped expecting any gains for the working class from that Labour Government.

Today the same stand by the TUC is no less a clear sign of the class interests the trade union bureaucracy is protecting and advancing against the workers.

The present seamen's claim — it is in fact the third version of their claim for this year — has been argued by the NUS Executive **within the terms of the Social Contract**, which the NUS has backed all along. But the Government and the TUC say that it goes over the limit if taken on top of the rise they got this year as the second stage payment of an old claim, won before the £ pound limit.

The TUC is therefore trying to cheat the seamen out of this year's meagre, wage-curbed increase, on account of them having waited until this year to get the whole of their last increase!

For the TUC, there is a clear logic to this monstrous denial of the claim. They are out to fight, tooth, claw and knife-in-the-back, to keep wages down. The seamen are not by any means the only workers who have this year received money agreed on before the 6-pound limit. **What the seamen win, other workers will claim.**

In fact, such situations must have been common in the past months in every sector of industry. The Seamen's claim brought the issue into the open — and it has showed up just how much extra police duty the TUC and the Union leaderships have been taking on themselves in defence of the employers' profits.

The TUC pressure got the strike put off, while frantic activity went into finding benefits that could be offered without threatening the Social Contract and unleashing a great flood of similar claims.

If the seamen do strike on Saturday September 28th, they will find the TUC as well as the Government and employers ranged against them.

**AND WHO WILL BE ON THEIR SIDE?**

If the seamen's claim was a matter for themselves alone, if other workers did not stand to benefit from it, it would probably have gone through with no trouble. What is at stake is the living standards of the working class. And every worker has an interest in standing with the seamen.

London dockers have pledged their support, as have seamen's unions internationally. Other trade unionists must take steps to ensure that the seamen are not, in 1976, a "tiny handful", and that trade unionists up and down the country and in every trade will stand up for them.

INSIDE

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WHEN JAILERS  
TALK OF  
'FREEDOM'...



AFTER the fall of Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique, the fate of the white-supremacist regime in South Africa hinges on the possibility of a controlled transition in Rhodesia to a conservative, collaborationist black regime of the Malawi type.

The Smith regime cannot possibly survive. The effects of a militant overthrow of that regime by black nationalist forces on the already rising militancy of black workers in South Africa would be revolutionary.

For that reason, South African Prime Minister Vorster has been energetically seeking agreement with other African governments for a negotiated solution in Rhodesia. He is prepared to tell Ian Smith that the unqualified supremacy and unmitigated privilege of the white settler population in Rhodesia must be sacrificed for the good of the greater exploiting power in South Africa.

Kissinger and the USA see the situation in much the same terms. And Vorster and Kissinger between them can apply tremendous leverage on the ruling circles in Rhodesia. It is not excluded that they could force the white minority to retreat a considerable distance. Certainly Kissinger and his CIA aides could get rid of Ian Smith tomorrow if they find a suitable replacement.

But any settlement they forced through would rest on a very delicate knife-edge: trying on the one hand to force the white settlers to accept the inevitability of black rule, and on the other hand to reinstate the 'moderates' like Nkomo as leaders of the black population of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

British government help to the Vorster-Kissinger strategy could be vital. That is why Labour and trade union militants in Britain must strenuously demand:

☆ No intervention by any imperialist power — including the UN — in Rhodesia.

☆ Full support to the militant forces of Zimbabwe nationalism in their fight for unqualified majority rule.

☆ Solidarity with the black workers' struggle in South Africa.

☆ The Labour Government to break all links with the white-supremacist regimes.

# TUC: APART FROM 'SOCIAL DISASTER' THINGS ARE FINE!

## CP finds a use for Rule 14

AT the end of August the United Manchester Hospitals NUPE branch sent in a resolution for the September meeting of the Manchester Trades Council. It expressed its opposition to cuts in public expenditure and called for support for:

- ★ The North West TUC's demonstration against cuts in public spending and unemployment on September 26th in Blackpool.

- ★ The lobby of the Labour Party conference organised by nupe for September 28th

- ★ The proposed lobby of Parliament in the Autumn

- ★ The conference 'How to Fight the Cuts' organised by Manchester Fight the Cuts Committee on October 9th.

The secretary of the Trades Council, veteran Communist Party member Frances Dean, wrote back to the secretary of the NUPE branch, Jack Sutton, in which she declared that the motion "is out of order". The reason given was that "it calls for support for a conference being organised by Manchester Fight the Cuts Committee, which is an unofficial organisation operating outside the established policy making machinery of the Trade Union movement."

The letter goes on ... "We are an official organisation of the Trades Union Congress and as such have to operate within the guidelines laid down by the TUC for the conduct of Trades Councils' affairs."

In other words, the NUPE motion has been disqualified by the application of the notorious Rule 14 — not only the section advocating support for the Fight the Cuts Committee, but the whole of the motion, which later in her letter Frances Dean refers to with hypocritical sympathy.

At the 1975 TUC and in the subsequent fight in the trades councils against the adoption of Rule 14, the CP delegates always argued that the best tactic to adopt with regard to Rule 14 was 'don't fight it — ignore it'. So they proposed that Trades Councils should adopt Rule 14 — but not put it into operation. This short-sighted view soon rebounded on their own activities, when the TUC-appointed chairman of the 1976 Annual Conference of trades councils refused to allow onto the agenda CP-sponsored motions critical of the Social Contract. He ruled these out of order on the grounds that they went against official TUC policy!

Now the same shabby bureaucratic manoeuvre is being used by CP members against those who want to organise a real fight back against the cuts.

## THE UNIONS



A hundred years ago the TUC, in the belief that 'progressive' legislation would strengthen the movement as a whole, ditched the immediate interests of the working class. Last week the 108th TUC Conference marked yet again another step in the same direction — the integration of the trade union leadership into the institutions of the state.

Len Murray was perfectly eloquent on the subject himself: "We have already seen" he said "the first two stages of an historic legislative programme carried out by the Labour Government, aimed at strengthening workers' collective power."

"The first step was the abolition of the Industrial Relations Act. Secondly came a positive programme of legislation designed to encourage strong trade union organisation and the extension of collective bargaining."

"The provisions in the Employment Protection Act, Health and Safety at Work Act, and the Industry Act can give a real stimulus to an already growing trade

union involvement in decision-making at all levels of the economy. The third stage is for a fundamental change in company law and in the statutes of our nationalised industries and public services to give organised workers, through their trade unions, the right to parity representation on the policy-making board of their enterprise."

Here we have it then: in exchange for "going easy" on the economic gains for the working class the Government is making legislative concessions which will strengthen trade unionists in the fight to achieve 'prosperity' when 'times are better'.

### Plant level

That's the idea — and it's made clearer what it means by Murray. He, rightly, sees workers' participation at plant level (the last point he makes here) as the same as the Social Contract at a national level.

It's just that he doesn't call it by its right names: scabbing,

acting the foreman, doing the bosses' dirty work and so on.

The same perception of the general strategy of the TUC — legislation now, wait for improvements in the economy before we demand improvements in living standards — is made in a different way in a recent revealing article in the *Morning Star*. Jones, defending the Social Contract, proudly boasts that 'never before has there been such a close working relationship between the trade unions and the government. This agreement has laid the foundations for real advances by the working class.'

He then goes on to defend Labour's record with a crib from Harold Wilson's piece of effrontery that passed for a speech to the last Labour Party Conference. He says 'There have been few governments that have carried through so much of their manifesto in so short a time.'

Carried out what?

'The achievements of these last two years cannot be forgotten by the trade union movement'. And then, before the reader busts a gut, Jones admits that 'there is still more to be achieved.' For instance: 'The aim of achieving a real and substantial shift in resources to working people and their families still remains to be fulfilled.'

### Failure

There you have it! Almost all the promises have been fulfilled bar one: the workers are no better off that they were before. The Government and the TUC, working together, have done a grand job BUT... 'The TUC meets this week against a background of 1½ million unemployed. Tragically, many of these are school leavers. This figure represents a social disaster.'

Apart from the 'social disaster' things are fine...

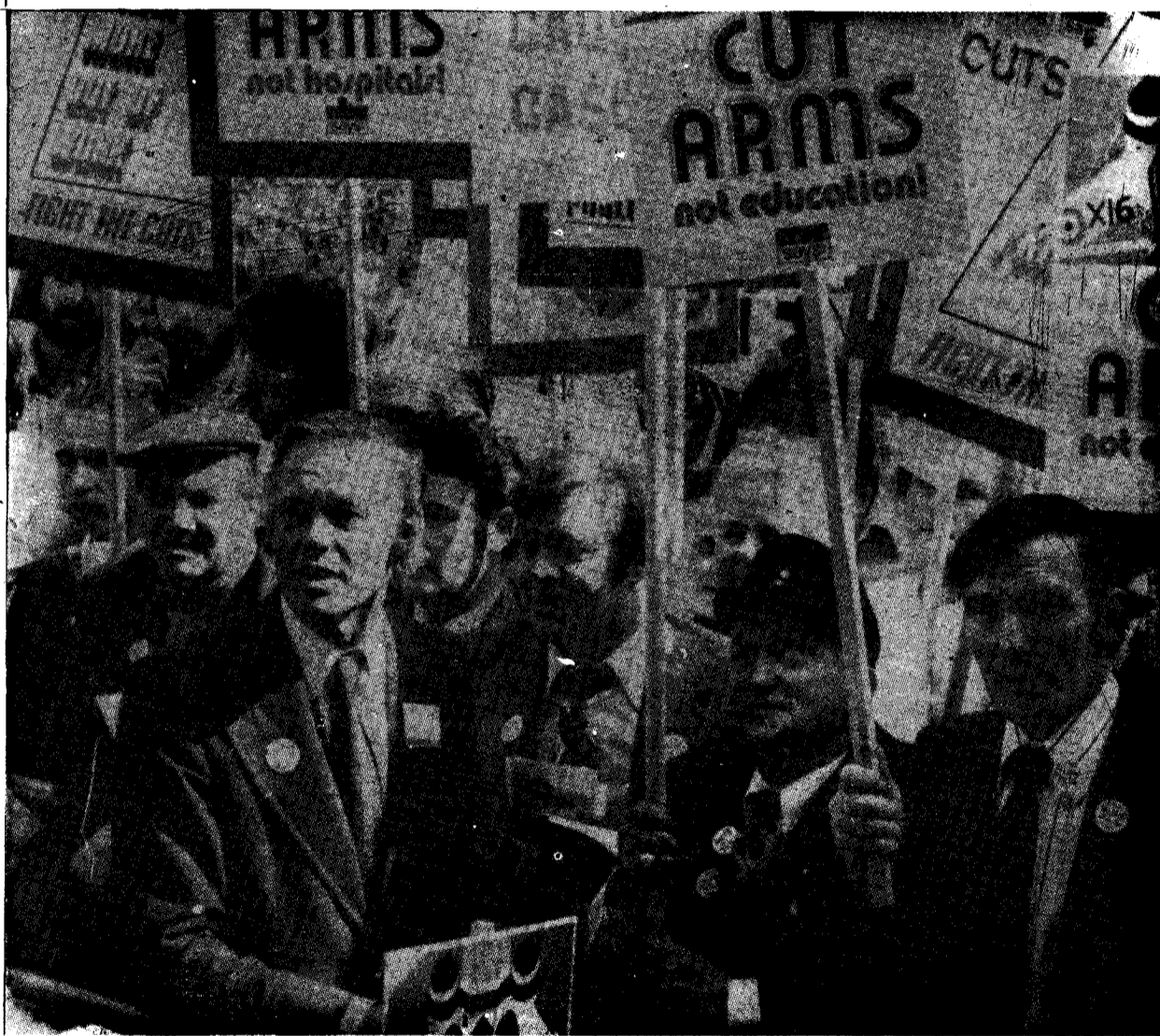
Once again you have the contrast between the battery of legislative 'achievements', and the total failure to defend or improve the lot of the working class in the slightest.

Cyril Plant, the outgoing TUC President, also reeled off the benefits of the Social Contract as he saw them, and characteristically included only one single, miserly, economic gain: 'It is a contract' he said in his speech opening the Conference 'that has helped old people by raising pensions to record levels. It is a contract that has produced the Employment Protection Act ... that has seen the establishment of the NEB, the National Oil Corporation, Manpower Services Commission, ACAS, and perhaps above all a new spread of cooperation between the Government and the trade union movement.'

The litany rarely varies. The strategy is well understood and completely conscious.

The result of much of this legislation has not been totally negative (though some of it is completely pernicious and anti-working class). It never has been — laws protecting the funds of unions from legal action for losses caused to the bosses by strikes, the right to strike and to picket, were all major advances.

But as the trade union leaders 'advanced' in their power and authority, as they advanced in their respectability, and as they advanced closer to the sources of power in society, and in the state



While the TUC at Brighton was knuckling under to the Government (to the sound of feeble and flabby 'dire warnings'), 2,000 trade unionists and unemployed youth made their presence felt outside the Dome.

The largest and noisiest section of the lobby was the Right to Work contingent, headed by the orange-jacketed Right to Work marchers who had just completed their march from London.

Over 1,000 supporters of the IS-controlled Right to Work Campaign surged round the entrance to the Brighton Dome, almost completely swamping the picket called at the same time by NUPE to protest at the Government's spending cuts.

This official picket, organised and sponsored by the Union executive, was clearly intended as a back-up to the NUPE resolution that the TUC should support action by public sector unions against the cuts. Not surprisingly, with such limited objectives, the NUPE picket was rather muted, despite being well supplied with official placards and banners. Towards the end of the first session of picketing, the NUPE pickets even began to take up the slogans of the Right to Work contingent.

The lobby, however militant, seemed to have little impact on the TUC itself — most delegates

just scurried past. Certainly the slogans put forward by both parts of the lobby provided no political basis for any sort of breakthrough against cuts and unemployment. Simply chanting things like 'Hurry Hurry Hurry — Sack Len Murray' can't have impressed any of the TUC delegates as being a serious alternative political approach to that of the General Council.

Still, at least those slogans were better than the disgraceful one coined by some IS members at the Right to Work disco in Crawley. There they had chanted 'Wankers of the World Unite' at the contingent of gay workers who had supported the march. Such virulent hostility was the barely hidden rotten underbelly of IS sectarianism on the Right to Work march, on which they attempted to ghettoise and persecute members of the gay and women workers' contingents.

Like Fisher and his picket, IS only wanted to use the Right to Work march to further their own aims. They did manage to recruit some young people from the march — but the conduct of IS, like that of Fisher, can only be a lesson in how to contrive a carefully-contrived stunt. It tells us nothing about how to conduct a real political fight.

The militancy of the young marchers and their supporters in Brighton deserves far better than this

in particular, the vigour of their trade union principles, the strength of their will to fight, melted away.

This will to fight for the interests of the working class does not just melt away for the duration of this or that 'contract' with a particularly government offering legislative 'concessions'. It melts away for good!

Jack Jones says 'We worked to put this present Government in power — in power to undo the havoc wrought by a doctrinaire and divisive Tory government. It would be folly not to help sustain the government in power!'

The 'folly' is to betray the interests of the workers to any government ruling in the interests of the capitalists. The 'folly' is to stand by the 'havoc', the 'social disaster' wrought by this government.

And does Jones think that the close working relationship between the unions and the Government is going to drop the moment there is a Tory Government? There will be different tensions and pressures, to be sure. But the net the trade union leaders are ensnaring the working class in now will be used to advantage by future governments whatever their political complexion.

The legislation is in part of course thoroughly reactionary — like the setting up of ACAS. But even those laws that contain the best intentions, like Equal Pay, set up systems of tribunals designed to cheat and hamstring the working class.

Thus, according to recent government figures, the success rate of cases brought to the Equal Pay tribunals is 1%! Likewise the success rate at Unfair Dismissal tribunals is 1%.

In fact the legislation has hardly denied victimisation and sex discrimination in pay. On the contrary the laws and in particular the institutions set up under them have been a big factor in delaying, obstructing and disorientating active and potentially successful struggle against these practices.

These legislative contraptions — or just 'traps' for short — constantly serve to suck in workers from the arena of class struggle to that of collaboration — where the bosses and their state dictate the terms.

What is true at the national level is repeated at plant level where shop stewards committees have merged with 'works councils'; where the workers' leaders sit on the board. Neither does it matter whether the firms involved are nationalised, private but receiving more state money than the usual generous gifts from the state coffers, or just plain private.

The one good side-effect of the increased 'prestige' of the TUC has been a growth in its membership, to 11,036,326, about 50% of the workforce. But how does this increase compare with the trade union movement's potential growth if it actually started fighting for its members' interests?

Clive Jenkins of the ASTMS claimed at the Conference that 'the unions have a major impact on every political, social and economic issue'. David Basnett of the NGMWU described this influence as 'beyond our experience in history'.

But not only did this 108th TUC use this 'impact' on the side of the Government against the working class (upholding, in Jones' words, a social disaster); they used it to confirm and increase the collaboration which halts the real advance of the working class and constantly creates new layers of workers organically tied to the labour aristocracy and the labour bureaucracy.

# Fighting Bury's penny-pinching

TWENTY-YEAR OLD Brenda Woodier is living at the moment in an acute admission ward at Prestwich Psychiatric Hospital, near Bury. Although she should not be going to the hospital, she is forced to live with people who are mentally disturbed because she has nowhere else to go. Instead, social workers think, her emotional problems would best be helped by her living in supervised accommodation and going out to work.

Such accommodation does exist in Bury — Hillcrest Hostel, a 'half-way house' for people who need help or supervision, but who shouldn't be confined to a psychiatric hospital. Brenda wrote to the hostel. The Bury Council Social Services wrote back a three-line note saying there was no accommodation...the hostel was being closed as part of the million pounds worth of cuts in the town social services being instigated by the Tory council.

Now Hillcrest is being occupied by members of the Bury Action Group in a bid to keep it open.

Over the past month the Action Group (composed of users of the many institutions affected by the cuts, and including parents of the day nursery children, Age Concern, Spastics Society, and so on) has been waging a vigorous campaign against the council's penny-pinching plans. It has organised a demonstration of over 1,000 through the town centre; got 14,000 signatures on a protest petition; rallied the support of the local trade unions and the national executives of Nalگو and NUPE; and arranged a 100-strong lobby of the council meeting on Thursday September 9th which discussed the cuts.

At that meeting, Councillor Albert Little, the Tory chairman of the council, announced that council were prepared to make a small concession to the demands of the Action Group that all the cuts be reversed. They would keep open Radcliffe Day Nursery and Whittle Pike Adult Training Centre for the Mentally Handi-

capped — and make the £78,000 saving elsewhere! Otherwise, the cuts would go ahead as planned, and he even mentioned the possibility of a further £800,000 worth of cuts...

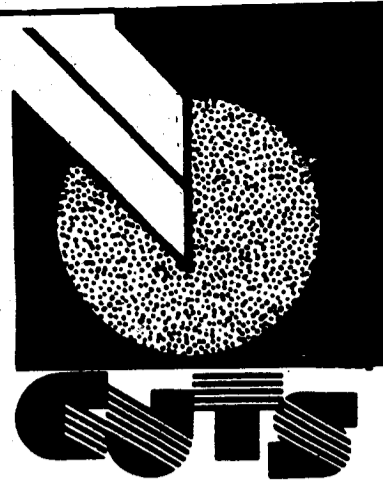
Suggestions from the Labour minority that the cuts be taken away from the social services and extra money found from the rates was vehemently opposed by the Tories, who raised the spectre of the bankruptcy of small businessmen and shopkeepers. One Labour councillor was heard to remark — 'There are some people in this council chamber who would sell their own grandma for 6p off the rates.'

Before the meeting the Action Group had decided that it would accept nothing less than a reversal of all the cuts, and would take direct action if the council didn't back down on its plans. The morning after the council meeting members of the Action Group walked into Hillcrest Hostel. Some of the residents of the hostel had previously been to Action Group meetings, and told people there that they were under pressure to get out quickly even though there was no alternative accommodation. The Action Group decided to act

in support and mount an occupation. When they went into the hostel, they announced that they undertook not to interfere with the normal running of the place, and would remain as long as the residents wanted them...or until the council said it would keep the hostel open.

Hillcrest's residents have been fully involved in the running of the occupation, and have made it clear that they want the Action Group members to stay. On the Friday night the police threatened the occupiers with eviction, but the residents told the police that they were there as residents' guests. Since then both the police and the council have taken no further steps to remove the occupiers.

Each day fresh messages of support are arriving. NUPE and NALGO branches, and the Bury AUEW have all sent messages of support and donations. Also Labour Party bodies in Bury, Prestwich, and Radcliffe have passed resolutions condemning the cuts and any Labour councillor who supports them. Three local Labour MPs — Frank White, Mike Noble, and Jim Callaghan — have also sent messages of support.



The actions of these Labour Party bodies and MPs spotlights the dilemma that the official labour movement finds itself in over Bury.

After all, although the cuts are being carried out by a Tory council, they are part of government policy. Undoubtedly the local Tories see the cuts issue as a splendid opportunity to embarrass their Labour opponents by carrying out Labour policy with a little more zeal than the Labour government and local councillors would like. David Ennals, Minister of State at the Department of Health and Social Security, has written to the Bury Action Group saying that the cuts are 'excessive'. Yet he cannot deny the allegations of the Tory council that the cuts were instigated as a direct result of circulars from the government of which he is a part to the local authorities.

## Any price

Rank and file Labour Party members like those who passed resolutions supporting the Hillcrest occupation, should bear this in mind. When Labour MPs support actions like those taken by the Bury Action Group, their support should be utilised — but remembering that it was their votes in Parliament that enabled the Labour government to carry through its programme of cuts, a programme which Bury's Tories are only taking to its logical continuation. When MPs and trade union leaders talk about preserving the Labour government at almost any price, remember that they won't have to carry the cost, but rather people like Brenda Woodier and the residents of Hillcrest Hostel. Whatever the 'excesses' of the Bury council, their plight is the responsibility of those Labour politicians at Westminster who would 'sell their grandma for 6p on the rate of profit.'

SUE ARNALL



Local MP Jim Callaghan visiting the Hillcrest occupation, and getting told by the residents just what they think of the cuts.

# TYNESIDE TENANTS ORGANISE

ON OCTOBER 4th North Tyneside Council will be putting up council rents by 60p, the third increase within 18 months. Already they have gone up by £1.10 a week (a 30% increase on an average rent) and another 70p increase is threatened for the start of 1977. These are increases by a Labour controlled council in an area of 11% unemployment, massive youth unemployment and, as in other parts of the country, declining public services and wage restraint.

Against this background, over 100 tenants turned out at a public meeting on Thursday September 2nd, organised by the North Tyneside Housing Campaign, to plan the fight against the rent increases. The previous week over 100 tenants had demonstrated at a council meet-

ing at which the Labour councillors rubber-stamped the increase. The Lord Mayor also had the police clear the tenants from the public gallery on the pretext that they were 'disrupting the proceedings of the council'.

## BATTLE

The public meeting was chaired by Cllr. Robin Jamieson, one of the few inside the Labour group to vote against the increase. David Corkey, joint secretary of the Housing Campaign told the meeting — 'The days of polite protest, letter writing, and petitions to the council are over. They have got the working class nowhere.'

As both a council tenant and an ambulance driver, Joe Dud-

ding was one of those experiencing the cuts all the way round. 'When you dial 999 these days,' he told the meeting, 'ambulances no longer turn up straight away. The staff to drive them has been cut.'

Tilly Long, a council tenant from Wallsend, told how her estate had gone on rent strike to try and get repairs done. She made the point that unless all tenants were organised, the council would set tenant against tenant and so win the battle.

Cllr. Jamieson also made it clear that as a member representing many council tenants, he was not prepared to see cuts in public spending or further rent rises. The time for a fight-back was long overdue, he said. These remarks caused so much offense to the Labour councillors

who had voted for the cuts that they decided later to discipline Jamieson for speaking out against local Party policy.

After the speeches, various proposals were put forward and it was agreed to carry out occupations of council buildings, organise a march in North Tyneside, and support the demonstration against the cuts called for October 16th in Newcastle by public sector unions.

For the organisers, the meeting was very encouraging. For the first time in the area a link had been made between tenants and unions over a common cause. The job now is to build on it.

KEITH HAYMAN,  
JOINT SECRETARY,  
NORTH TYNESIDE  
HOUSING CAMPAIGN.

MAO Tse-tung has died at the age of 82. Beyond question he was one of the greatest revolutionaries in history — the leader of a revolution that has massively transformed a country of over 600 million people.

True, the revolution he led was not *our* revolution, not on a communist programme of democratic direct political rule by the working class. Nevertheless it was a revolution that did overthrow capitalism and landlordism in China, drove out imperialism and opened the door to tremendous progress for the Chinese people.

These are great and lasting achievements.

The Chinese working class will have still to carry through a 'supplementary' revolution against the ruling bureaucracy, whose bonapartist leader and arbitrator Mao remained until his death — a revolution to establish their own direct power, abolish the privileged bureaucracy and seize control of the means of production out of the hands of that bureaucracy.

But this does not diminish the achievements of the Maoist revolution or of Mao.

Wang Ching-wei and Hu Han-min — which later became the Kuomintang (KMT).

When in 1911 there were revolutionary upsurges in Wuhan and Changshu led by Sunist forces, Mao joined them.

Mao had been at High School until then and when the revolutionary wave subsided in 1912 he demobbed himself and went back to his books. At this time, contrary to popular myth, he was fairly ambivalent in his attitude to the workers and poor peasants. He came from a merchant family and would spend a considerable portion of his income on buying water, as, according to tradition he considered it beneath his dignity as an intellectual to carry it into the city himself.

When he left High School and the Nationalist army he considered going to law school to become a "jurist and a mandarin", but changed his mind, and having been rejected for other courses he studied to be a teacher.

In the period of Mao's student days, 1915-21, there was a wave of radical movements and ideas mainly with a nationalist, anti-Japanese motive, but also spurred on by the October Revolution in Russia. Mao became embroiled in the student movement.

In 1917 he was reading the paper of Ch'en Tu-hsui (who was to found the Communist Party of China, the CPC), *New Youth*, and thus by the end of 1917 was participating in the *New Peoples Study Society*, predominantly an organisation of intellectuals who advocated the abolition of the 'three bonds' — prince/subject, father/son, husband/wife — and came out against religion, capitalism and autarchy.

1919 saw massive student demonstrations accompanied by anti-Japanese slogans. In June 1919 Mao helped to form the *United Students' Association* of Hunan which demanded the decapitation of a local pro-Japanese politician.

## Impact

Under the impact of the October Revolution, small groups of communists grew up. Mao was converted to socialist ideas in the 1919-20 period. By 1920 there were nuclei of the CP at Shanghai and Peking. Mao organised a branch in Hunan at the end of 1920.

In the 1920-21 period Mao was organising labour unions and together with other communists saw the *proletariat* as the leading force in the socialist revolution, both in colonial and advanced countries. In fact, when the first Congress of the CPC was held in July 1921 it veered towards sectarianism, calling for the ending of relations with parties and groups other than the proletariat. On this point, Mao's official CPC biographers have tried to paint Mao as an anti-sectarian.

By the time of the 2nd Congress in July 1922, the CPC had been taken to task for its sectarianism by the Communist International. They now adopted a resolution espousing a United Front with the Nationalists.

However, Sun Yet-sen turned down the United Front. Maring, the Comintern representative, on his own initiative, then steamrollered through the CPC a course whereby communists would be allowed to join the KMT on an individual basis.

This amounted to a subordination to the Nationalist forces whose roots were among the national bourgeoisie and the better off sections of the peasantry.

In spite of the fact that the majority of the CPC were opposed to this course and that it violated the Comintern's position on the independence of the proletariat and its party in backward countries, Li Ta-chao and

fervour the new policy, which was to prove so disastrous.

*The myths present Mao as deviating from the working class only towards the mass of poor peasants. In fact, already in July 1923, Mao adopted the line that the merchants were the leaders of the National revolution and that control of the labour movement should be relinquished to the KMT.*

In October 1923 Stalin's representative Borodin arrived in Canton. He undertook to stiffen up the KMT with Soviet technical and military aid. And when the first congress of the KMT took place in January 1924, Mao was elected an alternate member of its Central Executive Committee.

Throughout 1924 he immersed himself in the peasant work of the KMT, so much so that he was sometimes derided as 'Hu Han-min's secretary'. Mao's turn to the peasantry was thus based initially on the centrist policies of Stalin in 1924, and not, as is often made out, on a profound theoretical insight into the 'new role' of the peasantry!

## Peasantry

The 1925-27 period is well known in the Marxist movement as marking the first classical tactics of Stalinism. The CPC, under the leadership of Ch'en Tu-hsui, stuck to Bolshevik conceptions of the United Front tactic and the leadership of the proletariat in the revolution; but Stalin (through Borodin) forced on them a complete subordination to the KMT. *And in this period Mao, against the CPC, bent over backwards to be more pro-KMT than Stalin himself.*

As the KMT started to clamp down on CP members, and murdered some of the 'left' KMT officers who were gravitating towards the CP, Ch'en proposed that the CP withdraw from the KMT. He was over-ruled by Maring (supported by Mao).

In January 1926, at the Second Congress of the KMT, Mao defined the peasantry as the centre of gravity of the national revolution. He lost his seat on the Central Committee of the CPC, but remained an alternate member of the KMT's EC — and was actually appointed Editor of the new KMT organ *The Political Weekly*.

During the Northern Expedition in 1926-27, a movement to unify the country, Stalin used the CPC to restrain the poor peasants, who were carrying out their own confiscations of the landlords' and rich peasants' land. His aim was to win favour with the bourgeois and landlord officers of the KMT.

## Pay-off

Then in April 1927, the CPC took the brunt of the KMT's savage pay-off. The KMT, led by Chiang, massacred tens of thousands of the Shanghai workers who had handed the city over to him. Repressions followed in Peking and Canton.

*But still the Stalinist course continued, and the rest of 1927 was taken up conciliating sections of the KMT — which led to the further liquidation of communist forces.*

The experience confirmed the analysis that had been made by Trotsky and the Left Opposition, who had warned against subordination of the proletarian forces to the KMT. But Mao drew different conclusions, based on his previous orientation and on the turn in Stalinist policy in the Autumn of 1927.

Under Borodin's directives, Mao was sent to try to organise an armed uprising among the Hunanese peasantry — who three months earlier were being restrained by the CPC, including Mao, and who were now disorientated and demoralised.



ill-timed and divorced from any communist perspective. Mao was forced into the surrounding countryside with a handful of followers. Uniting with two bandit chiefs, this small army of declassed peasant elements conducted sorties to massacre local landlords. More landless peasants collected along the way.

By 1931 Moscow was strongly supporting Mao, and the Central Committee of the CPC was moved from Shanghai to Kiangsi. The working class base of the CP, already smashed in the massacre of the worker communists, was thus now altogether relinquished.

Mao was denounced by most of the CP leadership, but he continued in his guerilla course regardless. Chen Tu-hsui became a Trotskyist, endorsing the Left Opposition's campaign against the Stalinist course in China. But the Trotskyists remained a small group which declined as the working class in the cities was

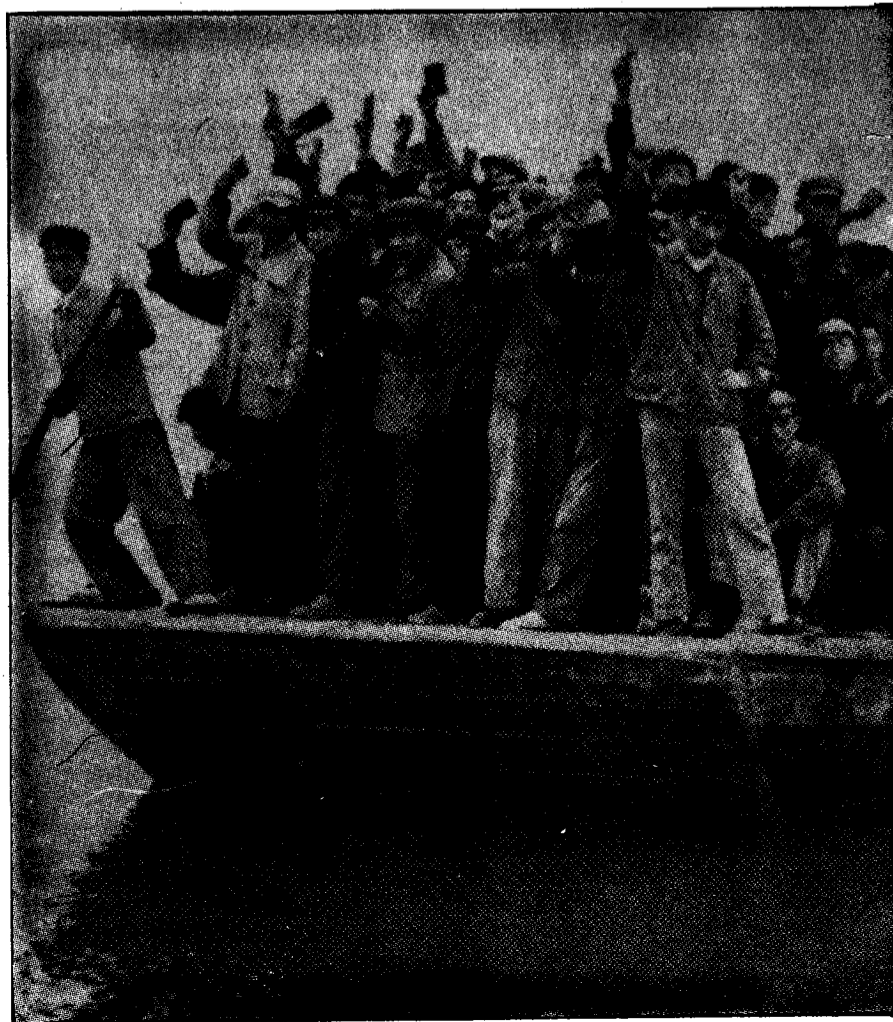
pulverised by the Japanese and attacked by the KMT and the Stalinists.

By 1931 Mao had taken over large parts of Kiangsi province. This was constituted into a 'Soviet' area. However, the only reforms that were carried out were reductions in rents and taxes which the poor peasants paid the landlords.

## Purge

Not prominent among the Maoist myths is the fact that at Fut'ien 2-3,000 officers were purged from his army when they advocated Li Li-san's policies of confiscation of the land of the rich peasants and the formation of cooperatives. Though Mao had adopted in words the Third Period Stalinist sectarianism, he still believed that the rich peasants would form the backbone of the national revolution.

By the summer of 1934, the



Red Guards in the 'Cultural Revolution'



Mao, the 'arch-opponent of peaceful co-existence', plays host to Nixon, Makarios and Nyerere.

Mao's life spanned the long, tortuous and tragic history of the Chinese revolution that began in 1911 with the fall of the "Celestial Empire". It is a tragic history despite the victory of the Maoist Red Army in 1949 and the achievements of that regime since.

For another, shorter, less bloody course was possible — a revolution led by the urban working class and creating a democratic workers' state in China was possible in the 1920s. And it would not only have changed the course of Chinese history, but of world history.

The penetration of imperialism into China and the subsequent developments over sixty years, coupled with the long history of warlordism, combined to produce a nationalism which espoused certain western democratic liberal ideas for the unification and saving of the Chinese nation. The two examples of this were the constitutional monarchist reform movement in 1898 of K'ang and Liang and the republic

# THE LONG MARCH OF MAO TSE-TUNG

by Frank Higgins



Japanese had succeeded in blockading the Kiangsi Soviet Republic. After a section of the Red Army had been smashed in confronting the Japanese, Mao and the rest withdrew from Kiangsi and decided to push north on the Long March. This put Mao firmly in control of the CP, which had by now become a party of declassed peasant elements.

By the end of 1935 the CPC had reverted from a Third Period attitude (refusing to form united fronts and denouncing 'social fascism') to a Popular Front line. The petit bourgeoisie, the landlords, the nationalist bourgeoisie and even sections of the pro-imperialist bourgeoisie were all recognised as potential allies in the anti-Japanese Front. Thus in the middle of 1936 found the Maoists trying to reach a working agreement once again with the KMT, with Mao seeing the 'Mass pressure' of anti-Japanese feeling as making it

possible that Chiang would "see his mistakes and grant the demands of the people"!

In February 1937 a telegram was actually sent to the KMT offering concessions — Mao agreed to subordinate the Red Army to the KMT, to give over the newly established Shensi Soviet Republic to the Chiang government in Nanking, and to halt land reforms. In September 1937 they agreed that a complete list of CP members who joined the KMT would be handed over to the latter and that KMT members would not be recruited to the CP.

Mao still paid ritual homage to the proletariat, but by December 1939, after a period of intense collaboration with the KMT, he predicted a "brilliant future" for the butchers of Shanghai.

In January 1940 he stated that the KMT could continue to claim the leadership provided it proved itself capable! At the same time the pauper's broth of



1946 — just before the civil war, pictures of Stalin and Lenin alongside Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek decorate a Shanghai hotel; below them, the crossed flags of the CPC & KMT.

Maoist 'theory' was the old Menshevik 2-stages theory dressed up in 'new language': the bourgeois democratic stage, led by the bourgeoisie, would be a 'new democracy' with the 'joint revolutionary dictatorship of several revolutionary classes'.

However, Mao was not naive or in complete agreement with Stalin. The Eighth Route Army and New Fourth Army, although formally under KMT control, were difficult for it to control from afar, and continued to recruit the spontaneously arisen anti-Japanese defense squads in the areas behind Japanese lines. And, in August 1940, after reaching an agreement with Chiang that all the Maoist forces should be evacuated north leaving the KMT in control of central China, the New Fourth Army swept aside KMT forces as it moved north.

This was to be the fundamental difference between the second collaboration with the kmt and the earlier total subordination. Whatever was said, the Maoists had learned some of the lessons of 1927 and maintained their own forces intact. This was to allow them to survive and triumph when Chiang in '46 launched an all-out drive to exterminate them.

It was during the period 1941-1944 that Mao emerged as the Great Teacher, Great Leader etc. Blockaded by the Japanese forces from July 1941, Mao launched the "rectification campaign" to 'proletarianise' the peasant army. The cult of Mao Tse-tung's "Thought" dates from this period.

## Stalin

At the Seventh Congress of the CPC in April 1945 'The Thought of Mao-Tse-tung' was said to be necessary to 'guide the entire work of the Party'; and Liu Shao-chi claimed that Mao was not only the greatest revolutionary and statesman in Chinese history, but also its greatest theoretician and scientist.

But the political content of Mao's Thought was such that in Autumn 1944 he accepted a coalition with the KMT under their leadership, as suggested by the USA, and the only thing that prevented this was Chiang's tactical stupidity in refusing such a coalition. Mao continued to have illus-

ions in the USA and in Chiang, even while the former was aiding the latter in putting down some of the Maoist forces.

When the Japanese surrendered in August 1945, Stalin had concluded a treaty of friendship with Chiang and agreed to hand over Manchuria to the Nationalist forces — emphasising the need to sign the agreement quickly otherwise Mao would get in first. Mao also agreed to drop his coalition request in favour of 'democratisation' of the existing Nationalist Government area.

He also agreed to a reduction in the size of the PLA and to abandon certain Liberated Areas

## Civil war

The only reason this didn't come about was because Chiang attacked the base areas before the ink was dry on the joint agreement. He enjoyed US help in transporting troops north, and Soviet benevolent neutrality. Stalin had in fact put his money on Chiang, and recognised the kmt as the leader of the revolution right up to the seizure of power by the PLA.

By the middle of 1946 China was involved in full scale civil war which had been forced on the Maoists.

When the PLA gained power it was a declassed peasant army. The old state bureaucracy was taken over en masse from the KMT. So were the nationalised industries, particularly in Manchuria, which had been in KMT hands. Thereafter the bonapartist militarist regime led by Mao evolved under the triple pressures of a hostile imperialism, massive internal problems and the, then, friendly pressure of the Soviet Union as a model. It began by expropriating imperialism and massively reforming the land tenure system. By 1957 it had expropriated the native capitalists too — compensating them handsomely. By the late 1950s the system in China was virtually identical in its social structure to that of the Soviet Union.

How should we assess the Chinese revolution? Some Trotskyists take the view that the victory of the CPC in 1949, in and of itself, created a deformed workers' state. Others (and Workers Action is closest to this trend) assess it as such only on account of the social transformations of the 1950s.

Mao's role was central and contradictory. He created a regime on the Stalin model of strict, stifling bureaucratic control, rule and privilege, though without — on anything like the same scale — the system of bloody terror on which the Russian bureaucracy has depended: Mao relied more on manipulation.

Stalin rose to power on the grave of a great revolution; Mao came to power as the leader of a great, but limited revolution. The Chinese working class will have to complete that revolution — and it will need a revolutionary communist — Trotskyist — party to be built to organise and lead it. Mao's c-thinkers — having contributed to laying the economic basis of a workers' state — will be the opponents of this future working class political revolution.



Hua Kuo-feng — Mao's heir?

To do that they will have to smash the bureaucratic state apparatus and take direct power through a system of workers' councils; take direct control of industry and organise the economy according to a democratically arrived at; and democratically controlled and implemented working class plan; and destroy the bureaucracy as a social stratum by removing all its material privileges, as well as destroying its totalitarian monopoly of control and power in society.

China after such a workers' revolution would be a genuine ally of revolutionaries in other countries — by contrast with the Maoist pretense at 'exporting revolution', which is in fact coupled with material aid to bloody counter-revolutionary regimes like those in Ceylon, in Pakistan and in Indonesia.

When such a revolution has been accomplished in China, Maoism can be buried alongside Mao and Stalin.



tools of Mao's manipulation

# A DOSSIER ON RACISM

Rachel Lever reviews RACISM - WHO PROFITS, the latest CIS report

"If anyone profits from racism it is the large multinationals like Fords who operate throughout the world, who rely on high speed continuous production and the total absence of resistance from their workers. Racism is one way to get it."

"The systematic exploitation of the low status of immigrant workers is carried out by large employers. Forty three per cent of black workers are employed in plants of 500 workers or more, compared to only 29% of white workers. This is an essential function of a highly capitalised company, which demands shift work so that its expensive machinery is worked the longest possible hours. Almost a third of black workers work shifts, more than twice the percentage of white workers.

There is a saying in Leeds 'the darker the sky the blacker the faces'. The shifts and jobs demanding unsocial hours are almost entirely manned by black workers. In some companies a picture emerges of a single machine in a shed full of old machinery run by local labour, and that new machine manned round the clock by Pakistanis. "In 1973 I was earning 22 pounds for a 40 hour week. The only way the Pakistanis did it was by working double shifts. They worked from 6 o'clock in the morning till 6 o'clock in the evening"

The night shifts in the factories and mills of West Yorks are invariably staffed by black workers. Even here the principle of non-promotion of black workers is upheld. Nightshifts run without management or other supervision at all. The vast hierarchy and chain of command that exists during the day, and necessitates foremen (all white) supervising production, is simply absent at night. This is the situation throughout Bradford.

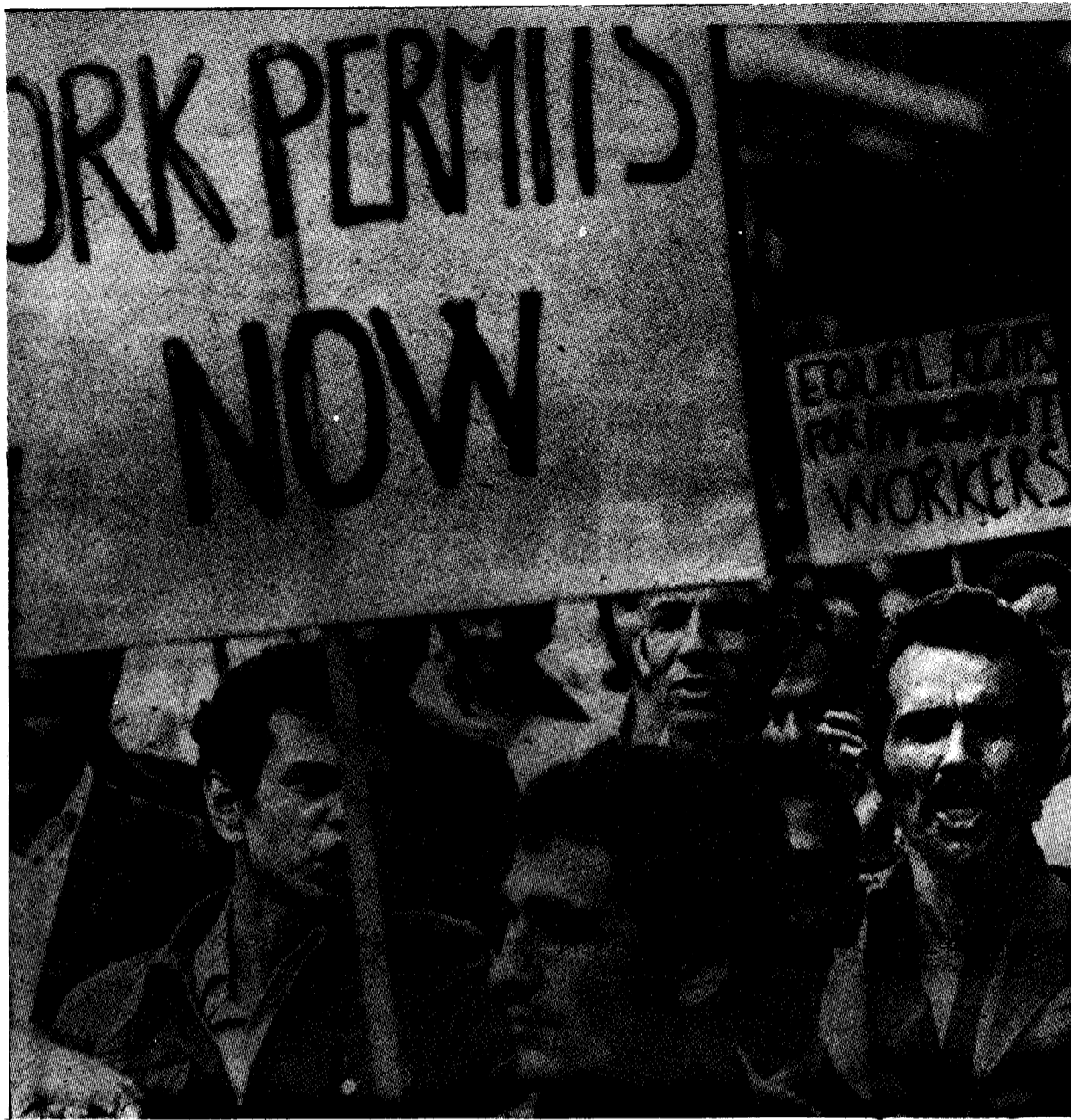
In the Midlands and the North black workers have spent their entire working life in Britain doing night shifts.

Little wonder that the arrival of the Pakistanis in the early sixties was the solution the employers had been praying for. In the next ten years, the main employers of immigrant workers in Leeds and Bradford made massive profits. Courtaulds increased its annual profit by 226% to 120 million pounds, ICI by 213% to 380 million, GKN by 185% to 85 million.

## Profits

The latest Counter Information Services special report RACISM - WHO PROFITS demonstrates the way the big employers use what they regard as immigrant 'labour units' in a systematic and calculated manner. How capitalism overcame a labour shortage in certain industries, jobs and shifts, that could only have been overcome otherwise with higher wages and improved conditions.

But employers did not just reap enormous profits from the super-exploitation of these workers themselves. They were very ready to use racism to divide the whole workforce.



Thus at Heathrow the kitchen staff, all of whom are white, are classified as 'assistant cooks and have a starting wage of 40 pounds per week. They pack prepared food onto trays for the inflight meals. The Asian women outside the kitchen put the cutlery, plates, cups and napkins onto the same trays. No difference is skill between the two jobs is discernible, but the Asian women have been regraded from 'assistant cook' to 'catering attendant' and earn almost 10 pounds per week less. In July 1975, 450 Asian workers in the aircraft catering unit walked out, the first time such a thing had happened in the unit's history. The union declared the strike unofficial, making it clear that they regarded the demand for parity as 'unrealistic'. Now women inside the kitchen receive up to 12 pounds more. Those outside, i.e. the Asians, receive between 2 and 8 pounds more and be regraded downwards from catering attendant to labourer.

Fords at Leamington has four different shops in its complex: the foundry, the fettling shop, the machine shop and the trim shop. In the foundry, temperatures can reach 130 degrees F and the conditions of work are very dangerous. The fettling shop is also hard physical labour and the air has a high metal dust content. The labour force in this shop is predominantly black, up to 80%, while of the 200 people in the machine shop, all are white.

In addition to boosting profits

and dividing workers, racism works for the bosses' system in general. An Indian worker in Bradford comments "You get the feeling that as long as industry needs our labour the establishment will take a liberal view. But I feel this will change, there is a crisis now." When things go badly for capitalism, immigrant and black workers are the first to go to the wall — and they provide a handy scapegoat.



WHO PROFITS shows how the scapegoating works into a vicious circle. The government still has to see that its present planned programme of cuts and income control is carried through to completion. In doing so it will be creating an even more favourable climate for racism than presently exists. If buses are full and if children are being taught

in school corridors and if housing shortages mean 3 to a room, then statements like this one of Robert Mellish "many of our cities are badly overcrowded. We can't pump more humanity into them" will seem to make obvious and elementary sense, rounding out the vicious circle so that racism itself facilitates the implementation of that [cuts] programme.

CIS very accurately analyse the

same time damn the white liberal bureaucracy. They found it in the '4-Star Asians' story.

This press campaign, however, would have found no response but for the unquestioned acceptance by the bulk of the population of a series of myths and stereotypes. The facts provided in the Report to refute these myths are an invaluable armoury for anti-racists.

Thus 'They're taking our jobs' — on the contrary, vicious discrimination has meant that in the 18 month period to May 1975 unemployment rose 65% for the general population, but 156% for minorities, and 182% for young West Indians. For those with qualifications up to degree standard, 79% of white men are in professional or management jobs compared with only 31% of blacks.

'They take our houses' — Despite having lower incomes, proportionately only half as many blacks have council houses as whites. Blacks are housed in the most rundown, oldest and least popular council estates.

About 64% of the council housing occupied by blacks was built before 1940, compared with 25% for whites. Yet black and white families pay the same average rent. In fact, because of the way in which the housing subsidy works, with most subsidy going to the newest buildings which cost more and on which loans have not been repaid, we estimate that white tenants get a subsidy five times as high as black tenants. Concentrated on the older estates, which have paid their costs many times over, but still paying rents comparable to those for new homes, blacks are in fact directly subsidising the rents on the new estates.

As owner occupiers, far from helping to run down urban areas and speed decay, black families, by buying and renovating older properties, are slowing down this process.

## Fraud

'They live off the state' — some 60% of all social security payments go to the elderly. Only 2½% of the black population compared to 15% of the total are of pension age. This means that spending is twice as high on average for whites as it is for blacks.

We estimate on the basis of figures available that on average each white person receives at least 30% more from the state than each black. Moreover, the import of ready-made workers amounts to a saving, for the country of immigration, of between 8,000 and 16,000 pounds per migrant worker.

'Overcrowded island' — there are 6 whole unoccupied houses for every homeless family, and in the last 5 years there's been a net population loss through emigration of 293,800 (which is 3 times the number of dependents of immigrants estimated to be waiting to join their families here

Behind the racist fraud, the capitalist state provides force for

Contd. next page

# REVIEW

the continual repression of the minority community. CIS looks in-depth at one area, Lewisham, which between them the police and the Special Patrol Group have in a state of near-curfew.

*'I driving from Lewisham to New Cross and get stopped three times, the whole place full with road blocks, transit vans, police cars, the lot — curfew in the town'*

*Black youths in Lewisham talk of a state of warfare between themselves and the police. Their clubs are invaded, their parties broken up. They complain of repeated street pick-ups, beatings and interrogations. They speak of the unbearable tension of the situation, which could explode into open confrontation at any time.*

*Parents provide a detailed history of particular cases where their children have been harassed. They think that the police often pick up youngsters as a warning, believing that black children, if threatened with punishments early in life, will keep out of trouble later on.*

*Very young children have been charged with 'suspected of loitering to commit an arrestable offence' — one of the most frequent tools of harassment — often waiting at a bus stop, or merely being on the streets, near shops etc.*

*Parents are worried about letting their children out after dark, even going to the extraordinary lengths of hiring taxis for their children to make necessary journeys through the borough. Both underground and buses have become unsafe, as prime arrest areas. Those picked up by the police felt that they then became 'marked' for future pick-ups, with the further disadvantage that, as school reports were required at court hearings, they become 'marked' at school as well.*

*The parents [interviewed in a Community Association survey] made no attempt to hide cases where their children had broken the law. Their anxiety was directed at the ill-treatment and wrongful or unsubstantiated arrest of their children. In a number of the examples given, charges were either dropped eventually or the police case dismissed for discrepancies in police evidence.*

*On top of this state harassment (which is itself only a small part of the picture alongside the atrocities of the Immigration Officers, the 'illegal immigrant' manhunts and the summary deportations) black communities face the racist violence whipped up by the press. This too is detailed in the CIS pamphlet.*

*The racist jigsaw put together and scrutinised in the CIS Report is completed and underpinned with the final, crucial piece — Britain's immigration laws. Politicians and the press always choose to mount a racist campaign when immigration control legislation is in the offing — giving the government of the day the excuse of 'public demand'*

for introducing racist laws.

The evolution of Britain's immigration laws (by definition racist laws) is traced in an important section 'From Citizen to Migrant': *Britain wanted labour units directly geared to the needs of the economy but it wanted to reduce the social cost. Looking to Europe it saw the highly efficient contract labour system of migrant workers who were brought in from the poorer areas of Southern Europe in times of boom and sent back during recession.*

*All immigration legislation from 1962-1971 has been geared not to cutting down the numbers but to reducing the rights of settlement, citizenship and permanency — moving Britain into line with the rest of Europe.*

*With the 1971 Act immigration to settle was virtually abolished, to be replaced by one-year 'best behaviour' permits to work — allocated according to the skills on offer. But even before the law was changed, there had been a huge shift towards bringing in European migrant labour — which came under the Aliens Act: In 1968 the number of work permits issued under the Aliens Act was 62,267, compared to Commonwealth vouchers totalling 4,353. By 1969 the figures had reached 67,788 and 3,512 respectively. Such migrant labour [many doing seasonal jobs] cost less in terms of housing,*



*education and social services than a permanent black labour force.*

*The process [of 'Europeanisation'] is not finished. In its final form the system is very likely to resemble the one that exists in West Germany. Without a sizeable imperial heritage, the West German economy admitted ten times as many foreign workers in the '60s as Britain. This migrant workforce is highly disciplined, controlled by the state and employers. The workers are recruited directly by agents for West German companies in their countries of birth. They are recruited for a fixed term of employment, usually of about two years and live in hostels provided by the company.*

*The last stage of reducing Commonwealth immigrants to migrants is already under way. The Government is proposing a final sweep, a register of dependents and new nationality laws that will finally cut the Commonwealth tie, and the transition to the European system of contract migrant workers will be complete.*

*This latest CIS report, produced in cooperation with the Institute of Race Relations, is an invaluable collation of up to date argument, facts, figures and tables, knitted together in a coherent analysis, with healthy conclusions. It costs 45p (+15p postage) from 9 Poland Street, London W.1*

## A statement from the I-CL

AT A meeting on 19th September 21 comrades, led by D. Hughes and D. Stocking (two former leaders of the I.S. Left Faction/Workers Power), decided to desert the I-CL.

As Trotsky wrote of similar dead-end splits in his period, "They split from us not because we are intolerant or intolerable, but because they themselves did not and could not go forward".

The split has no foundation in revolutionary - internationalist principles. In the course of the five-months preparatory debate for the forthcoming I-CL Conference, Hughes and Stocking came forward with only relatively minor differences on national tactical questions.

Their chief argument centred round the view that the I-CL gave insufficient priority to "industrial work", and claims that the I-CL majority tended to "sectarianism", or "propagandism", or concessions to Labourism. (Only one of those participating in the split has claimed that the political differences were large enough to justify it.)

When other Political Committee members protested against the unprincipled factionalism inherent in the workerist demagoguery about "industrial work" (when Hughes and Stocking were unable to earmark a single actual difference as to what, concretely, should be done in relation to "industrial work") and in the usually caricatural presentation of the majority's arguments, Hughes and Stocking set up a hue and cry about the minds of the membership being "poisoned" against them. They were eventually to demand — as an ultimatum — that the other PC members disavow their political assessment of Hughes' and Stocking's methods.

It appeared virtually certain that Hughes and Stocking would be in a minority at the forthcoming first I-CL Conference. (At the August National Committee their documents had received only a tiny minority vote.) At the Political Committee on 10th September, Stocking and his co-thinker S.King suddenly declared that they did not recognise the authority of the Conference, that they would not undertake to abide by its decisions if they were in a minority.

### Circle spirit

Stocking, King and, later, Hughes, reiterated over three days their position of not recognising the authority of the Conference. It was put to them that if they considered Conference preparations unsatisfactory, they should propose postponement, alteration of the agenda, reference-back of documents, etc. They made no such proposals, but adamantly held to their position of non-recognition.

The PC majority was then obliged, in defence of the most elementary democratic rights of the I-CL membership, to suspend Hughes, Stocking and King. At the same time the door was left open to them by a provision that they would be completely and immediately reinstated, even onto the PC, if only they agreed to recognise the authority of Conference.

Hughes, Stocking and King remained obstinate and went on the path of split.

They present the split as a

"de-fusion", a reversal of the December 1975 fusion between Workers Fight and Workers Power which formed the I-CL.

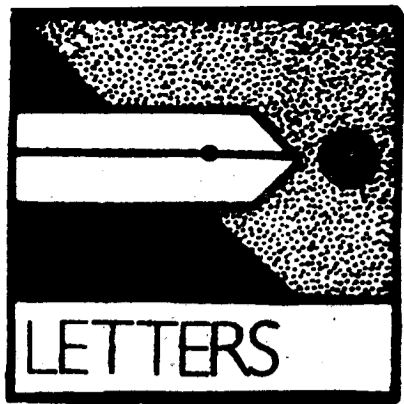
This is a dishonest trick. A large proportion of the ex-WP comrades (including leading ex-WP comrades) remain loyal to the I-CL. In a special appeal, they condemned the invocation of the "ex-WP" label: "Its aim is to advance the fortunes of a narrow circle... It is an attempt to appeal to comrades on the basis of past friendships, loyalties, and allegiances as opposed to political programme."

The split represents the revolt of circle politics against party spirit. As a result of fusion arrangements, Hughes and Stocking had a degree of power in the leading committees of the I-CL corresponding more to their former pre-eminence in the Left Faction/Workers Power than to their real influence in the I-CL. A declaration signed by most members of the NC majority had already committed its signatories to support the granting of places on the Political Committee to Hughes and Stocking (in contrast, Hughes and Stocking, in the last period before the desertion, announced a programme of removing all members of the PC majority from the leadership!)

### Desertions

However, the perspective was one of Hughes and Stocking being a subordinate part of a collective leadership, not emperors in their own circle. They could not tolerate that. And so they took the course of split, appealing to old loyalties rather than to any politics. They bolted rather than subordinate themselves to the work of party-building.

The Hughes-Stocking grouping has no political future. It will either expire or gravitate to a large group — most probably the IMG, in whose chronic factional dog-fighting they will feel at home. Its main platform inside the I-CL was "more industrial work" — but Hughes himself has already admitted that outside the I-CL his grouping will not be able to do any serious



industrial work, and will orientate to "lots of" work in the mass reformist party.

At the Hughes-Stocking meeting of 19th September, a group including the only serious proletarian element at the meeting (the I-CL cell in an important Midlands factory) argued an anti-split line. They maintained that if Hughes and Stocking were serious about their politics, they would form a faction of the I-CL to fight for them. They declared that they themselves would fight for their positions — which are close on some issues to those put forward by Hughes & Stocking in the pre-conference debate — inside the I-CL, probably by forming a faction.

The I-CL entirely upholds the right of these comrades to form a faction. It leaves its doors open to any comrades who took part in the split but have second thoughts. They will be entirely free to argue their positions within the democratic-centralist framework of the I-CL, and to receive proportional representation on the leading committees.

The Political Committee of the I-CL has in any case guaranteed that the Hughes-Stocking documents on I-CL orientation will remain on the agenda of the conference to be debated by the membership.

The I-CL will not waste time mourning over the desertions. If comrades wish to commit political suicide, in the last analysis they cannot be stopped. The I-CL will learn the lessons from the example Hughes & Stocking gave us of circle politics, and go forward, continuing our programme of publications, intervention in the working class, and international dialogue, debate and collaboration.

Political Committee  
International-Communist  
League

## 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

## COVENTRY: CAR DELIVERY MEN FIGHT FOR JOBS

ALL THREE MAJOR car delivery firms in Coventry are on strike. Silcock and Colling have been out for 3 weeks; Toleman-James for a fortnight; now, with the BRS Car Transport workers' support of these workers, the trio are all out.

What lies behind the 500 strikers' action is the contraction of the car industry in Coventry and the job insecurity this has created. For instance, the future of the two Jaguar plants is under a cloud; there is talk too of the Rover-Triumph plant at Canley closing down and the assembly work being done at Solihull.

At Jaguar (Brown's Lane) the workers have withdrawn from the participation plan, instituted an overtime ban, and are taking guerilla actions. Here there is no longer uncertainty about the employers' plans: the structural steel is at Brown's Lane waiting to be taken to Castle Bromwich where the new paint shop is to be built!

## Changes

All these changes will affect the car delivery men. This will be especially the case if, as is rumoured, Alan Law (Birmingham district official of the T&G responsible for haulage) has said that no Coventry drivers will be allowed into the Birmingham area.

These aren't the only changes. Recently Silcock and Colling lost a contract with Fords to They then said that they would sack 17 drivers. The Silcock and Colling men rightly met this threat by refusing to allow the men to be sacked and calling for work-sharing instead. They have threatened that they will extend the strike nationally throughout the other sections of the firm, thus affecting the flow from Chryslers and Fords.

Toleman-James workers simultaneously demanded that the increase in their workload with the gaining of the Ford contract should be met by an increase in the directly-employed staff. Management intend to get round this by hiring drivers at the point of production and thus not increasing their own work-force.

BRS workers' support for the dispute at the other two firms, plus their own opposition to the ever-increasing job-insecurity, has now unified all three groups.

JANET PITILLA

# FASCISTS ON THE RUN IN BLACKBURN

ON SATURDAY September 11, in contemptuous defiance of all the fascist threats, 6,000 anti-fascists took over the streets of Blackburn. The bully-boys of the National Party and their followers in the town, who are so bold and brave when they find an isolated black person to pick on, didn't dare show their faces. Only one tiny band of dedicated Nazis, decorated with Union Jack stickers and racist slogans, shouted racist abuse from the safety of the other side of a police cordon.

One fascist was so enraged by the sight of so many people, black and white, marching together in Blackburn that he had an apoplectic fit and tried to rush the march. The police stepped in and led him away for his own safety.

And that was all. Instead of 'blood on the streets', as they had threatened, there were merely puddles.

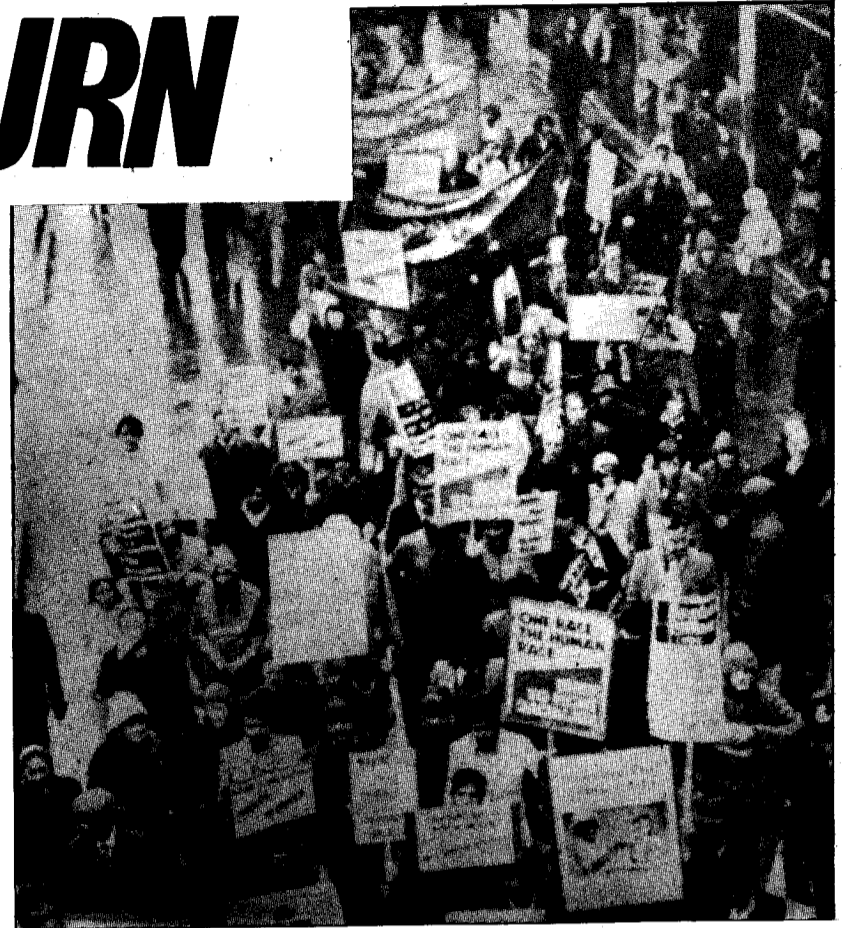
The fascists may have gloated at the soaking the marchers got. But no amount of rain could wash away the fact that when socialists mobilise their forces against fascism, the racist rats skulk back into their holes.

Unfortunately, the dominating slogans on the march were as soggy as the weather. The Communist Party led Action Against Racism committee, which put out the call for the march, insisted on the slogans of Peace and Prosperity for All and One Race — the Human Race. And in the interests of 'unity', threatened to ban all other slogans and banners.

## Threats

But their threats went as unheeded as had those of the fascists. At the back of march came contingents from all the major left groups, including over 200 Workers Action supporters — calling for labour movement support for black self-defence, for an end to immigration controls, and for the fascists to be driven out of the labour movement.

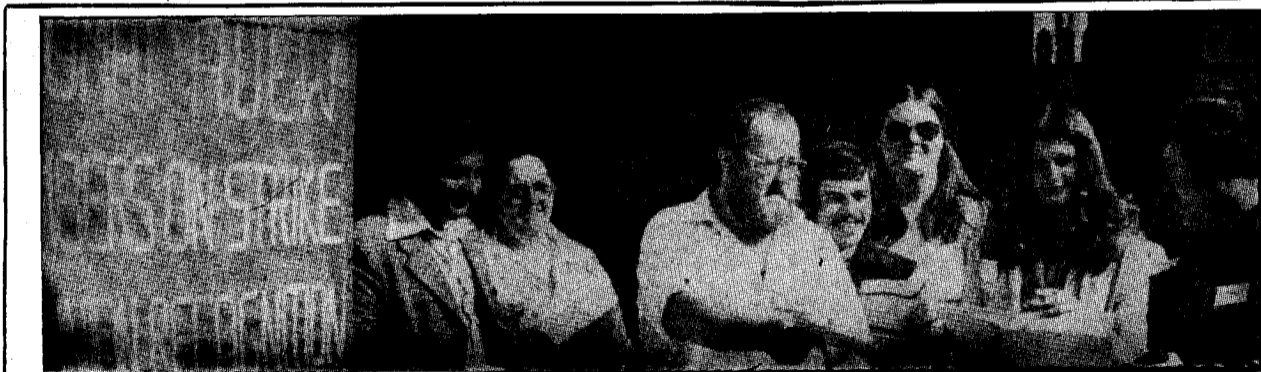
These contingents held a rally after the march, where speaker after speaker pointed out that the march, though a success, was only the first step along the road of clearing the fascists out of Blackburn and making it a place where black



people could live without fear and discrimination.

The size of the march was certainly encouraging. Coaches had come from all over the country, and were joined as they marched through the town by many local

Asians. It should provide tremendous encouragement for anti-fascists and anti-racists in the Blackburn area — as will the fact that 5 days later Labour regained the Council seat it had lost to the National Party.



Above: strikers from Automat, Swinton, lobby the TUC. Trico strikers also lobbied the TUC, to little effect.

These two marathon strikes, one for union recognition and against victimisation, the other for equal pay, show up the hollow sham of the 'great legislative advances' that the TUC General Council has 'won' in the Social Contract. These workers are no better off for all the new laws, and have found themselves left high and dry, though it is clear that concerted action by the trade union movement could have made quick work of both their

strikes.

The Trico women have now been offered another 50p, bringing the offer to three pounds — whereas they would need an extra 6.50 to give them equal pay. At a mass meeting, only 4 voted to accept the offer.

Southall AUEW District Committee is calling an all-London demonstration to support the strikers. This should be given all the support militants can muster. But what is really needed is nationwide action by the AUEW to WIN the strike, and a national levy to see these strikers through.

## CHAMBERLAIN PHIPPS, NORTHAMPTON AUEW SELL-OUT

SUPPORTED by Northampton Socialist Engineers group, women from the Northampton firm of Chamberlain Phipps Automotive occupied the local district offices of the AUEW as part of their continued fight for reinstatement, payment of lost wages, and exposure of the role played in the dispute by District Secretary, Reg Ward.

The women were sacked 2½ weeks ago for refusing to accept the right of the National Union of Footwear, Leather, and Allied Trades (NUFLAT) to organise in the factory, which does upholstery work for the car industry. Muriel Bamford, spokeswoman for the workers, had organised 104 out of 147 workers into the

AUEW. Then management tried to enforce an effectively useless and dormant closed-shop agreement signed by them and NUFLAT officials over the heads of the workforce. This, along with the threat of sackings, forced the workers into joining NUFLAT. Four women refused to join and were sacked.

The factory was picketed for the first two weeks, but faced diminishing results after the AUEW District Committee had failed to give their support, the women turned their efforts towards bringing pressure to bear on the district through an occupation of the district offices for their reinstatement.

Reg Ward has in the past

consistently refused to give the women any guidance or help in their dispute. At a works' meeting with management, Ward refused to recognise anyone in the factory as an AUEW representative, despite Muriel Bamford having a collector's book. This is only the latest in a series of sell-outs by him.

Engineers in the Northampton area have the opportunity to express their opposition to the policies of Ward and the District Committee by supporting the rally which will be held outside the union offices on Thursday September 23rd. AUEW No.3 Branch has issued a press statement calling on engineers to support it.

## EVENTS

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

Sunday 26 September. Public Rally of the International-Communist League: The LESSONS of PORTUGAL and BUILDING a REVOLUTIONARY INTERNATIONAL. 8pm at the Skinners Arms, Judd St, WC1. Speaker from the I-CL Political Committee: guest speakers from the Spartacusbund (Germany), Lega Comunista (Italy), and Internationale Kommunistische Liga (Austria).

Monday 27 September. Open meeting on Ireland for Labour Party Conference delegates. Speakers include Bernadette Devlin. 6.45pm at the North Bank Hotel, 320 North Promenade, Blackpool. Organised by TOM saturday 30th October. National Working Womens Charter day school on nursery campaigns. 10am to 5pm at the Centre of Environmental Studies, 62 Chandos Place, WC2. Creche provided.

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'.