

workers' ACTION

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Inside

Press's anti-strike heroes
 P.2
RHODESIA
 P.3
RUSSIA 1917
 PP4/5
CPGB dissidents
 P.6
Desouters Strike
 P.7

Grunwick strikers still full of fight after one year of struggle lobby delegates to the TUC Conference. The Strike Committee wants blacking to include gas, water, electricity and post & telephone services. But how far will the TUC go?

SEE STORY P.8



SCANLON LAYS DOWN HIS LAW

Refusing to discuss the question of how the union would vote on the 12-month rule, Hugh Scanlon ended a meeting of the whole AUEW delegation by leading the executive members out and leaving the engineering section's lay delegates to draw up a statement condemning the executive's action as "intolerable" and "unconstitutional".

The statement points out that the executive action "violates the rules of our union and decisions taken by our higher authoritative body, the final appeal court". The chairman of the final appeal court was one of the delegates supporting the statement.

The press that is so free with its insults, branding all leaders of militant actions as "unrepresentative minorities", now praised "Mr Hugh Scanlon's masterful use of the block vote"! The fact that the members of the most democratic union in the country could be cheated by half a dozen executive officers did not raise a word of criticism in Fleet Street.

BETRAYED BUT NOT BEATEN

DISREGARDING the views of the elected members of its TUC Congress delegation, the executive of the AUEW's engineering section has announced that it will cast its votes in favour of the 12-month rule.

As we go to press, it seems certain, therefore, that the Government's attempt to impose another round of wage control on the working class will receive the support of the majority of the TUC.

If feeling were running very much in favour of the

12-month rule, Scanlon's wretched trick might work. But when it tips the scales for TUC acceptance of the 12-month rule, it may well be a hollow victory.

Workers whose standard of living has fallen ever since the government introduced the social contract pay controls will not hold back from fighting to bring our wages at least back to 1974-5 levels just because half a dozen Government lackeys in the engineering union say so.

It is isolation, lack of

leadership, bureaucratic control and a sense of having to take on "the whole system" that is holding the working class back. Certainly a vote at the TUC against the 12-month rule would give encouragement to workers in fighting to raise their living standards, but it is not the decisive factor.

The TGWU and other unions will use a TUC majority in favour of the 12-month rule to reverse their own conference decisions for free collective bargain-

ing. But that does not mean that the rank and file must, or will, also accept bureaucratic dictation.

No to the 12-month rule!

No to any pay curbs!
 For wage increases to restore living standards at least to 1974-5 levels, and an escalator clause in every wage agreement to guarantee that wages keep pace with prices: £1 pay increase for each 1% rise in the cost of living.

BACK TO WORK WITH THE PAPER HEROES

I WORK in the same shop at Longbridge as Ron Hill, and I'd never heard of him before the strike fiasco the week before last. Apparently he didn't organise the anti-strike march and didn't lead it, but he did shoot his mouth off a bit louder than the rest of them, so the press decided to build him up into a super-hero — the ordinary down-to-earth Black Country bloke who'd had enough and decided the time had come for him and his mates to stand up and be counted in the never-ending battle against the fiendish reds like Derek Robinson.

Ron obviously liked the publicity and gave a lot of interviews with his ordinary down-to-earth wife at his ordinary down-to-earth house, where ordinary, down-to-earth things were said like "I want to put the Great back into Britain", "I want to give the Company and the country a chance", "I'm not a bosses' man but the time has come to stop the militants".

Bravery

All this was fairly predictable, the sort of things that papers like the Daily Express and the Birmingham Evening Mail have built their reputations on.

More puzzling was the way that Saturday's Evening Mail and then its sister the Sunday Mercury started talking darkly about the "enemies" good old Ron had made because of this courageous stand, and suggested the frustrated extremists would be picketing the gates that Monday despite the fact that the extremist minority of 9,000 had been thwarted by the moderate majority of 4,000.

Ron commented bravely that the only way he'd be stopped from clocking on was if "they" hospitalised him.

JIM DENHAM looks at the press coverage of the "anti-strike" demos in Birmingham.

Well, I am pretty well in with the 'extremists' at Longbridge and I never heard any talk at all of pickets being mounted after the strike was called off. And, surprise surprise, come Monday, the Evening Mail reported that no pickets were in sight. But it repeated that "angry militants had said they planned to picket when work resumed today".

Where the Mail got this story from is a mystery. Most likely the paper itself invented the story to fit in with its picture of the Longbridge unions being run by demented fire-breathing savages.

Anyway, the press obviously reckoned they'd hit on a winning formula, and, never ones to miss out on a bandwagon, the Evening Mail reported on Wednesday August 31st that "women workers staged a Longbridge-style 'we want to work' demo outside Britain's biggest chocolate factory, Cadbury-Schwepes, in Birmingham today".

"Mrs Doreen Smith, aged 39, of Northfield, said, 'All we want is to go back to work. The union is trying to stop us from earning our living'".

The effect of this story was lessened somewhat by the fact that the pickets told Mrs Smith and her supporters that they could go back in if they wanted to — "There is the gate, we won't stop you".



The revolt, with its 'leader' Ron Hill (right).

Slightly nonplussed by this, the Mail report explains that the women didn't enter the factory because they were afraid of being victimised by the Union later on.

The Cadbury dispute involves over 4,000 workers laid off without pay by management in breach of a written agreement guaranteeing 85% lay-off pay.

The Mail quotes one of the demonstrators as saying "I know there are only about 60 of us here today but we speak for the majority of women inside the factory when we say we want to return".

The Mail did not tell its readers that when Mrs Smith had rung in to ask how to obtain her outstanding wages the previous week, Cadbury management had suggested to her that she and a few of her friends might like to organise a 'back to work' demo.

On Friday 2nd September the Mail carried a report (tucked away on page 16) that women strikers "confronted Mrs Smith when she went to the factory yesterday to collect a tax rebate. There were cries of 'you don't speak for us'".

On the front page of that day's Evening Mail, however, a splash headline reads, "Granny leads a work demo". The report says that "battling Granny Joan Edkins today issued a desperate plea to 1200 Lucas toolmakers: 'Call off your strike and let's all get back to work'. Mrs Edkins claimed she was speaking on behalf of 2000 women workmates laid off at the Lucas factory in Great King St, Birmingham because of the toolmakers' nine-week strike".

Furious

The report claims Mrs Edkins led 200 women on her march. In fact about 50 women were shepherded past the picket by Evening Mail reporters and a Lucas shop steward called Anne Huntley. But more of that later... back to Cadburys.

The Sunday Mercury of September 4th in a front page article headlined "Back to work women on the warpath", tells us that "at Cadburys women workers have an opportunity tomorrow to end a dispute which started over 150 men in a power plant and has spread throughout the works."

"Previously a strike of this sort was virtually unknown at Cadburys, a traditionally benevolent firm. Hundreds of women workers who joined the T&G when the plant was made a closed shop and have now been called out by the union in sympathy with the men are furious about this action and want to get back. They are

organising a massive person to person action grapevine during the weekend to make sure that all possible support for their return to work motion at tomorrow's mass meeting is mobilised.

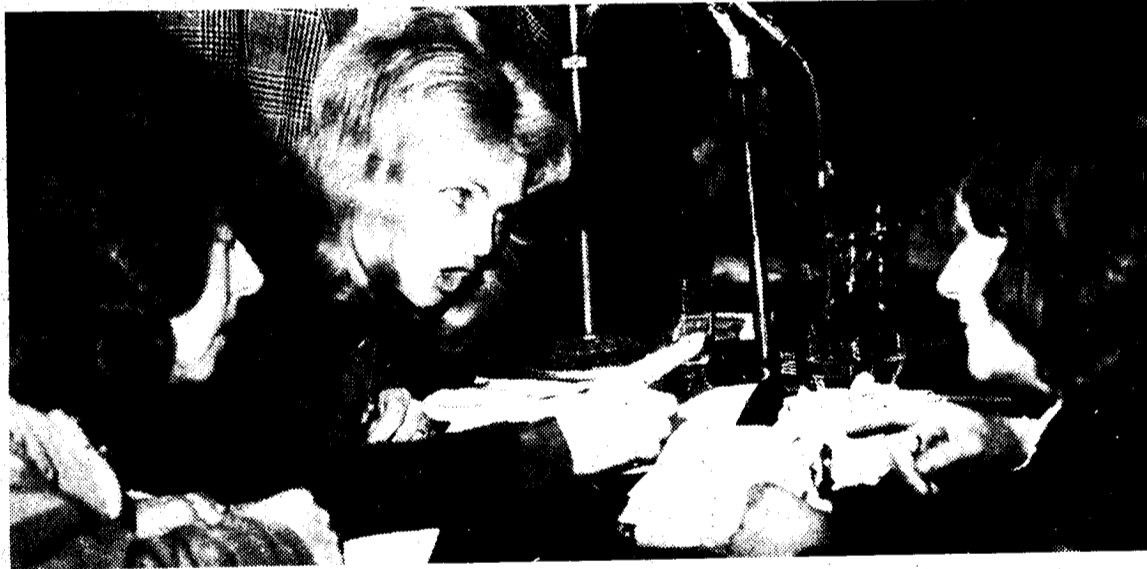
Monday's Evening Mail carried nothing about the result of the mass meeting, simply saying that "at Cadburys Bournville factory today more women workers were trying to bring about an end to the strike that has thrown them all out of work".

The next day's Evening Mail said nothing about the dispute or the mass meeting. It was left to Tuesday's Birmingham Post (the Evening Mail's posher morning stable mate) to carry a brief report informing us that "women at Cadburys Bournville factory also failed in their attempt to get a strike called off. At a mass meeting yesterday they voted to continue the strike by a two to one majority".

Purses

The Sunday Mercury, in a front page article about both the Lucas and Cadburys back to work 'movements', names Mrs Anne Huntley as the leader of the Lucas women (what happened to the Evening Mail's battling Granny?). Mrs Huntley is quoted as saying: "The women are fed up. They are sick of being thrown out of work. There are a lot of political issues in this strike but the women just want to work and have money in their purses. In many cases mothers and wives will be in direct opposition to their own husbands who are on strike".

The Mercury does not say that Mrs Huntley is the T&G convenor at Lucas Marshall Lake Road, and that together with Eric Collins, the AUEW convenor there (who is also secretary of the Lucas senior stewards' committee) she has been spending a lot of time in the company of Post and Mail reporters. Their other activities involve trying to remove the Labour Party credentials of Phil Rooks, a Lucas shop steward, and they plan to sell an exposé of the sinister left wing forces at work in Lucas (especially toolroom leader Ron Morris and Lucas BW convenor Larry Connolly) to one of the national papers very soon.



The 'Cowley wives' — the press is listening....

ROBBING THE JOBLESS, OR KILLING THEM...

AT 1,600,000 unemployment is the highest since the war. Figures published in the magazine *New Society* show some of the realities behind that total.

The increase in unemployed school leavers has been much steeper than the rise in total unemployed. At the peak period of the year, just at the end of the summer term, school leaver unemployment was 23,000 in 1973. In 1974 it was 60,000, in 1975, 166,000; in 1976, 208,000; and this year it has risen to 230,000.

At the low point of the year — just before the Easter batch of school leavers — the figure was down to 2,000 in 1974.

In March 1977 it was 33,000.

Despite what the press sometimes says, it is not a life of well-subsidised idleness that these youngsters find. 130,000 people — one in ten of all unemployed — are failing to receive the supplementary benefit due to them, because they have not been able to thread their way through the claims system. On average, *New Society* estimates, they are probably losing about £7 per week.

Poverty and despondency on the dole take a harsh toll, according to an American survey. The 1.4% rise in unemployment in the USA in 1970

— modest by British standards — led over the following five years to:

- 1540 extra suicides;
- 5520 extra mental hospital admissions;
- 7660 extra prison admissions;
- 1740 extra murders;
- and 51,570 extra deaths overall.

The author of the survey then calculates the "cost" of this at \$7,000 million (\$250,000 for a murder but only \$40,000 for a suicide...) He concludes that unemployment is not very economical. Others will realise that unemployment is not very human.

THE SOCIAL-Democratic and Labour Party was founded in 1971 as a party which could take the Catholic community in Northern Ireland in the direction Britain wanted. Taking over from the old Nationalist Party, which based its policy entirely on support for reunification of Ireland, it added elements of vague 'socialism', concern for civil rights, and above all willingness to work in any power-sharing schemes that Britain could devise within the Six Counties.

British stalemate creates fracas inside SDLP

Some nominal commitment to a united Ireland — the so-called 'Irish dimension' — was essential for the

SDLP in its efforts to drag the Catholic community away from militant Republicanism. The uneasy combination of working within the Six County system and aspiring to a 32-County Ireland was squared by reliance on Britain's long-term intentions to disengage itself from Ireland.

The actual current policy of the British Government has, however, been more and more in the opposite direction to disengagement. Within the current political stalemate, the direct rule by the British Army, the abandonment of attempts to create a new Six County legislature, and the now planned increase in Six County representation at Westminster, all add up to a drift in the direction of integration of the Six Counties with Britain.

It is this stalemate and this drift which has caused moves to revive the old Nationalist Party and a fracas inside the SDLP. The SDLP has increasingly been stressing the 'Irish dimension', and this

provoked former minister Paddy Devlin to denounce it publicly as 'green flag nationalism'.

For now the SDLP is holding together. But the tensions cannot fail to remind the Catholic community in Northern Ireland that the Six County system confronts them with a dead end.

OO

Unemployment in the Six Counties is 12.9% [double the rate in Britain]. In the town of Strabane, Co. Tyrone, it is 29.2%, and 35.9% for males.

At this level of unemployment sectarian job preference becomes very important. A

recent investigation by the Northern Ireland 'Ombudsman' confirms that this sectarian discrimination, blatant in the old days of the proud 'Protestant Ascendancy', still exists.

Cookestown council, Co. Tyrone, is Protestant-controlled. One quarter of Cookestown's manual workers are Catholic, but only one Catholic is employed in the council offices. Of 26 people recently taken on to staff new swimming baths, only two are Catholics.

The Ombudsman has recommended that compensation be paid to two Catholics turned down for jobs at the baths, and concludes that there has been discrimination and



Paddy Devlin

The Times strikes a bargain with the Front

THE CENTRE PAGE of 'The Times' is usually devoted to Bernard Levin writing about Wagnerian opera or how we should vote in trade union elections, or Lord Chalfont bemoaning the run-down of the armed forces and philosophising about "the delicate balance between freedom and order".

Last week, however, the 'Times' gave over its space to John Tyndall, Führer of the National Front.

The 'Times' obviously felt the need to justify a long interview with someone who calls himself a "white racist", and so their editorial explained: "Mr Tyndall says that if the media allow the National Front to state its policies, it will stop marching in provocative areas and chanting abusive slogans. The 'Times' has kept its side of the bargain. It will be interesting to see whether Mr Tyndall can keep his".

If this is an honest justification — probably it isn't — then it shows that the 'Times' is edited by fools and run by people who do not think that the National Front is fascist — something that even Margaret Thatcher seems to have got a grip of.

Once you understand that the National Front is fascist, it is clear that marching through "provocative" areas (the areas are provocative, not the NF!) is just what the National Front will increasingly do, especially if the 'Times' decides to help it spread its views.

But the 'Times' is consoled by bland assurances. Tyndall gave "his categorical assurance that any National Front member abusing or attacking an immigrant would be instantly expelled". And an Englishman's word...

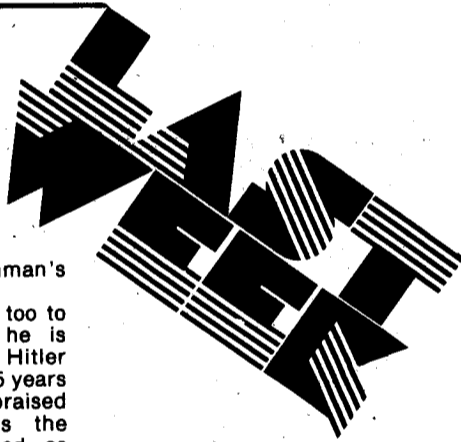
ed". And an Englishman's word...

It is no doubt consoled too to hear Tyndall say that he is "much more critical of Hitler than he used to be 10 or 15 years ago when he publicly praised Mein Kampf". Perhaps the 'Times' is now informed as to which bits of Mein Kampf Tyndall is "much more critical" of. Certainly those who chanted the refrain: "The ovens, the ovens" each time he denounced the Jews in a speech in North London this April seemed not to notice any difference between Tyndall's views and the views in Mein Kampf.

The 'Times' goes so far as to doubt whether Tyndall is anti-semitic. For this paper of the "top people" the fascist Führer is represented as misguided but idealistic. The pervasive tone is one of calm superiority — not noticing that it is Tyndall who has made them look ridiculous and not the other way round.

The Campaign Against Racism in the Media (CARM) has successfully brought pressure to bear on smaller local papers to implement an anti-fascist and anti-racist policy. In this it has often received the support of journalists and print workers on the papers. A fight must be started within the 'Times' to stop the paper ever again giving the fascists the run of its pages.

"The National Front is attracting attention out of all proportion to its size", says the *Observer*. Its conclusion... "In the *Observer Colour Magazine* a week next Sunday James Fox examines the rise of the National Front."



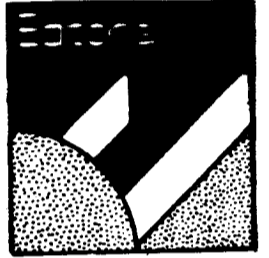
The *Daily Express* editorial took up Margaret Thatcher's ignorant nonsense about the National Front being "the right foot of socialism" with customary disregard for the facts. "Fascism", claimed the *Express*, "is hostile to private enterprise..."

Is it? Presumably the *Daily Express* can point to numerous Nazi nationalisations or to capitalists made destitute by the Mussolini regime. Or is that the *Express*, like Goebbels, believes that if you keep repeating a lie people will eventually think there is some truth in it?

Sue Slipman, Communist Party president of the National Union of Students, is launching a campaign against racism. Speaking at a meeting at Heriot Watt University, however, she reserved her sharpest attacks for those left organisations that have managed to chase the fascists off the streets. She described the clashes with the National Front at Lewisham and Ladywood as "appalling".

Ms Slipman, in her rush to dissociate herself from serious militant actions, seems to forget that it was the National Front that found Lewisham "appalling" as they were driven off the streets by the lefts and large numbers of young blacks.

A PLAN THAT PROTECTS PRIVILEGE



THE US-BRITISH plan for a settlement in Rhodesia is a plan to preserve as much as possible of the privileges of the white settler minority. Recognising that black majority rule is coming, the US and the British government want to make sure it comes with as little damage as possible to the interests of imperialism or of the property-owners of Rhodesia.

Central to the plan is a proposal for a Bill of Rights which will include the right of "protection from the deprivation of property". This "will confer protection from expropriation of property except on specified grounds and even then only on conditions that there is prompt payment of adequate compensation... and that compensation may be remitted abroad within a reasonable period".

With a view to ensuring that any new regime has firm economic ties to imperialism, and to providing adequate leeway for the formation of a solid black capitalist class, the plan also advocates a "Zimbabwe Development Fund" to finance new economic projects.

Economic rights, of course, need political guarantees. To make sure of the conditions for a pliable new black regime, the plan provides for a British Resident Commissioner, with dictatorial powers for a period of at least six months.

Field Marshal Carver, a supporter of Brigadier Kitson's theories on counter-insurgency and a veteran of the British campaign against the "Mau Mau" in Kenya, is nominated for this gauliteer role.

The Resident Commissioner is to be Commander in Chief of the armed forces, and will be responsible for constructing the officer caste of the new Zimbabwe army by bringing together elements from the old Rhodesian army and from the nationalist guerilla forces. As his military support in the interim, he will have a UN security force.

Neither the nationalists on one side, nor the Smith regime and the South African government on the other, can afford to accept such a plan until they are sure that the other side will accept it too. At present, however, it appears that the plan really has failed to formulate a compromise acceptable both to the more realistic white supremacists and to the would-be black bourgeoisie.

That is no cause for regret. Neo-colonial interference in Zimbabwe can have no function but to cheat the black majority of victory in their struggle for full political and economic equality. The Labour Government should withdraw from all these neo-colonial enterprises and give full moral and material support to the black liberation forces.

COUNTER REVOLUTION

DISINTEGRATING under the impact of the First World War, the Tsarist autocracy in Russia was overthrown by the February Revolution of 1917. A bourgeois-liberal Provisional Government took its place; but alongside the Provisional Government there was another power, the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Sailors' Deputies.

The Soviets, directly elected from the rank and file in the factories, the regiments, and the fleets, formed the basic structure of a workers' government. But the majority in the Soviets was held by the 'moderate' Socialists — the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionaries (SRs) — who used the power of the Soviets to prop up the Provisional Government, which in turn propped up the bourgeoisie.

After April, when Lenin returned to Russia, the Bolsheviks centred

their strategy round the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!". The Provisional Government, controlled by the bourgeoisie, which, in its turn, was linked by a million ties to the land-owning class and to imperialist interests, was incapable of solving the problems of the imperialist war and land reform. Instead of supporting the Provisional Government, socialists had to work for the revolutionary seizure of power by the working class, supported by the peasantry.

During May and June 1917 the Bolsheviks' policy won increasing support in the Soviets. But in July the revolution nearly faced disaster. In this fourth article of his series on the 1917 Revolution, **ARNIE PROUT** describes how the Bolsheviks faced the problems of the 'July Days' and moved towards the revolutionary uprising in October.

ON THE Soviet-called procession of June 18th, the official slogans were virtually absent from the banners whilst Bolshevik ones abounded. Maxim Gorky wrote in its aftermath that "the Sunday demonstration revealed the complete triumph of Bolshevism among the Petrograd proletariat."

But if this 'triumph' had intoxicated the Bolshevik leaders then reaction would have been able to strike far more serious, perhaps even fatal, blows to the revolutionary movement than it in fact did.

In April Lenin had re-orientated the Bolshevik party towards the goal of proletarian revolution and the seizure of power. But an integral part of this new strategy was the use of peaceful persuasion to win over the masses. Lenin had denounced dreams of "snatching power" as "sheer adventurism" and had insisted that "We must rely solely on education, but only so long as no one uses violence against the masses."

The problems inherent within this approach began to emerge with its success. For a start the growing support for Bolshevism was uneven. In June the Bolsheviks swept the board in the

elections of the workers' sections of the Soviet but in the provinces the tempo of development was far slower. Even within Petrograd the Bolsheviks could not command an overall majority in the Soviet — despite the left swing within the Petrograd garrison; despite even the Kronstadt sailors.

And Petrograd was highly exceptional in its concentration of industrial workers when measured against the millions who constituted the peasant majority of the empire. Although land seizures abounded and discontent with the Provisional Government was growing, this was hardly a conscious expression of support for Lenin and proletarian revolution.



The image of the Paris Commune, the revolutionary workers crushed by a bourgeoisie at the head of a provincial peasant army, springs to mind when we consider this situation. So too it must have to the Bolshevik leaders groping for tactics which could press forward their advance and close the gap between capital and province, town and country.

The bourgeoisie regarded the June events as the height of midsummer revolutionary madness — all their worst fears of February confirmed. Increasingly they looked for a saviour. At first a politician, Kerensky perhaps — later for a military man who could discipline the impudent masses with a firmer hand.

And the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries (SRs), shellshocked at their rebuff by the workers, increasingly gravitated to this progressively less liberal bourgeoisie, still grasping on to the illusion that they could control events, searching for a way to discredit the Bolshevik thorn in their side.

Their only hope lay in exploiting a Bolshevik error.

Their opportunity came in early July when the Petrograd workers moved towards a premature attempt at revolution.

A wave of strikes gripped Petrograd: "All Power to the Soviets" now figured as a key demand of the factory committees. Regiments called upon to supply troops to the government refused, whilst the Machine Gun Regiment called for an armed demonstration on July 4th.

The Bolsheviks tried, unsuccessfully, to get the demonstration called off. In the tense political situation of July 1917, an armed demonstration made sense only as a prelude to an attempt to seize power — and the great majority of the population outside Petrograd were not yet ready to support a working class seizure of power.

But anarchist calls for immediate action were more in tune with the mood of the masses. Bolshevik leaders urging patience were booed loudly at workers' meetings.

The Bolsheviks were faced with a dilemma: whether to denounce the demonstration or to go along with it and, in Kamenev's words, "give the movement an organised character". In fact they vacillated. Pravda even appeared with a large blank space where an article denouncing the demonstration had been withdrawn at the last minute...

As the demonstrations began the Bolsheviks had no alternative but to go along with Kamenev's proposal. Hundreds of thousands of workers, soldiers and sailors thronged the city centre — surrounding especially



the Tauride Palace where the Soviet Executive met.

The Provisional Government, frantically appealing for military reinforcements to rescue them, fled to the General Staff HQ. Amid armed skirmishes with cossacks and counter demonstrators the masses' demand that the Soviet take power rang throughout the city.

The height of the events was the seizure of Chernov, Minister of Agriculture, by an angry crowd at the Tauride Palace. He was released only after Trotsky and Lunacharski had rushed to the scene and persuaded the crowd that nothing was to be gained by acts of violence against "unimportant individuals". Eventually Raskolnikov, Bolshevik leader at Kronstadt, persuaded the sailors to disband and return to barracks. As they did, the demonstration slowly dispersed.

The same evening workers' delegations addressed the Executive Committee of the Soviet: "Comrades" said one "how long must we workers put up with your treachery? All of you here are debating and making deals with the bourgeoisie and the landlords... You are simply betraying the working class. Well then, let me tell you that the working class won't put up with it. There are 30,000 workers all told from the Putilov Works. We are going to have our way. All Power to the Soviets! We

have a firm grasp on our rifles! Your Kerenskiis and Tseretellis are not going to pull the wool over our eyes!"

But in the wake of the revolutionary demonstration which could not be followed up with revolutionary deeds, the counter-revolution had its chance to strike. That the revolution was not crushed completely was due only to the Bolsheviks' efforts to moderate and discipline the demonstration.



Petrograd was entered by the 'loyal' Ismailovskii regiment, which put itself at the disposal of the Provisional Government. The offices of Pravda were sacked, Lenin denounced as a German spy and the arrest of the Bolshevik leaders was ordered.

In the workers' districts the militia was disarmed; militants were beaten up and shot as Black Hundred gangs made their re-appearance. Vacillating regiments rallied to the government, and the Right went on the attack.

On July 8th Lenin went into hiding. The next day Kerenski was appointed head of an interim government.

When, two weeks later, Lenin wrote that "the counter-revol-



Lenin had to go into hiding, in disguise

1917



Street fighting in July

ion has become organised and consolidated and has actually taken state power into its hands' he was exaggerating considerably. The right wing had re-asserted itself and was steadily pulling the government in its direction, but the unstable division of power between the counter revolution and the Soviets, with the Provisional Government vacillating between them, had not been ended.

The Bolsheviks had retreated, but the retreat was not a rout. Despite demands for the complete banning of the Bolsheviks the Soviet deputies had resisted this (for fear, perhaps, that they might be next), contenting themselves with a public trial of the Bolshevik leaders.

The "July Days" had revealed the Provisional Government as essentially powerless. They had been rescued by the officer corps and it was clearly here that the real centre of anti-Bolshevik strength lay. They led the offensive against Lenin: in the opinion of Prince Lvov "our deep breach on the Lenin front has incomparably greater importance for Russia than the breach made by the Germans on the South Western front."

The charges against the Bolshevik leaders were of course a fabrication: organising an attempted insurrection on July 3rd/4th and being German spies. These allegations, easily refuted and soon to be quietly

dropped, were incredible to the working class militants, though they had some impact among the more volatile soldiers.

Kerenski was hailed by the Right: "his name will be written in golden letters on the tablets of history". A number of reactionary measures were introduced: the re-introduction of the death penalty at the front; disciplinary measures against the railway workers; higher indirect taxes. An open campaign for the disbandment of the Soviets and for "a strong government" began, as the right wing's appetite grew with the feeding.

It was toward the end of July that the threat of a military dictatorship became more widely canvassed.



The bourgeoisie became increasingly disillusioned with the government's ability to 'impose order'. In August the Congress of Commerce and Industry described them as "a gang of political charlatans". Kerenski, yesterday's golden boy, became increasingly despised on the right as well as the left; a new, stronger saviour was demanded in his place.

In was symptomatic of the Russian middle classes that they were compelled to cast around outside their own ranks for such a man. General Kornilov, a reactionary but a republican, once described by a colleague as having a lion's heart and a sheep's brain, emerged as their choice. A great hullabaloo was raised around him which led to his nomination as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

Matters came to a head after the Moscow State Conference — a sort of rally for bourgeois and 'moderate' socialists designed to act as a focus for national unity in the absence of Constituent Assembly elections. In fact it revealed Kerenski as the spineless posturer he was, laid bare the depth of support for Kornilov among the upper class rabble and ended in uproar as fist fights broke out between Soviet delegates and the officer corps (despite the fact that Bolshevik delegates had boycotted the Conference).



Kornilov was convinced that he must seize power. Plotters began to spin a web which involved not just the General Staff but right wing cabinet ministers, Kerenski's personal advisers and the embassies of Britain and France.

Kerenski almost certainly knew of the plot well in advance — but hoped somehow to be able to turn it to his advantage. For Kornilov and Kerenski did not differ in fundamentals. Both agreed with Kornilov's aim of hitting "this Soviet so hard that it will not come out again"; their real argument was about which of them should preside over the process.

On August 26th Kerenski demanded the resignation of Kornilov. Now an attempted putsch was inevitable, especially considering the counter revolution's wild mis-estimate of the balance of forces. "The lower orders" thought Prince Trubetskoy, would be struck by "an indifference which would submit

to the least crack of the whip". How wrong he was!

Awakening at least to semi-consciousness, the Menshevik leaders in Petrograd began to organise resistance as Kornilov marched. Unable to do this without Bolshevik support they reluctantly joined forces in the task.

Lenin readily accepted: "Our workers and soldiers will fight the counter revolutionary armies if the latter should take the offensive against the Provisional Government, but not in order to defend that government... it will be to defend the revolution and its true objectives: the victory of the workers, the victory of the poor, the victory of peace."

In Petrograd the workers' militia was re-armed, the city administration re-organised as a war footing and Bolshevik agitation increased.

On August 28th Kornilov's "Savage Division" advanced on Petrograd but found themselves brought to a full stop by the sabotage of the railway workers. Groups of workers met the troops and distributed Bolshevik leaflets. Many of the soldiers had been told they were advancing on Riga to free it from German control.

As they realised the truth, Kornilov's army simply evaporated. Counter revolutionary violence was defeated without a single shot being fired.



Kornilov — the 'strong man' who couldn't get to Petrograd

This victory had a decisive effect on the pace of revolutionary developments. Not only had the reverses of July been overcome, but big steps forward had been made. Far from being "German spies" the Bolsheviks had shown themselves as the most determined defenders of the revolution. Their standing in the eyes of the masses was greatly enhanced and all the slanders of July swept away.

Through September party organisation was revived and in Soviet elections throughout Russia Bolsheviks were put forward.

At the same time the Provisional Government was left weaker than ever — many of its members were known to have been secret supporters of Kornilov. The Mensheviks in the Soviets were bereft of a coherent policy, and all they could do was

urge Kerenski to follow a 'radical' policy.

For the Bolsheviks, the campaign of education went on, given a sharp edge by insistent demands on the Menshevik and SR majority in the Soviets to break with the bourgeoisie and take power in the name of the Soviets. For Lenin, the Mensheviks' and SRs' rallying against the counter revolution — temporary and unstable though it was — opened once again the possibility of a path to power through peaceful persuasion in the Soviets.

But soon it was obvious that the Mensheviks and SRs were too closely tied to the bourgeoisie to support "All Power to the Soviets". As the Bolsheviks moved towards gaining a majority in the Soviets, the necessity of a revolutionary insurrection became clearer and clearer.

ROUGE, daily paper of the ICR (French sister-organisation of the IMG) reports in its issue of 24th August on the recent congress of the Socialist Workers' Party of the USA.

"... It was, however, something else which marked this 19th Congress: a decisive turn in the situation inside the Fourth International. After the report on the 'world Trotskyist movement', the congress voted unanimously for a resolution calling for the immediate dissolution 'of the two main factions in the International, the International Majority Tendency and the Leninist Trotskyist Faction'. A meeting of the leading committee of the LTF (within which the SWP is the main force) was held at the end of the congress and decided by a big majority to dissolve the faction. Only a small minority, led by the members of the LTF in France and in Spain, proposed that the LTF should transform itself into a tendency in order to continue in that form the political struggle on the questions on which there remain big differences inside the International (in particular, the balance sheet of Portugal and Angola, the question of China and Vietnam, and orientation for Europe).

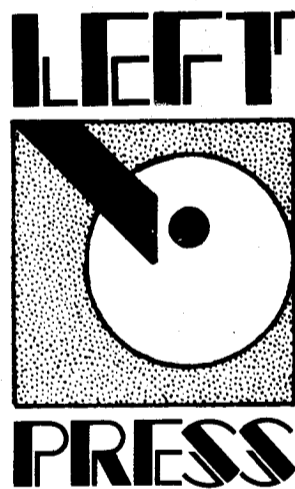
"The SWP justifies this turn in the situation of the International essentially by the self-criticism made by the IMT on the resolutions on armed struggle in Latin America which it presented at the 9th and 10th World Congresses, and by the need to put an end to eight years of factional confrontation in the International, despite the breadth of the political differences which remain and which even became sharper two years ago, in relation to the Portuguese revolution..."

Rouge of 1st September informs us that the IMT members on the Central Committee of the ICR have declared that they are in favour of dissolving the IMT.

The factional battle which has raged in the Fourth International (United Secretariat) since at least 1969 has thus reached some sort of truce. On the face of it, this is a sign of the health of the USFI: a fierce debate has been fought out without a split and concluded by a new closing of the ranks.

Looked at more closely, the picture is not so healthy. From the late 1960s,

The split is off — but the issues remain



the European sections of the USFI, reflecting the coloration of the radical student movement, shifted politically towards ultra-leftism. Armed struggle and vanguard initiatives were proclaimed as the essence of revolutionary politics. In Britain, this was expressed in such things as the IMG's headline response to the 'Bloody Sunday' massacre in Derry in 1972: "Avenge Derry — Open the Second Front!"

The SWP at first had fully shared the USFI majority's enthusiasm for guerilla warfare in Latin America. By the 9th World Congress in 1969, however, they had reverted to a much more sober, not to say minimalist, approach. They proclaimed themselves champions of a strategy of party-building through the revolutionaries proving themselves the "best builders" or "mass single-issue campaigns."

The difference in approach between the majority and the pro-SWP minority led to fierce disputes and splits in many sections of the USFI, including the British. Over the last year or so there have been moves to heal those splits, for example in Australia and Canada. But those moves have not been based on a resolution of the differences, but rather on a shift by the

international majority towards the more stable, but also more rightward-leaning, tactics and attitude to the labour movement of the SWP.

The shift was most startling in Portugal. Within the space of a few months, from late 1975 to early 1976, the USFI majority group in Portugal switched from support for the 'Revolutionary United Front', which effectively considered the Portuguese Socialist Party as 'social-fascist', to presenting a manifesto for the presidential elections which said that the revolutionary candidate, if elected, would call on Mario Soares to head the government!

In Britain, the shift was rather slower — from the talk of breaking up Labour Party election meetings in 1970 to the present line of working for the creation of a left-reformist "class struggle left wing".

It is this convergence on the level of daily tactics which has made the dissolution of the factions and tendencies possible. But even now it would not be possible if the USFI operated on democratic-centralist lines, rather than as a loose federation, or if there were a really rigorous effort to argue out the programmatic differences on Portugal, or on the political revolution in the Stalinist states. Those differences remain blurred over and obscured in a web of scholastic argument, as they have been since the SWP reunited with the USFI majority in 1963.

FOLLOWING the defection six weeks ago of some hundreds of members under the leadership of Sid French, the Communist Party of Great Britain has revealed another deep division in its ranks. 550 CP members gathered in Hammersmith on Friday 2nd September to hear their party leadership described as 'degenerate, revisionist, opportunist, and reformist'.

Called under the slogans, 'Against the Draft, Against the Split', the meeting condemned French and his followers as traitors for splitting the party, but repeated many of French's ideas.

The meeting began amidst uproar, the chairman attempting to open it from a microphone in the body of the hall. The platform had been occupied by Johnny Gould from Hammersmith CP, who appeared to be trying to prevent the meeting taking place. He was forcibly

ANOTHER C.P. FACTION SURFACES

removed by stewards, unimpressed by his claim to be the real chairman of the meeting.

Jack Dash, the meeting's first speaker, confirmed that the CP is in a deep state of crisis. *Morning Star* sales are plummeting, the Young Communist League is now a 'tiny sect', and in the last six weeks between 700 and 1,000 members have left the party — including many industrial militants.

For Dash, the blame for this situation lies with the present CP leadership, a bunch of intellectuals who dare to speak of guaranteeing a plurality of parties after socialism (i.e., a CP-left Labour government) has been achieved. They talk

also of the independence of the trade unions under socialism — whereas for Dash the unions will form an integral part of the State, as they do in the USSR and the 'People's Democracies'. Dash also condemned King Street for refusing to discuss joint action — such as at Lewisham — with the SWP.

Draft

Evidently Dash and others like him are beginning to feel they will be outflanked on the left, and that the SWP, at least, cannot be ignored.

Mary Davis from the London District Committee of

the CP pointed to the utterly ambiguous use of the term 'democracy' in the new draft. Making no distinction between bourgeois and proletarian democracy, the draft sees to road to socialism simply as a process of gradually extending 'democracy' until socialism is achieved. The struggle against the state, the insurrection: all these awkward questions vanish with a stroke of the pen.

Similarly, according to Davis, the draft misses out all class analysis in its handling of women's and blacks' struggles. They are treated as *intrinsically* progressive (as the struggles of independent classes?), writing out the role of the working class

in the leadership of these struggles.

But in opposition to this reformist mish-mash we are offered... the 1951 draft. Instead of the 'broad democratic alliance'... the 'anti-monopoly alliance'... Instead of women and blacks... bankrupt small capital!

Terry Marsland, Deputy General Secretary of the Tobacco Workers' Union, argued in a similar manner, referring to the disaster in Chile as exactly the logical outcome of the new draft (a particularly pointed criticism, since the CP leadership are parading Chilean CP leader Luis Corvalan in London next week as part of their factional ammunition). But for Marsland the Frenchites committed treachery when they split.

John Foster provides the intellectual leadership of this opposition. Making the closing speech, he defined the present CP leadership as a new and special kind of reformism, if anything more dangerous than traditional Labourism. Foster condemned the new draft as 'beginning to justify' participation, collaboration in forcing through speed-up and rationalisation, which, he said, would be presented as a new kind of 'socialism'.

Split

In restating some simple truths about the nature of the State, Foster made many correct criticisms of the new draft (though they would apply just as well to the 1951 document). But for him, too, the conclusion is that one must stand firm behind the Soviet Union — meaning the bureaucracy — and uphold 'internationalism' — by which he means the treacherous policies of that bureaucracy.

In substance, and sometimes avowedly, last Friday's gathering echoed the positions of the Frenchite 'New Communist Party', refusing only to draw the conclusion that a split is inevitable. For them, as for French, socialism is what you find in the USSR. Leninism is what Stalin practised, and for all their talk of revolution, not one word was spoken of the need for soviets or workers' councils. They undoubtedly represent an important section of the CP (among those who 'sent messages' to the meeting was David Bolton, Vice-President of the Scottish miners); it is equally certain they are the minority.

As a minority, they face bureaucratic suppression. Speaker after speaker told of intimidation against them or other oppositionists for daring to speak out against the draft. Barry Docherty from the Glasgow Committee of the CP claimed that he had been blacklisted inside the party. But this opposition no more represents genuine communism than the official CP leadership does.

JAMES RYAN

YES, UNITY IS POSSIBLE!

YOUR REPLY to Paul Hunter on the question of socialist unity (WA66) quite correctly rejects any "static and empty exercise which breeds confusion instead of clarity", but entirely fails to draw the lessons of the 'three dimensional reality' you argue for.

To take the example of the Ladywood by-election this month. The reality is that if the Socialist Workers Party had foresaken its sectarian course of mounting a party-building exercise and joined forces with Socialist Unity, the joint candidate would almost certainly have secured a thousand votes, beating the Liberals and NF.

Such unity was possible on

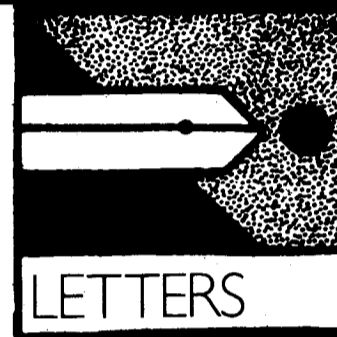
an anti-racist, anti-fascist programme, embracing opposition to the Social Contract and women's oppression with mass action as the cornerstone of taking forward these struggles. Many tens of thousands of working class militants disillusioned with Labour but bewildered at the contortions of the far left, would be attracted by such unity.

The 'dynamic of class forces' that you refer to can be seen in practice on the Grunwick picket line, the Lewisham counter-demonstration, and in all the other struggles where far left forces come together — albeit with their separate papers, banners and formal programmes.

It is unity around these struggles that *Socialist Challenge* and *Socialist Unity* seek, with the aim of bringing about a common programme in a unified revolutionary organisation.

The only liquidation that this represents is the determination to drive out the rabid sectarianism that places the British far left in the by-ways of history. Talk of the liquidation of programme precisely reflects this.

Those who cannot find a line in *Socialist Challenge's* editorials, articles, opinion pieces and the rest are too acclimatised to manifestos as socialist newspapers and too traumatised by reading different



opinions to recognise that open debate is the life blood of a socialist paper and that this can be comfortably accommodated within a paper which puts forward clear positions on all the key questions of the day.

HILARY BRAZEN
London W2

Differences put in perspective

The spread on far left unity in *Workers' Action* No.65 made some statements which need commenting on.

You say (in "The long quest...") that IS's 1968 unity appeal was "an opportunistic move" by "a loose, primarily petty bourgeois group, without discipline and with little coherent politics other than the description of the stalinist states as state capitalist." Despite all this, and your unmentioned characterisation of IS as centrist, i.e. not revolutionary (unless your assessment has been changed), you claim that unity could have "massively enlarged the revolutionary left." You don't mind the danger of the political distinction between centrists and revolutionaries being blurred in 1968, yet oppose the IMG's proposed "unified revolutionary organisation" now because the existing (small, and sometimes trivial, in my opinion) differences between revolutionary groups might be blurred.

The main divide, says another piece, is between reformism and communism, with a further (minor) division between the CPs and Trotskyism.

Although this plays down the real difference between Stalinism and Bolshevism ("a whole river of blood" and "mortal struggle between two utterly hostile political camps within the world working class movement" — Trotsky's Stalinism & Bolshevism), it puts the differences on the far left into perspective, as absolutely minimal. So why not polemically and act accordingly comrades?

But while the incompatibil-

ity of the CPs' road(s?) to socialism with revolutionary communism is minimised, you make it clear that the IMG/*Socialist Challenge* way is incompatible with the *Workers' Action* way, as far as you are concerned!

Another point needing clarification is your billing of the former *Workers' Fight* group as "attempting to continue the positive work of the SLL as it was before 1963-4..."

Although you don't say

what happened then, the SLL contained the seeds of its later degeneration before that time: the sectarianism, lack of democracy, opportunistic errors, etc did not spring from nowhere. No group on the left has been free from mistakes — WF/I-CL was opportunistic in its support for "industrial democracy" participation schemes, utterly sectarian in its attitude to the Right to Work Campaign and the Troops Out Movement/United

REPLY: A CEASEFIRE OR A FIGHT

EVERYONE MAKES mistakes, the Stalinists do even worse, so why be so concerned with the differences on the revolutionary left?

Leon Trotsky answered this question in 1939, in a polemic against the French politician Marceau Pivert:

"Without plumbing the gist of programmatic differences, he repeats commonplaces on the 'impossibility' of any one tendency 'claiming to incorporate in itself all truth'. Ergo? Live and let live. Aphorisms of this type cannot teach an advance worker anything worthwhile, instead of courage and a sense of responsibility, they can only instill indifference and weakness... Revolutionary ardour in the struggle for socialism is inseparable from intellectual ardour in the struggle for truth".

The struggle for precise political ideas does not rule out unity. But it must be unity combined with a drive for political clarity in the larger arena formed by the united organisation — not unity based on a political and theoretical cease-fire! The Trotskyists who took up the IS unity call in 1968 did not bury their differences with IS — on the contrary, they pursued a vigorous political struggle in IS, which led to their expulsion in 1971.

Is unity combined with a rigorous quest for clear-cut revolutionary policies possible today, under the umbrella of 'Socialist Challenge'? The whole spirit of 'Socialist Challenge' is opposed to it. Instead it looks for platforms and positions which are vague enough to satisfy everyone.

And 'Socialist Challenge', like comrade Brazen, confuses organisational fusion with unity in action between different organisations "with their separate papers, banners, and... programmes". 'Socialist Challenge' itself is neither one nor the other, but a consortium based on talk of unity rather than any real unification.

FUSION

'Workers' Action' has never been slow to support unity in action. But uniting with the IMG or the SWP for particular actions is a different matter from organisational fusion.

Moreover, cd Brazen's assertion that at present "tens of thousands" of working-class militants would be attracted by unity in action, or by organisational fusion, is not born out by the evidence. 'Socialist Challenge' has not pulled in thousands of people. The

TOM, totally subservient to the Labour Party bureaucracy in its abandonment of support for revolutionary candidates, ... could go on.

These are the sort of errors that *Workers' Action* frequently condemns and even sees as proof of centrism in other groups, but which you ignore in the seemingly pure International-Communist League (to which you are obviously sympathetic). BRIAN KENT
Hull

1975 fusion of *Workers' Fight* and *Workers' Power* — the only real, if small, step towards revolutionary unity in recent years — did not create a tidal wave towards the fused organisation. At Grunwick and at Lewisham, the thousands were pulled in by bigger forces at play than just the fact of the SWP, IMG and WA being there together!

On one point, however, we can agree with cd Brazen: that open debate is vital. It is precisely on this point that the IMG (not us) is blocking any possible moves to unity. It is they who reject any close discussion between our tendency and theirs, insisting that before any such discussions we must first abandon our opinions on the vacillating and unstable (centrist) character of their politics!

Open debate needs to be carried on at a higher level than cd Kent's list of "mistakes", where he does not argue out any of the issues nor even describe comrades' positions accurately (we do not know of WF or the I-CL ever having "support for 'industrial democracy' participation schemes"!), or his peculiar allegation (peculiar indeed from a comrade obviously sympathetic to the IMG) that we minimise the differences between Trotskyism and Stalinism.

'MORE PAY OR WE STRIKE' SAY HARD-UP FIREMEN

2000 FIREMEN marched through Birmingham on September 1st in support of our pay claim. The most resonant slogan was simple: More pay — or strike!

Simultaneously, unofficial action was being taken in many stations. Fire engines were pushed out in front of fire stations, bedecked with slogans such as 'More money — or your life!' A strict work to rule was imposed by the men on duty, and only emergency calls were answered. The bureaucrats' myth of 'apathetic firemen' was finally laid to rest.

The average take-home pay for a fireman with two children amounts to little more than £40 per week for a compulsory 48-hour week, working two weekends out of three and bank holidays. Even the so-called "weekend off" does not start until 9am Saturday!

The official union claim for higher wages is hinged mainly on changes in the fireman's job.



The Government legislation on fire prevention and health and safety at work is partly administered by firemen, and no extra money is as yet being paid for this work.

The current agreement runs out on November 7th. Negotiations have started, but union officials have not yet put figures to their claim. A recall union conference at the beginning of October will accept or reject any offer that is made. Branches are now mandating delegates on what is acceptable.

The general feeling is for £25 to £30 across the board and/or £100 a week for qualified firemen. We must demand a living wage for a 40-hour week, and a substantial payment for fire prevention work on top of that.

The scandal of firemen moonlighting or having to claim rent and rate rebates and free school meals for their kids must be ended. We must make sure that our wages at least keep pace with inflation.

Since the wage-freeze busting Glasgow firemen's strike of 1973,

firemen have come to realise that this is the only kind of language the employers understand. In the West Midlands, all five divisions have had near-unanimous votes in favour of strike action in support of the current pay claim.

Even two years ago this would have been an unthinkable development. But the time is approaching of a firemen's strike in which the leadership will be hard-pressed to contain the anger and frustration of the rank and file

JAMES DAWSON

Criminal Trespass charge for anti-fascist clean-up

LAST WEEK four socialists were arrested in Leamington for painting out racist slogans on walls around the town. They were charged with Criminal Trespass — maximum sentence 10 years.

The local Anti-Racist Committee decided to respond by organising a "mass paint-out" for Saturday September 3rd. Numbers were to be swelled by advertising the activity at the large dance held by the Coventry Grunwick strike support committee at the Chrysler Ryton social club on the Friday night before.

The National Party responded by organising a national mobilisation to stop the "paint-out".

When the anti-fascists arrived at the appointed spot, they found that the police had decided the only way to deal with the situation was to go round the night before and neatly paint out all the racist slogans themselves!

An improvised demonstration then took place to Warwick Market Place, where the fascists were holding a meeting — heavily outnumbered by cameramen and police. After delivering a few well-worn insults, such as "You can see they don't wash", and "They've never done a day's work in their lives", the fascists skulked away.

The anti-fascists then held a meeting, claiming a clear victory — defeat for the fascists on the street and the cleaning of racist filth off local walls.

A committee to defend the four who were arrested has been set up.

D.S.

DESOUTTER STRIKE

AUEW drags its feet

JUST A COUPLE of miles from Grunwicks, another recognition struggle is nearing its 18th week. At Desoutter Brothers in North London, workers are still picketing and trying desperately hard to get solidarity action in support of their dispute.

It began when management

attempted to move a worker from one machine to another and then refused to go through the stages of the grievance procedure. They did not recognise the AUEW, and were determined that it should go through the works committee set up by management. At a mass meet-

ing called directly after this, the 230 union members unanimously voted to strike.

The AUEW have tried to organise the factory three times but without success. This time the Desoutter workers were determined they would win.

However, they are faced with tremendous problems. Out of the original 230 strikers, only 80 remain. Others have been forced back to work because of financial difficulties. They have been receiving only £9 strike pay.

Although the strike has been made official by the AUEW very little has been done to publicise the dispute. The North London District Committee — although Communist Party dominated — has done the nominal minimum to assist the fight. At the last North London District Committee, a resolution tabled calling for a levy of members was voted down when it was argued that many members would not agree.

No national call for blacking on the products of Desoutters has been made either.

Given the nature of Desoutters products (air tools, steering mechanisms) the workers have in fact great industrial power, with effective blacking. But as in the case of Trico the AUEW are unwilling to use this power when they know that the result would be large layoffs in significant sections of the car industry at a time when they are unwilling to cause trouble for the Labour Government.

Just how effective blacking could be can be seen by the effect that nominal blacking is already having. 1500 workers at Jaguar, Coventry, have already been laid off

Because of the effects of actions such as these, the management is beginning to feel the pinch. Their latest offer was partial recognition: that grievances should be dealt with by union officials, but that the strike committee convenor, Fred Hopper, should not be reinstated. Fred Hopper was sacked after an alleged incident on the picket line. The offer was rejected by the strikers.

In many ways, the struggle at Grunwicks is important for Desoutters. A defeat for the strikers there would have serious consequences for workers at Desoutters and for any group of workers out for recognition. It would give confidence to the bosses to stick it out to the bitter end. However, the fact that most of the attention is focused on the Grunwicks dispute does pose difficulties for the Desoutters strike.

Fred Hopper, the convenor of the strike committee, told Workers' Action: "The national focus is on Grunwicks, and as such it is depriving us of any publicity. We intend to draw the attention of the labour movement to our dispute".

The biggest need of the strike is financial help and support for the mass pickets which are held every Thursday. The AUEW must also call on its members to impose a national blacking, and the North London district must carry out a ballot of its members on the question of the levy, to provide the much needed financial support.

Donations to: Barry Moroney, Acting Treasurer, Desoutters Strike Fund, 27 Springfield Mount, Kingsbury, London NW9.

PETE SMITH

61 STRIKE FOR CLOSED SHOP & OLD PAY DEAL

61 shop floor workers are on strike at James Robertson & Co in Huddersfield, demanding the suspension of two men who were breaking a work-to-rule and overtime ban called by the T&GWU in the factory.

The factory is part of Hickson and Welch Holdings Ltd, whose profits last year jumped by 72% and were described by its chairman as "the best since 1951". It makes sulphide dyes, which can be highly explosive.

The work to rule was over a pay deal promised by the management eight months ago for the end of Phase 2, but never delivered. The two blacklegs were asked several times by the union not to continue overtime working, but refused. The strike is therefore over the basic issue of imposing a union closed shop.

The men expect the strike to be made official soon.

Messages of support and donations to: Bill Devlin, 176 Netheroyd Hill Road, Cowcliffe, Huddersfield.

TIM RILEY

workers' ACTION supporters' groups

Basingstoke, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Chester, Coventry, Edinburgh, Huddersfield, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Middlesbrough, Newcastle, Newtown, Northampton, Nottingham, Rochdale, Sheffield, Stoke

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

WORKERS IN ACTION

DON'T LET BOSSES' LAWS SAVE WARD

SUPPORT the Grunwick strikers, says the TUC. When George Ward, Grunwick's scab-herding boss, announced last week that he would not accept the findings of the Court of Inquiry under Lord Justice Scarman, APEX general secretary Roy Grantham declared that he was going to call on all Grunwick suppliers to stop supplies.

Len Murray said that the TUC would adopt a "no holds barred" approach.

Anyone would think the dispute had just started! Grantham's idea to start blacking the firm's supplies comes over a year after the strike started.

And Murray's determined pronouncement comes exactly one year after he first said just the same thing!

In fact the TUC and APEX are proposing a reduced scale of activity against Ward. There will be a few more calls for blacking various supplies. Probably they will be ineffective because of the wide range of possible suppliers, many of which are non-union. But the "holds" which are "barred" are the strangleholds which could defeat Ward. No more mass picketing! No more blacking of services (water, gas, electricity, post)! — say APEX and the TUC.

Tory boneheads lash out at 'puppies'

According to the right wing Selsdon Group of Tories, the Confederation of British Industry are just "puppies" giving in to "mob rule". This crackpot outburst was their response to the Tory Party's refusal to come out in open support of Grunwick boss George Ward.

The Selsdon group thinks Ward is a hero of their class. On the strength of his union-bashing activities, they want him recognised by the Tory Party as its "industrial relations advisor".

Sir Keith Joseph likewise thinks the Tories ought to stand behind Ward. In contrast to the shadow employment minister, James Prior, who has condemned Ward, Joseph praised Ward for refusing to accept the findings of the Scarman Court of Inquiry. Branding the findings "slipshod" and "naive" and the court as a "con-trick", Joseph told Tories in Hove that Ward deserved the backing of the Conservatives.

After Joseph's speech, trade union leaders threatened to break off their discussions with the Tories on cooperation with a future Tory government. The 'Heathite' Tories have been openly pressuring Mrs Thatcher to dissociate herself and the party from Joseph's statements and remove him from his posts as shadow industry spokesman and chief policy advisor. So far she has done nothing, though Prior has issued a statement condemning Joseph.

Why? Because it might mean breaking the law. But this legal ruling is designed to serve only the interests of the capitalists. If a penniless workers can't pay his or her rates or bills, the services are cut off quickly enough! The labour movement should do the same to a boss who will not grant decent wages or basic union rights to his workers.

The strike committee is calling for blacking of services — because they want to win! APEX just wants to get the dispute out of the way. At the TUC Grantham said his aim was "to bring Ward to the negotiating table". Before that he had said that union recognition was secondary compared with reinstatement, and even reinstatement could be partial and staggered.

Ward has admitted that mass pickets and a full blockade could force him to his knees. In that case, he says, he would liquidate the firm rather than accept the strikers' demands of reinstatement and union recognition.

Resting on the great fall-back power of the capitalist class, the right to dispose of property according to choice, Ward would then cheat the strikers of their victory even if he has to admit defeat. We cannot accept that. If Ward liquidates, the Government should nationalise the firm without compensation, reinstate the sacked workers, and recognise their trade union rights.

Blacking becomes vital for Lucas toolroom strike

STRIKERS at Lucas plants have rejected an "improved" offer from the company. Following rejection by the overwhelming majority of stewards, a mass meeting threw out the so-called "final offer" of £3 increase plus £100 lump sum.

The 1000 Lucas toolroom workers have been on strike since July 4th in a dispute over bonus payments. They are demanding a £5 increase under a long-standing productivity bonus agreement. Management is trying to "buy out" the bonus scheme so that they can freeze the level of wages.

Their first offer was only half of the latest one, which is the

result of a joint management-ACAS-trade union working party. The working party recommended that the £5 be paid on a "self-financing productivity increase" basis.



AUEW official Terry Duffy, who is the right wing's main contender for the presidency when Scanlon retires, has tried to pressure the stewards into acceptance. Local AUEW official Ken Cure has followed Duffy's lead.

A key factor in the strike is

blacking. Lucas supplies of starter motors to the car industry have dried up, and Leyland has laid off workers at a number of plants; but over 8,000 components were flown in from South Africa recently.

Unfortunately the record of Leyland Longbridge convenor Derek Robinson on blacking — as in the Trico dispute — shows that he is more inclined to honour his commitment to continuous production than any commitment to solidarity with striking workers. Nevertheless the rank and file in Longbridge and elsewhere should press for blacking of incoming components.



The fascists seek vengeance

FOLLOWING last week's attack on Cottons Gardens, London, headquarters of the Socialist Workers' Party, an urgent appeal for funds has been launched.

The attack, carried out at around midnight on the night

of 30-31 August, caused damage estimated by the SWP at £10,000. Two or three men poured petrol through the door and set it alight. The ground floor and stairs of the building were completely consumed

by the fire.

Telephones, a printing press, and the building's electricity system were also damaged. Water used by firemen in stopping the blaze destroyed large quantities of literature in the basement of the building.

The SWP has received widespread publicity recently in connection with its activities against fascists, at Lewisham and elsewhere. There can be no doubt that this attack — the latest of several attacks on SWP premises — is the response of fascist thugs keen to wreak vengeance. Whether it was the work of the National Front or of another group acting as their agent is not definitely known.

Workers Action readers and supporters are urged to support the SWP's appeal. Money should be sent to the SW Defence Fund, Corbridge Works, Corbridge Cres, London E2.

EVENTS

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

MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER. Huddersfield Council of Labour week against racism. Monday: Multi-cultural evening, 8pm, Poly Great Hall. Wednesday: Southern Africa today. Anti-Apartheid public meeting at the Friendly and Trades Club, Northumberland St, 7.30pm. Thursday: Rock against Racism at the West Indian Club, Venn St: in aid of the Lewisham defence fund. Saturday: Anti-racist march and rally. Assemble 2pm at Cambridge Road Baths.

SUNDAY 18 SEPTEMBER. Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement carworkers' conference. 11am to 4pm at Digbeth Halls, Birmingham.

TUESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER. Revolutionary Communist Group public meeting: 'Ireland — Britain's Strategy of Repression'. Speakers: Steve Palmer (RCG) and Jackie Kaye (Prisoners Aid Committee). 7.30pm at Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, London WC1. Admission 20p.

SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER. Rally to launch the Manifesto of the International-Communist League: "The fight for Workers' Power". From 2pm at the Co-Op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N4.

SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER. Working Women's Charter day school on women and the trade unions.

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