

Workers' fight

3p

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CALL ELECTION NOW!

THE TWO important defeats Labour has suffered in the House of Commons make an early election a necessity if the labour movement wants to avoid its Parliamentary representatives becoming no more than 300 political hostages to the Tories and their hangers-on.

On Wednesday night a miserable alliance of Tories, Liberals, Scottish Nationalists and two Orange Unionist MPs defeated a clause in Labour's proposed Finance Bill, which would have given the trade unions a £10 million tax rebate.

On Thursday night much the same crew successfully proposed a motion to stop any further nationalisation.

These are not minor matters! Between them these two issues sum up most of the progressive aspects of Labour's programme: a commitment to scrap the Industrial Relations Act (under which the tax penalties against non-registered unions were imposed); and a commitment (however half-hearted) to an extension of public ownership.

At present Labour has the offices of power but is bound hand and foot by its own weakness: this is glory without power. If they stay on, trimming their proposals to the likes of the opposition, it will not even be that. Labour will be both powerless and inglorious.

Let Labour now 'go to the country' (or rather, to the working class) and wage a determined campaign for re-election on the basis of the decisions of the Labour Party Conference.



THRESHOLDS

THE FIGHT SPREADS

AFTER Friday June 21st, the seven million or more workers who have signed threshold deals will have gained over £1.60 extra in their wage packets. Thus within a period of just over a

month these workers have got almost as much as they 'won' under Phase 3.

But for over 15 million workers there is no compensation for inflation — they have no threshold deals and daily as the Retail Price Index climbs, their living standards fall. Thus an explosion is building up. Workers angry at inflation are demanding open-ended threshold clauses from their employers.

The first major blow was struck at Plesseys plant, Beeston, near Nottingham. In support of the sit-in other Plessey plants have come out in solidarity, including Liverpool, Sunderland, Wigan, Titchfield, South Shields, and Poole. It is uncertain which way the sit-in will go after the next rise in the RPI, but even if the Plessey workers are forced back, their action has sparked off action amongst other workers.

From Thursday midnight, June 20th, 100,000 SOGAT members will be out. The most serious blow to date against inflation will be struck. This action stems from SOGAT's refusal to

accept the Phase 3 offer made by the British Printing Industries Federation.

The offer deliberately threw out one of the major demands of SOGAT — for the abolition of the lowest grade. To win such an abolition would improve directly the pay of 5,000 workers. Indirectly it would improve the pay of 50,000 women workers when equal pay is compulsory. Because SOGAT are refusing to sign this offer, the employers are refusing to give in on the threshold clause. To force the pace, SOGAT has brought out all its members in every section of the general print industry. This will affect the huge IPC, which publishes the Daily Mirror and many magazines, and other newspapers too.

REFUSAL

The determination of the Engineering Employers' Federation and the Confederation of British Industry to prevent open-ended thresholds being won must be smashed with a united lead from all unions. The blank refusal of BLMC

to even consider paying out on any part of a threshold deal stems from the financial crisis of this car giant. The loss of £16.6 million last year, and the fear that the threshold will mean a total payment of £40 million extra on the wages bill is the major reason for this hard line. Already there have been a number of walkouts, and a T&G official in the automotive trades section is encouraging action to win threshold increases. In Yorkshire, a subsidiary of BLMC, West Yorkshire Foundries, has been out for a week.

GEC is strike bound at most of its plants in Coventry. Over 6,000 workers out of a total work force of 13,000 are now out, and they expect to win the remainder to the fight. In Teesside, at the Cargo Fleet GEC works, women came out for a day, and are now banning overtime, because the management have reneged on a local agreement which included a threshold clause.

Elsewhere action for threshold deals has spread. Swan Hunters in Newcastle have been out. ETU members in Pye, and STC plants have taken action, while the Ceramic workers' union is threatening action for the first time in over 20 years.

Such is the groundswell building up that we can be sure there will be yet more workers in struggle, especially when the new RPI figure comes out on June 21st.

No cover-up of police murder!

THE PRICE of fighting fascism has always been high. Kevin Gately, a 20-year-old student, paid the highest price of all. He was murdered by police while taking part in an anti-fascist march in Red Lion Square on Saturday June 15th.

The march, called by "Liberation" and supported by revolutionary organisations, had as its aim to stop the National Front from marching and holding a meeting in Conway Hall. The National Front's march was called to protest against the supposed amnesty for pre-1971 "illegal" immigrants, declared by the Labour Government. They are demanding a full-scale witchhunt.

As the anti-fascist marchers came into Red Lion Square the front of the march was allowed past the police cordon, which then swung in to divide the demonstration and attack the marchers. Backed up by members of the Special Patrol Groups the police — some mounted and some on foot — laid into the marchers with their truncheons and boots. Before they had finished, Kevin Gately lay dying.

Jackie Stevens, a fellow student at Warwick University who was marching alongside Kevin, gave this account: "As we tried to get

through to Conway Hall the police drew their batons and charged. Some were on horseback. I fell and was trodden on by a horse and kicked on the head. ... There was blood all over the place and teeth lying on the ground. People were screaming and shouting. We were all bunched up with horses on top of us. It was an absolutely horrific scene."

Nick Mullen of Middlesex Polytechnic heard a policeman referring to Kevin Gately "One of the bastards is down, let's trample him." And Mullen himself was savagely beaten as he was noting the policeman's number.

Whitewash

This murderous attack by the police was made in order to ensure that the Hitlerite National Front, with its drums, obscene slogans and many black shirts reminiscent of Mosley's British Union of Fascists, was able to march unhindered to its destination. Gloating in this victory, they had the gall to immediately announce their next disgusting parade — this time a joint march with the northern Ireland Orange racists.

Labour Home Secretary Roy Jenkins (in company with Tory MP Jill Knight who thinks the police are wonderful) hurried to defend the police. The press did their

level best to describe the affair as hooliganism by the left with one death by natural causes (compared in one paper to the death of a young girl at a pop concert crush a few weeks ago).

But now the truth is out — that Kevin Gately was murdered by the police — faint whispers are heard for a 'police inquiry'. A police or a Home Office inquiry — indeed anything short of a full and open public inquiry — would simply be a whitewash. In fact, the police have now added calculated insult to bloody murder by appointing the infamous bully boy Habershon to head their own 'inquiry'.

Militants in the labour movement are not being taken in by the whitewash that is already being splashed around. They have experience of police brutality against pickets. Many know that Deputy Assistant Commissioner John Gerrard, who organised last Saturday's attack on the demonstration, is also in charge of coordinating the police's new mobile thug units for breaking up mass solidarity pickets. There have been many calls for the Trade Unions to set up an inquiry into Kevin Gately's murder.

The next time the fascists march, we will be there again. This time better organised and with larger battalions.

And beyond the threshold....

THE SPREAD of strikes supporting threshold claims has rocked the employers' expectations. When the Tories originally brought in the threshold clause in Phase 3, they were banking on a rise of not more than 8% in the Retail Price Index (RPI). This would have meant paying out two lots of 40p per worker, since the threshold had been set at 7%.

With the roaring inflation the

employers have now found themselves faced with claims they did not expect. The result has been a massive ferment in the trade union movement, leading to militant struggles mainly in the telecommunications sector.

Three different types of struggles are being fought. There are those, like at GEC Teesside, where open-ended agreements had been signed under Phase 3, but where the

bosses have gone back on the agreement. There are those, like at the Beeston works at Plesseys, where both sides had agreed to a ceiling under Phase 3, but where the workers rightly want to tear up that agreement on account of the rampant inflation. And then there are struggles, like those in which SOGAT is

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ON SATURDAY June 15th, about 1000 delegates and observers met in London for an Extraordinary Conference of the National Union of Students.

Originally the conference was called to consider the flagging grants campaign. But, recoiling from hysterical press attacks, the NUS leadership added the question of anti-fascist activity to the agenda, in order to be able to retreat from the position decided in Liverpool in April. This was that members of fascist and racist organisations should be banned from speaking in universities, and that this ban should be enforced by any means necessary, including physical disruption of meetings.

FREE SPEECH

Opening the conference, NUS president John Randall made a fine-sounding speech, attacking the press for its distortion of NUS declarations, and for publicising every off-the-cuff remark dropped by racists like Powell while pointedly suppressing the views "of the oppressed in our community". And he called for an uncompromising fight against fascism.

But the rhetorical declarations of the NUS Executive are rarely a fair guide to what is actually going on. In response to the howls for free speech for fascists the Executive, instead of fighting amongst the mass of students for the line adopted at Liverpool (and it is quite understandable that many students would not automatically understand the

necessity for stopping fascist meetings) chose to fight at the NUS conference for the deletion of the injunction to stop the fascists "by any means necessary".

This response to press invocations of their favourite monster — "public opinion" — by an Executive elected to carry out left wing policies is inexcusable. The commitment to fighting fascism effectively, which they undertook at Liverpool, has nothing whatever to do with the media's bogeyman in the street and his supposed opinions. These 'Broad Left' student leaders will tell you any day that they support the armed liberation struggles in Vietnam or 'Portuguese' Africa, or armed resistance to the Chilean junta. Yet they shrink from advocating a real struggle against right wing reaction here because of a few articles in the bourgeois press!

THUGS

But, as one speaker aptly said, the survival or collapse of fascist movements depends, finally, "not on the force of argument, but on the argument of force." It is for this purpose that the National Front wishes to hold meetings in colleges and recruit

N.U.S. backs down on anti-fascist struggle

NAOMI WIMBORNE

students. It does not especially need them for their intellectual prowess, or for the refined way in which they might be able to voice such slogans as "Send them back" or "Wipe out the Reds". Rather, they want access to the beer-swilling rigger thugs and their ilk, precisely in order to **smash the left**. To stop that, we must be prepared to meet their argument of force with ours, **before they can get organised**.

Unfortunately, the Executive prevailed, and the recommendation to stop fascist meetings by any means necessary was removed, and the conference proceeded to extract most of the teeth from

the original resolution.

Speaking for the Executive, a Communist Party member informed Conference that no violence was necessary, that we had to attack the roots of fascism by organising a broad based movement, and that we must unite "democratic forces" to fight the extreme right. This is, of course, the recurring C.P. position (though at Liverpool they had got rather carried away and voted for the original motion unamended). It means that all action must be toned down to gain, without a struggle, the support of right wing Labourites, Liberals and other such 'democrats' rather than putting up a fight to



convince them of the necessity for socialist action. Of course we must fight for the most widespread campaign possible against fascism throughout the labour

ANTI-ZIONISM VERSUS ANTI-SEMITISM

AT THE recent Manchester conference against Racism and Fascism (see WF56) a motion was unanimously passed condemning the appointment of General Shazli, believed to have connections with Fascist organisations in Britain, as Egyptian

ambassador to this country. The conference made clear its belief that racists like Shazli in no way represent the Palestinian cause, which must be supported by all socialists. It also stated its intention to fight anti-semitism and all forms of racism, especially within the trade union

movement.

Before this was passed, however, there was a good deal of confusion. Originally, the conference had been presented with a motion which condemned Shazli, made no mention of the Middle East conflict, and criticised socialists

for not taking up the issue. There was a bitter debate over this, in which people said that we should not condemn Shazli as it would mean supporting a campaign being used by Zionists to tar anti-Zionists with the brush of anti-semitism. Finally the motion was thrown out without being voted on.

Socialists had been confronted with an apparent conflict between two principles — opposition to racism and opposition to Zionism — and the result had been confusion. It was only when, later on, a member of WORKERS FIGHT formulated a motion which clarified the position, that the resolution was passed which both condemned Shazli and supported the Palestinian struggle.

Below, ED CONWAY, who was at the Manchester conference, writes about some of the issues he sees as being raised.

WHEN ASKED his opinion about events in Palestine in 1929, which the Communist Party had called a revolutionary uprising of the oppressed Arab masses, Leon Trotsky did not venture a definite opinion. Instead, he told his questioner that he was studying the events, to find out to what extent anti-imperialist national liberationists were responsible, and to what extent reactionary Muhammadan pogromists. Clearly, Trotsky had not only discerned the various factions opposed to Zionism, but also demonstrated that not all of these factions could be supported: national liberationists should not be confused with anti-semitic pogromists.

BOGEY

At a time when Zionist propaganda is increasingly aimed at its new bogey, the "new left", and confusing many uncommitted Jews into believing that anti-Zionism is the same thing as anti-semitism, socialists must counteract this attack. They must not only declare opposition to all traces of anti-semitism, but also mobilise

against all avowed racists and anti-semites. In the case of Shazli, an opportunity to do this was missed by most of the left.

MOTIVES

Zionists were not slow to point out that anti-Zionists were nowhere near as forceful in opposing Shazli as in defending the Palestinians. At the Manchester conference, for example, there were very disturbing tendencies on the part of certain people, who no doubt think of themselves as socialists, to support all opposition to Zionism whatever its motives. (Although a resolution opposing Shazli, making it clear that we don't believe that he represents the Palestinian cause, and stating our determination to fight anti-semitism with all possible means was finally passed unanimously, there was tremendous confusion beforehand, resulting in one Jewish supporter of the anti-fascist committee walking out and afterwards writing to the local Jewish press about it.)

The hysterical reactions of some comrades stemmed from an inability to differentiate

between anti-imperialists and anti-semites. Every time this occurs, Zionists will use it to confuse progressive elements, both inside and outside of the Jewish community. It provides ammunition for them to neutralise much support which might otherwise go to the Palestinians. It is hard enough to fight the well-oiled Zionist propaganda machine without taking up incorrect positions through indiscriminately bestowing our support on all who oppose Israel. That would be to reduce ourselves to the Zionists' own level, such as when, before the February general election, they publicised National Front statements of support for Israel!



Menachem Begin - an arch anti-Arab racist, leader of Zionism's ultra-right wing in Israel

At present, the Zionist campaign to equate anti-semitism and anti-Zionism is having success. Socialists must seize every opportunity to expose this fallacy, and prompt those people who are targets of Zionist propaganda to question its basis. We must mobilise against all known Nazis, racists and fascists, even if they happen to be anti-Zionists.

J.O'M. comments for the Editorial Board: Comrade E.C. makes the point that a tendency by socialists "to accept all opposition to Zionism whatever its motives" is disturbing.

Marxists take the view that if we accept the right of an oppressed people to fight their oppressors (in this case the Arabs to fight the Israelis and Zionism) then we do not have the right to make our support conditional on the politics and political gradations within the camp of the oppressed people.

This remains true in this case. However, a number of other points than this general principle are raised here.

First, we should note that fascism and anti-semitism are not synonymous. Though fascism, which employs a semi-mystical view of the Nation, has a tendency to use racism in its demagogy and incorporate it into its ideology, it is primarily in its social drive an attack on the working class. Neither the Horthy regime in

Scrapping the (

IT'S easy to see why there's so much confusion about conspiracy. It comes out of the charges brought against the first 6 Shrewsbury defendants.

They were charged with conspiracy to intimidate workers under Section 7 of the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act of 1875.

That trial, and the savage sentences passed on Des Warren and Eric Tomlinson for this 'conspiracy', have prompted widespread demands throughout the labour movement for the repeal of "the 1875 Conspiracy laws". At conference after conference the demand for repeal gets resounding applause, and any voice raised against it is condemned as un-militant.

The general impression is that the charge 'conspiracy to intimidate' all comes out of the 1875 Act. In fact, it is a combined charge. Intimidation is one charge.

That is brought under Section 7 of the 1875 Act. But conspiracy is quite another charge, and that is not made under the 1875 Act, but under a sort of unwritten law.

To abolish conspiracy charges is not a matter of repealing any written law. It is a matter of enacting a law which would say that if it can't be proved that a person or persons committed a particular action, then those people can't be charged with planning it; and further, that if it is proved that a criminal act was committed by someone, then that person can't also be charged, as a separate offence, with



Hungary nor the Mussolini regime in Italy were actively anti-semitic; in fact many Jews fleeing from Hitler's racist fascism found refuge in Horthy's semi-fascist Hungary.

Moreover, fascists who are anti-semitic are not on the whole anti-Zionist: during the 1967 Middle East war, virulently anti-semitic French fascists loudly supported Israel — recognising, no doubt, the similarities with their own settler brethren in Algeria.

ASSURED

Also, Zionists have continually made alliances with anti-semites, right from the early deals struck up with Tsarist ministers when people like Herzl ('the father of Zionism') assured them that Zionism would 'get rid of the Jews from Russia'.

Thus an Arab right winger or fascist who was also anti-Israeli would not necessarily be characterised as an anti-semite, and would be unlikely to be a political equivalent of, say, an English Colin Jordan. His anti-Zionism would

more likely arise from his being an Arab than from his being a fascist (And, as a fascist, he would pose far greater threat to the Arab masses — the most consistent anti-Zionists — than to Israel.)

NAZIS

However, undoubtedly anti-semites do exist in the Arab nationalist camp. But even their anti-semitism is probably subjectively, of a different sort from the European variety. In fact, anti-semitism in the sense that it exists in Europe (and still does, especially in Eastern Europe and Russia) has never been known in the Arab countries. Hostility to the Jewish communities there was a product of Zionism and the Middle East war that followed the setting up of the Zionist state in 1948. Even this was very mild by the standards of the American hysteria against German immigrants in the First World War or against Japanese immigrants in the last War. Certainly any attack on the Arab Jewish communities

NEITHER FISH NOR FOWL —

AN ANALYSIS OF THE TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT

SINCE the reactionary Orange general strike in northern Ireland, a broad mood in favour of a British pull-out has grown enormously. This mood had existed below the surface for a long time — but now it is a matter for open discussion in the pages of the capitalist press. Papers like the *Mirror*, the *Mail* and the *Observer* are seriously discussing withdrawal of troops. What does this mean for the 'Troops Out Movement'?

Is withdrawal of troops in fact likely soon? All the press take for granted that the British Army is a benevolent peacekeeping force. So they see withdrawal as a matter of dropping a peacekeeping responsibility — because the results in terms of peacekeeping are not worth the effort.

But it is not true that the British Army is a peacekeeper. That is the opposite of the truth. The Army is there to safeguard the interests of British imperialism. In the long term the British ruling class aims to de-sectarianise the Orange state and normalise Britain's relation of economic exploitation of the whole of Ireland. In the short term they aim to suppress the insurgent nationalist minority in the north.

What this means is that Britain will withdraw either when driven out or if it

becomes too feeble to be able to care any longer about safeguarding its interests in Ireland. That stage has not quite been reached yet.

Despite the revival of the IRA campaign since the "United Kingdom" general election, the British ruling class are not beaten yet. To pretend that they are will only lessen our effectiveness in aiding those trying to defeat the British Army in northern Ireland. And the British ruling class would have to be seriously threatened by the working class at home to feebly relax its grip on Ireland.

To get the British army out of Ireland will take more than a vague mass feeling of (largely chauvinistic) exasperation. It will need organised mass pressure.

Lunatic

The significance of the present 'troops out' mood should therefore be coldly assessed. It is cloudy, not an organised force, and in terms of press comment may be no more than a passing spasm. The pro-withdrawal Labour MPs are possibly a more serious factor. But will they fight, especially against a Labour Government?

Much of the 'bring the troop; home' mood accepts the idea of the troops' peacekeeping role, and says simply "Enough — why are the Green and Orange lunatics our responsibility?" It thus lines up, fundamentally, with

the British ruling class; it is no basis for a serious fight against the government to force withdrawal.

The task remains to organise at least some of the mass feeling for withdrawal — to compress the steam into an engine for use against the Government, to play a role of real solidarity by undermining the capacity of the British state to pursue its policies in Ireland.

Some of the people who lead the **Troops Out Movement** are apt to make rather wishful comparisons with the mass movement in the USA against the Vietnam war. But here there is not the mass conscription, nor the mass casualties, of the war in Vietnam. This absence makes all the difference between a gaseous cloud of indignation and an organised movement like the American anti-war movement, which actually materially restricted the options of the US ruling class and aided the Vietnamese National Liberation Front.

More important, no-one could see the US Army in Vietnam as keeping the peace. Opposition to the US presence in Vietnam could be formed only on an anti-US government basis, which

the basic justice of the IRA cause can the issues be clarified.

The **Troops Out Movement** was founded by a hard core of people who held a solidarity position, with the perspective of forming a broad campaign. Ironically it has played no part in the present development of a 'troops out' feeling. In fact, if the pro-withdrawal Labour MPs were to go so far as organising some action, then the T.O.M. would be largely by-passed.

Chorus

It bears the stigma of being a pro-IRA tendency (because of the people who make it up and speak for it), yet deprives itself of the political framework to separate out the progressive, anti-Government elements from the reactionary chauvinists and racists who form a large part of the 'troops out' chorus.

Even the T.O.M.'s espousal of "self-determination for Ireland" as an aim resolves no confusion. At the recent T.O.M. conference someone asked exactly what did self-determination mean. No-one could answer officially for the T.O.M. Fred Halliday, of *New Left Review*, gave a



became more and more openly and consciously pro-NLF.

In Britain, the only binding element which could form the spine of a movement — as opposed to an amorphous mood — is some explicit belief in Ireland right to self-determination, a denial of the ruling class propaganda about the peacekeeping role of the troops, and some understanding of the aims of the Republican movement. We do not mean such a movement need have the most explicit and clear-cut position of full and outspoken solidarity with the IRA which is demanded of revolutionaries: but it must have the rudiments of that position if it is not to be paralysed by ambiguities.

A movement round that spine of solidarity could not hope to harness all the discontent with British involvement in Ireland; but it could harness that part of it which is capable of playing a progressive role.

Solidarity

The need for solidarity as a binding element is the lesson we draw from the whole experience of over five years of work in Britain on the Irish question. It has, for example, been impossible to argue against internment without facing the fact that it makes sense to most people. Better lock people up on any pretext, the argument goes, rather than allow slaughter to continue. This is why the Anti-Internment League, based on a purely liberal approach, collapsed. Only by explaining

personal opinion from the platform. Self-determination, for him, meant that the Six Counties should continue as a separate entity until the majority in the Six Counties wanted otherwise.

This position, of course, is in total contradiction to self-determination for Ireland as a whole, which means that 32 counties is the unit for majorities and minorities. It is even in logical contradiction to getting the troops out, for the Six County majority fundamentally (despite tensions) wants the Army in Ireland. This position also implicitly condemns the



Brigadier Kitson - one of the creators of Britain's tactics in N.I.

whole IRA struggle for trying to subvert this 6-County unit.

The T.O.M. is simply a hodge-podge, neither fish nor fowl. Nor is the muddle confined to the 'broader' elements of T.O.M. It affects the **International Marxist Group**, the main organised faction in T.O.M.

Recently *Red Weekly*, the IMG's paper, openly attacked those demanding an explicit

solidarity position (in response, it seems, to a **Workers Fight** leaflet given out at the last T.O.M. conference). "The T.O.M. will win more people to solidarity with the IRA in six months" it stated "than the 'solidarity first' merchants have done in four years."

In fact, the main result of more than six months' work of the T.O.M. has been the silencing of the solidarity position where before it appeared most stridently — in the press of the IMG! Where once 'Victory to the IRA' was their badge of honour, they now, in their own paper, attack open advocacy of solidarity.

The organisation of a troops-withdrawal movement objectively playing a solidarity role is, if conditions allow, a legitimate aim for revolutionaries. The US Socialist Workers Party played a great and progressive role in building the anti-Vietnam war movement.

Criticism

But the revolutionary organisation itself must maintain an uncompromising position in its own press of conscious, vocal solidarity with those fighting imperialism and for the defeat of the imperialist army. The legitimate criticism of the Socialist Workers Party was that it did not do that sufficiently and consistently.

In conditions offering infinitely less excuse (and even less opportunity) the IMG now repeats this mistake. Watching this latest preposterous gyrations of the IMG is like watching the frantic dance of a circus clown turning somersaults on a trampoline — a clown decked out not in the traditional spangled stars but the misappropriated hammer and sickle emblem.

That we criticise the IMG and the T.O.M. does not mean that the rest of the British left is less guilty. Just the opposite. The I.S. group and the W.R.P. simply do not concern themselves with any solidarity or 'troops out' movement at all. In the Labour Party Young Socialists a campaign has been organised over Ireland. But this campaign, dominated by the scab 'Militant' tendency, owes its separation from the Troops Out Movement only to its straightforward capitulation to British imperialism. It links the withdrawal of troops to the purely mythical cure-all of a non-sectarian Trade Union Defence Force. Until the long-to-be-awaited arrival of this panacea, the British Army must (so 'Militant' spokesmen say) stay in Ireland.

Nonsense

This 'Militant' campaign, then, accepts the lie that the troops are 'peacekeepers'. And it accepts — and 'Militant' eagerly promotes — the disgusting propaganda that the IRA fighters are murderous psychopaths.

Revolutionaries must, then, take part in the Troops Out Movement. But in order to use the Troops Out feeling to build in objective solidarity with the Republican struggle, we must fight to differentiate and crystallise out those who could play an active role against the British ruling class and British Army from the reactionaries. This means fighting clearly for self-determination for Ireland, against any nonsense about the democratic validity of the Six Counties, and openly explaining the justice of the IRA's cause.

And within any broader movement, revolutionaries must fight for the sharpest and most explicit solidarity with those who fight the British Army in Ireland.

JOHN O'MAHONY

Conspiracy law?

planning it.

That would eliminate the present nightmare situation where, 'conspiracy' being an unwritten 'crime' and carrying no maximum penalty, allows courts to give people much longer sentences for planning an act than they could be given for actually doing it. Thus Des Warren got 3 years for conspiracy to do something which itself carried a maximum penalty of 3 months. (The trial was of course a farce in other ways, too.)

And it would eliminate a situation where the Stoke Newington 5 (the so-called 'Angry Brigade') are serving

sentences of up to ten years for conspiracy, when they weren't even charged with doing anything.

In fact, the 1875 Act went some way towards doing this — and that is how it got the word "conspiracy" in its title.

The part of that Act which deals with conspiracy says that if a lot of people get together and conspire to do something that would not be a crime if one person did it alone, then that doesn't amount to a criminal conspiracy.

This may seem self-evident. But until 1875, it was legally possible for strikers to be charged with conspiring to

abstain from work all together, even though a single worker had every legal right not to go to work if he didn't want to.

Thus the part of the 1875 Act which deals with conspiracy was an important milestone in establishing the right to strike. The demand for its total repeal is quite wrong. What we want is more laws that do the same thing for the rest of the law on conspiracy.

What about the rest of the 1875 Act? Until 1971, the 1875 Act was also the law which explicitly made strike picketing a legal right, though it was always terribly hemmed in and restricted. In 1971 the Industrial Relations Act took this over, and with its repeal now, that part of the 1875 Act becomes important again.

What does need to be got rid of is the part which makes "intimidation ... removal of tools ... watching and besetting ... persistently following..." etc offences. And we need to make much clearer and stronger the right to picket effectively, which has been eroded by a number of court cases under the last Tory government.

RON VANDY



must be seen in the context of such phenomena, rather than of some supposed all-pervasive 'international anti-semitism'.

In the 1930s and '40s, certain Arab nationalists gravitated towards German imperialism, then under the anti-semitic Nazis, on the general principle of allying with the enemy of their enemy (British and French imperialism). There was also a coincidence of their anti-Zionism — opposition to the growing white Zionist movement that were, under the protection of British imperialism, pushing them out of their territories — with the lunatic race theories of the Nazi anti-semites. Some of them found Nazi race theory a reasonable, perhaps even a justifiable, explanation for their own persecution in Palestine.

Some of these people Arab nationalists — Zionists or Nazi-anti-semites — were a virulent and unrepentant talker of anti-semitic strands in the anti-

Trotsky, the Zionists have grown from a small colon minority protected by imperialism to a fully fledged state which has expelled an entire population from its land by terror and naked force, which engages in torture and employs collective punishment and reprisals against innocent women and children on a massive scale, and which has even developed its own internal racism against oriental Jews.

TAINT

Are we then permitted to ignore any taint of even subjective anti-semitism within the anti-Zionist movement? Cde. Conway is absolutely right that we cannot. Any anti-semitism disguised as anti-Zionism must be burned out of the anti-Zionist movement. The holocaust of the European Jews under Nazism is far too recent to make even a hint of anti-semitism tolerable, or to allow anti-Zionists in a country like Britain to regard anti-semitic strands in the anti-

Zionist movement as marginal or unimportant. And not merely because any ambiguity here "plays into the hands of" Zionists who equate anti-Israelis with anti-semites. Quite simply, all racism is obscene.

It is true that Zionism is in practice very little but the anti-Arab racism of a white settler community, made self-righteous and paranoid by the German experience. But if a Jewish racist is a walking obscenity, it is all the more imperative for those who fight Zionism to be on the alert for any hint of anti-Jewish racism, and to show it as little tolerance as to any other racism.

Solidarity with the Arab liberation fight is our first task. But we must also help the Zionist masses of Jews in this country — and the contribution of (non-Zionist) Jews to the socialist and working class movement has been a truly major one — to sober up from their Zionist folly and to understand that Zionism is itself a disgusting form of racism.

STEEL FIGHT GOES ON FOR LOCAL CLAIM

The National Craft Coordinating Committee, headed by John Boyd (AUEW) which negotiates for most British Steel craftsmen, lobbied British Steel House on 14th June in support of the national claim.

BSC's reply, which Boyd accepted, amounts to a 7% increase on the basic. To sweeten this sell out, Boyd hinted that more may be coming after Phase 3 is over. Thus the demand for £10 on basic has been settled with £2.50 to £3 on basic, nothing but vague promises on pensions, holidays and shift rate etc.

Craftsmen's disgust at this has forced many to consider ways of organising a fight for the claim. One of the steelworks represented at the lobby, Shotton, is planning a meeting to form a national craftsmen's shop stewards committee, while in the North East, Consett and Lackenby have agreed to sponsor a meeting to form a north east coast craftsmen's shop stewards committee. The meeting is to be held on 28th June in the AUEW Hall, Middlesbrough.

The feeling against the NCCC, and the North East Coast Allied Crafts Committee is high, for many shop floor workers see these bodies as useless for organising a fight to improve wages.

The fight of the Lackenby Allied Craftsmen for their local claim of £10 is well advanced. There have been a number of 2-hour sit-ins and these along with bans on overtime, bans on shift relief and a ban on carrying over of work from one shift to another, has caused chaos.

Production of steel is badly affected. The management are beginning to sweat because the Lackenby plant has won over the Consett plant to the £10 fight. Both these plants have the advanced BOSS plants which need round the clock maintenance. So far, the local action has meant maintenance being left for anything up to 12-15 hours.

But the quick moving local management have come up with an offer of a productivity deal. Knowing how amenable Boyd is to a bosses' suggestion, this offer may well be made nationally.

TOM RAMSEY

Permanent Revolution

May-June 1974

articles on Chile; Workers' Government; Stalinism in Vietnam; Rosa Luxemburg on the Belgian general strike of 1902. Plus discussion and reviews. 20p plus 5p postage from 98 Gifford Street, London N.1

DAN SMITH KEEPS HIS PARTY CARD

AT A meeting attended by over 100 Labour Party and trade union militants at the Red Lion Hotel, Nottingham last Thursday (June 13th) Eddie Milne, MP for Blyth, spelt out what it was like campaigning against corruption and careerism in the Labour Party.

The meeting was called by "friends of the Nottingham East Constituency Labour Party", a necessary title to avoid recrimination.

Eddie Milne explained how from 1960 as a Labour MP, he found he was constantly opposed by the T. Dan Smiths and the Cunninghams of the North East. Finally this year he was expelled from the Labour Party for 'conduct detrimental to the Labour Party'. Needless to say, the Labour Party machine has tried to whitewash the whole affair: Cunningham and T. Dan Smith, even now after their trial and imprisonment, are still members of the Labour Party!!

THE Nurses' National Coordinating Committee set up in Manchester on 1st June met again in London on 17th June and resolved to call for a massive Day of Action on Monday 8th July. Nurses from as far as Scotland came to back up their call for £30 minimum, £12 across the board, a sliding scale of wages, and other demands.

Nurses in the North-west have been among the most active. In Liverpool the Nurses' Action Group has had a promise of support from the docks for July 8th. Meanwhile the Manchester & District Nurses Action Group (MADNAG) has enlisted support from the AUEW District Committee, Lancrose Chemicals, and Gardiner's Engineering; and there has

NURSES

MINERS SAY: 'We're with you'

been another stoppage in Salford docks after the one day solidarity strike of the week before. MADNAG has also had financial support, such as £50 from local ASTMS members. A big public meeting is planned for Monday 24th June (in the

Milton Hall, Deansgate) and there will be a march from Albert Square on July 8th.

Most heartening to nurses is the news that Yorkshire miners are currently balloting for action in support of the nurses. Miners are talking of one-day strikes every week,

and there is even some feeling for an all-out strike until the nurses' demands are met.

It is clear that activity boosts confidence. While NUPE officially still remains inactive, the NUPE Area Committee supports MADNAG's action. And in the North East, NUPE leader Alan Fisher has been obliged to fall in behind Darlington NUPE's action against private patients after the branch had voted no confidence in him.

BAN

In Darlington and neighbouring towns, ancillary workers are claiming they have put an end to private practice by direct action. Whether or not the ban on private patients in the North East is in fact totally effective, it has undoubtedly done more than any number of Labour Party Conference decisions to abolish private practice in the Health Service.

Further evidence of the way action increases morale is the new confidence of radiographers and other small professions in the NHS. Radiographers in the Durham ASTMS called for an all-out national strike, 300 marched in Manchester on 15th June, and in London they have overcome their reluctance to demand increases above phase three.

With local feeling so strong, it is criminal that union leaderships are so passive. NUPE continues to deplore industrial action, and sends messages to stop it — until branches like Darlington force the union to support their action.

Meanwhile the EC of COHSE, under heavy pressure from their rank and file, has planned further action following Castle's refusal of an interim award.

Action includes a ban on agency staff and private patients; refusal to co-operate with the admission of patients to mental hospitals coming in on Home Office detention orders; and a ban on attempts to move staff around.

LINK

The Halsbury Inquiry will be under great pressure from the Government to give enough, but no more than enough, to settle the nurses' fight. But any offer they make will be made as if the nurses are a 'special case'. To prevent the nurses' militancy being isolated from the needs of the rest of the Health Service workers (and others in a similar position), many branches of NUPE are demanding that the other claims are brought forward, and the fight of these other workers joined with the nurses' fight. In this way the ancillary workers will offer practical solidarity to the nurses, as well as smashing any 'special case' arguments.

The call for action on 8th July must be supported by all workers. The CBI is organising an attack on threshold agreements. The TUC is trying to push down the lid on the wages pressure cooker, and inflation is tearing massive holes in wages. 8th July should be the day workers reply to this offensive of the bosses, the government and the TUC against our living standards.

ED CONDUIT (ASTMS)

Speechless in Gaza

IF the harassment, victimisation and final 'release' of Valeri and Galina Panov was typical of the Russian bureaucracy's heavy-handed yet totally unprincipled treatment of the issue of Jewish immigration to Israel, then the reception these two received on their arrival in Israel most sickeningly typified that country's racist basis.

An Israeli official pronounced these two Russians automatic citizens, and Panov made a speech in which he said he was "coming home". The speech was translated by an interpreter...

Panov the Russian was "coming home" to a land whose evicted inhabitants in their refugee camp diaspora might well echo the Old Testament lament "by the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept."

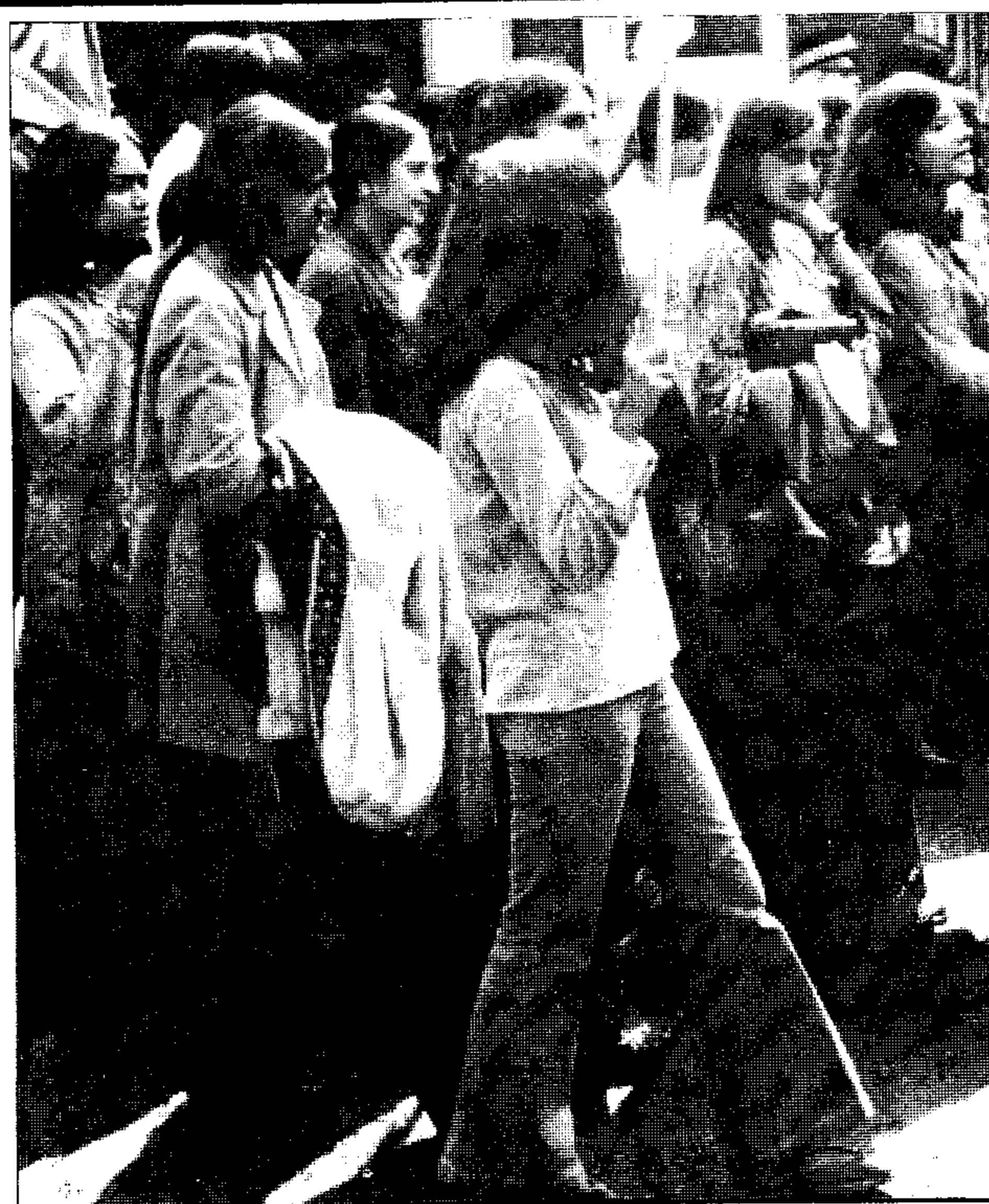
The victimisation and harassment of the Panovs was pointless and arbitrary. But the granting of their visas to Israel was one more stone cast at the exiled Palestinians.

In fact, despite the well-publicised difficulties for Jews wishing to emigrate from Russia to Israel, the Russia government makes it easier to go to Israel than to anywhere else. Visas for Israel, though hard to get, are granted in tens of thousands. Many people who simply want to leave Russia have done so by getting visas to Israel and then going elsewhere.

If the Russian government were socialist (let alone Communist!) it would not have demoted and sacked the Panovs. And it would say clearly that until the Palestinians have been fully compensated and allowed to return to their homeland as free and equal citizens in a multi-racial society, it would not permit emigration to that land which others have stolen and re-named 'Israel'.

But then, if Russia were socialist, it is doubtful whether many people would wish to do so anyway.

RACHEL LEVER



1,000 people marched through Leicester last Sunday (16th) to support the strikers at Imperial Typewriters.

The strikers themselves were there in force, of course, backed up by militant black organisations (Indian Workers Association, G.B., Black Unity and Freedom Party), socialist groups (IMG and Workers Fight), and representatives from the papers Big Flame

(from Liverpool) and Race Today.

Marching past the factory, the demonstrators chanted "Bromley and Weaver — OUT". These two are racist T&GWU officers who have refused to support the strike — or rather, have given their full support to... the management.

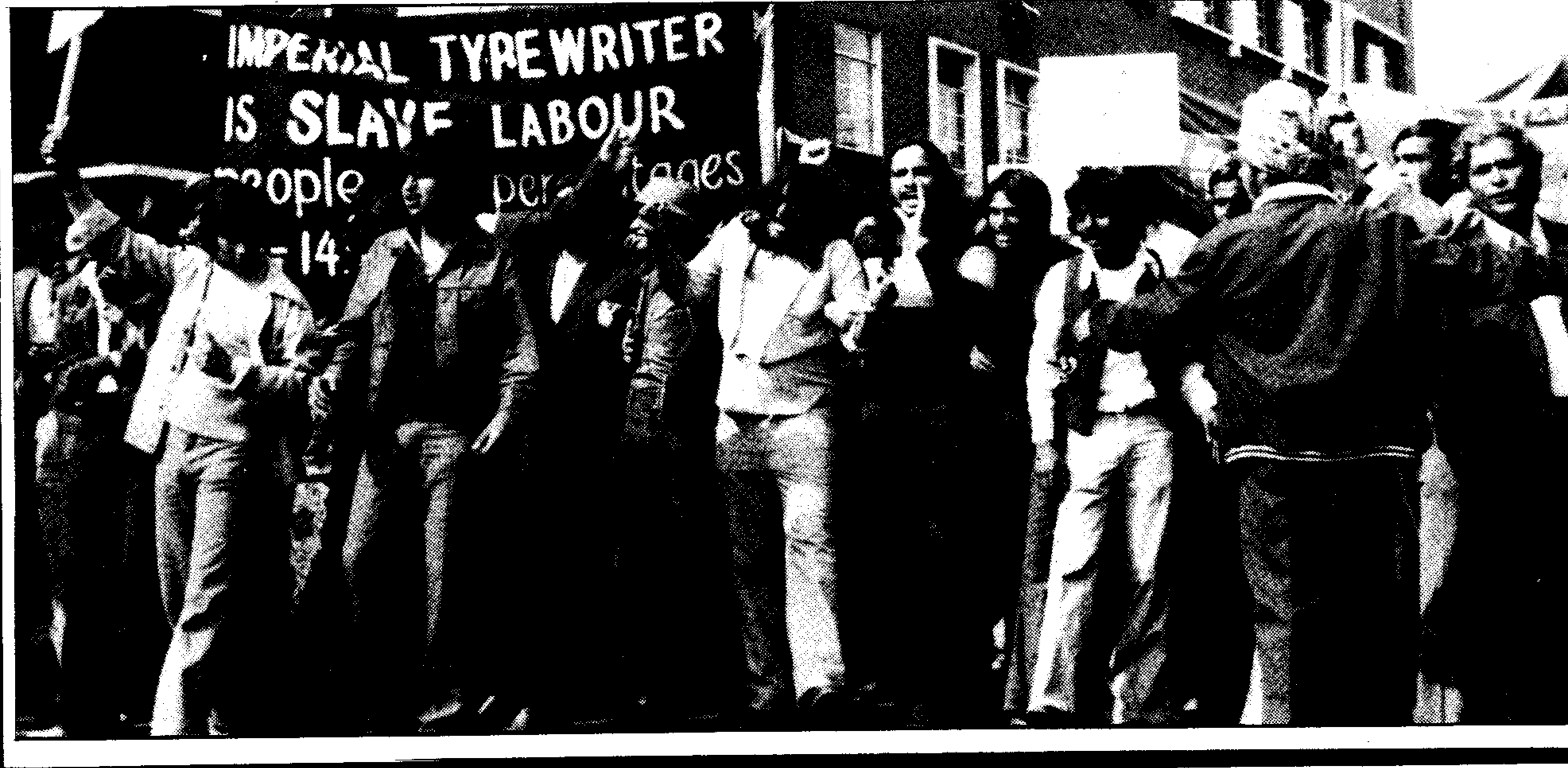
At a meeting afterwards chaired by Bennie Bunsee, Jane Leggatt from Working

Women's Charter emphasised the role of the women in the strike. 38 women had in fact started it, and a prominent demand is for equal pay. Tom Reilly (TASS) spoke of the repressive role of the police (a number of pickets have been arrested and fined) and the National Front which, being both anti-black and anti-strikes, has been doubly insensed by this high-spirited

and confident action.

This kind of support activity is good for morale. Equally important, all T&GWU members must send urgent resolutions to the leadership demanding that the strike be made official and that the Union cleans out all racist officers from its ranks, with Weaver and Bromley the first to go.

Photos Sid West (Coventry WF)



— from Page 1.

beyond the threshold

presently involved, where workers who once refused a threshold agreement, now see the point and are demanding an open-ended agreement.

At Plesseys at Beeston, where they are trying to break the ceiling on the agreement they have a further problem: their claim asks for negotiations each time the RPI goes up 1 per cent. This is a bad demand. It is far better to demand an automatic rise with a fixed amount per 1 per cent, as otherwise workers would always be fighting from a position of extreme weakness.

Secondly their claim, like all others, it seems, does not have a consolidation clause in it.

Workers should fight to get elements consolidated on a continuous basis (month by month) or, at least, at the termination of Phase 3.

The Pay Board has decided to interpret the Pay Code clause 176 so as to mean that no claims can be made retrospectively. Neither so-called left-winger Michael Foot nor the Labour Government have opposed this preposterous and cynically warped interpretation. Appropriate to their operating the full panoply of Tory laws, they allow the Pay Board, a Tory creation, to rule unchecked.

Disastrous

Now is the time to fight for these claims. Waiting could be disastrous, for a struggle taken up in a month with a low rise in the RPI or no rise at all would suffer a great blow to its morale. The July RPI is expected to show a leap of 2 or even 3 points.

But what happens when the period is over? It will then be

necessary to use the militant feelings built up in this period to push for big no-strings wage rises and cuts in the working week. These claims, the first of which will be the autumn round of claims, must be pushed whatever the law or "understanding" between the TUC and the Government. Workers should demand automatic, open-ended, zero threshold clauses whose benefits are continuously consolidated into the basic rate.

The unions should use the time until then to prepare their own version of the statistically fiddled RPI that is put out by the government; they should also try to fix a sum by which wages rise which is not less after tax than the amount by which the purchasing power of wages is falling.

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MEETINGS

LONDON Workers Fight. Terry Liddle (Committee for Defence of Ukrainian Dissidents) on Repression and Unrest in the Ukraine. Sunday June 23rd, 7.30pm in the Golden Lion pub, Britannia Street (junct. Kings Cross Road). Workers Fight Forum, Sunday 7th July at 7.30pm in the Golden Lion, John Cunningham on Communism and Social Democracy.

LIVERPOOL Workers Fight, Socialist Forum. Jon Riley on STALINISM. Wednesday 26th June at 8pm, at Stanley House, Upper Parliament Street.

Troops Out Movement. Weekend school on IRELAND. Sunday 7th July starting 10am, at NUFTO Hall, Jockey's Fields, London WC1. Apply for credentials to T.O.M., 23 Harvest Road, London NW6. Charge 20p.