

Workers' fight

3p

No. 66 — August 24th to August 31st 1974

THE National Front is marching again. Twice in the next two weeks (August 24th in Leicester, September 7th in London) they will be issuing an open challenge to the labour movement: STOP US IF YOU CAN!

The National Front needs to march because it is a fascist organisation. Essential to its growth is the pomp and circumstance of parades, drumbeats, the waving of flags and banners. "Mass demonstrations", Hitler wrote in Mein Kampf "must burn into the little man's soul the conviction that though a little worm, he is part of a great dragon."

But marching, the ability to control the streets, is also vitally connected with the purpose of their growth: the building up of a physical force to counter and smash down the force of the working class movement when the bosses' system's lies and fraud don't serve any more to keep the workers down.

Squads

Before any military coup or right wing dictatorship could safely move in, the labour movement would have to be broken up, cowed and demoralised. It is the role of fascist organisations to perform this task for capitalism unofficially, at a time when a still-operating parliamentary democracy would put limits on the ability of the state to do it openly.

If we allow them to test their strength in marches and gather to themselves the strongarm forces for the job, we will find ourselves, sooner or later, meeting them very much more often, and not merely at an appointed time and place in the broad daylight of the High Street.

We will encounter them as strikebreakers, as meeting-breakers and as skull-breakers; eventually, when a critical situation for capitalism warrants it, they will be used as death and terror squads to pick off activists. This already happens in Northern Ireland (and the new links of the NF with the well armed Orangemen — which they hope to celebrate by their joint march with them on September 7th in London — have very serious and immediate implications for us)

Already

In a small way, elements around the NF are already engaged in this 'work', or in preparations for it.

For example, on Sunday August 18th, people arriving for a meeting in London to plan anti-fascist work found two cars outside, and men in them taking photographs of those going into the meeting. Somebody is collecting data about the left: photos, names, addresses, probably personal details too. And in this case, it wasn't the police.

And already, here and there, a militant trade



STOP THE NATIONAL FRONT NOW!

unionist, or an anti-fascist activist has found himself in hospital after opening his door to strangers in the night or walking up to his front door past a parked car that suddenly disgorges well trained thugs.

Only one or two. SO FAR.

We must do a number of things to block their way.

Police

It would be suicidal madness for the working class movement in this country to let this menace grow, bit by bit, in its own good time, until it's strong enough to walk all over us. And it would be naive in the extreme to look to the capitalist state. The police won't do the job for us. (The Public Order Act, passed

after anti-fascist agitation in the 1930s, is used against the left and now against Irish republicans.

Lies

We must cut the ideological ground from under their feet: counter their lies and slanders; answer every one of their 'arguments' and show how irrational and self-contradictory they are; pose real working class solutions to the chaos and insecurity of capitalism which bring desparate and fearful people to turn to the Front's phony 'solutions'.

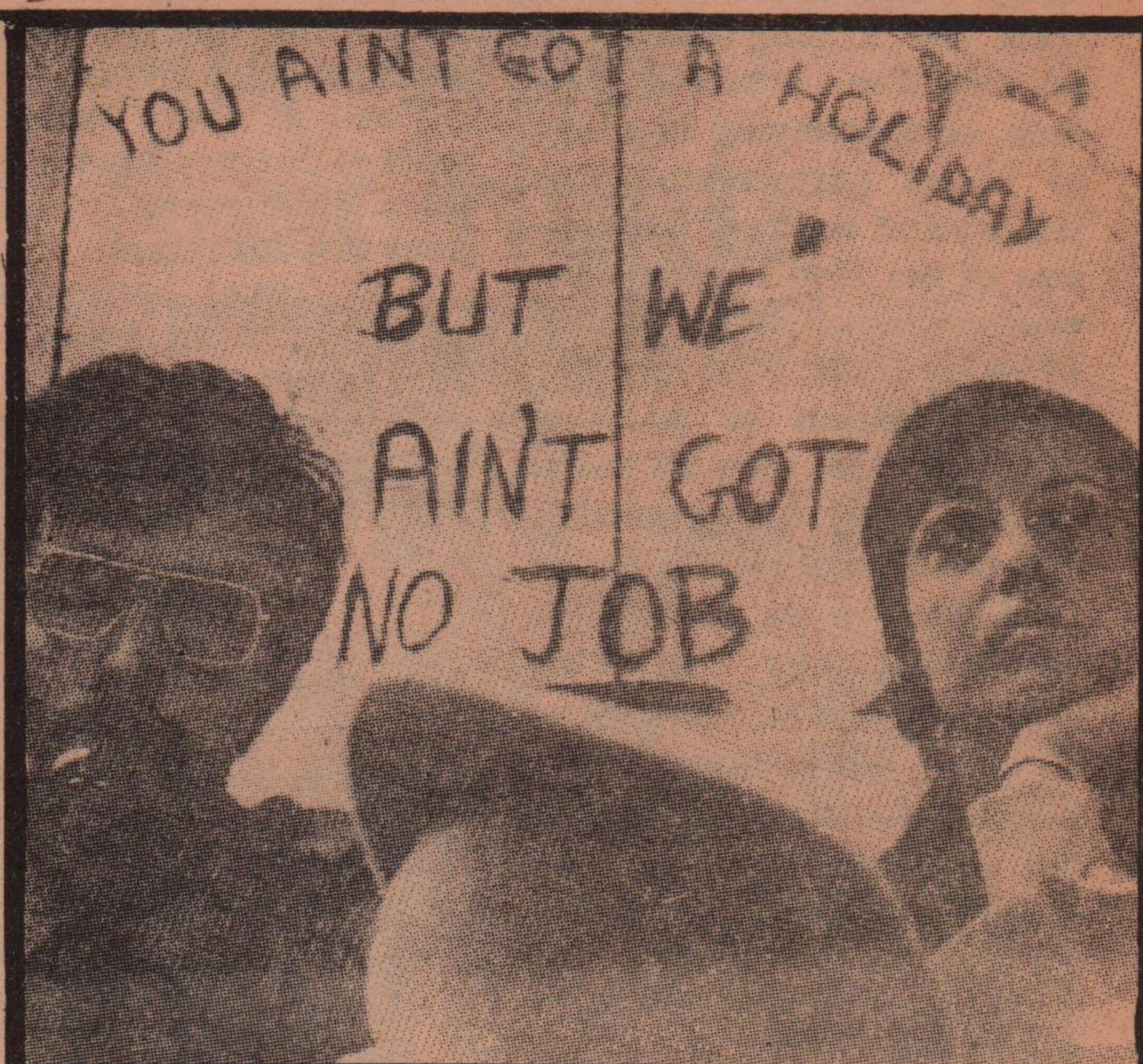
We must struggle to eliminate the all pervasive groundswell of racialism within the labour movement on which they feed. We must demand the repeal of the racist Immigration Acts, introduced by both Labour and Tory governments, which give

credence to the NF's racist ravings. And we must take up actively the cause of our black brothers at work and in the trade unions against racist discrimination.

We must also begin to organise workers' defence squads to protect vulnerable sections of our movement. Already, the Front has attacked Asian strike pickets. Our ability to mount pickets, sell papers or go about our political or trade union business cannot be allowed to depend on the Front deciding to leave us alone.

We must campaign to expel all National Front members from the trade union movement. They are in it to destroy it. It is quite ridiculous to let them maintain their fifth column infiltrators.

Continued on back page



Who's to blame for Court Line?

POLITICIANS are incompetent, ignorant and sluggish — according to leading Tory politician Michael Heseltine. For that reason, he says, politicians should keep out of the affairs of industry.

He could take his words to their logical conclusion and argue that all politicians with directorships, large shareholdings or other important big business positions should give them up ... except that his companions on the Tory benches would rapidly have him certified insane. And then again, he could conclude that all consultation between government and big business should end immediately ... but no industrialist or financier would think they had heard him right.

STUPID

Heseltine made his stupid statement while trying to prove that the blame for the Court Line failure lies on the Labour Government. The Government, and Mr. Benn in particular, must (he says) take the responsibility for 40,000 people being stranded in the middle of their holidays, 100,000 having their holidays cancelled, and 3,000 Court Line staff losing their jobs.

Exactly why Heseltine thinks the government should be blamed is not clear. Does he think the government should just have left Court Line to the healthy workings of capitalist competition? In that case Court Line would simply have gone bust a few months earlier.

CONFIDENCE

In fact, the Government did very much what any capitalist government would do. Right up to the last minute they continued to say Court Line holidays were all right, just as the Court Line bosses said

Court Line holidays were all right — because to say anything else would destroy the commercial viability of the Court Line.

In that sense the Labour Government is responsible. They did deceive tens of thousands of holidaymakers. Just as Court Line did.

To speak for the Tories on this issue, though, must need tremendous qualities of cynicism or boneheadedness or



Heseltine — boneheaded

both. This is scarcely a time to preach the virtues of "free enterprise"! If you fall behind in the race for profits, you go bust and people suffer — workers, customers, creditors. That is the law of "free enterprise". You can defend it as a necessary evil, or you can attack it as a monstrous, unnecessary inhumanity — but you certainly can't blame it on Wedgwood Benn's or Peter Shore's dishonesty!

In fact, a socialist economy would very easily rule out things like the Court Line crash. For one thing, holiday

Continued on back page

THE GERMAN working class has a long history of participation schemes and their accompanying ideology of 'social partnership'. The factory and workers' committees of the 19th Century, the works council law of the 1920s and the Nazi law for 'the regulation of national work' of 1934, were all based on the theory of partnership expressed most clearly in the 1934 law: "In the factory the employer, as director (Fuehrer), and the workers, as servants, work together for the attainment of the aims of the factory and for the common good of people and state".

Although these days it is stated more subtly, this is also the basis of the present scheme.

In every work place with 5 or more workers the employees elect a 'Betriebsrat' (works council) which then negotiates with management.

In companies with more than 500 workers, worker representatives occupy one third of the seats on the board of directors, and in the iron,

steel and mining industries 5 out of the 11 board members are nominated by the unions, as well as there being one worker-director on the executive. (Management also has a say in naming him.)

This 'equal participation', which at present covers about 70 companies, is being extended. The D.G.B. (German TUC) wants it to apply to firms with more than 2,000 employees and a turnover of more than 150 million Mark, thus covering another 3,000 companies. And one of the main slogans of the DKP (German Communist Party) is for 'Democracy in the factory' — i.e. more participation.

Benefits?

But what real benefits (if any) has this participation brought German workers?

Equal representation on the board (the 11th member if 'independent', agreed by both sides) has existed in the mining industry since 1952, but this has not prevented thousands of redundancies taking place. So many conditions are placed on the activities of the workers'

representatives that — even if they wanted to — it is impossible for them to take a militant stance in defence of the interests of the rank and file.

The rights and duties of the Betriebsrat are laid down in the 'Betriebsverfassungsgesetz' (BVG — 'works constitution'), the central theme of which is that the Betriebsrat has to work with management "trustfully ... for the good of the employees and the company". As long as the means of production are in private hands, this can only mean for the good of the owners, the capitalists.

This duty to collaborate is expanded to "a duty to help to settle all industrial disputes" and "consideration of the interests of the factory can lead to limits being put on the right to participate".

Strikes

The Betriebsrat "may not undertake activities which endanger the industrial peace of the factory". Thus, whereas the capitalist has various means at his disposal for enforcing his designs (e.g. threats of closure, redundancies, moving production elsewhere etc) the right to use the only effective means of struggle of the workers, the strike, is withheld from the Betriebsrat. Indeed, the "employment of means of struggle between Betriebsrat and management" is forbidden, and if a member of the Betriebsrat does attempt to bring about a strike, he makes himself liable to pay compensation. Moreover, it can lead to him being sacked without notice, or to his expulsion from the Betriebsrat. There are many examples of such measures.

Because the BVG does not deny the possibility of a conflict of interests, but at the same time commits the Betriebsrat to 'peaceful' means only, an arbitration board exists in case of failure to come to agreement. If this were not to, the law would be saying, too explicitly, that the employers are omnipotent!

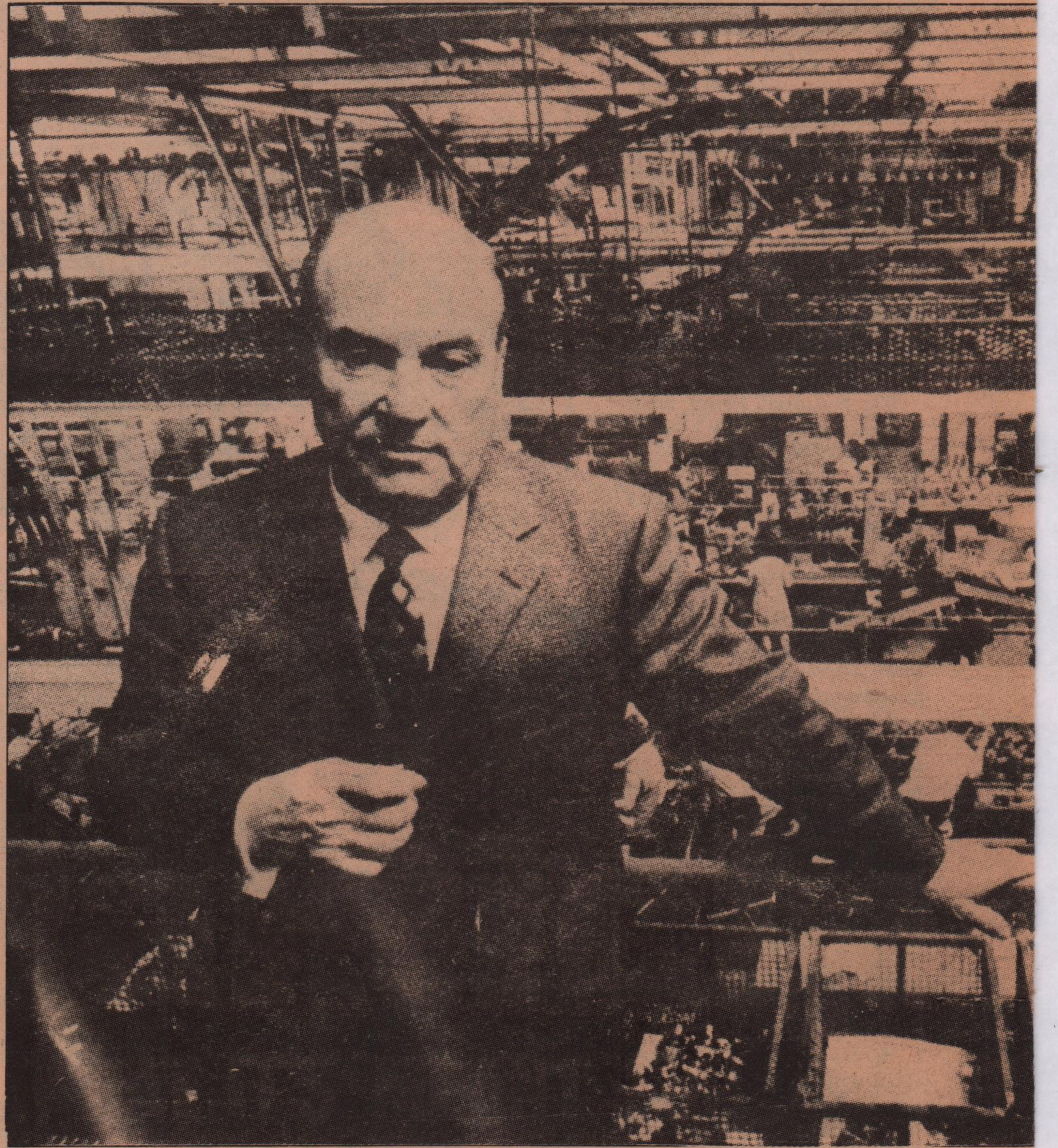
Judgment

This board consists of equal numbers of management and Betriebsrat members, and these must agree on an 'independent' chairman who has the deciding vote; if they do not agree, the chairman is named by the industrial court. "The board makes its decisions in keeping with the interests of the company and of the employees affected, according to fair judgment".

If they believe 'fair judgment' has not been made,

Participa

WHAT IT'S MEANT FOR GERMAN WORKERS, AND WHY WE FIGHT IT TOOTH AND NAIL



It still belongs to him

either management or Betriebsrat can take the case to the industrial court. Because, as outlined above, the only weapon the Betriebsrat has is negotiation, whereas management can claim that if its proposals are not accepted then redundancies may result, this arbitration board differs significantly from those which negotiate national wage increases: the only strike which can take place on the factory level is the unofficial one, and this by definition is illegal.

Supplementary to this is the banning of "party political activity in the factory" on the part of the Betriebsrat or the employer, except in "the treatment of matters of wage negotiation, social or economic concern which directly involve the factory or its employees." Whether a

particular issue directly concerns the workers is open, of course, to different interpretations, but in doubtful cases the industrial court almost invariably decides in favour of 'industrial peace'.

To quote an employer: "the law correctly proceeds from the viewpoint that party political activity in the factory serves only to stir up discontent". Thus it's possible that any statement by a Betriebsrat member which goes beyond purely technical matters can be regarded by management and industrial court as party political activity, in which case the same sanctions as above can be applied.

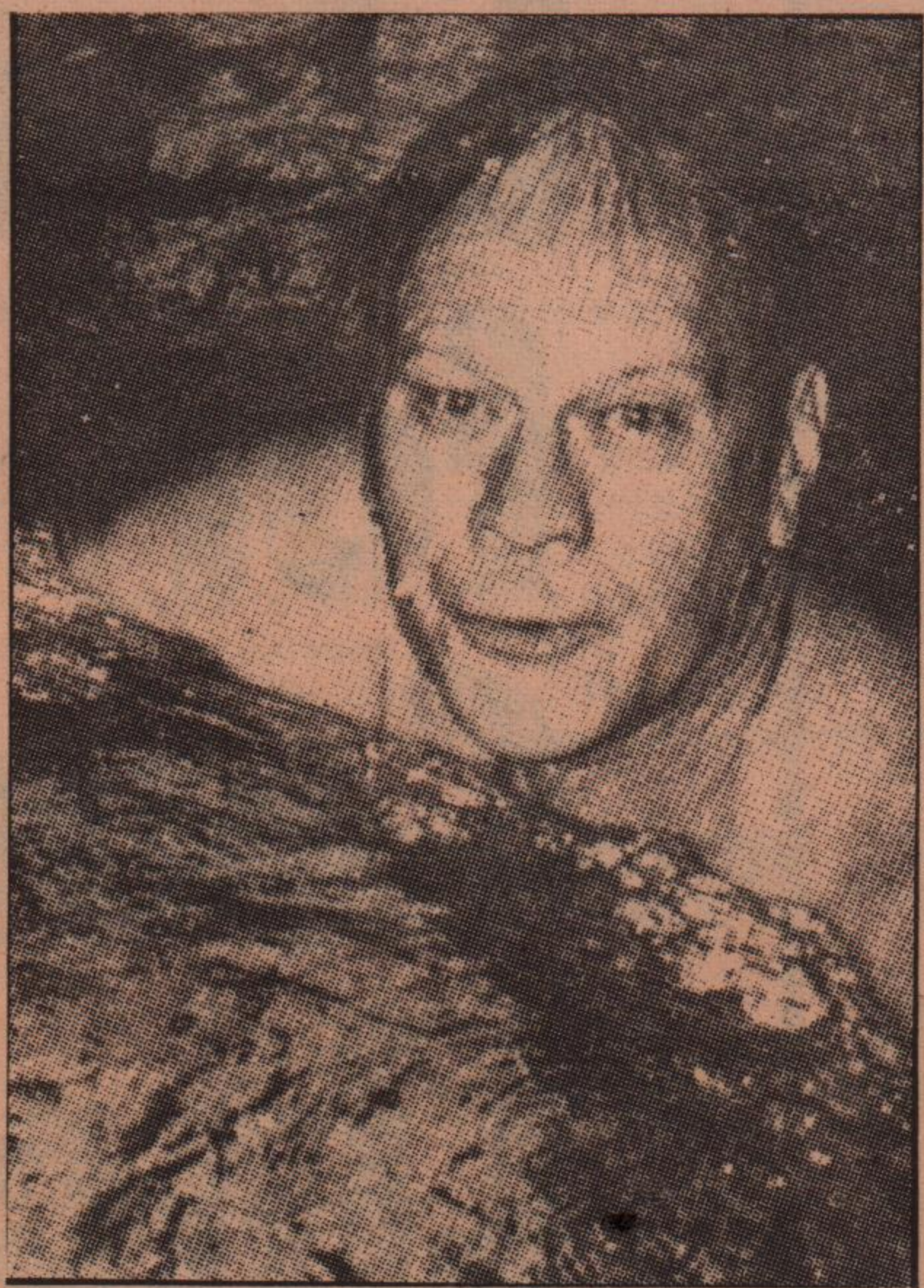
One example of this ruling at work is of a union official who was banned from attending a meeting of all workers in a factory because on a

previous occasion he had stressed the necessity of having Trade Unions and had "spoken against the ideology of the company as a family"! Industrial lawyers have interpreted this section as meaning that the Betriebsrat has actively to prevent political activity in the factory.

Influence

What can the Betriebsrat influence? As might be expected, the right to decide prices, investment, the siting of production and the number of jobs, are all left as the sole prerogative of management. This has always been assured by successive governments, as a SPD (Socialist Party) MP (who was at the time in charge of the DGB department responsible for participation!) commented "in a

Look what came up out of the Watergate!



So nasty, paranoid, unlovable Nixon is OUT, and clean, handsome, spotless Ford is IN.

The change couldn't be more complete! say the papers. For example, the sober Financial Times tells us that "where Mr. Nixon often scowls, Mr. Ford usually smiles." Well, isn't that nice! Less politely, we all know that one was the cleverest trickster in the business, the other too dumb to chew gum while crossing the street, largely on account of having played football too long without a helmet.

SCENARIO

Very entertaining — but aren't we talking about the most powerful man in the world? The style of government may change — but what about its substance? The new President will keep an 'open house' — but who to?

The fact is that the joke "would you buy a used Ford from this man?" is far from funny, and not merely on account of its having been played to death. Ford himself comes straight out of one of Nixon's famous 'scenarios', even if it, like so many others, didn't quite turn out according to plan. The plan was probably to use him as a buffer — a Vice President so dumb that they'd prefer not to kick out Nixon.

But Nixon should perhaps have known that American Presidents are no more selected because they have the best brains than are Miss Worlds chosen because they really are the most beautiful. And after all, Nixon himself was the speaker of the great line "Devaluation ... that's too complicated for me to get into."

Clever or dumb, however, American Presidents do represent American imperialism both at home and abroad. And whether qualified or not, Gerald Ford has opinions on how to do it, opinions not at all alien to large and influential sections of US capitalism. Opinions not at all funny, moreover:

At a time when America was experiencing a growing popular revulsion against the Vietnam war, Ford attacked butcher Johnson for ... not waging all-out war on Vietnam. He wanted North Vietnam bombed to a pulp, and Haiphong Harbour mined. (At that time, these were extreme 'hawk' solutions. Later, of course, 'peacemaker' Nixon was to do every one of these things.)

Later on, "Ford was one of the tiny band of congressional leaders who were told, at the time, of President Nixon's secret bombing of Cambodia. But he never questioned it, either publicly or privately, and in public speeches actually confirmed President Nixon's assertions, maintained long after it was no longer true, that the neutrality of Cambodia was being scrupulously observed." (Hella Pick, Guardian 9th August).

(If the House Judiciary Committee had voted to impeach Nixon for this, would Ford have been impeachable as an accessory...?)

ARMOURY

Ford's answer to inflation will be to cut government spending — except on one item. He would like Congress to appropriate immediately another \$2 billion to \$3 billion in military expenditure. If they vote against, he said recently "you vote for war. ... It's as simple as that."

And Jerry Ford is as simple as that, a genuine old 'balance of terror' man, "a cold warrior of ancient vintage" who believes America must amass an ever bigger armoury, and defend every outpost of the "Free World", to keep the Red Menace at bay.

Ford is a man of the people all right. But we'd better make it clear which people: the people who own America and half the rest of the world — and would dearly like to own the other half, too.

SPIKIE

WHILE Constituency parties and affiliated organisations go through the process of discussing resolutions for this year's Labour Party Conference, a shadow hangs over the Conference itself. It is the shadow of a General Election.

The Conference is scheduled for 30th September to 4th October. If, as is likely, an October Election is held, there will be no conference at all. And if the Election is set for a little later, the Conference would be at best a pre-election jamboree.

This contempt in which the leadership holds the rank and file of the Party has always been keenly felt, and the feeling is reflected again this year in a spate of resolutions calling for the Labour Government to carry out Conference policy; for the National Executive Committee to be more

responsible to the membership and not a Cabinet rubber stamp; for the independence of the LPYS, and, in resolutions from Brent North and Edinburgh Pentlands, support for Eddie Milne. Another motion calls for a Party inquiry into the corrupt affairs of the North East.

The fact that Labour is a working class party working within the capitalist framework comes over in the bulk of the resolutions. From the rates system to disabled persons, and from transport to the question of discrimination, reformism as an end in itself is spelt out clearly.

Even where the resolutions concern more 'left wing' topics such as public ownership and industrial democracy, they are abstract and vague. Nowhere do they seem to be based on the class struggle itself. Nowhere do

LABOUR'S RESOLUTIONS

they put forward a programme around which workers can mobilise. Rather, they rely on arguments basically on capitalism's own ground: that nationalisation can be 'efficient' and "more productive for the nation", or that workers would like to participate in management's decisions. Otherwise, we get the dreary and oft-repeated 'Militant' magic formula of

"nationalising the 250 monopolies under democratic workers control with compensation only on the basis of need."

One has to look very hard to find resolutions which reflect class conflict directly or call for action by the working class. In 30 motions on the National Health Service, only one or two even

ation

WE MUST



free market system the rights and responsibilities of the company must be left alone." The Betriebsrat has a certain, but limited, influence over employment, sackings, promotion and transferal, but its influence is most extensive in purely social matters (where to put the showers, what loo paper to order, etc.) but even here the right to participate in decisions can be taken away if these extend beyond the level of the individual factory. Further, the Betriebsrat helps to decide piece work rates, the start and finish of the working day — but not the number of hours worked — and can negotiate a 'social plan' (i.e. re-training schemes etc.) in the event of rationalisations resulting in redundancies. The influence of the rank

and file over the Betriebsrat is small. The Betriebsrat must call a meeting of all employees every three months and give a report of its activities, and these can be discussed and criticised. The meeting can pass resolutions to the Betriebsrat, and take a line on its decisions. But it cannot give a mandate, and the Betriebsrat is not bound to the decisions of the meeting. A vote of no confidence cannot be passed, and an early dissolution (election is for three years) can only be obtained through the industrial court. Furthermore, in informing the rank and file of its activities, the Betriebsrat is bound to keep 'company secrets' and its members are liable to one year's imprisonment or a fine if they do not.

Status

The great majority of worker directors have worked their way up from the position of white or blue collar workers by means of political or union activity, so that 60% of them were white collar workers, union secretaries of Betriebsrat chairmen before becoming directors, and a further 20% occupied higher positions. The change of status from that of employee to virtually that of employer brings with it alienation between the rank and file and those supposed to represent them. As one worker director put it: "you always have to keep three factors in mind — the good of the company, the good of the employees, and the good of society as a whole."

Thus it was the chairman of a Betriebsrat who led a group of German workers, armed with spanners, in beating up Turkish immigrant workers during the unofficial strike at Fords in Cologne last August — for which he was publicly praised by management. On the other hand militants have been sacked for leading strikes through the Betriebsrat in the steel industry (1973); and an attempt is being made at the moment by the car exhaust manufacturers Pierburg to sack four Betriebsrat members who are said to have led a strike.

Expulsion

Union bureaucrats also do their best to ensure that militants are not elected. Three shop stewards at the Opel car works in Stuttgart were threatened with expulsion from the union for standing in opposition to the official union candidates. At the Opel factory in Bochum, the Betriebsrat asked management to sack one of its own

Except, that is, for resolutions which fundamentally support the Social Contract, Birmingham Northfield alone condemns Labour's continuation of the Tories' Phase 3, only Leeds North West call for a fight against racist and fascist ideas within the labour movement, and only Peckham South and Brent South call for the unconditional release of the Shrewsbury trial building workers.

Of the 432 Resolutions submitted, precisely four deal with Northern Ireland. None of these tackles the question from a working class point of view. All four move tentatively towards suggesting a 'phased' army withdrawal, with its replacement by a U.N. 'peace-keeping' force. Subtly, but significantly, a reactionary motion condemning "acts of hijacking and terrorism",

members who attempted to bring corruption (extra payment and privileges) to the attention of the rank and file! Studies have shown that only one in ten workers believes that he has gained from the existence of workers participation. Despite this, the DGB claims that participation brings control over management and the political power of the companies.

Change?

The DKP (Communist Party) sees workers' participation as "a means of changing the existing power structure"! Although some employers are still against the extension of participation, probably the best analysis of its importance comes from Handelsblatt (the German equivalent of The Economist): "The unions must pay the price for the fact that in future their officials will have a half share in the decision making and with equal responsibility on the boards of companies producing about 80% of the social product. One thing they can no longer do is to denounce the employers for all actual or alleged failings."

It continues — "This means that in future, when a company raises its prices, decides on a merger, makes a mistake in its investments, takes advantage of the consumer or disregards the government, then these decisions won't have been condemned by those who sit on the board. It is no longer just the share-holders and the bankers who have to push such policy publicly, but also the union officials. That is, unless they loudly and clearly condemn this policy." As we have seen, they have little opportunity for doing so.

'Public' interest

Handelsblatt concludes "In the history of participation in the iron, steel and mining industries, which were the model for the new expanded system of participation, it is unknown for a union official to refuse to vote for such a decision in the interest of the general public, of the employees or of the consumers. The union officials' complaint against the system always comes several hours after the agreement has been signed by the board of directors." Handelsblatt states clearly what participation really means: "By participating, the unions become responsible for the actions of the company, they are integrated into the system. They can no longer denounce the employers, because they are in the process of becoming employers themselves."

HEINZ GUNTHER

submitted by Poale Zion (!) is placed next to the Irish motions on the order paper....

But perhaps for sheer political blindness a motion on 'Political Prisoners' takes the prize. "This Conference" it states "deplores the existence of political prisoners, as a contravention of the Declaration of Human Rights of the UN ... and urges the Government to bring pressure to bear on countries where there are political prisoners to expedite their release."

If this motion is passed, would we see the interesting spectacle of a Labour Government putting pressure on itself to end internment and release the many Irish political prisoners in this country's jails? Or would the Government simply ignore such a resolution. Just like all the others.

Clive Bane

USA

Trial of Indians who fought for their rights

NOT content with genocide, suppression and cheating of the Indian people, and the imposition of grinding poverty on the survivors, the American state is now trying to exact a savage revenge on the leaders of last year's occupation of Wounded Knee — an occupation which attempted to draw attention to the breaking of treaties which were supposed to have given Indians control of certain lands.

In a trial resembling in many aspects the Shrewsbury trials here, the US government is trying to frame Russell Means and Dennis Banks on a series of charges which could put them in prison for life.

ELLSBERG

The Ellsberg trial was dismissed on account of government misconduct when it was found out that the White House was behind the burglary of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office. But when it came out that most of the Prosecution's evidence against the Wounded Knee defendants was based on an illegal FBI wiretap, the judge merely came to "the brink" of dismissing the trial of Russell Means and Dennis Banks.

Instead of cancelling the trial, the judge ruled that the prosecution couldn't use that evidence, but that any information based on the wiretaps that could help the defence



Russell Means (left) & Dennis Banks

case would be handed over to the defence.

But since making that order, the Judge has consistently favoured the prosecution in its efforts to withhold these vital documents. He has for example helped the prosecution to keep back any documents naming the numerous FBI spies and secret informers — thus giving his approval to their use.

Moreover, all the evidence about the illegality of the FBI's methods was heard in the absence of the jury!

More significantly, the judge has ruled out any political evidence and any reference to the broken Sioux Treaty of 1868, which promised that the land around Wounded Knee would be Indian territory. Under that Treaty, in fact, the roadblocks set up by the FBI around Wounded Knee would have been illegal — rather than the occupation itself.

In an attempt to brand the American Indian Movement (AIM), which organised the occupation, as terrorists, completely unfounded kidnapping charges have been included. Most of the other charges are of specific acts which it's more or less admitted can't be pinned on the two defendants, except by inference because they led the action.

Throwing a lot of mud around and hoping some will stick, hundreds of prosecution witnesses have been paraded in and out of the courtroom, many contradicting each other and themselves. Days have been spent 'proving' that there were guns and molotov cocktails at Wounded Knee — yet no attempt has been made or could be made to prove that the defendants either possessed or used them.

SHREWSBURY

Rather, it's all supposed to impress the jury that nobody was up to any good, and that it's as well to lock up the ring-leaders. Just like Shrewsbury — but instead of 3 years, they could be locked up for life.

The Judge, despite a reputation for 'fairness', has shown blatant bias for the prosecution, and has treated the defendants with racist patronisation as if they were naughty children.

This degrading treatment is one of the things AIM is trying to expose and fight. It is currently boycotting the tourists who come to South Dakota to gawp at the 'picturesque' Indians.

One other attempt to degrade the movement and the defendants is the charge of petty larceny of Wounded Knee stores.

What a pathetic reply that is to the charge levelled by the AIM at the US Government — the charge of having stolen a whole country from the Indian people!

MAXINE LANDIS

S.KOREA

The bullet that missed

THE South Korean regime has lately become so blatantly repressive that it is embarrassing its US patrons.

This repression is behind the attempt to kill the President, Park Chung Hee.

In the wake of student protest demonstrations demanding democratic rights, there has been a massive roundup of oppositionists. Even radical Christians have been harried and imprisoned.

So far, international protests have led to five of the death sentences being commuted, including that on South Korea's best known poet, Kim Chi Ha.

There has been repression of their supporters too. Relatives of some prisoners who circulated details of torture in a basement of the Korean CIA building were themselves arrested. Kim Chi Ha's lawyer is under arrest for 'speaking too freely in court' after his client had been given the death sentence. And Catholics who held a mass to protest the jailing of Bishop Daniel Chi (who was arrested after denouncing the government) found the Korean CIA moving among them taking pictures of the participants.

In Washington, voices have been raised against the proposed 45% rise in arms subsidies to the Park regime. And a worried 'Christian Science Monitor' commented: "What must be brought home to the Park regime is the danger it is bringing to itself, to South Korea and the delicate international balance of the whole region by its attempt to repress all political dissent..."

One person, however, who has no qualms is Nobel Peace winner Henry Kissinger: "Where we believe the national interest is at stake we proceed even when we don't approve (of police state methods)".



Kim Chi Ha

Since January, a total of 135 people have been sentenced for such 'crimes' as inciting rebellion and conspiracy. Many have received 20-year sentences, 18 were imprisoned for life, and nineteen people were sentenced to death.

PORTUGAL

An embarrassing death

The attitude of the Spínola government in Portugal to movements in solidarity with the independence fighters in the African colonies was clearly demonstrated last week when a demonstrator was shot dead in Lisbon's Central Square.

The demonstrator had been organised by Angola House, a cultural centre for Angolans in Lisbon which has, since the April coup, been an active political centre for pro-independence feeling.

The Government had originally banned a meeting to protest at the white racist attacks on blacks in Angola itself. So the march was held in defiance. The demonstrators, many of them black, were told

to disperse by the Security Police. After some fighting, the police fired into the crowd, and Victor Barnardes fell dead. Others were wounded.

FUNERAL

To begin with, the Government responded by trying to excuse the police and claiming that someone in the crowd fired first. Finally, after further protests, the police admitted responsibility. Various government ministers attended the funeral — still trying to balance between their 'revolutionary' pretences and their repressive actions. The Communist Party's ministers were especially upset: not only do they have to try to keep the allegiance of

the Portuguese workers while sitting in a government that censors the press, smashes strikes and has now murdered an unarmed demonstrator, but they are hoping not to put any spokes in Moscow's attempts to keep in with the freedom fighters in Africa.

In giving its reasons for the ban, the government had described the meeting (and demonstration) as "inopportune". Quite so. For the Portuguese imperialists (or would-be neo-colonialists), the last thing they want is a solidarity movement in Portugal while they are trying to extricate themselves, in their own time, from Africa. C.B.

GOOD

ONS?

mention support for those workers in the industry who are actually fighting here and now for defence of, and improvements in, the service.

Wages — the basic struggle of the working class to improve living standards — hardly come into the picture. (Perhaps they're not a 'political' question, just the province of trade unionism.)

TGWU stab in the back for thresholds

IN A LETTER to the Nottingham District Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, Brian Matthews, the Regional Secretary of no.5 region, instructed him not to pay out strike pay to the Plessey workers at the Beeston plant.

Plesseys workers struck and occupied the factory over two months ago in one of the pioneering fights over threshold payments.

The same attitude has been taken by the General and Municipal Workers union and by the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers. As a result the trade union organisation in the factory is in chaos. Many members have ripped up their cards, and some shops have seen

the majority of the workers leaving the unions concerned.

The T&G's attitude is justified in Brian Matthews' letter like this: "There have not been any instances where these (i.e. threshold disputes) have received Executive backing or approval".

This gives a warning that any fight to extend the threshold payments beyond November will receive no backing from the Union leaders.

The latest figures show that about ten million workers are receiving £2.40 as a result of the threshold deals. In July the threshold payment accounted for three quarters of the rise in average earnings. That is, without the threshold payments, wages would hardly have risen for that month.

Without threshold payments, the cost of living would have left many workers drowning in debt and inflation. From January to July, prices rose 17.1%. Basic weekly wages have risen 18.1%, but that's before tax. After deductions, the percentage rise in take-home pay is probably nearer 12%.

Militants are really going to have to fight when the threshold deals come to an end. All payments (and they may go as high as £4 or more) must be consolidated. The agreement must be extended, with at least 60p for each 1% rise in the cost of living. We must guard against any attempt to pass off consolidation as a pay increase. And we must explain clearly that the present Retail Price Index is not a real measure of the cost of living for workers; a working-class cost-of-living index, worked out by working-class organisations, is necessary.

Claims for substantial basic increases of around 30% will also be on the agenda, and must be pressed for equally with the cost-of-living payments.

S.C.

WHITE SOCIETY'S 'JUSTICE' AT BROCKWELL PARK APPEAL

Horace Parkinson, the entirely innocent bystander who didn't even try to resist arrest during the Brockwell Park 'riot' and was so sure nothing would come of it, has had his three-year sentence confirmed by the Appeal Court.

Lloyd James, who thumped a cop who'd pushed up against him and then fought back when three policemen set upon him and beat him nearly senseless, also had his 3-year sentence confirmed.

Robin Sterling's appeal was upheld. It was found that the trial judge had misdirected the jury on identification, and that he couldn't have thrown bottles at the police because he was left handed, and the bottles had been thrown by someone who was right handed.

start fighting the police. So it's pretty obvious he caused a riot, isn't it?

Horace Parkinson brought three new witnesses. Their evidence was not even taken because, said the learned judges, they should have come to the original trial. Never mind that one had been in Jamaica at the time, another in hospital having a baby and the third afraid of the police. That just wasn't good enough.

These judgments are a slap in the face for the whole black community. And, as RACE TODAY comments, "Next time a Brockwell Park situation develops, and there will no doubt be a next time, who is

going to stand there and meekly accept arrest? When a youth with an unblemished record (Horace) ... pulls a three year sentence for something he didn't do ... who will not fight and kick and punch like mad next time the police arrive?"

FROM PAGE ONE COURT LINE

facilities would exist for the purpose of people enjoying holidays, not — as they do at present — for the purpose of making profits.

Often it is at holiday time — the one time when we escape from the daily round of wage slavery — that some of the most ugly faces of capitalism show themselves. The lying words and pictures of the bright brochures. The con-tricks, the rackets. The garish, unplanned and often unsafe (remember Summerland) buildings of holiday resorts and holiday camps. The shameless drive to get every last penny out of the pocket of the holidaymaker.

The case for socialism could hardly be clearer. A planned economy, working people deciding for ourselves what we want, the drastic reduction in hours of work that modern technology makes entirely possible — then "leisure" could become the most vital, creative part of our lives, rather than the degrading capitalist horror it usually is today.

You'd think even the Labour Party leadership might, at the least, see the case for the nationalisation of the holiday industry. Yet they continue to use nationalisation only as a means of shoring up declining basic industries for capitalism. It's a policy that not only fails to bring socialism, it doesn't even stop the disasters of capitalism.

MARTIN THOMAS

National Front

We must, of course, build up and extend the strength and power of the working class in its general struggles with capitalism, throwing the con-tricks and Contracts back where they came from. Wherever we show weakness, that is their strength.

And we must harness this strength and power to the anti-fascist movement: affiliate works and union organisations to the local anti-fascist committees; and build factory anti-fascist groups.

And, wherever the fascists come out on the streets, we must attempt to stop them, by whichever means are most effective. People who join a bully-boy outfit will think better of it if they are made to run. Whenever they have been stopped, they have suffered lasting demoralisation.

The Front have had things their own way for too long, meeting only token opposition from the bulk of the labour movement. As a result, they have grown at an alarming speed.

Stop that growth!
Stop the marches!
STOP FASCISM!

NUPE OFFICIALS STALLING ON ANCILLARIES' CLAIM

More battalions could be moving into the health service pay war, if a call put out by the Liverpool hospital ancillary workers is taken up. At a meeting of the Liverpool Teaching Hospitals branch of the National Union of Public Employees, held on 20th August, a resolution called for a seven day strike with no emergency cover, if negotiations on this year's pay claim are not started immediately.

In moving the resolution, the Branch Secretary, Frank Orr, called for a £30 basic, and said "he felt that ancillary workers should join with nurses and radiographers in fighting for a decent rise, otherwise they would end up at the bottom of the wages heap again".

Frank Orr also condemned the inaction of National Health Service trade unions over the issue of pay.

The General Secretary of NUPE, Alan Fisher, had been invited to the meeting, but he sent David Packham, a national officer of NUPE, instead. Brother Packham got a rough reception from the meeting when he tried to make excuses for the lack of action by the NUPE leadership.

Packham fled from the meeting, promising to tell the National Executive Committee of NUPE that the members refuse to

be fobbed off with useless talks about pay or meagre offers.

NUPE has already decided to approach other NHS trade unions involved in the ancillary workers' pay claim, with a view to agreeing on a call for a £30 basic, and consolidation of the thresholds. NUPE members and ancillary workers in general will have to beware attempts to use consolidated payments as representing pay rises.

Despite NUPE's approach to the other unions, there have been no plans laid for action. Both the Trades Union Congress and the forthcoming general election will give the NUPE NEC enough excuses to avoid doing anything before November. Fisher, in a letter to the Liverpool Teaching

Hospitals branch, has urged the rank and file to take no action. He argued it could harm Labour's election chances.

Two delegates from other branches were invited to attend and speak at the meeting. Jack Sutton, secretary of the Manchester Royal Infirmary NUPE branch, and another delegate from the East Merseyside NUPE Hospitals branch both spoke in favour of the resolution. They pledged themselves to get their areas to hold meetings on the question of pay, and the MRI NUPE branch is planning to put a resolution to the Manchester area NUPE shop stewards' meeting later this month.

T.R.

MEDALS

So after four months in prison for doing what even the judges now admit to be nothing, Robin Sterling has been released. He gets no compensation for his four months' wrongful imprisonment and interrupted studies (he was still at school when they jailed him) — only the relief of not serving 3 years.

And those who wrongly arrested him and framed him for trial?

They got medals! The judges thought Lloyd's offence particularly serious. After all, it was the sight of him being beaten up that caused the rest of the funfair crowd to



Horace Parkinson

LABOUR TO NATIONALISE DOCKS — BUT FOR WHOM?

"THE government proposes that all commercial ports and cargo handling activities throughout the whole coastline (including estuaries) should be brought under public ownership and control".

So begins Labour's plan for the nationalisation of the UK ports and docks. The document, outlining the plans drawn up by Fred Mulley, Labour Minister for Transport, is for the setting up of a National Ports Authority. This NPA will decide the 'overall strategy', promote efficiency, ensure profitability, control and direct investment, and thus generally run the docks. But on whose behalf?

For excluded from Mulley's plans are any proposals to nationalise the major shipping groups that dominate the docks industry, or the container consortiums, and it is these interests which will make the greatest gain out of a nationalised docks industry.

The decline in world trade, the poor record of profits (e.g. the best year, 1973, only produced £14 million for all ports), and the chronic inability of the dock bosses to tackle the NDLS head on, have all combined to bring about a state takeover.

The Mulley plan is based on the Rochdale report of 1962, instead of the more radical proposals laid out in the 1970 docks nationalisation bill.

Such is the run-down of the docks — out of £400 million invested since 1964, only £150 million came from private sources, and a lot of that went to Felixstowe and similar ventures), that major docks are bedevilled by their failure to keep up with the almost permanent change occurring because of the "container revolution".

The profitability of this increasingly expensive revolution for UK interests is dependent on greater efficiency and lower costs in the British docks. The containerisation of the UK-South Africa route alone cost £500 million.

Any further 'rationalisation' of the export/import trade will depend on the degree to which Labour or Tory can make the docks viable competitors with European ports. For one of the major pressures on the shipping-container consortium interests (and thus the Government) is the more advanced rate of modernisation of the major European ports. As an effort to catch up with this degree of modernisation, Labour will pour a large amount of State money into the docks, especially before any EEC ruling is issued forbidding subsidies.

The shipping-container interests intend to pay a price for this modernisation. First they will receive a generous rate of compensation for out of date

buildings, equipment, and an industry run into the ground. Further this will include a tighter control over the registered dockers by the nationalised body.

Most dockers welcome the news of the nationalisation. They have had to pay with loss of jobs, and worsening conditions for the employers' mess over the past 20 years. But the experience of the nationalisation of the mines with its wholesale closures and sackings will have taught a number of lessons.

One, that it is not worth sacrificing jobs, conditions, or hard-won agreements for nationalisation.

Two, that the same struggle for wages will go on, and particularly a struggle against any attempt by the Government to make the 'nationalised industries' carry the burden of a wage freeze.

Thirdly that dockers cannot afford to take responsibility for decisions to make the docks profitable. It is possible that a system of 'workers' participation' may be brought in, to replace the suggestions not taken up from the 1970 Docks Bill. A model for such a system may be the idea of elected shop stewards sitting on local Boards of the NPA. Jimmy Symes, leading Liverpool shop steward, is already to sit on the Mersey Docks and Harbour board.

The most crucial question, perhaps, is the extension of the

National Docks Labour Scheme to all ports and wharves. Already Michael Foot, in the House of Commons on 15th July, has announced his "intentions" to extend the dock labour scheme "to all significant cargo-handling activities at the ports and wharves handling third party traffic not at present covered by the scheme." Foot also said he would look into changing the legal definition of "dock work", thus, maybe, opening the way for registered dockers to claim all "stuffing and stripping" as their work.

Some of the most bitter opposition has come from the Felixstowe management, who are most angry at the proposal to extend the NDLS. The question of nationalisation hardly seems a problem to these backwoodsmen, but the NDLS really scares them with absolute control over hiring and firing being taken away from them. A leading figure in the City of London, said "We do not care all that much about who is going to run the ports", but at the same time he insisted "There is one way and one way only for the country to get out of its forecast slump conditions, and that is for every man jack of the population to do a good day's work for a good day's pay". And that is the main job of the nationalisation in the coming years; increase the productivity of dockers, cut the labour force, and lower the rates for the shipping container consortiums.

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beat the management. If they do, it's doubtful if it could continue acting in such a high handed manner. But, as one of the pickets told me "we have had no experience of strikes before and need stronger backing behind us."

Backing has finally started to trickle in. The Trades Council has promised support, and dockers will be blacking materials and supplies.

It is important that this strike is won and the arrogant, greedy taught a lesson they won't forget in a hurry. And the pickets I talked to showed every sign of fighting to the finish. So give them YOUR support. Send donations and messages to Miss Smith, Treasurer, W & R Strike Committee, 46-48 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool L3 5SE. Barbara Wojciechowska

Women's third month out

WOMEN at Wingrove and Rogers in Liverpool are now into the 3rd month of their strike. Of the original 250 women and 9 men, 50 have been persuaded back into the factory by the management, while the rest are still holding firm.

The strike was the first ever at the firm, which was not well unionised, and some of the strikers are still to join the AUEW. Yet they have kept up their strike nearly through the whole summer.

They are protesting against the failure of the management to implement the introduction of a bonus scheme promised in June '73, and the failure to

honour a threshold agreement. The highest wages they had been earning before the strike were £18.60 before tax.

And the management had been trying to screw even more work out of them for that pittance. For 9 months the women had been subjected to a time and motion study which cost the management £15,000. To give an appearance of 'science' to this crude profit chasing, a student involved in the study was said by the management to be doing it 'as part of his course'!

While all this was going on, not a single maintenance man was employed by the factory; the women worked in dilapid-

ated surroundings — roofs leaked and the heating was completely inadequate.

Since the strike, the management has been using every dirty trick in the book to keep the factory going; they have recruited some of the cleaners to work on the benches, and started work at 7am to avoid pickets and get in extra hours.

Four men emerge in the morning to protect scabs going in and out.

They even sacked a 63 year old man who had been working there 49 years.

The strikers get strength from such incidents, though, feeling more determined to

PHOENIX PAMPHLETS

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