



LEYLAND STRIKE COULD FELL CALLAGHAN



9,000 workers at British Leyland's five truck and bus factories in Lancashire have rejected a company pay offer of 7.6% and, as we go to press, are entering their second week of strike action demanding a £15 increase and a 35-hour week.

This major strike, paralysing one of the most profitable sectors of Leyland, marks the emergence of mass struggles in the fight against pay policy.

It is no coincidence that it comes at the same time as 3,000 skilled workers at Vauxhall plants in Luton and Dunstable have voted to give the company seven days' notice of strike action unless it improves on its 8½% pay offer—which has also been rejected by other manual unions.

SHOP FLOOR FEELING

These moves—about which the Tory press is consciously silent—are only the clearest cases of the shop floor feeling on wages which has already produced indications that the government's arbitrary 10% pay ceiling is breaking up.

Most notorious of these signs has been the unsuccessful government attempt to force the Belfast firm of J. Mackie to withdraw a 22% wage increase already in the pay packets of 4,000 (largely Loyalist) workers.

The government attempt to bludgeon this employer into directly cutting wages—amounting to a last ditch effort to impose a Phase 3—even brought embarrassed opposition from arch wage-cutter Jack Jones.

It adds to the growing list of firms under threat of government

sanctions for paying increases above Healey's limit—yet so far no employer has felt strong enough to attempt to reverse an agreement.

Meanwhile the CBI, while of course in favour of wage cutting, is clearly disturbed by government measures which could potentially bankrupt certain employers, and has had to declare support for individual firms "unjustly" penalised.

ABANDONED

In fact Healey's original call for another year of increases no bigger than last year's 5% figure has already been abandoned.

Instead government and employers are now frantically trying to hold settlements to 10%—while "self-financing productivity deals", which can only further boost unemployment, have been devised as an escape clause for anguished employers.

The main weapons in enforcing

the 10% figure are union officials who see it as their job not to regain and defend members' living standards, but to prolong the reactionary life of the Callaghan-Steel coalition government.

These bureaucrats know that if large sections of workers break through the 10% limit, the Liberals could be forced to withdraw from the coalition. This would inevitably precipitate a huge government crisis.

What worries union bureaucrats is not so much the possible return of a Tory government (they lived happily with Heath for four years) but the prospect of a sharpened fight for new leadership

in the labour movement.

This is why they are using every device to divert workers from pay strikes. Instead they are attempting to negotiate job-cutting productivity deals.

WEAKNESSES

This same attitude is reflected in layers of convenors and stewards.

David Hewett, for instance, AUEW convenor leading the Leyland strike has shown weaknesses on this score, complaining that the Lancashire factories:

"... have become a low wage, low productivity set-up so the

workers have become apathetic and uncooperative."

Instead of making this kind of statement, Hewett should be seeking every avenue to spread the strike. The Leyland stewards should call a meeting of delegates from other local shop stewards committees, union branches and other labour movement bodies with the aim of spreading the strike in the area.

This would lay the basis for a local council of action capable of action independent of the trade union bureaucracy.

They must call on other

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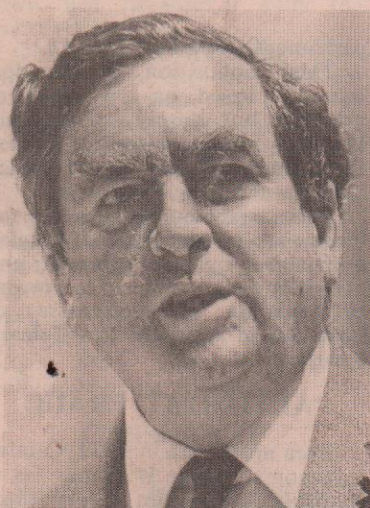


PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

Healey

NO VICTORY IN TAMESIDE

Between September 21 and the end of October it will be illegal for any organisation to exercise its elementary democratic right to hold mass meetings and marches within the Greater Manchester district of Tameside.

This important precedent poses a grave threat to the labour movement.

Make no mistake, the ban is directed principally at those forces who have shown that they are not going to allow fascists to parade freely whenever they will.

The Workers Socialist League is opposed to state bans on any

political marches and meetings.

While the centrists of the Socialist Workers Party prepare their "victory march" to celebrate the ban we say very clearly:

This ban is a victory for:

*the police, who could not have guaranteed the NF's safety;

*the Labour Party leadership, which has consistently refused to do anything about the growing fascist menace (and indeed has concentrated its fire on those who have confronted the fascists physically);

*the fascists, who will use the ban to campaign for 'democratic' rights.

It is not a victory for the working class but confusion on

this question is rampant on the left.

Socialist Worker No 546 (24.9.77) does not even see fit to mention that the ban applies to themselves and other working class organisations as well as to the fascists.

And the confused front page lead in the International Marxist Group's paper *Socialist Challenge* No. 15 says this:

"We reject the ban on the anti-fascists with the contempt it deserves . . . The fact that the fascists are not being allowed to soil the streets of Tameside is a victory for all those who argue for

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Fight for union in St Louis

REPRINTED FROM
'LABOR NEWS'

An open attempt to break the Steelworkers' Union local has developed in the strike of 1,500 trade unionists at the Hussman Plant in Bridgeton near St. Louis, USA.

Workers at the Hussman Plant, (a division of Pet Inc., which makes refrigeration equipment) have been on strike since May 1.

Steelworkers' Local 13889 struck over the callous refusal of Hussman to satisfy its demands of improved wages, health and welfare benefits. Workers told *Labor News* (paper of the US Socialist League) that the company was also trying to double up on manning levels and reduce union representation.

Shortly after Hussman began to hire non-union scab workers, the company got a restraining order

against mass picketing and called in Bridgeton police and trained riot squads.

On August 1, three hundred pickets were attacked in what one local labor paper has called a "police riot". A hundred pickets were arrested.

Janet Stone and David Ramsey were later given jail sentences by a judge for violating a temporary restraining order against coming within one hundred yards of Hussman's gates.

Ramsey was singled out by the prosecutor in a red-baiting attack. Ramsey is a militant auto worker at the Chrysler plant and an organiser for the National Workers Organisation, a group associated with the Maoist Revolutionary Communist Party.

As a result of his absence to attend his trial, Ramsey has been framed-up, victimised and fired by Chrysler management, which hopes to prevent any connection and solidarity between the militant Chrysler workers and Hussman strikers.

The Greater St. Louis Labor Council has condemned the August 1 police riot and Hussman's union busting as "an outrage to every-thing decent".

The Labor Council has also endorsed a boycott against Pet Inc. (the parent company) which owns 905 liquor stores and a chain of restaurants.

But boycotts, statements and demonstrations at stockholders' meetings are not enough. The Labor Council must call a mass labor movement picket at Hussman's.

And it must call for the removal of police riot squads and the judge's restraining orders.

But to do this would mean a break with the Democratic politicians who control the police and judges.

Independent Labor candidates must be run in the next local elections. Labor must also call for massive public works to dry up the pool of unemployed who can be used as scabs.

LEBANON—Israel's armed attacks over the last two weeks on Palestinians in Southern Lebanon is a new example of the ultra-aggressive line of the new Israeli government. But it is also clear that Israel has continued since the end of the civil war to give direct aid to the fascist and near-fascist Lebanese Phalangist forces. The new aggression may be one of the results of the "secret" meeting two weeks ago between Foreign Minister Dayan and an Arab leader (possibly King Hussein).



The Colombian Teachers Union (FE CODE).

NEW STRUGGLES ERUPT IN COLUMBIA

The one-day general strike in Colombia on September 14 marks a new stage in the upsurge of the Colombian working class and of its confrontation with the right wing government of President Lopez Michelsen.

During the course of the strike, which reportedly paralysed the major cities, the security forces launched a massive wave of repression.

In the capital Bogota alone 18 people were killed by the police and 4,000 arrested, many of them placed in the bull-ring which became a temporary prison camp grimly reminiscent of the football stadium in Santiago, Chile.

The Colombian government claims to be one of a tiny handful of exceptions to the South American political rule of military dictatorships.

It is true that both the parliament and the President are elected after a fashion.

But the nature of Lopez Michelsen's rule, since his election as a 'reforming' candidate in 1974, has shown how elections are no guarantee of the most elementary democratic freedoms.

PRETEXT

For most of that period, using the terrorist activities of some Maoist and Guevarist guerrilla groups as a pretext, the government has ruled with emergency powers.

It is the organised working class and the peasant movement which have been the victims of these powers.

Strike leaders and militants have been dismissed from jobs and arrested and in a number of cases, tortured and killed.

Under the emergency powers the standard approach to any strike threat in recent months has been for the army to occupy the plant, as has been done recently in oil installations and cement factories.

In the universities, especially in Bogota, these occupations have taken the form of full-scale army invasions. For most of the last two years the University of Bogota has been closed and many of its militant student leaders imprisoned.

This is Colombia's vaunted 'democratic system'. The mass of the working class and peasantry showed their contempt for it last year when in the municipal elections only 25% of those eligible bothered even to put their name on the voters' roll.

BOURGEOIS PARTIES

Electoral politics in Colombia has for long been the almost exclusive preserve of two bourgeois parties—the Liberal and Conservative parties.

Aside from the traditional repression of political opposition, the parties have also tried to main-

'yellow' trade unions.

A large section of the working class is still organised in two 'trade union' federations, the Union of Workers of Colombia (UTC) and the Confederation of Workers of Colombia (CTC), which are part of the Conservative and Liberal parties respectively.

But for the last few years the Colombian working class has been rapidly building independent unions; partly the Communist Party dominated Syndical Confederation of Workers of Colombia (CSTC), and more importantly, unions in individual sectors such as the oil industry (Workers Syndical Union, USO).

These have also emerged among white collar workers like the teachers where the Colombian Teachers' Federation (FE CODE) has organised a long series of

strikes, the bank workers and workers in the health service including doctors who last year were involved in a two-month long strike against government plans to restrict their trade union rights.

The demands of the general strike—for large wage increases and automatic cost of living compensation—were rejected contemptuously by the government.

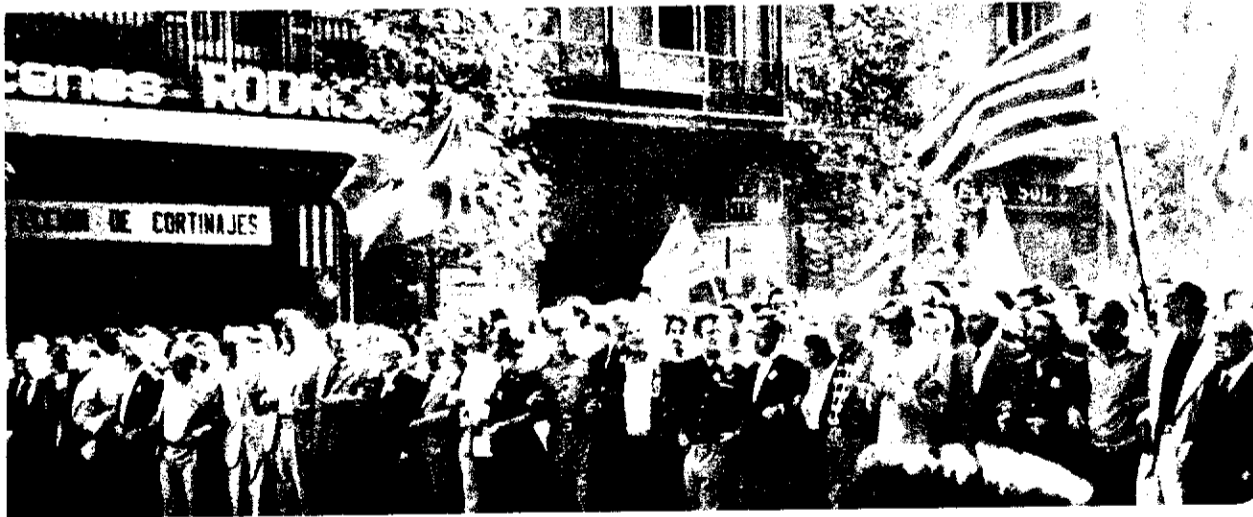
This, along with the brutal repression, will only reinforce the combativeness of the workers, and a repeat of the general strike for a longer period is already being widely proposed.

The determination of Colombian workers to fight is very clear. But the weakness of the workers' movement are significant. Such weaknesses include the continued existence of the fake 'trade unions'

the absence of an authoritative trade union federation partly due to the opportunist manoeuvres of the Communist Party in the SCTC and the absence of a mass revolutionary party representing the independence of the working class and based, therefore, on the Transitional Programme.

The largest parties on the left remain the CP and the Independent Workers Revolutionary Movement (MOIR) which will both be standing separate popular frontist candidates in the Presidential elections next year.

In a future issue of *Socialist Press* we shall be analysing these campaigns and what they mean for the working class.



Bourgeois leaders, reformists and Stalinists at the head of the giant march

MILLION-STRONG MARCH IN SPAIN

The Diada, the traditional national day of Catalonia on September 11 was celebrated by huge demonstrations throughout the Catalan region culminating in a march of well over one million through Barcelona—one of the biggest demonstrations ever seen in Europe.

The demonstration leaves no doubt about the massive popular support in Catalonia for an end to the systematic repression of national rights which has been associated with the Francoist dictatorship.

Catalonia gained its limited statute of autonomy in 1932 after an overwhelming popular vote for autonomy in a referendum. The Stalinist and bourgeois alliance in the Generalitat (the name of the autonomous executive) played an important role in the political and

ary workers and the left wing parties in Catalonia from 1937 to 1939.

The second most important bourgeois politician (after Luis Companys) in this counter-revolutionary alliance was called Josep Tarradellas. Since Companys' death in 1940 Tarradellas has been the leader of the self-styled Generalitat in exile.

This old and discredited man is now once again being used by the forces of counter-revolution in Spain.

He has done a deal with the Francoist regime of Adolfo Suarez which would permit a re-establishment of the Generalitat of which Tarradellas would be president at the head of a list of bourgeois ministers (already leaked in the press).

Suarez' plan to implement this deal before September 11 proved impossible because of the opposition of the Socialist Party and Communist Party members of

parliament elected on June 15.

Their opposition to the deal was not based on any shred of principle but simply on the fact that they opportunistically wanted their share of any power which Suarez was willing to devolve.

These manoeuvres between the Francoists in Madrid, the Catalan bourgeoisie and the reformists and Stalinists are all designed to prevent the exercise by the masses of Catalonia of any right to self-determination.

'AUTONOMY' FRAUD

Even more than in 1932, Catalan 'autonomy' when it comes (as it probably will within a very short time) will be a fraud.

It will answer none of the problems of the Catalan working class; it will be an instrument designed to combat its demands more efficiently.

Revolutionaries in this situation must put forward the democratic

demand for self-determination but must reject all compromise with nationalism by fighting at the same time for democratic and transitional demands for the whole Spanish state.

Among these the demand for the dissolution of the repressive Francoist apparatus and the creation of workers self-defence organisations is of extreme importance, as September 11 also showed.

While the organisers of the march were congratulating themselves on its total success and peaceful nature, the armed police occupied large sectors of the centre of Barcelona.

While they did not attack the main body of the demonstration, on its edges they fired at demonstrators, injuring about 300 and killing at least one who had his brains blown out by a rubber bullet.

VICTIMS OF MOSCOW'S CYNICAL DIPLOMACY

The forced incorporation of Eritrea into Ethiopia, which the Soviet Union opposed in the United Nations after the war, was never accepted by the Eritrean masses.

National liberation organisations were set up and in the days of Haile Selassie's despotism got moral



Castro

support from Moscow and even some material support from Cuba where some Eritrean guerrilla fighters were trained.

As long as the imperialist-backed Emperor hung on to power the position of the Stalinist bureaucracy was clear—strong support for the Somali junta and token help to Eritrean national liberation.

But in 1974 Haile Selassie along with his feudal aristocracy was overthrown.

At the beginning of 1974 the tensions of decades exploded throughout Ethiopia.

Workers, peasants and students staged hundreds of demonstrations, strikes and other actions which brought the autocracy to its knees.

SUPPORT

For months Haile Selassie manoeuvred to find some basis of political support but found none.

As power seemed to be passing altogether out of the hands of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie a group of military officers known as the Military Coordinating Committee came to the rescue.

Mouthing "revolutionary" words the MCC ruthlessly imposed its power not only against the collapsing feudal aristocracy but also against the independent mobilisations of workers, peasants and students.

In September 1974 Haile Selassie was formally deposed and the MCC formed a provisional military government which was known as the Derg (meaning Armed Forces Coordinating Committee).

The Derg soon declared itself "socialist". What "socialism" seemed to mean was a land reform, some nationalisations but the reserving of some areas of the economy for capitalism including investments from the imperialist countries.

involved the ruthless suppression of all independent parties and organisations, attempts to prevent all strikes, the total suppression of the trade union movement and so on—not unlike the policies of other "socialist" military dictatorships like those of Libya, Algeria, Peru and even Somalia.

But as time went by the repressive actions of the Derg in some ways went even further than similar regimes.

Both the "left" tone and the repressive brutality of the regime intensified after Colonel Mengistu literally shot his way to power in a meeting of the Derg in February of this year.

The instability within the junta released a new round of mass mobilisations led by left wing forces such as the Ethiopian Popular Revolutionary Party.

All these were put down with almost genocidal fury by the government.

MURDERED

Many thousands were murdered in the first months of 1977. The regime in fact raised money by selling the bodies of the massacre victims back to their families at £100 a time.

If the relatives would not buy them the bodies were thrown to the hyenas.

In the last few weeks Mengistu is reported to have ruthlessly suppressed the petty-bourgeois Maoist Meison group which until recently supported the Derg.

Last week Mengistu announced the establishment of a single legal government party, the Ethiopian Workers Party.

This, then, is the regime chosen by the Soviet Union as its new close ally in the Horn of Africa.

The Soviet bureaucracy's plan has never been simply to shift its allegiance from Somalia to Ethiopia.

Its aim is to reconcile these differences and become the dominant force in the whole area.

CONCEDE

What it has argued for is that Ethiopia should concede territory in Ogaden to Somalia and that some form of autonomy should be granted to Eritrea after which everyone would live happily ever after under Soviet tutelage.

But the Kremlin bureaucracy's attempts at compromise have so far failed because it is dealing not with its obedient servants but with opportunists such as the Derg and the Somali junta who have their own particular and conflicting interests.

It is also dealing with the masses' demand for national independence in Eritrea which they will not tone down just because it suits the Soviet bureaucrats.

Of course, it is still possible that under pressure the split national liberation movement will be forced into a compromise with the Derg.

Both the main liberation movements, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front (EPLF) have been involved in bitter battles with each other in the past, though recently they have moved closer together at least on tactical questions of the fight against the Derg's army and its recently mobilised popular militia.

CONSISTENT

The EPLF has a much more 'left' image than the ELF but the two political strategies are consistent with each other since the EPLF does not in its immediate programme go beyond the "national democratic revolution".

Both fronts have received

material aid from a variety of sources including imperialist and right wing Arab governments.

The EPLF however, has tried to create political links with organisations further to the left.

For instance at the congress of the EPLF a few months ago, there were delegations from the People's Republic of Yemen, from Gaddafi in Libya, from the Popular Front and the Democratic Front in Palestine, from the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman, the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party and the Italian Communist Party.

UNRELIABLE

The problem with these friends has been that either they are not materially powerful or not reliable or sometimes, neither.

Gaddafi, for instance, who is in a position to aid the Eritrean liberation struggle, has now sent help to Mengistu—though not too much since it is hard for him as a fundamentalist Moslem to justify aiding a predominantly Christian country against a Moslem one.

The opportunism and treachery of Stalinism and its world allies in supporting the Derg, therefore, is creating a new opening for imperialism and the most reactionary Arab governments in the whole area.

It is well known that in the last few months the Stalinists of Moscow have found themselves not, as they would wish, creating a kind of Pax Sovietica in the Horn of Africa but, instead, taking sides with the increasingly war-torn Derg.

And unless there is a very sharp change of fortunes the Derg faces defeat on at least two fronts.

It does not deny that the Somalia-backed West Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) now controls 80% of the area of the eastern provinces including Ogaden; only three towns remain in Ethiopian hands and they have all recently been the scenes of major battles.

In the last week the WSLF claims to have captured Jijiga. Also Ethiopia's only rail link with the sea through Djibouti has been cut for several months.

And in Eritrea the liberation forces control the majority of the country and have for months been at the gates, or even inside the gates of its capital Asmara.

Inside Ethiopia itself the Derg is under attack both from the right-wing Ethiopian Democratic Union, which represents an alliance of capitalist and deposed feudal interests, and from the popular forces (the working class, peasantry and students) who are partly organised in parties such as the "Marxist-Leninist" Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party.

STALINIST

Like the Popular Liberation Front in Eritrea this party adopts a rigid Stalinist two-stage (democratic followed by socialist) concept of the revolution.

Trotskyists must fight everywhere in the labour movement for principled support to the mass opposition to the Ethiopian Derg's bloody and repressive policies and for material solidarity with the national liberation struggle in Eritrea.

And the increasing desperation of the threatened Derg shows the urgent need for the building of revolutionary Trotskyist parties in Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia which can give leadership to the struggles and fight against political compromise either with the imperialists or with fake "progressive" forces like the Somali junta or the Derg.

Eritreans Fight Cuban Backed Government Forces



Brezhnev

WORKERS SOCIALIST LEAGUE

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist organisation fighting to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class to lead the mounting opposition to the betrayals of both 'left' and right wing Labour and trade union leaders and the Communist Party, as they attempt to enforce wage control, sackings, speed-up and public service cuts.

As workers take up the struggle against these policies they are forced by the sheer weight of forces opposing them to confront political questions. Only with an understanding of the role of the labour bureaucracy and a programme to unite the broadest sections of workers in struggle can a way forward be found.

The Workers Socialist League is the only movement that sets out to do this, fighting consistently in the working class for transitional demands, which go beyond simply trade union militancy to raise the political questions to workers and prepare the forms of organisation and the knowledge necessary for the struggle for socialism.

As a result we have been at the forefront of struggles against the cuts, against wage control, for unionisation, and against redundancy. We have done more than any other tendency to fight the introduction of 'workers' participation' in industry. And we have strongly supported the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, which has set out to show the link between the reactionary policies of the Social Contract and bureaucratic dictatorship in both the unions and the Labour Party.

But our practical struggle for the continuity of the principles and method of Trotsky's Transitional Programme is in no way a task confined to Britain. It requires an attention and involvement in the struggles of the working class internationally, and the fight to reconstruct the Trotskyist Fourth International.

So there has been a consistent drive within the WSL to deepen and enrich the movement's understanding of the history and the present crisis of the Fourth International as an essential part of our initiative towards its reconstruction.

We urge all readers who agree on the need for revolutionary leadership and the demands we put forward to find out more about the WSL and join our fight in the Labour movement.

THE FREE SHOW FEW WORKERS WILL SEE



The copy made by Rubens after Leonardo's unfinished fresco of the Battle of Anghiari

Rubens, whom we found at work, and while continuing to paint he listened to readings from Tacitus and dictated a letter. We were silent for fear of disturbing him but he conversed with us without interrupting his work and without stopping his reading. He also went on dictating the letter as though to give us proof of his amazing gifts."

Given that this aura of panegyric and fairy tale worship surrounds his life, work and memory it's best to stick to the essential, well documented facts about his life.

He was born into a wealthy Flemish family on June 28, 1577. The story of his childhood is

and antique sculptures, a study that is well documented in the exhibition.

A large part of this initial part of his artistic education consisted in producing sketches of the monumental works of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo.

As his "Battle of Anghiari" shows, a high level of preparation went into the production of these copies and this disciplined relationship served to lay the basic groundwork for the future productions completed in Antwerp when he returned there in 1608.

His development as a painter was above all smooth and continuous

restlessness.

One of the best exhibits on show in this exhibition is that of "The Lion Hunt".

The end result is wild, traumatic and capturing; yet the initial drawings still demonstrate a careful, analytical, nearly surgical balance and attention to detail, as well as brilliant construction techniques.

SYMPATHETIC

All Rubens's paintings are overpowering—yet to see them side by side with the initial sketches is like looking at a photograph of a fully grown lion next to that of a cub.

All the initial sketches give us a sympathetic insight into his creative process and it is obvious that for Rubens "drawing" was simultaneously "discovery".

Every line he laid down was a stepping stone to the next and even in his most gentle drawings of horses, costumes, trees and nude figures we can see the subject brought to life yet dissected, and in the process reduced to its essential, primitive qualities.

The later works, those subsequent to 1625, show Rubens at his most characteristic and personal. Free strokes of the brush are used and the whole manner of approach is marked by its fluidity and extreme, unhesitating rapidity.

LIGHT HEARTED

Nothing could be freer and livelier than the sketch for the Lion Hunt. As Eugene Delacroix remarked in his famous journal:

"With all the outspokenness of his colours and his heavy forms, he arrives at an ideal of the greatest power. Force, vehemence and splendour free him from the demands of grace and charm."

Rubens's subjects were always typical of an artist patronised by the courts of Western Europe; biblical themes, portraits and religious allegories.

This exhibition of his sketches does however afford us a glimpse of another, more lighthearted Rubens.

It further shows that although Rubens was never a thinker on the level of Leonardo, a soul as troubled as Michelangelo or such a perceptive character analyst as Rembrandt he was both an avowed realist and a remarkable visionary; a true son of his age.

BY MIKE HIGGINS

It was also an age that saw the decline of two centuries of phenomenal artistic creativity, a period not seen for the previous 2000 years.

Out of this metamorphosis was born a new vision of the world. The age of scientific discovery was born. The age of Galileo, who stressed the interdependence of the stars; of Newton, who discovered the laws of gravity and motion; of Leeuwenhoek, who discovered those of microscopic matter and of Harvey, who explained the circulation of blood.

STATE OF FLUX

From these events people began to see continuity in the universe and to realise that nothing was ever destroyed but all was in a constant state of flux.

It was a historic turning point—the point where religion and science, religion and art, logic and ethics, all began to part company and go their own separate ways.

Tradition was crumbling and the deities of the past were beginning to be replaced by the new material determinates of man's bodily fate; mechanical laws, atoms, glands and genes.

John Donne, spokesman for the agony of a world on the rack of violent change, wrote in 1611, "this new philosophy calls all in doubt... 'tis all in pieces, all coherence gone."

During his life and after his



A Lion Hunt. Unfinished oils on panel

death in 1640, Rubens has always been one of the greatest names in European painting.

His biographers have tended to give him the sort of treatment dished out to Lenin after his death by Stalinist historians.

A whole series of writers, by a combination of myth and conjecture and some open lies, have succeeded in building up the legend of Rubens the Superman.

One famous quote by Otto Snerling, respected physician to the

sketchily documented and quickly told. Having lived in Siegen, Westphalia for only a matter of months, the family moved to Cologne and then onto Antwerp in 1589.

It was here that Rubens studied and absorbed the Romanizing tendencies of the Antwerp Mannerists. His studies included the then inevitable concentration on engravings and reproductions of antique works of art.

He moved to Italy in 1600 and it was here that he entered the service

and one can search in vain for sudden breaks and leaps in style.

The Italian Period which saw him developing a hard, epic style gradually gave way to a more subtle suave method which nevertheless still contained the same solidity.

The decade 1610-20 began for Rubens with the two great altarpieces called "The Raising of the Cross" and "The Descent of the Cross".

The latter illustrates especially

1977 marks the 400th anniversary of the birth of the greatest Flemish artist of the Baroque era, Peter Paul Rubens.

As part of the "Rubens Year" celebrations the British Museum has mounted an impressive and surprisingly accessible exhibition of more than 200 of his drawings and oil sketches, certainly the largest of its kind ever displayed in this country. Admission is free and the show runs till 30th October.

For a number of reasons though, it's unlikely that this event will draw more than a large handful of workers.

A few years ago a survey was conducted amongst manual workers in this country in an attempt to determine their attitudes towards museums and art galleries and to find out why so few visited them.

This survey had no pretensions to laying bare the social, economic and political roots behind the so-called "cultural philistinism" of the working class but it did come up with some interesting points.

It turned out, for instance, that over 95% of the respondents likened the atmosphere within the buildings to churches.

OVERWHELMED

All those interviewed felt totally overwhelmed by the rows of gilt-framed paintings that confronted them once they had entered the galleries, be they the products of genius or mediocrity, be they nineteenth century official portraits, eighteenth century landscapes or even earlier religious pieces.

For many, museums have the same status as stately homes and the oil paintings they house seem to acquire and embody the same mysterious way of life that permeate these refuges of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie.

They symbolise a way of life totally alien and directly opposed to the interests of the masses; about as enticing as a Sunday sermon and a fraction as relevant to the conditions of the real world.

To dig even deeper into the annals of history, Jean de la Bruyere commented, more than 300 years ago, that "the pleasure of criticizing robs us of the pleasure of being moved by some very fine things."

No-one is quite sure what those "fine things" were, but we can assume la Bruyere was attacking those professional critics, still with us today, who never permit themselves publicly to find works boring or to admit to being foxed by them.

The trouble is that while the critics maintain their "intellectual dishonesty", too many people draw the opposite conclusion - that art is purely for intellectuals and the wealthy. In fact this Rubens exhibition shows that there is much life and drama in fine art which can be grasped by the layman.

CRUEL CHARIOT

Engels once remarked that human progress was a cruel chariot that rides over mountains of corpses.

The period into which Rubens was born was a cruel and turbulent age, an age that was nurtured by

LEFT CONFUSION ON STALINISM

FIRST OF A TWO PART ARTICLE BY TONY RICHARDSON
EXAMINING THE POSITIONS TAKEN BY VARIOUS GROUPS
PROCLAIMING THEMSELVES TROTSKYIST ON THE CURRENT
EVOLUTION OF STALINISM.

MANDEL REVIVES OLD ERRORS

The Trotskyist Fourth International was formed in 1938 to give a clear lead in the struggle against Stalinism, which had shown itself as a thoroughly reactionary, counter-revolutionary force within the workers' movement.

Since 1938 the major internal struggles and splits that have taken place within the Trotskyist movement have turned on the need for a correct method of analysing Stalinism and understanding the varied ways in which Stalinist parties have managed to play a counter-revolutionary role.

In grouping the basic forces that were to form the FI, Trotsky had to struggle against the centrist forces of what he termed the '3½ International'—the so-called 'London Bureau of Revolutionary Socialist Unity'.

These people could not accept the necessity to break definitively from Stalinism. Instead they nurtured hopes and dreams that the Stalinist parties could be transformed somehow into revolutionary parties.

Similar tendencies, however, have since found expression within the ranks of the FI, particularly in the aftermath of the war, when the continued existences of Stalinism

and the long-drawn out contradictory process through which it expanded into Eastern Europe gave some impressionists the idea that Stalinist parties had acquired a new, progressive historical role, and could be pushed further to the left by "mass pressure" or "exceptional conditions".

SPELLED OUT

The main advocate of this position was FI General Secretary Michel Pablo—but the case was widely argued at first by the FI leadership as a whole, and was taken up also by Ernest Mandel, who spelled it out as clearly as anyone:

"In the coming revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe, during the period of preparation and unleashing of war, the growing pressure of the masses is liable to force the French and Italian Communist Parties to modify this pacifist course of 'neutralising' the bourgeoisie. These parties could then... project a revolutionary orientation' and 'see themselves forced to undertake a struggle for power'..." (*Ten Theses 1951*).

PUBLIC SPLIT

As the class struggle itself in 1953 refuted these views, several sections of the FI swung against Pablo's line, which threatened to



Mandel

politically liquidate the forces of Trotskyism in ill-conceived "deep entry" into the national Stalinist parties.

A public split began when the US Socialist Workers Party (which was prevented by reactionary US legislation from affiliation to the FI) issued an Open Letter declaring opposition to Pablo's line.

But those which sided with the Open Letter and formed the International Committee also failed to develop a full understanding of Pablo's method and of the problems that remained unanswered.

As a result the Cuban revolution produced considerable confusion within the IC, and in 1963 the SWP, believing that Castro was a "natural Marxist" and that Cuba was a non-deformed workers state, broke from the IC and declared its sympathies lay with the groups that had followed Pablo ten years before.

HISTORICAL PROCESS

In examining the positions of the 'Trotskyist' groups on the current developments of world Stalinism, therefore, we cannot see them as positions plucked from the air. They represent a historical process of development and are a symptom of the crisis within the world Trotskyist movement itself.

The position of the majority tendency of the 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International' (the IMT) is argued most clearly by Ernest Mandel, whose article *Three Facets of Euro-Communism* was published in the April 28 issue of *Imprecor*.

this question and attempts to defend himself against a charge of arguing Pablo's position by specifically saying:

"These ('Euro Communist') parties cannot be transformed into revolutionary or centrist parties 'under pressure from the masses'."

But despite this denial, everything in the article shows that he is again attempting to get around the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism, by looking simply at the surface of events. While he is capable of referring to historical truths, he shows himself equally capable of ignoring history altogether.

For this reason the article begins by saying that what he terms 'Euro Communism' is a continuation of the rightward development of Stalinism, quoting Trotsky's description of the dual pull on the Stalinist parties—from Moscow on the one hand, and the national bourgeoisie on the other.

Trotsky however did not make this point simply to pass the time. He was analysing an actual process through which the Communist Parties, by following the Stalinist logic of fighting for 'socialism in one country', and implementing the Stalinist 'Popular Front' policy involving alliances, with bourgeois parties, were moving even closer to support for their own capitalist class against the Soviet Union.

The so-called "Euro Communism" phenomenon cannot be understood unless it is seen in these terms.

Firstly they are indicating their opposition to any struggle against capitalism. The enthusiastic support given by the Italian Communist Party to the vicious "austerity" measures of the bourgeois Christian Democrat government shows this, as does the backing given by the Spanish CP for the Suarez government.

And secondly these Stalinist parties show their new 'democratic' credentials by criticising the internal regime within the USSR and Eastern Europe—while taking care to give no support to independent workers' struggles against these bureaucracies.

These twin policies in other words are two sides of the same reactionary Stalinist coin of 'peaceful coexistence'.

Not so for Mandel. For him the verbal attacks on the regime in the degenerated workers' states flows not from the Stalinists' move towards their 'own' bourgeoisie and attempts to win anti-communist middle class votes, but from

"the working class and the decisive middle layers... In other words: the growing criticism of the Soviet bureaucracy is a concession primarily to the West European working class itself and not to the West European bourgeoisies".

Mandel's conclusions are based on this argument.

"It follows that we must regard this aspect of 'Euro Communism' positively and not negatively... What we condemn about the 'Euro Communists' on this point is not alleged "capitulation to imperialism", but rather inconsistency and lack of courage in carrying their own thought through to the end... This is progress and not regression".

Mandel thus proceeds to put forward a completely false "contradiction":

"Euro Communists' are compelled to make concessions simultaneously to reformist petty-bourgeois pressure from the right and anti-bureaucratic pressure from the left."

There is a contradiction posed by Euro Communism. But it is very different from the one suggested by Mandel. Indeed the "Euro Communists' criticism of the USSR is completely consistent and from exactly the same pro-capitalist standpoint as this class collaboration in their own countries.

The real contradiction is that such class collaboration by making no concessions to the left, stands totally opposed to the forward movement of the working class internationally, and involves the mass CPs in struggles to contain their members.

COUNTER-REVOLUTION

Mandel, however, because he takes everything the 'Euro Communists' say about Eastern Europe as genuine, winds up drawing the ludicrous conclusion that

"... it is being openly or implicitly acknowledged that Soviet society, far from being a 'workers' paradise,' has many features that no 'Euro Communist' party would introduce in the event of the overthrow of capitalism in their own countries."

So carried away has Mandel become that he has actually forgotten yet again that these Stalinist parties are counter-revolutionary parties that stand absolutely opposed to the overthrow of capitalism, and have shown (as in France, May-June 1968) their determination to prevent such an overthrow!

Mandel goes on to suggest in the most idealist fashion that the masses will come into conflict with the CPs because of inconsistencies in the Stalinists' arguments—preaching "democracy" within the USSR, while running bureaucratic parties at home.

Workers however will come into struggle against these CPs not intellectually but as a *material necessity*—because the CPs are supporting and assisting the employers' attacks on workers' living standards and basic rights.

The CP-led trade unions, far from relaxing their "monolithic" regime as Mandel suggests, will tighten the bureaucratic screws still further in the struggle to control the working class.

This will force many rank and file CP members into confrontation with this leadership, in which a clear analysis of these CPs will be essential.

PRESS GANG Out With A Bang

Eric Miller was rich. He lived the life of a tycoon. He bought and sold companies with less worries than most of us buy doughnuts.

When he put a revolver to his head last week and blew a hole in himself it could be seen as just another capitalist trying to find the decent way out.

We should be grateful to the press for reminding us that Miller was in fact a 'socialist'. He was treasurer of the Socialist International, the same international denounced by Lenin at the outbreak of World War I.

In fact when the Socialist International came to London he looked after them.

The *Daily Express* tells us: "He gave members of the Socialist International meeting at the Churchill Hotel—the Peachey flagship named after the politician he most admired—lunch of lobster and champagne. It puzzled them but they ate and drank heartily."

Miller was a friend of Sir Harold Wilson and seemed equally at home with the leaders of the Labour or the Tory Party.

To Sir Harold he was an election campaigner. To Reginald Maudling a very convenient landlord.

Sir Eric could see no difference

the Labour aristocracy and his leading business role.

He took Marcia Williams to London's most expensive restaurant to discuss "Labour Party business" says the *Mirror*. He had links with a Mafia godfather.

Just to show that being a 'socialist' is a passport to international living even Bobby Moore OBE came to his funeral.

The picture drawn for us in the press is supposed to be about the downfall of one man who lived it up too long.

In fact it is the detail about the so called leaders of the labour movement that provides the most interest.

Who got most out of Miller? Maudling with his house deal, or Harold Wilson with his helicopter trips at election time?

Was this man really so unusual? He had more money than most. But the signs are there in other so called 'socialists'.

Eric Miller isn't the only member of the Labour Party to be a JP and hand out sentences to the working class. He isn't the only 'socialist' equally at home with Tories or top Labour bureaucrats.

Perhaps the best lesson out of the whole affair is that the labour movement needs Sir Eric Miller and his less rich followers like it needs a hole in the head.



Members of the Left Opposition on their way to exile in 1928.

UNITED FRONT

BY JOHN LISTER

The 'United Front' is a term possibly more often used and less often understood than almost any other among left wing groups in Britain and internationally.

It has recently been stretched, for instance, to absurd lengths in order to include the uncritical support given by the Workers Revolutionary Party to that anti-communist, pro-Islamic bonapartist despot Colonel Gaddafi of Libya.

More common, however, is the bewildering array of propaganda blocs between small left groups, in which all those concerned agree to drop offending aspects of their programme in the name of "unity" and each of which lays fraudulent claim to be a "united front".

Of course neither concept has really anything to do with the tactic of the united front as it was adopted by the Third and Fourth Congresses of the Communist International.

POLITICAL DIRECTION

The Russian revolution of October 1917 was successful because a revolutionary situation had occurred under conditions where a Marxist leadership existed capable of politically directing the struggles of Russian workers, soldiers and peasants for the overthrow of capitalism.

But Russia was not the only country in which similar revolutionary crises took place at that time.

In Germany, Hungary, and Bulgaria enormous revolutionary struggles shook capitalist rule to its foundations. But in each case the working class was unable to take the final step to power because there was no equivalent of the Bolshevik party in those countries to give conscious political leadership. Instead, social democratic parties, remaining strong, were able to head off the militancy of the working class.

HOLD

In some other countries too, even though newly formed Communist Parties were able rapidly

social democratic parties retained a political hold over a substantial section of the working class.

As the wave of post 1917 revolutions began to ebb, the problem to be confronted by the Communist International was how to win workers away from these reactionary leaders.

At the same time, with employers launching all-round attacks on the living standards of the working class as a whole, united action was needed to defend even the most elementary conditions.

EXPOSE

It was in this situation that the Third Congress of the Comintern recognised that the task of the Communist Parties was now to go beyond their initial role of denouncing the social democrats and stating the basic principles of revolutionary socialism—which in the new conditions amounted to little more than propaganda work.

It was necessary to devise a tactic to expose the social democratic leaders in practice before the eyes of their mass membership, while at the same time advancing a programme which would show workers the need for a Communist Party. This was the basis of the united front policy. As Trotsky said:

"With the third congress, it is realised that the post-war revolutionary ferment is over . . . The turn is taken to winning the masses, using the united front, that is, organising the masses on a programme of transitional demands."

The *Theses on Tactics* adopted at the Third Congress made the overall view of the 'united front' even clearer:

"Communist Parties can develop only in struggle. Even the smallest Communist Parties should not restrict themselves to mere propaganda and agitation. They must form the spearhead of all proletarian mass organisations, showing the backward vacillating masses, by putting forward practical proposals for struggle, by urging the struggle for all the daily needs of the proletariat, how the struggle should be waged, and thus exposing to the

all non-communist parties. Only by placing themselves at the head of the practical struggles of the proletariat, only by promoting those struggles, can they really win over large masses of the proletariat to the fight for the dictatorship [of the proletariat]."

The Comintern spelled out the difference in approach and in programme between the CPs and the reformist parties.

"The Communist Parties do not put forward any minimum programme to strengthen and improve the tottering structure of capitalism. The destruction of that structure remains their guiding aim and their immediate mission. But to carry out this mission the Communist parties must put forward demands whose fulfilment is an immediate and urgent working class need, and they must fight for these demands in mass struggle, regardless of whether they are compatible with the profit economy of the capitalist class or not . . . If the demands correspond to the vital needs of broad proletarian masses and if the masses feel that they cannot exist unless these demands are met, then the struggle for these demands will become the starting point of the struggle for power."

The call for unity in action aimed at the social democratic and

centrist leaders by the Communist Parties was therefore from the very beginning linked to a conception of a programme which would stand in stark opposition to the reformists' own programme, but which would win popular support within the working class ranks of these parties.

Only in this way could such a call create conditions for these leaders to be exposed if they failed to accept.

To demand that social democrats act jointly with Communists on a programme so advanced that neither social democratic workers nor their leaders would accept it would be to achieve nothing.

JOINT ACTION

But to demand joint action in which the CPs meekly dropped their own demands and endorsed the reformist programme would neither expose the reformist leaders or politically advance the working class—it would simply cut away the political independence of the CPs.

The danger of this opportunist course being adopted by CPs seeking to implement the united front tactic was recognised and in December 1921 the Comintern Executive issued a series of 'Direc-

tives on the United Front', which included stringent conditions, insisting on:

" . . . the absolute independence of every communist party which enters into an agreement with the parties of the Second [reformist] and the Two-and-a-half [Centrist] Internationals, its complete freedom to put forward its own views and to criticise the opponents of Communism. While accepting a basis for action, Communists must retain the unconditional right and the possibility of expressing their opinion of the policy of all working class organisations without exception, not only before and after action has been taken but also, if necessary, during its course. In no circumstances can these rights be surrendered."

At the same time the Directives made it clear that the tactic in the form of public proposals for joint action was only really of relevance to the mass CPs.

Not only would a proposal for joint action from a tiny group of communists to a mass social democratic party seem absurd, but the ability to capitalise on a refusal by the reformists to carry out joint actions depended upon an ability to communicate this to the masses.

"Whenever the offer of a joint struggle is rejected by our opponents the masses must be informed of this and this learn who are the real destroyers of the workers' united front . . . In either case it is essential to capture the attention of the broad working masses to interest them in all stages of the struggle for the revolutionary united front."

UNITED FRONT

Where parties lacked a sufficient basis of working class support however, the Fourth Congress made it clear that the united front tactic did not apply, though clearly what remained entirely valid was the concept of a programme of demands on which the small Communist Parties could fight to establish a leading position in working class struggles.

It was this problem of orientating small numbers of forces



Sedya, Bakov, Kaganov and Zinoviev—they began the opportunist



Lenin in Red Square

which had to be tackled nearly 20 years later in the Transitional Programme adopted as the founding document of the Fourth International in 1938.

Stalinism had bureaucratized and corrupted not only the Russian Communist Party but through that had led to a complete degeneration in the Comintern itself.

ABANDONED

In the course of this degeneration the Stalinists had abandoned completely the concept of the united front as formulated in the first four congresses of the Comintern.

In Britain in the years 1924-26 the 'united front' had been perverted to allow the Stalinists to form an uncritical bloc with the 'lefts' in the TUC leadership, developed through the Anglo-Russian Committee. Trotsky summed up the lessons of this sorry episode in this way:

"In order that the Soviet trade unions might maintain the bloc with the strike-breakers of the General Council ... the British Communist Party had to be deprived of all independence. This was obtained by the actual dissolution of the party into the so-called 'minority movement', that is, the 'left' opposition inside the trade unions.

... The demands for a break with the strike breakers appeared even to some within our own ranks as ... sectarianism.

... Stalin, Bukharin, Zinoviev ... sought to replace the weak British Communist Party by a 'broader current' which had at its head, to be sure, not members of the party, but 'friends', almost Communists, at any rate, fine fellows and good acquaintances ...

The result of the Stalinist policy was of course that in the British General Strike of 1926 the CP had no line to put independently of the TUC. Its slogan was "All power to the General Council". And the General Council betrayed the strike after nine days.

Three years later this opportunistic right wing course was bureaucratically switched to a hysterical ultra-left policy in which any united action with social democratic

was ruled out and reformist parties were denounced as 'social fascist'.

This 'left-wing' perversion of the 'united front' led to the victory of Hitler in 1933.

Just over a year later the Comintern again changed line, to a new attack on the united front - the call for 'People's Fronts' which set out to incorporate both workers' parties and bourgeois parties. The outcome was the defeat of the Spanish revolution and of course in other countries the complete subordination of the CPs to the policies of their so-called 'progressive' bourgeois "allies".

NEW INTERNATIONAL

The failure of any section within the Comintern to raise the slightest doubt or resistance to Stalinist policies even after its sectarian line had been the major factor in the crushing of the German working class by Hitler in 1933 confirmed for the Trotskyists that a new International had to be built.

But the new International would not be able to draw on the massed resources of the millions-strong social democratic movement as had the Second International. Nor did it carry the revolutionary prestige that had rapidly drawn thousands of workers to the banner of the now degenerated Third International.

The Fourth International would need to find a road to the masses in conflict with these mass formations, with only the most slender basic forces in each country.

It could not in the initial stages resort to public proposals for united fronts.

Instead the political *method* which had provided the basis for the united front policy was developed, in the form of a system of *transitional demands* outlined in general terms for a range of different situations internationally.

These demands, if fought for in practice within the workers' movement, could win mass support and establish Trotskyist forces at the forefront of the daily struggles of the working class.

The term 'united front' does not feature in the main tactical discussion in the Transitional Programme—but the combined fight for united action and for the exposure of reformist leaders is incorporated into the orientation of the programme as a whole, and the demands themselves.

One example of this which is clear today is the demand for a sliding scale of wages to protect against inflation. The demand has a mass appeal within the working class, has the potential to satisfy their real requirements, but is steadfastly rejected by the reformist leaders.

United action is both desirable and possible on such a demand—but brings workers face to face with the treacherous role of their own leaders.

In fighting along these same lines today, the Workers Socialist League does not refuse to act with other left groups insofar as we agree on particular points of programme on particular issues.

But in our view to weaken in any way the fight for the transitional demands within the workers movement in order to consolidate some form of "alliance" is to seek unity on an *unprincipled* basis and to retreat in practice from the fight for a mass base of support in the struggle against the reformist and Stalinist leaders.

CAPITULATION

This is why such blocs as the electoral pact between the International Marxist Group and the Big Flame are not united fronts.

Rather, by abandoning such basic elements of the Trotskyist programme as the demand for the opening of the books of the employer, the fight for work sharing on full pay and the fight for a sliding scale of wages, the bloc in fact heads in diametrically the opposite direction towards capitulation to reformism and the abandonment of political independence.

As Trotsky wrote in 1929:

"There are epochs when the revolutionary tendency is reduced to a small minority in the labour movement. But those epochs demand not arrangements between the small groups with mutual hiding of sins, but on the contrary, a doubly implacable struggle for a correct perspective and an education of the cadres in the spirit of genuine Marxism. Victory is possible only in this way."

PRESS FREEDOM AND THE CLOSED SHOP

One motion that never quite found its way onto the TUC order paper at Blackpool this year was not set aside because of lack of time—but was knifed in the corridors outside the conference hall.

The motion from the National Union of Journalists called on all TUC unions to refuse contact with any journalist who did not belong to a TUC affiliated union.

In other words the TUC was called on to declare a position on the struggle for a closed shop for journalists in terms which would have made support for closed shop disputes difficult to avoid.

The motion—which was opposed by the right wing inside the NUJ, including the General Secretary, Ken Morgan—came at an apposite time when journalists at Darlington had been on strike for a closed shop for ten weeks.

Strikers were lobbying the TUC calling for supporting action to spread the strike against the employers—Westminster Press.

Bill Keys, General Secretary of SOGAT, had other ideas. As chairman of the Printing Industries Committee of the TUC he was at the time of the TUC meeting setting up a sell out for the Darlington strikers.

PUBLIC ATTACK

It was impossible for him to give even token support to a motion which might mean that concrete support was then demanded for strike after strike around the country.

Key's solution was simple. He told the NUJ delegation that if they did not withdraw the motion he would denounce them from the platform and would launch a public attack against the 'Trotskyists' on the national executive of the NUJ.

The motion was duly withdrawn.

It is one typical account of how the leadership of all the print unions—including the NUJ—has refused to come to terms with the drive towards the closed shop.

Not only has the union had a closed shop as official policy for more than 30 years but the NUJ itself was formed as a reaction to the older Institute of Journalists (IOJ) where leading positions were inevitably taken by management.

In recent years the campaign took active shape at the 1975 Annual Delegates Conference of the NUJ where the union was committed to fight for a closed shop and to make no exceptions for editors.

This took away the loophole by which editors have been free during a dispute to do the strikers' jobs and to sign work done by any scab without fear of sanction by the printers.

HOWL OF RAGE

The closed shop policy was met with a howl of rage throughout Fleet Street, claiming that "the freest Press on earth" was about to be delivered into the hands of NUJ 'reds'.

Fuelled by this witchhunt a special delegate conference inside the NUJ was called which authorised a ballot of the union membership. The ballot then overturned many of the 1975 policies, while reaffirming closed shops as the aim of the union.

The national executive have since made closed shops difficult to declare. Chapels (office branches) must have a vote in favour of action from at least 75% of the members and must have at least 90% of the eligible members already.

On occasion the management has conceded without a fight. But a closed shop is not in itself an

answer to anything. In Fleet Street most of the national dailies which launch the witchhunting against the NUJ militants operate effective closed shops.

The fact that some employers have happily conceded NUJ closed shops (and subsequently been forced to leave the employers federation, the Newspaper Society) is evidence that *in itself* the closed shop is no threat.

The contradiction—that some employers seem to have no qualms about the closed shop, while others will fight it tooth and nail—is merely a reflection of the split on tactics at present evident within the Tory Party.

OPEN CONFRONTATION

Some employers have not been willing to face a lengthy strike in profitable provincial papers, when they have good reason to hope that they can prevent the full implications of the closed shop being used.

Others, however, believe that open confrontation is the best policy.

The drive towards the closed shop itself comes of course in the first place over wages. Provincial journalists are badly paid and in many offices heavily overworked. Pay strikes by the NUJ have

The concept of a 'free press' is as absurd as the concept of a 'neutral' state. The direction taken by the press—like the direction taken by the State—is entirely dependent on the class that owns it.

A paper which elected its editor from the workers, which decided policy through the workers, while the capitalist continued to own the paper would in fact be a form of dual power.

The claim that 'press freedom' exists today is so bizarre that the right of the whole working class to control the media should be clear.

But it is not. Confusion is publicly sown within the ranks of the membership by the leaders of the print unions themselves.

Ken Morgan—who ended his seven year stint as NUJ General Secretary this week—said in his farewell speech to the Central London branch that the employer could be right to fear the closed shop if that ever meant that journalists would attempt to influence editorial content.

The few examples of printers or journalists blacking copy on direct political grounds have all been condemned by the same union leaders who refuse to lead any fight for the defence of jobs, while attempting to force through agree-



ment on the introduction of new technology.

There is little doubt that if the NUJ membership is defeated over the closed shop—as opposed to individual strikes being defeated—then the way will be open for the employer to set about breaking up print union closed shops.

NO CONTACT

The way forward for NUJ members is to take the campaign into the labour movement—pressing for no contact to be made with IOJ or other non-union journalists.

The refusal of the print union leaders to fight for this relatively simple trade union demand, is part and parcel of their refusal to fight for wages or to defend jobs.

The campaign for the closed shop must therefore be bound up in a campaign for a new leadership in the print unions, a leadership based on the needs of the workers in the industry and subject to instant recall by it.

Above all the closed shop fight must never be seen as a narrow question of wages and conditions but as the fight to bring the media under workers' control: only then will any meaningful 'freedom of the press' be established—since only this step can open up the media to the voice of the overwhelming majority of society—the working class.

Lewisham police attacks

Police last week stepped up their harrassment of South London's black community with the arrest of the wife and three children of David Foster, Chairman of the Lewisham 21 Defence Committee.

The arrests took place early on the morning of Saturday 17 September. David Foster had left his home in New Cross at 6.30 to go to work. Ten minutes later a policeman arrived at the house.

He told Mrs Foster he had come to check whether her son Chris, one of the Lewisham 21 was at home. (Under the bail conditions, the defendants have to be indoors from 9pm to 7am every day).

Mrs Foster checked her son's room and confirmed that Chris was in bed.

RADIOED

Mrs Foster alleges that the policeman radioed the station and was told by an Inspector to "nick" the boy anyway. A moment later the inspector said that he would come down and do the job himself.

Five minutes later the Inspector and three other policemen arrived. According to Mrs Foster the inspector assaulted her and her 15 year old daughter, Dawn, as the other policemen looked on, amazed.

Mrs Foster and her daughter, still in her nightclothes, were then arrested and taken to Deptford police station where they were held for three hours before being charged with assault.

They were then left to walk home although Dawn Foster was still in her nightclothes.

Meanwhile, 16 year old Chris and his brother Karl had themselves been arrested when the police paid a second visit to the house.

Chris was charged with breaking bail conditions and the police asked for him to be kept in custody. The magistrate, however, was not prepared to agree and gave him bail of £50.

The Fosters have now taken out two summonses against the police, one alleging assault and the other, assault and grievous bodily harm.

But if this police harrassment is to be halted, the immediate need is to fight for the mobilisation of the labour movement in South East London.

The Lewisham 21 Defence Committee must urgently proceed to approach Labour Party and Trade Union branches and other labour movement bodies to elect delegates to a Labour Movement Enquiry into the events surrounding the arrest and subsequent treatment of the Lewisham 21 and the assault and arrest of members of Mr Foster's family.



A flash in the pan? Police defend a Lewisham 21 demonstration from attack by National Front fascists last July.

FIGHT TUC PAY SABOTAGE

Union conference decisions taken only this summer are already being ripped to confetti by desperate union officials determined to stem the tide of pay struggles.

As the storm mounts within the AUEW against Scanlon's action in flouting the National Conference policy and casting the AUEW's 1.2 million votes to tip the scales in favour of the 12-month rule, the 37 man TGWU Executive met last week and voted to throw overboard the union's explicit rejection of the rule at July's Biennial Delegate Conference.

Meanwhile in the NUM the right wing leadership is also embarked upon a course of all-out defiance of conference policy—discarding the decision for a £135 claim to be lodged for November, and adopting instead the defeated call for productivity deals.

The struggle to break Healey's 10% limit and win big claims linked to cost of living clauses to regain and defend living standards is thus inseparable from the issue of union democracy and the struggle for new leadership in the trade unions.

For this reason we urge full support for the Conference on "The Wages Offensive and the Fight for the Sliding Scale of Wages" called for Sunday 23 October by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement at Digbeth Hall, Birmingham.

More information about the conference and credentials (50p) can be obtained from the Conference Secretary, Kevin Lee, 44, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham



NEW BOOKLET

THE CASE FOR THE SLIDING SCALE OF WAGES

All the points you need to know in fighting for the sliding scale 20p plus 10p postage from Kevin Lee, 44, Devonshire Road, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham

WHO WILL FIGHT CALLAGHAN?

Key Issue Is Breaking

Lib-Lab Coalition

The right wing's line for the Labour Party conference is already plain for all to see. Healey, Callaghan and the coalitionists who make up the present cabinet will set out above all to ensure that the key issues of pay policy and the Lib-Lab deal remain intact.

Any censure they receive on this or that aspect of their reactionary pro-capitalist policies will be brushed aside with the time honoured contempt shown by Labour leaders for party conferences.

A few crocodile tears on youth unemployment will be shed, a memorial bouquet or two thrown on the coffin of the mutilated social services, and a liberal helping of fraudulent hints at better times to come and a Christmas bonus for Britain's starving pensioners will be the biggest concessions made by the crypto-Tory right wing.

KNIFE-EDGE

Yet Healey and Callaghan know their coalition government hangs on a knife edge. Any day now mass struggles on wages could precipitate a governmental crisis that would sweep them from office.

The reason they feel able to approach the annual conference with such arrogance is the spineless capitulation by the Labour 'left' even before the first signs of battle.

The 'Tribune' group of MPs, for example, has trooped obediently time and time again into the Parliamentary lobby in order to register support for the Callaghan-Steel coalition, and the pay laws it was designed to introduce.

HABIT

There appears no chance that they will break what has become such a deep-rooted habit during this year's party conference.

HAIN: WHO IS JOINING WHO?



Hain

Peter Hain and Simon Hebditch have deserted the Liberals and joined the Labour Party.

Peter Hain has successfully



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report.

Callaghan—no fears of serious revolt by the 'lefts'.

Indeed it is even unlikely that any leading figures on the Labour 'left' will be unmannerly enough to blurt out the fact that this is a coalition government in which the Labour Party plays second fiddle to the bourgeois Liberal Party.

Certainly Callaghan and Healey will feel safe from attack on this score from the tame cat "Trotskyists" of the Militant group, who have openly declared their opposition to breaking the coalition deal, while pleading for a whole range of socialist policies to be implemented by Callaghan.

But it is necessary to put the 'left' Labourites on the spot in order to expose their role to those sections of workers who retain the illusion that they might turn and fight the right wing.

This is why the Workers Socialist League has changed its original plan to lobby the Labour Conference on

Tuesday October 4 and called instead for a lobby of the annual Tribune Group meeting on Sunday October 2 at 10.30 am at the Dome Brighton.

Our central demands will be that the 'lefts':

- *Break the coalition. Launch the fight at this conference!
- *Fight for the removal of the Callaghan-Healey leadership!
- *Support all pay struggles.
- *Fight for a socialist programme for the coming general election.

Right wing attacked in Camden

Camden Labour Councillor Phil Turner has caused a stir in the local Labour Party by putting into print the words that many Labour activists have been thinking for some time.

In an article headed 'Wanted—A Socialist Council' published in the St. Pancras journal *This Month*, Turner attacks local right wingers:

"One hears more and more from the leadership of the Group about the 'plight of ratepayers' and less and less about the needs of the poor and disadvantaged."

And Turner goes on to draw a conclusion which applies with equal relevance to the Labour government when he points out that the Labour Group, and the leadership in particular:

"... have become obsessed with 'cost effectiveness', 'manpower saving' and all the other jargon phrases of the economic crisis."

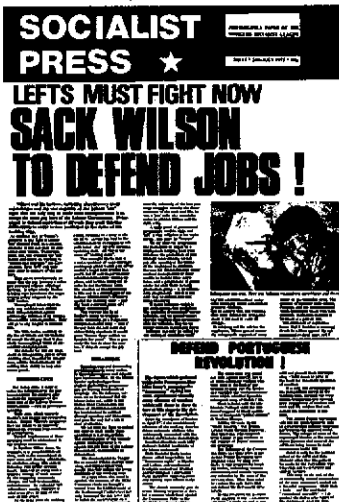
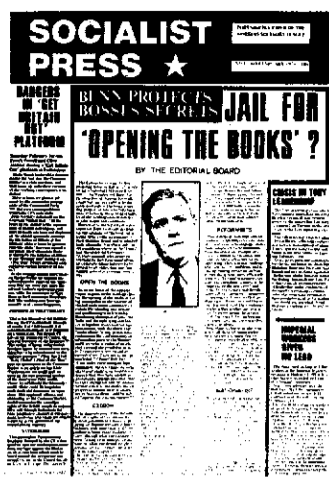
A fight to remove reactionary local Labour leaderships and right wing MPs is the only way to resolve this problem. Turner's article—though insufficient in itself—shows that many sections of the Labour Party are beginning to think in

DISCARDED

Socialist Press would like to know what is being referred to here.

Is it the policy of wage restraint, unemployment and the cuts or was Peter Hain referring to the now tattered and discarded 1974 Election Manifesto?

Meanwhile we will watch with interest to see whether these ex-Liberals are serious about their socialism or whether this move reflects instead the move by the Labour 'lefts' towards the policies of the Liberal Party. Hain and friend will show in practice where



DATE SET FOR WEEKLY PAPER

DEADLINE NOVEMBER 2
That was the date fixed for the first issue of the new weekly 'Socialist Press' at a meeting last week of the Executive Committee of the Workers Socialist League.

The go-ahead for the expansion of the paper comes at an explosive stage in the development of the political crisis in Britain, as the Lib-Lab coalition struggles to hold together reactionary wage controls rejected by the vast majority of workers. Such a situation confirms the need for a Trotskyist weekly paper.

In their efforts to maintain the Callaghan-Steel coalition in office the TUC leaders have embarked on a series of manoeuvres and breaches of democratic procedures even more blatant than those that rail-roaded through the hated Phase 2 policy.

In their desperate attempts to hold back the working class on wages, the union bureaucracy has reached the point of sabotaging even the most basic struggles for unionisation and recognition—as in Trust Houses Forte, Grunwick, Desoutters and Westminster Press.

REFORMISTS

This provides the clearest conditions for a struggle both for an alternative programme to the reformists and for the construction of a new leadership within the trade union and labour movement.

The work already done by the fortnightly *Socialist Press* on such issues has established a record far ahead of any other left wing paper.

To take just one example, we should note that throughout the whole period prior to and following the Phase 2 vote at the 1976 TUC, *Socialist Press* alone insisted that the TUC vote was a stage-managed bureaucratic manoeuvre which in no way reflected the feeling of workers on the shop floor.

STRUGGLES

While every other left group attempted to argue that workers "accepted" or "agreed with" the TUC policy that there would be no struggles against Phase 2 and that the only hope of activity would be protests against the cuts it was left to *Socialist Press* to pinpoint its tell-tale signs of a wages explosion beneath the surface of events.



The toolroom strike: Socialist Press alone drew the real lessons.

This is why we alone were able to draw the political significance of the Seamen's strike, of the pay strikes last year at Rubery Owen and Salisbury Transmissions, and the New Year's wave of pay strikes.

This resistance culminated in the Leyland toolroom strike which brought the downfall of the Labour government and the emergence of the wage-cutting Lib-Lab coalition.

And while the left groups floundered on this, it was left to *Socialist Press* in a Special Issue, to draw the political lessons from this change and to step up our consistent struggle for the exposure of the 'left' talkers within the Labour Party—demanding the 'left' MPs vote against the coalition, and fight for the removal of the Callaghan-Healey leadership.

Indeed *Socialist Press* alone consistently characterised the Lib-Lab deal as an unspoken coalition and highlighted the urgent need to break that deal if the fight for socialist policies is to proceed.

Our line on these developments and interventions into key struggles at home has been combined with a continuous orientation towards the struggles and political problems faced by the working class internationally.

From the earliest issues of *Socialist Press* we have seen the crisis of political leadership in the British workers movement as part of an international crisis of leadership, in which Stalinist and reformist parties play a treacherous role in every country.

And at the same time we have recognised that this crisis of leadership can only be resolved by the fight to reconstruct the Trotskyist Fourth International—at present divided and disorientated by opportunist leaderships and unresolved problems.

Socialist Press has been able to carry therefore not only international news—spanning dozens of countries and attempting in each case to provide not simply neutral "news" but a Marxist assessment of struggles—but also considerable material on the problems and the tasks to be confronted in reconstructing the Fourth International.

EXPANDED

And as we have expanded *Socialist Press* from an initial eight pages to twelve pages we have been able at the same time to develop extended book reviews, and coverage of the arts, as well as industrial news pages which offer regular and serious analysis of a wide range of disputes.

Every one of these aspects of *Socialist Press* will be developed and expanded with the added scope of the weekly paper. It will retain the existing 12-page format though the added expense of producing a weekly paper will mean that we will have to impose our first-ever price increase, with the new paper going on sale on November 2 at 15 pence.

The decision to name the date for weekly publication follows an

examination of the strong response to our £3,000 Special Fund, which is now within clear sight of complete success.

But the fight for this money must not relax. We need every penny of that £3,000 to proceed with this development of the paper.

WSL branches throughout the country are already straining every muscle to raise donations and carry through fund-raising activities—but readers can also play a vital role in raising the final amount needed.

Many of course have already donated generously during the campaign for the Fund. But we call again on all readers and supporters to rush last minute donations for the completion of the Fund to *Socialist Press* without delay.

And at the same time we want to urge our readers to let us know their feelings about the content and style of the weekly paper—articles and topics that in your view ought to be featured in the pages of *Socialist Press*.

Already a number of meetings of WSL members have revealed a strong feeling that our coverage of the Labour Party should be expanded and developed in the weekly, while others have proposed a regular allocation of space

specifically for reviews and the arts.

Let us have your views and comments so that in the final planning stages of the weekly paper we can draw on the broadest sample of readers' opinions.

NOT RELAXED

One thing we can guarantee. The weekly *Socialist Press* will not relax in the struggle to present the most developed Trotskyist political analysis on the key issues in the international workers movement.

We have no intention of attempting to dissolve our paper into a mish-mash of opportunist and diplomatic statements and centrist confusion along the lines of *Socialist Challenge*, nor of aping the moralising rank-and-fileism of *Socialist Worker*.

The weekly *Socialist Press* will therefore play a key political role in the coming struggles of the working class and as the organiser around which the struggle to construct a revolutionary leadership within the labour movement can take new strides forward.

We are certain that our readers and WSL members will respond to this call and lay a firm basis for continued development.

FUND RAISER



To commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Russian Revolution the WSL has produced a five colour silk screen print of a recruitment poster for the Red Cavalry during the Russian Civil War.

This poster is available from local branches of the WSL, price £1, or from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR, price £1 plus 25p p&p.

All proceeds to the Socialist Press Special Fund for the weekly paper.

BACK ISSUES
SOCIALIST PRESS
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MAGAZINE GOES QUARTERLY

The first issue of 'Trotskyism Today', the theoretical magazine launched by the Workers Socialist League in July, has been an enormous success.

Many local areas have already sold out their allocations and continued orders are coming in for additional copies.

In the light of this response the magazine's Editorial Board, meeting this weekend, has fixed the next publication date as the end of October, from when it will appear regularly on a quarterly basis.

Among the features to be included will be the transcript of an educational lecture on Aspects of the History of the Fourth International given at the WSL Summer School, together with an examination of the role and policies of the Trotskyists in Britain during World War 2.

Advance subscriptions are now

available for the magazine, at £2.50 per year, including postage. If issue number one is anything to go by, this could be the only way to be sure of a copy!

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INDUSTRIAL NEWS



Grunwick: BUREAUCRATS PREPARE TO PULL OUT

"What the report said to Mr. Ward was that he should make a gesture and take a few of them (the strikers) back to give the unions a chance to save their faces . . . Mr. Ward was not being asked to surrender anything essential".

Knowing *Socialist Press* to be the only newspaper to have consistently exposed the Scarman Report as being nothing short of a sell-out and effectively a shield behind which all the trade union bureaucrats both "left" and right would hide, regular readers will be forgiven for thinking the above quote is drawn from a past issue of this paper.

If this isn't the case, then perhaps the centrist waverings of *Socialist Challenge* or the rank and filism of *Socialist Worker* have somehow or other finally dragged them into a position of opposition to the Scarman proposals and out in defence of the strikers jobs?

SHEFFIELD FIGHT ON PAY RULE

Mounting anger against the AUEW leadership showed itself at the special shop stewards meeting last Monday recalled by the Sheffield District Committee to discuss the TUC report back.

Richard Caborn, a leading 'left' Labourite and member of the AUEW delegation at Congress vividly described Scanlon's blatant disregard for the union rulebook (which states that the AUEW delegation decides how to cast the union's block vote).

He was followed by his father, veteran Stalinist District Secretary George Caborn who put the position of the Sheffield District Committee.

Fearful of the pressure of the shop floor, Caborn pledged support for all local engineers with claims either over the 10% or against the 12 month rule.

In the discussion that followed most stewards showed that they understood clearly that this policy would bring them into sharp conflict with the union executive—who have already instructed all full-time officials not even to apply for strike pay for those sections

Regretfully such an about turn is asking too much from those who have without fail lined up their forces in effect behind the bureaucracy.

In fact the lines above represent one of those rare occasions when verification for our point of view comes in a hysterical outburst from a representative of the ruling class, in this case James Prior, arch right wing Tory and Shadow Secretary for employment.

Prior's frankness is matched by the story on the front page of the *Times* last Friday.

Under the headline "Union preparing for withdrawal from Grunwick's dispute", APEX leader Roy Grantham shamelessly revealed that he had:

" . . . finally recognised that there are no tactics available for winning the dispute that are not either illegal or damaging to the electoral chances of the government."

The only surprising thing about this disgusting sabotage is that it's taken so long to bubble to the surface.

For this decision to abandon the strike represents the logical culmination of the whole APEX strategy and fitting tribute to the series of talks between trade union leaders, all with strike breaking records as long as their wage slips, and various strike committee members, ostensibly set up to transform the spineless TUC resolution calling for "an intensification of financial and practical aid" into concrete action.

SECRECY

From the very outset it was clear that these talks, destined to head off demands for immediate action, would be conducted under a heavy veil of secrecy.

Even the strike committee itself has been kept in the dark about the progress of these negotiations and "persuaded" not to lobby these meetings.

Indeed the increasingly blatant and vicious attempts by the APEX leadership to gain total control over the strike committee and steer it into certain defeat confirms the pressing need for the committee to reassert its independence from the bureaucracy.

Elements of demoralisation within the strike must be consciously fought by the strike committee. The call for a mass lobby of the TUC General Council meeting issued last week is clearly a move in the right direction.

ISOLATED

But this turn must not be an isolated shift in policy. Whatever the outcome of this meeting, a strong call should go out for the immediate resumption of the mass pickets, thereby cutting the ground away from those who will suggest continuing negotiations.

From his recent statements it is clear that Grantham sees the strike dragging along till at least Christmas and he will go to any lengths to cut short any independent action by the strikers.

The strikers can expect no help from the likes of Grantham, but must appeal for support to the labour movement as soon as possible, as well as demanding an immediate end to the secrecy within the strike.

*For mass pickets now!
*For the blacking of post, water and electricity now!
*No to Trade Union sell-outs!
*Scarman proposals out! For full reinstatement and recognition now!

CARS BULLETIN LAUNCHED

Thirty car workers attended the first car workers conference called by the Campaign for Democracy in the Labour Movement in Birmingham on September 11.

Although representing a modest beginning the conference made an important contribution towards the development of alternative leadership in the car industry.

The conference was comprised mostly of workers from the Cowley Body Plant, the Cowley Assembly Plant, the Longbridge complex and Jaguar.

The conference took the decision to set up an on-going committee of the CDLM and elected delegates to it.

It charged the committee with the task of beginning the publication of a Car Workers Bulletin to be sold in the car plants as a focus for the struggle for alternative leadership.

The conference also decided that the Committee should organise a wider and better prepared conference at a future date to carry this work forward.

The conference, which was on the programme of the CDLM, passed a motion which laid stress on the need to regain and defend living standards.

INFLATION

Over and above the call to break the 12-month rule and declaring full support to workers in struggle against wage control, the motion spelled out the need for cost-of-living clauses to protect against inflation.

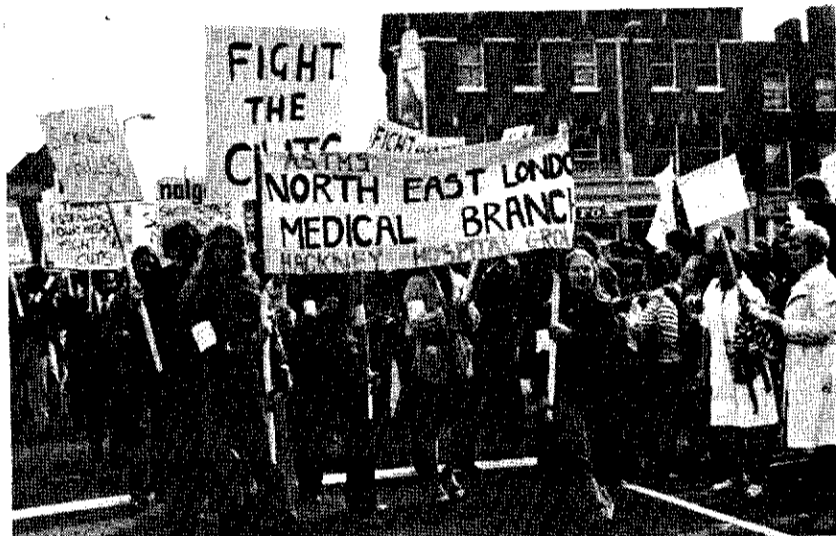
Corporate bargaining and 'participation' schemes were opposed and mutuality agreements defended, while the call for the opening of the books and nationalisation of the car and component industry was included.

Other objectives adopted were:
*Extend and improve lay off agreements to 100% pay.

*No secret negotiations. Direct control over negotiating committees by mass meetings.

*For Combine Committees directly answerable to the shop floor.

*Against import controls.



Workers in nearby Hackney marching against the cuts last year.

PLAISTOW MARCH

The Action Committee of Plaistow Hospital, East London, has called for the biggest possible mobilisation of local community and trade union support for a march on October 1.

EGA Reprieved — Minister

100 supporters of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital work-in picketed DHSS headquarters on Tuesday 20 September as their representatives lobbied Secretary of State David Ennals to demand the hospital stay open.

Ennals announced to the lobby of stewards, union officials, local MPs and consultants that he had been "converted" to the case for a women's hospital to be run by women, but gave no assurance that this meant the EGA would stay open.

He also admitted that but for the work-in, the hospital would have been shut months ago. Instead the DHSS has been forced to implement the laborious consultation of local interests as to the future of the hospital.

This statutory procedure, which the DHSS had previously avoided, will not stop the closure, but will give the work-in another three months breathing space to step up the fight for the repair of the hospital lift and for the upgrading of the hospital on its present site.

A work-in to stop plans to close the hospital has been going on since July 15.

The workers have said, through their unions, that it should stay open until such time as better maternity facilities are provided.

The Area Health Authority plan to close Plaistow to implement government cuts and transfer its work to Forest Gate hospital presents, the workers point out, the danger of delays for expectant mothers that could be critical.

Newham has already one of the highest rates of infant mortality in Europe, with terrible conditions and run down social services.

Plaistow is not the first East London hospital to come under the axe.

Already the Plaistow Invalid and Crippled Children Hospital has closed as well as the Poplar Hospital.

The responsibility for this rests first and foremost on the shoulders of the trade union leaders in the public sector who refused to mobilise strike action in their defence.

The October 1 demonstration must become the focus of a movement of strikes and occupations that can prevent this happening again.

STILL AVAILABLE
THE TOOLROOM STRIKE AND
THE FIGHT TO END WAGE
CONTROL

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SHEFFIELD CP SHOWS COLOURS ON PAY

40 AUEW members at Singlehurst Hydraulics in Sheffield were locked out on 15 September by management after imposing a work to rule over a 25% pay claim. The dispute offered the Communist Party-dominated AUEW District Committee a golden chance to push through a claim in excess of the 10% limit—though not in breach of the 12 month rule. However, while official backing was granted, District Secretary George Caborn also took a hand in negotiations, as a result of which the workers have now been persuaded to return with a mere 10% settlement, while negotiations take place on a self-financing deal to provide additional bonus payments. This deal provides a sombre warning to those who might be expecting any firm lead on pay from Caborn and the District.

No backing yet for Rolls Royce

As the strike by over 100 production workers at Rolls Royce in Willesden, North London goes into its third week, the strike has yet to be made official by any of the four unions involved—the TGWU, the sheetmetal workers, the woodworkers and the EETPU, although the sheetmetal workers leadership promised a favourable decision this week.

A mass meeting on 16 September rightly threw the management's offer of an 8% wage rise and £1 a week for sick pay into the dustbin and confirmed their original demand—for a 17% wage rise coupled with average earnings of at least £71 a week holiday pay.

As we go to press it is still unclear what response a similar claim has had in the two other plants in Crewe and Shrewsbury and news that the Crewe plant have accepted a management offer of 10% whereas the Shrewsbury plant seems set to strike for their original claim is unconfirmed.

What is clear though is that the fight for official backing will be a long and arduous one, something those in Willesden realise when they say they expect to greet snow on the picket line.

Canley job fears

British Leyland's plans for the ending of car production at Triumph's Canley plant in Coventry have led to fears that thousands of jobs will be lost.

The work is being transferred to Solihull and despite promises of retraining and reorganisation of Canley as an engine plant, workers there are disturbed by the possibility that car production will be transferred before the preparation for the new work is underway.

Following a meeting with all four Coventry MPs, managing director Derek Whittaker has agreed to call a meeting of all convenors at the Canley plant.

The MPs admitted, however, that they were not "entirely happy" with the outcome of their meeting with Whittaker.

Workers at Canley must demand a full inspection of the company's books which will lay the groundwork for a trade union plan for the future of British Leyland—a plan which will start from the principle of defending jobs.

NUJ CAVES IN TO PRINT UNION OFFICIALS ON CLOSED SHOP

A short lived stand by the National Executive of the NUJ against the brute force of the TUC collapsed this week when it voted without dissent to put the question of a closed shop at Darlington up for barter.

The Executive agreed that a 'mediator' will have a free hand to produce a 'solution' to the strike at the Westminster Press owned North of England Newspapers.

The mediator will also be free to propose a settlement to the dispute at Westminster Press's London office where journalists were victimised for refusing to break the Darlington strike.

OPENED UP

In this way strikes at both offices where journalists have been picketing since early June have been opened up for print union leaders to carry out a sell out.

Only 10 days before their collapse the NUJ executive had voted—by 10 to 9 with one abstention—to make victory at Darlington and London an absolute condition of settlement.

Now although the strikes will continue the arena has been shifted away from the strikes into the conference rooms where the bureaucrats have more freedom to manoeuvre.

MEDIATION

The Printing Industries Committee of the TUC had proposed at Blackpool that mediation should begin and that journalists and supporting printers should return to work. A 90 to nil vote by the Darlington chapel to stay out followed by a similar vote in London set the scene to resist this.

An emergency meeting of the Westminster Press NUJ group chapel was called, a mass-lobby of



Ken Morgan—until this week NUJ General Secretary.

the group met in Darlington and reaffirmed support, a move which brought the possibility of escalating the strike closer.

CROSS PICKET

But the PIC threatened to order all print workers at Darlington to cross the picket line if the NUJ did not go into mediation without pre-conditions.

Keys, Morgan and the other print leaders are looking for a short term "interim" closed shop from Westminster Press in return for an end to the strike.

The cynical nature of this treachery was exposed at Blackpool. There, in secret, print union leaders met NUJ members from Kettering who want to leave the union and assured them they were free to do so.

Last year their attempted defection prolonged a dispute at Kettering into a six month closed shop battle.

IDENTICAL

It was the identical solution which is now being sought at Darlington which finally drove the NUJ members back to work. Now their strike is shown to have been in vain.

All is not yet lost. The strikes continue and the NUJ Executive has promised to examine the mediator's proposals "in the light of NUJ policy."

This cryptic wording which was accepted by the entire left wing of the Executive is specifically designed to mean all things to all parties.

But it takes the disputes into exactly the arena in which the print union leaders will flourish: the half world of shady deals, half truths and sordid manoeuvres that could leave NUJ members and printers alike drinking bile out of a cup called 'victory'.

the NEC was arranged and a motion was prepared to combat the sell-out.

This resulted in the historic vote by the Executive to continue the fight without concessions.

It was achieved in the face of bitter hostility from the outgoing NUJ General Secretary Ken Morgan who urged the Executive not to vote at all rather than vote for the tough amendment.

BLUNT

The reaction of Bill Keys, chairman of the PIC, when Morgan broke the bad news was blunt.

"When will the NUJ National Executive grow up?"

He convened a second and more determined meeting of the PIC.

Evidence that the strong stand by the NUJ was correct was borne out immediately.

Under the impact of the vote, print union FoC's from all over

I'M A SOCIALIST CLAIMS ENNALS

A chanting crowd of nearly 400 hospital workers and local supporters greeted Minister of State for Health David Ennals on his arrival at St. Nicholas's Hospital in South East London on Monday 26 September.

The hospital has been cited for closure by the Greenwich and Bexley Area Health Authority. Ennals agreed to inspect it after the Community Health Council had responded to a wave of protest and objected to the move.

Ennals was all smiles as he gave his brief set speech about "a very difficult decision" and hurried along to avoid questions.

He spent three hours touring the wards, posing for pictures and engaging patients in smarmy conversation.



Worry and bitterness were written on the patients' faces. One woman from Thamesmead with a broken leg told *Socialist Press*: "How can we tell him what we really think? We're terrified down there; it's all concrete. You might be dead before you got to hospital."

She added "I think he wants to close it."

At the end of his walk about Ennals refused to give his decision or even to speculate on its timing. He insisted that the area health services would have to suffer an equivalent blow elsewhere if St. Nicholas's were to remain open.

When asked how a Labour Minister could justify cutting the Health Services of working people anywhere, Ennals claimed that the NHS was continuing to expand in real terms.

"After all", he spluttered, "I'm a socialist!"

On leaving the hospital he received a "Save St. Nicks" badge which he stuck in his pocket with an apologetic laugh.

Members of the action committee to save St. Nicholas's were divided on the likelihood of Ennals reversing the closure decision.

Socialist Press asked the workers what they would do if he went ahead with the closure.

From their answer it seems clear that some kind of resistance is envisaged. They would now do well to come out openly for occupation and to prepare labour movement support for it throughout the community.

SKEGNESS: A NEW THF?

The refusal of TGWU officials to use the strength of the 1.9 million strong union to win disputes emerged clearly in the marathon strikes against the Trust Houses Forte hotel chain which were sold out earlier this year.

Now 43 workers at Sanderson's fork-lift factory in Skegness are facing similar obstruction in their twenty-week battle for reinstatement and union recognition.

They are up against not only a reactionary anti-union employer, but TGWU Regional Secretary David Cairns, whose actions helped ensure the sell-out of the Imperial Typewriters occupation in 1975.

TGWU officials have so far dragged their feet on any blacking action against Sandersons and its subsidiary, Truckmasters. Sandersons is continuing to import Toyota fork trucks and adapt them.

Meanwhile all Cairns could say at a support meeting called on 12 September was how difficult it would be for the strikers to get jobs if they were defeated.

TGWU members however have given strong support to the action—with Ford workers blacking the supply of engines, leading to a drop in production from 15 trucks a week to 3.

As strike committee member Colin Simpson told *Socialist Press*:

"We are fighting on three fronts: one, the employer; two, the higher TGWU officials; and three, hard-ship. We are receiving only £6 per week strike pay from the union with another £6 from the strike fund."

There seems to be no cooperation between the union officials and the strike committee.

If we lose this it will set trade unionism in this area back 100 years—but we will win.

But what we need to win is full backing from the union. Above all we need urgent financial support."

The next meeting of the TGWU No. 10 Regional Committee must

be lobbied with the demand for immediate Regional and national blacking on Sandersons, and for increased financial help.

In the meantime, support and donations should be sent to Phil Gilliatt, 27, St. Matilda's Drive, Winthorpe, Skegness, Lincolnshire.

Leyland

FROM PAGE 1.

factories throughout the Leyland combine to submit their own claims now and take action to win them.

And they must broaden this call to the car industry as a whole—where claims are now in process in Ford and Vauxhall.

In each of these cases we advocate that the claims submitted should be full catching up claims to regain 1974 pay levels, linked to cost of living increases, providing rises to keep pace with inflation as assessed by elected trade union committees.

To highlight the fight against the present government the Leyland strikers must demand that the 'left' Labour MPs declare full support for the strike and

fight to break the Lib-Lab coalition.

It is by the stand they take on coming struggles that these so-called 'left wingers' can be exposed in the eyes of thousands of workers who still cherish illusions that they will at some point fight Callaghan, and new steps forward can be taken in the fight for new leadership in the workers' movement.

The pay policy is already reeling under the battering of a wages offensive—correct leadership in such major disputes as that at Leyland can deal it the final blow, and open up the possibility of a fight for an alternative programme.

MORE DETAILS

Please send me more information about the Workers Socialist League.

Name.....

Address.....

Post to WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.

DESOUTTERS: FIGHT MUST GO ON

A mass meeting of strikers from Desoutters Brothers in West London—on strike for 20 weeks demanding trade union recognition—voted on Monday to accept a management document as the basis for a return to work.

At the same time the meeting decided to remain on strike in support of the convenor, Fred Hopper (who was sacked during the dispute) and to meet again after AUEW officials have met Desoutters management on the

issue.

The document which the mass meeting has accepted in no way concedes trade union recognition.

It simply provides a procedure by which "individuals" can raise grievances and if they wish, can be accompanied by an "employee of their choice".

NO RECOGNITION

There is to be no recognition of shop stewards and no collective representation. It will remain impossible for example to negotiate on wages.

Standing behind the vote to accept the company's terms was the shameful decision of the London North District Committee to refuse to institute a District levy to finance the strike.

The Committee had built up the hopes of the strikers by sending an F&GP member Don Cook to look at the books of the strike. He proclaimed that a levy was needed and undertook to press this.

When the F&GP met on Tuesday of last week however, it did not discuss the levy. Instead they recommended a return to work on the basis of the document which has now been accepted.

On the question of the levy the District President George Anthony an extreme right wing CP member, said there was no need for one since

the strikers were going back to work.

The next evening the full meeting of the District Committee voted down a levy by 9 votes to 4.

Stalinist Don Cook who had inspected the books carried out his promise. He argued for the levy, and then voted against it.

This was a further blow to the financially hard pressed strikers.

At the mass meeting the key role was played by Bill McLoughlin AUEW Divisional Organiser. He said that the company had made some "concessions" in the document and that it could be used to the workers' advantage.

"CONCESSIONS"

He was not however prepared to move acceptance himself but instead railroaded the strike committee into recommending acceptance on a majority decision.

The sacking of the convenor shows how many "concessions" the company are making.

A return to work without his full reinstatement would mean further victimisation and harassment.

It is essential that the strike remains completely solid for the full reinstatement of the convenor and the campaign for national blacking must continue.

The blacking is still firm in Oxford and Sheffield and this must be extended. New and more regular sources of finance must be established.

It may be that the struggle to defend Fred Hopper will create the conditions for a new look at a document which can only be described as a sell out.

TOOLMAKERS BACK BL LINE

BRITISH LEYLAND have found a new ally in their bid to stamp out individual plant bargaining after November 1.

He is Roy Fraser—once notorious as the leader of the Leyland Toolroom strike which clashed with the rigid straight-jacket of Phase 2 earlier this year.

Now Fraser and the toolroom committee have called a new strike from October 28—the aim being to pressure Leyland into proceeding with this proposed corporate bargaining structure.

This manoeuvre has nothing to do with rates of pay. Fraser is simply seeking the best lever for

restoring pay differentials between workers.

This clashes with the aim of TGWU leaders—to bring about area rather than corporation-wide bargaining.

And both plans conflict with the feeling on the shop floor—which is bitterly opposed to the end of plant bargaining.

Hugh Scanlon—who during the strike agreed that the 3,000 toolmakers be sacked by Leyland—has now weighed in to back Fraser.

Whatever comes out of new talks between Scanlon and Jones, workers will need to fight to defend plant bargaining.



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report.

Fraser

UNION OF THE LEFT IN CRISIS

France's popular front—the Union of the Left—is now in the throes of its worst crisis since its formation five years ago.

The crisis could, conceivably, lead to the break up of the Union.

Talks between the leaders of the political groups which comprise the Union—the Socialist Party (SP), the Communist Party (CP) and the bourgeois Radicals—ended in deadlock last week, with no agreement reached on the front's common programme.

This failure further exacerbates the crisis engendered on September 14 when Radical leader, Robert Fabre, stormed out of the first round of talks accusing the CP of "intransigence".

The ostensible sticking point in the negotiations has been the CP proposal that the original (1972) programme of the Union, which called for the nationalisation of the country's nine biggest industrial groups as well as the banking and financial sectors, should be extended to include all subsidiaries of these groups.

Standing behind these apparently doctrinal differences, however, is a sordid reality of electoral politicking.

The Radicals staged the walkout as a way of focussing national attention on themselves and their role in the popular front.

FORMAL GUARANTEES

Their participation in the Union is a formal guarantee to the bourgeoisie that the working class's own parties are willing to tailor working class demands to suit French capitalism.

Fabre's walkout is a demonstrative reminder to the French bourgeoisie that it is their interests that he represents and for which he is fighting. As such it is a thinly-veiled call for middle class support in next Spring's legislative elections.

But the CP have also had to play to their working class base—hence the extended list of companies to be nationalised and the proposed increase in the minimum wage from 2,200 to 2,400 francs, as well as their apparent "intransigent" opposition to the Radicals' demands.

All this however is window-dressing: the CP are motivated by considerations of bureaucratic self-interest, not concern for independent working class activity; their much feted stand on the nationalisation issue is characterised not by intransigence, but by the crassest opportunism.

Already the CP have dropped their demands that the Peugeot-Citroen car works and the Compagnie Francaise des Petroles be nationalised.

Moreover, it should be pointed out that the proposed nationalisations will be bureaucratically executed from above, and will include a takeover of plants which French capital currently find it unprofitable to run privately.

The correct demand is that the CP and SP break with the bourgeoisie by breaking from the Union of the Left, by rejecting the common programme and by refusing any participation in any such popular front blocs. Instead there must be a fight for a SP/CP government on a socialist programme.

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TAMESIDE, From Front Page.

mass mobilisations against fascism and for denying them a platform."

It is all very well for the IMG to "reject the ban with contempt".

The fact of the matter remains that we as socialists cannot march or meet legally within Tameside between September 21 and the end of October.

Workers democratic rights have been removed.

The ban has simply handed the NF an issue on which to campaign while workers have learned no new lessons on how to fight fascism.

Almost forty years ago Leon Trotsky had this to say about state bans on fascist organisations.

"Being an irreconcilable opponent not only of fascism but also of the present day Comintern I am at the same time decidedly against the suppression of either of them.

The outlawing of fascist groups would inevitably have a fictitious character: as reactionary organisations they can easily change their colour and adapt themselves to any kind of organisational form since the influential sections of the ruling class and of the governmental apparatus sympathise considerably with them and these sympathies inevitably increase during times of political crisis.

... Under the conditions of the bourgeois regime, all suppression of political rights and freedom, no matter whom they are directed against in the beginning, in the end inevitably bear down upon the working class, particularly its advanced elements. That is the law of history.

The workers must learn how to distinguish between their friends and their enemies according to their own judgement and not according to the hints of the police."

The ruling class today clearly has no intention of silencing the fascists.

On the other hand the state will continue to bear down heavily on the anti-fascists.

This is why we insist that the way to crush the fascists must be the independent mobilisation of the working class.

Whenever there are threats from the fascists against the organisation of the labour movement or the black community—which is bearing the brunt of fascist attacks at present—there must be a campaign for the formation of workers defence squads.

Those 'lefts' who call for a 'ban' on the front must be forced to support such a fight.

At the same time we recognise that the fascists are only able to grow because they pose as people with an answer to the economic crisis.

We will be able to cut the ground from beneath the feet of the fascists only by advancing a programme which can defend and regain living standards.

The 'lefts' must support the struggles of workers against the coalition government's policies of wage control, unemployment and cuts which add fuel to fascist campaigns.

They must launch a campaign for the breaking of the coalition

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