

SOCIALIST PRESS



Weekly paper of the Workers Socialist League * No. 121 * October 18, 1978 * 15p



Pay crunch
at Leyland
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DON'T ISOLATE FORDS!

STRIKE NOW ON WAGES!

Last Friday's 6½% and 8% offers by Ford management were a frank admission of the company's weakness in the face of a solid, official strike by all its 57,000 manual workers.

Having already lost three full weeks production and knowing that their whole European operation is gradually grinding to a halt through shortages of components from Britain, Ford bosses have not only been compelled to drop their initial defence of the 5% pay limit, but been held up to ridicule by having two offers flatly rejected in one day.

Further action

Their refusal to fix further talks or to go beyond an 8% offer with strings attached now indicates that further action is needed to force Ford and other bosses to concede.

But TUC leaders have shown no inclination to press ahead with the final demolition of the 5% pay limit.

Far from pressing ahead and mobilising other sections of workers on their own claims in strikes alongside the Ford workers, they are now engaged in timewasting talks at British Oxygen and at Vauxhalls, despite the fact that company offers are miles short of workers' demands.

Despite his speeches against Phase 4, miners' leader Gormley last week brazenly ruled out of order Arthur Scargill's proposal for the miners to put in an immediate pay claim alongside Fords.

Problems

And union leaders are even now participating in a series of talks with Callaghan and Healey, the diehard architects of wage controls.

These talks are unlikely to produce any significant agreement on a new pay ceiling to replace Healey's 5% ultimatum.

Union leaders know too well the problems that would cause from their members.

But the talks reveal the willingness of TUC leaders to compromise and sacrifice their members' living standards in the so-called "national interest".

With pay reviews involving one million local authority workers and over 100,000 Leyland workers now falling due, it is essential that all such compromises are swept aside and the fight taken up for strike action alongside Fords to win workers' demands in full.

And the fight must be carried into the trade unions and the Labour Party around the demand that those who verbally oppose Phase 4 now campaign not only for an end to the Downing Street talks but also for the removal of the wage-cutting Callaghan-Healey leadership.

Only policy

Meanwhile incessant talk of price controls as part of a new proposed package deal shows that union leaders continue to reject the only policy that can defend workers living standards against inflation—wage increases with cost of living clauses linked to the rising

Break off talks with Callaghan



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

cost of living as assessed by elected trade union committees.

With such leaders in charge, a new danger is opening up in Fords even as the management begins to crumble: officials such as Ron Todd who have gone along with the strike in order to keep control are even now choosing at what point they can attempt to end it—with the claim only partially won.

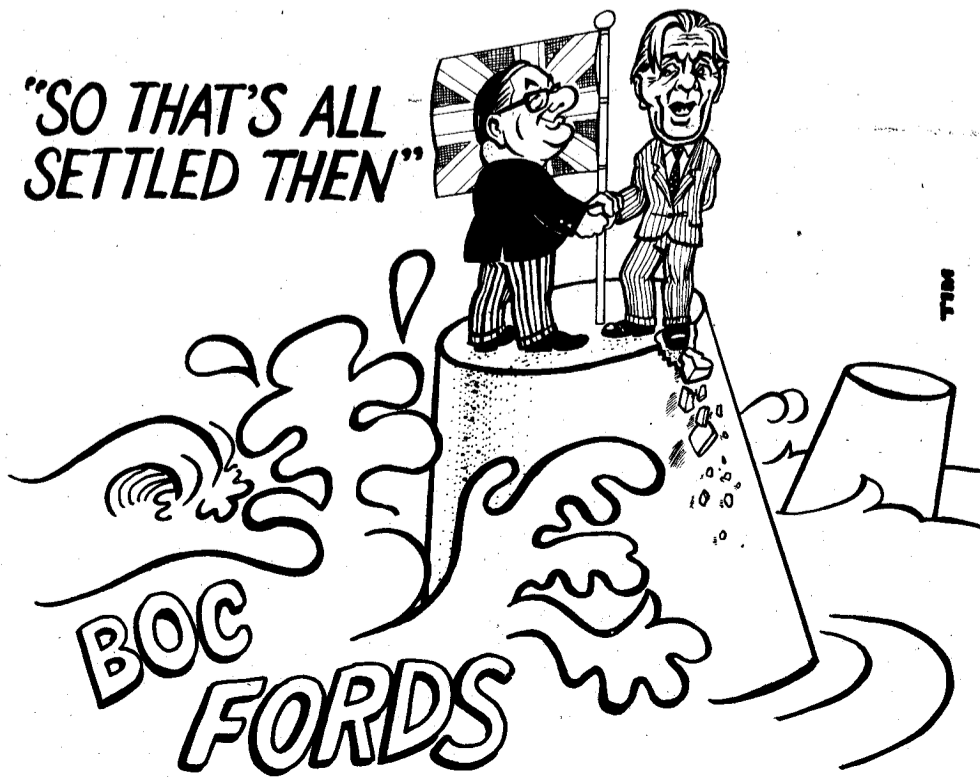
Ford workers must begin to take control of this strike out of the hands of the union bureaucracy if they are to achieve the full £20 increase and the 35 hour week demand.

Mass meetings in each plant must be convened to elect strike committees—who must then take on the task of campaigning amongst other sections of workers—council workers, Leylands, Vauxhalls and others—for strike action against Phase 4.

Such committees offer the best means of fighting for a continuation of the strike at the point where union officials move in to sell out.

Meanwhile every union branch and shop stewards committee must insist that their leaders withdraw from the secret wage cutting discussions now taking place in Downing Street.

"SO THAT'S ALL SETTLED THEN"



General strike in Iran

A new general strike began in Iran on Monday 16 October—forty days (the traditional period for mourning) after the massacres of Black Friday.

This comes after two weeks in which the bloody regime of the imperialist and Stalinist backed Shah has been further shaken by a wave of militant strikes supported by virtually the whole workforce in the public sector.

Hundreds of workers have been killed and injured in army attacks as have university students demonstrating against the Shah as they assembled at the start of the college term.

The regime's reaction has betrayed growing weakness and panic.

While with one hand the regime fires bullets at the strikers, with the other it is trying to buy them off.

But panic offers of wage increases of 25% (which the regime admits would severely deepen its financial crisis) have failed to persuade the workers to call off the strikes.

Fears that public knowledge of this critical situation could lead to insurrection drove the Shah last week to try through the martial law authorities to impose total press censorship.

The reaction of print workers and journalists to this was immediate and terrifying to the regime.

They came out on protest strike and brought the presses of all the major newspapers of Iran to an instant halt.

One possible option the Shah must be considering is the abandonment of even the verbal pretence of constitutionalism and the making of the present state of military terror permanent through the appointment of a military government.

Whichever tactic he tries in his desperation he can rest assured of imperialist backing.

In particular, Callaghan, Owen and Mulley continue to back him on behalf of British arms firms for whom the Shah is a major customer.

That is why the absence of Labour Party and trade union banners on last Saturday's sparsely attended demonstration against martial law organised by the Campaign Against Repression in Iran was very serious.

A campaign must be urgently taken up throughout the labour movement to demand the immediate ending of British aid to the Shah and the removal of Callaghan, Owen and Mulley, the "by appointment" suppliers of political support and murder weapons to the self-styled "King of Kings".

Extreme danger of military coup in Turkey

In this *Socialist Press* interview John Docherty talks to a Turkish Trotskyist who is currently visiting Britain.

Socialist Press: Do the murders of six members of the Turkish Labour Party in Ankara represent a new stage in the political situation?

Turkish Trotskyist: Yes. It shows clearly the great dangers that exist of a military coup now in Turkey and the suppression of all democratic rights of the workers and poor peasants.

SP: Can you tell us how this has come about?

TT: The bourgeois administration of Ecevit's RPP, which came into government at the beginning of this year with the support of many workers and poor peasants has proved completely incapable of solving the economic crisis facing Turkey.

The Turkish balance of payments deficit for last year was 4 billion dollars, and this problem shows many signs of growing greater this year.

In Istanbul alone there are 50,000 extra workers permanently unemployed added to a one million total.

Factories are closing down all the time.

Ecevit has failed to get economic support from the Soviet Union so he has now moved to gain the cooperation of the Americans and the IMF.

At the same time as re-opening the American military bases, there has been a wage freeze and the prices of agricultural goods have been increased by less than 25% against a general inflation rate of 60%.

This causes social discontent amongst the peasantry as well as the urban workers.

SP: What has been the role of the main workers' organisations in the face of this crisis?

TT: They have without exception supported Ecevit, in deeds if not in words.

The Communist Party, though they talk of 'critical support' for the RPP, completely refuse to mobilise the working class for fear of threatening Ecevit's government.

Thus the leaders of DISK, the 'revolutionary trade union confederation', who are mostly from the CP, refuse to lead any strikes, or even to recruit new members to the unions.

They refuse to raise any of the economic demands of the working class and will not even argue for democratic demands, for example against restrictions on the right to strike.

Reformist organisations such as the Turkish Labour Party and also the Maoists, which are mostly petty bourgeois, argue along the same lines.

After the murder of the TLP members, Party leader Behice Boran said they would not retaliate, and she was then congratulated by *Hurriyet* (Freedom) the main right wing daily paper.

Everywhere the policy of the reformists and Stalinists is to disarm the working class, to refuse to mobilise them and to lull them to sleep despite the dangers, thus preparing for their defeat.

SP: What would you say is the main danger facing the Turkish workers now?

TT: Undoubtedly the development of the fascist movement and the threat of a military coup.

Since the fascists of the National Action Party went out of the government when Ecevit's



Two of the murdered Turkish Labour Party members last week

Ecevit, they have been involved in numerous individual killings of student leaders, worker militants, etc.

In the Kurdish areas, however, they have led uprisings in three cities, coming into conflict with the national government.

In the absence of any reaction from the workers' organisations against these provocations fascist leader Turkish has now been openly calling for a military coup.

There can be no doubt that this possibility is closer than for some time.

As Trotsky says, for the fascist movement to become a threat, it is not necessary for the petty bourgeoisie to support it, they need to be disillusioned with the political system as it is.

This is certainly the case in Turkey today.

SP: What are the possibilities of revolutionary leadership in the working class?

TT: They are very great. Workers will respond to a lead, as supporters of the Workers Socialist League have discovered.

It is possible to build defence squads in workers areas and through their mass organisations against the fascists.

It is also possible to organise strike action, to compel the release of strikers from jail and to win some gains despite the treachery of bureaucratic union leaders.

Above all, however, it is necessary to build a revolutionary party in the Turkish working class. This is the need of the hour.

We say that it is necessary now to call for a united front of workers organisations, the Communist Party, the Turkish Labour Party, DISK, etc., to mobilise the working class on economic and democratic demands.

One of the main slogans of this united front must be for a workers and farmers government, and for building armed workers' detachments to answer the fascist attacks.

The Turkish Pabliste supporters of the USFI do not have such a perspective.

Though they now agree with us that Ecevit's party is bourgeois, thus reversing their support for him in the election, they do not see any need to mobilise the working class.

They have produced a magazine with widespread

circulation reprinting the Transitional Programme in Turkish, yet they state quite explicitly that they will continue to refrain from putting forward any policies for the current political situation in Turkey.

Even in one union where they have some control, they make no effort to win members to revolutionary policies.

They see the fight against fascism and a military coup in terms of petty bourgeois discussion and guerrillaism rather than mobilising the working class and fighting for revolutionary leadership.

SP: What is the significance of the Kurdish national struggle in Turkey today?

TT: I consider that it is necessary to give particular prominence to this matter in any full consideration of the Turkish political situation.

Any imperialist settlement in the Middle East, holding back the upsurge in Iran, reaching a compromise with the bourgeois nationalist regime in Iraq, involves holding back the Kurdish national struggle.

The suppression of the Kurdish national struggle is right at the centre of recent political developments in Turkey.

I have already mentioned fascist attacks on the Kurds.

In August near the city of Hakkari in Kurdistan, 500 armed militants of the Kurdish Democratic Party were killed and others were handed over to feudal communities where rivalries were deliberately stimulated and more deaths resulted.

It was the publicity given to these events in the publications of the Turkish Labour Party which led to a fascist raid on

their premises four weeks ago, long before the murders of last week.

The Kurdish national movement does not just consist of the bourgeois nationalists of Banzani's KDP.

A fight within this movement on the basis of the principles of proletarian internationalism and permanent revolution is not only necessary but also possible.

SP: Can you tell us the context of the recent TLP murders?

TT: I mentioned the importance of the revelations about government atrocities in Kurdistan in leading to the latest events.

Following a continual series of killings by fascists, in the first week of October Haskatli, leader of the fascist party in Istanbul was killed together with his son.

The same night no less than six retaliation killings of socialists and trade unionists took place in Istanbul.

The TLP killings in Ankara took place in this context.

The killing of Haskatli was claimed by a new organisation called the Marxist Leninist Propaganda Union which says it will kill one fascist for every left winger who dies.

Such an escalation will not, of course, help the working class without the mobilisation of the working class.

When the fascists killed six students in Istanbul in March, DISK called two hour protest strikes.

Now, when much more is necessary, they call nothing at all.

Such is the criminal way that the Stalinists and reformists disarm the working class when their mobilisation is all the more necessary.



Ecevit

Crisis brings on Kaunda's zig-zags

Zambia last week announced the re-opening of the direct trade route to South Africa via Zimbabwe which had been closed since the 1960s.

The immediate cause of this move was big crop failures necessitating immediate imports of fertiliser from South Africa.

However, the Zambian economic crisis has been sharpening over the last few years.

Closure of the rail link through Zimbabwe had increased the cost of both exports and imports.

The importance of all this is not the fact of trade with South Africa for this has been going on constantly via Botswana.

It lies instead with the open announcement of this trade which in turn has important political developments lying behind it.

Major strikes

Alongside the developing economic crisis, the political problems faced by President Kaunda have been immense.

For example, there have recently been major strikes by municipal and railway workers, while Kaunda has also been under sharp pressure from the right wing opposition led by Simon Kapwepwe.

He has been in the forefront of calls to reopen the border and make stronger links with South Africa.

Faced with these problems, Kaunda zig-zags from left to right.

He seeks to deal with the problems facing him by further cementing his ties with imperialism—typified by the opening of the border and trade with South Africa and also his recent aid deal with Britain.

Kaunda hopes to outflank



Kaunda

Kapwepwe from the right with his current stance.

Within Zambia itself, under the guise of a crackdown on crime, Kaunda has launched a campaign of political repression.

Political opponents, including supporters of Kapwepwe, have been openly arrested.

These right wing policies are combined with periodic militant rhetoric (against South Africa, the USA or Smith) and courting of Moscow—with threats of calling in Cuban troops to defend himself against Smith.

But in spite of these words, Kaunda has carried out a continuous programme of secret diplomacy with Smith (eg Smith's secret visit to Zambia to meet Nkomo) and with South Africa itself.

He was a key figure in persuading SWAPO to accept the imperialist plan on the future of Namibia.

In short, as shown by Callaghan's emergency rush to meet him in Nigeria last month, Kaunda is one of the central props of imperialism in Central Africa.

ZANU must reject all talks

Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union last week issued a statement calling for the exclusion of the USA from any further talks on the future of Zimbabwe.

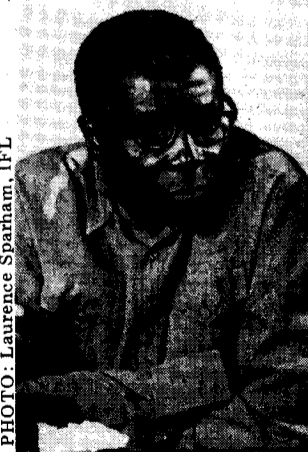
A statement like this is long overdue from forces which claim to represent the best interests of the Zimbabwe workers and peasants.

However, it can be legitimately asked why ZANU has not made such a statement before.

Why is so much importance placed on Smith's visit the USA, the reason given for the demand to exclude the USA from talks?

Smith's visit makes no serious difference to the talks already going on in secret between imperialism, the Stalinists and the leaders of the liberation forces, particularly those under the control of Joshua Nkomo.

If the ZANU leadership were serious about its



Mugabe

opposition to imperialism it would fight any manifestation of compromise and refuse to take part in any talks.

But there seems little prospect they will do this any more now than they have done in the past.

A struggle must be taken up for the building of a principled leadership around a Trotskyist programme for Zimbabwe.

*No deals with imperialism!

No Secret talks! Intensify the armed struggle!

For a socialist Zimbabwe!



INTERNATIONAL

US workers move against anti-union laws and labour bureaucrats

Based on a report from the St. Louis correspondent of *Labor News*, paper of the Socialist League (DC).

The 25-block long Labor Parade through central St. Louis "exceeded all expectations" according to the *St. Louis Labor Tribune*—the official AFL-CIO newspaper.

It was the largest march in St. Louis history. But this success was not due to the efforts of the labor bureaucrats, who made no serious efforts to turn out the rank and file.

With the Missouri Secretary of State having certified in August the so-called "Right to Work" proposition to appear as a referendum on the November ballot, the labor leaders are running scared.

They hoped at first that the September 9 mobilisation would frighten the Missouri ruling class into finding a legal technicality to keep "Right to Work" off the ballot.

Closed shop

If successful in the November referendum, the misnamed "Right to Work" law would outlaw the closed shop in the state of Missouri.

The legislation is a part of the anti-union Taft-Hartley Labor Act, and is operative in 20 states, mainly in the south of the USA.

But in the weeks before the St. Louis parade, labor officials did little to build the march.

No press conference was called, nor was there any real effort to get radio, television, or newspaper publicity.

Yet thousands of workers did show up for the parade. Many units wore "Right to Work is a Ripoff" caps and shirts.

But both the leaflet handed out by the American Socialist Workers Party and Tim Kaminsky's article in their paper, *The Militant*, failed to criticise the role of the conservative labor bureaucracy.

Fat cats

The SWP plainly hopes to become the respected "left" advisors for the union fat cats.

It fails to point out that the bureaucrats' material privileges, sweetheart deals, and undemocratic methods have opened the door to the bosses' current right wing offensive.

The bureaucracy's conservatism has alienated the ranks from unions, and their refusal to organise the unorganised has actually produced a decline in union membership in both absolute terms and as a percentage of the work force.

But the SWP's literature, revolving around favourable questions from a speech by Auto workers' leader Doug Fraser, in no way poses the need for an alternative fighting leadership in the unions.

To defeat the "Right to Work" law in November, Vacca was replaced by militant talking rival

the left forces in the unions must offer a serious alternative programme.

Instead of joining the bureaucracy in debating abstract constitutional rights and talking about "freeloaders", labor must clearly show the class war origins of the "Right to Work" campaign.

Offensive

It must openly say that it is part of big business' right wing political offensive linked to the defeat of labor reform legislation and cutbacks in social services.

It is linked to massive unemployment, inflation, the dollar decline, the rebirth of racist groups and the jailing of striking teachers, city workers and firemen.

Labor must tell working people that the ripoff campaign's chief aim is to destroy the union shop.

Even though the union shop's benefits are limited by the continued treacherous deals of the bureaucrats, it has set a higher wage standard for all Missouri workers.

Moreover, in union shop states labor organisations have often led or joined in fights for expansion of democratic rights and progressive worker protection laws.



Postal workers' delegates fight for rejection of the bosses' offer

Massive new rallies must be called in every city where rank and file speakers will point out the class war nature of the union-busting campaign.

An emergency Conference of Labor, open to all working people, should map

out a strategy including a march on Jefferson City.

Fear of ranks

But the union leadership fails to do this out of fear of the rank and file mobilisation.

The September 9 Labor Parade in St. Louis, by drawing thousands, showed the enormous potential of workers if the unions start to mobilise independently and in the streets.

SELL-OUT LEADER OUSTED

Meanwhile within the US labour movement the bureaucracy is facing a growing, if confused and politically misleading opposition.

Clear example of this was this week's revolt by 2,000 workers at the newly organised US Volkswagen plant in New Stanton, Pennsylvania.

A mass meeting at the plant voted by 1,235 to 94 to reject the new contract freshly signed by United Auto Workers' leader Doug Fraser and Volkswagen boss James McLernon, and to take strike action to force an improvement.

Hundreds of pickets gathered outside the plant—forcing management to abandon efforts to get in to their offices, and the whole plant—organised into the union only three months ago—is now idle.

Booted out

While Fraser contemplates how to discipline this major revolt and force a return to work, postal workers' leader Joseph Vacca, President of the National Association of Letter Carriers has been ignominiously booted out of office in elections following his sell-out of the post workers' pay struggle.

Vacca was replaced by militant talking rival

Vincent Sombrotta from New York in the biennial election.

3-year sell out

He had capitulated to compulsory arbitration on the pay claim, which had led to a three-year 21.4% sell-out settlement.

Meanwhile even the gangster-ridden and notoriously corrupt Teamsters union bureaucracy faces mounting problems as the 'rank and file' Professional Drivers Council (PROD) launches a series of internal union moves and wrongheaded law suits against union President Frank Fitzsimmons.

'Fitz' has been summonsed to union tribunals charged with misconduct and harried by Congressional inquiries and Labor Department investigations into Teamster finances spurred on by PROD.

And in one union local alone, Local 688, PROD members are bringing two lawsuits, seeking a total of 495,000 dollars against secretary treasurer Ron Gamache.

Legal suit

At the same time the 'rank and file' grouping Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU) has also filed a legal suit demanding equal treatment for TDU election



Fitzsimmons

candidates in the *International Teamster Magazine*.

TDU Presidential candidate Pete Camarata has established a murky record over the last two years of invoking the machinery of the US capitalist state to intervene in the Teamsters Union.

As a result of his complaints to the Department of Labor, the Department is to sue the officers of Teamsters Local 299 in Detroit, seeking to overturn an election held last December.

The corruption of the Teamsters leadership has become an international legend.

Camarata has had to

endure physical beatings and threats to his union membership and his job in order to pursue his fight against Fitzsimmons.

The top 10 Teamster families that control the bureaucratic network of the two million-strong union made a total of \$1.7 million in salaries alone in 1976—with the top five families—Fitzsimmons, Provenzano, Schoessling, Williams and Presser—themselves making well over a million dollars.

But in fighting such a bureaucracy there is no substitute for the patient, principled mobilisation of the union's membership independently of the capitalist state.

Illusion

To spread the illusion that the state apparatus that imposes Taft Hartley legislation, protects scabs and harrasses workers can defend or impose genuine democracy in the Teamsters union is to pave the way for never-ending bourgeois intervention in the labour movement.

In breaking from such methods, Teamster militants must also take up the fight for their union to break from the bourgeois Democratic party and play a role in the struggle for a Labour Party in the USA, based on the unions, and representing workers' independent class interests.

Chile butcher to visit Peking

The reactionary basis of the foreign policy of China's Stalinist rulers has for some time been the search for allies—any allies—against the Soviet Union.

This unprincipled quest has brought them into friendly relations with all manner of reactionaries—from military dictators in Pakistan or Indonesia to Tories in Britain and a Francoist King in Madrid.

In the last few days the Chinese leaders have shown signs of fishing for new, up to now reviled, potential allies against Moscow and of cementing one of its most criminal old alliances.

The new possible friends are, not surprisingly, the so-called Eurocommunists.

Peking's public attitude towards them has changed from bitter (and hypocritical) scorn of their "revisionism", to tentative flattery of the "certain independence" which they were showing towards Moscow's "hegemonism".



Pinochet

Those were the words of the Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Yu Chan on October 1 to a visiting delegation of French provincial journalists.

Yu Chan said there were still differences with the "Eurocommunists", for example, on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But his generally friendly tone made it clear that he regarded such differences as a mere formality.

It was inevitable that the Peking bureaucracy should attempt to intervene in the public rift between the "Eurocommunists" and Moscow.

But it does so entirely in its own interests.

As in the rest of Chinese Stalinism's international interventions it shows no shred of political principle.

Nowhere has this been more shamefully borne out than in the case of Chile.

The reactionary Peking bureaucrats scarcely disguised their pleasure when General Pinochet overthrew Allende's Popular Unity government in 1973.

Since then, Peking has continued to cultivate its butcher friend. Pinochet receives birthday greetings from the Chinese government.

And now, it is reported, he is shortly to be invited to China and feted in the manner of recent predecessors like Margaret Thatcher, Henry Kissinger and King Juan Carlos.

Pinochet may be the murderer and torturer of tens of thousands of Chilean workers. But the only thing that matters to the class criminals in Peking who profess to stand for the dictatorship of the proletariat is that Pinochet is an implacable enemy of the rival band of opportunist betrayers of the working class in Moscow.

Brute force backs up bankrupt Irish capitalism

The announcement last week that the Irish bourgeois government is unlikely to meet its target of creating 20,000 new jobs by the end of the year underlines the huge problem of unemployment in Ireland as a whole.

In the South, although official figures carefully leave out school leavers and farmers, economists now

estimate that around 11% of the 1 million-strong labour force is without a job.

And in the North, where official figures exclude women and youth, even the government figure shows 11.8% out of work.

A survey of schools in West Belfast conducted last November showed a staggering 53% of school leavers still unemployed six months after leaving school.

This is despite the lavish cash handouts offered by

the British government to British and foreign monopolies if they set up factories in the North, and numerous fraudulent "job creation" and training schemes which cover over the full scale of unemployment.

The reality is that the capitalist system cannot provide stable jobs or decent living standards for workers either North or South of the artificial, imperialist-drawn "border".



Lynch

The type of investment attracted to these areas of chronic unemployment seeks to exploit the depressed wage levels and the low levels of taxation which flow from primitive social services, health and education facilities.

But they also bring in the latest technology, using government grants to assist the setting up of increasingly capital-intensive factories.

This also means that, in

the North, such investment is concentrated on the areas where skilled workers, advanced communications and other facilities are already available—in other words the largely Protestant areas, favoured by successive Loyalist governments in this sectarian statelet.

Small wonder that, to prop up a system which has nothing to offer the majority of the population other than misery and

exploitation, repressive measures are needed both North and South.

IRELAND



Quotas attack students

If DES 'quotas' are imposed on overseas students at North East London Polytechnic 500 student places and 50 teaching posts, quite apart from clerical and manual jobs, could well be lost.

Under the 'quota' system the number of overseas students, now designated 'specified students' to avoid the Race Relations Act, must be reduced to that of 1975-6.

In fact 'specified students' include many who would previously have been considered 'home students' eligible for local education authority grants.

Now such students must be 'normally resident' in Britain—interpreted by most authorities as students who have lived here for three years for other than educational purposes.

Labour councils

The only way these racialist policies, which Labour borough councils such as Newham have blithely implemented, can be reversed, is by direct action.

Already a student union threat to stage an occupation has resulted in most of the regulations concerning fees payments to be withdrawn until the next governors' meeting.

They are threatening occupation again unless the rest of the regulations are withdrawn at that meeting.

Staff at NELP must support the students in the event of occupation and refuse to handle any applications until all discriminatory measures against overseas students are withdrawn.

GARNERS: A MAJOR BLOW AT TGWU SABOTEURS

Dear Editor,

I would like to supplement the report on the Garners Day of Action in last week's *Socialist Press* by emphasising the scale of the defeat inflicted on the union bureaucracy.

The appearance of Ms Desai of Grunwicks and Phil Gillatt from the 18 month Sanderson strike at the rally demonstrated to the embarrassment of TGWU bureaucrats the continuity of independent class struggle on the one side and TGWU sabotage on the other that has characterised the Grunwick, Sandersons and Garners strikes.

The events in Northumberland Avenue were adequately described in last week's *Socialist Press*; the overwhelming majority of the march did indeed follow the WSL back to the picket line, leaving a small rump of bureaucrats, Stalinists and WRP members to follow the

Region 1 float into oblivion.

This break from the bureaucracy in which members of the strike committee played a leading role was an alarming reminder for Region 1 officials that a leadership exists within this strike which is prepared to take the necessary actions to win the strike, even if it means an open fight against the union bureaucracy.

The full effects of the Day of Action and the mass picketing on the strike have yet to be seen.

The morale of the scabs has been damaged.

And, as we predicted, it has meant that the strike has gained

materially, as fresh forces have been drawn to support the strike.

Over £100 a day was arriving at strike headquarters last week.

Wandsworth Trades Council has taken the important step of sponsoring an emergency fund for the costs of those arrested.

The police have been more tentative on picketing restrictions.

But what is crucial is that although it now becomes vital for the bureaucracy to kill the strike, they will find it much more difficult after the Day of Action.

This change in the balance of forces was reflected this week

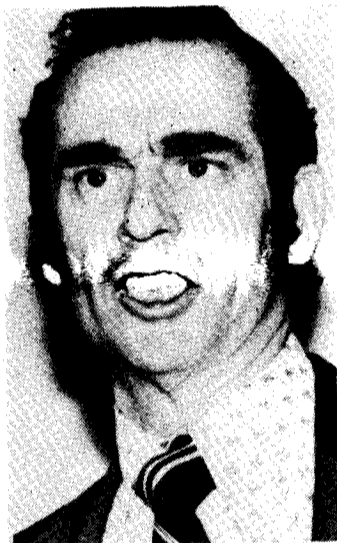
in a number of positions taken by the strike committee.

They are issuing a call for the Regional Committee to support and organise a national TGWU delegate conference to discuss ways of supporting the strike committee's policy.

And they are also calling on all trade unionists, especially TGWU branches, to lobby the next Regional Committee meeting.

We must call on all labour movement bodies to support these initiatives.

Yours fraternally,
GS
London.



Shorter

WRP's squalid cover-up attempt

Under the scandalous heading 'Solidarity Turns to Adventure', the opportunists of the Workers Revolutionary Party attempted last week in their daily paper *Newsline* to conceal their abject failure to lift a finger against the TGWU bureaucracy in the Garners strike.

When the 12 WRP supporters, led by actor Corin Redgrave, and standing in scowling silence alongside the Stalinists of the Communist Party, watching hundreds of workers march back to mount a mass picket on Garners' restaurants, they merely put the seal on their whole history of passivity and abstention in this crucial strike.

Bitterness

But their bitterness at the success of the picketing and their own isolation led the WRP into a vicious, lying attack on the move which most clearly demonstrated the isolation of the TGWU Region 1 bureaucracy:

LIE No. 1: The *Newsline* article claimed that the mass picket was a breakaway by "a group of revisionists and rene-

gades". Yet anyone present on the day knows that the majority of the trade union contingents on the march followed the call to turn back and picket Garners.

If the mass picketing was really done only by "revisionists and renegades", then the WRP has to answer why they only turned out a dozen people on the march—none of whom joined the picket.

LIE No. 2: The *Newsline* claims that the mass picket "clashed with a well-prepared cordon of police at Whitcombe Street".

This is "illustrated" by a photograph taken only after a series of police charges had finally broken up the mass picket itself.

In fact, WSL members had checked beforehand and verified that there were no police at all at the Whitcombe Street restaurant when the mass picket arrived.

And the arrests that took place nearly all came later in the evening when normal picketing had been resumed.

LIE No. 3: The *Newsline*, anxious to minimise the defeat suffered by Region 1 officials at the hands of "renegades and revisionists" claims that the mass picket took place only after the march was over.

Yet they refuse to support the very demands fought for consistently by the Strike Committee in the teeth of vicious bureaucratic opposition—mass picketing; full blocking of Garners and its suppliers; and a TGWU Regional levy to finance the strike.

Instead, like the passive WRP contingent on the march, the *Newsline* offers no fight against the bureaucracy, and simply urges Garners strikers to adopt the call for a "general strike" to bring down the Labour government.

Refusal

These lies are combined with a conscious refusal by *Newsline* to point out the minimal level of support by the TGWU Region 1 bureaucracy—who mobilised only a couple of token banners among the 25 labour movement contingents present, despite their 500,000 membership.

The whole article adds up to a brazen defence of the bureaucracy against the strike committee and the trade union contingents that showed in practice their willingness to fight for a successful conclusion to the strike.

Such is the price paid for the WRP's 'left' talking opportunism and conscious

refusal to offer any practical or political lead in workers' daily struggles.

TGWU officials Shorter and Staden and SE region TUC 'left' Jack Dromey will not be too ecstatic about their new-found friends in *Newsline*, however.

Cynical

Because while this miserable rag gives its cynical endorsement to their treachery, hundreds of trade unionists and

the Garners Strike Committee on October 7 publicly registered their bitter hostility to the bureaucratic sabotage of the strike, and exposed the officials' isolation from the rank and file.

The WSL declares itself, as ever, unequivocally on the side of these workers and the independent mobilisation of the working class.

Only on this basis can the fight be carried through for the construction of a revolutionary party capable of leading the struggle for power.



Newsline's own picture shows the numbers that joined the mass picket

'Lefts' stand aside as TUC talks go on

Remember Denis Skinner? He, along with Neil Kinnock, was one of the 'new broom' left wingers elected to Labour's National Executive by constituency parties this year.

As a member of the NEC



Callaghan

PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

he was mandated by vote of conference to take part in a campaign against the government's 5% pay limits.

But last week, as TUC leaders in the midst of the Ford strikes trooped in to Downing Street to attempt to patch up a means of controlling wages which is less brazen and contentious than the 5% Phase 4 ceiling, not a whisper of opposition was to be heard from Skinner or his 'left' colleagues in the 'Tribune' group.

Rapidly forgetting his demagogic statement at the Tribune rally that "we have got to get rid of the pay policy once and for all", Skinner has retreated to the sidelines while union leaders and the right wing Callaghan cabinet discuss new means of holding back workers' pay demands.

No doubt as the outcome of these talks is implemented by the TUC and Labour leaders, Skinner will, if pressed by sections of

workers in struggle, turn up now and then and offer them a 'left' speech condemning Callaghan's policies.

But if such talk is separated from an all-out campaign now within the Labour Party to drive out the Callaghan-Healey leadership, it means nothing.

The kind of feeling now running through the trade union movement on this issue was reflected last week in the 'left' speech given by the London Confed Secretary Bill McLoughlin to the rally in support of the Fords strike.

Pointing out that Callaghan and Healey are now the mavericks of the labour movement, pursuing a policy rejected by individual unions, the TUC and the Party conference, McLoughlin called for them to be removed from office.

And he went on to call for other sections of workers to prevent the iso-

lation of the Fords strike by coming out on their own pay claims at once.

If top bureaucrats such as McLoughlin are making such statements, then clearly there must be a growing willingness within the working class to fight for this perspective.

Rather than develop and strengthen this movement, offering a concerted campaign to drive out Callaghan and Healey, Skinner and his fellow NEC 'lefts' have already junked Labour conference policy and effectively washed their hands of the struggle.

In demanding they break from this position and lead a serious fight inside the Party and the unions, more and more workers will see for themselves the inadequacy of 'left' talking reformism in the struggle for socialist policies to defend the independent interests of the working class.



Skinner



Ghost of Heath haunts Tory Party conference

For the Tories, it must have been a frightful sight.

In the midst of a national strike at Fords—centrepiece of a wages movement that could yet bring down the Callaghan government—the mummified remains of former Tory leader Heath sprang embarrassingly to life.

Proving that four years under a political shroud have taught him nothing and allowed him to forget nothing, Heath acted as if driven on by some fiendish ancient curse.

Oblivious to the real world, he spoke in favour of the very policies which brought the downfall of his government in 1974—rigid wage controls.

Reporters from the Tory press, however, were plainly relieved at this opportunity to report something of interest from the otherwise mundane conference of the main capitalist party.

Prominence

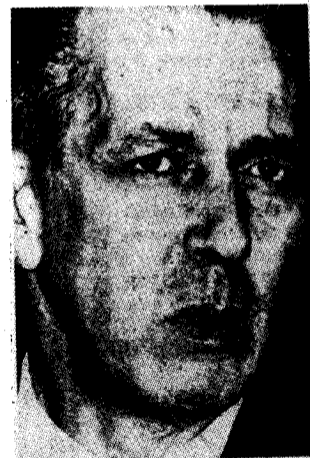
The replies to Heath's utterances were reported with renewed enthusiasm, and the efforts of the Thatcher leadership to persuade TUC leaders and naive sections of workers that the Tories stand for free collective bargaining were given increased prominence.

Thatcher's winding-up speech appeared in parts to echo the recent declarations of TGWU leader Moss Evans, with its calls for "realistic, responsible collective bargaining, free



Davis

conference



Joseph from government interference."

But there was no statement at any time that the Tories would scrap the existing 5% limit which already, by collaboration with union leaders, has been imposed on 500,000 workers.

And a careful reading of Tory leadership speeches throughout the week indicates clearly that government interference will in fact be intensified through the still more rigorous application of the monetary policies already threatened by Labour chancellor Healey.

There will be strict cash limits on public spending and target "rates of return" for the nationalised industries.

Shot-gun

Borrowing by private firms will be made more difficult and more expensive.

"Lame duck" firms will be speedily dispatched to a watery grave by government shot-gun.

In this way, Sir Keith Joseph and others spelled out with relish, workers who demand "unrealistic" levels of pay would price themselves out of a job.

Most Tory leaders have now come to the view that this kind of approach stands more chance of enlisting the assistance of frightened reformist union officials and convenors than the setting of an open pay limit.

Viability

Because while union leaders have been known to challenge general pay 'norms', no bureaucrat has yet challenged the central reformist notion that capitalist industry must be allowed to make a "fair" profit, and be kept "viable"—if necessary at the expense of the workforce.

This is why Evans has been so careful to restrict the TGWU pay offensive to highly profitable firms such as Ford and BOC, while clamping down firmly against similar action in Vauxhall. All Evans' talk has, like Thatcher's speech, focussed on "responsible" bargaining—in other words wages determined by the profitability of the employer. This has not been lost on the Tory leaders.

Confrontation

With the prospect of a huge strike movement on pay possibly topping Callaghan and throwing the Tories into office, the last thing Thatcher wants is to tie herself in advance to rigid pay controls which would produce an immediate confrontation with the working class.

Hence the confused talk of the Tory conference—and hence also the extraordinary low key of the speeches dealing with the next election.

No rallying cry was issued for the bringing down of Callaghan.

Instead, the voices of the Thatcher crew could scarcely be heard above the sound of their knees knocking at the prospect of possibly having to face up to a militant working class.



Thatcher

Thatcher's own final sermon against class hatred summed up her concern that this party—not known for its conciliatory views—could soon be thrown into bitter confrontation.

"If it is wrong to preach race hatred. . ." (said this leading

British imperialist troops repressing Irish and other workers, and to increase the armed forces.

And the entire body of large and small businessmen, shareholders, landowners and assorted over-paid well-heeled parasites sallied into attack after attack on the allegedly low productivity of the British working class, demanding an immediate end to "over-manning", ruthless rationalisation of industry, and an all-out assault on the social services, as well as tax cuts to further line the pockets of the rich.

Relic of past

But the irony remained in the vocal presence of Heath as an inescapable relic of the past.

Now regarded, astonishingly, as part of the Tory 'left', Heath took office pledged to a series of equally draconian attacks on the unions.

But four years later, his Industrial Relations Act in tatters, his wage controls defeated and his authority extinguished, he was pitched out of office by the working class.

He remains for the Tory Party a living visible reminder that reactionary words are one thing: implementing them is another. A frightening sight indeed!

advocate of racial hatred) ". . . why is it right to preach class hatred?"

But of course race and class hatred—above all a consuming hatred for the working class—is the very essence of Toryism, and had been as ever a marked feature of this year's conference.

Delegates had howled with anguish and rage at Sir John Davis declaring that sanctions could not yet be lifted against the Smith regime in Rhodesia.

Bring back stocks

They had trooped to the rostrum to demand the return of the death penalty, of the birch and the stocks, and declare their undying support for the police in its attacks on the working class.

They enthusiastically backed plans to increase pay for



Callaghan's former cabinet colleague Prentice, now recommended by the right wing 'Selsdon Group' to take over from James Prior as Thatcher's Shadow Employment Secretary.

PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report

NATIONALISE THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

In a capitalist society, governments may use certain industries such as the motor industry as "regulators" of the economy.

By using taxation and credit restrictions they can make it difficult for workers to buy cars.

This has the brutal effect of throwing car and component workers on the dole, and reducing the demand for consumer goods.

But in two industries, construction and machine tools, the relationship of the industry to the economy is much more direct.

These industries represent in concrete material terms the growth or decay of a capitalist economy.

If growth stops, construction is not just reduced but disappears completely.

Severity

This means that construction is affected by a crisis immediately and dramatically.

All the problems which confront workers in a crisis—unemployment, wage-cuts, attacks on agreed conditions and on union organisation—occur more suddenly and with more severity than in other industries.

Even in periods of relative stability for capitalism there is never the same stability in construction.

For a start there is a large seasonal fluctuation. The early stages of construction work are far more expensive to carry out in winter than in summer.

Because union organisation in construction has never been strong enough to force permanent employment, many building workers find themselves unable to get work in winter.

Casual employment

Secondly, labouring in construction has remained one of the few areas of casual employment. The sight can still be seen in some parts of Birmingham of labourers queuing up at 7.30 in the morning waiting for sub-contractors to arrive and pick their labourers for the day.



Builders on the march during their 1972 pay strike

So many workers do not know from one day to the next whether they will have a job.

Thirdly, because of the position of construction as representing the growth of the economy, fluctuations in the rate of growth are magnified.

In the minor recessions of the 1950s and '60s, unemployment nationally reached 4%. In construction the peaks were about 10%.

But these problems were as nothing compared to the last five years.

Previously, government policy was to increase public spending during

periods when private investment faltered.

Immeasurable

This to a certain extent shielded the construction industry from the worst effects of crisis-ridden capitalism.

But now the crisis has reached the stage where in its attempt to "save capitalism" the Labour government has slashed public spending at a time when private investment has collapsed.

The result is that 400,000 out of the two million jobs in construction

and supplying industries have disappeared.

Output has fallen by 30% in four years. The waste which this means to society in terms of unused skills, machinery and materials is immeasurable.

At the same time Shelter estimates that there are a million families without a decent home in Britain.

The construction industry is dominated by a few giant companies, with a multitude of tiny tinpot contractors and sub-contractors competing for what the giants don't want.

The giant construction firms make much in their

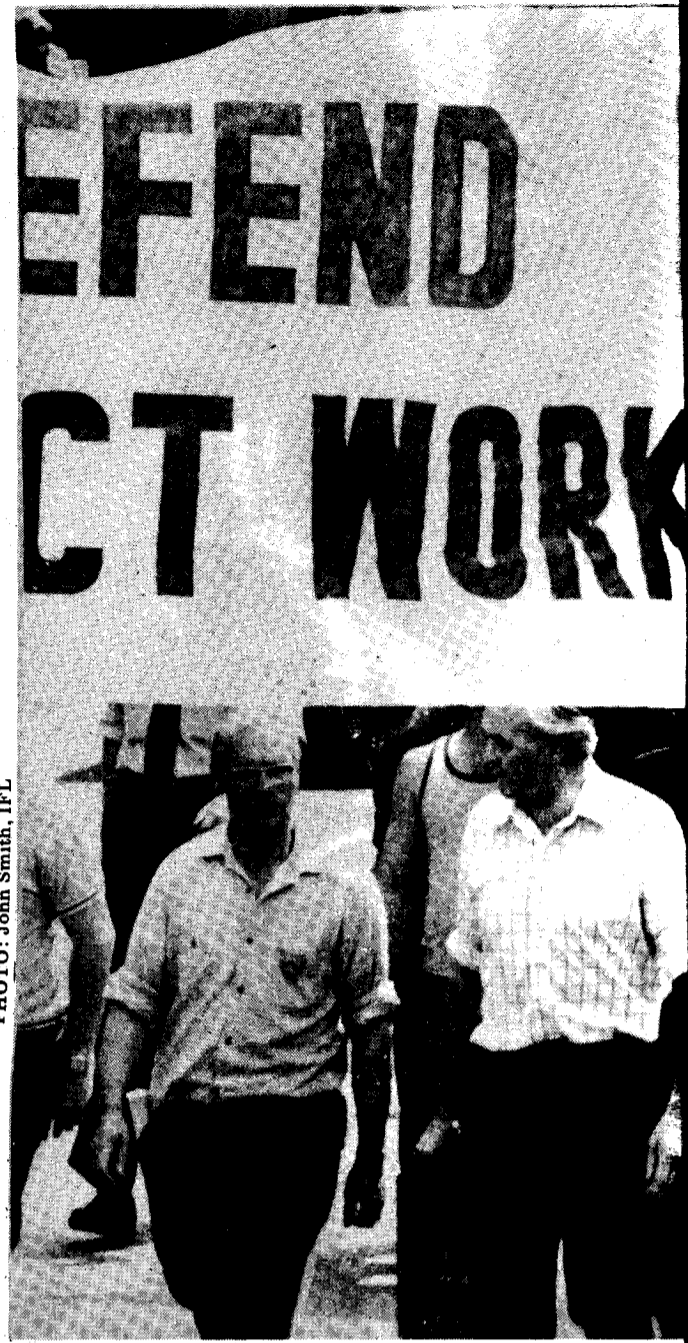


PHOTO: John Smith, IFL

March in defence of Manchester Direct Works department

propaganda of the virtues of "competition" in ensuring efficiency and low cost construction.

But in practice the use of price rings and corruption in obtaining contracts is so widespread as to be a way of life.

Recent articles in *Construction News* have indicated that over most of the country supposed "competition" in the supply of ready-mixed concrete is in fact a farce.

The country is divided into spheres of influence. In each area all but one of the suppliers put in near identical tenders, and the remaining supplier puts in a slightly lower one.

Widespread

This enables prices and profits to be protected in times of slump.

The recent Bryant's case in Birmingham showed that Bryants were able to obtain £100 million worth of orders by bribing the Chief Architect and other officers of Birmingham City Council.

It is well known in the industry that these examples are not exceptions but widespread.

The projects which the construction giants go after are those where the use of large construction plant and automated techniques can bring big profits.

Houses and community buildings designed to a good standard are not generally of this type. Motorways and office blocks are.

This meant that in the early 1970s local authorities found it almost impossible to get tenders for their contracts.

The speculation in property values led to hundreds of thousands of construction workers being employed building the empty office blocks which now adorn the skyline of our cities, while many of those same workers had no

decent house to live in.

Now that this boom has ended, the construction giants are trying their best to have the direct labour departments of local councils closed down so that they can take the work they turned up their noses at in previous years.

They are generally managing to maintain profits by taking contracts overseas and sacking workers in Britain—but even the Arabian building boom is running out of steam now.

Bourgeois economists argue that competition tends to balance supply and demand. What they neglect to say is that under capitalism there is no direct relation between social demand and economic demand i.e. between what people need and what they can afford to buy.

The problem of housing shows this very clearly. In a crisis, the giant construction firms leave their plant idle and lay off their workforce, and use their financial reserves for speculation in property and stock markets.

Workers must demand that the books of these companies are opened to committees including building workers and other trade unionists.

Nationalisation

They will find that in a crisis the construction firms cannot guarantee employment or provide the new homes, schools, shops and factories which workers need.

That is the basis of a call for nationalisation of the industry.

One of the fondest arguments for competition is that it protects "quality". Nothing could be further from the truth.

Once a contract has been let—whether by fair means or foul—the object of a building contractor is to save as much as possible of



workmanship is higher but even so they provide a cheaper service to local councils than contracting out the work.

This is because work can be planned effectively and profits are retained within the council finances.

But they suffer obvious problems because of the jungle outside.

Wages are low because basic rates reflect the existence of competition from sub-contractors.

Constant pressure

In fact, some direct labour organisations have had sharp fights to stop the infiltration of sub-contractors onto their sites.

They have to bear more of the cost of training, and at the end of their training many skilled craftsmen are lured away by higher rates of pay on non-union sites.

And the constant pressure from private builders for their abolition has succeeded in preventing them tendering for work outside the sphere of council housing, and has forced them to tender for council work in competition with private builders for council housing.

Where previously DLO's acted as a service department which estimated the work but finally charged for just what was necessary, now they act as profit making departments who tender and then have to try and make as big a profit as possible.

Embryo

All the problems caused by competition are being brought into DLO's in this way.

One good result of the campaign against DLO's has been the formation of joint committees from tenants associations and building trade unions to defend DLO's.

These are very important because they represent the embryo of how the building industry should be run—by joint committees of the users and the building workers.

Efforts should be made to widen the scope of these committees to cover the whole performance of the building industry, private and direct labour, in relation to local authority contracts and to consider the expansion of public works to combat unemployment.

The WSL has always emphasised that the development of a public works programme under trade union control is an essential part of a fight against unemployment.

Sub-committees

Local Trades Councils should set up sub-committees to investigate what programme is required in an area, including reclamation of derelict land, new schools and nurseries, new hospitals and health centres, new youth clubs and recreation centres and new industries.

This would give a basis for the labour movement to fight for its proposals with government and local councils, and provide part of the programme for a planned economy.

Workers control

Workers control of the sites is an essential part of the fight for nationalisation of the industry as a whole. First it denies the employer the right to make profit out of poor working conditions, dangerous practices and non-unionised labour.

Secondly it lays the

foundation for the control of a nationalised industry by the workers themselves.

It must go hand in hand with opening the books of the building employers and supply firms to show to the workers that only nationalisation under workers' management can guarantee them a decent job.

The Labour Party has come forward with a series of proposals which constitute half-measures.

Whereas nationalisation would end casual labour by ensuring that all building workers had one permanent employer, Labour's proposals suggest a scheme similar to the Dock Labour Board.

Building workers would all be registered and would receive fall-back pay when unemployed.

No substitute

Experience in the docks shows clearly that this is no substitute for permanent employment. It cannot guarantee a good standard of living, does nothing to eliminate the evils of bad quality, lack of training, and waste of resources which are a necessary part of the competitive tender system.

The Labour Party policy also proposes setting up a National Construction Corporation by nationalising a major construction firm.

This would then compete with other firms and set "a standard of excellence".

This policy (which fortunately is most unlikely ever to see the light of day) would create like Leyland a single "nationalised" corporation forced to compete with private capital on capitalist terms, and therefore forced to adopt all the same attacks on wages and conditions that the other building giants are involved in.

It would be no surprise to see such a corporation adopting the same anti-union stance as the other employers.

Planned

The case for nationalisation rests on the need for a construction industry which can be planned to serve the needs both of construction workers and the needs of workers for decent homes, schools, hospitals and workplaces.

It is a demand which develops naturally out of the problems which face construction workers both in the public and private sectors.

It is a demand which can only be realised by joint action by all workers to take control of the sites away from the building employers.

And it rests on the development of organs of control which can draw up the plans for how a nationalised industry should be run.

Housewives

These organs of control will be the basis for the management of a nationalised industry.

They will already involve workers from other industries, and housewives.

And the full realisation of the potential of a planned construction industry will only come when these other workers have joined together to end capitalist rule.

But the struggle must start from here.

By Godfrey Webster

the contract price for profit.

To do this, he skimps on materials, employs the smallest number of craftsmen possible, cuts every corner in construction, and tries to hide defects rather than put them right.

At the design stage necessary checks are omitted to cut costs. These result in unsafe construction which may collapse either on building workers (e.g. Milford Haven bridge) or on the unfortunate final occupants (e.g. the Ronan Point high rise flats).

Only publicly controlled Building Standards give any protection to workers against even lower and more dangerous standards.

Standards too low

As it is, the pressure from contractors for cheap and easy construction techniques has led to many standards being reduced or set too low.

Everyone knows that modern council houses have a higher quality of construction, and larger rooms than comparable private construction.

But even in these the standards for noise and heat insulation are far too low.

These standards should be for workers to determine. It is they who will have to live in the houses.

Similarly for institutional buildings such as community centres, hospitals, and schools: committees of workers should be able to assess what is required in terms of space, quality, and facilities.

Inadequate safety

They should have the advice and assistance of designers and of the social workers, hospital workers or teachers who will use the buildings.

One of the easiest ways

to cut costs is to omit safety precautions.

Every year over two hundred building workers are killed and 40,000 seriously injured in accidents most of which are directly due to inadequate safety.

"Forseeable"

The Health and Safety Executive estimate in a report that 88 out of 100 accidents were "reasonably forseeable."

In other words they resulted from an obvious breach of known safety rules.

One example given is about ladder accidents:

"The principal cause of ladder accidents is failure to tie or to foot satisfactorily the ladder. Reasons given are that tie points are either not conveniently placed or that cost was the decisive factor in not tying or footing the ladder."

The Health and Safety at Work Act makes it mandatory for employers to form safety committees and appoint safety officers from among their workers.

Difficult to unionise

This is unlikely to occur on many building sites. The reason is the low level of unionisation outside of local authority building departments.

By its nature, construction is a difficult industry to unionise. Projects last a relatively short time and employ different types of labour at different stages.

This means that workers are constantly moving from one site to another. Construction firms avoid employing many direct workers, preferring instead to hire sub-contractors for a specific job or period of time.

This reduces their responsibilities in terms of health and safety, sick pay, holiday pay and finding

new employment at the end of a job.

Because of these savings they can afford to pay sub-contract workers considerably more than direct workers.

This in turn encourages building workers to go sub-contract.

On most building sites, therefore, a majority of workers do not work for the main contractor, and cannot benefit from union negotiations on pay or other conditions.

They have no protection against injury, sickness, or industrial disease, and no chance to fight for continuous employment.

Campaign

The only way this situation can be ended is by a co-ordinated campaign of building and other workers.

Workers in unionised factories should insist that building workers on projects within their site are directly employed and unionised.

This should include all supervisory and technical staff. Workers in the

supplier industries have a particular role to play.

The supply industry is much more heavily unionised. A supply workers' committee in reinforcement, concrete or brickwork could black supplies to non-unionised sites. Transport drivers could assist in a similar way.

Direct Labour

One area of the construction industry shows the beginnings of an alternative for building workers.

It also shows the impossibility of a piecemeal solution to the problems of construction.

This area is the Direct Labour departments of local district councils.

These departments carry out the repair and modernisation of council houses, and sometimes new building as well.

They are mostly completely unionised and have much more adequate working conditions, training facilities and safety precautions.

The standard of their



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

1 million families live in sub-standard housing, while building workers remain unemployed

Castro's fans excuse Eritrea slaughter

By Bob Sutcliffe



Cuban troops in Angola

The renewed campaign by leading members of the American Socialist Workers Party to make Fidel Castro an honorary Trotskyist was given another boost in the October 2 issue of the journal *Intercontinental Press* in an article on the Ethiopian Revolution by Ernest Harsch.

The main subject of the article is the war in the Ogaden in 1977-78 between the Ethiopian Derg, supported by the Soviet Union and Cuba, and the West Somali Liberation Front and the regular army of the Barre military dictatorship in Somalia.

Changed view

Harsch admits that *Intercontinental Press* has completely changed its assessment of this war.

It used to say (correctly enough) that it was a contradictory war in which a legitimate national liberation struggle—of the oppressed Somali minority inside Ethiopia—was also being used by the imperialists for their own reactionary objectives in Ethiopia.

Now, however, Harsch says that "the imperialist-backed Somalian invasion was the overriding aspect of the war, both in its actual extent and in its political thrust."

So in retrospect, Harsch claims, it becomes clear that this was a very simple war of imperialism whose 'real impetus' and 'objective aims' (sic) only emerged afterwards.

Rewrite history

Why does Harsch feel it necessary to rewrite the history of this war in such a one-sided way?

The answer becomes plain in the rest of his article: because such a rewriting will reflect revolutionary glory on the hero of the story, Fidel Castro.

So, as a result of the

Cubans' role in Ogaden, Harsch claims:

"Despite the negative aspects of the Cuban role in Ethiopia, the dominant side by far has been the progressive one. In a war situation—where the question is posed of 'which side are you on?'—the Cubans come out decisively against the imperialist machinations. In the overall picture, that's no small thing."

This to Harsch is:

"... an internationalist policy, a policy that aids the African revolution, and by extension the world socialist revolution."

This clean bill of revolutionary health for Castro, follows hard upon the publication of another article in which SWP leader Joseph Hansen lauded Castro's regime, claimed that it was "independent" of the Soviet Union and explicitly denied that Trotskyists should call for its overthrow through political revolution. (See the comment in *Socialist Press* No. 113).

Falsifications

Harsch, like Hansen before him, is forced to stoop to falsification in order to establish his case.

One scandalous instance of this is his treatment of the Soviet Union.

He tells us (p.1093) that in Ethiopia:

"Moscow's policy is highly opportunist, and has nothing to do with aiding the Ethiopian revolution."

He is quite right. And he adds some (rather crude) proof: the USSR initially supported the "repressive military junta" in Somalia and only switched to Ethiopia later because it was bigger and because the Americans withdrew.

All this constituted, Harsch says, a "counter-revolutionary approach."

That's at the beginning of the article.

Only when we've read on enough to forget that, does Harsch tell us with breathtaking inconsistency that just the same conduct by Cuba is evidence of its



A medal for butcher Mengistu

revolutionary internationalism!

Withdrew aid

So when the Soviet Union withdrew military aid from Somalia and sent it to the Ethiopian Derg it was counter-revolutionary and opportunistic.

But when Cuba did the same (a policy which it obviously co-ordinated with its co-thinkers in the Kremlin) then it was coming out decisively against imperialist machinations!

When Moscow portrays the Derg as "socialist" and "Marxist-Leninist" then, Harsch tells us, "the Kremlin helps bolster Mengistu's phoney claims."

But when Fidel Castro calls Mengistu a revolutionary and a socialist, when he fetes the Ethiopian leader as the most honoured possible guest in Havana (most of which Harsch chooses not to mention), then Harsch assures us;

"Castro is right when he points to the socialist dynamic of the Ethiopian revolution, but he confuses the Derg itself with this process."

"This political position could lead to some serious

errors, especially in a situation as complicated as Ethiopia."

Harsch doesn't divulge the (no doubt very dialectical) trick which enables him to discern that virtually identical and certainly co-ordinated actions by the Moscow and Havana bureaucracies are in the one case conscious counter-revolution and in the other case a simple confusion of a genuine revolutionary socialist.

Harsch tells us: "Soviet arms aid falls within the context of Moscow's support for the Derg's repressive policies against the Ethiopian and Eritrean masses."

Not revealed

Of course he doesn't reveal how Cuba's arms aid (from the beginning co-ordinated with that from the Soviet Union) falls in a totally different context.

Of course, Harsch doesn't sort out this apparent inconsistency because he cannot.

Every shred of evidence is against him. And he knows this because the structure of the article

obviously tries to conceal the glaring inconsistency from the reader.

It is a conscious effort to falsify the role of Cuba in Ethiopia.

Even in the Ogaden war that role was certainly not an unambiguously anti-imperialist one.

Since then it has been unambiguously counter-revolutionary.

Its troops have defended the repressive dictatorship of Mengistu which has unleashed a bloodbath against the Ethiopian left.

And Cuban (and Soviet) military assistance has been decisive in supporting Mengistu's genocidal offensive against Eritrea.

Against the evidence, Harsch asserts that "the Cubans have steered away from getting directly involved in the war."

Whether or not Cuban soldiers are in the front line Mengistu's offensive would be impossible without the back-up he gets from the thousands of Cuban troops and technical advisers.

Harsch even claims that Castro supports the right of self-determination for Eritrea.

If that is so, then how does he explain Castro's frequent recent public references to the "territorial integrity" of Ethiopia?

Harsch scandalously reduces Cuba's collaboration with Mengistu's attempted genocide to a "difficulty facing the Cubans on the question of Eritrea."

Well, poor Cubans—not knowing whether to be in

the front line of the bloody offensive or just to back it up from the rear!

The truth is that Cuba's role in Ethiopia is as the more flexible 'left' arm of Soviet foreign policy.

For years every statement and action of the Havana bureaucracy has shown that you couldn't fit a lightweight page of *Intercontinental Press* between the positions of Castro and Brezhnev.

The leaders of the SWP, however, want to say that the difference between them is the most fundamental possible political difference—that between revolution and counter-revolution!

Unprincipled

This is a desperate effort by the SWP to prop up long-discredited positions.

It was on the basis of common adaptation to Castro and petty bourgeois radicalism that US and European "Trotskyists" formed an unprincipled political bloc—resulting in the "United" Secretariat in 1963.

The denial of the political assimilation of Castro to Stalinism is certainly the continuation of those political positions and those of the Pabloite adaptation to the Stalinist bureaucracy.

And to maintain this position requires, as Harsch's and Hansen's articles have shown, that these 'Trotskyists' indulge in scandalous distortion of the evidence.



Castro (right) with Che Guevara

One year later, murderer still scot free!

By John Lister

A full year after the public murder of American Young Socialist leader Tom Henehan, police are still refusing to arrest the known killer or his accomplice.

Angelo Torres gunned down Henehan at a Young Socialists' discotheque in Brooklyn, New York, on October 16 1977.

Henehan was a Political Committee member of the US Workers League (the US organisation in political sympathy with Gerry Healy's "International Committee", dominated by the British Workers Revolutionary Party).

Identity known

Workers League member Jacques Vielot was also wounded in the shooting.

Torres' identity, and that of his accomplice, Edwin Sequinog was known to the police within an hour of the murder.

But it took these advocates of "law and order" four months to release his name, they still have not released his photograph; and, a year later, both Torres and Sequinog remain scot free.

This contrasts vividly with the draconian police and military moves against labour movement militants on picket lines—and continual FBI surveillance of left groups.

A barrage of obstructive excuses is thrown up by Brooklyn police whenever Workers League leaders attempt to inquire as to what has been done on the murder case.

But so far the Workers League has not taken the most obvious step of initiating a labour movement inquiry into the killing.

Open investigation

This course of action was urged on them by the US Socialist League (DC) in the first issue of their paper, *Labor News*, after the tragic killing had taken place.

Headed 'Open investigation necessary', the article—published before the killer's identity was known—pointed out:

"The ramifications of this murder are complicated and unpleasant, not only for the Workers League, but for every organisation in the US which is opposed to capitalism.

"Therefore, we call upon every Trotskyist organisation, the labour movement in general, and concerned workers and students to participate in the investigation.

"The detailed descriptions of the gunmen which the Workers League has already furnished the 90th Precinct in Brooklyn need to be printed in their party organ, the *Bulletin*.

"There are several important questions that need to be answered in this investigation.

"In the first place, was the murder a political attack against Tom Henehan and the Workers

League, or was it a normal homicide? To initially assume that the murder was not political, considering its victim and the location of the event (at a Young Socialist dance), is most careless.

"To simply assume that it was, however, is equally dangerous.

"It is most likely that Tom's

death was political, but this should be ascertained factually, with concrete evidence and not through conclusions based on the motivations of right wing elements.

"This will enable the Workers League and other interested parties to pinpoint exactly from what quarter did the attack on Tom and Jacques

come.

"What is the description of the two gunmen who killed Tom? Since the murder occurred at the entrance to the dance it is likely that there were witnesses.

"The *Bulletin* newspaper should interview any eye-witnesses and publish their observations of the night of

October 15 and morning of October 16.

"According to the minimal description in the October 21 and subsequent issues, Tom was inside during the dance and, following a disturbance at the door, came out to investigate.

"Therefore there must have been at least one other comrade already outside at the door (was

this Jacques?) collecting donations.

"If Jacques has sufficiently recovered by now he may be able to provide a more thorough explanation of what occurred.

"The New York police have been brought into the investigation of the killing but the readers of the *Bulletin* as well as other working class organisations, certainly need to know at least as much as the "concerned" detectives of the 90th Precinct.

Unsolved

"The New York Police Department is not going to be interested in fully pursuing the investigation, and even if they were, the thousands of unsolved homicides in New York City raises doubts about whether they would succeed in solving it.

"However, the Police and other agencies are now in an excellent position (on the pretext of gathering information concerning the killing on October 16) to probe every nook and cranny of the Workers League: the names of all its members and supporters, their addresses and places of work, etc.

"It is most unlikely that the police will find anything illegal, since the Workers League is known to oppose the use of drugs among its members, or terrorist activity such as trafficking in guns, bombs, or other petty-bourgeois "revolutionary" dilletantisms.

"But this won't stop the police from providing the CIA or Nazi organisations on the periphery of the police with the information they now have the opportunity to amass.

"This is why the murder of Tom Henehan is a double tragedy, not simply for Tom's family and comrades, but for the organisation he belonged to.

"Let the open investigation of his death and the shooting of Jacques Vielot begin immediately, and let it be independent of the police."

Unfortunately the Workers League has not acted upon this advice.

But more reprehensible by far is the deplorable silence on the killing by the US Socialist Workers Party—sympathising section of the "United" Secretariat of the Fourth International.

During the last year these self-styled "Trotskyists" have not found so much as a column-inch in their mammoth 36-page weekly paper *The Militant*, much of which is filled with civil rights issues and liberal protests.

Publicised

Yet the SWP itself has suffered bomb attacks and attempted assassinations of leading members—including election candidate Catarino Garza, which have all been correctly and heavily publicised in *The Militant*.

The murder of Tom Henehan fits into a pattern of growing violence by right wing and state forces against the US labour movement.

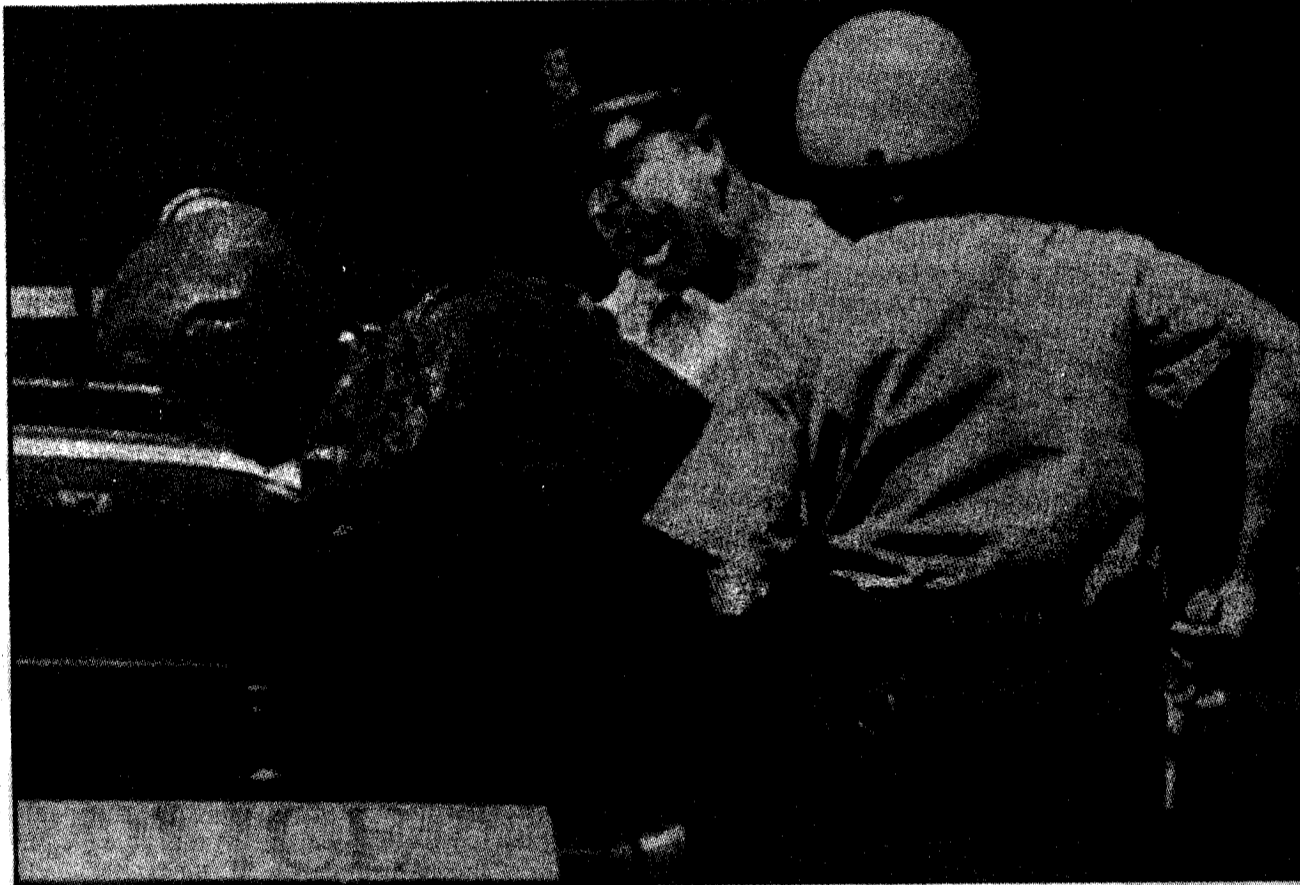
The SWP silence under these conditions is a scandal.

The campaign to expose the case to the labour movement and to draw out the lessons from the brazen police connivance at the murder of a leading Trotskyist could be substantially advanced by the convening of a labour movement inquiry, along the lines suggested by the SL (DC).

Our political differences with the Workers League and the Healyite International Committee are well known and deep-going.

But were the Workers League to take the initiative in such an inquiry they would certainly advance the fight for political clarity in the US class struggle.

And any political grouping that refused to support such a move would stand exposed as tacitly accepting political murder of the leaders of opposing tendencies.



US cops—condone murder of Trotskyists while harrasing blacks and the labour movement

Women from a woman's view

TONY RICHARDSON reviews Claudia Weill's film 'GIRLFRIENDS'

'Girlfriends' has been compared in the Tory press to the Woody Allen film 'Annie Hall'.

But this is a completely false characterisation. Unlike 'Annie Hall' there is no real attempt at humour.

There are only a couple of jokes in the whole film—each based not on wit but on the situation.

Photographer Susan Weinblatt and her friend

Anne share a flat and develop a real friendship. Then Anne moves out and marries a well-to-do man, has a baby and struggles to write poetry at home.

But neither Susan, who continues photographing Jewish barmitzvahs and fights to get her personal photographs accepted by magazines, nor Anne are happy.

Both however try to deny how much their friendship means—saying

again and again how happy they are on their own. The film exposes the hollowness of this pretence.

'Annie Hall', directed by Woody Allen, was a film about a beautiful woman, a sparkling personality, seen from a man's viewpoint.

But Claudia Weill, director of 'Girlfriends' has examined each of the relationships from the woman's standpoint, portraying them with real sensitivity.

Thus the married man with whom Susan falls in love but who pulls back from a relationship because of his wife, is only an incidental character, whose feelings are not examined. The focus is on Susan and her response to the situation.

Gradually through its careful portrayal of personal relationships the film shows that the most important relationship is that between Anne and Susan.

In doing so it highlights how few films seriously portray women as anything other than incidental characters, or as ornaments in a man's world, seen from a man's view.

The weakness however, is that as nearly always in such films, the characters are drawn exclusively from the privileged petty bourgeoisie.

Their feelings, emotions and relationships take place completely cut off from the real world, its struggles and its material problems.

Indeed in real life not even every petty bourgeois wants to become a photographer or a poet.

Some key sections, affected by the class struggle, come to recognise that human relationships can only flourish freely and sexual oppression be brought to an end, in the struggle for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism.

WSL

Writings on the Fourth International



The Poisoned Well:

The document drafted by the Workers Socialist League for submission to the pre-conference discussion of the USFI XIth World Congress — exposing the political bankruptcy and opportunism of both of the previous main factions within the USFI. Pointing out that the common factor of each of the self-styled 'Fourth Internationals' is their departure from the method and principles on which the FI was founded, this article calls for serious steps towards the reconstruction of the International.

Published in *Trotskyism Today* No 3, July 1978. Price 60p plus 15p p&p.

Both available from the WSL,
31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR



Aspects of the History of the FI:

Based on a lecture by John Lister to the WSL 1977 Summer School, this article attempts to examine in more detail the departure from the Marxist method carried out by Michel Pablo and the majority of the International Secretariat of the FI in the period following the Yugoslavian 'break' with Stalin in 1948. The article shows the methodological connection between the positions which led to the 1953 split in the International, and those which opened the door for the opportunist 'reunification' of 1963.

Published in *Trotskyism Today* No 2, March 1978. Price 50p plus 15p p&p.

Conference fights cuts in Sheffield

Pressure builds up on low pay

The determination of public sector workers to fight against further wage restraint is growing in strength as union branches throughout London continue to pass resolutions in support of the demands of the "Low Pay Campaign".

Following the lead given by Camden General Branch of NUP NUPE, Westminster Hospital NUPE have passed a resolution supporting the claim for a £60 a week minimum wage and a 35 hour week linking it to a demand that the NUPE Executive call for indefinite strike action from the final settlement date.

The Branch also pledged its support to any other section or branch of NUPE which takes industrial action against Phase 4.

Many hospital branches have already resolved to support the claim including St. Andrew's Bow—who are preparing for joint action with TGWU and GMWU branches in the area—and the Royal Free, Hampstead.

Finally, a one day strike in support of the claim on 6

November has been voted for by the North London Polytechnic NUPE branch.

The resolutions—and many more, both in London and nationally—reflect the growing militancy of public sector workers over the question of pay.

Co-ordination

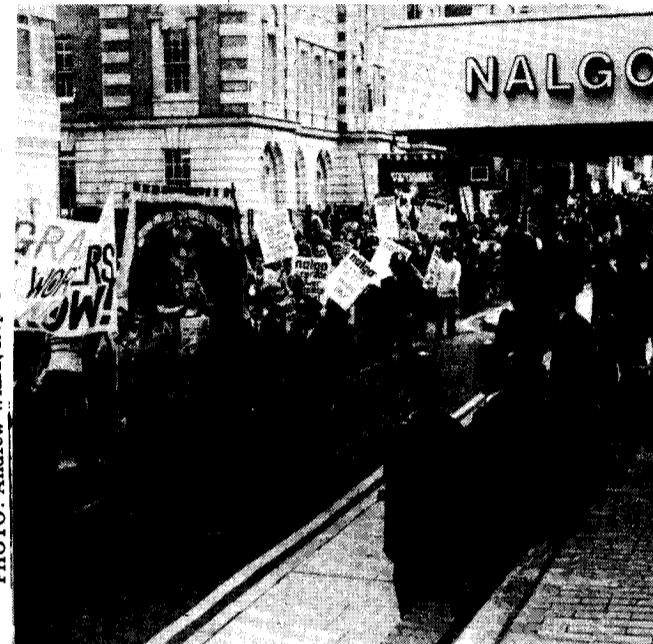
Despite these moves, however, the leadership of NUPE and the other unions involved in launching the "Low Pay Campaign" have not taken a single step towards co-ordinating these resolutions and bringing together the various sections into a united attack on Phase 4.

This treacherous inactivity of the NUPE leadership—despite all their fine talk of 'unity' and the plight of the low paid—must be fought at all levels in the next period.

The shop stewards movement in the London Health Service is in a strong position to take the initiative in bringing together these claims, and forcing the NEC to give a lead in coordinating action with other sections and unions.

Support is growing in several NUPE branches for a London stewards' conference—initially for Health Service stewards—to discuss action on the pay claims.

Unless the leadership is forced to give a clear lead there is a danger that the whole campaign—and with it all the chances of action in the public sector to break Phase 4—will end in isolation and defeat, with individual branches in the various sections taking action at different times, and having far less effect.



Striking social service workers continue their action over regrading

A conference has been called in Sheffield on Saturday December 2 to discuss the problems facing the NHS and a programme of action to defend and develop health care facilities.

The conference was originally called by the Sheffield Campaign against cuts in the NHS after a fight waged by WSL mem-

bers and Socialist Press readers.

A WSL member argued that it was necessary to go beyond the concept of fighting cuts as and when they occurred, and actually begin to take up the political questions which lay behind the cut-backs.

It was felt that the committee should launch an offensive around a programme of action which could be taken to the centre of a conference based on labour movement delegates. This was eventually agreed.

The conference is now being sponsored by a number of union branches and Labour Party wards and support is pledged by a number of working class organisations.

Trade unions

The committee is open to all workers in the health service and other trade unionists in industry, labour movement bodies and members of the public who are determined to campaign against cuts in defence of the health service.

The committee campaigns in the trade union movement on the following policies which will be open to discussion/amendment at the conference.

*Opposition to all closures in the NHS which

represent a cut in services, and indirect cuts such as natural wastage etc.

*The secrecy which surrounds the AHA must be abolished—all plans, discussions and information should be open for inspection by trade union committees and users of the health service.

*For regular increases in the health service budget to keep pace with inflation and additional finances to increase services to meet patient's needs.

**Opposition to the massive profits made by the drug and supplier firms from the NHS. For an investigation into the finances of these firms as part of a campaign for their nationalisation.

*The cuts will not be prevented by lobbies of MPs, petitions, or "days of action". What is required is national strike action by health service unions. On the basis of this we call for solidarity strike action by other unions.

*We support in particular hospital occupations against closures.

Details and credentials for the 2 December conference, which will be held at Mount Pleasant Centre, Sheffield, can be obtained from Chris Styles, 179, Sandford Grove Road, Sheffield, S7 1RS.

WSL Why not join us?



Few movements can ever have trodden on so many toes in so short a time as the Workers Socialist League.

Our movement has been at the forefront of agitation for action to break Labour's wage controls — brushing aside the posturing speeches of the TUC bureaucracy to reveal their real collaboration with Phases 1, 2 and 3.

We have fought tenaciously against the sale of jobs at Speke, in steel and elsewhere by the TUC bureaucracy, and highlighted their fraudulent talk of 'fighting unemployment'.

Our members have time and again deflated fiery speeches by 'left' windbags who talk of opposition to the cuts but make no call for strikes or occupations; as a result we have been in the front rank of support for every major cuts

struggle.

We have championed every major unionisation struggle from Grunwick to Garners and Sandersons, highlighting each step of bureaucratic betrayal and sabotage.

And the Workers Socialist League has been at the forefront of the fight in British Leyland and throughout industry to oppose the erosion of the independent shop stewards' movement through class collaboration in 'workers participation' bodies.

Explain

In each of these struggles and in our international work the WSL has fought to reveal and to explain the counter-revolutionary role played by the Stalinists of the Communist Parties — whether these be 'Euro-communist' parties or those adhering to Moscow.

Our principled stand on these issues has also vividly exposed the opportunism and confusion of the various other left groups who claim to offer workers a 'revolutionary' alternative.

And such struggles have earned our members continued witch-hunting and victimisation at the hands of employers and union officials alike.

The lessons of these fights, together with an up-to-date assessment of the developing struggles of the working class internationally, have been reflected in our paper, *Socialist Press*.

Now, as struggles break out on a growing scale against Phase 4 of wage controls, and public sector workers increasingly rebel at low wages and the impact of savage Labour spending cuts the need to carry this fight

for revolutionary leadership to new sections of workers is greater than ever.

Weapon

The fighting perspective of the Trotskyist programme offers every militant a weapon in the dual fight against the employers and against the treachery of Labour and TUC bureaucrats.

We call on *Socialist Press* readers and supporters to consider the coming struggles, the problems they face, and the necessity of a principled lead in each day-to-day fight.

Why not join us, and help us trample on even more bureaucratic toes in the months and years ahead?


MORE DETAILS

Please send me more information about the Workers Socialist League.

Name

Address

Send to: WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR



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42-hrs fight looms

As the Fire Brigades Union conference opened in Bridlington last week, General Secretary Terry Parry revealed that he was still unable to report the amount of the pay rise due for payment on November 7.

The reason, he said, is that the exact figure could not be calculated until the Department of Employment's earnings survey published its annual figures on October 26.

But Parry did say that in his view the *Daily Express* report anticipating a 20% rise—meaning around £15 per week for qualified firemen on the top rate of pay—"would not be far out", and that the rise might be more than that.

Difficult period

However it was suggested that if the figures were revealed it might encourage other sections of workers to press claims in excess of the 5% pay limit.

The £15 per week figure would in any event apply only to firemen with 4.5 years service—with lower grades getting considerably less.

But the size of the increase will no doubt encourage the employers to pursue their policy of attempting to run fire stations with less men on duty than at present.

Firemen now face a difficult period in which they must fight to defend existing jobs and manning levels at the present 48-hour week standards—even before the struggle to force employers to man up to the same levels of cover for the 42-hour week.

"Picked off"

Indeed in the debate on the 42-hour week Parry argued strongly against an emergency resolution from Greater Manchester calling for the FBU to force the employers to agree to implement the 42-hour week by December 1 or take unilateral action as a union to implement it from that date.

Parry claimed that with only one third of brigades manned up to be able to go over to the 42 hour week at present, this policy would give the employers an excuse to back out of talks.

And he argued that while some brigades might be able to implement the shorter hours unilaterally, others would be picked off, with the employers using the action as a pretext to cut manning levels.

His appeal for no action was capped off with a ritual plea for "unity". The Executive resolution, calling for a negotiated arrangement for the introduction of the 42-hour week to be reported to a recall conference on 28 November, was carried by a 3-1 majority,



Firemen on the march during their strike

backed by many of the larger brigades, including Merseyside.

A resolution from the Bucks brigade criticising the Executive's handling of last winter's strike was withdrawn in order to support the Greater Manchester move on the 42-hour week.

Delegates went on to virtually nod through a series of new rules designed to tighten up



Parry

disciplinary procedures in the union.

With only minor amendments the whole of the EC document was adopted—though at one point it was revealed that through a defective microphone some delegates had been voting even though prevented from hearing the debate!

The rule changes end the members' right to appeal to full conference against expulsion from the union by the EC.

Clearly such a change is aimed against union representatives who lead militant action on pay and conditions, and will be used by the right wing FBU bureaucracy to buttress themselves against the type of rank and file hostility demonstrated during last winter's strike.

Chapple hits militant branches



Chapple

Moves are now underway within the EETPU to drastically cut back the number of branches in operation.

In the London area the proposal from General Secre-

tary Frank Chapple and his right wing EC supporters is to cut down to only four branches by December of this year.

Such a move would dissolve all the branches with any militant record—one in North London has a 50-year history of militant leadership—and strengthen the stranglehold on the EETPU exercised by the Chapple leadership.

At one time there were 48 branches in the London area, but this number has been steadily reduced. In 1972 Chapple disbanded the union's district committees.

Now full-time officials are coming round to inform branches of the Executive Council's decision.

These moves must be seen in the context of the proposed amalgamation with the AUEW, which will undoubtedly lead to still further "streamlining" in order to minimise the strength of the rank and file.

EETPU militants must follow up the resolutions already passed which call on the Executive to reconsider the scheme, and demand an emergency conference to discuss the whole issue.

AHA talks of concession

The Kensington, Chelsea and Westminster Area Health Authority has made a show of conceding to pressure.

At its last meeting it accepted that there will have to be an extension of the 'consultation' period before going ahead with the plan to close St. Mary's Hospital in Harrow Road.

Health workers lobbying the AHA meeting on 11 October heard Chairman John Dunwood, and others talk about an extension, but in the end put off a decision pending discussion with the local Community Health Council.

Supporters of the battle to defend the hospital must view all such talk with the utmost suspicion.

The AHA's quandary on this question is a reflection of almost unanimous opposition to its plan being voiced by local organisations.

There is no doubt, however, that the Authority intends to go ahead with the cuts in expenditure dictated by the Labour government.

The public meeting on 19 October at Paddington School organised by the Hospital Defence Committee must discuss a programme of opposition to all cuts, in whatever guise.

Labour 'lefts' like Arthur Latham, local MP, who claim to support the Campaign, must be forced to say there what steps they are taking to remove the Callaghan-Healey leadership which is responsible for foisting the cuts on the working class.

Expulsion threat to strikers

93 production workers at the Usher-Walker printing inks factory in East London are on indefinite, unofficial strike demanding the withdrawal of management redundancy threats.

At a meeting with representatives of the NATSOPA

chapel on Monday October 9, management revealed plans to make 15-20 workers of their own choosing redundant, and to force a further half dozen workers to retire.

All out strike

Since the factory is at present undermanned this move could only be seen as a bid to remove the militant leadership of the NATSOPA chapel.

A union meeting next day therefore voted to take all-out strike action demanding that the sacking threats be withdrawn, and seeking the payment of money withheld by management during a previous dispute.

But this prompt action in defence of jobs has annoyed NATSOPA officials, who have now threatened disciplinary action, including possible expulsion from the union, of chapel members on strike.

Sandersons mass picket

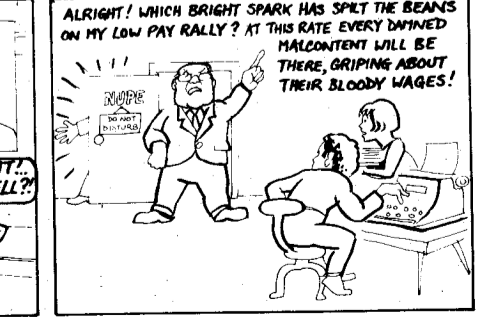
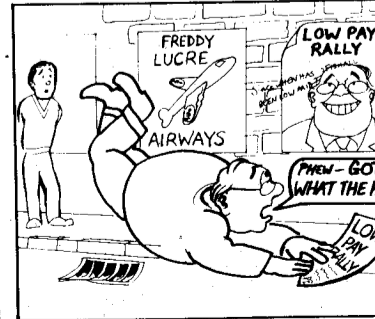
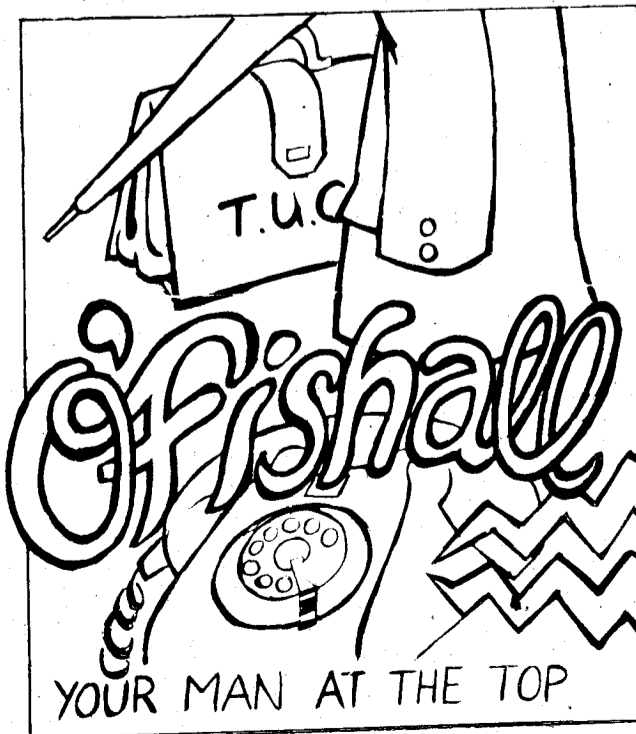
WHILE TGWU National Organiser Ron Todd swaggers around basking in the reflected glory of the union's massive strength at Fords, he is tactfully silent about a very different battle—one he has consciously ignored.

The Sandersons recognition strike in Skegness, now 18 months old, goes on with none of the publicity or full-scale

official backing of the Fords dispute, though there is no doubt the strike could be won.

The TGWU members involved are fighting for the most basic right of all. They are appealing for support, especially on their mass picket at 6.30 am on Friday October 27.

We urge trade unionists everywhere to respond to this call.



SOCIALIST PRESS

The Cowley claim

- *£27 per week increase on basic wage.
- *Consolidation of all supplements.
- *Premiums to be based on full hourly rate.
- *Cost of living clause.
- *35 hour week.
- *Increased company contributions to pension scheme.
- *Sick pay at full hourly rate.
- *Five days additional holidays.

Ten years jail for strike leaders after show trial

The kangaroo court in Tunis has pronounced sentence on the 30 union leaders, removed from office by the government for their part in the violent general strike of 26 January.

With no right of appeal, Habib Achour and Abderrazak Ghorbal (the former general secretary and regional secretary for Sfax of the UGTT, General Union of Tunisian Workers) have been sentenced to 10 years hard labour, while shorter terms have been inflicted on 22 others.

But these vicious penalties fall short of the death sentence demanded by the state prosecutor in this rigged trial.

Hailed by the Tunisian bourgeoisie, such 'clemency' was dictated by the scale of the opposition that developed to the form of justice being administered by Bourguiba's 'democratic' regime.

Impossible to act

The defence lawyers walked out in protest—some now face charges themselves as a result.

Their replacements, appointed by the state, complained that the restrictions of the court made it impossible for them to act in defence of the accused. They too refused to cooperate with the political frame-up.

Outside the trial, relatives and supporters of the defendants were arrested, along with observers sent by French trade union confederations, as they demonstrated in protest.

Amnesty

Condemnation of the sentences, and demands for an amnesty have been made by international trade union organisations, including the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and the International Union of Arab Workers Unions.

But the Bourguiba regime has given no sign that it will succumb to these protests, and the various bureaucrats involved in this campaign have from their side given even less indication that they will mobilise the independent strength of the working class to achieve these basic democratic demands.



The mass meeting which adopted the Cowley Assembly Plant claim

Pay crunch at Leyland

Following the lead given last month by the Cowley Assembly Plant most of the plants within Leyland Cars have now tabled wage claims seeking around £100 per week for production workers.

While Cowley stewards have been awaiting management's reply to the claim endorsed by a mass meeting in the plant, the Leyland Combine Committee has met, and been forced to recognise that this year's wage review will be negotiated at factory level and not through centralised, corporate level bargaining.

But the Communist Party and right wing stewards who control the Combine Committee have still not given up in their efforts to introduce at least elements of corporate bargaining this year.

They have recommended that each individual plant consider including "common elements" in each claim.

After the Communist Party members succeeded in defeating a Cowley proposal that all plants should press for a cost of living clause, the "common elements" proposed were:

- *A 35-hour week without loss of pay.
- *Consolidation of all supplementary payments.
- *An increase of £15 per week from November 1978 to be applied to the highest current flat rate payment (£84.13). All other grades to receive the appropriate pro rata increase based on this rate.
- *Full parity to apply from November 1978.

These points have now been submitted by most of Leyland's Midlands car plants as their plant claim.

Management policy

A central danger with claims formulated in this way is the demand for "parity" to be brought forward to November of this year rather than November 1979.

Since "parity" means, in effect, Leyland management's corporate bargaining plan, such a demand falls completely into line with management policy, and must be strongly opposed.

Union leaders have enabled Leyland bosses to make major advances towards their corporate plan.

Last week the national negotiating committee (LCJNC) voted to accept the company's five grade structure—suggesting only slightly different differentials to those insisted on by management.

"Bench marks"

More importantly, the negotiating committee has agreed to undertake the task of slotting each of the 60 "bench marks" (job titles) into the five grades, subject to the current job evaluation exercise.

Every one of these



PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Todd decisions is highly contentious and likely to lead to strikes as soon as each is announced.

In an effort to avoid this, decisions are being taken behind firmly closed doors, with LCJNC members sworn to the strictest secrecy.

The five pay grades proposed by BL management are as follows.

1. £84.76
2. £80.71
- 2a. £79.05
3. £71.66
4. £65.00

Even a meeting of TGWU convenors held last Friday was refused access to the documents by TGWU national cars officer Grenville Hawley.

Despite the eagerness of the Stalinists to press ahead, it is likely that the sheer scale of the task and the practical problems involved will make it impossible for management to bring pay "parity" forward.

The main company strategy to head off the wage claims is likely to come next weekend at a meeting in Luton, where chairman Michael Edwardes is to unveil the new "improved" 5-year plan

for Leyland.

If there is any prospect of the Company proposing to bring "parity" forward as part of a wage offer it would have to emerge at this meeting.

There is no doubt that it would be accompanied by calls for massive speed-up under threat of further plant closures.

"Incentive" plan

But much more likely is that management will use the revamped "incentive" plan to form a major element of their offer.

This scheme—also discussed under the strictest secrecy by leading bureaucrats on the LCJNC—is now reaching its final stages.

But, however much money they may seem to offer, "incentives" schemes are a completely separate issue from basic wages.

And, as productivity deals, they fit into the description given by TGWU National Organiser Ron Todd in the Ford dispute—offering workers no more than "a raffle ticket" in exchange for more effort.

Leyland workers must mount pressure on their plant negotiating committees to stick to the main points of the claims submitted—increases on the basic rate, consolidation of supplements, shorter hours, and longer holidays.

Key question

The "incentives" plan should be considered separately and thrown out.

The key question is the way in which the leadership in each plant prepares its members to fight for the claim.

Management and union leaders will almost certainly argue that Leyland is different from Fords because it is "bankrupt" and kept afloat by the taxpayer.

Therefore, they will claim, any pay rise must be financed through increased productivity.

£60 million interest

This must be answered by demanding that BL's books be opened to elected trade union committees, and by pointing to the £60 million per year paid by Leyland in interest on this so-called "taxpayers' money".

Leyland workers must press for mass meetings to discuss these questions, alongside stewards meetings and written statements to keep members informed.

*Strike now alongside Fords!

*End the secret negotiations; publish LCJNC documents to the whole union membership!

*Decisions on the pay claim to be taken at mass meetings.

*No deal on "parity" or incentives!

*For an uncompromising defence of living standards. £100 per week for production workers, with cost of living clauses to protect against inflation!

*End "workers' participation"!



Cowley convenor Fryer speaking at the mass meeting

FUND

It is pleasing to see that the scares of previous months have resulted in a good start to the October Fund. The first half of the month has yielded a total of £356.23. This means that we are well placed to collect a bumper fund this month.

More heartening news comes this month from Oxford where a weekly tote has now been started which promises to bring in a further £40 a month to our funds very shortly.

Meanwhile all donations to the monthly fund should be sent to: Socialist Press Fund, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR.