

BIG FLAME

Sent 77

Paper of the Revolutionary Socialist Organisation Big Flame

10p

KEEP RACE

HATE OFF

THE STREETS

VIOLENCE has always been an essential part of right-wing activities. The National Front's claim to be a 'respectable political party' is hollow — really it is a ruthless para-military gang.

Inside, on the centre pages, we print a list of some of the attacks and firebombings carried out by the fascists in recent months. They are part and parcel of a deliberate campaign of harassment and intimidation which is the hidden face of the National Front.

Unless the growth in the fascists' power and influence is halted now, then their campaign will snowball. The fascists don't give a monkey's about 'mugging', 'law and order' and all their other too-familiar propaganda themes. Their aim, like Hitler's, is supreme power and they will boot their way to that end — unless they are stopped.

That's why we say: stop the fascists marching now, while there's still time to do it. There is no doubt about it: that will mean violent scenes in the streets. But ask yourself: wouldn't it have been better if Hitler could have been stopped in his tracks right from the start?

Mill Rd. Maternity is saved!

THEY'RE CELEBRATING IN LIVERPOOL

THERE'LL BE a big dance soon to celebrate saving Liverpool's Mill Road Maternity Hospital. 27,000 people signed a petition to keep the hospital which was threatened because of the Liverpool Area Health Authority's economy measures. The AHA wanted it closed, regardless of the excellent service the hospital offers to women from all over Liverpool. They've been told by the government to cut NHS spending drastically, ignoring the needs of working class people for better, not worse, health care.

Four women workers at the hospital formed an Action Group 18 months ago. Gradually they got support from doctors, community health councils, medical committees, TU branches, community and womens groups, councillors and local MPs, as well as getting the petition signed door to door and in street markets. All this forced a majority of the AHA to change their minds and vote to retain the hospital, despite the financial loss.

But the victory hasn't been won that easily. It's going to mean hardship for other Liverpool women and hospital workers as the AHA plan to close the smaller maternity units at Broadgreen and Sefton General. An Action Group is being set up at Broadgreen to try and keep the Maternity Unit there open. Women up that end of the city need local maternity services, and working class people everywhere need more and better services — not cuts! Mill Rd is at least a start!

AND FIGHTING ON AT HOUNSLOW

The Day of Action at Hounslow Hospital last month was supported by hundreds of local tenants and workers, including Ford Langley Shop Stewards Committee. It has strengthened the hospital workers determination to keep the hospital open, and won them

HOUNSLOW HOSPITAL WORK IN



backing in the area,

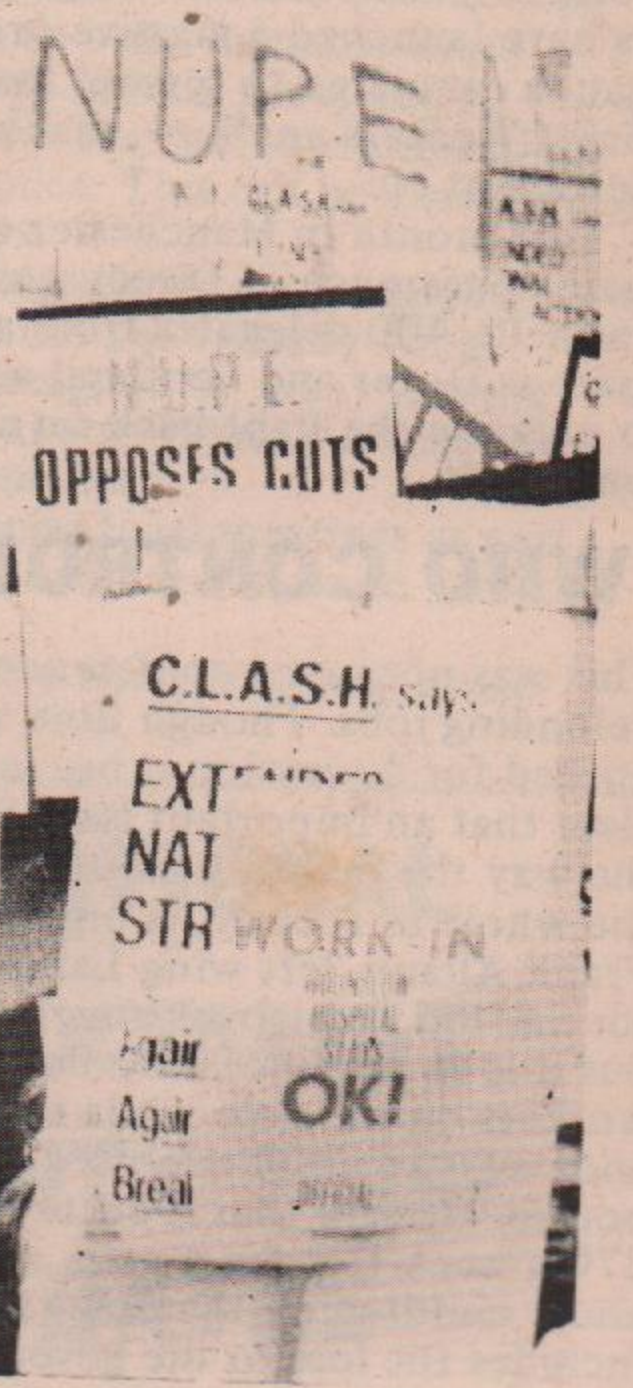
The main problem for the work-in now is making sure that patients go on being admitted. "Doctors have been told not to refer cases to us in future," says the secretary of the hospital defence committee. "If they do,

their jobs may be at stake."

An attempt by a consultant to move 16 patients out was stopped by ambulancemen. They have refused to move patients, except on strictly medical grounds. And 25 nurses, who were made

redundant and told to report to another hospital, are still turning up for work at Hounslow.

The hospital workers know that as long as there are patients, Hounslow must stay open. And while it stays open, the fight goes on to prevent closure.



LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

BLACK AND BLUE IN BURNGREAVE

"I saw these two white men beating up a young West Indian lad, and my first reaction was to call the police. Then I realised that they were the police"

THE DISTRICT of Burngreave in Sheffield has got itself something of a reputation. Unlike the quiet and respectable areas of the town like Dore and Tetley (where the dogs don't even mess on the pavement), there is rarely a day passes in Burngreave without some excitement, and the appearance of a panda car or two. Even on those days when there is nothing happening the local constabulary are about, reassuring us by their attentive presence.

The police seem to be particularly keen on reassuring the local black community. It's not uncommon for them to stop people on the street or even go round to their houses to enquire how they're getting on; invite them for a ride in their car; put them up for the night at the "station" - often completely without charge - and give them a few lessons in boxing as well.

Surprisingly, a lot of Burngreave residents were unaware of the good works of the police, until an incident on Monday 4th July. That evening, a group of a dozen or more police officers (some in civilian dress) put on a special public display in the area to an audience of about 50 onlookers, who interrupted their teas and TV viewing to come out on to the street and watch.

The events which led up to this incident began that morning, when a black youth, Hansel, was woken from his bed and taken in for "questioning". The police told him to spill the beans about crimes recently committed in the area or else they would "get him." He was then released.

In the afternoon he was picked up

Residents fight police harassment in Sheffield



A speaker at protest meeting on July 5th

again together with three other West Indian youths, and several girls, in connection with an alleged robbery of money and jewellery from a car on Burngreave Bank. They were put in a transit van and taken to Attercliffe police station. Hansel and one other youth were held in custody, the others were allowed to go after questioning.

Then at about 7 pm, two plain clothes police with truncheons entered a house on Catherine Rd to arrest another black youth, Junior Bailey. He was grabbed, handcuffed and dragged into a car. There were four other black youths in the house at the time, and one of the police apparently said "Send for the van, we might as well arrest the lot". Two of the youths ran off, two were arrested.

ted. Tony was one of them, and he resisted, said they had no reason to arrest him, and the police hit him, wrestled him to the ground, and the rolled down the road, fighting. One of the policemen later exhibited a large bump on his head and said he'd been hit with a billiard cue.

A lot of people gathered on the street to see what was going on. One woman said: "I saw these two white men beating up a young West Indian lad, and my first reaction was to call the police. Then I realised that they were the police!". Several panda cars full of uniformed police reinforcements then arrived, took Tony off, and tried - unsuccessfully - to grab several other black youths who had come to help him. The police had little difficulty however, in arresting four young white residents who were standing around

arguing with them. Just arguing.

At Attercliffe police station the 9 people arrested were ill-treated and abused. Junior Bailey had to go to hospital for a gouged wrist. The four white "do-gooders", "social workers" and "agitators" were released at 1.30 am, three of them charged with "assault on a P.C. in the execution of his duty" and one with "Obstruction of a P.C. in...etc." The black youths were released at 4 am and only Bailey charged: with "assault on a P.C. while resisting arrest." All those charged have pleaded not guilty.

The next evening an impromptu meeting was held by local residents on the street corner where the incident took place, and speaker after speaker, both black and white, expressed their disgust at the way

the police had handled the situation. Out of the street meeting a Residents Group was formed, with an elected committee, to take action over police harassment and also the wider problems of unemployment, bad housing, inadequate educational and recreational facilities etc. The Group points out that these are problems which concern everyone in Burngreave to some extent, but that it's the coloured community who are most acutely affected by them, and the West Indian youth in particular.

The Residents Group has subsequently organised two well-attended public meetings at which local grievances have been aired, and the danger of racist attitudes openly discussed for the first time.

Concerning the incident on July 4th the Group has sent a letter to the Lord Mayor, accompanied by a petition with 200 signatures, protesting at the police behaviour on that day and calling for a public inquiry into police activity generally.

Although an official complaint has been lodged against the police by the accused, the Residents Group has little faith in an internal inquiry where the police are investigating themselves. The call for a public inquiry has not however met with any clear response from the Mayor, who has simply referred the matter to the Community Relations Council.

The Group therefore has plans to organise its own "people's inquiry" and is collecting evidence of incidents that have occurred in recent months. The Committee of the Group want it to be understood that they are not in any way opposed to the police carrying out their duty and apprehending suspects in the proper manner. They are, however, very strongly opposed to the arbitrary and groundless arrests, intimidation, harassment and brutality which are becoming all too common in Burngreave.

by: Burngreave Residents Group Committee

DIRECT WORKS CONFERENCE THE BATTLE FOR CONTROL

ALL OVER the country Direct Works departments are being run down or threatened with closure. Direct Works departments are the sections of local councils which repair council houses or, in some cases, build them as well. For some time the big building firms like Laings, Costains and Wimpey have had their eyes on this work. They want it for themselves because at the moment they can't make any profit from it if local Direct workers are doing the work. Recently the building employers have launched a massive propaganda campaign to 'prove' that Direct Workers are 'lazy, dishonest, inefficient etc'.

Last month in Manchester a delegate conference of Direct workers was held. 400 delegates from as far apart as Dover and Scotland attended to organise the fight back on a national basis.

WHO CONTROLS

This was not just a conference about defending jobs. Though time was limited for discussion it became clear that an important issue was the way the building industry, and the whole of society, is organised. Frank Allaun, left wing Labour MP for Salford, explained how ridiculous it is to have 250,000 building workers on the dole while thousands were in desperate need of houses. He said that it costs the state £70 a week to keep a man, a woman and 2 children on the dole (this includes the loss to the government in tax, National Insurance etc). Wouldn't this money be much better spent on employing people to build much needed houses? But of course this society is organised to do that. The building industry is controlled by private employers whose aim is to make profit not to abolish unemployment and homelessness. And even worse, the part of the ind-

ustry that might be able to do this - the Direct Works Departments - are being closed down!

Pete Carter, convenor of Sandwell Direct Labour Dept. in Birmingham, quite rightly went further. Because Direct Works are controlled by local government not by profiteers they give us a vision of the future, where tenants, workers architects and planners work together to build the kind of communities we want. He said:-

"Direct Labour has an historic mission to make our fight not only one of wages and conditions but to wage a political battle about who controls."

WAGES

At present Direct Workers are amongst the lowest paid in the building industry. They made it clear at the conference that they want parity with the private sector. And it's clear that a big wage claim will help the fight to maintain Direct Works departments. Because at present the local councils can close down the departments and make men redundant because the pay is so lousy that many shrug their shoulders and accept it. Many feel they would be better off on the dole or working elsewhere. Decent wages would make it a job worth fighting for. And that is a bitter lesson for all workers fighting redundancies during this period of wage control.

WHAT NOW

All over the country Direct Labour organisations (DLOs) are fighting individual battles against their local councils which are trying to phase them out. To win, a campaign needs to be waged at national level, led by the rank and file with the support of other workers in the public sector,



Direct Works march in Manchester

tenants, rate-payers and other groups interested in working class control of their lives.

6 POINTS

The following points were passed unanimously:-

1. Local committees representing all public sector departments should be set up to fight all cuts in public spending.
2. The Reg Freeson Bill is very limited and needs expanding to include tendering for national government contracts such as hospitals. Also the system of Direct Labour accounting for a job should be comparable to the private sector.
3. Building programmes to be produced by committees of workers, tenants, architects, planners, environmentalists etc. and to be put forward to the government as the workers answer to the future of the industry.
4. The November pay claim of £12 plus consolidation of the £6 and 5% into the basic rate is the minimum rise workers should expect. The muscle of Direct Labour should be used in November to implement this claim in full and to ready itself for the fight for parity. 'One rate for the building industry' in June 1978 when the private sector negot-

iates their pay rise. This means ignoring the 12 month rule and demanding a large pay rise as the official estimate of the gap between private and public is £8.

5. No cuts in the apprentice intake.
6. Public ownership of the building industry.
7. All council contracts to go straight to Direct Labour departments.
8. This should be organised and fought for from the sites to make sure it is effective.
9. Pressure must come from the demands of the workforce and be controlled by the rank and file not the trade union leadership.

MINOR CHANGE

Reg Freeson has put a bill to Parliament asking that Direct Works Organisations be allowed to tender for any local government building contracts in any local borough. Even this minor change obviously threatens the ability of private builders to make their profits at the expense of ratepayers and tenants. As a result the bill will probably be dropped by the Labour Government.

This raises a vital point only partly touched on by the Manchester Conference. The Labour Government

is not on our side. Throughout the country it is not just Tory councils who are attacking DLOs, but Labour councils as well. In Knowsley, Merseyside, the Labour council may even close the department down soon. And in Glasgow the local DLO tendered for a building contract but came a close second. Fortunately Glasgow council awarded them the job all the same in order to save the department and 800 jobs. But along came Bruce Millan, Labour Minister for housing in Scotland and reversed the decision, depriving 800 men of work.

NATIONAL FIGHT

All the same, the conference has begun to put the Direct Works campaign on a national footing. A 12 person committee will co-ordinate the campaign nationally and local DLOs have clearer guidelines for how to fight to defend themselves. The test for this national co-ordination will come over the defence of local DLOs by national action and whether a national fight over the wage claim can be organised.

Jim Kelly, convenor of Manchester Direct Works ended the conference: "This conference is just the beginning, now we start the national fight back in earnest".

SOCIALIST UNITY ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN LADYWOOD

Left Campaign Raises Basic Issues

Socialist Unity, the co-alition of organisations (including Big Flame and the International Marxist Group) and individual militants stood a candidate, Raghb Ashan, an Asian shop steward at Rovers, in the recent Ladywood by-election. Our vote of 534 (3.5%) was an excellent result, a high proportion for an openly revolutionary socialist campaign and one which gave a great boost to the forthcoming national conference which will fully launch Socialist Unity. The by-election got a lot of publicity, all of it hostile to the far left. Below we reprint an account by one of the campaign committee in Ladywood to redress the balance.

Result in detail

JOHN SEVER	8,227
(Lab.)	53 p.c.
QUENTIN DAVIES	4,402
(Con.)	23 p.c.
ANTHONY REED-HERBERT	888
(Nat. Front)	6 p.c.
KENNETH HARDEMAN	765
(Liberal)	5 p.c.
RAGHIB AHSAN	534
(Soc. Unity)	3.4 p.c.
JAMES HUNTE	336
(Ind.)	2.2 p.c.
KIM GORDON	152
(Soc. Worker)	1 p.c.
GEORGE MATTHEWS	71
(Ind. Con.)	.5 p.c.
PETER COURTNEY	63
(Reform)	.4 p.c.
WILLIAM BOAKS	46
(Air, Transport, Public Safety)	.3 p.c.
Labour majority	3,825

IT SAYS a lot for our system of politics that an area like Ladywood can only get any attention during a by-election. And there'd have been less attention paid had it not been associated with violence, along with Lewisham, in the public mind. The rest of the time, Ladywood is just typical inner city area: it stands, with its soul-less high rise estates and large immigrant population, as an indictment to years of neglect by Labour Councils, faithfully re-elected time after time by working people.

The Tory candidate, a typical upper-class twit, made great play of this neglect, yet people knew they were just debating points given the Tories well-known priorities. But Labour can take no pleasure from their re-election. Everywhere we found demoralisation and cynicism about Labour and politicians generally, reflected in the very low poll of 43%.

LABOUR & TORY JUST THE SAME

Only a fool would claim that there was no difference between Labour and Tory. But their idea of politics is identical I followed both candidates up and down the streets, throwing in a few comments to amuse the shoppers. Both candidate's approach consisted solely of phoney smiles, handshakes and asking 'are you a voter'? If they weren't you didn't see the candidate for dust. They also never disagreed with anything anyone said. And they call this politics! It made a mockery of Labour Minister, Roy Hattersley's disgusting comment on Ladywood that the 'extreme left' could be ignored because they were not political.

"The extreme left are not worthy of political analysis. They need medical treatment or prison sentences."

(Roy Hattersley, Labour Minister)



In fact the two Socialist candidates - Raghb Ashan of Socialist Unity and Kim Gordon of Socialist Workers Party were the only candidates to run truly political campaigns. That is, campaigns which raised solutions to the basic issues of the day - cuts, housing, racism, prices, womens rights - the list is endless. And our 'solutions' were not to rely on sending an MP to parliament. In any case Ladywood voters know what to expect of their MPs. Brian Walden, their last one, was on a £15,000 a year retainer from the British Bookmakers Association before jacking in Parliament to become a TV celebrity. Instead, we stressed that the solutions to people's problems lie in their own hands, in fighting back together against government and bosses policies, working class, not parliamentary politics.

HOSPITALS & NURSERIES

Practically, during the campaign, we fought against hospital closures in the area and for the opening of nursery facilities. This issue shows clearly the madness of this system. Hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent building new nurseries. The Council will not open them because public spending cuts make them more expensive open than closed. Meanwhile the area and its children are desperately short of such facilities. During the campaign we began to bring together a group of local people especially women, to fight for the nurseries to be opened.

But it was racism that dominated much of the events. This partly reflected national events like Lewisham. However it was also inbuilt into the problems and lives of people in the area, with its large Asian and West Indian communities. Harsh immigration controls, which split families and cause great heartache is one of the realities of living in this country for immigrants. And then the National Front made sure that racism reared its ugly head. Their simple scapegoat solutions of repatriation win them passive support in sections of the white working class. The 888 who voted for them

at Ladywood, represented about 10% of the white population. We got 'National Front' chanted at us outside tower blocks as we toured the area with a car and loudspeaker.

During the by-election, a little noticed figure once again gave the lie to the NF's claims that blacks cause overcrowding and shortage of jobs and services. More people left Britain over the last three months than entered, as they have done, every month, every year, for a decade or more. But national debate alone will not convince the NF's frightened and confused supporters. Many are drawn to the power of the NF, who tried to exert that power by holding a meeting right in the middle of a large black community. It was to counter this provocation that we decided, with other socialists and local residents to picket the fascist meeting.

The media blew up the few violent incidents out of all proportion. They frothed about extremists and 'red fascists', the leader of the Labour



National Front candidate, Ladywood, making a spectacle of himself.

Group denounced the counter-demonstrators. About this, there are a few points to make. Firstly, we were supported by the vast majority of local people. Messages and money poured into our headquarters the day after the picket. Secondly, there

was some violent incidents that weren't helpful to fighting racism and fascism. But the British public are going to have to accept that this is an inevitable and natural product of race-hate campaigns of the Front. Thirdly we are doing something about racism and fascism.

PRESS ARE DOING NOTHING

For all their fine words, the Press and the established parties are doing nothing. Despite the barrage of hostile publicity, our fight against the Front is producing some good effect inside the working class. More people are realising that the National Front are Nazis.

I spoke to one journalist from a national weekly who told me that he was astonished to find while interviewing Reed-Herbert, the NF candidate, that he actually was a fascist. It was, he said, one of the most frightening experiences of his life hearing the articulate well-dressed solicitor spew out traditional fascist clap-trap about "international conspiracies of Jews and Communists."

BIG IMPACT

The Socialist Unity campaign made a big impact in the area, reflected in our vote of 534. That impact would have been much greater had the left run just one candidate, almost certainly beating the Front. But, as in Stechford, the working people of Birmingham were faced with the confusing sight of two far-left candidates. The Socialist Workers Party once again ignored all appeals for co-operation. They paid the price with a derisory vote of 152. Sectarian party-building campaigns can make little impression fighting an election: which requires a broad-based, united co-ordination of forces.

The message is one which is getting through to more and more SWP members. Unfortunately it is not heeded by the leadership. After the by-election Socialist Worker put forward two reasons for their low vote. The first was that "The SWP was continually attacked in the Birmingham press which gave the impression that the SWP stood for 'thuggery' and random violence. No

other candidate was subjected to such abuse." This is a lie. While the SWP got most of the national publicity, local press publicity was directed overwhelmingly at Socialist Unity. For instance, the headline in Birmingham's daily paper the day after the violent anti-NF picket was "Demo man says no regrets". The subject - Raghb Ashan.

The other lie was that "534 people voted for the rather vaguer politics put across by the Socialist Unity candidate". In fact a reading of the two election addresses shows the opposite. The SWP simply put forward 5 demands, which failed to mention immigration controls, Ireland, women's liberation and many other vital issues all contained in the Socialist Unity programme which went to all households in Ladywood.

TASKS FOR SUPPORTERS

The task for Socialist Unity supporters is to build Socialist Unity committees in local areas and to mobilise for the forthcoming national conference. This can be done in three ways.

- * Get signatures on the appeal, similar to the one in Ladywood which was signed by many leading figures in the workers, womens and gay movements.
- * Organise local meetings as part of the national tour to build the conference.
- * Sell the Socialist Unity broadsheet. Out now.

NATIONAL SOCIALIST UNITY TOUR DATES

(more details later)

North West and Scotland - Oct 3-6

Yorkshire, North East & Midlands - Oct 10-13

Home Counties & South Wales Oct 17-20

IRELAND

LIZZIE MISSES DERRY

BUT SHE VISITS A NEW PROD SEAT OF LEARNING

THERE WAS one question nobody asked about the Queen's disastrous visit to northern Ireland. They never asked why the brand new, super-duper 'New University of Ulster' which the Queen visited on the second day) was built in such a God-forsaken little hole as Coleraine.

Quite frankly, Coleraine makes Scunthorpe look like Las Vegas. (Apologies to Scunthorpe)

JOBS FOR THE BOYS

In many ways the New University of Ulster was built in the back of beyond called Coleraine for the same reasons that violence erupted once the Queen arrived. It's called 'discrimination'.

The obvious place for the areas new university was Derry. Belfast already had a university (Queens) and Derry is the second largest city in the north. Also Derry already had an institute of Higher Education at Magee College, around whose buildings the new university could easily have been based. Above all, Derry has a disgustingly high unemployment level and the university would have created hundreds of jobs.

But that's the catch. Because most people in Derry are Roman Catholics. And the then government of northern Ireland, consisting of Protestant Loyalists, weren't going to give any jobs to 'Taigs' (their word for

Catholics). So they built the new university in all-Protestant Coleraine.

VIOLENCE

That's what northern Ireland is all about. The employers and their politicians make sure that the jobs and houses are only given to Protestant workers. In return the Protestants vote for the Loyalist politicians and develop a fanatical hatred and fear of Catholics.

The British troops are there to make sure that the Catholics don't overthrow the corrupt system all together. That's why the Catholics end up supporting the IRA and its military campaign to get the British out of Ireland. They know that they will never get a fair deal as long as Britain holds power there. They can see how a Labour government that pretends to be on the side of working people is actually increasing the Army crackdown on Catholic areas so that Loyalist bigots like Paisley can sleep easily in their beds.

That's why the Queen's visit produced bombs, bullets and riots. As the British monarch she represents everything that northern Ireland (under British rule) stands for — corruption, religious discrimination and well-lined pockets for a few rich businessmen while the rest exist in poverty almost unknown in the rest of Europe.



QUESTION POSED BY THE FRANCIS LIGGETT/ROBERT EMMITT SINN FEIN CUMANN ST JAMES'S AREA BELFAST.

INDEPENDENCE WAR

Fancy a nice quiet place to live? Somewhere with the lowest crime figures in the UK, where big, organised crime is virtually unknown and crimes involving firearms are rare. And where despite the high unemployment and large, sprawling council estates, vandalism is very low.

Believe it or not, that was northern Ireland only 10 years ago. Violence and crime were far worse in Glasgow, Liverpool or London than in Belfast.

PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN

But now things have changed. There is a war on. And right now the British Government, helped by press and TV, is mounting a huge propaganda campaign to convince us that the people fighting (except the British side) are really only criminals and gangsters. They ignore the political background like the religious discrimination against Catholics, the exploitation of the people by British big business and the presence on the streets of a foreign occupation Army from Britain.

In reality there is a war of independence going on in Angola against Portugal, in Vietnam against the US or Aden against Britain.

POLITICAL PRISONER STATUS

For many years the Government were forced to recognise that prisoners were in gaol for political offences. In normal circumstances they wouldn't be criminals at all. So they were allowed many of the freedoms that prisoners of war are usually allowed, such as more regular visits by relatives, or food parcels sent from outside.

Now, the Government is ending political prisoner status. Newly convicted prisoners now have to wear prison clothing, they have to work in the prison workshops and cannot be segregated from prisoners of violently opposing views. In the past the Republican and Loyalist prisoners were kept apart. Now the Government pretends they aren't political just 'criminal' so of course they won't have any political arguments will they?

This mad propaganda stunt by the powers that be is being resisted by the Republican prisoners in H Block in Long Kesh camp, and by their relatives outside. Big Flame has already publicised the activities of the Relatives Action Committee in bringing this farce to light.

We say that political prisoner status should be restored at once. And that the blatant torture of prisoners should end.

Withdraw troops now

NO JURY

The British Government pretends it is not like that. They say they are just putting 'criminals' behind bars. But the trials that hundreds of people go through are hardly 'ordinary' trials.

For a start, there is no jury. The judges, usually dedicated members of the Ulster Loyalist establishment, decide whether a victim is guilty or not. And there is usually no need for any real evidence.

Because up to 80% of people convicted of so-called 'terrorist' offences had signed confessions! It doesn't take much to figure out why so many alleged 'hard, ruthless' characters meekly sign away their freedom. Though the Government denies it of course, it is obvious that prisoners are literally beaten to a pulp to get them to sign confessions where there is absolutely no evidence of guilt.

MENTAL HOSPITAL

Occasionally the truth leaks out. This happened recently when a farmer from Tyrone, 64 years old Mr. Peter McGrath was arrested at home and taken to a police station. 24 hours later he was rushed to hospital in Belfast, then later to a mental hospital at Omagh. He was unable to recognise his own relatives and could only mutter three words — 'Hospital, bath, fight'.

Another Tyrone man, Owen Roe O'Neill (29) had earlier been released from interrogation with large tufts of hair pulled out and face and body covered in swellings and bruises. He had been beaten by the Special Branch for 3 days. With the evidence of his doctor Mr. O'Neill began proceedings to sue the police. Once they heard of this he was promptly re-arrested. When he refused to drop the proceedings he was immediately charged with handling weapons in an alleged ambush 3 years ago! He is now in jail awaiting yet another rigged trial.

RELEASED

Even some of the judges couldn't stomach the endless succession of battered, bleeding prisoners appearing in court with the police presenting the 'freely' signed confessions as evidence against them.

Recently a teenager, Brenda Murray, was released from a 15-year sentence for bombing after a retrial. Evidence showed that she was miles away at the time of the incident, while eye-witnesses described the bomber as 'tall and well-built with shoulder-length hair', whereas Brenda is small, slim and has short hair!

So what happened to her during interrogation to make her sign away 15 years of her life?

POLITICAL PRISONERS



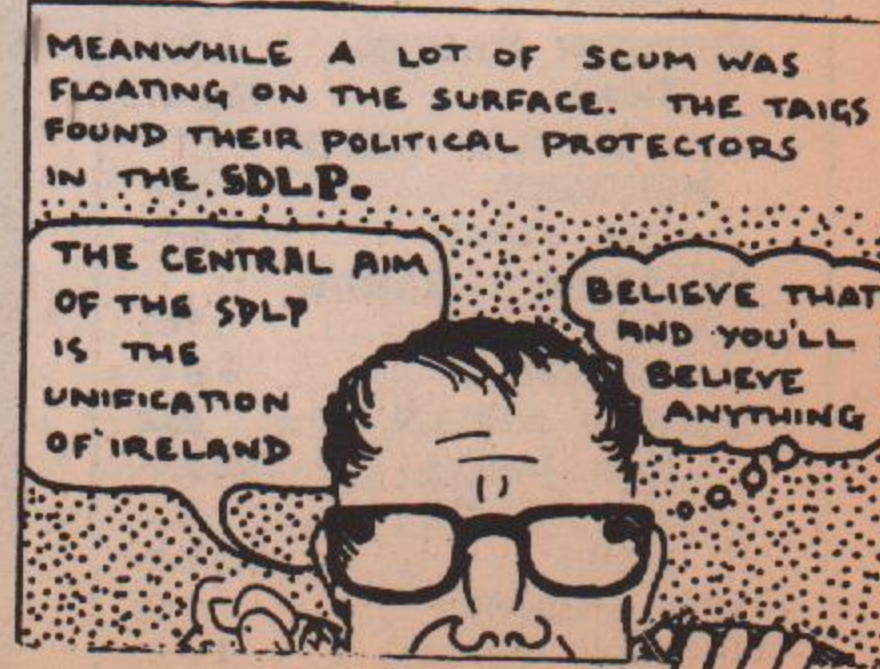
LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

FOR TWO weeks before Tuesday August 9th (the anniversary of the introduction of Internment in Northern Ireland) Relatives Action Committees in different towns in Ireland held protest demonstrations and pickets about the denial of political status to prisoners in Northern Irish prisons.

Inside the prisons, Republican prisoners who are protesting about political status have been enduring terrible conditions for months — wearing nothing but a blanket often in solitary confinement, and getting

minimal food, and often subject to severe beatings.

The women and Ireland Group in London held a picket in Whitehall at the end of Downing Street on Tuesday August 9th, the day of the biggest actions in Ireland, in support of the prisoners and the Relatives Action Groups. Some of the group were dressed in blankets, and held placards explaining the issue of political status, and the rest gave out leaflets explaining the issue.



AN OPEN LETTER TO

BRITISH SOCIALISTS
Dear Friends and Comrades,

We take this opportunity to appeal to British workers, trade unionists and socialists to expose by whatever means available, the current policy being pursued by the Labour Government at Westminster in relation to our occupied six north eastern counties. It is with a feeling of intense disgust that we witness the intrigues between your government and the Unionist M.P.s at Westminster, who seem to have adopted a long-term policy towards integration of the North in the United Kingdom in return for right-wing Orange Tory votes in the House of Commons. It would clearly seem that for self-interested motives, the Labour Party is prepared to sacrifice yet again the democratically expressed will of the Irish people for self-determination, on the high altar of political expediency.....

As socialists and republicans, we at least welcome an end to all the high-sounding talk about the 'principle' of power-sharing. At last we can see that such has simply been humbug and an expedient to avoid making a decision; and that the Speaker's Conference exposed the real thinking of the Labour Party, i.e. to bring integration that much nearer. Such a policy we will oppose with every breath in our bodies, in our unions, tenant groups, political groupings and on the streets. It is a policy that will bring yet more blood-shed to our long suffering land, because we know that the continuation of direct rule is not the answer to the political problems of Ireland. More than ever now we need the support of our working class brothers and sisters in Britain. Stand with us in our dark hours ahead. The only policy that can bring peace with justice is the ending of 800 years of imperialist domination, by a declaration of intent to withdraw British armed forces, and the recognition of the Irish people's right to self-determination.

Love and solidarity,
George Henderson,
External Affairs Secretary,
Irish Front. And Chairperson
of IRSP Comhairle Ceanntar

THE STRUGGLE WORLDWIDE

NAMIBIA: AN EGG OF SOLID URANIUM

RIGHT NOW the focus for newspaper interest in Southern Africa is Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) but from an economic point of view much more important is Namibia, a territory occupied by South Africa since 1915. A RECENT issue of the 'Financial Mail' (which is South Africa's Financial Times) had an article called 'The goose That Laid An Egg Of Solid Uranium - That is Provided No-one Kills The Goose'. The article was about Namibia, a territory between Angola and South Africa which has been illegally occupied by South Africa since 1915. The article went on: 'As the interim government phase approaches, businessmen's thoughts are turning more and more towards the territory as a promising area for investment. If the right political solution can be found, this territory's economy will not so much boom as blast off. For about three months international corporations have been visiting the territory at high level including bosses of General Mining (USA), British Petroleum (UK) and Barclays Bank (UK). Projects under discussion include a cement works, the extension of the Walvis Bay-Windhoek railway and a major extension of the country's mineral resources centred on uranium (prominent is the exploitation by RTZ at Rossing).'

As the report concludes, 'new uranium output would help the territory achieve economic viability and provide a base for its gradual industrialisation in the way gold mining industry did for South Africa'.

PLANS

So there are the plans of the capitalists - enormous economic development for the country under the guidance of an 'interim' government favourable to their interests. Between the western capitalists and the realisation of their plans stand the Nam-

ibian masses under the leadership of SWAPO (South-West African People's Organisation). Since the foundation of SWAPO in 1959 its relation to the Namibian people has been a close one. At a SWAPO conference in Tanzania in 1969 Sam Nujoma, one of its leaders declared; 'you will agree that the liberation struggle in Southern Africa is approaching its climax - a climax which, for all practical purposes and as a matter of historical inevitability - will resolve in massive violence and bloodshed. It must be noted here that the final showdown between the freedom fighters and the minority racist regimes in Southern Africa is much nearer than imagined.'

STRIKE

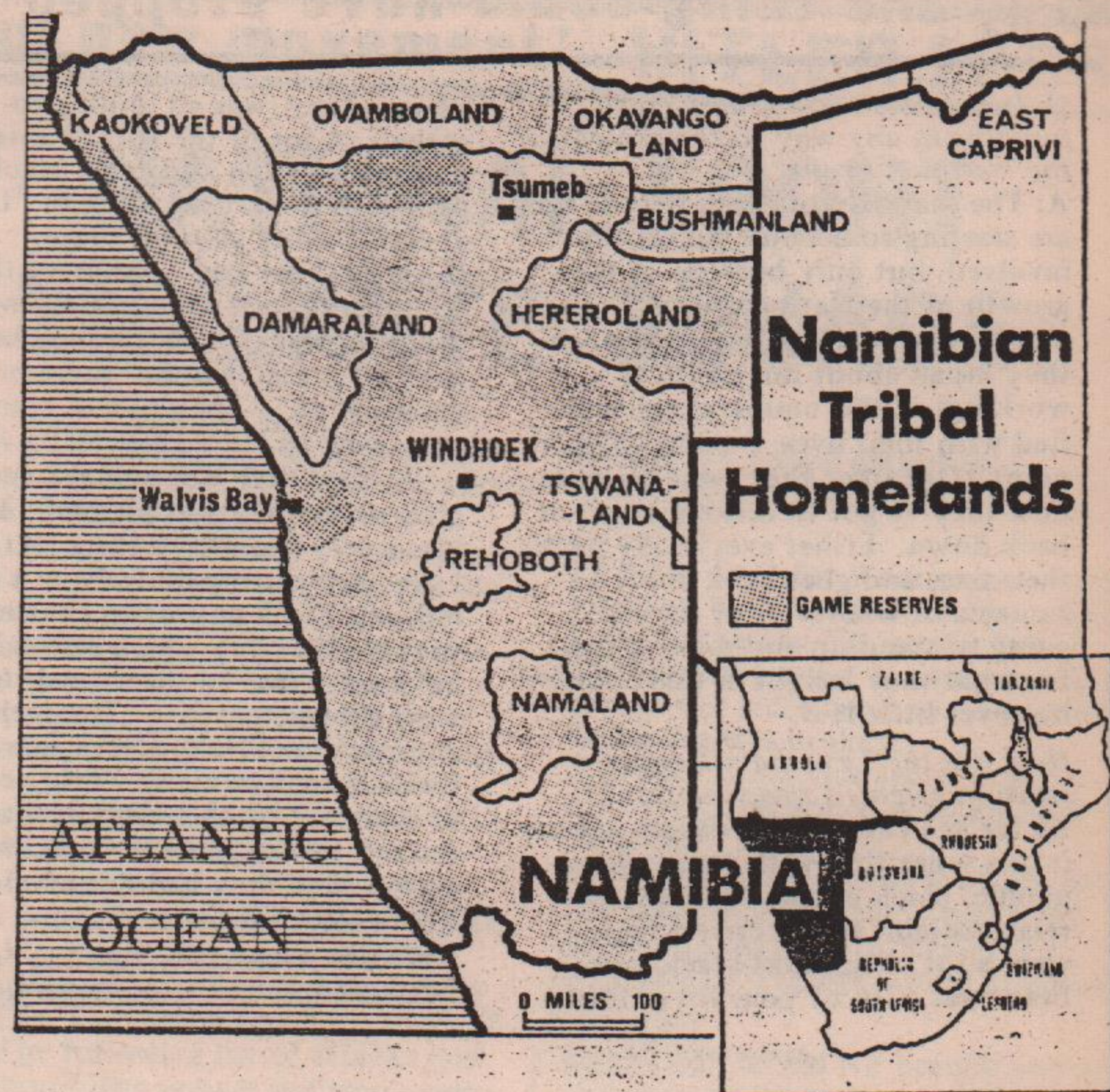
The first mass event that showed the revolutionary desires of the Namibian people was the strike of the contract workers that began in December 1971 and lasted for 4 months. It involved 20,000 workers - 90% of the industrial and agricultural workers that came on contracts from Ovamboland (the southern part of Namibia). Government attempts

to replace the strikers with other contract workers proved a total failure and the strikers won their demands for the freedom to change jobs.

In 1973 under pressure from the United Nations, the South African government ran elections to show the world that the people of Namibia favoured batustans ('homelands') along the lines that were being developed in South Africa itself.

ELECTION

As in South Africa it groomed a collection of local chiefs for the masses to vote for - SWAPO called for its followers to boycott the elections. In Ovamboland out of 42,000 registered only 2.3% voted! In the main cities of Windhoek there were two votes cast and in Walvis Bay one - that of a policeman! A report of the United Nations admitted that there were very few supporters inside Namibia for South Africa's plans for batustans. The point is made clearer in a SWAPO communique. 'The South African attempt to impose bantustans through chiefs will ultim-



ately prove an inconsequential gesture, since chieftainship, as an institution, has lost its potency and value in all Namibia. As the terror rages against the population in the northern region and across Namibia, counter-terror will unfold against the rule and lives of all the chiefs who range themselves with the white racists against their people'. Since 1974 SWAPO has been able to rely on bases in Angola and Namibia to intensify the guerrilla war.

RICHES

Because of the tremendous economic riches at stake. (Namibia is the fifth largest world producer of diamonds, the tenth in lead - a major producer of uranium, copper

zinc, iron ore), the foreign policy of Carter and the imperialist powers is to put pressure on the South Africans to make a deal with SWAPO. In fact, the last move of the South Africans has been to offer SWAPO the right to stand in elections as long as they stood on tribal lines - with 25% of Namibia going to the tribes and the remaining 75% including the mines going to the whites.

Clearly, SWAPO will not accept this; 'The South Africans tell us now to participate in elections on a tribal basis. That means disbanding SWAPO, and we are not going to do that.'

SWAPO

SWAPO is prepared to participate in national de-tribalised elections as long as the following conditions are met - South African armed forces and police be withdrawn, political prisoners set free and elections to be for a single national Namibian government and held under United Nations supervision. No matter how difficult and protracted the struggle may be, we are determined to carry on until genuine independence is achieved. SWAPO shall never enter into any shady dealing with the enemy and his imperialist allies aimed at creating a neocolonial regime in Namibia.'

The fact that the imperialist allies are publicly arguing amongst themselves over which way to turn over Namibia is a sure sign that things are going well for the progressive forces led by SWAPO.



Namibian worker rests on park bench. 'for blacks only.'

THE YEAR SINCE MAO'S DEATH

WITH THE 11th party conference a period in Chinese history has come to an end. For during the last 18 months, some of the most fundamental questions of the revolutionary process were being raised - how to industrialise after the revolution? Should there be wage differentials and productivity deals? Should China use capitalist technology? etc. There is no doubt that for the moment those 'who put production in command' are in control of the party and state in China. But the country's recent turbulent history is a series of sudden upheavals.

UPHEAVALS

On the one side there were the radicals (called by their enemies 'the gang of four') led by Chiang Ching (Mao's wife) and Chang Chun-chiao who wanted to continue the model of development started in the Cultural Revolution - small-scale units of production, workers' control of production, sending of intellectuals to the countryside to work in communes, rigid state control of culture and art (as Minister of Art, Chiang Ching only allowed four films a year all of which showed the

no importing of foreign technology, pupils to have a say in what went on in schools, abolition of the army in favour of the building of a people's militia (along the lines of the Red Guards). On the other side, there were the pragmatists led by Teng and the army high-ups (and supported by Hua) who wanted economic development through the building of large-scale units of production using imported capitalist technology, the restoration of 'discipline' in the factories and schools, a free approach to art and culture, providing the army with modern equipment and the re-introduction of material incentives (bonus) in the calculation of wages.

REASONS

For the moment, it is clear that the pragmatists have won. The reasons for their victories include: - the support of the army leadership who knew that the radicals wanted to dissolve the army into a people's militia. - the lack of unity amongst the masses; some of whom supported the radicals as upholders of the Cultural Revolution. Others resented the moralism of the radicals and wanted

of living rather than relentlessly carrying on with the revolutionary process.

- the bad harvest of 1976 and the low levels of industrial production which gave a lot of credibility to Teng's arguments for large-scale modernisation.

DEMOCRACY

Although it would be very foolish to see the victory of the pragmatists as a permanent one, it is becoming more and more obvious that the Chinese masses need to find ways of fighting to make irreversible the process whereby they gain control over their lives. It is quite clear that they have not been able to maintain the victories of the Cultural Revolution.

In the beginning of the Soviet Republic of the USSR, the revolutionary integrity of Lenin and the early Bolsheviks partially compensated for the lack of a proletarian democracy and the same can be said for Mao and the makers of the Chinese Revolution. But these organs of proletarian democracy (i.e. area committees, workers councils) are an essential part of building socialism. For the moment,

EVENTS OF THE LAST 18 MONTHS

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1976 | |
| Jan 6th | Death of Chou en Lai |
| April 5th | Crowds mass in Tien An Men Square in Peking to show their affection for Chou. Demonstration, which is to a certain extent spontaneous, is attacked and dispersed by forces controlled by the left-wing. |
| April 7th | Under instructions from Mao (Now very sick), Teng Hsiao-ping is stripped of all his functions; he is accused of 'putting production before the revolution.' |
| July 28th | Earth quake in Tang Shan causing great economic disaster. |
| Sept 9th | Death of Mao. |
| October | Hua takes position as successor of Mao and immediately begins purge of the left-wing, who are now called the 'gang of four.' |
| Dec 11th | Important conference on agriculture in which the programme of raising production through the introduction of capital intensive methods is put forward. |
| 1977 | |
| Jan 1st | Editorial in Peking Review announces a new cultural 'let the hundred flowers bloom.' This is described as 'an easier material life and a more varied cultural life.' Beethoven is rehabilitated. |
| Feb 5th | Policy statement on coal and armaments. Modern foreign technology will be bought for the army. Teng's views on the need for large-scale industrialisation come back into favour. |
| March 17th | Teng rehabilitated. |
| March 30th | End of important conference on education which announces the end of many of the politics of the Cultural Revolution and stresses the need for discipline and the respect of teachers. |
| Aug 20th | End of 11th Party Congress which announces the end of the era of the Cultural Revolution and the adoption of Teng's views of putting 'production in command.' |

Only one thing could have stopped our movement- if our adversaries had understood its principles

Q. Is the black community responding in any way to the growth of the National Front?

A. The majority of black people now are starting to become politically involved, but only because of the growth of the National Front. The majority of black people, although they moan about the political workings of this country, are satisfied with their lives, I mean up to a point. Or rather they were because now they've got to make a stand or back down. Either everybody packs their bags and goes back home to Jamaica or wherever, or they're going to stand up and make a fight for what they've got in this country, however little it is.

How has the Lewisham Demonstration affected this situation? As far as I can see, Lewisham affects it in a sense that with some white people, black people have a closer relationship. In the crowd there were a lot of militant blacks and there was a lot of your lot (whites)

there. They was all joining together. A lot of the sort of things you was hearing said from black people in the crowd, such as "Look at those white guys up there, those guys are bad" Some of the white guys were doing things worse than the black guys and the black guys were just standin' there in amazement. "They're bad man and they with us."

At first they was amazed and afterwards they was pleased. There was a very friendly feeling. At times I saw guys sitting on walls - a really militant black guy sittin' chattin' with a white guy which normally he'd never do. In the crowd they were drawn together. The feeling amongst the blacks afterwards was "well there's as many white people as there are black" And in that respect I think they felt a bit more secure than they had done before. The whites who were fighting were not necessarily fighting for black people but were fighting with

'I don't like the police... their main purpose is to harass people'

SOUTH LONDON BLACK YOUTH SPEAKS

them. The blacks weren't on their own. They don't feel so left out. I think before the black population felt they were fighting the whole of the white population apart from a few social workers. But in the

actual demonstration the whole lot was drawn together and they saw the white people was concerned and I think they felt a bit more at ease.

I don't know whether it improved the relationship of white people towards black people, but it certainly improved the relationship of black people towards whites. In Lewisham younger kids are coming together. Tolerance has grown. Friendships, between black kids and white-kids have grown. We don't hear much of black kids and white kids fighting one another in Lewisham. In the '60's you used to get a very different situation. In the skin-head era, black kids and white kids used to have big fights. Apart from the odd incident there's not much of that anymore. Organised gangs aren't a feature of the scene.

What did you think of the police on the Demonstration? Really I don't like the police. As far as I can see their main purpose in life seems to be to harass people.

Like the Lewisham 24 - (24 black youths arrested on completely cooked up charges)

Yes. One of my friend's friends was picked up around the same time as the Lewisham 24. They didn't make any charge just asked him a lot of questions and kept him locked up in a cell for two days, not allowed to see anybody. And then they just let him go again. But on the demonstration the police's behaviour was odd. For a long time most of the police arrests were

towards white people. There was a black guy walked past a policeman with a brick in his hand and five others carrying a great pole down Lewisham way, and in both cases the 'old Bill' just sat there! It almost seemed as if they didn't want to pick out too many black people. They were goin' out of their way to collect more white people than black people. I don't know whether they were ordered to or not but it really seemed as if before they'd come out someone had said - lets take it easy on the black kids cos we don't want too much publicity.

After the Front disappeared and the police tried to clear the streets, this situation changed. After the police station was stoned and the bike set on fire, the police lost their cool. And by then it was the black youth who were really in the middle of it and they started getting arrested.

It seems as if these developments are confined to youth, how do the older blacks feel about the violence? The older people are very conservative and a lot of them didn't agree. In neighbouring streets down by Ladywell a lot of black people were lookin' out of their windows and sayin' "terrible business! terrible business!" But then again a lot of older people did agree with it. 'Cos a lot of them don't like white people anyway. They were saying - great, beat 'em up. One old man was saying "the only way to get 'em is to get a knife and stab 'em."



No Free Speech For Fascists

Some people have argued that to oppose the fascists militantly would be counter-productive and would help them grow. But the NF support has grown because people are disillusioned by the failures of the Labour Party and are turning on black people as a scapegoat, and because the Labour movement has fought shy of taking up the issue of racialism. It is not the action of militant anti-fascists that has led to the NF being poised to become the 3rd largest party, but the unwillingness of those who see themselves as anti-fascists to translate their words into deeds.

The freedom to stir up racial hatred is not the same as the freedom to advocate that the earth is flat or other favourite topics of people at Speakers Corner. The inevitable result of unbridled race hatred is death for millions of people. **Whose democratic rights were the more important - those of the Nazis to organise as a political party or the right of the millions of their victims to remain alive?** When anti-fascists organise to smash fascism, they are helping to extend people's rights - the rights of black people, Jews, gay people, gypsies, and the whole of the working class, the potential victims of fascism. Weighed against this, the rights of the NF count for nothing. Politicians and the press have tried to smear socialists and opponents of the NF as "just the same

as the fascists". Maggie Thatcher has called the NF "left-wing" because they oppose the status quo. But socialism and fascism have nothing in common. The aim of socialists is to build a society with more democracy - we want workers to be able to own and control the factories, tenants the communities, students the schools and colleges etc. Socialism would extend the rights of the working class, the vast majority of the population, while limiting the rights of the small minority that at present rules.

Fascists, on the other hand, want to smash the working class's democratic rights and living standards. They would destroy trade unions, disband the welfare state and impose a rigid authoritarian control over every area of our lives. To say nothing of what they would do to their political opponents and minority groups. Fascists only oppose the present set-up in so far as they think it is not oppressive enough. The system is too democratic in their eyes. The NF does not want democracy in the future and is prepared to use undemocratic means to achieve its aims. The 'respectable' facade put out on election addresses has worn very thin in most people's eyes. The wave of physical attacks on black people which started last summer and the recent extension of fascist violence to socialists is proof enough of that.



Fascists Should Be Banned

Politicians and the press are fond of saying that to ban the NF would be the thin end of the wedge - an erosion of democracy. Yet they are quite prepared to ban selected left-wing actions. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament suffered numerous bans on its marches. A demonstration against fascism in Greece in the 1960's was banned in London. Opponents of the British presence in Northern Ireland are banned from Trafalgar Square ... and so on. Who gets banned from doing what is a political decision. Both Labour and Tory governments have been

more eager to restrict the rights of the left than the right. This is not to say that we should not call for the police and the government to take action against the fascists. The Race Relations Act, which makes incitement to racial hatred illegal, is virtually unused in police files. Not just Front marches but every word of their propaganda is an incitement to racial hatred. But black people and the working class cannot rely on the enforcement of the Race Relations Act to stop the fascists. Black people have been forced to organise their own self-defence. The

anti-fascists movement as a whole must take the matter into its own hands. Which does not mean acts of individual violence, but the mobilisation of hundreds of thousands to physically stand in the way of the fascists, just as happened in Cable St in 1936. It was no co-incidence that the police, two days after the Lewisham demonstration, announced their intention to prosecute the British Movement (another fascist organisation) for publishing stickers inciting race hatred. But such prosecutions don't even scratch the surface - only militant mass action will win.

and had smashed with the utmost brutality the nucleus of our new movement' **HITLER, 1933**

LEWISHAM and LADYWOOD- NO LONGER A MINORITY AGAINST THE FRONT

IN THE last month, we have had the two very important anti-fascist mobilisations at Lewisham and Ladywood. They have shown clearly that there is an increasing number of people who are prepared to make a stand to stop the Fascists taking the streets.

The response of the 'gutter' press has been predictable. They have unanimously condemned the violence and argued how 'Nazi' fascism and 'Red' fascism were the same things — this is not surprising when you realise that the national press is owned by ruling class concerns like Trafalgar Investments and the Harmsworths, that are actively supporting right-wing organisations like the NAFF. In the 1930's the Daily Mail actively supported Hitler, and arranged secret meetings between the British government and Hitler's envoys. When Mosley's British Union of Fascists was prevented from marching through Cable St. in October 1936, the national press protested against the violent attacks on the Blackshirts!

So it comes as no surprise to see the media use Lewisham and Ladywood to try and discredit the left.

Racist Police

It suits ruling class interests to make the violent confrontations of last month into a clash between two rival armies. But in fact the truth is very much different. In both Lewisham and Ladywood, a majority of the anti-fascist forces were local people, many of them black, whose militancy comes from their experience of racist provocations by the fascists and the police. In Lewisham, local police raided the homes of 60 black youth to clear them off the streets during the Queen's Jubilee tour — the code name of the raid was Operation 39/PNH (PNH standing for 'Police Nigger Hunt')

If, once again, we go back to Cable Street, we can see that it is long-term political work in an area that makes it possible to get the support of local people needed to defeat the Fascists in large scale street confrontations. As Phil Piratin, Communist Party organiser in the East End of London at that time wrote, 'Mosley's appeal struck a chord. There were certain latent



Tested in Ireland, riot shields are used for the first time in Britain. The Battle of Lewisham also provides the excuse for the right-wing to call for a new para-military police force, equipped with machine guns and armoured cars. A new

threat for the working class movement to confront.

NO NAZIS IN SOUTH LONDON
Demonstrate Sat. Sept 10th
Assemble 2 pm Elephant and
Castle. Called by South London
Anti-fascist Co-ordinating C'ttee.

anti-semitic prejudices, it is true, but above all these people, like most in East London, were living miserable, squalid lives. Their homes were slums, many were unemployed. Those at work were often in low-paid jobs. Therefore we urged that the Communist Party should help the people to improve their conditions of life, in the

course of which we could show them who was really responsible for their conditions, and get them organised to fight against their real exploiters.' And it was through intensive activity around housing and jobs that the support to smash the fascists was built. And the same pain-staking, long-term work is being done throughout the country by the

NATIONAL FRONT VIGILANTE SQUADS

MARTIN WEBSTER, the brains behind the National Front's provocative marches (his official title is "Activities Organiser") once said "We must kick our way into the headlines.

In certain parts of the country, the NF has close links with Ulster Loyalist terrorist organisations. It has an "Honour Guard" made up of selective thugs to "protect" its marches and meetings — often with clubs and knuckledusters. Front members have been closely involved with the wave of violent attacks on black people which began last summer and continues, particularly in East and South London.

The following list of attacks and firebombings against political organisations over recent months is just an illustration. It does not include attacks on black people which have become too numerous to mention.

JUNE 17
LEWISHAM. NF attacks open air meeting of Lewisham 24 campaign. One woman beaten unconscious.

JULY 2'
LEWISHAM. NF attacks demonstration of Lewisham 24 campaign with bricks and poisonous Paraquat weedkiller.

JULY 29
LIVERPOOL. Six unidentified attack and send to hospital 2 people at October Books, the bookshop of the Communist Workers Movement. — previously the Communist Party social club and Community

many anti-fascist committees, women against fascism groups, coalitions against fascism whose job it is to continue building the struggle against fascism long after the TV cameras and the armies of the left have disappeared.

We have no doubt that in situations like Lewisham and Ladywood, the response of many of the people there to the attacks of the fascists and the police will be violent. And it is not the job of the revolutionary left to attempt to control their... just anger, but nor is it the job of the revolutionary left to take all credit for what happens in these situations. The Socialist Workers Party has made some mistakes. In their desperate search for publicity they have fallen into every trap the ruling class had laid for them, including that of claiming to have organised the anti-fascist violence. How much more threatening to ruling class control if the truth had come out — that it was the women, black youths, anti-fascists and trade-unionists who smashed the fascists and not directives from the central committee of some Party. It's a pity the SWP leadership does not read its own publications, for the point is clearly made in a recent copy of 'International Socialism' 'There is, however, a real danger that our mobilisations will tend towards what can only be called terrorism. The conditions for a successful physical struggle against the fascists necessi-

Relations Council offices in Liverpool had been ransacked.

JULY 30
LEEDS. Socialist Worker paper sellers attacked by NF with knuckledusters. Later in the day NF invade Young Communist League meeting and beat several up, including one 13-year old whose leg was broken. Still later the police arrest 2 NF members, still armed with knuckledusters.

— previously the manager of the local Northern Star bookshop had been beaten up, and the offices of the Red Ladder Theatre Group attacked.

AUGUST
BRISTOL. Local NF branch announce plan to form 'vigilante squad' armed with clubs.

AUGUST 3
STOKE. NF election candidate and two others fined for attacking anti-fascist committee leafleters in May.

AUGUST 16
EAST LONDON. Centreprise community centre and bookshop fire-bombed. £1,500 damage.

AUGUST 31
EAST LONDON. Socialist Workers Party print works firebombed. £10,000 damage.

This attack brought the total of London left bookshops and offices attacked this year to six. Asian restaurants have also been a favourite target of the fascists.

tate a certain amount of clandestine organisation but there is the possibility that this will become an end in itself. Because we are a tightly disciplined organisation, it is technically simpler to mobilise our own members without involving any wider section of the working class.' (IS Journal 94)

On the other hand, we do not agree with the position of the Communist Party which hopes by behaving in a 'reasonable' manner to win the support of large sections of the working class. Their position as expressed inside ALCARAF (the Lewisham anti-racist campaign) was to oppose stopping the NF because it would alienate the reformist Labour Party and Trade Union leaders. In their misguided search for a peaceful solution to the rise of Fascism, the CP are forgetting a tradition of violence confirmed by our working class history.

Throughout the years (the latest episodes being the mass pickets at Saltley and Grunwick, and the violence on building sites that led to the imprisonment of the Shrewsbury 2) — the militant sections of the working class have used mass violence when it was necessary — and it is no business of the CP leadership to conveniently forget this because it suits their strategy of accommodation with social-democracy.

Keep Dr Jekyll Out Of Hyde

THE NEXT major provocation by the National Front will take place in Tameside, near Manchester on Saturday October 8th.

The NF plans to hold a rally in Hyde Town Hall to campaign for "Freedom against Red terror"! Tameside Trades Council has got the support of their NUPE and NALGO delegates who say that Town Hall workers will not open the Town Hall for the NF. But this cannot stop a Tory Councillor doing the job.

The Campaign to stop the fascists is already under way. It is being led by the Tameside Trades Council Anti-Fascist Committee, and has the support of the North West Regional TUC. A meeting of 300 delegates two weeks ago in Manchester, called by the North West TUC, voted unanimously to

the NF turn up. Calls for a 'counter conference' and a 'counter-carnival' were rejected. It is hoped that this strong union support will mobilise huge numbers of anti-fascists figures of 20,000 were mentioned at the conference.

While that may be optimistic, it is vital to build up massive local support. Tameside has a very small black population and only a tiny NF presence. The NF's decision to hold a national rally there is clearly an attempt to boost its falling support in the North West, and to cash in on Tameside's reactionary reputation after the Tory Council's recent backwoods battle against comprehensive education.

Further information from:
Tameside Trades Council Anti-Fascist Committee, c/o AUEW, Margaret St South, Ashton-u-Lyne. ALL OUT HYDE, OCTOBER 8th.



WILLIAM MORRIS - ARTIST WITH AN ... EYE FOR REVOLUTION

TIME OFF

THE RE-APPEARANCE in paperback of E.P. Thompson's book 'William Morris' is a very welcome event. Once again we have the possibility of assessing the important contribution Morris made to our revolutionary movement; a contribution that is becoming more and more relevant.

William Morris, who was born in 1834, was for the first 50 years of his life a writer and an artist. It was from his position as an artist that he came to see the oppressive nature of the society he lived in; "Luxury cannot exist without slavery of some kind or other, and its abolition will be blessed by the freeing both of the slaves and of their masters." At this time (1879) Britain was at the height of its imperial power and it was becoming clear to Morris that his own position as artist and teacher was being made possible only by brutal imperialist exploitation; "While we meet here in Birmingham to further the spread of education in art, Englishmen in India are actively destroying the very sources of that education - jewellery, metal-work, pottery, carpet-making - all the famous and historical arts of the great peninsula have been thrust aside for the advantage of a paltry scrap of so-called commerce." So, it slowly came to Morris that the society he lived in was divided into classes, and that he could no longer remain on the side-lines.

"Here are two classes, face to face with each other ... no man can exist in society and be neutral, no-body can be a mere looker on; one camp or another you have got to join; you must either be a reactionary and be crushed by the progress of the race, and help it that way; or you must join in the march of progress, trample down all opposition and help it that way."

It is not difficult for us to imagine what a scandal Morris' joining the revolutionary left caused; the Times called it a 'disgrace' and suggested that the sooner Morris got back to his books and wall-paper designing the better. So for the next 13 years, until his death in 1896, William Morris was an active member of the revolutionary left, first in the Social

Democratic Federation, then in the Socialist League, of which he was one of the leaders. For 13 years, Morris toured the country giving lectures, speaking at out-door meetings, whilst at the same time editing the weekly newspaper of the League 'Commonweal'. And it is the agitational work done by Morris and his comrades that made possible the wave of militancy of the unskilled workers that swept through the country in the 1890's and re-established a socialist movement inside the working class.

THE SEARCH FOR A NEW SOCIETY

What is unique about Morris's contribution to revolutionary marxism are his writings about what the socialist society after the revolution will be like. Morris understood clearly that men and women will not be brought into the revolutionary movement just to destroy what exists, they will also want to build something new. So Morris wrote about the organisation of work in the new society, about what sexual relations will be like under socialism, about the effects of automation, about the divisions between town and country - he wrote about all these things because he thought that:

"We need not be afraid of scaring our audiences with too brilliant pictures of the future of Society, nor think ourselves unpractical and utopian for telling them the bare truth, that in destroying monopoly we shall destroy our present civilisation....If you tell your audiences that you are going to change so little that they will scarcely feel the change, whether you scare anyone or not, you will certainly not interest those who have nothing to hope for in the present Society...."

To many Marxists, this desire to talk about the future society seems naive and out of place, but certainly Marx himself, believed that it was important to talk about communism as he wrote in the 'Critique of the Gotha Programme.'

"In a higher phase of Communist society, after the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental



"Luxury cannot exist without slavery of some kind or other" Morris.

and physical labour, has vanished, after labour has become not merely a means to live but has become itself the primary necessity of life, after the productive forces have increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly - only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be fully left behind and society inscribe on its banner: from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

Today, more than ever, the revolutionary movement needs Morris' dreams and his vision. Many brothers and sisters will be joining revolutionary movements in advanced capitalist countries not just because of material oppression - they will be joining to build a new society in which they have control over all aspects of their lives. Nor can we any longer get away with promising that all change must wait until the revolution; for the power and organisation that we

will need to overthrow capitalist society is being built in the revolutionary struggles that are being won and lost now.

E.P. Thompson's book is an important contribution to the revolutionary movement today. Get your library to get it.

'William Morris' by E.P. Thompson
Merlin Press £3. 50



THE SLEEPING PARLIAMENT

The above poster is by John Heartfield, a German Communist artist. It shows the German parliament sleeping while the Nazis were seizing power all over the country.

Heartfield's posters are an important inspiration to the German left wing today who use his themes in their posters

The current exhibition in London brings together Heartfield's work with art from the German movement today. It is an impressive reminder of the contribution committed art can make to the revolutionary anti-fascist movement.

EXHIBITION OF
ANTI-NAZI
POSTERS
by John Heartfield
at ICA
Trafalgar Square
London

LETTER TO MALE TRADE UNIONISTS

As a woman who has regularly supported the picket line of the Grunwick factory since June 13th, I am writing to clear up any doubts that those coachloads of male trade union militants may have had about the role or validity of women in that situation.

I and many other women feel strongly about this issue, which is one of exploitation of Asian workers, most of them women, and have been prepared to be crushed and brutalised daily by large men in uniform in that cause, to say nothing of the problems arising for those of us who are mothers over child-care arrangements every morning.

We welcomed your arrival in force at Grunwick's, and were surprised and angry to find ourselves abused, patronised and generally pushed aside by some of your contingents. The women of the strike committee (for it has been largely the women who have stood on the picket line over the last 11 months) and its supporters have been waiting for the day when the people, male and female, trade unionists or otherwise, for we are all workers, will take over the streets and bring the factory to a standstill. It's quite enough to have to confront police violence without the pickets being divided among themselves. Next time let us unite our strength.

Yours in anticipation of victory,
Sarah Greaves,
Independent Mothers
Movement.



Dear Friends,

For some time now Big Flame has been sent in to me on a regular basis and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the group for taking an interest in my political welfare. I would also like to express my solidarity to the comrades who produce Big Flame who will be pleased to hear that it is read by all the political prisoners in this prison and also by a growing number of the general prison population.

Big Flame reinforces the feelings of solidarity which I know from personal experience exists between the Irish and English workers. The Big Flame Manifesto was very refreshing and thought-provoking and in the main I agreed with its content, but many of the ideas and perspectives could be developed fuller in separate pamphlet form. On the question of the need for a new revolutionary organisation I would just like to point out that any group or party must earn the right to lead by being rooted deep in the working class and the people's struggles. For example look at Ireland - within the present struggle there are two main forces within Ireland who are leading the

struggle forward. These are the nationalists and the left wing within the republican movement and outside it. One could criticise the Provisionals from many viewpoints but looking at the struggle from an overall position - they have been in practice the main anti-imperialist group in Ireland who have led the struggle forward, and have earned the right to lead by being rooted deep in the working class ghettos and people's struggles.

As for the question of unity of the left, well, this in my view can only come about by unity on the basis of one's political practice. From the inside looking out the recent Ladywood by-election and the standing of comrade Raghieb Ahsan on a Socialist Unity platform is a step in the right direction in building political practice and promoting class struggle.

With every passing day the capitalist crisis gets deeper and deeper, economically and politically and the working class are not going to take this sitting down, and when the class stand up in mass and take to the streets in protest we must be in the situation to channel their discontent into the political consciousness and the need for the seizing of state power and the building of the socialist society.

Once again thanks for the paper, I look forward to the next issue and reading about the anti-fascist battle of Bolton Road. Our numbers are increasing daily but the struggle carries on behind the prison walls.

Greetings and solidarity,
An Irish political prisoner
(name supplied)

SHEFFIELD COMPANY'S MASSIVE PROFITS

LAYCOCKS ENGINEERING Ltd is a subsidiary of Guest, Keen and Nettlefold, Britain's largest engineering combine. Laycocks employs around 1,400 manual workers at 3 plants in Sheffield. They make a variety of motor components (clutches, overdrives, couplings etc.) and garage equipment. Militants have been trying to build strong shop floor organisation in the company for over 20 years. There have been some successes in the past, but also a lot of setbacks. Some 20% of the workers are still not in a union. But now there are signs that some of the recent hard work is starting to pay off. The experience of recent events is highly relevant both for workers in the hundreds of similar companies up and down the country, and as an indication of what multinationals are up to as a whole.

WAGES

Laycocks workers, like most others had to settle for a meagre £2.50 - £4 under phase 2. However, the agreement only went through in June, and the stewards immediately drew up another claim, this time for £10 across the board and bonus increases which in total would amount to rises of over £20 a week. The abolition of the 12 month rule is thus critical for Laycocks workers, if they are to pursue this claim. The strength of feeling in Sheffield engineering as a whole can be gauged by the vote of the Confed stewards meeting in August in favour of a strike on September 5th and lobby of the TUC in favour of the scrapping of the 12 month rule.

CUTBACKS

Perhaps the most important campaign at Laycocks in the long term will be the one started in the overdrive section. For the past four years, overdrive workers have lived with the constant threat of short-time work. All this year they've only been able to work three weeks

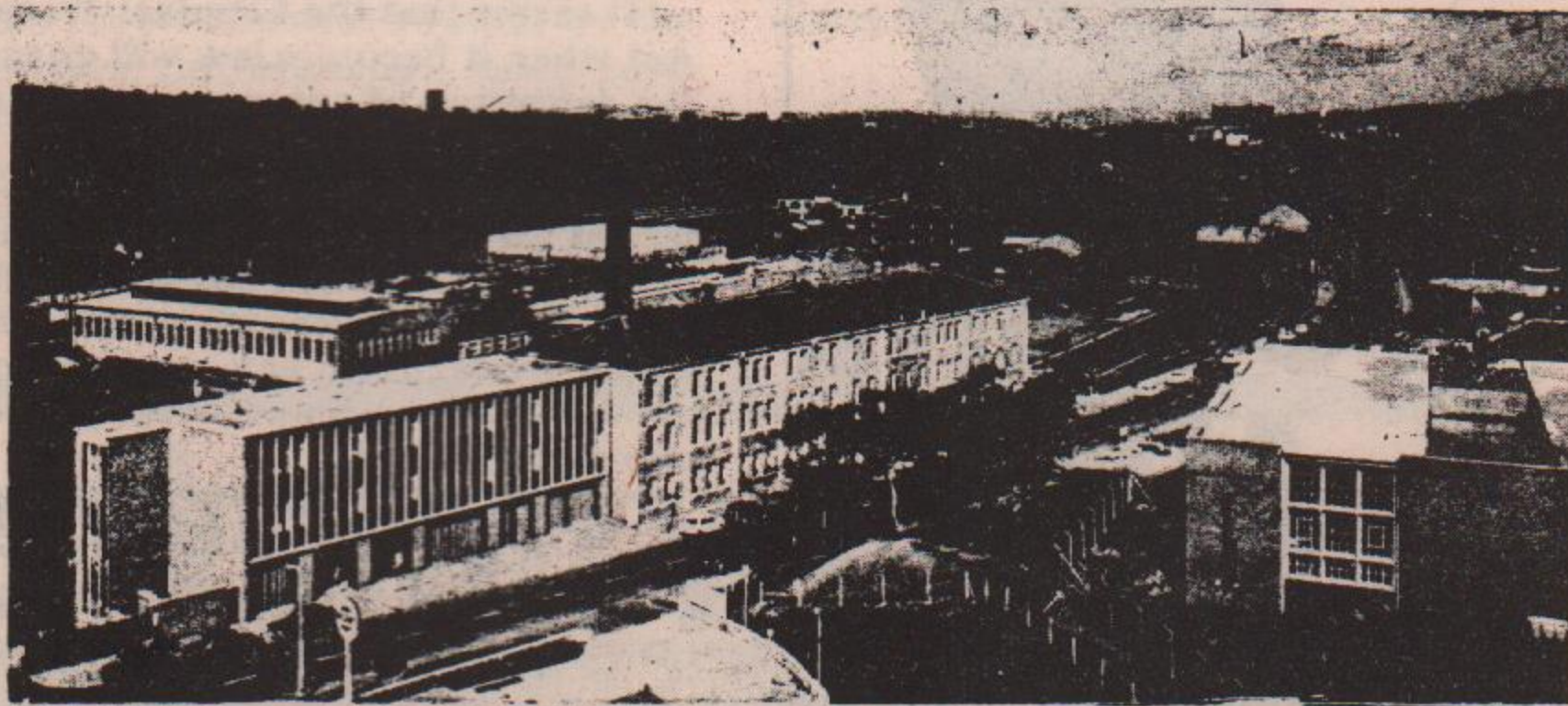
But no cash for jobs

out of five, with all the associated consequences - loss of earnings; inability to plan ahead; loss of pension contributions etc.

Management claims it has world beater in the overdrive, but its sales policy is so bad that production is down from 2,000 to 600 a week and 24 fitters have lost their jobs. The workers set up an Action Committee to campaign for investment and the creation of new jobs. They argue that if the sales effort were aimed at the customer and not just the manufacturer, a lot more orders would come in. If GKN won't do

And its take-over of foreign firms like Sachs in Germany have given GKN the scope to move production from one country to another and hence undermine workers organisation, break strikes etc. Sachs and Laycocks both make clutches. The loss of jobs in the overdrive section at Laycocks, comes on top of a general rundown involving several hundred jobs in recent years. The favoured management tactic is to move workers to lousy jobs on lower pay so that they leave voluntarily. This enables the company to avoid paying out redundancy

One of the important features of all the recent struggles at Laycocks is that they have involved issues which can unite all sections of workers. Of course not everyone has gone along with them. Some skilled workers wanted to be treated separately some of the mass meetings have been poorly attended, and there have been many other problems like poor communication between the plants. To some extent the Big Flame leaflets - which have gone into the plant have had to do a job which the stewards committee itself should have been doing - spreading information, explaining issues etc. But as more workers get involved in the various campaigns, it should become increasingly possible for militants to start generalising the struggles and putting forward socialist alternatives on the shop floor itself. And then from there to help make the combine committee a vital organisation for all GKN workers and not just convenors and senior stewards. Note. We would welcome contact and information from workers in other GKN plants.



GKN-FIGHTING A MULTINATIONAL

the investing they say (and it certainly has the capital, having made a record £97.7 million profit this year), then the National Enterprise Board should. They stress the energy saving potential of overdrives, which can reduce engine wear by 20%, save petrol and reduce noise. From the start of their campaign, the committee has sought the mass involvement of all Laycocks workers. They've leafleted all plants to keep people informed and organised collections amongst the workers to finance trips to car factories etc.

OVERSEAS

GKN trebled its overseas assets between 1972 and 1976, whilst it just doubled those at home. Likewise its overseas sales have increased nearly three times as much as home sales. Meantime 3,500 jobs in its British plants have been lost.

money.

DISCIPLINE

The company policy of shifting workers around has made the employees acutely aware of the importance of combatting disciplinary actions involving demotion. (Demoting a worker from a skilled to a semi-skilled job gives management an ideal opportunity to move that worker to another section). A recent instance in which management tried to demote an apprentice has become a test case. The workers have already won the first round by forcing management to go through procedure, after a strike in the apprentice's section. Workers are now considering what further action can be taken to stop the use of demotion as a disciplinary measure.

GKN, in its reports to workers, continually proclaims that 'The world of GKN is people', that there is 'an identity and common cause between shareholders and employees'.

Year after year GKN tells its workers to pull together, as more profits means more jobs and long term security. The reality is different. Whilst GKN's profits have doubled, and the shareholders have done very nicely for themselves, employment in the UK has actually declined by 3,500 jobs. GKN workers have produced the wealth, their reward has been redundancies, living under the threat of redundancy and short-time working. This is the reality that Laycock workers generally, and the overdrive workers in particular have come to know well.

Fee paying in by back-door in Essex schools

RECENTLY, PARENTS at Phillip Morant Comprehensive School in Colchester, Essex, received a letter from the school's headmaster asking for a £5 'contribution' per household towards the provision of 'textbooks consumable materials and equipment required for the day to day running of the school.' On top of this, the school wants parents to pay £1 per child towards transport costs for 'extras' like school outings, sporting fixtures away from the school etc. As one parent commented, 'When you are already struggling to cope with inflation, an extra fiver is a lot of money to find....the request is embarrassing because you're afraid not to send the money for fear of your child being picked on.' In the letter the head bends over backwards to avoid responsibility for his letter and pass the buck; after all he's just the helpless victim of the cutting of the rate support grant by central government - or in other words 'don't complain to me'.

Paying twice

This is just one of the 'Economy measures' suggested by Essex county council to its schools - others include the removal of every third light-bulb! As parents, we should be clear that the money for this so-called free education system must come from the government - as if we don't pay through the nose, as well as through rates and taxes, for it already. We will not pay twice over or be made to feel guilty because we can't afford to pay for an education that doesn't meet the needs and hopes of our kids in the first place.

Brewery Workers Appeal

THE WORKERS at the Wilsons brewery in North Manchester have been on strike since August 11th over and across the board £15 pay rise. Profits of the head company Grand Metropolitan Hotels, were £108 million last year! Since the Manchester brewery is the main Watney supplier for the North-West, the strike is causing pubs serious supply problems.

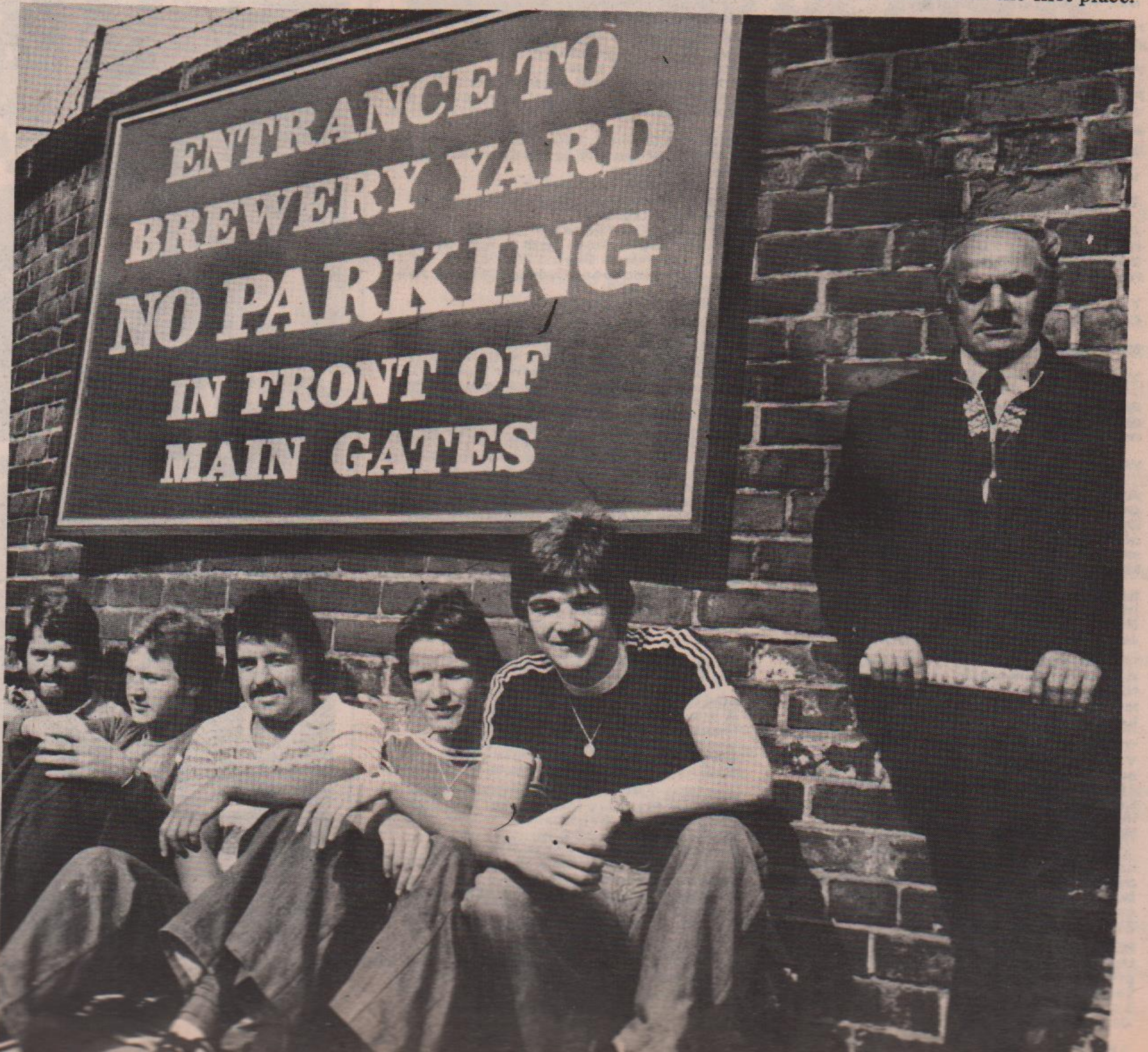
Tenants are trying to get their beer from other breweries. Since union drivers are refusing to deliver to Watney (or Wilsons) pubs, other brewers are getting cowboy agencies to do their deliveries for them.

The statement from the Wilsons Brewery Strike Committee puts the position -

'We have, in the past, supported other brewery workers when they have been on strike by refusing to deliver beer, in any form, to strike hit pubs or clubs. We have also refused new business and kept all orders down to their usual level.

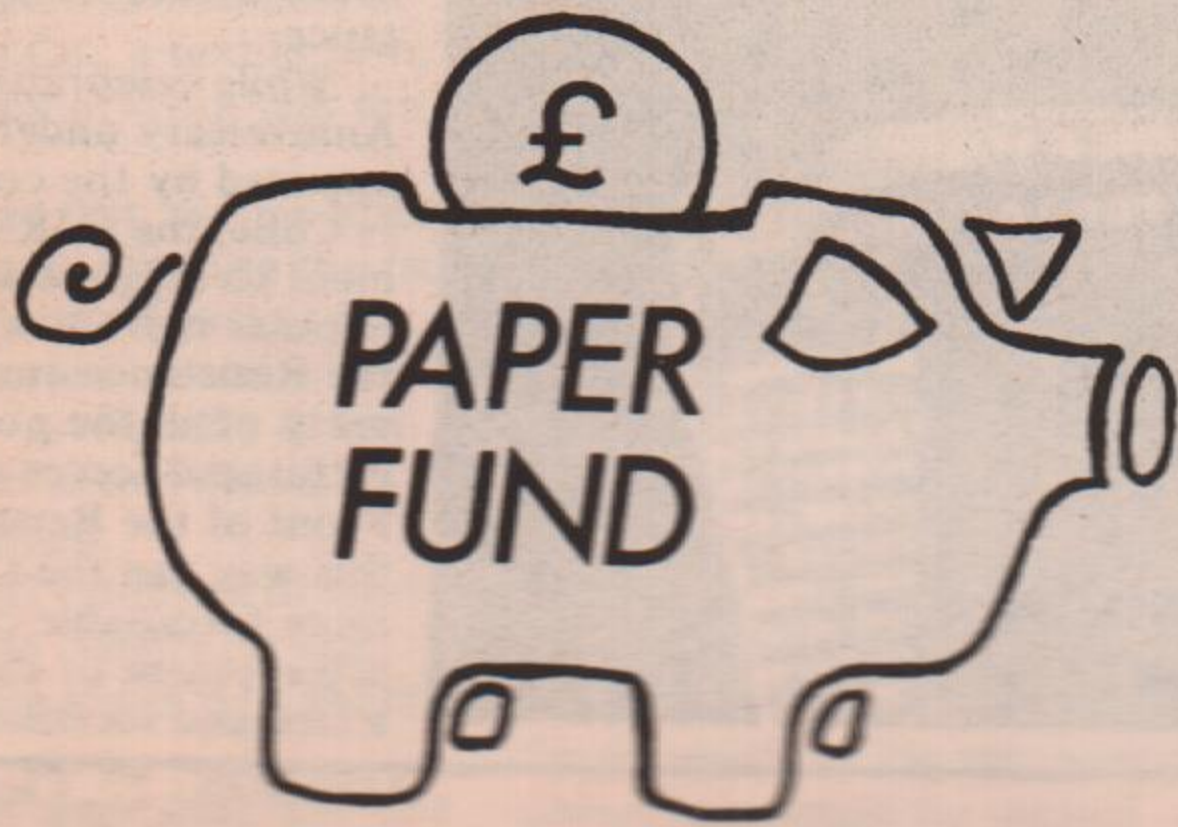
We now find that beer is being delivered by other breweries and that pubs are ordering more beer than they need, they are then allowing it to be transferred to our outlets. Help us be checking on this practice. IF WE LOSE, THEN YOU LOSE. So we ask you to support us, by only delivering to your own outlets and by refusing new self-orders.

Donations and messages of support to Jim Shepherd, 21 Langness Street, Clayton, Manchester.



Contributions this month: Liverpool readers 40p; Trafford Park reader £1; Bolton member £25; West German supporter £1.56; Liverpool member £25; London supporters 5.45.

Which makes £58.41 - a grand total considering how many of you were away on holiday. Remember - the paper never takes a holiday, nor do our creditors. So give in a suitably revolutionary fashion NOW!



Business Manager, 217 Waverley Road, Liverpool 7.

"SUS"PICION

THE CHARGE of 'Sus' that is 'being a suspected person' was introduced with the Vagrancy Act of 1834. It was introduced by Parliament as one method of controlling the large number of unemployed who were wandering the country in desperate search for work, caught in the depression following the Napoleonic wars. Now, once again unemployment rates are high and 'sus' is a favourite tool of racist police against black youth. For the police 'sus' is a wonderful charge - the prosecution doesn't have to produce a victim, the accused isn't informed of the charge until arrival in court and there is no right to trial by jury.

In 1975, the last year when full figures are available, more than 3,000 people were arrested on 'sus'. Of these almost half were in Lon-

don, and more than half of these were black. Who is 'guilty' of 'sus' - well, according to the Vagrancy Act 'Every suspected person or reputed thief, frequenting any river, canal, or navigable stream, dock or basin, or any quay, wharf or warehouse... street, highway... avenue... with intent to commit an arrestable offence'. So easy is it for the police to convince judges that the accused had 'an intent to commit an arrestable offence' that Justice Scarman recently attacked the police for using 'sus' as 'a convenient method of supplying a hiatus in the evidence of a felony' (which means using 'sus' when there is no hard evidence for committing the crime). A law similar to 'sus' was ruled unconstitutional in the US, luckily for our rulers this country does not have a written constitution!

SOCIALIST WORKERS' PREMISES GUTTED BY PETROL BOMB



The firebombing of the Socialist Workers Party print-shop in London is the latest in a series of fascist attacks on left-wing centres. This attack, which caused £10,000 of damage is a direct consequence of the firm stand taken by the SWP in the fight against fascism.

PUBLICATIONS

All available from 217 Wavertree Rd. Liverpool 7.

All prices include postage

Draft Manifesto for a New Revolutionary Organisation 35p

Sections include: Modern Capitalism, Composition of the working class, Reformism and popular power, Trade unions, Party and class, International Perspectives, Revolutionary strategy.

Industrial Bulletin No. 2 20p

Articles on Direct Works, Pleasays etc.

Womens Struggle Notes No. 2 20p

Plus the old favourites.

'Portugal - A Blaze of Freedom' (35p) and 'Chile Si' (30p)

Rising in the North 30p

Irish Bulletin No. 8 20p

THE REVOLUTION UNFINISHED

A Critique of Trotskyism. 60p. Two members of Big Flame dissect Trotskyism - the dominant tendency in the British revolutionary left.

THE CASE AGAINST THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

By a group of Independent socialists 20p.

THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION

An analysis of what's happening in education and the role of education in maintaining class domination. Out now. 40p.

WORKERS' POWER

A socialist report on the power plant and energy industries. By the Energy Group of the Conference of Socialist Economists. In co-operation with AUEW-TASS, Trafford Park, Manchester. 25p.

BIG FLAME JOURNAL No. 3. Including a major article by Christopher Roper on Argentina. Just Out. 45p plus 15p postage.

'ASPECTS OF THE YOUTH QUESTION'. A series of pamphlets and papers. For further information and details of subscriptions write to SAV, 318a Mare St. London E8

'TOWARDS A REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH YOUTH MOVEMENT?' New pamphlet out soon for young people in struggle. 25p + postage (will include a copy of Leeds Schools' Out' paper). Further information from Schools' Out, c/o 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds 2.

'TROOPS OUT'. First issue of new United Troops Out Movement paper due out mid-September. Information on bulk orders from United TOM newspaper collective, c/o Islington Community Press, 2a St. Pauls Rd. London N1

PERU SOLIDARITY BULLETIN No. 2. Up to date information on political repression in Peru. Send S.A.E. to Peru Group, Socialist Society Society, University of Liverpool Students Union, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool.

'IRISH WOMEN AT WAR'. Papers from the Feminist and Ireland Conference (June 77). 30p + postage from Women & Ireland group, 50 Upper Tollington Park, London London N4.



RED LADDER THEATRE requires. FULL-TIME ADMINISTRATOR to begin Oct. 1977. £50 a week. Written applications by Sept 4th with S.A.E. stating: administrative/political experience, and reasons for interest in job.

Also. For minimum six month contract in new play touring community venues, begin Nov. 14th.

1. S.M./Sound Technician
2. Performers M&F, singers and musical skills advantageous.

3. Musician/performer. Detailed applications with S.A.E. by Sept. 11th. Interviews Sept. 19th-24th. TO: New Blackpool Centre, Cobden Ave. Leeds LS12 5PB. Tel. 0532 792228/9

TOUR OF ARGENTINE MILITANT. In September, the Argentine support Movement is organising a national tour of Gonzalo Chaves, a leading trade unionist from Argentina who is also a member of the Council of Peronist Montoneros.

The tour starts on the 7th Sept. in Blackpool (Casemont Hall, 6 o'clock), the 11th in Corby, the 12th in Sheffield, the 14th in Coventry and ends in London with a meeting at Transport House on Monday 19th Sept at 6 o'clock.

For more information contact: Argentina Support Movement, 1 Cambridge Terrace, London N.W.1

MANCHESTER BIG FLAME. Educational for sympathisers.

Sept. 7: AntiFascism - The Way Forward
Sept. 21: Alternative Technology - a way forward for workers' struggles?
Oct. 5: Women's Struggle - a Historical View.

All meetings 8 p.m. in Big Flame Office. 3rd Floor, 14 Piccadilly.

SOCIALIST UNITY IN SHEFFIELD. A meeting to discuss the desirability and feasibility of standing Socialist Unity election candidates in Sheffield. SAT. 24th. SEPT. Students Union, Sheffield University. 1-4 p.m. with creche.

UNITED TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT National Planning Meeting for the TOM Autumn Open Conference. SEPT. 17th. 1.00 p.m. Committee Room, Cavendish House, Manchester. Polytechnic Students Union, All Saints, Manchester. Attendance open to all who agree with the two TOM demands. Further information, phone 061 224-2773

HOMAGE TO CHILE Sept. 10th, 7.30pm Large Assembly Hall, UMIST union, Manchester. MELI-ANTU (Chilean folk group) with speakers. Organised by local Chile Solidarity Campaigns.

SOLIDARITY WITH POPULAR RESISTANCE IN CHILE. Friday 9th Sept. 7.30 Fulham Town Hall, London. Organised by MIR, MAPU and Christian Left

THE NEW CRIMINAL TRESPASS ACT



The Colour of Justice

Another charge very much in fashion against dissidents is 'conspiracy'. It is being used against the Lewisham 24 and it was very much used by Judge Campbell in the 'Islington 18' trial, where the jury (much to their credit) did not reach a verdict of guilty on any of the 30 conspiracy charges. It was Judge Campbell's definition of conspiracy that can set dangerous precedents for the accused. He saw conspiracy 'as an agreement between two or more persons to commit an illegal act' and he stressed that the act itself then becomes irrelevant; the conspiracy consists of the agreement alone.

Furthermore, 'agreement to conspiracy can be reached without words, over a cup of coffee or a can of coke'. And he made it clear that the defendants were charged with different conspiracies so it was not necessary for the prosecution to prove they had ever met each other.

It seems that the Criminal Trespass Act when it becomes law will change the definition of conspiracy in that it will no longer be possible for a conspiracy to be a crime if the subject of the conspiracy is not a crime in itself. But this will not necessarily make the establishing of a conspiracy by the prosecution any more difficult - it's still 'without words over a cup of coffee'.

Finally, for all those who believe that under English justice, men and women are innocent until proved guilty; here is an extract from Judge Campbell's summing-up in the Islington 18 trial, where he uses 'guilt by association' to make the Islington 18 responsible for all the problems of our cities.

'This is a really serious crime, make no mistake about it. The streets of our city, or certain parts of our city, during last summer had become unsafe for people to walk in alone. Lone women and lone men even groups of two or three or four were set upon in the street by gangs of thieves and rogues who regard it all as a way of life and even as a pleasant pastime. You have seen from the witness box a number of victims giving some impression of the terror and fear to which they were subjected and although you are returning 90 verdicts, you realise that that represents a mere fraction of the criminal acts with which this trial has been concerned. These counts are specimen counts. These defendants if they are guilty have committed far more crimes than those with which they are specifically charged.'

More power to the elbow of the jury for not taking a lead from that racist pig of a judge.

THE EFFECT IS SHATTERING

away desperate women because there is no room, difficulties with rehousing etc.

In Greater Manchester there are nine refuges: 3 in Tameside threatened with closure under Tory Public Expenditure cuts, 3 in the City of Manchester, 2 in Salford and one in Stockport. Not bad, you may say! However, they are all old, decrepit buildings and women from Stockport and Salford do not get rehoused by the Council. Many despair and return home to certain violence - they have nowhere else to go! Support groups are saving the Council millions of pounds by spending time and energy in Refuges. N.W.A.F. demands that the Government starts taking its responsibilities seriously and gives battered women a chance to get on their feet again and provide a decent home for themselves and their children.

They have organised a week of action from Sept 17th - 24th to draw attention to the plight of battered women today. The few Refuges we have are only scratching the surface of the problem, and doing little to solve it

The programme for the North West Region is as follows:
Sat 17th Sept. Demo by women and

kids in Lancaster, as that Council refuses to rehouse women who have been in the Refuge.

Sun 18th Sept. Film "That's no Lady" plus play at the 68 Club, West Indian Sports and Social Centre, Westwood St. Moss Side Manchester.

Wed. 21st Sept. 12.30 Lass O'Gowrie play "Polly put the Kettle on"

Sat. 24th Sept. National Demo in Birmingham with speakers etc.

Chile 12 years of the MIR



THE MIR was born in 1965 amidst a growing economic crisis, an accelerated deterioration of the living standards of the working class, the bankruptcy of the populists policies of the Frei regime and the incapacity of the traditional left to generate a clear alternative for power.

It was during the prerevolutionary period of the Popular Unity, having regained its legality, that the MIR consolidated its position, which already was substantial among the Chilean working class. From outside the Popular Unity the MIR sought to strengthen the independent organisation of the working class and develop Popular Power as an alternative to the weakness of the reformist policies. It constantly argued the necessity of an offensive against those who were preparing a coup and denounced those who blindly refused to see that the only way out of this situation was to confide in the people and not in fragile alliances which were only confusing and betraying their struggle. The only way to have avoided the bloody outcome was to have united the left and the people, strengthen their organisation and create dual power.

Since the 11th September 1973, the Chilean working class and people has heroically resisted Pinochet's military dictatorship. Hundreds and thousands have been massacred, tortured and imprisoned. Despite the savage defeat, decades of struggle have taught the workers of Chile the capacity for prolonged resistance.

While celebrating its 12th Anniversary under the conditions imposed by the counter revolution in Chile, the MIR renews its commitment to support and organise the popular movement, pushing forward the Resistance and calling for the unity of all the popular and anti dictatorial forces in the Political Front of the Resistance. Only in this way can the Chilean people create more favourable conditions for the achievement of their final objective a free and socialist Chile.

BIRMINGHAM BIG FLAME MEETING: 'Towards a New Revolutionary Socialist Organisation'. Fri. 23rd. SEPT. 7.30 Upstairs room. The White Lion pub. Opposite Nite Out Club, Horsefair, city centre.

There are Big Flame groups in:
Leeds: 80 Harehills Ave., Leeds 7.
Liverpool: 217 Wavertree R., L'pool 7. 051.263.1350

LONDON: 27, Clerkenwell Close London E.C.1.
Manchester: 14 Piccadilly, M/Cr 2 061.223.4515
Sheffield: 07242.587120

GRUNWICK

Force the issue now!

The publication of the Scarman Report and Ward's reply show a ruling class divided as to how to deal with the Grunwick situation. On the one side, there is the wing of the ruling class represented by Scarman who want a settlement to the dispute by negotiation and compromise. As the report says, 'the British tradition of compromise is implicit in the modern English law governing industrial relations'.

As Scarman clearly realises, obedience by working people to the law depends on the law reflecting a position of compromise — favourable to the ruling class but showing some give to working class demands.

And this means that when the interests of the ruling class as a whole are threatened — as they are at Grunwick — they are quite prepared to sacrifice the interests of small sweatshop bosses like Ward.

And Ward knows the score as he made clear in an article in the Times: 'The learned judge was there to suggest the majesty and trappings of the law. From the terms of the tribunal's findings, it seems his lay colleagues were there to provide expert guidance — not on the nature and problems of small businesses such as Grunwick (of which they appeared to know little and understand even less), but on the corporatist arrangements which govern the relations between big business and the unions'.

Now, in this situation of a divided ruling class conditions were favourable for an offensive strategy by the workers. Unfortunately, fundamental differences of opinion on how to proceed between the APEX officials and the Grunwick Strike Committee exist and have resulted in set-backs like the calling off of the August 8th

mass picket.

And the attitude of APEX officials has been that if they were reasonable Ward would make concessions and meet them half-way.

They have failed to see that their being reasonable would never force Ward to meet them half-way. As he says, 'Therefore, categorically, we will not re-instate the strikers. Indeed, our existing workforce would leave us if we did. If illegal action forces the company into liquidation, so be it. But never will we submit to force and blackmail, which disgraces everything for which Britain has always stood.'

It is clear that, as owner of Grunwick, Ward holds a strong card — he can close the place down. But at least to force him to do that would make the point that slave employers

like him are not welcome. The strike committee has been threatened (with financial sanctions) and bullied long enough by APEX officials. It is now up to them and rank and file workers to force Ward to a final confrontation — either he re-instates immediately all the strikers or his factory will be closed down, not because he wants to but because working class power will close it.

Volunteers (preferably male) are urgently needed, as from Sept 5th, to help run a creche for the children of the Grunwick strikers. (Mornings and afternoons). Toys, paints etc. and money donations are more than welcome.

For information contact Tony or Angie c/o Grunwick Strike Headquarters, 375 Willesden High Rd. London N.W. 10.. Tel. 459-4121

STRIKE COMMITTEE SAYS

'Ward has already said that he will not be bound by the report. Our position is as follows:

'For seven days, we will hold out our hand to the company and ask them to sit down with our unions and negotiate a settlement. We will not wait longer and we think that it is unlikely that Ward will respond.

'On 30 August, we will be meeting with the Executive Committee of APEX and we will be asking APEX and the TGWU to put down an emergency motion at this year's TUC calling for all services —

water, electricity and post — and supplies to be cut off to the company and calling upon the entire movement to support any union suffering as a result.

'We will also be calling upon our unions and the movement as a whole to support the resumption of the mass picketing after Congress meets....

'In short, it was the strength of the Trade Union movement that lifted our dispute off the floor. It will be that same strength that wins a historic victory for the entire movement.'

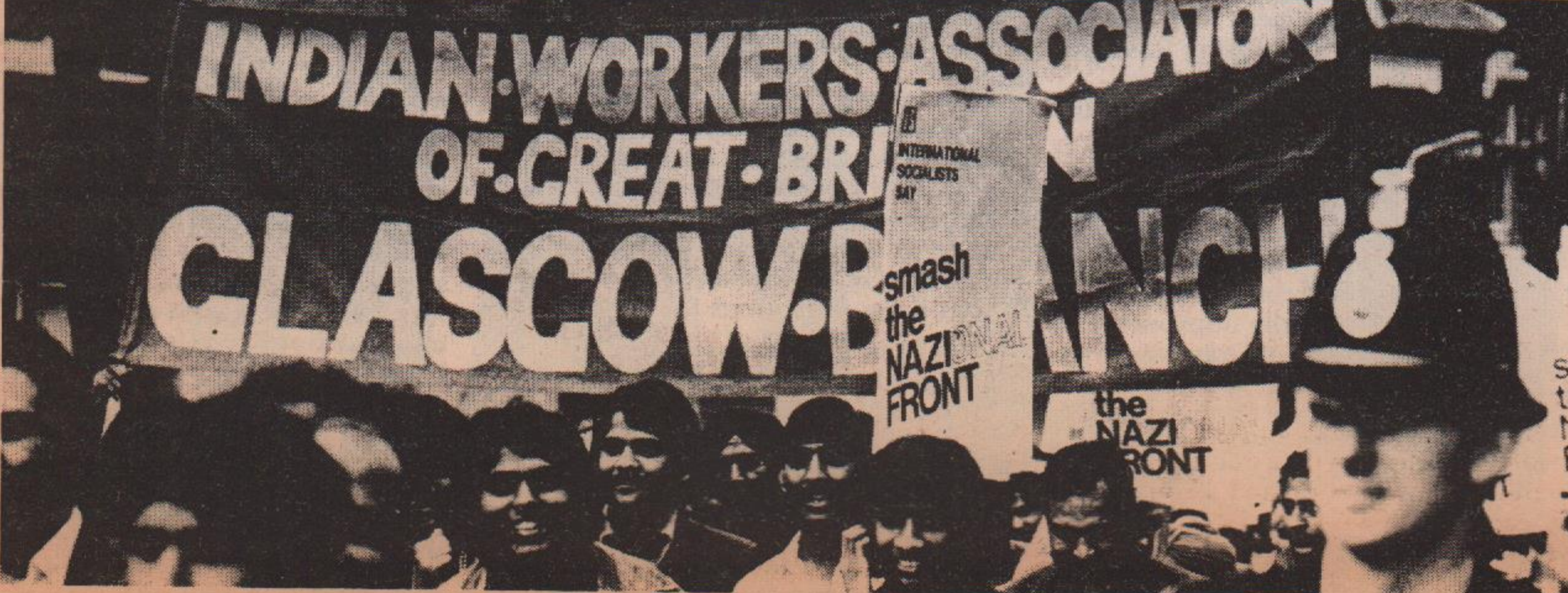
Grunwick Strike Committee

Police clear the way for Grunwick scabs' bus. — Andrew Wiard (Report)



PICTURE: Christopher Davies (Report)

Black and Asian workers



TAKE THE LEAD



COVENTRY GRUNWICK SPIRIT HITS SWEATSHOPS

A CAMPAIGN to unionise backstreet sweatshops is underway in Coventry. It is creating panic amongst the owners. And the tactics used so far promise a determined and successful battle.

The first round started during the Coventry works holiday when four Asian women T&GWU members at Forward Trading Co., a textile firm, were sacked. Lack of work was the reason given.

The women say this was an attack on their attempts to unionise the factory and walked out. A picket line was set up, supported by some of their husbands — on holiday or between shifts — and within two days all work had stopped.

Given the small numbers of women involved (less than twenty) it was important that the strike be a short one.

Once the gates were shut, the first weapon was publicity. News of £16 a week average wages (for 40 hours) and often less — combined with path-

etic toilet, canteen and other facilities was widely spread.

One unexpected turn was the news that Surinder Singh, the owner was a member of the Foleshill branch of the Communist Party. This embarrassing bonus (he was rapidly expelled) sent him into hiding.

The next tactic used was to send a large delegation of pickets, plus a lawyer, trades Council president, and Indian Workers Association members round to his very posh house, demanding back wages owed to them. This also made front page news locally

NO SURINDER

Under this sort of pressure, and with collection s taking place amongst the Indian Community and with pressures from other employers to settle fast before it spread, Surinder Singh caved in. He recognised the union, reinstated the sacked women and agreed to wages talks.

Throughout all this, the T&GWU official was on holiday. In view of

the experience of the strike at the Club One Bingo last year some people were not too worried by this.

Since the strike, however, the T&GWU is making noises about a local campaign amongst similar sweatshops. Interest in joining the union is considerable. The Grunwick strike has had great impact and the Forward Trading success has shown what can be done.

So it came as no surprise that two days after the return to work at Leofric Shirt Company.

Again the dispute centred around T&GWU recognition. Again aggressive tactics were used. Picketing was very confident. Local factories were leafleted. Best of all women from Forward Trading took the afternoon off work to support the picket line and help organise finance, relations with the press and so on.

BOSS SPANIC

The Indian Workers Association reckon there are 15 textile sweatshops alone locally. Panic has set in amongst the employers. Several are threatening to move out of Coventry before 'their' workers join the union.

In the wake of these disputes, the T&GWU and the Trades Council are now committed to a unionisation campaign. And a meeting has been arranged for potential union members with Mrs Desai from Grunwick.

POSTSCRIPT: Some elements in the Indian community are apparently very worried about Indian women standing around on street corners picketing. The so-called moral dangers have been ignored by the pickets!

BRUM STEWARDS OUT IN THE COLD

OVER THE last few months an important dispute has been going on at the Albion Bottle Company in Oldbury (Birmingham) which shows the problems Asian and West Indian workers face when they have to take on both management and union officials.

The background to the dispute at Albion Bottle is that in the period 1974-77, a well organised shop-floor was able to push up wage rates by 100%, manning levels were kept high, and management was forced to concede the closed shop and the check off. By the beginning of this year, wage rates (up to £1.50 an hour) at Albion Bottle, were amongst the highest in the area and the new American management who wanted to introduce new machinery knew that it needed a confrontation to carry out the redundancies the new machinery would bring about.

LOCKED OUT

In April, the Leyland Longbridge stewards committee called for a Day of Action against the Social Contract; this was to be on April 20th. At a mass meeting at Albion Bottle, a one day strike on the 20th was overwhelmingly carried — some of the Albion workers went on the lobby of Parliament, which by that time did not get much support from the Leyland stewards combine. When they reported for work on the 21st, the majority of the morning shift found that they were locked-out, so no-one went into work.

Benson, the AUEW District Secretary, who was brought in to

settle the dispute, refused to make it official and after one month he signed an agreement with management under which management agreed to re-employ not re-instate all the 230 workers in order of seniority. In fact, management has re-employed all the workers except for the 20 stewards and the convenor, who were the back-bone of shop-floor organisation at Albion Bottle. In the meantime, Benson, a right-winger not known for liking foreign workers, is trying to merge the militant branch of the Albion Bottle workers with another branch that his lackeys control. He is also refusing to accept the branch's nomination for the District Committee.

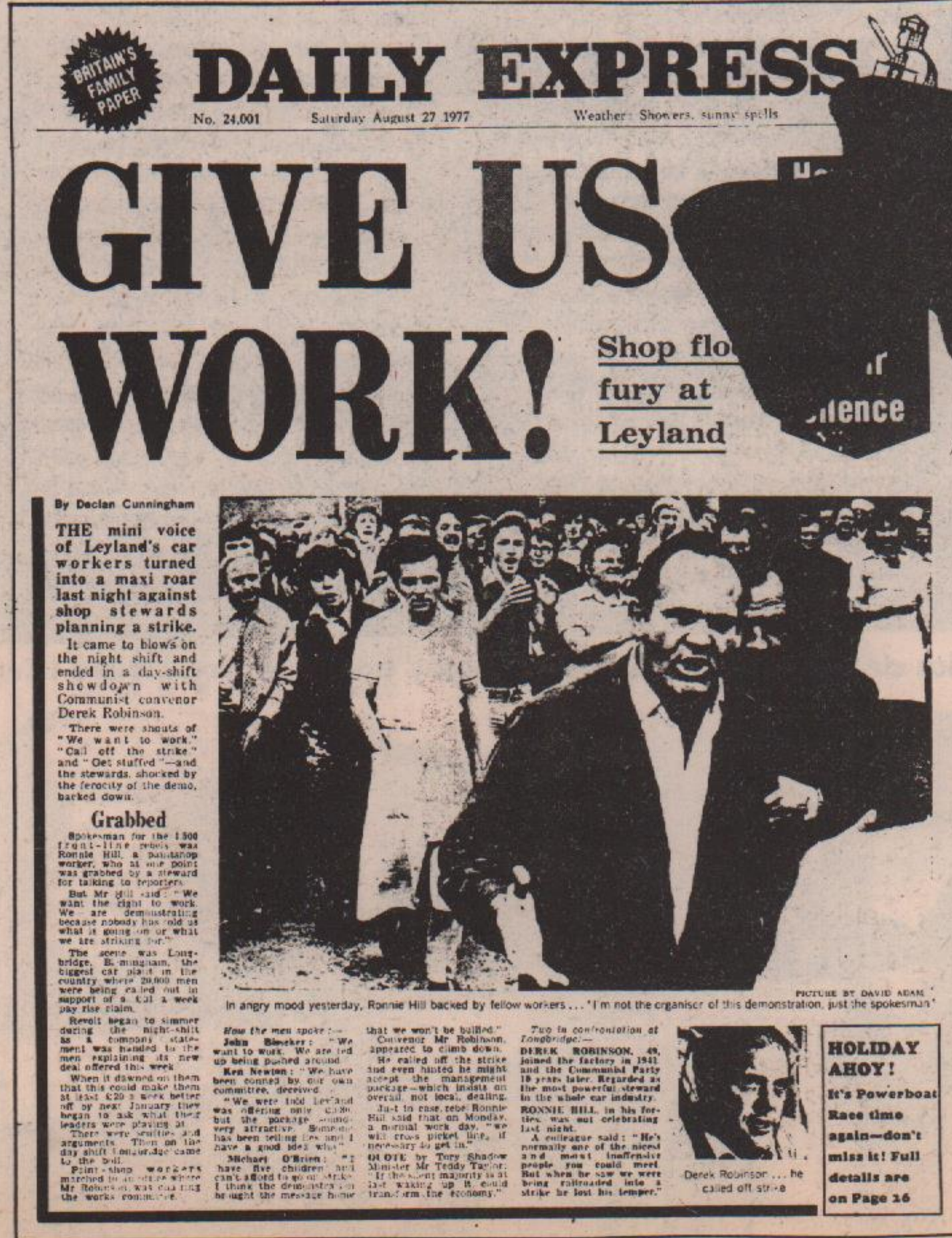
DISCRIMINATE

Unemployment rates in the area are very high, and Social Security did not start paying the stewards unemployment benefit until the beginning of August — four months after the beginning of the dispute. The 21 sacked militants have appealed to an Industrial Tribunal for unfair dismissal and, as at Grunwick, the case will turn on whether the employer discriminated against the stewards. This is why it was so important for management to get the agreement of the union re-employ the workers they took back and not re-instate them; if they had re-instated them, then the stewards would have had a very strong case to prove discrimination. As the Employment Protection Act stands at present, an employer who sacks all his workers is not discriminating against them!

BIG FLAME

BRITISH LEYLAND LONGBRIDGE

...BUT NOT AT ANY PRICE



of 'militants'. And yet, in reverse, this is what has happened — except that the self-appointed 'leader' of the minority is anti-strike and therefore a 'moderate' and a hero in the bosses papers.

Justified

We, the Longbridge Action Group, believe that the strike was, and would still be, justified, because the management letter was at best grossly misleading and at worst downright lies. The letter accused the stewards of wanting to 'go it alone'. In fact the management had broken our agreements by refusing to negotiate after August 1st. They also banded about figures of up to £10 each for parity and for incentives, which we 'might' get as a 'maximum', while saying nothing about how parity is tied to productivity and how the incentive scheme must be 'self-financing'. Nor did they mention that the improvements in sick pay and lay-off pay were virtually the same as the 'security of earnings' package we threw out last year because of its penalty clauses. Above all, the so-called 'offer' was no offer at all — the Working Party has no negotiating status. As one steward said, 'The only offer they've made is to the press'. And the Evening Mail managed to describe the offer as £20 in its lunch-time edition and £25 in the evening. (Well, we live in times of high inflation!) After the dust had settled, the Mercury said the offer was only £9!

Who is this 'Working Party' anyway? The union side is appointed officials from the Confed. and it covers the whole Leyland combine. Set up after the toolmakers dispute to 'reform' industrial relations, the

company has used it to introduce corporate bargaining by the back door, with Government policy on wage restraint as the stick and parity as the carrot. Some people at shop meetings said 'Leave it to the officials', the same officials who've been supporting wage restraint under Labour all along.

Lessons

The main reason why the propaganda from the company and the media swung the night shift was the failure of the Works Committee to fully involve the membership. As one bloke in the paint shop said to the Works Committee member who spoke on Thursday night, 'Last time we saw you, you wanted us to go back to work. Now it's to tell us to strike'. The stewards should realise that there are lessons for them.

Instead of demanding a simple, straight-forward across the board increase which could have united the membership, they pushed a claim on managements terms, incorporating productivity dealing and corporate bargaining, leaving the workforce confused as to the difference between our claim and the so-called 'offer'. And with the power of the stewards' committees already seriously reduced by 'participation', corporate bargaining threatens to put the final nail in the coffin.

So where do we go from here? We should not get demoralised because a few hundred green labour went down to the Works Committee office, even though the Daily Mirror said there were 1500 of them! The real silent majority should have the

chance to stand up and be counted in favour of the strike at a mass meeting of both shifts in Cofton Park this week.

OFFER IN DETAIL

- * An increase within the 10% this year — i.e. less than £5 top line.
 - * The first of your parity payments — i.e. under £1.75 after November subject to productivity levels.
 - * A self-financing productivity deal — no figure specified. Management would have the right to change managing levels and slips unilaterally and could even suspend the scheme at any time. The scheme would be based on finished jobs off the line — turning shop against shop, and allowing 'acts of God', components shortages, breakdowns and disputes in other sections to affect your take-home pay.
 - * Moves towards staff status — a revamped offer we've already rejected.
 - * The 'offer' is a package deal. You can't accept the good bits without the bad bits as well.
 - * By November 1979, we would be on present Rover rates (i.e. £75 for skilled workers, £71 for direct (line-workers) down to £56 for labourers, plus the increase we get this year. Meanwhile, Rover and other plants will probably have increased their wages, so management's use of the 'parity' argument is completely cynical.
- Produced by Longbridge Action Group.

THE NATIONAL press has given a lot of coverage to the Longbridge 'moderate militants' who demanded and got the 'right to work'. As the following leaflet, which was distributed at Longbridge by rank and file left wing militants, points out, a lot of the blame for the backlash lies with the Communist Party-dominated Works Committee who for too long have taken decisions at Longbridge without consulting the members. So a backlash of the members was always on the cards.

It is important to add that the behaviour of the 'militant moderates' was ambiguous. On one section

where they went back to work there was a man missing. Management told them to continue working a man down. At this the section downed tools and walked out. They at least, were demanding work, but not work at any price.

THE LEAFLET

"Vote overturned after militants march on Works Committee office". Imagine the headlines in the Evening Mail if a 2 to 1 vote against a strike was overturned by a minority

Batchelors Workers Want Peas-full Solution

"IF WE GIVE IN now and go back, they're going to kick us from pillar to post".

Workers at Batchelors in Sheffield have been on strike since July 11th. They are fighting for a pay rise which they should have got in 1975. Batchelors is owned by the multi-national company, Unilever, which owns large sections of the money-spinning food-processing industry. Not only Batchelors peas but other household names such as Birds Eye, Surprise, Walls, Vesta, Lever Brothers, Pears and BOCM are part of their empire.

The battle at Batchelors is over a pay agreement made in 1975 and not fully honoured yet by the firm. Unilever are losing thousands of pounds every day and they aren't give in for fear of other unions and firms all over the country putting in similar claims.

But the workers are just as determined not to give in. They have already refused one offer from man-

agement which would have meant 59 redundancies. The Sheffield strike committee has contacted the other strikers in Worksop and has visited London and Hull to get support from dockers. Visits to other Unilevers factories in Manchester, Kent and elsewhere are going ahead.

When we talked to women on the picket line during the first weeks of the strike they were certain that the management had a lot more to lose than them.

"It's bad for them to have a strike at this time of year because it's the fresh pea season now. They're losing a lot more money than if they paid us out what they owe us. There must be thousands of pounds worth of orders a day to shops all stopped last week."

"We're already out and we're only losing a basic wage each week. They are losing thousands of pounds in every department. More than we'll ever lose".

Batchelors released a press statement recently claiming they had lost £5 million through the strike due to the loss of the pea crop. But it is hard to believe that the giant Unilever concern is unable to divert its peas to one of its other factories. So it's vital that Unilever workers know about the strike and organise to boycott any diverted goods.

The picketers have been out every day now for two months. They need all the support they can get — financially and otherwise to take on their multi-national boss.

As we go to press we have heard that union officials and management have reached some settlement after more talks. Whether it reflects

the determination of the strikers and whether they will accept it — remains to be seen. Send donations and messages of support to:

V. Knight, 42 Grimsall Crescent, Foxhill, Sheffield S6 1AJ



John Sturrock Report

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