

BIG FLAME

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Paper of the Revolutionary Socialist Organisation Big Flame

10p

Don't catch cold this winter... SLING OUT THE WAGE FREEZE NOW!

AFTER THREE years of wage controls we're all on our uppers. That's why the workers who take on the 5% limit should get the support of the whole working class.

The local authority workers have already said that the 5%'s no good for them. They'd be better off on social security. They look like following the national walk-out by the Ford workers.

Arthur Scargill, leader of the Yorkshire miners, has written to the Transport Workers Union branch at Ford Langley to pledge his support for the strike (see below right).

That's just what we need to sling out the wage freeze.

Scargill backs Ford workers



(CARLOS AUGUSTO PHOTO)

I have been opposed to an incomes policy or social contract ever since the Labour Government gave it birth. I support your efforts and those of anyone else who seek to destroy the social contract which has resulted in an erosion of the living standards of working people.

Scargill (Yorkshire Miners)



Troops Out demo Barnsley 7 Oct 12:30 Rock St

editorial

Reaction so far suggests that Sunny Jim's gamble of getting workers to accept another year of wage restraint will not be that easy to pull off. The economic strategy of his government has been to combine monetarism, that is a tight control of the amount of money in circulation, with strict wages control.

In fact, the Labour government began a wages policy in 1975. Government advisors argued against using tight monetary control for three reasons. One, it's a strategy that takes a long time to be effective at all. Two, since the high unemployment rates of the previous recession had failed to damp down wage demands, there seemed little point in brandishing the job threat. Three, monetarist policy is especially uncertain in its effect on private sector wages.

WELFARE CUTS

The 'wages explosion' was the first victim of the Government's new restrictions on public spending -

But once wage controls were established monetarist policies primarily aimed at curbing public spending began to be introduced. One of the very reasons the monetarists had put up for the failure of high unemployment levels to discipline wages was that public sector jobs were too secure and that too many were being created. They related this to the fact that in the 3 or 4 years up to July 1975 public sector workers

were right up front in wages struggles. In 1974/5 this was especially so in Scotland, and it is not coincidental that the major class confrontation before the imposition of wages controls in July 1975 was the use of troops by Glasgow Council, fully backed by the Labour Government, to smash a strike of public sector drivers. From then on the demands grew that public sector workers be faced with the 'realities of life', by which they meant the needs of capital, i.e. face the loss of wages or jobs.

WELFARE CUTS

The 'wages explosion' was the first victim of the Government's new restrictions on public spending - so tough that last year's beat even the Treasury's targets. Then came the attack on the indirect or social wage - the benefits we receive over and above our wages from the Welfare State. At first, the social wage was the sop that the Government offered in return for union cooperation on wages policy. Now, even that's too expensive. The Welfare State isn't just being savagely cut. It's being trimmed to meet the needs of capital more directly. Capitalism requires a healthy workforce, but not too healthy and not everyone. Besides cutbacks on health are ideal for hitting out at one of the key groups of workers responsible for the public sector wage explosion.

A similar intention can be seen in the run-down of the direct

works departments, often the backbone of the wage fight in the generally badly organised building industry.

Savings in this kind of public spending made way for more spending on law and order and on the nuts and bolts of industry. The oil companies have demanded and got a vast outlay on road and port facilities on Teeside and in Scotland, in addition to the usual grants for investment.

NATIONALISED FIRMS

The other side to the public spending monetarism of the Government is the assault on the nationalised industries' workforce - the bridge between the working class in the public and private sector. Nearly every major strike in the past two years has blown up as a consequence of Government intervention in the State sector. British Leyland and British Steel are only the best known cases.

Originally, the justification for the public spending clamp down was that the IMF had demanded it to halt inflation. Later, Healey claimed that the aim was to release resources for investment. Investment would create jobs and wealth. Now, Labour has come to accept mass unemployment except at election time when temporary jobs will be created to buy votes.

Labour has pirated the whole Tory election package, from racism to law and order. It's even shown the Tories how a refined kind of monetary control can reduce wages and inflation - at a stroke.

Nazis eclipsed



(BIG FLAME PHOTO)

Peter Marriner, leading member of the British Movement, and one-time Labour Party election agent in Ladywood, Birmingham, is pictured trying to shake off the attentions of North Wales Anti-Nazi League supporters in Shotton last month.

For two months now the North Wales and Wirral ANL branches have been picketing in rotation the three shops (Eclipse Records) of Arthur Calland, the British Movement's Clwyd organiser.

Calland's shops in Shotton and Mold (North Wales) and Neston (Deeside) have in the past been used as outlets for the BM's Nazi publications. His wife Mary, national organiser of the BM's women's section, has twice stood as BM candidate in local elections in Neston, polling 9% in May this year. The BM has been steadily

extending its operations throughout North Wales, where it now has its national centre in Shotton.

But the pickets and demonstrations organised by the local Anti-Nazi League branches have begun to cut away the BM's support in the area.

Anti-British Movement leaflets have been enthusiastically received by local people and very few have crossed the picket lines into the shops.

British Movement Fuhrer, Michael McLaughlin, feels so frustrated by this, and the police's refusal to break up the ANL pickets, that he has threatened a national mobilisation of his thugs in Mold on September 30th, the venue of the next ANL picket.



Dear Comrades,

I'd like to take up your request for views on the 'new improved Big Flame newspaper' by way of a comment on the article about the Big Flame summer school in the last issue.

The article described one woman's reaction to the week we spent together on the North Yorkshire coast. It was one of the most moving and interesting pieces I've read in any left wing publication, and I think the 'new' paper should contain much more of that sort of thing.

This is not to suggest that there should be less reportage and analysis of industrial, community, and cultural issues. But articles like the one on the summer school bring the paper to life in a way that most reports and analyses often fail to - however hard the writers try to stick to the BF principle of letting people speak for themselves in the articles we write.

What I'm suggesting is that far more attention is given to the letters page. It is a striking defect of our paper that so few people find it interesting or controversial or worthwhile enough to bother to write to us. The editorial collective should stimulate letters by introducing a more challenging approach to some of the articles: setting up debates and sometimes being more provocative by printing contradictory views. There's no need for this to slip into the editorial anarchy we sometimes find on the left, nor should the paper give the mistaken impression that BF doesn't take sides on these debates. But it would give life and vigour to the paper. BF members should be encouraged to write to the paper, and we should ask sympathisers and critics to write to us, expressing their own points of view.

In particular, we should have

more letters dealing with the kind of things raised in the article on the summer school. How do socialist parents relate their politics to their children? I was shocked to read a featured article in one left paper recently in which a trade unionist was talking to his child about a strike in a tone of voice which implied that he'd never mentioned politics in front of the child before. This is a major issue for lots of us on the left, and yet it hardly ever features in our discussions.

The article raised another important political issue: our relationships among ourselves. It's true that even in BF there is a kind of elitism among the 'professional revolutionaries'. But it's also true that none of those professionals wants to seem elitist: they (we?) too find it difficult approaching new comrades; some of them were deliberately keeping out of people's way because they were conscious of being too much in the limelight. Especially when the limelight often feels like the firing line.

Lotta Continua newspaper has deliberately opened itself to the confusion, anger, anguish, and enthusiasm most of us feel at some time or another during the permanent struggle to live in and build the revolutionary movement. I'm sure Big Flame could do more to express this hidden, yet enormous, side of politics.

Solidarity,
Robin Fuller,
Leeds Big Flame

Robin Fuller's letter raises many interesting points. It is unfortunate that so few of the readers of Big Flame can be bothered to write us letters: it is probably more a question of laziness than lack of interest. But it is also true that people have prejudices about what they think is 'political' and thus worth debating. What we are trying to show by articles like the one on the Summer School is that personal relations and reactions are just as much part of a revolutionary socialist perspective as strikes and occupations. We are glad that the letter responded to this and we hope that it encourages others to write in.

BARNSELY CONVENOR SACKED

THE CASE OF THE UNION THAT LOST ITS WAY

BARRY ALMOND was a works convenor for twelve years. Today he has no job. He was sacked from the Hepworth Iron Company's Crow Edge factory, near Barnsley, for allegedly fighting on company premises. There is little doubt, however, that the real reason for his sacking was his leading role in the recent seven-week strike at the plant, and his previous successes in union organising there.

Barry Almond's sacking was part of a deal worked out by Hepworths management, the Arbitration, Conciliation and Advisory Service (ACAS), and Transport Union officials to end the strike. As a further part of the agreement, four shop stewards stood down. In return, the 240 workers sacked by the firm for attending a union meeting in works time, were reinstated. The voting on the agreement was close, and left many bitter feelings. But the validity of the meeting is brought into question by a number of points:

(1) It appears that not all the strikers knew about the meeting - 350 did not attend.

(2) Barry Almond was stopped from attending the meeting, both by management and by union officials. On what authority?

(3) One of the items in ACAS's formula for a return to work - item 7 - stated there should be no victimisations. Management, in sacking the convenor, breached this clause.

Even though the strikers then returned to work, many of them were extremely unhappy about the whole affair. And the issues are still not resolved. Barry Almond is taking his case to an industrial tribunal, but more importantly, he and others are asking some very

leading questions about the role of the union in the dispute, management's tactics, the role of the police, and more generally, questions about the strategy of employers as a whole.

BREAKING THE UNION

The Hepworth strikers saw the original attempt by the company (which has a near-monopoly in British refractories and ceramics) to sack the 240 as a blatant attempt to break effective union organisation in the plant. As a strike committee leaflet explained: 'with a weakened union, it will be much easier to push through redundancies' - redundancies which the workers foresee as a result of new technology involving the replacement of tunnel kilns with roller kilns.

POLICE IN CAHOOTS

Management tactics during the strike, and their close encounters with Penistone police are also revealing. Squads of police virtually occupied the plant and appeared to be working hand in glove with management to ensure that supplies could be taken out and the picket line broken. Scab lorry drivers, doubtless encouraged by the generous strike breaking bonuses they are alleged to have received, were escorted past the pickets by the police, even though they drove in convoys and some failed to display a number plate. No prosecutions have resulted as far as we know. The only arrests were pickets.

Transport and General Workers Union officials seem to be developing a nationwide habit of undermining strikes (even official ones,

like at Hepworths) or just hoping they'll go away. In the Sheffield area we have had: the strike last year at the Grosvenor, where the hotel workers were virtually abandoned by the union,

Sandersons Forklift strike, where strikers are still fighting on after many months of isolation, and now Hepworths.

At Hepworths, the regional T & G officials suggested well before the strike ended that the stewards asked to stand down by management should do so. But as the strike committee said at the time:

'The issues are much broader than solving a dispute and that sort of support we don't need. The sort of support we do need is YOUR support. Our fight is your fight.'

TIME TO START WINNING

Today Barry Almond and the many union members inside who continue to back him still need that support. Much of the backing the strikers did get came too late. In Sheffield many union activists are still unaware of the details of the dispute. But the issues are not being forgotten.

Barnsley Trades Council have come out in support of Barry Almond and condemned the deal which gave him the push. Hepworths' ending of the closed shop agreement, their temporary breaking of union organisation at Crow Edge, their gangster-like strike breaking tactics are too important to forget now the strike is over. Will they be the price one group of workers pays for keeping Moss Evans's beloved Labour Government in power?

Fighting Fascism – in football

EVERY SUNDAY morning, tens of thousands of young workers up and down the country play in Sunday football leagues, the excitement, fun and drama make up in part for the working week. Football, like all leisure, puts back part of what work under capitalism takes out. So when politics is brought into sport, whether its the Berlin Olympics of 1936, the World Cup in Argentina or the Moscow Olympics, all used in their way for propaganda purposes, most sportsmen and women want just to 'get on with the game' and ignore the context in which it is played.

This explains why three successive teams, one of them a Labour Club, have been prepared to play against Tameside National Front in the Hyde Sunday League, despite the attempts of local anti-fascists to get them to withdraw. "We believe that the NF football team should be ostracised in the same way as South Africa is in international sport," a spokesperson for Tameside CARF told us. The NF were elected to the League amid a burst of publicity from the local paper. At their first match, they brought over a hundred thugs from as far away as Blackburn and Rochdale to support them. Apart from the chants of "Superwhites", which can't have been for the team, which lost ten nil, they beat up a young sixteen year old lad and severely harassed the half dozen anti-fascists who turned up. We have held two protests since then. At their next match, fifty of us walked back and forth over the pitch, until the Referee, an NF member, smashed a woman in the face in the goal-mouth. After a brief fight, the police arrived but refused to arrest the referee and later refused to prosecute.

The police turned up in numbers for the following week's match. As soon as we walked across the goaline, about fifty of us, the police ran in and seized two leading members of Tameside CARF, who they later charged with breach of the peace and other invented offences. They conveniently ignored the beating up of two ANL protesters by NF hooligans behind the other goal. One fascist and an ANL protester were arrested in separate incidents.

The local and national press have, like the Daily Mirror's disgusting 'Clash of the day' article, painted a picture of ANL hooligans attacking harmless 'Superwhites' who 'only want to play football.' More sinister, these articles were based on the police's press release, which talked of bricks and bottles being hurled onto the pitch. Tameside CARF is asking the Press Council for an enquiry.

Our campaign has sorted out those in the Labour Party who are prepared to join anti-fascist activity from those like Hyde Independent Labour Club who aren't. We will continue all forms of pressure until the Fascists are no longer allowed to bring football into disrepute.



Danger: Fascists at Play (Big Flame Photo)

fighting fascism Women Need To Organise

RAPE, BATTERY, sexual harassment in the streets, these are the everyday fears of women, whether you're coming home late after a night out with your mates, or popping across the streets to the shops.

This article is by an anti-fascist militant who was attacked by the fascist ref. at the first football picket.

Yet because women aren't brought up being able to handle physical violence – to fight wasn't considered 'ladylike' or something 'rough' girls did, the only defence we have lies in being feminine and relying on the illusion that 'nice girls don't get hit'. So when women step outside the accepted conduct of being a woman and go on demonstrations or pickets against for example, the Nazi NF as I did in Tameside, to stop them using football as a way of gaining respectability, we run the risk of physical assault. I was punched in the face by two fascists and it taught me a few things.

Violence in some situations is unavoidable and we must be prepared for it. Self-defence is one obvious way to prepare but not everyone can do this. But what we can all do is organise ourselves together in groups of people we know and who will look out for each other. For the big demonstrations women's contingents have been organised but they tend to be forgotten on the smaller occasions.

Because I'd never been attacked before and therefore didn't know how I would react, and because I fought back, I now feel more confident in myself. It's important for women to show they are strong and won't be pushed around, not to compete with men as to who is most aggressive but to show ourselves and men that when it counts we can fight for ourselves,



Fascist referee shows whose side he's on. (Big Flame photo)

because we can't ignore the fact that there are men who will and do attack us because we are stepping out of line.

Lastly, I was amazed by the reaction of a lot of the men and the way I was fussed over, especially as I work in a refuge for battered women, I see the extent of male

violence towards women and I've only got to pick up a newspaper to read of women being raped or murdered but because this man was a racist and fascist everyone was shocked. But how many sexist attacks are there on women which are completely ignored by 'good' socialists and anti-fascists?

FREE ASTRID PROLL!

Astrid Proll has been arrested by the British police under the immigration laws and faces extradition to a German high security prison. She was arrested in West Germany in connection with R'A'F membership in May 1971 where she was tried but never sentenced. Between 1971 and 1974 she was kept in solitary confinement. In the silent

wing Koenn Ossendorf, she was subjected to torture by sensory deprivation- the removal of lighting, movement and sound for a total of four and a half months. She was released on temporary bail on the recommendation of doctors who stated that if she remained in prison she would die. During her hospitalisation she had to report daily to the police.

If she is extradited, she has every reason to fear for her life. We strongly urge every possible support for this campaign. You can support by joining the 'Friends of Astrid Proll'. Come to demos, pickets, discuss and urge support within your own unions, groups, organisations etc. If you require any more information about future meetings and action, please contact; F.A.P. 27 Clerkenwell Close, London E. C. 1.

fighting racism

ASIAN YOUTH IN BRADFORD

Following protests by the Bradford Asian Youth Movement, the North East Leeds Anti-Nazi League, and the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, Said Rahman, the Bradford trade unionist, has been released from Armley Jail, where he was awaiting deportation. Rahman, along with 20 of the 23 other Asians and Africans incarcerated under the Immigration laws, was let out shortly after a picket of Armley Jail.

Tarlochan Gata-Aura, a member of the Committee of the Asian Youth Movement, which launched the campaign, told Big Flame:

'Although we got most of them out, a week or so later 15 more were picked up and put in Armley, so the campaigning must go on.

The AYM has set up the 'Campaign Against Deportations and Racist Immigration Laws', and we will be holding meetings and a national demonstration on 21st October. This is just the beginning of the campaign, and we're getting quite a lot of support from the Asian community and from the white left. We're mainly concerned about the Asians, because there's a very strong feeling against these laws and it's never been mobilised before. The white left is quibbling among itself and too much energy is being put into the Anti-Nazi League, but at least they are organising meetings for us.'

The campaign faces serious obstacles: the complicity of the Labour Government in fomenting racialism by its own legislation reduces the possible support from Labour Party members. The uncertainty of the Anti-Nazi League's position on immigration laws means that only some branches are willing to take a stand against these laws. And the different situations of the various sectors of the Asian community all make it difficult to generate the kind of mass pressure that is necessary to stop deportations and abolish immigration controls. But the Bradford

Asian Youth Movement's initiative is of major importance, and the white left must follow their lead.

NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE RACIST IMMIGRATION LAWS

Called by the Asian Youth Movement

Saturday, 21st October
2pm, Salt Street, Carlisle Rd.
Bradford

For information contact the Asian Youth Movement,
c/o 1 Marlborough Road,
Bradford 8

WHEN THE day shift at Halewood heard Ford's offer of a 5% rise the rush to leave the factory was so great that the crash barriers at the main gate were bent out of shape!

Soon, Ford workers all over the country — Swansea, Southampton, Dagenham, Langley — were joining in the rush to show Fords what they thought of their 5%. The speed and unity of the response took everyone by surprise — including the union negotiators. They had already got a taste of their members feelings when a demonstration, organised by the Ford (UK) Workers Combine, in Moscow Place, London, where the negotiations were held, very loudly made it clear that £20 and 35 hours was what Ford workers were interested in.

Below we print one of the reasons why Ford workers are angry.

Pay for W/E		Tax Wk	Tax Code	Tax Bas	Why Not Pay Taxed	Monthly Draw	Name	Div	Dept	Badge
07	04	78	02	A	140L	10				
Gross Pay TD		108.12	Tax TD		22.75	Net Pay TD		85.37		
Gross Pay		108.12	Tax		22.75	Net Pay		85.37		
Gross Pay		40.00	Tax		0.00	Net Pay		40.00		
Gross Pay		16.15	Tax		0.00	Net Pay		16.15		

This is the pay slip for a single Ford worker, for a week of days with no overtime. Ford workers are demanding a rise of £20 for all, a reduction in hours to 35 with no strings or productivity deals. They also want payment for all lay-offs and a line worker's allowance of one hours pay per shift.

Why we back Ford strike

● Because the Ford workers are the first mass group of workers to act against the Government's 5% wage limit. The first group to test in practice the five resolutions from the TUC.

● Because the Ford workers are in the frontline of a class-wide struggle against incomes policy. If they win, it opens up great possibilities for every other part of our movement.

● Because in the demands of the Ford unions — £20 across the board and five hours off the working week — they are not talking about 'special cases' or 'differentials', but talking in a much more open, united way about the needs of workers as workers. Across the board rises they are talking about, and about £20, a genuinely realistic figure to fit the real needs of working class people. When the TUC talks simply about restoring free collective bargaining, it means different things to different people. It means 'responsible' wage bargaining to the TUC leadership; it means added differentials to the most skilled sections; it means *nothing* to the unemployed, the pensioners or the lower paid.

The only way to look at the Government's and bosses' offensive over living standards is in a mass, united way. For the needs of the entire class. The Ford workers have begun to put forward a program that helps to build it and this is what should developed in the future.

I need that £20'

George, a Halewood worker, is firmly behind the strike—

I need that £20 rise — in fact it's not enough. On average I take home £55 a week. With three kids and a heavy mortgage that's not much. After deductions I reckon that £20 is worth about one pair of kids shoes at today's prices. Anyway, Fords can afford it. On last year's profits they'd still have £200 million left in the kitty if they paid us what we want. Besides, it's our work that made that money in the first place. The 5% they

FORD WORKERS V. 5% LIMIT

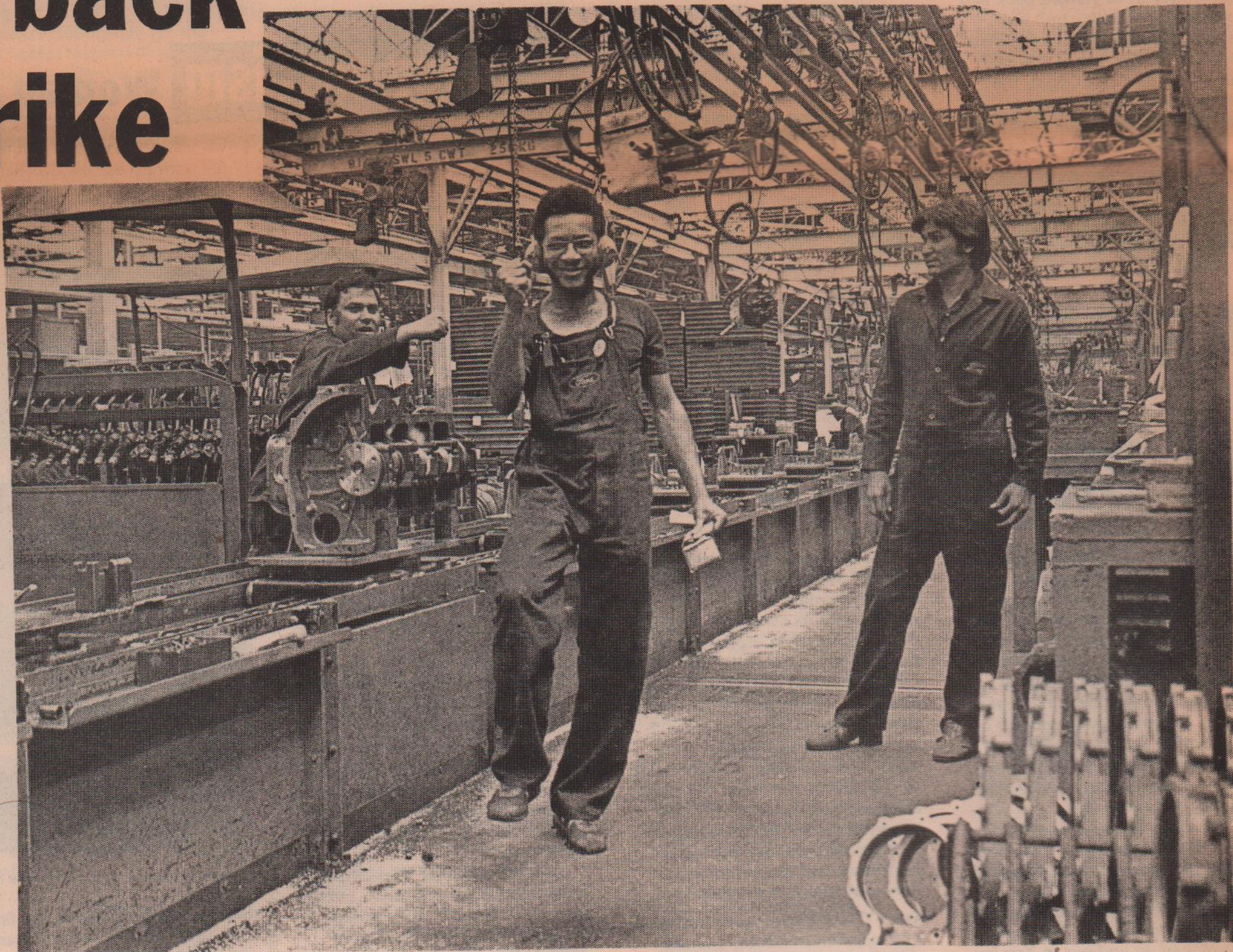
Buy the badge

The badge we show on the right was produced by the Ford (UK) Workers Combine. Thousands have been sold at cost price at Ford plants up and down the country.

The Ford (UK) Workers Combine is an unofficial grouping of rank and file Ford workers with members at most plants. They produced the badges because the union didn't, they produced leaflets pushing the claim because in most plants the union didn't. The Combine is not an alternative to the union — many members are stewards — rather it is trying to do what the union consistently fails to do — inform the shopfloor and educate it to the realities of struggle in a capitalist society. It is socialist but it is not dominated by any group or party and all Ford workers are welcome.

The Secretary can be contacted at:

2 Ellenborough House,
White City Estate,
Australia Road,
London W.12



Dagenham engine plant workers sporting ANL badges. Now they have another cause to fight for. (Photo: Carlos Augusta)

are offering us is a joke — £2 after tax it would give me, and they don't even mention shorter hours. Thousands of new jobs would be created and this would mean that my 18 year old lad would have the chance of getting a proper wage. At the moment he's on £23 a week. And it will help all the poor bastards who can't find anything. They say that it would push up the price of cars because the wages bill would be higher. Why should it? Take it out of the company's profits.

The only thing that Fords is offering us is the one thing that we don't need — a productivity deal. We all know what that means — more work and less workers. Anyway, we are already working at top speed — how are we going to make any money out of a productivity deal?

Everyone knew that the company's offer was going to be peanuts and on the Wednesday night things were getting really tense. Lads were sticking up posters they had made themselves and everyone

seemed to be wearing the badges "£20 on the pay — hour off the day — No Strings"

When we got in on the Thursday night we knew we were going out. The day shift had already voted for an indefinite strike — and they are supposed to be the weaker of the two shifts!

On our shift the mass meetings were short and sharp. In the Body shop there was a 5 to 1 vote for the strike, and at the PTA meeting only one bloke voted against — and he did it for a joke!

KILLING NO MURDER

By the time you read this, the media in Britain and in all Europe will be reporting the second inquest into Liddle Towers. The reason for the widespread coverage is quite clear: Liddle Towers, an EPTU shop steward, has been described as the British Steve Biko. He was killed by the police.

But a number of important questions highlighted by the tragedy will never be discussed at the inquest. Whatever the ultimate verdict, it remains for working-class organisations to ram home these issues, seeing to it that they become the basis for a civil rights campaign in Britain. These are:

- * the absence of any democratic control of the police.
 - * the completely phoney character of the police complaints procedure.
 - * the lack of rights of any person arrested at the present time.
- Sir Robert Mark, the ex-Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, sheds some interesting light on this issue. Ironically, on the same day as the second inquest into Liddle Towers opened, his book, 'In the Office of Constable', was published. This contains three sentences of extraordinary relevance to the Tower's case. They require to be underlined a hundred times

when considering his death: I had better explain the basic problems of police wrongdoing and discipline. It needs no great brain to appreciate that the two classes most immune from the criminal law are lawyers and police, if only because they know most about it. The function of policing, being one of regulation and control, involves an inevitable temptation to corruption, sometimes petty, sometimes more serious.

Obviously, in the North East, where 'The Godfather', Andrew Cunningham, combined being chairman of the Police Committee with helping his bent colleague John Poulson, then the opportunities for malpractice are legion.

The Towers' case proves this point. All the power of the authorities has been mobilised to suppress the facts, to hide the wrongdoing. Policemen put pressure upon witnesses to modify their statements. No energy or expense (public

money) was spared to assist the eight men who made the arrest to concoct a suitable story. Meanwhile, the members of the Liddle Towers' Action Committee were subjected to harrying and vilification.

POLICE COVER UP MURDER INSIDE BECAUSE OF

Why does the hierarchy of the Northumbria Police go to such extraordinary lengths? The reason is quite simple. For almost three years, they have attempted a cover up. If this were now destroyed, it would not only endanger the positions of the policemen who kicked Liddle Towers in the cells at Gateshead police station, but also those higher up who helped concoct the alibi and, even more grave, those at the top of the establishment who gave a veneer of credibility to what otherwise would appear as a totally unconvincing account. 'We killed a man in these cells - and got away with it.' That is the boast of Gateshead policemen when they want to bring pressure to bear on arrested individuals. The success so far experienced over the Towers' case, coupled with the promotion of many of the policemen involved, has led many policemen to realise that their bosses will support them irrespective of what they do. Bully boys in blue have resorted to even more violence, mugging people whenever the inclination arises.

For the socialist movement this has particularly important implications. At a time when the capitalist state is intensifying its repressive apparatus, enlarging the Special Branch, forming Special Patrol Groups, then it is vital that our opposition is made as effective as possible. Remember the trade union movement was built on the principle 'An injury to one is an injury to all'. Shop steward Liddle Towers did not merely receive an injury.

Killing No Murder, a report by the Liddle Towers Committee, documents the unanswerable case against the police. Copies from the Committee at 42 Cherryburn Gardens, Fenham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE4 9UQ for 27½p. including postage.

(by R Challinor)

Screws put on Trial

ALMOST UNHERALDED in the Press recently was the news that thirteen screws from Hull Prison have been charged with conspiracy to beat and assault prisoners in the aftermath of the Prison riot there two years ago. An assistant governor has also been charged with the common law offence of Malfiesance — which roughly translates as criminal neglect of duty.



September, 1976: prisoners protest against brutality on the rooftop at Hull.

The charges carry sentences of up to 14 years imprisonment, so it should be interesting to see which prisons those found guilty are sent to. Our guess is that they'll join Stonehouse and the growing throng of bent coppers in a cosy south coast open nick.

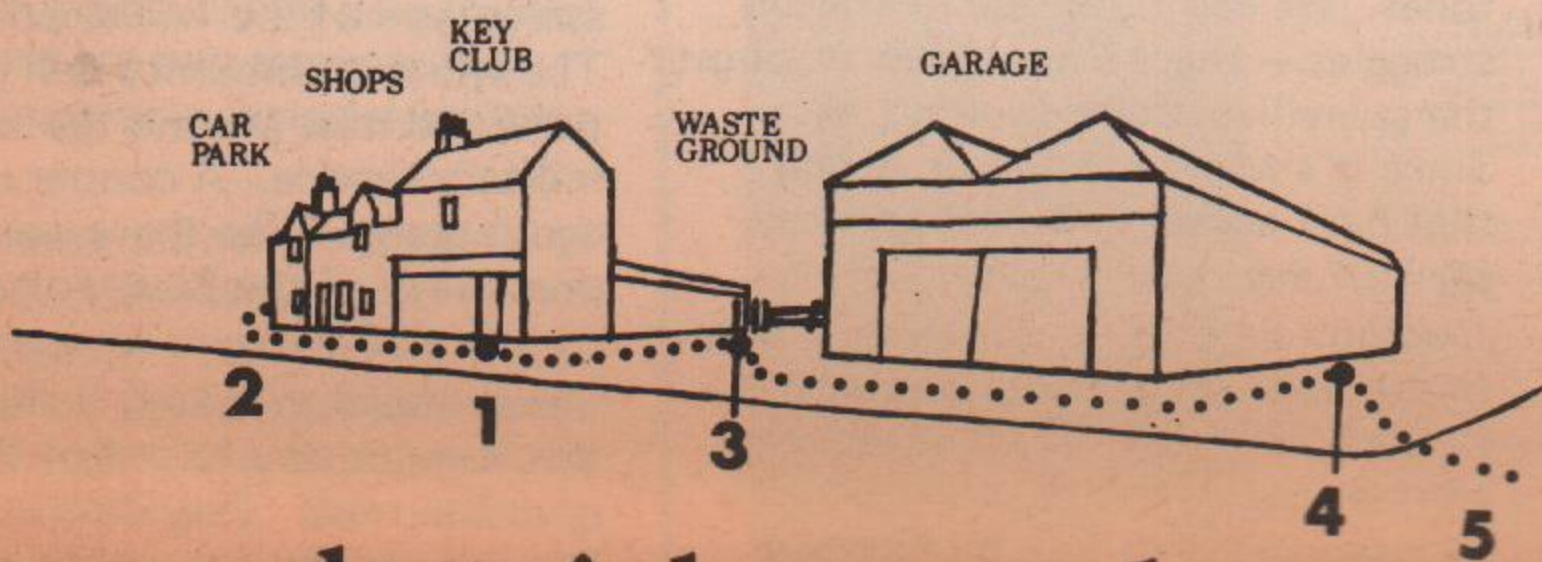
Before these thugs can be done there will be a long trial. Already witnesses are being intimidated — Jake Prescott, who will be a major witness was badly beaten up in Dartmoor recently after screws had challenged him to "grass them up" to the police about brutality there. He did, and was knocked half senseless and lost three weeks remission for his troubles. We understand the Hull Police, who brought the conspiracy charges.

when told of the Dartmoor incident by Jake's lawyers at Islington Law Centre, commented that this was not the first time prisoner witnesses had been intimidated and it probably wouldn't be the last. They sent two detectives down to Dartmoor to take a statement from Jake about the beatings.

The trial should tell the real story of what went on at Hull, but only if prisoners are allowed to give evidence without this sort of intimidation hanging over their heads for several months.

Perhaps they should be all transferred to Hull Police Station until the end of the trial!

(Islington Gutter Press)



how it happened

Liddle left the Key Club (1), and walked towards the car park (2). Between (1) and (2) he became involved in a quarrel with the police. They attempted unsuccessfully to put him into a small Panda car. Then he was dragged back to the entrance of the Key Club. A thud on the door, caused by Liddle falling, brought members out of the club. They saw him pulled on to the wasteground (3), where they witnessed him being kicked. Liddle was then dragged into the side road (4). There he lay semi-conscious. Inhabitants of the flats some distance away, aroused by the noise, looked out of their windows to see the figure of Liddle, lying handcuffed and being kicked by three policemen. Eventually he was taken off in the direction of Gateshead Police Station (5).

MENTAL ILLNESS — NO REFORMS HERE

DAVID ENNALS, the current Minister of Health, is a presentable chap who has a reputation in Labour Party circles of being somewhat progressive. And at least if he has disappointed his 'radical' supporters by allowing the continuing run-down of the NHS, it was thought that he would insist that the Ministry of Health took a principled position over the need to improve the rights of mental patients. From extracts available of the White Paper on the Mental Health Act, it is clear that the Labour Government will not even carry through reforms on social issues like mental health.

The worst part of the Mental Health Act currently in force is Section 65 by which a patient can be detained for an indefinite period at the Home Office's 'pleasure'. And contrary to the advice of progressive doctors, and the Mental Patients Union, the White Paper proposes no changes in Section 65, and the power of the Home Office to overrule doctors and, obviously, patients. Defending the White Paper, Ennals had this to say: "I do not believe for one moment that a Home Secretary, unless faced with powerful evidence, would wish to detain a patient a day longer than necessary." Which is but another of the blatant lies we have grown to expect from our leaders.

The White Paper does propose some reforms — like a partial right to refuse treatment, information to be given on treatment and legal rights, less censorship of mail, automatic tribunals every

three years. But it retains the category "psychopathic disorder" and would allow compulsory detention of such people if there is "likelihood of benefit from treatment."

HOW THE ACT AFFECTS LIVES

Talk of Ministers, White Papers and Acts is all very well but it can tend to make us forget that all the time thousands of people are suffering from their effects. Among the sufferers is Michael Young.

Michael Young is 26, and comes from Manchester. For nearly six years he has been a patient in Moss Side Hospital, a maximum security psychiatric "special hospital" located in Maghull, near Liverpool. Moss Side is run by the Home Office, not the NHS. All authority over Michael's case rests with the Home Secretary, because he is detained "for an indefinite period" under Section 65

of the Mental Health Act. In fact the Home Secretary has a committee, the Aarvold Board, to review patients like Michael, who are judged to present a special risk to society. Such cases are identified shortly after admission to hospital, and any future recommendations — e.g. no change, transfer, change of Section, conditional discharge, or discharge — must go before the Board, which meets in the absence of the patient or representatives.

Michael was sent to Moss Side after interviews with three psychiatrists while awaiting sentencing on a charge of stealing a TV set and other property worth £315. He had a long record of petty theft, with previous terms in borstals, special schools and prisons, but had never been charged with violence of any sort. However, the psychiatrists classified him as subnormal and psychopathic, and recommended Section 65 in Moss Side. Their reports, which contradict each other, say that Michael killed pets in his home and attacked his mother and sister with a knife. A later report from Moss Side refers to Michael molesting his younger sister. The Home Office summary of the case refers to a history of drug taking, though this does not appear anywhere else. With these reports, Michael was sent to Moss Side and his

case referred to the Aarvold Board. His parents did not object to the court's decision, partly because they did not understand it, and partly because they were told that he would be going to hospital for a short time, to help him return to society.

INSIDE BECAUSE OF INACCURATE REPORTS

His mother and sister found out that Michael was reported to have attacked them, at his first Mental Health Review Tribunal, four years after he was put away. The entire family deny both that Michael was violent or that they ever suggested he was. They are furious about the report that he molested his young sister, which they deny. Michael was not represented at his first Tribunal, which was over in an hour and recommended no change. At the second, he was represented by the Manchester Law Centre. On the day, with all the witnesses present, the tribunal was put off for two months. On February 7th, '78, the tribunal heard from Dr Maire O'Shea, the independent psychiatrist who had interviewed Michael, that he was neither subnormal nor psychopathic and never should have been sent to Moss Side or placed on Section 65. His family denied all the allegations of violence against them. David Wallace, the clinical psychologist who tested Michael, said he was of average IQ. The story about the cat turned out to be no more than a rumour. Eight months later, the Aarvold Board has not made a decision and when they do, they are under no obligation to explain it to Michael or the Law Centre.

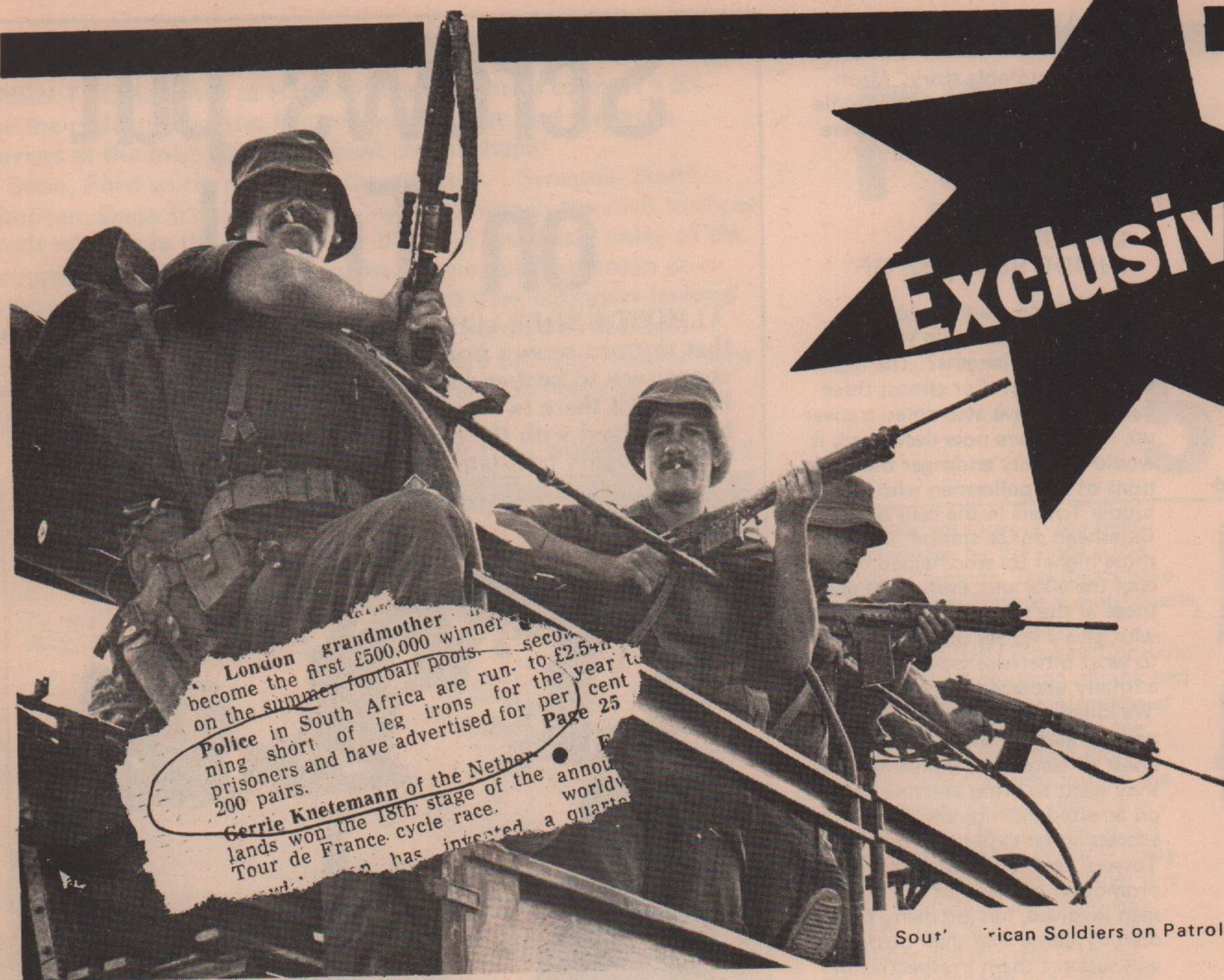
Why is Michael still inside? At the tribunal, his current psy-

chiatrist stated that Michael was psychopathic because he had said it was all right for the poor to steal from the rich because the rich steal from the poor. We think that his long record for petty theft, led the court to seek a longer sentence. The Mental Health Act 1959 gave them a solution. In fact, the six year saga of court, psychiatrists, tribunals, and Review Boards has all been perfectly legal. The Home Secretary has no obligation to overturn the original decisions even given the family's denial of being attacked. There is no safeguard against psychiatrists inventing a case history. Moss Side did not have to offer treatment, and they didn't. There are no rules of evidence or procedure at the tribunals. It was only because his mother rang the Law Centre that Michael was represented at his second tribunal.

SUPPORT NEEDED FROM REST OF COMMUNITY

It is quite clear that the rights of Mental Patients will only be improved if and when other sectors of the community support them in their fight. Most of us do not have much time to devote to the problems of mental patients. It is important to realise that the criteria by which mental illness is determined are arbitrary and reflect the values of 'our' society. It is not only in the Soviet Union that dissidents are gotten out of the way by being certified as insane.

The Medical Patients Union can be contacted c/o Grass Roots, 109 Oxford Road, Manchester. The 'Guardian' newspaper refused this article on Michael Young



South African Soldiers on Patrol

WAR RESISTERS SPEAK OUT

The major force that will overthrow the white South African regime is the black resistance. But to win the struggle this resistance will be greatly helped by defections from the white power structure, which includes the armed forces. That is why the formation of a South African draft-resisters group is of great importance. It has the potential to act as a focus for the discontent that is growing amongst soldiers as the military situation deteriorates.

The interview that follows with two members of the War Resisters Group was done in collaboration with the *Islington Gutter Press*.

What were your experiences in Angola?

I was in Angola in November '75 for three months. I was based in the south and so wasn't involved in the fighting, which was further north. We pulled back into Northern Namibia for four months. In the last two months we were on the Angolan border in Namibia, in an area that was clear of guerrilla activity. And the way they acted here was to bring in every single member of the local population and torture them for information. I went to bed every night for two months to the screams of people being tortured for information, mainly with electric shocks. From my experience I reckon our operation which involved four battalions tortured about 2,000 people within two months. And out of those I heard that ten or fifteen people were actually held as suspects. The others were just let go as they didn't know anything. I testified to the U.N. about it. The Guardian published my story.

PUBLICITY

M: Yes, we heard about you in the army. We had these lectures once a week on the horrors of drugs etc., and we spent a lot of time talking about the evil Anderson fellow. So they let us know about it.
B: That's another thing about our

work that's important. Whatever publicity we can get back home is good publicity. Just to mention South African War Resisters in South Africa is all the publicity we need — no matter what they say about us.

Is the army all white?

No, since 1974 they've been forming black regiments. With coloureds — people of mixed blood — the situation is that if you are unemployed, you're conscripted into the army. They send you a form, and you've got to get it signed by your employer and return it within 29 days. If they don't get it, you're conscripted — and they come looking for you.

WAR RESISTERS

How are you trying to organise war resisters?

We started in July, we're run by a coordinating committee of six people. We're in touch with 35 people in this country, who are refugees — they haven't got British passports and they're not students. Trying to guess the total number of people who've left because they don't want to do military service is difficult. We're still in an early stage of trying to build up a network and become known. Basically the work we're doing at the moment is assisting people who arrive here.

The basis that we're working on in terms of getting people asylum in various countries is that in the United

Nations Conference against Apartheid in Lagos, in August last year, a recommendation was passed which urged all member states to grant immediate political asylum to bona fide war resisters and deserters.

POLITICAL ASYLUM

In this country people are not being granted political asylum. So we're helping people settle down when they arrive, and trying to get people involved in solidarity work with the liberation movements, and also to encourage people to get involved in local politics — we feel it's important to take responsibility for the society you're living in, which I feel a lot of exiles don't do.

So far no-one's been sent back to South Africa against their will, but if the Tories get in that's quite likely.

The whole thing of people leaving because they refuse to fight is a relatively new thing. We had thirty people arriving here because of the small July call-up, and we're going to get a lot more arriving because of the larger January call-up. We produce a newspaper which is distributed inside South Africa giving information to people who are thinking of leaving. I think what's most important is that there's a good possibility of resistance developing inside the army. Our programme at the moment is aimed at being a support base to that resistance inside the country. There are a number of reasons for

us getting this programme going. Firstly being white South Africans we have to consider the role of whites in struggle. Though the overriding situation is a class struggle, in South Africa it all has racial overtones. We can't join the liberation struggles — there's no whites amongst the guerrillas, there couldn't be. Since it's whites in South Africa that have access to power and key sorts of information, there is a specific role that whites have to play. In our analysis of the situation the greatest contradiction that is facing whites today is the question of military service. The fact that a huge proportion of the white population are being forced to lay down their lives for a system which some of them don't believe in. So far people have been prepared to go along with the army, seeing it as a drag. But as things get tougher more people are going to say "No we are not prepared to risk our lives for a system we don't believe in." I think Soweto was important to whites in stressing that the writing is on the wall. Things are going to change. For some, this means right now how do we get our money out, where's the best deal overseas. But a lot of the youth, who don't have that interest in getting out, who do see themselves as South Africans have the dilemma of what it means to go and fight for a system they don't believe in. The dilemma is becoming more and more real.

FASCIST POLICE

Would you describe South Africa as fascist?

There are a whole lot of contradictions in South Africa. Despite the stereotype of the fascist police. The white community will get more polarised now around the issue of military service. A couple of years ago it seemed like there was a possibility of the State softening its line and giving in to international liberal pressure. I think this is quite clearly out of the question now. The State is as hard line as ever and becoming more so.

How political do you see your movement? What support has your group got from people here? We will have to battle quite hard in this country to get interest. We are hoping to build support here on a broad front. It hasn't the political sophistication of saying what you should be fighting for but it's the first step. Apart from anything else the South African army is today playing a more and more important part in South African society. It's the backbone of State security. The military is being used more and more in urban areas, this will keep increasing. South Africa couldn't exist today without its defence force. So purely from the point of view of undermining the South Africa defence force as the main defence of

traditional alternatives. They could drink, go to church, emigrate and vote for the Nationalist Party.

CHALLENGE

But the anti-Catholic policies of the northern Irish government began to be challenged, in small ways at first. A homeless Catholic family from South Tyrone, the Gildernews, issued one of the first challenges.

They had applied for a council house. There was a suitable house in the village of Caledon but this was allocated to a single woman, a Miss Beattie. She, of course, was a protestant and the secretary of the local Unionist Party. The Gildernews, being Catholic, didn't even get a look in.

SQUAT

They wouldn't take 'no' for an answer. With the local Nationalist MP, Austin Currie jumping on the bandwagon, the Gildernews occupied the house in Caledon in a token protest. Shortly afterwards, in August 1968, the new Civil Rights Movement gave its support with a march from Coalisland to Dungannon, two local towns.

HOPES AND FEARS

The growth of this Civil Rights Movement gave new hope to the

depressed Catholic ghettos. As people began to join it, all kinds of Catholic politicians, like Currie and Fitt of the Nationalist Party, Devlin of the northern Ireland Labour Party and John Hume, a Derry factory manager, struggled to put themselves at the head.

But just as the new movement for equality gave hope to the Catholic working class, it sparked off a completely different reaction from Protestant workers. They felt fear and anger.

In a depressed area like northern Ireland jobs and houses are scarce. The Protestant working class has only small privileges over Catholics but they count for a lot. The Civil Rights Movement threatened to remove the few precious economic advantages that Protestant workers possessed. More and more the Protestant-loyalist workers looked to anti-Catholic hardliners like Ian Paisley for leadership.

DERRY

The Civil Rights march from Coalisland to Dungannon had been peaceful, though many in the loyalist community were furious that it was even allowed. They were even more furious to learn that a new march was proposed for October in Derry. They saw

IRELAND TEN YEARS ON

THE BIRTH OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

THIS YEAR is the tenth since the birth of the Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland. These ten years of conflict, hopes and continuing struggle against British Imperialism are only the latest "troubles" that will always return to haunt British Governments as long as they keep control of their oldest colony. We are printing a series of articles looking back over this ten years. This month: *The Birth of the Civil Rights Movement*.

1968. ONLY ten years ago and Northern Ireland was a quiet place. Hardly ever in the news. Nothing to report.

But the calm was deceptive. A third of the population, the Catholics, were treated like dirt. They were excluded from jobs in the major industries or local government. They were always at the bottom of the housing list. And every summer, thousands

of Protestants marched through their areas, Orange banners waving and drums pounding, just to show them who was boss.

In the mid-sixties there was no revolt by the Catholics. The IRA military campaign of the late '50s had petered out. The

anti-Catholic regime at Stormont Castle in Belfast was as safe as ever, with the British border to protect it from the rest of Ireland, and surrounded by its all-Protestant police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary. The Catholics, sunk in apathy and despair, turned to the

SOUTHERN AFRICA

ZIMBABWE: Will Britain Intervene?



I went to bed every night for two months to the screams of people being tortured for information mainly with electric shocks.

the South African state, we see our programme as having validity. It's our personal belief that there's a hell of a lot more to do as you must have a political programme. But we see the alternatives as either mobilising people into the liberation struggles, or neutralising them out of the South Africa government one. These are two separate but equally important struggles at this stage.

Do you think that there is going to be a Viet Nam situation in South Africa?
I don't think the United States will send in troops. That is impractical, as we saw in Angola. But quite clearly the US role in South Africa is very underplayed in that it does hold the strings to what is going on economically and politically.

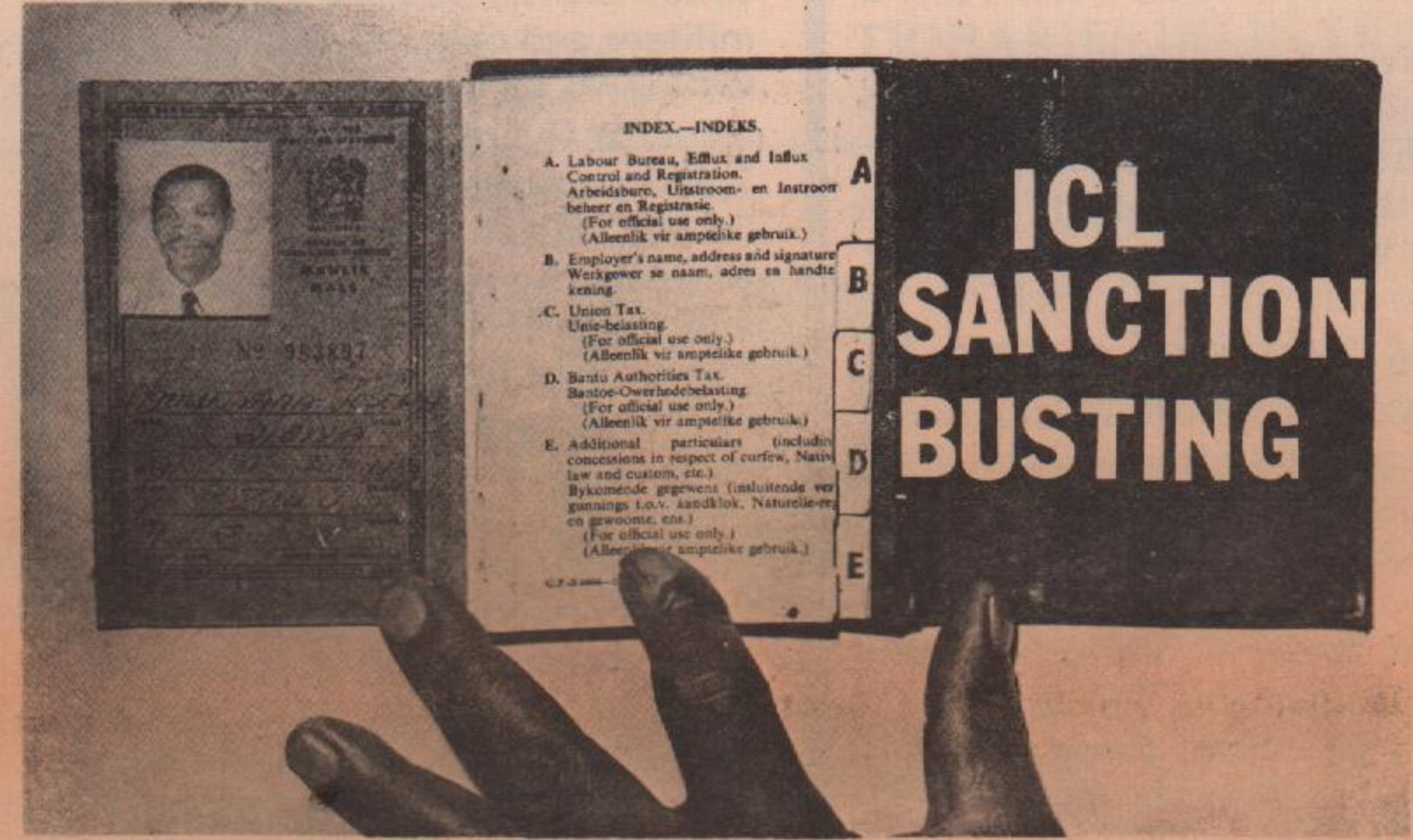
ARMS INDUSTRY

One final point on the military and industrial complex that has built up in South Africa. Given the arms embargo to South Africa, which they had anticipated for some time, the whole military industrial complex has expanded. It has given a boost to the economy, like in World War 2. A whole new range of industry has opened up, it's not only producing the weapons it needs, it is starting to export them.

South African War Resisters are at BM Box 2190, London WC1. Tel : 01-346 8049

THE MAKING public of sanctions-busting has now become an acceptable activity — even government sponsored inquiries do it. But this exposure is limited to past cases that are still going on. The United Nations has passed a resolution banning the sales of arms to South Africa but this is not stopping ICL, a company in which the government has a 25% share. selling a computer to the South

African police. A computer that will be used to centralise records of black Africans who break the pass laws which are a basic method of control of Apartheid. The U.S. government has responded to the UN resolution by forbidding US companies like IBM to supply computers to South Africa; not surprisingly, in this market where they have no competition, ICL sales are growing fast — last year by 68%! Apart from selling



The products of the British firm International Computers Ltd. are part of the basic machinery of apartheid, the computerisation of the police force, ICL has recently sold ten computers to Barclays Bank (South Africa) and 30 to the South African Electricity Supply Commission.

Fortunately ICL workers are not waiting for a government inquiry before they take action. The ASTMS branch at the ICL plant in Manchester has asked their national organiser to take up with management their opposition to the sale of the computer and they have arranged a meeting with

the hated pass and influx control system. Photo taken from the new CIS pamphlet 'Buying Time in South Africa'.

stewards from the ICL plant in Letchworth to sort out ways of blocking the sale.

The opposition by ICL workers of the sale of a 2972 computer to South Africa is an important contribution to an international struggle, begun by workers at British Leyland and Pilkington's. It shows a consciousness that we must help spread to all other factories supplying South Africa.

Since the Foreign Secretary, David Owen, announced the Government's contingency plans for a military intervention in Rhodesia, there has been little response from the British Left. Below we argue why, especially in light of recent developments, the danger of an intervention should be taken far more seriously.

ALTERNATIVES

First, what are the alternatives to a British military intervention?
1. A negotiated settlement: This was Owen and Young's expressed hope, and the Patriotic Front leadership has not been unenthusiastic about the prospects of it. But there seems little chance of it now, and without a military intervention, no chance.
2. A victory for the internal settlement, secured by Rhodesian armed forces: ZANU's strength in the countryside makes this an impossibility.
3. A UN peace-keeping force or a pan-African peace-keeping force: one of these, probably the former, is certainly a likelihood at some stage, but it would not necessarily solve the crucial problem of where the real power lies. The lack of real force, of effective fire power, would seem to necessitate, then, an important but secondary role for such a force. It could maintain the 'appropriate' balance of power once this had been established - by foreign intervention.
4. A victory for the Patriotic Front (or ZANU or ZAPU): not even the sophisticated Owen and Young can allow that. Apart from anything else, the consequences for South Africa would be far too serious. So, although this option is still a possibility, the more likely it becomes, the more likely becomes a British intervention. It is no alternative.

Clearly a British or British-led military intervention would not solve anything in itself. However, it is an essential component because it alone could effectively solve the problem of the balance of power.

"CHAOS"

'The Observer', which has come out strongly in favour of an intervention, makes no bones about this. It says that 'effective control has now slipped from the hands of the white minority and there is no alternative centre of black power inside the country capable of maintaining security or establishing a new government. This is a classic recipe for chaos.'

For 'The Observer', 'chaos' means an anti-imperialist victory. So, when it says Britain must intervene to prevent chaos, it is clear what is meant: Britain must intervene because only an intervention can make the difference between

a neo-colonialist regime and an anti-imperialist regime.

'REAL' REASONS

But this is covertly expressed, of course. The 'real' reasons and justifications for an intervention would be:

1. Rhodesia is Britain's responsibility. It is time (after 13 years!) that Britain took up its responsibility, as this is what is asked of it internationally and by the Patriotic Front.
2. British passport holders' lives are at risk. These lives need to be saved and only British troops can achieve this.
3. The Soviet Union and Cuba have their greedy eyes on Rhodesia. They have to be kept out.
4. There could well be a power struggle between ZAPU and ZANU. British troops are needed to prevent this and impose a ceasefire.

So much, then, for ideological back-up. What form would an intervention take?

'The Observer's' argument is that Britain should adopt and distort ZANU's position, which is that Britain is the colonial power responsible for Rhodesia and that it should accept its responsibility and persuade Ian Smith to accept it.

Britain could then send in troops to safeguard a British-controlled transition to majority rule. Moreover, once the troops were in, they would have free rein to keep ZANU and ZAPU from taking over effective power, and after the initial stage they could use UN troops as back up.

The call for a military intervention has not only come from the 'Observer'. As reported in the last issue of Big Flame, the 'Economist' has also called for one. We have then a similar call from two influential weeklies that clearly represent the views of a wide section of capital and of the Government.

PUBLIC OPINION

A Belgian comrade who has studied the Franco-Belgian invasion of Zaire has warned us of the remarkably subtle and sophisticated way in which the media prepared 'public opinion' for the invasion. What was at first considered repugnant and sinister was later accepted, at the time of the invasion, as unavoidable and even 'humane'. The Belgian left was left high and dry.

We at least can learn from their experience.



The first Coalsfield-Dungannon Civil Rights march was commemorated recently by 15,000 people. Many of this year's marchers were on the original demonstration, including the entire Gildemeaw family, who had originally occupied the council

house in Caledon. Notable by their absence were such politicians as Gerry Fitt and Austin Currie. They have long given up fighting for people's rights. They weren't even invited.

the march as a threat to their own shaky standards of living as well as to do military service is difficult, itself which guaranteed them the little advantages they had.

The fear and anger of the loyalists was shared by the police, drawn almost exclusively from the loyalist population. When the Civil Rights

supporters were marching down Duke St the police attacked viciously. They batoned down every marcher they could reach. These were early days. Rioting and street-fighting did not necessarily come easily to the shocked, confused and, now, bleeding demonstrators. They scattered back to their homes

and the story spread quickly through the city.

The Catholics had seen the growth of a new movement dedicated to winning them equal rights. But their hope mingled with anger when they saw the police reaction. Meanwhile the Protestants were beginning to accuse the

traditional Unionist Party leaders of being too soft on the Civil Rights Movement. They demanded tougher action.

The scene was set for massive confrontation.

Next month: The troops arrive and take sides.

DERRY 1968 — BARNESLEY 1978

The tenth anniversary of the first Civil Rights march in Derry occurs October 8th. On Oct. 7th, the anniversary will be marked by a demonstration in Barnesley. The United Troops Out Movement has chosen Barnesley because it is the constituency of Roy Mason, the Ulster Secretary. Back in 1968 the Civil Rights marchers were brutally beaten off the streets by the RUC while the British government looked on. Today the same job is being done by British troops under the control of Roy Mason. Mason needs to be told loud and clear that his troops are not wanted in Ireland. Be there on Saturday, Oct. 7th, 12.30 Rock Street (off Sackville Street).

WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM IRELAND NOW!



Popular support for Sandinista Front guerrillas

IRAN: The mosques and the bazaars against the Shah!

THE SHAH of Iran recently introduced martial law into various Iranian towns, thus effectively bringing to an end two years of limited "liberalisation" that sought to give the repressive regime some credibility and stability. Martial law was brought in to bring an end to a wave of demonstrations, strikes and bombings that has gripped the country since January and that threatens to topple the regime. Here we look at the general background to these events, the forces involved and the implications.

On January 9th of this year in the Iranian town of Qom, at least 20 people were killed by Government troops. The murders occurred during a demonstration of students and schoolchildren that was an immediate response to anti-religious attacks by the regime that called for the return of the exiled Islamic leader Ayatollah Khomeini.

But whatever the immediate background to the Qom demonstration, the real forces that it reflected became apparent in the months that followed. In wave after wave of demonstrations developing finally into a general strike, a wide spectrum of forces has taken part.

Small traders, craftsmen, the clergy, the unemployed, landless peasants growing sections of workers, students, school students, the smaller national bourgeoisie, have been involved. All of these, however disunited in their eventual aim are completely united in their immediate aim: the overthrow of the Shah and, the dictatorship.

BACKGROUND

Basically the cause of all the demonstrations is the type of "modernisation" that a country requires when it adapts itself to the needs of international capital. In Iran this has been particularly accentuated by the vast oil resources and the resulting wealth.

In the countryside, the changes have meant a replacement of the former feudal relationships by a capitalist mixture of small farmers and large farmers and wage labourers. As a result of three stages of land reform and widespread mechanisation, masses of small and landless peasants have been thrown off the land and live tenuously between casual work or no work in the towns. These migrant workers are the Kosh Nashins, and they have played a central role in the anti-Shah movement.

In the towns a variety of factors are at work. The introduction of foreign consumer goods and the growing concentration of firms have meant that countless thousands of small workshops have gone into bankruptcy and countless thousands

of shops have lost out to big stores. Those that remain are under constant pressure

BAZAARS

Many of the workshops and small shops/stalls have traditionally been in and around the bazaars. These are in many ways a centre of traditional community life and, having preserved many traditions, they have acted as one of the main focal points for anti-Shah activity. Hence the growing police attacks directed against them.

The changes in the countryside have led to a dramatic increase in the urban population. In 1960, only 15% of the population lived in the towns, now that figure is 50%. As a result, public services cannot cope, rents have rocketed, accommodation is inadequate. In the last three years or so this situation has worsened as the Iranian growth rate has dropped from 4.6% to 2.4%. It is not the rich who have had to make sacrifices, and the effect has been an increase in strike activity and, as a result, in repression of workers.

At the same time, the oil boom has brought a lot of people a lot of money. Not only the bourgeoisie, the bureaucrats and the politicians, but also many workers and traders have benefitted from the boom — many of them from highly corrupt methods. The corruption has been one of the main targets of the anti-Shah movement.

RELIGION

The dramatic changes of the last decade or so have occurred simultaneously with Government attacks on religion. The Government has taken over control of many organisations, their money, their religious shrines, the running of the mosques, etc. And, in doing so, it has not only led many people to see their problems primarily in religious terms, but also provided these people with a leadership — the clergy. For these have had no option but to oppose the regime.

But the opposition movement is not as religious in content as some have suggested. The central role that mosques have played partly derives from their relative security, and a variety of groups have used them as a base, including Marxist guerrillas. Nevertheless, religious groups have played a very important role and many of them are far from being

progressive. Ayatollah Scharriat Madari of Qom, for example, who is one of the main religious leaders, has said that he has had and will have no truck with Marxism, and mainly desires to turn the clock back.

THE REGIME'S BACKERS

Like Brazil and South Africa, Iran has been armed to the teeth by the Imperialist powers to carry out a role as regional policeman. The region that it guards over stretches from the Soviet Union to the Gulf. Its armed forces with 340,000 soldiers, 350 combat planes and 1600 tanks is easily the most powerful of the area and well-equipped to carry out external and internal repression. U.S. support for human rights will certainly not be allowed to interfere with the maintaining in power of a regime that buys Western goods (especially arms) and supplies the West — BP is its largest customer — with much needed oil. It is economic considerations that determine who Sunny Jim sends telegrams of support to.

At present the Marxists we support have but a very small voice in the anti-Shah movement. But the process of destroying a regime often goes much further than those who started the destruction would want. It is this process getting out of hand that Callaghan, Schmidt and Carter fear — and it is what we hope for.

All Eyes on Nicaragua.

FOR THE last month, there has been a general strike in Nicaragua as progressive forces led by the Sandinista Front fight for military control of the country and the overthrow of the dictatorship of General Somoza. The strategy of the Sandinistas has been to use the favourable conditions created by a general strike to develop a nation-wide insurrection. In the words of one of their militants: "We must make the most of the general strike and avoid friction with the parliamentary sectors of the opposition until the popular movement converts itself into a guerilla strike. It is essential to launch a popular insurrection everywhere at the same time so as to be able to defeat an army that is corrupt and demoralised but extremely well-equipped and brutal...". Organisations representing industrial workers, students and agricultural workers have been brought together in the Movement of the People United (MPU) which by now represents 17 rank and file organisations. In the last few weeks, the MPU has been giving military training to its cadres and setting up support committees in the shanty-towns, especially in the larger cities on the Pacific coast. At the same time, the Sandinista Front is backing 'the group of twelve personalities', who are anti-Somoza politicians that the progressive forces want to instal as the new government after the fall of the dictator.

So the left wing strategy is clear — to sufficiently develop a base, both military and political, in the working class areas of the cities to force the National Guard, which has only 7,500 members, to over stretch itself. Defeat of the U.S. trained National Guard would mean the immediate end of the Somoza regime. In a straight fight against the dictatorship, the guerrillas would have a good chance of winning — even though the military balance is not in their favour. But the situation is complicated by the presence in the confrontation of the Broad Front of Opposition, which includes business interests and liberal politicians — the Broad Front wants to get rid of Somoza but does not want him to be replaced by a progressive regime that in any way interferes with the economic status quo — profit-making. The Broad Front which instigated the current general strike is backed by the United States (who also gives vast military aid to Somoza) and by Venezuela and Costa Rica who want change, but not too much change in Nicaragua.

There are three possible outcomes to what is now a very unstable situation in Nicaragua: — That Somoza, the dictator, is able through the use of brutal repression to re-establish control. Already, hundreds of working class people have been slaughtered during National Guard charges into the shanty-towns. To sweeten the pill, Somoza would probably promise not to stand in the 1981 presidential elec-

tions — elections which, in any case will be rigged like all elections in Nicaragua.

— That Somoza 'abdicates' and is replaced by a middle-of-the-road government that introduces a measure of bourgeois democracy and gets rid of the worst excesses of corruption of the Somoza regime — for instance his family pocketed all the money that was sent from all over the world to the victims of the earthquake in Managua. What makes it difficult for the Broad Front to implement this solution is that neither is there any popular support for it nor do they have the military muscle to impose it.

— The third possible outcome is that it is the progressive forces that overthrow the dictatorship and therefore are in a position to determine the policies of the government that replaces it. In the event of a government being set up that begins to carry through anti-capitalist measures, it is more than likely that there would be a military intervention of the United States in Nicaragua. The Americans have made it clear that they regard Central America as one of their 'spheres of influence' and that a progressive take-over in Nicaragua could have 'a domino effect' in the neighbouring states of Honduras and Costa Rica.

It is very important that we follow the situation very closely and are prepared to take whatever action we can in the event of U.S. intervention — which is very likely to follow a victory of the progressive forces in Nicaragua



Women in Teheran demonstrate against the Shah (see insert)



Abstain
—
Labour

In Big Flame we do not have a 'support Labour' position as a matter of principle — for us it is a tactical question. In 1974, our position was to call for a Labour vote because we thought that a Labour government would give more space to working class struggle to develop and we were right — though the explosion of struggle only lasted a year. The time it took the Labour Government to get the cooperation of the trade-union leadership for an austerity programme that has made the working class pay for the crisis.

Between 1975 and 1978, real take-home pay declined by 6%, whilst company profits increased by 49%! In the last budget, Healey relaxed controls on company dividends and the upward zoom of the stock market shows the confidence big business has in a Labour government — you can be quite sure that the *Financial Times* will be supporting Labour at the next election. The Tories say 'Labour isn't working'; it sure is — it's working fine for

the bosses. And it's because it's Labour, because it has the support of the trade union leadership, and because it has been able to blackmail rank and file militants to support it. In fact, those members of Big Flame who are arguing for a support Labour position are victims of this blackmail when they say 'we have to support Labour because it's better than the Tories'. It's quite true that a Tory government will be worse for the working class, but

it does not follow from that we have to support Labour.

LABOUR'S TORY POLICIES

The 'support Labour' position is always argued for at an abstract level. If we look at the actual policies of the current Labour Government — its incomes policies, its escalation of repression in Ireland, its support for the Official Secrets Act (and the expulsion of Philip Agee) and its very poor overall record on civil liberties (no change in the laws for mental patients, introduction of the Criminal Trespass Act etc.) its support for sanction-busting and the Shah of Iran, its run-down of the NHS, and so on. We can see that the Tories are having to shift their policies further to the right because Labour is implementing Tory policies. In fact, Labour could use as its campaign the ads for the Fiat 132: 'a wolf in sheep's clothing'.

No doubt the return of a Labour Government will be better in the long-term for the revolutionary left in the sense that being constantly subject to social democratic poison will make more and more people immune to it. But this is just as cynical and manipulative an argument as those who say that a dose of Toryism will wake the working class up.

WHAT SHOULD REVOLUTIONARIES DO IN THIS SITUATION?

A VOTE FOR LABOUR?

To abstain or to vote Labour in a General Election: that's the dilemma facing thousands of active socialists. After a debate in Big Flame, the issue has now been resolved in favour of a vote for Labour. We print (right) the motion our organisation passed, along with the case for both sides of the debate.

Now we welcome your views.



Abstain
—
Labour

UNTIL THE recent vote, Big Flame's position on voting Labour was that it was a tactical question. This covered periods when we called for a Labour vote and when we had a position of abstention. The impetus behind this position was a good one, in that it reflected a desire to break with mechanical formulas of automatic support for Labour in elections.

The weakness of this position was that it started from the relationship between the revolutionary movement and Labour, rather than from the masses and Labour. So, when we called for a Labour vote in 1974 on the slogan of 'Labour, our weakest enemy', while this may have been superficially correct for a short time, the open and successful attacks of the Labour Government soon made it absurd. The opposite argument which then began to be put forward by comrades holding an abstentionist position — that Labour was the most dangerous enemy of the working class — has equally absurd implications. Taken to its conclusion in electoral terms, it would mean advocating a Tory vote.

Similarly, the accompanying argument that revolutionaries could not possibly call for a Labour vote after their vicious attacks on the working class, while understandable, is also the wrong starting point. We do not call for a Labour vote on the basis of its programme. Labour's programme and policies are pro-capitalist. But while we may talk of Labour's 'Tory policies', that does not mean that there are no differences. For these differences are based on the respective party's relation to the working class. The Labour Party is a force built out of the working class movement. It is part (even when a negative one) of working class struggle. In contrast, the Tories openly represent and are seen by most of the working class

as based on the interests of the ruling class.

A CLASS VOTE

The working class vote for Labour is a combination of defence mechanism and hatred of the alternative. It is a class vote. While some revolutionaries may see a governmental alternative as irrelevant, that is not how the majority of the working class see it. That choice reflects living under conditions of bourgeois democracy and until revolutionary socialists can help build alternative forms of democracy and an electoral presence, the working class will go on making that choice for social democratic parties. And we have to side with the working class, while fighting to develop alternatives and break the stranglehold of reformism. This cannot be done from the sidelines with abstract propaganda. The hold of reformism is not based simply on illusions or bribes through concessions. It reflects the possibilities and existing choices that will be made whether revolutionaries like it or not.

There is a complete absence of such strategical perspectives or concern with questions of government and state in the abstentionist analysis. This does not show how revolutionaries can relate to the many militants at the base of the Labour Party and trade unions who do have

It is quite clear that our priority at the next election should be to build Socialist Unity and the class struggle. Though not brilliant, Socialist Unity by-election results are sufficient to warrant a Socialist Unity presence at elections in those areas where the forces represented in Socialist Unity have an ongoing involvement in the struggle. There are two major problems with Socialist Unity. The first stems from the IMG's insistence on seeing it as an alliance that is only put into operation at election time. This makes it very difficult for Socialist Unity to convince working class militants that we are any different from the other political parties that only come around when they want votes. The second stems from Socialist Unity's having taken up a 'support Labour' position. This reflects the IMG's incorrect assessment of the Labour Party and their schizoid attitude towards it.

There are two essential parts to building Socialist Unity: the first and most important is to make sure that it develops organic links with ongoing struggles, the second is to see that it develops a perspective and programme that generalise the most progressive struggles that are occurring. For instance, the Corporate Plan of Lucas Aerospace stewards has raised the perspective of the fight for socially useful work which goes beyond a demand for the right to work. Of course, until now this perspective only exists at a propagandistic level. And the pro-

paganda must be generalised if this perspective is to have any chance of being realised in struggle.

SWIMMING AGAINST THE CURRENT

There is no doubt that by refusing to take up a 'vote Labour' position, Big Flame will isolate itself from the majority of the working class, who still vote Labour if only out of habit. But since when have the politics of a revolutionary organisation been determined by what the majority of working class people think and/or do?

We know that it is an essential priority for revolutionaries in this country to smash the hold social democracy has over the working class — the hold that has crippled the self-activity of the class since the beginning of this century. We also realise that the way this hold will be broken is not by mass defections of the working class from social democracy but, in the beginning, by a small trickle of militants taking up revolutionary positions. And we must provide a focus for these militants, however many or few they may be.

We must 'swim' against the current not because we are elitist and like swimming against currents, but because we know that it is necessary at times to do this if we are ever to build a mass tide of revolutionary socialism.

PETER ANDERSON

● The priority for Big Flame at the next election (as it is in general) is to present a class struggle

socialist alternative to the working class. Therefore we aim to build and vote for Socialist Unity, as well as supporting other far left and class struggle candidates.

● But except where they offer an alternative, revolutionaries should call for a vote for Labour on the following perspectives which can be adapted to slogans;
a) the working class will have to fight any government,
b) vote Labour to keep the Tories out.

● We do not call for a Labour vote on the basis of its programme. The Labour Party is a bourgeois party based on working class support. We reject the view that the Labour Party is a 'lesser evil', and affirm that Labour governments are enemies

of working people, as well as the Tories.

● We call for a Labour vote because we recognise that the working class votes Labour to affirm its own class identity against what it recognises as a class enemy. As revolutionaries do not at this time offer a governmental alternative, we realise that the working class will nevertheless seek a choice of government. Revolutionaries therefore have to side with the working class in choosing a party built out of the working class movement, rather than the traditional class enemy.

We recognise that the Labour Party in power presents better conditions for revolutionaries to break militants from Labour, as a Tory government lets Labour off the hook, encourages phoney radicalisation and disarms militants.

illusions in the possibility of transforming the Labour Party. The Tory Party in power undercuts the possibility of winning them to an extra-parliamentary alternative. The phoney radicalisation that always accompanies Labour in opposition disarms militants and inevitably sets up a movement for the return of Labour.

Abstentionists argue that it is not possible to call for a Labour vote and oppose the basis of Labour policies. If this was the case, the revolutionary left would never be able to make choices between reformist left candidates and right-wingers in the unions and anywhere else. More seriously, it fails to recognise that many class-conscious workers vote exactly on this basis. They do not have illusions that Labour is going to introduce socialism or even significantly advance their interests. But they still correctly see voting in class terms. The basis of reformist consciousness in the working class is located more at a society-wide level today, rather than ideological links to Labour.

'FIGHT ANY GOVERNMENT'

This is why we refuse to call Labour the 'mass party of the working class', or similar formulations; such formulations do not recognise the changes in the relations between Labour, reformism, and the class. We regard Labour as a bour-

geois current (defined by programme, leadership, etc.) in the working class movement. So, despite calling for a Labour vote, we want to prioritise the perspective of 'the working class must fight any government'. At election time the Left appears to somersault in over-stressing the return of a Labour Government. Our first stress must be to put forward a set of demands for independent working class action against wage controls, unemployment, spending cuts, racism, and many other issues. The call for a Labour vote 'to keep the Tories out' is secondary to this.

It follows that we reject the notion that Labour is a 'lesser evil'. This slogan confuses militants. Labour is a different evil; the difference arises primarily from its ability to tie down the unions and hold back the class struggle. But we do recognise the particular dangers that the Tories represent. Their election would greatly intensify the ideological swing to the right and it would herald open and more vicious attacks on immigrants, public spending cuts, abortion rights, etc.

No organisation which did not oppose the return of a Tory government would have moral or political credibility in mobilising the working class movement to fight such measures.

T. ARNOLD

THEATRE CO. IT'S A LOCK -OUT!

A whole company has been locked out of its own theatre. Theatre Mobile, Burnley, arrived back from their holidays, all ready and eager to continue work on their new plays to find the locks changed, windows meshed, and the doors barred. A dastardly landlord? A dreadful mistake? A plot?

No - just the worried concern of their employers, Mid-Pennine Arts Association, who felt that the building was rather unsafe for such delicate artistry. O.K. of course for the typists and other employees whose rugged frames could withstand the imminent danger of collapse. Unfortunately Mid-Pennine Arts neglected to find new premises for the gallant crew, but they, undaunted, discovered for themselves another building. Its a little out in the wilds, without phone, but who needs modern conveniences for rehearsals.

This little tale doesn't end here, doesn't even begin here in fact.

ASBESTOS

Theatre Mobile have been together for over a year now. They've been doing community theatre under the directorship of Dave Pammenter, and have started on an educational theatre project. After their last, much publicised, play about the dangers of asbestos industry, they started running into some legal entanglements. They had written to various asbestos firms asking for information. They received from Cape Asbestos, among various public leaflets, an internal memorandum about the Anti-Asbestos lobby. Like any observant person would, they copied it and sent it back. Cape Asbestos took out an injunction to stop them using the information. Like any law-abiding person, they obeyed.

But Mid-Pennine Arts, concerned about any future legal action, decided (under no pressure from Cape Asbestos) to have their own legal expert censor the play. After much heart-rending discussion, the theatre company decided that its own future was more important than one play, so they accepted.

SCANDAL

This was in June. As you've read, after their holidays the company returned to find themselves without a building. Worse was to come. John Wood (deputy director), and Dave Pammenter (artistic director), found themselves the targets for charges of financial and managerial maladministration. This was soon made a local and national scandal.

RED-BAITING

The local papers revelled in it, using it as a red-baiting political smear campaign. However, the papers never seemed to stop and consider just what the charges were. Well, they included such serious charges as donating £5 to local old age pensioners so they could hire a van to go to Blackpool (cos the theatre van couldn't be used); failing to get authorisation for two cheap calculators (with which to do the accounts); spending money on Iris Bentley - she was paid her fare to Burnley to watch a play written by the company about her brother.

He is now believed to have been innocent of the crime for which he was hung. Iris, incidentally gave a lot of free publicity to the play, appearing on television and giving interviews.

SACKED

What did the managerial maladministration amount to? Well, Mid-Pennine Arts just don't like theatre companies which run themselves democratically. They especially seem to dislike theatre companies meeting to discuss issues. Also they object to clauses in contracts, negotiated with Equity, the actors' trade union, for paid Paternity Leave.

John and Dave answered all the charges, and called in the union. However, two officers from Mid-Pennine Arts turned up, sacked John and Dave, and terminated the contracts of the whole theatre group.

Theatre Mobile is fighting for the reinstatement of the whole company. They feel committed to the local area, and want to continue working there.

LEFT-WING THEATRE

In the meantime, Theatre Mobile are preparing their new play 'Chalking the Flags' based on a recent book on the Lancashire suffragists. They see their case as part of the attack on left-wing theatre which began with a councillor's attempt to take North West Spanner's grant away.

Messages of support should be sent to Theatre Mobile, Old Co-Op, Whitewell Bottom, Watercroft, Rossendale.

CLOSURES-HOW TO FIGHT THEM

The pamphlet outlines a story of management incompetence in Leyland

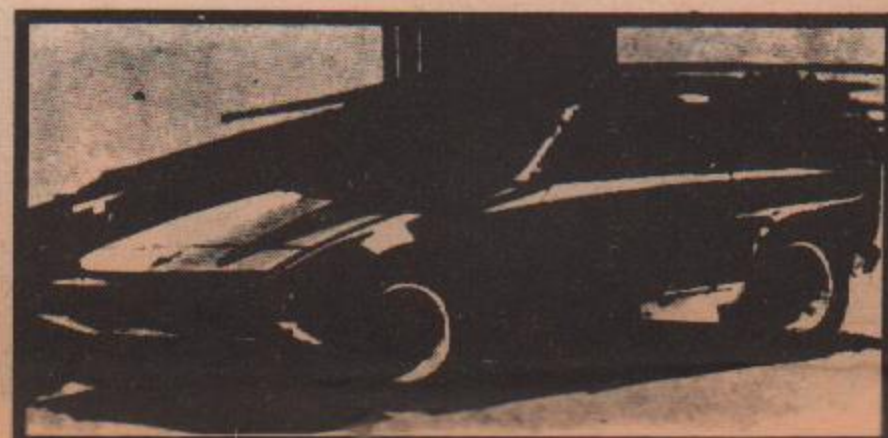
However, Leyland got away with closing down a whole factory.

They were in a strong position. They had manoeuvred the workers into a 17-week strike, had the full backing of the Labour government, and had the press ready to run a huge propaganda campaign against the workers. But there were also factors that should have gone in the workers' favour. The plant had a solid trade union organisation, the redundancy terms were not very attractive and there is high unemployment in the area. So why did the workers give up without a fight? The workers and stewards quoted in the pamphlet blame the press, the trade union leaders who recommended that the plant be closed and refused to support them, the NEB - and also

dancy pay. Past experience shows that the only effective way to fight redundancy - to keep jobs - is occupation. This requires mobilisation of the workers and organisation on a level not usually found in daily practice. At Speke the 17-week strike and the way it was run had produced just the opposite situation - the workers were demobilised - but it would be wrong to just blame the stewards. The problems go deeper than that.

'I think that some of us are a bit inclined to want to do things by ourselves if you know what I mean - without the membership. But when you come right down to it, you can't do bugger all without the members, your rank and file trade unionist. You certainly can't fight a closure.' A steward from the plant.

What Happened at SPEKE?



"A car designed on the basis of major motoring needs for the next twenty years."

BRITISH LEYLAND

BIRMINGHAM
United Troops Out Movement open educational; 'Fascism and Ireland'. 8.00 p.m. Labour Club, Bristol St., City centre. (Ring 643 9209 for information) Thursday 5th October.

BARNSELEY
United Troops Out Movement National Demonstration. Saturday 7th October

MIDLANDS
UTOM Film Tour - "Home Soldier Home"

Monday 16th October. Birmingham University Students Union Building (Lunch time showing) + UTOM ex-soldier speakers.

Monday 16th October. Showing for women only, organised by Selly Oak Women's Action Group. 8.00 p.m. Gay Centre, Allison Street, near Moor St. Station. B'ham.

Tuesday 17th October. Joint UTOM/Socialist Teachers Alliance showing. Martineau Teachers Centre, corner Bristol Rd/Priory Rd, Edgbaston. 7.45. Speakers from UTOM, STA and ex-soldier. Discussion on Army recruiting in school

Weds. 18th October - Coventry. Lanchester Poly. MO 22 (opposite Colin Campbell pub) 8.00 p.m. Admission 30p.

Thurs. 19th. - Leamington. Bath Place Community Venture, Bath Place, 7.30 p.m.

Friday 20th October. Leicester Poly Students' Union. 12.30 p.m.

Friday 20th October. Leicester University - Perry G. 7.30 p.m.

Monday 23rd October. Aston University Council Chamber. Students Union, Gosta Green. 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 24th October. Redditch Trades and Labour Club, Bromsgrove Rd., Town centre. 7.45 p.m.

BIRMINGHAM
Midlands Conference on Britain's Involvement in Ireland. Friday 27th October. Fund Raising Social. Irish Bands. Disco. Emerald Pub, Coventry Rd., Small Heath. 8 p.m. (Buses 8 & 58 & 60 from city)

LONDON
National UTOM Conference. City of London Polytechnic (nearest tube Aldgate).

Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd October.

COVENTRY
Carnival Against Racism
Saturday 14th October. Assemble 1.00 p.m. Foleshill Rd

LEEDS
Leeds University Union Big Flame Society introductory meetings.

Thurs. 12th October: 'What is Big Flame?' - Christine Davidson (BF National Secretary)

Thurs. 26th October: 'Education and Socialism' - George Hardy (Leeds BF) Both meetings at 1 p.m. in Leeds University Union.

Join BF Students Society at the Bazaar in the University Union on Thursday 5th or Friday 6th October (mornings only).

LEEDS
Red Ladder Theatre's new musical show about working class struggles in Leeds. Tickets 50p. Venue in Osmondthorpe to be arranged. Promoted by Leeds BF. Saturday 28th October, 8.00 p.m.

LEEDS
Leeds BF's Bonfire in Back Francis Street, Leeds 7, from 6.00 p.m. on Saturday 4th November.

LEEDS
Leeds Socialist Unity meets every Weds., 7.30 p.m. in the Trades Club, Saville Mount, Leeds 7. Help needed with leafletting for the following events: UTOM film to build for Barnsley demo; meeting with speakers from Bradford Asian Youth Movement, Wol verhampton Anti-Racist Committee and Socialist Unity - 'No Deportations, No Immigration Controls' 8.00 p.m. Monday 16th October, venue in South Leeds to be arranged.

LIVERPOOL: BIG FLAME MEETING.

The Fight Against Closures
Thursday 12th October, 7:30 pm. AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, L'pool. Speakers: Huw Beynon, a speaker from Big Flame, a speaker from Standards

INTERVENTION NO.2 OUT NOW!
'Revolutionary politics as a hobby', Jim Masters airs the unmentionables of the Left. An essay on the irrational in politics - the Left as a subculture. Copies 62p. (inc. p&p) from: Intervention, 539, Battersea Park Rd, London SW11.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE HISTORY WORKSHOP - NUMBER 1

A weekend meeting on the theme 'The Miners and the Class Struggle in South Yorkshire c. 1844-1972' will be held at Sheffield Polytechnic in the New Student Union Buildings (opposite Midland Station) on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th October. £1 Entrance fee - details from 4, Spring House Road, Sheffield 10. Te. 669244 (Sheffield)

NEXT EDITION

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Articles, letters and photos to:
BIG FLAME Newspaper
217, Wavertree Rd.
LIVERPOOL 7
051- 260 0305.

JUST OUT:
A CLOSE LOOK AT FASCISM AND RACISM: a BF pamphlet. * 30p (including postage) from 217 Wavertree Rd., Liverpool 7



BRADFORD
Campaign Against Deportations and Racist Immigration Laws.
Sunday 8th October: Public Meeting with Tariq Ali and Vishnu Sharma. 2.00 p.m., Textile Hall, Bradford.

BRADFORD
Saturday 21st October. National Demonstration Against Racist Immigration Controls called by the Asian Youth Movement. Assemble 2 p.m., Salt Street, Carlisle Road, Bradford 8.

LONDON
Hounslow Hospital Occupation Committee Open Days

Fri 6th October - afternoon. presentation of Community Hospital to Area Health Authority - evening, films, theatre, music.

Sat. 7th October - MARCH AND RALLY (Assemble Hounslow Hospital) 12.00.
Workshop discussions 2.30.
Evening - films, songs, video.

themselves. Certainly, all these factors contributed, but unless we begin to understand that the closure issue raises questions that go beyond the normal range of trade union activities we will continue to be puzzled as workers walk out of factories and onto the dole queues. The stewards at Speke found themselves without the support of either the union leadership or their own rank-and-file, and both problems illustrate the difficulties that traditional trade union strategies face at the present time. Every issue is turned by the company into a matter of life-or-death, and each small question is turned into a national issue - productivity and finance for the NEB, wages and national negotiations, the participation scheme. One reaction is to ignore all this and carry on as before, but the problems will not go away, and the course of the Speke closure shows that the union leaders have become bound up with management plans for 'saving' British Leyland.

At the same time, the stewards found that their traditional way of running the union at local level was of little use when the issue was one of closure. When the issue is wages or working conditions, the strike is an effective weapon. But what happens when management don't want to bargain and want to stop production altogether? All too often trade unions have merely negotiated over the level of redun-

Occupation is the correct demand, but it takes more than the demand to win the struggle and get workers mobilised against closure. In the past occupations have tended to demand either nationalisation or state intervention and support. At Leyland both of these demands are of no use. With the present Labour government the NEB is fully supporting the drive to make Leyland a viable capitalist concern.

To go on the offensive, two strategies are necessary. the current policies of the Labour government must be opposed. This is why the current current Ford claim is so important. Wage policy, unemployment and the the hard line of the NEB are all part of the same campaign to discipline the working class.

workers at Leyland must demand that management give up the idea of trying to compete with the international motor companies. If the cost of becoming competitive is so high, then Leyland should turn to producing something else

Fighting capitalism on its own ground is not easy. Workers must go on the offensive and demand new solutions to the problems of British capitalism. If the old strategies continue to be employed, there will be many more Spekes.

What Happened at Speke? by Huw Beynon. Available for 50p from: Branch Secretary, 6-612 Branch, TGWU, 38 Caldwell Road, Liverpool 19.

COUNCIL WORKERS IN ACTION

— SOCIAL WORKERS

— DIRECT LABOUR

The article below comes from a member of Liverpool NALGO who works in social services.

LOCAL AUTHORITY social workers in many different parts of the country are now involved in a battle for improved salary gradings. In Tower Hamlets, Southwark, and Newcastle, they have already been out on strike for over six weeks. Social workers in Liverpool, Cheshire, and Leeds are expected to join them soon.

The social workers belong to NALGO, popularly supposed to be a 'rich man's union'. Nothing could further from the truth. Most NALGO members are in fact very badly paid — 70% of them get less than the average national wage. Social workers are no exception to this, and have in fact been badly treated even by Local Government standards.

The root of the problem is the national social workers salary scale, which keeps wages down by ruling out (according to the employers) local 'regradings'. These are

no technical reason to stop them. NALGO's leaders have just about woken up to the fact that they have a potential major dispute on their hands and have given permission for the strikers to step up their pickets. In Newcastle, for instance, all deliveries to the Civic Centre are being blocked. But the leaders' new resolve might not be all it seems. A 'secret' document which was leaked reveals that the bureaucrats are 'worried' that the strike fund might not last very long! This is after 750 social workers (out of a total mem-

ALL OF the 4,500 operatives employed by Manchester Corporation Direct Works Department are on indefinite strike, until such time as management agree to shelve their proposed new incentive scheme and negotiate a new scheme which would include re-organisation of work and bonus payments on the Maintenance Division.

Management, backed up by the Town Hall's Legal department and the City Council's Direct Works Sub-Committee, have shown that they are determined to implement the scheme that they paid P.A. Management Consultants £54,000 of ratepayers money, to devise.

All council building and maintenance departments are under attack from the organised forces of the private building trade employers and their Tory allies. But Manchester Direct Works Department has, with the exception of the run-down of the new construction division,

weaker Direct Works Departments throughout the country would reduce the wages of the workers involved in Manchester by between £10 and £20 a week, and would further widen the already massive gap between the earnings of building workers in the public and private sectors. The proposed scheme has a built in ceiling of bonus earnings at 66% but the consultants admit this maximum would be virtually impossible to achieve. Workers who accepted a similar scheme at the Engineering Workshops three years ago have rarely got any more than 44%. Both schemes are

by Neil Swannick, steward, Plant and Transport Drivers, Manchester Direct Works.

convenors and stewards have put forward proposals that would reduce wasted time on jobs, phase repairs on area bases and break down into smaller work groups for the purpose of bonus gangs. These could only result in a better service for tenants and a more realistic incentive scheme for the work force.

Management's interest is neither in the workers or the tenants. They are merely submitting to demands to reduce their budget in line with other public expenditure cuts. They are not interested in the fact that

LABOUR WANT TO NATIONALISE BUILDING.



The results would be Disastrous!



Left: Propaganda put out by the Private Builders Organisation, CABIN. Right: Picket of Manchester Direct Works Department.

UNION PLACE PHOTO COLLECTIVE



Southwark NALGO social workers picketing Area Office in Camberwell

more or less the equivalent of promotion, on the grounds that a job had had extra responsibilities attached to it. There's no disagreement that social workers have had extra responsibilities dumped on them since the grade was fixed, but because there is this national grade, the employers say that we can't have more money.

Hardly any other 'professions' in Local Government are tied down by scales like this, and as a result planners, architects and so on are able to negotiate good local deals. Social workers can't do this, so we are demanding not just more money but local negotiations as well.

NALGO's leaders were first told to get rid of the national grade by a national Conference in 1977. They didn't do anything about it for over a year because — wait for it — they didn't think that the employers would agree to it! When they finally did get around to asking them, the employers told them to sod off. This is now being used by local authorities to refuse local negotiations, even though there is

bership of 750,000) have been on strike for six weeks!

Whatever the leadership do, the public support for the strike has been surprisingly good. On the other hand, it has been no surprise that the press has been pretty hostile. One London paper tried to blame the fact that an old woman lost her pension book on the social workers' strike — even though they admitted that the DHSS had 'ignored' her request for a new book! There's also been some criticism of the strikers for not running an 'emergency' team. Not that they've complained about the refusal of Tower Hamlets Council to provide an Emergency Team for the last five years!

Despite rubbish like this the morale of the strikers, and those about to come out is high. 'Compromise' approaches in London and at national level have been booted out. Social workers are united in saying that there's no chance of a settlement unless we are given cash on the table and the right to negotiate locally.

remained virtually intact. Tory councils in other parts of the country, notably the Greater London Council, have carved up their building and maintenance departments to hand out contracts to their friends in the private industry. Labour Councils are under pressure from their opponents and organisations like the recently formed Campaign Against Building Industry Nationalisation, to cut back on the budgets and scope of their own Direct Labour Organisations. Manchester Labour Council are also submitting to these pressures to cut the wages of the Direct Works operatives. This is their gratitude for campaigning support of the stewards and workers of the Direct Works in the recent local elections.

IMPOSSIBLE BONUS

The work-study based scheme which has been implemented in many of the

based on the return for standard performance — this is, work at a brisk and business-like speed — being 33% bonus.

Under the new scheme craftsmen would earn approximately £8 and labourers £6.50 bonus a week compared with the present £19 and £16. The management consultants who prepared the scheme are ready to admit that "after so many years of loose work targets, and given the present industrial relations climate, we do not believe that the standard type of scheme (such as the one outlined above) would be acceptable to the majority of the work force." Four and a half thousand striking operatives say it is not.

WORKERS' ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS

Realising that there are many problems in the existing work organisation and bonus scheme that have grown up over the years, the

Direct Labour is a non-profit making building and maintenance service to the City of Manchester, and not a private firm trying to maximise profits.

Management are determined to ram the scheme down the throats of the maintenance section whether they like it or not. Maintenance has been traditionally the least militant section of the department. But their strike was 100% solid. They asked for support of all the other sections and got it. Management have dug their heels in. But the strikers are determined to win!

Messages of support etc to: Direct Works Social Club, Barking St., Bradford Rd., Manchester 10

For more information read "Building with Direct Labour" by the Housing Workshop of the Conference of Socialist Economists, 55 Mount Pleasant, London WC1X 0AE. Price £1.75 (inc p&p) 65p (plus 25p &p) for orders through TUs, Tenants Organisations and trades councils.

Coventry: 'We Shall Not Be Chained To 5%'

First in the Midlands to go on strike against Phase 4 are the 900 hourly paid workers at Renold's Ltd. plant at Spon End, Coventry.

In negotiations with management which have now broken down, the AUEW stewards were looking for a 100% increase similar to last year.

Renold's, whose initial position was no increase, have now offered a 3.5% rise which is the Phase 4 5% minus shift premiums. In making this offer, management are following the instructions of the Engineering Employers Federation who have

circulated to all their members instructions to include overtime and nightshift premiums in the overall 5% allowable under Phase 4.

So far no further meetings between management and the workers are planned and there is every indication that the strike will be a long one. Stewards at the Renolds plant in Manchester have made it clear that they will boycott any work transferred from Coventry. The strike at Renolds is one of the first snowballs in the avalanche against Phase 4.

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WE STILL need to have a steady flow of donations coming in if the paper is to remain at 10p a copy. We will need your support even more when we launch our improved paper.

And BF groups should not feel exempt from paying for the copies they sell.

We especially need a REGULAR flow of income. This is why we are asking our supporters to fill in the standing order form opposite and hand it to their own bank.

Our thanks for donations this month which total £34.50

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- Sheffield BF — £6.50
- B.L., London — £5.00
- Liverpool BF — £3.00
- T.C., Evesham — £1.00
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Standing order for periodical payments.

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DATE OF PAYMENTS	DATE & AMOUNT OF FIRST PAYMENT	DATE & AMOUNT OF FINAL PAYMENT	
	£	£	
ACCOUNT TO BE CREDITED, or Name and Address of Payee if payment is to be made direct.		ACCOUNT NO. OF PAYEE IF KNOWN	
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LOYDS BANK LTD., INDIAN BUILDINGS, WATER STREET LIVERPOOL L69 2BT or such Bank as the Payee may advise.		30-95-11	
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*Delete as necessary.		Your signature.	

BIG FLAME

THEY NEED YOUR SUPPORT

**Garner's Mass Rally & Picket October 7th
3pm Assemble
Speakers' Corner.**

THE STRIKERS of Garner's Steak Houses in London are now entering the eighth month of their strike for trade union recognition. (84 of them were sacked in January this year when they joined the Transport and General Worker's Union). Yet the strike has fallen away from the public eye to the point where people are beginning to dismiss it, albeit reluctantly, as "another Grunwick". What they do not realise, however, is that the blacking and picketing organised jointly by the Strike Committee and its support group is really beginning to bite into the profits of the employer, Cyril Margolis. Every lunchtime from 12 till 3pm, and every evening from 6 till midnight, a steady stream of supporters — trade unionists, other catering workers and activists from a variety of different groups and political persuasions — have shared, with the strikers, the job of picketing all the main restaurants in London. This, along with at least partial success in the blacking of supplies, has led to a situation of strength in which the strikers feel now "even more determined to win". There is a feeling that with a boosted picket for a month or so, Margolis will be forced to start talking to the strikers about both recognition and reinstatement.

It is really important that the level of picketing stays high at this time (many other groups of hotel and catering workers are watching the progress of the strike with more than a little interest) and in order to boost support for the strike, in picketing, general morale and money that the Strike Committee has called for a Mass Rally and Picket on October 7th. That will remind people particularly on the left of the need to take the strike more seriously and help carry it to a winning conclusion. (As far as the money goes, the strikers still receive only £6 a week strike pay from the TGWU and more than one of them has been turfed out of their lodgings, unable to keep up rent payments). Speakers from the Grunwick's Strike Committee and from the Sanderson's Forklifts Strike Committee (themselves on strike for 18 months for TU recognition) have agreed to join the strikers on the platform for the Rally which will start at 3.00 at Speakers' corner near

Marble Arch. It is unclear whether the Regional Committee of the TGWU will provide a speaker — two of them were given a rough ride at the last Day of Solidarity back in May — or whether they will furnish any more than what is known, in official language as "unofficial" support for the event. One of the things that could be worrying them is the plan to march after the Rally to Trafalgar Square, dropping off large numbers of the marchers to picket the various branches of Garner's Steak Houses along the way.

Support the Fight against Slave Labour in the Catering Industry — Victory to the Garner's Strikers. Enquiries, donations and offers of help to Garner's Strike Committee, c/o TGWU, 12-13 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London W.C.2. (Tel: 01.240.1056)

by a member of the Garner's Strike Committee Support Group.

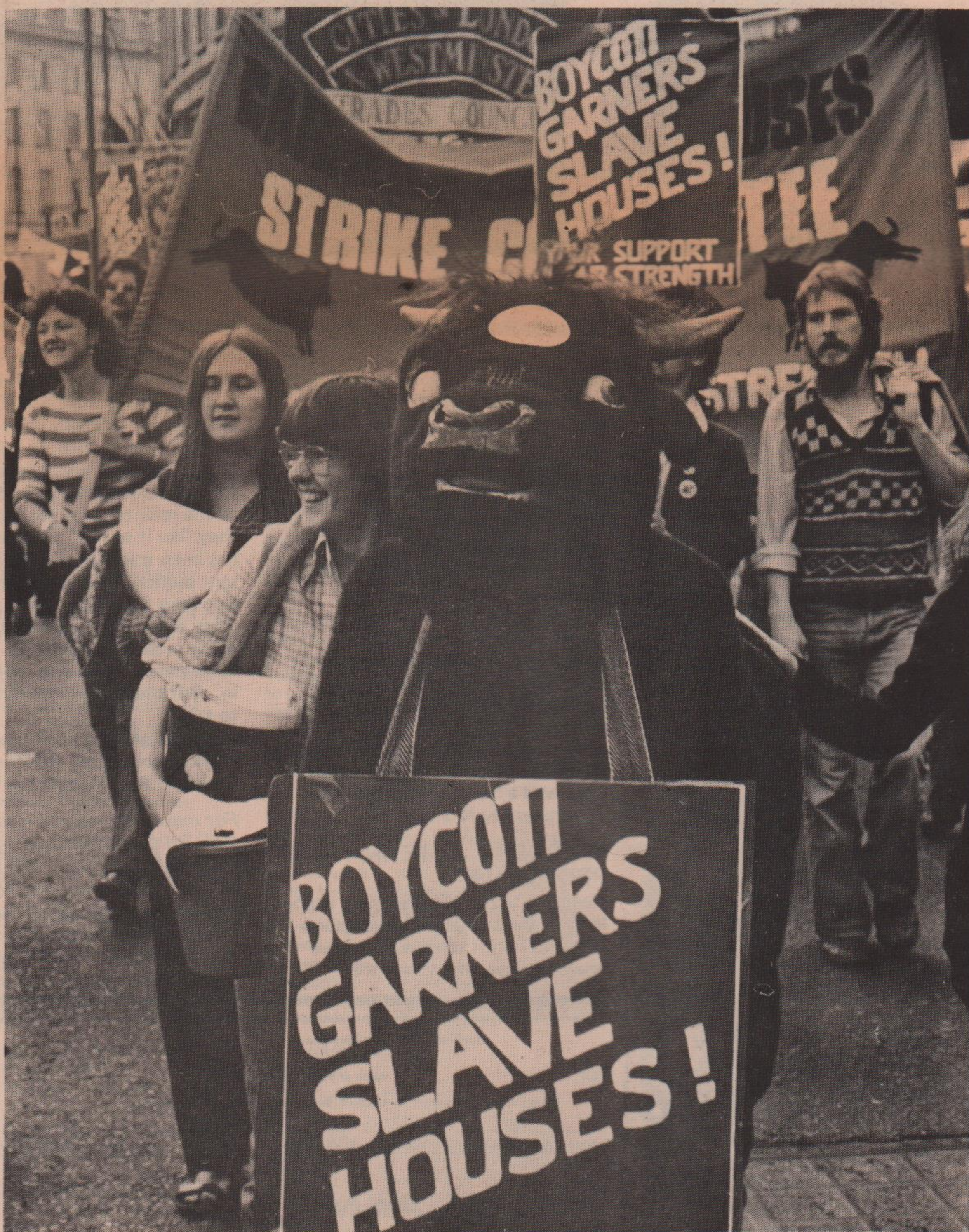
**Sanderson (Forklifts)
Picket 6.30am
October 27th
The Croft, Skegness.**

WE ONLY WANT RECOGNITION — BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP TO GET IT.

WORKERS AT Sanderson (fork-lifts), Lincoln, have been on strike for 10 months for union recognition. Last May, 43 workers walked out in protest when a shop steward was sacked. They were dismissed too. Although the government's Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service had recommended recognition after balloting the workforce, the firm's managing director saw things differently.

The strike has received very little national coverage. It will take a nationwide blockade of Sanderson's supplies and services to beat the bosses.

Contact the strike committee c/o Phil Gillatt, 0754 3512, or write to TGWU, Transport House 6/8 Bridge St Boston



Union Place Photo Collective

Scene from the last rally attended by about 1,000 people on May 20th. This time there must be twice that number.

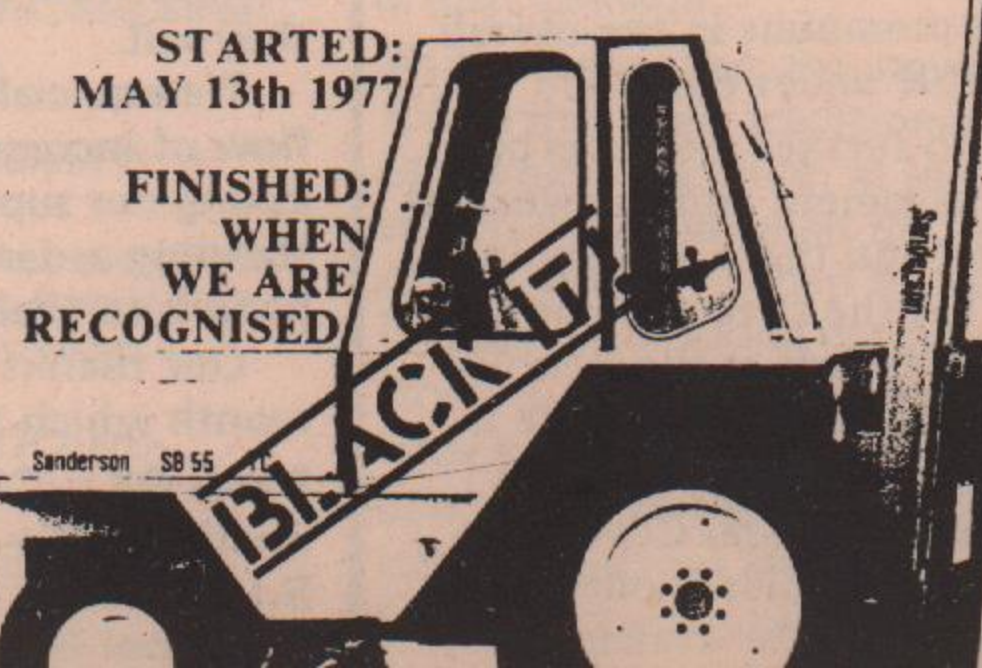
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