

# CHARTIST

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## SMASH £6 PAY TRAP

DISASTER IS NOW FACING the Labour Government if the present course continues. The anti-working class policies of the Wilson leadership mean workers are suffering the most concerted offensive against living standards since 1972—the year of the Heath pay freeze and one million unemployed. Today, this offensive takes place in conditions of even deeper capitalist crisis with 1½ million currently jobless and a 33 per cent inflation rate over the last six months. Such are the grim prospects for the winter.

Whilst we knew what to expect from the Tories we certainly don't expect the same treatment and worse from a Labour Government elected on a wave of working class struggle.

The Labour Party's Conference decisions, expressed in a modified form in the Election Manifesto, pledged Wilson to carrying out policies completely contrary to the present £6 pay law, mass unemployment and social service cut-backs. Wilson and his allies in the TUC impose these policies by cynically using the big stick of unemployment and workers loyalty to the Labour Party.

### Short leash

In this way our Labour leaders bow to the demands of Big Business for cuts in workers' real wages and a short leash on the power of the organised labour movement. While companies who give their directors golden hand-shakes of £150,000 go untouched, workers are being expected to make huge sacrifices to help capitalism's profitability crisis.

Wilson, Healey, Foot and the TUC leaders conveniently forget the pledges to "restore full employment" and maintain living standards. As this year's Labour Party Conference meets a return must be forced to these specific Manifesto pledges.

But it is not enough to have commitments. It is necessary to have a political strategy to implement them and to expose the bankruptcy of the Wilson leadership. This is where the role of the Tribune MPs and Benn is so dangerous.

### Fundamental changes

In Wedgewood Benn's letter to his Bristol Constituency Party he correctly states that "We must use the crisis we have inherited as the occasion for fundamental change and not the excuse for postponing it... our first task must be to defend the jobs and living standards of working people and their families..."

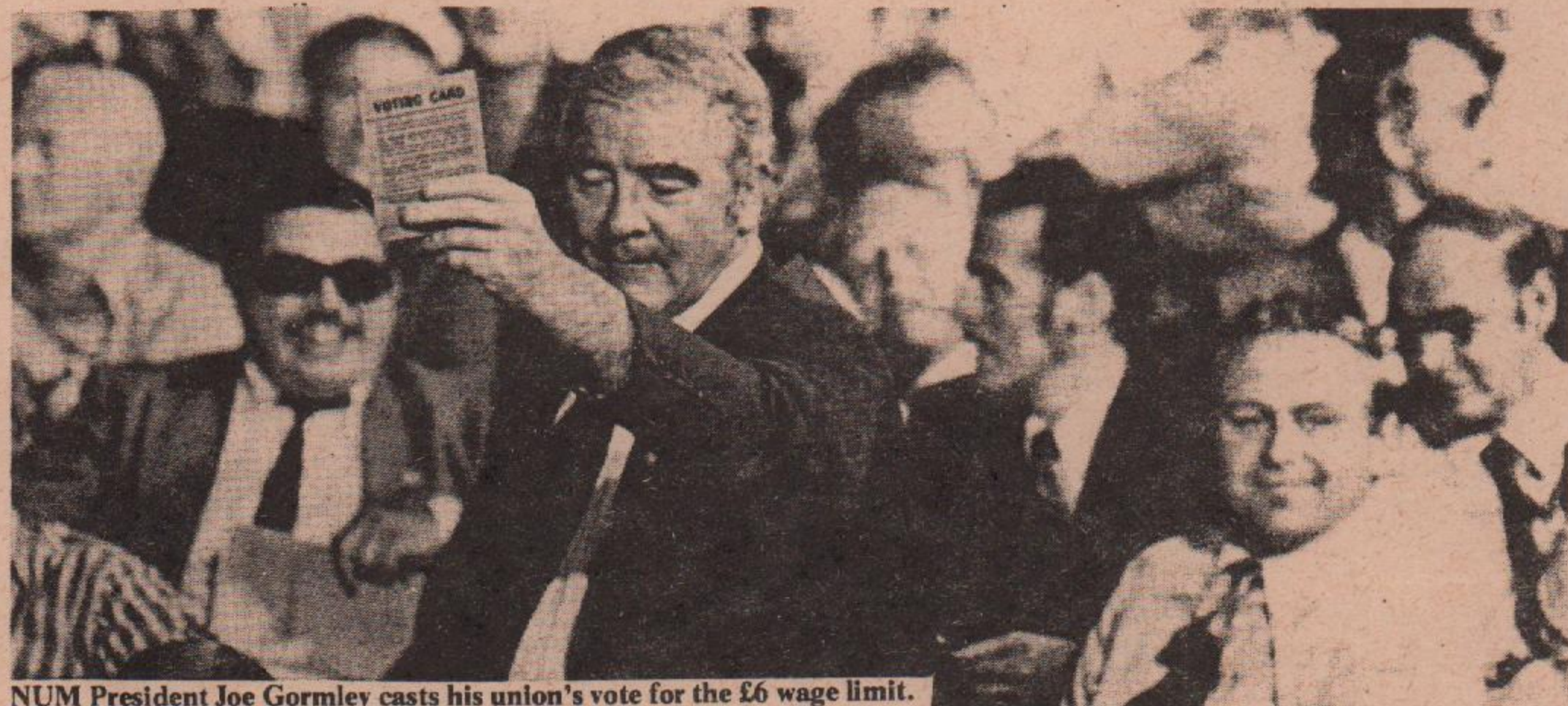
While Benn and the Tribune Group are correct in calling for the implementing of those Manifesto pledges expressing the interests of the working class, they omit to mention one crucial factor. The £6 pay limit.

TUC Secretary, Len Murray, drew

### by Mike Davis

the £6 limit dagger against the blast-furnacemen and forced a return to work. Similarly, the same limit is being used to brow-beat over a million council workers and farm-workers—whose average wage is less than £25—who are attempting to defend their living standards against the rocketing cost of living. Where do the Tribune MPs and Benn stand on this?

ASTMS chief, Clive Jenkins, writing in 'Tribune', called the TUC Congress a "very progressive affair, leaving aside the £6 limit". And erstwhile champion of the Labour left, Eric Heffer, whom Wilson sacked as Industry Minister, tells us in the same paper that Labour Party Conference "must not get sidetracked into a false debate about a £6 wage limitation." But the £6 pay freeze is the essence of the Labour Government's betrayals. Without rejection of the £6 limit and support for all struggles against it, no ser-



NUM President Joe Gormley casts his union's vote for the £6 wage limit.

ious fight to defend living standards and against unemployment, the Healey cuts and the retreat from the Manifesto can be mounted.

What is a "false debate" is the Jack Jones face-saver. That is, whether the £6 is an across-the-board entitlement or a negotiable maximum. The 'Tribune' has swallowed this "false debate" hook, line and sinker. Labour millionaire and Minister, Harold Lever has affirmed: "On aggregate this (the £6 limit) amounts to about half the rise in the cost of living". In other words, any acceptance of the £6 limit is acceptance of cuts in living standards of between 15 to 20 per cent, on curr-

ent inflation rates. The TUC and Tribune knowingly accept this.

Only a fight which lays the whole responsibility of the economic crisis on the rotting capitalist system and rejects any limitation of workers wages while the system exists, can provide a solid political foundation for the fight back for jobs, wages and decent living conditions.

If capitalism cannot provide workers with the basic necessities of life or maintain our social conquests it is capitalism that must go to make way for a planned socialist economy. Only a complete break by the Labour Government from any policies designed to prop up this system can open the door to such a struggle.

## 'I'm no rebel' says Tony Kelly

'THEY SAID there was a conspiracy in Newham North East. Of course there was a conspiracy—a conspiracy of right-wingers, and its going to be destroyed.'

This was the tenor of Tony Kelly's message to a 150-strong meeting organised by the Manchester Chartists.

'We're labelled the rebels. I'm no rebel. I've accepted every democratic decision of our Labour Party. That's more than can be said for Reg Prentice,' said brother Kelly.

'They said we were a minority group. Of course! How many Labour Parties in the country have a majority of electors in them? He was selected by a minority. He was selected by a small group of 28, and deselected by 56!'

Chartist Graham Bash (Leeds S. E. Labour Party) followed Tony Kelly. He outlined some of the lessons from Newham.

'It was not only a blow against a particularly odious right wing spokesman for the interests of Big Busin-

ess—someone who attacked the Clay Cross councillors and the Shrewsbury pickets. It was not only a blow against someone who appeared with Ted Heath on platforms in favour of the Common Market. And it was not only a blow for labour movement democracy—an assertion of principle that it is the members of the Labour Party who pick their representatives and can replace them if necessary.'

'It is above all a declaration of intent from within the ranks of the Labour movement—that enough is enough, that the retreats and betrayals of the Labour Party and trade union leaders must be stopped, that the task of preparing a new leadership in the Labour Party begins now.'

He continued, "The right of tendencies to organise within the Labour Party must be defended as a matter of principle. What a fraud that the right wing dare to challenge our right to do this. What is the Parliamentary

Labour Party if not a 'party within a party'? What is the Campaign for Democratic Socialism if not an organisation of Gaitskellites? What is the Social Democratic Alliance if not an organisation of right-wing MPs?

'If the Labour Party is ever to effectively challenge the power of Big Business, we must fight against all bans and proscriptions that exclude some of the best industrial militants and socialist youth from our ranks.'

Such was the opposition to this meeting from the local right-wing bureaucrats, that they raised the price of the hall from £2.50 to £15. And they tried to stop the meeting at the last minute by saying we had not asked permission to charge admission!

That was just a small indication of the anti-democratic behaviour of Labour's right-wing supporters of Reg Prentice. We can be sure that their witch-hunting attacks on the left will increase as the struggle develops to ensure that Newham is just the first step in an all out challenge to the Labour Party leadership.

# Don't be ill on Sundays

by ANNA GALVANI

IN THE RECENT round of Government cut-backs it seems that we are being told when we can and cannot be ill. In order to save money, the new Royal Free Hospital in Inner London may soon be put on short-time working, with complete closure during Saturday's and Sunday's and cuts in night-time services. Patients will be sent home earlier than they would normally be — which even now is too soon in many cases—so that less staff will be needed.

In the Tower Hamlets District, the District Management Team (DMT) has let it be known that it is going to start (perhaps a better word would be increase) a programme of cuts over the next two years, resulting from a £760,000 deficit this year, with a £400,000 overdraft. Amongst the proposed cut-backs are the following:

- No replacement of equipment.
- Cuts in medical and nursing numbers.
- Across the board reductions.
- Closure of wards starting at holiday times.
- Staff cuts by natural wastage—200 jobs to go including 1 in 23 at the London Hospital.
- DMT to replace jobs by equipment if a proper return can be shown quickly.
- Community Health Councils to be told of lengthening and imbalanced waiting lists (they'll need to be told!)
- If Districts overspend outside auditing will be imposed, cutting off central government funds for major projects.

As if this weren't bad enough, already four hospitals in the East End have been closed, leaving the whole dock area covered by a series of first-aid posts and the tiny Albert Dock Hospital, which doesn't even have a proper blood bank. In Camden and Islington the Royal Northern Hospital is to be closed without replacement.

To these ludicrous measures the Labour Government's answer is to withdraw yet another £70 million from the expenditure allowed to the NHS. So much for the Manifesto pledge to expand the NHS! You could say the NHS is being bled dry—only soon there won't be anyone left to take the blood from!



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# THE CHARTIST

Monthly Journal of the Socialist Charter Movement.

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## As TUC accepts £6 freeze — What prospects for worker's struggle?

THE LABOUR Government's temporary success in selling the £6 wage limit to the leadership of the trade union movement has placed the entire working class in Britain in the greatest danger.

The ruling class industrialists of the Confederation of British Industry and the City bankers, with their Fleet Street allies, have expressed unbridled satisfaction at the results of this year's TUC Congress in September. The Sunday Times, in its big businessman's feature pages, 'Business News', wrote that Jack Jones's role in the £6 wage-limit plan, which will cut living standards by half, had meant he had "grown in stature".

Capitalism's house-journal, the Economist, explained to its readers that in Britain's great hour of need, the trade unions had "shown their true worth..." This meant that the TUC bureaucracy is as anxious about the future of capitalism as the Economist itself.

27%

The single fact that pleased the capitalists, the Tories and their press most was the apparent acceptance of the argument that wages cause inflation. More than two thirds of the Trade Union Congress were prepared to vote in support of Wilson's pay limit. Or, in the Economist's words, prepared "...to accept wage restraint and falling living standards..." because delegates had swallowed the line that wage increases are responsible for inflation (and that, in turn, bringing about unemployment).

The truth of the matter is that wages are barely keeping up with an annual rate of inflation of 27%. A recent Confederation of British Industry report has affirmed that in the last year living standards have fallen by 7 per cent. Official government statistics on earnings show that the estimated average male weekly earnings after tax in June 1974 amounted to £40.02. For the same worker in June 1975 his take-home pay was £48.34, but at June 1974 prices this amounted to £38.33 — a wage cut of 4 per cent.

None of our trade union leaders or Labour lefts have been prepared to put forward clear arguments against the view that worker's wages cause inflation. Nowadays, this is the official line of the Treasury under the Chancellorship of Labour's Denis Healey. The traditional lefts of the old-style, Jack Jones and Michael Foot have ended up totally agreeing with this view. Even those sections of the Tribune Group who are attempting to maintain some sort of support for socialist principles have been most lame-dog in opposing the view that the working class wage earner is busy pumping up prices to their current levels.

### Tribune

The 'Tribune' statement criticising the government's present course, devotes one sentence to counter the view that lies at the heart of the government's present wage restraint strategy. They content themselves with dismissing this argument by simply saying "...we must reject the view that wages are solely or even mainly responsible for the present crisis..." Quite frankly, comrades of the Tribune Group, we need clear arguments and a clear programme to back up your own rejection. Until recently, Jones and Foot were prominent members of the Tribune Group. These ex-leaders of the Labour and trade union left did not have the arguments to back up the brave words of better years. Can we be certain that the current leaders of the Tribune will do any better?

Two prospects for the labour movement grow out of the most recent set-backs. Firstly, that the betrayals of the Wilson-Murray leadership and the confusion-mongering of the lefts could translate itself into demoralisation for the tens of thousands who place confidence in these people to lead the fight for better wages and conditions. This is extremely dangerous. Any refusal on the part of the labour movement, even for a temporary period, to fight to maintain living standards over the next period will have serious repercussions.

ious repercussions.

The trade union bureaucracy is trying to present the view that workers will get nowhere by using the strike weapon to win wages rises which keep pace with the accelerating cost of living. If Jones and Murray drive home the point then many rank and file trade unionists may feel that they have even less chance of defeating the bosses when it comes to fighting a factory closure.

The second prospect for the labour movement depends entirely on the ability of socialist militants to provide clear marxist arguments and a class programme which starts by saying that workers can take no responsibility for the crisis of the capitalist system. This must be the anchor from which to build the fight back against wage restraint and unemployment.

### rising scale

The ranks of the labour movement will not stand by and allow their living standards to be cut to the bone. Already sections of the trade union movement are flexing muscles against Labour's pay restraint. Shipyard workers in the north-east, the blast-furnacemen in the steel industry, farm-workers and council workers are revealing the potential for opposition to the £6 limit. In this situation the fight for a rising scale of wages assumes tremendous importance. Living standards can only be defended today by fighting for a nil-norm threshold clause to be inserted into every wage agreement. This should be based on a cost of living index worked out by the trade union movement and informed by price committees of workers, housewives and unemployed.

On the basis of a struggle for a rising scale of wages to meet the rising cost of living a movement to develop workers control of the economy can be built. If the capitalists cannot control inflation without savage attacks on workers living standards then they must be swept aside along with the anarchy of their system to make way for a planned socialist economy.

AS MEMBERS of the various Civil and Public Service trade unions met this September for the Redder Tape "rank and file" group conference, they were faced with the question of how to organise an effective fight against the Wilson Government £6 maximum pay law. Feelings are running high amongst Civil and Public sector workers as they know that traditionally they have borne the brunt of successive Government wage-curbs. As the question of the defence of living standards is raised Redder Tape has the duty to provide a clear alternative for militants entering into struggle.

#### CAMPAIGN

Demands for a rising scale of wages were raised from the floor by several Redder Tape members including members and supporters of the Socialist Charter. A motion put by members of the Socialist Charter called for a campaign to

## Rising scale fight at Redder Tape conference

MIKE McDAID (CPSA)

be organised by Redder Tape around the demand for "a rising scale of wages to match the rising cost-of-living with a campaign committee to investigate the mechanics of the demand, eg. the formation of price-monitoring committees." Prominent members in the leadership of Redder Tape objected to the demand for a rising scale on such grounds as, it is not yet the right time to raise this demand.

But with inflation running at over 30% a year and with the government planning to ram the £6 pay-limit down the throat of the Trade

Union movement, the fight for increases large enough to compensate for the increases in the cost-of-living is clearly a demand with explosive potential.

In the coming months workers will be forced to confront the Labour Government over the £6 wages policy because of the drastic cut in living standards it represents. It is essential that the preparation for this movement, especially amongst these traditionally less militant workers, is begun immediately.

It is the chief task of militants in the Civil and Public sectors to place the demand — a rising scale of wages — at the centre of coming wage struggles.

# 'Clay Cross Leaders Betrayed'

says David Skinner

DURING THE last month, the ex-councillors of Clay Cross have had to meet the Official Receiver. Receiving orders have been made against them for debts of £63,000 incurred whilst they were in control of Clay Cross Council.

The CHARTIST spoke to DAVID SKINNER who gave the following account of what is going on.

"The District Auditor put us into Court but we were refused an adjournment which we wanted so as we could get legal representation. It's alright for people like John Stonehouse, he can get all the legal advice he wants. He's done everything but sleep with his solicitors. But then he's an MP - and we are just ordinary working people.

## SUMMONED

Anyway, we were summoned to appear at the Official Receivers, and we went on September 2nd. Fortunately the National Union of Public Employees stepped in to ensure we got proper legal advice. Actually, NUPE has been a lot of help. They've written to the Standing Orders Committee of the Labour Party Conference asking if they could put an emergency resolution - calling on the Government to stop hounding us".

CHARTIST: How was the £63,000 debt incurred?

Dave Skinner " £8,000 was under the Housing Finance Act, £20,000 was for payments to workers for looking after old people, and £30,000 was what we paid for reducing the dole queue - when we set up our own building works department instead of relying on scab labour. The District Auditor refused to accept these payments.

## MODERATES

All this is the fault of those so called moderates, the Jenkins' and Prentices, those who betrayed us by abstaining on the Housing Finance Special Provisions Bill. They're the same rats who stood with Dick Taverne and supported Common Market entry. The Bill didn't go very far, but at least it would have annulled our disqualifications and reduced our debts. At least it would have shown the Government was doing something on our behalf. The District Auditor would have thought twice. But when the right-wing scabs abstained on the Bill and got it defeated, that was a green light for the establishment to throw the lot at us.

CHARTIST: How does the fight go on from here?

Dave Skinner! One thing is certain. We're not going to flee to Australia like Stonehouse or accept bribes like Poulson's friends. We did what we were elected to do and carried out the policy of the Labour Party, as decided at its Conference. And that's more than you can say for the present lot in the Government.

They can attach our earnings, or send us to prison, and we're in for a bleak time. I know my kids will find it tough, especially with Christmas coming up. When this happens, remember it was the right-wing MPs who landed us in it."

# RAIL CUTS - NO FIGHT FROM NUR LEADERS

BY KEVIN MOORE

re-organisation until they have had satisfactory talks with the British Rail Board.

When Battersea No.1 branch raised the matter with Head Office the General Secretary replied that they were opposed to cuts but that the fighting was to be left to Transport 2000. Transport 2000 is an environmental group arguing the railway case in terms of 'less pollution' and more efficiency. Their 'fighting' consists of arguing with Tory and Labour MPs about the desirability of rail as opposed to motorways. What Transport 2000 say is certainly correct but they are not interested in fighting redundancies or improving staff conditions.

What the NUR leadership is doing is walking away from a fight. At the Annual General Meeting of the NUR earlier this year the Executive Committee fought in defence of Wilson's record, including giving full support to the £6 pay limit. A resolution from Battersea No. 1 branch attacking the Labour

15% FARE increases and now cuts in services - this is how British Rail treat their customers. As yet another nationalised industry attempts to balance its books, the prospect of even more unemployed looms on the horizon.

For your extra money you will be getting fewer trains, no matter on what region you travel. The Euston to Watford line comes off worst with cuts of up to 40%. Suburban services in general are for the chop. British Rail estimate that they are not used as much as they were and are travelling half-empty. No doubt rush-hour commuters will have a few words to say about that! It is true that some lines, particularly in off-peak periods, do have few passengers. The reason for this is obvious - the soaring cost of tickets!

What has been the rail unions reaction to this present state of affairs. Although they have said they will fight redundancies and line closures, railway workers have yet to see any leadership materialise.

NUR Head Office has told all branches, LDCc and Sectional Councils (staff reps.) to take no action and to refuse to agree



Sidney Weighell, NUR Secretary

government's failure to implement Election Manifesto pledges, was also defeated by the EC.

The NUR EC now face a difficult situation. If they continue to accept Wilson's cuts it will eventually mean a loss of members - something the NUR can ill-afford.

Yet they are committed to backing Wilson. No wonder they have left the 'fighting' to Transport 2000. While the BRB is content to halt all recruitment, delete any remaining vacancies from the establishment, and allow natural wastage to reduce staffing levels, the NUR EC will apparently do nothing. But BRB are now hinting about actual redundancies. The danger is that the EC will mount a half-hearted struggle. Branches and District Councils must ensure that this does not happen and that the EC begins the fight now - against all aspects of Wilson's cuts - by actually organising a lead locally as the Southern District Council of the NUR is pledged to do.

# The Left and the Newham fiasco

by DAVE WILSON

SINCE JULY when Reg Prentice was kicked out at Newham North East a storm of controversy has been whipped up by Labour's right-wing, the Tories and their press.

Prentice and his 'allies' have used every dirty trick in the book to blackmail and sling mud at the rank-and-file Labour Party members, especially Tony Kelly who has had to endure an unparalleled gutter-press witch-hunt.

What happened at Newham on September 11th when Prentice tried to rally his supporters with the help of leading right-wing personalities? We don't have any sympathy with Roy Jenkins, Tom Jackson, Shirley Williams and Prentice who were heckled and shouted down. Equally, the Chartist does not greet that night's events with the enthusiasm and glee shown by Socialist Worker and Workers Press, both well-known papers in the socialist movement. Their reporters did produce material that was correct, for example, exposing the unconstitutional way Prentice organised the meeting by holding it on the same evening as the official L. P. Executive Committee meeting.

## PROVOCATIONS

They also exposed the history of provocations on the part of the speakers that led to the rumpus. Jenkins' and Prentice's record on the Shrewsbury Two and EEC and Williams' record on prices all came under the hammer. But no real mention was made of the National Front who were responsible for flour-bombing Jenkins. This is a most serious question. How could the I. S. join in with fascists to wreck Prentice's rally? The I. S. it seems were very proud of the way they handled affairs.

The Sunday Telegraph carried a large photo of Jim Nichol, IS national secretary, pint of lager in



Flour bomb hits Roy Jenkins

hand, explaining between gulps how Jenkins and the rest had only gotten what they deserved. On the same day, Martin Webster, well-known NF hatchet-man, was boasting about how Jenkins and co. were lucky not to receive more than flour bombs - and what the fascists might do next time.

Both the IS and the WRP have played down the fact that fascists - the most vicious enemies of the working class - joined in with IS members and perhaps some "angry workers" from the WRP to shout down London's right-wing. The left was there for different reasons from the NF but the fact is they were there together.

Some people weren't there. Tony Kelly and the Labour Party members who rightly removed Prentice. Rightly, Kelly told reporters that he did not "believe in shouting down opponents", an attitude both IS and the WRP would do well to take note of. The rank and file of Newham North-East rid

themselves of Prentice and inflicted a real black eye on the ruling class, an example we hope many Labour Parties will follow.

Because IS and the WRP, with their hostile views to struggle in the Labour Party - "a party full of Prentices", (Socialist Worker), "force Labour to resign", (Workers' Press) - find themselves isolated from the mass movement which includes the Labour Parties, as much as the trades unions. They lionise hooligan tactics that led to the mistakes of Newham. As long as Prentice holds a Labour Party card, even HE has to be defended against fascist gangsterism.

If IS and the WRP oppose this, they are willingly following the Stalinist ultra-leftism of the '30s. The Socialist Charter is not keen on defending social democrats of the Wilson-Prentice-Jenkins type. We want to drive them out of the working class movement as soon as possible. This can only be done by more and more militant workers and socialists fighting within the Labour Party.

The longer IS and the WRP abstain from this fight, shouting on from the sidelines, the longer this task will take. Before the "new party" of the kind they want to build can really get off the ground, workers have to be won from reformism and the Labour leaders defeated. The right-wing will not come to Marxist groups looking for a fight. We must go to them. The boxing ring is not just in the trade unions, but also in the Labour Parties.

The major responsibility for the fiasco at Prentice's meeting lies with Prentice and his right-wing camp followers. By resorting to hooligan tactics the left-wing only fall into the provocative trap laid for them.

# THE LESSON OF THE PAST

## ORGANISE THE

## UNEMPLOYED

BY PETER GOLD

AS EVERY worker knows, the 1920s and 30s marked a very stormy period of class-struggle. One of the workers' instruments in that conflict was the National Unemployed Workers' Movement (NUWM). The movement's aim was quite simple: organise the jobless and prevent them being used as a weapon against employed workers. This meant a fight to defend the rights of the unemployed, which were few and far between. Most unemployed workers had to rely on Poor Law Relief, proof of destitution via stringent Means Test being a qualification. The only alternative was to fall back on charity, which only demoralised workers.

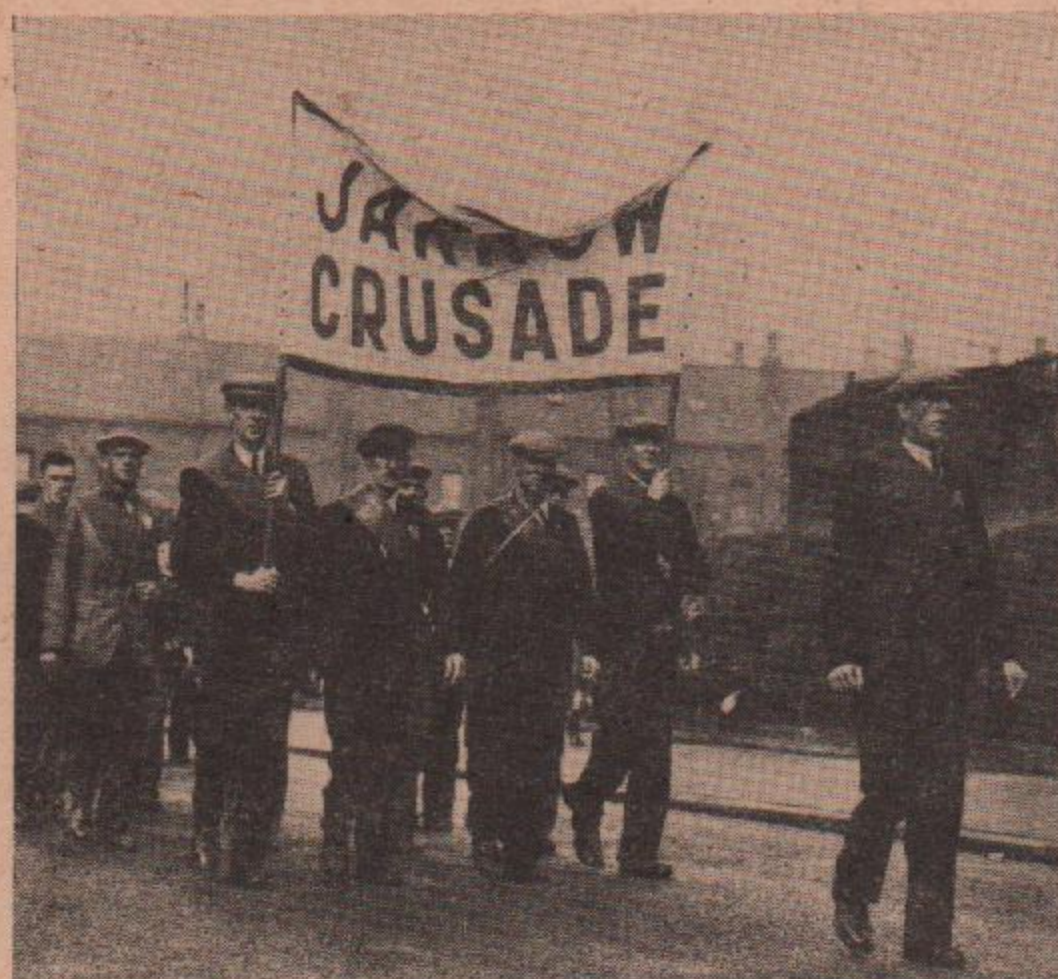
### POLICE RIOT

Political action was a burning necessity. Due to the failure of the official Labour and Trade Union leaders to organise such action, the unemployed began to organise themselves. First impetus came from a vicious police riot at an unemployed demonstration in October 1921. In response a Council of the Unemployed was set up. That year, the TUC Conference refused the unemployed a speaker and turned a deaf ear to the demands of two million workless. After this performance and two unemployed rank-and-file conferences, the NUWM was launched. It was a national movement with over 300 branches, publishing a regular paper called "Out of Work". Built in the teeth of opposition and indifference from union leaders, the Movement agitated for the united workers' front, employed and unemployed, against the bosses. Its central rallying cry was Work or Full Maintenance!

### HUNGER MARCHES

In 1922 the first National Hunger March was held, culminating in a rally of 200,000 workers. As it became clear that the post Great War boom had collapsed, the TUC began to feign interest. In 1923 a joint advisory council was formed with the NUWM and Unemployed Workers Charter drafted. While the official leadership dithered the NUWM campaigned. It demonstrated its firm class political character by assisting strike pickets and emphasising the need for militant struggle and revolutionary leadership. In 1926 the NUWM rendered great support to the General Strike and fought the betrayal of the TUC, which caved in after 9 days. Over the next 13 years, the NUWM was active in the battle against unemployment.

Nationwide, the jobless fought back. The 1926 Labour Government refused to even meet a delegation from the NUWM which had drawn up a new twelve point Charter. As capitalist crisis worsened and unemployment grew, it was obvious that the Labour leaders class collaboration would lead to disaster. In 1931 it came, when Ramsay MacDonald formed a coalition with the Tories in order to impose savage cuts in the dole. The reply of the NUWM was quick despite the much degenerated politics of its CP leaders. A campaign of marches and meetings got under way. In Birkenhead and Manchester there were all-out clashes with the police.



These campaigns showed the unemployed's will to fight. Still, the TUC and Labour Party avoided struggle. Tragically, the Communist Party helped them by calling the leaders 'social fascists' instead of building a united front against the job-smashing, union-bashing and wage-slashing policies of the traitor Ramsay MacDonald. The Stalinist ultra-leftism of the CP let the trade union leaders off the hook. At the 1932 TUC Secretary Citrine was unbridled in his witch-hunts against the Movement, and able to disguise the fact that he had no policy save that of "stirring the conscience of the nation". By 1935 the Movement dominated the fight against unemployment. It had held a Conference of Employed and Unemployed calling for a programme of public works with jobs at Trade Union rates, a shorter working week, and training for youth.

In 1935 the new Unemployment Act made the Means Test even more vicious and cut benefit. This created massive protests. In South Wales there were enormous demonstrations of miners. In other places dole offices were wrecked. The Government was forced to retreat. This victory encouraged the employed and a new wave developed.

After 1935 the transition to a war economy began. Unemployment decreased and the NUWM's main fight was against overtime working; which denied extra workers jobs. By 1939, the NUWM was redundant.

### INFLECTED DEFEATS

In its eighteen year life it had organised five Hunger Marches, produced countless leaflets, mobilised thousands against the employers and the state, defeated black-legging and had helped prevent Mosley's fascist poison from infecting the unemployed. It had advised workers on their rights and fought for them. Above all it had inflicted defeats on the Tory Government through militant action. If it failed fully to unite employed and unemployed the main responsibility for this lay with the Labour and TUC leaders who accepted the division and refused to take responsibility for the unemployed.

Today, the workers are strong and undefeated, unlike in the 1930s but the demand: work or full maintenance is no less relevant. A mass movement of unemployed must be built in unity with the fight against redundancies, and the Labour-Trade Union leaders forced to defend the right to work.

UNEMPLOYMENT IS now approaching the devastating level of the 1930s. In August, 1,250,334 were registered as unemployed and the September figures show virtually no change in the number of jobless. These are the worst figures for thirty years. According to the Economist, a leading big business journal, "unemployment is now set to rise to two million, perhaps beyond." Thousands of women workers who don't register never even show up in the statistics.

Behind each one of these cold statistics lies the misery and suffering of countless working-class families attempting to survive on a miserly subsistence payment from the Labour exchange or Social Security. In fact, Department of Employment figures show that in May, when 813,055 were unemployed in Britain, 252,000 were not entitled to unemployment benefit and were living solely on supplementary allowance.

Even worse, there were 162,000 registered as unemployed and receiving no payment whatsoever. And what does this marvellous state hand-out amount to — a meagre £9.80 a week for a single person.

## 15 MILLION JOBLESS

This savage attack on jobs and living standards is not confined to British workers alone. Internationally, capitalism is passing through deep recession which has made jobless more than 15 million workers in the 24 OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) Countries.

Everywhere capitalism is making drastic cutbacks in labour in an effort to restore falling profit rates. A general "shake-out" in industry is the only way capitalism can offset the emergence of the most profound contradictions. In the thirties, capitalism offered the working class the

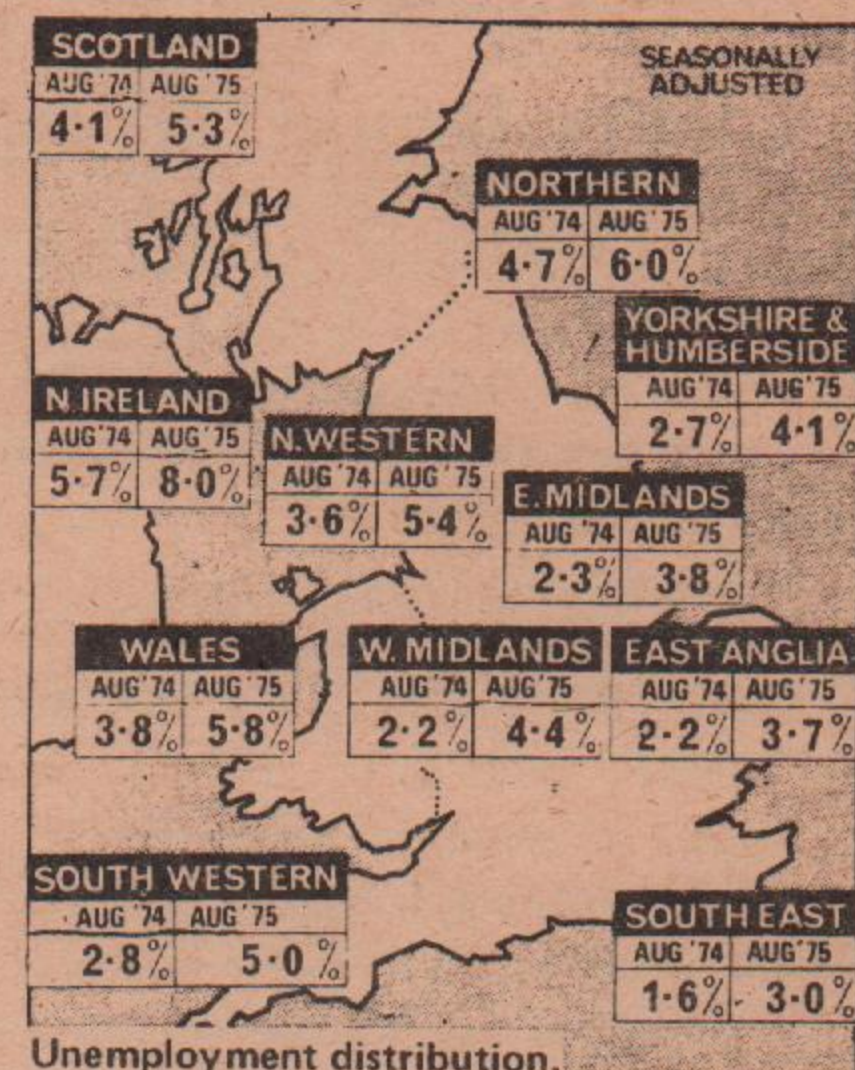
AT THE END of July Eric Varley the Industry Secretary announced the ending of all Government aid to the declining motorcycle manufacturers Norton Villiers Triumph (NVT). This new application of the Tories' "lame duck" policy could result in the loss of over 1,000 jobs in the Midlands — an area with already above-average unemployment.

The NVT plant in Wolverhampton (employing 1600 workers) had been put into liquidation and production was to have been switched to NVT's other factory in Small Heath Birmingham. But the reaction of the workers was swift. They immediately occupied the factory, mounting a 24-hour picket to make sure nothing left the plant. At the present time 1100 of the 1300 who were in the plant at the time are still in occupation. The workers are demanding that the Government takes over the factory and protects their jobs.

What is the background to the crisis of NVT? In 1965 all the bike manufacturers — Ariels, AJS, BSA, James, Norton, Matchless and Triumph — amalgamated into two groups, BSA and AMC. By 1966 AMC had gone into liquidation. Manganese Bronze which

# THE SCO

By Mike Davis



choice between the axe of recession and mass unemployment or the saw of inflation. Today, in Britain, the working class is faced with both the axe and the saw at its throat.

Harold Wilson tells us in the free pamphlet, "Attack on Inflation", which has been dropped on our doormats, that "one man's pay rise is not only another man's price rise — it might also cost him his own job — or his neighbour's job". Such is the philosophy by which the present Labour Government are operating and which Jack Jones and Len Murray have got the TUC to swallow. It is the philosophy of Toryism! It has nothing to do with Labour's election pledges to restore full employment and execute a "fundamental shift in the balance of power and wealth" in the interests of the working class.

When the Secretary for (Un) Employment, Michael Foot announced the jobless figures for August, he declared that "what we face is a recession of a major character affecting the whole Western world". However, like the rest of the Labour government he has no policy to resolve the

# NVT Worker

by John Quirke

owns 49.9 per cent of NVT now (the Government has the other 50.1 per cent of shares) bought the Norton name and merged with Villiers. BSA then fell into grave economic straits as a result of failing to rationalise production, with existing capital and made a loss of £8 million. Also re-tooling could not be carried out because of failure to raise capital.

Norton Villiers then stepped in and took over BSA with a £4.8 million grant from the Government. In all NVT has had £18 million of Government aid with no control being exerted over its activities. Now the Labour Government is prepared to see the workers face the misery of the dole queue.

Management at N. V. T. are clear on how they intend to solve their crisis — at the expense of workers' jobs and living standards. Dennis Poore, chairman of N. V. T., spent

# BURGE OF UNEMPLOYMENT



Workers fighting for their jobs at Cammell Laird shipyards have come up hard against police attacks, which have so far claimed 11 arrests. A mass picket of more than 600 on 27 August was their response.

crisis except curbing wages and presiding over Britain's major growth industry — the production of longer dole queues.

Foot bemoans the lengthening dole queues and expresses the fear that Labour will be swept from office if unemployment is not stopped. But what is he doing? Labour has now been in office for 18 months and neither unemployment or inflation has ceased to rise. Foot tells steel workers threatened with the loss of 20,000 jobs that alternative work will be found. But the only alternative work he has so far found for the 1.7m unemployed is through Temporary Unemployment Subsidy — to employers — which is estimated to save a massive 30-40,000 jobs!

The Labour Government is now cynically abandoning its election pledges which millions of workers voted for. In treacherous liaison with the TUC it is attempting to impose the whole burden of the capitalist crisis on the backs of the working class.

But the response of the trade unions and labour lefts to this situation is as weak-kneed as it

is dangerous.

Having agreed the crisis is international and that workers in all capitalist countries face high unemployment, the Tribune Group, the Communist Party and its mouthpiece, the Morning Star, allied politically with trade union leaders like Hugh Scanlon, proceed to tell us the answer is import controls and more state spending.

Import controls amount to support for British capitalists against "foreign" capitalists. They stoke the fires of nationalist sentiment which the fascist National Front breed on, and, rather than forging international links between workers facing common problems and a common enemy, spread disunity and division. The savage import controls imposed on Portuguese textiles have thrown thousands out of work in Portugal and strengthened the hand of reaction. What kind of solidarity is this that the Tribune and CP leaders advocate?

Moreover, import controls with the decrepit condition that British capitalism is in can only mean one thing — defeat in a trade war.

More state spending while the economy remains in private hands will be equally disastrous for the working class. Inflation will be boosted on more borrowed money with no guarantee that the employing class will invest.

What is required to fight the spectre of the Thirties is a policy to unite the unemployed with the employed in a struggle to defend the right to work. If the employers are able to plough deep divisions through the ranks of the labour movement, blaming the wage-struggles of the employed for the plight of the unemployed, and deepen such splits with the salt of racialism, then no successful fight-back can be mounted.

## UNITE UNEMPLOYED AND EMPLOYED

Today, unlike the 1930s the working class and its organisations remain strong and undefeated. The power and determination to fight is there. Only the class-collaboration of our leaders obstructs this course. The fight-back must take three essential strategic lines. Firstly, the TUC must take full responsibility for the unemployed. Each Trades Council and trade union branch must ensure that unemployed members remain active. Unemployment sub-committees must be established to monitor the situation in each borough or area. Demoralisation and isolation must not be permitted to infect our jobless brothers and sisters.

Secondly, to galvanise the unity of the employed and unemployed an independent class-struggle policy is needed in the unions. Such a policy should focus on the demands for:

- Work-sharing with no loss of pay.
  - Cut the working-week to 35 hours with
  - A guaranteed minimum wage of £40, tied to a rising scale of wages.
  - A system of public works
  - Open the books — expose the bosses profiteering behind the veil of "business secrets!"
- Paramount in the fight for this policy must be defense of the right to picket and occupy. With firm picketing and work-place occupations the bedrock can be laid for launching a real fight around these policies.

## PUBLIC WORKS

Thirdly, the mobilization of the ranks of the entire working class must be the top priority of the TUC and Labour lefts. The industrial and political struggle must be merged. Every struggle against redundancies must be openly supported and used to strengthen the fight against Wilson's Tory policies. If Benn and the Tribune are really serious about fighting unemployment let us see them come out openly and campaign for nationalisation without compensation of any industry declaring redundancies. Let us see them mount national campaigns for public works to employ the jobless on hospital, house and school-building programmes — there is no shortage of trained workers willing to meet the task. Let us see them fight for workers' control with full knowledge of the business secrets of the whole of industry.

The scourge of unemployment must not be permitted to wreak havoc on working class living standards as it did in the 1930s. Only a clear socialist strategy based on the united strength of workers nationally and internationally can create the conditions to wipe out the spectre of the '30s for good.

# Workers Occupy In Jobs Fight



THE NEW WULF MOTORCYCLE AT NVT

this out. Intensive speed-ups, de-manning--at least a 50% reduction of the workforce--and increased productivity of 15,000 - 20,000 bikes a year. This is needed, he argues, in order to compete on the American market. There has been a 60% fall in sales due to the intensive competition

from Japanese and American manufacturers. The management have also blamed foreign imports for their predicament and have called for "import controls."

The solution of "import controls" is consistently put forward by lefts in the Labour movement, and is a de-

mand that has been raised in other struggles in the textile industry and Imperial Typewriters, in particular. The call has even been put out by Peter Shore to buy British. All these arguments are thoroughly reactionary. They only divert the struggles of workers into defence of one's "firm" or "nation" at the expense of other workers, confusing who the real enemy is. In Germany and America similar "Buy German" or "Buy American" campaigns are under way to set workers against each other.

Already Local Labour councillors in Wolverhampton have come up with the idea of a "community cooperative" with the local council, local business men, and component suppliers buying the factory from the receiver.

This would not benefit the workers one iota, as it would only be swapping one employer for another, cutting jobs and intensifying exploitation.

The way forward in the fight against redundancies in N. V. T. is complicated. On the one hand, management use the existence of a rival plant to play one group of workers against the other. On the other hand, there is the existence of the workers' cooperative at the Meriden Factory which was set up after an eighteen month fight against

closure. Meriden illustrates the dangers of workers' co-ops.

The Meriden cooperative started operations officially last March with a government grant of £750,000. Triumph Meriden has made a "profitable" start but this has been at the expense of the workers. Productivity has doubled with speed-ups, replacement of men with machines, resulting in a reduction of the labour force from 750 (before occupation) to 350 today. Also wages are based on a common wage rate for all, of £50 a week which is well below the average wage in the Engineering industry in the Midlands. Workers in the cooperative will be no less exploited, will have to operate according to the same laws and logic of the anarchic capitalist system. It has to buy its power and components and sell its products on the market.

N. V. T. has contracted to sell Meriden output for the next two years and this aroused the resentment of N. V. T. workers as they see it as a threat to their jobs. Also the workers at Meriden will find great difficulties as the "owners", in giving support to the workers of N. V. T.

Cooperatives are not the way forward in the fight against unemployment. The choice between wage cuts, two-thirds reduction in the labour force, and intensive productivity drives vs. unemployment is no choice at all.

# Portugal—New Government Strengthens Reaction

BY BERNARD MISRAHI

UNDER Admiral Azevedo of the 6th Provisional Government, the new programme threatens to return the newspaper 'Republica' and Radio Renascenca, bastions of the revolution, to the former owners. It talks of incentives for private enterprise and respect for private property (returning the estates, factories, banks and mansions to the bourgeoisie?). Can they carry out this programme?

Already the workers have demonstrated that they are prepared to physically defend the gains of the revolution. This counter-attack to the reaction was launched over a month ago.

On August 20th, 100,000 marched through Lisbon in support of a document written by some officers of COPCON (internal security force), and of the committees of tenants, soldiers and workers—the organs of 'Popular Power'—that the document supported. The document was not supported or produced by General Otelio Carvalho, as we incorrectly stated last month.

Due to the increasing isolation felt by the Communist Party (PCP), produced in part by its ultra-left policies and the anti-Communist outrages in the north, it was pushed by these mass movements of the working class into inviting the revolutionary left groups, who had largely organised the demonstration, into forming a United Revolutionary Front (FUR).

## 100,000 DEMONSTRATE

Two days after the FUR was formed a demonstration of well over 100,000 was organised in Lisbon on August 27th. "End the misery of the peasants", "Revolution—yes. Right-wing Government—no!", and "Advance Popular Power" were some of the slogans shouted. But the PCP turned the demonstration into a sectarian pro-Goncalves rally. President Costa Gomes, who addressed the march, was booed and shouted down.

The PCP apparently thought it was more important to jostle for places in the new Government (as the fall of Goncalves seemed inevitable), rather than strengthen united action against the reaction. But the PCP

were later expelled from the FUR, not for these antics, but for making conciliatory gestures towards the Socialist Party and the bourgeois PPD. Nonetheless, rank and file PCP members and SP members are working alongside the revolutionary left groups in the developing workers and soldiers committees and popular assemblies.

The fall of Goncalves and the fifth provisional government was a blow because it came in the wake of the anti-Communist offensive in the north and the reorganising of the rightist 'Moderates' around the 'Document of the Nine', produced by Major Melo Antunes and nine Armed Forces Movement (MFA) officers.

The new government under construction by Admiral Azevedo supports the Antunes position for stabilising capitalism in Portugal. There must be no PCP or SP participation in this government.

## MFA ASSEMBLY

However, whilst the splintering and faction-ridden MFA Assembly can make and break governments, real power is slipping from their hands into the factories, barracks, streets, and right-wing villages. The new government will have even less power than its predecessor. The first acts of the Prime Minister designate Azevedo, were to try to restore 'order' in the army by forbidding soldiers to go on demonstrations, forbidding newspapers to report dissension in the armed forces and ordering troops to Angola. The troops stayed in Lisbon. Thousands of soldiers marched in a massive demonstration on Porto, condemning the ban, and all papers, including the SP influenced 'Jornal Novo' ignored the ban on publicising splits in the armed forces.

But the recent anti-Communist campaigns and governmental shifts have strengthened the right, particularly in the armed forces. Even SP leader Soares, has recognised the threat from the right is greater than that from the 'Communists'.

Portugal is in a state of developing dual power. Neither the working class nor the bourgeoisie is in full



SOLDIER WAVES RED FLAG DURING LISBON DEMONSTRATION

control. The workers can proceed to completely smash capitalism or the half smashed capitalists can recover and destroy all the gains of the toiling masses. The growing dual power is nowhere more evident than in the army, where in some units soldiers obey no important orders before discussing them, and conversely in others, left-wing commanders have been removed by soldiers. The majority of the army is undecided. There is no military dictatorship because the military cannot dictate.

Although the advanced sections of the working class have made tremendous gains, especially in the field of control of production, there is a dangerous lack of clarity in perspectives and programmes being put forward. Revolutionary groups talk of 'national independence', 'Unity with the Third World' (who will buy the Lisnaves ships, presumably) rather than a call to workers of the advanced capitalist countries to support them. They also neglect appeals to the SP workers to join a United Front, although a movement is growing amongst SP workers against Soares and, as yet, little has been done to convince the peasants that workers are their allies. Finally, while the revolutionary groups can attract the PCP when it is on a left zig, it cannot stop it from veering away when the Stalinists are on a right zag.

# SELL OUT IN SINAI

THE EGYPT-ISRAEL disengagement agreement, signed by Anwar Sadat in Cairo last month, is a cruel blow to the hopes of not only the Palestinians but of all the oppressed Arab people. For a mere 13-26 mile Israeli withdrawal and a 1-5 mile Egyptian advance, Sadat has not only legitimised the rapacious colonisation of that area occupied by the Zionists, but also opened the door for American intervention in the Middle East by conceding to Zionist demands that American 'civilian observers' should marshal the peace in the strategic Giddi and Mitla passes in the Sinai desert.

Under the pressures of the worst economic crisis in Egypt since the 1950s, Sadat was quite simply bought by Kissinger's promises of economic aid to the tune of one billion dollars.

However, even this will not be enough to prevent discontent in Egypt, where the growing clandestine socialist movement has learnt to associate deals with Israel, and the Israeli occupation of Arab lands with increasing police repression

By Geoff Bender

at home. Already 20 members of the International Communist League have been placed on trial, and since the agreement was reached the Palestine Liberation Organisation radio station has been taken over by the Egyptians. This occurred allegedly as a result of a story concerning an attempted assassination of Sadat, although it is more likely that it was part of the 40-odd clauses of the agreement which still remain secret.

The response of the official PLO leaders to all this has been vocal protests, but the majority under Arafat are still attempting to woo international bodies like the Inter-Parliamentary Union, to gain respectability rather than working to mobilise the Arab masses against the treachery of the Sadat government. However, the ordinary Palestinians cannot help but be aware that their struggle to regain their national rights is inseparable from the fight to overthrow the reactionary regimes of Sadat, Hussein, and their ilk.

In 1948 the defeat of the Arab armies and the compromise settlements with Israel, known as 'the Catastrophe' in Arab countries, led to a series of upheavals which removed King Farouk in Egypt and other reactionary rulers. The current sellouts of Sadat may help to loosen the hold of the corrupt Egyptian regime, paving the way for its overthrow.

While Israel's southern borders are made safe by the US presence and Sadat's policies, the process of colonising the Arab land continues. More than 20,000 Israelis are now living in over 50 settlements in this area, encouraged by interest-free loans on houses pre-fabricated in Tel-Aviv.

Also continuing is the harassment by the Israeli air-force of the Palestinian camps around Beirut in the Lebanon. It is also widely believed US and Israeli interests are behind the attacks on the Palestinians and their Moslem and left-wing allies by the Falangists, who base themselves on the maintenance of the privileges of the Christian population. The

The working class must split the army further. They must not so much break with the left MFA as bring them fully under their discipline. All left-wing commanders and officers, including Carvalho, must submit to elections through the soldiers and sailors committees and assemblies. The arming of workers and the creation of militias under the control of the workers committees and assemblies must be stepped up. The reactionary officers must be purged. Most importantly, the organs of workers power must be strengthened, extended and generalised.

While the COPCON document gives some attention to material aid to the peasants and to reconverting factories along with public works schemes to absorb the 500,000 unemployed, these plans must be concretised and extended to details for the construction of a planned economy. They must demand of the USSR and China that as much material aid as is required is forthcoming to the beleaguered Portuguese economy. This could be one way in which the economic blockade of the EEC and US imperialism could be broken.

The Portuguese working class is feeling for power in a confused, haphazard way. It still lacks a revolutionary leadership to clarify the situation. The immediate task confronting the United Front is to force the C. P. out of the government and back into common discipline — as well as extending an arm to the Socialist Party ranks who are coming into conflict with their right-wing leadership. The existing agreement between the parties must be strengthened and formalised, to withstand the dangers it will confront. The original programme of the Front left a lot of room for doubt and confusion on several points. Nonetheless, this is far less important than the great opportunities opened up by this new unity, which must be carried on in preparing the workers' movement for the almost inevitable civil war.



Sadat with paymaster Ford

religious divisions, a hangover from the days of French Imperialism, have been exploited by right-wing elements who are calling for the disarming of the Palestinians and waging a terror campaign against the Moslem population.

The future of the Arab workers of the Middle East will depend in Egypt above all on the linking of the developing economic struggles with the fight against repression; essential too is the demand for the publication and repudiation of the disengagement agreement, and all such agreements made under the pressure of US imperialism.

In Lebanon, the struggle revolves around defence of the Palestinians, still the key to the revolution in the Middle East.

# Loyalist split deepens

BY GRAHAM DURHAM

THE DEEP split in the ranks of Ulster Loyalism, which has apparently ended in victory for Paisley and his followers, appears at first sight to be a repeat of the defeat of the Faulkner power-sharing executive by the UWC lock-out of May last year. However, the fact that it is Craig the hard-line opponent of the former Stormont government, who now wishes to find a 'realistic' solution - including possible SDLP representation in government - is extremely significant. According to the Sunday Times, "Craig came to know of the detailed plans of Loyalist paramilitaries who were preparing for a bloodless coup if a political vacuum developed and the sectarian assassinations escalated." That Craig, the man who built up the B-specials in the 1960s, has openly opposed such a coup, reflects his different assessment of the armed balance of power in the North. Craig believes that behind the facade of SDLP power-sharing, British imperialism would be prepared to back an Ulster government maintaining the oppression of the Catholic population.

Paisley, however, has received wide backing for his total rejection of power-sharing, a stand which must lead to a showdown with Rees. Paisley, backed by the UVF, the UWC, and by a majority of UUUC delegates, has demonstrated his willingness to rely on the armed strength of the paramilitary forces organised in the Ulster Army Council. The Loyalist murder squads have allowed Paisley to

demonstrate the willingness of the paramilitaries to impose their own security, as well as using the sectarian reprisals as an excuse to pressure Rees into ending the release of internees and taking tougher measures against the Catholic population.

The power-sharing proposals of Craig are based on the secure knowledge that British troops, and the RUC, will continue to be used to harass and oppress the Catholic population. The 'ceasefire' has not prevented Rees sending extra troops to the north, over 1000 extra men are operating in Armagh alone. Behind the extra troops stand the UDR and the recently strengthened RUC - both forces dominated by Protestants and including men with a dual membership in organisations like the UDA and the UVF. It is hardly surprising that those forces have proved utterly incapable of halting sectarian murders, like the Miami showband massacre. The role of such forces in the defence of a 'law and order'



PROTESTANT LEADER WILLIAM CRAIG

Ulster government or in the event of a civil war would not be difficult to imagine.

In the face of these threats, the SDLP have no answer - knowing only how to grasp at crumbs offered by the UUUC. The provisional IRA, by clinging to the ceasefire, has played into the hands of Rees - whose strategy in releasing internees has been to reduce the level of support for the Provisionals. British Imperialism never had any

intention, as the O'Connell leadership apparently believed it did, of withdrawing British troops. Nor can British imperialism be bombed out of Ireland by means of campaigns in Britain - such activities only make the waging of a campaign of solidarity with the nationalist struggle more difficult in the British labour movement.

As Rees, facing the collapse of the Convention, once more prepares a British solution for Ireland, it is necessary to wage an energetic campaign in the trade unions and Labour Party for the complete withdrawal of troops from Ireland. Only the Irish working class can provide a lasting solution and we must campaign for the right of the Irish people to self-determination. The Chartist believes that the best way to achieve this is by building the influence of the Troops Out Movement in Britain. Alongside this, we must wage a solidarity campaign with the nationalist population and its organisations. As the Loyalist split deepens these struggles for the withdrawal of troops and solidarity become daily more urgent.

## The Struggle for Troops Out .... in Ireland and in Britain

### T.U. SPLIT OVER BELFAST TOUR

#### UNRESOLVED

BY GERRY MCMORROW

(ONE OF THREE EXPELLED)



Mike Knowles

Brother Tom Pilfold, (who had expelled the "dissidents") was then introduced but had little to say other than reading a letter which had been written to Belfast Trades Council outlining the terms of reference of the trip. This contained a statement to the effect that the delegation was to return with a policy which could be adopted by the whole London trade union movement; it would then 'act as one'. When challenged later in the meeting to say where such nonsense had been agreed, he was unable to answer.

Jack Dromey, who as organiser of the visit, had a lot to explain, was next to speak. His description of the itinerary of the visit, interlaced with platitudes of tribute to each and every organisation he met, climaxed in the production of a letter from Sean Morrissey of the Belfast Communist Party which he claimed refuted one of the many accusations of rigging made in the minority

report. He began reading - "Dear Mr. Knowles, in reply to ..... " UPROAR. Mike Knowles, secretary of Hackney Trades Council, and one of the three expelled, leapt to his feet wishing to know how Dromey had managed to obtain copies of his correspondence, particularly as he had not received this letter himself, and indeed had never written to the individual who was replying to him.

"Oh, you will receive a letter", the stout defender of our freedom replied. Mike approached the platform and demanded his letter; "Well - er - we'll get you a photocopy", the chairman replied.

Joe Cooper, president of Belfast Trades Council, then appealed for support for the Northern Ireland trade union movement and spoke at length on army harassment.

Discussion from the floor opened with Mike Knowles, Rosemary Sales, and myself pointing out many inaccuracies in both the delegations' printed and verbal reports. The rigged nature of the tour, the contradictions of the 'Bill of Rights' position, which imagines Westminster will give civil rights to the Irish people while it denies them the basic right to self-determination, and the make-up of the unrepresentative organisations met with were exposed. Our conclusions, namely that the only

just and lasting solution is one which calls for the immediate withdrawal of troops and which recognised the right of the Irish people to decide their own destiny, were explained, and judging from the applause, received the support of the mass of elected delegates.

Those few speakers who were given the chance from the floor made damning indictments of the official position which went completely unanswered although 3 platform speakers were called to sum up.

In spite of numerous calls for a vote, the Association, having left its options open by issuing no agendas and now seeing its recommendations in grave danger of defeat by delegates from its constituent bodies, closed the meeting. It is obvious that their failure to arrange a conference which would rubber-stamp the 'Bill of Rights' solution and thus discredit the Troops Out Movement has thrown the organisers into disarray. They will now concentrate on attacks from other directions; it is claimed, for instance, that they have addressed 60 branches etc. although Hackney and Barnet trades councils have been waiting two months for even a reply to invitations sent to Dromey and Pilfold.

Comrades should therefore invite the expelled delegates to their organisations particularly where a report-back has been arranged by the official delegation. We must ensure that the bankrupt policies derived from their pre-arranged facts, in no instance go unchallenged.

The three can be contacted through the 'T.U. Committee for Free Speech on Ireland'. Secretary, M. Davis, 18, Lordship Park, London, N.16.

ON SATURDAY, September 13th, Unity Hall, (Headquarters of the NUR), barred to the Troops Out Movement a few days previous, was the setting for the report-back conference of the Greater London Association of Trades Councils 'fact-finding' trip to Belfast. Delegates, while queueing to have their bags searched - (What did the Association have to fear from its members?) - marvelled at the organisational ability shown by the complete absence of credentials, agendas, discussion papers, and recommendations to conference.

The chairman refused to accept points of order, deeming such a procedure impossible on the grounds that there were no standing orders! The three members of the delegation, arbitrarily expelled in Belfast for objecting to the rigged nature of the visit, were not permitted to speak from the platform. Originally the conference was to have been open to the whole Labour movement but the organisers, the majority either members or sympathisers of the Communist Party, feared they would not be able to defend their undemocratic, unconstitutional actions in Belfast so the conference was restricted to six delegates from each trades council plus "invited trades unionists".

All three expelled members were present as elected delegates from their trades councils in contrast to the other 11 ex officio majority on the platform. The three were told that, like anyone else, they could speak from the floor in discussion.

**PORTUGAL MARCH OPPOSES BOYCOTT**

ABOUT TEN thousand socialists and trades unionists supported the call from the Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee (PWCC) to support the Portuguese Revolution.

A representative of Radio



Renascença, while warning of the dangers facing the revolution from Azevedo's Government, assured the rally at Hyde Park that the workers were resisting the reaction and conveyed the greetings of some of these workers, from the Lisnave shipyards and from Plessey.

The demonstrators carried some placards, written in Portuguese, taken directly from the demonstrations in Lisbon:

"End the economic boycott" - (The EEC has reintroduced tariffs on Portuguese textiles. While the EEC opened negotiations with the Castano regime to eventually integrate Portugal within

By Bernard Misrahi

**Surbiton YS**

the EEC, it didn't want to end dictatorship.)

"Death to the CIA. Down with Social democracy."

**SOARES PICKET: YS BRANCHES MUST MOBILISE!**

The chief social-democrat, Soares, the leader of the Portuguese Socialist Party (SP) has been invited by the Labour Party NEC to address the conference in Blackpool. We do not believe that Soares, who has opposed the workers building up neighbourhood workers and soldiers committees, represents the Portuguese working class. Neither do PS workers who are organising a picket outside the conference when Soares is due to speak. We therefore urge all comrades who will be in Blackpool to attend the picket.

**Labour against housing cuts**

**campaign begins**

John Quirke

THE Labour campaign against Housing cuts published its first bulletin at the beginning of September. This marks the beginning of its campaign to mobilise support around its three demands.

- Powers of requisition of all empty property.
- No cuts in investment in public housing, and no reallocation of money from other services.
- The GLC and the government must return to the policy of the manifesto on which they were elected.

This campaign despite its limitations in not taking a clear position in relation to no increase in rents and rates is a step forward in the fight to call a halt to the anti-working class policies being implemented by the Labour GLC and Labour government. The campaign must be supported by all left-wing activists inside and outside the Labour Party.

At the present the campaign is limited to the Labour Party. But links are being made with tenants associations, Shelter and tenants

groups. Support is also needed from Trade Union branches and Trades Councils. In order to build a base within the Labour movement to confront the Labour leadership at the GLC.

A Co-ordinating Committee is at the moment directing the campaign and each affiliated Labour movement organisation can send a delegate.

The cost of affiliation is £2.50.

Send to LAHC 8 Camden Rd NW1

**£300 FIGHTING FUND**

TO MAINTAIN and improve the standard of your paper, we need money to buy type-writers, duplicators, and other equipment. Unfortunately, we have only collected £91 in three months. To reach our target, we need another £209 in the next three.

So, send your donations to: Chartist Publications, 82, Loughborough Rd., London. S.W.9

JAMES WHITE'S Abortion (Amendment) Bill is not dead - but merely dormant. The fight to retain, let alone extend a woman's right to abortion has only just begun.

**RESTRICTIVE**

What has happened so far? The Select Committee considering the Bill has recommended restrictive measures to change the 1967 Act (reported in the last issue of the Chartist) which will make it even more difficult for a woman to get an abortion. The predominantly anti-abortion Select Committee, far from throwing out White's Bill, has prepared the ground for the government to introduce a Bill with the same ideas but more subtle in approach.

**CAMPAIGN**

Meanwhile the anti-abortion lobby is limbering up to help them along this autumn. The anti-abortion organisations SPUC and LIFE held a doctors' conference last month (for those "interested in the preservation of human life") - delegates fees paid for by the NHS, of course. This conference called upon the government to re-establish the Select Committee and to implement White's measures. A national demonstration is planned in October - their last one drew 60,000.

Throughout the year the Labour Movement has made it clear that these attacks on women's democratic rights were not on. Last month the TUC conference com-

by LIZ ADAMS

mitted the TUC to campaign to defeat any restrictive abortion legislation and to defend and extend NHS facilities for abortion.

What is needed is for delegates to Labour Party conference to support similar resolutions and for the Labour Party and Trade Union membership to campaign jointly to:

- oppose the re-establishment of the Select Committee.
- oppose any Government attempts to introduce further legislation amending the 1967 Act.
- campaign for freely available contraception and abortion facilities.

At the National Abortion Campaign conference on Oct. 18/19th at Imperial College, London, delegates from trade unions and Labour Parties should play a key role in developing a clear programme of action to wage an effective campaign this autumn. For further details contact NAC 30 Camden Rd., NW.1 01-485 4303

**FREE SPEECH ON IRELAND DEMO!**

**OCT. 5th HYDE PARK 2.30pm**

FOR THREE years there has been a ban on Trafalgar Square for meetings in connection with Ireland. A rally has been called by the British Peace Committee to demand free speech on Ireland, and directed against the Prevention of Terrorism and the Special Powers Acts and all emergency powers legislation. So far none of the detainees held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act have been connected with terrorist activity, and none deported to Northern Ireland have been proceeded against on arrival in the Six Counties. Many of them were active Trade Unionists. The main purpose of the Act is clear: intimidation and wider police powers of search and arrest.

All YS Branches should support this demonstration.

**END THE TRAFALGAR SQUARE BAN!**

**ABOLISH THE PREVENTION OF TERRORISM ACT!**

Meet at Hyde Park on October 5th at 2:30pm. March to Trafalgar Square

**Hackney YS IRELAND Troops Out Now ?**

**Tues 14th Oct. 8.00pm**

STAMFORD HILL LIBRARY N.I.6

Debate between: MIKE KNOWLES ( Hackney Trades Council and Troops Out Movement). BOB LABI (LPYS National Committee). Meeting for all Labour supporters - organised by North Hackney LPYS.

**CHARTIST PUBLIC MEETINGS**

**AFTER NEWHAM - WHAT NEXT FOR LABOUR LEFT?**

Main Speaker **Tony Kelly** (Newham N.E. CLP)

LEEDS	BLACKPOOL
730pm Friday 10th Oct Leeds Trades Club Saville Mount off Chapel Town Rd	6 30pm Monday 29th Sept The Victory Counce St Blackpool Central