

# The Newsletter

WEEKLY ORGAN OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

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B/OSL FILE

# TRADE UNIONS!

## Wilson makes way for the Tories

**T**HE attack on the trade unions is now moving into top gear. On Sunday, August 29, the press gave enormous publicity to the articles by the Labour MP Desmond Donnelly and Sir Miles Thomas. An editorial in the 'Sunday Times', mouthpiece of the Thompson Empire, on the same day gave its fullest support to the demand for legal action against the unions. Clearly the attack is being carried out in a very organised way by people whose views coincide with those of the most reactionary and powerful employers.

A noticeable feature of the campaign is its tolerant attitude towards the right-wing trade union leaders. Sir Miles Thomas goes out of his way to compliment them.

'It is not the fault of the union leaders', he says, 'I know many of them personally. They are mostly serious-minded, deeply-thinking and dedicated men. They would not be where they are otherwise. Many of them have statesman-like qualities in their philosophies.'

The employers are well aware that it is not necessary to muzzle these gentlemen, and that, in fact, they need their assistance in order to succeed in taking away the hard earned freedom of millions of ordinary trade unionists.

The class hatred of the employers for the rank-and-file trade unionist is not disguised. In the Tory 'Evening News' of September 1, the weekly ultra-right-wing columnist Lord Arran attacks striking workers as follows:

6... a 30-year-old welder is able to put 18,000 of his mates out of work, to their detriment — not to mention the country.

This is called workers' solidarity. I call it pig-headed obstinacy.

For sheer stupidity give me the British worker demanding his "rights".

You put this bloody government in, chum, and quite soon you'll put it out.

The last sentence is the important one. What the Tory scribe is really saying is that Harold Wilson has opened the door for the Conservative Party to return to Westminster with a greatly increased majority.

### Discredited

This, then, is the role of the right-wing — the trade union leaders hate the working class in struggle and behind the scenes collaborate with the Tory employers to tie them more and more to the capitalist state, whilst Wilson plays ball with the Tories in Parliament in such a way that Labour is discredited and the Tories come back.

Then the Tories will start from where Labour leaves off in its attack on the unions and complete the job.

Such a conclusion cannot be avoided if one studies the events of last week-end. Wilson returned from his holidays knowing full well that the capitalist press were howling about so-called unofficial strikes in the motor-car trade.

### Cashing-in

He cashed in on this by announcing that the Labour government proposed holding an enquiry into 'unofficial strikes'. Yet, the same Wilson knew that, just a few days earlier Ford put many thousands of workers on short-time without consulting the trade unions concerned. This was only done several days after the short-time proposal was announced.

Wilson avoids mentioning the motor employers, who sack workers indiscriminately, and who are protected by the press.

He concentrates instead on attacking the workers who are the victims of the

capitalist offensive and who are being maligned by the capitalist press. Is there any further evidence needed that our so-called Labour Prime Minister is a tool of the Tory capitalists?

Now take the way in which Wilson and company treat their colleague, Desmond Donnelly, MP.

Remember, that one of the so-called reasons why they expelled the Young Socialists was that they talked about their differences with the right-wing in public.

### 'Curb unions'

No such treatment for Donnelly. He comes along with an article in the Tory 'Sunday Telegraph' (how more public can you get?) in which he makes the following legislative proposals to curb the unions:

6First, Mr. Aubrey Jones's Council on Incomes and Prices should be invested with statutory powers. It should have the authority to examine such wage settlements and price arrangements as it wishes, in order that they should conform broadly to national policies. It would also try to ensure that employer-union agreements are soundly based in the interests of both.

Second, recognised contracts between management and the unions must be legally enforceable; and either side must have the right to sue the other if it defaults. A statutory period of notice before any strike action can be taken should be enforceable, thus eliminating wild-cat strikes.

Third, certain statutory model rules must apply to all unions, including the introduction of the secret

Continued page 4, col. 7—>

by  
**Frank Williams**

### S. Vietnam students march against call-up

By MICHAEL BANDA

**W**HILE the military situation in South Vietnam has bogged down into sporadic fighting and localised guerrilla operations, the political situation continues to deteriorate rapidly.

In Hue, on August 29, a mass rally of 3,000 students demonstrated against the mobilisation decree of the South Vietnam government, which makes all higher school certificate holders eligible for military service.

This latest decree shows how desperately short of manpower the puppet government is, and although the decree has been somewhat modified, the students — and the Buddhist clergy as well as the urban population — have defied the threats of the regime to demonstrate not only against the decree, but against the whole reactionary, medieval set-up that passes for government in Saigon.

### Civilian government call

Main target for attack by the students was General Van Thieu, Chief of State, and the most hated man next to Air Vice-Marshal Cao Ky. The students demand the election of a civilian government to replace the military junta.

### Blue Union call in Merseyside leaflet

## 'For 100 per cent trade unionism on

## the docks'

## 'Blue' and 'White' unite against the Devlin Report

By Our Liverpool Correspondent

**T**HE Devlin proposals will hand the docker and the industry back to the big port bosses. To increase the power of these bosses, the "Blue Union" will be driven from Merseyside. Then all trace of any democracy in the Transport and General Workers' Union will disappear.

This warning is in a leaflet which was distributed up and down Merseyside docks this week. It is a statement from the Merseyside Area Committee of the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (the 'Blue Union').

Last week, Transport and General Workers' Union officials held dock-gate meetings on Merseyside, supporting the Devlin report. At the same time they announced a drive against non-unionism and a 'card show' on September 6.

### T & G authority

'Blue Union' dockers see these moves in line with the recent attack on the 'Blue Union' by Mr. Lew Lloyd, the docks district secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union. They see the Transport and General officials seeking to establish the type of authority which Devlin would welcome.

The dockers remember the period before 1955 when the Transport and General officials were more arrogant because men did not receive their docker's registration book except on production of a T & G card. It is the bitter experience of this bureaucratic authority which has been one of the main ingredients of the stubborn persistence of the 'Blue Union' in the north, despite continuous difficulties and victimisation.

Now, the Transport and General leadership seeks to establish its authority on the docks to assist the carrying through of 'modernisation' plans.

### Crushing plans

In these plans there can be no room for the 'Blue Union' with its democratic and militant traditions, neither in the north nor in London—despite the granting of a seat on the modernisation committee. It was always clear that if the T & G officialdom crushed the 'Blue Union' in the north then they would clean it up in London.

'The democratic control of the "Blue Union" by its members has always been seen by the employers as an obstacle to their plans', says the statement of the Merseyside Area Committee.

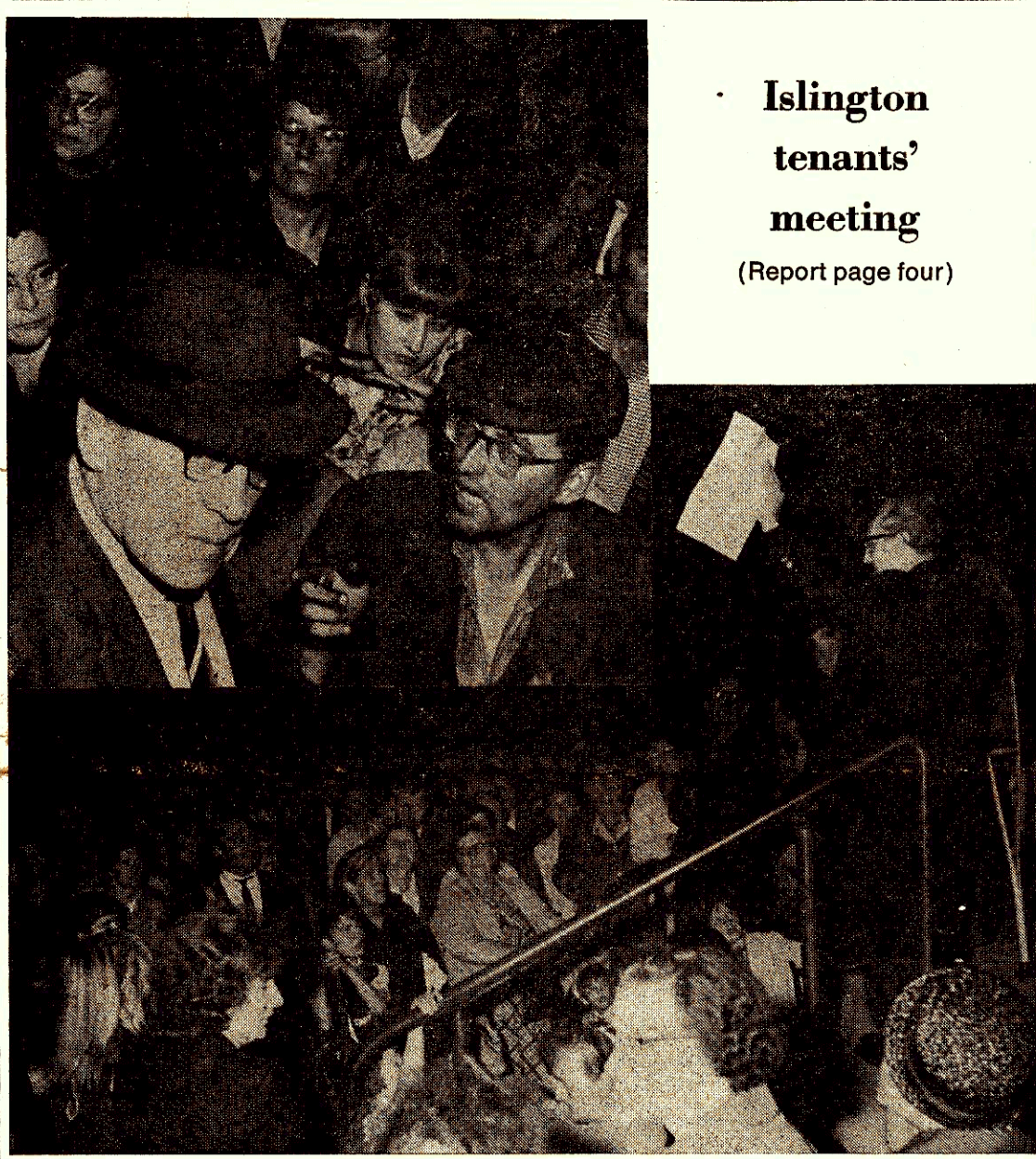
'The Ammon and Leggett reports attacked the NASD because its officials were under the control of lay committees. The Devlin report attacks democratic procedures in the union. It proposes that this should be changed and also that the power of the Transport and General leadership should be strengthened.

'The attack on democracy in the trade unions goes hand-in-hand with an attack on the freedom of a docker to belong to the union of his choice—"white" or "blue".'

### Recruitment ban

The statement declares that the proposals from T & G officials for a 'card show' are 'part of an attempt to impose an agreement on northern "Blue Union" members to ban all recruitment to the "Blue" "Blue Union" members,

Continued page 4, col. 7—>



Islington tenants' meeting

(Report page four)

## Tenants tackle councillors at angry rent-rise meeting

The chairman of the Islington, London, Tenants' Association is seen above holding a notice from the town clerk ordering tenants to pay rent increases of up to 38s. in two phases. Tenants met last Friday outside the local town hall to protest against the increases and to lobby a special council meeting which was discussing the rents question. But, it seems, the matter had already been decided—the notices were pushed through the tenants' letter-boxes while they were at the meeting. Anger rose as the notice was read out, and, when the council meeting ended, tenants stopped councillors to discuss the position with them (see picture above). There is increasing support in the area for the policies of the Young Socialists, who have participated in the struggle, and a large turn-out is expected at a YS demonstration against the Labour government and the rent increases its economic measures have created.

## NLF MEMBERS REFUSED ENTRY

**T**HE Labour government has refused entry visas to members of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, invited to this country by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

Sir Frank Soskice, in a letter to Lord Russell, has stated that he had decided it was 'not in the national interest' to let them in.

Lord Russell, in his comment on this piece of humbug, stated:

### 'Not final'

'We cannot accept this decision as final... We shall seek the reversal of this decision and begin a national campaign to demonstrate the extent of public feeling until the government's decision is reversed.'

A letter in the 'Statesman', signed by, amongst others, Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, supports the right of Liberation Front representatives to visit this country.

## Ford deliverymen to return at Halewood

Newsletter Industrial Reporter

**T**HE 300 men employed by Silcock and Colling Ltd., on delivery of Ford cars from Halewood, Liverpool, were recommended, on Thursday, to return to work.

Union representatives, who met with the employers and a Ministry of Labour industrial relations officer for seven hours on Wednesday, will ask the men to return while an industrial court determines whether there has been a breach of procedure in the sacking of shop steward, Frank Murray.

The men struck two weeks ago after Murray was dismissed. He had just returned to the factory after being found guilty of dangerous driving.

### UNPRECEDENTED

Strike committee members claim that the men went on strike because the management's action was unprecedented. The procedure agreement was broken, the committee alleges, because Murray was sacked without any discussion.

### MOTOR TALKS AT NO. 10

Trade union leaders and management representatives from the motor industry were meeting Minister of Labour, Gunter, and Prime Minister, Wilson, at 10 Downing Street on Friday, to discuss the recent disputes in the industry.





# Industrial Newsletter

## HALEWOOD SHUTDOWN

# More hardship facing

## Ford workers

From BILL HUNTER,

**THIS week, Ford at Halewood, Liverpool, have shut down their production lines completely. The management declared on Thursday of last week that the factory would reopen on September 7—providing the delivery men's strike was over.**

**This is the latest attack on Ford workers. The company unloads its sales difficulties upon the backs of its workers. Do they hope trade union officials will end the strike of 300 car delivery men?**

At the same time as Ford workers were given another blow, the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee at Halewood issued a duplicated statement on short-time working.

The first thing the statement points out is how big business rewards a willingness to sacrifice workers' conditions in the interests of a profit drive.

'The trade unions,' says the statement, 'agree to commit their members to a policy of a high amount of overtime during the peak spring and summer periods when schedules are running high as opposed to the hiring of extra labour who would be fired when schedules drop.'

'They also agree to "mobility of labour", whereby men are constantly re-deployed to maintain efficiency of plant operations, often with great inconvenience to the men concerned.'

### 'Reward'

'Both these measures are patiently endured, and much co-operation is given. The reward for this is labelled "continuity of employment", virtually a guaranteed five-day week.'

'And yet the Ford Motor Company, the only company to have secured such agreements, is the first of the motor car manufacturers to cast its employees on to short-time working and imperil their livelihood with redundancy tactics.'

Only a few weeks ago the Ford Company was disciplining men for refusing to comply with a 15 hours per week overtime plan, in addition to Saturday.

The statement, however, repeats the illusion that the Labour government will come to the aid of Ford workers. It ends with an appeal to George Brown: 'We urge most strongly that you be ever-watchful of the Ford Motor Company, and that you thoroughly acquaint yourself with the current situation.'

### Unemployment

This statement was being distributed on the very same day that the press reported that Labour Ministers were critical of Ford, Hoover and Vauxhall. Why? Because they ought not to have reduced hours or workers without loss of pay? Not at all.

The 'Sun' reported that: 'Some Ministers would be prepared to see short-term unemployment while workers find other jobs, rather than have much-needed manpower wasted on a four-day week.'

Sections of the Labour right wing argued that the Ford workers should have been released on to the labour market.

The Labour Ministers want to assist capitalism through reducing the shortage of some skilled labour by general unemployment in an area like Merseyside where unemployment is already growing.

The Ford workers have far more to fear from Gunter, Brown, Wilson and Callaghan than ever Ford have.

### Immigrants

From page three

What is the response of the trade unions to this? Complete silence, which means complicity with the employers. No struggle to unite French and immigrant workers. No fight against the conditions which the immigrants have to put up with.

The only voice really being raised is that of the group of Italian workers who publish the monthly bulletin 'Noi Emigranti'. They have begun to organise immigrant workers without distinction of nationality. Their programme can be reviewed in the following points:

(1) Establishment of an organisation of immigrant workers to fight side-by-side with French workers, exploited by the same employers.

(2) Bring as many immigrants as possible into the French trade unions to defend the interests of the immigrants through a National Convention of Immigrant Workers on a programme of (a) equal pay for equal work, (b) payment of the same family allowances as the French workers, (c) decent housing conditions, (d) recognition of skills and professional qualifications, (e) full political rights.

(3) Formation of solidarity committees to aid those in need.

This kind of work becomes increasingly necessary as the capitalist economy ceases to expand.

It is the only way to mobilise this enormous mass of workers, who not only experience all the problems of the French worker, but others besides.

These workers must be brought into the struggles of the French working class. The passivity of the French unions on the question of the immigrants must be broken down. It is to these tasks that 'Noi Emigranti' devotes itself.

### Los Angeles

From page three

being a movement of struggle against the economic and social roots of oppression, which persists, and even gets worse with the deepening crisis of capitalism, despite the new laws.

Those who wanted civil rights only to allow the Negro to 'take his place in American society' are being thrust aside, because that American capitalist society cannot provide any place for its new 'citizens'. Along with large sections of the working class they are now impelled to a struggle against the ruling class and its system of profit and war.

### Private eyes

From page two

Its successful battle against the right wing of the Labour Party in the Young Socialists, its confident progress towards the daily Trotskyist newspaper, and its growing acceptance as the alternative leadership of the most advanced workers, have left behind for ever the days when Trotskyism could be dismissed as an insignificant minority tendency.

These two publications are part of the offensive now being mounted against the working class as a whole.

Having successfully tamed the Stalinists as well as the Labourites, the ruling class now finds it desperately urgent to deal with the alternative leadership.

They will not succeed: the working class will turn back their offensive, and in the course of the struggle, the Trotskyists will win their place as the new working-class leadership.

## Growing opposition to BR 'deal'

Newsletter Correspondent

A LARGE number of resolutions passed by rank-and-file members and local leaders of the National Union of Railwaymen are building up against the 'package deal' offer by British Rail's new boss, Stanley Raymond.

The deal, which is in line with George Brown's wage freeze policy, will tie workers down to a three per cent increase in October, another three per cent next year 'unless there were major changes in the meantime', and a reduction in working hours to 40 a week.

On holidays, chairman of the Railways Board, Raymond, said he would like to make a modest start, and proposed one extra day for staff with ten or more years' service. The position would be reviewed in 1966.

Raymond called the deal a 'planned programme for progress'.

Progress could hardly be the word when rail workers are 11 per cent behind other industries on the wages front.

Many district councils of the union are now preparing to wage a fight against the package deal.

### AEU ORDERS

## DON'T STRIKE OVER PAY

Newsletter Correspondent

IN a recent circular to district committees of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, the executive committee of the union says members have no right to strike or revert to day-working when they are in dispute with an employer over payments-by-results or time worked.

The executive states that: 'In future no support will be given, nor benefit paid, in respect of stoppages of work which have not received the prior approval of the district committee and the executive committee in accordance with the rules of the union.'

### 'Mutual agreement'

The circular complains that an increasing number of cases concerning payments-by-results are remitted for discussion to the Central Conference, but that these disputes are really a matter of mutual agreement between the workman and the employer.

No more cases are to be discussed at the Central Conference.

So, as workers strive to keep up with the rising cost of living by improving existing agreements, their leaders attempt to tie their hands behind their backs with bureaucratic red tape.

### India

From page two

in food-grains and a system of compulsory requisition of all marketable surpluses with provisions for adequate compensation for the tenant-cultivators and poor farmers is an unpostponeable and indispensable policy for ensuring an adequate supply of food to the people.

But in order to provide a real abundance of grain, not only for consumption, but particularly for export, a vast programme of land reform, land reclamation, cheap credit, fertilisers and better marketing facilities for the cultivators must be introduced.

To expect any of these things from the Congress regime would be like extracting milk from a he-goat. Only a workers' and peasants' government will end hunger, misery and capitalism in India.

## Recognition strike in tenth week

Sheffield components blacked in Midlands

Newsletter Reporter

THE ten-week-old strike of over 100 Amalgamated Engineering Union members at Dunford and Elliotts (Sheffield) has received powerful support from the Midlands.

Workers at the British Motor Corporation's Tractor and Transmissions plant at Birmingham decided to renew their 'blacking' of all steel components from the Sheffield firm from August 23. Supplies amount to about 80 per cent of steel used.

This announcement, which came after a BMC convenor had visited Sheffield, contradicted an earlier statement by an AEU executive member who had been conducting negotiations in the strike.

Workers struck after the management allegedly refused to recognise the union.

This strike is closely connected with the 'package deal' signed between the AEU and the employers. The strikers want a similar shift system operated by the AEU in Sheffield — four-shift week with 'mini-shift' on Fridays — even though Midland workers are opposing the 'mini-shift'.

### CRACK SYSTEM

But this system would crack the 'Sheffield shift system' under which shift workers must remain at their jobs if their replacements do not arrive for work.

Workers at Ambrose Shards (Sheffield) added their support to the Dunford and Elliott workers when they passed a motion calling for the suspension of National Union of General and Municipal Workers' local official. His union has failed to call out their members in sympathy with the AEU men, on the grounds that their union is not a direct party to the dispute.

## TOILET DISPUTE ENDS

FOLLOWING an announcement that a team of men would investigate actions which led to a strike of 40 workers at the Coventry Felt Company, it was agreed to return to work.

The investigation team is part of a proposal put by a local official of the Transport and General Workers' Union during a week-long strike over the dismissal of a 19-year-old machinist, whom the management alleged spent too long at the toilet.

Carol Lloyd, the dismissed machinist, said that she had only been away for 10 minutes.

### Vote to return

The company, which supplies felt to the major car firms, claims that Carol was away for 20 minutes and that production was disrupted.

At first the majority voted in favour of continuing the strike. But after a local TGWU official and a union representative from Massey Ferguson — who said he could not guarantee support from workers at his firm—both said that the decision was wrong, and another vote was taken.

### Wilson

From page one

ballot before strike action can be taken. This will ensure a more true reflection of collective union opinion and safeguard the rights of the membership, to say nothing of their wives.

No-one in the right-wing, or for that matter, in the so-called left-wing, demands Donnelly's expulsion from the Labour Party for airing his views — and what views — in the 'Sunday Telegraph'. He says and does what he likes, whilst the Young Socialists are victimised by Wilson and his hirelings.

### No different

Could any other example be produced to prove in practice that Wilson is no different from Ramsay MacDonald and that he is doing the same dirty work now as the former did in 1931?

The lesson should be clear. Labour needs a Marxist revolutionary leadership — one which goes all out to expose the capitalists and expose their agents inside the Labour Party and the trade unions. There can be no more compromise with Wilson and his Tory allies.

### 100 per cent unionism

From page one

it is declared, can transfer to the 'White' — but not vice versa. What sort of freedom of choice is that?

The Area Committee declares it will not accept the plan that T & G officials will eventually 'service' 'Blue Union' members. The result of these proposals would be to reduce the NASD to 'a tiny "sweet" club'.

The statement goes on: 'The Merseyside Area Committee of the NASD stands for 100 per cent trade unionism on the docks. Time and again we have proposed to the Transport and General Workers' Union that there should be a joint campaign to bring this about. But we will expose any attempt to attack the "Blue Union" and split the dockers under cover of a supposed plan for strengthening trade unionism.'

'The present moves for a card check, etc., have been decided, arbitrarily, by T & G officials, without consultation with the NASD members concerned.'

The statement then issues a call to the rank-and-file members of the TGWU, 'who have supported us in all struggles for the dockers' interests'.

It asks them 'to demand that their District Committee meet the Merseyside Area Committee of the NASD and work out a joint campaign'.

### Joint campaign

Confidently, the statement says:

'A joint campaign of "White" and "Blue", up and down the docks, with freedom of choice, would bring 100 per cent trade unionism within a week and would do away with splits and discrimination.'

'We call for unity of "Blue" and "White", for trade unionism on the docks and the building of a strong organisation to defeat the plans to hand back the dockers and the industry to the port bosses.'

'If seriously concerned, then the T & G will meet the Merseyside Area Committee of the "Blue" to work out a campaign — otherwise we can only conclude that the present moves are meant to split the dockers at a critical time.'

'The NASD has every right and duty to continue to enrol non-unionists. Already, since the Devlin report, many dockers have joined the NASD. Membership of the "Blue Union" will still be open to dockers on Merseyside.'

'We stand in support of freedom of choice and 100 per cent trade unionism.'

The NASD announces a mass meeting for 'all dockers' next Saturday, on 'Devlin and Democracy'. It also announces as a speaker — Bert Aylward, former secretary of the dockers section of the NASD, who retired recently. He is well-known and well respected on Merseyside.

## Rent rise confirmed as tenants meet

Newsletter Reporter

WHILE angry Islington, North London, council tenants held a rent rise meeting outside the town hall last Friday (August 27), notices were being pushed through their letter boxes ordering them to pay increases up to 38s., in two phases.

Inside the town hall a special council meeting was supposed to be deciding whether or not to implement the increases.

A roar went up as the Tenants' Association chairman read out the 'two-phase' terms of the notice from the town clerk, which was rushed to the 300-strong tenants' meeting. Tenants will have to pay the first amount next Monday and the rest next April. A Tenants' Association leaflet has since recommended tenants to pay the first phase!

### Councillors blamed

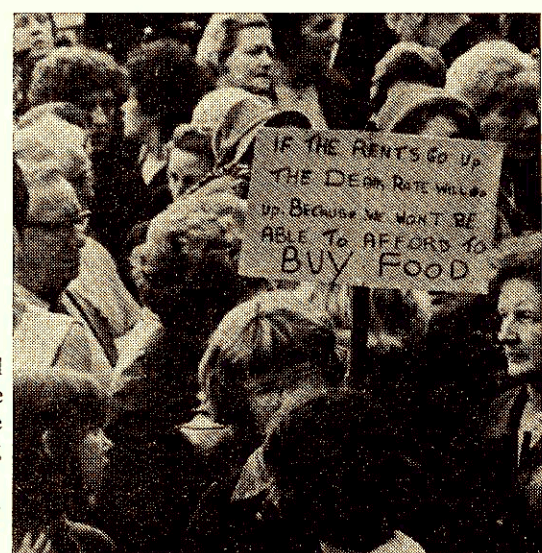
For nearly three hours the tenants stood outside the council meeting last Friday listening to speakers, several from the Communist Party, who blamed the rent increases on the 'incompetence' of Islington Labour councillors to run the finances of the borough.

'You can make your position clear at the next election by not voting for the councillors', several speakers suggested — omitting to mention any alternative.

### Speakers stopped

The previous evening, at a similar meeting, Young Socialist speakers were prevented from speaking after one of their supporters explained the increasing number of rent rises all over the country, in terms of the financial crisis of the Labour government and the economic restrictions imposed on councils, who have passed the buck to their own tenants.

Having whipped up the anger of the tenants, speakers, after



The very young see rent rises as an increase in the cost of living.

## Middx Y S to protest housing racket

IN Southall, Middlesex, recently, two of the independent Ealing Labour councillors spoke on the same platform as the leader of the Council's Tory group at a meeting called by the 'whites only' Southall Residents' Association. The meeting passed a resolution against immigrants having council houses. As reported in last week's 'Newsletter', six Labour councillors have split from the Labour group to form their own group, after voting with the Tories to make immigrants wait 15 years for a council house. Members of the Residents' Association, which gets houses £100 cheaper — but only for white people — have been collecting names on a petition against immi-

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