



RECALL TUC - BUILD COUNCILS OF ACTION

BREAK LOCKOUT- GENERAL STRIKE

The 2-day lockout which the Tory government is imposing on the whole working class is a cool and calculated manoeuvre.

The Tories' actions are not determined by a real coal shortage (there are 14 million tons of coal stockpiled at power stations and another 13 million at the pit heads—enough to weather the NUM overtime ban for several months *without* power cuts), but are an attempt to put immense pressure on the working class and throw the trade union bureaucrats into panic. This, they hope, will split the labour movement and break all resistance to government policy.

The General Council of the TUC has refused to recall Congress and instead decided to organise a national demonstration and campaign against Tory policies. But what sort of alternative can the TUC chiefs put forward when their main efforts in recent weeks have been to ask ASLEF to call off its industrial action, and to discuss collaborating with the Tories to end the current industrial disputes in exchange for a lifting of the lockout? Not even the TUC General Council can really believe that a government which is prepared to lockout the entire country for 2 days every week will be frightened by a one-day strike.

What the situation calls for is not some wishy-washy 'campaign' but a *determined working class counter offensive*. The call of the AUEW and TGWU executives and the London Trades Council for an immediate recall of the TUC must echo from every quarter of the trade union movement. The demand must be raised for such a TUC to unite and organise the working class to fight the Tory attacks in the most effective way: through a *general strike to bring down the Tory government*.

But trade union militants should not sit on their hands until the TUC acts. The fight against Phase 3 and for the present wage claims must be pressed forward. Those unions which are now on the firing line—especially the miners and the engineers—must meet the Tory challenge by stepping up their industrial actions and providing a concrete focus for the struggle of the whole working class.

A national strike by either the miners or the engineers could turn the tide against the Tories, but a united fight by them both would shake the government to its very foundations. Combined with active efforts to unite all the struggles against Phase 3, such an alliance would be a massive step towards a general strike.

Practical measures must be taken to unite the working class at the rank-and-file level. Such unity demands resistance to all attempts by the ruling class to hoist the burdens of the present crisis on to the backs of the working class and break their willingness to fight. A determined struggle against all redundancies and for full pay during lay-offs must be organised throughout the trade union movement, with factory occupations as a key weapon.

The local labour movement must use such struggles to forge the unity which will enable it to go on the offensive. Councils of Action must be set up in every area to organise and unite all the local struggles of the working class, and draw in other sympathetic groups such as students, tenants and housewives. If the TUC is prepared to organise a national fight against the government, then these Councils of Action will be an invaluable local arm of the struggle. If the TUC refuses to go beyond token protests, then the Councils could coordinate their actions and give a national lead themselves.

Measures such as these can block the Tories' manoeuvre and forge a united movement which could rapidly dispose of the Tory government and take up the task of preparing and implementing a *working class solution* to the crisis.



Lawrence Daly talks to building workers lobbying Wednesday's TUC General Council meeting over the Shrewsbury verdicts. He told them 'This is our fight too'. Absolutely right! We trust that Mr Daly will call on the TUC to take up the fight to reverse the verdict and stop the trials, and will work to place the might of the NUM behind this campaign.

SHREWSBURY

no prison door can withstand the workers' might

THREE YEARS, TWO YEARS and NINE MONTHS IN PRISON—these are the savage sentences handed down on picket leaders Des Warren, Eric Tomlinson, and John M. Jones in the first of the Shrewsbury trials on Wednesday.

The working class is already preparing its reply to this brutal attack. The Liverpool Trades Council has called a one-day area strike for today. The London Shrewsbury Defence Committee has called on London building workers to stop today, and they will be joined by London dockers. The dockers have also announced their willingness to take part in an indefinite stoppage in the new year if the building workers give them a lead. The London Defence Committee is meeting again next Friday to decide what further action to take.

These vicious sentences will touch

off a wave of indignation throughout the labour movement. Even the foreman of the jury which convicted the Shrewsbury defendants was moved to stand up in open court and denounce the sentences as 'disgusting'. The crucial question over the next ten days will be how to turn this indignation into a mass, organised movement which can **overturn the sentences, and stop these trials.**

Only a movement of the sort which freed the Pentonville 5 can free these men. One-day strikes will not be enough. What is needed is definite commitments from all sections of the labour movement, but especially from building workers, for **indefinite stoppages from 1 January.**

The London dockers picketing the Home Office on Wednesday called on building workers to

give them a lead. Yet the Communist Party rejected demands at the London Defence Committee that very same evening for indefinite stoppage of the building trade in the new year. But this is precisely what every organised section of workers is waiting for!

The Executives, and all regional bodies, of UCATT and T&G must call for indefinite stoppages in the new year. But militants must not wait on these two unions. Shrewsbury defence committees and all rank-and-file trade union bodies must use the next 10 days to hold as many factory gate meetings as possible to get convenors and shop stewards meetings to pledge industrial action for the new year.

The Tories have conducted a vicious provocation at Shrewsbury. Turn Shrewsbury into the spark which is needed to set the whole working class ablaze!

NO RED WEEKLY NEXT WEEK

Red Weekly 33 will appear 4 JAN

Sunningdale - getting the show on the road

With the agreement reached at Sunningdale, the final stages of the new British settlement for Ireland have been reached. Powers have been devolved upon the Assembly Executive, and the show is ready for the road.

To put the agreement in perspective, however, it is necessary to go back to the local government elections last May, which were supposed to create a new political 'centre' on which the settlement would rest. But instead, the voting conformed by and large to the old sectarian pattern, and commentators wept over the corpses of the Alliance and Northern Ireland Labour Parties.

In the Assembly elections in June the sectarian pattern re-asserted itself even more firmly. Catholics and protestants voted to keep each other out. Paradoxically this assisted Whitelaw. The established politicians on either side, who had the best chance of winning, thus attracted a higher proportion of the votes. Thus the Faulkner Unionists and the SDLP emerged with more seats than they could otherwise have expected, and the scales were tipped towards an agreement.

DUCKS THE ISSUE

A solution to the most difficult problem at Sunningdale—the constitutional status of Northern Ireland—was neatly avoided. Paragraph five of the Sunningdale communiqué reads as follows:

'5. The Irish Government fully accepted and solemnly declared that there could be no change in the status of Northern Ireland until a majority of the people of Northern Ireland desired a change in that status.

The British Government solemnly declared that it was, and would remain, its policy to support the wishes of the majority of the people of Northern Ireland. The present status of Northern Ireland is that it is part of the United Kingdom. In the future, the majority of the people of Northern Ireland should indicate a wish to become part of a United Ireland, the British Government would support that wish.' (emphasis added).

When Jack Lynch grumbled in the Dail that the sentence we have emphasised means that the South's constitutional claim to the whole of Ireland is invalidated, he was brightly told that the Irish and British statements had to be read as 'parallel', taking no precedence over each other, (i.e. you can choose the interpretation you like). Nevertheless, no interpretation can duck the fact that it registers with the United Nations the right of a minority of the Irish people to maintain partition.

On almost every other point of controversy, discussion was postponed. The only real function for the Council of Ireland will be the co-ordination of repression, but even here they were unable to settle the extradition question.

PROVOS NOT BEATEN

The nature of the agreement was determined by the fact that the original package, as outlined in Whitelaw's Green Paper, was premised on the military defeat of the Provisional IRA. Operation Motorman was to be the key point of this military strategy. But the Provos were not beaten. The military effort in the North, and the chronic political crisis there, began to be reflected in demoralisation in the army, and defection at home. So the deal had to be brought forward; not as a solution to the Irish crisis, but to hold off the political difficulties created by the Irish crisis for British politics.

Its purpose therefore is to hold the line while the Provos are smashed, and the conditions for the



The twin campaigns in defence of Irish political prisoners and to force the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland continued in London this week.

On Saturday morning, North London Troops Out Movement placed a twenty-strong picket on the Parkhurst Road Army Recruiting Office. This picket had the public support of local public representatives and Trades Council members.

Throughout that same night, a predominantly women's vigil took place outside Brixton Prison, where Dolours and Marion Price, two of the Republican prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment at Winchester are being force-fed.

On Sunday afternoon, 250 people marched in a

demonstration from Hyde Park to the Free State Embassy to protest against the Dublin government's attitude to Republican prisoners in Britain. The march was organised by the Prisoners Aid Committee, and included contingents from Clann na hEireann, West London Troops Out Movement, the International Marxist Group, PD and NICRA (see photo above).

On Monday evening, North London Troops Out Movement placed a picket on the Quintin Kyneston School in Finchley Road to protest against the presence of an Army stand in the school's careers convention. As the Troops Out Movement gave out their leaflet they were joined by members of the National Union of School Students, who gave out a leaflet written by NUT and NUSS members from inside

the school. In all, 50 people supported the demonstration—more than the total number of people attending the careers convention.

Activity on the question of troops must be maintained. As recruitment for the British Army continues to fall, Chapman Pincher in the *Daily Express* (14 October) revealed that the British Army now has a plan to ease the dangerous shortage of male recruits by enticing more women to join. It seems that the British Government applied at the recent NATO Ministerial Meeting to alter the NATO rules to allow them to open up more jobs to women in the Army. Nobody should be under any illusion that this represents a conversion on the part of the Army top brass to the idea of sexual equality.

imposition of a more long-term solution are created. That is why the major problems were ignored.

STATE STRUCTURE

There were few concessions in the agreement for the inhabitants of the ghettos of Belfast and Derry and the catholic dominated border towns, who have been the social base of the Republican resistance. Specifically there is no move towards reform of the sectarian state structure in the North. The SDLP did not even press its shabby compromise on policing.

It is this which will provoke the sharpest conflicts in the coming period, and will prevent the de-mobilisation of the Provos support. Day by day, subject to Army harassment, visiting the men behind the wire, wary of a sectarian pogrom, the ghetto people will be made to know that in the North of Ireland they are still the wretched of the earth. It is from such springs of bitterness that the Provisionals have always drawn the strength for their military campaign.

The Provos are basing their strategy on the assumption that they can retain their support, and carry on the military struggle long enough to provoke a breakdown in the settlement, and a political crisis which will force the British to sue for peace. But there is a great danger that the minority could become exhausted before such a goal is realised. Only an extension of the base of resistance, which requires a quite different political

strategy, can create conditions for victory.

No serious reforms can be made in the state structure because this would undermine the hold of the Faulkner Unionists on a viable section of the Unionist electorate. Faulkner has already moved dangerously far from his base of support, and obtained a majority in the last meeting of the Unionist Council only by two expedients. First he got an agreement that the wives of Assemblymen could vote, as did wives of Stormont MPs in the past. Second he promised to break off negotiations if the South did not drop its constitutional claim to the whole territory of Ireland.

There is thus likely to be a further split in the Unionist Party, and the leaders of the various fragments will be struggling to win over its mass base. Success in this can only be the result of a systematic campaign within the Assembly, combined with the re-mobilisation and unifying of the mass protestant extra-parliamentary opposition, in a fight for the protestant ascendancy.

The protestant resistance has thrown up mass paramilitary organisations, which have matched endlessly up and down, and which have issued threat after threat. But the results have been only a bitter sectarian murder campaign and one brief clash with the British Army, after which the mass organisations subsided in confusion.

Millionaire Keen strikes again

The mining town of Barnsley in Yorkshire was recently subjected to a massive poster raid by members of an organisation called 'Campaign for a More Prosperous Britain,' led by self-styled millionaire Tom Keen. The posters attacked the 'Marxist Traitors' in the NUM for wrecking the 'British Way of Life' by forcing the miners to go on overtime ban against their will.

Last week, Keen struck again. This time it was the TUC Headquarters in London which came in for a plastering with anti-union and anti-communist propaganda. The theme once again was that well known 'communists' such as Jack Jones, Hugh Scanlon and Joe Goenley (!) were bringing anarchy to the country and destroying 'Democracy.' This time, Keen and five of his followers were arrested for criminal damage and bill-posting.

The activities of Mr. Tom Keen and his organisation might appear as just eccentric buffoonery. But in fact Keen belongs firmly to the fascist right-wing of British politics, and the bold and imaginative style of his operations should not obscure this fact.

Tom Keen first came to prominence on the extreme right when he created the 'National Party of St. George' in the Reading area in 1971. This offered a platform to various other fascist elements, including representatives from Colin Jordan's British Movement, Mosleyites and the National Front, and was intended primarily as a stewarding body or physical defence group for the ultra-right. Other activities included the leafleting of local pubs and factories with racist propaganda. However, the Party was soon proscribed by the National Front on the grounds that it was too right wing.

AMBITIOUS PROGRAMME

The 'National Party of St. George' was the embryo of the 'Campaign for a More Prosperous Britain,' which has developed an ambitious programme of propaganda, financed by Mr. Keen. The CMPB operates out of Oldham, where under cover of 'Units To Let Ltd' (364 Manchester Road), Keen houses his litho printing machine. His workforce are officially employed in a number of property companies set up by him, but carry out reactionary political tasks for a regular monthly income of between £15 and £30 a month. Apart from smuggling (for which he was once fined

£2,000), Keen has made his money in property speculation. He owns or part-owns several companies: Cholsey Investments, Purley Publishers, Berkshire Farm Suppliers, Thomas L. Keen (Property Management), Thomas L. Keen Investments (Property Management), Come 'N Eat, and Jolson and Keen.

In April of this year, Keen led an 'iron bar raid' on a young family who would not leave one of his properties because they had nowhere else to go. After smashing up the family's furniture and terrorising their pets, he smashed the windows in other houses 'to keep out squatters.' The house was on the Anglo-American Estate, Purley, near Reading, which Keen bought for £3,000 just after the war. Having successfully forced the family out, he was able subsequently to sell the land for £1 million. Keen claimed he was 'morally 100% right' to do what he did because he 'owned the property.' Yet one of the demands of his Campaign is for 'the end of black market prices of building plots, which are forcing newly married couples in particular to take on extortionate mortgages and put their money in the hands of profiteers' (from *Striking News*, paper of the More Prosperous

Britain Society). There's hypocrisy and demagoguery for you!

BY-ELECTIONS

Keen has used his money for many anti-working activities. During the recent BRS dispute in Coventry, he attempted to break the strike by offering 100 of the 1,300 workers a £2.50 rise for ten weeks, 'out of his own pocket.' The bait was not taken. Dick Taverne was offered £100,000 by Keen to field candidates for a breakaway political party—but he too is reputed to have declined the offer. Nevertheless the Campaign for a More Prosperous Britain, his most successful achievement so far, carried out a poster campaign against the Labour candidate in the Lincoln by-election. Keen also intervened in a similar way in the Chester le Street, Dundee (East) and Govan by-elections.

Keen has over the past few months shown himself to be one of the most determined figures on the extreme right—quite prepared to organise squads of bully-boys in his efforts to split the working class movement with anti-communist and racist hysteria. Such a situation cannot be tolerated by the labour movement. In future, working class and anti-fascist organisations should make every attempt to keep Keen and his Campaign off the streets; ignoring his activities will only encourage others to follow in the path which he has already trodden out.

MINERS AND ENGINEERS

Must unite to face crisis

For many weeks, *Red Weekly* has been calling for an alliance between miners and engineers as the key to a successful fight to overthrow Phase 3. The government's announcement of a 3-day working week, which came as a surprise to the whole country, completely transforms the situation on the industrial front. What is the way forward now?

The 3-day week is an attempt to smash the NUM into submission by sabotaging the economy, thereby bringing to an end the one struggle which could become a signal for the rest of the working class to go into action. But it is also designed to simultaneously pour cold water on the engineering struggle which is slowly getting under way.

There are two big dangers in this situation. The first is that the engineers will be thrown back onto the defensive. The second is that the miners will simply continue with their present overtime ban in the belief that the 'general chaos' will force the government to yield a better and bigger offer in the New Year.

MINERS

After last Thursday's meeting of the EC of the NUM, which rejected any form of ballot and reaffirmed the overtime ban, Joe Gormley said: 'It (the overtime ban) is having the same effect as a strike, and the men are getting paid'. A few moments later, the Government was to shatter this cheerful attitude by announcing a two-day a week lock-out of the entire working class.

Gormley's strategy has been to leave it deliberately unclear as to whether the overtime ban was intended as a preparation for a strike (by running down coal stocks) or as a substitute for a strike (by pressuring a government already in difficulty). Gormley was hoping that the government would find some compromise offer before a ballot on a strike became unavoidable.

But the line of the NUM EC now makes no sense at all. To continue the ban on the grounds that this is a sufficient means of industrial action to achieve the claim is no use: the government has just made it clear that it intends to stand firm on Phase 3 to the extent of sabotaging the economy at a cost of £400 million a week! Even as a preparation for industrial action the overtime ban loses some of its force, for a secondary aim of the power cuts is to conserve the existing supplies of coal in preparation for a long struggle.

The NUM executive was right to reject the idea of a ballot on the offer. The success of the overtime ban so far is a convincing demonstration that the rank-and-file miners reject the present offer. But by cheerfully brushing aside a ballot for a strike, the NUM executive has allowed the government to go onto the offensive.

The NUM must now move rapidly to a ballot for a strike and thereby make it clear to the rest of the working class that it intends to lead the struggle, along with other sections such as the railmen and engineers, to smash the Tory Government and its policies. If it fails to do this it will allow the Tory Government to turn large sections of the working class against the miners through widespread lay-offs

and lock-outs in a situation where no section of workers is providing a clear perspective for struggle for the whole class.

ENGINEERS

From 1 January, millions of engineering workers will be thrown on to a three day week. The CBI are pushing the Government to suspend all existing guaranteed week agreements and to drop the three day rule on unemployment benefit so as to seduce workers to the Labour Exchange to get 2 days 'compensation' rather than have them banging at the managers' doors. This will mean a sharp wage cut for the engineers. On top of this, many firms, unable to weather the economic crisis, will seek to close down altogether. Some factories will be closed in crash rationalisation programmes as the big combines made desperate efforts to cut costs. The Government's 3-day week will throw the engineers into defensive struggles at a time when plans were being laid to step up industrial action for the AUEW claim.

Until the Government's announcement, it looked as if the AUEW National Committee meeting on 3 January and the CSEU on 10 January would, if they intended to take any action at all, adopt an overtime ban. Such a decision would now be patently absurd. Of course, an overtime ban in engineering would have had a demoralising and divisive effect on engineering workers in any case, and is useless as a preparation for a national engineering strike. A national strike was always the only rational way forward; but now it is the only way forward left!

This means that Hugh Scanlon, and the Communist Party (who have so far refused to call for a national engineering strike because of their unwillingness to embarrass the 'left' bureaucrats), will no have to come off the fence. If they do not go onto the offensive, then the engineers will suffer a serious defeat. Several weeks of a sharp loss of earnings coupled with exhaustive local struggles will, if no perspective of a national stoppage emerges, result in mass disillusionment with any form of industrial action. The backwash of such a defeat could be a wave of hostility towards the miners from many engineers, even though the miners' overtime ban is not directly responsible for the 3 day week.

WAY FORWARD

How can the miners and engineers avoid the dangers in the present situation and move forward?

Clearly the most effective response to the entire present crisis, would be for the TUC to break off all talks with the Government and organise a General Strike to bring it down. But it would be extremely foolish for any trade unionist to wait around for this august body to do what it has sworn never to do again since 1926.

The miners and engineers should immediately set about cementing an alliance at all levels. The executives of the NUM and the CSEU should meet together early in January—the CSEU to declare a national strike for the claim, the miners to call an early ballot. These executives should be bombarded with demands, through resolutions and lobbies, for

Engineering Convenors' Conference—Big headaches for the CP

Last Friday, 14 December, 400 convenors and representatives of shop stewards committees in the engineering industry met in Manchester to discuss what action should be taken to pursue the struggle over the national claim.

The conference was called by various leading convenors throughout the country at the initiative of the Communist Party, with the intention of putting out a 'rank and file' call for a national overtime ban. However, Heath beat them to it by announcing the day before the conference that most of industry would be on a three day week as from 1 January.

BANKRUPTCY

But what this bewilderment expressed was the complete bankruptcy of the CP's politics.

Their problem was simply this: a call for an overtime ban on a three-day week would have made them look ridiculous, but a call for an all-out national strike and an alliance with the miners—the obvious next step—would probably bring them into collision with Scanlon. Since the CP's alliance with Scanlon comes before everything else, this couldn't be done either.

So what was to be done? As one delegate put it—'The Government have taken away our right to have an overtime ban'. Perhaps they should demand the right to work overtime and then ban it? Cyril Morton, convenor of Shardlows in Sheffield, announced that his factory was not going to be upset by anything the government did; they were imposing an overtime ban as from 1 January—on all three days! After this kind of stuff no-one would have been surprised if Brian Rix had taken the platform.

If the decision that this conference had to make were not so crucial for the working class's fight against Phase 3 the looks of bewilderment on the faces of the CP militants as they rolled up to the conference would have been amusing.

In the end the CP's dilemma was resolved by adopting a resolution calling upon the recall National Committee on 3 January to 'give a positive lead on industrial action up to and including a national stoppage'. (In other words, the National Committee should do something.)

MINERS AND ENGINEERS

But if the engineers are to have any hope of smashing Phase 3 then the National Committee's lead will indeed have to be 'positive'—a lot more positive than the Manchester conference. The Tory government have made clear by their emergency measures that they intend to go to all lengths to defend Phase 3. The trade union movement will have to muster every ounce of its strength to smash it.

But it is precisely Scanlon's refusal to give a 'positive lead' on the way forward for the engineers that is giving the CP such a headache and leads to the kind of farce we had in Manchester. If Scanlon had made it clear that he stood for an all-out national strike, there can be no doubt as to what the decision of the Manchester conference would have been. There would have been no ambiguous calls for action 'up to and including a national stoppage'.

So what will the CP militants do if the recall NC does not give a positive lead? Will they use the opportunity of the recall shop stewards' conference, after the 10 January meeting of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions, to campaign for a national strike and co-ordinated action with groups like the miners? Or will they continue to flounder around, adapting to Scanlon's every twist and turn? The choice is very simple—either to remain consistent with the Communist Party's whole political approach, or else to break from those politics and campaign for a national strike in spite of Scanlon's vacillations.

TERRY CRAWFORD



Convenors at the Manchester conference—chairman Len Brindle speaking.

such a joint meeting.

But the leaders of these unions cannot be trusted to take these steps, and certainly not to prepare millions of workers up and down the country for decisive struggle. Local bodies in the NUM and the AUEW should immediately call joint emergency meetings to organise for the struggle. Strike committees should be created straight away in the AUEW, and the national convenors conference should be recalled in January.

The engineers will be facing struggles over lay-offs without pay from early in the new year. Refusals by employers to honour guaranteed wage agreements, or to extend these agreements to workers who are not presently covered by them, should be met with immediate occupation-strikes. These struggles could, however, exhaust the energies of the engineers and lead to demoralisation

unless they take place in the context of a clear perspective for carrying the struggle forward: either a call for a general strike by the TUC or for a national engineering strike by the CSEU.

This does not mean that engineering workers should wait for such a call before launching local strikes and occupying factories over lay-off grievances: such local actions would unite the working class movement in struggle at the local level, give impetus to the campaign for a national strike, and set the ball rolling towards national action. The point is, all defensive struggles launched in the months ahead must be linked to demands which can push the working class movement towards an all-out offensive against the Tory Government. That is the only road to victory.

DAVE BAILEY

Nurses step up fight on canteen prices

Last Wednesday a hundred and fifty hospital workers, mainly nurses and medical students from Kings College Hospital and other hospitals, held a militant demonstration through the streets of Southwark. This was part of a seven week-old campaign against price rises in hospital canteens. The

demonstration was also supported by Southwark Trades Council, ASTMS Central and West London medical branches, and Southwark Teachers Association.

The demonstration clearly linked the campaign for lower hospital canteen prices with the need for

higher wages. The main slogan was 'Wages up, canteen prices down.' At an open-air rally after the march, a nurse from Dulwich Hospital and a member of Wandsworth Teachers Association pointed out that bad conditions in hospitals and schools are the result of Government cut-backs in all social spending. These speakers also stressed the need to link the fight in hospitals and schools to the overall fight against the Tory Government and its anti-working class policies.

At a working meeting in South Bank Polytechnic after the rally, nurses decided to set up an inter-hospital committee to look into nurses' pay, to formulate pay claims, and to collate information about hospital conditions so that action (including further canteen boycotts) can be planned.

Unfortunately, a setback came three days later with the decision by a NUPE delegate conference in London to accept a Phase 3 offer for hospital ancillary workers. This offer also entails a 1p per day

increase in meal charges, at a time when the Dulwich and Kings canteen boycotters, officially backed by NUPE, have already managed to squeeze a 2p decrease in meal prices out of hospital management.

Despite this setback, however, the Dulwich-Kings committee of nurses and medical students plans to continue to strengthen its links with nurses, ancillary workers, research workers and medical students in other hospitals. The next stage of the campaign will involve sending speakers to trades councils, trade union branches and other local working class organisations, as well as student unions, in order to explain that working class health care is suffering because of worsening hospital conditions. Any hospital worker wanting to be involved in the work of this committee should contact the Nurses Boycott Committee, Nurses' Entrance, Kings College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London, SE5.

JANE SUTHERLAND

WORKERS VS.

Part 2. The Rise of the Triple Alliance

Today, when the miners, railwaymen, and engineers are all engaged in industrial action against the Government, it would be a major step forward for these three powerful groups of workers to form an alliance and confront the Government in a united fashion.

Such an alliance would not be without precedent in British history—between 1918 and 1921 the struggle of the working class movement in this country hinged around a powerful 'Triple Alliance' between the miners, railwaymen, and the transport workers.

The idea of such an alliance emerged out of the big pre-war labour upsurge, which saw a national rail strike and a number of local transport strikes in 1911 and a national miners strike in 1912. A new mood of militancy was sweeping the rank-and-file. The trade union leadership was forced to make concessions to this, and so sought to strengthen the industrial power of the unions.

The Government was coming to play an increasingly important role in industrial disputes, and it was clearly absurd for a succession of unions to enter the ring alone against the Government and the employers. So the Miners Federation of Great Britain proposed an alliance between the main unions involved in this wave of struggle. Under the terms of this alliance they would agree to put forward their wage claims at the same time, and each pledge that they would not settle until the others had had a satisfactory settlement.

LABOUR AND WAR

The plans for such an alliance were drawn up in June 1914, in anticipation of a big new round of struggle. However, the World War intervened, and the labour bureaucrats—both in the Labour Party and in the unions—bowed down before the 'patriotic' appeals from the ruling class for 'national unity' in the task of European-wide bloodletting. So the Triple Alliance had to be put on the shelf.

The war imposed big burdens on the working class: both those who were sent to gun down their fellow-workers on the continent, and those who had to slog out their guts for increasingly devalued wages on the home front. Meanwhile, the ruling class raked in immense profits.

But the war also strengthened the industrial and political power of the working class. Booming war production and the demands of the European trenches created a huge shortage of labour which encouraged the rapid

growth of trade unionism and shop floor organisation. This new industrial muscle was given a preliminary flexing in important war-time struggles on Clydeside and throughout the engineering industry.

At the same time the Government was forced to assume control over industries such as the railways and the mines to ensure their effective functioning for the war effort. This, for the first time, gave the workers in these industries the ability to negotiate nationally and win a long-standing objective—uniform working conditions throughout the whole industry. Government control seemed like a step towards the nationalisation of these industries, which the miners and railwaymen had long seen as a necessary step towards their economic aims. Once the war was over, it was inevitable that an unprecedented wave of working class struggle would sweep the country. The ruling class would face huge difficulties in trying to keep control of the situation, particularly with the example of the Russian Revolution to inspire the British workers.

The constitution of the Triple Alliance, drawn up in 1914, was finally ratified in 1917 and the new body was geared up for action. The opportunity to test its strength was not long in coming. In January 1919, the Miners Federation of Great Britain worked out its programme of demands on the Government: a reduction of the working day to six hours, a wages increase of 30% and nationalisation of the mines with a measure of union say in their management.

The other Triple Alliance unions also put in claims.

When the Government refused to concede the miners' demands, a strike ballot was held which showed a six-to-one majority in favour of strike action. Faced with a national coal shortage and the combined power of the Triple Alliance, the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, warned the miners that he would use the army to break a strike, and proposed that the strike be postponed and a commission of inquiry into the coal industry set up, with the miners entitled to nominate half of its members.

The MFGB accepted this offer, but only agreed to suspend the strike notices pending the interim report of the commission. Within a fortnight the commission, chaired by Sir John Sankey, made its interim recommendations: a wage rise of 2s. a shift, a reduction of the working day from 8 to 7 hours, and a continuation of the inquiry into the industry on the basis that 'the

present system of ownership and working in the coal industry stands condemned... the colliery workers shall in future have an effective voice in the direction of the mines'. Both the miners and the Government accepted this as the basis for settlement.

TRIPLE ALLIANCE IN ACTION

When the Triple Alliance executives met on 21 March 1919 it was reported that while both the miners and transport workers had reached satisfactory settlements, the railwaymen were still in deadlock. It was therefore decided that the Alliance would intervene with the threat of a combined strike if the negotiations were not promptly reopened. The Government capitulated immediately.

The Triple Alliance did not restrict its activity to purely industrial matters. In April 1919 it took up the question of the continued presence of British troops in Russia, who were working actively with counter-revolutionary forces against the Bolshevik Government. It called on the Parliamentary Committee of the TUC (then the equivalent of the General Council) to sum-

mon a special conference to take up the question of British intervention in Russia, the withdrawal of the conscription bill, the release of conscientious objectors and the withdrawal of a War Office circular which had initiated an inquiry into the reliability of the army in event of 'civil or industrial disturbances.'

The Parliamentary Committee of the TUC refused to act, and the question was taken up again at the Labour Party conference in June. Despite the determined opposition of the Parliamentary leaders of the party to the use of industrial action for political ends, the Triple Alliance managed to secure a resolution from conference calling on the National Executive to approach the TUC 'with a view to effective action being taken to enforce these demands by the unreserved use of their political and industrial power.'

When nothing seemed to be forthcoming from either the Labour Party or the TUC, the Triple Alliance met on 23 July and voted overwhelmingly to act on their own.



Railwaymen's leader J.H. Thomas (left) with fellow bureaucrat J.R. Clynes.

Fighting Fascism in the Thirties

Part 2 Cable Street and After

By TOM CAMERON

As the year 1936 dawned, black revolutionary CLR James warned in the paper of the Independent Labour Party (still at that time a sizeable organisation) that: 'The ruling classes, broadly speaking, are pro-fascist ... rule they must, by fraud or through Parliament and the Press, or when that fails by force through fascism ... and at the first signs of them we must apply the only remedy—organised bands of workers who will drive the fascists off the streets.'⁸

Events in Europe highlighted the danger. Nazi terror held sway in Austria and Germany. The Italian workers' organisations had long been smashed. In Paris, riots erupted as Fascists marched on the National Assembly. But the greatest blow was yet to come. The new line of the Communist International placed its hopes on 'Popular Front' alliances between workers and bourgeois parties to 'defend democracy.' Such a government now ruled in Spain. In July, sections of the army under Franco's command rose in arms with German and

Italian aid and there too brought fascism to power.

The shock of these events reverberated through the British working class. It was in this atmosphere that Mosley launched his forces into the working class districts of London's East End, where a quarter of the population was Jewish. Claiming Keir-Hardie as the forerunner of the British Union of Fascists, fascist slogans declared: 'If you love your country, you are a National. If you love her people you are a Socialist. Be a National-Socialist!' Intensive recruitment drives rendered the East End the BUF's main base, with walls carrying the message, 'Perish Judah.' Street battles occurred almost daily.

As winter approached, Mosley announced a march across East London, from the City via Aldgate to Limehouse and Bethnal Green. Despite constant liberal protests, the Home Secretary declined to intervene. The date was set for 4 October 1936, a Sunday.

CABLE STREET

Resistance on a massive scale to Mosley was

anticipated, but needed organisation. The Labour Party and trade union leaders, however, told workers to stay away.⁹ The Communist Party also held back. It had projected a major youth rally for the same Sunday in Trafalgar Square, and refused to cancel this until 1 October. The *Daily Worker* played down the issue until only days before the march, when the pressure had become irresistible. The 'official' CP record, written by Phil Piratin, virtually concedes this: 'What should be the character of the action against Mosley? It was felt that the workers would rally in huge numbers, and plans were made accordingly.' He continues, however: 'On that occasion, the leadership of the CP was undisputed.'¹⁰

In fact, the Independent Labour Party, which Piratin fails even to mention, played a leading role in calling for action. The ILP at that time stood to the left of the CP, opposing the inevitable concessions to bourgeois forces which accompanied the 'Popular Front' tactic. It was influenced by revolutionary agitation, and the Trotskyist movement, though small, was not without impact.

Following a split in 1933, a minority had entered the ILP, and published a paper *The Fight* as its marxist wing. The majority worked inside the Labour Party and Labour League of Youth through the paper *Youth Militant*.

These militants pressed for mass action to halt Mosley. Hundreds of Labour Party members and trade unionists responded to the call, and splits appeared in the East End CPs and YCLs. Jewish workers ignored the appeals of their bourgeois Board of Deputies to avoid conflicts. Dockworkers voted to participate. By mid-morning on the Sunday, 250,000 workers were on the streets.¹¹

Some 7,000 police materialised to protect the fascists, whose coach windows were smashed by flying stones from the crowd. The police repeatedly charged to clear a way through, and shop fronts caved in as the workers clung to their positions, blocking Gardeners Corner. Trams abandoned by anti-fascist drivers reinforced the mass resistance.¹² As the battle spread beyond control, the police invaded Cable Street, only to encounter prepared barricades. Milk bottles and stones showered on them, forcing several to actually surrender. The Spanish workers' slogan 'They Shall Not Pass' carried the day. With the fighting still raging, the police at last ordered the fascists to withdraw. The blackshirts retreated across the city, leaving the anti-fascists to celebrate for hours.

THE STATE

It was decided to hold a ballot of their combined memberships to ask them if they were willing to strike to secure the abolition of conscription, the ending of military intervention in Russia, and to stop military intervention in trade union disputes.

This proposal did not have the support of all the Triple Alliance leaders, however. J.H. Thomas, secretary of the NUR and one of the most notorious bureaucratic scabs in the history of the British Labour movement, denounced the proposals:

'I cannot understand and do not subscribe to the policy that asks men to strike today for what they refused to put a cross on the ballot paper yesterday ... We ought clearly to recognise that, if Labour is going to govern, we can't have some outside body attempting to rebel against Parliamentary institutions without it recoiling on our own heads.'

In the event, before the strike ballot could be held the Government was in full retreat: within one week of the Triple Alliance decision, it announced that all British troops would be pulled out of Russia by the end of the summer and conscription abolished by the end of the year.

'DIRECT ACTION' ASCENDANT

This was a tremendous victory for the Triple Alliance and for the policy of using the industrial power of the working class to affect Government actions. Right-wingers like Thomas were put on the defensive and, temporarily, had to retreat. At the TUC held in September 1919 the advocates of 'direct action' were firmly on top: a motion of censure was passed against the Parliamentary Committee for refusing to call a special Congress, and a right-wing motion rejecting strikes for political ends was defeated.

This meeting of the TUC was confronted with an important development in the struggle between the miners and the Government. After the acceptance of its interim report by both the Government and the miners in March, the Sankey Commission had gone on to examine the organisation of the industry. Over this question there were, naturally, sharp divisions between the miners' representatives and the coalowners. Nevertheless, the state of the industry under private ownership was an overwhelming argument in favour of nationalisation and the commission Chairman, supported by the miners' representatives, came out in favour of nationalisation in his report, delivered on 20 June.

The Government delayed its reply, playing for time. Finally, towards the end of August, despite its prior commitment to accept the Commission report, the Government unequivocally rejected nationalisation.

The problem now facing the labour movement was how to force the Government to accept the miners' demand. This discussion was on the agenda of the September TUC, which pass-



Lloyd George in Parliament—he warned that he would use troops to break miners' strike.

ed overwhelmingly a strongly worded resolution on this matter:

... the Congress instructs the Parliamentary Committee ... to insist upon the Government adopting the Majority Report ...

'In the event of the Government still refusing to accept this position, a Special Congress shall be convened for the purpose of deciding the form of action to be taken to compel the Government to accept the Majority Report of the Commission.'

This resolution was moved by Robert Smillie of the MFGB, and seconded by ... J.H. Thomas! Had this veteran right-wing bureaucrat suddenly become a convert to 'direct action'? Not quite—his real purpose would become clear in the months ahead, during which a dramatic turn was to take place in the fortunes of the Triple Alliance, and of the whole British labour movement.

BRIAN SLOCOCK

Next Issue:

'Black Friday': the Death of the Triple Alliance.

... AND AFTER

The Government, said *Blackshirt*, had 'surrendered to Jewry.'¹³ Now the working class movement faced the crucial task of developing this victory to smash the fascists outright. But the Stalinists reverted to calls for a Popular Front, as opposed to organising the mobilised masses. A CP statement summarising the workers' triumph on the night of the battle ended 'Forward now to the united front and the People's Front all over Britain,' pointing to the forthcoming Labour Party conference. Predictably, such hopes were dashed. Within ten days the *Daily Worker* was reflecting how the Labour Conference 'rose again and again in applause at every reference to the victory of the London workers,' but 'the resolution carried only found the incident "deplorable".'¹⁵

In the face of social democratic inaction, the ILP drew a different moral: 'Unity of action must be maintained, and out of it must be built not only a movement of resistance to fascism, but a united militant working class which will go forward to win Workers' Power ... In East and North London today, the workers are compelled seriously to consider the question of establishing an organisation to defend themselves.'¹⁶ The ILP proposed an 'all-in-conference' of workers' organisations to commence this task.

EAST END CONFERENCE

The need for organised and sustained mass

action was apparent. Vengeance-seeking Mosleyites terrorised Jewish passers-by in Mile End Road, throwing a seven-year old girl through a shop window. Fifteen thousand workers marched the next Sunday under the slogan 'Fascism must be smashed!' The ILP opened an anti-fascist HQ, held nightly meetings, and established a fund to combat Mosley, constantly urging the creation of a workers' defence force.

Eventually, an East End anti-fascist conference was held, organised by the Socialist League at Whitechapel. The official Labour Party leadership discouraged attendance, but 125 delegates came from union branches, local Labour Parties, Labour League of Youth branches, the ILP, and some CP and Jewish community organisations. A committee was elected, and an agreement reached on unified stewarding for working class meetings and on 'organised resistance' to the BUF, despite CP attempts to 'water down' these efforts.¹⁷

But obviously these moves by themselves carried insufficient strength to take the working class on to a general offensive. This permitted the State to intervene.

FASCISM ABANDONED

The arousal of the masses had seriously worried the ruling class. The government therefore rushed in the Public Order Act, banning political uniforms and limiting the right to organise demonstrations, to the delight of the Labour Party opposition in

parliament. This 'anti-fascist' legislation has since been generously applied to the socialist left on various occasions.

The ILP, for its part, warned that: 'Any such proposals must be resisted to the utmost ... workers must not think that this will end the menace of fascism.'¹⁸ This proved correct. The failure to build on the Cable Street victory allowed Mosley to fight on for months. Despite a financial crisis and splits inside the BUF, the fascists provoked another violent clash in Jamaica Road, South London in 1937; took 20% of the votes in some local elections; and as late as 1939 could gather 15,000 at major rallies.

The approach of war, however, with its consequent armaments drive, destroyed Mosley's dreams of a new depression that would instigate fascist rule; and the alignment of British imperialism against Hitler finally installed the BUF's leadership in Brixton prison under Defence Regulation 186 in May 1940. Capital had no further need of this 'instrument of steel.'

It is beyond doubt that the successes at Cable Street and elsewhere had dented and damaged the fascist movement. In clear contrast to the timidity of reformism, and the zig-zagging policies of Stalinism, revolutionaries and militants in the working class movement had fashioned unity in action by the masses on the streets. Their call for a standing workers' defence force, independent of the State,

remains valid in our time whenever fascism threatens—and links the duty to smash fascism to its logical corollary in eliminating the root problem—capitalism itself.

1. *The Corporate State*, by A. Raven Thomson, published by the BUF.
2. *Blackshirt*, BUF paper, 1 June 1934.
3. *Who Backs Mosley?* Labour Research Department, 1934.
4. *Democracy and Fascism*, Communist Party pamphlet, 1933.
5. *Printers and the Fascist Menace*, published by the Printing and Allied Trades Anti-Fascist Movement 1934.
6. *The Fascist Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 1935.
7. *The Fascists in Britain*, by Colin Cross, Barne & Rockliff, 1961, page 123.
8. *New Leader*, ILP weekly, 3 January 1936.
9. *Daily Herald*, 3 October 1936.
10. *Our Flag Stays Red*, by Phil Piratin, Thames Publications, 1948.
11. *New Leader*, 9 October 1936.
12. Piratin, op.cit.
13. *Blackshirt*, 10 October 1936.
14. *Daily Worker*, 5 October 1936.
15. *Daily Worker*, 15 October 1936.
16. *They Did NOT Pass*, ILP pamphlet, 1936.
17. *New Leader*, 6 November 1936.
18. *New Leader*, 23 October 1936.

RECALL THE TUC!

ORGANISE A GENERAL STRIKE TO BRING DOWN THE TORY GOVERNMENT!

IMG Political Committee Statement

Pursuing their aim of reducing the living standard of the working class, the Tory government has now resorted to the biggest economic lock-out and sabotage in this country's history. No one should be misled into believing that the proposals for three day working are the result of an absolute shortage of energy. All the facts show that this is nonsense there are 27 million tons of coal stocks and oil shipments from the Middle East are continuing to rise. In any case if there was some shortage of coal there is an obvious answer - grant the wage claim of the miners and railwaymen.

In fact the three day working week and Barber's new budget, have little to do with energy, but everything to do with capitalism's need to cut living standards to maintain its rate of profit. Faced with resistance to this plan by the miners, railwaymen and power engineers, the government has resorted to a very simple trick. By the national lock-out they hope to make other sections of the working class believe the lie that it is the railwaymen and miners who are responsible for their loss of pay and so force them to return to work.

The *Sunday Times* newspaper spelt it out clearly when it said, 'It is the government's desired effect to get the miners and railwaymen to submit to an accumulation of pressure from fellow workers faced with the dole.' The stakes in this are very high. The employers' magazine *The Economist* has said that if the miners could be defeated Heath could look forward to a year without strikes for higher pay or against the rising unemployment that is going to develop in the next year. In short, the Tories are trying to inflict a massive defeat on the working class.

The responsibility for the fact that the government is in a position to carry out such an attack rests squarely with one group of people - the present leadership of the working class movement. The working class is potentially in a position of overwhelming strength. Over five million workers still have wage claims in under Phase 3 and the trade union movement this year has grown to over 11 million members. Against the united use of this enormous strength the employers and government would be helpless.

But instead of waging a united struggle the trade union leaders have allowed the strength of the working class to be split up as different groups of workers go into struggle separately. Some unions for example the AUEW - have not even taken national action. It is this failure to launch united action which has left the way open for the Tory government to step in and further divide the working class. Even now this policy is being continued: Len Murray, instead of summoning up the forces of the trade unions for a united struggle has stepped in to try to get the railwaymen back to work.

These policies must be reversed, if the present Tory onslaught is to be defeated measures such as the following must be taken immediately:

1. Smash Phase Three - no retreat on the wage claims - united strike action to win the claims in full.

If the government's and employers' attempt to drive down the living standard of the working class is to be defeated it is vital that all the wages struggles against Phase 3 are successful. There is nothing the employers would like more than for the working class to forget about breaking Phase 3 to pieces and instead fall back on purely defensive struggles. But the big

battalions of the working class - the miners, engineers, railwaymen and so on - are still undefeated, and the relation of forces has not changed in favour of the employing class. Smashing a hole right through Phase 3 is the best way to defeat the employers and the government and open the way to winning all the demands of the working class. *This means first of all a united national strike by miners, engineers and railwaymen but with power engineers, ambulance men and other groups of workers drawn in as well.*

Already an agreement has been reached between ASLEP and the NUM that the miners will not allow coal to be shifted from rail to road transport. This is a move in the right direction but it is still far too little. ASLEP and the miners must make an open public initiative for a uniting of all claims against Phase 3, or any new phase of the incomes policy. Steps must be taken at the local level as well. When Ernie Roberts of the AUEW spoke at the South Wales miners rally a small step was taken towards miners-engineers unity. Miners have also been invited (for example at Sheffield) to speak at engineering shop stewards meetings. All these steps must be stepped up enormously and at all meetings held to discuss individual wage claims representatives of other workers with claims in must be invited to speak so that plans for united action can be drawn up.

2. Work or Full Lay Off Pay. No Sackings.

The present crisis, like all others, is a product of the capitalist system. None of the burdens of this crisis should be accepted by the working class. All existing lay off pay and guaranteed wage agreements must be enforced, and such protection extended to all other sections of the working class. Claims for full lay off pay must be put in by every section of the working class and these must be backed up by strike action if rejected. Sackings and unemployment should not be tolerated. The world economy in recession would bring about big moves towards increased unemployment next year. Barber's budget will now increase this trend.

Any refusal by an employer to meet the demand for five days pay, any attempt at a lock-out, and any move towards sackings as firms try to rationalise and cut costs must be met with occupation-strikes. These occupied factories must be used as a base from which to organise for the counter-offensive of the whole working class against the bosses and the Government, drawing ever wider layers into struggle for a general strike.

3. Put Power and Other Vital Industries Under Workers Control.

A whole number of workers control measures are relevant in the present situation. Workers in public and private transport should use these facilities to transport flying pickets, and prevent the bosses from sabotaging the movement of supplies of foodstuffs and other essential materials. Power workers should exercise workers control in the power stations in order to ensure that occupied factories or other industries and installations seized by the workers are not deprived of electricity.

The propaganda offensive of the ruling class must be broken. On 13 November, Heath had all the Fleet Street editors attend a special briefing at 10 Downing Street to plan the campaign of lies against the working class movement. The print workers and journalists must break this offensive by refusing to produce and print such lies. Workers on the *Evening*

Standard showed the way in the last power workers dispute by refusing to print material attacking the power workers. Printing plants can be taken over and used to produce material for the working class - as was done by Briants at the time of the Freeing of the Five.

4. Open the Books.

The facts about the current ruling class manoeuvre must be made known to everyone so that the government's lies can be exposed. Some of the facts are already coming to light. But all the records, plans and statistics must be opened up for inspection. The TUC must demand the complete opening of all the books. But workers must not wait for this. In hundreds of firms and government departments the vital records pass through the hands of workers every day. Groups of workers must organise the publishing of every single fact on the real state of the economy. On this basis the trade unions and other working class organisations must draw up plans for the working of the economy and the allocation of materials under workers control. This is the vital step towards the only real economic solution - the creation of a socialist planned economy.

5. End the Emergency Power Laws - Defend the Working Class.

The government still has at its disposal the Emergency Powers law, put into operation a month ago. This gives it virtually unlimited power to commandeer supplies and use the police and army against the unions. The army has already been used in the Glasgow firemen's dispute. An immediate demand must be made for the ending of these laws and for the defence of pickets, and the organisation of picketing pools must be launched in every area. There must be a direct appeal from all working class organisations - above all from the TUC and the Labour Party - to the army rank-and-file, calling on them to refuse to strike break and attack trade unionists.

6. Organise a General Strike to Bring Down the Tory Government.

None of the measures needed to deal with the present crisis can be carried to success as long as the Tory government is left in office to mastermind the present economic sabotage and attacks on the working class. While simply removing the Tories will not solve all the present problems (only the destruction of capitalism will do that) nevertheless smashing the present government is a necessary step to begin to solve all the problems which confront the working class. This government is vital for the ruling class. It will not be got rid of by namby-pamby action of pleas. Only the most united and decisive action can be sure to force the Tories out - this means a general strike. This is the aim which the working class movement must now set itself. A General Strike can achieve more than the downfall of the Tories. It can open up the way to socialism. In particular, it can begin to put the control of the economy and the organisation of the state in the hands of the working class. It can begin to move towards a new type of government - not like past Labour governments which based themselves on the capitalist state (the police, army and civil service) and which, as a result, could not act against the capitalist economy, but a real workers government which bases itself on the organisations of the working class bent out of mass struggle.

7. Recall the TUC. End Talks with the Government.

The present leadership of the working class movement must be forced to show where they stand - whether they intend to fight the Tories or to cave in. They must be called on to come out into the open with their proposals for organising the struggle. If they adopt a fighting programme of the type we have discussed (which we don't believe for one moment they will) then that would unite the working class and take it forward. If they don't, then it will be clear to everyone serious about fighting the Tories that action must be taken independently.

The demands of the AUEW and other unions for a recall TUC must be taken up and turned into a crescendo. If there is a recall Congress it must be accompanied by one-day strikes and the biggest lobby in history. All talks between the TUC and the government must be ended. Heath has no intention of making any significant concessions. It is an outrage, a betrayal, that at this very moment the TUC is preparing for another round of talks with the Government in the National Economic Development Council, rather than mobilising the working class for struggle.

8. Build Councils of Action.

Whether the TUC fights or not, the greatest possible organisation of united struggle at local level will be needed in the days ahead. The traditional way the working class has responded to this need - the way it acted in 1926 - is to establish a Council of Action in every area. These could unite every single group of trade unionists and draw in tenants, students and other allies of the working class movement. The role of such Councils in preparing for and organising the working class response is vital. They can organise united struggles for wage claims, unite the fight for lay off pay, coordinate the occupation of factories, take over control of local stocks of coal and other supplies, organise distribution of materials, organise workers self-defence against police or army strike breaking, publish the facts of real supplies of material, make contact with the power workers and so on. It is an urgent matter of the hour to set up a Council of Action in every area.

There are many ways this can be done. Probably the best is to set one up through emergency meetings of Trades Councils and special conferences called by them - but in other areas it could be through appeal from the local CSEU, by shop stewards committees etc.

The important thing at present is not how Councils of Action come into existence but that they are actually set up. While no one should wait for the TUC to act before taking these steps, the TUC should be called on to promote the setting up of Councils of Action in every area.

On the basis of this type of programme the present crisis can be turned into a victory for the working class, a chance to open up the way to socialism. Of all these demands the most urgent ones which must ring out in the working class movement are:

- * No retreat on the wage claims: Smash Phase 3: United action to win the claims in full.
- * Break all lock outs with occupations; fight for full lay-off pay.
- * Recall the TUC.
- * Build Councils of Action in every area.
- * Organise a General Strike to Bring Down the Tory Government.



Free the Carabanchel 10!

This Thursday, 20 December, ten Spanish workers—the 'Carabanchel 10'—were due to go on trial accused of organising the illegal Workers Commissions movement. It is reported that the regime hopes to get the trial over quickly and has ordered that it must not last more than three days. It may also try to hold it behind closed doors on the grounds that one of the accused is a worker priest. The latter, Father Garcia Salve, is one of the six detained priests who have recently been on hunger strike.

Below, we look at the context in which this trial is taking place.

The Burgos trials of December 1970—when nine Basques were sentenced to death and prison sentences totalling more than 1,000 years were handed down—are still fresh in the memories of many today. So great was the storm of protest which erupted, both in Spain and in the rest of the world, that the dictatorship was forced to commute the death penalties into prison sentences.

This mobilisation has since had considerable consequences. It was the first mass-based direct action to have such an effect on the dictatorship. Also significant was the important role played by the extreme left. Never since then has the dictatorship dared to impose such sentences for fear of the reaction which they could provoke. But that does not mean that it has abandoned its policy of repression—far from it.

TEN ARRESTED

On 24 June 1972, Franco's police arrested ten workers in the suburbs of Madrid. Held since then, without any evidence being offered, and charged with the 'offence' of political association, Camacho and his comrades have waited 18 months behind the bars of Carabanchel (the Madrid prison) to be tried.

The date of their arrest was no accident—the first months of 1972 had seen a whole wave of struggles, culminating in March in the general strike in El Ferrol.

It is no accident either that the dictatorship has made the most elementary right of workers' organisation into an offence. Camacho and his comrades—for whom the Public Prosecutor is demanding sentences of 12 to 20 years in prison, sentences which total 162 years for the ten of them—were at the head of the movement to build the Workers Commissions in the 60s, and for the most part are prominent figures in the workers' movement.

ILLUSIONS

In response to the growing radicalisation, amongs the youth and in the workers' movement, the ruling class had at first bred illusions in the possibility of a re-establishment of parliamentary democracy. Many, even in the workers' movement, hoped that industrialisation in Spain would bring with it at least a certain adaption to bourgeois democratic norms.

This hope reached its highest point when Opus Dei moved into the government in a big way in 1969. Opus Dei represented the 'liberal' wing of capitalism, but was quite prepared to sacrifice liberalism to Francoism if capitalism itself was ever threatened. And sure enough, in May 1973, Franco announced a government reshuffle which swept aside all the Opus Dei ministers and presaged the implementation

of a 'hard' line with the appointment of Admiral Carrero Blanco as prime minister. Opus Dei went quietly without kicking up any fuss.

PAMPLONA GENERAL STRIKE

But the situation in Spain remains just as explosive today. One month after this reshuffle, in June 1973, a general strike took place in Pamplona (in the Basque country), centring on the Motor Iberica factory. It arose from a wage demand which could not be settled through the 'normal' channels of the State-run trade unions. The sacking of one militant after another led to the occupation of the factory, following a pattern which has now become classical.

In order to overcome the isolation which threatened them, the workers of Motor Iberica organised a general strike in Pamplona and the province as a whole, which brought all the factories in the region to a halt, and was also supported by the shopkeepers in the town. The civil governor set off for Madrid to get his instructions at the same time as a group of workers were attempting to free 3,000 people arrested and under guard in the Grand Square. But this general strike remained confined to one province, and for this reason it gradually petered out. The responsibility for this rests, among others, with the leadership of the Workers Commissions, who were not prepared to push forward the co-ordination and extension of the struggle on a national scale.

Thus this general strike showed at the same time both the high degree of militancy and self-organisation of the Spanish working class, and the restraining influence of the Spanish Communist Party, which has a majority in the leadership of the Workers Commissions. The CP is in fact more concerned to safeguard the possibility of continued collaboration with the 'progressive,' 'anti-fascist' section of the capitalist class, to arrive at a 'democratic' stage between fascism and socialism, than it is to push forward the mass movements which could soon be in a position to overthrow the dictatorship and establish a workers' state.

For its part, the Franco dictatorship also understands this situation. It is no longer able to prevent the birth, organisation and politicisation of a workers' movement. It knows very well that if the movement is once structured and nationally co-ordinated in the struggle to overthrow Francoism, on that day it will be in the movement's power to overthrow the regime. That is why Camacho and his comrades are in prison, even though the dictatorship has at the same time been trying for some years to integrate the problem of the Workers Commissions, by allowing the problem leaders to play a role in the official trade unions. But this tactic has failed, in the same way that the present attempt to prevent any national co-ordination of struggles by repression against the leaders of the Commissions will undoubtedly fail.

Be that as it may, and despite the legalistic orientation of Camacho and the Spanish Communist Party in the Workers Commissions, our comrades in Spain (the LCR, sympathising section of the Fourth International) consider that the struggle against the repression is the most important axis for the mobilisations in the period to come. In this way, a certain unity of action can be achieved at a time when it is most necessary to confront the policy of repression, which the dictatorship has launched against the leaders of the Workers Commissions to prevent them from co-ordinating their activities in the struggle for the Revolutionary General Strike. (*La Gouche*).



A section of the Paris demonstration

tour to promote the junta, and openly declares that his lorry-owners' strike was decisive in preparing the way for the coup. He was barricaded in his room for more than three hours before police dispersed the demonstrators.

Meanwhile, the attempt by the French fascists of *Faure Front* to hold a meeting in support of the Chilean junta on Wednesday had to be called off after the threat of a massive response from the left. Learning from the events of June, when the Communist League was banned after a counter-demonstration against a fascist meeting, even the Communist Party took part this time in preparations for a united left mobilisation. As a result, the fascists were denied a hall for their meeting, and when they announced a demonstration instead the police preferred to avoid a confrontation with the left by promptly banning it.

MARSEILLES: The bombing of the Algerian consulate last Friday, in which four people died, has met with a massive response from immigrant workers. Over eight thousand of them took part in the funeral march on Sunday, shouting militant slogans against racism; and a number of protest strikes took place on Monday, largely on the initiative of the unofficial Movement of Arab Workers. This determined response follows on from the earlier

Jewish, Arab socialists call for joint struggle

We print below a joint declaration by Matzpen-Marxist and the Revolutionary Communist Group: the one an anti-Zionist group in Israel, the other a revolutionary Arab group in Lebanon publishing a monthly journal *Al Mounadel*. Both are supporters of the Fourth International.

At the present time, the failure of the petit-bourgeois Arab nationalist groups like Al Fatah to recognise the importance of the anti-Zionist struggle inside Israel is leading towards recognition of the State of Israel and the acceptance of a bantustan-type solution to the problems of the Palestinians. This statement, despite the presently limited influence of its signatories, is thus extremely important in that it points the way forward to an internationalist solution for which both Arab and Jewish revolutionary marxists can struggle in the Middle East today.

On the occasion of the fourth Arab-Israeli war, the Jewish and Arab revolutionary marxists, supporters of the Fourth International both in the Arab countries and in the very heart of the Zionist State, express our intention of fighting for our common point of view, that of proletarian internationalism.

In the war between the Zionist State and the Arab bourgeoisies, the revolutionary marxists are not neutral: they support the struggle of the Arab peoples against the Zionist State—a colonialist state which is the major bastion of imperialism in the Middle East: the enemy not only of the Arab masses but also of the Jewish masses, whom it is leading into a permanent war against the struggle of the Arab peoples for their national and social liberation.

The support of the revolutionary marxists for the war against the Zionist State is not at all support for the policies of the Arab ruling classes. On the contrary, the duty of the revolutionary marxists is to show the Arab masses that the ruling classes of their countries have no intention, in their confrontation with the Zionist State, of ensuring victory for the national cause of the Palestinian Arab people—their right to resettle on the territory from which they were expelled, and to live free from all forms of national oppression, which necessarily means the destruction of the Zionist State. The Arab ruling classes intend in fact to create the basis for 'peaceful co-existence' with the Israeli State on the backs of the Palestinian masses.

The basic reason for the agreement which is now being drawn up, through the intervention of US imperialism and with the support of the Soviet bureaucracy, is to block the revolutionary process for which the Palestinian cause has acted as a catalyst. In exchange for a withdrawal from the territories occupied in June 1967, the bourgeois Arab regimes, collected together under the aegis of Saudi Arabia,

are preparing to recognise the Zionist State, and, in agreement with it, to block the rise of the Arab socialist revolution.

The role of the marxist revolutionaries is:

— In the Arab countries, to expose the manoeuvres of the Arab ruling classes, their capitulation to imperialism and Zionism, and their betrayal of the Palestinian cause; to turn the necessary struggle against a 'peaceful solution' into a spring-board for a total revolutionary struggle of the Arab masses against imperialism, Zionism and capitalism.

— In Israel, to develop the critical sentiments provoked in the ranks of the masses by the last war into an anti-Zionist class consciousness, which will allow a break in the 'sacred national unity' and a joint struggle by the Jewish workers with the Arab masses for a united Arab Socialist Republic, which alone can guarantee not just security for the Jewish masses but also their national rights and their social emancipation.

FOR THE TOTAL AND UNCONDITIONAL RETREAT OF THE ISRAELI ARMY FROM THE TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN JUNE 1967!

NO TO THE 'PEACEFUL SOLUTION', NO TO THE BETRAYAL OF THE NATIONAL CAUSE OF THE PALESTINIAN ARAB PEOPLE!

FOR A COMMON REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE OF THE ARAB AND JEWISH WORKERS AGAINST IMPERIALISM, ZIONISM, AND THE ARAB RULING CLASSES!

LONG LIVE PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM!

Israeli Socialist Organisation (Matzpen-Marxist)

For the Arab revolutionary marxists: Revolutionary Communist Group (Lebanon)

20 November 1973

demonstrations organised against the killing of immigrant workers by right-wing forces in August.

KENTUCKY: Picketing women are playing a vital role in preventing the Duke Power Company from breaking a four month-old strike by Brookside coal miners, who are fighting for the right to be represented by the United Mine Workers union rather than the Southern Labor Union, a local outfit run by the company. The company had hoped to bring in scab labour after obtaining a court injunction which barred more than three pickets at any entrance. But they failed to anticipate the response of the women, organised in the Brookside Women's Club.

First the women organised a demonstration through the local town of Harlan to focus attention on the strike and gather support. Then more than a hundred

of them piled into cars and drove back to the mine. When the scabs came out, 'we talked with them and we fought with some of them,' said miner's wife Mary Widener. As another activist explained, 'the Women's Club carries switches to whip scabs with.' No scab has dared set foot in the mine since.

The women have also braved gun-toting company thugs at the nearby High Split mine to pull out two-thirds of the miners there in solidarity with the Brookside strike. Although a number of them have been arrested, fined up to \$500, and thrown into jail, the Women's Club remains as determined as ever to see the strike through to victory. In so doing, they have provided an object lesson in the fighting strength possible when the whole class (and not just its male portion) moves into struggle.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

PARIS: The last fortnight has seen a notable upsurge in activity around Chile. Forty thousand people took part in the international demonstration on Sunday 9 December, including contingents from Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Britain, Austria, and Holland; while two days before, 50 Young Communists occupied the Chilean Embassy to demand the release of Chilean CP leader Luis Corvalan and all political prisoners.

On Saturday 15 December, 60 militants of the Socialist Party occupied the offices of the LAN-Chile airline to protest at the collaboration of the French government with the junta. However, the most dramatic action took place the following morning at 8 am when supporters of the Paris-based Committee for the Support of the Revolutionary Struggle of the Chilean People, which includes our comrades of *Rouge*, occupied the hotel where Chilean lorry-owners' leader Leon Villarín was staying. Villarín is on a European

Maclarens Must Win!



Demonstration of Maclaren workers in Glasgow

The occupation of Maclaren Controls (a subsidiary of ITT—the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation), in Glasgow is entering its third week. The occupation, provoked by management lock-out threats and the movement of machinery out of the plant, followed a six week strike.

The AUEW has been demanding £2.25 for labourers and semi-skilled men, and £5.27 for women—all within the terms of Phase 3. ITT have met none of these demands, offering across the board increases for men of £2.00 and £4.06 for women. The workers' demand for implementation of the 'equal pay' provisions under Phase 3 are vitally important in this dispute, as over half the work force of 320 are women.

shift hall for folk concerts while the Directors' Suite is to be used as a canteen. Corporation workers have agreed to keep water connected in response to ITT threats to shut it off, and a fight is on to get the same undertaking from electricity workers.

MACLARENS MUST WIN

The Maclaren occupation raises not simply the issue of redundancy or wage increases, but can become a focus for a mounting wave of struggle around all the central issues which face the working class. If it is defeated, then other struggles around Phase 3 could be dragged down with it.

As a Maclaren's leaflet states: 'Our fight is your fight. We want the right to a decent living standard, the right to organise and the right to work. The Tory Government is destroying these rights for every worker in the country... our fight is crucial in the fight against Phase 3. If we can take on ITT and win, we can all take on Heath. Maclarens must win.'

The most important job now is to get effective blacking action of all work produced as part of Maclaren's contract—either direct from the factory, or in production elsewhere. Moves to establish a combine committee are under way, as are attempts to find out the most important ITT subsidiaries for blacking activity.

Since ITT wants to isolate and demoralise the workforce over Christmas, the

solidarity and cohesion of the workers, and the pressure on ITT, will very much depend on mass public support from the trade union movement.

PUBLIC SUPPORT

Collections have been organised, and motions of support are pouring in. Clydebank TASS branch passed an immediate motion of support and sent £5. John Brown Engineers have shown the way with a 20p per head collection decided by the membership, to be discussed again each week. Yarrows are taking up the question, and money has been offered from the UCS fighting fund. Support has come from students, community organisations, and the women's liberation movement, while local shopkeepers are donating food parcels.

The AUEW Shop Stewards Quarterly on Saturday will also be discussing the question. They need to call for factory meetings, collections, pledges of support, and demonstrations of public support in Glasgow.

One danger is that the trade union leadership in Glasgow, fearing that the issue will escalate beyond their control, will attempt to confine the action. On Saturday's STUC demonstration against Phase 3, there was no speaker from, or reference to Maclarens.

DIRECT ATTACK

ITT's strategy of 'starve them out' has received a severe set-back already. But it will not be long before another tack is tried. There is a real danger of a direct attack on the factory, but the police will not move in if the political price is too high. It has to be made clear that any such attempt would provoke a response as big as that at Salfrey Coke Depot.

This means obtaining pledges of physical support from local organisations, neighbouring factories, and so on. It also means preparing a counter-offensive. Maclarens have moved their office staff to an undisclosed location in the town. When this is discovered it should be the target of a series of mass pickets involving as much of the working class movement as possible.

Pressure of this nature will make sure that ITT do not dare to go in with the hoot. The actions of solidarity which have so far taken place, and the determination and enthusiasm of the occupiers, make it certain that Maclarens can win: it is up to the working class movement to make certain of that victory and turn it into a victory against this whole Government.

IMG Statement on London Bombings

As we go to press no-one has positively claimed responsibility for the latest London bombings, although the press campaign is rolling down its, by now, well worn channels.

As before, the behaviour of the police has been ghouliah. There is a mountain of evidence that bomb warnings in Belfast have been deliberately ignored. On top of the unexplained failure to clear the area of the Old Bailey blast in the summer, we now have the ill-explained failure to clear the area of the Horsferry Road bomb.

Our attitude has not changed either. It would not be strange if Republicans decided to retaliate by hitting at targets in London. The treatment of the Winchester prisoners is a scandal. While UDA, and British Army, convicted murderers are allowed to serve their sentences where they choose, the Price sisters and their comrades are brutally force-fed to break their hunger strike and keep them in England.

Unlike the British press, and some sections of the British left, we try to envisage how the world looks from Andersonstown. Forceful feeding is a deliberate

insult to the Republicans, they recall the death from force feeding of Republican militant Tom Asha in the 1920s, anger fills them, and makes them more determined to fight a callous enemy.

We reassert our unwavering solidarity with the Provisional IRA, and all other forces fighting British Imperialism, whether or not they are responsible for these bombs. We will keep up our struggle on behalf of Irish political prisoners, to build the Troops Out Movement, and to campaign for self-determination for the Irish people.

But again we repeat our conviction that a bombing campaign in Britain, if the IRA is responsible for these bombs, is tactically mistaken. The development of mass political support for the repatriation of the prisoners, and to get the troops out is a slow job, but a bombing campaign cannot help this work and can potentially confuse and demobilise support.

But our solidarity with the Republican struggle is unconditional, and we see these latest events as a challenge to increase our political work on the Irish question.

Junta man Chased through BBC offices

Chilean lorry-owners leader Leon Villarin, who publicly boasts of his role in bringing down the Popular Unity government earlier this year, was chased through BBC offices at Bush House on Wednesday when he arrived to do a recorded interview.

Despite the short notice—his itinerary in Britain as in the rest of Europe has been kept a close secret—50 demonstrators were waiting when he arrived at 11 a.m. Shouting 'Down

with the military junta,' and 'Villarín out,' they pursued him inside Bush House—up the stairs, into the foyer, and then into some more offices where scuffles broke out before he vanished out of sight.

After a further quarter of an hour the police arrived, whereupon the demonstrators read out a statement in the name of the Chile Solidarity Campaign to the BBC staff who had gathered, and then dispersed.

Seventh week of Uxbridge lock-out

A lockout of 160 printers of the National Graphical Association (NGA) in Uxbridge, Middlesex, is now in its seventh week. King and Hutchings, part of the giant Westminster Press Group, have been unable to print since their notice to the NGA members expired on 6 November.

The dispute began when, without consultation, the management added a free advertising sheet, *Your Advertiser*, to the workload. The workers refused to handle it, and were given notice for the third time

in 18 months.

Pickets and the successful blacking of copy around the country by the other print unions have prevented the publication of 13 weekly papers in West London, including the *Harrow Observer*, the *Middlesex Advertiser* and the *Middlesex County Times*. Also hit is *Labour Weekly*, contract printed by King and Hutchings.

OTHER GRIEVANCES

The dispute has in turn brought other

grievances to the fore. K & H are currently installing a new press which will be used for the *New York Herald-Tribune*. To print this, the NGA have been offered £1.72 on top of their current basic of £30.32. They are asking for £4.72.

They are also asking for £4 of the £8 weekly guaranteed bonus to be transferred to the basic, which would give them something approaching parity with NGA members at Thomson's in Watford, for example, who receive a £42 basic. In five weeks and

four meetings with the union at national level, the management have not budged an inch.

The managing director of K & H, Frank Barlow, has told the NGA that sheer hard-ship will get them back on his terms, and clearly believes he has no need to negotiate at all. That attitude is now ringing ever more hollow. Contracts are in jeopardy, and 500 other staff have to be paid, while the printers stand firm. Losses in advertising revenue alone must be near £1

million.

The NGA have long suffered from the contempt of the K & H management, and now intend to put that right. Hitherto, NGA Father of the Chapel, Ian Cummings, has been harassed in his attempts to attend to official union business during working hours, which is scarcely the case in other major print shops. And the production manager Les Greaves pretends not to know what the words 'chapel' or 'union' mean, telling them that if they have any complaints they should write to the Queen!

Other NGA branches have sent donations to help the fight, which has transformed the NGA chapel into a force to be reckoned with. Westminster Press will certainly not starve them out.

NUJ (UXBRIDGE BRANCH) MEMBER

Farell to be Jailed Again?

Michael Farrell, whose hunger strike along with fellow People's Democracy member Tony Canavan in Cramlin Road jail earlier this year prompted mass demonstrations which led to their release, is now faced with a further term inside.

He has been instructed to appear in court next month, when he will be ordered to serve a three-month suspended sentence for an offence committed in 1970. Had this sentence been taken into account at the time of his last trial, he would have received a total of more than nine months and would have been eligible for political status the lack of which was the motivation for his hunger strike. Now he is faced with more of the same.

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CASH FOR THE CRISIS!

This is the last Red Weekly of 1973, a year of unprecedented crisis and class struggle. Our next issue will be published on 4 January 1974, as workers face the challenge of the Tory two-day-a-week lockout.

In this crisis we think that we, in common with all revolutionaries face important responsibilities. Thousands of workers will be looking for answers to problems they have not faced before, and experienced militants will face new tests.

Broad revolutionary agitation is needed, to get across the key points on which the struggle has to be focused, to the maximum possible audience. And we need to mobilise in struggle all of the forces which are directly influenced by the revolutionary left.

Red Weekly and the International Marxist Group intend to strain every muscle. From its next issue our paper will go over to 12 pages for the duration of the crisis. Extra staff will be taken on, so that we can broaden our reportage. The IMG will be producing thousands of leaflets and posters, sending organisers into the field, and building public meetings for which speakers will be sent on tour. All of this will cost a great deal of money.

We are calling for an emergency fund drive to raise £2,000 by 31 January. We ask all our supporters to respond immediately, help us to meet the challenge. Send a donation NOW to: F. MacLean, 182 Pentonville Road, London N1. (Cheque payable to Red Weekly).