

RED WEEKLY

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FORD WORKERS STRIKE THE FIRST BLOW

VOTE LABOUR — BUT SMASH SOCIAL CON-TRICK



UNDER THE TATTERED BANNER OF THE SOCIAL CONTRACT Wilson has set the election date for 10 October.

With a distasteful shudder Wilson rejects 'pitched battles and confrontations' as a solution to Britain's problems. He prefers to rely on 'an alliance of all useful people.'

by BOB PENNINGTON

But some useful people remain unconvinced. At Ford's Dagenham and Halewood, 1800 press shop workers tore the social contract into shreds when they voted to stay on strike until their demands for better shift pay were met. They have less faith than Mr. Wilson in the 'good intentions' of Ford's and the Confederation of British Industry.

Other not so 'useful' people remain equally unconvinced. The hard-headed bosses of British industry and the Tory champions of unemployment like Sir Keith Joseph want to wallop the working class, not cuddle them. They know only too well that the crumbling British economy cannot support some utopian policy of 'fair shares for all.'

'In the self-deluding world of Transport House, the Labour leaders desperately tug the Social Contract around themselves hoping it will protect them from the icy winds of reality.

But the 'united Britain' of class collaboration they want to build is an illusion. The employers neither believe in it, nor can they afford it. For the working class to accept Labour's so-called 'solutions' would be a road to disaster, defeat and demoralisation.

The working class right now are strong and undefeated. They have inflicted defeat on the capitalists in every major struggle they have launched in the last few years. The capitalists are disunited—like capitalists are disunited—the Tory Party is split and sections of its leadership have no confidence in winning the election.

The employers know that the big battles are coming *after* the election. What they desperately need is time to prepare for them. Wilson's 'useful people' line helps to give them just that. In practice it means: collaborate with the employers until they have reorganised their forces, strengthened their state apparatus and got themselves in a position to fight.

The election will come and go, but the wracking crisis of British capitalism will remain and worsen.

But the key question is: how does the working class get the best conditions for itself to fight that crisis? By relying on their own strength and going into struggle the Ford workers have struck an important blow to that end. By defeating the Tories at the polls and returning a Labour Government another blow will be struck.

As the miners understood at the last election the interests of the working class could not be furthered by calling off their struggles. The defeat of the Tories at the polls confirmed how right the miners were.

INSIDE-

IMG PROGRAMME
FOR THE CRISIS!

4-page pull-out

THE ELECTION

Unemployment: dishing out the lies

Lies, lies and more lies—that's all that's been served up by the politicians on the question of unemployment.

First, Sir Keith Joseph, ex-Tory Minister of Health and Social Security, says quite blatantly that a big dollop of unemployment would be excellent in the fight against 'wage inflation.' A day later he denies it.

Then, Harold Wilson comes on the box to tell us that only the Labour Party has the policies to prevent a rise in unemployment. But the Labour Manifesto has only eight words on the subject: 'to create employment in areas of high unemployment.'

Worst of all was Wilson's comment on the latest jobless figures—he claimed that a drop of 9,263 between August and September showed that Labour's policy worked. But the latest figures are distorted because of the time of year: fluctuations in seasonal employment plus a drop in the number of school-leavers.

What the figures *really* show is a rise of 5,900. Where is the success of Labour's policy now? What force has the Government's guarantees to the Ferranti workers? Only the action of the workers' movement can provide real solutions.

'NATIONALISE FERRANTI' — say Scots Labour councillors

When Ferranti brought out the begging bowl, they made sure the odds were stacked against direct action by Ferranti workers in Edinburgh. The 5,800 workers, one-third of the company's entire workforce, were starting a week's holiday when their bosses announced they were bust.

That's not to say that the workers' 'leaders' were standing by, ready to occupy to enforce job security. After all, the local AUEW office is one of the bastions of right-winger John Boyd's faction in the bureaucracy.

Boyd's hacks weren't slow in making their position clear on Ferranti's. The line of regional organiser Ernie Leslie and convenor Doug Rooney was that the English plants might go to the wall, but the Scottish plants were viable. Under nationalisation?—oh, no, the last thing they wanted was outside interference in their attempt to save jobs.

In one proposal, they offered the employers mass redundancies,

destroyed any attempt to create the maximum unity of Ferranti workers, and gave an open invitation to the SNP to make its divisive, racist interventions in the Scottish workers' movement a major focus in the election.

But the treachery of the right-wing has been met head-on by the demand of five Labour councillors, backed by Piton Branch of the AUEW, that Ferranti's be nationalised under workers' control. Their statement says:

'We regard the state of Ferranti as a devastating indictment, not merely of the Ferranti company, but of capitalist enterprise in general. We ... demand the immediate and outright nationalisation of Ferranti ... on the following provisos: (1) minimal compensation—if any of the present owners are in dire financial straits we should give them unemployment benefit; (2) ... the nationalised industry be under workers' control at all levels ... and in all cases of nationalisation; (3) ... the Labour Government legislate to force all companies to open their books ... to their work forces.'

Continued page 6



Ford Dagenham body plant workers — striking a blow against the social contract and for the whole working class

£2,000 FOR
RED
WEEKLY!

This week's paper costs 8p—an increase of 3p on the previous price. But from now on, this week and every week, there will also be an extra four pages, making 12 in all. We hope it will help to soften the blow.

These extra pages, though, cannot be financed entirely from the

price increase. Rising costs would have forced us to charge more in any case.

No, we have expanded the paper in the belief that you, our readers, will recognise the political importance of this step and will come to our aid in making up the difference. To this

end we have launched a Special £2,000 Fund Drive to be met by the New Year.

Please don't let us down—rush all you can afford to: Red Weekly (Special Fund), 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. You won't regret it!

RED LION SQUARE

Defend Pete Cooper

Anti-fascist militant Peter Cooper, who two weeks ago received a three month jail sentence for taking part in the 15 June demonstration against the National Front, last week had the boot put in by his employer—the Labour-controlled Southwark Council.

Peter, who is a clerk in the Southwark Social Services Department, returned to work on Monday (after spending a week of his annual holiday leave in jail, awaiting release on bail until his appeal comes up) only to be informed that he was getting the sack immediately.

A string of flimsy pretexts were produced to justify Peter's victimisation, including lateness, giving insufficient notice for a request for holiday leave, and 'lack of interest in the job'. This latter 'sin', according to Peter's bosses, revealed itself in a number of perfidious ways including 'yawning', 'dancing in the office', 'sitting on the back of his chair' and 'asking the date'.

Peter was denied a request to work out his month's notice and was refused a written statement of the reasons for his dismissal.

Peter is not the only militant to meet with the disapproval of Southwark Council. Just last week a NALGO shop steward was demoted for allegedly returning employment agency time sheets, in line with his union's campaign against private agency staff.

NALGO shop stewards in the Southwark Social Services are taking up Peter's case and have called for a full meeting of the Department to discuss further moves.

Peter's sacking is a blow against organised trade unionism, and against all those committed to fighting the fascist menace. His defence must be taken up throughout the labour movement, and Southwark Council must be told in no uncertain terms that they cannot get away with this sort of scandalous victimisation.

Trade Unionists demand charges be dropped

The following statement is being circulated throughout the labour movement in protest at the jail sentence handed out to anti-fascist militant Peter Cooper.

'We, the undersigned, were appalled to learn of the three month prison sentence meted out to one of the June 15 anti-fascist demonstrators. Many other demonstrators are coming up on similar charges. In fact, by the time this petition is distributed there could be other such sentences.

We feel that it is quite unacceptable that people should be imprisoned for protesting against the activities of the fascist National Front.

We demand from the Home Secretary and the Labour Government—

The dropping of charges against the June 15 demonstrators.

The immediate release of those already sent to prison.

Among those who have already signed the statement are:

- Mike Cooley (former President, AUEW/TASS)
- Jack Collins (Kent Area Delegate, NUM Executive)
- Ernie Roberts (Assistant General Secretary, AUEW)
- Don Cook (Convenor, West London Transport Depot)

attitude to the law. Brian Heron pointed out that the IMG did not advise indiscriminate breaking of the law, but that defence of the workers' interests were the prime consideration.

Many others had advised breaking the law, for different reasons, like Scanlon and the Industrial Relations Act. Finally, he pointed out, Lord Carson, a leader of the Tory Party between 1912-14, had called for the systematic breaking of the law over the Northern Ireland issue. One rule for the working class, quite another for the ruling class.

PAUL SMITH

Police used as "private army" in Liverpool strike

The Wingrove & Roger's strike of women workers is now in its 14th week.

Although the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers has declared the strike official, its support has been no more than token.

On Monday 16 September, 50 police, many of them marching in military formation, turned up to intimidate the mass picket of 60 people.

As Barry Williams, Liverpool Trades Council executive member and a member of the picket, told *Red Weekly*: 'Wingrove & Rogers are using the police virtually as a private army.'

BENDING THE LAW

The employers know, and the women strikers know, that the strike will only be successful if the scabs are stopped from going into work. But neither the employers nor the police are too bothered about the niceties of the law. If the law has to

be bent—or even broken—to stop the pickets, then they will do just that.

Meanwhile the AUEW ignores the serious nature of the attack by the state. Maybe they think a strike of women workers is not too important. Perhaps they console themselves with the nonsensical idea that the employers and the coppers would not dare do it to 'our lads'.

The women strikers are rather more alert to what is happening at Wingrove & Rogers. In consultation with the IMG they have drafted a resolution to be sent to all Working Women's Charter Groups.

This calls for: support for the strike; for all trade unionists to be alerted to the activities of the police; and for the AUEW to pull out its finger now by organising effective picketing from all of the local AUEW and labour movement.

Resolutions to be sent to Wingrove & Rogers's Strike Committee, Rita Smith, Shop Steward, c/o AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool 4; and to the AUEW National Office, 110 Peckham Road, London S.E.15.

Teacher militants urge "reject offer"

ON SATURDAY, 28 September the National Union of Teachers (NUT) Executive will be recommending to a union special conference acceptance of the current London allowance offer.

Militants from the London Teachers' Action Committee will be picketing the conference to urge delegates to reject the offer.

The current offer is a 40 per cent improvement on the Pay Board's original proposal made in July.

This increased offer was won as a result of the unofficial strikes organised by the Action Committee in June, July, and September. It is a victory for the militants, but nevertheless holds new dangers for teachers nationally.

First, it introduces three separate pay tiers, where only one existed before. This is a definite attempt to split the militant central London teachers from those in the outer London area and new 'fringe' areas.

Second, the creation of the new 'fringe' area is in itself a dangerous precedent. It could well be the forerunner of 'fringe' zones in cities all

across the country.

The NUT Executive, including the members of the Communist Party who sit on it, are urging teachers to call off the struggle and place all their hopes in the forthcoming Houghton Report. But there is absolutely no reason to hold high expectations of this report. It will almost certainly lay great stress on a 'professional' salary structure—more for headteachers, and less for class teachers.

The London Teachers' Action Committee broke the union executive's stranglehold on the union through its campaign of unofficial strikes, and the campaign against teacher shortage is continuing. Even if the London Allowance offer is accepted, and the class struggle on the education front quiets down for a while, the crisis throughout our social services will continue. Big struggles are on the cards in the very near future, and the experiences of the Action Committee have left militants better prepared than ever before to launch and lead such struggles.

JON DUVEEN (NUT)

Telephonists tell Jackson 'your number is up'

Two hundred telephonists from eight overseas exchanges in Central London picketed the headquarters of the Union of Post Office Workers on 16 September in protest at the suspension of two of their branch officers.

Disciplinary action had been taken against the chairman and secretary of Overseas Telephones No 2 Branch because they had called on the membership to take industrial action, which contravenes the UPW's splendidly democratic rule book.

The picket, which represents the first significant challenge to the right-wing union leadership since the aftermath of the post workers' strike in 1971, has since been followed up by contacts with other branches—yet another infringement of a rule book designed to outlaw any possible rank and file initiative.

CALLS BLACKED

The dispute which sparked off this clash began on 10 August, when No 2 branch voted to black all overseas calls to and from the Brighton area in response to a local deal negotiated by a senior UPW official. This allowed untrained Brighton operators to handle foreign language calls without receiving the £1.48 weekly allowance paid to London telephonists, a move precipitated by the severe staff shortages in London.

Such deals have already been attempted at international exchanges in Glasgow and Leicester, and are regarded by the London telephonists as the thin end of a large-scale productivity wedge.

The suspension of the two branch officials arose from the refusal of the London members to lift their backing during the Farnborough Air Show. The intervention of the union bureaucracy persuaded them to extend the backing to the Glasgow and Leicester exchanges, causing severe disruption to the overseas phone service.

SECRECY

A union disciplinary committee consisting entirely of full-time officials is to examine the case, and the bureaucracy is refusing

to reveal either the names of the 'judges' or when the committee will meet.

However, the blacking will continue whether or not the suspension is lifted. The London telephonists are demanding that all linguist operators must receive the full allowance, and that no changes in work practices are introduced without the approval of the workers themselves.

JACK SANDERS

BUSMEN ON THE RACIST ROUTE

Leeds City Transport is not well loved by its workers. The pay is low, and the discipline irksome.

However the busmen (members of 9/112 branch T&GWU), far from directing their resentment at its cause, have chosen to focus it on the immigrants in their ranks. A recent meeting of the predominantly white 9/112 branch voted for a resolution demanding that Sikhs on the Leeds buses no longer be allowed to wear turbans.

A picket of T&G headquarters called by the Indian Workers Association and the Sikh Temple predictably brought no response from the bureaucrats inside. Throughout the argument the T&G officials from branch level upwards have trotted happily along the racist trail blazed by their white members.

The Leeds situation has all the makings of a repeat of Mansfield Hosiery and Imperial Typewriters. The Leeds labour movement must at once press for an immediate reversal of the 9/112 branch decision.

The T&G leadership should waken from its slumber and take the Sikhs' fate out of the hands of white racists. The formation of a black caucus within the union to safeguard the interests of such immigrant workers is an obvious necessity.

MARTIN O'LEARY

Scarman - who's on trial?

Lord Scarman's Inquiry into the 15 June anti-fascist demonstration reached one of its climaxes last week when Brian Heron and Dave Bailey appeared to testify for the International Marxist Group.

Their testimony was an important opportunity to outline the arguments for mounting the 15 June action and stressing the fact that the political responsibility for Kevin Gateley's death must rest at the door of the police.

Every pathetic little twist and turn was tried by lawyers from the Home Office, the police and the National Front to confuse and fudge the issues. Farquarson, QC (representing the police) dealing with the fact that a section of the IMG contingent linked arms to march away from the Square, produced such gems from his brilliant legal mind as 'so the IMG hold each other's hands, eh?'

When it was pointed out by the IMG that they advised demonstrators to wear and use the minimum necessary protective clothing and self-defence, in response to the level of violence and armament of the police and National Front, this was seen

as 'introducing the language of civil war'. The 'civil war' of the picket lines, the factory occupations and the whole workers' struggle seemed so far away from the cosy atmosphere of the Tribunal that Scarman and Co. reacted like a lot of cross little boys when it was introduced to disturb their comfort.

The IMG's decision to appear at the Inquiry clearly proved correct. The IMG is the number one candidate for scapegoat for the results of the police riot. Because they pursued the agreed route of the demonstration, and intended to put a proposal for a mass picket to a mass meeting of all the demonstrators outside Conway Hall, the IMG is made out to be the villain of the piece. But the appearance and representation of the IMG at the Tribunal makes it more difficult for the ruling class to get away with this.

By taking up the key political questions in the Tribunal the IMG begins to put the Tribunal on trial before the working class. The police action on 15 June was part and parcel of the upgrading of police actions in the class struggle. Any strengthening of the police or the state's hand proposed by Scarman will come from the real fear of the ruling class of more Salsleys, and more factory occupations. This too was made clear by the IMG witnesses.

The final indictment against the Tribunal must surely be Scarman's hurried interruption of the testimony on the IMG's



Over 40 anti-fascist militants, mainly from the International Marxist Group, picketed the Home Office last Saturday to demand that all charges arising out of the 15 June demonstration in Red Lion Square be dropped, and that Peter Cooper (see above) and IS member Nicholas Pitt be immediately released from jail. Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

LABOUR'S MAKE-UP

RUNS

Vote Labour - but

THE ELECTION

smash the Social Con-trick!

Chalfont resigns—

Lord Chalfont's resignation from the Labour Party raises again the question of what attitude the revolutionary left should take to the open right wing in the Labour Party.

One position is that of the *Tribune* group who in effect say that 'unity is all important'. They simply declare that Jenkins should 'call on his followers to work for the biggest Labour majority possible at the next election.'

The reaction at the base of the Labour Party is very different. Taverner was chopped at Lincoln by his local party. Now the MP for Sheffield, Brightside, has hit the dust. Far from seeking 'unity', the response of the ordinary members is to get rid of the open right. It is worth examining what social reality these developments reflect.

Vote Labour - but

THE ELECTION

smash the Social Con-trick!

After 1945 Labour became a 'party of government', attracting a whole host of careerists not based on the working class movement. Many rose high in its ranks. By 1970 the number of ex-manual workers amongst Labour MPs had fallen to 26% compared to 37% in 1945—and even this was much lower than the pre-war figure. The number of Labour MPs who were businessmen or in the professions rose to 50% in 1970.

This development within the Party has now created a whole stratum of individuals who move with no incongruity between the Labour Party and the state apparatus, the management of the nationalised industries, and even the leadership of private capitalism. To take a few prominent examples—George Thomson became an EEC Commissioner, Richard Marsh became head of British Rail, Lord Robens was a viciously anti-working class Coal Board chief, Ray Gunter was a director of Securicor, George Brown was involved in IPC, and Harold Lever is a millionaire banker.

But more important than the class background of the right is the question of where their base lies.

The old base of the Labour right was the trade union bureaucracy. At the 1935 Labour conference, for example, all 75 resolutions of the 'leftist' Socialist League were defeated by the union block vote. In the early 1950s the Bevanites could gain up to 75% of the constituency vote on issues like German re-armament and won six out of seven constituency places on the Labour NEC. But every one of their positions was defeated at the Labour conference by the vote of the union leaders.

The role of the union bureaucrats was so direct that they determined which of the various contending right wingers would lead the Party. They also ensured that none of the leading figures of the right would be defeated. In 1953 the trade union bureaucrats changed the Party constitution so that Herbert Morrison, defeated by the Bevanites in the 1952 elections for the National Executive was brought onto the NEC as Deputy Leader. In 1954 Arthur Deakin, the head of the TGWL, ensured that Gaitskell was elected party Treasurer. This set Gaitskell on the way to becoming the Party's leader the following year.

The Labour right clearly understood where its base of support lay. As Shinwell gratefully told the 1952 Labour con-

Now kick out Jenkins & Co

ference: 'Thank heaven for the trade union movement at this time. Thank heaven for what is called the block vote!'

RULING CLASS BACKERS

In the past the right wing, no matter what its individual social origins, was based on union bureaucrats who were by their very position, and despite their views, firmly part of the working class movement. Now the situation is different. Jenkins and company want to break the Labour Party away from its base in the trade unions, not give praise to the block vote. Jenkins has his base in the *Times*, the *Guardian*, and the ruling class backers of the Liberal and even Tory parties, and not in the trade union bureaucracy—let alone in the working class.

None of the Labour bureaucracy, including the 'lefts', break with the historic interests of the ruling class; but the Jenkinsites are direct agents of the bourgeoisie within the workers movement. They are a clique, lacking the old base of the Labour right, whose sole link to the working



class movement is their formal membership of the Labour Party. That link should be ended. Jenkins and his supporters should be expelled from the Labour Party.

JOHN MARSHALL



A picket supported three Ford workers arrested by the Special Patrol Group during the one-day engineering strike in May when they came up at Barking magistrates' court on Monday. Right-wing Home Secretary Jenkins has backed this police action just as he did over the Shrewsbury case. Photo: PETER HARRAP (Report)

BIG MOUTH HOGG

LORD HAILSHAM has bounced his large bumbling body into the middle of the General Election.

Formerly Quintin Hogg, Lord Chancellor and many other things, Lord Hailsham launched into 'red scare' tirades against the Labour Party that must have wetted the chops of every right-wing buffoon in the land.

Whilst Heath was prattling on about 'national unity', our Lord was not half so restrained. He compared life under a Labour Government to life in the Soviet Union. 'Farmers are faced with ruin' he said, 'and, like the Soviet Union, the housewife is beginning to suffer a shortage of goods in the shops—even of staple foods. Whatever the acceptability or otherwise of capitalism, it means plenty. Whatever the virtues of socialism, it means shortage.'

What a load of drivel! Perhaps, Lord Hailsham, you are forgetting the oil crisis? Even the example Hailsham gives himself proves exactly the opposite of

his anti-Communist diatribe. The shortages of oil, sugar and salt have been created by the anarchy of the capitalist market, and by the monopolies hoarding goods and waiting for prices to rise.

What about the meat and butter mountains? Or the decision of Canadian capitalism to dump £17 million tons of wheat into the sea, rather than reduce the price?

Only socialist measures can tackle these problems. Not the pale pink policy of the present Labour Government, but solutions based on *working class action*. The real way forward lies in the actions like those of the Italian workers who sought out and unmasked the warehouses stacked full of meat during their meat shortages, the Birmingham transport workers who are blacking a number of pubs which overprice beer, and the London and Hull dockers who are refusing to load sugar for profiteering exporters. Such actions can topple the large frame of Lord Hailsham from his day-dreaming fantasies with an almighty thud.

LABOUR PARTY leaders have never been the most stunning guests at fancy dress parties. In 1966, they turned up decked out in incomes policy. Later they wore their anti-union *In Place of Strife*.

In this election, however, emperor Wilson has turned up without any clothes at all. He's calling the 'outfit' the Social Contract.

Very few are being taken in, least of all the ruling class. The *Economist* is downright insulting: 'What is really happening? Are the people to be fooled again? The social compact is no more than a voluntary incomes policy... concealed as an attack on social justice.'

Meanwhile, Labour's election Manifesto, published this week, tries to hide the naked truth: 'At the heart of this manifesto and our programme to save the nation, lies the Social Contract between the Labour Government and the trade unions... It is not simply, or narrowly, an understanding about wages. It is about justice, equality, about concern for and protection of the lower paid, the needy, the pensioner and the handicapped in our society.'

But try how you may to look behind the cosmetics, it's difficult to see anything but an incomes policy—to drive down working class living standards still further.

sam boyd

GUARANTEED

Groups of workers now need to fight for at least a 30% increase to keep pace with the soaring cost of living. Not only that, they need to fight for a measure of guaranteed and automatic protection against inflation that goes far beyond the miserable £2.80 already won by some workers through the threshold agreements. This means the fight for a sliding scale of wages.

What does Labour propose in the face of this? The TUC document on the Social Contract reads: 'The 12-month interval between major increases should in general continue to apply.' Secondly, the document says that no pay claim should aim to *increase workers' living standards*.

When working class living standards have fallen 2½% since Labour came in in March, when they're going to fall 5½% this year with unemployment soaring, the TUC have made a choice to bale out the bosses.

FALLS APART

But there the deception falls apart. The employers, it seems, are not very taken by the Social Contract. Only the directors of one branch of Turner and Newall, the giant engineering firm, have had the gall to ask 'What about the Social Contract?' in the face of a pay claim from their workers.

The rest of the ruling class know that pieces of paper drawn up by the Labour Party and the TUC won't deter tens of thousands of workers from launching massive struggles this winter and spring.

Rather than do battle in the future when the crisis really bites, the Ford

company are now breaking the Social Contract themselves. They are trying to get a new wage agreement with Ford workers before the last one has run out.

Vote Labour - but

THE ELECTION

smash the Social Con-trick!

This political window-dressing is simply meant to fob off the Labour Party left wing. But it's also a lie.

During the last election campaign, one of the most astute moves by the Tories was to get Tony Barber to work out the cost of implementing Labour's programme. Sure enough, the computers concluded that such a bill stood no chance of being met through the normal channels of the ruling class use for raising 'public' money—taxing the working class.

Labour's cover is blown. No matter how heart-rending their promises of social reform in return for wage restraint, they have no plan for an attack on the wealth and power of the employers to pay for their social programme. The cost will be borne by the working class.

Wilson admits as much himself. He talks in the manifesto of 'improvements in society... many of them cost money... the timing of them will depend on how quickly and how completely we get on top of the economic problems.' He means it depends on how quickly the Social Contract forces down living standards—pay now, live later?

SCARED

The ruling class may be running scared of the crisis. But in the struggles to come, they won't be fighting the Labour Party. Christopher Mayhew and Lord Chalfont have cut and run from the Labour Party not because a Labour Government will usher in the revolution but because they know it will be too weak to stem the tide of working class struggle in the next few months. Similarly, when Tory leader Heath called Wilson's refusal to be drawn on the idea of a coalition 'an open declaration of class war' he had no illusions that the generals of the working class army will come from the Labour Party.

In the coming confrontation, militants should rely only on their own strength and not look to Labour. Yet again Wilson has turned up to the part unsuitably dressed.

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THE ELECTION

smash the Social Con-trick!

The rest of Labour's Manifesto falls into place once the lies about the Social Contract are discarded. It's true as someone said of Wilson, that he has a capacity for making a grain of truth cover a desert of deception. And sure enough, one side of the Social Contract deal is a series of concessions on social policy. In return for workers holding back on wages the Labour Government promises to maintain living standards in kind.

All the touching clap-trap about pensions, housing grants, a lump sum to the NHS, food subsidies and the overtures to women by promising them the moon, is supposed to be what the Social Contract is all about.

Back to the bad old days, when Orange was king!

BRIAN GROGAN

The Irish issue is almost totally missing from the election campaigns of all the major parties. This might seem surprising.

After all, British imperialism's policy for Ireland has been slavishly followed by all the parties for the last ten years. And today, this policy is in ruins.

But the issue is not completely blacked out. It is there in the actions of the Labour Government. It is there in the person of Powell. It is there in the muted debate growing inside the Labour Party and the trade unions about the role of British troops. And it is there in the ominous words of the Labour Party Manifesto.

The Manifesto charts the new course being taken by the Labour Government in the last few months since the victory of the Loyalist General Strike. And it leaves ten years of consistent ruling class policy behind. No more, the commitment to 'democratise' the sectarian orange state summed up in 'power-sharing'. No more, the move towards a federal solution summed up in 'the Irish Dimension'.

The Manifesto blatantly sets out the intention to recreate Protestant supremacy. In such a plan, 'power-sharing' means at most the inclusion of the odd renegade under Protestant domination. And 'the Irish dimension' means little more than the indisputable fact that there's a common border between the North and the South. Once more the Labour Government is the master of a reactionary push against the nationalist population.

Faced with the choice of either supporting the demand of the Irish people to determine their own future or defending the imperial interests, the Labour Party has no hesitation in choosing. And so, right from its very first time in office, the Labour Party and successive Labour governments have been the staunchest defenders of partition and of the necessary repression of the Catholic minority in the six counties that follows.

LABOUR'S RECORD

In 1924 it was the Labour leader Ramsay MacDonald who worked out with the Orange leaders the actual division of Ireland. This established Protestant ascendancy over a Catholic minority as a permanent feature of problems in the North. In giving its blessing to the partition, the Labour Government also gave its blessing to vicious sectarian violence against the Catholic minority which was indispensable in getting them to accept their subordinate position. Through such continual pogroms the minority has been kept in that position for over 50 years.

In 1949 it was the Labour government which drew up that section of the Government of Ireland Act which put the permanent status of Northern Ireland into law. In 1969 it was the Labour government that sent in the British troops in an attempt to deal with the most recent upsurge — troops have consistently battered and repressed the Catholic minority ever since.

TODAY'S DIRTY TRICK

On each of these occasions the Labour Government has justified its actions through talk of the 'democratic rights' of the Protestants or the need to end 'sectarian strife'. But in each case these high-sounding phrases have been no more than a cover to hide beating the Catholic minority into submission to the rule of the Loyalists. This is the reality of Northern Ireland. The artificial division of the Irish nation makes it the only possibility.

Today's proposals stem from the inevitable failure of the policy which British imperialism



Wilson — toasting the Loyalists?

started over ten years ago. This strategy attempted to transfer the policing of British imperialist interests from the Orange ruling class in the North to the Southern Irish ruling class. The victory of the Loyalist General Strike finally ended the 'power-sharing' project of the Sunningdale Agreement.

Now the Labour Government wants to revert to its original strategy of an alliance with the Loyalists. To do this it has called the 'Constitutional Convention'. True to form, the Labour election manifesto paints a pretty picture of the democratic nature of this body: 'It will be a convention of northern Irish people, elected by northern Irish people'. But as long as the artificial northern state exists, this can only mean handing things over

to the Loyalists.

Once the situation is stable the Labour Government is then in favour of withdrawing the troops: 'The army cannot replace the police and it will be the aim of the Labour government to encourage the whole community to support the police service, which would enable the army to make a planned, orderly and progressive reduction in its present commitments.'

This can only mean one thing, the Catholics will be again battered into supporting the sectarian police forces. To ensure that happens, the Labour Government has spent the few months since the General Strike beefing up the strength of the Loyalists. Presumably, the legalisation and arming of the protestant vigilantes under the name of the 'special reserves' is all part of encouraging the whole community to support the police service.

FIGHTING SPIRIT

The role of the troops will be to rebuild the old Orange state. From now until the calling of the Constitutional Convention next Spring the Labour Government intends to build up the strength of the Loyalists over the Republicans.

But the Republican population is not going to take this lying down. The fighting spirit of the Catholic ghettos and the actions of the Provisional IRA which have plagued all imperialism's plans are still there. Moves in the direction of civil war are being made by the very actions of the Labour Government itself.

And yet the Party Manifesto spews out the rubbish that 'a sudden withdrawal in advance of any political settlement would leave a vacuum which would certainly be filled by the paramilitary groups, with a grave possibility of civil war.'

The best way of preventing this build up of Loyalist strength is to remove the troops immediately. The best way of undermining the idea that the Protestants have some God-given right to dominate the Catholic minority is to withdraw the troops now.



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Ireland will not this election uncentre.

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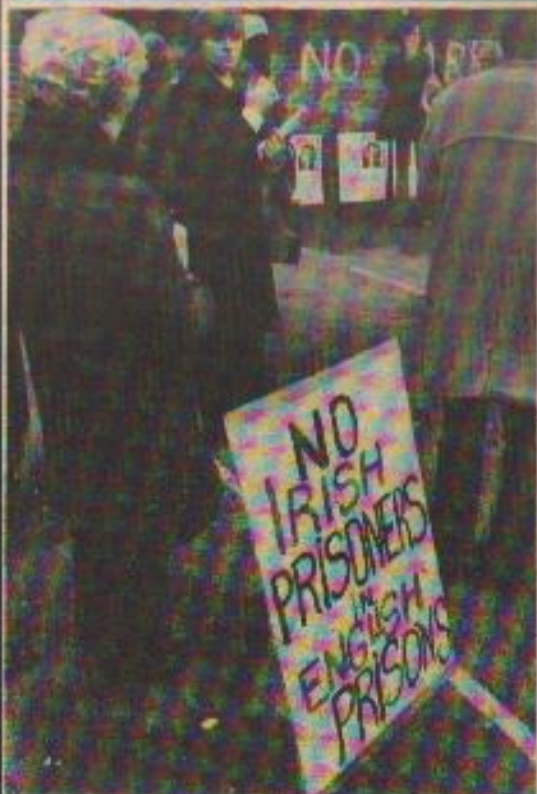
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LABOUR'S RECORD - A BAD IRISH JOKE



Internment, armed-repression and a whole host of Irish political prisoners in British jails — these are the achievements of our 'socialist' leaders!

Labour M.P. Stan Newens, writing recently to the *Irish Post*—main paper of the Irish community in Britain—acknowledges that several of the paper's correspondents '...favour the withholding of votes from Labour at the next General Election.'

Newens' letter is a response to editorials, articles and letters in the *Post* over the past few weeks questioning the traditional support of the Irish community for the Labour Party (estimated to be as high as 84% in the 1970 general election).

Newens urges Irish voters 'to think very carefully indeed before he or she advocates withholding votes from Labour'. Newens claims the Labour Party contains such champions of the Irish struggle as himself, who '...was one of the minority of MPs who voted against the renewal of the powers under which internment is carried out in Northern Ireland; Kevin Macnamara; Paul Rose; and Jock Stallard, who 'played a leading role in organising a sizeable demonstration in London six years' ago [sic] to denounce discrimination in Northern Ireland'.

The historical record of Labour on

Ireland makes one wonder why Irish support for the L.P. has been so consistently strong. Labour's attitude to Ireland has been characterised by complete blindness to the imperialist relationship between the two countries. This has led them to a defence of partition and the role of British troops in Ireland.

In 1921, Lenin observing this, recommended that the Bolsheviks '...immediately instruct one of our most sarcastic journalists to write a draft ... to the British Labour Party... particularly in order to make the leaders of the British Labour Party understand what contemporary imperialist relationships mean in international politics, we suggest to them that they favourably consider: first, the withdrawal of the British troops from Ireland and the taking of a referendum; secondly, the same in regard to India, thirdly...'

The resurgence in the Irish anti-imperialist struggle in the past five years has really put Labour on the spot. It was Wilson who in August 1969 authorised the use of British troops as the direct instrument of Westminster's plans. When under the Tories the troops spearheaded a

policy of repression, internment, indiscriminate murders, Labour's famous bipartisan policy 'back the Tories down the line. The position of the Labour 'left' was inconstant.

Since last February Labour really excelled their previous ruling record. Pursuing policies which earned the plaudits of Enoch Powell, they have intensified the repression while Wilson simultaneously claims that there are no political prisoners in Northern Ireland!

Rather than grant the minimal demands of republican hunger strikers, the Labour government celebrated Michael Gaughan's death through force feeding. Now Rees has capitulated to the loyalist backwoodsmen on the two issues of setting up an ascendancy parliament and a protestant reserve police force.

IRISH REACTION

It is these political developments that have caused such a spread reaction amongst the politically active sections of the Irish community. This has led to the emergence of the Belfast based Desert Labour Campaign and a call by London Provisional Sinn Féin for voters not to support Tory, Labour or Liberal, but to write-in 'British Troops Out of Ireland' on the ballot paper. This has also been the decision by the

(Irish Civil Rights Association) stand candidates in key Labour constituencies where there are large Irish communities.

We agree with ICRA on the failure of the Labour government, and

LAND: ING ISSUE

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with them the exasperation that Labour is trying to keep Ireland a non-issue during the election. However we regard their decision to run what can only be described as a 'Bring down Labour' election campaign as deeply mistaken.

The aim of ICRA's campaign is to punish Labour for its crimes rather than use the elections to help create

by
Oscar Gregan

better conditions for the advancement of the Irish struggle. Rather than striking a match, they prefer to curse the darkness.

Supporting the Irish Political Hostages Campaign, we still called upon

Irish comrades speak out on British election

If those forces supporting the struggle for democratic and national rights in Ireland want to intervene in the British general election, they should do so with the clear understanding that a victory for the British working class will be in the best interests of the revolutionary movement in Ireland.

This means that they should first of all call for a vote for those revolutionary groups to the left of the Labour Party (in safe constituencies) who defend the right to self-determination for Ireland and who advocate a consistent fight against British capitalism at home. Where this course will not be possible, as is likely in most cases, they should call for a vote for

The British ruling class spends £3 million a month to keep its army in the North of Ireland.

This fact alone should be of great interest to British workers, who are being told in this election by both sides that there is not enough money to pay for 'luxuries' like schools and hospitals. For all his fine talk now, it was Wilson who maintained the £180 million Tory cuts in the education budget. So why, if times are so hard and if we all have to 'tighten our belts', is so much money being spent on this war?

The answer is that the army defends not the workers of Ireland but the profits of British bosses. That is why they continue to prop up and extend the whole network of kangaroo courts, internment and torture that is a brutal fact of life in the North of Ireland today.

Meanwhile both Tory and Labour politicians outbid each other every time a British soldier is killed in paying tribute to the 'glorious' traditions of the British army and how these soldiers are fighting against a brutal army of mad bombers.

It is true that many working class school leavers are 'conscripted' into the British army by the most insidious of all recruitment officers - unemployment. But once they join that army and fight foreign workers of whatever nationality, we cannot allow their class origins to blind us to their real role. They are serving the interests of the ruling class and not the working class. We cannot side with them, any more than any trade unionist can side with policemen who bust up picket lines.

SHAM PROVINCE

In a situation where the army is used to smash up the homes of workers in 'arms searches', and where the army drags off men and women for torture and internment, it is only to be expected that the Irish workers will fight back. In the Falls, Ardoyne and Bogside, in all the Catholic areas, they have continued to

All the talk of Labour and Tory leaders about the 'peacekeeping role' of this multi-million pound war-machine falls on deaf ears in Ireland. It was British imperialism which fostered and encouraged sectarian divisions throughout the centuries.

Now the aims of the imperialists have changed, the protestant workers are not falling into line. Behind the backs of the 'peacekeeping'

supporters of the Irish struggle to vote Labour at the last General Election. We however had no illusions that Labour would be a better government for the Irish anti-imperialist fighters.

Out of office, especially in a situation where the crisis in Ireland will deepen, Labour would quickly try to channel political discontent into their party. One can imagine Stan Newens once again writing to the *Irish Post* commenting smugly on the folly of the Desert Labour Campaign at the previous election.

No, comrades of the ICRA, let us not let them off the hook again. Labour, in office, up against the wall, will not be able to dangle any more false promises before the Irish voters.

In that situation we would have the opportunity to convince many people that the road to Irish national liberation does not lie through winning concessions from Labour at Westminster.

Labour, without illusions, and carry on their own fight for the withdrawal of troops, the ending of internment, and the repeal of repressive laws.

This is the only principled course open to ICRA which would be consistent with striking the greatest possible blow at the next election against those who are unleashing repression in Ireland. The fact that ICRA follows a different, even opposite course, shows the major weakness of the ICRA and Provo leadership: i.e. their inability to understand the decisive importance of class struggle. This has led them to a situation where they advocate a course of action which, if successful, could do enormous damage to the struggle in Ireland.



Even Lenin, back in 1921, had to strongly attack the scandalous anti-imperialist policies of the Labour Party on the Irish question.



The IMG - seen here on a demo just after the Derry massacre - has been in the forefront of the solidarity movement in support of those forces fighting for Irish self-determination.

Self-determination - what it's got to do with us

army, the loyalist para-military armies have been able to grow and develop. It is precisely the presence of this army in the North of Ireland that emboldens the loyalist workers in these actions.

These protestant workers in the last analysis fall in on the side of British imperialism. As Glen Barr, a leader of the Ulster Workers' Council, explained when he withdrew his candidature in Derry in favour of one of West, Craig and Paisley's 'fur-coat brigade': 'The Official Unionist at least supports the Union, whereas the SDLP candidate stands for a united Ireland.'

British workers cannot afford to find themselves on the side of these backward protestant workers. The price for doing this would be success for Powell in his viciously anti-working class plans. In the present crisis of British capitalism the workers of Britain can only ignore the struggle of the Irish workers at their peril.

ARMY OPERATIONS

The period up to and including the present has been marked by well rehearsed and well planned police and army operations. This has been the case since the formation - under Labour - of the police Special Patrol Group which has now added Kevin Gately to its list of victims. There have also been the well publicised attempts to accustom the British workers to the sight of troops on the streets at Heathrow.

Now there is all the talk of private armies even sanctified by leading Tories. The press may pass these eccentricities off as 'Dad's Army' operations, and indeed they are less of an immediate threat than the thousands of already existing private 'security' organisations. But what they do reveal is the discussion now taking place in the coterie and exclusive clubs of the ruling class.

Even the sober *Times* now discusses seriously the possibility and pros and cons of a military government. Through all this the British army continues to develop itself as the world's most highly professional machine of counter-insurgency. The training it receives daily on the streets of Northern Ireland serves to amply back up the theories of the infamous Brigadier Kitson.

It is against this background that we can see the importance of a victory for the Irish revolution. Such a victory would be a massive gain not only for the workers of Ireland but for all the workers of these islands, and the British ruling class would be immeasurably weakened.

As long as British workers ignore the reality of the Irish struggle, as long as they assume that British imperialism has some right to be in con-

trol of even a part of Ireland, then they aid their own oppressors. If British workers accept the domination of one race by another, or one class by another, they leave the door wide open for people like Powell.

Powell's re-emergence from a base across the Irish sea is a step in a patient and long drawn-out aim to destroy the organised British working class movement. The ruling class may not need him now, but he knows that as the crisis intensifies they will increasingly look favourably on what he has to offer. His cynical support for Labour is a reactionary interpretation of 'the rope that supports the hanging man'.

That is why we say that Labour's bi-partisan non-policy in Ireland serves only the ruling class and is preparing a terrible bloodbath for both the Irish and British working class. We say in this election, as we have done consistently: withdraw the troops now. They are not keeping the peace. On the contrary they prolong the war, and deepen the split between protestant and catholic workers.

The presence of the troops assists the protestant ultras to arm and re-arm, and increases the danger of defeat for the catholic workers. Yet it is only when the latter are successful in their struggle, when the protestant workers have finally been convinced that they cannot continue to improve their miserable lot at the expense of the catholic workers, that there will be any real chance for unity of the Northern Ireland working class. That would indeed be a major step on the road to socialism in Britain and in Ireland.

TED COXHEAD

PROVOS RAIDED

Red Weekly has received the following communication from the Irish Republican Information Service:

On Friday 13 September, 1974, the office of the Irish Republican Information Service was raided by fifty members of the secret political police (Special Branch) of the Southern Government. The office, which is housed in the premises of the Movement's weekly newspaper *An Phoblacht*, was ransacked and all the mailing lists, files and office equipment were removed by the raiding party.

The editor of *An Phoblacht*, members of his staff, and a girl who manages the internees' craft shop were arrested. This latest act of suppression of the Republican viewpoint came as a direct result of talks between Prime Ministers Wilson and Cosgrave the previous evening in London.

We appeal to you in the interest of freedom of speech and freedom of editorial comment to express your solidarity and extend your help to us in these repressive circumstances by writing a letter of protest to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Iveagh House, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, Ireland.

SOUPED UP MILITANCY NO ANSWER

International Socialists Conference

Even to many International Socialist members, the perspectives of their National Committee printed in *Socialist Worker* of 21 September, and the editorial in *International Socialism* 71—for the IS conference will appear as bankrupt and shocking.

Admitting the existence of the biggest political, social, and economic crisis in Britain for decades, they blandly recommend that the revolutionary left 'turn from concern with global political questions to the minutiae of local fragmented economic struggles.'

They compound this by insisting on the classic reformist split between the fight for the immediate economic issues and 'making propaganda about the crisis and the need for socialist solutions.'

Nowhere in the *Socialist Worker* article or in *IS* journal do they even mention Ireland. This despite the collapse of imperialist strategy in Ireland and the grave threat to the British working class heightened by the intervention of Powell on Ireland.

This political disarray is not new. In March, after the election of the Labour government, the IS said this 'may mean that revolutionaries are isolated within the movement for a period... That should not worry us too much. It provides us with an opportunity to argue our positions clearly and patiently to other groups of workers and to prepare to reap the benefits when the honeymoon ends.'

This meant that the IS tailed behind those initiatives which rather than isolating them brought revolutionaries into more prominence than for a long time.

A revolutionary group by definition should be in the vanguard of events. It should be the first to launch those campaigns and take those initiatives

which will begin to challenge the hold of reformism.

But IS were not even at the meeting which called the 5 May Chile demo despite the need to put up a fight against the reformists' attempts to put it off. They had only a token presence on the 15 June anti-NF action which initiated the anti-fascist movement.

IS reveal where their confusion lies. They agree that 'it would be a gross mistake to see the past summer as a period of fall in the class struggle.' But instead of dealing with the key political events and their role, they continue: 'In fact the actual level of economic struggle in the factories has been higher than in the past two years.' (IS 71).

They thus make a simplistic direct equation between the trade union and economic struggle and the class struggle. This leads to the error of believing that the working class will be broken from reformist *factory by factory*.

This totally misunderstands how the reformists—or, rather, how the bourgeoisie with the help of the reformists—actually dominate the working class. The ruling class exercises its domination at the level of the whole of society and the state. It is at this level that the revolutionaries will have to have an impact if they are to be at all successful. The time has never been more ripe for such revolutionary interventions.

The economic crisis is now of such a character that it is undermining the institutions like Parliament and the Labour Party—institutions through which the bourgeoisie dominates the working class.

Revolutionaries must take every measure they can to sharpen that crisis.

Ironically the IS present the fight against unemployment in this way. Arguing for nationalisation and workers' control they explain this means 'a fight to compel the employers and their state to obey the workers' dictate over certain questions... It is also a fight that can begin to raise the most important questions about the control of society as a whole.' Clearly this cannot be limited to one factory. But this approach must be

extended. If Labour is re-elected there must be a fight to make it responsible to the organisations of the working class and their struggle and not to the bourgeois state. Similarly there must be a fight for a political solution to problems like that of inflation.

But against the need to fight for a sliding scale of wages the IS say that 'the best advice we have to give now, apart from "put in a big claim and fight for it" is "establish the right to put in another claim whenever the workers decide".' Apart from the fact that advancing this as a central theme will in no way advance the socialist consciousness of the working class—a goal that is not unconnected with what socialists are in business for—such a line doesn't have a future as far as even the wage struggle is concerned.

To advocate simply more and more struggles for wage claims is the surest way to ensure complete exhaustion, not a fight against inflation. A fight for the sliding scale of wages is the best way of winning the argument 'no sacrifices by the working class' while at the same time developing socialist consciousness.

As far as their immediate practice is concerned, the most disturbing thing about the IS and the NC resolutions for conference is their growing sectarianism.

At one time the IS used to quite rightly scoff at and attack the SLL/WRP line that 'building the party' was the answer to everything. They used to agree that the mere existence of the party is an answer to nothing, what is important is what the party does. Yet today the IS has taken the 'build the party' syndrome to unheard of lengths, with its election slogan of 'Vote Labour but build the revolutionary party, build the IS.' This has no political line for the working

class at all. Alongside this is the growing sectarian practice of the IS. The impact of the revolutionary left against the reformists has been gravely impaired by the refusal of the IS to launch joint campaigns on issues such as Chile or fascism.

They see all campaigns merely as party building exercises. This has now been taken to such absurd lengths that around the attacks on *Socialist Worker* by the state and police, and the cases of the IS militants arrested in anti-fascist activity, they have refused a united campaign—even though one of their militants has already been imprisoned, and even though their press is liable to crippling financial charges through court attacks.

All these developments stem from the fact that the traditional syndicalist practice of the IS is no longer delivering the goods. We are at the beginning of a totally new phase of the class struggle. The profound economic and political crisis which the ruling class now faces has thrown into profound crisis the twin pillars of working class quiescence since the second world war—parliamentary democracy and the welfare state.

In this situation the workers' vanguard is entering a deep-going politicisation which forces it to look for global solutions even to immediate questions. The souped up trade union militancy of the IS is no answer at all, and they look like having to live with this problem for a long time to come. On the evidence of the NC perspectives, the IS today have less chance than ever before of coming up with anything, even resembling a correct analysis.

Brian Clynes



Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

A mass picket of tenants, trade unionists and others was held last Saturday outside the offices of Prebble's the property speculators, who are trying to force through a series of evictions in Islington. They have already managed to railroad one tenant to jail.

Swansea witch-hunt of students and teachers

Students and staff at Swansea University are being made the victims of the most thoroughgoing victimisation let loose in a British university.

Mike Weston, a lecturer in the Philosophy Department, has been sacked. Six students have been suspended for a year. Another lecturer, Colwyn Williamson, secretary of the campus branch of ASTMS and a member of IS, is being witch-hunted. An incredible range of allegations have been made against Williamson, who is the subject of a college inquiry. Together with Weston, he is said to have masterminded a boycott of the second year exams.

To try to prevent further opposition several other philosophy lecturers—a number of whom are ASTMS members—have had their 'tenure' deferred. 'Shut up or you don't get a permanent appointment' is the line against dissident staff.

The University administration have already met with one sharp rebuke. Last week's meeting of staff in the Philosophy Department voted for the unconditional reinstatement of the students. The professor, being a fervent believer in democracy, then simply overturned the vote.

Students returning for the new academic year are going to run into another attack from the University administration. New rent increases are on the agenda, and higher food prices are threatened on top of last year's 20% price hike. There is also a chronic shortage of accommodation.

The unity forged between staff and students in previous struggles must now be built on to meet this latest and most serious attack.

Messages of support and defence and donations to: Defence Committee, c/o A. Morgan, 14 Bryn-y-more Crescent, Swansea.

will certainly be a real challenge to the right-wing bureaucrats. It'll also be interesting to see what Benn says. We expect a reply very quickly. As soon as we get a copy, you're welcome to see it.

The councillors met this week to discuss activity around their demands. IMG militants are campaigning for active support throughout the city's labour movement. Already, Edinburgh Central UCATT has backed up Pilton AUEW by supporting the call for nationalisation under workers' control.

The potential exists for a fight for Ferranti workers which would cut the feet from under what Ron Brown calls 'one of the most vicious sections of the bureaucracy you could come across.' Then the only redundancies will be at AUEW Regional Office.

Steward MacLennan (UCATT) Edinburgh IMG

Socialist women discuss future strategy

Over 400 women attended a conference of the socialist current of Women's Liberation in Birmingham last weekend.

One of the main discussions involved the question of domestic labour, and the exact nature of the relationship between women's work in the home and the social and economic relations of capitalism. Out of this discussion, the possibility of seizing power in countries like Britain without tackling fundamental questions of women's oppression was debated.

There was also discussion as to why working class women have by and large not joined the Women's Liberation Movement. One question raised was as to whether or not a campaign around the demands of the Working Women's Charter would help to draw such women into the WLM.

No final agreement was reached, but it was decided to hold a conference on 'Future Strategy for the Socialist Current' at which the Charter Campaign will doubtless be one of the most important items.

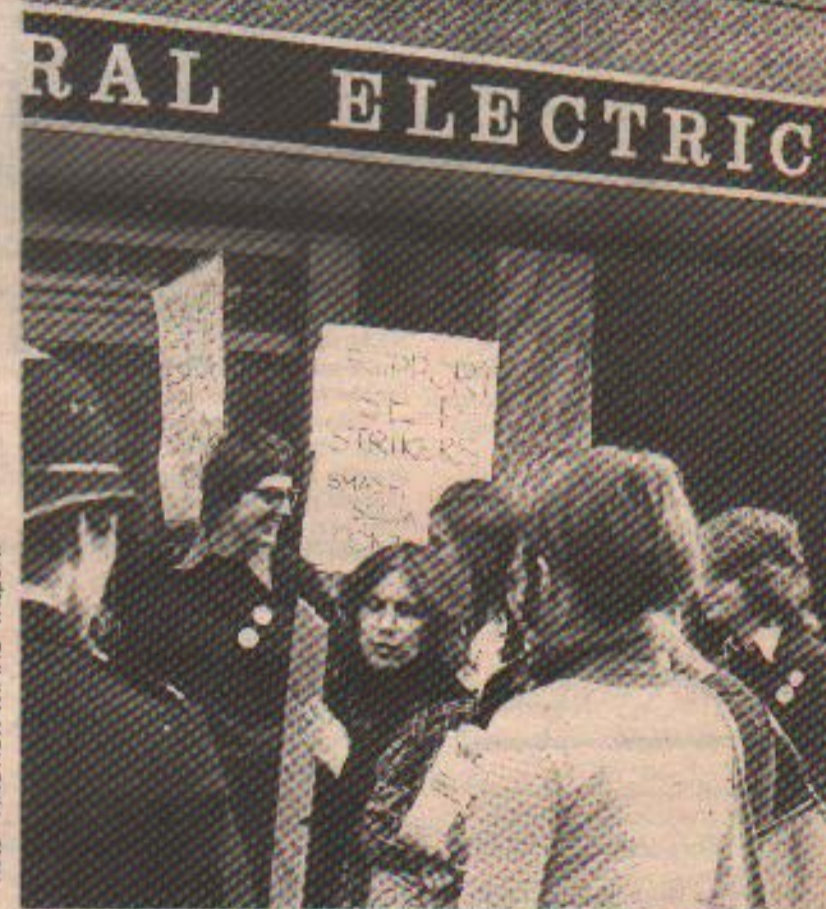


Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

The headquarters of GEC in London were picketed last Thursday in support of the women strikers at the firm's subsidiary, SEI, in Manchester

Members of the IMG also put the following resolution to the conference. There was considerable opposition to putting it to the vote in the absence of structures to implement it, but it was finally carried by a narrow majority. The resolution read:

The election period offers an important opportunity to take our campaigns to wider layers than those of the women's liberation movement.

Our political framework for initiatives should be to campaign in the context of a vote for Labour on initiatives to popularise all six demands of the women's movement, particularly focussing on the Labour Party's Anti-Discrimination proposals, using

existing and forthcoming struggles on equal pay, nursery facilities, etc.

These initiatives should include factory gate, shopping precinct and public meetings, street theatre etc.—e.g. in London there is a proposal for a demonstration on 4 October to the Department of Employment on the issues of Equal Pay and Opportunities.

This Conference urges women in the movement to encourage and support the sorts of activities outlined above.

ERRATUM

We gave the wrong address last week for information about the Working Women's Charter conference on 26 October. All enquiries, requests for credentials, etc. should be addressed to: Pat Masters, Flat 4, 20 Queen's Gardens, London W.2.

FERRANTI

From page 1

Two of the councillors, Ron Brown a well-known local engineering militant, and Phil McGhee, a member of NUPE, told *Red Weekly* what they hope to achieve.

RB: We're not simply talking about Ferranti's. It's not a one-off job, we're thinking about the whole structure of industry.

PM: It so happens that the Ferranti situation has given us the opportunity to plug nationalisation and workers' control—to get these ideas talked about, to make them current in working people's minds. Obviously the Labour leadership has never done this, and the present leadership never will.

RB: It's got to be socialist nationalisation, it's got to be workers' control, workers taking up their rights. This

French troops march for reforms

It's not often that you come across 200 soldiers in uniform milling down a street shouting anti-government slogans. But that's what happened in the French town of Draguignan a fortnight ago, and the ruling class is still trying to recover from the shock.

It all really began six months ago. For some time there had been growing discontent among the ranks of the conscripts, encouraged by the massive school students' demonstrations against the new laws governing military service. But it was only with the opportunity of the presidential elections in May that an organised group of conscripts came out into the open with a list of demands known as the 'Appeal of 100' (the original number of signatories).

Since then the movement has spread rapidly to embrace almost every regiment in the service. Here and there the authorities have made attempts to crush it by punishing so-called ringleaders, but these have been largely in vain. Over 3,000 conscripts have now publicly added their names to the 'Appeal'.

Among these, 199 were from the Draguignan barracks of the 19th Artillery Regiment. The French Trotskyist paper *Rouge* takes up the story:

Monday 9 September: a leaflet is passed around in the barracks. It contains a reminder of the main demands included in the 'Appeal of 100', the 199 signatures collected in this regiment, and an article by some of the many black Antilleans [from French colonies in the Caribbean] in the barracks denouncing their treatment as 'boys' by the officers.

LEAFLET

Tuesday 10 September: threatened with punishment for handing out the leaflets, 200 soldiers gather after lunch and move towards the gates of the barracks. Their aim is to make their way through the town as a contingent and present their demands at the Town Hall. The same demands are shouted by the demonstrators:

- End the repression!
- Raise pay to 1,000 francs [about £21 a week]!
- Smash racism!
- We want reforms!

...The demonstration moves off towards the Town Hall, and stays there while NCOs run puffing and panting along the contingent trying to persuade the demonstrators to return to



the barracks.

For more than an hour the demonstration made its way round the town through to the centre via the immigrant quarter under the approving stares of the population. On reaching the centre, the soldiers sit down. The colonel arrives: 'Who are your leaders?' Everyone gets up.

After an hour and a half, the demonstrators agree to return to the barracks, accompanied on their way by a crowd of young people and ... a car-load of police, who don't dare interfere. Once inside, they do a 'lap of honour' and then head for the mess to hold a meeting and draw up a balance-sheet of the action.

DETERMINATION

All this would have alarmed the authorities under any circumstances.

As it was, the Draguignan march took place just days after the Government had introduced some small reforms designed precisely to fob off such protests. As *Rouge* commented, these gestures 'far from confusing the conscripts, have strengthened their determination to go for the lot, have sharpened their belief that it is now possible to win'.

In Britain we are still far from seeing such a situation develop. In particular, the fact that ours is a professional army with no compulsory military service means that it is far less vulnerable to outside political developments.

But on the other hand, there can be no doubt that the pressures of the colonial war in Ireland are beginning to have an effect on British army

morale, and that the present trickle of desertions could soon assume a greater importance. The jailing of Pat Arrowsmith for distributing leaflets outside a barracks shows just how great are the fears of the ruling class on this score.

This, together with the likely use of troops as strike-breakers in the coming struggles, and the attempts at Heathrow and elsewhere to familiarise people with the idea of troops acting in a civil situation, make the lessons of the French experience very important for the British labour movement.

In particular, they show the importance of combining demands aimed at winning sections of the army to the side of the working class with the slogan of workers' self-defence.

US responsible for Chile deaths - official

The 'knight in shining armour' suit in which US President Ford rode into the White House has started to go rusty at the joints.

First came Ford's sudden announcement of a total pardon for former President Nixon, despite all the various crimes he committed while in office. Then came 'inside' reports that Ford, far from being the 'new broom' that he likes to advertise himself as, was totally dependent on the very team of advisers that Nixon had put together to run his operation.

In order to try and block such criticisms, Ford decided to get rid of his White House Chief of Staff, General Haig (who had previously been a big wheel in the Nixon machine). To the dismay of America's European allies, Haig was kicked upstairs as the new military chief of an already tottering NATO.

The latest scandal to rock the Ford Government has been the public revelation of secret information about CIA and US Government operations in Chile. These make clear what most socialists were already able to guess - that the US deliberately worked to create political and economic chaos in Chile in order to bring about the downfall of President Allende and his Popular Unity Government.

It appears that the CIA was allocated some 11 million dollars (more than £4 million) between 1962 and 1970 to make sure that Allende didn't win the elections. When these plans were scotched in 1970 with the victory of Popular Unity, American policy makers seemed unsure about what to do next.

After all, in most parts of the world the US props up corrupt dictatorships which don't bother about such niceties as elections. This allows the American to tart these regimes up as fighters for the 'free world', and depict those who fight for the interests of the workers and peasants as 'enemies of democracy'.

But there was no denying the result of the Chilean election. However, if some veteran US plotters and schemers hesitated, there was one who did not - Nixon's 'national security adviser', Henry Kissinger (later to take charge of foreign affairs as Secretary of State, a post he still holds under

Ford).

Kissinger seems to have taken the Chilean election results as something of a personal insult. Certainly he was quite clear as to what came first if the 'will of the people' in Chile clashed with US interests. As he put it, according to one account: 'We don't have to let a country go communist just because of the irresponsibility of its people'.

So Kissinger took direct charge of the wrecking operations in Chile, bringing them under the control of the top-level White House body known as the '40 Committee'. Working through this committee Kissinger secured a further eight million dollars for secret CIA operations. He opened up by sowing economic chaos. US foreign aid to Chile was whittled down to nothing virtually overnight. US Government pressure was brought to bear to prevent Chile receiving financial assistance from such 'international' agencies as the World Bank.

When Chile's economic difficulties produced growing political problems for the

Popular Unity Government, the CIA moved in to take advantage of them. For example, vast sums of money were made available to bolster the two national strikes of lorry owners which shook the Chilean Government in the year before its downfall.

At the same time US military aid to the Chilean army was actually increased and we can be sure that more than a few winks and nods were exchanged.

All of this took place under cover of complete secrecy. Even official committees of the Senate and Congress were told bare-faced lies when they attempted to probe US operations in Chile.

NOTHING NEW

This horrific tale of how the US Government deliberately and determinedly worked to bring about the situation which resulted in the deaths of thousands of Chilean workers and socialist militants, and gave birth to the present brutal regime which rules the country, certainly involves a far greater crime than any of those uncovered during Watergate. But we can

be sure that it will not touch off anything like the same response in US ruling circles.

President Ford has already placed himself firmly in the breach behind Secretary of State Kissinger with his unbelievably arrogant statement that US actions in Chile 'were in the best interests of the Chilean people'.

Of course, there is nothing really new about the Chile operations. Such methods have been the mainstay of US imperialism. But Watergate was something more - it was an attempt to apply these same methods in a political conflict within the US ruling class itself. Such a violation of the bounds of class solidarity was a threat to the unity of the ruling class and had to be stopped promptly.

But there is no chance that the US imperialist war machine will change its spots. It will remain a blood-thirsty man-eater until it is destroyed by the combined actions of the American working class and the world-wide anti-imperialist struggle.

CHRIS BALFOUR

WHAT'S ON

NOTTINGHAM RED CIRCLES: Wide-ranging series of discussions based on the politics of the Fourth International. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month at 8 pm in the Lion Hotel, Clumber Street.

IMG GAY GROUP: Contact J. Mills, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds for further information.

BENGALI FRIENDS in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and *Lazar* (Fourth International paper), contact: Bengali, Mullvadén, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

'IRELAND: TROOPS OUT NOW?' AUEW: TASS meeting, Thursday 26 September, 7.30 pm in Trowbridge Town Hall.

WATFORD RED FORUMS: Fortnightly in the Green Man, Watford High St. First meeting - Monday 30 September, 8pm, on 'The Marxist Theory of the State'.

CHEAP TYPESETTING and paste-up, ring Gillian (days and weekends), 01-674-4233.

SOUTHALL RED FORUMS: Every Friday evening at 8 pm in the 'Featherstone Arms', Featherstone Road, Southall (near Dominion Cinema).

LONDON RED FORUMS: A comprehensive political education series, every Tuesday at 8 pm in the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road, N.1.

SOUTH SHIELDS Anti-fascist Committee public meeting: 'Who are the National Front'. Speakers from local trade unions, Arab and Jewish communities. Thursday 26 September at 7.30 pm, People's Place, Darby Terrace, South Shields.

LONDON RANK & FILE Technical Teachers, first meeting of term: Friday 27 September, 7 pm, in Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road. Main topic: Women's rights and the union - what we fight for in our colleges.

TYNESIDE IMG: Public meeting - 'On what basis should socialists support the Labour Party'. Thursday 3 October, 8 pm at the Adelaide Hotel, New Bridge Street (behind Manors Station), Newcastle.

LIVERPOOL RED BOOKS: Revolutionary literature - Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Eastern Europe, Third World, Ireland, Women's Liberation. 81a Flenshaw Street, Liverpool. Tues-Fri: 12:30-3. Sat: 11-3.

SHREWSBURY 2: Greater London meeting for all trade unionists arranged by Greater London Association of Trades Councils, at Conway Hall, Friday 27 September at 7.30 pm, to organise a demonstration in support of Des Warren and Eric Tomlinson.

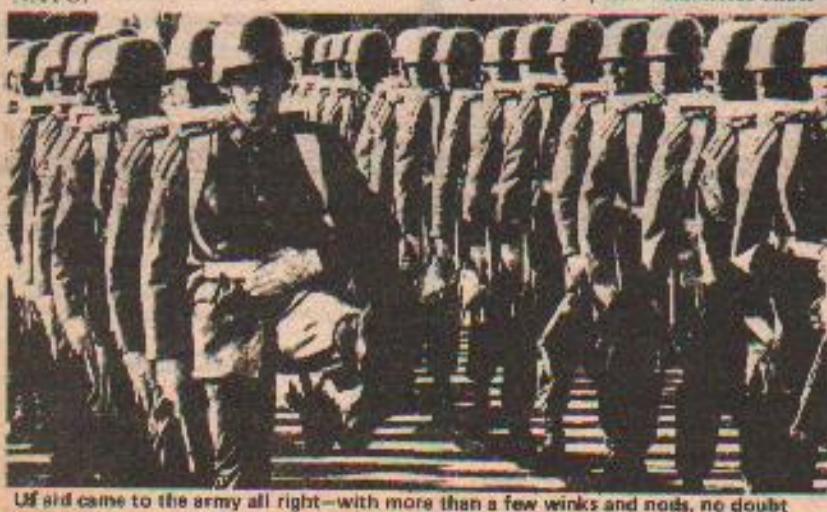
EPTATIKH BAAH

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International has made a world-wide appeal for funds to build the Greek revolutionary socialist weekly *Ergatiki Pali* (Workers' Struggle), the paper supported by the Greek Trotskyists whose fusion we announced a few weeks ago.

In Britain we have set ourselves the modest task of raising £50 towards this project, of whose importance in the present situation we are sure all readers are aware.

Please send all contributions to: Red Weekly (EP), 97 Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

Copies of *Ergatiki Pali* are regularly available, price 8p (includes p&p) from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.



US aid came to the army all right - with more than a few winks and nods, no doubt

Nurses' militancy makes Govt. cough up

by Jeff King

THE WAVE of unprecedented militancy shown by the nurses over their pay claim has made the Government cough up higher increases than it intended.

By introducing all-round percentage increases, however, Haisbury has made sure that the chief people to benefit are the senior grades of nursing sisters. Their minimum salaries increase by £284 per annum (18.4%).

Lower down the scale, an 18-year old student or pupil nurse entering the job gets a maximum rise of £309.

At current rates of inflation, and taking into account the higher taxation they will have to pay, this means student nurses and nurses below the rank of sister will hardly be better off in real terms than last year. The effect of the average 30% increase can be seen when one looks at the wage-paying table.

DIVIDING TACTIC

Haisbury, obviously alarmed at the wide-ranging support amongst all nursing grades for big improvements in wages, has designed his report to placate the senior grades and divide them from student and ordinary nurses.

A further aim is that ministers will get better returns from their decisions. The Labour Government, it has been said, is clearly anxious to shift some work onto untrained staff. They hope this will save money as far as training student nurses is concerned.

As Castle and Haisbury tow their wage increase on the table they are at the same time preparing to dip their hands into the nurses' pockets. The Report recommends a 'realistic' look at living charges. No doubt large increases are being planned for hostel accommodation.

Haisbury tries to give cover to this by references to a freeze on lodging charges until a review can take place. This is a deliberate ploy to get the nurses to accept the award now so they can be robbed of its benefits by higher rent charges later.

Nurses in London who 'live in' do not receive the London Weighting allowance. Haisbury intends, however, that they shall pay 'realistic' London rents. This plan to stick up rents is going to take another slice off the pay increase.

The nurses have shown that it is possible to fight the social contract. Given the all-out united support of the health workers' unions and the industrial solidarity action of trade unionists outside the NHS far bigger gains could have been made.

That same militancy must now be harnessed to fight against increases in lodging charges, against

attempts to reduce staffing levels, for the reduction of the working week — rejected by Haisbury — and to prepare for a new wage claim.

WAGE RATES ON 1 APRIL 1974

Principal Nursing Officer	£3,272
Senior Nursing Officer	£2,460
Nursing Officer	£2,160
Sister	£1,632
Staff Nurse	£1,338
Senior Enrolled Nurse	£1,380
Enrolled Nurse	£1,203
Student and Pupil Nurse on entry	
age 18	£816
age 19	£891
age 20	£936
age 21+	£1,065
Nursing Auxiliaries (untrained)	
age 18	£816
age 19	£855
age 20	£900
age 21	£1,053



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (LONDON)

For the well-oiled consultants private practice is a bonanza — in 1969 7,000 consultants raked off £7.7 million out of £15.1 million doled out by private health schemes. For the working class it is a leech which sucks off the already under-financed, under-equipped NHS.

The continued existence of private practice, whether inside or outside the NHS, throws into sharp relief not only one of the main traits of the ultra-respectable medical profession — the exploitation of sickness for gain — but the growing failures of the NHS.

INABILITY

The material basis for private practice is the inability of the NHS to provide treatment at the time it is needed. Waiting lists have always been a feature of the Health Service. But as the crisis in the NHS has worsened, the queues for treatment — over half a million — and waiting times (anything up to 2-3 years) have escalated. It is this situation that consultants and private health insurance firms such as BUPA have waxed fat on.

Now these people are looking for even richer pickings as they see the NHS eroding away.

Successive governments, Labour included, have cut back NHS expenditure in order to defend the interests of British capital — the rate of profit — against the interests of the working class.

The present Labour government's record in this respect is little better. The recent injection of £40 million into the NHS is like taking a watering can to a desert. Nurses have also felt the 'cold comfort' of Labour's 'social contract'.

ACTIONS

The actions taken by hospital workers against private practice have an importance beyond just the issue of private medicine itself.

What is at stake is whether the crisis in the Health Service is going

Leeching off the NHS



to be solved in the interests of the working class — a workers' solution — or in the interests of the capitalist class.

Actions such as at Charing Cross and Hammersmith Hospitals point the way forward. By direct action hospital workers forced the Labour government to begin to take seriously its own policy on private practice within the NHS by setting up a Working Party to report at the end of the year.

However, there should be no reliance that Labour will implement effective action, even against private medicine. Already private insurance firms and part-time consultants are laying plans for the growth of private health schemes outside the NHS — private hospitals have been built or planned. NHS staff have been recruited for hospitals like the Wellington in North London.

Nothing short of the total abolition of private medicine in and outside the NHS is needed to halt the drain, distortions and abuses on the NHS that private practice represents.

The campaign against private practice must be spread not only among all sections of hospital workers but into the wider labour movement. To wage this campaign effectively it must be used as the first step to developing united working class action to impose a workers' solution to the crisis of the NHS by taking up demands such as:

- Immediate injection £1000 million into NHS budget for this year
- Sliding scale of NHS expenditure so that the NHS budget keeps pace monthly with the rises in costs
- Nationalisation of all ancillary industries (drugs, building)

In this campaign hospital workers must take the lead by calling on the local trade union movement such as trades councils to organise conferences to enquire into the running of the NHS, what steps and demands are necessary to defend and extend the health care of the working class and to plan joint action in support of hospital workers.

This is the way to lay the basis for united action of the labour movement in preparation for the coming struggles in the hospitals, most importantly the ancillary workers' pay claim in the autumn.

COLIN SPENCER

BOB MURPHY

NCB attack miners' unity

Two for one. That seems to be the average. Every time the rest of Britain has one General Election, the miners get two.

Today the situation is somewhat different. Today it's the Labour Government's turn to make the workers pay for the mess capitalism is in through their precious Social Contract.

And there is no longer the total unity of the NUM Executive against the Tories' income policy; today, total indecision reigns as to what attitude to take to the productivity deal. At its last meeting a motion calling for rejection of the deal was defeated 15 votes to 11, and a motion for acceptance... defeated 17 to 10!

OPPOSITION

All the ruling class papers talk about rises of £12.50 a week. Joe Gornley, Lawrence Daly and the NCB are united in their call for acceptance of the deal. But already opposition is growing. To date, the Area Councils in Wales, Scotland, Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Lancashire have recommended rejection of the deal.

On 2 and 3 October, the miners will vote. Workers everywhere will be asking what is at stake. And they should be told that through the deal the NCB hope to increase the profitability of the pits by attacking that very unity and strength that put the miners in the driver's seat in the struggles against the Tory Government.

Indeed some miners will get large wage

increases of up to £12.50. But the increase will be calculated on the basis of output of face-workers, which can differ by as much as 11 cwt per man-shift one week to 40 cwt the next. And that in one pit.

Imagine the discrepancies between pits with different geological conditions. The Midlands, for instance, has far better faces in general than Scotland. And the bulk of the rest of the men will get bonuses calculated on the basis of 50 per cent of the face-workers' bonus. So the discrepancies will extend to different categories as well.

But that's not all. The NCB plans for coal production next year are 120 million tons of deep mined coal. The target for 1985 is exactly the same. With an increase in productivity this can mean only one thing — redundancies and pit closures.

PIT CLOSURES

It's all very clear, it's the same old policy that ate away at miners' standards of living in the fifteen years after nationalisation. As Arthur Scargill, President of the Yorkshire miners, said: 'The deal will divide miner in Yorkshire from miner in Lancashire; it will divide miner in Doncaster from miner in Barnsley; and it will divide miner from miner in Barnsley itself.'

The miners will go to the polls twice in October — they must reject the productivity deal to be in the best situation to fight whichever Government is elected a week later.

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