

SOCIALIST VOICE

Journal Of The International Socialist League
British Section Of The IWL (FI)

Police attacks encouraged by NUS leadership



This Issue

- ★ Vicker's Strike
- ★ Troops out of Ireland
- ★ Perestroika
- ★ End of Gulf War ?

Police And Union Leadership Bludgeon Strikers

On the 21st July ten National Union of Seamen (NUS) pickets were arrested in a night raid at their homes in Dover. These arrests were made on charges under the new public order act. Terry French (ex jailed miner) was among those arrested and he is the only one who has not so far been released on bail.

It had been anticipated by the seafarers that as soon as their leadership took steps to abandon the striking seafarers arrests and further victimisations would follow. This is not, however, the first time that heavy handed tactics have been used against the seafarers.

P&O's Friends Use Gunlaw

On the 14th of March the crew of the Belfast freight ferry the "Saga Moon" were marched ashore at gunpoint by the harbour police. This use of fire-arms in an industrial dispute has received no media attention.

In another unreported incident the crew of the Isle of Man steam packet ferry "Tynwald" was deliberately cut adrift by management after they had indicated they would take strike action in support of fellow union members in Dover. This was a clear breach of safety laws. If similar action had been taken by NUS members against the strike-breaking vessels in Dover the pickets would have been jailed.

The role of the courts and police in acting in the interests of management and against the interests of the workforce is clearly revealed here. The full weight of the law is now being used to bludgeon the now isolated seafarers into submission.

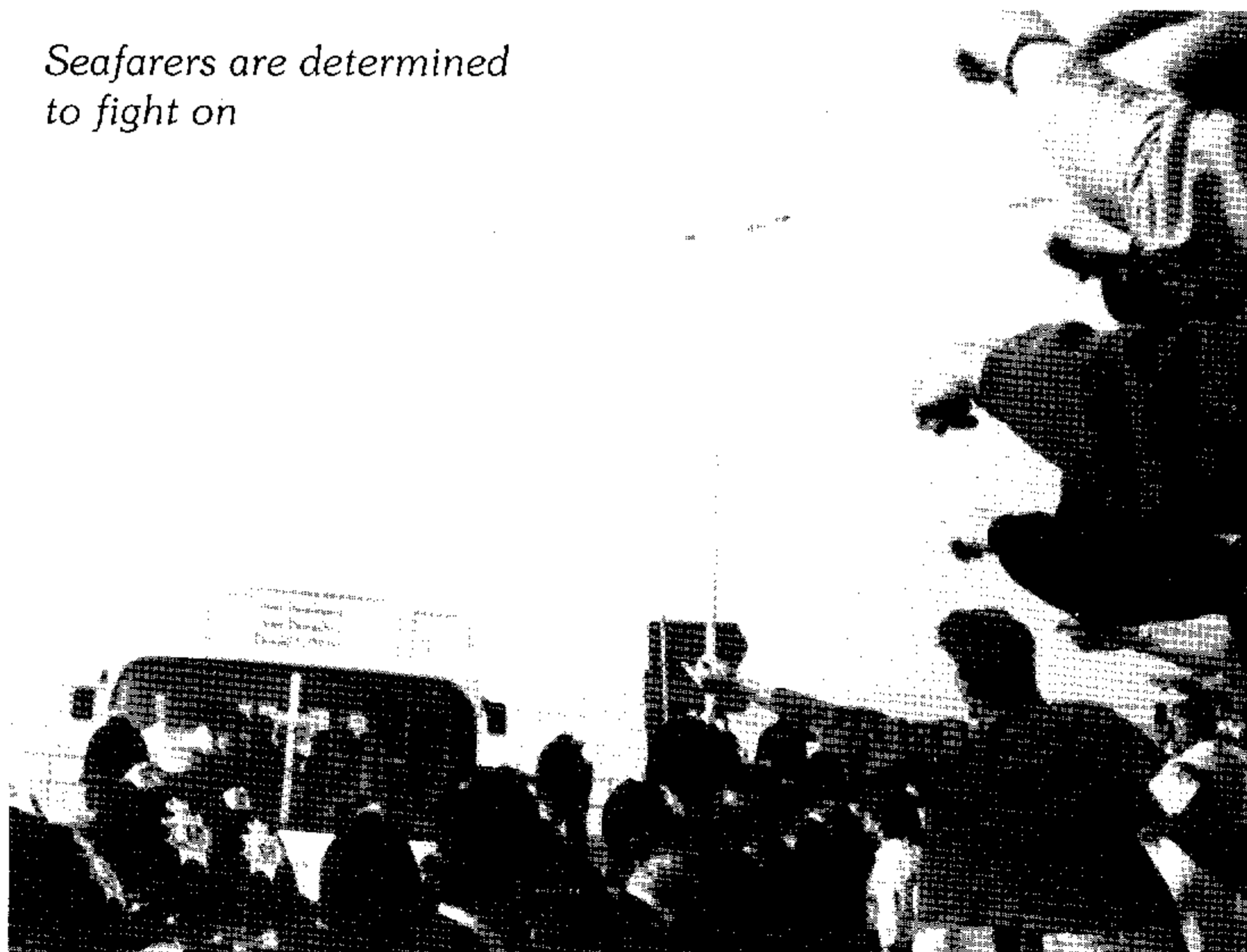
How are the seafarers interpreting this experience? S.V. asked a Dover striker: "This is a union-bashing exercise and they are getting away with it. On our own we are not strong enough - united action could have brought the dispute to a quick end."

Leadership Backs Down Again

The question has to be; how and why are P&O getting away with it, in spite of the determination and initial unity of the membership? We asked about the NUS

Simon Cohen

Seafarers are determined to fight on



leadership and the way decisions have been made: "I'm not happy with the fact that the union called off the national strike. When the lorries were out and the other ports were out at the beginning we were strong. But the NUS called for them to return to work and broke the strike"

McCluskie, in spite of some early denunciations of the Tory laws followed court instruction to 'supposedly' persuade the courts to release union funds. Now the leadership have called off the daily demonstrations at the docks, again 'supposedly' to persuade the courts to release the funds. The result of this groveling to the Tory laws is now seen to be not the preservation of the union and its resources but their destruction. The NUS now seems doomed to extinction and the question for the seafarers is; can they afford a leadership that doesn't understand that the

real assets of our unions are the workers themselves and their willingness to fight?

Rank and File Criticise Merger Moves

Having sacrificed the union that supported him McCluskie is now fighting for a merger with the NUR - basically to secure for himself a place within the bureaucracy. The rank and file are in favour of an amalgamation within the T&G - seemingly precisely because this path will deprive McCluskie of this way out of the situation created by his own disastrous leadership.

We call on all workers, we make a special appeal to them: The seafarers have their backs to the wall don't let them continue alone it is our duty to support them.

Socialist Voice

Editorial Board and Staff For This Issue

Louise Cerovecki, Sue Gwyer
Peter Money, Martin Ralph,
Kevin Townsend, Peter Windeler

Southshields Supports Seafarers

Ed Barbor

The untapped solidarity that many working class communities feel with the striking seafarers was evident when the NUS held a march in South Shields (on the Tyne) in support of the strike in Dover on July 9th.

Although South Shields, being on the coast, has a seafaring tradition no attempt was made by the leadership of the NUS to gain the

support of the local population for the march. In fact other unions were told of the event only three days before and most people knew nothing of it.

Consequently the march was small but support from the local population was obvious when all activity stopped in the local market as we passed. Seamen's banners from Aberdeen, Liverpool and London were present.

After the march a small rally was held with

No Safety At Sea

Louise Cerovecki

Another fire broke out on a P&O cross channel freighter on Saturday July 16th. Worries about oil leakage from a bilge pump had been ignored. The feeling is that P&O have deliberately ignored faults to keep sailing during the summer period also knowing that maintenance has not been properly carried out since the NUS strike. The Company deny all this of course.

The Zeebrugge "Herald of Free Enterprise" inquiry tried to place the blame on crew members whose procedures on that fated day as on all occasions are actually dictated by the Company's ruthless drive to increase productivity and profits. This is the real culprit behind the disaster as well as Piper Alpha, Kings Cross and many others.

What does it mean then when accidents are blamed on human error? It means that the bosses have imposed conditions where workers are operating on the edge of human endurance and physically cannot perform at the levels necessary to ensure the safety of themselves and the public who rely on the services of the industry they work in.

Are the bosses ignorant of this? No - numerous studies show for instance that most accidents happen in the last hour or so of work periods, that shift workers, particularly night shift, are prone to sudden uncontrollable spells of virtual paralysis and semi-consciousness.

When P&O announced their plan to impose 24 hours on 24 hours off shifts they were in fact virtually planning to put all our lives at risk to swell their profits and ensure yet more luxury to the few whose interests they serve.

speeches from the President of the Durham Mechanics (NUM), John Prescott, who sounded far more left-wing than his reputation, and Jim Slater who repeated the call for compulsory binding arbitration. This is a strange call for a trade unionist to make but it is in accordance with the policy of the NUS to attempt to get the sequestration order lifted by remaining within the law.

Editorial : Multinationals And The Economic Crisis.

No greater warning can be given of the meaning of the present international crisis or what will happen to workers in the coming slump than the explosion of Piper Alpha. It is sheer hypocrisy for the oil magnates to say sorry.

As the story in the Socialist Voice shows the owners of the North Sea Oil Rigs have known what could happen, they squeeze the profits while they can.

The economy is running a balance of payments deficit at an annual rate of over 10 billion. The Tory government can make all the noises they want about the possibility of a continued rate of growth until the year 2000 but it just will not happen, unless they can enslave the working class.

The attacks on the working class are renewed at ever sharper levels. The recent sale of the Rover Company to British Airways for 150 million was accompanied by the injection of 469 million and a regional grant of 78 million to BA. At the heart of this deal is the attack on 4,900 jobs at Cowley.

Professor Roland Smith has a long history of such attacks on workers. When he arrived at BA he had the sacking of 100's of workers at Silentnight and Senior Coleman under his belt. The BA company going for workers throats at Cowley is only a beginning. All workers should respond to these attacks with the maximum of support. It may have started with Silentnight but it won't end with Rover.

As can be seen in the example of Vickers in Barrow the attacks on workers are going to hit the whole of the community. All layers from the working class to the middle class will be undermined by these Thatcherite policies.

They now proceed to conflict with the areas that historically have supported their rule. Short Brothers in Belfast, the aircraft manufacturer, is to be privatised and Harland & Wolff is also to be sold off. While the Catholic communities suffer the brunt of British Rule the protestant working class is also in for hard times.

The problems of British Capitalism was highlighted by the High Technology industries. While its markets are expanding at above average international rates the size of the British owned sector is actually declining. It means that even here there is decline, while the popular Amstrad computers give an impression of growth in reality the companies that dominate the market like GEC and Plessey are far from healthy.

They have maintained growth by defence contracts and other Government contracts such as the notorious system X computerised telephone system. Thought of as a world beater (only other countries manufactured ones quicker and more competitively) System X, the backbone of GEC, was kept going by vast Government subsidy.

It is a system in relative and absolute decline. The problems workers face over their health and safety arise from this background. One of the many issues at Vickers involve the increasing erosion of proper safety measures, the same is the case with P&O and the Oil companies in the North Sea.

In roaming the globe for profit the multinationals bring misery and early death to many workers. This international crisis is not just bearing down on British workers.

Imperialism can be seen to be rubbing its hand with glee at the thought of the markets now opening up in the Eastern Bloc.

In reality it is the international crisis and the struggles of the working class that is behind the explosion in the soviet Union. We are told by the Euro-Stalinists in Marxism Today arid proponents of 'New Realism' and by many sociologists elsewhere that the working class no longer exists.

However, for us the main question is how the working class is going to be organised and mobilised. This question is now at the heart of all the movements of the class here and internationally. It links with the question, what type of leadership can help the working class come to grips with what it is now confronting - the government and the bureaucracy. What type of party will maintain a permanent vigilance and mobilisation to aid and to strengthen all movements of the class?

We believe such a leadership is found in the Trotskyist International of the International Workers League. A proof of this is the development of our section in Argentina that now has the possibility of becoming a mass party. We believe the working class has to build a similar leadership in Britain. We know from our own experience that the class is in daily struggle and so the International Socialist League is not sceptical of the abilities of the class to which we belong. In this country, we say again, what the working class does in struggle is decisive not just in the future but right now.

Broad Left' Plans Shaken

Socialist Voice interviewed Andy Dixon, NUT executive member for Manchester on the recent developments in the union.

S.V. What Were The Main Issues At Harrogate?

A.D. "The Special Conference was demanded by delegates at our annual conference to discuss the proposed reorganisation of the union. Behind the arguments over the way the union is organised are major political issues. The Broad Left group (more accurately described as the "broad right"), who control the union, want to reduce the collective and campaigning activities of the union and emphasise individual "legal and professional" services to members. Associated with this is an attempt to reduce the involvement of members through their local associations, elected local officers and school representatives and to replace this with "direct" services to members as individuals.

The specific proposal which has attracted most hostility from the union members was the attempt to reduce the frequency and size of NUT conference. The executive retreated under pressure on this even before the Special Conference had started! A representative annual conference has been saved - a major victory for the membership and the left. Other important issues at Harrogate were the introduction of central collection of subscriptions, reorganisation of regional offices and major changes at union HQ.

The Special Conference substantially amended the latter two proposals but unfortunately did not stop the central collection of subs. This gives more power to head office and reduces the role of local associations.

The regional changes are now subject to a Working Party due to report in September and it is vital that local associations reply to its consultation document by calling for the retention of at least the present number of regional offices and rejecting the idea of increased power to full-time officials. A major victory for the left was the passing of an amendment restoring the offices of Equal Opportunities and International Union at HQ".

S.V. Did New Realism Receive A Blow At The Conference?

A.D. "Yes. The New Realist idea - that a fighting union is no longer relevant or possible - was weakened by Harrogate. The Broad Left proposals for a restructured union were substantially amended and most impor-

tantly the membership showed that they are not prepared to be told what to do by the leadership. Even the amended proposals were approved by the narrow vote of 101,102 to 83,514.

On some card votes the left won by 2 to 1. However, the Executive majority has not changed overnight. They still control the union and we still have much work to do to defeat them. I think Harrogate demonstrated that they cannot ride roughshod over the membership."

S.V. How Is The Executive Majority Interpreting The Harrogate Decisions?

A.D. "Not surprisingly they have picked out those aspects of the final memorandum that suit them. For example, they are putting great emphasis on the aim of balancing the NUT budget by 1990. They have even used this as an argument for delaying implementation of some decisions of Harrogate! They are also using the Working Party on regional services as an excuse to delay some conference decisions like the appointment of Equal Opportunities and International officials.

It is important that union activists and local associations make clear to the leadership that this subterfuge is unacceptable. As a political manoeuvre the Executive majority accepted an amendment at Harrogate that declared; "the main objectives of the union are to defend the jobs, pay and conditions of service of its members and to work for improvements in the education service" and supported greater efforts to involve women in the union.

We must spell out to the Executive that this amendment shows precisely the sort of union we need and demand. Restoring the Equal Opportunities and International departments is a first step. A leadership that leads is also needed."

S.V. Apart from the Attacks of the Executive Majority what are the Main Issues Facing Teachers in the New Term?

A.D. "The Education Reform Bill is probably an Act by the time your readers see this interview. Teacher's pay, conditions of employment and jobs are threatened. School based bargaining cannot be adequate to face this threat. Local associations and the National Union must give members the support they need to take on heads and governing bodies. Links between local associations would be helpful. Racism is also a live issue. The recent events at Burnage and Dewsbury show the need for an anti-racist campaign that links teachers, parents, and school students; involving black and white. Open enrollment (part of the Education Bill) increases the danger of 'racial' schools. Public campaigning around other aspects of the Bill such as opting out are also vital. Tameside NUT have already organised a meeting for parents at one school known to be keen to opt out. Initiatives like this should be followed elsewhere. We must not forget pay and negotiating rights. The left has argued for our 1989/90 salary campaign to begin at the start of the Autumn Term 1988".

S.V. Why The Rush To Appoint A General Secretary Designate When Fred Jarvis Doesn't Retire Until September 1989?

A.D. "Simply to give Doug McAvoy (one of the leading proponents of "new realism") a stronger position from which to fight the election for General Secretary when the Tory employment laws enforce this in September 1989. Mr McAvoy said as much to the press on the day of his appointment. It is up to us to build the opposition among the local associations and among the membership".

Jarvis calls for union unity and talks on joint action

1988 The year of the pro-union rejection of the membership

Fred Jarvis - never a more

Strike Solid In Barrow

Louise Cerovecki & Martin Ralph.

The dispute over the fixed holidays is "just the tip of the iceberg" Vickers strikers agree. Dr Leach, Vickers boss agrees with that in his own way. He has said we "need to raise productivity and changes can be uncomfortable in the short term". Uncomfortable now means strikers receiving no DHSS payment and the first £17.70 being deducted in lieu of strike pay - whether it is received or not. The initial issue of contention leading up to the strike was the refusal by welders to work in conditions of excessive heat. Workers in the submarine-machinery section were suspended for refusing to work overtime - that was on the 8th June at 7.30 am. By 9.15 am everyone was out on unofficial strike. **Eight weeks into the strike the 12,500 strong workforce is still out . No one has attempted to cross the picket line.**

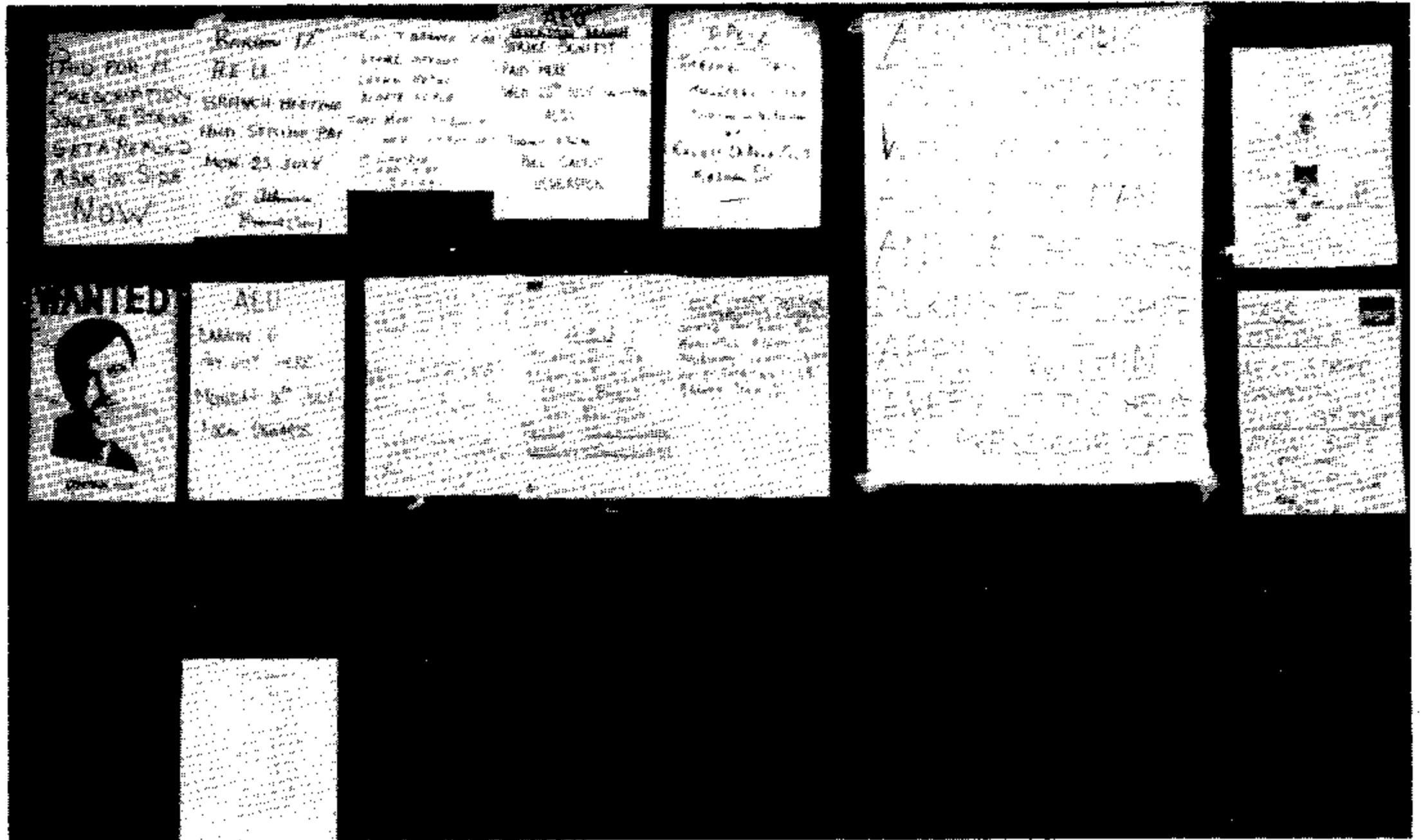
The feelings of the strikers, and their support in the town show quite clearly the nature of the issue involved. The strike has been reported as being over the issue of holidays. The firm sought to impose fixed holidays throughout the works as against the former arrangements where employees could choose their holidays in the weeks most convenient for them and their families.

Privatisation Blamed

We would have been described as 'moderates', say workers at the shipyard. What has caused them to become a determined force, solidly in support of action? Two years ago the yard was privatised. 80 per cent of the workforce took out shares in the privatised company. They were promised a glowing future. Now, only 20 per cent still have shares.

There have been two changes of management since privatisation and each has tried to be tougher than the last. A production foreman writing in the local press stressed the shortage of manpower, and the introduction of new technology without any consultation. He described the result as a "reign of chaos". Clearly the management and Tories are out to break the long fought for conditions in the shipyards. There is even the feeling among the members of the unions involved that the management brought about the dispute in order to crack a traditionally well organised workforce.

Four months ago, they cancelled the holiday agreements and imposed fixed holidays. The management and the Tories do not want a return to work under the old conditions. They have signalled that the battle is to the end. They now state that they want shift working,



Organising Messages at the local strike headquarters

full flexibility and an end to all demarcation. They have let slip that they have the support of the Ministry of Defence - and therefore of the Tory government.

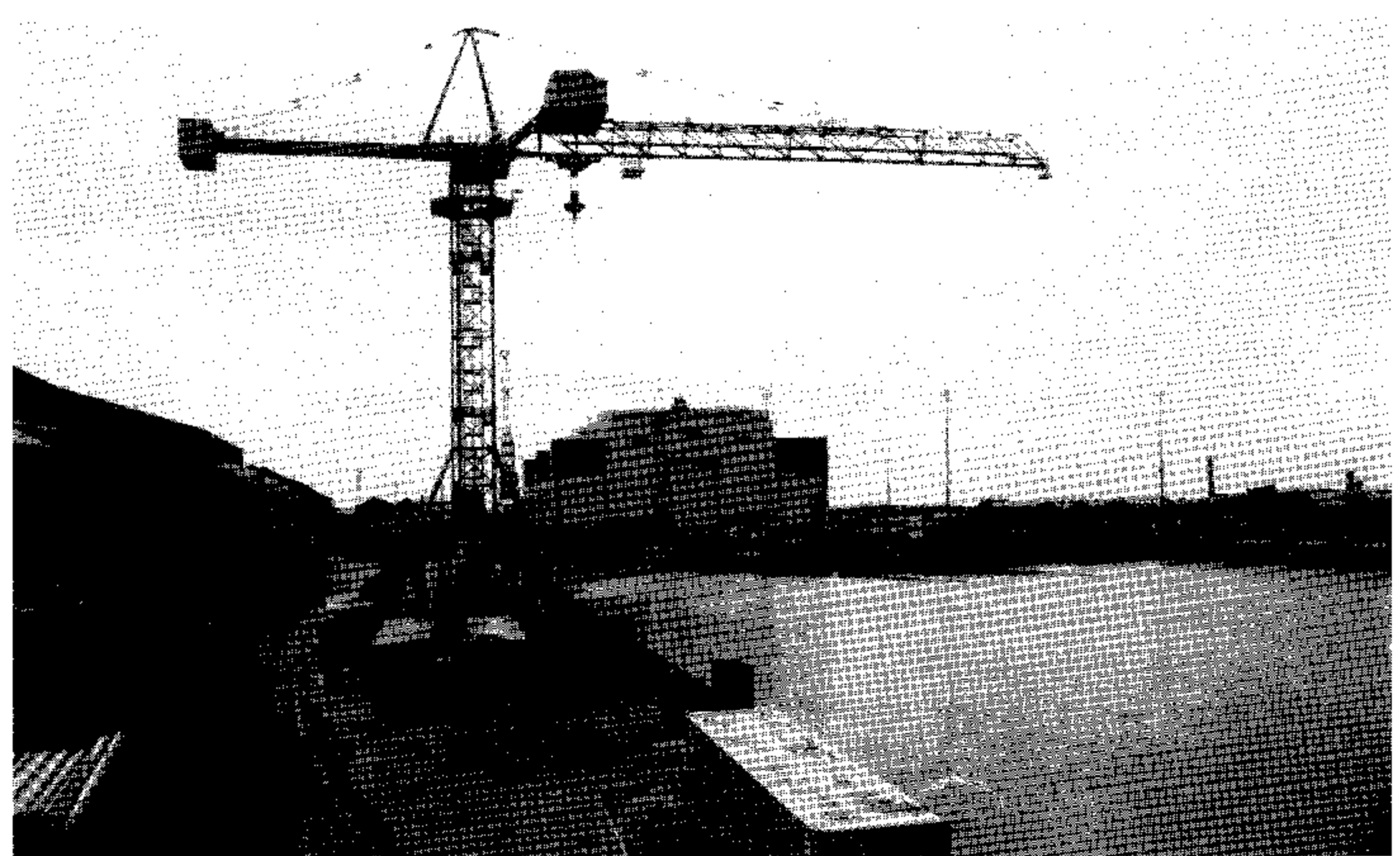
Dispute Unites The Community

Barrow-in-Furness is a relatively isolated town - it has been described as the 'longest cul-de-sac in Britain'. The community centres around the Vickers yard and thus, the struggle involves most families in the small town and the feeling that the firm is imposing its will on the whole community with no regard for the consequences. If jobs were lost many small shops and other businesses would collapse. Such implications for the middle class are very obvious in a community like Barrow. Children are continuing to receive free school meals during the holidays - a move that went unopposed by the Tories thanks to this widespread support.

The company has laid off its thousand

apprentices - whose indentures forbid them to participate in industrial action. This is seen as a particularly vicious attack on young workers. In this way their income does not go into families where their relatives are on strike. The company has also stopped sickness and maternity payments. By their rough treatment Vickers have united blue and white collar workers in a common fight. This is the first time in over twenty years that Staff and manual workers have been so united.

The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions had recommended the lifting of the overtime ban prior to their early attempt to negotiate over the fixed holiday issue. This was rejected at a mass meeting. Workers must be wary of their leaders. Decisions of the strike should be made and agreed by the strike committee with the strikers themselves. All unions in Barrow must unite to block all movement in and out of the yard.



Vickers docks quiet for two months

"Time To Go"

By John Owen

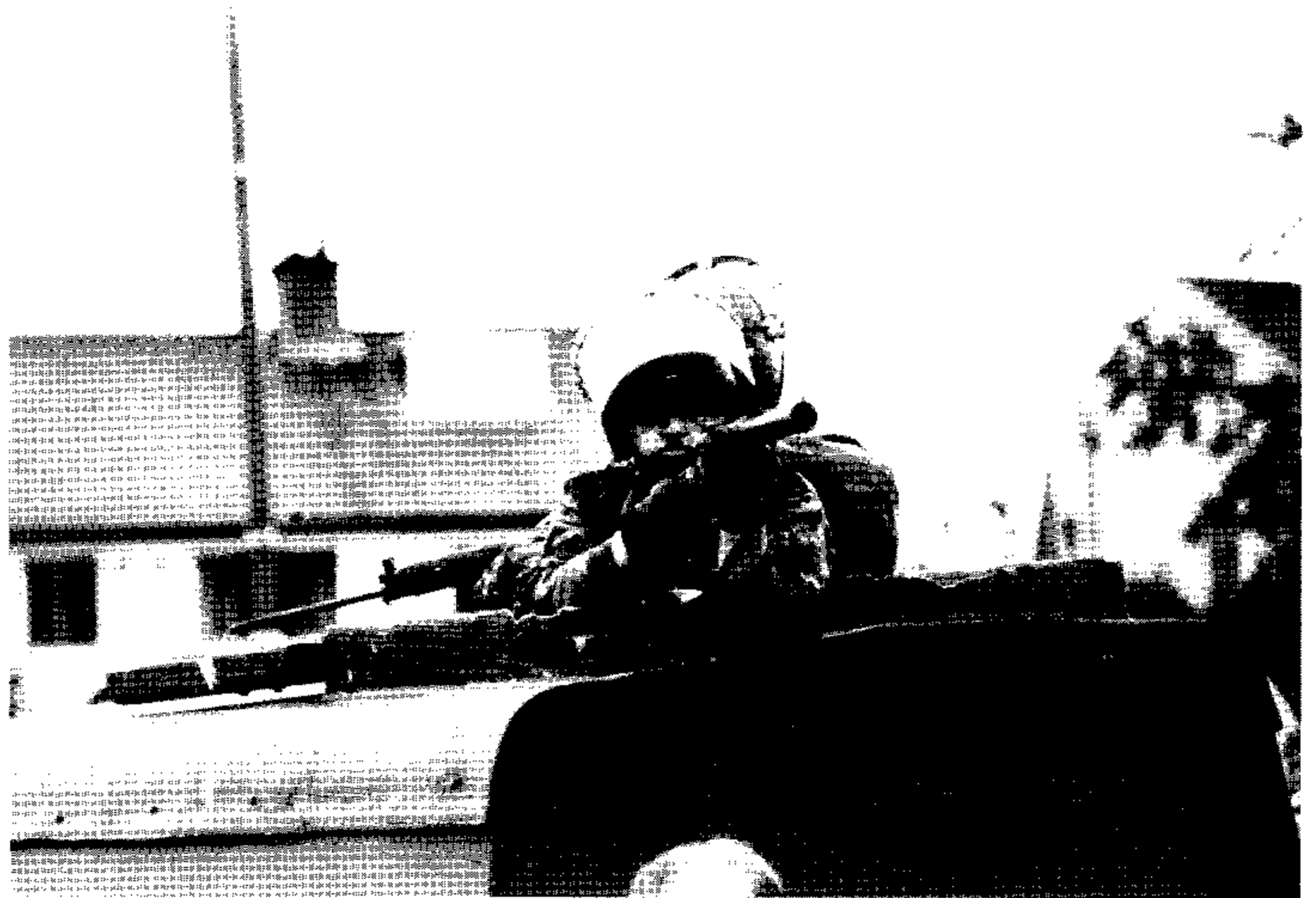
Politicians, writers and public figures have come together in Britain to publish "Time to GO", a charter for British withdrawal from Ireland. The charter is the first move in a year of action to stimulate discussion about Britain's presence in the north and popularise withdrawal.

1989 marks the 20th anniversary of British troops being sent onto the streets of Belfast and Derry. The charter says that there have been 20 wasted years and asks: "isn't it time Britain left Northern Ireland; almost 3,000 dead, 10's of thousands injured, countless lives scarred and discrimination and injustice rife, civil liberties and equality of treatment in both Britain and Ireland denied, and yet we are no nearer a solution".

The Time to Go charter draws attention to the waste of resources in maintaining the military occupation and British Rule, resources which could be invested in a new future instead of on a military strategy which even the generals admit cannot succeed.

Year after year opinion polls show what the government denies. That the majority of people in Britain want the troops pulled out. Opinion in favour of keeping the troops in the north has consistently stayed at a low level. The charter records that: "the vast majority of people in Ireland and Britain want peace and good neighbourliness between these islands." "Britain has the responsibility to make possible the process of reconciliation. This cannot begin while Britain insists on staying in Northern Ireland."

20 years ago people in the North were marching for self respect, civil rights and justice. Today



Troops out now!

religious discrimination, legal injustice, official brutality are a stark reminder that reform has not been possible. Instead of justice there came "emergency legislation" and "special powers". The powers have been used for internment and torture, super-grass trials, no jury 'Diplock' courts, strip searching and 'shoot to kill'. They have done nothing to end the inequality or poverty.

In 1969 the British Army promised an end to the fear and the British Labour Government an end to injustice. But instead of a political solution that would allow the Irish to determine their own future politicians have given them a succession of pseudo institutions set up to establish legitimacy for the denial of democracy, which is the six county sectarian state.

Prisons are full but the problems remain. Nowadays even talks about talks are advertised as progress. "British presence is unquestionably part of the problem" says the Time to Go charter.

But British 'presence' is the

problem for all British workers and socialists.

The question facing all those who wish to see the withdrawal of British Troops is how to take the demand into the working class.

- Troops out now!
- For the right of self-determination

1968 • 1988

TROOPS OUT NOW!

ANTI-INTERMENT
MARCH
Saturday 6 August 1988

IRISH FREEDOM MOVEMENT

Republican marching bands
Assemble 10pm, Edgerton Town Hall (near)
Upper Street, London N1

Phone 01-729 0414 for information and
details of transport from around the country

Profits Before Lives

Kevin Townsend

The Piper Alpha disaster killing 167 off-shore workers is the latest in a catalogue of atrocities caused by the capitalists search for maximum profits. The disaster has brought into the open how the oil magnates are prepared to risk lives to produce oil at the cheapest possible price. The industry more and more presents a picture of corner cutting, wage cutting and anti-trade unionism. All the North Sea oil and gas producing concerns are implicated for putting lives at risk whether Occidental, B.P. or Shell UK. Two hundred and forty three lives have been lost in the industry and 600 seriously injured. The chance of being injured is 11 times greater working off-shore than on-shore. A picture unfolds of an industry that cares about as much for the workers safety as the pre-war pit owners did for the miners. The bosses disregard for safety of workers in the North Sea is matched by their disregard for the living standards of workers; wages since the world oil glut have fallen by as much as 40%.

Crocodile Tears

Thatcher and Armand Hammer, head of Occidental, shed crocodile tears for the dead and injured and donate a paltry 1 million each to the disaster fund.

One item that will not have been included on the agenda for discussion was the blast on the same Piper Alpha platform in 1984 and the cover up by the government and the company of the results of the Department of Energy investigation. Did Thatcher make any pledge to extend the "health and safety at work act" to off-shore platforms who at present are immune from any legal compulsion to enforce this act? To-day there is a growing concern among North Sea workers about safety conditions on North Sea oil and gas platforms, rigs and terminals. Platforms like Shell UK's Brent Alpha and other Brent field operations have witnessed similar gas emissions and explosions recently. BP's Sullom Voe oil terminal in the Shetlands had an explosion last month. Builders on 3 BP platforms in the West Sole field staged a sit-in on a gas platform in the aftermath of the Piper Alpha disaster and in protest at poor safety conditions before resigning.

Accident Foreseen

One question that has to be asked is: Was the accident foreseen? The answer is yes! The Piper Alpha rig "was a more dangerous platform than the majority of platforms in the North sea due to the number of men on board, the lack of inspection in some areas, the volume of oil and gas (it produced) and its age." said Jack

Donaldson, who was Occidental's loss production officer in Aberdeen until 1985. He says that before his retirement he told his superiors of concerns about the platform, particularly about the fire-retardant abilities of the portion of the crew quarters made of wood and fibre glass. The company replied to this by saying that all safety standards were met. This says everything and nothing. In the face of concrete facts they answer with abstract cynicism. Dan Kirkwood head of the off-shore training body at Robert Gordon Institute of Technology answered the company when he said: "the truth is that Piper was patched up. In the early 1980s she had about 55 clamps put on the jacket to hold her together."

Lives Seen As Expendable

Patch and mend! Keep the oil flowing, keep the profit coming, lives are expendable! This is the reality in the North Sea. Dan Kirkwood has said: "All the North Sea installations are very much at the mercy of the environment and suffer from a lot of design deficiencies caused by a variety of cost constraints." This means that there is a continual threat of Piper Alpha happening again, anywhere, anytime. But cost constraints are not the full picture. Dean Naylor, a worker from the Piper Alpha who lives in Stockport and only just escaped with his life, said in a recent interview that in the living accommodation there was a strong smell of gas two days before the disaster. "Since the drop in the oil price there have been cut backs in routine maintenance on most rigs. What happened on Piper was bound to happen somewhere."

We can add that it can happen again unless workers and their trade unions act now to defend life against profit. A proper gas inspection of a rig would mean the oil company shutting a rig down for 8 or 9 hours and paying 10,000 for the inspection. Lives are much cheaper commodities to risk losing. Workers should demand the complete separation of living accommodation from the production area and for trade union inspection of these living and working areas. The trade unions should also fight for the creation of health and safety committees (where they do not exist) with one third workers and one third trade union health and safety representatives on them.



Unemployed Victimised

Recently Mr Kinnock made a secret visit to the Merseyside Trades Union, Community and Unemployed Resource Centre in Liverpool. This was clearly part of his PR campaign to show that there is no real opposition to his present leadership style and direction.

A number of unemployed activists accidentally found out about the visit and took part in a non-violent protest as Mr. Kinnock entered the building. Activists working from the centre have since been banned or suspended from the campaign rooms.

This basically means they can no longer use the resources of the centre to campaign on behalf of the unemployed and workers in dispute.

Since the visit the management of the centre have prevented the real issues involved being discussed. These were; firstly, the secrecy surrounding the visit prevented many Labour, trade union and other left wing activists in Liverpool from either demonstrating their opposition to the present Labour leadership or more importantly putting forward their views to Kinnock; secondly the publicity and show of support gained by the present leadership during the challenge for the leadership; thirdly, the show of support given to someone who continues to demand witch hunts against left wing activists and fourthly, the treatment of the unemployed activists was dismissive throughout.

The management have given their excuse for the secrecy surrounding the visit that they had instructions from the Labour Party Head Quarters!

Why did they keep his visit quiet, not only from unemployed activists but also from the Merseyside labour movement which is in an area where Kinnock has pursued a policy of witch hunts and done nothing to support the 47 Liverpool councillors who were victimised by the Tory government?

Why have they pursued sanctions against unemployed activists who were angry at what they saw as a "con" for Kinnock?

Mark Bareham - a member of Granby Labour Party and T&GWU 6/612 branch.

Project 2000 = Cheap Labour And Cuts

Rae Hunter

At the Royal College of Nursing Conference, on the 23rd May this year, John Moore, Social Service Secretary, announced Government support for nurses' training reforms. The care of long term sick and handicapped will increasingly be given over to non-qualified nursing staff.

The Royal College of Nursing welcomed this as it is something they have been waiting on for some years. They call it Project 2000.

The nursing unions COHSE and NUPE have been and are opposed to Project 2000 as it is no good for training nurses and certainly no good for patients. They say the Government is trying to get nursing care on the cheap.

The National Health Service was introduced in 1947 and gave the example of what could be achieved if workers are determined to fight for something. Some say the Welfare State was given to us by the Tories - out of good will!! No - this is not how it came about.

The face of the Tories is the face that Thatcher's government presents to us. To take from the poor and helpless. To take from children their milk, their school meals, their comprehensive education and to cast the old, the long term ill, the mentally sick, into so-called community care. We gained the Welfare State through the strength of the working class. In 1945 soldiers came back from the war with guns in their hands and said; "We are not going back to the Means Test and the 30's".

New Methods

The new method of training nurses would mean that all nurses have a three year training - this means doing away with State Enrolled Nurses. Trainees would be given student status. They will be trained like Medical Students in College or University and not be



hospital based, as they are at the moment. Mr. Moore said: "Students will no longer be regarded as 'pairs of hands'; they will no longer be thrown in at the deep end and asked to bear far more responsibility than their training and experience warrants." He also said that nursing trainees would receive the same rights and privileges as other students including 80 per cent poll tax rebate.

Yet the privileges and money of other students has been cut to the bone. They have to take side jobs to live, that is if they come from poor working class families. So what is being given? The new method of training will be bad for nurses as they will get most of their training separated from the patient. Nurses are not just technicians, capable of operating machines, their main source of knowledge is in connection with the living or dying patient.. The idea is that, once trained they will nurse intensive care, acute surgical, and medical patients and certainly patients that can afford to pay. The long term cases and geriatrics will be nursed by Nursing Aids of

Helpers - they will, no doubt, give them an attractive name - but they will have a minimum of training and certainly be 'a pair of hands'. They will be poorly paid, no doubt as part of the new MSC schemes. This will turn them off nursing as a career and the main sufferer will be the patient.

So what is our future as potential patients? Colin Ralph, Registrar of the UK Central Council, said "Whichever way you look at the question, we are going to have fewer trained nurses in the future." At present 59 per cent of the 487,000 strong nursing force is qualified. Under the changes this is expected to fall, while the number of nurses helpers would rise from the present 112,000 auxiliaries to between 150,000 and 200,000.

There is general ignorance of how these Government money saving tactics will affect us. It is important that these questions are raised in our unions and in particular amongst unemployed youth and Old Age Pensioners organisations.

Battle For Hulme

Pete Money

"This is only a tactical retreat by the Tories - the main fight is still to come". This was how Allan Scott of the Hulme 5 Tenants Association described the decision of the Tory Minister of State for Housing and Planning, William Waldegrave, to agree to a feasibility study into the future of the Hulme housing estate in Manchester thus postponing the plan to put the estate under the control of a Housing Action Trust (HAT).

Although it is the opposition of the local tenants organisations, particularly the most active and militant, the Hulme 5 Tenants Association, that has led to the Tories postponing the imposition of a HAT it is far from the victory that is being claimed by the La-

bour controlled Council. This is made clear in the letter from Waldegrave agreeing to the study. The letter states "the Government would not be committed to any particular course of action by the study's eventual findings" and that "it is only through the mechanism of a Housing Action Trust that substantial additional central Government resources are likely to be available".

In spite of this, Councillor Darby is claiming a victory for the council and the tenants associations and claimed that "the only difficult questions now are whether the government is prepared to back the proposals of the feasibility study".

However, the real question in Manchester is that the City Council has had its budget slashed by around 20% and has absolutely no money for the massive backlog of repairs and renovations that are essential for an area that

is recognised as one of the worst housing estates in Europe. For their part the Tories are intent on taking the estates that have been run down, because of lack of funds, out of the hands of local government and put them under the control of Tory appointed commissioners who will prepare the estates for selling off to companies like Wimpeys and Barrats, as has already happened in nearby Salford.

They are using their financial stranglehold over the City Council to compel the councils to do their bidding: to slash services and to hand over council assets to the financial sharks of the City.

Manchester City Council, which once claimed to be the defender of jobs and services has done a complete about turn and has been vigorously carrying out cuts throughout the city. They have been pushing through

Socialist Voice interviewed Cathy a Registered Mental Nurse who works in a psychiatric unit within a London general hospital.

S.V. What is the attitude of nurses to Project 2000 in your hospital?

Cathy. "It is used to try and make nursing more "professional", more middle class. Nurses will be based in college not in the wards. They now spend eight to ten weeks on the ward. With Project 2000 they will have eight to ten days on the ward. My feeling is that it is a load of rubbish! Although there are mixed attitudes to it. Under this scheme State Enrolled Nurses will be seen merely as assistants which will mean their downgrading. There will be fewer student nurses on the wards and these jobs may be replaced by YTS schemes. The wards cannot function without student nurses. Project 2000 is already working on a small scale."

S.V. How are student nurses treated?

Cathy. "Student nurses have eight to ten weeks secondment in private wards. A reason for this is that there are not enough psychiatric hospitals to train them. This means that the private hospitals are getting free labour for eight to ten weeks."

S.V. What are the feelings over the wages?

Cathy. "We have received a 4.4% pay rise so far. The feeling is that we will not be paid and the unions are still discussing. It is said that the 15.3% pay rise, if we get it, will mean ward closures sooner than anticipated. In other words more cuts! Yet at the moment a first year staff nurse receives 8,200 and in the private hospitals they get 11,000 plus perks."

speedups and flexible working in all areas.

These attacks have been answered by strikes and protests from all sections of council workers such as the refuse workers and the grave diggers. And, as the strikers point out, they have had the enthusiastic support of the people of Manchester.

The Hulme tenants should continue to demand:

No Hats in Hulme

No Privatisation.

No Refurbishment by Council, Direct works under the control of tenants and Council housing workers.

Tenants to have full access to council files and accounts.

Lawsons Fig Leaf Falls !

Peter Windeler

The Tories are now being shown to have no economic clothes. The Thatcher/Lawson lies that the economy is healthy have been exposed with the news that most experts expect a £10BN trade deficit for this year. What this means is that the UK, after years of decimating industry resulting in millions unemployed, only survives by importing huge numbers of goods. City pundits (and Labour politicians) blame the boom in borrowing by individuals. But

the crises which the UK and other capitalist economies are going through is a result of the strength of the masses internationally. Today for instance in the UK wages are growing by 8.5% against inflation of only 5%. The relative strength of the British workforce in extracting increases in wages means that the Tories must continually take the offensive and reduce workers living standards at every turn.

Hard Times

After reading the docker's story in the last issue of Socialist Voice it recalled in my memory the conditions of workers and their families in the 30's that my relatives often talk about.

My Grandfather was a carpenter and cabinet maker. In the early 1930s he used to walk from St. Helens to the docks in Merseyside over 10 miles just on the chance he would be picked for work. He never did get work in the docks.

The conditions of families in our streets in those times were very bad. My grandmother had to have an operation to remove a tumour from her back. Her doctor paid for it, otherwise she might have died. The cost of the operation had to be repaid at shilling a week for years.

The means test was in operation at the time. An assessor would come into the house and tell the family to sell the clock, anything except the bare necessities before they could get a penny from the state. If someone in the street got a rabbit, everyone in the street would prepare vegetables and a great stew would be made. My Grandfather eventually got work at Sutton Manor colliery in St Helens. One story told is about the time two eggs were shared between the 6 kids. The next door neighbour used to pick coal of the local heap and polish it for ornaments for rich peoples hearths, she got paid 1 shilling an hour. Even in the 1950s times were hard. My Gran died in 1951. The family was still paying off the funeral expenses seven years later.

From a St. Helens Reader.

VIDEO • VIDEO • VIDEO • VIDEO • VIDEO

Video of the May Day Rally and teachers strike in Argentina, filmed by the M.A.S.

20,000 workers and youth celebrate Internationalism in a football stadium in Buenos Aires, plus a vibrant and colourful report of the 600,000 strong teachers fight, that lasted thirty seven days, against the government's and I.M.F economic policy.

Any reader that wants to see this video, which reflects the growing movement in Argentina, should contact Socialist Voice.

VIDEO • VIDEO • VIDEO • VIDEO • VIDEO

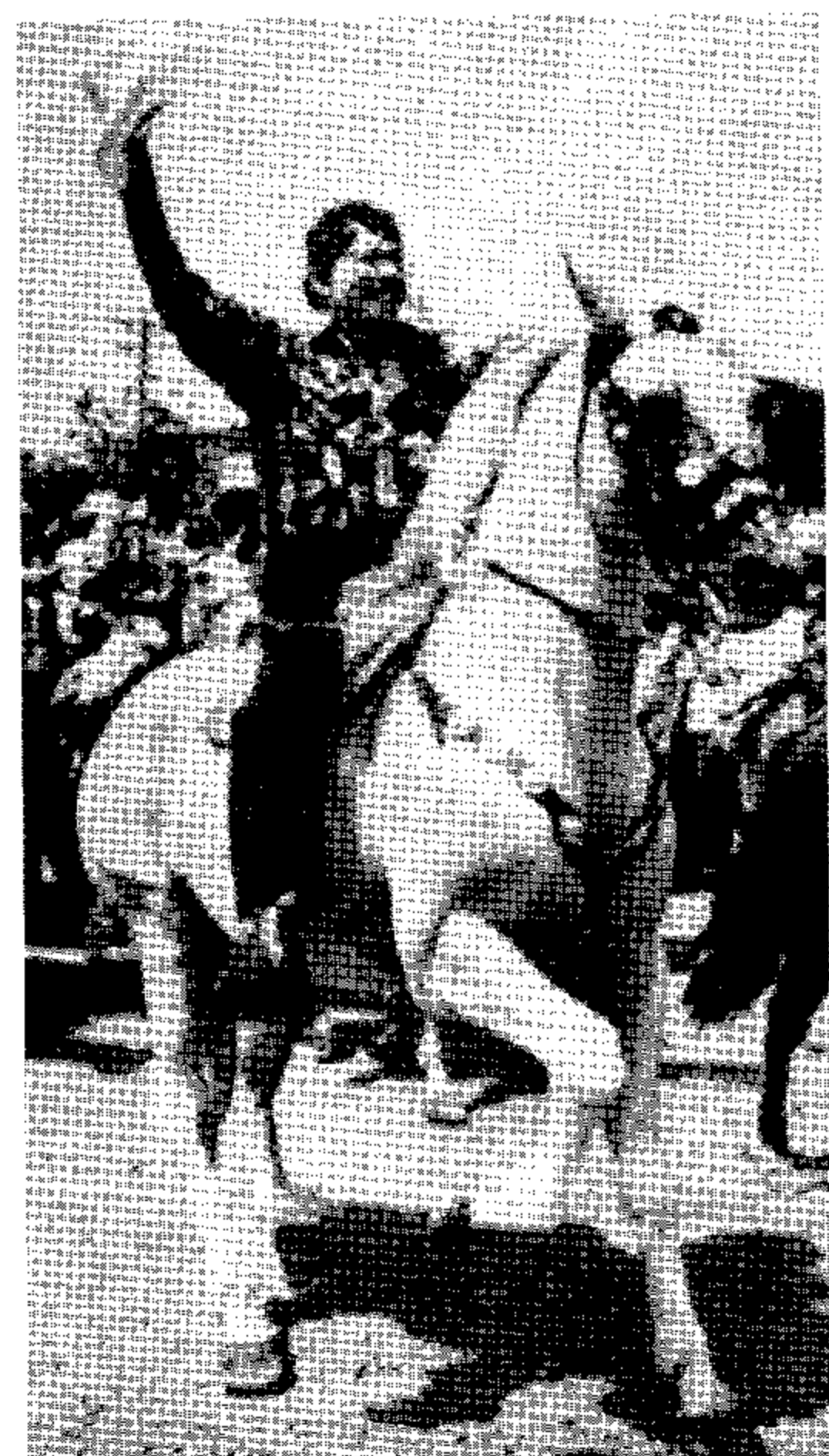
One Step Forward Two Steps Back

A few days after the massive massacre in the Persian Gulf the U.S. government condemned the "brutal measures" of the Nicaraguan government. What did the Sandinistas do? They had just expelled the U.S. Ambassador and another 7 diplomats and they had closed down the reactionary daily "La Prensa" and "Radio Catolica".

The US, who sent soldiers to Korea, Vietnam and Grenada, who have supported every dictatorship in Latin America, who support the genocidal state of Israel and who supply the mercenary Contras, now consider "brutal" the expulsion of some diplomats and the closure of a news-paper and a radio. And they answered these measures by not only expelling the Sandinist diplomats in the United States and the United Nations, but by renewing military and "humanitarian" support for the mercenaries of the Contra.

Sandinistas Retreat

Two months ago the Sandinistas handed a success to the pro-imperialist forces, signing a peace agreement under the terms of the "Arias Plan". This allowed the Contras to stay armed within Nicaragua; set free all the Contras and the Somozist Guards that were in prison with full political freedom and provided for financial assistance from the United States. This happened a few days after one of the most important successes of the Nicaraguan people, when there existed the real possibility of a definitive destruction of those counter-revolutionary armed forces.



President Ortega Commemorating nine years of Nicaraguan Revolution

But imperialism, as ever, taking advantage of this retreat of the Sandinistas, increased its attacks on the Nicaraguan revolution. With the permission of the Sandinistas all the allies of Reagan in Nicaragua, the bourgeoisie and the catholic church began developing a political campaign, led by the US Ambassador, to undermine the conquests of the Nicaraguan masses and the Sandinist government itself. This is not new. Capitalist imperialism is never satisfied. Its whole history demonstrates this. Where there is an anti-imperialist government they fight for a pro-imperialist one. Where they have an ally they want a direct agent for their policy. Where they have an agent they want more exploitation and so on. Capitalist imperialism has no limit in its search for more and more profit.

Masses Defeated Imperialism

But in the case of Nicaragua there is another important reason which explains the pre-occupation of Reagan. The Nicaraguan Revolution of 1979 is the latest example which shows that the mobilisation of the masses, even in a small, poor, weak and backward country, can defeat imperialism.

The US government cannot allow this conception to imbibe the mind of millions of Latin American and world workers. This is why they want to transform this example into its opposite. Imperialism will do anything possible to try to prove that no one who attempts to fight against it can triumph. At present it does not matter how many concessions they are given, US imperialism is not going to stop the attack until the destruction of the Sandinist Government, the direct and most symbolic result of the Nicaraguan Revolution. These conditions put the Nicaraguan Revolution in an unstable situation. Either they develop the revolutionary measures until the complete defeat of imperialism; in the military field destroying the Contra; in the economic field expropriating the multinationals, the bourgeoisie and the powerful catholic church and in the international field by developing the revolutionary process in the other countries of Central America or they will be defeated by the incessant counter-revolutionary attacks of imperialism and its allies. There is no intermediate possibility.

The expulsion of the diplomats and the closure of the newspaper and the radio, together with the expropriation of the largest sugar exploitation in Nicaragua by the Sandinist government appeared a good sign for the development of the revolution. But it flattered only to deceive. Only a week later Daniel Ortega, the Nicaraguan President, returned to the policy of inconsistency.

Undermining The Revolution

In the 9th anniversary of the Nicaraguan Revolution, on July 19th, he stated; "before the efforts for peace of Nicaragua" the United States "have ordered the Contra to continue killing" and "have ordered a plan of internal undermining". But he continued to propose an extension of the cease fire with the Contra until August 30th and invited the United States to resume the bilateral dialogue to normalise the relationships. This means that the Sandinistas are not going to develop the revolutionary measures necessary in Nicaragua. On the contrary, while they call for the dialogue with the Contras and the US they denounce the workers who go on strike for wages as "counter-revolutionaries". It is necessary to understand that the Nicaraguan workers have lost 90 per cent of their purchase power since 1980.

Ortega explained that: "Our Socialism defends the workers and the peasants, but it brings too the opportunity to contribute to the development of the country from all the sectors that exist in Nicaragua." Are the Contras, the bourgeoisie, the catholic church and the multinationals those "sectors" that "contribute to the development of the country?" What opportunity are they giving to the workers if they call them "counter-revolutionaries" and put in prison their leaders just because they go on strike for higher wages? It is true and just that after six years of war against the Contras, with 57,000 dead and \$12,000m losses, the first issue for the Nicaraguan workers and people is to end this war. But this end will not come with the policy of the Sandinistas, with concessions and "dialogue" with the Contras and US imperialism. It will come with the mobilisation of the masses to destroy the Contra and to pull the levers of the economy from the hands of the bourgeoisie, the church and the multinationals.

In 1979, the dictatorship was overthrown by the massive, self-organised and armed mobilisation of the workers and the people, not by the dialogue with Somoza and his North American supporters. It is in this way of self-organisation and mobilisation that the Sandinistas are losing popular enthusiastic support and the workers are beginning to fight against their managers, the multinationals and the bourgeoisie, and the students are demanding guns from the government to fight against the Contras. The Sandinistas continue with their inconsistent policy of dialogue and agreements while the working class and the masses are beginning to fight against their enemies by developing the conquests of the revolution. It is in their hands - with or without the Sandinistas - that the future of the Socialist Revolution lies.

Mexico In Deep Crisis

Almost a month after the National Elections the results are not exactly known. The opposition denounced a "generalised fraud" managed by the government; the Electoral Junta has suspended the count because of "failures in the computers"; there have already been important mobilisations repudiating the fraud.

The forecast, based on the first informations said that the winner was Carlos Salinas, candidate of the officialist PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) with a small advantage over the main opposition candidate, Cauhtemoc Cardenas of the FDN (National Democratic Front):

Even if Salinas is designated the new President, this elections show a leap in the crisis of the PRI that has governed the country during sixty years winning all the elections with a wide advantage. The crisis of the PRI opens a new stage of political instability in the middle of a grave economic crisis.

In the 30s the PRI government had some frictions with imperialism, nationalised the oil industry, conceded important conquests to the workers and obtained a massive popular support that allowed it to maintain during decades a hard control over the political life and over the workers' movement.

Mexico could have a certain economic and industrial development, even if maintaining high levels of misery and poverty. It could overpass the world economic crisis of the 70s because of the oil exports.

But today, with an external debt of \$ 105,000m and the fall of the international price of oil, the capitalist Mexico is smashing and the PRI within it. In the last five years Mexico has paid \$ 80,000m of the external debt. But for that the last government of the PRI had applied the austerity plans of the IMF

taking the buy power of the workers to a half and increasing the unemployment two times. At the present 40 per cent of the population suffer malnutrition. This situation provoked an increment of the struggles of the workers and people, but at the same time the deep crisis of the PRI.

This crisis is very dangerous for imperialism. The stability of the Mexican regime was very helpful for the North Americans not only because they have important investments, but because it was an obstacle between the Central American revolution and their own workers.

The deepness of the economic crisis and the crisis of the PRI and the Mexican regime opens the possibility of more and more struggles of the workers and the people not this time in the back yard, but at the front door of the United States.

More Than 11,000 Colombians Assassinated

11,000 Colombians Dead In One Year

At present the main task for the Colombian workers and people is to stop the massacre provoked by the death squads, organised by the militaries and the land owners with the accomplice of the government.

The authorities recognised that 117 had been killed in Uraba in 1987. In the first week of March (1988) over twenty banana plantation workers were taken from their dormitory at night and killed immediately. Responsibility for the attack was claimed by a neo-fascist death squad.

On August 25th 1987 Dr. Hector Abad Gomez and Dr. Leonardo Betancur Taborda, president and vice-president of the Antioquia departmental branch of the Colombian Committee for Human Rights, together with Luis Felipe Velez, president of the Antioquia branch of the Teachers' Union (Feconda) were shot dead by unidentified men. The

successor of Mr. Abad was murdered on December 17th.

In Mejor Esquina 36 were murdered. There was indiscriminate shooting of victims including a woman and a child. In 15 minutes the small village of 300 inhabitants lost 15 per cent of its population.

In the first 70 days of 1988 there were 12 collective assassinations with 105 victims.

The Frente Popular has lost 60 members, the front "A Luchar!" 64 and Union Patriótica 550.

Quotes like these ones can be found in every report from Colombia, where an Index of Censorship reported that 11,000 Colombians, comprising peasants, workers, trade unionists, activists and politicians, were killed in 1987.

Twenty military officials and drug traffickers were accused of leading and protecting para-military groups. The government recog-

nises the existence of 140 death squads, know how they operate and where they are. But nobody has been arrested.

The CUT (The National Trade Union) of Colombia is calling for a General strike in response to each assassination, demanding; "Trial and Punishment for the Murderers!", Investigation and Dismantling of the Para-Military groups!"

It is the duty of all those that consider themselves Revolutionaries and Socialists to support unconditionally the struggle of the Colombian workers and people with an International campaign to demand the Colombian government takes measures against The Perpetrators of the Assassinations.

Perestroika - The Whip Of Profitability

Bill Hunter

In the Soviet Union there is promise of a great and turbulent movement out of which can come an advance for socialism. All the great questions of the future of humanity and of history - fundamental questions of marxism, of internationalism, of the rights of nations and of workers democracy - in one way or another - are coming before the Soviet people.

The Gulf Of Inequality

The movement arises from the repression of the population by state and party officials. Under Stalin, this bureaucracy grew in the Soviet Union and degenerated to a most vicious, parasitic and corrupt growth in the degree that it was separated from the control of the masses. The gulf of inequality between these bureaucrats and the working class grew to enormous proportions.

This privileged caste in the Soviet Union can no longer rule with the brutality and repression of Stalin. It must take heed of the discontent below. But it has continued to rule even if it is forced at times to adjust to the discontent.

Bureaucracy Blocks Development

Ending the conference of the Soviet Communist Party, held last month, Gorbachov declared that it had demonstrated to the world the "democratic development" achieved by the Soviet Communist Party over the past three years. The conference, however, produced no advance in freedom of the working people to organise and express their opinions.

Glasnost and Perestroika in no way embrace the encouragement and opening up of facilities for the workers' self-mobilisation, nor do they develop the workers' power over officialdom. The Soviet Union is faced with fundamentally severe problems of economy. The development of Soviet society, in productivity and technology, on the historically progressive basis of state control established by the Russian Revolution, is now blocked by the bureaucracy itself. In productivity and production volume the Soviet Union lags behind imperialism.

Introducing Market Forces

Trotsky and the Left Opposition foresaw that there was an increasing obstacle to productive development in bureaucratic planning and parasitism. The expropriation of the political rights of the masses itself became a major economic fact in the Soviet Union. The exclusion of workers' democracy and initiative meant planning from above, enforced in an atmosphere of fear and dictatorship and thus removed from reality. The present leaders of the bureaucracy want to substitute for the repression of Stalin, which is no longer possible, the whip of profitability. This is the essential meaning of Gorbachov's Perestroika. There are propositions for a weakening of state control internally, and in the monopoly of foreign trade. There will be an increasing determination of production by the market, and by far the dominant market, directly and indirectly, will be the world market.

Capitalists Supporting Perestroika

Gorbachov has the best press of any world



Demonstration in Erevan capital of Armenia

statesman. There are bankers, finance capitalists and their political representatives in North America and Europe who see the possibilities of a perspective for the development of their profits in his Perestroika.

They cannot but see a future in measures to dismantle state control and the monopoly of foreign trade in the Soviet Union. Top circles of our ruling classes must be watching for, and seeking to assist, a perspective that would open up a new lease of life for their capitalist system.

The Spectre Of The Opposition

A real study of Lenin, of Trotsky and the early years of the Soviet Union which youth and intellectuals are now opening up in the USSR, will help bring the realisation that Gorbachov's course has nothing in common with Leninist principles. The present bureaucratic leaders of the Soviet Union, including Gorbachov (and Mrs Gorbachov), continue to justify their anti-communist privileges. And Gorbachov's bureaucratic paternalism and hostility to a working class which will get out of his control, is the opposite of Lenin's conceptions.

Lenin and Bolshevism were characterised by the conviction that the working class was compelled to be not just a protesting class, but a revolutionary class and an international class. Stalinism was characterised by a deep scepticism in the power of the working class to emancipate humanity and a vicious hostility to the initiative of masses and their revolutionary movements. Gorbachov and the bureaucrats who support him now continue that hostility to the masses, in turning for assistance for the grave economic problems they face towards capitalist methods and ideology.

Fear Of Workers Upsurge

The habits of thought of the bureaucrats, their own future and that of their families are tied to bureaucratic prospects; their connections internationally are with bourgeois representatives, their connections with the working class movement are with the bureaucratic layers who themselves express the pressure of the bourgeoisie. They must of necessity fear the introduction of a real workers democracy, in the factory committees, the neighbourhoods, real soviets -

such as existed at the beginning of the Russian Revolution - with the mass of workers brought face to face with the public administration.

Great Russian Chauvinism

In the fast developing clashes in the national republics we are seeing how the stalinist degeneration of the Soviet Union raised the national question to new heights by its bureaucratic centralisation and the great-Russian chauvinism which Lenin condemned in Stalin. Now, the loosening of the bureaucracy has encouraged the movements for national independence. The bureaucracy must, despite manoeuvres and small concessions, eventually use force to suppress them. History is now presenting a mighty account before the stalinist bureaucracies throughout the world. This is the pay off for the opportunism and counter-revolutionary crimes of stalinism. There is only one course for the Soviet Union to overcome the stagnation which is the result of the corrupt, clogging and repressive bureaucracy whose wastefulness and plunder pervades a society where workers' control was suppressed. That course is a root and branch change; a political revolution which restores soviet democracy and the internationalist principles of Lenin. This is the socialist course. As against the conscious drive for socialism and the emancipation of the oppressed, which motivated the great sacrifices of the Russian revolutionaries, the bureaucracy appeals to bourgeois money-grabbing values and economic individualism, in the spirit ofThatcherism - profit, private enterprise, the spirit of the market, as against planning.

A regeneration of the Soviet Union can only take place through a new upsurge of the working class against the bureaucracy. In fact, the working class will unleash its initiative, first through the struggle against the oppression of the bureaucracy.

There can be no return to communist relations in the Soviet Union by a "cold way". It will need the heat of upsurge and revolution in which the working class will have to learn its strength and possibilities in running the state advance for socialism. All the humanity and of history-fundamental stions of marxism, of of the democracy - in one way or another.

Corruption Lives In The Bureacracy.

Mark Smith

Glasnost is revealing some "secrets" about the privileges of the soviet bureaucracy which show that investigations of corruption will not include the entire bureaucracy or its connections.

There have been some previous scandals in East European countries. For instance in 1981, in Poland there was a wave of indignation because it was discovered that one of the officers of the Government owned a whole Greek island where he spent his holidays! In Yugoslavia recently a striker said that "the government is applying austerity plans while the officers use Mercedes Benz."

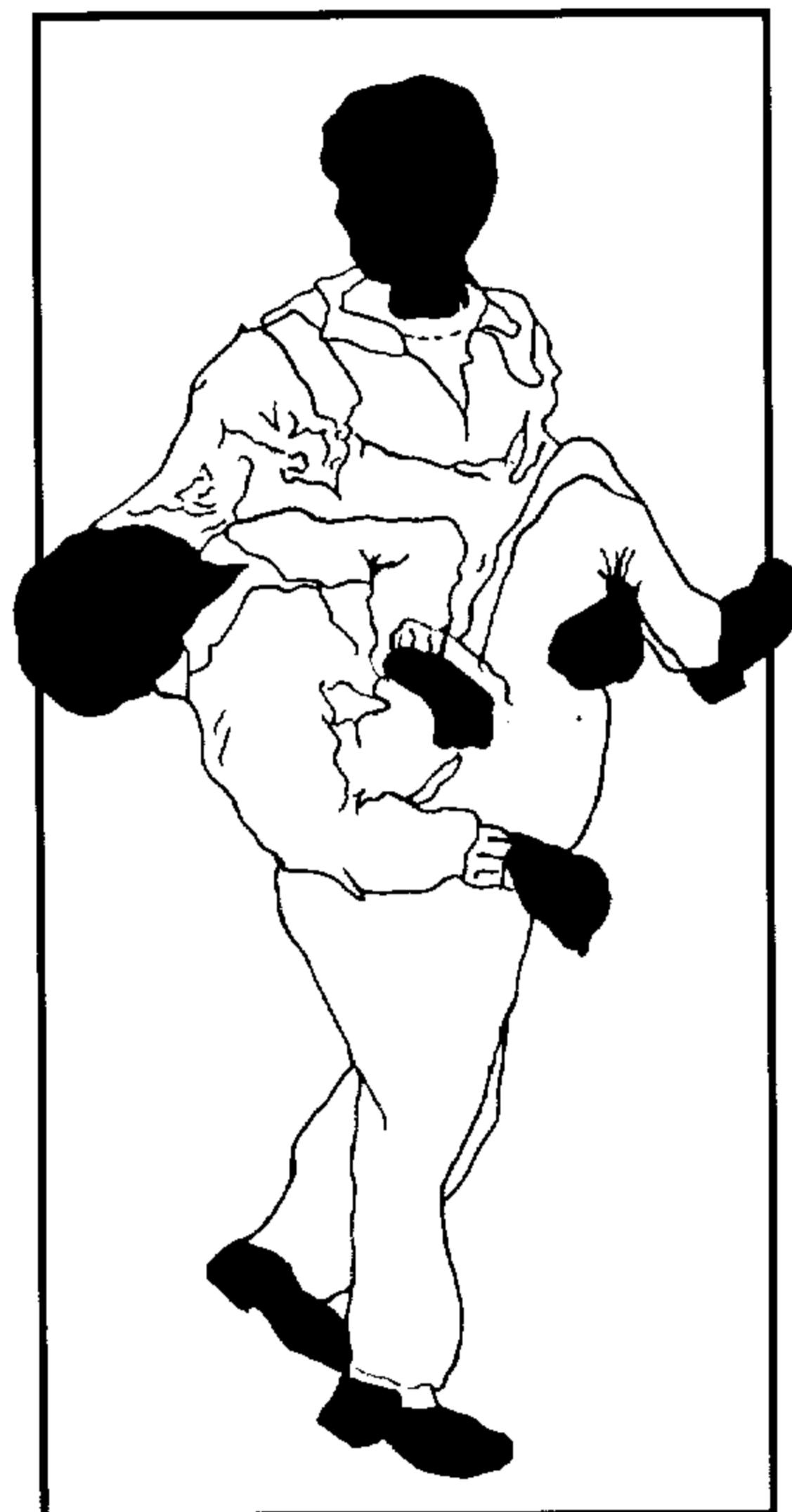
In the Soviet Union things are not very different. Leonid Brezhnev had a collection of racing cars. His daughter, Galina - who likes the high life - has been linked to scandals involving diamond smuggling; she is living in a government supplied dacha in the suburbs of West Moscow. Brezhnev's son in law Yuri Churbanov - a former Deputy Minister of Interior in charge of Police - is on a charge of accepting bribes amounting

to over 650,000 roubles (650,000 pounds). Brezhnev's personal secretary, Gennady Bovin, was sentenced to nine years in prison for taking 19,000 roubles in bribes.

Yuri Churbanov was given a coveted Second World War medal, despite the fact that he was only five years old at the end of the war. Brezhnev scandals concern the past.

But what about the present? It is enough to see the clothes and jewellery of Mrs. Gorbachev on television to know that things have not changed very much. Or they have got even worse!

The Soviet Police Chief of Investigations has declared that crime in the USSR is organised by mafias involving the corrupt state bureaucracy. These mafia organisations control clandestine vodka sellers, thieves, drug traffickers, prostitutes, gambling dens, etc. Contract murders are organised from between 30,000 and 100,000 roubles. According to these investigations two thirds of the proceeds of organised crime go to officials within the state bureaucracy.



Drawing from the Collection

CHILD OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Conceived from love
and born by fate
into a country
torn by violence
and hate.

Child of South Africa
trapped by the colour of your skin
suppressed by a minority
and paying for another mans sin
I look at the pictures
confronting me
seeing a child
that only in death
could be free.

And in the face of the father
in whose arms you lie
the agonies of bondage
as he waits for you to die.
In bidding for freedom

you willingly gave your life
unselfishly making the
ultimate sacrifice.

How much longer
must your cries go unheeded
and how many deaths
of children are needed.
When will love prevail
and the world hear your plea.
For only then
in unity
will the children of
South Africa
be free.

Norma Wilson

The poem and drawing is from a
collection published under the title
"Thoughts in words" by Joy

Lorraine and Norma Wilson.
They come from County Durham
and were active in the H.F.W.
Strike Strike Support Group. The
poems reflect their involvement in
struggles and views on more
personal issues.
Another poem of struggle that
shows their commitment to the
working class is "A March In
London Against Apartheid". It is
a small collection but well worth
reading.

Copies for £1.00 can be attained
from
P.O. Box 18,
Stockport,
SK6 4DH

"Lay Down Your Arms"

Here is the mammoth creature which they mocked! That it had no head and certainly no teeth!

Woe unto you oppressor Woe unto you exploiter

We have rebuilt its head we lathed its teeth on our machines. The day this head rises beware of the day these teeth shall bite.

On that day: mountains of lies shall be torn to shreds the gates of apartheid shall be burst asunder the history books of deception shall be thrown out.

Extract from "The Tears of a Creator;" poem composed for the launch of COSATU. Mi S'Dumo Hlatshwayo and Alfred Temba Qabula.

Mr Kinnock toured Southern Africa in the middle of last month. He, of course, expressed himself against apartheid, but lectured those who suffer under it; "violence", he said "is counter-productive".

There speaks the authentic and servile voice of a British right wing reformist leader, a "social-imperialist" or "social-chauvinist" as Lenin would have called him.

Slaves; rattle your chains. But not too loud and don't use force to break them! We must remember that for Kinnock to lose an election is of far more importance than for hundreds of thousands in South Africa to lose their liberty and their lives! Such is the miser-

able, careerist and politically corrupt nature of the leadership of the Labour Party.

And Mr Kinnock is even to the right of the words of the United Nations! Their resolution 42/42 approved in November last year reaffirmed; "the legitimacy of the struggle of Southern Africa, and its right to chose the necessary means, including armed resistance, to attain the eradication of apartheid". These words are not meant to be implemented but have everything to do with providing a cover for some of the leaders of the African States and petit-bourgeoisie.

With imperialist arrogance they lecture those suffering under the oppressive cruelty of a racist regime as to what methods they should use in freeing themselves. It is certain that the oppressors have no uncertainty about the counter-productive nature of the violence of the apartheid state, while Botha's police are filling the jails full of trades unionists, freedom fighters and children; torturing and hanging or playing cat and mouse with innocent martyrs like the Sharpville Six.

Is this violence counter-productive? It has, in fact, been very productive for the British, American and other investors in the gold and coal mines and in the manufacturing industry. For a very great number of years, a pitiless violent terror and racism has supplied cheap labour, suppressed African resistance and put fear into liberal protesters.



Kinnock would look a little less of a hypocrite if instead of sanctimoniously telling Africans that they should confine themselves to peaceful protest, he examined the "struggle" of the Labour and Trade Union leaders against apartheid. There is some definite "counter-production".

Any call by Kinnock or the trade union leaders to organise real working class action against the racist regime would break the anti-union laws. Kinnock is certainly consistent in this respect. He advises the African oppressed to keep within Botha's repressive laws while he fervently will respect and keep within Thatcher's.

"Peace" With Apartheid ?

Martin Ralph

The likely agreement between Angolan leaders and those of Apartheid is a crucial betrayal of the struggle against the racist South African regime. Yet it was not only American Imperialism that was pushing for a settlement. The Soviet Union was also very keen to see the Cuban removal and a signed agreement. The question is why? The primary reason is the fear of the Soviet bureaucracy of a military victory, or even a partial one in the struggle against the apartheid army. Such a victory would give added impulse to the struggle of the masses in Namibia and in South Africa.

Masses Begin To Rise

It is worth recalling that in 1987 a dramatic increase in man-days lost in strikes occurred from 1 million in 1986 to 9 million in 1987. COSATU unions won wage increases of over 18% on average. It is this movement, that would threaten apartheid openly, that the bureaucracy fear to encourage.

Dirty Deals

Another reason is for pure economic gain. The Soviet Union has signed an agreement to co-operate in the diamond and quartz mining enterprises in Angola and the USSR

would draw up a detailed geological map with the intention of further exploitation. Yet Angola's diamond production has dropped in recent years because of attacks by right-wing UNITA rebels. The theme of the bureaucracy is; "don't let a good economic deal get in the way of the legitimate interests of a liberation struggle". The Soviet Unions' leaders act, as always, from their own privileged interests and the deep seated opportunism of the bureaucracy.

Bankers See The Chance

Meanwhile, imperialism tries to get there first. Angola has applied to join the IMF. Its foreign debt is \$4000M. At the centre of the agreement is a political settlement with UNITA and South Africa.

Racist Blood Spilt

All sides were in a hurry to make an agreement. The Chief of the South African Defence Force, General Johan Geldenhugs, has said that 31 white troops have been killed and 90 injured. These figures do not include the black units of Namibian or Angolan exiles nor UNITA rebel forces. The partial victory of the Cuban forces had to be stopped by any means.

AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Selected documents of the International Workers League (Fourth International) - LIT

1. Argentina, Bolivia: Two Lessons - By various authors.....£1.00
2. A Scandalous Document - By Nahuel Moreno.....£1.00
3. Declaration and Platform of the Bolshevik Faction.....£1.00
4. Our Experience with the Lambertists - By Nahuel Moreno and Mercedes Petit.....£1.00
5. The Founding Theses of the IWL(FI) - Theses on the Necessity of an International and a Revolutionary Leadership.....£1.00
6. On the United Front.....£0.25
7. Manifesto of the 1984 World Congress of the IWL(FI).....£1.50

These documents comprise a selection of the balance-sheet, tasks and perspectives and political positions of the IWL(FI) and its forerunner organisations while they were part of USec. More documents will be made available to British readers as soon as translation work permits.

Add 26p for p&p for each document or £7.50 the set. inc p&p

Send all cheques and orders to:

Socialist Voice,

PO Box 18, Stockport. SK6 4DH.

“Counter-Revolutionary Peace”

Bill Hunter

A million men and women have died in the Iran-Iraq war. Their suffering has been a source of profit for capitalist arms manufacturers and arms merchants. The profits have increased as the blockade of arms to Iran put up the prices that the Iranian government were forced to pay.

The arms dealers profited out of the horror of chemical warfare. An article by the diplomatic editor of the Independent gave the comments of one arms dealer on the 22nd July; “Chemicals were being exported from Germany, for ‘agricultural’ use, of course, and processing equipment from Italy. The two were put together to make poison gas and don’t think those involved did not know”, he said.

As Lenin declared during the First World War; “War is terrible but terribly profitable”.

The Gulf War is coming to an end. The offensive of the Iraqi army is meant to establish the strongest bargaining position in negotiations of peace terms.

Who then has gained out of the war? For revolutionary socialists the most favourable outcome could only be the victory of Iran, despite the nature of its government. That would have made the situation more critical than ever for Imperialism in the Middle East.

What are the forces now preparing the ceasefire? They all have one characteristic in common, whatever may be their other divisions. They are all forces which have sought to check and confine the Iranian revolution. First, there is Imperialism, lead by the American ruling class, a thorough-going ruthless enemy of the Iranian revolution since the overthrow of the Shah in

1979.

Then there is the most reactionary wing of the Arab bourgeoisie, now lead by Saddam Hussein of Iraq who has been greatly assisted by American Imperialism.

There is the clerical-bourgeois government of Iran which has support to suppress the working class. It represents the bourgeois reaction against the working class content of the revolution. At the same time as it struck blows against the right two years after the revolution it forcibly dissolved the factory councils and the workers control which had been a feature of the revolution. It launched repression against workers leaders. Workers party’s were suppressed. Trades unions became semi-legal. Undoubtedly, it is now facing a great war-weariness by the population who have made untold sacrifices in their efforts to defend the revolution.

The Iranian government will now try to tie the working class to the United Nations. Dr Mossadeq in 1952 and ’53 placed great faith in this ‘peaceful’ arm of Imperialism.

He said, in appealing to the United Nations in 1952: “If the exploitation of our oil industry is to continue in the future as it has done in the past, if we are to tolerate a situation in which the Persian plays the part of a mere manual worker in the oilfields and in the Abadan refineries, and if foreign exploiters are to continue to take virtually all the income, our people will remain forever in a state of poverty and misery.” The Iranian revolution attempted to put a stop to this, 36 years on the aim of Imperialism is to crush this gain with the help of the clerical bourgeoisie.

And, finally, there is the Soviet bureaucracy, seeking to establish itself in a new stage of collaboration with imperialism in “policing” the world. Their collaboration has already lead to the collapse of supplies to the Iranian forces.

The peace in the Gulf will thus be a counter-revolutionary peace. American Imperialism, whose fleet went into the Gulf as a blatant act of aggression against the Iranian revolution and which perpetrated the crime against the helpless passengers of the air-bus, will end with secure bases in the area.

The Arab bourgeois governments, particularly Iraq, are more tightly tied to imperialism and reaction has taken a step forward in an area which boasts half the worlds oil reserves. And, while the arms manufacturers have made their profits out of the war the finance capitalists now talk of prospects of a ‘business boom’ in Iran and Iraq and a profitable business in the peace.



The Struggle for Internationalism inside the W.R.P.

Volume One and Volume Two
Now Available

Selected Documents of the Bolshevik Tendency

June 1987 - February 1988
Special Offer £6.00 + £1.00 p&p

Socialist Voice
P.O. Box 18
Stockport. SK6 4DH

£500 I.S.L. Fund

The working class is involved in many struggles to defend its conditions, wages and jobs. The union bureaucracy is acting on behalf of the bosses when it attacks its own union members.

The TUC has betrayed the youth and the unemployed in collaborating with the governments slave labour schemes.

Socialist Voice will fight with all those now seeking a road of struggle. We need to raise money in order to develop our paper.

We intend to publish many pamphlets on the issues facing workers and also documents from our international organisation. We appeal to all those who support the direction of the ISL to help with our fund.

Please make all postal orders/cheques payable to : Socialist Voice. Send to : PO BOX 18 . STOCKPORT SK6 4DH.

International Socialist League

Take out a subscription for Socialist Voice 35p + 26p P & P

For Six Months. £3.66 includes p&p.

We want articles, poems, political cartoons and letters for our paper from readers and workers so write now !!

Please send me more

information about the I.S.L.

Name

Address

.....

.....

.....

Send To : I.S.L., P.O. Box 18, STOCKPORT, SK6 4DH.

Build The fight Against E.T.

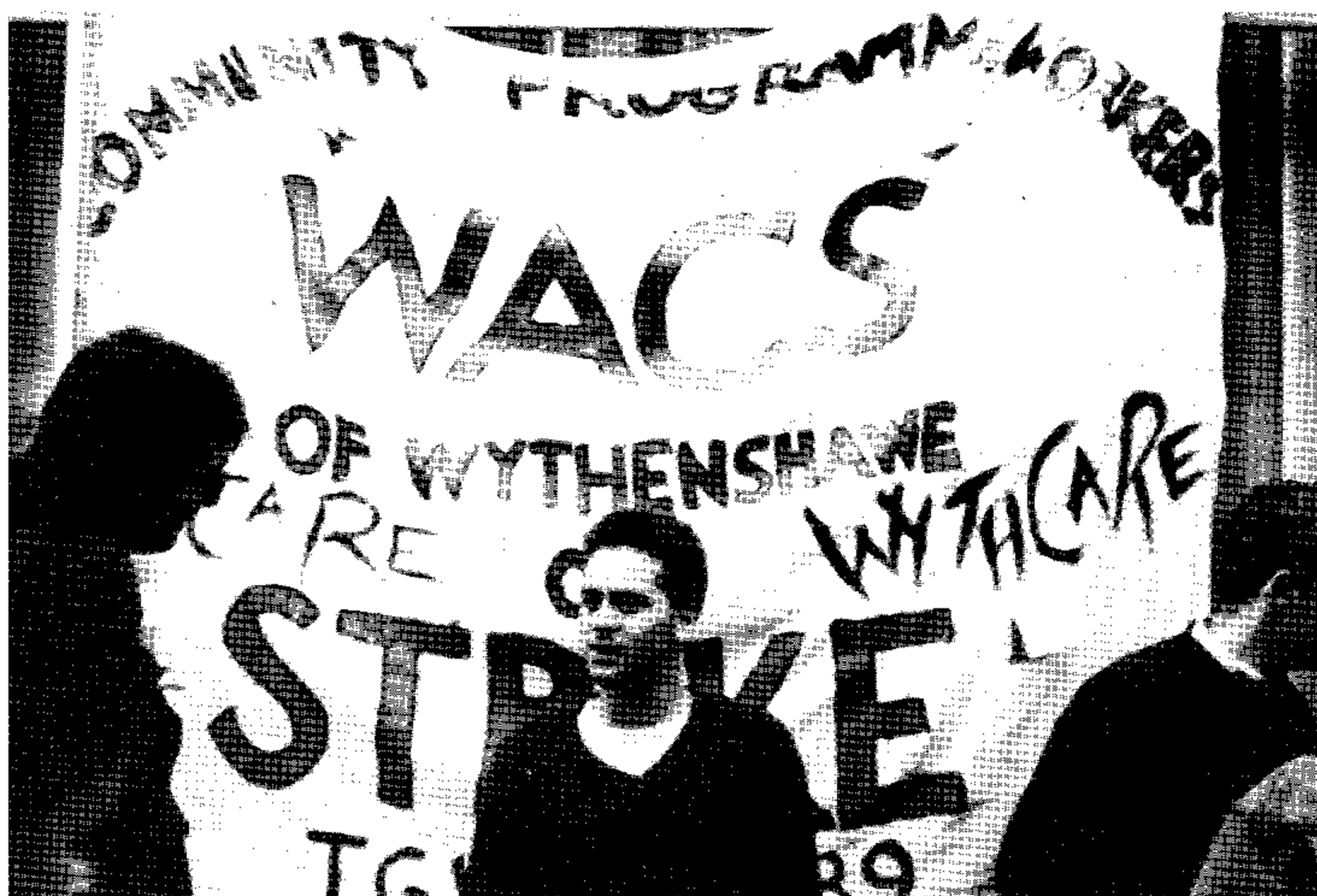
Tim Pearson

In September 1932, hundreds of working class people marched in the Wirral, Merseyside in protest at the Tory governments means test which forced the working class people of Britain into destitution and poverty. The trade union leadership must never forget that working class people queued outside mills, collieries and docks for the chance of work, which would pay them a pittance in order to avoid the degradation of being means tested and having to put meagre possessions into hock. The high levels of unemployment then were used to undermine the trade union movement.

56 years later the working class people of Britain are yet again fighting against a Tory government wishing to return to the 'Victorian Values' of the 30's. On June 15th 1988 over 30,000 community programme workers and supporters all over Britain took strike action to show their total commitment of opposition to Employment Training. Demonstrations took place in Sheffield and Edingburgh which were attended by over 4,000 rank and file members of six unions. This action was organised by the T&GWU Community Programme (CP) Workers Shop Stewards Combine and the Edingburgh CP Workers Group.

Employment Training, the latest in the governments line of slave labour schemes will be introduced on September 2nd. It will force 600,00 unemployed people a year, between the ages of 18 and 65 to work 35 to 40 hours a week for their income support or dole plus a top up of 10. If you refuse a place on ET you will lose your dole for 6 months or 40% of your income support for the same amount of time.

There is no doubt that ET is a compulsory 'work for your benefit' scheme. The whole



A recent victory of CP Workers

objective of such a scheme being to create a low wage economy and a pool of cheap scab labour which will be used by employers to undermine workers pay and conditions. It is clear that ET will be used as another arm of the anti trade union legislation. The development of the schemes are outlined in the Employment Act 1988 alongside the latest laws designed to render ineffective the trade union movement. As in the 30's the Tory government have maintained mass unemployment and changed the way unemployment is calculated to suit their plan of social engineering. This includes 22 changes in the method of calculation. They have introduced legislation which denies 16 to 18 year olds their rights to benefit and bars them from signing on the unemployment register. The Tories, through their propoganda about the 'skills gap' attempt remove the blame for unemployment from their own backs and

place it on the backs of the unemployed.

On August 20th, the streets of West Kirby on the Wirral will once again see the working classes unite to fight against ET. We call on all socialists and activists in the labour movement to give their full support. This must be the start of the campaign to smash ET.

The T&GWU CP Combine have called for a demonstration on the TUC in Blackpool on September 7th. The leadership of the trade unions must be forced to take a stand in defence of their members against ET and fight against compulsory slave labour.

The unions will find themselves sawing at the very branch they are sitting on if they comply with this attack on the unemployed. The privileges with which the union bureaucrats are bought off will go too if the Tories succeed in their policy of using the unemployed to smash the organisations that have traditionally been reserved for the benefit of those in work. If the unions do not address themselves to the questions of fighting alongside and on behalf of the unemployed they will be finished as organisations of the working class.

FOR THE UNITY OF THE EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED SMASH EMPLOYMENT TRAINING!



Workers in the 1920s finding ways to fight.

Published by the
International Socialist League.
P.O. Box 18, Stockport SK6 4DH

Printing by Breker Forms Ltd
7 Worra Street, Salford, Manchester