

WORKERS' FIGHT

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4p

ENGINEERS, TENANTS AND STEELWORKERS FIGHT TO

DEFEAT TORY

LAWS!

The small Derbyshire town of Clay Cross is now a major flash-point in the struggle against the Housing Finance Act. The whole weight of the Government and the law is being brought against the 'rebel' Labour council.

On Thursday 23 November dust-carts, over 100 council tenants, and council workers were outside the council offices to meet the District Auditor, who had been sent in by the Housing Minister to inspect the books.

This is a result of the council's refusal to implement the 'Fair Rents' Act. Local tenants voiced their support for the council, and local council workers, NUPE members, brought all their vehicles down in solidarity.

The council has now been informed by the Ministry that they are breaking the law and have therefore been served with a default order which means that:

1) They must instruct their officers to prepare a rebate scheme and prepare a provisional assessment of 'Fair Rents' not later than 29 November.

2) Operate a rebate scheme not later than 1 January 1973.

3) Increase rents by £1 no later than 3 January 1973.

4) Serve notices of increase to tenants not later than the beginning of December.

The Ministry have put further pressure on by ordering an extraordinary audit of the Housing Revenue Account, carried out on the 23rd.

THREAT OF JAIL

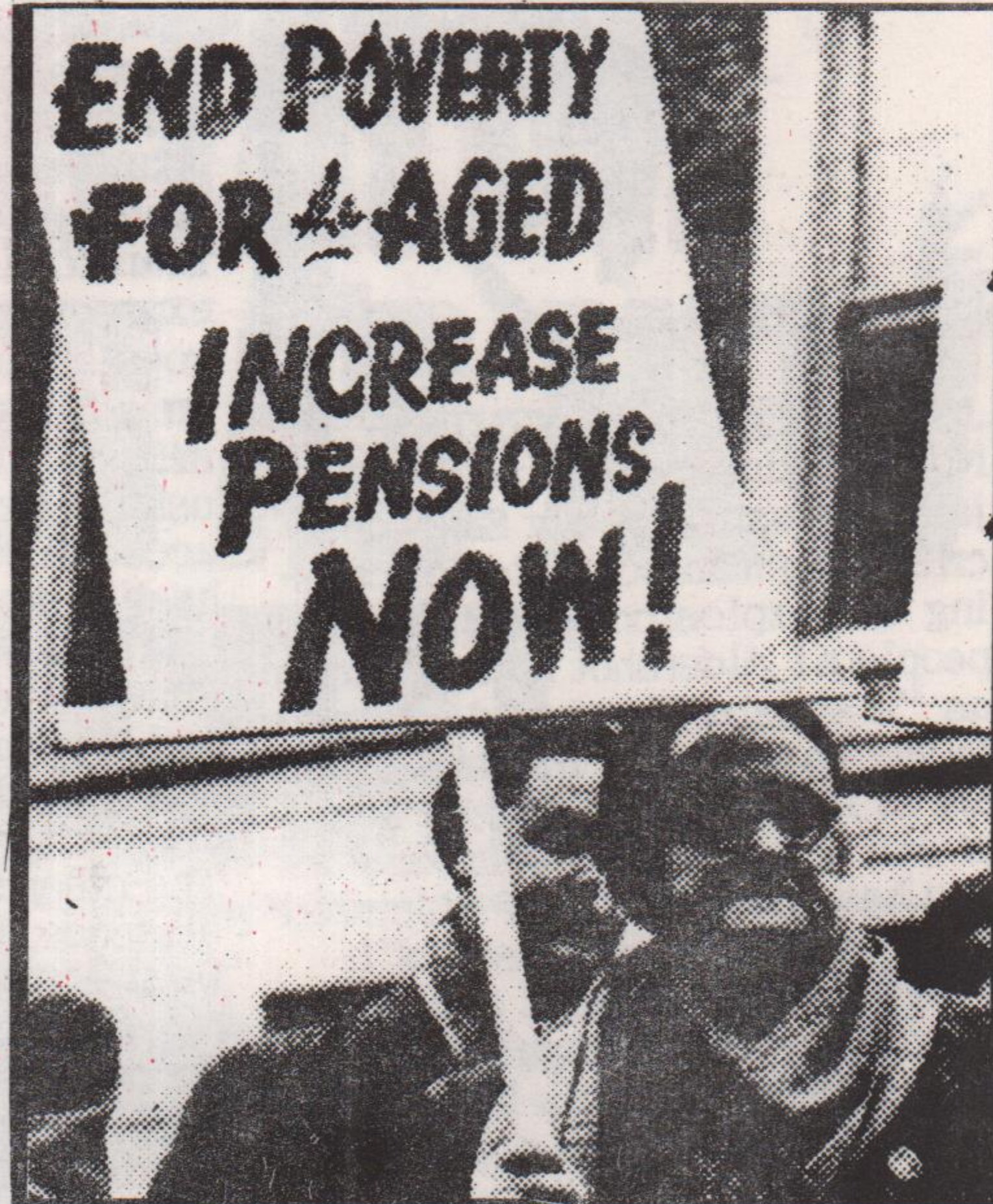
The auditor has the power to surcharge each councillor if he decides that more income from rents should have been collected. In plain language this means that he can fine each councillor in order to make up the deficit. The councillor then may only appeal to the High Court. Failure of appeal and refusal to pay could mean prison.

Nevertheless Clay Cross councillors have decided to stand firm along with four other councils in England, two in Wales, and 20 in Scotland. Some councils are opting out now the pressure is really on. They must be forced to remain firm. If the rest of the Labour councils in the country had not rushed indecently to implement then the story would be very different.

The Clay Cross council have leafleted all tenants asking them not to pay any more rent than they have been asked by their elected representatives, and have also organised a series of public meetings to explain their position and ask for the tenants' support.

The evidence is that tenants

Pensioners on last Wednesday's lobby of Parliament added their protests to the action of the labour movement against the Tory government.



are solidly behind the council and this backing must remain solid.

ORGANISATION

There has been some criticism of the local Labour party for not organising an independent Tenants' Association. Their reply is that organisation does exist informally through local councillors' roots in the community and on estates.

But organisation of the tenants by the tenants now needs to be strengthened to ensure that if any rents are increased by a Housing Commissioner from the Ministry then no tenants will pay an extra penny on the rents. Each street must be prepared to resist all attempted evictions at a moment's notice.

Councillor David Nuttall told me that Tenants organisation is absolutely necessary and the leadership must come from the local Labour Party".



Arthur Skargill: support from miners

Councillor Arthur Wellon, leader of the Labour group, expects and demands independent action if any sanctions, financial or penal, are taken against any councillors. Already promises of support and industrial action have come from Herbert Parkin, secretary of Derbyshire National Union of Mineworkers, and from Arthur Skargill, South Yorkshire NUM.

They must keep their word, as Clay Cross council did in allowing local AUEW strikers to use the council offices for meetings and taking collections of money and food for pickets in the miners' strike. All Trade Union branches should send messages of support and promises of action to the Council in case of sanctions taken against these men and women. We must not allow them to be victimised.

TREVOR CAVE,

More reports on the tenants page 11.

THE SEIZURE ('sequestration') by the Government of £5000 of AUEW money again poses the big question clearly to the left Trade Union leaders. Are you going to fight back? Or, are you going to play the role of noble but totally passive martyrs who 'protest' and 'refuse to cooperate' with the NIRC but dare not strike a blow in return?

The fighter says "here I stand: try and move me if you dare". The martyr says "here I kneel, waiting patiently for the blow on the back of my neck: but I have the consolation of knowing that in principle I am entirely right". The Tories know which one of these two they prefer to deal with. Last July they were very heavily defeated when only a proportion of the working class chose to stand up and fight for the release of the five dockers locked up in Pentonville Jail.

And they are still, for now, very frightened of having to face another confrontation with the working class. The £5000 fine was imposed as a result of a private case brought by a man who objects to being excluded from the AUEW (for scabbing). Even here the Government is trying to tell the union how to run its affairs.

National Industrial Relations Court President Donaldson was so anxious, for now, to avoid more confrontations like those of last June and July that he declared that in future there would be no threat of jail for union officials (and, perhaps, by implication, for lay militants) who fall foul of the Industrial Relations Act — only fines.

But even in the face of this open fudging the AUEW leaders have allowed their funds to be seized, without mobilising to fight back. After all his fighting talk against the NIRC Hugh Scanlon is now reduced to empty martyrdom."

To their credit the Executive of the AUEW decided unanimously to refuse to appear in the court and to refuse to pay the fine — or, at least, to pay "voluntarily" (as Scanlon said, preparing for martyrdom). Now the prospect is one of

an endless series of fines: a similar prospect during the summer brought the 'militant' T&GWU to heel and into the Tory court. They found there is no half way position between recognising the power of the Court (under protest) and an all-out fight to smash the Act and the NIRC. They capitulated.

CONCILIATION

The period of 'conciliation' from July onwards did not mean the shelving of the Act — the Tories, with the cooperation of the TUC,

contd. P.12

LACKENBY STRIKE FOR PARITY

1000 steelworkers on Teesside are challenging the Tory Government's right to hold down their wages. With overtime bans, work to rule, and now strike-action they are fighting for parity of wages with steelworkers doing identical work in South Wales. They are in revolt against the preposterous situation where workers doing exactly the same jobs on Teesside get as much as £8 a week less than workers in South Wales.

Maintenance workers, members of the British Iron and Steel, Kindred Trades Association, decided to work to rule, banning Saturday working and refusing half-shifts and double shift working. A rigger failed to turn up for a night shift and the man on the job, a BISAKTA member though not directly involved in the claim, refused to do a double shift and continue working. The engineering mates were approached, and they refused. So the shift engineer and the shift foreman did the job.

contd. P.12

30 Years Jail- for Fighting Back



JUST BEFORE HE SENTENCED Noel Jenkinson to 30 years in jail, Mr Justice Sebag Shaw described the man convicted of causing the explosion which killed 7 people at Aldershot last February as "a sinister figure and a threat to any environment in which you are at liberty. No civilised society will tolerate such behaviour as you have been guilty of which led to the slaughter at Aldershot".

Jenkinson, a Marxist and a member of the official Republican movement, clicked his heels and nodded, with no little contempt, at the judge, before being led away to the cells.

That final outburst by Mr. Sebag Shaw - smug ignorant and quite stupid in its attempt to treat the Aldershot bombing, for which Jenkinson was allegedly responsible, as the work of misfits who are... "a threat to any environment" they inhabit - is a fitting official end to the Aldershot affair. It pairs perfectly - though it contrasts remarkably - with the verdict of another Judge Lord Chief Justice Widgery on the massacre in Derry on Bloody Sunday, 30th January, 1972 for which the Aldershot bombing of the Headquarters of the Parachute Regiment, the butchers of Derry, was a retaliation.

Widgery was faced with massive evidence, eyewitness reports, and photographs which proved (at least to most of the world's press)

that the British army deliberately shot down 13 civilians, all of them unarmed, in cold blood. He let the British army, and the murderous Tory Government which controls it, off without even a warning. In fact he did a complete whitewash job to cover up for the murderers.

Sebag Shaw was faced with a case against Jenkinson which hinged on the testimony of a man, John Parker, who is a proven informer paid by the police Special Branch. Last summer he was exposed in court as an agent provocateur in the "Stoke Newington" arms trial. The court virtually admitted that the special branch had, using Parker, tried to frame the accused. The charges were hastily dropped.

In fact both Widgery and Sebag Shaw serve the same government and the same military machine. One puts the camouflage back in place after the Derry massacre. The other metes out a barbarous sentence, to "settle accounts" for the attack on the paratroop regiment: he doesn't even balk at the testimony of a venal informer, nor is he inhibited by the fact that Jenkinson is, as likely as not, a scapegoat, set up by the frame-up artists of the police Special Branch.

The Aldershot bombing was, in itself, a quite legitimate attempt to strike a blow at a military target - the officers' mess of the Parachute Regiment - in Britain. That it went tragically wrong does not change that, nor does it make Sebag Shaw's unctuous comments any less an odious expression of the double-standards of the British ruling class where "justice" is concerned.

It's no immediate comfort to Jenkinson - but Mr Sebag Shaw, shouldn't be so sure that this writ will run anything like so far into the future as 30 years. The working class is going to make his present "environment" a lot less safe for him and all the boss-class parasites he serves than it is now.

an activist. He has become the victim of one of the biggest slander and defamation campaigns in recent history.

The Tory press mourns for soldiers engaged in repression, men - many driven into the army by unemployment, to be sure - who took sides blindly, without regard to what they fight for and under what command they find themselves. That same press can't forgive MacStiofain for being internationalist enough to take sides according to what he thought right. Depicted now as some lesser Hitler, he is in fact the military leader of an oppressed people fighting to escape from oppression.

British socialists and militants must demand the immediate and unconditional release of MacStiofain and all the other Republican prisoners now held in Britain and Ireland.

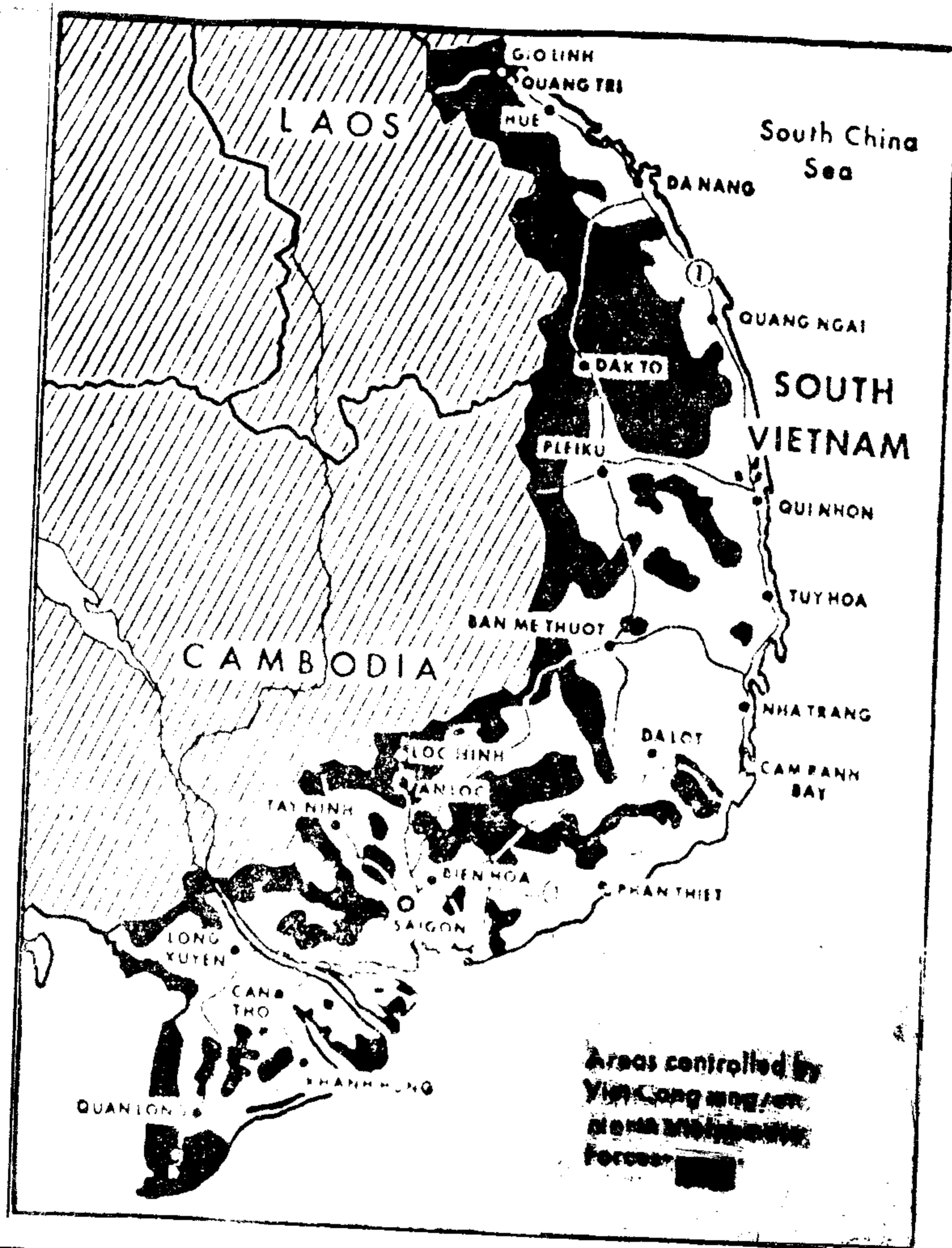
FREE MacStiofain

"I expect to have twelve days to live", said Sean MacStiofain when he was remanded in custody by one of Jack Lynch's special courts in Dublin. He declared himself to be on hunger and thirst strike, and that it would continue until his release - one way or another.

The Irish Republican movement has, of course, had much experience with hunger strikes and passive resistance to the forces of repression in the jails of the Irish 'Republic' and of Britain.

The move to imprison MacStiofain, one of many republicans now jailed in the South, highlights the growing repression in the 'Republic', as Lynch snuggles up to Heath, and willingly sets about doing the Tories' dirty work in Southern Ireland..

MacStiofain, an English worker, felt so outraged at the brutal record of British rule in Ireland that he himself became a Republic-



The Vietnamese have the right to compromise BUT WE DO NOT!

VICTORY TO THE N.L.F.!

by JOE WRIGHT

WHILE PRESIDENT NIXON'S "Man of Peace", Henry Kissinger, has been flying round the world, the situation in Vietnam has been anything but peaceful. The past few weeks have seen a massive intensification of the war, both in the air and on the ground. The American command announced recently that its B52 bombing, since the failure to get a ceasefire agreement, has been the most intensive since the war began.

Moreover America has been rushing supplies in to beat any truce deadline. This avalanche of 'aid' reveals more than a race to grab territory before any standstill comes into force.

It also indicates quite clearly that as the US imperialists see it, after the ceasefire the US presence in the South will remain, albeit thinly disguised by the facade of the puppet regime of Thieu and Co.

For four years now the American government has given up any hopes of outright victory in the war. The outcome of the Tet offensive in 1968 was that it was politically unacceptable to the majority of Americans to allow 500,000 US troops to remain in Vietnam.

From that time on, even such an arch-imperialist tub thumper as Nixon had to start withdrawing the GIs, without which there could be no hope of the North and the forces of the Provisional Revolutionary

Government being defeated.

But if it was impossible to defeat the Vietnamese then Nixon's administration certainly had not accepted that the Communist forces were going to win. Instead of having a large standing army, which was political dynamite at home, they substituted a massive bombing programme, which was politically acceptable.

They aimed to force the Vietnamese into accepting that the South would remain a foothold of American domination in Asia, even though North Vietnam would still exist and there would be no US ground troops present. What Nixon sees in the ceasefire is the achievement of that aim.

COMPROMISE

There is certainly no other pressing reason why he should want to sign a ceasefire. There are no electoral pressures on him (even before the outcome of the election he showed that this wasn't one of his major considerations) and there is no evidence that there are economic pressures which would be solved by a complete disengagement from Vietnam.

For the Vietnamese, it should also be clear, the truce represents a compromise. It is a compromise which they, more than any other liberation movement in the world, have every right to make - but nevertheless it is a compromise, and not a victory.

Some people will no doubt,

childishly, call the compromise a sell-out. Others (the Communist Party of GB, in particular) will call it a victory. But what is many times more important than a "Sell-out" vs. "Victory" argument is an analysis.

In explaining the necessity for compromises Lenin used the analogy of a man who is attacked by robbers. The robbers point a gun at him and tell him to hand over his money. Does the man refuse a "compromise" and get himself killed, or does he make a temporary retreat and hand over the money with every intention of getting it back later.

On what then have the Vietnamese 'compromised'?

Firstly they have conceded that US bases and weapons at present in the South will come under the Thieu regime. This, of course, explains the sudden rush of weapons to the South. During the past month 400 aircraft have been "borrowed" from US bases in Iran, South Korea and Taiwan and sent to Vietnam. The result of this is that the entirely 'artificial' regime in the South will, if the ceasefire is signed, be able to boast the third largest air force in the world.

Secondly the Vietnamese have dropped their insistence that Thieu and his cabinet must go. This in itself is unimportant. What is much more important is that they have also dropped their insistence on a coalition government in the South, consisting of the PRG, neutralists and 'puppets' (but not Thieu). Instead, according to the version of the agreement released by Hanoi at the end of last month, the Thieu regime will continue to administer the areas they now control; the PRG will administer the areas they control, and a council will be set up.

The Council will consist of representatives of the two governments plus the neutralists and will supervise elections and 'reunification'. The significance of the dropping of the demand for a coalition government is that under a coalition the National Liberation Front would be able to organise politically in the urban areas from which they are at present banned by the Southern regime, and in which their supporters are imprisoned and killed.

ACCESS

Since the Thieu regime represents next to nothing in terms of popular opinion, there can be little doubt that in a free election the NLF and the neutralists, who are for the most part favourable to reunification, would dominate the polls.

But under a system of two governments the NLF would be denied access to the heavily populated urban areas, for although, as can be seen from the map, geographically South Vietnam is divided fairly equally between the two sides, in terms of population the great majority live in areas controlled by the Thieu regime.

In the secret talks with the Americans the Vietnamese insisted that the NLF had the right to organise politically in the areas which would come under the administrative and military control of the Thieu government. It was this, reportedly, which the American negotiators found one of the most difficult points to stomach.

But how can the Vietnamese accept the word of Thieu that he will allow the NLF to organise in areas he controls? Of course they can't, and it would be naive to

think that they are so naive to think they can.

The Geneva agreement of 1954 had a similar clause, which didn't prevent the dictator Diem from murdering thousands of Communists. Since this bitter lesson the Vietnamese are hardly likely to ignore the question of the military balance of forces. This is why previously they always demanded a political settlement before there was any ceasefire.

They have now dropped this insistence but they have also forced the US to drop their demand that North Vietnamese troops in the South should leave as part of the truce agreement.

Does this mean they think that the military balance of forces is such that Thieu will be unable to suppress the NLF?

PRISONERS

Another important Vietnamese concession is that political prisoners in the South will not be released as part of a general amnesty. This is not just a humanitarian question. If it were, then no doubt the US Administration would find it in themselves to be very generous.

There are in South Vietnam an estimated 200,000 political prisoners. When this number is compared with the motley demonstration of 10,000 (again 'estimated', and probably very generously at that) which Thieu managed to gather in support of his policies, it can be seen that the release of 200,000 anti-Thieu prisoners could have a decisive effect on the balance of political forces. As it is, the prospects of these prisoners surviving the Thieu regime are gloomy.

But finally and most important, what do the Vietnamese make of the truce? Do they see it as a necessary, but temporary, retreat with the ultimate aim of expelling all US 'influence' from Indochina, still to be achieved. According to Hoang Tung, a member of the Communist Party central committee, in an interview with the Morning Star: "The American side says that there will be no victors, but, the way we look at it, is that if they go, they are not victorious, so we must be. They will have no dyke here to stall the revolutionary wave in Asia. Yet it will not be a total victory for there will still be some pro-US forces in South Vietnam. And the US may seek to use economic and political disruption and subversion.

"We are not afraid. We have our own strengths, and with correct international support complete victory will be ours. Maybe it will not come as quickly as we want."

The answer is ambiguous, and not necessarily for opportunist reasons in the sense of 'fooling the people'. The Vietnamese are often forced to nod to the Russian and Chinese bureaucrats while giving a wink to true internationalism (note the phrase "with correct international support").

Whether the US will have a 'dyke to stall the revolutionary wave in Asia' won't be decided by the truce agreement. It will be decided by struggles still to come and in particular the leadership that the DRV and PRG give in these struggles.

As to whether this leadership will be forthcoming, we can either indulge in futile guessing, or we can develop a full analysis (which this article doesn't pretend to be) of the DRV and PRG — an analysis which will have to be rooted in the historical context both of the her-

oic struggle that they have led against imperialism, and their origins and continuing ideological links with Stalinism.

However, for socialists in this country there is no necessity for guesses and equivocation. If the Vietnamese have been forced to compromise, then we have not been. There haven't been any bombs falling on King Street — nor Clapham High Street, Gifford Street or Cottons Gardens.

If the Vietnamese have been forced to compromise they have every right to do so. We have no such right. We continue to stand opposed to any US presence in Indochina, regardless of whether it hides behind fraudulent regimes. And we are opposed to the might of US imperialism imposing compromises on the colonial countries in their fight for independence, and in this sense we are opposed to the compromise too.

EX-DICTATOR POSES AS NEW DEMOCRAT



AS EX-DICTATOR JUAN PERON returned to Argentina last Friday, after 17 years' exile, a cordon of 35,000 troops and police guarded the airport to restrain massive popular demonstrations. A few hours previously, 60 or so junior naval officers had attempted an unsuccessful mutiny. The day was marked by a general strike.

Since Friday, Peron's objective has been to cement over the ferment in Argentinian society. He has held talks with major political parties and trade union leaders, with the aim of forming an alliance for the elections next March.

Since Peron's overthrow in 1955, there has been no stable regime in Argentina. The Peronist movement — more than a third of the electorate in 1965 — has remained outside the established political system. Its militant working class base is united (loosely) with its conservative leaders only by a vague attachment to the memory of Peron.

In the early years, at least, of his rule Peron, demagogically preaching 'national liberation', gave some real economic and social concessions to the working class as their payoff from a programme of national industrial development.

His limited success faded rapidly in the years before his overthrow. In Argentina today, or in any 'third world' country in normal times, such a programme could not be repeated.

US and West European big busi-

ness interests, with Argentinian industrialists as junior partners, control the economy and pocket the profits. Even when they sponsor industrial development, machinery and technical skills have to be bought from the industrially advanced countries at prices which they dictate.

Thus the Argentinian national economy is constantly in debt to and subordinate to the US economy. And it is the workers who foot the bill, under conditions of constant repression.

Peron's operation was dependent on the special circumstances of a big accumulation of wealth by rich landowners, which was milked to develop industry; and on favourable trade conditions for Argentina's major export product (beef) during World War 2.

Peron's return represents the last card of the Argentinian ruling class. He may be able to pacify the militant Peronist forces briefly, and put together a coalition to give some political stability for a time.

But his political intervention can only help to shatter the Peronist myth in the eyes of working class militants. The strong Argentinian labour movement will increasingly be open to the arguments of revolutionary socialists, for the only solution that can really achieve 'national liberation' — the seizure of state power and economic wealth by the working class.



When the LEWISHAM FAMILY SQUATTING ASSOCIATION was set up, the Kelly family was the first to be housed by them. They were then the first legal squatters. But being rehoused did not mean an end to their troubles.

It was at the time that the Kelly family was facing its second eviction, this time by the GLC, that the Kellys first came into contact with the Lewisham Family Squatting Association. The GLC had demanded that Sam Kelly, his wife Jill (who was pregnant at the time) and their child move out of Jill's mother's house. The Council warned that if the Kelly family wasn't out by a certain date, then Jill's mother and her seven children would be thrown out too.

But having one child and a low wage made finding a flat impossible. To make matters worse the Kellys were now given the run-around by Lewisham Council and the GLC. The GLC said that housing the Kellys was Lewisham's business because they were living in Lewisham — while Lewisham said it was the GLC's business.

In this situation the news of a squatters group that might be able to help them appeared as a sudden prospect of deliverance from the squalor and insecurity of a series of evictions. So Sam and Jill went along to the squatters' meeting at Goldsmiths College.

CHAMPION

The meeting took place at Goldsmiths College because the founder of the local squatters movement,

IN BRIEF

It has been widely reported that Unilever's shareholders are to receive higher dividends than last year. Trade union leaders from the pseudo-militant Scanlon to Mr. David Basnett, the disgusting right wing general secretary-elect of the G&MWU, have been foaming at the mouth at this "breaking of the freeze."

Curiously, however, Scanlon argued "A wage increase delayed has gone for ever, whereas a delay in increases in dividends merely puts off payment till later". And the Basnett hound added, "We have said all along that the freeze would allow companies to keep their profits for a future occasion!"

Of course Basnett is a liar. It is simply not true that they "have said all along". On the contrary, the trade union leaders have, along with their pals in Parliament, demanded dividend control as a meaningful part of the 'redistribution of wealth'. As we quoted in the last issue of WF, the General Council's resolution at the Brighton TUC Conference called for "control of rents, profits, dividends and prices ... to secure a redistribution of income and wealth."

At the same time, MPs like Jack

one Jim Radford, was at the time a second year student there. Radford, who posed as the champion of every oppressed section in turn — depending on where he was likely to gain support — had made a deal with the Tory council that he could give families the keys to vacant council property so long as the families would agree to move out the moment the council needed it back.

The understanding was, of course, that this would mean a pretty long stay at low rent. Radford also fell in line with the Council's stipulation that people from outside Lewisham wouldn't be housed.

Having the keys gave Radford the power. He rapidly built round himself an admiring clique of full-time paid (£25 per week) staff — all personal friends — who manned an office at the Albany, Deptford. And it was the 'rent' from the houses — paid not to the council but to the LFSA — which paid for this old pals act.

At the first meetings, though, Jim Radford's eye for self-promotion and his clique's skill at bureaucratic manoeuvres was veiled by the general feeling of friendship and 'we're all in it together'.

REPAIRS

In fact when the Kelly family got the keys to a house, becoming then the first legal squatters, all the LFSA's and Radford's promises seemed to be coming true. The house was hardly a palace but Sam and his wife were desperate, with their marriage in crisis as a result of the instability.

Then came the repairs ... A new floor had to be put in, plumbing and a sink in the kitchen, and finally the roof had to be repaired to stop up leaks.

But they never seemed completely free of repairs in the house which was over 100 years old and had stood empty for 15 months. But what did come to an end was the small amount of money they had managed to save to help them move in.

Of course, with so much spent on repairs and new furniture, families like the Kellys quickly fell

Ashley were countering the Tories' arguments on wage control by saying that this was a hoax without dividend control. As Scanlon and Basnett now admit (they didn't say a word at the time!) it was they and the likes of Ashley that were perpetrating the hoax!

If dividend control just means paying out later to the wealthy shareholders then why did they ever vote for the General Council's resolution? Why didn't they explain it at the time?

COLD SHOWER OF BUSINESS SENSE AT HOT SPRINGS

Actually the thoroughly capitalist virtues of dividend control were made clear at a recent conference in America.

The conference was the October meeting of President Nixon's Business Advisory Council at Hot Springs, West Virginia. A year ago US big business had stormed and raged against the imposition of dividend controls, and now ...? Now, albeit with certain qualifications, big business is in favour of controls.

Good sense too. Why? Real growth has been about 6% and promises to continue at the same rate. In addition, after falling in 1968 and 1970, post tax profits are likely to be very high this year.

In fact an increasing number of companies are finding that with volume sale up and unit costs declining their profit margins are widening rapidly.

THE SQUATTERS AND THE SOCIAL CLIMBER

SAM KELLY tells his own story



Radford countered with threats to "smash" Sam Kelly and others who wanted to have the families running the Association, instead of Radford.

Then the campaign which Radford had described as "People before Politics" turned into a pro-Tory campaign! "If a Labour Council would go back on the arrangement (with the LFSA) while the Tories would carry out their pledge, then I can only advise you" said Radford at one meeting "to vote Tory in your own interests."

The LFSA proceeded to provide a platform for Tory councillors. One of them sounded something like an army padre — "If you've got any problems come and see me chaps!"

But all this was small beer for Radford who had his eye on better things. Soon he was to graduate from the dubious patronage he dispensed to the squatters to become Warden of the Blackfriars' Settlement (Community Centre). But not without some small remuneration for his sell-out of the squatters and his grovelling careerism. He receives £2,600 a year plus free accommodation. And so this diplomatic revolutionary now has only the tax-man to fight.

But if Jim Radford now has the luxury of free accommodation Sam Kelly was not so lucky. It took the death of Sam's baby boy to jerk a little red tape off the eyes of the Council. On the day after the funeral Sam was notified that he had at last been allocated a house.

RADICAL PLATFORM

Sam now feels that there was a clear way to avoid the pitfalls of the Lewisham Association. "After gaining the 'concessions' from the Lewisham Tories and squatting families 'legally' the initiative should then have been taken by Radford, or anyone else in his position, of them squatting families

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PRO-TORY

Feeling threatened even after carving things up to suit himself,

What this shows is that prices could freeze, while profits would still rise somewhat. The result would be stable prices and set wages (i.e. no advance for the working class — indeed a loss because of its subordination to the ruling class) and rising strength for the employers. Thus those "socialists" who claim that the Tories should freeze prices — with the implication that wages could then be frozen — are absolutely wrong.

The answer? No wage freeze! No negotiation with the Government! No "restraint"!

AFTER THE BLUFF COMES THE SWAGGER

Incredibly, in the light of all the facts and of events since then, many people still believe that Israel fought the 1967 war (in which large areas of Jordan, Syria and Egypt were annexed and hundreds of thousands made refugees) in order to 'prevent the destruction of Israel and the extermination of its people'.

Israel's leaders, however, have never had such illusions. Too arrogant of their strength to sustain the bluff of their weakness, they occasionally give themselves away.

The following statements were made by General Peled, who during the 6-day

war was chief of the Bureau of Logistics and one of the 12 members of the Army General Staff.

"The thesis according to which the danger of genocide hung over us in June 1967, that Israel was struggling for its very existence was only a bluff, born and developed after the war. ...

"There is no reason to hide the fact that since 1949 no one has dared, or more exactly, no one has been able to put in question the very existence of Israel. ... It is publicly notorious that the Arab leaders themselves, perfectly conscious of their lack of power, didn't believe their own threats. ... All the stories circulated about the terrible danger we were in because of the tiny-ness of our territory, an argument advanced after the war was over, were never taken into consideration in our calculations before the hostilities.

"When we proceeded to mobilise all our forces, no sensible person could be found to believe that all that power was indispensable to 'defend' ourselves against the Egyptian threat. That power was necessary to definitively crush the Egyptians militarily, as well as their Soviet patrons politically.

"To pretend that the Egyptian forces massed on our frontiers were in position to threaten the existence of Israel constitutes an insult not only to the intelligence of everyone capable of analysing this kind of situation, but above all an insult to the Israeli army."

HEATH VISIT TO WOO THE 'MODERATES'

from AUSTEN MORGAN in BELFAST

THE RECENT VISIT HERE OF Prime Minister Heath was in response to appeals from various Unionist and Tory MPs at Westminster that Heath should go and reassure his people that all was well.

The closest he got to 'his people' was a view from his bullet proof limousine of a group of housewives and children making the appropriate gestures of welcome fitting for the chief representative of British Imperialism in Ireland.

Whitelaw's civil servants had some trouble scraping up a luncheon list of 90 people who would be willing to sup with the great white father. In the end a motley collection of vicars, trade union bureaucrats, academics and administrators were found.

Clearly Ted Heath is not well liked in this corner of the British Empire. But his personal problems are of no concern to us. What is of concern are his political problems and the reasons why, in this corner of the Empire at least, the sun does not set peacefully.

The dominant view offered by the bourgeois press and television, and one that is too rarely challenged, is one of Heath and his Tory friends as the honest brokers in N. Ireland politics.

Attempts are less frequently

made to create the same image of Ted as the conciliator in the field of what is euphemistically referred to as "industrial relations". British socialists and trade unionists have not had too much difficulty in seeing through this ideological smokescreen and realising that in a class society the bosses' party and their state quite clearly serve the interests of one class — interests which are not those of the working class.

When it comes to Northern Ireland the illusion has by and large been believed even by those who ought to know better. Heath and Whitelaw appear as the impartial arbitrators in a situation of community conflict.

But just as in the class struggle Heath serves one class, so it is in the anti-imperialist struggle, where Heath represents British Imperialism.

BIG BUSINESS

In fact the Tories serve the same interests both at home and abroad — those of the British ruling class. Their interest when it comes to dealing with a major strike or with Ireland is the same — serving that small number of rich and powerful people who are the real rulers both at home and abroad.

LYNCH TO USE CHURCH LAW CHANGE IN BID TO DISCREDIT PROVOS

Coming hard on the heels of the referendum of earlier this year on whether to join the EEC, or "Europe", as it is incorrectly called (which Jack Lynch and his ruling Fianna Fail party won by a 4 to 1 majority), comes another referendum in the South on a change in the Constitution.

This time people in the South are being asked to approve the removal from the constitution of the notorious Article 44, which declares that the Roman Catholic Church, in view of the adherence to it of the vast majority of citizens, enjoys special status in the country.

The main political parties are agreed on this measure and it appears that the Church leaders also favour it. Pressure has also come from the northern Social Democratic and Labour Party, which also wants changes in the law on divorce and contraception as a means of winning over northern Protestants. (The socialist left in Ireland has of course long been in favour of these changes for the

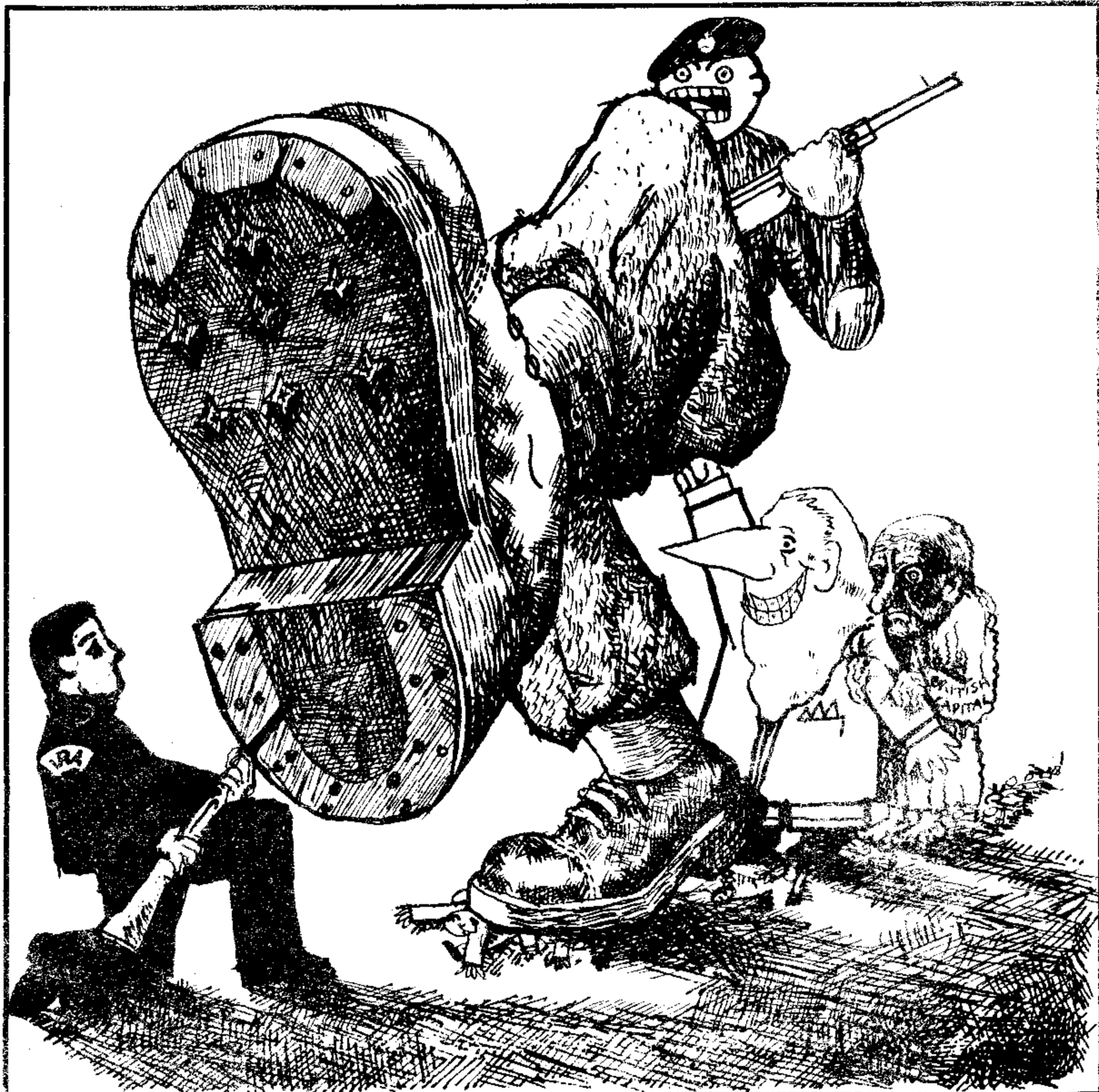
same reasons.)

The Catholic hierarchy, however, is not so likely to accept the other changes suggested by the SDLP. Article 44 by itself in fact means hardly anything, and removing it will not alter the position of the Church, which retains its overall stranglehold on Irish education and life in general.

For this reason the change (which will undoubtedly go through) is not likely to influence the Protestant Unionists. Not only do they object to the legal enforcement of Catholic social legislation, but workers in particular view with disdain the level of welfare state payments in the 26 Counties.

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that, from the point of view of Jack Lynch and Co., this latest referendum proposal is a mere public relations exercise. Assuming that Article 44 goes, Lynch will no doubt use the referendum vote as an excuse to continue his harassment of the Provisional IRA.

CHRIS GRAY



What then are the interests of British big business in Ireland?

Imperialism has dominated Ireland for several centuries. The Irish people in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries were kept in a state of abject poverty and misery due to the workings of an agricultural economy which kept a small number of British absentee landlords at a fine standard of living which the British administration in Ireland helped collect for them.

Ireland was allowed to industrialise where and when it suited the interests of the British bourgeoisie. Belfast grew rapidly in the last century as a centre for ship building and Linen manufacturing. The profits made from Irish workers went into the pockets of British business men.

The situation today is still much the same. The South, however, has increased in importance and is now, though nominally independent, as valuable to imperialism as the North.

This is the basis of Heath's interest in the problems of N. Ireland — a desire to protect and even extend these valuable industrial assets.

During his stay here again mentioned the £100m which the British exchequer annually pays to the "people of N. Ireland". He neglected to mention the really important flows of finance, in the form of surplus extracted from Irish workers, which is annually taken out at a much greater rate than the paltry amount contributed by Westminster to maintain the Orange state.

There is another aspect, in addition to the strictly economic, of the British ruling class's interest in Ireland. A political regime in Ireland opposed not only to British imperialism but also to Irish capitalism, would be a grave threat to British big business. The interests of imperialism dictate that there should be a political set-up in Ireland which not only allows them to exploit the country but which prevents it becoming any sort of political or military threat to capitalist Britain.

LAST COLONY

This then is the context in which Heath and his mates look at the problems of N. Ireland. The soft talk and the hypocritical statements of concern for the

people of N. Ireland are nothing but a sham. Heath is not believed when he talks at home in this manner — nor should he be believed when it comes to dealing with Britain's first and last colony.

The Tories are at present trying to find a political solution to the "troubles" in the North. They seek a new form of rule in Ireland because the anti imperialist movement and the resistance of the republican population of the north have all but destroyed the Stormont state which the British imposed on Ireland in 1920 against the wishes then of the vast majority of the Irish people and even of the small group of Loyalists in the north who resisted Irish independence.

Heath is at present following a twofold policy. On the one hand he is attempting to completely and utterly smash the resistance of the Catholic population by using the army.

The British army, which has grown in strength from 500 to 21,000 in three years, is following a course of out and out repression — every member of the Catholic community is treated virtually as a member of the IRA.

The only protection Catholics have from this army is the IRA.

On the other hand Heath attempts to woo the 'moderates' (best defined as those who accept the policies of imperialism). It will be these moderates, both Catholic and Protestant, he will attempt to stick in his new reformed Stormont so that Imperialism may peacefully rule in Ireland for another fifty years.

These moderates in the Alliance, the N.I. Labour Party and the Social Democratic and Labour Party, are only too willing. They want politics brought back to the Parliamentary arena where they, and not the guerilla fighters, will be the 'stars', and where the IRA would be branded as a bunch of criminals.

Heath came to Ireland to renew his acquaintance with these would be Parliamentarians and to put on a show for the world's press. His 48 hours on Irish soil, spent mainly in Army compounds, Police stations and at Stormont Castle, may have excited the world's press. For the ordinary people of N. Ireland it was nothing but another Great British bore.

LAST JUNE AN UNEXPECTED judgment by the Court of Appeal ruled that the T&GWU was not responsible for the actions of its members when those actions were unofficial.

With this one ruling the whole of the British capitalist class's strategy for controlling the working class was thrown into the melting pot.

By the following month, thanks to the Tories' friends in the Law Lords, this judgment was reversed, and the T&G was responsible. But what had happened in the meantime? A massive strike wave which could have reached general strike proportions, got underway — dockers struck, printers struck, miners and drivers struck ... the very power of the ruling class looked as if it might be challenged.

The moment the Tories were not able to operate their chosen policy, all that they stand for was in imminent danger of being overthrown. Far from those five days in July being "the real face of British Toryism" they were the exception that proves the rule.

What then is the rule? How does the ruling class maintain its dominance over the working class in Britain? It clearly is not usually by a show of force — organised strike breaking, troops shooting workers, jailing of trade unionists, etc. Not that the capitalists would be averse to doing this if they thought that they were really threatened.

But the fact is that they are very rarely really threatened — and that in itself is a measure of the degree of control they exercise over the working class.

How do they manage it?

Generally the capitalists attempt to set a framework either by law (compulsory) or by agreement (voluntary) within which the point of confrontation is between the trade union bureaucracy and the rank and file, and not between capitalism and the trade unions as a whole. The main drive is always to get the union bureaucrats to police the unions for capitalism.

It was this that led Trotsky to write: "From the example of England, one sees very clearly how absurd it is to counterpose ... the trade union organisation and the state organisation. In England more than anywhere else, the state rests upon the back of the working class ... The mechanism is such that the bureaucracy is based directly on the workers, and the state indirectly, through the intermediary of the trade union bureaucracy".

But how does it come about that the bosses' state is able to rule in part through the trade union bureaucracy, through those whose verbal commitment is precisely that they are "against the bosses"?

From about the middle of the nineteenth century Britain's profits in particular the super-profits of

imperialist exploitation were used to create a "labour aristocracy". As Lenin pointed out, a part of these super-profits were distributed so as to buy off a top layer of the working class (the skilled craft workers).

Imperialism had laid the material basis of a certain differentiation within the working class, such that the top layer became throughly 'bourgeoisified'.

The ideology of this top layer was reformism, or social-chauvinism — socialism in words, chauvinism or nationalism in deeds. This was most vividly expressed in 1914 when, after a decade of opposition to the coming imperialist war, all the European social democratic parties capitulated and urged workers to 'fight for the fatherland'. But it is in fact also an everyday phenomenon in peacetime too, where 'national interest' rather than class interest dominates the attitudes of the reformists and international capitalist competition supercedes socialist internationalism.

In Britain today, the chief representatives of this layer are the trade union and Labour Party leaders and paid officials, as well as certain white collar and specially privileged sections of the working class.

TRADE UNION INDEPENDENCE

Just in case some of those who become trade union leaders still see themselves as trying to express the real interests of the working class, all the pressures and privileges of "high station" are brought to bear to soften them up: winning and dining by big business and its parliamentary lush-boys, meeting the boss "in person" and, perhaps most of all, the whole tendency to look on negotiation as essentially a form of compromise.

These pressures hold absolute sway where a union is undemocratic. The members pay the piper, but they don't call the tune. They can only do so if they can elect, pressurise and, if need be, recall their "leaders". Trade union democracy is not just a way of ensuring maximum freedom for the rank and file, it is also a way of ensuring minimum freedom for the officials.

"The primary slogan for this struggle is: Complete and unconditional independence of the trade unions in relation to the capitalist state. This means a struggle to turn the trade unions into the organs of the broad exploited masses and not the organs of a labour aristocracy." (Trotsky, *Trade Unions in the epoch of Imperialist Decay*.) Only complete trade union democracy can ensure this.

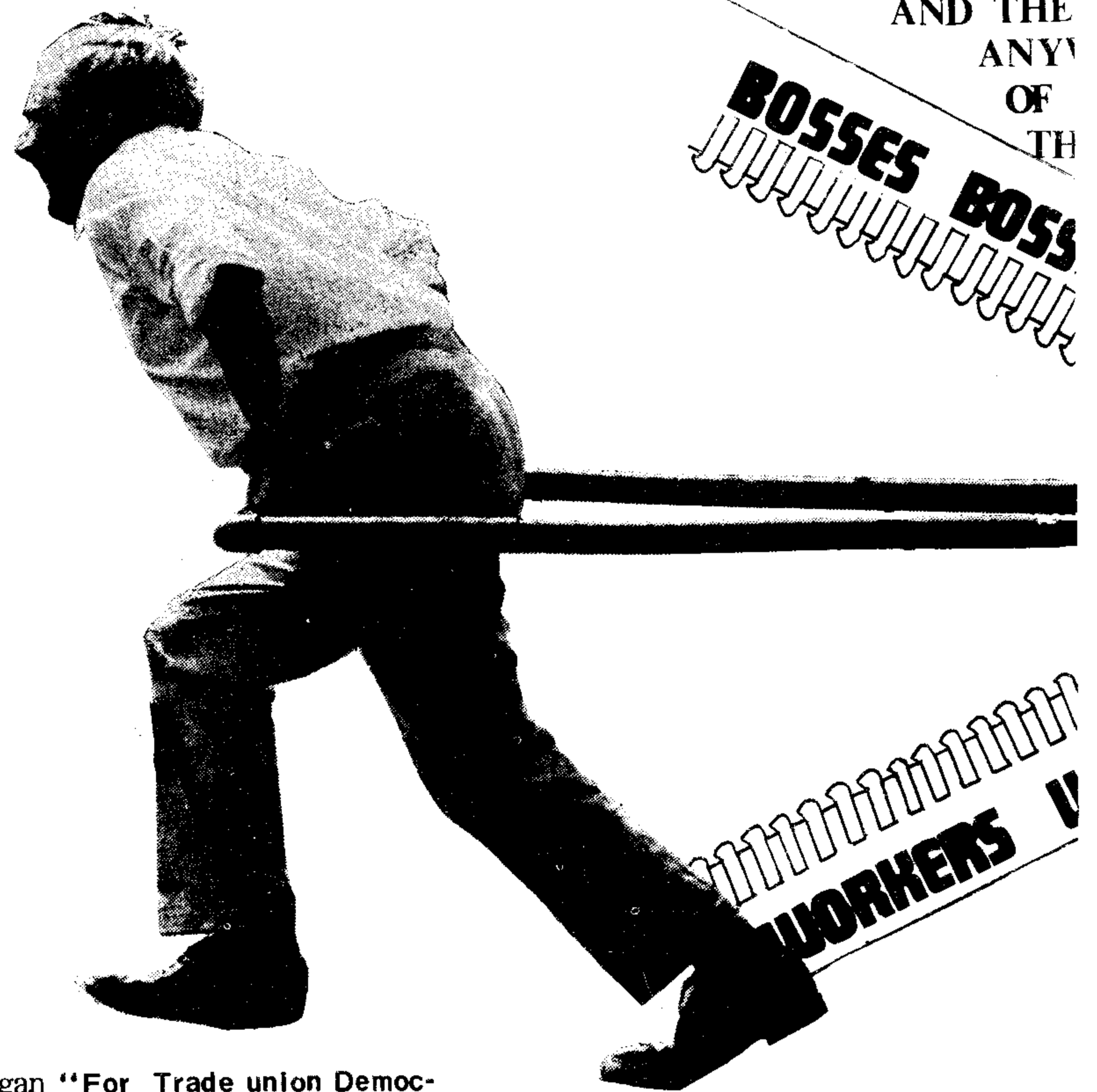
So the slogan "Hands off the Unions" must be coupled with the

TRADE UNIONS AND THE STATE

HOW THE LEADERSHIP OF THE TRADE UNIONS

by
PAUL ADAMS

FROM THE EXAMPLE OF ENGLAND
IT IS TO BE SEEN
AND THE
ANY
OF
THE



slogan "For Trade union Democracy": regular elections not appointment, the right to recall officials, stewards' participation in negotiation; lay committees; decisions to be put to mass meetings or delegate meetings, etc.

DEFEATISM

Our view, the Trotskyist view, is that the trade union bureaucracy is a distinct social layer which represents its own — not the working class's — interests. And its own interests lie in leading workers against individual capitalists to some extent, while chaining them to the capitalist class as a whole. The difference between right and left is that in the main the left do the first better than the right, while both do the second to the same extent.

Consider: did the state's troops smash the Triple Alliance of 1924? No, the railmen's leader, Jimmy Thomas, did it. Did the state's troops smash the General Strike in 1926? No. Although they acted as strike breakers and although leading communists were jailed, the strike was actually smashed by the TUC General Council. Did the High Court forbid communists to hold office in trade unions? No. The TUC did.

Did the rank and file agree to stop striking during the war? No. The TUC did. Did shop floor work-

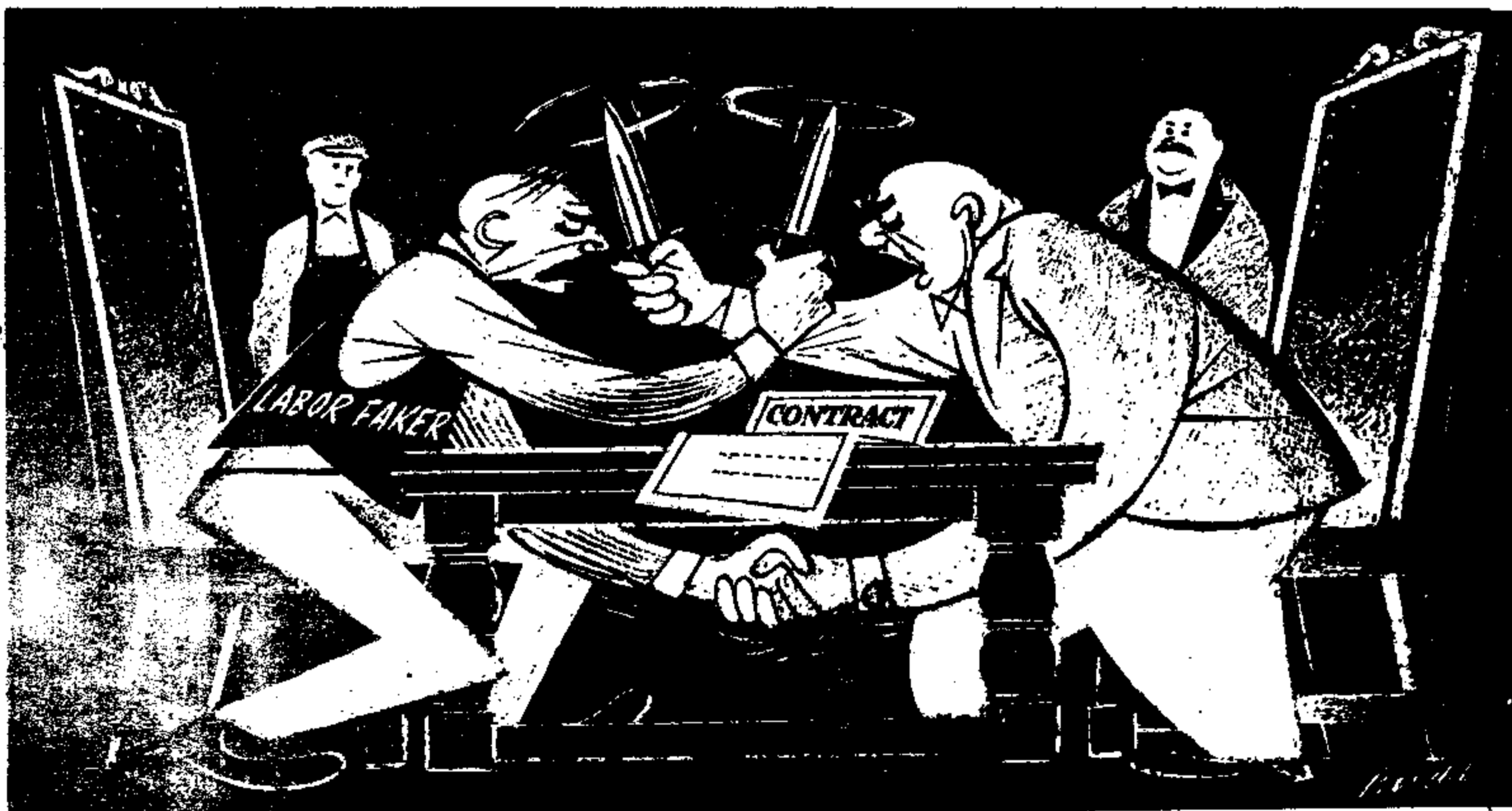
ers agree to co-operate with Labour's Prices and Incomes Policy? No. But the TUC did.

The examples are too numerous to list. But can anyone name just one piece of class collaboration that the rank and file wanted but that the TUC campaigned against?

How then is this tiny minority so powerful? Do they just spread their reformist, social-chauvinist class collaborationist ideas and convince everybody? No. They do spread these ideas, but the chief way that they maintain their own dominance, and through that the bourgeoisie's physical and ideological dominance, is by actually structuring the working class's activity and experience according to their ideas.

Thus, for instance, the trade union bureaucracy counters the development of the working class's self-confidence not so much by arguing defeatism, but by leading the class to defeat. After 1926 millions of workers gave up the belief that they could win, because, thanks to the TUC, they hadn't won.

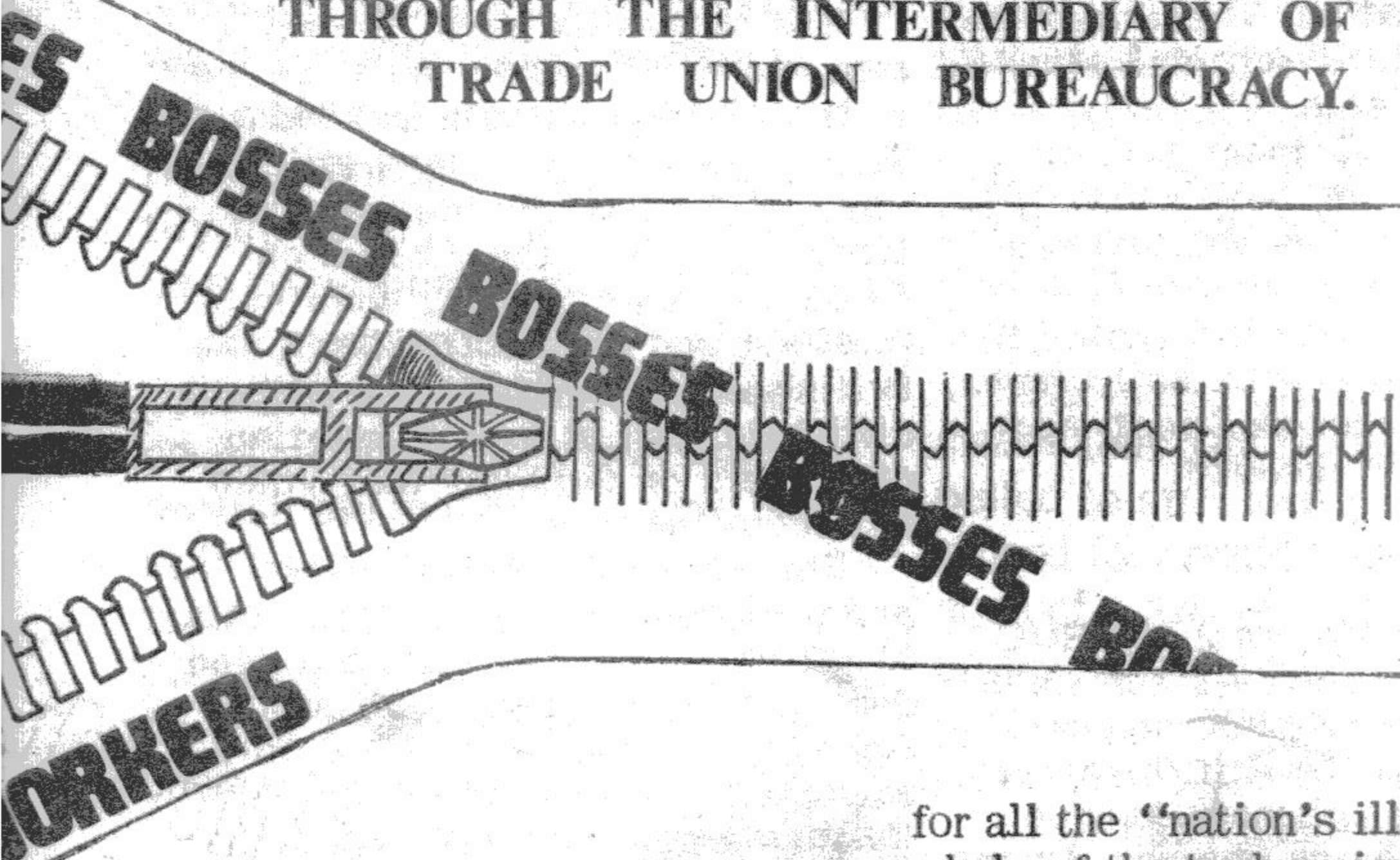
For the trade union bureaucrat life is a series of self-fulfilling prophecies: I say the rank and file can't handle their own affairs, therefore I take the crucial decisions myself, therefore the rank and file are powerless, therefore they don't attend branch meetings, therefore I can assume they don't want



UNIONS STATE

UNIONS KEEP THE BOSSES IN POWER

IN ENGLAND, ONE SEES VERY CLEARLY HOW ABSURD COUNTERPOSE... THE TRADE UNION ORGANISATION STATE ORGANISATION. IN ENGLAND MORE THAN ANYWHERE ELSE, THE STATE RESTS UPON THE BACK OF THE WORKING CLASS... THE MECHANISM IS SUCH THAT THE BUREAUCRACY IS BASED DIRECTLY ON THE WORKERS, AND THE STATE INDIRECTLY, THROUGH THE INTERMEDIARY OF THE TRADE UNION BUREAUCRACY.



to take decisions, all of which proves I was right saying that they can't handle their own affairs....

"LABOUR" LAWS

After the 2nd World War, trade unionists found that the boom conditions enabled them to bargain locally again after the straight-jacket of war-time National Agreements. (As is usual when the ruling class wishes to discipline the workers, National agreements were the rule.)

Now workers zoomed ahead by negotiating nearer rank and file level. Disputes were generally short, with the bosses conceding quickly — in 1950 around 1,300 strikes lost the employers only 1 million working days — and could well be over before District Office ever knew about them.

There began a process of growth in trade unionism and in the power of the shop stewards.. Today there are 11 million trade unionists and 175,000 shop stewards.

By 1960 however, the situation had changed.. The more far-sighted members of the capitalist class understood that the rate of growth was beginning to decline, both absolutely and relative to other major industrial countries. They realised that the rate of profit could only be maintained and increased if exploitation was increased.

After the 1960 Fawley agreement the employers felt that they had found the instrument whereby their control of production could be increased, while workers could be got to think — at least at first — that they were getting a better deal.

the name of the game: **productivity dealing.**

And the 'prod deal' also involved an ideological attack on the working class, because its basic message was: **your higher wages are determined by our higher profit.** It was therefore to be the new form of widespread class collaboration between the mass of workers and the bosses.

When Labour came to power in 1964 it used every Party Political medicine-show to extol the productivity deal as the ideal patent tonic

apply essentially to the union bureaucracy. **They can voluntarily or compulsorily accept to compel us: but for us it is compulsion one way or the other.**

So why did the trade union leaders balk at compulsory national agreements and control? Because a more cunning game was to be played — one that conformed to the bureaucrats' split personality.

While the Labour Party, knuckling under to big business, threatened **statutory powers and the law**, the trade union bureaucrats under the guise of **opposition to "In Place of Strife"**, actually sought to eliminate from the policy only the **open intervention of the state in the form of the law.** What appeared then to be a fight for the working class was in fact chiefly a fight by the bureaucracy to retain its mask of "independence" while actually knuckling under to the general line of the policy "voluntarily".

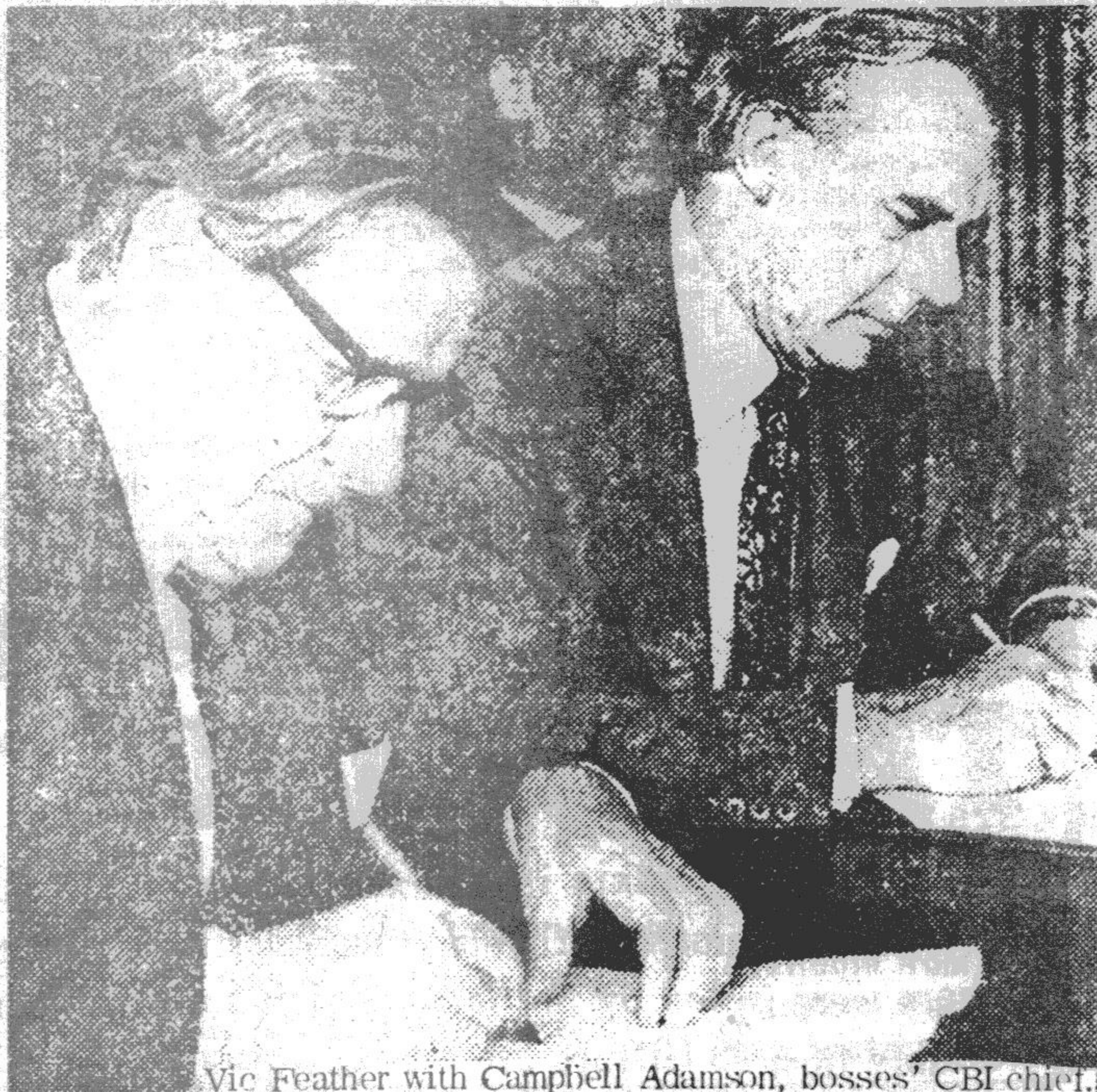
The election of the Tories solved this stalemate for the ruling class. The Tories could act without either being inhibited by any need to "look left", or being pressurised by the working class.

When Robert "Securicor" Carr introduced the Industrial Relations Act as a Bill into Parliament, therefore, the trade union leaders offered no resistance other than a Sunday afternoon march. It had been cheap enough to resist Labour, where there was no danger of things getting out of hand because "we mustn't rock the boat for Labour". This was the perfect combination of pretended revolt and actual capitulation.

Now, rather than do anything that would mobilise, organise or invigorate the working class, the (mis)leaders who at least haggled with Labour caved in to the Tories!

Just in case the "left" had a twinge of doubt on this score, the fantastic victory of the miners who smashed any attempt to impose a "voluntary" incomes policy (the ill-fated 7 1/2% norm) served as ample warning. The "left" leaders took the warning, understanding that any wave of militancy they encouraged by leading a fight against the Act would drown them as well as Carr.

They realised in any case that Securicor was right when he said that the Act would strengthen the trade unions — the union machine, that is — and that it would redress the balance between the rank and file and the union bureaucracy in favour of the latter.



Vic Feather with Campbell Adamson, bosses' CBI chief.

The Industrial Relations Act is the perfect combination of the two principle ways the bosses' state has used to chain the unions to itself: on the one hand it puts all the rights to take the **initiative** in the hands of the union leaders (enforcing national contracts, disciplining dissidents etc), and second, it puts all the responsibility for the initiatives taken by the rank and file into the same hands. That way it gives these 'trusties' both the motive and the alibi they need to police the rank and file.

INCOMES POLICY

But the working class is pretty tough. It takes more than one chain to even slow it down. And so a second chain has now been shackled on — that of the Incomes Policy. From April to July the TUC was having talks with the CBI, with the TUC (rather than the CBI) making inviting noises to the Government to join in.

After the jailing of the five dockers the TUC felt it had to tread carefully; but at the Brighton TUC conference Feather gave a clear indication to the Tories and the CBI that "tripartite talks" would be welcome.

Like a whore who describes all her customers as rapists, the TUC initiated the talks, immobilised the working class as much as it could and then, having made sure that Heath had got what he wanted anyway, said that they were against the deal and would only comply if forced.

Thus the union leaders played their usual game of trying to shackle the working class to the interests of the capitalists' state. The more capitalism finds itself in difficulty the more this role is accentuated.

But the more capitalism is squeezed the more it squeezes the working class and the more that working class needs to rely on its own activity and refuse to be subordinated to the interests of the state.

This can only be done if the working class fights the government with the slogan **Hands off the Unions**, and fights the leaders with the slogan **For trade union Democracy.**

- * NO Industrial Relations Act
- * NO Prices and Incomes Policy
- * NO wage Freeze
- * NO legally binding agreements!



BELFAST

1932 - when Protestant and Catholic workers fought together

There are massive barriers between Catholic and Protestant worker in Northern Ireland today. It will be impossible to remove them so long as the Protestants desire and the Catholics fear a restoration of the

Orange police state, which gave Protestant workers privileges against their Catholic counterparts.

The article below is reprinted from UNFREE CITIZEN, weekly paper of the Belfast Peoples Democracy.

NORTHERN IRELAND WAS HARD hit by the Great Depression. There were 76,048 people out of work in 1932, a third of the work force, and 45,000 of these were in Belfast.

The old Victorian Poor Law System complete with workhouse was still in operation and the relief rates were farcical. A man and wife were expected to exist on 8/- a week. With one or two children they got 12/- a week and with more children they got a maximum of 16/-. Most single men and women got nothing. The few who did got 3/6d. a week.

TASK WORK

The Victorian mentality of eliminating "idleness" still prevailed and the under-nourished, half starving unemployed were forced to do task work on roads and drains under the eyes of brutal overseers. Not many could work on these Out Door Relief schemes and the rest received their allowance in kind, leaving with nothing to pay the rent or the "tick-men" and money lenders to whom most working class people were in debt.

The Belfast relief rates were the lowest in the United Kingdom. In Belfast a man, his wife and one child would get 12/- a week; in Northampton they would get 27/-, in Bradford 26/- and in some places they got an additional rent allowance. The explanation was simple. Poor Law Relief came mainly from the rates. A Methodist minister pointed out that the rate per head in Belfast was less than £2.10.0d. while the average in 17 British cities was £4.3.0. The businessmen of Belfast seemed quite content to let thousands of workers slowly starve to death.

OCTOBER 1932

On Monday October 3rd 1932 the ODR workers went on strike. That evening between 30,000 and 50,000 marched from the Labour Exchange in Frederick Street to a mass meeting at the Customs House steps and endorsed the Unemployed Workers' demands for a minimum of 18/3 for a single man, 23/3d for a married couple and 2/- for every child.

The strike was 100% effective and all 2,000 ODR workers stayed out.

The next day 10,000 unemployed

marched from Frederick Street to the workhouse on the Lisburn Road (now the City Hospital) and thousands lay on the tram-lines to halt the traffic. On Wednesday the RUC banned another march, but an immense mass meeting was held at the workhouse gates and the returning crowd hi-jacked trams in Gt. Victoria Street.

The RUC cleared the street with baton charges but there was also rioting in Sandy Row and Divis Street.

Meanwhile 300 single men had demanded admission to the workhouse as paupers - having calculated it would cost the Poor Law Guardians 16/10d a week to keep them there. Once inside they shouted and sang and refused to go to bed. In the morning they were expelled because they demanded eggs for their breakfast.

The Government and the Guardians hastily offered a 50% increase in benefits but the strikers rejected it and called instead for a rent strike, tick strike and school strike to begin on Monday October 10th, and a mass demonstration on the 11th. They also demanded a general strike of all employed workers, but the trade unions and Belfast Trades Council, who hadn't backed the ODR strike in the first place, ignored them.

Over the weekend the strikers established a food depot in Corporation Street. They had collected £500, 2,000 loaves, 800 stone of potatoes, 727 lbs of sugar, 120 lbs of tea and 500 gallons of milk and they began giving out food parcels to the most needy cases.

By Sunday the RUC had banned the Tuesday demonstration but a mass meeting at the Customs House was told it would go ahead. William Boyd of the ITGWU was later convicted of making a seditious speech at this meeting.

"MURDER"

On Monday night the RUC broke up strike meetings in Cromac Square and the Shankill Road. Maurice Watters, a young member of the Irish Revolutionary Workers' Party, was arrested and convicted of incitement to murder for saying: "John Wilson and Lily Coleman (members of the Board of Guardians) are

murderers and should meet the same fate. A procession will be held and force will be met with force. The other night when windows were broken in Sandy Row, know 3 or 4 men who got on the step of a cage car and gave the Police information. These men are only common informers and should meet instant death."

On Tuesday October 11th Sir Charles Wickham, head of the RUC, banned all meetings and processions. The strikers were to have assembled at 5 different points in both Protestant and Catholic areas, marched to Frederick Street, and thence to the Workhouse.

CAGE CARS

Wickham drafted in 2,000 RUC equipped with cage cars and whippets mounted with machine guns. In East Belfast the RUC dispersed marchers at Templemore Avenue with repeated baton charges. On the Shankill Road, baton charges at Tennent Street led to serious rioting and 2 RUC men fired their revolvers in the air to escape from a crowd in Agnes Street. There was rioting too in the Short Strand, Ardoyne, New Lodge Road and Lancaster Street.

But the worst fighting was in the Falls. There the RUC came in armed with rifles and seemed anxious to provoke a clash. They fired into a crowd at Bow Street, killing one man and wounding several. Soon, fighting was general, with streets trenched and barricades thrown up.

Fourteen people were wounded by RUC gunfire, but though they claimed to have been fired on, there were no RUC casualties. That night a curfew was brought on until further notice.

BOSSSES' CARD

On Wednesday 12th another man died of his wounds. Again fighting centred on the Falls and the RUC opened fire twice in the Leeson Street area which was heavily barricaded. There was some trouble too in North Queen Street, the Shankill and East Belfast.

But meanwhile the Unionists were busy trying to stir up sectarianism. The Chairman of Pottinger Unionist Association said "It was a shame to see their own Protestant

people being driven by hirelings from Dublin, Glasgow and from Moscow, if they liked - for where was the money coming from? They did not want such people here ... (but) ... they had Ulster forces able to deal with these people - whether in the Short Strand, Falls Road or anywhere else - who had no love for Ulster people or the Union Jack."

Craigavon too in his first comment on the crisis warned "the mischief makers" that "if they have any designs by the trouble they have created in our City ... that this is one step towards securing a Republic for all Ireland ... then I say they are doomed to bitter disappointment."

By Friday the combination of massive repression and sectarian scare mongering had stopped the rioting. The Trades Council helped to demoralise the men by negotiating with the Government without any protest over the murder of workers by the Police.

When the Government and the Guardians announced big increases in relief the struggle was almost over.

UNITY

The new rates were 20/- for a man and wife, and 4/- for each one or two children up to a maximum of 32/- a week. Feeling was still strong, as shown by the massive funeral of one of the victims on Friday, though the RUC were able to arrest and deport Tom Mann, the British unemployed leader, without difficulty. But at a mass meeting of strikers on Saturday they voted to accept the terms.

The workers' tenuous unity probably could not have survived a long fight. They had gained a good deal and, in the words of Tommy Geehan, the Chairman of the Unemployed Workers Committee, "what we have achieved is in direct contradiction to the statements of those who said that the workers could not unite and could not fight, and the past fortnight will be recorded as a glorious two weeks in the history of the working class struggle. We saw Roman Catholic and Protestant workers marching together and on Tuesday last we saw them fighting together."

CLASS CAUSE

The Outdoor Relief Strike was a great demonstration of what could be achieved in the North of Ireland, of the fact that religious hatreds can be surmounted when the workers have a sufficiently strong common cause.

But it was also a warning. It showed that united action on economic issues can easily be undermined by the deliberate fostering of sectarianism - and that the Unionists were only too willing to do just that.

It showed that working class solidarity could dissolve very quickly if it was confined to economic issues. No great effort was made to politicise the 1932 dispute and show the unemployed that their real enemy was the economic system of capitalism and imperialism - not just the Belfast Board of Guardians.

No less than three years after Catholic and Protestant workers had fought side by side against the RUC, they were fighting each other in the riots of 1935.

The 1932 dispute also showed that even then the official Trade Union movement shirked any real fight with the bosses and their instrument, the Orange state.

But if those lessons are learnt, above all the necessity for political education and for linking all battles with the overall struggle against imperialism and for the Workers' Republic, then the ODR strike was of vital importance. It has given us an example to follow, an ideal towards which to strive.

THE LEFT and THE CRISIS

a WORKERS' FIGHT pamphlet

The Left and the Crisis is an examination and critique of the political line of a number of prominent Left groups during the week last July when 5 dockers were jailed by the Industrial Relations Court. The pamphlet is available from 98 Gifford Street, N.1, price 5p plus 3p for postage.

IS THE FAMILY REALLY NECESSARY?

THE U.S. SOCIALIST WORKERS' Party has recently published a collection of essays written by members of the S.W.P., under the general title 'Feminism and Socialism'.

The best of the sixteen articles is probably Dianne Feeley's contribution on "The Family". She defends the Marxist assessment of the social function of the family:

"Universal, state-imposed marriage became advantageous to the profiteers with the rise of the industrial wage-slave system. It relieved the capitalists of all social responsibility for the welfare of the workers and dumped heavy economic burdens upon the poor in the form of family obligations. Each tiny 'nuclear' family must live or perish through its own efforts, with little or no assistance from outside."

She argues against the viewpoint of the Communist Party (USA) as expressed by Fern Winston.

Winston, it seems, claims to be speaking from a Marxist standpoint, while actually departing from a basic Marxist analysis of the family and concocting a theory to sanctify the family: "Objectively it can be a revolutionary force in society".

Winston argues that "Let us suppose that somehow or other we could magically (her own word) abolish the family, ... there would still be ... men ... children ... cooking, shopping, dishwashing, cleaning and all the other chores." So it is a waste of time trying to change the situation.

This one statement shows up the degenerating effects of Stalinism and its far-reaching destruction of revolutionary consciousness.

The point is not to "magically" invent some alternative scheme for people to live together other than as families. The point is, as Feeley puts it, "to lay the basis for the disappearance of the family as an economic institution ... through allowing women to be fully integrated into social production, abolishing unequal pay, establishing free, 24-hour child care centres for all, setting up low-cost, high quality laundry services, take-out food services and dining facilities, and creating a mechanised public house-cleaning service."

Winston's main ploy is to assume a definition of the family as simply a group of people living

together. She ignores the economic and legal compulsions that underlie the family in class society. Of course human relationships will still exist as the family system is replaced by other social institutions. People will still live together, but the compulsive legal and economic ties between them will be abolished.

"Replacing the family system means that people will not be compelled to stay together because of a need for economic support, because of a marriage certificate, lack of any place to live, or lack of good care for the children if a couple breaks up."

Once individuals are no longer forced to depend for their economic welfare on the family, people can freely choose their own ways for living together. Some may choose the present-day man-woman-children set up, but all historical evidence suggests that a vast variety of other forms is possible; for ex-

ample, the anthropologist Margaret Mead pointed out that in the non-capitalist society of Samoa the unit "varies from the biological family consisting of parents and children only, to households of fifteen to twenty people who are all related to the matai (headman) or his wife."

Feeley's criticism of Stalinism and its effects on the Russian family is also very good. Her article sums up the strengths of the book; a clear-sighted view of the oppression of women, unclouded by any apologetics for the family system; an identification of the underlying cause of that oppression — class society; and a commitment to promoting the independent action of the women's movement in fighting that oppression.

The authors of the book are absolutely correct as against all those socialists who refuse to support the existing women's liberation movement on the grounds that it is

"middle class" and "non-Marxist" — thus implying that militant women must first become Marxists and win large sections of the working class to their views before they can get "permission to struggle" from these self-satisfied socialists.

But, if the authors are clear on the need to overthrow capitalism in order to achieve the liberation of women, they are less clear on the road to that overthrow.

There is a passing lip-service to the working class, with the statement that working class women "especially should be drawn into the mass struggle."

But they write of "The right of a small minority of wealthy individuals to rule by exploiting and oppressing the overwhelming majority of the world's peoples" (my emphasis) — whatever happened to the ruling class and the working class?

And who is going to bring about the socialist revolution? "Black and Chicano liberation struggles, the international anti-war (pacifist?) and student movements and the struggles of the Vietnamese, the Palestinians, the Irish and all other peoples who are in motion against their oppression. Our combined impact (!) can achieve the liberation of humankind."

Again, there is no mention of the working class or its revolutionary party. Just all those oppressed sections of capitalist society wandering about all over the place, and one fine day they might if they are lucky bump into each other.

The revolutionary party becomes simply an administrative link between the various sections, not an element of conscious political strategy towards bringing the various forces together under the leadership of the working class. It is all speculation and sectional work.

FRAN BRODIE



* FEMINISM AND SOCIALISM is edited with an introduction by Linda Jenness; available from Pathfinder Books, 47 The Cut, London S.E.1, price 80p.

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WHERE WE STAND

□ CAPITALISM is inseparable from the exploitation by the bourgeoisie of the working class 'at home' and (since 'advanced' capitalism became imperialist) of the workers and peasants in the colonies and neo-colonies abroad.

It is a vicious system geared to buttressing the strong against the weak, to serving the handful of capitalists against the millions of workers, and to keeping many millions in poverty so that a few may prosper. Capitalism exalts property and degrades life. It is at the root of the racialism which poisons and divides worker against worker. It is a system of massive waste and social disorganisation, at the same time as it forces the working class to fight every inch of the way to better or even maintain its wages and conditions.

Having once been progressive, in that it at least developed, in the only way then possible, the productive resources of mankind, it is now a totally reactionary force in history. Its expansion after World War 2 gave it merely the appearance of health: in reality the boom was like the flush on a sick man's face. And already economic expansion has given way to creeping stagnation.

□ TODAY the ruling class can keep their system going only at the cost of large scale unemployment and attempts to cut the living standards of workers in the 'rich' parts of the world, of massive starvation and bloodshed in the 'poor' two thirds of the world, and of the ever-present threat of the destruction of humanity through nuclear war.

□ THE ONLY WAY OUT is for the working class to take power and to bring the resources of the modern economy under a rational working class plan, in place of the present unplanned and blind private-profit system. Having overthrown capitalism and established social ownership of the means of production, the working class will build towards a truly communist society, in which at last the principle will be "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

□ The working class has created political parties for this purpose — LABOUR PARTIES, COMMUNIST PARTIES, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES. — But in country after country these parties have joined capitalist governments and managed capitalism. They have betrayed the socialist aspirations of their working class supporters, tied the labour movement to the bosses' state, interest and ideology, and destroyed the political independence of the working class.

□ The task is therefore to build a socialist party which will stand firmly for the interests of the working class. WORKERS' FIGHT is a group of revolutionary socialists, aiming to build that party: a party which is democratically controlled by an active working class membership, which preserves its political independence and fights the ideological domination of the ruling class.

□ The basis of our activity is the scientific theory of MARXISM, the only theory which gives a clear understanding of present day society and of the necessity of revolutionary change.

□ Although they cannot organise the struggle for workers' power, the TRADE UNIONS are indispensable for the defence of workers' interests. We fight for the independence of the unions from all state control, and within the unions for militant policies and for democracy. We see the trade union bureaucracy as a distinct stratum which acts as a broker between workers and bosses. Its life and work-situation is quite different from that of the working class. Lacking a direct, necessary allegiance to working class interests, or any fundamental historical interests of its own, its general tendency is to work with the bosses and their state against the working class.

Only a mass national rank and file movement, linking up the different industries and guided by the ideas of revolutionary Marxism can, in this period, turn the trade unions into reliable instruments of working class interests, independent of the bosses' state.

□ We fight against the INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT, against any incomes policy under capitalism, and against any legal restrictions on trade unionism.

□ We fight against UNEMPLOYMENT, for a national minimum wage; for work or full pay; against productivity bargaining.

□ We fight to extend the power of workers to control the details of their own lives in industry here and now. We stand for the fight for WORKERS' CONTROL with the understanding that it can be made a serious reality only in a workers' state. We are against any workers' 'participation' in managing their own exploitation under capitalism.

□ We believe that the "PARLIAMENTARY ROAD TO SOCIALISM" is a crippling illusion. The capitalist class will not leave the stage peacefully; no ruling class ever has. Socialism can be built only by smashing the capitalist state machine (army, police, civil service) which is the ultimate defence of the bosses' power in society, and replacing it with a state based on democratic Workers' Councils.

□ The LABOUR PARTY is a capitalist party in its ideas, its policies, and in its record in government. At the same time, the bedrock organisations of the working class, the trade unions, support and finance the Labour Party. There is an open valve connection between the Labour Party and the unions, allowing the possibility of large-scale active working class participation in the party.

We relate to the Labour Party, therefore, not by simply denouncing it, but by attempting to advance the working class towards outgrowing and breaking through the stage in its own development — ideological, political and organisational — represented by Labourism.

□ We fight for full and equal rights for WOMEN, for female emancipation from the male domination which has co-existed throughout history with class society and which has its roots in such society. We fight, in particular, for the emancipation of women of our own class, suffering a double and triple exploitation, who have been most accurately described as the "slaves of the slaves."

□ We fight against RACIALISM and against immigration controls. We fight for the integration of immigrant workers into the labour movement and for a united fight against capitalism, whilst supporting the right of black minorities in Britain to form defence leagues or independent political organisations.

□ We give unconditional support to the struggles of oppressed peoples everywhere fighting against IMPERIALISM, and to their organisations leading the fight.

□ British workers have — fundamentally — more in common with every single worker throughout the globe, irrespective of race, religion, nationality or colour, than with the whole of the British ruling class. We see the fight for socialism as a world wide struggle, necessitating the creation of a world revolutionary party. We give critical support to the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

□ We stand for a political revolution of the working class against the bureaucracies of THE U.S.S.R. and the other countries called 'communist', which we consider to be degenerated and deformed workers' states. The social regime of the different Bureaucracies has nothing in common with socialism, let alone with real communism. At the same time we defend the nationalised economy in these countries against capitalism and imperialism, unconditionally: that is, irrespective of the selfish, usually anti-working class and anti-revolutionary policies of the ruling bureaucrats, and against those policies.

□ There are OTHER POLITICAL GROUPS (including the official British section of the Fourth International) which have generally similar aims but methods differing from ours, or differing conceptions about what needs to be done here and now. We consider all these groups to be seriously — sometimes grossly — inadequate in theory and practice. We favour unity in action with these groups where possible, and a serious dialogue about our differences.

A BOOK YOU SHOULD READ

LABOUR'S GIANT STEP, by Art Preis. £1.65 from Pathfinder Books, 47 The Cut, London SE 1.

reviewed by Stan Lee

The capitalist class attempts to present to us the USA as a land without a working class struggle, the land of free enterprise, where anybody can become their own boss, where conflict between capital and labour is virtually non-existent.

In fact the opposite is true. America dwarfs many other countries with titanic class battles. The 116 day steel strike is just one example of the enormous combativity of the US working class.

LABOUR'S GIANT STEP, subtitled "20 Years of the C.I.O." is a record of the formation and phenomenal growth of the Congress of Industrial Organisations.

From 1936 until 1955 when it amalgamated with the American Federation of Labour (AFL) there were a total of 78,798 strikes involving 42,366,000 strikers.

Especially interesting for us today is Chapter 37, which deals with the "30 for 40" struggle — that is, 30 hours work for 40 hours pay. The background to the struggle was the ending of the Korean war, a situation not unlike that which America will face when she finally pulls out of Vietnam. By March 1954 unemployment reached a peak of 4,052,000. In fact between January 1953 and May 1955, except for one month, the official number of jobless never fell below 3 million.

U.A.W. CONTRACT

In 1950, Walter Reuther had signed a 5 year contract. But the rapid inflation of the Korean war period, even given an 'escalation clause', bit into the earnings of the Auto workers. Wildcat strikes (Reuther himself always tried to avoid a fight) involving 135,000 Auto workers, were principally responsible for winning concessions from General Motors. The contract was amended, but GM's wages bill was a mere \$15m a year up, as against an annual profit of half a billion dollars (which rose to more than 1 billion in 1955).

Meanwhile, the main debate at UAW Conventions was on the programme to combat unemployment. Reuther's chief emphasis was on the so-called guaranteed annual wage. This proposal was counterposed to the traditional programme of a shorter week with no reduction in wages.

Following the adoption of Reuther's Annual Wage resolution, another resolution presented by Reuther's Resolutions Committee proposed condemning those who advocated a campaign "now" for "30 for 40" as Communists and fellow travellers. When Ford local 600 president Stellato pointed out that the demand had been long established UAW policy, reaffirmed at every previous convention, Reuther alleged that the demand would 'undermine US military and economic strength', and on a wave of chauvinism and confusion the witch-hunting Reutherite resolution was passed — though not without a sizeable opposition vote.

During this period Reuther & Co echoed Democratic thinking. They attacked Eisenhower (then President) for giving priority to balancing the budget, as against 'defence against Communism' — even at a time when the amount earmarked by Eisenhower for direct war spending was \$42 billion a year, 3 times more than in any previous peacetime year (including the peak Cold War year of 1949).

The account of the 1954 steelworkers' strike is also revealing. With the industry running at close to 100% capacity, 600,000 steelworkers went on strike — without waiting for formal notice from the Union bureaucracy. The strike started at midnight on June 24th, and by the following morning at 10.30, US Steel had given in and negotiated a substantial pay rise.

Straightaway, however, the steel monopolists raised the price of steel \$7.30 a ton — making them a \$3 profit for every \$1 of increased wages.

The book is a mine of detailed information, written from a clearly partisan working class viewpoint, and full of instructive lessons on the role of union leaders, the US Communist Party, etc. It is especially interesting in dealing with Roosevelt and the New Deal and does a good debunking job on the Roosevelt image.

At £1.65 it isn't cheap but is a very solid volume for the money, and if you can't afford to buy it, why not order a copy at your local library — where other workers will have a chance to see it after you.

YULY GALANSKOV DIES IN RUSSIAN LABOUR CAMP

Intercontinental Press

Yury Galanskov, one of the most prominent activists in the Soviet opposition movement, is dead. According to the November 9 *New York Times*, he died in a Mordovian labor camp on November 4 while undergoing an ulcer operation. He had been serving a seven-year sentence in strict-regime camp number 17, which is reserved for political prisoners convicted of "especially dangerous crimes against the state."

The charges against Galanskov involve his allegedly having edited two samizdat literary magazines, *Syntax* in 1958 and *Phoenix* 1966 (the latter included a poem by the writer and critic Andrei Sinyavsky that the prosecution declared to be "of a criminal nature"), and having composed poetry that was clandestinely circulated in samizdat.

In January 1968 Galanskov, along with Aleksandr Ginzburg, Vera Lashkova, and Aleksei Dobrovolsky, was tried and convicted under Article 70 of the Russian criminal code, which deals with "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." Ginzburg had compiled a *White Book* which exposed and documented the injustices surrounding the 1966 trial of Sinyavsky and Yury Daniel, the first show-trial of the post-Stalin era.

Like the Sinyavsky-Daniel trial, the Galanskov-Ginzburg trial was a blatant attempt by the Soviet bureaucracy to intimidate the growing democratic opposition movement. But the trials provoked widespread protest within the Soviet Union and served to mobilize and unite the antibureaucratic sentiment they had been designed to stifle.

Regarding the trial and conviction of Galanskov and Ginzburg, Bertrand Russell stated: "So intolerably unjust were the procedures of the court that even the official journal of the British Communist party, normally a faithful spokesman for the Soviet Union, felt compelled to publish its criticism."

LIVERPOOL TENANTS STOP EVICTIONS

ON THE EVENING OF THURSDAY 16 November, the news went round on the Tower Hill estate in Kirkby that a rent striker was to be evicted.

The report turned out to be a false alarm, but within five minutes there were 200 people outside the striker's door to protect him! On the Monday, Tower Hill tenants association secretary Tony Boyle had got a notice of eviction, expiring in four weeks' time. The Tenants' Association threatened to turn the estate into a no-go area if the notice wasn't withdrawn and at 4pm on the Monday 600 tenants (including supporters from other areas of Liverpool) blocked the main roads leading into the estate. All traffic except ambulances was stopped from going in or out.

The police at regular intervals gave warnings that they would "take action" "in a few minutes" but no-one took any notice.

The bailiffs never turned up, and the no-go area was lifted at about 6 o'clock and replaced with a token presence outside Tony Boyle's house. Building workers and Kirkby Industrial Estate shop stewards have pledged support for the tenants. The Trades Council has set up a system of telephone numbers to call on in case of eviction attempts.

There has probably been a slight fall in the number of rent strikers over recent weeks, and Fazackerly has moved from a total rent strike to partial (withholding the increase). But clearly the basic forces of the tenants movement are intact, and strong enough to defy the Council's bailiffs and policemen.

PAUL BARKER

INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE

The war in Vietnam is not over yet despite the fanfare of press publicity promoting Nixon as a peacemaker. The Vietnamese have every right to sign a compromise because they are being bombed into the stone age by the US. For us, however, who are not being bombed, it is essential that we support the right of the Vietnamese to self-determination by demanding the withdrawal of all US forces NOW. The solidarity movement must be rebuilt.

CONFERENCE 2-3 December.
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,
London WC1. Speakers include
Noam Chomsky.

SQUATTERS from page 4.

without gaining consent from the Council.

"After the Redbridge events, which were what impelled the Council to make a deal at all, the Council would have been in no position to take any action against the squatters. The families could then have more or less dictated to the Council the pace at which the Association was going to be run!"

Sam also feels that "the families should have been educated as to why they were squatters. The squatting associations that followed Lewisham would then have been set up on truly radical platforms, and this would have been a somewhat limited answer to one of society's biggest problems."

LONDON TEACHERS MARCH

ON NOVEMBER 23rd THOUSANDS of London teachers went on strike and marched in opposition to the way their claim for a rise on the London allowance is being treated.

This march reflected the militant mood of teachers on this issue, a mood which was evident among teachers in staffroom discussions and NUT and Rank and File meetings.

When the teachers' pay claim, made earlier this year, was arbitrated, it was agreed that the London teachers would receive a rise on their London allowance on November 1st.

The present London allowance stands at £118, pitifully little when one considers the cost of buying or renting accommodation in the London area. The claim was for a rise to £300, and it was generally felt that the result of negotiations would be £200 at least.

But the teachers were then told by the Burnham Committee that

they would receive not one penny rise on the existing allowance. When approached by the Teachers' Panel and ILEA Mrs Thatcher offered a rise of £12 a year, which she later upped to £15 a year, thereby offering the London teachers an allowance of £133 per annum - almost £70 less than what they considered a minimum.

As a result of this, a meeting of 1,500 London teachers was held on November 9th to discuss action. Despite the militant mood of the meeting, the Union's Communist Party leadership proposed the action of a ½-day strike.

There were stormy protests from the meeting, but no amendments for further action were allowed!

Going on from the strike, the left wing teachers' group, Rank & File, intends to campaign for further action until the teachers receive their demands.

Marion Kavanagh

RENTS: TORIES CAN STILL BE BEATEN

The Heath Government discovered with the Industrial Relations Act that if there is sufficient mass opposition, the bosses' laws simply cannot be enforced. When thousands of workers defy the law, with overwhelming popular support, they cannot just be stuffed into jail. The government retreats.

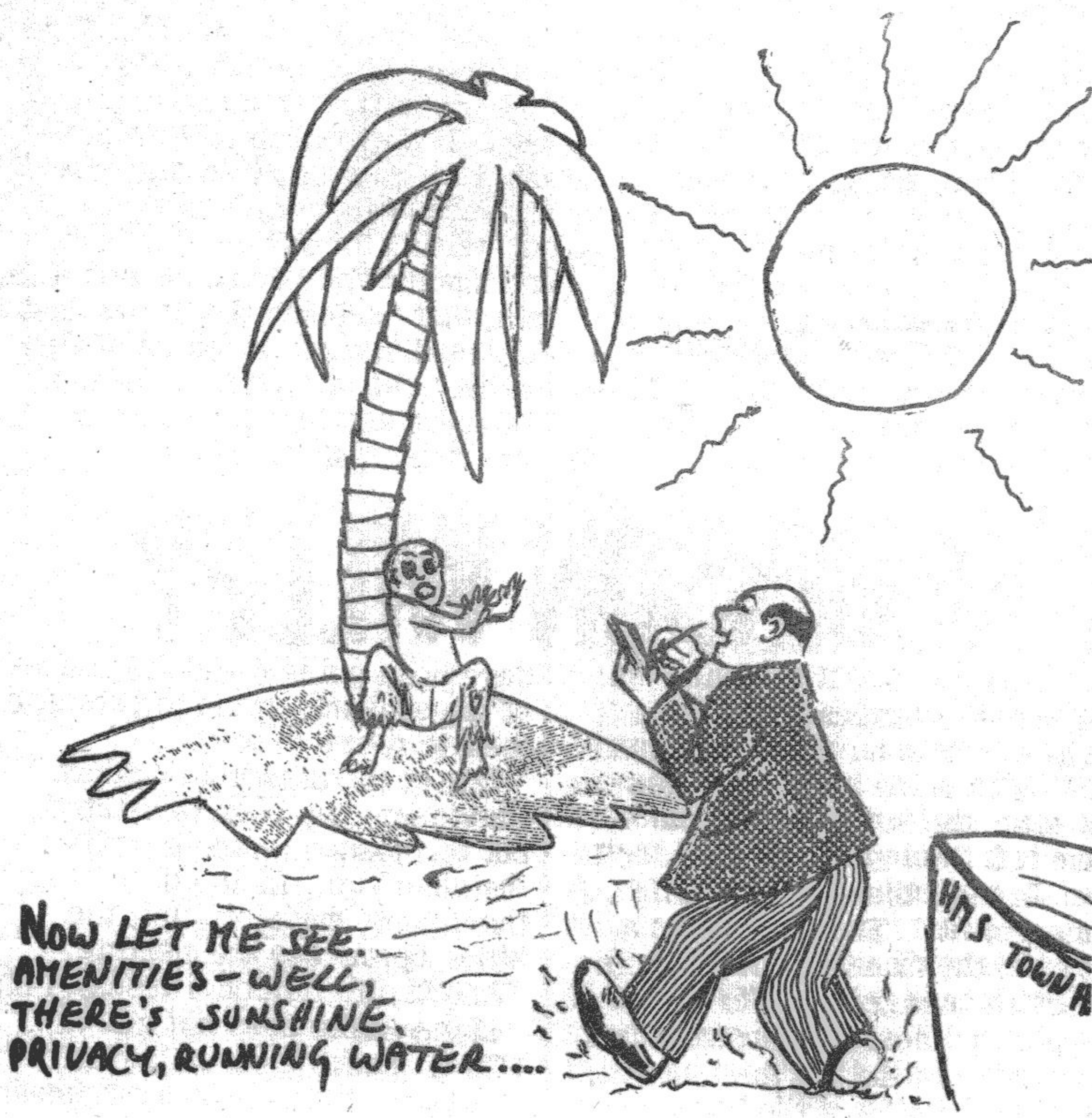
They are now faced with a similar dead-end over the Housing Finance Act. On 15 November they issued a threat to three of the non-implementing councils, Clay Cross, Halstead, and Eccles. The Tories refused to appoint a Housing Commissioner to go in over the heads of the council - instead they said that responsibility for loss of rents income due to non-implementation "rests with the councillors". They have

a deadline of 29 November for implementation. This way they hope to frighten councillors with the prospect of being sued for huge debts.

In Eccles they succeeded, but the other councils are still sticking out. If they stand firm then ultimately the Government have to throw councillors out of office and imprison them for non-payment of debts. And if the Government do take that action, against councillors, then the labour movement must respond in the same way as it responded to the dockers' jailing in July - an immediate strike.

In a number of places, rent strikes have declined. But there are still strong centres of resistance to the Act: Clay Cross, Liverpool, and others.

The assessor always gets his man



The Liverpool Trades Council - though it was late in moving, and has tended to be bureaucratic in operation - has, at least, provided an example to other organisations of the labour movement in its work to set up tenants associations.

It is important that where there is a decline in the struggle, even if only temporary, that it should not be allowed to bring demoralisation. Some of the main areas of weakness in the present struggle - London and Teesside, for example - have been the places most involved in previous tenants struggles round 1968. Any ultra-radical phrasemongering, any opposition to retreats where they are necessary, any attempts to paint over things in a rosy hue, can only increase the risk of demoralisation.

But equally it will be necessary for tenant militants to grasp boldly the opportunities of a revival in the movement. If tenants committees relapse into the view that "we can't do anything until the tenants start moving", then we are caught in self-fulfilling prophecy: the tenants wait for the committee and the committee waits for the tenants.

John Sterling.

NUPE MILITANTS CALL FOR ACTION

Militants in the Health Service, meeting at the 12 November conference called by the London Alliance of Stewards for Health Workers, put out a call to the leaders of the health service unions

1) to organise a national strike of hospital workers in support of the claim for £8 increase per week, 35 hour week, equal pay and opportunities for women, and four weeks' annual and two extra days' holiday. No deal to be accepted without these concessions.

2) to reject all forms of productivity bargaining.

3) to demand the recall of the TUC to organise all out action to smash the wage freeze.

4) to demand that the TUC organise solidarity action with all groups fighting the freeze.

5) to demand that the TUC should end all talks with the Tories.

6) to call on the TUC to organise the whole labour movement to fight for a £25 minimum, take home pay for a 35 hour week. Equal pay and opportunities for women now. £16 pension.

This resolution was passed overwhelmingly by workers represent-

ing all health service unions, from Bristol, Gloucester, Liverpool, Canterbury, Manchester and London. Meanwhile the National Union of Public Employees official leadership is dragging on negotiations for £4 increase as long as possible, hoping to avoid a clash with the Government. A national ballot of all NUPE members is being considered to see if there is a willingness to carry out strike action.

But some of the NUPE membership do not have the patience which their big salaries and comfortable offices help to develop in the union's top leaders.

In LIVERPOOL, a mass meeting of 500 hospital ancillary staff in St George's Hall on 14 November was very critical of the NUPE officials, although in the confusion the LASH resolution was defeated. There is to be a 24-hour strike in Liverpool this week.

In MANCHESTER, a mass meeting of all Manchester hospital ancillary staff has been arranged for 1 December (7.30 pm, Lesser Free Trade Hall). The LASH resolution will be put to this meeting by the United Manchester Hospitals NUPE branch. It has already been agreed to call on the EC of NUPE to instruct members to withdraw services to private patients, and to organise a picket of the Department of Health and Social Security Regional Office.

Much will depend on the next conference called by LASH, to take place at St Marys Hospital, Praed St, London W2, from 10.30 on 3 December. More information from Mark Palmer (secretary, LASH), 122 Sinclair Rd, London W14 ONL.

JACK SUTTON (secretary, United Manchester Hospitals NUPE branch).

INDIAN WORKERS STRIKE AGAINST RACIALISM

FOUR HUNDRED INDIAN WORKERS at the Mansfield Hosiery mill, Loughborough, have given an effective working-class answer to the sordid mess of the Parliamentary debate on immigration.

The strikers' demands are £5 a week increase and an end to the racial discrimination which ensures that all the skilled, highly-paid jobs on the knitting machines are reserved for white workers.

The white knitters get £35 a week and the Indians £20.

STEEL STRIKE from page 1

Thereupon that whole section of Lackenby works was declared black, and production stopped. When the management stopped the pay of the workers carrying out the blacking, the section of workers struck.

Management have used the local radio and press in a campaign to persuade the men to lift all the bans and return to work. Then, they say, talks can start. There is a mass meeting on Sunday 26 November.

Now all of BISAFTA 5 (Lackenby branch) is out. Their eagerness to fight the British Steel Corporation on the claim is a measure of the resistance that the government can expect to their wage freeze.

policy would jolt the labour movement out of its docile attempt to learn to live with the Act. It would sweep aside the wage freeze.

So far the AUEW leaders are partly responsible for selling the CBI/Tory confidence trick of 'conciliation' to workers. Scanlon said last May "I believe that conciliation will work far better than legal sanctions and the Government's policy of abrasiveness and confrontation", and, covering for Jack Jones's capitulation to the NIRC he added, "the courts must be respected".

This shows that the AUEW leaders are unlikely to opt for a fighting policy. For militants to demand that they do so is to begin to mobilise the rank and file to take the initiative out of their hands if they refuse to act. Militants have not forgotten that it was the escalating mass action, without waiting for any official lead, and against the advice of the officials, that panicked the Tories last July, and opened the gates of Pentonville Jail for the five dockers. The same action can now make them relinquish their loot.

One standard argument of the anti-immigration lobby is that immigrants depress the level of wages, through being willing to take lower-paid jobs. But the real problem is not that immigrants supposedly for some strange reason, are happy with low wages: the real problem is the racialism of the employers and the trade union organisations who have set up the situation where the only jobs many immigrants can get are low-paid.

The strikers' union, the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear workers, last week offered to 'negotiate' on training and redundancy discrimination if the men went back to work. This 'offer' was rejected by 197 votes to three.

Messages of support to: The Strike Committee, c/o Mr Naik, 31 Station Road, Loughborough.

meanwhile in the bear pit.....

Nothing has excited Labour MPs quite so much recently as the Government's defeat by 35 votes over new immigration rules on 22 November.

Labour Weekly enthusiastically reproduces Wilson's call that there is "a clear and unmistakable duty on Mr Heath to resign".

Of course, socialists are absolutely in favour of getting rid of Heath's government. It would be an excellent thing if Heath resigned. It would be even better if Wilson mobilised the forces of the Labour Party in an active campaign to get Heath out.

And Labour MPs were of course absolutely correct to vote against the immigration rules.

But, for us at least, there are many better reasons for getting rid of Heath than that a few near-fascist, anti-union, anti-working class right-wing Tory MPs voted against him or abstained.

And the method we look to for ousting the government is not the Parliamentary votes of the Tory right wing. It is the direct action of the working class.

Labour MPs would be better occupied in aiding and promoting that direct action than in peddling alongside the most reactionary ideas of the Tory party. Their opposition to the proposed Tory rules owes nothing to socialist internationalism, and everything to flag-waving Empire-boasting.

All their talk of "this once proud nation" serves only to boost the idea that British workers should ally with British bosses against workers of other nations, to "back Britain", "export or die", "combat inflation", and so on.

This sordid mess is the logical climax of the Great Common Market Debate. Almost all the British left have united round the issue of keeping Britain out, thus drawing workers into a phony debate, a bosses' debate, in which neither alternative — in or out — has in fact clear advantages for the working class.

bureaucrats who will have played the major part in getting them there.

Obviously the lads at Robinson Willey cannot rely on the union officials. As more and more workers are finding out, their strength comes from the shop floor. Not only in their own factory but in others all over the country.

Realising this, an appeal has been made for donations. Support is urgently needed. Please send all donations to: Robinson Willey Strike Committee, 61 Florentine Road, Stonecroft, Liverpool 13.

LEN GLOVER.

AUEW FUNDS from page 1

merely wrapped a bit of cheap cotton gauze around the mailed fist in the hope that the workers would forget about the spikes underneath. 'Conciliation' partly succeeded in throwing back the mass awareness, which reached its high point last July, in the confrontation to smash the Industrial Relations Act. The sequestration and the use to which the Act could be put in the looming series of wage battles against the freeze have again brought to the fore the need to smash the Act — and the Government which spawned it.

The AUEW will either fight back now — or ultimately surrender and fall in line with the court, as the T&GWU did. The policy of passive non-cooperation in the face of escalating fines has already been proved to be non-viable.

The recent AUEW conference resolution talked of "protecting the fabric of the union". It could be used as a cop-out, though, — to

mean paying out now to avoid the "fabric" (the whole funds) of the union being "sequestered". Militants must ensure it is interpreted as "protection" based on fighting back, not on knuckling under in the manner of Jack Jones.

The engineers alone can't call the general strike which could smash the Act and the NIRC. They can and they should call a national engineering strike until the £5000 is refunded. They have the power — on their own — to paralyse industry. They can and they must start an appeal for solidarity action by workers in other industries, appealing to the rank and file on the basis that a mass escalation of the struggle could go on to smash the Act. The engineers are in the front line: resistance to the NIRC and defeat of the Industrial Relations Act is in the interests of all workers. The AUEW should — but without using it to avoid industrial action here and now — start a campaign for a recall of the TUC and agitate for that body to call a General Strike to Smash the Act.

A mass mobilisation on this

SELL-OUT AT ROBINSON WILLEY

JUST OVER FIVE WEEKS ago, three shop stewards were sacked from the firm of Robinson Willey in Liverpool. Robinson Willey employ about 450 workers making gas fires. The firm, always anti-union, sacked the three shop stewards, Malcolm Price, Graham Whitfield, and Graham Parkinson, in an attempt to break the union.

The workers' response was to strike and over 200 came out. Although their number has declined the men are still picketing the factory and the depot. What has

the union, the T&GWU, done? In the words of Graham Whitfield, "The officials have left us stranded". The union bureaucracy have not made the strike official and have left the lads to fight on their own. In fact, they are assisting the management! They have sent a letter to the management which in effect encourages them to break the picket lines. The management obviously grateful for this support, have sent copies of the letter to the firms they deal with. Already scab labour has been brought in and management representatives

have been going round the houses of the strikers, trying to persuade them to return to work.

One of the stewards, Graham Parkinson, has been reinstated, but the bosses refuse to reinstate the other two. In an effort to get the dispute made official, the strike committee are meeting T&GWU officials on Tuesday 14th.

If the strike does not get official backing the lads may have to return. If this happens Graham Whitfield and Malcolm Price will almost certainly join the dole queue — and it will be the trade union