

RED WEEKLY

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LABOUR WINS-- NOW FIGHT REALLY BEGINS

LABOUR HAS JUST LIMPED HOME. WILSON & CO. HAVE proved themselves utterly incapable of taking advantage of the crisis inside the ruling class and its main political party, the Tories.

As the election drew nearer, the capitalist press threw up its hands in despair at the inept showing of Heath. The Tory party could not even put together the appearance of a coherent programme.

Like clumsy, ageing acrobats, the Tories crawled over the barrier of confrontation to the pathetic offer of rule by television. They were exposed as discredited and disunited.

Despite the confusion and disarray inside the Tory party, despite a massive economic and social crisis, the working class were not roused by Labour. True, millions of workers with a deep-seated class hatred of the Tories cast their vote against the traditional enemy, but there was no grass-roots movement inside the working class to campaign for Labour.

How could it be otherwise? As inflation ate into living standards, and the dark cloud of unemployment grew ever more menacing, all Labour could offer was the social contract. The ruinous policies of the Labour Party have allowed the Tories to survive. They have led the Labour Party into a dead-end.

What the election has demonstrated is that the working class must place no confidence in the Labour Government. Now the real battles will begin.

The employers know full well that they have to smash the power of the trade union movement, or else the crisis will drive them against the wall.

But Wilson feebly gropes for a 'united Britain', and chatters on mindlessly about how he has 'spent a lot of time with industrialists'.

Unlike the Labour Party, the capitalist class are serious about the class struggle. They are at war with the working class—after all, their system is at stake. The working class must draw the lessons—they must place their own interests first. They must organise to fight each and every attempt by capitalism to drive down their living standards. They must begin now the struggle to challenge the right of capitalism to rule.

Living standards axed - Labour has no answers



Healey said 'it's only 8% inflation' — but suddenly 'it's only a 4% cut in your living standards'!

The latest figures make it clear. Living standards have dropped by four per cent. For our Mr Average, this is the harsh reality of capitalist Britain today.

But most people are not Mr Average. For big sections of the working class, the drop has been as much as 10 per cent, while for some—like teachers—the figure has reached a devastating 15 per cent!

At the same time unemployment is on the increase. Many 'well-respected' economists predict over one million on the dole by the end of the year. But the Labour leaders have had nothing to say about this state of affairs. Instead Wilson, Healey & Co. plead that things are not as bad as they seem. The social contract, we are assured, will solve all our problems.

But the con-trick has been exposed. It's been with us since February, and what's the result? — rising prices, rising unemployment, and vicious cuts in our living standards!

And what do the Labour leaders promise us now? The moment the election results were clear, they were falling over each other to be the first to stand on their heads. Callaghan came on the TV to tell us that 'nobody can expect to have a better time this winter'. Wilson went further. 'It's going to be a hard slog', he said, 'for the next two or three years.'

This means only one thing—the Labour leaders plan to solve the crisis on the backs of the working class. They have no plans to improve our living standards. They just offer more of the same. We cannot rely on their class-collaborationist policies. What they mean is more attacks on the working class.

Only outside Parliament, by relying on our own struggles, can we deal with the effects of the crisis. Now the fight really starts.

NO TO INCOMES POLICY!

THROUGHOUT THE ELECTION campaign everyone talked about the economic crisis, but no-one put forward any ideas as to what to do about it.

The Tories didn't come up with anything because their real policy—unemployment, and wage-cuts—wasn't exactly designed to warm the hearts of working people.

But Labour offered no policy, either. The middle-class reformist ideas of its present leaders proved it from seizing the capitalist belt by the horns—even in its election promises.

Wilson, of course, wavered around his magic formula—the social contract. But the economic crisis will very soon pound the partners into one-trick to pulp.

Now workers are likely to accept Wilson's command to let their living standards sag in order to help out the profits of their bosses. Even if they did, the massive capitalist crisis still wouldn't be satisfied. It's not for good,

and won't be satisfied with anything less than a big cut in workers' living standards.

Group after group of workers will go into struggle in the coming months to defend their hard-won gains. Labour will then have to choose—to back the workers fighting for their living standards, or the capitalists screaming for their profits.

We should have no doubts which way they will go—like every Labour Government, every reformist, they will line up with the capitalists.

Despite Wilson's continual election promises, Labour will try to impose legal shackles on pay—an incomes policy—to tie the hands of the working class and force them to bear the burdens of capitalism's crisis.

The labour movement must be put on the alert against this danger now. Militants must immediately launch a campaign to win the entire movement to the position of opposing any incomes policy under capitalism. Preparations must be made to meet any attempt to introduce such a poli-

cy with a general strike. Forthcoming Labour Party, trade union and TUC congresses should be flooded with resolutions to this effect.

At the same time, the workers' movement must work out its own solution to the huge problems thrown up by capitalism's crisis, problems which the social contract cannot get to grips with.

A workers' plan would solve the capitalist crisis at the expense of the capitalists and not the working class. Full protection of all wages and working people's incomes against inflation (a sliding scale of wages and State benefits), nationalisation of any firm declaring redundancies, with full guarantee of all jobs, and the take-over of the banks, monopolies and other key sectors of capitalist power would be the backbone of such a policy.

Such policies must be fought for within the unions and the Labour Party. The power of the working class must be mobilised to implement such measures, despite the sabotage of the bosses and the cold feet of the reformist Labour leaders.

IMG denies bombing smear

A number of news bulletins broadcast by London Broadcasting (LBC) radio station on election night referred to a report that responsibility for the Guildford bomb-

ings lay with the Provisional IRA and the IMG.

LBC had made no attempt whatsoever to contact the IMG about these allegations. On hearing the broadcast, the IMG immediately issued a statement denying any responsibility for the bombings. But LBC's news bulletins continued to repeat the same allegations without any mention of our denial.

The International Marxist Group completely denies any connection whatsoever with the Guildford bombings, and condemns the totally irresponsible behaviour of LBC in giving currency to this slander.

Red Weekly statement on the Guildford bombings — see page 3.

NF FASCISTS ON THE RUN



The National Front was forced to spend a large chunk of their election broadcast trying to wriggle out of the charge that they are fascists.

Not only did this make them look fools, but in all probability it only succeeded in convincing viewers that they are in fact fascists.

Their heated denials were forced on them as a result of a massive campaign right across the country against the NF. Reports have flooded in of NF meetings being called off after anti-fascists have occupied their halls. Other NF meetings have been ringed by mass pickets. Even the Labour Party has decided not

to speak on TV or radio broadcasts with NF candidates.

This swelling tide of opposition to the fascist NF has come about since the National Union of Students voted in April against free speech for fascists. The campaign then led to the anti-fascist demonstrations of Red Lion Square, Leicester and Hyde Park.

These actions have found a real response in the working class movement and have had a devastating effect on the NF, completely disrupting its plans to sell itself as some 'respectable' non-fascist organisation.

The ASTMS Steels branch in Sheffield has set up a local anti-fascist committee. The committee was given a big boost by the support from five convenors representing some of Sheffield's more important engineering factories. The convenors distributed thousands of leaflets in the factories for the committee.

The ASTMS branch arranged a picket of NF leader Tyndall's press conference in Sheffield, which was only able to go ahead because of a massive police presence.



The NF fuhrer John Tyndall almost addressed a mass meeting in Bristol last Tuesday. But luckily for him fifty police managed to prevent the mass—over a hundred anti-fascist militants—from joining his twenty-strong audience.

The local Anti-Fascist Committee, had already frustrated the Front's attempt to openly put across its politics. When the NF tried leafletting in one of Bristol's main working-class areas, Bedminster, five times as many anti-fascists moved in to distribute their own material and send the NF packing.

Photo: ANDREW WARD (Report)



Five hundred people joined a march against the NF last Saturday organised by Haringey Trades Council in London. Among the speakers at the final rally was Val Graham (above) for Haringey NUT Teachers' Association, who stressed that the NF's aim is to exploit already existing divisions inside the working class movement. It can therefore only finally be defeated, she said, by taking up the issues on which it feeds such as Ireland and abortion.

harried and hounded at all their local meetings in London the National Front decided that their only face-saver was a meeting of all their candidates in Conway Hall on Monday 7 October.

As soon as the International Marxist Group heard of the NF plan it made a call for a mass mobilisation.

As preparations for the anti-fascist mobilisation got under way, disquiet began to grow at the Croydon headquarters of the NF, when they realised that another hot-hole had been blocked.

The plans for the election rally lay dormant. There was not going to be any glorious parade of their candidates.

On Friday a dejected Martin Webster rang Conway Hall. The message was short, brief, and to the point. The rally was cancelled.



The NUPE branch of porters at Edinburgh University voted to go on strike last week if the National Front was allowed a stall at the Freshers' Fair for first-year students.

The NF had first approached the Tories for protection, but this was turned down. Meanwhile the local IMG was vigorously campaigning for a mass picket to deny the NF a platform. Apart from the response from NUPE, the University branch of ASTMS also voted to send representatives to join the picket.

On Friday morning 4 October dozens of students and trade unionists gathered at the entrance to the Fair to block the NF's passage. And the latter, wisely, decided to stay away.



Over 120 militants attended a rally in Birmingham on Saturday morning to protest against the National Front standing in the elections in the area.

The rally had been called by York Woods Building Site (UCATT) the previous week, and had been supported by John Lee, Tom Litterick, and Jeff Rooker—all Labour Party candidates in the Birmingham area.

Several speakers drew attention to the growing links between the National Front and the Loyalist forces in Northern Ireland. Support for the 27 October Troops Out of Ireland demonstration was called for.

York Woods building site (UCATT) would like to thank all those who contributed to the defence fund for arrested anti-fascist militants like Peter Cooper at the rally in Birmingham. £11.45 was received by the collectors.

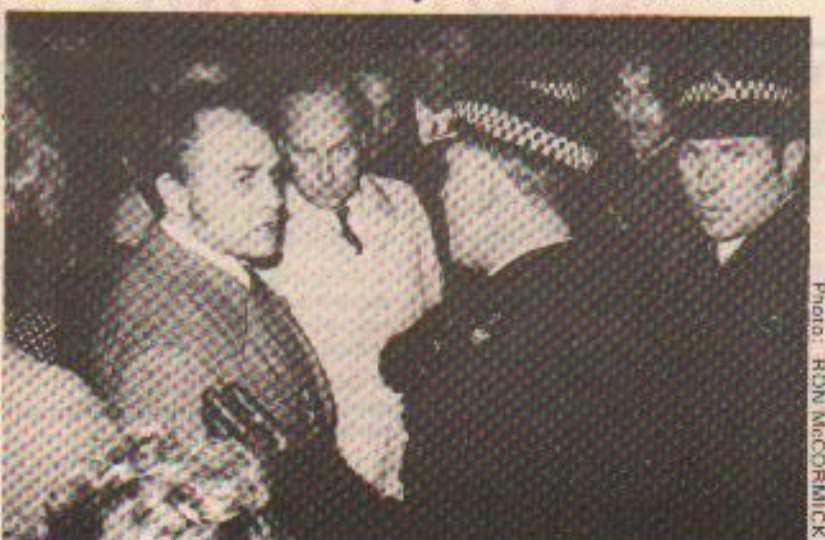
Pat Hickey (convenor UCATT Yorks Wood)



Determined and consistent work to build an anti-fascist campaign in Oxford bore fruit last week when two National Front meetings were stopped and the fascist candidates sent packing.

At the second of these meetings, at the Town Hall, the Oxford Anti-Fascist Committee scored a major success. Backed by stewards from the local car plant, together with local teachers, women's liberation and students, the Committee urged that the meeting be taken over since the Front candidate showed a marked reluctance to attend.

The 120 anti-fascists present elected their own chairman, who called for speakers from the IMG, IS and CP. At this moment the fascists provocatively charged the platform. But a defensive picket soon drove the fascist scum from the room.



Loading NF members Kingsley Reed (left) and John Tyndall were told by police that they could not go ahead with a meeting in Haggerston School, Hackney, last Friday after 300 anti-fascists had blockaded the hall. Later some of the local NF members were driven home by the police.

Anti-fascists blunt Scarman's hatchet

After five weeks of evidence on the battle of Red Lion Square, Lord Justice Scarman will soon be drawing his conclusions.

The main aim of the Inquiry has always been to use the events of Red Lion Square as a pretext for extending the general powers of the police over all workers' demonstrations and pickets. This would have to be done by portraying the events as just another symptom of a rising tide of 'bloody-minded violence and law-breaking', thus ignoring the issue of the fascists and the violence against the working class which they represent.

NOT EASY

But this won't be so easy. Not just because the IMG, NUS, Liberation and the CPE(M-L) have continually placed the National Front into the

centre of the Tribunal, but because since Red Lion Square, there has grown up a broad movement of opposition to the National Front which includes even the Labour Party.

The police story is that they were there on 15 June playing their 'usual neutral' role, keeping hostile factions apart, and keeping the peace for passers-by. Then along came these left-wing lunatics who assaulted the police and started an hour-long riot.

The IMG didn't deny that its supporters tried to break through the police cordon in Red Lion Square. However, we pointed out that this arose spontaneously after the police had changed the route of the demonstration to prevent it from going past Conway Hall, to an agreed meeting place in the south-east corner of the Square.

The police say, however, that the organisers must have 'misunderstood' the route all along. Scarman happily appears to have accepted the veracity of this so-called 'misunderstanding'.

THEOBALD'S ROAD

Those who remember the battle will recall that the anti-fascist demonstrators later placed a mass picket across Theobald's Road in an effort to stop the National Front going through to Conway Hall.

The mounted police, in conjunction with police behind the crowd, charged the crowd and split them into two sections, pinning them against traffic railings on either side of the road. Everyone there assumed this was to cut a passage for the Front, although in the event the Front were taken along a different route to the Hall.

The police now say that it was never intended that the Front should go along Theobald's Road. This came as news to Martin Web-

ster, and the inspector in charge of the mounted police!

The Special Patrol Group were especially active on 15 June. They made arbitrary arrests. From the transcript of police radio messages, it can be seen that the SPG were sometimes used as arresting squads sent in after demonstrators had been defeated by a police operation, on the order to 'make arrests'. The purpose of the arrests was to demoralise and deter demonstrators from coming back in future.

INTERPRETATION

This is the only possible interpretation of another incident in Boswell Street, where the SPG went after an IMG contingent marching with linked arms away from the area, on orders to 'break them up'. They did.

Scarman is now open to recommendations about what needs to be done to reinforce 'public order'. The IMG is demanding among other things, the banning of National Front marches by the labour movement; the disbanding of the SPG; and the dropping of all charges against defendants arising from Red Lion Square.

POLICE PROPOSALS

The police will publish their proposals at the end of this week. They claim they will be 'mild'. We shall see. But there is one definite casualty of the whole affair—the organisers of the demonstration, Liberation.

After Tony Gilbert, the Secretary, tried to score political points against the IMG from the witness box, and made revelations about how Liberation had intended to line up CP stewards in front of police cordons to defend them from the 'adventurous left', he announced that they will never organise anti-National Front counter demonstrations again.

NF belaboured

The Labour Party has refused to appear on joint radio and TV broadcasts with National Front candidates. Its national agent, Reg Underhill, has sent a letter to all Labour Party candidates 'advising' them not to share a platform with NF candidates.

But some candidates are obviously not too keen on Underhill's advice. Julius Silverman, candidate for Birmingham, Erdington, agreed to share a platform with NF candidate Tom Finnegan.

With coat collar upturned, Silverman tried to sneak past anti-fascist pickets and get into the building. Although he claimed to agree with the Labour Party's position on not sharing a platform with the NF, he pleaded 'special circumstances'.

Despite 15 minutes of bitter argument with the pickets Silverman went into the meeting. The pickets then entered the hall, called on other people to leave, and marched off to their own meeting.

Meanwhile in Bermondsey, Labour's chief whip, Bob Mellish, agreed to speak at a meeting with the Liberal, Conservative and NF candidates. His agent pleaded that this was a special meeting organised by a local vicar. Presumably, Mellish felt he had a straight directive from God's own agent.

But realising that trouble was brewing the IMG were mobilising for the meeting—Mellish bowed out at the last minute.

In Sheffield, the Labour candidate for Hesley, Frank Hooley, was addressing a university meeting with the other candidates when the NF arrived.

Hooley stated that he was in favour of allowing the NF candidate on the platform. This produced some pandemonium in the hall, during which a student with a pint of beer in his hand usually strolled up to the platform.

After two tugs at the microphone's lead, there was a great blue flash—and out came the lead. Hooley, defending the fascist's democratic rights, made a grab for the mike. All he got for his pains was a cascade of ale—quite accidentally!—over his best suit.

In Manchester the Enoch Powell road show was chaired by Lord Wigg. Wigg is a former Labour Cabinet Minister and close crony of Harold Wilson.

Bob Wright—the left-wing candidate for the general secretaryship of the AUEW—was also advertised to speak but did not turn up. In Manchester the night before, AUEW President Scanton defended Wright speaking, saying that Powell and the AUEW both opposed the Common Market.

Powell, the articulate spokesman for Ulster's loyalists and a notorious fascist, gets the blessing of Labour's anti-Common Market forces. This can only strengthen the extreme right, including the NF. It provides them with a legitimate platform amongst the working class for racism and their anti-Irish policies.

violence and politics FINGERING THE REAL VILLAINS

THE PAID HACKS of the ruling class are always prattling on about the terrible troubled times we live in. One of their favourite topics of late is the peril of 'international terrorism'.

Of course, these scribbling lackeys have never had anything to say about the real 'international terrorism' of our age—the imperialist death-machine, which has sown misery and bloodshed across the globe throughout the past century.

ENOUGH

But it is true that as the world capitalist system totters more and more of the exploited say 'Enough' and start to fight back. Nor should we be surprised that those who have suffered under the imperialist heel do not always feel inclined to conduct their fight in a polite and gentleman-

Pressing the police hard!

Journalists and other media workers will be picketing the Home Office at midday on 15 October in protest at the intimidation, harassment, and assault of a number of press photographers by the police during the National Front demonstration on 7 September.

They will demand the automatic dismissal of any policeman guilty of assault, and the abolition of Metropolitan Police press cards, with full recognition of National Union of Journalists press cards.

The anti-repression campaign which was launched by NUJ members last month is already meeting with some success. Three NUJ branches have now unanimously supported a resolution calling on the Union executive to endorse the setting up of a Commission of Inquiry into Interference in the Media by the Police and the State. They are also calling on all media workers to support next Tuesday's picket.

The Action Committee for the Defence of Journalists is now putting forward practical proposals for the elimination of Metropolitan Police press cards, which are selectively issued by the police;

ly fashion.

We must base our attitude to such struggles on an absolutely clear distinction between the violence of the oppressors and that of the oppressed. No matter what tactical disagreements we may have with the latter, we must always stand four-square beside them in the fight against our common enemy—the world capitalist system.

The ruling class will do whatever it can to break this unity. No 'dirty trick' is too low in its book. Among the measures which it adopts is the secret provocation of acts of violence designed to discredit and divide its opponents.

Whenever a violent political act is not publicly claimed by some anti-imperialist or anti-capitalist group this must always be considered a possible explanation (after all, a violent political act would not usually have the desired effect unless it was clearly connected with a certain cause or objective.)

'DEMOCRACY'

Those who think that such an explanation can be rejected in principle in a so-called 'democracy' such as ours are in for a rude awakening.

For years bombs have shaken the political life of Italy and given the police an excuse to persecute left-wing militants. These were blamed on various left-wing groups.

But such a mountain of evidence has now piled up that last month even Italy's Home Secretary—a member of the conservative Christian Democratic Party—admitted that the

bombings had been carried out by the right-wing. What he didn't add was that they had been aided and encouraged in this by scores of 'respectable' capitalist politicians, including members of his own party, whom it suited to have a witch-hunt raging against the left.

Another revealing incident comes from that most 'democratic' of countries—Canada.

'FINGERED'

In late July a bomb went off outside the home of a Montreal grocery tycoon. Something had obviously gone wrong—police found a glove still containing a finger on the scene of the 'crime'.

A quick swoop on local hospitals soon turned up a likely suspect—a man suffering from burns on his body, missing one finger, and whose blood was of the same type as that found on the glove.

Then something else went wrong—it turned out that the suspect was a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP—the 'mounties') of seven years' standing.

The plot thickened when it became known that this was no ordinary cop, but a member of the RCMP's equivalent of Special Branch—the well-named SS (Security Service).

So the next time you feel inclined to dismiss a charge that some violent act or other was a police frame-up—think again.

RAY ALEXANDER

ALL OUT FOR 'TROOPS OUT'

THE IRISH ISSUE was forced into the election arena again last week.

The most important success was the disruption of the Powell meet-

and for means for demonstrators and pickets to identify the police spy photographers who are busily illustrating the estimated two million Special Branch files.

Dick Brinsley

For further information contact: ACDJ, c/o London Freelance Branch, National Union of Journalists, 314 Grays Inn Road, London, WC1.

Black press photographer Caudley George was one of those attacked on 7 September

ing by 'Troops Out' militants in Manchester. This forced the essentially working class audience to come to terms with the fact that Powell's 'Irish turn' was not simply one of his eccentricities, but a basic part of his 'solution' for the ills of British capitalism.

Powell had made it clear earlier in the week that 'Ulster' MP's under

his leadership would concern themselves with much more than the problems the loyalists face in the six counties. As he so movingly put it they would 'take part in the politics of the kingdom'. In other words, Powell was announcing his intention to employ the reactionary loyalists as a base for attacks on the working class

in Britain.

To do this he must be sure of his base in the North of Ireland. He has therefore taken positions which, as the *Observer* newspaper commented, 'make William Craig look like a moderate'.

His description of the British army's actions over the past five years as 'pandering to the tiny minority within the minority' is almost beyond belief. If arrest without trial, concentration camps, torture, intimidation, killings, beatings up, smashing up of homes, and so on, is Powell's idea of 'pandering' then we have a pretty good picture of what he must have in mind for the British working class.

Powell is clearly a serious threat, and the concessions made to his loyalist base by the Labour Government are a scandal. The campaign of interventions into meetings promoted by the IMG was a useful means of exposing these facts. But it will take a lot more to defeat Powell or stymie the intentions of the Labour Government.

Powell depends on the anti-Irish feeling amongst British workers to gain success for his strategy. We must grab this particular bull by the horns and work to build up a movement inside the working class for the immediate withdrawal of British troops.

For the sake of the British working class and of the Irish revolution: All out for the national 'Troops Out' demonstration on 27 October.

BRIAN GROGAN

IN FOCUS

Guildford Bombings

As we go to press no one has yet claimed responsibility for last weekend's bombings in Guildford. On all previous occasions the Provisional IRA has given warnings of bombs they were responsible for. Of course, warnings may have been given in this case. It is not unknown for the forces of the State to refuse to publicise such warnings, as happened with the Old Bailey bombings.

If the Provisional IRA was responsible, the IMG and the *Red Weekly* wish to make it clear that they unconditionally defend the right of the Irish Republican movement to carry on armed actions against British imperialism. Such armed actions are an integral part of any revolutionary strategy for the Irish revolution. There is no reason in principle why such armed actions should be confined to the other side of the Irish Sea.

The response of the Labour Government, Wilson and Jenkins—not to mention the Tory Party and the mass media—has demonstrated their traditional hypocrisy. Profuse crocodile tears have been shed over the fact that four of the people who have been killed are adolescents. But those who shed them have never shown any concern over the fact that these young people were being recruited into the army to do one thing—to kill.

No matter how young they were, British imperialism was quite prepared to put them in the firing line. British imperialism would have had these young soldiers doing the same dirty work as the rest of the British army in Ireland—repressing the Catholic minority, harassing them, internment, breaking up their homes, exacerbating sectarian murders and supporting other loyalist attacks on the Catholic minority in the North.

Nor have these hypocrites shown such concern for the dozens of young Irish militants murdered by the British army. However, if the Provisionals are responsible for these bombings, we think they have made a tactical mistake. Armed actions are correct insofar as they fit into an overall strategy to mobilise mass forces against British imperialism.

At various times in the past, the Provisionals' actions in the Six Counties have fitted into this category. The present bombings in Britain do not. Such actions do not correspond to the present stage of struggle of the nationalist population in Ireland, nor do they contribute to the building of a movement in this country in solidarity with the struggle for self-determination of the Irish nation.

But these are tactical differences. We stand unconditionally by the Irish people in their struggle against British imperialism, whatever form that struggle might take. This also dictates our attitude to the present trials going on in Wakefield. Failure to stand alongside Judith Ward, on trial for the so-called 'M62 bombings', will simply aid the British ruling class in their efforts to use the trial to whip up anti-Irish hysteria.

Indeed, this whole trial is being stage-managed so as to finger large numbers of Sinn Fein militants and provide an excuse for increasing the repression against Irish people in this country. If such moves succeed, they would split the British working class movement and weaken it in the face of ruling class attacks.

We must turn such manoeuvres against the ruling class through mobilising large forces in defence of Republican militants. We must build a movement in this country for the withdrawal of troops which will both aid the Irish revolution and hit the British ruling class hard.



A touching, jolly picture of bosom buddies, Ian Paisley and Enoch Powell, sharing a joke.....no doubt, at the expense of the working-class.



MAO'S CHINA - 25 YEARS ON

Twenty-five years ago this month, Mao Tse-tung proclaimed the People's Republic of China from Peking's Tien-an-men Square. After two decades of armed struggle in the countryside, the leaders of a peasant insurrection now controlled the most populous nation on earth.

For socialists everywhere this was an historic event, second only to the October Revolution of 1917. Twenty-five years on, how has the new State developed?

The first and most striking feature about China today is that the economic imbalances and extremes of wealth and poverty that characterise similar countries like India have been eliminated. This is because China en-

joys the advantages of a planned economy in which production for profit has been abolished. Revolutionaries therefore defend the Chinese social and economic order as historically superior to that of capitalism.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

But this should not blind us to the considerable weaknesses that still remain, which are basically rooted in the leadership's economic conceptions and its bureaucratic and authoritarian methods of work.

The basic tenet of Maoist economic analysis, which it holds in common with Stalinist Russia, is the idea of self-sufficiency and 'socialism in one country'. A nationalist approach of this kind has a strong emotional appeal in China as a result of a century of imperialist humiliation and, more recently, economic sabotage by the Soviet Union.

by Greg Benton

But China's attempt to lift itself by its own bootstraps out of the circle of underdevelopment will undoubtedly fail in the long run. As an economic system, socialism is historically superior to capitalism mainly because of its ability to transcend the narrow boundaries and interests of the bourgeois nation-State. The Maoist policy of economic isolationism runs counter to this basic premise of Marxism.

Furthermore, it has led to considerable problems in both food and industrial production. The rate of growth of grain output, for instance, lags well behind the rate of population growth, and grain targets set in the late 1950s remain unfulfilled by a staggering 100 million tons.

In another key economic indicator, steel, the output of 20 million tons forecast by Mao for 1967 was only reached in 1971. The effects of this important bottleneck are inevitably felt throughout the whole economy, including in agriculture.

CULTURAL REVOLUTION

The Cultural Revolution of 1966-68 was an admission of failure by a section of the Chinese leadership. But because no honest assessment was made of why this had happened, the general economic strategy mapped out then was simply a relapse of the previous abortive policies. In particular, it represented the continued unwillingness of the bureaucracy to

draw the workers and peasants into supervision and control of production and of the decision-making processes at all levels.

China's most valuable, most available, and least exploited raw material is the critical consciousness of her workers and peasants—a truth which Maoism recognises in theory, but not in practice. It is the absence of any organs of mass supervision and control over the State machine which explains the present 'commandism, arrogance and bureaucratic ways' which have briefly come under attack in the 'criticise Confucius' campaign.

The Cultural Revolution was originally designed to wipe out such abuses through popular mobilisations at the base. Powerful mass organisations independent of the establishment soon emerged under this stimulus, leading to a substantial rank-and-file presence in local, regional and national leadership organs, and in the factory committees.

But Maoism's aims for these mass organisations were extremely limited. Once they began—invariably—to challenge the bureaucratic apparatus they were rapidly disbanded or reduced to performing token functions. After this experience it is no wonder that the 'criticise Confucius' campaign has failed to capture the imagination of the masses in the same way.

FOREIGN POLICY

The same features recur when one looks at China's foreign policy.

During the early 1960s the Chinese leadership fiercely criticised Khrushchev's policy of 'peaceful co-existence' and gave practical support to several revolutionary movements abroad. This stimulated an important debate in the world Communist movement.

But the growing right turn at home has been paralleled by a growing conservatism in foreign policy. In Sudan, Ethiopia and elsewhere China has connived at bloody counter-revolution. In Ceylon she joined an unholy alliance of US, British and Soviet forces to suppress the youth movement in 1971. She also advocates a strengthening of NATO and the EEC as a counter-weight to the USSR, and has thus voted by proxy for Heath in the coming British elections.

Workers' states have every right to maintain links with reactionary governments. But once such links hinder

the advance of the revolution, they must be severed.

This is in fact the only policy truly in the interests of the Chinese revolution itself. The only sure defence of the Chinese workers' State is not diplomatic deals but the destruction of imperialism in its nerve centres. The only way out of China's economic impasse is her integration into a world system of workers' states.

CRISIS AT TOP

In 1949 China's new revolutionary Government presented a confident and united face to the world. Twenty-five years later, this unity has crumbled.

Instead, as a tiny handful of ageing leaders conduct their medieval court intrigues inside the Forbidden City, the next generation of cliques and factions jockey for power in the shadows, their fingers locked to Mao's failing pulse.

Maoism as a collective force has run out of solutions in the face of the present multiple crisis. What is needed in China is a system of workers' and peasants' councils of the soviet type, thrown up in the course of a revolution to overthrow the rule of this fumbling bureaucracy.

The Cultural Revolution failed in its aim to renew Chinese society. But to the dismay of the Maoists it did throw up groups who went beyond the role prescribed for them and began to develop a 'ruthless criticism of everything that exists, ruthless in the sense that this criticism will not shrink either from its own conclusions or from conflict with the powers that be' (Marx).

It is from the ranks of this explosive residue of workers, students and peasants that the cadres of the coming Chinese political revolution will be drawn.



Peking, 1949. Mao announces, on 1 October, the founding of the People's Republic of China.

MIR leader shot by police

Setback for Chilean Resistance



Miguel Enriquez, leader of the Chilean MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left), was shot dead by police last Saturday after a two-hour gun battle in the working class suburb of San Miguel in Santiago.

His death is undoubtedly a serious setback for the Chilean resistance. The MIR was the only significant force, which emerged from last year's military coup with its organisation more or less intact, and since then it had played an increasingly important role in the fight against the junta.

Unlike the other major organisations of the resistance, the MIR leadership decided immediately after the coup that all its members would go underground rather than go abroad or seek refuge in

foreign embassies. Despite the loss of its second-in-command, Bautista Van Schouwen, who was arrested and tortured in December, the MIR had recently reached the position where it was able to bring out its own printed newspaper, produced underground.

The extent to which the MIR had won a leading position in the resistance was even recognised by the junta. Not long ago an approach was made suggesting that the political prisoners belonging to the MIR might be released in exchange for a promise that the organisation would refrain for two years from 'active political opposition.' The offer was turned down.

The death of Enriquez will undoubtedly put a temporary brake on the growth of the MIR's influence while the leadership is reorganised. But as his brother Edgardo commented on Monday: 'The death of our general secretary does not in any sense mean the liquidation of the MIR. The gun dropped by Miguel has already been seized by another leader. The struggle will go on until dictator Pinochet hangs high in Santiago.'

Meanwhile it is urgent to mount a campaign in defence of his companion Carmen Castillo, who was wounded in the same gun-battle. Eight months pregnant, she is reportedly being tortured in the Barros-Lucio military hospital.

In particular, the Labour Government must not be allowed to get away with inaction on this issue. The two pickets of the Chilean Embassy in the coming few days must be only a beginning.

PICKET THE EMBASSY!

12 Devonshire Street, London, W1.
Saturday 12 October, 11 am: organised by the MIR, IMG and IS.
Monday 14 October, 12-2 pm: organised by the Chile Solidarity Campaign and supported by the above organisations.

Italian government falls as workers prepare hot autumn



Italian workers demonstrate earlier this year—they mean business no matter what deals the bureaucrats try to cook up

Thirty-seven Governments since the war. On average that's a new one every ten months!

With the collapse last week of Mariano Rumor's Government, Italy's President, Giovanni Leone, is now hurriedly trying to put together a thirty-eighth. But whatever formula he comes up with, the new administration will be terribly weak.

No party in Parliament can secure an overall majority—vital if the ruling class is to deal with the enormous economic crisis against a working class not prepared to take their attacks sitting down.

The Fiat boss, Agnelli, has found this to his cost. This massive car firm, which employs over 200,000 workers, faces the same massive problems as its British counterparts. Last year alone Fiat lost £42 million. This year the figure is expected to be higher still.

The employers have acted viciously. Last Friday they put 65,000 of their workers on a three-day week. They have said that the lock-out will last until February next year—a loss of 32 work-days.

UNION OFFICIALS

In the face of this attack, the role of the trade union officials has been disgusting. Attempts by the Minister of Labour to cut the number of work-days lost to 24 only failed because they were rejected by management—the union officials were quite prepared to accept the arrangement. It's an absolute scandal that bureau-

crats should ever accept the idea of a wage cut, but in the present situation their treachery has reached new heights. Inflation in Italy is running at an annual rate of 25 per cent, and it's officially predicted that unemployment will top the one million mark this winter. Earlier this summer, what's more, new tax laws imposed by the Government jacked up the monthly budget for the average family by £30.

In spite of all these attacks, the working class is still very strong. At a demonstration held in Milan at the time of the tax laws, tens of thousands of workers shouted down the gutless bureaucrats on the platform with chants of 'General Strike'.

HOT AUTUMN

The prospects for the autumn are very clear—it's going to be very hot indeed. Already the temperature is rising. A one-day stoppage has been called for all workers in Turin, centre of the Fiat empire. Whatever the intentions of the bureaucrats, the workers won't stop at a token one-day protest.

All this presents huge problems for the ruling class. The prospect of mass militant action by the Italian working class, the economy in tatters—the Stock Market index fell by 20 per cent last month—and now President Leone has to patch together a coalition government which is destined to fall almost before it's risen. We're going to hear a great deal about Italy in the coming months...

BOB MURPHY

The emergency meeting a fortnight ago between the Congrave Government, the farmers, the employers and the trade unions gives fresh notice—together with the continuing row in the Irish Labour Party—of an approaching political and social crisis in the South of Ireland. Northern struggle and a rapid worsening of the economic situation, many of the major political institutions are going to come under great pressure in the near future.

AFTER SUNNINGDALE

It is the failure of the Sunningdale agreement which has really discredited the Dublin Government.

They had presented Sunningdale as the only way forward in the situation, using it to justify their passivity in the face of continuous British Army repression, internment, and loyalist assassination campaigns in the North. Furthermore, it had been used as the excuse for stepping up censorship of the media, repression against the Republicans, and campaigns designed to root out the nationalist traditions and culture in the South.

These actions were all based on the establishment of a pro-Westminster political alliance consisting of the Coalition Government parties (Fine Gael and Labour),

STORM CLOUDS OVER DUBLIN

the opposition Fianna Fail, and the Six Counties-based SDLP. The collapse of Sunningdale has broken up this cosy arrangement, and the former allies are now openly feuding amongst themselves.

The Dublin Government's response to the post-Sunningdale situation was to fall in behind the British Labour Government's concessions to the protestant hardliners. Using their notorious 'low-profile' formula, they have argued against saying or doing anything on the Six Counties that might offend the loyalists.

The SDLP, dependent on the Northern Catholics for their support, have therefore had no choice but to come out in open opposition to the Government. This is their only hope of preventing large sections of the Catholic community—fearful of right-wing pogroms—from abandoning

them for the Republican movement as they did in summer 1971.

'LOW-PROFILE' KITE

Meanwhile the Dublin Government have flown another 'low-profile' kite. Justice Minister Cooney recently came out in favour of a referendum to scrap Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution as 'a gesture of reparation' (!) to the loyalist community in the North. Scrapping these ambiguous clauses in the Constitution would definitively limit the jurisdiction of the Dublin Government to the 26 Counties of the South.

Although the sole practical effect of these Articles has been to allow Six County citizens to obtain Irish passports, there was an immediate hostile response to Cooney's suggestion from another former partner in the pro-Sunningdale alliance,

the opposition Fianna Fail. No doubt feeling the pressure of strong pro-Republican tendencies within his own ranks, party leader Jack Lynch threatened to break the bi-partisan policy on the North if Cooney's suggestion was pursued.

Foreign Minister Garret Fitzgerald has in response shelved the plan, describing it as as correct but premature.

LABOUR PARTY

It is within the Irish Labour Party that these developments have had the most explosive effect.

Since the party came under the domination of Conor Cruise O'Brien and entered the Coalition Government, there has been a latent opposition within the party, the 'Liaison of the Left'. This summer one of its leading spokesmen, Matt Merrigan, submitted a document on the Northern situation to the Administrative Council of the party.

In opposition to 'low-profile' O'Brien, the document commented that:

.... It is apparent that the Government, and that includes Fine Gael and the Labour Party, are now prepared to disengage from Northern Ireland in such a way that the minority position regarding a solution with an Irish dimension is undermined and Loyalist/Unionist supremacy underpinned. The SDLP bitterly resent this giving of minority hostages to Loyalist fortune.

'The minority and the SDLP (regardless of its role in the Executive) now stand exposed and isolated without even the solace of a friendly concern from afar for the lives and homes of the minority community in an unfriendly, hostile and potentially murderous situation on a mass scale.

'This leaves the IRA as being the first and only guarantor of minority lives and destinies and exposes the mocking Judas-like role of Dublin to trenchant and bitter criticism by spokesmen of the SDLP, particularly Paddy Devlin.'

In response to this social-democratic plea, Conor Cruise O'Brien wrote a 'doomsday' memorandum defending the Government's position. In it he argued that in a civil war situation all and sundry would be so helpless against the mobilised loyalists—that the social crisis throughout Ireland would be so acute—that anything beyond the present 'low-profile' policy would be disastrous.

Both memoranda, which were supposed to have only limited circulation within the Labour Party leadership, were leaked to the Press a fortnight ago. The effect has been to deepen the split between the Coalition Government, the SDLP, and Fianna Fail, and to earn Cruise O'Brien—for all his pains—the title 'perfidious republican' among the loyalists.

Where Fitzgerald, Cooney and O'Brien all go wrong of course is in their argument that Orangism and Loyalism are defensive reactions by the Northern protestants to Irish nationalism, and that concessions and 'reparations' are therefore necessary and legitimate.

They misrepresent history. Orangism and Loyalism are expressions of the privileged caste positions of Northern protestants. Far from being appeased by conciliatory overtures, they are encouraged by these signs of weakness to go on the offensive.

But why O'Brien & Co. go wrong has nothing to do with their misreading of history. It is because national independence is redundant from the point of view of the Southern capitalists. They, like us, recognise that it can only be achieved by a massive mobilisation of the working population ('putting the country on a war footing' in 'low-profile, doomsday language'), which would threaten them as well as British imperialism.

ECONOMY

It is not the place of this article to give an in-depth analysis of the crisis facing the 26 County economy, which led to the conference in Dublin on 28 September between the Government and representatives of the farmers, employers, and trade unions. But we can briefly outline some of its features, and thus give an indication of the tremendous struggles which are likely to break out in the near future.

Since the mid-1950s the main strategy of the Southern capitalists has been to attract foreign industry to the country by offering huge tax concessions and advertising the existence of a large reserve of cheap, skilled labour and easy access to the British market. From this they hoped to get an economic spin-off of native-based industry.

But the types of industry which were attracted by this policy generally tended to be components factories owned by international monopolies. They are therefore very vulnerable to slumps in the business cycle such as the present world-wide recession.

So there is now a likelihood of widespread redundancies in this sector. Already the workers are responding in some areas with factory occupations and preventing the removal of machinery.

WAGE FREEZE?

The level of inflation is so acute that the Government is calling for a wage freeze for a year. This will clearly provoke struggles between the trade unions and the Government, and also heighten the differences in the Labour Party over remaining in the Coalition.

Given the weight of agricultural production in the Irish economy, and the deep crisis in the EEC agricultural policy, we can also predict profound crises in Ireland among the farmers, and big possibilities of struggles and disruption of production in this sector.

It is this situation of economic crisis which makes the weakening of political institutions brought on by the collapse of Sunningdale so important, and stresses the need to develop the kind of action programme for all 32 counties of Ireland for which our comrades of the Revolutionary Marxist Group (Irish section of the Fourth International) are now fighting.

OSCAR GREGAN



Demonstration of the Workers' Commissions

Strike wave hits Spain

by
Jose Manzano

Thirty thousand workers are now on strike in Spain.

At Seat in Barcelona, more than 10,000 car workers have downed tools in disruptive lightning strikes. The workers are demanding an extra £27 a month and a 40-hour week. More important, they are also calling for the right of free assembly and the right to strike.

At another car factory, Fasa-Renault, 14,000 workers have taken similar action. Management replied by sacking 145 of the strikers, and the police backed them up. At a demonstration protesting against the sackings, they arrested eight strikers and pulled off the miraculous feat of wounding a number of workers when they 'shot over the heads of the demonstrators'.

It's a similar story in Madrid. Over 800 workers at the Robert Bosch electrical factory took strike action for more pay. This time management were 'soft'—they only sacked five strikers. When the workers occupied the plant, the police went in and viciously broke up the occupation.

Nor are factory workers the only ones taking strike action. A number of political prisoners have gone on hunger strikes. In Saragossa, two of the 27 strikers protesting their conditions have now been hospitalised.

In Bilbao prison the inmates have

taken action in support of two fellow prisoners who were freed by court order only to be immediately re-arrested just outside the prison gates. Their crime is that they are suspected members of the Basque nationalist organisation, the ETA.

GENERAL STRIKE

Meanwhile very little has so far been heard of the one-day general strike proposed by the illegal Workers' Commissions for the beginning of this month.

The Spanish Communist Party which dominates the Workers' Commissions, wants this to be a tranquil protest. This would show responsible opposition to the regime, and thereby persuade 'progressive' sections of the ruling class to join the CP in a pact against the dictatorship.

Such a pact would be an extension of the 'Democratic Junta' formed in July, which as the *Morning Star* put it 'includes representatives of all shades of Spanish democratic opinion from Monarchists to Communists, the powerful Workers' Commissions, employers, Socialists, and right-wing Liberals'.

It may be news to our readers that Monarchists, employers and right-wing Liberals are the real allies

of the workers' movement. It will certainly be news to the Seat workers that their employers might be 'democratic'.

No, the only true defender of the democratic rights of the working class is the workers' movement itself. Whilst the CP gropes for a repeat performance of the events in Portugal, Spanish workers will be most confused to learn that the Junta's demand for the integration of Spain into the Common Market is supposed to be in their interests.

MILITANT ACTION

But the CP's silence is understandable. The present strike wave hardly provides the best climate for a calm one-day stoppage—especially as it is the Workers' Commissions themselves which are organising the onslaught of militant action.

But the stoppage cannot be postponed forever. The very action by the workers at Seat, Bosch and elsewhere will act as tremendous pressure for the go-ahead. And that means that when the stoppage does take place, it will not be the whimper of the CP's pressure politics, but the bang of the Spanish working class preparing for an all-out general strike to bring down the dictatorship.

Here in Britain we must be at the ready to mount effective solidarity, so that we can play our part in sealing Franco's final downfall.

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The fight against the right after April 25

THE 25 APRIL coup which swept away the fascist regime created big headaches for the capitalists. They had backed the move, afraid that the old regime was leading them up a blind alley of expensive wars in the colonies and growing workers' struggles at home.

Their ambition was to have a nice, strong conservative Government at home which would have the necessary trappings of bourgeois democracy to keep the workers' movement happy and allow Portugal's full-scale integration into the Common Market, but which would in reality rest on the army.

SPINOLA

What better candidate to head up such a regime than General Spínola, a man whose suitability for the job was proved by the fact that in one hectic career, he had served with Franco's army in Spain, Hitler's army in Russia, and masterminded the use of Vietnam-style tactics in the African colony of Guine-Bissau.

But things went wrong with this manoeuvre right from the word 'go'. The mass of Portuguese people saw the coup as opening up the road for them to fight for all the things they had been denied during the decades of fascist rule: freedom of speech and political organisation, the right to their own class organisations, better wages and living conditions.

As a result the coup was followed by a massive wave of struggle in which workers took things into their own hands. They demanded the dismantling of the old fascist police machine and the punishment of those associated with the old regime. They launched a big round of strikes and factory occupations to back up demands for shorter hours, paid holidays, and a minimum monthly wage of 6000 escudos (£100).

RANK & FILE SOLDIERS

Faced with this mass movement, supported and joined by thousands of rank-and-file soldiers and sailors, the ruling class and their political flunkies had to give way on many things. Only the willingness of the Communist Party to sell the birthright of the Portuguese working class for a few miserable crumbs allowed the capitalists to pull some of the fat out of the fire.

The Communist Party joined a Government headed by a conservative capitalist politician, and in which a majority of members were

either military representatives or the outright flunkies of big business. They received two miserable posts in this Government (later reduced to one), and in exchange for this did everything in their power to call off the mass struggle. They opposed strikes and demonstrations, and backed every move made by Spínola and the Government, no matter how reactionary.

A press law was adopted which provided for heavy fines or outright banning of newspapers which stepped on the Government's toes. Among the 'offences' laid down in this law was 'insulting the Head of State' (Spínola).

The Government enacted a minimum wage law giving only 3300 escudos (£13 a week), and allowed big increases in prices. A trade union law was adopted which made occupations illegal, and placed so many restrictions on the 'right to strike' that it became a sick joke.

by

Chris Balfour

When workers went into struggle against these efforts to bail out the Portuguese capitalists at their expense the Government cracked down viciously. The post office workers' strike was broken by the threat to use the army in a massive scabbing operation. Striking seamen and airport ground crews were drafted into the army and forced to return to work under threat of court-martial.

All of these moves were backed completely by the Communist Party. During the postal workers' strike they even put their own twopence worth in by organising mobs to stone the Lisbon central post office and occupy the Porto postal workers' union offices to demand that the workers return to work. Little wonder, then, given these dedicated efforts by the Government (backed by the Communist Party) to restore the power of the capitalist class, that the right-wing should have started to reorganise. Among the dozens of political parties that sprang up after the coup, there were several organisations of the extreme right. Right-wingers continued to have important sympathisers among the capitalists and to hold important positions of authority in the Government and industry.

Renewed fascist activity was at first directed against black immigrant workers in Lisbon who sympathised

with the liberation movements in the colonies. Individual black militants were beaten up in the streets, and armed fascist bands attacked houses which black militants used as living quarters and political centres.

SHOOTING

When a mass rally was organised to protest against these attacks, and to express solidarity with the colonial freedom struggle, the Government replied by banning it and sending in the army and police to break it up. In the course of this operation the riot police (heavily infested with right-wing sympathisers) opened fire on the crowd, killing one militant and wounding three.

Despite the fact that the militant killed by the police was an army officer and member of the Communist Party-controlled Portuguese Democratic Movement, the CP did nothing to organise any mass protest against this outrage.

In the month that followed, right-wing activity—both public and secret—multiplied tremendously. But neither the Government nor the Communist Party did anything to resist it. In fact, militant workers who understood the danger from the right and the need for mass action to smash it had to fight the CP every step of the way.

When the workers on the big Lisbon daily newspaper, *Jornal de Comercio*, launched a strike and occupation demanding the firing of their right-wing manager, Carlos Machado (now under arrest because of his activities), the CP told them they were wrong. The clearing out of fascist elements was a 'secondary question', they said.

When the country's newspaper workers decided to stage a 24-hour sympathy strike after the *Jornal* workers were evicted from their plant by the army, the CP opposed it. They said that the Portuguese press was now 'free and open', and that the strikers

would be violating the 'right of the people to information'. They encouraged workers on the Lisbon daily *O Seculo* to scab on the strike. Only the decision of the *O Seculo* workers to stop production prevented a bloody clash between militant mass pickets and army units sent to ensure that the paper was produced.

When thousands of militant workers from the giant Lisnave shipyards stopped work and staged a demonstration demanding tougher measures against the right-wing the Communist Party denounced them for 'hostility towards the Government and disrespect for democratic order'.

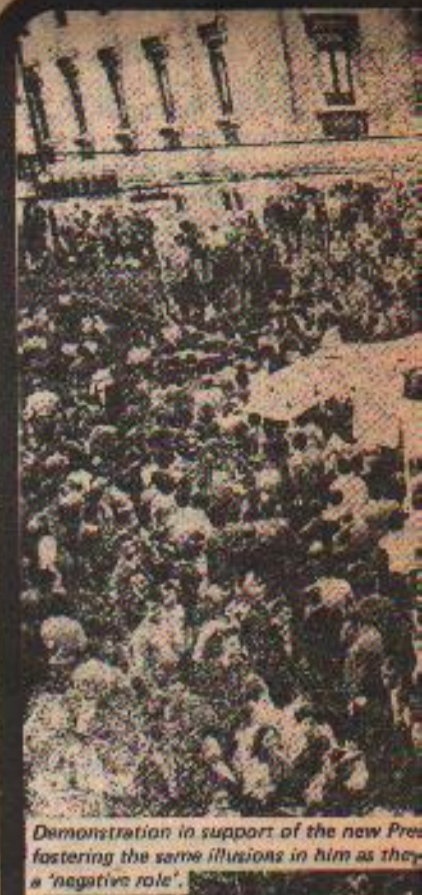
TREACHEROUS COURSE

Throughout all this time, then, the Government and the Communist Party did everything in their power to sabotage the growing anti-fascist movement. But thousands of militants refused to follow the CP's treacherous course, and agreed with the words of the Lisnave workers, who said:

'Our struggle for the purging of reactionaries is not a secondary struggle. It is a struggle of first-rate importance, because it unites us in a permanent and militant struggle against all the manoeuvres and manifestations of fascism, which are constantly being re-born from the rotting corpse of monopoly capitalism.'

Our Common Struggle

a monthly information bulletin published by the Portuguese Workers' Coordinating Committee. No. 2 due out soon. Ten issues for 70p. From: PWCC, 18 Fleet Road, London, NW3.



Demonstration in support of the new President, fastener the same illusions in him as they a 'negative role'.

Portugal down

LAST WEEK PORTUGAL'S big victory over the country's day, without pay.

But even this blatant attack anti-fascist movement of Portugal's ruling class. A defeat they have suffered, or lists can now count to preserve



Shutting up the 'Silent Majority'

PRESIDENT SPINOLA was the 'great white hope' of Portugal's capitalists and conservative politicians.

They tried as early as July to pull off a manoeuvre inside the Government which would have put off the general election planned for March, strengthened the power of the President, and called a Presidential election instead (with Spínola as the only candidate, of course).

This move failed because the young officers of the Armed Forces Movement were not prepared to go back on their democratic principles so soon. So the conservative Prime Minister Palma Carlos got the boot. He was replaced by a military man, the present Prime Minister Vasco Goncalves, and the army took over all the 'hot spots' in the Government (the Ministries of Labour and Information).

In the face of this setback, Spínola began to use his position as President to publicly encourage the right-wing. On every major public occasion he delivered a speech about the need for 'order' and 'authority'. One after another these speeches became more openly right-wing. In a speech delivered at the inauguration of the new commander of the Republican National Guard (a semi-military police force formed under the fascist reg-

ime but kept up after the 25 April coup) he even praised the 'great thirty-year tradition of the Republican National Guard'.

Then, on 10 September, he called for the 'silent majority' to speak out against fascism. Probably as part of a pre-arranged plot, this call was immediately taken up by right-wingers across the country, who called for a massive demonstration of the 'silent majority' in Lisbon on 28 September to support the President.

WELL-OILED MACHINE

A well-oiled and financed propaganda machine then went into action. A big Lisbon public relations firm was hired to put posters throughout the city. Slides and tape recordings boasting the demonstration were distributed to all cinemas. On the Thursday before the demonstration was due to be held a bullfight sponsored by the Veterans' League, and attended by Spínola, was turned into a huge right-wing rally in support of the planned demonstration, after the right-wing Liberal Party bought up a big block of seats.

Faced with this threat, the workers' organisations began to prepare for a showdown. Most unions denounced the demonstration, and the transport unions pledged themselves to

take all possible action to prevent demonstrators from out of town reaching Lisbon.

The Communist Party issued a statement attacking the demonstration, but issued no clear-cut call for mass action.

They preferred to lobby within the Government to get Spínola to dissociate himself from the march.

But Spínola refused to budge. And information began to emerge that under cover of the demonstration the right-wing was planning some form of violent coup.

Finally, on Friday afternoon, the Communist Party decided that it had to act. Its physical existence was in danger, and it knew that even if it did nothing thousands of workers would go into struggle anyway, leaving it politically discredited before the entire working class. It therefore issued a call, through the unions and the Portuguese Democratic Movement, for the setting up of workers' road blocks on all roads into the city.

The Lisbon working class responded massively. The city was quickly sealed off. All incoming vehicles were stopped and searched by workers, who confiscated firearms and distributed anti-fascist leaflets.

This was the first big setback for Spínola and his right-wing backers,



Soldiers arresting a member of the PIDE (secret police) after 25 April. Such use of the army against the right has been seen again recently. Many right-wingers still infect the State and industry.



General Costa Gomes. The CP is now Spinola, who they now admit played

guesses right— but not out!

PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO CELEBRATE ITS
winning in its own way—by asking everyone to go to work on Sun-

all properly blessed by the Catholic Church), to harness the mass
workers to the capitalist chariot will not calm the troubled minds
day's work is nowhere near enough to make up for the big political
pensate for the lack of any firm instrument on which the capital-
class power.

but they decided to go ahead with their plans anyway. Spinola rejected Prime Minister Goncalves' demand that he ban the demonstration.

Instead, the Minister of Information, a Spinola supporter, suspended all newspapers and regular radio programmes, and broadcast a speech calling on the workers to take down their roadblocks, and pledging that the Government would do whatever was required to allow the 'silent majority' demonstration to go ahead.

PRISONERS

The Prime Minister and the military Governor of Lisbon, another member of the left-wing in the army, were called to the Presidential palace early Saturday morning, and it appears, practically held prisoner.

But the workers refused to budge an inch. And then the important COPCON army units (a special secur-

ity wing of the army under the command of the Lisbon military Governor) began to go into action, rounding up suspected right-wing supporters. This further weakened the right, and showed Spinola that he couldn't count on the support of the army.

At that point the President capitulated. Goncalves was released, the Minister of Information's broadcast was replaced by an Armed Forces Movement message telling the people to remain on the alert against fascist manoeuvres, and Spinola banned the 'silent majority' demonstration. The following Monday he resigned as President.

It is not clear exactly what the right wing was planning. Spinola and his main backers probably wanted to set off a political crisis that would allow them to strengthen the powers of the President, reshuffle the Government to include more conservatives, and perhaps put off the general election and hold a Presidential election in-



Forward or back?

Despite the big defeat imposed on the reactionaries, the concrete gains won by the working class were only a fraction of what they could have been. Certainly, the danger from the right is far from over.

The new President, General Costa Gomes, is cut from exactly the same cloth as Spinola. A former chief of military operations in Mozambique he is a long-standing colleague and close personal friend of Spinola.

There is no doubt that if the Communist Party had set out after 25 April with a clear-cut policy aimed at strengthening the workers' movement and turning the new situation to the advantage of the working class, they could have easily taken power during the recent upheaval. They would have had full backing for such a move from a highly conscious and determined working class, mass sympathy among farm workers and peasants in the countryside, and massive support within the ranks of the army.

If the Communist Party was not actually able to take such a move it was a direct product of its own class-collaborationist policies. By supporting the repression of militant workers, and such reactionary measures as the press law and the trade union law, they weakened and confused the workers' movement.

GOVERNMENT

By participating in the Government alongside all sorts of reactionaries they allowed Spinola, the military brass, and capitalist parties like the 'Popular Democratic Party' to claim that they represented alternative ways forward.

Instead of working to build up a solid core of supporters of the workers' movement within the armed forces, they left the officers to re-establish 'order' and military discipline as

they saw fit. When three officers were placed under arrest for refusing to take part in the army's scabbing plans against the postal workers' strike, the CP did nothing to support them. When rank-and-file soldiers went on strike demanding shorter hours and better conditions, the CP didn't lift a finger.

MASSIVE DISPLAY

But the massive display of unity and fighting determination mounted by the working class could have wiped out all these failings—if the Communist Party had been prepared to base its policy on this power, rather than on deals with the military brass and the capitalist politicians.

At the very least, the Government could have been forced to make major concessions to the workers' movement—repeal the press and union laws, grant the 6000 escudo minimum wage, recognise the authority of workers' and soldiers' anti-fascist committees to carry out the job of 'cleaning out' right-wing elements.

cy on the part of the workers' movement to demonstrate they can solve the crisis—that the way out is not through a return to a fascist Portugal but through a struggle for a socialist Portugal.

The Communist Party rejects such a course, however. The head of the Portuguese CP, Alvaro Cunhal, recently told an interviewer from the French daily newspaper *Le Monde*: 'The economic situation is difficult. The immediate prospects are unfavourable and we have reason to believe that things will get worse in the near future. The levers of control remain in the hands of the monopoly groups who are not "good friends" of the new set-up.'

NATIONALISATIONS

But Cunhal makes it quite clear that he is not prepared to fight for effective solutions that are unacceptable to the army and the capitalist politicians. When asked about the possibility of nationalisations he replied: 'Objectively this is necessary, and it is economically inevitable. But if this solu-



The Communist Party has done nothing to aid the struggle of workers, like those of Mabor tyre factory, now on strike for several months for a minimum wage of £100 a month and a 40-hour week.

stead.

But it is virtually certain that other forces on the far right had much more violent plans, including possibly the assassination of the Prime Minister. It may be that Spinola & Co. knew about this and thought it would serve their own ends—getting a few 'trouble-makers' out of the way and allowing them to pose as 'moderates' and 'democrats'.

GRAVE THREAT

In any event, the demonstration represented a grave threat to the democratic rights and class interests of the Portuguese workers. The smashing of this manoeuvre was a big victory for the working class. But it also represented a big setback for the capitalist class, who once again find themselves without any reliable way to secure their class power and guarantee their economic interests.

But not one of these things was won. The Communist Party is totally unprepared to mount any sort of struggle to strengthen the workers' power, and instead is happy to settle for a new face in the Presidential Palace and vague promises from the army chiefs.

This is a really treacherous, and potentially disastrous, policy. The right-wing threat is going to get much worse. Spinola's resignation makes a split within the army almost inevitable, and Spinola can now become a rallying point for all right-wingers—military or civilian—against the Government.

TREACHEROUS

Moreover, the loss of the colonies and the growing recession in the world economy all bear bad news for Portugal's capitalists. The only way out is to force the Portuguese workers to bear the massive burdens of the crisis—both to attract more foreign investors and to guarantee the profits of the Portuguese capitalists.

But the workers, after their recent victories, will not take such attacks lying down. The result will be a deep crisis in the Portuguese economy tied to a big wave of industrial struggles. This is perfect ground for the right-wing to go onto the offensive.

The right-wing in the army will be strengthened, as today's 'progressive' officers begin to have second thoughts about 'democracy', when forced to choose between the working class and the capitalist class. In this they will be followed by sections of the middle class.

The only way to minimise this rightward drift would be an aggressive poli-

tion proves to be impractical—not being written into the programme of the Armed Forces Movement—it will be necessary to find something else. We don't want to create points of division which will make developments more difficult'.

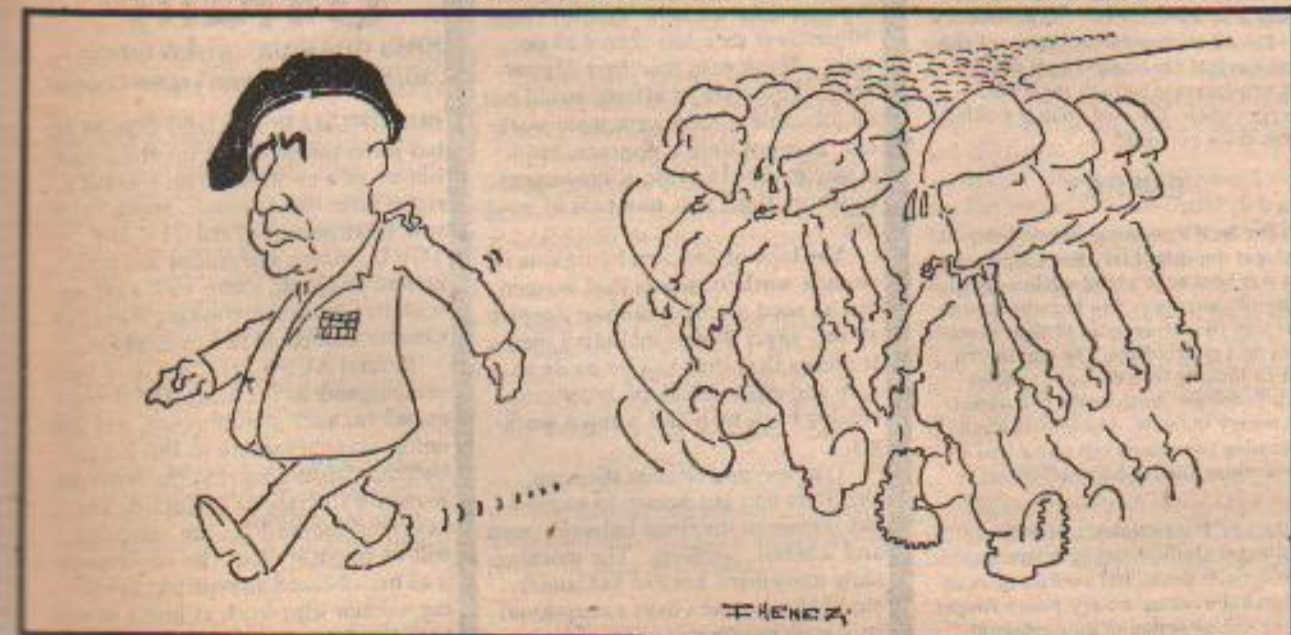
It is clearly up to forces to the left of the Communist Party—the organisations of the revolutionary left and those militant workers who have seen through the treachery of the CP—to mobilise the might of the workers' movement against the right-wing threat. Through the creation of anti-fascist vigilance committees across the country, the establishment of similar bodies among the rank-and-file of the armed forces, and the fight for their rights to be recognised by the Government and the military chiefs, the mass anti-fascist movement can be pushed forward.

Through direct action—mass demonstrations, strikes, and actions to prevent the right organising—the reactionaries can be blocked.

DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLY

Such a movement could link its actions to demands for immediate elections for a democratic assembly and the formation of a Government of the mass workers' organisations (Communist Party, Socialist Party, trade unions), which would base itself on the organised might of the workers' rather than deals with the capitalists. In this way it could carve out another way forward for the Portuguese masses than that represented by the Communist Party and its capitalist allies.

This is the only way to effectively smash the right-wing threat and guarantee the democratic gains of 25 April—through mass struggle and the fight for a socialist Portugal.





As the latest Government figures are released, proving that workers' living standards have been slashed by 4 per cent over the past year, **PAUL SMITH** looks at the coming wages fight and the tactics necessary to roll back the bosses' offensive.

If we look back at last year's progress of workers' incomes, the picture is not all too rosy. Some groups, like teachers, suffered cuts of 8% in as many months. Overall the decline in living standards for an average industrial worker was running at about 5-6% per year.

All those figures, which don't look bad to the bosses, look worse to the worker when you add the rate of unemployment. This is now running at about 800,000. The most 'optimistic' forecasters say that it will be difficult to keep it under one million this winter. So despite the defeat of the ruling class's political strategy when Heath fell, despite the tremendous power of the trade union movement, unemployment is increasing and living standards are falling. Fords, at the time of writing, have still not settled. Finally, as well as all these, this winter's pay struggles have still to come.

NEXT ROUND

A glance at the next 'round' of claims shows a mixed bag in terms of the strength of the workers involved. The starting date for discussion on the building workers claim is 1 November. After a battle at the UCATT conference last summer a demand was lodged for 87% for unskilled and 107% for skilled workers on the basic rates.

George Smith, general secretary of UCATT, has already scabbed on this claim. Building workers have had no rise since 1972, after their bitter national strike. But Smith now says that he doesn't want the whole claim because he agrees with the social contract. Smith is trying to use the slump in the trade (only 9000 private houses were started last August—a half of the total for the same month last year) to defeat his own rank-and-file.

The Executive of the NUM (whose claim is one to be settled at the end of October) refused to accept the divisive and miserly productivity offer of the NCB only after a sharp battle

with militant representatives of the rank-and-file.

Already Agricultural Workers Union representatives, whose claim of 42% (a minimum wage of £35 per week) goes to arbitration on 1 January, have announced intentions to retreat. NALGO and the Bank Clerks Union leaderships positively crowed with triumph at managing to keep their members' wage increases down below 14 per cent.

Still to come are 1 million local authority manual workers (1 November); 220,000 hospital ancillary workers (15 December); and garage workers. The ancillary workers, and the local authority workers are both seeking an extension of the threshold agreements.

TASKS

Several important tasks face militants if the coming struggles are to be victorious:

The fight against the bureaucrats. If Labour is returned, the national struggle against the bureaucrats will be decisive. In most cases the social contract will be used to flout the democratic decisions of last summer's union conferences.

We need a reply to the bureaucrats which strengthens our resolve by really doing what the 'social contract' pretends to do. We need protection of our living standards. Demands for a 'nil-norm' threshold, plus an increase to raise our standards since the last claim, will undercut all the hot air about whose benefit the social contract is in. When the National Committee of the AUEW meets in November to discuss its claim for 1975 the demand for a nil-norm threshold must be coupled to the 50 per cent increase in basic rates now being discussed by militants. In that way the rank-and-file engineering worker will see a positive policy that gives paramount protection against inflation.

Low pay and equal pay. The pattern of the settlements over this winter will set the stage for 1975. A glance at the list of claims shows big

sections of the low paid moving into the wages battle. A number of women workers' struggles (SEI in Manchester, Wingrove & Rogers in Liverpool) show that a big push for equal pay has the possibility of gathering steam.

An all-out fight is needed now, to organise the trade union movement around these struggles. The social contract is supposed to 'aid' low paid workers. But the only real aid is trade union solidarity—so this must be built now. A big wave of industrial action is needed for the implementation of a £30 minimum wage as a first step to a £40 minimum. All the furious regrading of women workers to avoid equal pay must be smashed by trade union action.

For one, organised push. The strength of the bureaucrats in unions like the Agricultural Workers and UCATT will make its impact. Many of the most bitter struggles over the winter will be only factory-wide or company-wide. Some will be for the extension of the threshold.

Issues other than wages will dominate many fights. We know we need to protect our living standards. We know we need extensive nationalisation to protect jobs in many industries. We know that by spring millions of workers will have been involved in one fight or another.

This fight must not be allowed to wear itself out in small rushes at the enemy. We need to organise towards a general strike to impose our own programme of demands: including a nil-norm threshold, nationalisation of firms declaring redundancies, equal pay and a decent minimum wage. These are all issues on which we will have to fight anyway.

We can start by taking up the fight at Fords. It's obvious to any trade unionist, in any car plant in Britain, that a united fight over wages—coupled with the demand to nationalise the car industry—would have tremendous power. But at the moment there is no organisation even to begin to discuss such a programme. We must work for a national conference of representatives of the main car plants in Britain to deal with the crisis in the industry.

Such meetings, in many industries, would mark a turning point in the fight against the capitalists and the social contract.

No incomes policy under capitalism. No matter which party wins the election, the next Government will be forced by the economic crisis to try and introduce a statutory incomes policy, to make the workers pay for the ills of British capitalism.

A campaign should be mounted now throughout the labour movement around the slogan 'no incomes policy under capitalism'.

The trade union movement should make it clear that any attempt by whatever Government—to impose a wage freeze or incomes policy will be met by a general strike.

are worried about their positions. The CEGB set a target of 14 million tons and already they are one million down on this figure. This is a drop of some five million from last year's stocks.

BSC have not announced their figures, but two months ago they were 15 per cent down. The capitalist crisis is seriously affecting the energy industry.

The oil crisis at the beginning of this year was just the beginning. It forced the employers to rethink their whole energy policy. The coal crisis is making them think yet again.

ENERGY

The NCB's proposed productivity deal was important for the ruling class not just because it would weaken the unity of the miners, but because it went part way to solving some of their short-term energy problems. The employers will be looking for new ways to solve their problems—both inside and outside the energy industry. The miners when discussing their claim can give a lead to the working class counter-offensive.

Not by Joe Gormley's friendly post-together with the employers, nor by productivity deals. The answers lie in an integrated workers' energy policy fought for by united action of all workers in the energy industry.

The Coal Board's productivity deal is dead, writes **BOB MURPHY**. After a campaign by the left-wing, the National Union of Mineworkers' executive finally voted by 21 votes to four to reject the deal.

The executive's decision was a vital step in maintaining the unity of the miners. The Coal Board's offer introduced wide discrepancies in pay threatening the unity which the miners used so effectively in the last two national strikes. But the picture is not as rosy as it seems.

SAME

The executive resolution moved by Arthur Scargill stated that the NUM might accept a productivity deal if it were 'based upon overall output per manshift and gives the same amount of bonus to everyone in the coal mining industry, irrespective of job performed'—from Coal Board Chairman to the tea ladies in his office, as Scargill put it.

An amendment was accepted from NUM president Joe Gormley calling on all miners 'to ensure that we meet the production targets which we have jointly agreed as our objectives for this year and future years.'

The NCB has set a target for next year of 120 million tons of deep-mined coal. This target stays until 1985. With increased productivity this means pit closures and redundancies.

All discussion on the claim must take this into account. Otherwise all talk about unity is simply hot air. Before any talk of a productivity deal the NCB are running down some pits and shifting production to more productive ones.

The question is who is going to benefit from increased productivity. With pit closures on the way, miners should demand work-sharing with no loss of pay to accompany any rise in productivity.

Such a plan would protect the miners from redundancy and give a lead to workers in other industries faced with redundancies. The miners led the struggle against the Tories, fighting on behalf of all workers against the Government's incomes policy. Now they can give a lead on how to fight redundancies.

This is all the more important with the latest news of the coal production figures. The NCB has announced that coal stocks are down to 6.5 million tons, exactly half what they were this time last year.

LARGEST

The two largest consumers of coal, the Central Electricity Generating Board and the British Steel Corporation

ALL

WINGROVE & ROGERS We're all more militant than ever!

Until two years ago the women at Wingrove and Rogers on Merseyside had never dreamt of joining a union. It was only after a strike at the Kirby branch that they realised the trade unions could work for their benefit. So they joined the AUEW.

But it's a long road to travel between joining a union and really carrying out an effective struggle against a firm that has, for 50 years, lined its pockets by imposing bad conditions and appallingly low pay on women workers.

The accompanying interview with a shop steward from Wingrove's tells its own story. At first, Marion's answers may seem to be those of any militant trade unionist. But they are more than that. They show how women workers learned through a long and bitter strike that only through their own activities will they organise support from, not only other trade unionists, but even from the AUEW itself.

POLICE

The strikers have been confronted by large numbers of police on a scale not seen in any other recent workers' struggle in the area. They have experienced a vicious, slandering press campaign which charged them with beating scabs, threatening them with acid and putting ropes across the gates. They have been dragged into the local election debate by a Conservative candidate, who has tabled a question, in the Commons on 'this sinister state of affairs'.

And they have fought back—by invading the *Express* offices and demanding an apology, and by going to a major Labour election meeting, demanding support from MPs Heffer, Foot and Fiddie Loyden.

At first the women believed they could 'go it alone' and rely solely on the strength of the AUEW. During their 17 week struggle this attitude has changed: They realise that they cannot win on their own, and after six weeks they appealed for support from fellow trade unionists: financial help, blacking and picketing.

But though the women have learned how crucial this support is, unfortunately the labour movement as a whole has yet to learn that women are a vital section of the workforce.

CHEAP LABOUR

Forty per cent of the workforce are full-time women workers—not including part-time workers—and, of these, 90 per cent earn less than £20 per week. Many earn less than 25p per hour. This state of affairs would not be tolerable if they were male workers. It is not only a disgrace, but it is suicidal for the labour movement to ignore these vast numbers of workers.

The lack of concern by unions for women workers means that women can be used as cheap labour, keeping all the wages down—including men's. It means that they can be made to scab and strike-break in disputes involving both men and women workers.

The unions are thus allowing the State and the bosses to exploit the ingrained divisions between men and women workers. The working class movement has not yet understood that women have exceptional problems because of their place in

MARION WINSTANLEY, a shop steward at Wingrove and Rogers, gave the following interview to *Red Weekly*.

What stage has the dispute reached? I think it's great now. It's reached a stage now where we're all more militant than ever. We're determined to get back.

Do you think there is a chance of winning the £2.80 threshold?

Definitely. Either that or he [Wingrove] will have to close his factory down.

What has the role of the police been in this dispute?

Absolutely disgusting. When you get 39 policemen, plus inspectors and three police women for about 50 picketers, I think it's a bit much.

Why do you think the police have turned up in such numbers?

I think they've been asked from inside the factory to do it. Because there's been no bother on the outside line at all.

Do you think the police have been neutral?

Definitely not. They've been on the management's side all along. They go up to the top of the road every morning to meet the scabs coming in to work and escort them down, yet if we put our foot off the pavement we're told to get back.

Have the police intimidated any of the pickets?

Well, not verbally, but physically by pushing them with their sticks and what have you.

What has the Union done for you so far?

Outwardly they don't seem to have done very much but on the quiet they've done a great deal. They've blacked everything that's possible. The Trades Council got onto firms to black work and helped us in that way. Now there's nothing going out or coming in except what the little fellow Bill [a scab worker] brings out in his car.

Do you think the Union would have acted more quickly if the dispute had been of male workers?

Definitely, the management wouldn't have been able to last so long if it had been men.

What do you think the strike needs now to take it forward? What would you like to see happen?

Well, I'd like to see a lot more of this mass picketing. The first mass picket we ever had frightened the daylight out of him [Wingrove] because half an hour later he was trying to negotiate with us. Since then the pickets seem to have dwindled down a bit. More mass pickets I think would be a great help.

lems before they can expect women to participate fully in struggle. And women must fight to raise these issues themselves within the unions.

B'ham

JOHN GRAHAM, AUEW branch delegate, Birmingham Trades Council.

BIRMINGHAM TRADES COUNCIL has given the go-ahead for the organisation of a conference on women's rights later this autumn. Marie Paterson, Chairperson of the TUC and TGWU women's organiser has been invited to speak, along with a representative from the Working Women's Charter Campaign in Birmingham.

Several AUEW branches have been campaigning in the local labour movement for such a conference, and four union branches wrote to the Trades Council demanding that the Working Women's Charter be discussed. The next step forward for the campaign will be to ensure that the conference is as broad-based as possible, involving women who work at home as well as in the factory and the office.

The only regrettable feature of

OUT FOR EQUAL PAY

WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER



At Wingrove and Rogers in Liverpool and Salford Electrical Instruments in Heywood, Manchester, women workers are fighting a battle for equal pay. At both factories men are crossing the picket line. In both areas support from the local trade union movement falls far short of what it should be.

These strikes confound those who say women are not interested in trade unions and that women do not know how to fight. But they also add a note of warning—that unless the new upsurge of fighting trade unionism amongst women workers is taken seriously by the entire trade union movement, then only the bosses will gain. For the women workers at SEI and Wingrove and Rogers are the tip of an iceberg.

Galloping inflation, cutbacks in social expenditure and increasing redundancies hit women—who are trying to cope on an average wage that is just over half of men's—harder than any other group of workers.

Although joining unions at twice the rate of men, women have never been as integrated into the life of the unions. Therefore, they are often more willing to disregard the policies adopted by the trade union leadership in this period. The spate of recent struggles launched over equal pay, grading and low pay show a disregard for the social contract that the trade union leadership is trying desperately to maintain with the Labour government.

Isolated strikes—like the cleaning women at Vauxhall's in Luton, and the national actions of the nurses and the teachers—have been important examples for the rest of the working class.

Increasing numbers of struggles by women are on the agenda for the coming months—not only on the wages front, but also around questions of rising rents and prices, discrimination in education and job opportunities, etc. The gains made in these fights must be consolidated so that women become an organised fighting force within the ranks of the workers' movement.

This means that male trade unionists must support struggles launched by women on all fronts. If they fail to do so on their own accord, women workers will adopt militant action to force them to do so. And any support organised must take into account the double oppression of women—arising from responsibilities in the home and their position in the workforce. The decision by the strike committee at SEI to organise a creche is a step in this direction.

The Working Women's Charter Campaign has been launched nationally to organise support for women's strikes. The Charter includes demands relating to women's position in the family alongside ones for better work conditions and opportunities. Any trade union branches, trades councils, tenants associations, students unions, or women's groups who have adopted the Charter can begin to demonstrate their seriousness about these demands by mobilising to the fullest for a national picket at SEI on October 19.

SEI: 'We'd rather eat grass than go back'

'It's worse than school. If we sit with our legs to the side of the work tables the supervisors come up and slap them back inside.'

That's horror story number one, about the Salford Electrical Instruments factory at Heywood near Manchester, where 400 women and one man are in their second week of occupation after a seven-week lock-out.

BLATANT

Women workers told me about the blatant discrimination in the factory. Women in the General Mechanical Engineering Department do exactly the same work as

men, for less pay.

'If we do work faster to make extra we are moved to another job. Once you have got the knack of a job they will kick you off.'

LOWEST

The wages at SEI are among the lowest in the north-west. A woman worker at SEI said: 'It's laughable. In one factory down the road a woman who cleans and makes the tea gets the same pay as a semi-skilled woman worker here.'

Nor is it just wages that anger the women. They have a stream of complaints about 'filthy toilets—and they are outside. We have to buy our own overalls. We can't talk. If we laugh some supervisor wants to know what the joke is.'

No wonder 400 women said 'en-

When a woman worker at the Heywood firm was clocked-out, all the women walked out and held a mass meeting to protest against this. Unfortunately, the women at the Eccles factory did not join them, and meetings held there have failed to bring them out to date. Half of the Eccles labour force is non-union.

SUPPORT

The women have however had support from the APEX workers at the Eccles factory. These workers fought a successful 11-week strike last year over equal pay.

The women have put their case to other factories in the area, to the Hull dockers—who have agreed to black all SEI goods—and to the Liverpool dockers.

by DODIE WEPPLER

Only one man at Heywood is on strike, although when the men were on strike recently the women agreed to give seven day's notice to the firm and come out in support of them.

The women had already had a one-hour rotating sympathy strike but did not think that was enough. However, two days before the women were due to come out the men returned to work.

JEERING COMMENTS

In spite of the support they got from the women then, the men at Heywood not only refuse to come out now, but make jeering comments at the women as they cross their picket lines.

'They say we are being silly and we have gone too far. The day after we occupied they helped the supervisors break some windows so they could get back to work. How can they say they are union men after this?', was one woman's exasperated comment.

About 20 women have been crossing the picket line, escorted in by male scabs. But they are getting fed up: several have left and last week four reported sick.

The morale of the strikers is still high. One said: 'You don't think you will be able to last much longer but you always do. I'd rather eat grass than go back in there'.

SOLIDARITY

But we must make sure that they do not have to eat grass. This struggle demands the unflinching support of



Women workers on the picket lines outside the SEI factory in Heywood, where they are on strike for equal pay. Men workers have consistently scabbed on this struggle and aided the management.

the entire trade union movement. Workers in the Manchester area should organise solidarity strikes and send contingents to the picket line to support this official dispute.

A number of trades councils and union branches support the demands of the Working Women's Charter. Others claim to support the demand for equal pay. Now is the time to turn that verbal support into action. Inside the AUEW, members must insist that action be taken against the male scabs at SEI and the AUEW workers at Eccles who have refused to follow the AUEW directive to come out.

Trade unionists and women's groups should collect money and organise meetings in support of this struggle. SEI gives a practical demonstration on how to fight for equal pay. The lessons of the fight—including the strike committee's decision to alleviate the domestic responsibilities of the women by organising a daily creche—must be hammered home in the labour movement.

On Saturday 19 October the IMU is calling for a national picket outside SEI. We ask for maximum support for that action.



Women occupying the switchboard room at SEI—the only room in the factory they could hold onto when management, helped by the male workers, broke in.

backs Charter

the campaign so far has been the attitude of the International Socialists. At the Trades Council their members spoke against discussing the Charter at the conference, on the grounds that it was 'too broad'. They wanted to limit the conference to discussing what they called 'trade union' issues, like equal pay.

Such a position does nothing to deal with the particular problems that women workers face. You can not expect women to be in the front line fighting for militant demands while they are still stuck cooking Sunday lunch.

The decisions of the Birmingham Trades Council is a recognition of this fact, and an important step towards actually doing something about it.

ough', and went all out for the claim submitted by their union—the AUEW.

The claim is for equal pay with the semi-skilled men on all aspects of the wage. This would include the piecework rate, bonus rates, the minimum time rate and the standard performance.

The claim was submitted in the two SEI factories at Heywood and Eccles, in August 1973.

When the talks finally collapsed, the Heywood women gave a month's notice to end the piecework scheme and to begin day work on 29 July.

LETTER

Brian White, managing director for both plants, sent each woman at Heywood a letter saying that if they did not return to piecework they would not be paid any wages.

On 15 August the company made good its threat. Supervisors went up to individual women on the line and told them that they would no longer be paid any wages.



'THE TROUBLE WITH WOMEN IS THAT THEY'RE NOT MILITANT ENOUGH!'

Germany's

'Miracle'



The West German decision to veto the proposed EEC food price increases and then rapidly reverse that veto was widely reported in the British press as merely a row over farming.

by John Marshall

This was only a tiny part of the truth. Behind agriculture lies the role which the West German ruling class has played, and is continuing to play, in inter-imperialist competition and the fortunes of international capitalism.

In order to understand that role it is necessary to outline briefly the way in which different rates of inflation can affect competition.

Given the great decline in the rate of profit, the only way the economy of any imperialist economy can be stimulated is through vastly increasing the amount of money in circulation. This, however, creates a rapid rate of inflation which tends to make a country's goods uncompetitive on the world market or which forces devaluation and a still faster rate of inflation.



The consequence is that the West German economy is overwhelmingly dominated by exporting industries such as automobiles, chemicals and electronics and depends on exports for 30 to 50 per cent of their sales. Under these conditions the West German

inherently strong economy, has kept the German rate of inflation well below that of any of its rivals—in the first quarter of this year prices increased in Germany by a mere 1.9 per cent compared to 3.3 per cent in the United States, with none of West Germany's European rivals having an increase of less than 4.2 per cent.

These policies have sent unemployment up in Germany by 137 per cent in the last year, although starting from a very low level, and it is continuing to rise. The effect in the balance of payment's stakes has been truly staggering. In the second quarter of this year not one of West Germany's major rivals had a balance of payments deficit running at an annual rate of less than 3,500 million dollars, and none of its European rivals had a deficit of less than 6,000 dollars. West Germany however had a surplus running at an annual rate of over 10,000 million dollars.

RESPONSE

The response of the other imperialist powers to this policy is naturally

to demand that West Germany inflates its economy and shifts its whole orientation. However given that the West German economy is precisely getting stronger in relation to its competitors the power of its rivals to influence it is very limited.

The only weapon which France, Britain, etc. possess is the threat that if the West Germans do not budge then everyone will have to deflate. That will not merely create the biggest international recession since World War Two—that is inevitable anyway—but could produce a 1929 type collapse. Such a collapse could hit the export-dominated West German economy even harder than anyone else. The sudden discovery of 'internationalism' by Dennis Healey, and the 'new European initiative' of Giscard d'Estaing, are simply demands that the Germans, and on a different scale the Americans, should bail out everyone else in the EEC.

The West German bourgeoisie naturally sees no reason why it should undertake any such task of charity—hence its increasing obstructiveness in the EEC and elsewhere.

But even the West German bourgeoisie cannot face with equanimity the complete collapse of the international economy. Therefore they have in the past period been carrying out a patchwork policy—not fundamentally reflating their own economy and seizing all they can in the EEC, but not going so far as to bring the whole structure down. This is why they backed down on the farm veto and have poured hundreds of millions into the Italian economy—with the fourfold objective of preventing the complete collapse of the Italian economy, stopping Italy from in desperation rupturing the framework of the EEC irreparably, making a large profit, and allowing the German bourgeoisie to have a crucial say in determining the Italian Government's economic policies.

NOT SUFFICIENT

Now, however, West Germany's rivals point out this patchworking is no longer sufficient. If the West Germans and the Americans do not reflate, the international recession may become uncontrollable. A new increase in the rate of inflation, which is what is necessary to head off the threat of a 1929, may be extremely dangerous for the international bourgeoisie, but it is less hazardous than the likely response of the working class to an attempt to impose mass unemployment.

The international bourgeoisie considers 15 million unemployed in the imperialist countries and a 15 to 30 per cent rate of inflation is marginally less dangerous than 30 million unemployed and a 10 per cent rate of inflation. Hence the big squeeze and the covert threats to Washington and Bonn.

One thing is certain however. What won't be on the agenda in Bonn is anything which is good news for the working class. As Trotsky said, the task of the working class is not to decide whether it wants to have its throat cut by the razor of unemployment or the hacksaw of inflation. The task is to destroy the executioner.

That, we can be absolutely sure, is the one thing Social Democratic Chancellor Schmidt is not thinking about.

However, if a particular economy has a lower rate of inflation than its rivals then it gains an increasing competitive edge over them while the continued expansion of their economies provides an additional market for its goods and thereby prevents its economy falling into complete recession. There are several problems. Firstly it can only be operated by those with an extremely strong competitive economy—otherwise the increase in exports necessary to keep the economy from rapid collapse cannot be achieved. Secondly, it is absolutely vital that all countries do not try the same policy simultaneously—if that occurs then everyone loses a market and all economies fall into violent recession.

The task is to keep the lid screwed down tightly on the economy but avoid provoking other countries by your gains into an uncontrollable generalised recession.

COMBINATION

The reason the West German economy has been able to carry out such a policy successfully over the last two years is because of the particular relation of the West German economy to the world economy. The combination of losing two imperialist world wars together with 12 years of fascist rule has been to create an economy with relatively unimportant foreign investments and with an enormously high rate of exploitation of the working class—which makes the economy exceedingly competitive and efficient in capitalist terms.

This dictates both the necessity of an enormously high rate of exports, and the possibility of achieving it.

bourgeoisie had a tremendous incentive, and the possibility, to attempt to carry out the type of competitive policy we have already described.

The essential policy of the West German ruling class has been to keep the lid more tightly screwed on their economy than anyone else's. Last year for example the money supply expanded by a mere 9 per cent in Germany compared to 15 per cent in France and over 20 per cent in Britain. This, coupled with Germany's



'The hacksaw and the razor blade' — EEC farm prices row revealed differences between French and German ministers on how to deal with the crisis

WHAT'S ON

SUPPORT S.E.I. WOMEN: Mass picket Saturday 19 October, 2pm, at SEI factory in Heywood (near Manchester). For further information, ring Dodie or Ingrid on 01-278 9526.

TYNESIDE I.M.G. public meeting: 'Nationalisation—will it bring socialism?' Thursday 17 October in Adelaide Hotel, New Bridge Street (behind Manors Str), Newcastle, at 8pm.

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

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

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

TROOPS OUT NOW: prepare for 27 October national demonstration on Ireland. Demand: British troops out now; self-determination for the Irish people; smash British imperialism in Ireland. Rally at Clerkenwell Green, Sunday 27 October at 2 pm. March to Fleet Street, Whitehall and Smith Square.

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

LIVERPOOL RED BOOKS: Revolutionary literature—Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Eastern Europe, Third World, Ireland, Women's Liberation. 81a Renshaw Street, Liverpool. Tues-Fri: 12.30-3. Sat: 11-3.

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Students show way to fight the social contract

Print-workers angry at bureaucrats



PRESTON POLY: How do you fancy being taught in a disused army camp? Cheap cement has caused the Poly buildings to crumble, and the best the authorities could come up with was the once daily bus trip to the military. If that was not enough there's no student accommodation available in Preston, so students commute from Blackpool and Liverpool.

Occupations have broken out in at least six colleges in the first week of the new student year.

Students are replying to the recent cuts in education spending. There was once a time when the Labour Government trumpeted the idea of free, high-standard education for all. And Wilson has said of the social contract that social benefits will be guaranteed if trade unions hold back on the wages front.

But the Labour Government have played a despicable role. They have only restored 17 per cent of the £180 million chopped out by Barber's Budget.

The real face of the social contract is unmasked. The students at Manchester, Warwick, Portsmouth, Birmingham, Preston and Coventry have taught us all a lesson—that the only way to throw back the ruling class attacks on all fronts is to rely on our own independent action.

commodation available in Preston, so students commute from Blackpool and Liverpool.

Preston students decided enough was enough. They drew up twelve demands including the closure of the army camps and the immediate provision of accommodation. To back this up they held a 24-hour occupation of the administration building with the support of 200 local students.

WARWICK: An Emergency General Meeting of 1200 students voted on Tuesday to occupy the newly-built Arts Centre. The students are protesting against the University's decision to withhold £24,000 of Student Union funds and the blocking of the appointment of a Permanent Secretary for the Union.

MANCHESTER: Students have occupied a disused cinema owned by the University in their fight to solve the accommodation crisis. This cinema, now used as a storehouse, was invaded by twenty University students who were given immediate backing by a general meeting of students at the Polytechnic. Soon afterwards, 150 Polytechnic students joined the occupation.

An occupation committee, democratically elected from the 170 students, has decided to launch a massive leaflet and poster campaign throughout Manchester colleges in support of their struggle. The students are demanding that the University turns over the cinema to the students both to house students without accommodation and as a centre for the campaign.

BIRMINGHAM: A Union meeting of over 700 students at the Polytechnic voted with only four against to occupy the administration building. After the union meeting 500 students joined the occupation.

They are fighting the proposed cuts in the educational programme, demanding no cutting of courses and an additional £50,000 for spending on college buildings. From the occupation students will launch pickets on the Local Education Authority and on the College Board.

And they are calling on the NUS to organise a national demonstration in Birmingham against the cuts in spending on education in Birmingham on 25 October.

PORTSMOUTH: With 4,000 registered homeless in the town, students at the Polytechnic have occupied the administration offices and other parts of the college, against the housing shortages. A union meeting of 1000 students voted overwhelmingly to take direct action.

The students are demanding the college finds the necessary housing and subsidises students paying exceptionally high rent. And they are also launching a joint campaign with homeless in the town, demanding that the local authority takes over and equips all squats and suitable empty property.

The Polytechnic students have organised a meeting with the local Trades Council to push forward a joint campaign.

Clerical workers in Fleet Street are angry. Their union leaders have been negotiating a pay claim that would give the average clerical worker only £4 a week extra for the next year.

The claim made by the bureaucrats is 5 per cent for all Fleet Street workers which will increase the difference in wages between machine and clerical workers.

One Natsopa clerical worker told *Red Weekly*: 'If the leadership of our union gets its way, we'll be 12 to 15 per cent worse off by next year. And these so-called leaders of ours are really proud that the claim's within the social contract. So much for the social contract being supposed to help lower paid workers.'

'We were hoping for an across the board increase of at least £10 for all Fleet Street workers—a claim that would help us fight alongside machine workers against the management. We were also hoping for an extra week's holiday and for a £42 minimum wage.'

'What do we get? The leadership not only breaks union rules by not consulting the clerical branch about the claim, but also negotiates what amounts to a wage cut for us. Fine "representatives" they are! Feeling is running high amongst clerical workers—we're not likely to accept this sell-out deal.'

The Natsopa Clerical Chapel at the *Observer* is one of the many chapels in Fleet Street who have rejected the bureaucracy's miserable claim. Their action over a local dispute could well be a run up to action in the whole of Fleet Street, even if the bureaucrats recommend acceptance of an offer based on their original pathetic claim.

Busmen burst out

IN SCOTLAND

DEMANDING £35 FOR 35 HOURS, central Scotland busworkers have launched a series of unofficial actions to back up their claim.

Although the union officials have instructed the men to return to work or carry on normal work, in general their plea has fallen on deaf ears.

The busworkers' action—a ban on overtime—means no weekend buses and the disruption of some weekday services. Angry at the long drawn out negotiations, these workers are demanding a separate agreement be made with the Scottish Bus Group.

In a number of areas flying pickets have been used. In Stirling buses coming in from other towns, such as Dundee, have been stopped by pickets in cars and asked not to pick up passengers. The pickets followed the buses past the Stirling boundaries to make sure this was adhered to. The buses have then been told to leave by the motorway instead of the service route.

This action by the rank and file seems to be having some effects. It now appears that negotiations are once again being set in motion at national level.

AND TYNESIDE

TYNESIDE BUSMEN have introduced a freeze on fare increases.

The 1300 workers have introduced this measure to help win their pay dispute with the Tyne and Wear Public Transport Authority.

The busworkers are also planning a series of strikes. In Newcastle bus crews will hold a stoppage each Saturday. At South Shields the busworkers will hold a series of lightening one and two-day strikes. In two weeks' time this will be followed by a full-scale stoppage.

The freeze of bus fares—PTA had intended raising fares on 6 October—is an excellent weapon. It denies the PTA thousands of pounds of expected new revenue and helps to win the public to the side of the busworkers. But this is a weapon that can be used in an even broader sense. As workers face crippling price rises in food, rents, and fares it is clear that the Government—be it

Tory or Labour—have no solution to inflation.

Actions by workers in public transport can effectively stop the local authorities making the working class pay for the economic crisis.

By refusing to collect increased fares they can unite other workers against price increases. They can set an example to other trade union members in other sectors of what action should be taken to fight inflation. Furthermore they can win over to the side of the labour movement people such as pensioners and housewives by giving a practical demonstration of how the unions can also fight for their interests.

AND AGAINST RACISM IN LEEDS

THE LEEDS BUS BRANCH of the TGWU are still insisting that two Sikh busworkers must not wear their turbans.

A number of busworkers in Bradford and Huddersfield are opposing this racist act by the Leeds branch. David Oates, a Huddersfield busworker, told *Red Weekly*:

'When I tried to raise my motion I was told "We have been warned about something like this." Branch officials objected that there was not time to discuss it and that we had no right to interfere in another branch's business. And anyway the Leeds Sikh Temple had put them up to it. But as there were Sikhs at the meeting a watered down motion accepting turbans in Huddersfield was passed.'

David also stressed to us the dangers of this racist stand by the union:

'Management must be laughing all the way to the bank. We usually fare quite well in terms of wages negotiations, but this has split us.'

'Officials from Huddersfield, Leeds, Bradford, and Halifax met management to discuss figures and implementation of our new overtime rates. The bosses said we must settle the turban issue first!'

'Leeds and Halifax voted then and said they were AGAINST turbans; Huddersfield voted for and Bradford abstained. Management are under some pressure locally to allow Sikhs to wear turbans, so our wages settlement has been delayed. This is what racism does—we must organise the rank and file as soon as possible.'

JIM FERRIS



Arthur Flicker, the leader of the press shop workers, at Ford's Dagenham, announcing the return to work last week.

FORDS (cont. from back page)

The deal is spread over two years. A payment is due now, a further payment will be made in 12 months and the final payment six months after that.

If Fords give in to the demand that the second and third stage payments both be made at the same time—in 12 months, rather than waiting an additional six months—the percentage increases for day workers will work out like this:

Grade A	11.9%
Grade B	12.3%
Grade C	12.7%
Grade D	12.7%
Grade E	12.9%

These figures are hardly likely to make defenders of the social contract lose much sleep.

The company has also come forward with some propositions regard-

ing thresholds. Firstly they have set a 36 point mean. Therefore the Retail Price Index has to go up 36 points before any threshold payment is due.

Furthermore the threshold payments will be based not on the new pay deal but on the *present* basic rate. Therefore if the RPI goes up 37 points the workers will get a one per cent increase on their old basic rate.

PROMISING

What Fords are actually promising here is to compensate for 1976 price increases at 1974 price levels. Thus for every 10p rise in prices Fords' workers will get about 7p.

Behind all the fanfare accompanying this so-called 'hammer blow to

the social contract' lies the real menace. The deal is tied up with a new productivity drive. Whilst the wages will be eroded in value by rocketing prices, production and Fords' profits are intended to go up.

More night work is also on the way. The vague phrase about 'give and take' has only one meaning—the workforce will have to do more night work.

Increased productivity and more night work can mean only one thing—redundancies. Just like car-makers all over the world Fords see nationalisation as the solution to their problems.

Clearly this deal should be tossed out. What is needed is an across the board increase for all workers; the immediate introduction of equal pay; and a sliding scale of wages to protect wage levels from inflation.

GRADE	Present rate including 2.80 threshold.	Present rate including threshold and 3.60 cleaning up ¹ money.	New Rate ²	% increase, for workers not receiving cleaning up money.	% increase for workers already getting cleaning up money.
A	38.20	41.80	44.20	15.7%	5.7%
B	40.80	44.40	47.60	16.7%	7.2%
C	41.80	45.40	49.00	17.2%	7.9%
D	43.00	46.60	50.60	17.7%	8.6%
E	45.00	48.60	53.20	18.2%	9.5%

1. At present not all workers get cleaning-up money, under the new offer this will be paid to all workers.
2. This is based on the likelihood that the next two months will see a rise of 3 points in the cost of living index entitling the workers to £1.20 in threshold increases. Fords are suggesting buying this out by incorporating it in the new rate.

FORDS FORECAST: PRICES UP, UP, UP

36 per cent
in two years,
say car
bosses

The Ford's management are realists. They have no illusions about social contracts. They are cynics about Wilson's chatter of 'useful people'.

The only contracts that interest them are those that cheapen production costs and turn out more cars. The only 'useful people' they know are those who work hard, uncomplainingly, and at full-sweat for the profits of Fords.

Fords realise that there is a deepgoing, paralysing economic crisis and that the halcyon days are over. Throughout the world car production is falling, profits are non-existent and they know the only way to survive is by boosting productivity and cutting costs.

The Ford pay deal takes into account the reality of this situation. It is intended to slash real wages and impose a bigger work-load on the labour force.

What's more, Fords do not subscribe to Labour's pipe dream

A 'hammer blow', whined the *Guardian* about the effect of the new Ford pay offer on the social contract.

According to the *Guardian* the offer 'blatantly exceeds the social contract guidelines...'

However, before Ford workers start to make plans for a spending spree they should make a careful study of the new deal. They can rest assured that it is not going to turn Dagenham and Halewood into suburbs of glittering affluence.

The following table shows what

the wage increases mean to workers in the five grades. The table is based on workers on permanent days.

Shift workers can also expect cuts in their living standards if this deal is accepted. What lurks in the background is the galloping rate of inflation. If inflation goes beyond its present 17 per cent—a commonly admitted figure—the more savage the pay cut.

Grade B workers for example on the alternating day and night shift who are already getting the £3.60 cleaning-up money—which many of them are—can only expect a £5 a

week increase. This is just over 10 per cent.

about maintaining present living standards. Their offer of a threshold, based on a 36 (yes, thirty-six) per cent norm is brutal and to the point.

Their 'economic experts' forecast a shattering 36 per cent rise in prices over the next two years. Ford's intend to cover themselves against that and offer in return one per cent of the basic rate for every point that the Retail Price Index climbs above 36 per cent. This means that the workers will only get back two-thirds of every price rise.

What Fords are proposing now is the bitter taste of things to come. It can only be resisted by the work-force rejecting outright their phoney deal—and that means an all-out struggle by the unions.

The working class, like the employers, must reject the illusory New Jerusalem of the Social Contract and put their own interests first.

Those grade B workers who have not been getting the cleaning-up money of £3.60 will get this plus the £5 rise. This might just about enable them to stay where they are in the face against inflation. But by the time the taxman has had his bite they too can expect to have a cut in living standards.

[Continued on page 11]



Ancillary workers in 25 London hospitals joined a one-day strike last week in support of their claim for a full London weighting allowance. They're ready for a fight—but are the bureaucrats? Photo: PETER HARRAP (Report)

Call for action committee to fight ancillary claim

AFTER THE NURSES and the radiographers, the hospital ancillary workers are moving into the front line on the wages field.

At the end of September the unions submitted their joint claim—a claim which they hastily assure every-

one 'does not conflict to any large degree with the social contract'.

This means they accept that there shall be no improvement in ancillary workers' living standards. Callaghan, speaking officially for the Labour Party, has said that is exactly what the social contract means.

For domestic workers who after

earning £4.55 in overtime get a take-home pay of £23 this must be very cheering news.

INADEQUATE

Although the claim includes the welcome demand for a 35-hour week, its call for a £30 minimum wage is woefully inadequate. This will come nowhere near meeting the needs of ancillary workers and still leaves them in the poverty ghetto of the wages table.

Both Labour and Tory Governments have sought to solve the staffing problems of the NHS and tried to keep its costs down by increasing the workload of the labour force. In some of the better organised hospitals, like the Brooke in South London, the workers have successfully resisted the management's productivity deals. Now the unions want to fine management for not making ancillary workers work harder, with a demand for a 10% penalty payment where no productivity agreement has been established.

As for equal pay, they show a touching faith in the promises of the Labour Party by simply deferring the matter to February 1975.

IGNORED

The lessons of the 1972 ancillary strike and the nurses' long battle over this summer are ignored. The unions have taken no steps to mobilise their members to fight for even these modest demands.

Whichever party wins the election, they will resist even the present claim. It was only the nurses' militancy which wrung more out of the Government than it intended to give.

In London a number of hospitals have already taken strike action over the London weighting demanding the full amount and no zoning. They understand that this is the way to make the management give in.

ACTION COMMITTEE

A number of militants are suggesting the setting up of an all-London Action Committee based on delegates from the shop stewards' committees to fight for the London weighting claim.

Such a committee will also have to be set up on a national basis if the ancillary workers are going to win their demands.

JEFF KING

RED WEEKLY

'We will decide supervisor' - says Kings worker

Despite pouring rain and cold over 100 pickets lined the gates at King's College Hospital last Tuesday defiantly singing 'We shall overcome'.

They were out on a one-day strike against victimisations and in support of the full London weighting allowance which is now being negotiated. Placards read: 'No racism in the NHS', 'NHS for the people not the Oil Sheiks', 'For a Workers' Inquiry into the NHS'.

VICTIMISATIONS

T&GWU shop steward Mick O'Shea told me: 'Over the past years there has been a steady stream of victimisations of union members by management. In September a supervisor called Derek Gorry attempted to physically attack Ollie Batterfield, our senior steward.'

'This man Gorry and two other people were appointed as supervisors over the heads of long serving members of the staff. The person who we believe is responsible for the appointments is the assistant hospital secretary Reg Broomfield, an ex-police man.'

'I raised this matter with the hospital secretary Mr. Turner, but nothing happened. The union representatives pressed for Gorry's removal from Kings. The management stalled and promised a reply by Friday 27 September. But we heard nothing.'

ANGRY

'The members were really angry. When Gorry physically threatened Ollie he made it clear he had no time for unions. Also many workers saw this as a racist attack—Ollie is a black brother. We are not putting up with anti-unionism or racism at this hospital.'

'So last Friday 4 October, we held a special branch meeting which carried the following resolution:

'This branch is totally opposed to the recent appointment of non-union men

to supervisory positions, and in particular the appointment of Derek Gorry. We therefore demand:

- The immediate dismissal of Derek Gorry.
- The appointment of all supervisory positions to be given on the basis of seniority and suitability which must be approved by the branch.
- That appropriate industrial action will be taken if these measures are not implemented immediately.

The hospital did not hold their inquiry into this threatened assault until Monday 7 October. The statement issued afterwards—signed by TGWU official, E.C. Sheehan, and the personnel manager, Mrs. N. Wheelce—claimed that 'Mr. Gorry acted hastily' as a result of 'his lack of experience as a supervisor.'

STRANGE

'How strange', commented one worker, when they advertised the job which Gorry got, it said experienced people in the NHS were needed.'

The statement added that 'Mr. Gorry is being transferred to Belgrave Hospital.' The 200 workers however did not rely on promises and still walked out the next day. The action was also in support of their claim on London weighting.

During the strike the union called on the pickets to go back to work. They rejected this and gave an ovation to Harry Wilson, a former shop steward in Jamaica, who denounced Sheehan for his role in the dispute.

Another worker told me: 'We have to fight on London weighting, we have to prepare to fight for our national wage claim and that means we need a strong union. Every attack on the union must be resisted. Every time racism raises its head either on the job or in the union it must be smashed because we need a united union to fight the management.'

BOB PENNINGTON

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