

WORKERS' ACTION

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10p

SPREAD

THE

STRIKES

STRIKING TOOLMAKERS at British Leyland plants have again refused to obey the summons of their full time officials to go back to work. After refusing to meet local official Bert Benson, they received an olive branch invitation from AUEW headquarters, but as far as the toolmakers and their unofficial leaders are concerned, their decision on 26th February to stay out and step up their picketing was final.

This is quite correct: the officials have forfeited the right to lead them by their efforts to derail the strike. All they are trying to do now is pressure the leaders to recommend a return to work. However, the lessons of the Rubery Owen strike of three months ago are that it is not enough to simply dig your heels in and refuse to speak to anyone. The Rubery Owen workers did that, and left the stage free for the officials to connive in defeating them.

The toolmakers are stronger than the Rubery Owen workers were. The 30,000 lay-offs caused by the present strike, the halt in production of 14 out of 18 models, the emergency Parliamentary debate, the frenzy of denunciation from the Right, all present a clear picture of this strength. Yet the Government, the Leyland management and the trade union bureaucracy are doubly determined that this strike shall be crushed. They recognise that it is a challenge not only to their strat-

egy in Leylands, but to the Social Contract, even if some of the strike leaders try to pretend otherwise.

What is therefore needed is the **spreading** of the strike, thereby increasing its power and generalising its purpose of smashing the Social Contract. That is the only way to ensure a retreat by the Government, the bosses, and the union leaders.

Not only have the toolmakers so far not accomplished this **spreading** of the strike and **generalising** of its message, they have done the opposite. This doesn't cause us to give the strike less support, but it does mean that the task of generating support is much more difficult.

The strike tactics have meant that some of the strongest toolrooms, like Rover Solihull, are refusing to take part in the strike because they are already at the top of the differentials league and can't see what good the

demand of the strikers for separate, company-wide bargaining for toolmakers will be for them. Equally there is a lot of resentment from lower-paid workers.

Nevertheless, the toolmakers' strike must be supported wholeheartedly. In that support we must fight for a unified struggle throughout the whole company, and beyond, of all grades and trades, on demands that can answer the attack on wages while linking the workers in a common struggle — namely, the sliding scale of wages (automatic wage increases in line with the cost of living).

If the Leyland Combine Convenors had any intention of building up this struggle into a mass struggle against the Social Contract, rather than using it as a token of protest that they can refer to in future bargaining, they

THE INVASION of the Globtik Venus by a gang of pick-axe and knife-wielding trawlermen has been described by leaders of British maritime unions as "buccaneering in a fashion more reminiscent of two centuries ago".

In order to smash the strike by a savagely underpaid Filipino crew — their wages were well below the union's monthly minimum — unemployed trawlermen from Grimsby were hired by the ship's owner, Ravi Tikko, who claims that the crew's strike was part of a "Communist plot".

What this is reminiscent of is not two centuries ago, but much more recent: fascism. One of the most-used tactics of the fascists was to organise scab forces from among the unemployed and use them as strike-breaking gangs... usually fed the line that the strike was a communist plot.

Unemployment in Britain has not risen to the level that can

make such tactics commonplace. But when it happens we should recognise it for what it is.

The fact that the ship was in France, at Le Havre, that the crew were Filipinos, and that the main union involved was French, may have served to blind the maritime mercenaries that crushed this strike to the class crime they have committed. But it does not lessen its seriousness. It is no different from if the same vile thuggery had been practised on British seamen, members of the National Union of Seamen, in a British port.

If any of these men holds a union card, that should be taken from him. There is no place for fascists, or for those who do their work, in the trade union movement.

All Tikko's ships should be blacked immediately. Dockers and seamen should see to it that this black is effective and not temporary.

Huge wave of student sit-ins

DOZENS of universities, colleges, and polys have been occupied in one of the biggest eruptions of student militancy ever in Britain. The number of occupations now stands at over thirty. The main issue concerns overseas students' fees and the quota system for overseas students which has been imposed by the Department of Education and Science and the Home Office.

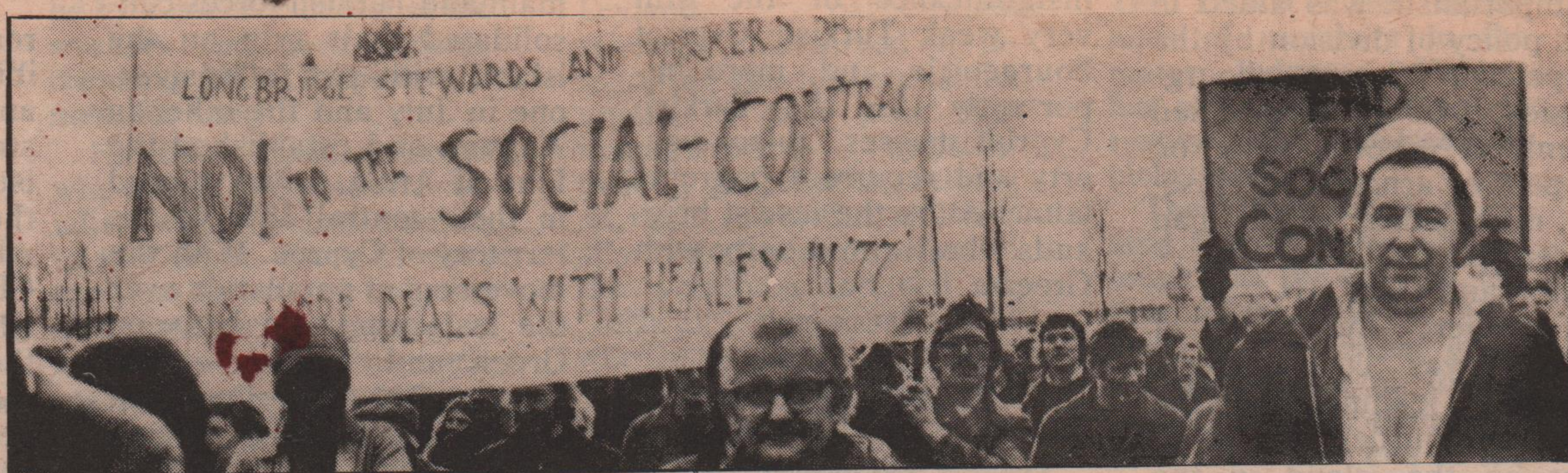
About 3,000 students at Sheffield University voted to continue their occupation, over 1200 at University College London are staging a sit-in, 1000 at Southampton voted for similar action, and at Cardiff an occupation was held against resistance from the principal and other officials.

Other occupations are taking place at Brunel and City Polys (both in London), Kent University, North East London Poly, North Staffordshire, Middlesex, Kilburn, Thames, Kingston, and Wolverhampton Polys, Harrow College of Further Education, North Gloucestershire Technical College, Sunderland Poly, Lincoln College of Technology, the Royal College of Art, the Slade School, and Hull and Manchester Universities.

The sit-in at the Royal College of Art is the first in the school's history — it is an elitist, post-graduate institution — and it has triggered off action at the Slade School of Fine Art, where a domestic issue (the closure of the Film Department) has fanned the flames.

It is certain that this movement will soon take in more places: Keele, Reading, Bristol, Bath, and Bradford universities appear to be on the brink of occupation, as do Brighton and Teesside Polys.

The occupation of the London School of Economics against discriminatory fee increases ended on Saturday when police invaded the premises after a court order had been asked for by the Director.



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SUPPORT THE TOOLMAKERS!

THE PARTIES to the conflict in Cyprus believe "that the time has now come to put upon the table positive constructive suggestions so that there can be a basis for negotiations". These are the sentiments that Clark Clifford, President Carter's envoy, attributes to the leaders of the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus and to Greece and Turkey themselves.

In reality, however, the only people who really feel that "now is the time" are the US government officials themselves. Indeed, with the Turkish elections approaching, and the present governing alliance likely to break down after the March budget, the Demirel government is certainly in no hurry to settle.

Why then is the US pressing for a speedy agreement, and why is it trying to pressure Turkey into one by withholding military equipment?

Patch up

The US urgently wants to patch up NATO's south-east Mediterranean flank. This, in the US Government's view, is made doubly necessary by the uncertain situation in the Lebanon. A settlement of the Cyprus situation would strengthen the US against the USSR, as well as providing a watchtower over the whole eastern Mediterranean and Middle East.

In order to achieve its desired settlement, the US is peddling the latest version of the 1964-5 Acheson 'partition plan': a 'loose bizonal federation', also demanding of the Turks that they concede some of the land Turkey conquered in 1974 to the Greek Cypriot community who were driven off those lands. Clifford will also hope to solve the Greek-Turkish dispute over the Aegean shelf exploration rights and further boost the credibility of Greece's Karamanlis regime.

Chronic

THE HISTORY of the island of Cyprus, for the last century at least, has been intimately interwoven with and determined by imperialism and colonialism. Its strategic geographical position made it an essential staging post for the British Empire on the route through the Suez Canal from Britain to its largest colony, India.

After the British 'withdrawal' in the late 1950s, Cyprus was still significant as a military base. The rise of

Cyprus, a weak link in the NATO chain

Arab nationalism, the incessant struggle against the Zionist Israeli state, made it again indispensable, now for the new dominant imperialist power, America. The integration of Cyprus into the NATO Alliance was continually sought, whether through the Acheson Plan of 1964-5, which aimed for a bi-zonal federation under the control of both Greece and Turkey, or the more violent plans of the NATO Command for a simultaneous landing of Greek and Turkish forces on the island which would make its division a fait accompli.

Such manoeuvres were bound to come to fruition some day. The possibility of the division of the island had already been institutionalised in the Treaties of Zurich and London (1959), which gave the 'right' to the 'guarantor powers', Greece and Turkey, to intervene in internal Cypriot affairs in case of 'constitutional violations'. Those constitutional violations were endemic, given the chronic divisions between Greek and Turkish Cypriots which had been consolidated by British imperialism.

Pogrom

Imperialism was aided in this policy of division by the respective Cypriot bourgeoisies, who in turn allied openly or covertly with the respective armed semi-fascist movements which had arisen during the '50s — EOKA and VULKAN.

However, the role of EOKA was contradictory. It played a leading role in the sectarian murders and pogroms on the island in the 1950s, and the leadership was certainly fascist. But it also commanded a large popular allegiance of workers and peasants whose main objective was the defeat of the British colonial forces. The monopolisation of the anti-colonial struggle by EOKA was due primarily to the unwillingness of the AKEL (the 'Communist Party'), the largest and best-organised party on the island, to build a bi-national

worker-peasant alliance of Greeks and Turks to fight British imperialism. Historic responsibility rested heavily on its shoulders, and would continue to do so for the next 15 years.

For a decade or more, the island was led by Makarios. Representing the alliance between the Church and the Greek Cypriot bourgeoisie, supported by AKEL, he followed a 'neutralist' policy

crashing down under the hammer blows of the Turkish invasion. Its collapse brought with it the fall of the mainland Greek junta, and its replacement by the veteran bourgeois figure Karamanlis.

Whether or not the Americans knew of the planned Turkish invasion is irrelevant, since such an invasion was already 'foreseen' in a sense by the 1959 Treaties



Makarios (left) and Denktash (right). Both for NATO, but UN secretary-general Waldheim had to go between

of balancing in world affairs. Internally his alliance with the Greek Cypriot bourgeoisie meant the relegation to insignificance of the still very weak Turkish Cypriot bourgeoisie, and, more importantly, for the Turkish Cypriot masses, abject poverty and recurrent pogroms launched by the fascist brigands who wanted unity with Greece.

Coup

The polarisation of the two communities and the subsequent events in the Middle East (the 'Seven Day' war of 1967 and the 'Yom Kippur' war of 1973) gave American imperialism the reason and excuse to do away with the 'neutralist' Makarios. Although he sought at most concessions within world capitalism for the weak Greek Cypriot bourgeoisie, he was, with his pro-Arab stance and closer links with the USSR, unreliable for US imperialism at a time when it was trying to break the Palestinian resistance.

Makarios was overthrown by the coup of July 1974, carried out by the forces of the Greek junta and the EOKA 'B' gorillas. Although the 'wily archbishop' escaped, for the left there was a traumatising and bloody massacre, with hundreds and thousands killed or imprisoned. The ensuing Sampson regime, based on sheer physical terror and with little popular base, was itself within a week to come

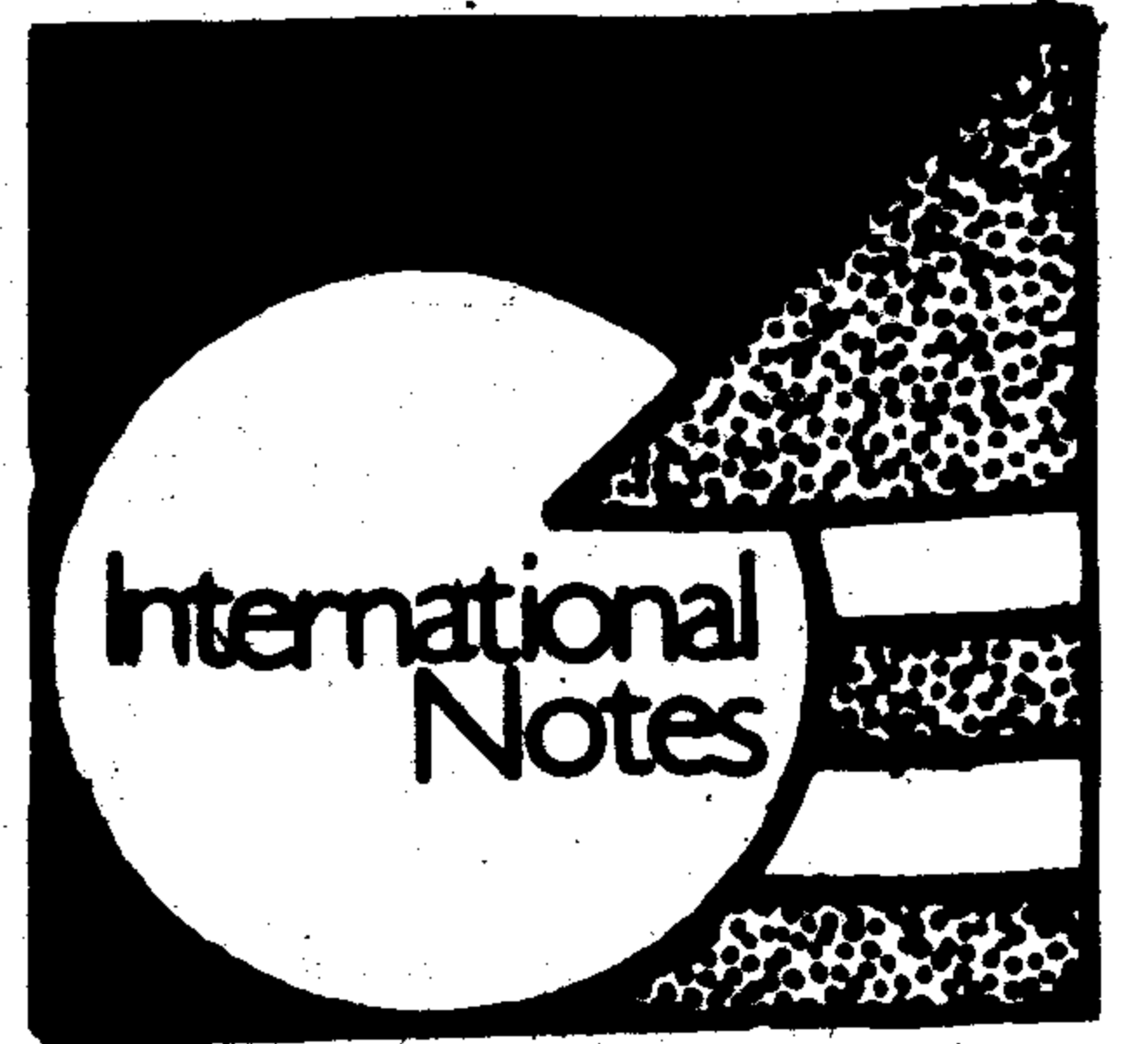
of Zurich and London.

Thus a new balance of forces emerged in the Eastern Mediterranean. The mainland Turkish forces consolidated their grip on the island with two offensives, one in July and the other in August, and established the Line of Attila, which placed in their control 38% of the territory of Cyprus. With the movement of population over the last two years between Greek and Turkish zones, creating 200,000 refugees in the South, the NATO-izing of Cyprus was complete.

The present talk of permitting Greek Cypriots to return to their former homes in the territory which is now Turkish-held cannot be taken seriously, as this would mean a re-emergence of Greek numerical superiority in this area. Behind the glib promises and opaque phrases is a cynical bargaining over percentages, with Makarios talking in terms of 20% of the land being held by Turks, but being prepared to settle — no doubt — for about 28%, the figure the US is rumoured to be arguing for; and Denktash holding out for about 32%.

Placate

Thus we can understand the pressure applied on Denktash, the Turkish Cypriot leader, to meet Makarios and begin talks — a course which Makarios himself, despite his demagoguery concerning the "unyielding struggle for Cypriot territorial sovereignty" — has never



excluded, and which since the Helsinki conference he has more or less openly advocated.

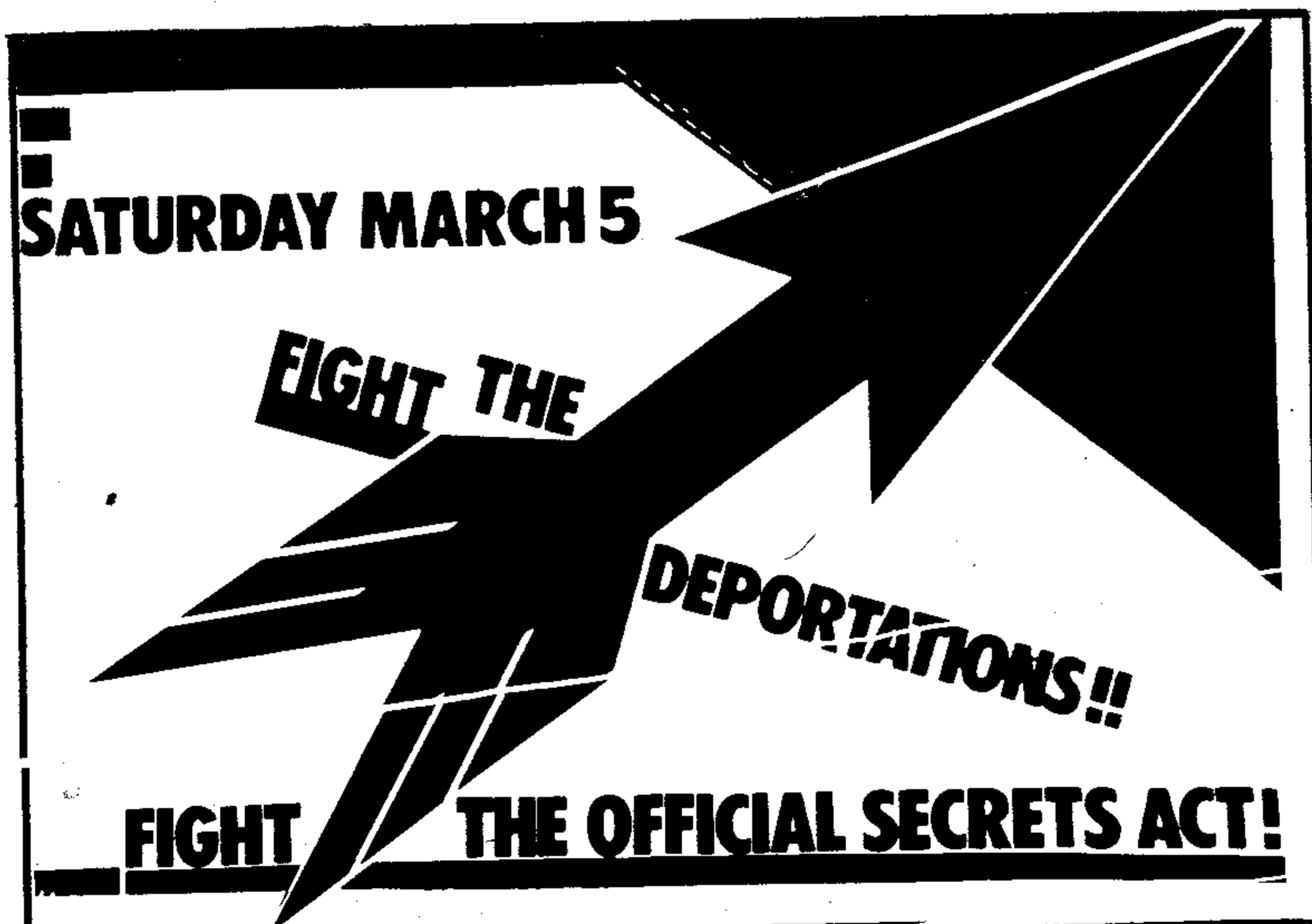
For, above all, Makarios realises the present impossibility and undesirability of any "national anti-Turk" struggle, and also he realises the ludicrousness of the political position of AKEL (close to that of the CP-exterior in Greece), which places emphasis on the "internationalisation" of the Cyprus issue, i.e. pressure on the United Nations and a greater reliance on the protector Soviet Union.

The non-feasibility of such policies, combined with the problem of the bitterness, frustration and anger of the 200,000 refugees in the South of the island, makes Makarios seek the 'pre-ordained' imperialist course, and thus hope to achieve some concessions to placate the growing dissidence within the Greek Cypriot side.

The results of the bargaining, if the US gets its way, will be a more stable extreme conservative government in Turkey, a more stable conservative regime in Greece, and two right-wing regimes in effect in Cyprus.

The first necessity for Cyprus is that all the troops be removed. But the fate of Cyprus hinges finally on the creation of class unity between Greek and Turkish workers, linked to the programme of a Balkan Socialist Federation.

C Giannaris



STETCHFORD:
A PRACTICAL
LESSON IN
PRINCIPLED
POLITICS

LAST SATURDAY afternoon, 26th February, about 1000 National Front supporters marched through Stechford, Birmingham, as part of their campaign for the forthcoming by-election, arising from Roy Jenkins taking up his post as EEC Commissioner.

The major counter-demonstration did not confront and stop the fascist march, deciding instead to march round the immigrant areas to show the willingness of black militants to defend their community and of white socialists to aid that defence. However, it rallied 1500 people — swelling to 2000 en route —

round the slogans: Opposition to all immigration controls; no platform for fascists; and labour movement support for black self-defence.

The counter-demonstration was supported by organisations of the immigrant community and the revolutionary left, plus 'Militant' and the Communist Party. However, the Birmingham Trades Council and Labour Party were scandalously absent, having organised a separate 'counter-demonstration' in the morning.

That demonstration — less than 200-strong, despite 'Militant' and CP support — was

led by the President of the Trades Council, Councillor Jarvis, a man who last summer had the Labour whip withdrawn because of an openly racist speech he made!

The situation of two demonstrations was caused by the flat refusal of the Trades Council to meet the wish of the black organisations to have the demonstration in the immigrant area. Instead the Trades Council wanted a demonstration at a different time from the NF one, and marching out of the Stechford area to a rally in the city

centre. The black organisations insisted that any meaningful counter-demonstration had to defend the black areas — not leave them free for the fascists to walk over with impunity.

A final ironic comment on the token nature of the Trades Council "counter"-demonstration was the fact that two Labour Party members got badly assaulted by NF thugs after it, while on the well-organised afternoon counter-demonstration there was only one arrest, following provocation by an onlooker outside a pub.

ALAN CARTER



EVER SINCE the 1960s, but more and more in the last few years, British Leyland, the only big British-owned car-manufacturing company left, has been fighting a losing battle on the export market, and increasingly on the British market itself. Antiquated plant and an "irrational" structure have been the company's main problem, in capitalist terms.

In the past there was something plausible in their claim that high wages and a "bad" strike record were making them uncompetitive internationally as against Japanese, Italian, or East European producers. But no longer are the wages Leyland pay higher than in other countries — the opposite is now generally true. And for the last three years the strike record has "improved" as well. Yet never has the company faced more problems of survival than they do right now.



A massive round of investment in modern plant and a big increase in productivity to reduce unit costs, are the basic needs of the company. But since the whole meaning of "rationalisation" and modernisation is to get more out of the workers employed, or out of fewer, and since this is being attempted at a time of low profits and high inflation, these aims

The most
exclusive
broad spectrum
in Bradford

Despite the rain about 300 students and education sector trade unionists picketed the regional "education debate" at Bradford College on 24th February.

The "debate" was held behind closed doors between 200 representatives of business, Government (including Gordon Oakes, Minister for Education), academic boards, and the union bureaucracies. The gathering was supposed to represent a broad spectrum of opinion, yet only one parent from a local school was invited, and not one member of the immigrant community.

TIM RILEY

Leyland — the social contract and the master contract

can only be achieved by a big attack on the living standards of the workers, and the sacking or "wastage" of large numbers of them.

In capitalist terms, then, any recovery of British Leyland will only be accomplished by a massive defeat of the workers and their unions, meaning literal impoverishment for many.

For those trade unionists who cannot conceive of a socialist, working-class solution to this crisis, there is obviously no alternative to going along with this, hoping to moderate its effects on workers' jobs and wages, and preserving the union's strength and structure, as they see it, by "conquering" the right for themselves to take part in the necessary decisions. Unfortunately not only the right wing of the car workers unions have adopted this strategy, but also — and predictably — the Communist Party and Broad Left. No more clear demonstration of their inability to represent workers' interests and lead workers' struggles could be desired.

The crisis in the company has had an effect also on the bosses themselves. Forced to attempt a massive restructuring of British Leyland at a time of low profits and high inflation, they have been obliged to rely on the government to provide most of the money. Leyland was duly "nationalised", and the NEB was given control of the purse-strings. This nationalisation was done by purchasing 95% of the shares, rather than by expropriation, and the previous bosses, with some changes of personnel, were left in charge of running the company.

So the scene was set for

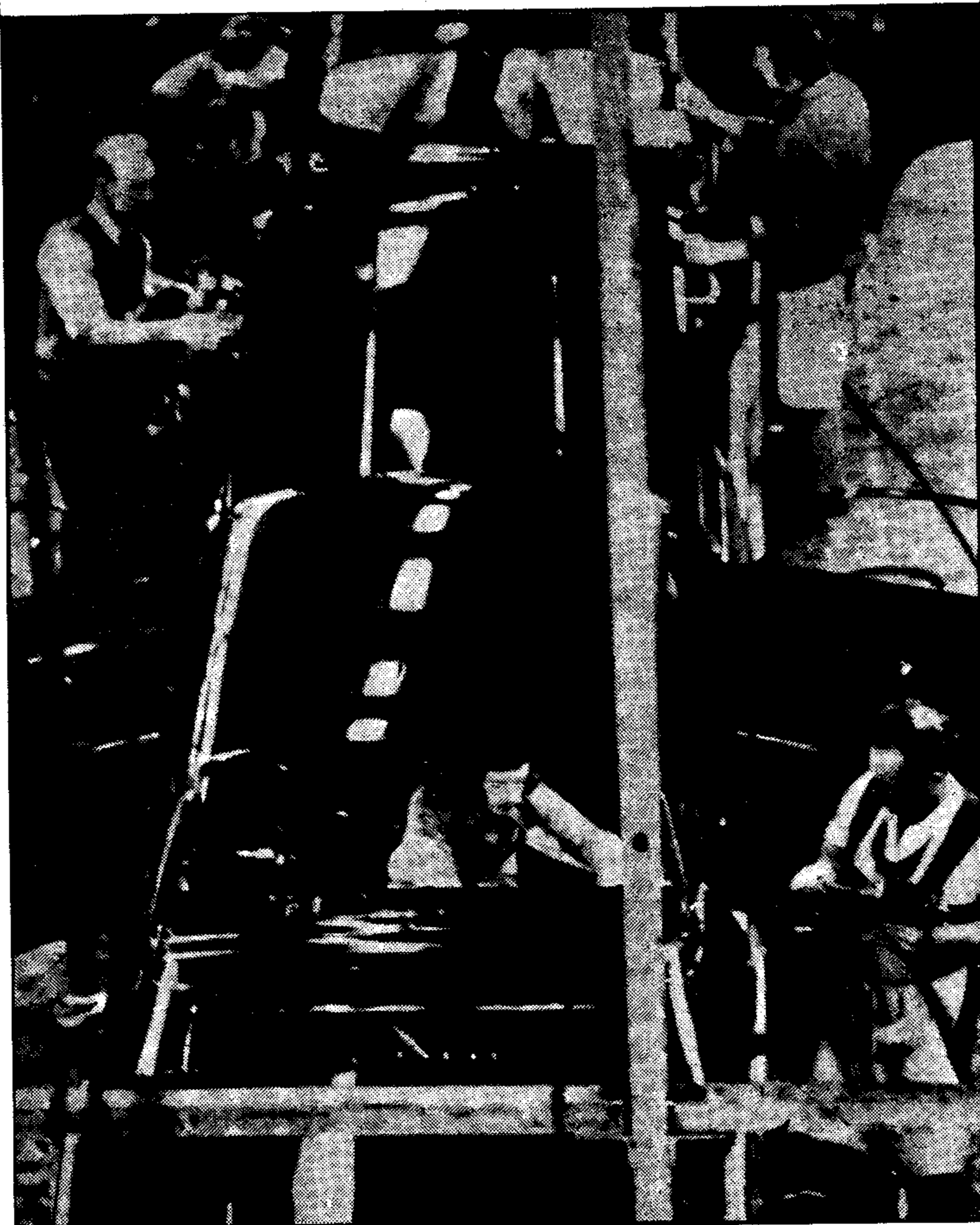
the big confrontation with the unions which the bosses and the NEB desperately need if their grand plan is to get off the ground. All the first moves came from their side. First there was the implementation of the Ryder report, the launching of the Leyland participation scheme. This aimed at integrating the leaders of the unions in each plant into management's decision-making procedures, relying on their cowardice and loyalty to get them to return to the workforce and sell the "difficult decisions" that were to be taken.

The bosses reckoned there would be no problem about the willingness of the union leaders to attempt this task, and on that they have been proved right. The unions throughout British Leyland have been committed for 15 months now to "uninterrupted production" and to the productivity increases and restructuring of the industry which are to come.



At Longbridge, the management went so far as to demand a guarantee from the workforce that there would be no "unofficial action" at all, and the convenor, works committee and leading stewards duly "sold" this to the shop floor without demur. These developments are just the start of the system of close class collaboration which the bosses intend to construct on the foundation of the bureaucratic domination of the unions by "participating" leaders, from "moderates" on the right to Communist Party members on the left.

But the car industry has for the past 20 years at least



The T&GWU has thousands of members in the motor industry. Yet it has not called on them to respect the toolmakers' picket lines.

The NEB is warning Leyland that if it doesn't get tough with the strikers, the firm might have to shut down [a vain threat given the importance of the company]. One of the directors of the NEB is Harry Urwin, Assistant General Secretary of the T&GWU.

This is "participation" in practice!

also been characterised by a strong shop stewards' movement, based on a large number of stewards on the shop floor, in close touch with their members' feelings and needs. Thus there is a strong danger, from the company's point of view, that the integration of today's union leaders into the participation structure, with all it implies, will be followed by the rejection of their authority from below, and the emergence of unofficial fight-backs, leaving these present leaders high and dry with no support, and thus of no further use to the bosses.

Developments like the resurgence of the toolmakers' committee, against the line of the union leaders in each plant, terrify the management more than any amount of sabre-rattling by men like Derek Robinson or Eddy McGarry.

However, management do have a partial answer to this threat. Just as, in 1971, they looked to the US and West Germany for the idea of Measured Day Work, which was designed to settle all questions of the timing and manning of jobs on the track once and for all in a round of negotiations each year, or at each changeover in production, and so reduce the room for do-it-yourself struggles on these things day by day and gang by gang, so now they are trying to import the idea of "Corporate Bargaining", better known in the US as the master contract.



Relying on the bureaucratic and unrepresentative character of union structures away from the shop floor, they aim to conduct all wage negotiations, and presumably fringe-benefit and grading negotiations also, at national level, and then recruit the trade union bureaucrats to help enforce the agreements and discipline the small and isolated fight-backs as they occur.

Effectively, if we had both Measured Day Work and Corporate Bargaining in British Leyland, there would be no recognisable shop stewards' movement left, and the chances of an early unofficial fight-back of the rank and file would be vastly reduced. This is what is at stake in British Leyland today.

DICK BRADLEY

SHELL & BP: OILING THE WHEELS OF APARTHEID



"ITS PEOPLE are increasingly better housed, better fed, and better educated.

"Its social endowments continue to embrace a broadening number of its less-privileged groups.

"And without casting aside values on which the nation's entire structure was formed, [it] quietly affirms its willingness to accommodate the changing times".

That, according to the Shell corporation (in an advertisement in the 'Rand Daily Mail') is..... the apartheid state of South Africa.

"Our participation in South Africa's development is our way of proving by deed our belief in the nation's emerging greatness".

The other British-based oil giant, British Petroleum (BP), thinks along similar similar lines. **"Congratulations to the Transkei"**, ran their press advertisement after the declaration of 'independence' of Transkei, an independence condemned almost universally outside South Africa as a fake serving only to bolster apartheid.

Smith

Both Shell and BP — a company in which the Labour Government has a controlling interest — are deeply involved in maintaining and boosting the apartheid system. Detailed evidence is provided in the recently-published pamphlet, **"Shell and BP in South Africa"**, by Martin Bailey (35p from Anti-Apartheid, 89 Charlotte St, London W1P 2DQ).

Bailey also argues that Shell and BP are almost certainly helping to break the sanctions against the white-supremacist regime in Rhodesia.

When Ian Smith declared UDI in Rhodesia on 11th November 1965, the United Nations imposed an oil embargo against the regime. The refinery in Mozambique in which BP and Shell each hold a 21% share shut off its supplies.

Yet Rhodesia continued to receive oil. It is estimated that its supply declined only 20% following UDI, and by

Congratulations to the TRANSKEI



BP is proud to play its part
in the development of agriculture
industry and commerce



1974 was 38% higher than before UDI.

After 1974 supplies through Mozambique were cut off. Yet obviously Rhodesia still gets oil. It must all come through South Africa.

A US-published pamphlet has shown that Mobil South Africa has supplied petrol to Rhodesia; and that Shell sells oil products to a company which acts as an intermediary for Mobil's sales to Rhodesia. Given the importance of Shell and BP in the oil and petrol industry both in South Africa and in

Rhodesia (where the government has put their subsidiaries under direct control), it is very unlikely that they do not pass supplies from South Africa to Rhodesia.

BP and Shell do very big business in South Africa, supplying almost 40% of its petrol consumption. The two companies ship oil from Iran to Durban, where they pump it to their own jointly-owned refinery, the largest in all Africa, which then transports 31,000 barrels a day to the industry of South Africa.

On every level the oil companies participate quite cheerfully in the system that treats people without white skins as less than human. Shell proudly announced they had built 25 luxury toilets "for whites only", and stated that "when we find that the non-whites have proved that they are capable of looking after and keeping their present toilets clean, the new luxury rest rooms would be made available to them". These revolting prejudices come from the foreign investors who have a

vested interest in maintaining the majority of the population at a level of subsistence which enables them to survive and reproduce the next generation, and that is all.

Black workers in Shell and BP in South Africa have no trade union organisation (the white-supremacist state in any case makes it illegal for black workers to strike).

Shell and BP intend to expand in South Africa. BP plans to invest £267 million in the next five years, and Shell £333 million over the next ten. They will be investing in chemicals and coal-mining — the latter an industry where the starvation wages paid to African miners were on average £15 a month in 1972, compared to £266 for white miners.

Shell also want to supply South Africa with a nuclear reactor. This would give the white racists the chance to produce nuclear weapons if they are not already doing so.

Already both companies are believed to supply oil to the South African armed forces and police. Probably

they supplied the forces that invaded Angola in 1975. Sentrachem, in which BP has a 20% share, manufactures defoliants which, the 'Sunday Times' reported in 1973, were used in chemical warfare against the Frelimo forces in Mozambique.

In some cases Shell and BP have gone into joint projects with the South African government. And they have been prospecting for oil off the coast of Namibia, thus accepting the South African government's claim to jurisdiction over Namibia, a claim rejected by the people of Namibia through armed struggle and by the United Nations through resolutions.

Shell and BP are also involved in busting a United Nations oil embargo on South Africa.

In 1973, after the Arab-Israeli war, the Arab nations threw their weight behind the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, and imposed an oil embargo. South Africa possesses no oil itself, and dependence on imported fuel is one of its most vulnerable points.

When Arab oil was cut off, Iran immediately stepped up its sales to provide nearly all of South Africa's needs.

Iran sells its oil through an international consortium of oil companies, in which BP has a 40% share and Shell, 14%. The United Nations called in November 1976 for an oil embargo against South Africa, but Iran - together with Shell and BP — continues to flout it.

BP's major shareholder is the British government, which, with 68% of the shares (due to be reduced to 51%), has the right to nominate two members on the board with the power to veto any resolution. One of the present nominees sitting on the board of BP is Tom Jackson of the Union of Post Office Workers.

In January the UPW agreed to impose a one-week blacking on mail to South Africa as part of an international trade union week of action against apartheid. Jackson called it off in the face of court action by the extreme right-wing National



"Strike, Strike, Strike!" Soweto kids turn back a carful of 'worker parents' bound for work in Johannesburg



BILL OF RIGHTS — RIGHT OR WRONG?

The British government may be considering the introduction of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. This, apparently, is being recommended by the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights in Northern Ireland, a group which includes businessmen and lawyers from the Six Counties who have been taking evidence from all shades of opinion in the north of Ireland.

This policy will no doubt be warmly welcomed in wide areas of the British labour movement. It has for years been the official line of the TUC, having been assiduously promoted by the Communist Party as its own pet policy for the crisis in Northern Ireland.

Workers Action believes that this policy is wrong.

The main thing wrong with it is that it accepts the existing institutional set-up in the north. This framework flows directly from the Government of Ireland Act 1920, which was imposed on the island as a whole by the British parliament under threat of all-out war. It has subsequently been approved in a three-cornered deal by the southern Irish capitalists, the Orange capitalists of the North, and British imperialism.

The Act established separate legislatures in the Six and Twenty Six Counties of "Northern" and "Southern" Ireland, with the Six remaining in the UK with local autonomy. Section 75 of the Act reserved powers to the Westminster parliament to override the wishes of the Six County population if necessary.

The whole Bill of Rights conception rests on the acceptance of Britain's right to control the north of Ireland. It accepts a colonial relationship between the Six Counties and British imperialism.

What the Bill of Rights idea says is this: the minority population in the Six Counties (the Catholics) are too weak to force the majority to concede fair treatment in housing, employment etc. Therefore the responsibility lies with the British government to step in and ensure justice for the minority in Britain's Irish colony.

This of course ignores the fact that the struggle being waged by the IRA (with the support of the Catholic communities) is directed precisely against British occupation of the Six Counties — i.e. against the link with Britain which the Orange bigots have relied on to practise their discrimination in jobs, housing etc.

Over the years, Britain was the prop for the Orange bullyboys. It continues to be their prop even when they address their 'bullying' and bluster against Britain itself. When that has happened, Britain has repeatedly backed down and maintained its support against the minority.

The question then arises, what agency is to ensure fair treatment for the victims of imperialism and its Orange bullies? Answer: the very same imperialist state which has denied the right of these victims since 1921 to choose their own destiny.

Thus the successful imposition of a Bill of Rights will strengthen the imperialist state which holds down a corner of the Irish nation.

And if the introduction of a Bill of Rights does nothing to further the interests of the northern Catholics but remains a dead letter, what then? Well, then, of course, we can afford to raise our sights and demand the enforcement of the Bill of Rights...



Day after day and month after month, the children of Soweto and the black ghetto townships of South Africa have kept up their struggle. Soweto has now become a landmark of heroic and sustained resistance.

The bloody example set by the police in Soweto on June 16th has, in the seasons since then, been absorbed into the common practice of South Africa's police. Vorster's regime has since June quite coldly gone on and on shooting the kids who demand "freedom and an end of

apartheid".

It has now killed at least 1200 people, most of them teenagers, some younger. 5,000 have been arrested and charged. Whole classes of schoolchildren have been arrested at a time. And now there's a 'curfew' in Soweto: anyone on the streets in school time will be "dealt with accordingly".

It is little wonder that Vorster fears these children. They've organised three major political strikes, one involving half a million workers. They've wrecked dozens of "Bantu Administration" offices and build-

ings and burnt down an entire Bantustan parliament building. They've destroyed the beer halls and boycotted exams. And they've turned their comrades' funerals into political demonstrations — in defiance of the bullets that are loosed on them even at the funerals.

The story of Soweto is beginning to be told. Currently, 150 photographs on show at the Africa Centre (38 King Street WC2), organised by Defence and Aid, tell their own story of the brutality, and the heroism, of Soweto.

Association for Freedom.

He claimed he had no choice — and that has also been his plea over removing the UPW blacking from Grunwicks in North London, where mainly Asian strikers are fighting both vicious exploitation and racialism.

But on the BP board Jackson has no such excuse. He should resign from the BP board and demand that the Government forces BP: to grant full trade union rights to its black workers in South Africa; to ban apartheid within BP South Africa; to refuse to supply the South African state forces; to get out of Namibia; and to stop breaking the oil embargo on South Africa. He should demand a full enquiry into BP sanctions-busting in Rhodesia. And the rank and file members of the UPW should make sure that Jackson does this.

Reduce

British workers in Shell and BP should act in elementary class solidarity with their South African brothers and sisters, raising the same demands for the oil companies to stop propping up apartheid.

The Labour Party's manifesto commits it to reduce "Britain's unhealthy involvement with apartheid" and the 1976 Labour Party conference also pledged to reduce Britain's involve-

ment with the apartheid regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia. Rank and file Labour Party members have to fight for those resolutions to be implemented, in relation to Shell and, particularly, BP.

Martin Bailey, unfortunately, fails to draw most of these conclusions. His focus is on persuading the big capitalists of the world that they would do best to keep out of South Africa. He advises them that would be good policy if they want to avoid having their property nationalised without compensation by a revolutionary black working class ("the struggle for majority rule", as he delicately puts it, "will affect their massive investments in South Africa"). Thus his perspective for action, at the press conference presenting the pamphlet, went no further than getting questions raised in Parliament and writing letters to various Ministers.

But the big capitalists are better able to work out their own interests than Martin Bailey is; and they know those interests lie firmly with continuing exploitation in South Africa. They will be shifted only by force — not the force of pamphlets, but by the force of working class action. Where Bailey's pamphlet will be useful is in preparing and informing that working class action.

LINDA COLLINS



"We're not fighting — don't shoot", they called out, sitting down in the roadway. Minutes later came the all too familiar crack of rifle fire

AT FIRST SIGHT the 'Rally for Women's Rights' last Saturday, 26th February, was disappointing. In the vast hall of Alexandra Palace, people milled around, looking at the exhibitions and the stalls, queuing for coffee, eating crisps, chatting in the seats. The platform speakers had difficulty attracting attention in the general chaotic atmosphere, and there were no opportunities for structured debate.

Yet 1500 people attended, looking for a way forward for the fight for women's rights. With better organisation — a smaller hall, with separate rooms for workshops, exhibitions, and stalls, the Rally could have been a real success.

The speakers gave reports on every aspect of the inadequacy of the Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act, and how women are taking up the fight for their rights: the occupation against closure of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital, the London nursery campaign, the Child Benefits campaign, the strike against low pay and slave-like conditions by Asian women and men at Grunwicks, the National Abortion Campaign's fight against the restrictive new Benyon Bill.

Since the Rally was so wide-ranging, there was a real problem of showing the connections of all these struggles, so as not to leave women isolated with each group fighting their own little struggle. It could have been better dealt with by organising workshops together with one or two major summary speeches.

Nevertheless, the last speaker, Pat Longman, from the National Secretariat of the Working Women's Charter

Rally shows inadequacies of new Equality laws

Campaign, managed to pull the disjointed pieces together. Summing up, she argued that the way forward in the struggle for women's liberation is to build a fighting campaign round the demands of the Working Women's Charter. We print here the text of Pat Longman's speech.

Unfortunately, however, the general diffuseness and lack of focus of the rally may have demoralised many of the women present and sent them away thinking "What next? What was all that for?" (Despite this, the IMG still defended their original conception of the Rally, as something of a 'jamboree').

Workers Action believes that the Charter campaign, with

a positive orientation towards working class women, can build upon the struggles of women of recent years, as at Trico and the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital. The WWCC can take forward these struggles through building WWC groups in the unions and workplaces, particularly, around the demands of the Charter. Women need to rely on their own strength and their ability to take part in a united working-class struggle, and a working-class based rank and file organisation of women needs to be built up, able to take initiatives and actions which the existing trade union structures, riddled with male chauvinism, too often refuse to take.

LINDA COLLINS

Women workers in Liverpool demonstrate against unemployment on the "Day of Action" called by the Labour Movement Assembly Against Unemployment. Women are losing jobs twice as much as men



KILL THE BENYON BILL

On Friday 25th February the Benyon Abortion (Amendment) Bill was given its second reading in the House of Commons, by 170 votes to 132, a majority of 38.

If it becomes law, this Bill, with its severe restrictions on the availability of abortion facilities, could only result in women turning back to the gruesome methods of the backstreet abortionist again, or else they would be forced to go through with an unwanted pregnancy.

The Benyon Bill attacks the charities sector; charitable clinics would have to be licensed and a woman's privacy would be threatened as police were allowed to examine clinic records. It would be even easier for doctors to plead conscientious objection to carrying out abortions, and any malicious person could bring an anonymous complaint against a doctor who had carried out an abortion. Most restrictive of all, the time limit for an abortion to be carried out would be reduced from 28 weeks to 20 weeks.

The existing 1967 Abortion Act is inadequate enough. Anti-abortion doctors, inadequate NHS facilities, and the public spending cuts are preventing women from choosing whether or not they wish to have a child. The one alternative left to many women from Britain and abroad is the charitable sector. If Benyon's Bill gets through, even that possibility will be closed to thousands of women.

In Parliament, Renee Shori spoke against the Bill as "based on an unbalanced report from an unbalanced select committee composed of mem-



Campaigning against the Benyon Bill: it's a serious threat now

bers who were, and still were, opposed to the 1967 Act." David Steel, Labour MP who introduced the 1967 Act, pointed out what Benyon's intention really was, "The two organisations campaigning for support for the Bill stood for the total repeal of the 1967 Act. Their object was to stop abortion. None should pretend that the Bill was to tidy up the Act. The steam behind it was to stop abortion."

The Department of Health and Social Security is opposing the Bill and 1,200 doctors have signed a letter to the Prime Minister opposing it. The National Abortion Campaign's demonstration on May 14th will be the way to put good intentions into action to kill this Bill. And in all the constituencies, Labour MPs must be called to account. The Labour Party Conference voted for free abortion on request, every Labour MP has a duty to vote against this Bill.

FIGHTING LONGER AND HARDER THAN BEFORE

ONE YEAR AGO women were promised equality by the Labour Government. Yet we can see here today how shallow those promises have been. Not only has the legislation been totally inadequate, but the problems that women are facing in their everyday lives and the struggles that they have to wage are longer and harder now than before the Acts became law.

The Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act were part of the trade unions' reward for agreeing to the Social Contract. Yet it is the Social Contract, with its cuts and unemployment, which is turning the clock back for women's rights.

The cuts in public expenditure have meant that the facilities necessary for women to work outside of the home and to be financially independent are no longer there. Their functions have been heaped back onto the family and onto the shoulders of women.

The Working Women's Charter sees the fight for better social provision and for equal pay and conditions at work as being completely interlinked.

It is impossible to talk abstractly of equal rights while ignoring the oppressive nature of the work that women carry out within the home and the way it impedes their ability to work with men on an equal footing. The Working Women's Charter, through its ten demands, takes up all the areas where a real fightback must begin to overcome this double oppression and exploitation. We recognise the importance of legislation, but the crucial question is the need to strengthen the organisation and militancy of women in fighting for their rights: for the history of the women's movement shows that advances are made only when women them-

selves begin to take the struggle into their own hands.

The demand for equal pay was part of the policy of the Labour Party and the TUC for 100 years. Yet these declarations of good intent only became law when women through their own efforts began to organise and demand it.

We have also seen today how the Industrial Tribunals set up by the Labour Government to implement the legislation have acted against women and the working class. The Labour Government sought to convince women that they could sit back and rely on the Tribunals — the fight had been won. But the findings of the Tribunals, and the historic strike at Trico, have shown clearly that women must rely on their own struggles. And the recently threatened bakers' strike highlighted the fact that many women are still not receiving equal pay.

But it only took a national union to threaten strike action to bring the employers to their knees. It shows only too clearly that if other unions had done the same, a lot of women would be much better off.

For these reasons the Working Women's Charter sees it as being of central importance to focus on the organisation of women in the workplaces and the community, and to fight within the labour movement to take up the question of women's rights.

The Government's present attacks are creating the material conditions for the prejudices that exist within the labour movement to come to the fore. Willie Hamilton, who introduced the Sex Discrimination Act into Parliament, has said that married women should leave their jobs and make way for men; and such ideas find fertile ground in the trade union movement, which has done little to actively take up the question

of women's rights. Many trade unionists still feel that women are only working for 'pin money', that they are a subordinate part of the workforce and make bad trade unionists. In lay-off situations we still find male trade unionists arguing that women should go out of the gate first.

They have still not woken up to the fact that women's needs are not of secondary importance, but vitally necessary, if women, as an integral part of the working class, are to play a full and active role.

Failure to fight for women's rights will severely weaken the working-class fightback.

Yet some unions will not even support women when they are forced, through lack of male solidarity, to take their case to an industrial tribunal. At the Electrolux factory in Luton the Union refused to provide even financial and legal backing to women who went to the Tribunal.

220 women there have filed claims — and still only two out of 60 male shop stewards are supporting the women's demands.

The fight at Grunwicks also demonstrates the need to take up the special discrimination that Asian women face — triply discriminated against, as workers, as women, and because they are black.

To fight this backwardness, the Working Women's Charter sees the need to organise and encourage women to set up women's groups within the labour movement. It is useless to talk abstractly about unity of the working class when women are generally less confident and less experienced in organising within the trade union movement to fight for their demands.

Yet, if women's struggles are not to be isolated, solidarity action must be spread in the

WOMEN

workers' movement. This can be seen in the cases of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson hospital and of Trico. In both these cases, women were forced to fight on a local basis with no national back-up. At Trico the AUEW's pledge to the Social Contract took precedence over the effective blacking of all windscreen wipers and other national solidarity action.

So how do we begin to overcome these problems?

We need a fighting, campaigning organisation of women, built in the workplaces and communities on a national level, which will take up the demands of the Charter. To this end it is important that a fight is waged for the Labour Party and the TUC to adopt the Working Women's Charter. But not as a thing in itself, or because the adoption of such a list of demands will automatically mean they will carry them out (indeed, as their acceptance of the Social Contract shows, these organisations are generally hypocritical about women's rights). However, if the Charter is passed by the Labour Party or TUC, it will give an impetus to women at a rank and file level, who will be eager to ensure that these promises are turned into concrete action.

In these ways we can ensure that women's needs are not seen as expendable luxuries, as happened with the child benefits scheme, and that women, along with other oppressed groups, are not made scapegoats for the capitalist crisis.

If this is not done, then the inability of the working class to fight for demands that will unite all sections of the working class will be seized on by those who wish to see the class tied to another round of wage restraint.

This is particularly important in the present debate around the Social Contract. The talk of the need to preserve differentials has meant that trade union leaders who represent low-paid workers have been able to argue for another round of wage restraint on the grounds that in a free-for-all low paid workers will suffer. Alan Fisher of NUPE has already said that the end of wage restraint would not help his members, the majority of whom are women; and others have stated that 'in the aftermath, low-paid workers will go to the wall and the prize will go to the strong'.

We have to state clearly that the cuts and unemployment are part and parcel of the Social Contract. That the working class should not be made to pay for the crisis and the need to restore profitability. And that, instead of arguing for another year of wage restraint — which will definitely mean that women will remain poorly paid — a campaign must be fought for a national minimum wage, which will automatically raise the wages of many women, and for that wage and all workers' wages to be protected against rising prices by automatic increases as the cost of working-class living goes up.

In this way both low-paid and high-paid workers will be united in their fight against the Social Contract.

Because of the importance of taking up these demands in relation to the fight against the social contract, the Working Women's Charter Campaign is calling a meeting on the Saturday before the Conference called by the Leyland stewards in Birmingham on April 3rd, to discuss why it is necessary to take up women's particular needs in the present fight-back. In this way the working class can go forward on a more united basis against the current attacks.

LCDTU CONFERENCE

Fighting talk, but real fight is ignored

The Conference of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions [LCDTU] committed itself to act on April 3rd, April 19th and on days of action organised by the public sector unions. But it didn't commit itself to do anything NOW.

In fact, the big fight of the present, the Leyland toolroom strike, was passed over in silence by the series of pre-selected speakers.

Even Derek Robinson, the Leyland Longbridge convenor and himself a toolmaker, ignored the strike.

This LCDTU Conference ought to have been a sounding board for the struggle of the toolroom workers. The only implicit reference to that struggle was a criticism by Jimmy Airlie, Clydeside shipbuilding convenor, of differential claims.

Collision

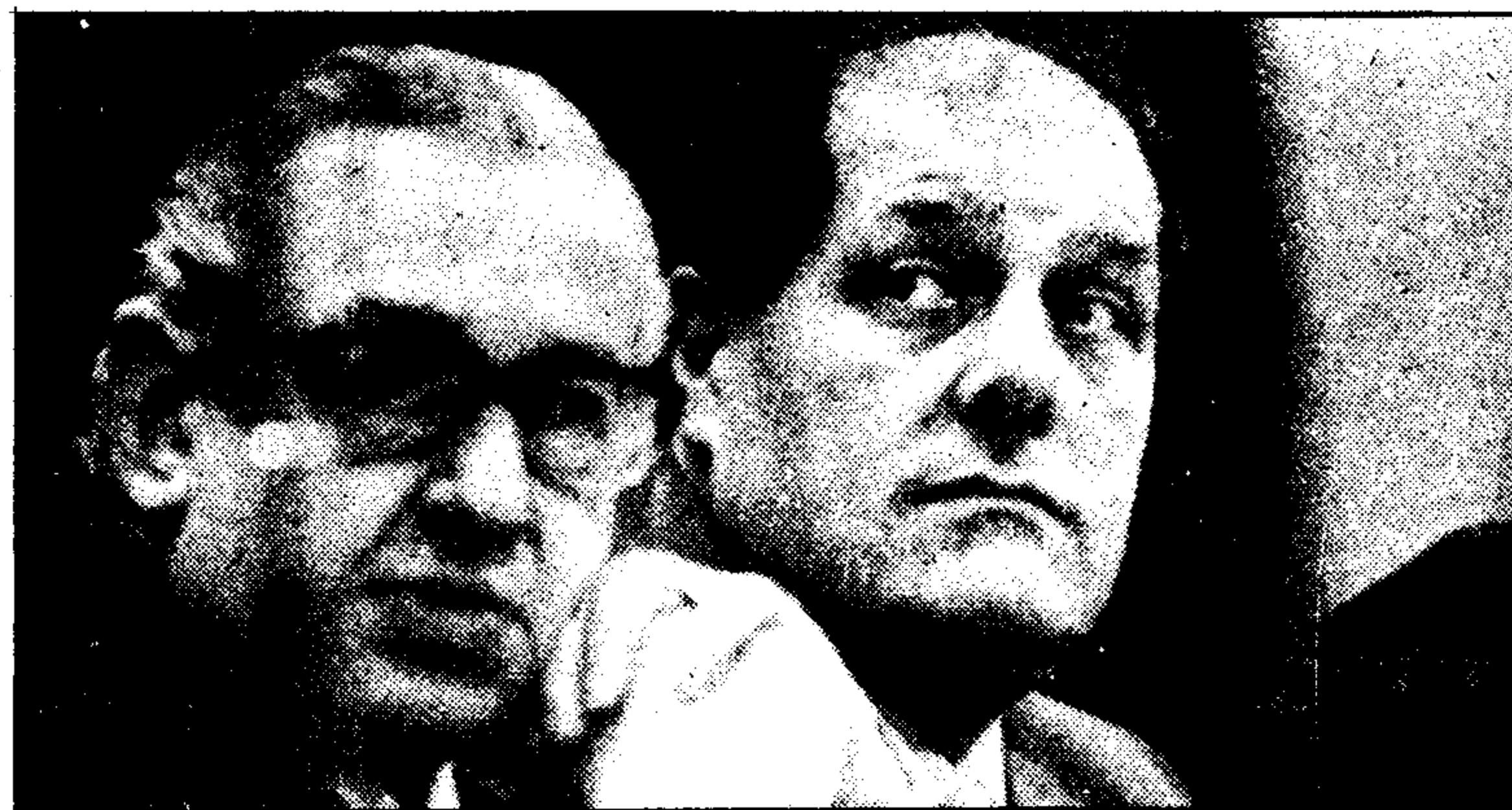
This refusal is the clearest indicator of the value of this conference. At best the Conference was an attempt by the Communist Party to rush after the spontaneous developments against the Social Contract in order to channel them away from any head-on collision with the union bureaucracy — particularly with the "Lefts" in the leadership of the AUEW.

Certain details, however, indicate that there was a lot of opposition within the CP to the resurrection, yet again, of the feeble crusade of the LCDTU. Leading Communist Party trade unionists

— Ken Gill, Mick McGahey and others — were conspicuously absent. And Kevin Halpin in opening the proceedings pointed out ruefully that in the past there had been many telegrams from prominent trade unionists apologising for their absence and wishing the Conference well; this year there were none.

The 1,200 or more delegates had the misfortune of having to sit through a funeral procession of CP speakers advocating things like "protection for the home base of industry" and saying yet again that they were not in favour of the Social Contract. But there was no clear idea of what the working class should do to get rid of it, what they should demand, and how they should fight for their demands.

The only practical suggestions in this respect were the calls to support the Leyland Convenors Combine Committee conference on April 3rd, which is being organised "on the widest possible



Wright & Robinson — reluctant 'militants'

Bullock by the back door

The TUC in its latest Economic Review complains that "It is particularly worrying to find that no planning agreements have yet been concluded, even with the nationalised industries or with companies heavily dependent on state financial support."

Soon they won't need to worry. They will be able to sleep peacefully in the knowledge that one Planning Agreement has been signed.

That Planning Agreement is the result of Chrysler's latest exercise in kidology. The Financial Times hails this agreement as something that has "broken new ground in the involvement of the unions in the car factories' affairs". And to bear out its enthusiasm it publishes a graph showing that strikes this year are down to about a half of last year's, while time lost is down to about a tenth.

The two men playing footsie in the affair are Mr. Ken Young, Chrysler's Director of Employee Participation and Communication ["There is no real body of technical knowledge on how to communicate with employees..."], and long-standing Communist Party member Eddie McCluskey.

Through a series of conferences at which employee rep-

resentatives may attend (everything is voluntary) the firm's plans are discussed in the light of market developments and so forth. These complex statistical data are presented in the form of cartoon films and the whole thing is got up as a television programme which departmental managers are encouraged to take onto the shop floor by means of portable TV sets [just in case the body of technical knowledge on how to communicate with employees has evaded them too].

Of course, there is no breach of confidentiality here. McCluskey proudly points out that when worker representatives on the planning agreement working party report back to the shop stewards "a lot of the information is confidential but we tell them what we can without divulging the actual details"

In reality, this is a non-statutory Bullock structure. All the basic objectives of the Bullock Report — trade unionists caught in the net of company affairs and loyalties, strikes headed off, workers identifying their interests with those of the Company — seem to have been achieved more informally here by this ruse.

Militants beware!



THE UNIONS



basis to mobilise the trade union movement in support of a return to free collective bargaining from August 1977 onwards" (not before, note!) and for a one day stoppage and lobby of parliament on the first day after its Easter recess (probably April 19th).

At this meeting as at all previous LCDTU conferences there was not even a semblance of democracy.

Voice

Although they formed a fairly substantial section of the delegates, militants from the different groups claiming to adhere to Trotskyism were denied any effective voice in the proceedings. Thanks to the SWP (IS as was) even this aspect could be kept concealed from many delegates: reneging on an agreement the SWP had made with the other groups to the left of the Stalinists on the need for a united fight for the right to speak at the conference, John Deason of the SWP's

ists' ideas a free passage.

A seven-part resolution was duly and ceremoniously passed at the end of the day (with no votes recorded against). The only important part of this resolution is part five, which commits "The LCDTU to assist in setting up, where they do not exist, local committees based on workplaces, factories, pits and sites to conduct an ongoing campaign on all these issues."

Local level

Most probably this is a bare-faced lie: the LCDTU just won't do it! But revolutionaries should use this commitment to pressure CP members into action, and to give weight to those CPers and their supporters who genuinely want to wage a struggle at the local level.

WORKERS' ACTION

supporters' groups

BASINGSTOKE, BIRMINGHAM, BRISTOL, CAMBRIDGE, CARDIFF, CHELMSFORD, CHESTER, COVENTRY, EDINBURGH, HUDDERSFIELD, LEICESTER, LIVERPOOL, LONDON, MANCHESTER, MIDDLESBROUGH, NEWCASTLE, NEWTOWN, NORTHAMPTON, NOTTINGHAM, READING, ROCHDALE, SHEFFIELD, STAFFORD, STOKE.

Write for details of meetings and activities to:
WASG, 49 Carnac Street, London SE27

WORKERS IN ACTION

COVENTRY UNITY CALL FROM MASSEY STEWARDS

MASSEY FERGUSON shop stewards are calling a city-wide meeting of shop stewards in Coventry on Tuesday 29th February to discuss their strike and a series of other battles in progress in the city's factories.

At Massey Ferguson the AUEW

members, now in their 9th week of a dispute provoked by management speed-up plans, have voted overwhelmingly against a recommendation by local officials to return to work, and are not due to meet again until Thursday 10th March. The strike is still official at

national level.

The bosses had expected the officials' recommendation to be followed, and had even organised a dinner in celebration. — but they were disappointed. Production has now been shut down since February 7th, and losses amount to £72.8 million.

Four Leyland plants in Coventry are in dispute. At Triumph Canley 4,250 workers are laid off as a result of a strike by 300 paintshop workers against imposition of time and motion study. At Jaguar Radford and Browns Lane, and at Morris Engines (Courthouse Green) the toolroom is on strike.

350 toolroom workers are also in dispute in Coventry's GEC factories. They demanded pay increases and staff status, and when the company offered only £3.50 increase imposed a work-to-rule. GEC locked them out as from Monday 28th February. The toolroom workers have put pickets on the gates, but other GEC workers are working normally.

The basic drive behind the GEC toolroom dispute is for parity

with other toolroom workers in Coventry. Chrysler toolroom have already got staff status, and Massey Ferguson toolroom get £84 a week as against GEC toolroom's average £69.

At the Wickmans machine tool factory, the 350 white collar workers last week occupied the administration block after being suspended by the company following a fortnight's work-to-rule. They demanded compensation to maintain differentials after manual workers at Wickmans had been granted staff status. Management offered a £150 lump sum, which was accepted, but then withdrew it.

Despite the fact that these disputes all involve relatively highly-paid workers, sometimes fighting for sectional privileges rather than for general working-class demands, the basic issue is whether Social Contract wage-limiting will be cracked or the bosses will continue their offensive against trade union organisation in Coventry. Full solidarity is necessary for every one of these strikes.

D.S.

GRUNWICKS: ACAS REFUSES TO REPORT

ACAS, the Government-sponsored Arbitration, Conciliatory and Advisory Service, has still not made public its judgment on the Grunwicks dispute.

Strike committee members have told *Workers' Action* that they have been assured that, even though ACAS has not yet published its report, it has come down in favour of the strikers' demand for union recognition. Yet ACAS has told enquirers that they are not making a report!

200 workers at Grunwick Film Processing in North London have been on strike since August 23rd last year. On 1st November, after four days of UPW blacking of Grunwicks mail, the Grunwick bosses agreed to go to ACAS.

After obstruction by the Grunwick bosses, who are continuing operations with scab labour having 'sacked' the 200 strikers, ACAS finally balloted the workers on union recognition, and said it would report in January. In January they

said the report would be postponed to 11th February. And still they have said nothing.

Meanwhile the strikers continue manning the picket lines. And the Union of Post Office Workers (UPW) leadership continues to put off a decision on reimposing the blacking on Grunwicks mail.

The Grunwicks strike has had very wide official labour movement support. TUC general secretary Len Murray spoke at a strike support meeting in December. The reason is simple: if the Grunwick bosses, anti-union cowboys as they are, are allowed to win, it will make nonsense of the Labour Government's legislation on employment protection and trade union recognition rights.

Yet the official labour movement is still quailing and dithering before the aggressive tactics of the Grunwicks bosses. And the only way to explain the antics of ACAS is as a deliberate tactic to spin along and wear out the strikers.

Two lessons follow. Rank and file pressure is necessary on a large scale to give solidarity to Grunwicks and to force the leaders of the labour movement to act in support of the strikers. And every atom of reliance on ACAS can only weaken workers' struggles.

WOMEN SACKED FOR DEMANDING EQUAL PAY

ANOTHER group of equal pay strikers have refused to get drawn into the Industrial Tribunal trap. 8 women are in their seventh week of official strike at T.H. Nice Garages in Bury St. Edmonds and on relying on their own direct action rather than getting bogged down arguing their individual cases, as the Equal Pay Act official procedure lays down.

The women, all AUEW TASS members, were earning from £16 to a maximum of £32pw (for a senior accounts clerk) while the lowest rate for men workers, fixed by the National Joint Council in the motor distribution trade, is £34.50 a week.

When the women demanded they receive at least the lowest male rate the company refused to negotiate. The women struck and they were 'sacked' three weeks later.

The strikers are picketing the firm. But the men there, who are not in the union, have declined to come out in support.

Because the strike is a small one in a relatively isolated area, the women urgently need support. Send messages and financial aid to: Sue Austin, 111 Eastgate Street, Bury St. Edmonds.

ASTMS STRIKE AGAINST SCAB LABOUR

THOUSANDS OF ASTMS university workers struck on Friday in support of 130 strikers of Birmingham University. The strike has been on for 24 weeks, over the university's failure to implement a national agreement on holidays which entitles technicians to an extra week's holiday. Birmingham has been the only university to break the national agreement and many ASTMS members see the strike as a test case. A defeat in Birmingham could be used to fragment the national agreement.

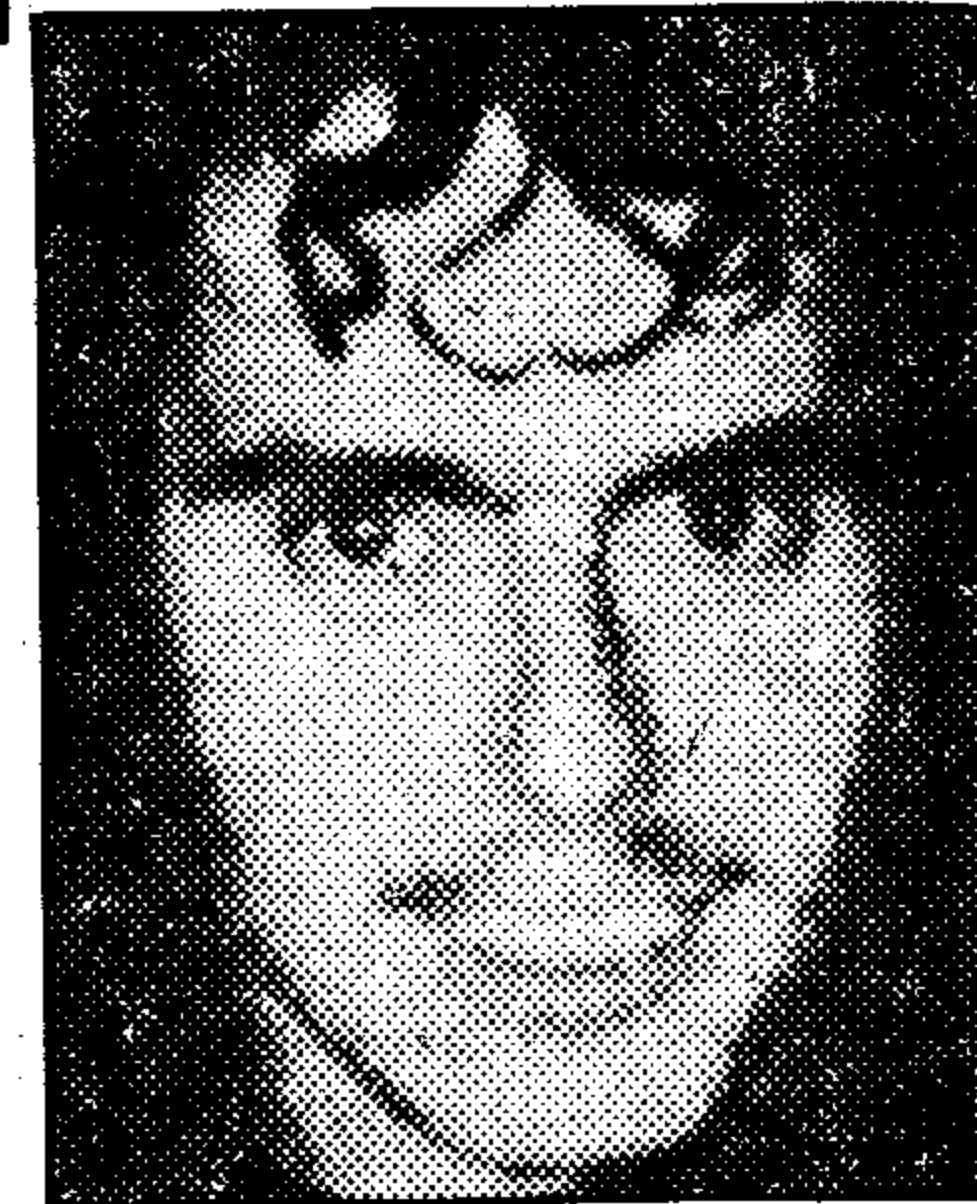
The protest strike was called because of the university's use of non-union labour to deliver coal and the intimidation of pickets by scabs. One-day strikes, however, will not win this strike, nor defend basic trade union rights. The ASTMS leadership must extend effective strike action and organise a blockade of scab firms. M.W.

Did he jump or was he pushed?

AFTER HIS arrest in a dawn raid by paratroopers and interrogation in the Springfield Rd RUC barracks, Edward Rooney is seriously ill in hospital with a fractured skull. The RUC statement said that he "took detectives completely by surprise by leaping from his seat and diving through a glass window. He fell 25 feet to a yard below, striking a parked car as he fell".

Evidently suicidal prisoners are not the sole prerogative of the South African police state. As a Provisional Sinn Fein spokesman commented, 'suicides' are not uncommon in the North. Two weeks ago the Provos exposed the case of Sean Moore who was threatened (coincidentally) with being thrown out of a second floor window.

Even Gerry Fitt of the Social Democratic and Labour Party has de-



manded a public enquiry, and the RUC are having an 'internal investigation'. But state thuggery in the North will not be exposed by the state. What is needed is a labour movement enquiry into the brutality of the security forces.

Court evicts Wildts sit-in

AT 11 AM on Wednesday 1st March 800 workers at Wildt Mellor Bromley works in Eylstone Road, Leicester, came out of occupation in response to a writ obtained by management in the law courts the previous Friday for re-possession.

The workers intend to stay on strike and picket the factory to stop the £17 million worth of machinery being moved and the plant closed down.

What will they do to stop the movement of machinery when police insist that picketing is limited, peaceful — and ineffective? Will the law be respected and obeyed again, after leaving in response to the writ? Alf Watson, chairman of the

Joint Shop Stewards Committee, said last week that they would probably accept 25% voluntary redundancies. All along, the shop stewards have insisted on the viability and respectability of the work-in, and been concerned about getting the jobs done on time and so on. But this isn't the issue — the work can be done elsewhere. Management think that the workers are too well-paid and the threat of redundancies can be used to force through wage-cutting new bonus schemes.

What is needed is mass pickets and efforts to spread the action to other works in the Bentley combine.

DAVE JEWSON

EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Paid ads (including ads for publications); 8p per word; block ads, £5 per column inch. Send copy to *Events*, 49 Carnac St, London SE27, to arrive by Friday for the following week's paper.

SATURDAY 5 MARCH. Demonstration for Agee & Hosenball and for Aubrey, Berry & Campbell. Assemble 1pm at Embankment and march to Home Office and to Century House (M16 HQ).

SATURDAY 5 MARCH. Scottish Anti-Apartheid demonstration. Assemble 10.30am at Blythwood Sq, Glasgow.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 5-6 MARCH. Second Socialist Teachers' Alliance conference. Registration from 10.15am at Caxton House, St John's Way, London N19.

SUNDAY 6 MARCH. Anti-Apartheid demonstration. Assemble 1.30pm at Speakers' Corner.

TUESDAY 8 MARCH. International Women's Day symposium on "Why Are Women Oppressed?" The speakers will be Irene Brennan, Hermione Harris, and Evelyn Reed. 7pm at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1.

FRIDAY 11 MARCH. London Spartacist group forum on "Leninism, the National Question, & Ireland". 7pm at Conway Hall, London WC1.

SUNDAY 12 MARCH. Campaign against the Criminal Trespass Law day conference for Wales. 11am to 5pm, Miners Hall, Merthyr Tydfil. Details c/o AUEW-TASS, 18 St Anne's Close, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid-Glamorgan.

SUNDAY 13 MARCH. Workshop on "What is a socialist feminist practice?" No. 1: "Is unemployment an area of feminist struggle?" Caxton House, St Johns Way, N19. More details: 13 Malfort Rd, London SE5.

SATURDAY 19 MARCH. 'Liberation' conference against racism. 9.30am to 4.30pm at Friends House, Euston Rd, London NW1. Delegates' credentials (£1) from Liberation, 313-315 Caledonian Rd, London N1.

SATURDAY 19 MARCH. 'Hospital Worker' conference, Portland Hall, 16-22 Riding House St, London W1. Credentials for trade union delegates £1 from 265a Seven Sisters Rd, N4

SUNDAY 27 MARCH. 'Campaign for democracy in the labour movement' recall conference on wage control and union democracy. 10am at Digbeth Hall, Birmingham. Credentials 50p from Kevin Lee, 44 Devonshire Rd, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham 20.

SUNDAY 3 APRIL. Conference on wage restraint called by the Leyland combine committee. Credentials 60p from P. Nicholas, 88 Newbridge Rd, Small Heath, Birmingham B9 5JG. Conference starts 10.30am at Birmingham Town Hall.

MONDAY-THURSDAY 4-7 APRIL. 4 days of Marxist discussion on the Soviet Union, in central London. Register with "Critique", 9 Poland St, London W1.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 21-22 MAY. National conference of the Working Women's Charter Campaign — "Which Way Forward for the Charter Campaign?" Delegates' credentials £1.50 from Jill Daniels, 1a Camberwell Grove, London SE5 (701 4173).

"WOMEN'S CHARTER", paper of the Working Women's Charter campaign. Issue no. 3 now out: price 5p, from Jill Daniels, 1a Camberwell Grove, London SE5.

"INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST"

No. 4, including the debate on the Workers' Government at the 4th Congress of the Communist International (first time in English for 50 years); 'The I-CL & Women's Liberation', and the development of capitalism in Russia. 30p plus 6½p postage from G.Lee, 98 Gifford St, London N1 0DF.

"WOMEN'S LIBERATION & WORKERS' REVOLUTION"; a new pamphlet from the International-Communist League. 20p plus 6½p postage from G.Lee, 98 Gifford St, London N1