

workers' ACTION

No. 55

May 5th to 12th 1977

10p

BIGOTS STRIKE FOR ORANGE POWER

INTIMIDATION and threats by the Orange paramilitary organisations in the Six Counties of northern Ireland have so far failed to launch a general Orange protest strike in support of the demands of Ian Paisley and Ernest Baird for a restoration of Protestant rule in Northern Ireland.

But in the Six Counties threats are a powerful weapon. Already the port of Larne is closed. If the power stations are shut down, that may force a general work stoppage.

This "strike" — even if there was no intimidation — is not for working class interests, but against a section of the Six Counties working class, and against the whole Catholic population there. It is a sectarian movement to restore the Protestant community to a position of political privilege.

Workers and socialists in Britain must support the Catholic community, including its right to defend itself — against either the Orange pogromists or the British Army, which serves the state and the government responsible for the situation in Northern Ireland. In no conditions should anything but hostility be offered to this reactionary Paisleyite attempt to create a general strike by gangster methods.

FOR FULL ANALYSIS, SEE PAGE 3.



demonstrate
against
Beryon
anti-abortion
BILL
saturday 14 may

FOR a woman's
RIGHT to CHOOSE

assemble 1.30 - Belvedere Rd (Waterloo)
& march to a rally
in Hyde Park at 4.30 pm.

HITLER GANG ATTACKS LABOUR AGENT

'HAPPY BIRTHDAY APRIL 20 88'. That was the message left by the British Movement on the Tower Hamlets Labour Party office in Bethnal Green Road, East London, last week.

They identified themselves by the insignia painted next to the slogan — a cross in a circle. April 20th is the anniversary of Hitler's birthday, and 88 stands for Heil Hitler (H being the 8th letter of the alphabet).

The birthday greeting to the hero of the fascist movement was daubed onto boards covering a hole where a brick was thrown through the window some weeks ago. To further emphasise their message, a bullet was fired through the office window.

The British Movement is one of the most extreme of the fascist groups — as their obsession with Hitler indicates.

They supported the National Front demonstration through Haringey on 23rd April in its attempt to intimidate the immigrant community.

The East End is a strong area for the fascists. Walls are cov-

ered with British Movement and National Front slogans and symbols. Current slogans round Bethnal Green read! "Jews should be gassed", and "Free Hess".

But it's not only in the relatively harmless arena of slogan paintings that the fascists are making themselves known. In keeping with their pro-Nazi ideology, they are turning to more violent methods. During the last five weeks, in the lead-up to the local elections, there have been several attacks on the local Labour Party and its members.

A brick was thrown through the window of another Labour Party office, in Stepney. A bottle was thrown from a car through the window of the local Labour Party agent's secretary. Fascists have attacked Bob Searle, Tower Hamlets Labour Party agent, smashing three of his teeth.

As a result Labour Party canvassers now have to work in groups for protection.

Searle's policy is to leave the Labour Party office door open so people may feel free to participate in the Party's activities. Fascists have taken advantage of this. At a local anti-fascist meeting recently, the leader of the Labour group on the local Council stated that he and the Party wished to fight fascism. Despite this, he argued in favour of the local Party's agreement to support freedom of speech for fascists by letting local Council halls to them.

Even in terms of loss of votes, the danger of the National Front is becoming clear to Labour activists. But the electoral aspect is the smallest part of the fascist threat! Attacks like those in East London, on the Labour Party and other workers' organisations, will become generalised unless we drive the fascists off the streets — now.

Ros Makin

AUEW gives Social Contract a battering

The voting at the AUEW National Committee's policy making meeting at Eastbourne is a crushing defeat for the TUC leaders' plan to impose another year of wage curbs on the working class. By 50 votes to 2 the National Committee voted for an immediate return to free collective bargaining and against a third phase for the Social Contract.

Meanwhile at Porthcawl,

the South Wales Miners followed the pattern in all the main mining areas of voting for a wage target for face-working miners that would bust any social contract. The £100 claim was the same as the 1975 claim — and in the view of those who supported this figure and others backing higher figures, it is "a very modest claim."

Nor are the South Wales

miners prepared to wait until next Spring. They want this claim met in November of this year. If it is not met, then the conference will reconvene to discuss whether it should recommend strike action.

A re-call proposal was also built into the AUEW motion. The successful proposal, while calling on the union to do all it can to dissuade the TUC from

agreeing to another round of pay limits, called for a second meeting when the position of the TUC as a whole has been made clear.

Of course, at this meeting Scanlon, if the TUC agrees on a further round, will try to scotch any plans for breaking "TUC discipline". It is likely in that event that many NC members will try to chicken out of the challenge to the Gov-

ernment that the union's stand implies.

The pressure on the AUEW leaders and the lay members of the NC must continue; resolutions supporting the position of the NC must flood into the union headquarters. Union members must also try to support industrial action by any section of the working class against the social contract now or after July

BUT THAT is what we are, that's where we come from: the offspring of the processes of destruction and death in metropolitan society, from the war of everyone against everyone, from the competition of each against each, from the system in which the law of fear, the pressure to perform well, dominates, from the system of one-at-the-cost-of-the-other, from the division between men and women, young and old, sick and well, foreigners and Germans and from the struggle to keep up with the Joneses. That's where we come from: from the isolation of the terraced row and the concrete barracks of the suburbs, the prison cells, the asylums, the isolation units, from the brainwashing through the media, through consumerism, through being beaten as a punishment, through the ideology of impotence, from depression, from sickness, from being declassified, from the humiliation and debasement of humanity, of all of humanity under imperialism.

THREE YEARS after their arrest, after two of their group had fallen victims of judicial murder, after a massive hate campaign in the media and after the expenditure of £5 million on the trial, three members of the Red Army Fraction, the so-called Baader-Meinhof group, have been sentenced to life imprisonment.

The sentences of Andreas Baader, Jan-Carl Raspe and Gudrun Esslin related to the bombing by the group of US military headquarters in Heidelberg and Frankfurt. In the bombing, four soldiers were killed. In addition to this the three were found guilty of 34 other cases of attempted murder.

To the ordinary person reading the daily paper, four murders and 34 attempted murders is a catalogue of

'BAADER-MEINHOF' TRIAL

The state exacts its revenge

amazing barbarity and life imprisonment seems a just solution. For the Baader-Meinhof group, this very reaction would be seen as a confirmation of their conception of the ideological enslavement of the working class through, among other things, the authorities' monopoly of information.

The Baader-Meinhof group were far from being barbarians. They fought with thorough-going commitment and self-sacrifice for the liberation of the oppressed — but with a political strategy based on pessimism, disillusionment, and desperation.

Fundamental to their strategy was the view that the metropolitan — above all, the German — working class was no longer a possible driving force of history; a conception of the Federal Republic of Germany as a satellite and agency of US capitalism; and the idea that the strategic and operational principles of the third world national liberation struggles could be applied to metropolitan countries. US military headquarters in Heidelberg and Frankfurt were thus obvious targets, being

vital installations of the "main enemy", US capital. It was an assault on the US-West German connection and also an act of solidarity with the Vietnamese struggle.

But for the Baader-Meinhof group the bombings also went beyond an act of solidarity — they were a blow in the same war as the Vietnamese were fighting. That is why, time and again after their capture, they emphasised that they were prisoners of war.

"The real situation in the metropolitan countries", said Ulrike Meinhof, "is that the masses are in the grip and under the control of the system in every aspect". She explains how "the complete encirclement and integration of the traditional class organisations of the proletariat into the politics of capital in the Federal Republic is historically determined". Above all she stresses that there is no getting away from the fact that "the history of the German workers' movement is the history of having failed to prevent two imperialist

world wars and 12 years of fascism, in fact of having failed even to wage a relevant struggle against these".

While Ulrike Meinhof certainly overestimated the strength of the US and Germany's dependence on it, and largely omitted the conflicts between the two, many insights as to the role of the Federal Republic in European politics were astute.

When she accused Brandt of being NATO's salesman in Southern Europe she was quite correct. And she also discerned the role of the Socialist International within capitalism's attempts to keep order in Europe. The role of the German Social Democracy in supporting Soares in Portugal, in supporting the Italian economy and the Greek regime was understood, at least in essence, by Ulrike Meinhof.

Ulrike Meinhof is dead. Murdered in her cell, the crime being disguised as a suicide. Her collaborator, Holger Meins, is dead. He starved to death on a hunger strike. £3 million has been spent by the government to build a special prison-cum-courthouse for the group.

Even the Times declared that the trial "not only beat all national records for length, expense and sensation, but also cast serious doubt over West Germany's commitment to due process of law".

The group's members have been kept in solitary confinement for three years. The state has tried to break them, to reduce them to vegetables. And it has stepped up its actions against the left in general in an attempt to identify both in the law and in the public imagination "left-wingers" with criminals.

These tough measures gear into a host of other invidious policies, like the 'Berufsverbot' that bars leftists from holding posts in the public services, like the increased harassment of leftist lawyers, of left bookshops, of squatters and political organisations of the left.

The Baader-Meinhof group were very wrong when they said that there already was fascism in Germany. But it must be understood that the state that has taken their lives or buried them in the horrors of life-long internment is a state whose rapid expansion of the means of repression represents a direct attack on the German working class and the workers and socialists of other countries affected by the police role of the Federal Republic.

H. SACHS

"Commissar Computer" on the side of repression

Home Secretary Malhofer (of the Free Democratic Party), speaking in mid-August 1976, proudly announced the increase in the number of those arrested at the borders of the Federal Republic of Germany. The constitutional order has been successfully defended. In the first half of 1976 70% more people were arrested than in the corresponding period of the previous year, that is about 25,000.

Malhofer also referred to the extension of the work of his predecessor Genscher (also of the FDP) in the strengthening of the Federal Bureau of Crime, turning it from a "miserable outfit" into the "Mecca of crime fighters from all over the world". Almost 60,000 official searches were carried out last year thanks to "Commissar Computer" at Wiesbaden. Since October 1974 200 people suspected of politically motivated terrorism have been arrested by means of the close cooperation between federal and provincial police forces.

In this context Malhofer also referred to the strengthening of Frontier Defence 9, which likewise started under the SPD-FDP coalition and is now one of the best trained and best armed anti-terrorist forces in the world, and the creation within the Federal Bureau of Crime of a "Terrorism" department. This Department works in concert with the "Bonn Security Section" and is based in Bad Godesberg.

According to Malhofer, the Federal Republic, thanks to this strengthening of the FBC, "can take on a decisive role in the international struggle against organised political terrorism" in conjunction with France, Britain and now Italy.

from Spartacus 30/31

Making the police apparatus stronger

In an interview with the Bild-Zeitung [a popular German daily paper] on 12th November 1974, SPD Chancellor Schmidt proudly declared: "The federal and provincial authorities have further strengthened and modernised their police apparatus since the summer of 1972". Indeed! There is always money available for such "internal reforms" as the strengthening of the Frontier Police, the militarisation of the police force, the creation of special commando units, just as there is for police contingents against the wildcat strikes in August, 1973 and the following court cases.

"Tough measures" are the only method the bourgeoisie has in a situation of sharpening social crisis of counteracting the demands. In the view of the 'legal expert' of the parliamentary fraction of the CDU-CSU [the allied conservative parties of Germany] Friedrich Vogel, "what is absolutely necessary is a painstaking observation of radical movements in the Federal Republic in the context of the development of the labour market. There is no doubt that openness of the population to radical ideas in the context of rising unemployment figures has increased". This is the heart of the matter!

At the same time as launching an anti-communist witch-hunt, the conference of ministers of justice (from all the provinces) of both the ruling and radical changes in penal law, in the rights of people appearing before the courts and in the right to demonstrate, and it advised the provincial parliaments on how best to introduce the so-called "Extremist Law" by amending the rights of state officials.

from Spartacus 11

Imperialism rushes to rescue Mobutu regime

Ruling circles in Africa and the West have responded rapidly to the invasion of Zaire, from Angola, by former gendarmes of Katanga province, now called Shaba.

A week after the invasion began, on March 8th, Jimmy Carter rushed \$2,000,000 of allegedly non-lethal military supplies to Zaire. Shortly after France and Belgium sent scores of planes full of equipment to help the corrupt and vicious dictatorship of President Mobutu Sese-Seko.

African states have committed themselves further. Morocco has 1500 troops in the battle-zone town of Kalwezi, and Sudan, Uganda and Nigeria have also pledged support.

China has joined in, sending a shipload of heavy artillery, presumably to combat 'Soviet social imperialism' in Africa.

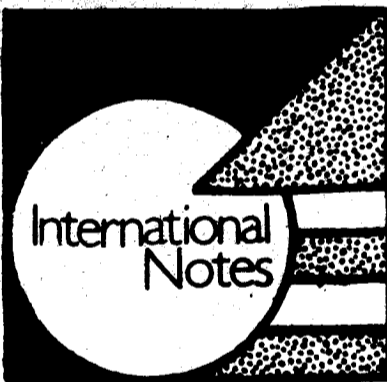
Why is there such concern about an invasion force of no more than 5000 men who have a following only in one province of Zaire and who face, on paper an army of 45,000 at the disposal of President Mobutu?

Shaba provides 60 to 65% of the capitalist world's supply of cobalt, a mineral essential for the steel industry, space exploration and the construction of nuclear power plants. It also has important copper mines. Preventing disruption of that supply is a first priority for the big capitalist powers, along with their general concern

for the stability of southern Africa.

Mobutu's regime, despite being Africa's biggest recipient of US military aid [\$32.5 million allocated for the year 1978 alone], is so riddled by corruption that it is not well able to deal with the rebellion itself. Mobutu is reputed to have amassed one of the world's largest fortunes in his numbered Swiss bank accounts since taking power in March 1965; but at Lubumbashi last month, some troops threatened to desert because their officers had pocketed the money earmarked for rations, and when one of the 'crack regiments' was sent to Shaba half the unit disappeared from the train within the first hundred miles of the journey.

The political programme of the insurgents' Congolese National Liberation Front (FNLC) is unclear. They originate in the gendarmerie of Moise Tshombe, who led the 1960's Katangese secessionist movement, backed by the imperialist copper mine companies, against Patrice Lumumba's radical nationalist regime. Lumumba was murdered by Tshombe's forces in collusion with Mobutu and the CIA, and thereafter a power struggle took place to ascertain who should administer the spoils in the interests of imperialism. Mobutu won; Tshombe was defeated, exiled, and eventually died in mysterious circum-



stances. After 1964, Tshombe's police fled to neighbouring Angola and there collaborated with the Portuguese against the MPLA. With the Portuguese withdrawal they switched sides and supported the MPLA against the FNLA, which was backed by Mobutu.

Despite an agreement concluded between Mobutu and Neto in February last year, pro-imperialist guerilla forces still continue with Mobutu's blessing to attack the Angolan army, particularly in the oil-rich enclave of Cabinda. This was the Angolan government's motive for permitting and equipping the FNLC invasion.

The invasion has little prospect of victory, given that FNLC support is confined to Shaba. In the short term it will strengthen Mobutu as other states rush to his assistance.

In the longer term he is likely to be displaced by the US and France in favour of someone capable of establishing a more stable regime in Zaire. The episode is a clear illustration of the nature of the intervention of the big capitalist powers in Africa, an illuminating background to USA and British talk of a just settlement in Rhodesia.

BAS HARDY

THE 1974 Orange general strike was as much a protest against the Unionist establishment led by the late Brian Faulkner as it was a blow against British policy. When it smashed Britain's creation, the power-sharing Executive 6-County government, it didn't shift British control — but it did deal a mortal blow to the whole Six County Unionist establishment.

The attempt to repeat the strike in 1977 has the explicit character of a line-drawing exercise within the ranks of Orange politicians. The Paisley-Baird leadership are demanding a restoration of Protestant majority government in the Six Counties and a British government drive against the IRA (by which they mean restoration of in-

THE ORANGE LABYRINTH

ternment for Catholics only and the execution of captured Republican prisoners of war).

They truly want these things. But they can hardly think they are strong enough to impose them on the British government. What they are doing in staking out their claim to speak for the Protestant masses, as against

Unionists like William Craig and Harry West. And they are trying to put a quick end to recent attempts by Craig and others to re-create a "moderate" united Unionist political party from the half dozen fragments now existing: one which might do business with the British government and the Catholic SDLP.

In a sense, what is being decided now, in conditions chosen by Baird and Paisley, is whether "street politics" is still dominant within Orange politics.

It is clear that there is no enthusiasm for strike action. What will decide is not mass enthusiasm but the power of intimidation possessed by the Orange paramilitary forces, all of whom back the strike.

When the strike of 1974 brought down the power-sharing Executive, it also brought down the already shaken Unionist Party that had ruled the 6-County state for the 50 years of its existence. There are now half a dozen Unionist fragments, stretching from the Liberal "Alliance Party" to Paisley's ultra sectarian anti-Catholic Democratic Unionist Party.



The Official Unionist Party had fought the Northern Ireland elections of 1973 on a pledge never to share power with Republicans (read Catholics). It gained the votes of 2 out of every 3 Protestants. Many felt betrayed when it proceeded to join a power sharing Executive with the SDLP. There were violent scenes in the Northern Ireland parliament as the hard-line minority protested.

The February 1974 UK General Election allowed the Orange population to express its feelings. 11 out of the 12 Westminster seats were won by hard line Orangemen.

The contradiction between the voting in February 1974 and the balance of forces in Stormont where the hardliners were an impotent minority up against the Faulkner-led Unionist majority in bloc with the SDLP, exploded in the general strike of May 1974.

Initially very much a matter of intimidation, it became an angry protest that destroyed the power sharing Stormont government — and ended 6-County self govern-

ment.

Six County politics in the old style has been dead since then. The Constitutional Assembly of 1975 merely reflected the communal antagonisms, and predictably produced a majority report in favour of Protestant majority rule. Even William Craig, a hard line bigot with a solid record of boneheaded devotion to his Orange principles, was quickly isolated when he proposed a voluntary (rather than constitutional) coalition arrangement with the SDLP, for the duration of "the crisis".



Since then the British government has pursued a policy of direct military rule. It has ignored frequent complaints from politicians and church leaders of both communities that it was allowing a political vacuum to develop.

Tensions within the Unionist ranks have intensified since Enoch Powell and two other Westminster MPs voted with the Labour Government in April's Confidence motion. Powell believes in complete integration of the Six Counties into the UK.

This section of Unionist politicians accuse the Paisleyites of not understanding Westminster policy. Understand or not, the Paisleyites find the agitation of Airey Neave and the Tory Party for tougher measures against the IRA more to their taste. And this has also added grist to the mill of ceaseless demagogic agitation which is the sztock-in-trade of Ian Paisley.

At the beginning of April William Craig, leader of Vanguard, called for the re-creation of the old Unionist Party from the existing splinters (there are 6 if you include Alliance). Craig still believes the way to get back to Protestant government in the Six Counties is to reach an agreement for a coalition with the SDLP. It is likely that a lot of Unionist politicians agree with this position, but dare not say so. Certainly all of them find the domination of the paramilitary gangsters and their demagoguery distasteful.



Finally the Official Unionist Party decided to field 320 local government election candidates without submitting them to the United Ulster Unionist Coalition, of which it is a part. Ernest Baird, of the Coalition, commented: "I'm concerned lest the Official Unionist Party action, in moving away from their UUUC colleagues and making overtures to other parties who believe in power-sharing, should be a preparation for a change of policy which would be contrary to the expressed wishes of the electorate."

Propelled by their own agitation, fuelled by the Tories' campaign at Westminster, and alarmed lest there be a drift to put the old style Unionist on the road again, Paisley and Baird gave the British government a 7-day strike ultimatum.

FRANK HIGGINS



May 1974 — Protestant crowds celebrate strike victory

The pattern of 'privilege' that unionism protects

"WANTED — reliable cook-general, Protestant (Christian preferred)".

Outside the six counties of Northern Ireland, this type of advertisement (cited in Barritt & Carter's book "The Northern Ireland Problem") would be almost incomprehensible. What it states, in short, is that the desired employee should not only profess certain religious beliefs but (this is the force of the requirement 'Christian') practise them strictly.

But such things are supposed to be past history in the Six Counties. We now have the Fair Employment Act of 1976 which is supposed to outlaw discrimination in employment in Northern Ireland. It is, however, open to doubt whether this act has had much effect on the situation.

The trouble is that discrimination is built into the very existence and nature of the Northern Ireland Statelet and cannot be reformed out of it.

The picture is illustrated by a speech at a meeting of the Unionist Labour Association in Belfast on March 4th 1961, by Mr Robert Babington.

"Registers of unemployed loyalists should be kept by the Unionist Party and employers invited to pick employees from them. The Unionist Party should make it quite clear that it is loyalists who have the first choice of jobs. There is nothing wrong in this. Indeed, just the reverse; the Unionist Party was founded to further the

objects of the loyalists".

Such registers are not in fact kept. However, the attitude expressed by the speaker is not at all untypical. Indeed, not only the Unionist Party but the statelet itself was founded for precisely these purposes.

John Darby in his recent book, "Conflict in Northern Ireland", gives further evidence:

"Occasionally there have been official estimates, as when trade union officials were quoted as estimating the proportion of Protestants to Catholic engineering workers at nine to one.

"More precise religious breakdowns for individual firms are more difficult to find, although in 1971 Kathleen Boehringer compiled a list of some firms which discriminated against Catholics — Harland and Wolff, shipbuilders, 500 Catholics out of 9,000 manual workers; Mackies, engineers, 120 out of 8,500; Sirocco engineering works, no Catholics in their 400 strong work force; Ormeau bakery, perhaps 4 out of 300. The trouble, as in every similar investigation, is that none of these statistics are substantiated." But...

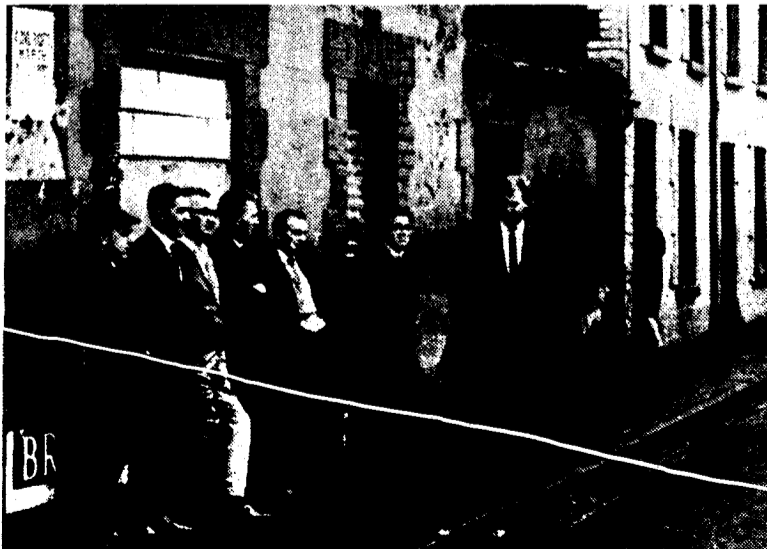
In 1974 the overall unemployment rate was 6.2%, but in Strabane it was 16.9%, Newry 14.1%, Limavady 13.2, Dungannon 12.3, Killeel 10.8, Enniskillen 10.5, Derry 10.3 and Omagh 10. All these are mainly Catholic areas.

Likewise the rate in Larne was 2.6, Ballinahinch 2.8, Lisburn 2.9, Antrim 3.1, Banbridge 3.5 and Bangor 3.5 — all mainly

Protestant areas.

It is this discrimination which underlies the Protestants looking to Britain to back them up instead of a class alliance with their Catholic fellow-workers, and thus makes any attempt to transfer the political assumptions of English trade unionism to Belfast (in Connolly's phrase) "an idea screamingly funny in its absurdity". It means that the British army has to be withdrawn and the Protestant workers forced to take cognisance of their Catholic comrades before socialism in Ireland can be achieved.

CHRIS GRAY



Unemployed: 17% in Catholic areas, as little as 2.6% in Protestant ones.



"DON'T FASCISM JOURNA

Journalists at the London weekly paper, the Hackney Gazette, walked out last week in protest against a display advertisement for a National Front meeting. The chapel declared that they would not work on a paper which promoted the fascists in any way.

The Hackney journalists belong to the North London branch of the National Union of Journalists, which recently circulated recommendations to its members to take direct action if necessary to stop NF propaganda in the press. Other journalists in the area have made an even stronger stand.

The Hornsey Journal carried a devastating attack on the NF, branding them as Nazis and warning all its readers against the menace they pose. The front page comment is uncompromising: 'We believe the time has come for newspapers to lead the public away from the racist and fascist forces that threaten to create a rift in the communities of London and other big cities'.

Elsewhere, Islington journalists demanded space in their paper to spread the same message, although their paper did carry NF election addresses. They say: 'As reporters we are bound to afford coverage to all candidates in the elections but we here dissociate ourselves entirely from the ideology of the NF, which — let there be no doubt — is a fascist ideology'. These journalists disclosed, under the headline 'A front for thugs', that reporters covering NF meetings are taken aside and photographed, 'so the NF can identify its antagonists for later use, and also to intimidate people from the Press on the spot'.

This response from working journalists in North London has helped to back up the hammering the NF suffered at the hands of anti-fascists on April 23rd.

WILL THE FASCISTS BE BEATEN LIKE THIS

The ability of Labour Weekly to write on two sides of every question — radical reformist and lick-spittle reformist — may be the toast of Transport House, but it ill serves the needs of the workers and Labour supporters who might read the paper.

Your reports of the clash in North London on April 23rd between NF marchers and anti-fascist demonstrators substitutes cheap journalistic ironies (like the headline, "Peace marchers (?) who went to war") for an honest attempt to report, appraise and draw lessons from the event.

But you do pose the right question: referring to the clash between the fascist marchers and the counter demonstrators, you ask, "So what did it achieve?". Characteristically you ask this question — which you do not try to answer — as if the counterdemonstrators need to answer it, but not those like yourselves who advocate peaceful, legal action only.



You conclude: "In the end the group that emerged with the most credit, and whose quiet demonstration made its point clearly, were the Haringey councillors." This, then, is the method of combatting fascism that you recommend.

You give no reason for this judgement; you don't even say what this "point" was that the councillors made so "clearly"; you don't show that this action by the councillors achieved anything.

What did the violent counter-demonstration achieve? You yourselves state that it "showed up the Front for what it really is — a nasty, Fascist, racist organisation..."

By no stretch of the imagination can the councillors' action have achieved that much, limited as it was to a few rambling speeches and a protest outside the town-hall with the banner "Haringey councillors against racism" as the NF was marching by.

A striking feature of the counterdemonstration was that many outside the ranks of the revolutionary left accepted our view that the Fascists should be dealt with violently, that they were not just one anti-working class political trend amongst many but a mortal enemy which will smash the workers' organisations if we do not smash it first. The crowd

AN OPEN LETTER TO LABOUR WEEKLY

readily accepted that the norms of "democratic rights" (right of assembly, marching, distributing leaflets, speechmaking and so on) must not apply to the Fascists.

That is an achievement — a big gain for the revolutionary left; a clear defeat for the reformist view.

Many participants on the demonstration new to politics will also now be moved to wonder at the action of the police. They will be moved to ask why the police protect the Fascists? They will be moved to ask what the reality behind "democracy" in Britain is, when it permits the National Front to spread their race-hatred unmolested.

For many people the National Front's confident strut down the High Street with flags flying might signify a solution. The growing vote for these Nazis in recent elections must surely alarm all socialists. And the Front know that the more often they can present themselves as the new solution the better for them. For them, the flags and drums are important...

Yet in Wood Green High Road that confident strut was halted; the 800-odd Fascists were clearly shaken by the demonstration, their confidence was battered, they looked the rotten, poisonous crew they are.

Thousands of workers and their families in North London will now look differently at the National Front, will listen to those who point

out its leaders' Nazi views, their convictions for synagogue burning and so on.

Isn't that an achievement? Or have the councillors of Haringey already done that so well that it can hardly be improved on?

Since that Saturday I have spoken to many blacks and Cypriots who clearly saw the demonstration as an impressive act of practical working class unity. If the councillors of Haringey repeated their meritorious picket a hundred times it would have less impact on the immigrant communities than a single practical experience like the April 23rd counterdemonstration.

The courage and commitment it takes to try to smash the fascists is rightly valued in these communities above the sermon of racial unity so regularly preached by councillors, church leaders and suchlike.

Labour Weekly does not bother to say that there were about 3,000 anti-fascist marchers. The mobilisation was aided by some Labour Party members and some Labour Party organisations in the locality, but the most energetic campaigning for a big turn-out was by the revolutionary left.

This campaign, the mobilisation on the day itself, and the campaign now being conducted to collect money for the defence of those arrested will all contribute to the raising of the political consciousness of the workers and youth

in North London.

It will ensure that the question of who the National Front are what's wrong with them and what should be done to smash them is raised time and again in the factories and the workers' organisations. It will be raised again and again with people who were not on the counter demonstration, people who say they are "not political" and even with those thinking of voting NF.

So Labour Weekly's Judith Cook asks "What did it achieve". I say: it taught and exemplified a political lesson about how to fight fascism; it encouraged and created race-unity and working class unity in action; it succeeded in raising an important political issue within a working class community, and forced thousands to define their commitment on the question of racism — with an overwhelmingly favourable outcome for the anti-fascists.

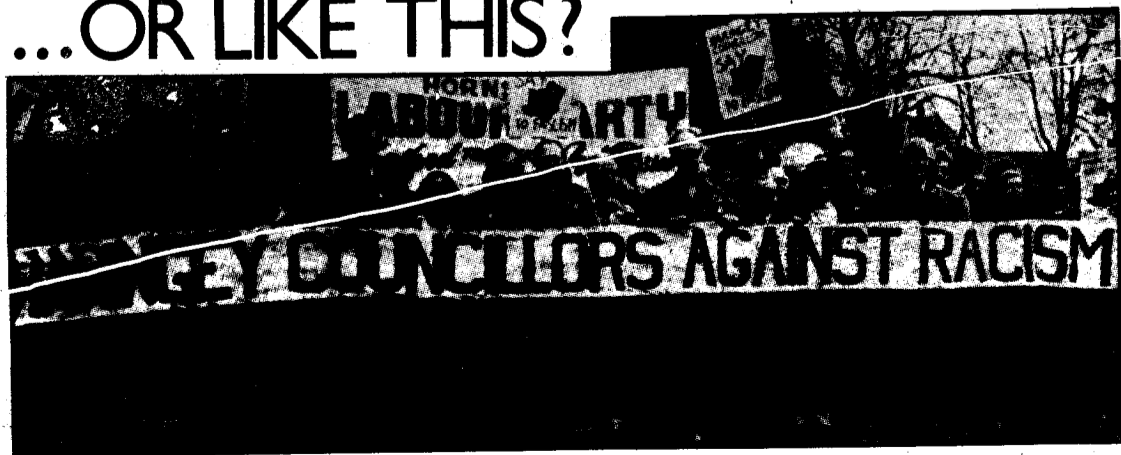


Last but by no means least, it shook the fascists it battered their confidence and increased the confidence of the anti-racist elements within the community. Not bad for an afternoon's work!

Of course I don't claim that all that needed to be done was achieved on the afternoon of the 23rd. We need to do much more. But we cannot do that if we start out from the do-nothing, leave-it-to-the-councillors, a-plague-on-both-your-houses, ignore-it-and-it-will-go-away nonsense that Labour Weekly preaches... in mindless imitation of the reformist papers of the German SPD, the Italian Socialist party, the Austrian social-democrats and others shortly before they were suppressed by the thugs of fascism in the twenties and thirties.

A HORNING

...OR LIKE THIS?



The day the NP ran away

On Monday 2nd May, the National Party fascists planned to hold an inaugural meeting in Darlington, at the City Library. The revolutionary left found out in time to mobilise 70 to stop the meeting.

Some of us occupied the room they booked and barricaded all possible entry points. The rest picketed the library and leafleted passers-by.

The NP turned tail — but only after the police had been called and had unsuccessfully attempted to break into the room, threatening everyone with arrest. The left stood firm until the NP had definitely disappeared, and then all came out in a group.

A few minutes later the caretaker locked the library.

The task now, in Darlington, is to fight the fascists wherever we find them, combatting them physically where necessary. At the same time a campaign must be mounted to pressure the council into not permitting the fascists to use any council-owned property.

A massive leafleting campaign against the NF candidate in Hartlepool is being conducted on the Tuesday and Wednesday before the local elections.

P.S.

PROMOTE "SAY STRIKING ALISTS

But in this picture there still remains one paper — the Tottenham Herald — which carries on doing the NF's dirty work for the racists of the Herald nothing is barred.

On the April 23rd events, they printed this letter (from a disinterested observer, we are to believe): "To the outsider his mind must be confused by what he saw. The National Front (benefits right or wrong), 2,000 of them marching behind dozens of Union Jacks, yes 2,000 Englishmen. The anti-mobs led by Tariq Ali, the Russian-supported anti-everything British, not one Union Jack. Every flag banner was the Red Flags of Russia with the Sickie and Hammer. I estimate that 95 per cent of the Anti-Front mob, led by Tariq Ali, a complete 100 per cent foreigner, were non-English. It was the Russian Red Army, led by Tariq Ali, that started the trouble..."

In North London and elsewhere in Britain, an outright struggle is being fought for control of, or influence in, the press. For the National Front this is a vital battle. They have many victories to boast of: the Tottenham Herald is one, and papers in Leicester, Birmingham, Crawley, and North Lancashire are others which gladden their hearts [not to mention the whole of Fleet Street, which regularly does their spadework for them on a massive scale]. They even control one NUJ branch outright — Isle of Thanet. But the counter-attack is underway, and they are getting worried.

The Times last week extended the hospitality of its letters column to Martin Webster, National Activities Organiser of the NF, to attack anti-racists in the media, in particular the Campaign against Racism in the Media and North London NUJ branch. National Front News has also said that the media

campaign is more dangerous to them than all the anti-racist marches organised last year.

After their quick growth last year, the NF aim to establish themselves as a major party in 1977. This involves them in a major gamble — standing hundreds of candidates in local and national elections in the hope of winning seats so that they have a permanent platform. If this success does not reach them, they could face massive demoralisation. There is a very unstable organisation, built on quick success, gimmicks, stunts, plenty of publicity and a favourable wind blowing from the press.

Just as the NF hope to build on the gains they could make in the local council elections in order to launch a massive assault — including gaining TV time — at the next general election, anti-racists must build on the successes we have had in fighting fascism in the press in London.

This is what the Campaign against Racism in the Media aims to do.

Confined until now mainly to the London area, and hampered by limited resources, CARM now aims to extend its influence nationally. At the NUJ national conference two weeks ago it made a significant impact, and the TV technicians' union ACTTT has affiliated. Though a motion at the ACTT conference recently to prevent all NF party political broadcasts was defeated 95-85, already the balance is changing, and unofficial action is entirely possible — if the support from trade unions and Labour Parties is there.

CARM has produced a pamphlet, In Black and White: racist reporting and how to fight it, which analyses the problem of racism in the press and advocates direct action from anti-racists where necessary to silence racist propaganda. Copies are available [35p plus 10p postage; bulk orders discount] from CARM, 13 Cleve Rd, London NW6.

JAMES RYAN

LETTERS

IN HIS REPLY TO Neal Morrell's letter in WA 54, Frank Higgins exposes many of the confusions and errors of Morrell's argument. He is right to point out that the "mini-state" for the Palestinians would not provide a "way forward" for the Palestinian liberation movement. Higgins is right too to characterise those who claim it would be as "fools or demagogues". But Neal Morrell posed three questions which are not answered by Frank Higgins: 1) What is the way forward for the Palestine liberation movement; 2) Why does Israel refuse to sanction the mini-state idea if it is fundamentally a concession to Zionism; and 3) Why did the PDLFP propose the idea of the mini-state, "a couple of years ago in the form of 'an independent Palestinian entity on liberated land'?"



To take the last question first: what is most striking about Morrell's remark is the implicit faith he has in the motives of the PDLFP: This is in line with the Arab nationalist line he takes throughout. The PDLFP, while it was around 1970 one of those Palestinian organisations that appeared more open to revolutionary socialist ideas, took on later a more rightist line and has more recently acted as a cover for the Fatah leadership and the regime supporting it.

The words Morrell quotes from the PDLFP fully support Higgins' accusation of demagoguery. To speak of the mini-state as being "independent" or located on territory that has been "liberated" is nothing but radical phraseology which can have no other purpose than fooling people.

Incidentally, Morrell observes that "the mini-state (demand) was raised by the PDLFP before the events in Lebanon". In other words, at a time when the Palestinian forces in Lebanon revealed that that country could be a base for guerrilla operations so long as the disorganisation of the Lebanese state continued and the Muslim-Left bloc created semi-dual power conditions, the PDLFP actually advocated withdrawing from the Lebanese theatre instead of stepping up the struggle against that state! And Morrell thinks WA should explain how such a progressive group as the PDLFP could raise the mini-state slogan! Morrell should rather explain his extreme credulity in relation to this group's policies.



Why does Israel refuse to sanction the mini-state? Higgins says "Israel refuses to recognise the existence of a Palestinian people". This is quite right. But one should add that Israeli politics is based on a peculiar amalgam of imperialist-Zionist realism and religious millenarianism, while the latter is a subordinate factor, it plays a quite important part both as a general underpinning for Zionism and as a movement in itself. This means that a territorial conception of Israel "according to the Old Testament" plays an important role.

But it cannot be excluded that Israel would recognise a Palestinian "entity" given two factors: pressure from US imperialism and the existence of a much mightier resistance movement within the boundaries of Israel (in particular one that succeeded in linking up with any Jewish forces). In

The West Bank state and the way forward in the Arab East

other words Israel is not prepared to make concessions because it doesn't need to. If it needed to it would; and we would see just how far the mini-state idea in practice in that situation is a potential escape hatch for Zionism under threat.

The mini-state proposal is the weapon the Zionists would use against any unity built between Arabs in the territories occupied after 1967 and Jews — for example, round the demand for 'giving back' the territories seized in 1967. That demand does not necessarily imply recognising the pre-1967 Israeli borders; it depends on who raises it. A movement of the Arabs who are the big majority in those occupied territories will logically demand Zionist withdrawal from control of those territories. In practice it might mean a movement for secession of the Arab majority areas and might lead to a mini-state. But the demand raised by the Arabs in those territories has quite a different dynamic from the mini-state policy.

Morrell never mentions the explosive force of the Palestinians within the present territorial boundaries of Israel and the contradictions arising from this presence.

The weakness of Higgins' reply to Morrell's central question as to strategy is that the different aspects of the reply are fused in one sentence and thus rather unclear. Higgins says: "We can work out a strategy for working class militants in the Arab East — a strategy which relates to the Palestinian struggle — but we neither have a magic formula to allow the Palestinian movement as a whole to escape its petty bourgeois nationalist limitations, nor are we willing to give our endorsement to the options imposed by those limitations."

There are two important elements here: unlike Morrell, Higgins relates to the question of a strategy for working class militants; and unlike Morrell, Higgins' context for this strategy is the Arab East.

Unfortunately Higgins seems to draw back from any conclusion (which is what Morrell wants him to be explicit about). Surely Higgins only conclusion can be that, for example, revolutionaries in Syria must struggle against the Syrian state for the proletarian dictat-

orship (workers' power) with a view to the socialist federation of the Middle East. For the revolutionaries of other countries of the Arab East: a similar struggle against 'their' respective states.

And for the Palestinians who have no state of 'their own'! All Higgins says is that "Guerrilla war is not now (?) the appropriate weapon". Why does he not say that Marxist Palestinians would attempt to organise the Palestinian people within the different national boundaries into working class revolutionary parties whose chief orientation would be towards the class struggle in those countries relating also to those demands necessary to the right, well-being and security of the Palestinian people as a whole?

Of course, like Morrell and Higgins, I am not suggesting that the adoption of this course by the Palestinians is a condition for the support of their struggle. Certainly not: the struggle of the Palestinians and indeed of the Arab states against Zionism and imperialism must be supported unconditionally.



I don't know whether Higgins will agree with what I have said. If he does not then Morrell's accusation will be proved right (though his conclusions certainly won't be), that Higgins shrinks from going beyond stating a solution (the socialist federation). To ask someone to go beyond that is not asking for "magic": it is simply saying, "If you were a revolutionary Palestinian in the Arab East, what would you do?"

If Higgins says "I don't know, I have never lived there; it is impossible to be concrete given lack of knowledge", that is an honest reply — but it is one which derives from the shortcomings of WA if it is true, and not from any wrong posing of the question on Morrell's part. And if it is a shortcoming it is one that should be made good, otherwise, as Morrell points out, no end of correct point-scoring against the mini-state line will help.

Fraternally,
EMMA PARSONS



Hornsey JOURNAL

April 25, 1977 HORNSEY BOROUGH JOURNAL FINSBURY PARK AND MURWELL HILL STANDARD

Forty years on: the evil march.



... of fascism fouls our streets

IN FEBRUARY 1974 Labour made one really clear election promise: no more statutory incomes policies. It was the fight of the miners against the Tories' Phase 3 limits which pushed the Heath government out, and Labour in.

Since August 1975, the Labour Government has made state limitation of wages a permanent feature of economic policy in Britain for the first time ever. A "planned return to free collective bargaining" is still often mentioned — but it recedes further and further into the distance.

The Labour Government has marked up several other 'firsts'. It is not the first government to do the opposite of what its Manifesto promised — "a fundamental and irreversible shift of wealth and power in favour of working people and their families" — far from it; but the scale of its reversal of its promises is something new.

Workers' living standards have been cut at least 5 to 10% since mid-1975, the first such major and consistent cut since the 1920s. Inflation was 20% in 1974, 25% in 1975, 15% in 1976, and is 16% per year currently; never in decades has it been so high so consistently. The unemployment figures have risen, with only occasional falterings, ever since 1974. Now they are 1,400,000, the first time such a figure has been reached since the 1930s.

The by-election results show that millions of workers have concluded that Labour can't be trusted. It's not surprising.

Floating the idea of pay controls in January 1975, Denis Healy said: "It is far better that more people should be in work, even if that means accepting lower wages on average, than that those lucky enough to keep their jobs should scoop the pool while millions are living on the dole. That is what the social contract is all about".

Approving Healey's plan in July 1975, Jack Jones declared: "My reaction is that the new figures [for unemployment — it was just over one million then] more than justify the effort we are making and sound the alarm for further efforts to be taken to contain the general trend towards further inflation".

The "further efforts" are continuing and there is still no sign of a decisive downturn in unemployment or of Healey's promised "single figure inflation".

Clearly the Labour Government and the TUC are not controlling the economy. The capitalist economy, with its profit drive, is controlling them. It controls them precisely because of their vain efforts to control it.

In 1969-71 there was the most serious recession in the advanced capitalist countries since world war 2, and the first one to hit them more or less simultaneously. The rel-

Will the strikes stop Phase 3?

atively stable set-up of US economic and financial hegemony was disrupted. The rate of profit lurched downwards.

After a feverish 'boom' in 1973, the 'oil crisis' set off a new world recession. The recovery, starting in late 1975, was never vigorous and is now stagnant. Most advanced capitalist powers have higher, or not much lower, unemployment rates than Britain.

Britain is a particularly sick capitalism because its history as a pioneer imperialist power has left it with a problem of antiquated industry and lack of investment. Clutching to the steering wheel of the system, the Labour leaders give the appearance of driving — but it is the engine of the capitalist world economy that is turning them.

This side of a working-class revolution which creates a new, consciously and democratically planned, economic system, there is currently a short rein for any economic policy. That is why the trade union bureaucrats have been able to secure support for Labour's policies from millions of workers who don't see any other way of "saving the economy".

It is the cooperation of the trade union bureaucracy with the state — which the bureaucrats present as their control in the state, but is really the state's control over them — that is the hub of current politics. It is summed up in a few sets of figures.

In 1974 there was an average of 587,000 working days of official strikes per month; in January-July 1975, 135,000; in August-December 1975, 40,000. The unofficial strike figures decreased, too, though much less so: 643,000 working days per month average in 1974; 512,000 in January-July '75; 255,000 in August-December 1975.

Meanwhile industrial tribunals dealt with 16,000 cases in 1974, 36,000 in 1975, and 48,000 in 1976.

Now the strike figures are beginning to turn upwards. There were 2,300,000 working days lost through strikes in January, February, and

March 1977, and of the 673 strikes 340 were on pay questions. Most of the major strikes have been not only unofficial but bitterly opposed by the union leaders.

No separate figures are yet available for official and unofficial strikes, but it seems that the unofficial strike rate is now approaching the 1974 level, the highest for decades. Moreover, 76% of the working days lost in strikes in the first three months of 1977 were in the central industrial area of metals, shipbuilding, engineering and vehicles, as against an average of 42% in that area in 1970-76. It is the practised combat battalions of the working class who are moving into action.

So is the Social Contract finally breaking under the strain of the tremendous contrast between promises and realities?

It is not so simple. Still not one single section of workers has come out on strike saying clearly and forthrightly that they are out to break the Social Contract. Those

groups of workers who have broken through the pay limits — some journalists in book and magazine publishing, for instance — have tried to keep their victories quiet rather than publicising them.

The Scottish TUC vote for further pay controls, and Hugh Scanlon's 2nd May speech approving Phase 3 limits as long as they give elbow room for restoring differentials, are good omens for Phase 3.

The Labour Government, unwilling and unable to change its policy to an anti-capitalist direction, and desperate to avoid an early general election which would be a Tory landslide, needs Phase 3 very much. And the trade union bureaucracy understands that need.

It is certainly possible that the sheer force of industrial militancy, even if it is not linked with any clear political alternative to the Social Contract, can abort Phase 3, and thus open the way for further big advances in working class struggle. Strikes

like Leyland, Heathrow, and Port Talbot should not only be supported; their example should be followed. Nevertheless, one of the lessons from the great strike waves of 1969-74 is that even very high levels of militancy can be tamed by the union leaders so long as there is no conscious, generalised challenge to the bureaucrats.

And here the role of the Communist Party has been pivotal. As a political party the CP is unimportant. As the organised spearhead of the mainstream Left in industry it is very important.

The CP has organised enough anti-Social Contract agitation to enable it to hegemonise the militant opposition. But at the 26th February LCDTU conference, and at the 3rd April Leyland conference, it has channelled that opposition into the diversions of 'import controls' and 'price controls', and separated the fight against Phase 3 from the battles now against Phase 2.

Far from challenging the bureaucratic Social Contract salesmen, it has propped up the more left-wing — that is, the more insidious — of them.

Against this, revolutionaries must constantly explain the need for a militant rank and file movement in the unions. The nuclei of that movement must be built now, in supporting and extending the current sectional struggles against Phase 2. But we also fight to arm it with a unifying strategy.

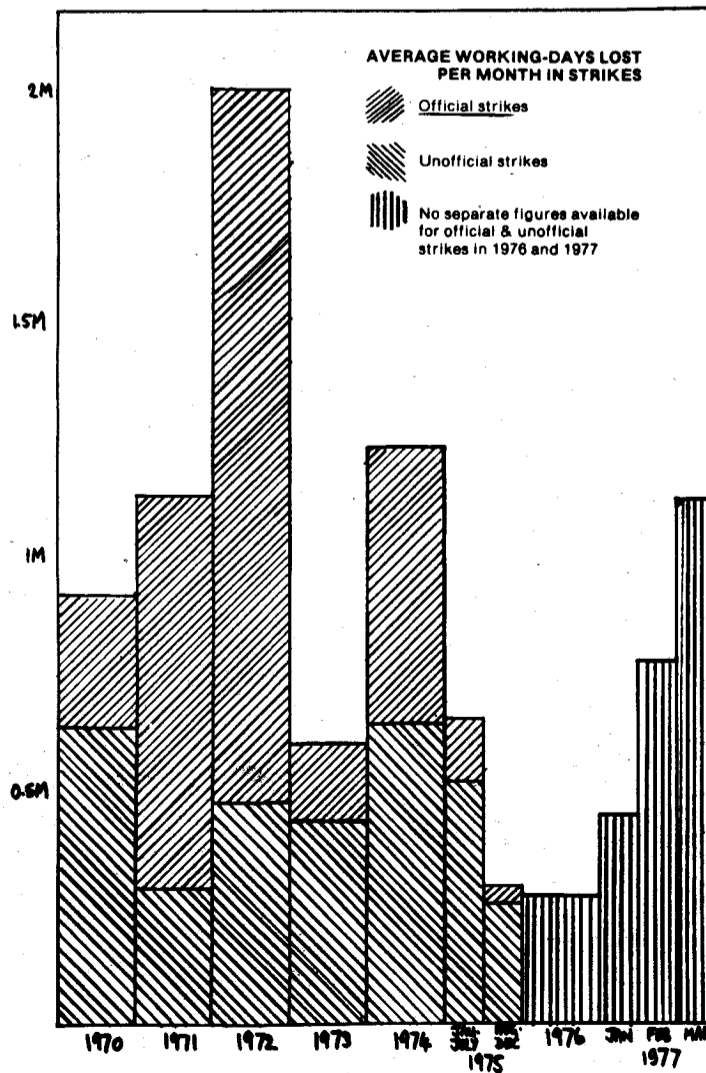
The struggle to secure, through working-class solidarity, the right to work and adequate living standards for all, must be the keystone of that strategy. That means the sliding scale of hours and wages: work-sharing, under workers' control, with no loss of pay; and agreements which guarantee that wages at least keep pace with prices.

And the Labour Government? Inside the Labour Party and the trade unions, militants must raise the demand that the Government breaks with the bosses and the bankers and enforces the sliding scale of hours and wages, nationalising without compensation to enable it to do so. As long as it does not do that, we can owe it no loyalty. In the rank and file struggle we will build up the sinews of class organisation that can eventually form the basis for a workers' government.

Even on the revolutionary left, it is a hard battle for this perspective. The Socialist Workers' Party apparently believes that its self-glorification plus the cry "we want £15" is enough. The International Marxist Group speculates on the possibility of a class struggle left wing with an absolute minimum of socialist political content.

But only with a revolutionary strategy can the working class escape being caught one way or another in the tools of capitalist crisis.

COLIN FOSTER



Trade Union week of action on South Africa

Midlands region branches of the Anti-Apartheid Movement held a day school in Coventry on 30 April on "working class struggles in South Africa and the need for solidarity". The outcome was a resolution calling on the AAM nationally "to organise a campaign in the labour and trade union movement at all levels on the issue of solidarity with the authentic organisations of the South African working class, culminating in a week of trade union activity on January 16-21 1978".

The reason for choosing this week is that this year the ICFTU called a week of action in January but there was no mobilisation at rank and file level. Indeed, the highlight of the action was the shameful backing out of solidarity by Tom Jackson of the UPW, bowing to the Law Lords.

A campaign starting now throughout the movement using the week of action as a focus could make solidarity far more genuine and meaningful. One of the most important tasks is to sweep away the chauvinism of import controls and other reformist garbage which pollutes the British working class, and to show the clear capitalist links between Britain and South Africa, and the real nature of the multinational firms for which most of us work.

All Anti-Apartheid local groups, and affiliated Labour Parties, LP-Ys, and trade union branches, should take up the Midlands resolution, so that the national AAM has no excuse to drag its feet.

DAVE SPENCER

Fascist thugs attack leafletters

Attempts by National Front thugs to stop activity by the newly-formed Anti-Fascist Committee in Stoke-on-Trent have met a setback.

On Wednesday 4th May, two groups of Anti-Fascist Committee members were distributing leaflets to expose the NF before the local elections.

A group of NFers in a car descended on one group and seized their leaflets. With the other group, the fascists did not just try to grab the leaflets, but physically attacked them, and tried to drag one of the AFC members away, shouting that it was a "citizen's arrest".

Onlookers called the police, who were obliged to charge the NFers with assault.

Boos for Healey at USDAW conference

AMID boos and jeers Denis Healey addressed the USDAW conference.

His message was predictable. He praised the TUC's role in policing the Social Contract and spoke of the bad old days of the Tory Government. Healey told shopworkers not to lose their nerve in the face of the sharpest fall in living standards for 50 years — help was on the way. Recovery was just around the corner with the magic ingredient, oil.

Then, just in case the delegates were not convinced, ominous noises were made about the plight of the lower paid in the face of a 'free for all'. It would mean shopworkers going to the wall and onto the dole.

The only things that Healey was willing to offer were the crumbs from the bosses' table — productivity bargain anomalies sorted out and a percentage deal of under 10%. His message met with little response except from the platform.

Lord Allen echoed the bosses' friend Healey the next day: "The trap of abandoning wage controls means the low paid, pensioners and unemployed wouldn't be able to keep up with strong elements in the trade union movement".

His answer: "growth and expansion will solve Britain's problems". In other words, keep the profits rolling in. The two million unemployed, the cuts in the social services and the rapid fall in living standards failed to receive even the slightest attention.

The debate that followed included a resolution for the extension of the social contract, but also a resolution calling for free collective bargaining, threshold increases and 15 per cent after August 1st. Moved by a supporter of the Broad Left, it was loudly acclaimed by the delegates. However, the reformist nature of the Broad Left showed through with their call for 'radical brave policies' — namely, British capital for British industry!

Allen, to make sure that anti social contract resolutions did not get passed, drew out the trump card — loyalty to the Labour Government. Anti-wage restraint delegates were branded as disloyal and pernicious.

The card vote on the resolution against the social con-

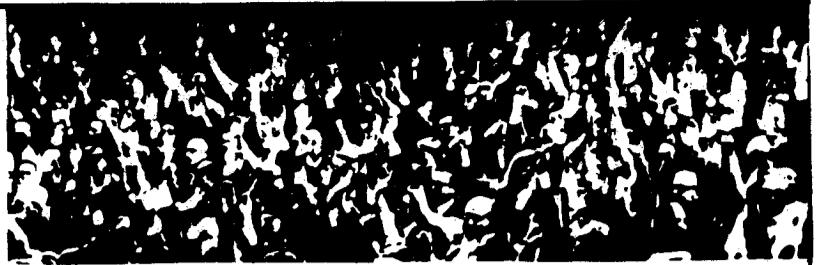
tract was lost 108,000 to 186,000 out of a total of 327,000 delegate votes. There were 30,000 abstentions, reflecting widespread confusion.

Other resolutions calling for a national minimum wage and a 35 hour week, and against the cuts, were heavily defeated. Even a motion calling for pensions for men at 60m instead of 65 was defeated: the bureaucrats said that it would cost the country too much!

The resolution on unemployment was considered so unimportant that it was left right to the end of the agenda, where there was no time for discussion.

The USDAW conference is yet another reminder of the need for a united fight-back against the social contract, which will make it impossible for the Lord Allens of this world to play on the fears of the weaker sections of the labour movement and to split them off from the stronger and the more militant sections of the working class.

JOHN DOUGLAS



Bro Clive and the free press

MANY trade union branches have supported the appeal by the paper *Socialist Worker* for funds towards £10,000 in damages and costs it faces after ASTMS general secretary Clive Jenkins prosecuted it for an article lampooning him.

One of them, the Magazine branch of the National Union of Journalists, wrote to Clive Jenkins to protest.

Jenkins replied. After gleefully reciting the lists of cases other top union officials have brought against *Socialist Worker*, he concluded that it would be not a blow, but a step forward, for press freedom if *Socialist Worker* were put out of business!

Lest Mr Jenkins start issuing writs against us, we leave readers to draw their own conclusions about his concept of democracy in the unions — and to send your donations to *Socialist Worker's* fund at 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

THE UNIONS



Was the TGWU election a fiddle?

THE RESULTS of the T&GWU elections for a successor to Jack Jones have now been published in full. Moss Evans, Jones' "heir apparent", came in well ahead of the others with over 200,000 more votes than the runner-up, John Cousins.

Evans' victory is a setback for the fight against the Social Contract and for policies which can meet the needs of the members of the T&GWU.

There were three surprises: that Tommy Riley (the candidate of the Socialist Workers' Party and its Right to Work campaign) did so well; that John Miller, the National Secretary of the Chemical Rubber Manufacturing and Oil Refining group, did so badly; and that Alan Thornett (of the Workers' Socialist League), an Oxford car worker with a nationwide reputation for militancy and supported by the Camp-

aign for Democracy in the Labour Movement, did so badly. Workers' Action welcomes Riley's success, although we supported Thornett.

In some areas the results are simply not believed. "It's a fiddle", is the verdict of a number of Workers' Action readers in the Midlands.

It appears:
 No ballot forms were received in many Oxford branches;
 2,000 are said to have voted at Longbridge, but because of the lay-off it is unlikely that more than a couple of hundred voted.

Some branch secretaries seemed to know 'the result' 3 weeks before the count.

Reportedly a branch in Oxford is demanding an enquiry. If the suspicion is justified, it will still be very difficult to produce hard evidence: but Workers' Action fully supports any demands for an inquiry.

Evans.....	349,548
Cousins.....	119,241
Kitson.....	75,935
Smith.....	47,799
Riley.....	27,445
Miller.....	24,701
Walsh.....	19,510
Bennet.....	18,579
Fulton.....	17,319
Lyon.....	14,010
Dyce.....	11,919
Thornett.....	11,493
Moorhouse.....	9,376
Thatcher.....	6,725

CPSA adopts its own wage control system

THE CONFERENCE of the major civil service union, the CPSA, will probably decide on Thursday May 5 to cast its TUC votes against Phase 3. But in reality it has already backed down from a fight to break pay controls.

Urged on by the union bureaucracy, delegates voted to go for the restoration of the PRU (Pay Research Unit) system, under which, from 1956 to 1975, civil service pay was determined by the 'fair comparison principle'.

PRU is a pay control system in its own way; it makes CPSA members parasitic on other workers' wage fights; and moreover the figures involved are always confidential. In effect the CPSA leadership — likely to swing somewhat to the right in the elections for the new EC — has been given greater room for manoeuvre over Phase 3.

Stephen Corbishley



Evans and Jack Jones

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

TYNDALE SIX SACKED FOR STRIKING; N.U.T. REFUSES AID

ABOUT 200 teachers turned up at short notice to picket the Inner London Education Authority's headquarters in Westminster last Thursday, in solidarity with six teachers from William Tyndale junior school, who have been recommended for the sack by an ILEA tribunal.

Trouble started at the school, in Islington, when a right wing member of staff, aided by a right wing Labour faction of the school managers, whipped up a campaign amongst local parents against the "progressive" teaching methods of the "Tyndale 6" — Terry Ellis, Brian Haddow, Dorothy McColgan, Stephen Felton, Jackie McWhirter and Sheila Green.

Eventually the ILEA was pressured into conducting an enquiry, and tried to use one of their own school inspections as a means of gathering evidence. The teachers resisted, eventually striking in a last ditch attempt to ensure an independent public enquiry which would include investigation of the managers, and calling for a 'neutral' inspection of the school by the Department of Education and Science which would override anything done by the ILEA, themselves a party to the enquiry. The NUT refused to make the strike official, at one time 'instructing' the teachers to return to work.

Judging by the press, the issue is simply one of inefficient teachers using dubious 'modern' methods badly and trying to avoid being found out by striking when the spotlight was on them. But consider the facts.

The sacking recommendations are tied quite firmly to the unofficial strike by the six. "The tribunal is not saying that the teachers should be sacked because of the way they ran the school or behaved towards parents or managers... it says they should go because they went on strike against an inspection in September 1975, and ran an alternative school" ("Times Education Supplement", 29.4.77). This is what the indiscipline charge is all about.

SUPPORT

And the charge of indiscipline (cunningly used by the press to imply that there was no discipline in the school, whereas the charge relates to the teachers not obeying their employers) was originally levelled against just Ellis and Haddow. It was the ILEA's controlling Labour group that overturned the recommendation of their own chief education officer, Eric Briault, and demanded that all six be brought to book.

As to the charge of inefficiency, as Terry Ellis has pointed out: How can you be charged with 'inefficiency' when you aren't told what the employers mean by 'efficient'? If the employers are forced to define 'efficient', then they are forced to concede a contract of service for teachers which includes a job description, something the left have been fighting for for years.

On the evidence of the Auld Report (from a public enquiry), there are no grounds for assert-

ing that Tyndale kids were in any way educationally disadvantaged because of Ellis; what caused the upset was that the most disadvantaged were being given the most attention, and this wasn't right for articulate parents of privileged children. In the words of the Auld Report, "For the first time (in the school) an element of class consciousness was introduced".

If the Tyndale teachers go down, it is a punch in the mouth for all teachers trying to grapple with progressive methods in a reactionary system in an unsympathetic climate. It will give ammunition to the right wing and speed the day when we're all forced to "chalk and talk" because of the cuts.

Many teachers are ready to admit that "there but for the grace of God go I", for no school can claim to be immune from incidents that could result in charges of "inefficiency". Sympathy for the Tyndale 6 must be transformed into practical solidarity, especially among London teachers. The NUT must be forced to reverse its scandalous position of no support for the Tyndale Six.

There will be a mass support meeting on Monday May 9th at Friends Meeting House, Euston Rd, chaired by Dorothy McColgan. The meeting starts at 6.30. There is also a videotape of the school at work, made before any of the trouble started, useful for sceptics in your school or union branch, available from Terry Ellis (01-263 2536).

IAN HOLLINGWORTH

FORD CLAIM

Two steps forward, one step back

ON SUNDAY April 17th, 300 shop stewards from 23 Ford plants met in Coventry to decide the wage claim for 60,000 hourly-paid workers to be presented to the July meeting of the Ford National Joint Negotiating Committee. The one resolution at the conference, proposed by the convenors and passed, contained the following nine points.

1. For a minimum 15% wage increase as a contribution towards parity with Ford German workers; recognition of the skills and responsibility; consolidation of earnings-related payments and the Cost of Living safeguard.

2. For a 2½-hour reduction in the working week for all workers.

3. For time and ⅓ payment for all holidays.

4. Four our pensions scheme to provide parity with staff employees.

5. To achieve job security by the introduction of an 80% of full pay for all lay-offs.

6. For full pay for sickness after five years service and for service holidays.

7. For payment to those workers whose tempo of work is determined by line working.

8. For adjustments to premium payments.

9. For an agreement of not more than 12 months.

Introducing these demands is the statement: "We therefore now call for and will fight for free collective bargaining from 1st August 1977 to effectively reflate the economy".

The basing of the demands on the need to help the bosses' economy — and not on the workers' needs — can only weaken the fight. Also, talk about 'free collective bargaining' with no mention of the need to support those fighting for it now, and no criticism of the acceptance of the Social Con-trick over the last two

years (the resolution says that the 'sacrifice' was the Ford workers' "contribution to the country's economic difficulties") is not the best starting point for fighting against the pressure for further wage restraint.

The record of the union negotiators in the 1976 pay claim emphasises these dangers. They accepted in advance that many of the demands they drew up would have to be left over because of the Social Contract. They then urged acceptance of Fords' paltry offers.

In relation to the 1976 pay claim, this year's demand represent one important step backwards. In 1976, the demand was for a 35 hour week; now it's 37½! Even Jack Jones has called for 35 hours, as a measure to combat unemployment. Some stewards did argue for a 35-hour week and a £15 wage rise, but their proposal was not voted on.

But there have also been two notable improvements over the 1976 claim. This year, the wage demand has a definite figure (15%), unlike the unspecific claim for 'wage parity with continental workers' that existed before. The claim for 80% pay for all lay-offs is a massive improvement over the demand last year for a 'review' only of the lay off pay situation.

Both improvements are a direct result of shop floor action over the last year.

As Vic Barnes, the Ford convenors' chairman, said in February: "We are reflecting the feelings of the members. After all, we are the chaps who have to sell whatever comes out of these packages to the members. Last time it was touch and go and now we have come to the end of the road as far as we can go in that direction".

A series of mass meetings last November and December rejected Ford's original offer on pay on conditions, largely because of insufficiency on lay-off pay — against the advice of the union negotiators.

The issue of lay-offs and lay-off pay has been central in a number of major disputes. At Dagenham, it was behind the strike in September and October 1976 which included the so-called 'riot', and behind the move to occupy the PTA (Paint, Trim & Assembly) plant in February 1977.

Towards parity

The improvements, though, are still not adequate to the needs of Ford workers. 80% lay-off pay still means that workers lose 20% of their earnings when management decides to send them home. The 15% wage claim is only seen as a "contribution towards parity" with Ford workers in Germany, and will still leave Ford workers in Britain near their present position of being lowest paid in Europe. The 15% is neither an answer to inflation at the moment, nor recoups what has been lost in the past. There is a demand for a new, and this time real, 'Cost of Living safeguard'.

After the conference, the convenors said that they would be prepared to 'reconsider' the wages and hours figures in the light of the discussion at the conference and the developing rate of inflation. There must be pressure from the shop floor to get them to do this. This pressure should be around the demands of £15 and 35 hours raised at the conference, and for a new and complete 'cost of living safeguard'

— full and adequate compensation for all price rises.

Whatever the final form of the claim, it will certainly need to be fought for. That fight, based on the maximum unity of all Ford workers, needs to be campaigned for and prepared now.

That preparation cannot be left up to the full time officials and convenors. Not only the history of previous pay claims, but the stewards' conference itself, shows that. The convenors promised "maximum participation in discussion at the conference", with amendments taken, but they refused all amendments and closed the conference after 2¼ hours because of a pre-arranged press conference. And in the last two weeks little has been done even to publicise the claim.

The shop floor militants themselves must take up the fight, starting straight away.

JACK BANNOCK

Halewood stewards claim a 'big victory'

1200 STRIKING toolmakers and maintenance workers (mainly AUEW members) from the body plant at Fords Halewood factory returned to work on Monday May 2nd following a 2-week strike. Shop stewards involved claimed a "big victory".

The strike had started on Friday April 15th after management had summarily suspended 9 AUEW members, without going through full procedure, for "leaving work early without permission".

The workers correctly saw the move as a continuation of management's recent offensive, begun in November, to break shop floor organisation and assert their complete control. The main demands of the strike were the lifting of the suspensions and the establishment of a new disciplinary procedure, particularly involving the right of shop steward representation.

Management conceded most of the demands when the determination of the strike was obvious and it started to affect work at other plants. Halewood had quickly been brought to a standstill; workers had also been laid off at Southampton.

The suspensions were lifted and replaced by written warnings.

Over disciplinary procedure, senior steward Arthur Barklem has been quoted as saying, "In future the men will be fully represented by one of their senior stewards when any disciplinary action is taken, this is what we have been fighting for". However, the provision of a status quo in disciplinary cases has still to be won.

Also thrown up in the strike was the question of AUEW representation and separate negotiating rights in the plant. This apparently will now be discussed "at a national level".

KEVIN FEINTUCK

EVENTS

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

SUNDAY 8 MAY. April 23rd Defence Campaign public meeting: 3pm, Tottenham Trades Hall, 8 Bruce Grove, London N17.

MONDAY 9 MAY. "Support William Tyndale!". Public meeting organised by Tyndale teachers and chaired by Dorothy McColgan. 6.30pm at Friends Meeting House, Euston Rd.

TUESDAY 10 MAY. International Communist League public meeting. "A Programme for Workers' Power". Speaker: Martin Thomas. 7.30pm, Victoria Hotel, opposite Stoke City football ground.

FRIDAY 13 MAY. London Spartacist group forum: "The Transitional Programme and the post-war economy", by Judith Hunter. 7.30pm, 'Roebuck', 108a Tottenham Court Rd, W1 (Warren Street tube).

SATURDAY 14 MAY. National Abortion Campaign demonstration against the Benyon Bill. Assemble 1.30pm, Belvedere Rd, Waterloo.

SUNDAY 15 MAY. Labour Abortion Rights Conference. 10am at the FTAT Hall, 14 Jockeys Fields, London WC1.

SUNDAY 15 MAY. International-Communist League public meeting: "Revolutionaries and the Labour Party". 7.45pm, 'Roebuck', 108a Tottenham Court Rd. (Warren St tube)

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 21-22 MAY. National conference of the Working Women's Charter Campaign — "Which Way Forward for the Charter Campaign?" City University, St John St, London EC1. Delegates' credentials £1.50 from Jill Daniels, 1a Camberwell Grove, London SE5.

SATURDAY 21 MAY. Left Action conference. 11am to 4pm at Essex Road Library, London N1.

ADS

SPARTACUS, monthly paper of the German Trotskyist organisation Spartacusbund. 35p.

PERMANENTE REVOLUTION, organ of the Internationale Kommunistische Liga of Austria. 25p.

LA CLASSE, monthly paper of the Ligue Communiste (Italy). 15p.

LUTTE DE CLASSE / CLASS STRUGGLE, bilingual Trotskyist magazine published by Lutte Ouvrière (France). 40p.

"ORGANISING THE PROLETARIAN PARTY", articles from Workers' Action reproduced by the Revolutionary Labour Group (Australia). 20p.

All available from Phoenix Pamphlets, 98 Gifford St, London N1 0DF. Add 15% per order p&p, minimum 6½p.

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