

Workers' fight

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and the
Trade
Unions

STRUGGLE
IN THE
UKRAINE

THE JOINT Council for the Welfare of Immigrants has sent a letter to the Home Secretary protesting at the method of enquiry being used in connection with Labour's so-called "Amnesty of illegal immigrants".

When the amnesty was announced, immigrants were encouraged to apply if they were here "illegally", according to the 1971 Immigration Act. As we reported in last week's **Workers Fight**, by then 667

LABOUR'S FAKE AMNESTY LEADS TO INTERROGATION OF IMMIGRANTS

immigrants had applied for the amnesty, 90 cases had been reviewed, but only 21 were given permission to stay. That is 69 were billed for deportation.

Apparently the basis of this disgusting piece of cynicism is that only illegal entrants may be amnestied — and not even all of these! But the majority of illegal immigrants are immigrants whose "illegal" status results from their overstaying their permits. These have been told that they do not come within the terms of the amnesty at all. They will be deported.

The enquiries are supposed to determine that the applicant was indeed an illegal entrant and not someone who overstayed his permit. But, in fact, these enquiries are nothing short of police interrogation. The same grilling techniques are used: one applicant was shown a photograph of a man. "You know this man, don't you?", he was asked. "We know you do. He brought you over here, didn't he?"

So the interrogations are being used not only to ascertain the routes and

methods of immigration but the people and contacts who operate them. Worst of all, in many cases answering all the questions — where one first stayed, on whose recommendation, where one worked, etc — would mean incriminating others. And these others are by no means always the "immigration racketeers" — real or imaginary — that the press has been screaming about. These others are often the relatives and friends, family contacts and home-town associates of the immigrants.

What these Home Office

enquiries are really asking is this: are you willing to shop your friend, your neighbour, or your relative?

Filthy

The labour movement should demand answers to a few serious questions about this filthy business. Was the amnesty a cynical manoeuvre aimed deliberately to help the professional immigrant hunters in their work?

Or is it that the Labour Government, having made its liberal and "humane" gesture, now finds itself unable or

unwilling to control the workings of the permanent state functionaries, the police and the law, who have turned Jenkins' gesture into an exceptionally repulsive double-cross?

Whether the true explanation be the first, or, more likely, the second, the labour movement must demand that harassment and victimisation cease immediately.

We say: stop the interrogation now. An amnesty to all "illegal" immigrants! Get rid of all racist Immigration Acts.

Pay Board

The two-tier trick

HERALDED by some papers as "a massive £400 a year rise for London workers", the Pay Board recommendations actually fall a long way short of that.

After learned calculations (such as £105 to compensate for "wear and tear and housing standards in inner London and exactly £24 in outer London) the Pay Board came up with the figure of £400 recommended allowance within 4 miles of Charing Cross, and £200 in the rest of London.

Despite the elaborate and ridiculous show of working out a "fair" allowance to the last exact pound, the Pay Board's calculation was obviously that the £400/£200 recommendation was just sufficient to cool the militancy which has developed on the London weighting issue, particularly in Inner London, and to keep the staff shortage crisis in London controllable.

In fact, the recommendations have led to an outcry.

The recommendations, welcomed by Labour Employment Minister Michael Foot, amount to £155 million overall increase, an average increase of £155 per year or 6.5% for one million public sector workers in London.

Within that overall total, increases vary widely. Bank employees within four miles of Charing Cross will only get £49 increase, as their present agreed allowance is £351. Inner London nurses, though, get £374 rise.

Some sections, like higher-paid civil servants, have got useful increases at no cost at all in terms of militant action.

But NALGO (local government workers) and NUT (teachers), whose members have fought long campaigns over London weighting have rejected the offer as insufficient.

IF THE right-wingers ("moderates", so-called) in the National Union of Mineworkers think that their victory at the conference on 2nd July has saved anything, they are wrong.

They managed to put the miners off a £20 claim adequate to keep up with the rising cost of living. But not even the bosses' press thinks that the miners' restraint will guarantee peace, harmony, and prosperity under the "social contract".

From the "Daily Mirror" to the "Times", the forecasts are of economic disaster. They point to the accelerating increase in prices, the enormous balance of payments deficit, the shortage of investment...

leading to hyper-inflation, eventual big bankruptcies, cuts in government spending, and in lending by finance companies, finally large-scale depression with over three million on the dole.

To avoid this catastrophe, which could lead to the collapse of such democracy as there is in Britain, the recipe offered is to stop agitating for higher wages and even to give up the small amounts granted in threshold agreements.

Cause

Clearly we are coming to a situation where there is a sharp conflict between keeping adequate wages and "adequate" profits. And of course the bosses' press sides with the cause of profits.

The answer the working class must give is very clear.

We do not accept the "need" for profits. Industry could be run perfectly well under workers' control, without capitalists and their profits.

For us, the most important thing about the state of the economy is the living standards of the working class, the great majority of the population. The policies we are interested in are policies to maintain and improve those living standards, and not policies to "boost business confidence" and "encourage investment".

The root cause of the crisis is not wage increases. In the normal mechanism of the capitalist economy, any boom leads to recession.

The shift in the balance of wealth to the oil-producing countries produced by the oil crisis has greatly accelerated

an already falling trend of profits. That trend, once begun, can snowball into full-scale depression.

Reducing wages would not even, in fact, solve the crisis. Real wages have in fact been falling over the last year or so — and that hasn't stopped the crisis! Reduced wages mean a smaller market for goods and thus further steps to depression.

Wage increases are not even the root cause of price increases. The increase in oil prices (together with the booming profits being made by the oil monopolies: Shell BP made £51 million more profit than expected last quarter) pushes up prices anyway.

So going along with social contracts and wage restraints will not solve anything for the working class. All it can do is soften us up for sharper, more brutal attacks directed not only against our living standards but also such basic democratic rights as we have.

The "social contract" may see the Labour Government through to an autumn election. But after that harsher policies will be demanded by the capitalist class from any government which fundamentally goes along with capitalism. Total wage freeze, massive

Comley — after the left talk, support for 'social contract'



unemployment, picket-bashing by police and the army.. all are on the agenda.

The labour movement needs a fighting policy, and clear demands on the Labour government.

No wage restraint under capitalism. Full support to all workers fighting to maintain and improve living standards. Remember that it is increases of the order of 30% which we need to keep pace with prices.

Pricewatch

•For automatic, legally-binding, open-ended, zero-threshold clauses, keeping take-home pay abreast of price levels as determined by rank-and-file workers' and housewives' pricewatch committees. The increases to be continuously consolidated into the basic rate.

•For a National Minimum Wage of £30 to safeguard the lower-paid. This National Minimum also to apply to pensions, grants and other fixed benefits, and to increase automatically to keep pace with the cost of living.

•Where companies claim they cannot keep going, or cannot grant adequate conditions to their workers — for the nationalisation of those companies under workers' control.

DON'T SAVE BOSSES' BACON

IN May 1972 an Asian bar-loader at the Trinity Street factory of Mansfield hosiery Mills in Loughborough made a complaint to the East Midlands Conciliation Committee of the Race Relations Board alleging that he had been unlawfully denied promotion.

Before the committee had delivered its verdict confirming the allegation, the National Union of Hosiery and Knitwear Workers submitted a wage claim of about £5 per week on behalf of the Asian bar-loaders. In July the committee not only endorsed the allegation of unlawful discrimination, but started enquiries into the attitudes of the NUHKW itself and the white knitters at the factory. The enquiries confirmed that these too were guilty of unlawful discrimination.

On 3 October the bar-loaders rejected the company's offer of "nothing without strings" and 109 of them went on strike. They returned after a week when the company agreed to look into the question of promotions — which revealed itself as a major underlying grievance. But in response to the company's agreeing to train Asian workers for the skilled and better paid full-fashioned knitters' jobs, the white workers went out on strike.

Trainees

By the end of October, the bar-loaders had again withdrawn their labour, being satisfied with neither the wages nor the promotion situation. Now they were joined by other Asian workers in the factory and by Asian workers in the Clarence street factory nearby, making about 400 workers in all.

The company retaliated by sacking the lot and then engaging 41 white trainee knitters. The union knew about this but didn't tell the strikers who later returned to work having gained some concessions on the wages issue.

When they got back they found out about the new trainees and withdrew their labour again. Having forced the union to back the wage demand, they now occupied the union offices to get the NUHKW to back them on the promotion issue. Reluctantly the NUHKW agreed but refused to ask white members to come out as well.

That sequence of events — the strikes at Mansfield Hosiery Mills — represent an obscene comic strip of British racism. But unfortunately only the blithe and the blind can believe it is anything but typical.

And ironically, it is precisely the CIR's newly published report on these events and its attempt to push the question of racism into the background that best proves it. In order to avoid the central question of race, the report talks about the payments system, the union organisation, the position of women in the factory and so on. But what emerges — for all its bias — is a portrait of backwardness presided over with princely complacency by the narrow, reactionary and parasitic organ of supposed workers' self-defence, the trade union.

"Our own"

Nothing suggests the smugness and bovine stupidity of the NUHKW as much as its president's whining self-justification: "We helped the Asians far more than we helped our own (!) people. That is what stuck in my craw all the time we were trying to get a settlement"

What does the report reveal? That the union encouraged productivity deals and rationalisation; that the wages system was so complex and filled with arbitrariness that no-one could understand their pay slips; that women are systematically discriminated against, as much as the Asians; that short-time-working agreements (guaranteeing minimum fall-back rates) between the union and the company can be made worthless, because the company is allowed to slip out of it by giving a week's notice

Racism and the Trade Unions

by Jack Price



Art Castings strikers and supporters picket the T&GWU, which had recruited white scabs into the union. Right: Imperial Typewriters strike support demonstration. A major issue is the right of Asian workers to elect their own stewards. T&GWU officials oppose them.



Photos by Sid West

of the commencement of short-time working that the union has no branches, using the check-off system to collect dues; that the union allows management appointees to function as stewards; that the union co-operates with management through a Joint Works Committee which, according to the agreed disputes procedure, is the highest body in the factory, relegating the union's own stewards' committee to insignificance; and finally, of course, that the union and the vast majority of its members in that locality are racist.

Pollutes

From this we can see racism in its context. We can see that where racism pollutes the working class, it is not only the blacks who are the victims. The whites, in their betrayal of their class interests for the illusory benefits of a little bit of status, sink in their class collaboration to the very bottom in terms of wages, conditions, job security, trade union rights, shop floor strength, and union democracy. In their frenzy to feel that they have got one foot on the ladder of social elevation by rising above the blacks and women, the white male workers acquiesce in every humiliation and degradation management proposes for them.

Unfortunately Mansfield Hosiery is not a one-off case — it is typical of thousands of work places.

Take the example of Heathrow Airport. There women cleaning workers on day shift, most of whom are Punjabis, earn 38p an hour. And these workers are "organised"! Or so the T&GWU and the G&MWU who take their contributions claim. The better jobs, cleaning the toilets, are reserved for whites.

Take the Nottingham textile industry. In May 1972 five black workers were sacked from the company of Crepes Sizes as part of a 'cutback'. At Sizes workers slaved a compulsory 84-hour week for a wage of between £35 and

£40. Machinery was dangerous, the supervisors were racist, toilet facilities were disgusting and the management's slogan seems to have been "Whiter workers get lighter work". The Asian workers organised a branch of the Transport and General Workers Union and despite some feet-dragging by the union struck and were victorious.

At nearby E E Yaffe men were sacked for joining Nottingham's May Day march. These men, all Asians, who had organised a T&GWU branch, also complained of incomprehensible payments systems, no proper meal and tea breaks, a miserable wage of £17.60 for 40 hours and the humiliation of having to ask for toilet paper and towels every time they wanted to wash or relieve themselves. When they struck the union was so negligent in pursuit of their demands that the workers burnt their cards and left for jobs elsewhere.

Pakistani workers at Harwood Cash also got no support from the T&GWU in their struggle against discrimination; they had to work 60 hours to get the same miserable wage as the white women got for 48 hours, and they were also barred from company transport

Scabs

At the recent Art Castings strike in Nuneaton, where Asian workers were on strike, the T&GWU, which did nothing for the strikers, actually recruited into the Union the scab whites who crossed the picket line to take the jobs of the sacked and striking Asians.

The present Imperial Typewriters strike is another case in point.

The AEUW, particularly its foundry section, is not better than the T&GWU. When in 1972 mainly West Indian workers were the first to strike and occupy their works in support of the Engineering Confederation's claim, their employer retaliated by sacking them all. The AEUW on that occasion, rather than

backing to the hilt the workers in the vanguard of their own claim, actually refused to let its banner be taken on a demonstration in support of the Stanmore workers.

Its total failure to rally support, and its tacit endorsement of the local press's "black power takeover" hysteria, led directly to the defeat of this immensely important struggle.

The blindness of the union in this case is almost incredible: had Stanmore won, the chances of success for the claim throughout the London district — and therefore nationally — would have shot up.

The cases in 1967 and 1968 at Conegre Foundry Ltd at Tipton show the AUEW (then AEF) refusing to fight against the victimisation of the militant Tarsem Singh and condoning its own member's scabbing.

Reporting another strike, at Newby's, the Sunday Times related: "At Newby's the

can expect much different from an instrument of the policy of the capitalist class. But, we might ask, why does an anti-working-class institution loyal to a state which through various governments imposes racist immigration laws and has a racist police force actually advocate equal rights for black workers.

Mobile

The fact is that while it is convenient and profitable for some employers to shove black workers to the super-exploited bottom of the heap, British capitalism as a whole would prefer to use immigrants as a mobile "reserve army" of workers operating at all levels, particularly when high employment gives workers a "seller's market" and pushes the general level of wages up.

Nor does the ruling class relish the growth of explosive discontent, particularly

at Mansfield Hosiery provided the proof! Both white and black could gain more from a united and concerted struggle against their common enemy, the propertied class.

White workers who have called on their black brothers for support have usually been well rewarded. The Fine Tubes strike died for lack of white trade union support, but one of its leaders, made the following statement "During our strike we needed the support of other workers to boycott supplies to Fine Tubes. We went to the union of one of the factory's main suppliers and the official indecisively told us that he didn't know if the workers would support us. Because of our experience we talked to the workers directly. When we went to the meeting we were surprised that it was mainly black workers who pledged support".

But he needn't have been surprised. For most blacks the

Indian pickets claim that an AEF official told them that the union's policy was that men who wanted to stay outside the factory should stay out: those who wanted to work should get in... "It's a new rule".

At Dartmouth Auto Castings no. 2 works black workers who were on strike complained to the AEF official about white scabs. This racist replied: "The whites understand realities: you don't".

If further evidence is needed, a recently published report "Racial Disadvantage in Employment", gives it. It records that "A West Indian or Asian has to make more than twice as many applications as a white man before finding a job. The minorities (particularly the men) are also heavily concentrated in non-skilled jobs and more likely than their white counterparts to work permanent night shifts"

Secret

One official interviewed admitted that there had been a secret agreement between a bus company and himself on behalf of the T&GWU to the effect that Asian bus workers would not get promoted.

Further, "At a plant in South East England", it reports, "management had at first excluded the minority groups and then kept their numbers to a low level because shop stewards had formally stated at a specially arranged meeting that they would be opposed to the introduction of Asian or West Indian men." Caribbean workers, it notes, have an average of 25% less than the average wage of the white worker. Asian workers have between 15 and 20% less, but they work longer hours.

For those who believe that the trade unions are a haven of multi-racial harmony — and there are such people, including some who call themselves revolutionaries — the reports will be an eye-opener, for all their soft-peddalling.

Naturally the CIR report puts the emphasis for its recommendations on "better communications". Not that we

among black youth.

But before anyone concludes that the best remedy for whites, therefore, lies in kicking the blacks out or keeping them down, remember: the main lesson of this report is that where white workers play along with the bosses' racist plans, they themselves suffer. Conditions

slogan "Black and White Unite and Fight" is a fact for them. It is the white workers who will neither unite nor fight when called upon. Raised by whites, this slogan is a bit of an insult — it is, after all, their fellow workers who are falling down on this, not the black workers!

The fact is that despite all sorts of pious TUC resolutions

LICENSED TO KILL

"IT doesn't matter if you kill an Arab" was how an advertisement last week aptly described the attitude of the British press and politicians to the Middle East.

Harold Wilson expresses his shock and sympathy every time a single Israeli civilian is killed, while the newspapers switch on the demagogy of "pity" and "anguish". But 30, 40 or 50 Palestinian refugees dead, and hundreds of others torn and broken under the rubble of their pitiful 'homes' merit hardly a mention and not a single Parliamentary protest.

But if the British press and the pro-Zionist Labour Party think it doesn't matter if you kill an Arab, the Israelis (who are among Wilson's guests at the current get-together of the grotesquely named 'Socialist International') think it matters quite a lot.

So much so that they have just issued their troops with instructions clearly setting out both military and religious authorisation for the slaughter of Arab civilians under practically any circumstances.

The instructions are contained in a booklet issued by the Israeli Defence Forces Central Command, entitled "In the Wake of the Yom Kippur War". It is written by the Chief Rabbi of the Central

Command, Lieutenant Colonel Rabbi Avidan.

The booklet, apparently, includes such orders as the following (I quote from a summary given by Dr. M.R. Mehdi in a letter to the Guardian, July 1st): "When our forces meet civilians during fighting, pursuit or invasion, then, so long as one cannot be certain that these civilians are incapable of harming our forces, the soldiers are permitted, indeed have the duty, according to the Halacha (religious law) to kill the same civilians."

"It is not allowed, under any circumstances, to put trust in any Arab even if he gives the impression of being civilised."

"The status of anyone who helps the enemy or the terrorists is identical with that of the enemy or the terrorists."

The booklet defines 'harming our forces' as "by supplying resources or by providing information to the enemy" "in some phase of the fighting".

trade unions in Britain are racist the working class is polluted by this filth and consequently its organisations at all levels bear its taint — including its two biggest and ostensibly 'left wing' unions.

Even among organisations claiming to be revolutionary, however, there is little recognition of this. Groups like 'Militant' and the Workers Revolutionary Party, for instance, simply refuse to admit that white workers are in the main racists.

In their customarily hysterical tone of outrage, for example, the **Workers Press** (paper of the WRP) accused the CIR of trying to "split the working class on racist lines" (which is the complete opposite of the recommendations) and accused it of slandering the working class and the trade union movement by pointing out that they are sometimes racist.

Such an attitude places the WRP firmly on the side of racism and chauvinism. It is no better than red-baiting post office workers' union leader Tom Jackson on this question. This buffoon claims that "to do anything special towards integrating the workforce may only point up the differences, which could lead to the very reverse of what you (?) are hoping to achieve". In other words — let racism be!

Special

Their attitude, for instance, to workers on strike in the Standard Telephones and Cables dispute in North London put them on the side of the scabs and racists, defending the leadership of the extreme right wing EEPTU.

You cannot drive racism out of the trade unions by ignoring the fact that it has taken firm root in the mass of the working class, both organised and unorganised. And drive out racism is what we must do! We must therefore fight in solidarity with our black brothers who are already fighting, whether over pay and conditions, over promotion, or over discrimination; we must help organise those not yet organised (and the majority are at least organised as members of trade unions); we must demand recognition of the special needs of immigrant workers when those workers call on us to do so; and we must fight to throw out of the trade union movement the organised racists of the National Front and all those who by their racism are a constant threat and insult to our black brothers.

Quite right, too. However civilised an Arab may appear, you can be sure he hasn't reached that stage of civilisation at which actions such as Lidice, My Lai, Deir Yassin or Wiryamu become codified and sanctioned in the cold type of the civilisers' official handbooks.

Besides, applied on a sufficient scale, such a policy could produce a significant reduction in the number of Palestinians making up the 'problem' for which, the Israelis in their way understand, a solution will (finally) have to be found...

SPIELKIE



... carry away child killed in Israeli terror raids on Lebanon

IN 1946, a lyrical poem about the beauties of nature was condemned by Stalin's literary censors as "bourgeois nationalism" and forbidden publication. If the poem had been set in Russia, it would no doubt have received approval and official accolades for being cheerful and positive. But the poet happened to be Ukrainian.

The incident is typical of thousands that can be related from the time of Stalin. But, while the literary censorship is now not so crude as in the 1940s, the oppression of the Ukraine is, if anything, worse.

Tsarist

The Ukraine is a pretty big place — 5 times the size of England, and with a population of some 50 million. But for only 15 years of its recent history has it been able to foster its own national and cultural heritage. Between domination by the Tsarist 'Prison house of nations' and the Russian Stalinist bureaucracy, the Ukraine enjoyed a brief flowering between 1917 and 1932. During that time, as a result of the Bolshevik nationalities policy, the number of people speaking and reading Ukrainian rose sharply, as did the number of books and newspapers published in Ukrainian.

Today, however, Ukrainians are in danger of losing their language completely. Following Krushchev's educational reforms of 1958-59, the teaching of the Ukrainian language is no longer obligatory in Ukrainian schools. In the universities, the majority of lectures are given in Russian, and examinations are conducted in Russian.

'Higher'

Some of these facts were outlined by Terry Liddle, speaking at a Workers Fight public meeting on Sunday June 23rd. Terry Liddle was speaking on behalf of the Committee for the Defence of Ukrainian Dissidents. And in a pamphlet produced by this committee (**Ukraine: Unrest and Repression**, by **Andrea Martin**) a detailed account is given of the systematic denial of Ukraine's national rights since the Russian bureaucracy's proclamation of the need for a total amalgamation of all national republics into a single 'Soviet nation'. In effect this simply means the deliberate Russification of the various nationalities within the USSR. Comrade Martin comments that this policy of complete assimilation of non-Russian nationalities "is being referred to as 'the entrance of the USSR into a much higher stage of historical development.'"

On a vast scale not greatly different from South Africa,

THE LANGUAGE OF OPPRESSION

Russian populations are settled in the Ukraine whilst Ukrainians are virtually deported to work in various parts of Russia. A rural Ukrainian seeking a permit to move to an industrial area will be given a permit to move to the Urals, Voronezh, Siberia or the Far East — but not a Ukrainian city. According to the 1959 census, over 5 million Ukrainians live outside the Ukraine (but within the 'Soviet Union'). The emigrants are given very little opportunity to retain their own identity: outside of

Peasants' Union. This group attacked bureaucratic planning in industry and agriculture, the gradual abolition of the Ukrainian language, oppression of the peasantry and curtailment of the rights of genuine trade unionism. It started out, as have many opposition groupings, by taking seriously aspects of the Soviet constitution and setting out to get them legally implemented. One of these is Article 17, which provides for the right of secession of any of the member states of the Soviet



Vyacheslav Chornovil.

the Ukraine there is not a single Ukrainian language paper published, nor is there a single Ukrainian cultural or educational institution to serve these 5 million people.

For the Russians who are encouraged and helped to settle in Ukraine, every facility and amenity is provided. Many start out as members of the privileged bureaucratic caste. In addition to this they have the advantage of speaking the language favoured by the authorities. Thus they slot into the better jobs and professions, while the disadvantaged Ukrainians are increasingly pushed into lower paid and less influential positions. Thus the Russification process becomes self-perpetuating and takes on its own momentum, as the caste differentiation between Russians and Ukrainians within the Ukraine hardens.

Top

One example, of personnel working on the construction of the Kiev Hydro-Electric Power Station during 1963, shows this process at work. Russians, constituting only 20% of the workforce, held all the top positions in management and technical work.

Over the last 15 years, the Russification of the Ukraine has been very much stepped up. From 1959 to 1970 in the Donetz-Dnieper region of the Ukraine the native population fell from 56% to 53%, while the Russian population rose from 38% to 41%. In this period the growing desperation about the (eventually irreversible) attempt to liquidate the Ukrainian culture and identity has led to the growth of a courageous and widespread opposition.

In 1959 a small grouping was formed which called itself the Ukrainian Workers' and



Ivan Dzyuba



Yuri Shukhevych, imprisoned in 1972 for 15 years for unpublished writings.

Union. But when this group was brought to trial, they were bluntly told that Article 17 was not for practical application but "for the delusion of the outside world."

Very early on, the aims were re-defined: Lev Lukyanenko, central figure of the Workers' and Peasants' Union, wrote that he "began to think that it was not the

UKRAINE Workers in Struggle

•1961 20 workers from factories in Lvov form the 'Ukrainian National Committee', an underground organisation aiming for the secession of the Ukraine. All its members arrested. Two sentenced to death and shot, others imprisoned.

•May 1969 Workers at the Kiev Hydro-Electric Station marched in the streets of Vyshgorod. They had lived for years in prefabricated huts and railway coaches, which had never been repaired. Defying the local Party organisation, they elected their own housing committee and sent a delegation to Moscow. Its leader was arrested and has never been heard of since.

•June 1972 10,000 'rioters' took to the streets for two whole days in the engineering city of Dneprodzerzhinsk. They attacked and partially destroyed a KGB building, and offices of the Ministry of the Interior, and destroyed files in the Komsomol (Young Communists) building and that of the Party itself. The KGB and militia opened fire, killing about a dozen people and wounding 100.

•September 1972 An unknown number of workers killed and wounded during strikes for improvement in living standards at Dnepropetrovsk, a major centre of heavy industry.

•October 1972 Further strikes at both Dnepropetrovsk and Dneprodzerzhinsk, with demands for better distribution of provisions, better living conditions and the right to freely choose a job and not be bureaucratically assigned. Again, some workers killed, and many arrests. These actions took place at the same period as the last big wave of arrests and trials of Ukrainian nationalist oppositionists.

•May 1973 Strike of 30,000 car workers at Kiev against wage cuts.

•August 1973 Rumoured major strike at a Black Sea port, with half the port's workers laid off, and the rest striking in solidarity.

independence of the Ukrainian SSR that was essential for an improvement in the life of the people but the liquidation of bureaucratism. And it seemed to me that bureaucratism could be liquidated only by giving greater scope to socialist democracy." Lukyanenko is now serving a 15 year jail sentence for his views (commuted from an original death sentence). The other members of this group were also imprisoned.

In 1965 widespread arrests of opponents of the Russification policy were carried out, and the victims tried in secret. Over 150 workers, students and writers signed a petition in protest: "...the political trials held in recent years are becoming a form of suppression of those who do not conform in their thinking. ... They bear witness to the intensified restoration

of Stalinism. In the Ukraine, where violations of democracy are magnified and aggravated by distortions in the field of the nationality question, the symptoms of Stalinism are manifested even more overtly and grossly."

In 1970, paralleling the Russian samizdat (self-published) journal *Chronicle of Current Events*, Ukrainian socialist oppositionists began to publish a typewritten journal called the *Ukrainian Herald*, reporting on political prisoners and repression and also containing poetry, philosophical and political discussion and unofficial fiction and essays.

Trials

Vyacheslav Chornovil (whose earlier account of the 1965-66 political trials earned him a year and a half in prison) spoke for many of these oppositionists when he wrote: "I categorically state ... that I have always firmly adhered to the principles of socialism and continue to do so. But not of that socialism which tries to regiment not merely the actions but also the thoughts of the individual. I cannot imagine true socialism without guaranteed democratic freedoms, without the widest political and economic self government of all the cells of the state organism down to and including the smallest, without a real guarantee — and not merely a paper one — of the rights of all nations within a multinational state."

In the first four months of 1972 in a series of massive sweeps, over 200 Ukrainian opposition activists were arrested, including Chornovil and Ivan Dzyuba, author of an important work exposing the treatment of the Ukraine ('Internationalism or Russification?'). Dzyuba, though because of an advanced tubercular condition had been told by doctors that he had only about a year to live, was sentenced to 5 years in prison and 5 years' exile. A member of the Ukrainian Writers' Union who offered to serve Dzyuba's sentence himself was simply carted off to a psychiatric hospital, in company with a number of other Ukrainian dissidents. Chornovil is now serving a 7-year sentence in a Russian prison at Vladimir.

Scale

But this group's conclusions point to the possibility of a very much more powerful wave of opposition to come. They feel that, because of the social implications of the national oppression of Ukraine, there is a much stronger likelihood of the working class being drawn into a significant struggle against the parasitic bureaucracy.

As Ivan Dzyuba wrote in *Internationalism or Russification?*: "We see that in city life the Ukrainian language is in a certain sense opposed as the language of the 'lower' strata of the population ... to the Russian language as the language of the 'higher', 'more educated' strata of society... And it is not possible to 'brush aside' this social rift. The language barrier aggravates and exacerbates social divisions."

Certainly, the scale and vehemence of working class action in Ukraine, although it generally takes the form of action over wages and conditions, indicates that the bureaucratic oppression of workers throughout the Soviet Union is deepened and made doubly intolerable by callous and calculated national oppression. This could well make of the Ukraine the weak link in the bureaucratic chains.

Maxine Landis

MANAGEMENT at BSC's giant Lackenby works on Teesside have laid off hundreds of steel craftsmen, who had been staging two-hour sit-ins and shift relief and overtime bans in support of their £10 a week pay claim.

The lay-offs — to take effect unless the men return to "normal working" — immediately drew a militant response from the men who began a round-the-clock sit-in. But the unions are lining up with management's ultimatum and demanding the men return to normal working — obviously because it embarrasses them to see men fighting for a claim that

NATIONAL PRESS BLACKOUT ON Steelmen's round-the-clock sit-in action

the union leaders, led by the right-wing John Boyd of the AUEW, have just sold out. Coming under a great deal of pressure from the men, particularly at Lackenby and Consett, the officials called a North East coast craft shop stewards' meeting on Tuesday last, 2nd July, at the AUEW Hall, Middlesbrough, which turned

out to be the biggest meeting of its kind yet held. But instead of the meeting hearing the opinions of the Lackenby and Consett stewards who have been in the lead in fighting for the claim and against the dirty sell-out that Boyd perpetrated, the meeting was taken over by Robson and Dixon, the AUEW and the

Boilermakers' full-time officials.

These bureaucrats tried to dictate to the meeting the conditions for any further increases in wages in the steel industry. But they were frequently shouted down by an opposition that demanded a new structure for the North East Coast craftsmen. The meeting closed an hour later with no result.

Nearly 50 stewards stayed behind, though, at the request of left-wingers from Lackenby and Consett. The outcome of this meeting was a decision by the officials under pressure to have a

recall meeting where restructuring, a group policy on off-pay situations, and a decent basic wage would be discussed. They also will discuss the possibility of regular North East coast crafts meetings as well as a National Conference of steel industry craft shop stewards.

Consett are to have a mass meeting to discuss support for the Lackenby strike. A firm vote of solidarity is expected from the AUEW and the ETU men.

National press coverage of the dispute has been zero. There has been a total black-out.

TONY DUFFY

LONDON TEACHERS DISGUSTED WITH PAY REPORT

"THE PAY Boards Report is a dog's breakfast." For once, Max Morris, CP ex-President of the NUT, has said it right.

£400 for those within 4 miles of Charing Cross and £200 for the rest means that those who miss the higher figure from the Inner London Education Authority Area alone are: half of Hammersmith, a third of Camden, half of Hackney, two thirds of Tower Hamlets, all of Greenwich, a third of Southwark, half of Lambeth and two thirds of Wandsworth. The only Inner London Boroughs largely covered are Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster and Islington. All the Outer London Boroughs are on the lower figure.

The whole thing is a farce. One school in Wandsworth is actually cut in half by the 4 mile limit!

What are the alternatives? If the total sum available is averaged out over all London teachers, they will get £237 a year each — a grand increase, after 3 years of intermittent struggle, of £119 before tax.

Max Morris again: "I cannot see how the NUT Executive can possibly accept it in any way at all".

Certainly, London teachers will not. On 3rd July, 300 teachers at 12 London schools took immediate unofficial action in protest, and as a result 3,000 schoolchildren had to be sent home. An ad hoc strike committee meeting mustered 200 teachers, and planned further action for 11th July.

There are rumblings that the Outer London Boroughs may be pressured to stay at £200, while the ILEA area shares out the rest, resulting in £320 for those teachers concerned. But the NUT has said it will stand by its claim for £350 for every teacher in London and the outer suburbs.

At the branch meeting of North London (Islington) NUT last Monday (1st July) a motion was passed calling on the Executive to push for £400 a year London Allowance for all London teachers, backdated to November 1972, and to prepare for strike action in September if success not achieved. A branch action committee was set up, with delegates from all Islington schools, to ensure that we are ready for the fight.

On Thursday 4th an emergency meeting of the NUT Executive will be lobbied by Rank and File (left wing of the NUT) and on Friday, after the Burnham committee will have met, there will be a Rank and File public

meeting to plan future action this term and also from September, revolving around the London Allowance, the continuing teacher shortage and the £180 million national cuts which the Labour Government is still operating.

There is no doubt that action will be widely supported. At grass roots level there is furious activity, with public meetings of parents and teachers linking up with tenants associations and setting up action committees. And the unofficial strikes are an added pressure on the NUT Executive.

Clive Bane
Ian Hollingworth
3.7.74

From p.1 PAY BOARD

Teachers are particularly annoyed by the "two-tier" system. Unlike office workers, teachers are relatively thin on the ground in central London. Only 12,000 teachers qualify for the £400, while 50,000 are in line for £200.

Making a nonsense of all their careful sums, the Pay Board have said the unions can divide up the total amount as they wish. Obviously they hope to split up workers, with inner London and outer London squabbling over the division of the cash.

The other "robbing Peter to

pay Paul" aspect of it is that the rise is billed to come out of local authority money.

But that "kitty" is already too small to cope with the social expenditure needed in London. We must demand a direct state grant to the local authorities to cover the increase.

The fact that the recommendations cover one million public sector workers under one settlement, together with possibly one million workers in private industry, gives militants a great chance to unite a vast body of workers in a fight for £400 straight London allowance for everybody. The teachers' action could act as the spark for thousands of workers indignant at the petty and ridiculous injustices and anomalies of the Pay Board report.

Tom Ramsey

Support the Nurses' Action Day!

IN EXCHANGE for a meagre half-promise from Barbara Castle about interim awards, Albert Spanwick, leader of the nurses' union COHSE, has decided to call off the action his members have been carrying out in support of their claim.

Meanwhile, the other main nurses' union, NUPE, announced that it is seeking an extra £200 million from the Government to give nurses an average pay rise of about £15 per week. But here too there is talk and no action.

The Nurses' Action Group Co-ordinating Committee, however, is going ahead with the national day of action on July 8th despite the officials calling off action. Nurses in Manchester and Liverpool are particularly determined to go ahead with the planned demonstrations.

At a rally in Manchester on July 1st attended by nurses from all three nurses' organisations,

NUPE, COHSE, and the Royal College of Nursing, a resolution was passed supporting the National Day of Action. It also called for a campaign against private patients and agency staff.

Sanctions on this issue have been carried out at a number of hospitals already.

There are plans for a mass rally in Manchester in August and NUPE stewards there are meeting on July 11th to plan action a wider scale against private patients.

The nurses have shown they are prepared to defend their living standards and the health service. The question is, is the labour movement prepared to give them sufficient support to win their battle?

JACK SUTTON

NON-REGISTERED DOCKS THREATEN MERSEY FIGHT

LIVERPOOL dockers plan to strike to win re-instatement for sacked shop steward Alan English.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Co. sacked Alan English last November after local management claimed he had defaced one of their notices. This led to a week's strike until a leading shop steward, Jimmy Symes (now a worker-director [!] of the MD&HCo.) agreed with the Company that the issue should go to the National Dock Labour Board.

After six months, the NDLB remains locked in neutral, so the MD & HC cannot sack Alan English. But he remains suspended. Dockers are demanding a threshold agreement, as well as Alan English's reinstatement.

The men intend to strike when the present 10-week old dispute between the docks maintenance workers and the company is over. The 300 maintenance men have closed down the heavily mechanised container berths over their demand for £7 and company recognition of their shop stewards.

Ship owners have already diverted their ships to other ports — notably Felixtowe. It is therefore very important that the National Ports Shop Stewards Committee meet to discuss the

issue of Alan English and how they can prevent the ship owners from breaking the strike.

This issue also relates to a section in the Jones Aldington Report, which calls for action to be taken by employers and Government by September 30th over the question of non-registered wharves and small ports. But the bosses' committee plans to do nothing. Dockers, however, will need to — or else these scab ports will continue to undermine registered dockers' strength.

Stephen Corbishley.

It was quite a shock...

The management at the "family firm" of Wingrove & Rogers in Liverpool were taken aback by the first ever strike at this engineering factory.

Of about 300 women working there, hardly any were in a union. Many had been there all their working lives, some going back to the 2nd world war! And the bosses had "never had trouble".

But the women had trouble, making ends meet with the £17 or £18 they got for a full week's work on old, noisy machines. They were doing fine, skilled work, making TV and radio components. But, because most of them were not in a union, the management just raked in their profits and never did a thing about the noise, the inefficient old machinery and the awful canteen. Let alone about the wages.

10 days ago all but a handful of 'old faithfuls' came out on strike, demanding a £4 wage rise to cover the mushrooming cost of living. The AUEW made it official, and now membership is booming.

A derisory offer of £1 was firmly rejected. Despite letters from the 'family firm' threatening to sack them all if they don't come back to work, they're determined to hold out for the full £4.

Now they've started picketing continuously all day, and are turning away lorries bringing essential supplies to the factory, where a few scabs are still trying to carry on production.

These women are now strong and confident. Wingrove & Rogers will never be the same place again!

Maria Riley

MEETINGS

LIVERPOOL Workers Fight forum. Cynthia Baldry on the Fourth International. 8pm, Wednesday 17th July, at Stanley House, Upper Parliament St.

LONDON Workers fight forum. John Cunningham on "Communism and Social Democracy". 7.30pm, Sunday July 7th, at the "Golden Lion", Britannia St/Kings Cross Rd.

Women's Movement takes up fight against Fascism

THE Women's Liberation National Conference was held last weekend (June 28th-30th) in Edinburgh, and 900 women and 70 children came along.

A number of important decisions were made and there was a spirit of sisterhood, unity, and constructive discussion, with far less of the destructive hostility apparent at previous National Conferences.

In response to the Canterbury Gay Women's Conference, and the pressure from several local groups in the women's movement, it was decided to allocate two hours of workshop on Saturday to the discussion of sexuality and the relationship between lesbians and the women's movement.

In the early days, lesbianism was used by reactionaries as a slur against the women's movement. Since then honest discussion has often been avoided on women's feelings for other women. The campaigns and demands of the movement have mainly been for the benefit of heterosexual women and it was felt that a further demand specifically relating to our own definition of our sexuality should be added.

The Plenary Session resolved that the Women's Liberation Movement should oppose all discrimination against lesbians and support the right of all women to define their own sexuality.

In addition to the workshops on sexuality, there were many others throughout the weekend discussing topics such as: self-

defence, sex discrimination, women & education, women & fascism, women & psychiatry, working women's charter, wages for housework, and the nurses' struggle.

During the Sunday plenary sessions the Women's Liberation Movement committed itself in several new ways.

A resolution of support and money was sent to the women and men struggling against racism and sex-discrimination at Imperial Typewriters. Messages of support were also sent to the Nurses' National Coordinating Committee, and the conference decided to back the Nurses' National Day of Action on July 8th.

Of particular importance was the discussion and resolution on Fascism, which was carried by an overwhelming majority. It resolved "to unite with all others who are directly faced with the struggle against fascism... to actively oppose fascism by whatever means necessary..."

Finally, it was agreed that the movement should adopt a further demand — that of women's right to "legal and financial independence". This demand came out of the Oxford Women

and Socialism conference, and there is to be a further one-day conference in London to discuss the implications of this demand (for information please write to Leonora Wilson, 21 Castle Street, High Wycombe).

Immediately this demand affects national insurance, pensions, social security, married women students' grants, etc — and challenges the whole relationship between the State and the family as a unit.

The Conference raised several issues which have not previously been fully discussed, and we came home feeling determined to get our local groups to take up these issues both in more thorough discussion and in concrete action.

The next National Women's Conference is to be organised by Manchester during Easter 1975, and there is to be a Women and Socialism conference on the 21st 22nd September in Birmingham to discuss the "Theoretical problems of the tactics and strategy of the Women's Liberation Movement as a mass movement". For information contact Jill Lampert, 26 Lonsdale Rd, Harborne, Birmingham 17. Sue Arnall

LPYS TO PICKET PREBBLES

ON SATURDAY 6th July militant tenants and members of Islington LPYS will be picketing Prebbles estate agents in Upper Street, Islington.

They will be protesting against Prebbles' recent action in issuing writs against nine tenant activists, all members of the Labour Party. Charges include libel, slander and

conspiracy.

The charges arise from a campaign against Prebbles which Islington tenants have been conducting since February. Prebbles are notorious for such practices as sending rent collectors round late on Sunday night accompanied by dogs, harassing tenants to make them

move, etc.

It is expected that, true to form, Prebbles will be able to get an injunction stopping the nine from picketing. Presumably Prebbles think that will stop the campaign. Saturday's picket will be the first proof that they are wrong.

Martin Thomas
Islington Central LPYS

news in brief

NEW ZEALAND could well be the scene of a general strike this week. Like the Pentonville 5 situation here in 1972 and the great general strike in Australia which freed Clarrie O'Shea, it is likely to be sparked off by the jailing of a trade union militant.

Mr Bill Anderson, a leader of the drivers' union is at present imprisoned in the fortress jail of Mount Eden near Auckland for refusing to obey a court Order forbidding the Northern Drivers Union and the Seamens Union from pressuring a ferryboat owner to accept union demands on manning.

Over 20 Ford workers demonstrated outside Barking magistrates court on Monday against the arrest of four of their mates. Three have been remanded on charges of obstructing the highway and threatening behaviour, while one who pleaded not guilty was convicted of obstructing the highway and fined.

Another peculiar 'IRA arms' case ended last Monday. A reporter from the gutter-rag, the Sunday People, and two others had charges against them dropped. The charges were made when the reporter, Trevor Aspinall, and two others were held by police on an arms charge. Aspinall claimed, however, that it was all part of his job as a reporter, adding that he "intended to contact the police over the firearms situation as he had done with previous investigations".

In other words, journalists are not only acting as informers — these little news pimps are always doing that along with their photographer friends — but they are regularly acting as provocateurs with a hot-line to the police.

Given the scandal of the Hackney 5 case early last year, and the Lennon case earlier this year, in both of which it was revealed that charges were only brought after police special branch provocateurs had done their jobs, it is not surprising that the news-and-nudes papers that are so quick to attack the IRA keep silent about their filthy methods.

The release of the Marxist Soviet dissident, Pyotr Grigorenko, from his arrest and imprisonment in a mental institution will be welcomed by socialists. As the champion, particularly, of the downtrodden minorities like the Crimean Tatars and protester against the bureaucracy's crimes against Soviet dissidents, Grigorenko has been largely ignored by the press in the West. They are only interested in those dissidents who, recoiling from the barbarism of Stalinism, incline towards bourgeois ideas, like Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov, and, lately, the Panovs.

Grigorenko's "crime" in Russia was being an uncompromising Leninist — and as far as the West was concerned, too, that was a crime.

Just how much Grigorenko's release was due to the pressure from socialists outside Russia it is hard to tell, but the news of his release should encourage renewed protests against the bureaucracy for its criminal policy of arrests and harassment of dissidents.

IMPERIAL TYPEWRITERS

RACE TODAY is co-ordinating a solidarity committee consisting of leaders of recent Asian workers' strikes and other Asian trade union militants.

It will spread information, collect money, and co-ordinate solidarity activity. International support is coming from France, Sweden, and Belgium.

The first action of the committee is a picket of the London offices of Imperial Typewriters, opposite Russell Square underground station.

This picket started on Wednesday 3rd July, and plans are to continue it. Why don't you join it?

Contact: Race Today, 184 Kings Cross Road, London WC1.