

SOCIALIST PRESS



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**BL BEHIND
COWLEY
WITCH HUNT**
See page 4

Nursery Rally Report Back page
Docks jobs in danger p.9
Family Election Ploy p.8



Army scabs during firemen's strike

The decision last Thursday by Liberal leader David Steel to break the anti-socialist Lib-Lab coalition deal underlines the urgent tasks that face the workers' movement.

The election is certainly being prepared by Callaghan. The question for the working class is on what basis will that election be fought: under the discredited coalitionist leadership that has inflicted unprecedented cuts in living standards? Or under a leadership pledged to a programme of socialist policies that are capable of galvanising maximum working class support and ensuring the return of a Labour government?

October election

The break in the Lib-Lab pact stems from Steel's belief that an October General Election is all but certain, and his anxiety to salvage what remains of the Liberal Party's electoral

support prior to that date.

For the second string capitalists in the Liberal Party and the reactionary leaders of the Labour Party the 14-month old coalition arrangement has already fulfilled its purpose:

It propped up the minority Labour government through a period when strike action threatened to overthrow Phase 2 of wage control.

*It provided Healey with solid support drawn from outside the labour movement in laying down his Phase 3 ultimatum to the TUC traitors.

*It gave the Callaghan government the confidence to carry through a military scabbing operation unprecedented since the 1926 General Strike to crush the Firemen's strike.

*It has pressured even the most talkative Labour 'lefts' into abandoning even the pretence that the

government stands for a socialist programme.

But now, with TUC leaders already consciously preparing the ground for a fourth round of wage control, and with opinion polls, local election and by-election results suggesting that Labour might win a General Election, the Labour left feel that October might be the best time to go for an election.

This they hope would allow them to continue with their method of attacking the working class, which they regard as more effective than that of the Tories.

Tories worse

But Callaghan and Healey are quite wrong to interpret the renewed electoral support for Labour as a vote for their policies of wage cuts, mass unemployment and destruction of the social services.

Workers have been turning out to vote Labour because they have come to realise that a Tory government would be even worse.

It would mean a further intensification of racist propaganda and legislation,

a new battery of laws against the unions, still more spending cuts to benefit big business, and hundreds of thousands of jobs lost in a new round of speed-up and rationalisation in industry.

Asset-stripping

Only last week a leaked confidential Tory report revealed that the Tories are developing detailed plans for asset-stripping and selling off the nationalised industries—sizing up the scale of working class resistance in each case.

Workers vote Labour because they recognise that such Tory attacks would destroy jobs, rights and living standards won in decades of struggle.

But the very fact that it took David Steel to break the Lib-Lab coalition, and that Callaghan-Healey intend to campaign in the election on their record as wage-cutters and job-slashers makes it clear that it is by no means enough to sit back until October and vote Labour.

The demoralisation and alienation of thousands of Labour voters can only be

effectively countered by a complete break with the coalitionist Labour leaders.

Trade union branches and Labour GMCs must at once take steps to ensure that the Labour Party conference is re-called prior to the General Election, and the Callaghan-Healey coalition cabinet driven from office.

'Lefts'

Those 'lefts' that have claimed to oppose the government's flagrant collaboration with the capitalist class must be called upon to take up a fight, and turn their words

into action.

To those that show the slightest sign of such a fight we extend both critical support and the demand that they press further and fight for a socialist programme based on the abolition of wage controls, restoration of all cuts in public services, a crash programme of public works to create new jobs, and nationalisation of the banks and major industries.

In this way we can demonstrate that the 'lefts' are incapable of seriously challenging the right wing or solving in Parliamentary fashion the problems faced by the working class.

The struggle against the existing leadership within the Labour movement preparatory to the General Election, the election of a majority Labour government and the fight to encourage workers to demand and force measures on a Labour government in defence of their independent interests can thus prove a crucial point of development for a principled, revolutionary leadership in the working class.



Healey

Prepare for election KICK OUT THE COALITIONISTS!

R.C.T. LIBRARY COPY
PLEASE RETURN

R.C.T. LIBRARY COPY
PLEASE RETURN

PLO LEADERSHIP CRISIS

The much publicised divisions within the Palestinian Liberation Organisation which came to the surface on 24 May will come as no surprise to Trotskyists who have understood the dynamic of the Palestinian Revolution.

The Zionist invasion of south Lebanon and the efforts of UN troops to enforce the *de facto* territorial boundaries this has created have brought into question the policies of Yassir Arafat and the PLO leadership in allying with the Arab bourgeoisie in order to defeat the Zionists.

Trotskyists have always stated that the struggle against Zionism by the Palestinians would inevitably bring them into conflict not only with the imperialist backers of the Zionists but also with all those in the Arab world who are tied to imperialism.

During April over 100 guerrillas have been detained by the PLO leadership for trying to

get through south Lebanon to fight the Zionists.

On May 22 the UN political commander Roberto Guyer announced that his forces would act in the same way to restrict the guerrillas.

The Zionists then announced yet another date for their "final withdrawal" from south Lebanon, 13 June.

At the same time Zionist defence minister Weizman announced plans for the setting up of six new urban centres as opposed to the usual 'settlements', in the occupied West Bank territories.

A few days later further plans to take over the property of exiled Palestinians were also proposed by the Begin regime.

All of these developments show very clearly that the Zionists have no intention whatever of arriving at any sort of 'peace settlement' with the Palestinians.

They aim to grab as much territory as possible from the Palestinians and to build 'buffers' 'occupied zones' and other euphemisms for colonial-

ism, for as long as they are able.

Nor does it now seem possible for even the bourgeois Arab regimes to arrive at the 'compromise' of setting up a bantustan state for the Palestinians.

This is the context of the crisis within the PLO. The announcement came on 24 May in a document signed not only by Habash's Popular Front and other parts of those who have always been 'rejectionists', but also, by Hawatmeh's Democratic Front which has worked closely with the Iraqis and tended in recent years to side with Arafat.

The 24 May statement also said:

"We feel that political decisions are being taken individually instead of collectively.

There is no participation in the adoption of decisions since (the Fatah leadership) is still the party that determines the political decisions".

The reasons for this statement became clear on the following day when there was

announced the setting up of a new three man committee to supervise military operations in south Lebanon.

The three man committee will include representatives of the PLO, the Lebanese government and the Syrian forces who are still occupying Lebanon in large numbers.

Its aim, according to an interview with Arafat published in *Al Hawadess* is to end all Palestinian military operations in Lebanon and for the movement to confine itself to "propaganda and information" activities.

It was also announced that instructions had been issued to PLO units to cooperate actively with the UN forces, and commanders north of the Litani river have been told to use force if necessary to prevent guerrillas from going behind the UN lines.

A unified 'Palestinian army' was also proposed to enforce these policies.

It is difficult to see how these policies of the PLO leadership can win support among rank and file guerrilla fighters or



Arafat

the Arab masses, including Lebanese socialists, who have fought tenaciously to support their struggle and their right to pursue it.

With the virtual abandonment now of direct negotiations between the Zionists and Arab bourgeois regimes, colonialist rule can only be maintained by coopting into its system of rule the leaderships of those fighting against them.

There can be no doubt that the stresses within the Palestinian movement represent the crisis of leadership among the anti-imperialist forces in the area, a crisis which can only be resolved by those who fight for socialist policies and a Trotskyist party to mobilise the working class and the peasantry in conflict with the Arab bourgeoisie.



—INTERNATIONAL—

NO VOTERS NEEDED FOR SADAT'S 98% REFERENDUM!

A clear example of the anti-democratic nature of the referendum was to be seen in Egypt over the last week.

The use of the referendum as a means of imposing dictatorial rule was invented by the first Bonaparte after the French Revolution.

Its use by later Bonapartist regimes which balance between the revolutionary aspirations of the masses and the imposition of class rule has been seen many times since then.

The referendum held in Egypt on 21 May was no exception to this.

"Spread defeatism"

It called on voters to say 'yes' to a series of propositions, each more reactionary than the last.

The six 'democratic principles' on the ballot paper included allowing the government to take action against those who published 'unfounded rumours' or 'spread defeatism'.

Another of the 'democratic principles' was directed against all those who were convicted of taking part in propaganda in opposition to or critical of religious principles.

Such people according to the ballot paper:

"... could not occupy higher administrative positions in the State or the public sector, could not stand as candidates for administrative bodies or trade unions, could not work in any form of mass media whatever or take part in any work which might influence public opinion".

Within 24 hours the Minister of the Interior had announced a vote of 98.29%



Sadat (left)

of the electorate in favour of this, with a more than 80% poll.

This was despite the fact that the *Financial Times* correspondent noted that:

"For long periods of the day the Cairo voting booths were almost deserted".

The *Le Monde* man said that:

"Several foreign journalists had to go to some lengths to see any citizens at all performing their electoral duty".

The purpose of the referendum, whatever the real result, was not to discover the 'democratic opinions' of the Egyptian people.

Nor did it aim simply to silence critics of the type of Muhammad Heikal, former confidante of Nasser and editor of *Al-Ahram*.

He advocated more open government in an interview published in the *London Times* on 22 May. His objective is to allow the capitalist regime more effectively to defend itself.

Reassert authority

Nor did it need the referendum to ban other more radical forces such as the newspaper *Al-Ahali* (The People) when it published in Egypt an interview with

Heikal.

Sadat had a number of different purposes in running the referendum.

The first was to reassert the authority of his Bonapartist regime, fundamentally unstable and threatened at the centre as a result of the failure of its policies.

Papers close to Sadat himself like the magazine *October* have been talking recently of the need for the army to 'defend the constitution' and stay well away from 'the game of politics'.

The policy of rapprochement with the Zionists having completely failed, the Sadat regime is now

desperately looking for a base for further lurches in policy, and this is clearly the aim of the referendum.

The great fear of those who rule Egypt today is of a new outburst of popular feeling of the sort which brought workers onto the streets of Cairo and Alexandria in January 1977, shouting 'Hero of the crossing, where is our breakfast?'

IMF delegation

The most important purpose of the 'saving of democracy' and the purges from public offices announced by Sadat at a press conference on 23 May was made clearer a day or two later when news began to be published of the activities of an International Monetary Fund delegation currently visiting Cairo.

Although Egypt's balance of payments deficit has been slightly eased in recent months, Economics Minister Hamid El Sayeh is currently trying to negotiate \$750 million special drawing rights from the IMF.



Begin

As in many Arab financial transactions, this involved a complicated relationship between the various capitalist powers in the area.

One of the ways this operates in this case is through petro-dollar loans from Saudi Arabia, acting in part as an agency for the US imperialists.

As the *Financial Times* put it diplomatically on 26 May:

"The Saudis have let it be known that they wish to see a much stricter programme of economic control in Egypt".

Further attacks on the economic conditions as well as the democratic rights of the Egyptian masses can be confidently expected as a result of the pressure of those well-known supporters of human rights, imperialist President Carter and the feudalist Saudi Arabian leaders.

A struggle by the Egyptian workers is also inevitable against them.

'Left' Iraqi regime purges Communists

The sole remaining 'treaty of friendship' between the Soviet bureaucracy and Arab nationalists will shortly join all the others in the dustbin.

This time it is the leaders of the Iraqi state who have moved to inflict a further humiliating blow against the crumbling strategy of Stalinist diplomacy in the Middle East.

The government last week accused the Polish Stalinists of shifting support from Arab nationalism to the Israeli state.

Now, it has threatened to break diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union unless all military aid to the Ethiopian military dictatorship is halted.

The major partner in the

ruling coalition is the Ba'ath Party of moderately radical bourgeois nationalists.

But the other group which formed this 'National Progressive Front' in 1973 was none other than—the Iraqi Communist Party!

The days of this Popular Front are clearly numbered.

14 Communists are reported to have been executed in the last month, and the Ba'athists have produced a wide range of attacks on the CP.

Supporters of the Ba'ath argue that 'political and popular losses have relegated the [CP] to an inferior position in an organisation which it led in the past'.

More particularly the Stalinists have been charged with raising 'doubts about stability in Iraq' and seeking

'to drive a wedge between the Kurdish people and the government'.

Whatever the truth behind these unconvincing accusations, the motives of the bourgeois nationalists can be in little doubt.

The Iraqi regime has mouthed the most 'left' positions of any Arab state on the Palestinian struggle, and along with Syria and the PLO now provides the Eritrean liberation fighters with their only material support.

These positions have won them the recent uncritical admiration of the Workers Revolutionary Party's daily paper *Newsline*.

But the Ba'athists' turn against Stalinism in no way indicates that they are being inevitably drawn towards

revolutionary socialism by the spontaneous pressure of the masses.

These Bonapartists certainly need to contain the anti-imperialist consciousness of the Iraqi workers and peasants by adopting a 'radical' foreign policy.

Yet far from working to transform capitalist property relations as *Newsline* has suggested, they are now engaged in forging much stronger economic bonds with imperialism.

These events in Iraq point sharply to the necessity for building a Trotskyist party which can fight against the betrayals of Stalinism and bourgeois nationalism in leading to the revolutionary overthrow of imperialism and the seizure of power by the proletariat.

Cubans come unstuck in Addis

As the Eritrean revolutionaries continue to hold the Ethiopian forces besieged in Asmara, the Derg in Addis Ababa has been able to vent its frustration in other directions.

Ethiopian radio last week announced the dismissal of the entire executive committee of the All-Ethiopia Trades Union charged with "corruption, political sabotage and abuses of authority".

Another charge was that the Executive had been infiltrated by the Meison political movement, which the military regime has been at pains to stamp out.

This same political grouping seems to have been used by Cuban diplomats in an unavailing attempt to pressure the Derg into ending military rule and holding back on the war in Eritrea.

The two senior members of the Cuban embassy have reportedly left Ethiopia after failing to persuade Derg leader Mengistu to establish a dialogue with exiled Meison leader Dr. Negede Gozeze.

Little desire

Such reports reveal the extent of the problem created for international Stalinism and its allies by the war in Eritrea.

The Stalinist bureaucracies themselves have very little desire to be seen so openly engaged in physically massacring a revolutionary struggle as the demands of Mengistu for the liquidation of the Eritrean guerrillas would force them to do.

The Eritrean Popular Liberation Front has appealed to the Cubans and South Yemenis to join forces with them against the repressive and bloody regime in Addis Ababa (see their statement, reprinted in *Socialist Press* 97).

Despite his fulsome praise for Mengistu, Castro has undoubtedly attempted to arrange negotiations between the EPLF, the Eritrean Liberation Front and the Ethiopian dictatorship.

Another coup?

These have so far come to nothing through the violent opposition of Mengistu.

It would come as no surprise to learn that the Soviet and Cuban bureaucracies have been working to engineer another coup within the Ethiopian counter-revolution—a coup that would bring to power a regime sufficiently grateful to Stalinism that it would negotiate a settlement with the Eritreans, and thus save the bureaucracies considerable embarrassment in their efforts to maintain defensive interests in this region of Africa.

INTERNATIONAL

DICTATORS**TOTTER****IN LATIN****AMERICA**

The events of the last few weeks in Latin America seem to mark a turning of the political tide.

In a dozen countries, militant workers' struggles and mass mobilisations have begun to show on a continental scale that the stability of Latin America's military dictatorships was not as profound as had appeared.

In one country after another the working class and mass movement has shown through the renewal or the intensification of struggles that despite the setbacks (many of them major reverses) of the last decade the working class of Latin America has not suffered a decisive historic defeat.

The readiness to struggle has survived the worst that the repressive, pro-capitalist Latin American dictators can inflict.

Open defiance

In Chile on May 1, 4½ years after the bloody coup of Pinochet in which 30,000 workers met their deaths, 5,000 workers once more came onto the streets of Santiago in open defiance of a government ban on demonstrations.

600 of them were arrested and fined.

There was visible (and in the eyes of Pinochet's increasingly divided junta, alarming) evidence that 30,000 murders and tens of thousands of jail sentences and "disappearances" are not enough to crush the resistance of the workers' movement.

The fourteen year old military dictatorship in Brazil—imperialism's Latin American showpiece—has received a similar shock in the last two weeks.

In Brazil too the first May Day trade unionist meetings since 1968 took place in spite of a government ban.

Strike

Then on May 16 only a few days after receiving a wage increase which was manifestly insufficient to cover them against the raging inflation, 2,000 workers in the Saab/Scania motor and lorry plant in Sao Paulo went on strike to demand an immediate additional 20% increase.

That in many parts of

the world would be a predictable enough event; in Brazil it was the first strike for 10 years.

And within a few hours the Saab/Scania workers were joined by 20,000 other workers from Sao Paulo's motor plants (Ford, Volkswagen, Mercedes and others).



Carter

It was only hesitantly that Geisel's regime, faced with such an unexpected challenge, declared the strike illegal.

The employers, however, conceded a large proportion of the workers' demands in the hope of ending the action before it set off a strike wave in other industries.

Latest reports say that most of the strikers have now returned to work.

But the self-confidence of Brazilian capitalists and Geisel's shaky dictatorship has received a blow from which it cannot quickly recover.

The blow comes at a moment when the Brazilian ruling class is increasingly divided about the succession to Geisel who is due to be replaced in presidential elections later this year.

Geisel's candidate, secret police chief Joao Baptista Figueiredo has not been universally accepted by his military rivals.

And although Figueiredo's campaign is being financed by American "multi-national corporations" it is known that many sections of both domestic and international capital are very uneasy about the declining prestige of the dictatorship combined with the new rise of workers struggles.

The reason why such a measure might be seriously contemplated by US President Carter is that Peru is now one of the two countries of the Latin American continent where imperialist rule is most threatened (though the Soviet Union—by rescheduling debts and sending military aid—is still trying to save Bermudez).

The other one of the two is undoubtedly Nicaragua, where the political death warrant of the dynastic tyrant Somoza has been outstanding for several months.

Daily events

Violent demonstrations and political strikes against Somoza have been common for some time.

But in the last four weeks they have become daily events.

Even schoolchildren have begun widespread protest occupations of their schools.

Frequently as many as 10% of the population of the capital Managua have taken to the streets.

Their confidence cannot be increased by observing what looks to be the impending collapse of the dictatorial military regime in the neighbouring countries of Bolivia and Peru.

In Bolivia, too, presidential elections are due within a few weeks though it is now an open secret that dictator Hugo Banzer, who seized power in 1971, would like to prevent them from happening.

Out of control

His attempt to introduce the appearance of democracy to his dictatorship has increasingly got out of his control as the workers have reestablished their organisations and strength over the last few weeks and as Banzer's support even within the army has melted away.

Banzer has tried to stamp out the new wave of protest by closing the universities and trying to stop the reorganisation of the trade unions.

But the question on the agenda in Bolivia is now whether Banzer himself can survive until the elections are due (in July) and whether the elections will themselves be overtaken by events.



Meeting of workers in Colombia votes for strike action

This is precisely what is now happening in Peru.

The right wing dictatorship of General Morales Bermudez, plagued by an almost catastrophic economic crisis, had scheduled elections to a powerless "constituent assembly" to take place on June 4.

Last week the regime faced a virtual mass uprising and in panic "postponed" its elections, putting many of the candidates in jail.

The occasion for the new political crisis was a new attempt by the regime to get its long-solicited IMF loan.



Clockwise from top left, Bermudez, Somoza, Pinochet and Geisel

The financial situation is now desperate with debt repayments and interest expected to eat up a staggering 55% of Peru's expected export earnings this year!

In order to satisfy the IMF of its capacity to repay any new loans the Morales Bermudez regime has introduced a series of austerity measures in which working class living standards have been sharply cut.

In addition a new anti-trade union law has been promulgated, and universities closed down.

For some weeks now these actions have provoked growing working class resistance and there has been a sharp rise in the number of strikes (supported even by the Peruvian Communist Party, which backed the military regime for nine years after it seized power in 1968).

Two weeks ago the regime removed food subsidies, producing a vicious leap in the prices of the basic foods consumed by workers and peasants.

Virtually all workers' organisations in Peru seem to have united last week in supporting a two day nation-wide general strike.

This followed general strikes the previous week in Cuzco and Arequipa, during which workers were savagely attacked by the army.

At least 26 workers have been killed by the army and security police who



and working class organisations have pursued criminally collaborationist policies which have kept the rotting tyranny in power and will help to lead to its replacement by another pro-imperialist regime.

The Nicaraguan Stalinists (the Nicaraguan Socialist Party-PSN) have recently in fact been the only political party to take up dictator Somoza's recent, desperate offer of negotiations.

The PSN is also a part of a popular front alliance known as UDEL which includes Tories, Liberals, Social Christians and other sworn enemies of the working class.

The Sandinista guerrilla movement has also recently moved into popular front politics.

Major riot

These are not the only examples in Latin America in the last few weeks of working class resistance and evident ruling class weakness.

In Colombia and Mexico there have been important strikes.

In Ecuador last month a major riot followed an increase in bus fares. And there too the government is threatening to "put off" the proposed elections.

In the Dominican Republic the outcome of the "election" is still uncertain and producing a particularly tense political situation.

The evident strength of the working masses, however, is nowhere matched by a principled leadership fighting for working class independence in the fight against dictatorship and imperialism.

All over the continent Stalinist and "guerrillaist" leaders have shown and continue to show that they are incapable of fighting imperialism and its agents.

Only guarantee

The opportunity to build new leadership and revolutionary Trotskyist parties, to mobilise the independent strength of the working class at the head of these massive upheavals, however, now exists to an extent which has not existed for several years.

It is the building of these parties, based on the struggle for the demands which start from the material problems faced by the working masses and lead to an awareness of the need for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, which will be the only guarantee that today's new militant struggles will end not in new defeats but in workers' power.

But the major left wing

LEYLAND BOSSES

BEHIND TGWU COWLEY WITCH-HUNT



TGWU Regional Secretary Mathers, lobbied by Thornett's section.

Startling new evidence has come to light of the deep complicity between TGWU officials and British Leyland management in the victimisation of Alan Thornett and other shop stewards at the Cowley Assembly Plant.

The evidence is contained in a 19-page dossier submitted to the TGWU by Leyland management in order to support their continuing refusal to recognise Alan Thornett as deputy convenor of the Assembly Plant—a position to which he was elected by shop floor ballot last December.

Since then Thornett and the other eight have been constantly witch-hunted by internal TGWU inquiries and threatened with expulsion from the union or a life ban on holding office in the union.

Allegations

The new dossier consists of three lengthy letters from the Cowley Plant Director—W.D. North—to TGWU District Secretary David Buckle containing a series of allegations against Alan Thornett and detailing minute by minute accounts of disputes on his section.

It had a covering letter from Pat Lowry, British Leyland Director of Personnel and Administration, (and one of the few top BL executives to survive the Edwardes clear-out).

All of North's letters were sent to Buckle between the October 20, 1977 decision by Buckle to proceed with TGWU disciplinary hearings and the Regional Committee disciplinary hearing on February 27/28 1978.

All evidence points to the letters being sent by arrangement with Buckle, since despite the fact that they contain serious allegations against Alan Thornett, Buckle concealed their existence until the company produced them in evidence months later.

Weapon

The obvious purpose of the dossier was to place a weapon in the hands of both TGWU officials and Leyland management in the event of a strike, either in defence of Thornett against TGWU disciplinary action or in support of the demand that he be recognised in his elected position.

As the officials have begun to find themselves in increasing difficulty over the disciplinary hearings and as time has gone by, they have been unable to prevent the letters coming to light.

Most revealing is the first paragraph of Lowry's letter in which he says that his understanding of the settlement in 1974 (when Thornett was victimised and defended by his section) was that the TGWU:

“... was no longer questioning that Mr Thornett would not under any circumstances be granted facilities to act as a senior steward, deputy senior steward...”

If this is true it means that Thornett has remained victimised for the past four

years by agreement with the TGWU!—

Only Moss Evans, now General Secretary, but the negotiator at that meeting—can testify to the truth or otherwise of that statement.

Lowry goes on to quote strike figures and to draw the conclusion that:

“Extreme line”

“Mr Thornett holds the same ideals now as he did in 1974... encouraging workers to take an extreme line, e.g. “reject speed-up”, “prepare to occupy the plant”, “reject the wage review”.

Lowry concludes by pointing to North's letters to lend support to the management decision to stand firm against recognition of Thornett as deputy convenor.

North's dossier deals mainly with disputes on Alan Thornett's transport drivers' section.

The disputes arose from the decision of the convenor at that time, right winger Reg Parsons, to exclude Thornett from shop stewards meetings and later centred on defending Thornett against the TGWU disciplinary hearings.

Serious nature

North concludes his dossier with a revealing paragraph which again points clearly to collusion with the officials.

“Once again I must emphasise the serious nature of this matter and I trust that you will investigate the whole issue on an urgent basis and inform us of your organisation's intent to enforce discipline into your organisation on this plant”.

The dossier has brought a quick reaction from the 170



Lowry

TGWU stewards on the Assembly Plant.

They voted with only 4 against to demand that national official Grenville Hawley—to whom Lowry's letter is addressed—attend a meeting of the stewards to answer questions on Alan Thornett's recognition.



Buckle—concealed letters



Evans—what are the facts?

They also decided to call a mass meeting of the plant and recommend that the meeting demands the TGWU bureaucracy drop the charges against the Cowley 9 in order to create new conditions for a fresh approach to management at General Secretary level, to

demand recognition of Thornett as deputy convenor. Cowley stewards are demanding that the hypocrisy of union officials demanding that Alan Thornett be recognised while at the same time themselves recommending

that he be expelled from the union be brought to an end.

Details of the Cowley 9 Defence Campaign from the Organising Committee, c/o 23, Overmead Green, Blackbird Leys, Oxford.



Thornett at the TGWU conference arguing against wage control.

Lowry's letter tells all

British Leyland Limited

To: Mr G. Hawley, National Secretary, TGWU/Vehicle Building and Automotive Group.

Dear Mr Hawley,

MR. A. THORNETT

Our meeting on 14 February ended with a commitment from me to review our main arguments for refusing facilities to Mr A. Thornett to act as an elected deputy senior steward at Cowley Assembly Plant and to write to you formerly (sic) thereafter. These arguments are listed below:—

1. It was our clear understanding, as I recorded in my letter to Moss Evans dated 5 June 1974 concerning Mr. A. Thornett, that the TGWU was no longer questioning that Mr. Thornett would not under any circumstances be granted facilities to act as a senior steward, deputy senior steward or in any other similar capacity at Cowley Assembly Plant.

2. An analysis of dispute statistics for Cowley Assembly

Plant reveals a considerable improvement at the Plant since April 1974 when we adopted our position in respect of Mr. Thornett. This analysis is attached as Appendix A. The figures are presented so that the losses arising in March and April 1974 are isolated. Whether one looks at hours lost by those in dispute or vehicles lost the conclusion is the same: industrial dispute losses post-April 1974 are significantly lower than in 1973. If one extracts the losses arising from certain Company initiatives to achieve change in the last two years, in the re-organisation of maintenance and the “four shop stewards” in the year May 1976 to April 1977 and Assignment to the Industrial Engineering Agreement in the Paint Shop in the period May 1977 to January 1978, the figures for the last two years are an outstanding improvement...

3. In the four years since April 1974 we have established much greater understanding of the Company's problems and there is a sense of common purpose to make Cowley Assembly Plant a success. Participation has, if nothing else, given representatives a greater knowledge of the business, and the reasoning behind management policies and decisions. We expect trade union representatives to seek the best deal possible for their members but we do not expect and cannot accept a totally negative approach which has, perhaps, some basis other than trade union principles.

attitude that led to the 1974 confrontations. It is our view that Mr. Thornett holds the same ideals now as he did in 1974 and that all the evidence from such documents as Branch News in the interim years since 1974 shows that a totally hostile attitude still prevails. He has continually attacked the Company and his union officials, encouraging workers to take an extreme line, e.g. “reject speed up”, “prepare to occupy the Plant”, “reject the wage review”. A responsible trade union representative should advocate adherence to agreed procedures to attempt to resolve differences. The Company welcomes constructive alternatives but it cannot maintain good industrial relations when faced with such hostile and negative attitudes.

4. The incidents of 25 October, which are outlined in the attached copy of a letter from Mr. W. D. North to Mr. D. J. Buckle dated 27 October, are strong evidence of Mr. Thornett's disregard for any authority and procedure. Also attached are copies of two further letters about recent events in transport which show that the disregard of generally accepted procedures is widespread amongst his members. Although Mr. Thornett cannot be said to have organised the meetings it can be said he did nothing to point out to those concerned the error of their ways. A shop steward, deputy senior or senior steward must in our view, not only know and keep to the code of conduct expected of him in his dealings

with the Company but he must also advise and persuade others to keep within the basic codes, e.g. the Procedure Agreement.

The four points outlined above are our main arguments for refusing to alter our position in regard to Mr. Thornett. We are not involving ourselves in an emotional witch-hunt of an innocent working man. We are prepared, as is evidenced by this letter, to back our views with fact. The strong shop steward who advocates a different approach to that of a Company to a problem need not fear similar refusal of facilities provided he or she stays within the fundamental agreements governing the conduct of employee relations. Cowley Assembly Plant's policy is one of complete acceptance of trade unions and their representational system within the spirit and intent of the British Leyland Procedure Agreement 1976.

It is in defence of orderly industrial relations and the continued and uninterrupted employment of thousands at Cowley that the Company has to maintain its stand on its refusal to accept Mr. A. Thornett as a deputy senior steward. We have not dishonoured our commitment to recognise him as a transport department steward and we cannot see any valid reason to alter the position arrived at in 1974 with Mr. Moss Evans.

Yours sincerely,
Pat Lowry
Director of Personnel and Administration.

GRANTS FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS?

The opportunist announcement by Shirley Williams, Secretary of State for Education that she is considering introducing grants for school students who decide to stay on for sixth form education must be viewed with extreme scepticism.

Even Labour spokesmen have admitted that the proposed "full national inquiry" into such a scheme and into the grants currently available for the 16-19

age group will probably mean no action for another 2-3 years.

Any grant paid would certainly be means-tested like those for university students, and, if they were to fit in with Chancellor Healey's strategy of spending cuts, would be so small as to be insignificant.

The present maintenance grants for school students—available only at the discretion of the local education authority—average at a puny £2.50 per week for a sixth former. A mere 2% of school students in England and Wales receive such

grants. Williams' scheme suggested grants of about £10 per week to 16-year olds in full time education, with a £4 bonus in the family allowance for every dependent child over 16.

But she did not say whether this would be awarded to all sixth formers or only those on special courses. And it is uncertain whether the money would be paid to the student or via the family.

Vague promises have also been made concerning students in the 16-19 age group who choose to go to Colleges of Further Education.

At present such students are entitled to tiny allowances similar to those for school students—and only 7% of those eligible receive grants.

Principle

Grants for school and college students should be a principle, not cynically exploited by Labour leaders as a vote-catching gimmick, or as a means of artificially reducing the numbers of youth on the dole.

Williams openly admitted that one motive for proposing the scheme is that too many working class youth are not staying at school and are swelling the numbers of youth unemployed.

A £10-£14 discretionary handout is seen as a cut-price way of fobbing off youth and easing pressure on employment offices.

It must also be seen in the light of the huge attacks on education being carried out by



the Lib-Lab coalition, with spending cuts forcing the closure of schools, cutbacks on books and equipment, and mass unemployment among teachers.

None of these points were raised by National Union of Students President, Stalinist Sue Slipman, who welcomed the Williams proposals, and suggested no steps towards obtaining student grants.

The small National Union of School Students (NUSS), however, is in a position to take up Williams' vague promises and launch a campaign in the schools for the payment of adequate grants.

To do this, the present Stalinist leadership must be fought, and the demand must be adopted of a grant at the same level as that given by the

Manpower Services Commission (which operated the 'youth opportunities' programme)—£19.50 per week.

This grant must be protected against inflation—rising penny by penny in pace with the cost of living. And it must be paid direct to the student, and not through the intermediary of the family.

All round fight

The cost of such grants would of course be considerable—and would highlight the necessity for an all-round fight against cuts in public spending and cuts in education in particular.

But if youth are to have a genuine opportunity to pursue

their education beyond the age of 16, this fight must be taken up in the student, trade union and Labour movement.

Back peddle

Meanwhile Williams continues to back peddle on the introduction of comprehensive education, allowing Tories in a number of areas to preserve selective schooling and refusing to take action to stamp out private education.

Comprehensive education got underway in the 1950s. On present showing it could be at least the year 2,000—half a century later—before grants for school students and fully comprehensive education are finally introduced!



Minister for Torture is happy in his work

"Some might think being Secretary of State for Northern Ireland or a Minister in our office the least desirable of all Government posts. It is an understandable view but quite wrong. My ministerial colleagues and I who

work in Belfast find it stimulating, rewarding in political terms and satisfying in personal terms".

So says Labour man Roy Mason, British capitalism's current Secretary of State for Torture in Northern Ireland, in an interview with *Labour Weekly*.

With imperialist arrogance and reformist claptrap jostling side-by-side in his argument, Mason attempts to justify his active role in supervising the brutal military occupation and the operation of a whole battery of repressive legislation aimed at preserving British rule.

He boasts: "There is not one of the 26 district councils which has not had a visit from one or more members of the Ministerial team".

But nor is there one Catholic ghetto area that has not been the victim of repeated visits from squads

of Mason's troops, or one opponent of British rule who feels secure to walk the streets of Northern Ireland.

"Direct rule is not Government by remote control from London, exercised through a body of faceless men sitting in Stormont Castle. We have made it our business to get to know Northern Ireland well".

And so have the hordes of British Special Branch, SAS thugs, spies, spivs, murderers and provocateurs who are cynically referred to in the bourgeois press as "security forces".

Vicious tortures

They have broken down doors, barricaded streets, and carried out the most vicious beatings and tortures in order to "get to know" the activities of anti-imperialist forces in Northern Ireland, smashing and splintering their way into the lives of the entire work-

ing population. Since this entire police-military operation is designed to prop up not simply British imperialism but also the Irish bourgeoisie both sides of the border, the workers of Ireland can thank Mason for his personal role in the mass unemployment levels created by the capitalist slump.

Mason himself admits to unemployment running at 30% in Strabane, Newry, West Belfast and other areas.

But he does not mention that capitalism in Southern Ireland—which also rests on the counter-revolutionary presence of British military occupation in the North and on investment from abroad—has a similarly huge rate of unemployment.

Beside these fruits of capitalism, the puny housing programmes and job-creation ventures carried out by Mason are no more than an insult to the Irish working class—forcibly administered.

Within a week recently three anti-unionist workers have suffered violent deaths at the hands of the RUC and the British Army—three more notches to be carved into Mason's desk.

Obscene involvement

This obscene involvement of Labour leaders in the oppression of Britain's oldest colony must be brought to an end.

The labour movement must step up the fight for the complete withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and for the self-determination of the Irish people.

And the Labourite butchers and police marks like Mason that have supervised and defended this exploitation must be driven from the workers movement.

PRESS GANG

The scars on Mrs. Jean Paton of her public abortion may well last the rest of her life.

Thrown against her will into the centre of a press campaign she has been pinned up on public exhibition, humiliated and condemned.

She has indeed, as she said after the Liverpool High Court ruling, been used as a pawn. The only question is exactly what game is being played.

The anti-abortion lobby is backed by nearly all sections of the press—either explicitly or with nudges and hints about the pendulum having "swung too far".

But it would be a mistake to see Mrs Paton's page one status solely as an expression of anti-abortion sentiment.

The threat that abortion on demand poses to the family, and the threat that the weakening of the family poses to capitalism are the ultimate dangers that the 'family' papers defend.

The *Daily Express* for example—in sharp contrast to its gutter rivals—actually defended abortion rights in its page 10 editorial:

"The law must always keep in step with contemporary morality. The right of a woman to choose is now widely accepted in practice, and the law now backs up this general conviction.

"A great number of women have been spared a great deal of heartache because of the court's decision".

Perhaps one in twenty of their readers will have read that. Twenty out of 20 will have read the lead story, 'Wife takes final step'—the second and third paragraphs of which read:

"Bill Paton said he would appeal against the finding that a man has no rights over the life of his unborn child.

"And he will still go ahead with that, said his mother, Mrs Joan Paton, to help other fathers. She added: 'We were shocked to hear about the operation. It is murder'".

So not only is the two month old foetus unequivocally given the SPUC title of "unborn child", but the grandmother's rights are added to the father's in an attempt to tip the scales against Mrs. Paton.

The story later included this gem of loaded reporting:

"All through the case—and at the end the foetus within her was three hours older—Mrs. Paton wept quietly, never once raising her head to the legal arguments".

If the father were given the right of consultation, says the *Daily Mail*:

"... some doctors might be less inclined to treat the granting of permission to terminate pregnancy as a formality.

"Here, transcending the

poignancy(!) of this particular case, is the real cause for concern: that a broadly acceptable reform to liberalise the abortion law has come very near to creating legal approval for abortion on demand".

Perhaps this reaction will convince readers we are right to formulate our demand as "Free state abortion on demand" and not as "A woman's right to choose".

If we turn to that authority on liberal reaction—the *Guardian*—we find it almost at the end of its tether.

After a column of dither the paper concludes:

"We conclude not in any spirit of ringing certainty but with a painful recognition of the complexities and the surging emotions of this case—that the law is right to say what it does".

Away from the surging emotions and into the offices of the *Daily Telegraph* we find the leader writers linking the 1967 Abortion Act to all anti-capitalist measures.

"It must also be said that Labour views in general on such matters as taxation, inheritance, equality, health, education, the age of majority, what you will, are all more or less calculated to destroy the cohesion and primacy of the family ...

"By now the family must itself be regarded as a British social problem ... The Tories should certainly make it a party matter to reverse these disastrous social trends".



"There is not one of the 26 councils which has not had a visit ..."

THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION

*The violent events that
paved the way for
'parliamentary traditions'*

PART FOUR by Mark Hyde

One of the movements thrown up by the English bourgeois revolution was the Diggers.

Led by Winstanley, the Diggers shared the view that wage labourers were unfree, but they drew a distinctive conclusion—freedom through the abolition of wage labour.

Winstanley's followers (who were pacifists) rejected the legal restraints laid down by their masters. Sharing an early conception of the labour theory of value they sought to put an end to exploitation through instituting common ownership.

Scarcity

Though doomed from the outset, as would be any notion of communism based on scarcity and a low level of productive forces, the Digger movement is an important indicator of the far-reaching character of the English Revolution which threw up forces which were, in certain senses, dramatically in advance of their time.

In such a revolutionary epoch, it is not hard to imagine how men who thought of politics in religious terms believed that they were on the verge of

Christ's Second Coming itself.

Indeed one Ludewick Muggleton thought that he was the Messiah.

Others like the Fifth Monarchy men saw their task as a violent uprising that would prepare Christ's rule.

Desperate

The sects' activities became increasingly more hysterical and desperate after the failure of the Leveller movement.

Cromwell suppressed them. The small men (and a good number of women who believed that they had found a road out of oppression in the sects) were in some ways an inspiration, in others a pitiful and sorry casualty of developing capitalism and the bourgeois revolution.

All were necessarily swept away by the might of Cromwell who expressed the historical mission of the only possible progressive society of the day—the new bourgeois order.

Ruthless

Like all revolutionary movements, Cromwell's could survive only by ruthless dictatorship over his class enemies.



Cromwell

The expansion of English capitalism to Ireland had bloody consequences—that remain with us to this day—but the bourgeois historians who portray Cromwell as a mere tyrant simply cannot face the real origins of their own system.

Only Marxism can appreciate Cromwell's worth.

In fact (as with the Russia of Lenin and Trotsky) Cromwell's rule saw a great spread of toleration and creativity in arts and science.

New popular styles in art and literature remain in the

works of Dryden and Marvell.

The poet Milton was appointed as a public servant paid by the state.

Petty, who had worked for Cromwell as a surveyor in Ireland, founded modern statistics; Boyle modern chemistry.

Science

Discovery forged ahead in sciences like astronomy. The scientific methods of Francis Bacon—of enquiry and research in place of mysticism and obscurantism—came into their own.

The architecture of Wren and the philosophy of John Locke would have both been impossible without the Ironsides of Cromwell.

The notion of Cromwell's England filled with bigotry and fear is a shallow myth borne of the conservative mind. Quite the opposite was the case.

Republic and Restoration.

The Cromwellian republic carried out a revolution in bitter conflict with the conservative reactionary forces that opposed it.

To Royalists, Cromwell's social base and the new rulers were unbelievable upstarts. One described them as "most sordid men and of the vilest condition".

Cromwell, of course, had to balance carefully between the contradictory forces at work.

The frequent changes of government, and the fact that the King was finally restored in 1660, reflects the precarious instability of the young bourgeois dictatorship.

Frightened

The Rump Long Parliament, full of frightened gentlemen, proved incapable of serious action. Cromwell's army dispersed it.

Cromwell was present for the occasion, scornfully pouring abuse on the MPs as they scurried out of the chamber.

The 'legal' Parliament was no more. But the next experiment fared no better in the long run.

Barebone's Parliament, (named after Praise-God

- ### CHRONOLOGY
- 1652 Act of Settlement for Ireland transfers Irish land to London merchants.
War with Dutch breaks out.
 - 1653 Cromwell expels Rump of Long Parliament.
Barebone's Parliament convened but dissolved before end of year.
 - 1654 Peace made with Dutch.
Cromwell calls new Parliament.
 - 1655 Royalist uprising followed by rule of Major Generals.
 - 1657 Humble Petition and advice presented.
 - 1658 Cromwell dies. Son Richard succeeds him.
 - 1659 Presbyterian-Royalist revolt defeated by army.
 - 1660 General Monck marches to London to restore monarchy. Rump recalled and dissolves itself.
New Parliament accepts Charles II's Declaration of Breda. Charles returns to England.
 - 1661 Cavalier Parliament meets.
 - 1670 Charles II signs secret Treaty of Dover with France.
 - 1673 Third Dutch War begins.
 - 1678 Many Catholics purged during hysteria over 'Popish Plot' invented by the charlatan Titus Oates.
 - 1685 Charles II dies—proclaiming himself a Roman Catholic on his deathbed. James II succeeds him.
Monmouth rebellion crushed at Sedgemoor.
Followed by Judge Jeffrey's Bloody Assizes.
 - 1687 James grants Declaration of Indulgence—primarily to give freedom to Catholics.
 - 1688 James issues another Declaration of Indulgence.
An invitation is sent by James' opponents, including erstwhile allies, to William of Orange to invade England and take over.
James' efforts to hold power fail. William takes over and James spends his last years in exile.
Finally defeated two years later at Battle of the Boyne (1690).

Barbon—one of its carefully selected members) was dissolved as a result of the manoeuvres of wealthier gentry and merchant members, frightened by its revolutionary programme.

The conflict between the army and the most conservative elements in the bourgeoisie remained.

A new army plan of compromise—the Instrument of Government—fell through, and it is probable that in 1655 Cromwell was only too pleased to be able to institute military rule—using a minor Royalist revolt as an excuse.

Carried through

The rule of Cromwell's Major Generals, based on military discipline, had a more decisive outlook than any previous attempts.

They carried out measures of the bourgeois revolution that the bourgeoisie 'proper' were too timid to enact while the men of property wanted to consolidate what had been won, and avoid further risk.

Opposition to the Major Generals came from former revolutionary bastions.

The history of experiments in government in Cromwell's time are exceedingly complex.

But the predominant trend is the longing for stability by the main body of wealthy merchants and gentry.

They wanted the revol-

ution to stop. They feared revolutionary dictatorship, which took power out of their direct control, as much as they had hated the dictatorship of Charles I.

Craving for order

The fact that the bourgeoisie even beseeched Cromwell to become King in 1657 expressed the craving for order, for a link—however tenuous—with traditional institutions.

The new ruling class felt uncomfortable, exposed—it only awaited an opportunity to cloak itself in the garments of the past.

While Cromwell lived, the instability of the situation was overshadowed by his enormous revolutionary strength and authority.

In his person he brought together the continuity and dynamism of the revolution. But his death in 1658 opened the road for the restoration of the King.

The bourgeoisie instantly sacrificed a few political and religious ideals for a guarantee of order.

Charles II returned in 1660. The conservative elements, spearheaded by General Monck, broke the resistance of the loyal Cromwellians in the army.

Rallying point

Charles was to be the rallying point against further disorders. As if nothing had happened, the Rump of the old Long



The Navy was built up as the instrument for the expansion of the new bourgeois order



A cotton mill—part of the industrial revolution



Depiction of Cromwell trampling on error and faction

Parliament was recalled. In what followed, bourgeois historians have seen the end of the revolution. The very name 'Restoration' implies a total reversal of the revolutionary process. This of course did not happen.

Cromwell's corpse was dug up and defiled. A few revolutionaries were tortured and disembowelled.

Tithes

The state church was secured again, as was the payment of feudal tithe taxes to it. But the essential content of the revolution was irreversible.

Charles II (though he was no doubt not always entirely aware of it himself), presided over a completely different society to that of his father.

He could not help but compromise with the new bourgeois ruling class.

England had witnessed a social transformation. In industry the supervision of quality, prices and the stranglehold of monopolies had been put aside.

The regulation of wages was swept away, as was the obligation of employers to

keep on labour. Capital now had free play—the enterprising bourgeois had almost unrestricted opportunity to accumulate and expand.

On the land, Royalist and Church estates had been confiscated—a huge overturn in land ownership.

Even those men who were able to buy back their lands for heavy fines to the revolutionary regime, were compelled to investigate and employ the techniques of the bourgeoisie in order to win back their losses.

The poor tenant, who had had guaranteed security in feudal society, faced eviction now if it was economically advantageous to his landlord.

Restrictions against the enclosure of land were beaten down, and forest lands turned over to cultivation.

Expansion

The rate of interest was lowered to give a boost to economic development. The prospects for expansion were unprecedented.

Colonial expansion moved forward apace. Links with overseas colonies were firmly established and the government took the first serious steps on the road to capitalist protection and trade war—a vital stage in the accumulation of capital.

Colonies were forbidden to trade with foreign powers. The Navigation Acts placed heavy restrictions on the trading of the Dutch—England's main competitor.

At the same time the navy was built up for the defence and extension of overseas domination.

Taxes

The landed classes, on the one hand, and the poor on the other, paid heavily in taxes to finance the expansive foreign policy generated by the avaricious appetites of the rising bour-

geoisie. The regime brought to power by the English Revolution thus assisted the rise of capitalism.

The old regime had stifled and stunted it. The full flowering of the industrial capitalist system and the modern working class were still decades into the future—but they were inevitable.

The breakthroughs made for the advance of capitalism were preserved even through the Restoration.



Conditions of child labour in the industrial revolution

1660 saw a political not a social counterrevolution. The government made no attempt to reintroduce the old practices which had strangled economic development.

Rather the system of taxation introduced under Cromwell remained in all its essential features.

The desperate attempts of the old Royalists to retrieve their estates did not hold back agricultural advance, and the government continued, through means like the Navigation Acts, to cast a benevolent eye over the interests of capitalist trading.

Of course 1660 did not signify the end of the turmoil and tension.

Uneasy balance

The period of Charles II's rule increasingly reflected the uneasy balance of forces which existed.

The old Presbyterian merchants, gentry and their allies could not but feel unease at Charles II's thinly disguised sympathy for Roman Catholicism and the favours of reactionary France.

The Whig faction, which reflected this interest, was even prepared to do a certain amount of rabble-raising against 'Popery' amongst the excitable London mob.

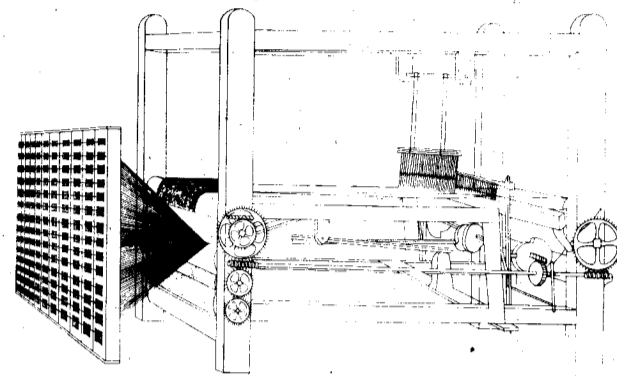
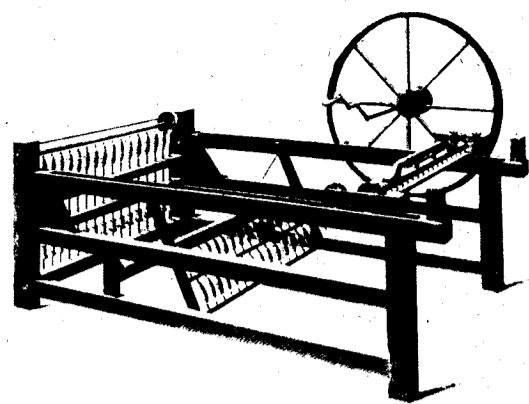
In founding the 'Green Ribbon Club' the Whigs were even willing to push forward the old colours of Levellerism and radicalism, stirring old revolutionary memories.

United by property

But there was not to be another revolutionary outbreak. Far more existed to unite the Whigs with Charles and his 'Tory' gentry supporters than divided them.

When the openly Catholic James II came to the throne in 1685 the great bulk of Whigs would not support the attempt of Monmouth (one of Charles II's illegitimate offspring) to overthrow him.

Even the 'radical' opposition preferred to witness the barbarous treatment of the rebels at Judge Jeffrey's Bloody Assizes rather than face the prospect of another



The revolution gave a fresh impetus to innovation and technological and scientific advance that had until then been held back.

violent revolutionary storm.

James II was removed in 1688—but only when his complete reactionary disdain for all opposition drove even the Tory gentry into a position of hostility.

Surrounded by arch-reactionaries, James set upon a course of systematically destroying the power of the class which had ruled since Cromwell's revolution.

The bourgeoisie were prepared to fight him—but not with the weapons of the 1640s.

There were to be no more New Model Armies, no more radical sects, no more riotous mobs.

Protestant

Only when the good Protestant Dutchman, William of Orange was prepared to invade England on the bourgeoisie's behalf—on a pledge of order and security—were James' opponents ready to oust him.

When James was captured this was regarded as a disaster—the trial of a King had revolutionary implications.

It was necessary to arrange his escape to complete the bloodless farce which bourgeois historians have called the 'Glorious Revolution'.

The Revolutionary Heritage. 1688 was nevertheless an economic and political burning point which consolidated the power of the bourgeoisie.

This consolidation was vital for the process of gradual accumulation that would, in a matter of decades, bring the Industrial Revolution and the full flowering of modern capitalism.

Poor cousin

But 1688 was a poor cousin of 1649—and thoroughly dependent upon it. It is necessary to see the separate 'stages' of the bourgeois revolution in their interconnection.

The birth of a new social order was a painful and long drawn out process with forward movements and retreats, a permanent state of flux.

Only the Marxist method of analysing historical development can uncover the complex relations between the apparently 'gradual' periods of society's 'evolution', and the rapid revolutionary leaps that

decide its course.

As has been noted, the bourgeois revolution was anything but a conscious process for its participants.

Trotsky quoted from Guizot the point that:

"When the time came for the drawing of the sword all were astonished and deeply moved".

But this fact in no way diminishes the significance of the English Revolution—not only as a field of study and testing ground for the historical materialist method—but for the drawing of concrete lessons for the working class.

For though it could not understand its own historic role, the bourgeoisie, the most cultured, educated and economically powerful class, could not have carried out a single revolutionary act without a resolute revolutionary leadership prepared to mobilise the great subjugated masses in its struggle for power.

Permanent revolution

Even in the first days of capitalism, then, were contained the seeds of what Trotsky in the 20th century called 'permanent revolution'.

The followers of Cromwell whatever their subjective intentions in 1640, demonstrated that decisive historical changes are brought about by arms, not words, and that at each stage the forces of reaction must be forcibly dislodged from their fortified positions.

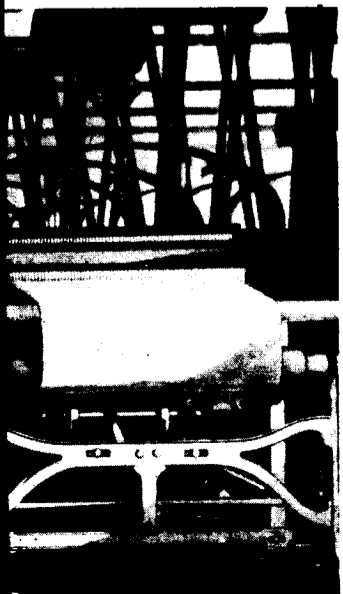
Cromwell saw that the question 'who rules?' was a political and military one, that could not be settled by debates on the merits of the Divine Right of Kings.

It is for this reason that the bourgeoisie and its reformist lackeys can only assimilate the odd impression from this period.

The legacy of Parliamentarianism, religious mystification and bourgeois conservatism lives on through the Labour bureaucracy today.

But the great traditions of revolutionary determination and contempt for a decaying order can only live on through Trotskyism which will guide the future 'Roundheads' of the proletarian revolution.

Concluded



ned up by the 1640 revolution

'VANGUARD' IN RETREAT

The political, organisational and financial bankruptcy that have lurked behind the grandiose facade presented by the sectarian International Spartacist Tendency are all openly revealed this week in the announcement that the IST weekly paper *Workers Vanguard* is to retreat to fortnightly publication.

The paper itself had never really gone beyond the tasks of a theoretical magazine.

Huge, rambling and undisciplined articles combined banal truisms with abstract propaganda for the maximum programme of socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In anxiety to stand distinguished from all other groups calling themselves Trotskyist, the Spartacists have filled the columns of *Workers Vanguard* with open falsification of the Trotskyist position on voting for workers parties in Popular Fronts.

Pro-imperialist

And in their efforts to avoid capitulation to bourgeois nationalism they have espoused objectively pro-imperialist positions on Ireland and the Middle East.

But while these positions have been revealed, the IST's empirical, sectarian leadership has until now concealed its inability to conduct the daily work of their own movement.

Now the announcement of fortnightly publication, which is signed by the *Workers Vanguard* editorial board, the Political Bureau of the US Spartacist League, and the Interim Secretariat of the International Spartacist Tendency, gives an insight into the complete irresponsibility and incompetence of these 'leaders' who have posed as the world's only authentic Trotskyists.

And it also reveals the huge material investment piled in by the International Spartacist Tendency into financing and propping up the 20-strong pro-Spartacist faction that split from the Workers Socialist League at its second annual conference in February.

'Quiescent'

The Spartacists rationalise this decision to drop the weekly paper, by pointing to the failure of the working class in the USA and internationally to live up to their requirements:

'The problem is not some absolute overextension of our capacities, but rather one relative to the quiescent period through which we are passing.'

This 'quiescent period' (elsewhere described as 'current North American political, social and financial realities') is of course the period in which the historic US miners strike has given an impetus to the wages struggle throughout the US labour movement; in which New York City is once again on the brink of a major financial catastrophe; and the period in which the Carter regime faces a worldwide dilemma in its bid to prop up tottering bonapartist regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

But for the sectarians of the Spartacist League the period is assessed not on the basis of an objective analysis of the movement of class forces, but on their subjective requirements as a movement.

Incapacity

The statement reveals the complete incapacity of the IST leaders to relate to the actual struggle of the working class: **'...as the weekly WV it did not and could not serve its central intended purpose—as an agitational organ of intervention**

Forward to the monthly!

into major and continuing social upheavals in America in order to help shape and direct elemental and partial class struggles in accordance with the historic aims and possibilities of the working class'

Crisis

This chronic political failure to present a living programme, or conduct any serious intervention into workers daily struggles led inevitably to a political crisis even in the hardened sectarian circles of the IST:

'the continuing discrepancy between intention and realisation brought the few hundreds of the SL/US right to the brink of a major breakdown.'

The statement details the appalling shambles of the IST's organisation—which was being hailed by their British agents as a paragon of a Marxist vanguard party:

'Though centred and most grinding on the press, the excessive pressures have been across the board in the organisation.'

'It has been felt in all the undermanned Central Office departments, not just the press. Our cadres—typified by the executive committees of too small local committees, the heads of inadequate trade union fractions, those going in spirals (!) trying to forge a black cadre component, the incomplete leadership of the Spartacus Youth League—have been repetitively faced with urgent tasks hopelessly beyond the means and forces available.'



Holding forth—Green

All this confusion and chaos, combined with a static ('stable') membership, and increasing bills for leaders' extravagant programmes of international travel, would obviously disorient any movement.

But the IST points out that the leadership compounded the problem simply standing by, bemused by the whole situation:

'The central party leadership and senior cadre generally were hardly immune to these component disintegrative processes.'

'For a couple of years (!) as first human resources then financial ones were exhausted, it had to, impotently witness weaknesses as the organisation slowly ulcerated.'

'Individual responses drifted towards frenzy or passivity, depending.'

Far from this being a temporary financial crisis, then, the IST statement reveals a long-

standing political paralysis which has dogged every part of their organisation in the US

This culminated in a 'precipitous break in the WV Editorial Board', followed by 'several months of discussion' as to whether and how the mess could be cleaned up.

In the middle of all this muddle and worry and 'even sinister threats to our organised existence', the Spartacists discovered the beginnings of a sectarian clique in the Workers Socialist League, and began an enormously expensive campaign to build the basis of a faction prior to the WSL conference.

Key figure in this classic exercise in political dishonesty was WSL Birmingham branch member Alastair Green.

According to WV of April 7 Green wrote secretly to Birmingham branch secretary Alan Holford in July 1977 declaring his intention to 'fight for the politics of the Spartacists inside the WSL'.

Holford, a National Committee member of the WSL, took no steps to inform the national leadership of this move by Green.

He was himself looking for a way out of the inevitable problems of fighting to build a branch of the WSL based on the working class in Birmingham.

Rather than fight Green's lurch to sectarianism, he joined him.

They began to gather around



them a circle of critics, defeatists, debaters and dabblers as the basis for a faction.

Green, with subsidies from the IST, began making extensive and repeated factional trips secretly visiting members in various branches of the movement, and meeting with the London Spartacists.

The Spartacists began to step up this British intervention. And the costs escalated.

Miserable

'But the fruits of these mighty labours were miserable. A mere 22 members were persuaded to split from the WSL at the February conference, despite the investment of hundreds of pounds and months of patient and clandestine factional work.

Among those 22 were all the least reliable and non-contributing members of the movement: only the cynics, sceptics, dilettantes and incurable wooden propagandists had rallied to the Spartacist banner of abstention from the living struggle, leaving the proletarian revolutionary core of the WSL intact.

The cost of this adventure to the IST is only now being counted. In April their leaders launched a fund drive, in which they characteristically once again abstained from giving the slightest direction:

'Since we have never undertaken such an emergency (or

any) fund drive before, we do not know how much to expect from it (!). Five thousand dollars would be poor; twenty thousand dollars would be good. Your leadership has let us drift into this mess; maybe the membership can help us out.'

But even though Spartacists rallied round with some £28,000, this was not enough to refloat the leaking *Workers Vanguard* tub.

This gives some measure of the rate of overspending carried out by IST leaders with their jet-setting "international consultations".

Conned

The message, for those who have been naive enough to fall for the lies, the posturing and the pretensions of the Spartacists during the very period in which this financial disaster was occurring, is simple: **You have been conned, by some of the most cynical tricksters in the labour movement!**

A leadership which for years on end is incapable of administering the day-to-day political and financial workings of the movement is self-evidently an incompetent and irresponsible leadership.

There is no likelihood that such a leading cadre — which, on its own admission, cannot even function the SL's much-vaunted trade union fractions —



Incompetent—IST leader Robertson

can arrive at a correct political analysis of the much more complicated problems of the international class struggle.

Unfortunately there is equally little chance that the seasoned sectarians in the IST ranks will draw the obvious political conclusions from this state of affairs.

By John Lister

FAMILY USED AS ELECTORAL PLOY BY CALLAGHAN

Sternly reproving and cosily familiar by turns, Callaghan has long cultivated the image of a father-figure to 'The Nation'.

But last week, when he addressed that sturdy socialist gathering, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Labour Party leader gave a new meaning to this homely manner.

After pontificating to the presbyterians on the virtues of wage control and the glories of North Sea oil,

Callaghan added to his workaday homily a passage on youth and crime.

To resolve a situation where increasing numbers of youth seek to overcome their frustrations through violent action, he proposed a renewed emphasis on the values of the family.

Remote

The terms in which he described this institution were startlingly remote from the experience of everybody who has endured this mode of oppression and the rigours of capitalist

society:

'The place where we care for each other, where we feel our responsibilities for each other, where we practice consideration for each other . . . the caring family is the basis of the caring society'

Cant

But such sanctimonious cant is all the more obscene from the lips of the leader of the Lib-Lab coalition.

The Labour Party leaders point proudly to their record in the fight for the liberation of women.

But the imposing array of legislation barely

conceals a contradiction in the recent development of bourgeois society.

As capitalism experienced a renewed period of expansion during the 'Long Boom', considerable numbers of women were brought out of the home into social production.

Once involved in the arena of public life, these women began to develop politically and raise demands for equal rights with male workers—demands which even the tactics of the labour bureaucracy could not succeed in stifling.



Fighting to break the shackles of the home

DOCK JOBS

UNDER ATTACK

4000 dockers' jobs hang in the balance now the Port of London Authority (PLA) has declared its plan to virtually close the 'Upper' Royal, Millwall and West India Docks.

The number of registered dockers in London has already fallen from 24,000 to 8,000 in the last 10 years.

If the bosses' figures are to be believed, the Upper Docks have made a loss of £13 million in the last three years, £8 million last year alone.

The PLA assets are claimed to have shrunk from £54 million to £2 million since 1973.

Speculation

The world recession in trade is only part of the explanation.

The main reason is the growth in the size of ships being used, the reduction in general cargo handling as opposed to modern methods of containerisation, palletisation and roll-on and roll-off systems.

The Royals, bigger than the St. Katharine and Surrey Docks which have already been closed and lucratively sold off to property speculation, take 12,000 ton ships.

The West India Docks take 8,000 tonners.

They might at a pinch take 50,000 ton ships. But the ships the PLA wants to use, and for which it would like to build new seaways and ports at Maplin, are for 100,000 ton ships.

Ports all over the world have been restructured to accommodate these giants.

The speed of technological change has accelerated, the last five years having seen as much change as the previous 30 years.

At least 200 brand new smaller ships are lying up in the fjords of Norway—there is no market for them.

The recent tanker disasters show some of the social dangers involved in 100,000 tonners. They are slow and difficult to manoeuvre, taking as much as 5 miles to stop.

But capitalist profitability cannot be held back for social factors.

End of scheme

The main attraction of the Maplin plan, which the PLA is still nurturing despite government veto, is that it would employ no more than 1,000 dockers, perhaps only 700.

It would entail the end of the dock registration scheme which the labour movement fought so long and bitterly to achieve.

Already thousands of jobs connected with and replacing registered dockers work are outside the registered system.

That was the significance of the betrayal of the dockers' strikes of 1972, 1974 and 1975. The aim of the five week strike in 1975 was to bring all unregistered docks and ports and all dock work within five miles of the riverside into the Docks Labour Scheme.

Watered down

Longshoremen in the US do in fact have a nine mile corridor of this type.

Thanks to the treachery of such "Labour" MPs as Brian Walden, this Ports Bill proposal got watered down to a half-mile corridor.

The five mile corridor, had it been implemented, would have put all work connected with the docks on a quite different basis.

It would have stopped employers fleeing from the registered strongholds.

Trebors, just the latest example, are about to leave West Ham in favour of unregistered Felixstowe.

Thousands of workers whose working conditions provide no protection against short time and lay offs, and whose very jobs are now in jeopardy through

the threatened closure of the Upper Docks, would have been in a position to defend themselves as an integrated and organised labour force.

Redeployment

Such workers include container depot workers, railway workers, lorry drivers and loaders, in firms dotted all around the Dockland and Lea Valley area, but judiciously outside the half mile corridor.

Redeployment without worsened conditions would have been possible rather than redundancies.

No doubt the PLA, politicians and trade union bureaucrats saw in the five mile corridor the very embryo of what they most fear—the basis for a fight for a nationalised, integrated transport system, under workers' control.

It would have brought an extension, rather than the destruction of the registered scheme.

It would have heralded the fight for the PLA to be a body of delegates elected from the shop floor.

It is still open to the TGWU leaders to fight for these policies.

Most of the workers in the industries concerned are in the TGWU. But the TGWU bureaucrats Fred Bryden and Ron Todd, who have sat on the PLA Board for years, and who have participated in the documents pleading for the virtual closure of these docks, consider themselves (in their own words) not as trade union representatives, but as appointees of Her Majesty's Government.

Hard job

Not once have they passed on information or reported back to the docks branches despite resolutions last year demanding that they should.

The PLA, government and trade union bureaucrats know that they will have a hard job carrying through 4,000 redundancies.

The East End Labour MPs Peter Shore, Ian Mikardo and Nigel Spearing are likely to look for delaying tactics.

The TGWU is still committed to national

strike action in the event of any registered dock workers being forced off the register.

When Wallace's, the last private employer in the Royals, folded last month, making 330 redundant, consultations were immediately held between the TGWU, Dock Labour Board and PLA.

Fear

Rather than provoke a confrontation at that stage all 330 were found jobs, distributed on a percentage basis around the various London docks.

No employer refused to take their share—despite overmanning.

Fear of the problems facing them lies behind the PLA saying that in carrying out changes it will look for:

... the positive co-operation of employees, trade unions and the National Dock Labour Board".

Undoubtedly Cuckney, PLA chairman, renowned for his hatchet job on the Liverpool Docks and for 'sorting out' the scandals of the Crown Agents, has a carefully worked out strategy.

Question mark

Predictably it is the dockers themselves rather than the TGWU bureaucrats who have resisted his invitation to make a joint approach to the government for £68 million.

It is the threat of dockers' resistance that places a question mark over the PLA's plans. A recent booklet from the PLA, *The Challenge of the Future*, makes this clear:

"The present situation is unsatisfactory in every way (except perhaps for those who are exploiting it to their own advantage at the expense of others).

It provides an unsatisfactory workplace for the PLA employees in which frustration, fear, cynicism and discontent are rife".

This "discontent" which the employers fear, must now be turned into a clear political strategy to defend dockers' jobs.

Industrial action

The demand must be raised for a conference of all workplaces connected with the docks and transport.

Such a conference must be the first step to launching industrial action on a scale which can force the opening of the books of the port authorities to elected union committees, expose the corruption and profiteering at the expense of workers and implement a workers plan for an integrated transport system based on the social nationalisation without compensation of all firms involved.



London dockers' mass meeting during the 1975 strike.



Cuts hit particularly hard at women

In a muted form these demands were incorporated into Labour Party policy, at a time when capitalism itself needed to attract women into wage-labour and to grant them increased freedom of movement.

They were later expressed when the Labour government legalised abortion, made divorce easier and introduced legal reform on sexual discrimination and equal pay.

Only infantile idealism could dismiss the gains contained within these reforms, but they were limited, partial, and hedged about with a dense thicket of restrictions.

Social democracy had helped to loosen the bonds

of the family by its compromise between capitalism's needs and workers' demands.

Major attacks

Yet already the persistence of capitalism's economic crisis meant that women were no longer required as wage-labourers.

Adjusting to new conditions, the Labour leaders slaved to defend the interests of capital.

First alone, then in coalition with the Liberals, Callaghan and the whole leadership of the Labour Party have presided over a series of major attacks on the working class, which have hit women workers in

particular.

As unemployment has climbed, it is women who have suffered the heaviest loss of jobs. The cuts in public spending have been a major contribution to this increase.

Faced with permanent unemployment and driven back into the home, women have there experienced the effects of inflation which has served to make housework an even more arduous occupation.

The public spending cuts have added to these burdens by throwing on to the family more of the responsibility for the care of children, the old and the sick.

With these measures the Labour traitors have done far more to restore the family and to continue the oppression of women than their 'progressive' parliamentary acts did to reform these elements of capitalism.

Now they seek to cover up this treachery with words of cosy comfort and the smooth pieties of well-practiced hypocrisy.

Callaghan's speech was in no way a freak outburst.

Central theme

A decision has clearly been taken that the rehabilitation of the family will be a central theme in the Labour Party's electoral campaign. *Labour Weekly* has already enthused with uneasy sarcasm on this 'devilishly clever electoral gambit'.

Such proposals must be fiercely resisted as part of the struggle against this programme for attacking the working class to defend capitalism.

Every step must be taken to break the repressive and reactionary influence of family life.

The policies of betrayal can be fought only with a socialist programme. We call for:

*Work sharing on full pay, linked to a massive programme of public works, to end unemployment and redundancies, and to bring women back into social production.



'Family' specialist Thatcher committees of trade unionists with the full participation of housewives, who can be brought forward from domestic isolation in this way.

*A sliding scale of public spending and a massive injection of funds into the social services to meet the needs of workers, including those facilities required by working women—free abortion on demand, full time creches and nursery education.

*The immediate abolition of all forms of legislation that authorise repression or discrimination on the grounds of sex or sexuality.

By David Whitfield



INDUSTRIAL NEWS

MASSEY'S SACK 1000

After several months speculation, a number of serious lay-offs and the switching of many production workers to

machine maintenance and painting, Massey-Ferguson have finally announced nearly 1,000 sackings—approximately one in five of the company's total manual workforce in Coventry.

The company has called for volunteers to be made redundant and according to reports in the Coventry *Evening Telegraph* have so far received 1,200 applications.

It remains to be seen whether sufficient of these will be accepted to cover the 900 hourly paid and 90 staff which make up the 990 redundancies at the Banner Lane and Baginton factories.

Two convenors

The crisis of leadership in Massey's is shown graphically by the fact that among the volunteers are two convenors and many members of the shop stewards committee.

Nevertheless the stewards have stated their intention to fight compulsory redundancy and also any short-time working. They are arguing for block lay-offs.

As *Socialist Press* has pointed out before, the crisis at Massey's has had a severe effect on component suppliers where there has also been sackings and short time working.

Pressurise

Union leaders representing the unions involved have called on the government to extend credit facilities to countries which cannot afford to buy tractors; or to buy tractors and give them to underdeveloped countries instead of cash aid.

And they want the company to apply for a Temporary Employment Subsidy.

Coventry's four Labour

MPs have been called in to help pressurise the government.

As we have argued before the key programmatic demands for workers at Massey's and the component suppliers are work sharing on full pay and a fight to 'open the books'.

Answer

This is the only independent, working class answer to the mass sackings. Through the fight for these demands the way can be opened up for a fully nationalised, integrated tractor industry in Britain—under workers' management.

Massey Ferguson have shown they cannot provide jobs—the plant and machinery must be removed from their ownership without compensation.

The 'left' MPs in Coventry will no doubt complain about these redundancies and demand that the government 'ease the situation'.

Prepare

If they were serious about their opposition to unemployment, if they were hostile to the firms which destroy jobs left, right and centre, they must be hostile to the present government.

They must prepare now a campaign for the removal of Callaghan/Healey and the building of an alternative leadership in the Labour Party and the trade unions.

However since the entire record of these leaders, like that of the trade union bureaucracy, has consisted in slavish support for the Lib-Lab coalition and its policies, workers must not fall into the trap of waiting for the 'lefts' to act, but press ahead with their own independent demands.

Metal Box launches speed-up drive

A decision by members of the TGWU to return to work at Winsford's Metal Box factory marks a setback for those workers and a corresponding victory for trade union bureaucrats—most notably Roy Sanderson, EETPU National Officer.

The betrayal started three months ago when an electrician at the factory—the second largest in Winsford—was suspended by management over a minor issue.

Escalation

His fellow electricians immediately stopped work. From that point the escalation was rapid.

Management reaction was to impose 11 conditions of work which had not been in force prior to the dispute. With a line-up of EETPU officials and employers against them the electricians began to retreat and accepted many of these conditions.

But management refused point blank to compromise on the full 11 conditions, and sent home the rest of the factory, including TGWU and AUEW members.

An indication of the next stage of the betrayal is given by the following statement by an AUEW official:

"We stress that we are

wholeheartedly in support of the electricians. They have done everything humanly possible to bring the dispute to an end".

After seven weeks of lay-off and bureaucratic foot-dragging by both factory and full-time union leaderships (although it must be said EETPU officials moved quickly in their betrayal) management stepped in again, and sacked all 15 electricians.

They announced that they would provide what they call "an alternative electrical service"—i.e. a scab workforce.

"Peace package"

It is widely suspected that this attack could not have been carried out without the full support of Roy Sanderson, who was called in on the case.

A company spokesman said the electricians have been sacked because they have not taken notice of a 'peace package' agreed between employers and EETPU officials, the essence of which was "return to work and negotiate".

But on the day of the final sell-out electricians at 20 Metal Box factories throughout the country

stopped work for a day, clearly realising that Winsford workers are being used as the anvil on which the company would hammer out its policy of speed up and greater exploitation of the whole workforce.

AUEW officials at Winsford are expecting to be confronted by 24 similar precedent-setting conditions on their return to work and TGWU leaders expect no less than 60 new points to be demanded of them by the company.

But after seven weeks on the dole, a mass meeting of TGWU members agreed to the company's return to work call.

However a strong and determined EETPU picket on the gates may make the outcome less certain.

And as Winsford EETPU member Richard Donleavy told *Socialist Press*:

"I shall be fighting for all EETPU members to come out in support of the Metal Box electricians. The betrayals of the leadership must be challenged."



Chapple—working closely with Callaghan supporting speed up and sacking

PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

The Workers Socialist League

The Workers Socialist League is a Trotskyist organisation fighting to construct a principled revolutionary leadership in the working class in Britain and internationally and for the reconstruction of the Trotskyist Fourth International on the basis of the Transitional Programme.

The WSL fights at every step against the existing leaders of the trade unions and the Labour Party—now firmly harnessed to the bourgeois politicians of the Liberal Party in an unspoken coalition arrangement.

Against their policies of class collaboration we put forward instead a programme which points to the independent class interests of the working class, its need to organise independently to overthrow capitalism, destroy its repressive state machinery and establish a socialist planned economy.

Only in this way can workers resolve today's problems of tumbling living standards, mass unemployment, slashed social services, racial, national and sexual oppression.

For more details on the WSL and its work, fill in the form below.

Name.....
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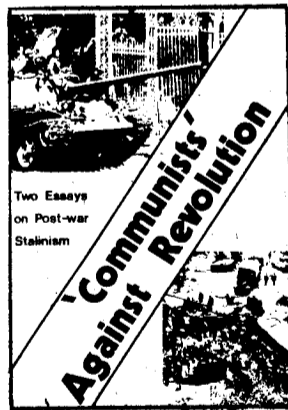
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MARXIST STUDENT



Issue No. 6, May 1978, includes an assessment of the NUS conference as well as articles on students in the 1960s, the ANL, and Revolutionary Way Forward for Youth. Available from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR, Price 10p plus 9p postage.

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JACKSON-UNITY IN INACTION

EGA CLOSURE DATE STILL JULY 21

Faced with mounting rage and objections inside the Union of Post Office Workers to his key role in maintaining pay control, Tom Jackson was forced to resort to outright trickery at this year's annual conference.

A motion calling for a special conference to draw up a wage claim later in the year—when the extent of the TUC's capitulation to the government would be known, was certain of massive backing. Jackson ensured control by seconding the motion—and then reducing its role to a formality by nailing down UPW policy to

a further year of slavish adherence to wage controls. He was aided by the absence of policies designed to provide an alternative way forward for the postal workers and telephone staff. Bob Divine, moving an Edinburgh motion calling simply for a return to free collective bargaining, based his case on the need for "flexibility" and the fact that it wasn't "wages in isolation" which caused inflation.

collaborate with any government—Labour, coalition or Tory. But the narrow margin by which Jackson clings to his policies of class collaboration was most vividly demonstrated in the Grunwick debate.

Inaction

A motion condemning the executive for the handling of the issue (in effect a motion condemning the action taken against Cricklewood postmen) was defeated by 9,033 to 9,694 with more than 1,000 abstentions.

Jackson defended himself with a plea for unity in inaction. "A union can only succeed when united. If this proposal is carried, our union will change and many will not like that change."

If carried you give consent to break Conference decisions and union rules.

Member would be set against member, leaving the way open for unofficial leaders, enthusiastic and headstrong, to do what they liked.

It could open a new and dangerous chapter in union history.

Treachery

The debate revealed clearly the treachery of the "lefts" who put themselves forward as the champions of the working class.

At the Grunwick conference two weeks before, John Taylor, an executive member, had breathed fire and brimstone against the right wing of the union.

Now, faced with those same right wingers on the platform around him, his speech in opposition to their policies was a model of grovelling polite dissent.

Delegates had voted to suspend standing orders to give Taylor time to state the case for the Cricklewood postmen.

Major overturn

By his careful avoidance of any attack on Jackson and the other right wingers on the EC, Taylor played his role of a left cover for the actions out to the last.

The only major overturn of the executive came over the reintroduction of Sunday mail collections and the introduction of cheap postage at Christmas, two moves which would increase work for the members, while they remain debarred from fighting for improved wages and conditions.

These proposals, which came with the full backing of the UPW members on the Post Office board, were decisively thrown out.

Applause

Despite the absence of a clear line on the TUC's role in general and Jackson's role in particular to hold down the wages of the working class, every speaker who spoke against wage controls was greeted with applause.

Jackson told the conference: "I don't like policies imposed by politicians who don't know what they are doing but I do believe that the trade union movement can work out with the government of the day a plan for the future, a plan for fairness and I don't want to return to the jungle."

In effect by supporting Jackson's plea by roughly two to one the conference has given him the room he needs to tie the hands of his members and to

union will find a new strike HQ—presumably as far from Abrahams as possible!

The failure of these officials and their allies to make good any of the promises extracted from them by the strike committee places them in an extremely weak position.

It is urgent that the recall conference in support of the Garners strike—to be held on June 22 at Transport House, Smith Square, London—be made the arena for the complete exposure of these betrayals and for a renewed fight for full-scale blacking of Garners, TGWU mass pickets and £36 a week strike pay financed by a Regional levy.

More information about the recall conference can be obtained from the strike committee at 12/13 Henrietta Street, Telephone 240-1056.

among the scabs, who see the prospect of picketing continuing to hit custom and slash their income.

Main ally of harassed employer Margolis have been the contingents of police who have gone as far as demanding supporters show union cards before allowing them to join picket lines. The solidarity march was accompanied by two lines of police from four divisions.

Police efforts to restrict the size of picket lines have been assisted by those of TGWU officials Ron Todd and George Abrahams.

Abrahams, announcing that the response to the strikers' demand for £36 per week strike pay had been a miserable once-off hand-out declared at a mass meeting on May 21 that there would be "no more interference from outsiders".

He also announced he would take personal charge of strike pay and that the



Jackson

GARNERS: CONFERENCE

To any outside observer it might appear that after 18 weeks on £6 a week strike pay, the marathon strike for union recognition at Garners Steak Houses has taken its toll of the original 84 strikers.

But developments within the scab firm, and the weakened position of the TGWU bureaucracy in relation to the strikers shows that all sides are being ground down by this war of attrition.

Picket lines outside the restaurants are being maintained each day, and a new picket of suppliers at Wardour Street has been imposed. Regular supporters are now attending from Wandsworth and Southwark Trades Councils.

The strength of the action and the size of the solidarity march on May 20 has clearly aroused doubts

PRINT RETREAT

Machine minders at the Observer who had been threatened by the union with permanent loss of their jobs returned to normal work at the weekend in time to produce a full version of the Sunday newspaper.

But NGA leaders who had agreed to act as the direct agents of management in victimising their members cannot hail the return to work as an outright victory.

It had become clear during the week that if the machine minders decided to defy the threat for the second week running, attempts by the NGA to bring in scab forces were not likely to succeed.

Other printers on the Observer were prepared to refuse to work with union scabs, and the NGA leadership was having difficulty recruiting the small numbers they needed to break the dispute.

The 25 machine minders, who are also in dispute at Reveille over manning and pay,

lacked and still lack a programme with which to fight the officials who want to see them out of a job.

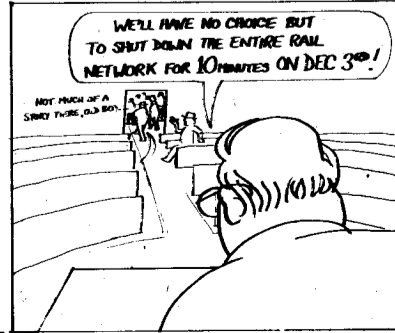
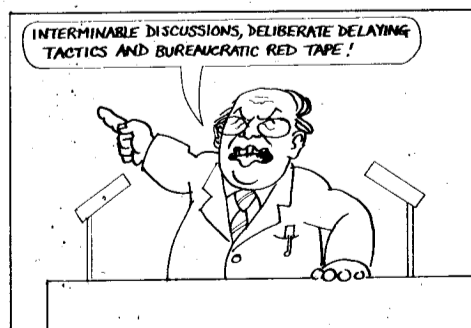
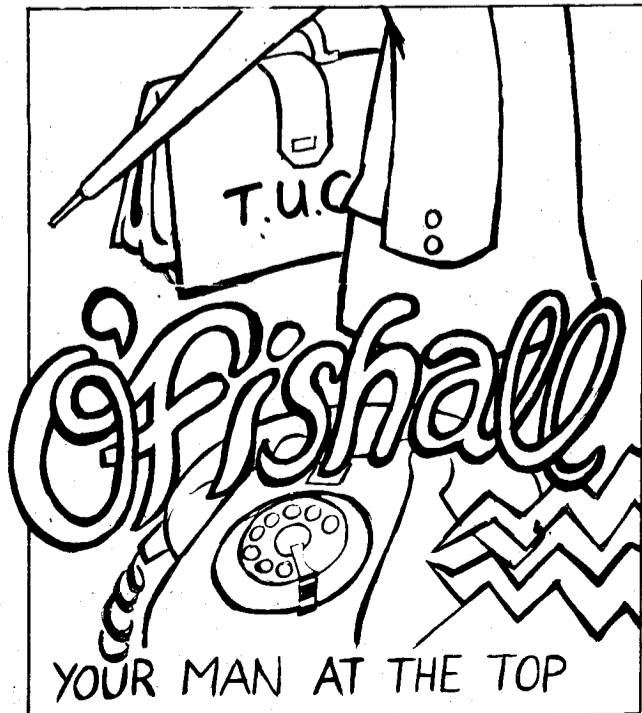
They returned to work "on the basis that other fellow trade unionists' livelihoods could be in jeopardy."

Instead a call to those fellow trade unionists should have been made for an all out defence of jobs at the Observer and a policy of restored staffing levels and work sharing on full pay.

THE TRANSFER of work on Leyland's TR7 sports car from the now closed Speke plant to Canley in Coventry has already cost 3,000 jobs on Merseyside.

Now Leyland have announced plans to axe a further 700 jobs at Canley—to be "phased out" over the next 18 months.

Canley workers, who were told by union leaders to accept the TR7 to create jobs, are now being warned by employers that resistance to speed-up and sackings could endanger output and job prospects!



SOCIALIST PRESS



FUND

With only £10.50 towards our £2,000 special fund arriving in the last seven days, this has been the worst week so far. We need to raise £100 a week to keep on target for this fund so there is no room for complacency. We urge all readers and supporters to go all out during the coming week to change this position.

Donations should be sent to:

WSL Special Fund

31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR



PHOTOS: Laurence Sparham, IFL

Rally platform: Ann Marie Sweeney, speaking



Ted Eames

CALL FOR STRIKES TO STOP CUTS

The fight for 30 nursery places in one town has to be seen in the context of a national fight for leaders and policies to combat the cuts.

That was the message from Ted Eames, NUT member and speaker at the Action Against the Cuts Rally—called in Oxford at the weekend by the South Oxford Nursery Campaign.

Ted Eames linked the fight for the nursery places to the fight against the Lib-Lab coalition and against trade union leaders who refuse to carry out a fight against their policies.

The rally attracted 100 delegates and visitors to a detailed discussion of policies to counter the cuts in action. They included speakers from London hospital occupations and an occupation of a Liverpool hostel for homeless women.

Eames said he 30 nursery places were a victim of the coalition policies in the same way as the more

dramatic sackings, wage control and other attacks on the working class.

"They have made a consistent and frenzied attack on the pitifully small resources fought for by the labour movement. When these resources are under attack only action is effective.

"We are talking about occupation and we are talking about strike action".

Landmark

The nursery occupation had stood out as a landmark of opposition to the cuts, compared to the swamp of protests made by trade union leaders.

"They either support cap in hand protests or outright capitulation to the bourgeoisie's demands".

He cited the Oxfordshire teachers' dispute as an example of the refusal by trade union leaders to allow their members to fight.

"If they had called an all out strike in May last year they could have smashed the cuts policy of this council."

"Only the trade unions can bring the right kind of pressure to bear; and by pressure I mean strike action. Support is a dangerous word and a dangerous concept unless it is linked to consistent pressure for action".

Eames stressed the importance of the social services to women

"We must fight for a principled, conscious leadership in the fight against the cuts.

"We totally reject the pessimism and defeatism of those who say that the working class will not fight. We have heard enough of holiday speeches at union conferences, we want no stunts or token gestures.

We are for a clear policy of opening local authority books, and to occupy and strike in defence of jobs, conditions and the social services generally".

Ann Marie Sweeney, a NUPE member, and another member of the occupation committee, said that they had had enough of general-

ised campaigns with no action.

Councils had learned to run down services before they closed them, demoralising the workers and making them feel the services were second rate and hardly worth saving.

Responsibility

This placed an extra responsibility on the trade union leadership to fight 'rationalisation' and other euphemisms.

"We had an 80,000 strong march against the cuts in 1976 pleading with the government to change its mind. It never stopped the cuts. It never saved a single hospital bed or nursery place and it never will.

"It is no good calling for general action against the cuts if we don't fight to save South Oxford Nursery Class.

It is vital that the unions don't comply with the smaller less dramatic cuts. We must fight on every cut even if it is only half an

hour of dinner ladies' hours".

Nationally, despite the banner at the national conference saying NUPE Fights the Cuts, the union had not conducted a single fight on any cut in the country.

CLASH

Colin Kenny, secretary of CLASH, the London health service stewards organisation, outlined some of the drastic cuts taking place in London hospitals.

The attempt to set up CLASH had been opposed by trade union officials to the point where they had threatened their union membership.

At the EGA a clear commitment to strike action in other hospitals was required.

Yet the work-in had allowed 'security men' to come and survey the hospital. The date for closure was still officially July 21.

"The implication of this is to build for strike action which is not a protest but which mobilises the independent strength of the working class".

Unprecedented

The speaker from the Hounslow Hospital, Pat McCarthy said that the health authority raid on the hospital last October had been an unprecedented piece of history in the health service:

"It has to be an example to the labour movement of

how far the authorities are prepared to go".

Open the books

The conference, in a series of group discussions, drew out the lessons of occupation and of the open books demand.

It closed with a clear restatement of the principles and policies of the campaign, with an overwhelming vote for the tabled resolution.

"1. This Action Against the Cuts Rally endorses the policies of the Oxford City Nursery Campaign of: a) occupation of social services threatened with closure, b) recognition of the vital importance of strike action by the trade unions involved to defend the social services, and c) striving to set up bodies of trade unionists and other consumers of the social services—parents, patients, etc—to investigate the spending and profits in the public sector, and specifically the demand for the reopening of the South Oxford Nursery Class, fully financed by Oxfordshire County Council with all the jobs refilled. Delegates at the rally resolve to take this back to their branches, trades councils, etc.

2. This Action Against the Cuts Rally resolves to give full support to similar campaigns in defence of social services, and where such struggles arise in Oxford the Oxford City Nursery Campaign will seek to coordinate the campaigns".

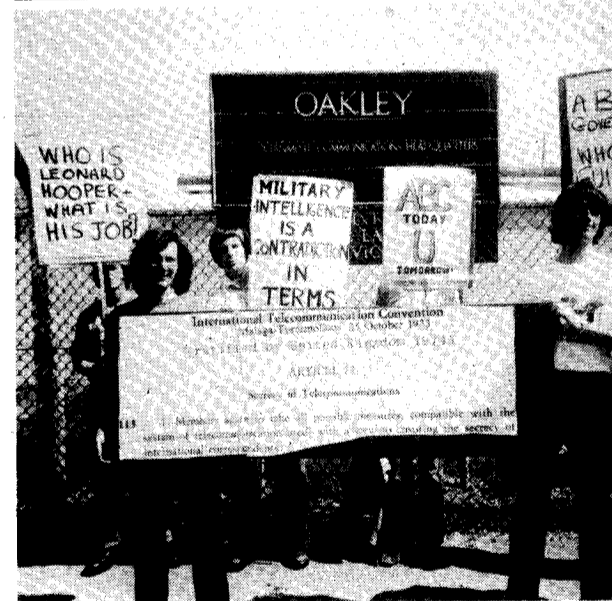


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

March in defence of Aubrey, Berry and Campbell, victims of charges under the Official Secrets Act

TROOPS SETTLE IN AFTER SLAUGHTER

The real, imperialist invasion of Zaire is still being carried through by the forces of the French and Belgian states.

On the transparently fictitious grounds that the rebels have captured European hostages, French paratroopers are waging a major offensive to subdue the region of Katanga.

Despite the outcries of moral indignation in the Belgian parliament, Belgian troops have withdrawn from the main conflict only to station themselves at Kamina airfield.

It is quite clear that these forces will not withdraw

until the threat of further insurrection has been stifled and the vast mining operations can be resumed in profitable peace.

Meanwhile the bourgeois press clings to its lie that the troops were sent to avert a 'massacre of whites'—despite clear evidence that only 200 Europeans have died compared with well over 1,000 Africans gunned down by imperialist forces.

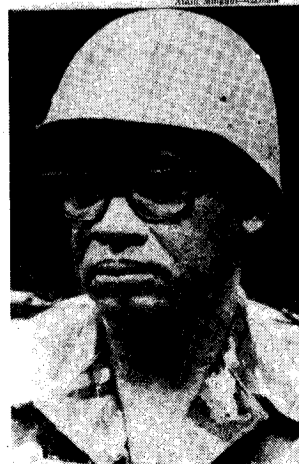
The economy of Zaire will collapse rapidly into chaos unless this happens very soon, and already some mines have started working again.

But imperialism is tormented by the know-

ledge that an invasion in the near future even from a small body of half-trained rabbits would be almost enough to rout the army of Zaire, which is at present ruled by corruption, demoralisation and disaffection.

CIA funds alone cannot succeed in propping up the dictatorship of General Mobutu for very long against any organised opposition.

Despite claims by President Giscard d'Estaing that all French troops had been recalled, the commander in Zaire declares that he has received no such instruction and that paratroopers are to remain indefinitely.



Mobutu

But it is politically inconceivable that the French government could alone guarantee the survival of

Mobutu.

This situation has driven imperialism to seek a Pan-African 'peace-keeping' force, with troops from every reactionary and pro-imperialist state in black Africa.

But such a proposal has been greeted without enthusiasm by bourgeois leaders who know what strains this would impose on their own political credibility and power.

Only Moroccan troops have so far intervened alongside the French, and the pressure of continuing war against the Polisario Front in the Western Sahara makes it unlikely that Hassan's tyranny could undertake

the long term defence of imperialist interests in Zaire.

The task of the international workers' movement—a task rejected by social democratic and Stalinist parties throughout Europe—is to force the withdrawal of all imperialist forces from Zaire, to enable the popular resistance to Mobutu to sweep away this vicious military dictatorship and open up new avenues of revolutionary struggle in Africa.

Central to such struggle must be the fight for the building of a Trotskyist leadership capable of asserting at each point the leading role and political independence of the working class.