

WORKERS' FIGHT

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DEFEND DOCKERS! SMASH THE ACT!



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GENERAL STRIKE!



**THIS IS THE CRUNCH!
TRADE UNIONISTS ARE
IN JAIL, TO BE HELD
INDEFINITELY, FOR ACTING
AS TRADE UNIONISTS.**

The National Industrial Relations Court has claimed its first victims. The Tories are using their power, the power of the courts, the police, and their laws, against the labour movement.

Now we must reply with our power, the power of industrial action – the power of the General Strike.

The issues involve every worker. Every worker has an interest in

defending Trade Union rights and fighting redundancies. That's what the dockers are in jail for doing.

Every factory, every office, every building site, every pit, must stand by the dockers.

And if the leaders of the Trade Union movement really are leaders, then it is their duty to take the initiative in organising all possible solidarity action – action, not words – with the dockers.

Where they fail, local Trades Councils or ad hoc Action Committees must do the job.

The dockers are fighting for the right to work. In the last 5 years the number of registered dockers has declined from 60,000 to 40,000 and containerisation means a threat of more jobs lost. In fighting for a livelihood, the dockers

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BRITISH TROOPS OUT!

The IRA, and our attitude to it, has again become the touchstone for serious opponents in England of the Tory Government and its policies. Seizing on the revulsion produced by the Belfast bombings as justification, the British Army is stepping up its offensive against the IRA. Already it had invaded part of Catholic Belfast, which led to the mass protest evacuation of thousands of working class families.

More invasions are likely. A bloody invasion of Free Derry could well be on the cards, now that the plans to build a 'Berlin Wall' around the Bogside have had to be abandoned. Certainly there will be a move back to British Army terrorisation of the Catholic areas in operations to 'weed out' the IRA – that is, to break the will of the Catholic population to go on supporting the IRA.

58 people are already undergoing 'deep interrogation' by the torturers of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, following a big roundup. A massive rise in the number of internees is probable.

British socialists must be clear on what the issues are.

Horror at the Blitz in Belfast will be widespread. This bloody holocaust of ordinary people is intended by the IRA to pressurise the British Government and the Army – that is, to influence the callous men responsible for the situation in the first place. But the Tories are only too glad to exploit the revulsion and the horror at such slaughter as in Belfast to manipulate the two sides, Protestant and Catholic, even to the point of civil war, in order to keep control of the Northern Ireland situation and ensure that the only changes are those they want.

TRUCE

The brief truce broke down because of intolerable provocation by the UDA and the British Army. Ever since Direct Rule, the Army – supposedly the great peacekeeper, keeping apart the Green and Orange forces – has allowed the Orange gangs, the Unionist supremacists of the UDA, to drill openly and arm openly. The licensed killers of the British Army, some of them roaming around as free-lance plain-clothes gangs,

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LABOUR'S PROGRAMME TO NOWHERE

The knuckle-duster treatment the Heath Government has been meting out to the working class (not always very successfully!) outrages millions of workers. For the first time many have looked on the real face of British capitalism, a face partly masked now for three decades or more. 'Kick the Tories Out' is the heartfelt cry of the whole labour movement.

Ever rising prices, mass unemployment, social service cuts, the Industrial Relations Act and the unashamed class bias of the government have generated a deeper detestation of the Tories, the hard-faced men turned nasty because they don't do quite so well out of anything anymore.

SIT-INS

Many thousands of workers have implicitly challenged the foundationstone of British capitalism — private ownership of the factories — by sit-in strikes, declaring the right to a job to stand higher than the 'right' of the boss to run his factory as he likes. Big sections of workers have even challenged the Government's right to rule and make the laws — and so far have neutralised the penalty clauses in the Industrial Relations Act.

They have acted as people increasingly conscious of a distinct and separate interest, people increasingly free from the restraints of ingrained submission to the given order of things.

Though not yet full class consciousness, this is definitely more than trade union consciousness. 'Socialism' may be widely seen as a politicians word, empty and devoid of meaning. The old idea of a piecemeal transformation of the capitalist system into something quite different may now have become dimmed, and half-forgotten, to give way to a healthy reliance on industrial direct action. Nevertheless, the growing demand for change contains the elements of a reformulated socialism, more advanced than anything seen in Britain for many decades.

POLITICAL

The great industrial victories won by the working class have not solved any of the problems. They have fended off the tentacles of the Industrial Relations Act, and kept us from drowning in the sea of rising prices.

But no more than that. To solve its problems the working class will have to take over not single factories, but the whole country, to be run in our own interests, for our needs, not those of the bosses' system.

To achieve this the labour movement needs a political programme, to fuse with and supplement direct industrial action. With an effective political lead the Government could have been smashed long ago — and so could the system.

How does the newly published programme of the Labour Party — the party set up by the unions, and still financed and supported by the unions, measure up to the demands of the present stage of the struggle?

Millions of workers still vote Labour, and the relationship between the unions and the local Labour Parties is that of an open valve allowing the possibility of a free flow of trade union activists into the Labour Party. Labour may still be massively discredited from its recent spell in office, but it



remains the nearest thing to a political arm the unions have, and what workers see as their alternative to the hated Tories.

For that reason the new Labour Party programme is an important document.

"Labour's Programme for Britain" poses as a document carrying new socialist ideas. But right from the start the stale smell of warmed-up left-overs from 1964-70 is overwhelming.

UNEMPLOYMENT

We are told that Labour would abolish unemployment by creating "balanced economic expansion" (whatever that may mean). This is rather like the H. Wilson of 1964 who denounced the successive "stop-go" cycles and promised "sustained economic growth".

But when Labour came to office, what was the result? Wage freeze, productivity dealing, government promotion of mergers and massive handouts to monopolies to 'modernise'; redundancies and mounting unemployment from 1966 onwards; and a final desperate attempt to shackle the working class with anti-union laws — proposals on which the Tories have since built the Industrial Relations Act.

Production did rise, but with fewer workers. In spite of Labour's efforts to revitalise it, British capitalism remains one of the most stagnant in the world.

How does Labour propose to get "balanced economic development" this time round? Why, by the tried and proven methods of 1964-70!

INCOMES POLICY

There will be a "voluntary" incomes policy. Workers are to be asked to peg wage levels. As in 1964-70, there will be a 'prices policy' to balance the wage freeze — in fact, all the old George Brown pantomime gimmicks are there, from 'Early Warning Systems' to consumer reporting of 'alleged over-charging'.

To the argument, backed by all past experience, that in a private profit economy price controls are impossible to enforce, it has no argument. In fact it admits that: "Price increases did, of course, quicken appreciably during the last year of Labour Government" (p. III)

NIRC

The Industrial Relations Act will be abolished and give way to the 'voluntary system' — or will it? Read the small print on p. III:

"The extent of Government intervention will have to depend on how successful voluntary efforts are".

Since it is highly improbable that workers will voluntarily let their wages freeze, the most pertinent question is: Does Labour intend to scrap the Industrial Relations Act fully and completely?

In fact, the penal clauses in the Act, which have drawn most attention, are only the tip of the iceberg. The rest is a whole framework of industrial relations which the Tories are easing into place even now. Labour — originator of "In Place of Strife" — may do no more than modify the Act.

EQUALITY

We're told that inequality could be pared down by taxation policies. But didn't Wilson talk about 'soaking the rich' in 1964?

Instead, the rich got richer and the poor became relatively poorer. Apart from measures to reverse the recent blatant Tory tax discrimination in favour of the rich, the Labour programme has nothing to offer. The Corporation Tax envisaged, in the words of the program, would be a "system which discriminates in favour of profits which are re-invested in plant and machinery and against those which are handed out to shareholders in dividends." (p. VII). But wages foregone are lost forever, while dividends can be reaped later. Or

"The taxation of wealth can mitigate the consequences, but it cannot prevent the shareholding class from getting steadily richer as part of the process of economic growth" (Programme, p. V).

So what do these 'socialists' propose to do about it? Actually take the loot away from the shareholding class and redistribute it? No!

HOUSING

The programme slams the Tory means test in the Housing Finance Act (anyone remember the rent rebates of the last Labour government?) and rocketing rents (the Greenwood proposals in 1968 were for a general increase of 50p a year for the foreseeable future).

But all the programme can suggest positively is greater subsidies for local councils and nationalisation of certain land that may be used for development. Cheap housing in sufficient quantity cannot be produced without breaking the grip of the finance companies and the major building firms. There are no proposals for nationalising these enterprises.

NATIONALISATION

We are promised the reversal of the Tory de-nationalisation programme, and the new nationalisation, with the usual ample compensation to the robbers for the loss of their loot, of shaky industries. The same capitalist priorities will continue to control the nationalised industries, with the odd worker co-opted to police his fellow workers.

State holding would, in many cases, replace the "1940s form of nationalisation". The state will bail out losing enterprises by taking a percentage share holding. It will provide an insurance service for profiteers.

FOREIGN POLICY

On foreign policy we find a line difficult to tell apart from the Tories'. Continued support for NATO (plus a few fine phrases about "multilateral European political engagement"). No definite commitment on 'defence' spending. "Commitment to the Commonwealth" (that is, to British imperialism). Entry into the bosses' kitchen of the EEC (though renegotiated).

On Vietnam — "The basis of the National Executive Committee policy on Vietnam is the 1967 Conference resolution which stated: 'This Conference calls upon the Labour Government to dissociate itself completely from the policy of the US Government in Vietnam.'"

Of course, the Labour Government didn't dissociate itself, and there is no assurance that a future Labour Government would either.

As for the burning question of Ireland, they don't even pretend to have a different line from the Tories there.

PROGRAMME

Even though the ferocity of the Tory Government is helping Labour to live down the disgust induced by its period of office, the Labour Party, out of office as in, remains true to itself.

The working class needs a programme to serve its own class interests — that is, to eliminate the bosses, the profiteers, the rent-sharks, and their private-profit system. It needs to smash the Industrial Relations Act. It has a right to demand that a trade-union-sponsored organisation should answer the felt need of millions of workers. But Labour won't do it. It prefers to play the system, as Britain's junior capitalist party.

Stan Lomax.

WORKERS FIGHT

FOR THE IRA

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joined the UDA in the assassination of suspected republicans. Nor is it a secret that the UDA heavily overlaps with the Ulster Defence Regiment, officially part of the British Army, in men, officers, and even equipment.

Immediately the military pressure of the IRA campaign was withdrawn, Ringmaster Whitelaw began to bend under UDA pressure, hardening against the Catholics.

It is important to grasp why the situation 'deteriorated' so quickly after the truce. The British policy of balancing within the fixed and unquestionable framework of 6 Counties meant that the heaviest weight in the Six Counties see-saw (the Orange weight, for whose advantage the 6 County balance was arranged in the first place) reasserted itself inexorably.

Having got their ceasefire with the Provisional IRA, the issue was posed to Whitelaw and the Government: stand up to the UDA. That would have meant, unavoidably, breaking the framework, questioning the 6 Counties. Instead they turned on the Catholics, almost as if to spare the UDA the trouble of doing so. The policy of 'balance' within the 6 counties demanded it.

The confrontation at Lenadoon Avenue, with the Army ramming a removal van rehousing refugee Catholics, was as far as the IRA was prepared to allow that to go without hitting back.

The ruthlessness of the IRA is a product of decades of repression within the artificial Orange state, carved out by Imperialist violence against the will of 40% of its people and of 75% of the whole Irish people. The Catholic masses — and their militia — have been driven to a desperate once-and-for-all battle to break the Partition framework. The Northern Ireland Catholics fight in isolation, in the most unfavourable conditions imaginable. The rearguard of the Irish fight for national freedom, they are betrayed and abandoned by the 'leaders' of the Irish nation, and are simultaneously cut off from the allies that would make an advance on a socialist basis possible — the Orange majority of the Northern Ireland working class.

Nevertheless they have risen in the last three years with tremendous audacity and courage. Out of the Catholic slums and ghettos has poured a stream of self-sacrificing opposition to the Orange state and its Imperialist guarantor. They have thrown themselves against the British Army, massively superior in a conventional military sense, upholding the promise of the three generations since Partition to rise again and again until they break the grip of British Imperialism on Ireland.

Their weapon, guerilla warfare, is the only one possible. They do not have the tanks or the guns to stand up to the British Army in open war. They have every right to use guerilla warfare, to attack the British Army and drive it out. They have a right to attack the UDA, and the UDR, the auxiliaries and allies of British Imperialism. The UDA is not the equivalent of the IRA as a popular defence militia. Popular support it has — but its basic driving force is sectarian arming to beat down the rebellious Catholics. Its rationale is the desire to maintain a supremacist position and maintain partition and the 6 County state which buttress and systematically recreate that position. When the IRA attacks the UDA it is an attack by oppressed people against their oppressors or the dupes of their oppressors. The attacks on property, factories, etc come within the same category. They have a right to make themselves felt as forcefully as possible. That's what war is about. And the Catholics are fighting a just war.

AGAINST BRITISH IMPERIALISM

We emphatically support the cause of the IRA and their right to fight the British Army and its allies with every weapon they have, both defensively and 'offensively'. Of all the British socialist groups we most emphatically defended the right of the IRA to strike at military targets in Britain itself, and endorsed the attack on Aldershot barracks, despite the accidental deaths of civilians. We have not changed this position.

Those in Britain who cover for the British Army assassination squads, and now yet again for the RUC torture squads, should shut up about the IRA "murder gangs" and "terrorists". However, there are limits to the silence imposed by the political responsibility — indeed the moral duty — to stand apart from the anti-IRA hypocrites. Support for the IRA against British imperialism and its militant allies cannot exclude criticism when they indiscriminately bomb civilians.

The terrible tragedy of an inter-communal civil war is very possible, as the only-too-likely climax of the chronic and — so long as the 6 County cockpit exists — unmendable division of the Northern Ireland working class.

But to blame it on the IRA or the Catholics is to blame the oppressed for revolting and thus provoking the oppressor. Even the effects of the bombing will, at worst, only ignite the situation. It has not created it. As in South Africa and the USA the oppressed want a unity based on equality and democracy. It has not been theirs to determine. The reactionary Orange forces — and, tragically, large sections of the Northern Ireland working class are amongst the most implacable of them — will not rest until their old supremacy has been restored in one form or another.

UNITY

It is preposterous to blame the IRA for failing to create unity in Northern Ireland. No possibility exists of a political breakthrough to create unity with any sizeable section of the Protestant population. Nor will it exist for many a long day and year. The old Civil Rights movement ground to a halt, stopped already three years ago by the bitter animosity of the Orange population including the majority of the working class.

The IRA — both sections — can be criticised for not developing an all-Ireland offensive, against the Green as well as the Orange Tories. The real tragedy of Irish politics has been, and is, the divorce between on the one hand 'socialism' and working class struggle politics, and on the other 'republicanism': this has led to the attitude that it is the job of the trade unions to fight the local class struggle, and of the republicans to fight imperialism. The result is no overall national anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist strategy, no multi-faceted organisation, no serious concept of an all-Ireland struggle.

But this cannot be changed by talking about it from England. Those in Britain who use criticism of the IRA as an excuse to refuse to take sides (as does 'Socialist Worker' in its July 15th issue, where it has used it, this time, essentially, as a preparation for neutrality if civil war breaks out) only discredit legitimate criticism. Here and now we must support the Republicans against both the UDA and the British Army.

If a civil war does break out socialists in Britain must stand clearly for the Republican minority fighting imperialism and its local allies. And we must know in advance where we stand. There is a very widespread tendency amongst the British socialist groups to use often legitimate criticisms of the IRA as a cop-out from taking sides.

Because of the balance of forces within the 6 Counties and the collusion of Jack Lynch with Britain a tremendous importance attaches to the activity of the British labour movement in opposition to the Tory Government's Irish policy.

The partition of Ireland, the framework for permanently setting Catholic and Protestant workers at each other's throats, must be ended. Britain must withdraw the troops from Ireland: they have no right there and they do no good there, they only hold the ring, maintaining the reactionary partition of Ireland.

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spearhead the struggle of the whole working class against unemployment.

The lying bosses' Press said it was a dispute between worker and worker. But already the lorry drivers have decided to strike to support the dockers. They say: 'As trade unionists we must fight against the Industrial Relations Act together'.

Ford Dagenham, British Leyland Longbridge, the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, and miners are among those committed — already, as we write — to solidarity action.

This will be a serious struggle. The Government has detailed contingency plans for using troops and civil servants to break strikes

In 1926 the General Strike was weakened because union leaders did not organise workers' defence militias against the strike-breakers and because they did not counter the massive Government propa-

ganda by using printworks to produce workers' propaganda. We must demand that our leaders don't fail this time — and the rank and file must step in, organise and act independently, if the leaders fall down.

The Government will say: it's the unions against 'law and order'. In reality it's a question of whose law and order — the bosses' law and order that makes a million unemployed, or the workers' law and order.

The labour movement has so far temporised with the Industrial Relations Act. Now, through the law courts, the Government itself makes it plain that we must either knuckle under or go all out to smash the Act.

WE CANNOT SETTLE FOR ANY THING LESS THAN THE COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT.



In Brief

CO-OPERATE AND BE DAMNED

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) publishes a monthly journal *The OECD Observer*. This month's edition carries an article on immigrant labour and its role in the economies of the 'host' country.

Reporting a survey under one Professor Kayser the *Observer* lists the good Professor's conclusions — and highly enlightening they are.

1) "The country of emigration would not only be a potential supplier of manpower; it could also if necessary play the role of shelter or safety valve, 'preserving' the labour force on leave (!) during an unfavourable economic period(!)"

In other words, the country of emigration (invariably poorer than the country the migrants go to) pays out the social cost of that labour (its up-bringing, schooling, later old-age pension etc.) while losing the value that labour can create. Not content with that, the plan is now to make them pay out dole in the event of their countrymen's unemployment. As Professor Kayser honestly adds "in doing this, it considerably enhances the service it is already rendering the industrialised countries..."

2) "various measures, such as reductions in overtime, bring emigrants to stop work of their own accord..."

In other words foreign workers can be kicked out simply by lowering their gross earnings.

3) "during periods of recession, even more than in normal times, migratory home-flows would bring back to their country workers who are difficult to re-integrate into their national economy either because they are unsuitable or because they are unwilling..."

It all rather gives the lie to the sour and ignorant talk about immigrants 'coming over here and using up our social services', doesn't it!

HOW BROAD IS YOUR FRONT ?

Common ground on the Common Market is something that the Communist Party seems to be able to find with even the most right wing groups. Some time ago, for instance, the No to the Common Market march was made up of Communist Party members, Labourites, right-wing Tories — and the fascist National Front.

Could anybody then be blamed for concluding that the Party's attitude is perhaps summed up in the placard pictured below — which for once we freely admit to having cut straight out of the front pages on the Morning Star.



MAINLY MAUDLIN

On the day after Maudling announced his resignation Fleet Street shed its crocodile tears. Well, it was no time to be shedding real ones, was it. Still the depth of their hypocrisy is a constant source of wonder to many.

On that day they all quoted Maudling's resignation letter, which spoke of "the glare of publicity which, inevitably, surrounds a Minister and, inexcusably engulfs the private lives even of his family." You could almost hear them tut-tutting their "too true"s.

And the next day? The next day a number of them plus the London evening papers led on the story of Maudling's daughter's divorce case.

This must have been part of what the Express (in what passes for an editorial) meant by: "There will now be widespread sympathy for him and his family in what in a very real sense is a personal tragedy."

EQUAL PAY — A LETTER

From Alan Theasby, Teesside
Hilary Cave's article on the "Equal Pay Fiddle" (WF 9) did a good job in drawing attention to the ways that bosses make sure that women get less money than men, but I would like to raise a few points.

On the question of overtime, it is true that most women tend to avoid it because they are expected to spend some of their time shopping, looking after their children, keeping the house clean, and so on. But is avoiding overtime a bad thing? In view of the unemployment level, we are campaigning for overtime bans, a shorter working week and longer holidays. Hilary Cave almost makes it sound as if overtime is a special privilege granted to men, but denied to women, who should therefore be demanding it.

We fight for higher basic rates of pay so that workers don't have to put in long hours of overtime in order to earn a decent wage. Bosses are not just picking on women when they keep basic rates low — they are forcing men to work long hours as cheap labour.

Higher rates or bonuses for dirty, heavy, or dangerous jobs have not just been freely given by the bosses to split workers along sexual lines — in fact they have been fought for and won by men against management opposition. ...

Does Hilary Cave want him to give up his condition allowance or whatever just because he gets a little bit more than a woman who could not or would not do his job? Women must fight for their own bonuses and special allowances, and male trade unionists must help them, even lead the fight, because of the way women have been conditioned by society to be passive and subservient.

Until women are properly organised and have equality, they will always be in this position, but they cannot break out of it by themselves. Precisely because they have been trained to accept a secondary role in society, to look after the home rather than seek a career, not to be involved in politics and trade unionism — for these very reasons it is essential that men help them.

Those women who want to 'stand on their own two feet' without the aid of male workers, who condemn all men as a separate race of oppressors, and who seem to want female supremacy are ignoring the class politics involved and alienating the men who could help them achieve equal rights.

Hilary Cave, as a socialist, does not fall into this trap, but many prominent members of the Women's Liberation Movement do. The Women's Liberation Movement is fighting for equal rights, but because it is a mainly middle class movement with no socialist programme it often provokes men into taking even more feudal and reactionary positions. Of course we do not fight political backwardness by giving in to it, but we must recognise that it exists in the attitude of many men towards women.

Women at the moment should not be complaining because men can work overtime or win "dirt money" and thus earn more than women; they should be demanding free creches and nurseries on factory estates, full pay and no loss of pension rights when off work through preg-

nancy, bonuses for married women with children, better social, welfare and educational services, and so on.

Similar rights have been granted in the Soviet Union, where women are treated as equals economically, politically, and intellectually, without any loss of courtesy or respect. In fact women are favoured in many ways, without any "male chauvinist" backlash. ... men who read this paper should fight on behalf of women for equal pay and opportunities, and the other rights I mentioned.

A REPLY

I would like to question two points in Alan Theasby's letter.

First, on the Soviet Union. It is true that in the Soviet Union women are in some respects — for example educational and job opportunities — more equally placed than in Britain. However, there is no room for complacency about the situation in the Soviet Union. In the years following the 1917 revolution, there were indeed real efforts to do away with the nasty little medieval jail for women and children that was the traditional Russian family.

But Stalinism rolled back the reforms in this area as in many other spheres. In 1936 the freedom of a bortion was abolished and the freedom of divorce restricted. Today, a bortion is legal but restricted, and divorce involves court proceedings. For many people the expense of divorce is probably beyond their means.

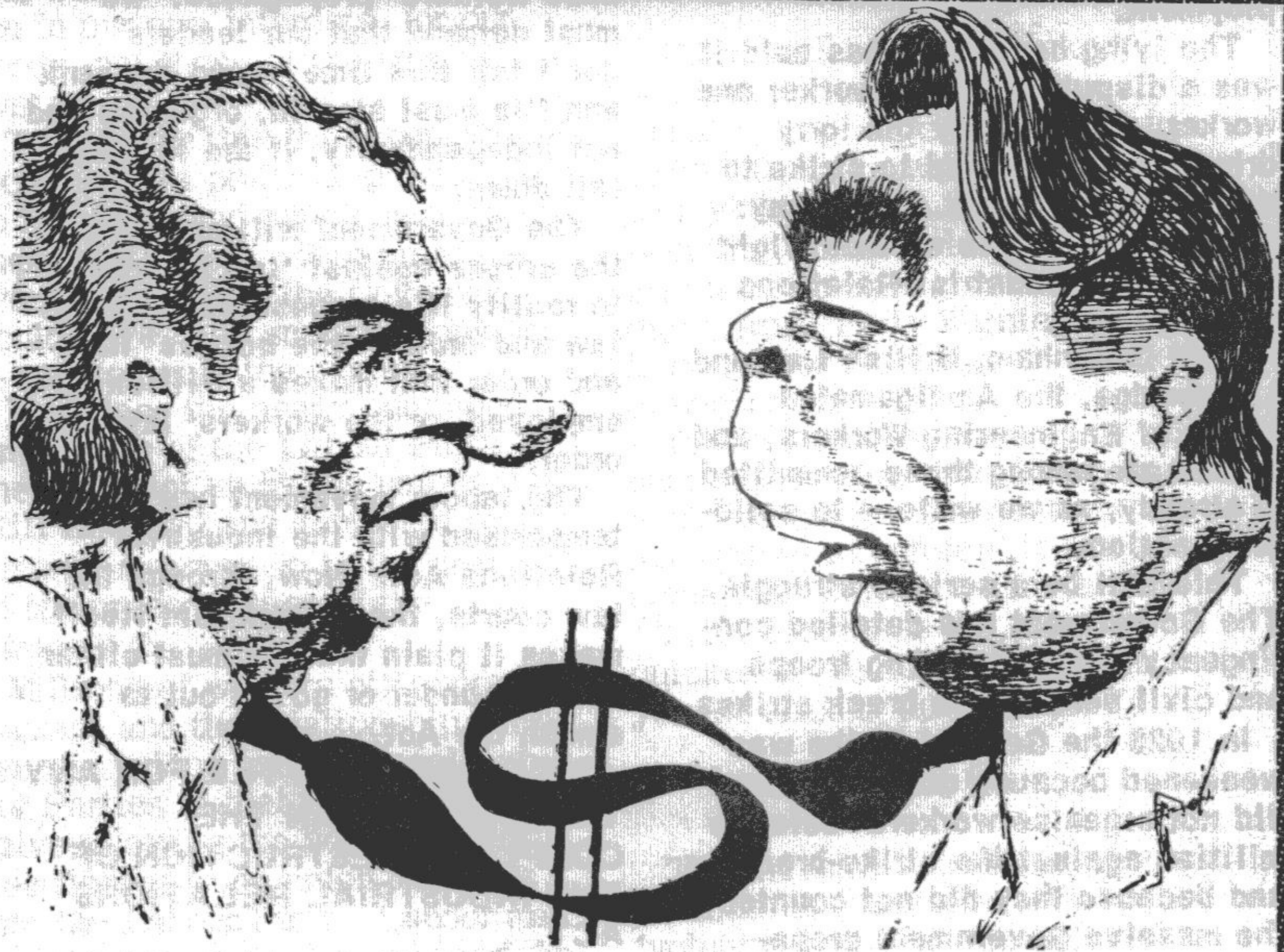
As Lenin wrote: "It is impossible to be a democrat and a socialist without immediately demanding complete freedom of divorce, because the absence of such freedom is the utmost oppression of the subdued sex, woman".

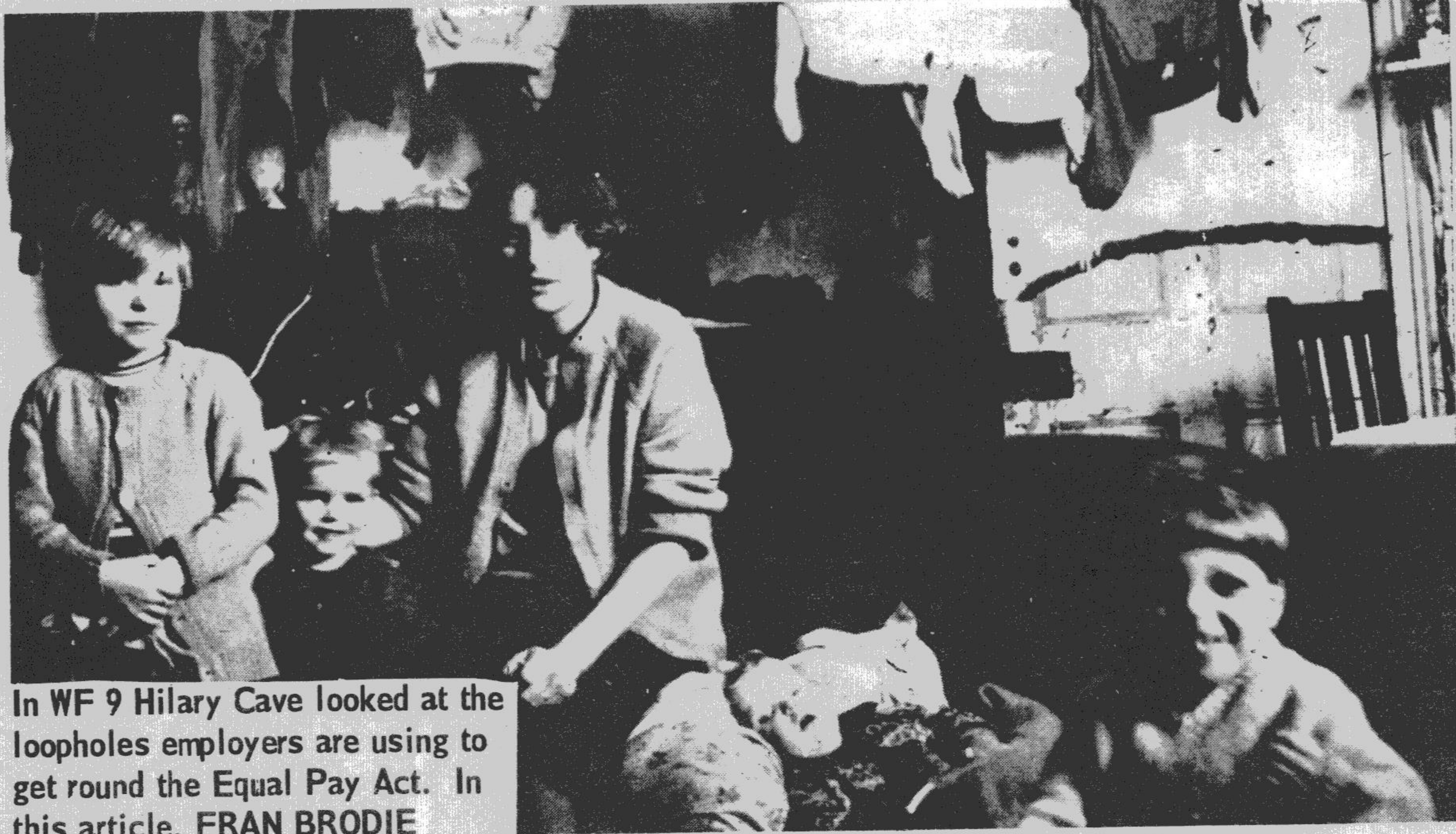
Secondly, Alan Theasby says that because the women's liberation movement "is a mainly middle class movement with no socialist programme, it often provokes men into taking even more feudal and reactionary positions". He immediately adds the correct principle that "we do not fight political backwardness by giving in to it". Surely, what that principle means in the case of women's liberation is this: we must support women fighting against all the reactionary ideas that represent women as inferior, irresponsible, irrational, etc; support them WHETHER THEY ARE SOCIALIST OR NOT.

Of course, we argue clearly that only a socialist perspective can make a reality of women's liberation; but we do not use that argument as a cop-out from supporting the existing movement. If there is a male backlash, then it is the responsibility of socialist men to fight that backlash, not to discredit the women's liberation movement by associating it with a few eccentrics who may want "female supremacy".

"It is quite true", Trotsky once wrote, "that there are no limits to masculine egotism in ordinary life. In order to change the conditions of life we must learn to see them through the eyes of women".

An E.B. Member





In WF 9 Hilary Cave looked at the loopholes employers are using to get round the Equal Pay Act. In this article, FRAN BRODIE writes about the fight for real equality for women.

SLAVES OF THE SLAVES

With the passing of the Equal Pay Act in 1970, some focus has been put on the oppression of women in this society, but, to many people, the Act would appear to have removed inequality at one stroke. While an equal pay act may be better than nothing at all, equal pay cannot even begin to solve what is drastically wrong with the position of women in this society.

To begin with, what is the Equal Pay Act? what does it say and how effective is it?

The Equal Pay Act 1970 comes into force on 29 December. It is supposed to eliminate sexual discrim-



ination with regard to pay, terms and conditions of employment.

It seeks to do this by:
1) Establishing the right of the individual woman to equal treatment when she is employed —

- a) on work of the same or broadly similar nature to that of men;
- b) in a job which, though different from those of men, has been given an equal value to men's jobs under a job evaluation exercise;
- 2) Providing for the Industrial Relations Court to remove discrimination in collective agreements, employers' pay structures and statutory wages orders which contain any provisions applying specifically to men only and which have been referred to the court. (From "A Guide to the Equal Pay Act, 1970", D.E.P.)

The Act itself has built-in weaknesses. For instance there is nothing to stop an employer paying women the lowest non-discrimination rate, a wage which no man would tolerate. Even more important, the Act applies only where an agreement has been drawn up, which means that non-unionised workers are not affected at all by the Act. But, most important of all — the great fail safe of the Act as far as the bosses are concerned — there are no penalties for non-observance of the Act! Except for unions, that is....

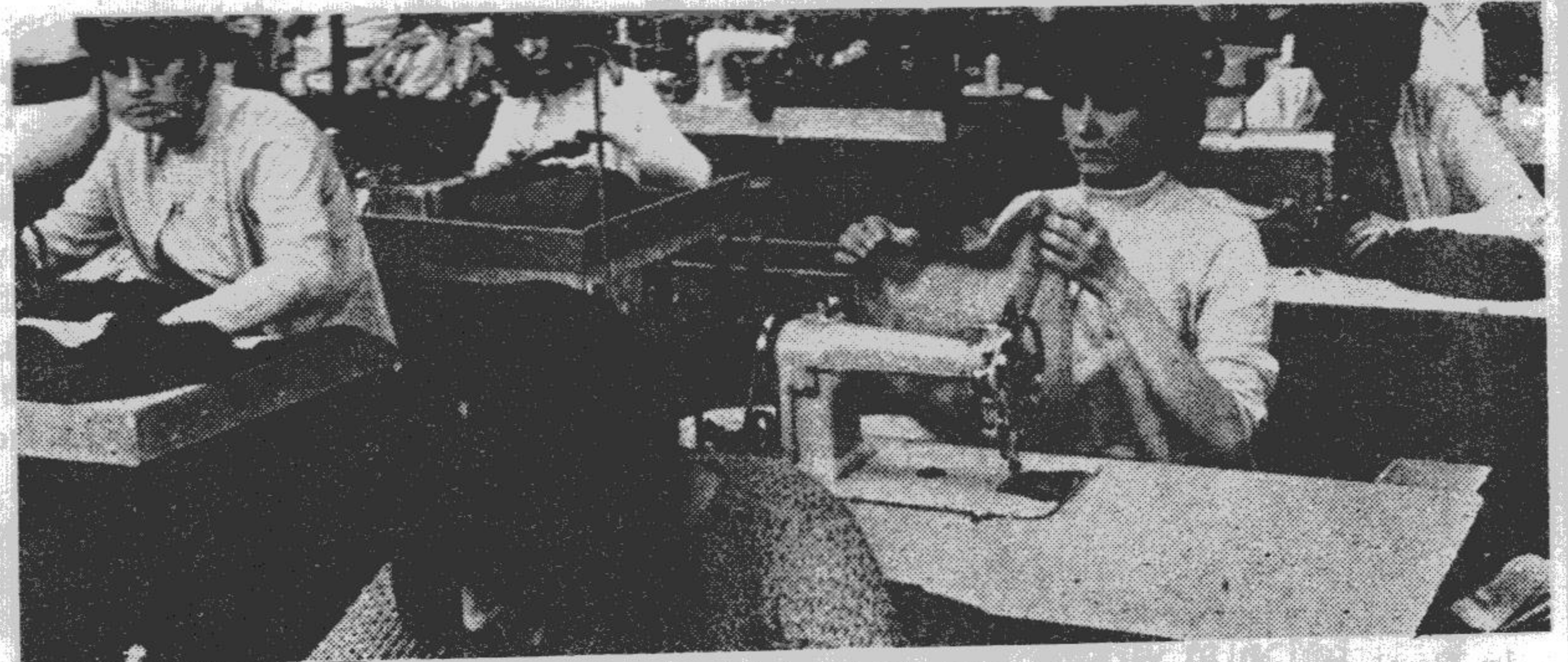
But the Equal Pay Act, even if it were effective, will not begin to solve the problems of women in this society. All women are exploited, but none so much as the working class woman. She is exploited as a woman and as a member of the working class. She has been brain-washed from birth by a system that profits from her ignorance. She has been trained to know her place in this crap society, as one of the inferior beings of the world.

In women's magazines we can read articles written by "middle class ladies" about the fun and rewards of bringing up our children. How the hell can it be fun or rewarding for the majority of women? The middle class woman can hire a 'daily' — a working class woman — to do all the donkey work, and leave her the fun and the rewarding aspects of bringing up children, or again with the help of her invaluable 'treasure' she can combine her career with children. She has some choice.

For the working class woman there is no such choice — or, rather,

"Hobson's Choice". She can either bring up her children on the meagre wage her husband brings in, fighting a constant battle to make ends meet, and seeing her children deprived of bare necessities, or she can get a job.

If she is lucky she will earn about £12 a week. Great! The family will soon be able to afford luxuries like food, rent, and clothing.



But will it? If she is very lucky there might be a nursery to look after the children. That's £3.50 down the drain already. If she is not so lucky she will have to pay a child minder £4 per week.

Take a pound a week for tax and insurance, and £2 more bus fares and lunch money — she is left with about £5.50 for 40 hours hard graft, 40 hours? The working class woman leaves one job at 5 o'clock to go home to another: there's the evening meal; the kids to bath and put to bed; the washing up to do plus what other housework it's possible to fit in in an evening. Some choice!

To change this situation we must work to smash the effects of society's brainwashing. We must realise that we are not the dog-bodies of society. We must eradicate the idea that women work for 'pin money'. Above all we must realise that we are equal members of society.

This is where the Equal Pay Act may have some use. It is vital that we fight to make sure that the Act is fully implemented among all sections of women workers. We must join our union branches, and where there is no union branch we must form one. Women workers must be unionised, because we are going to have to fight for wage rises to count-

eract the rises in prices, nursery fees, school meal costs, and so on.

It is vital that we combine the fight for equal pay with demands for free state run nurseries, free school meals, and free welfare service. Otherwise what we get in one hand through equal pay will be paid out in ever increasing costs, and equal pay will be meaningless.

We must fight through the Trade Unions for these demands. The Trade Union organisations have a definite task: to struggle for the economic interests of the working class as a whole. This economic interest is the same and inseparable for the working class of both sexes. Any separation on the basis of sex is artificial.

There must not be separate Trade Unions, as this would split the class in two. Women must fight inside the already existing Trade Unions.

Male workers must be brought to realise the need for unity with women. They must realise that without unity the struggle of the class as a whole will suffer. And that unity means fighting alongside women workers and not on their behalf. It must be unity of equals in the active struggle of the Trade Unions.

Women must form cells inside the Trade Unions to fight for interests that affect women workers as women. The Trade Unions can benefit immensely from this. I do not believe it will damage class unity — on the contrary it will raise the level of consciousness of both sexes. It will bring home to the male just how

exploited the female is. And a raising of consciousness can come about only by being aware of each other in relation to the class struggle, and not in the master-servant relationship that society tries to promulgate.

The law will not abolish exploitation inside the family, which is one of the roots of female exploitation. In the family the man is the boss and the woman the worker. Until this attitude is changed women will be exploited.

The Equal Pay Act is only a beginning towards the liberation of women. We have a long struggle ahead of us to establish our rights as human beings. Laws alone will never do that. We will have to do it ourselves.

It is vital that we become aware of ourselves as members of the working class. It is not enough to confine ourselves to fighting for women's rights. We must take up our place in the working class and fight on all fronts, the economic, the political, and the ideological.

We must not betray the working class by being a pool of cheap labour and strike breakers. We must recognise our enemy not as man, but as the class enemy: the boss, the ruling class, and this filthy capitalist society.



Jailing of union leaders sparks off QUEBEC GENERAL STRIKE

by PAUL ITIZÉ

If you didn't know that two months ago there was a general strike in Quebec in reply to the jailing of 50 union leaders, then don't think yourself particularly ignorant. The British press, which revels in such trivialities as the bear-hugging of Princess Anne by a patriotic admirer, hasn't found it in itself to even mention the eruption of class war in Quebec. It is little wonder that the press found the whole affair too hot to handle — the parallels with this country are far too close for comfort. But for workers the experience of the class struggle in Quebec provides valuable lessons; lessons which need emphasising and which justify a detailed examination even at this late date.

In April of this year Quebec's 200,000 government employees came out on strike. They were demanding a minimum wage of \$100 a week, job security, and better working conditions. The fact that it was a strike of government employees, which was lead to a general confrontation between the Quebec working class and the state, is in itself significant.

THE STATE

Increasingly, the state is becoming not just a committee for the administration of society in the interests of the ruling class, but the vanguard of the ruling class. The government decides for the whole ruling class to keep down the living standards of the whole working class. To achieve this it tries to inflict a decisive defeat on one section of the working class, and it chooses a battle field where it can directly dictate the tactics. That is the government consciously picks a show-down between the state and the state employees.

The pattern is the same in Britain. Over the past few years practically all the major strikes have involved either public employees or workers in nationalised industries — the miners, the postmen, the dustmen.

In Britain, the response of the state employed workers has been fragmented. Each union lines up in turn for its struggle with the government. During the miners' strike the leadership of the ETU actually delayed (and eventually called off) industrial action by the power workers, saying that with the miners out on strike as well, it would cause too much disruption. After all, the labour lieutenants of capitalism must keep to the rules of the game, and having two sections of government employees out at once just isn't cricket.

In Quebec (where cricket is not a popular game), all government employees came out together — teachers, hospital workers, transport, the lot. The strike involved a common front of 900 unions affiliated into three major federations.

Naturally in a battle of these dimensions the common front had to have a 'high command'. This high command rested essentially on three men: Marcel Pepin (Confederation of National Trade Unions), Louis Laberge (Quebec Federation of Labour) and Yvon Charbonneau (Quebec Teachers' Union). These three personified the left wing of the Quebec trade unions. The strike was fought with a common strategy and a solid front of all the unions.

SOLIDARITY

Not only that, but the front called successfully for solidarity strikes from other workers. As mines, factories, docks, and construction sites came out in solidarity, the province of Quebec was crippled.

As was expected the provincial government invoked the 'cooling-off period'. This is almost a run-of-the-mill affair in Quebec 'industrial relations', and the union leaders called on their members to ignore it, which they did.

The government then passed emergency legislation to deal with the strike. This legislation, Bill 19, was unparalleled in its viciousness. It outlawed strikes by government employees and ordered an immediate return to work, with fines of between \$50 and \$100 a day for individual workers who stayed out on strike and \$50,000 a day for unions which remained out. It also provided for compulsory arbitration and an imposed settlement if no agreement was reached by June 1st.

STRIKE OFF

A 65 per cent majority of union members voted to ignore the legislation and continue the strike. But the three union leaders decided to call it off, and there was a return to work after 11 days of strike. However, they refused to return to the negotiating table.

Quite clearly, by calling off the strike the union leaders had given the government the upper hand. No strike action together with no negotiations was clearly a non sense, and as June 1st approached the common front began to weaken. As the right wing in the unions (which had been against disobeying the original injunctions) grew more vociferous, the civil servants union decided to negotiate a separate agreement, fearing that the alternative would be to have one forced on them.

If things had been left there, then in all probability more union leaders would have chickened out as June 1st approached, and the common front would have been left in tatters. However, things weren't

left there. The government decided to bring charges against the fifty union leaders who had disobeyed the original injunctions. Among the fifty were Marcel Pepin, Louis Laberge, and Yvon Charbonneau.

CONTEMPT

The three top leaders' first appearance in court was on Thursday May 4th. They waited around for half an hour, without the case starting, and then left complaining about waiting and about the presence of police with anti-riot equipment. They were sentenced to one year's imprisonment, the maximum sentence for contempt of court.

On Tuesday May 9th the three leaders voluntarily handed themselves over to their jailers. A problem was created by the leader of the jail guards union, who urged his members not to accept the three men into prison. "It is the deputies who should be in their place", he said. But, eventually, someone was found to take the men into custody.

By the end of the week, the reaction of the working class to the imprisonments had so shaken the whole of Quebec that ministers were threatening to resign and the Quebec government was close to toppling.

It all started in Sept-Iles, a small heavily industrialised town with a population of 18,000 and a highly unionised working class.

The day after the imprisonment of the union leaders a spontaneous strike broke out which rapidly involved the whole of the labour force. A demonstration led to clashes with the police who were bottled up in the police station. To prevent reserves being brought in, the workers blocked the main road, took over the airport, and jammed all the telephone lines.



GENERAL STRIKE

From the rest of the Canadian union leaders the workers of Quebec received at best luke-warm verbal support, liberally laced with warnings about the dangers of anarchy. Donald Macdonald, President of the Canadian Labour Congress (equivalent to the TUC) warned workers against a general strike, declaring his positive distaste for this form of struggle because "they're not strikes, they're revolutions".

Strictly speaking, of course, he was incorrect, but nevertheless he does have a point. In the normal run of capitalist society, the capitalist state takes over a whole series of functions which are essential to the running of any civilised society. Education, hospitals, information and news-services, traffic control, 'law and order' all become the near-monopoly of the State.

Now there is no God-given rule which says that these activities cannot exist independently of the class struggle, but, in capitalist society, the ruling class takes over these functions (which in themselves are nothing more than aspects of civilised society) and turns them into instruments of class rule. Education and information (TV and radio) are obvious examples. They are constant weapons in the hands of the ruling class, which uses them to strengthen its own ideological hold over the working class.

In a general strike, however, the state is stripped of all these institutions, both in as much as they are instruments of class rule and in as much as they are legitimate, useful aspects of civilised society. The state is left bare. Bare, that is, except for what is most essential to it - its "bodies of armed men", the police and the army.

Equally, in a general strike, just as the state is stripped of these functions, so the working class is forced to take them over. The strikers must create their own police force, their own health inspectorate, their own information service. Moreover, in taking over these functions the workers turn them into weapons against the capitalists. The necessity is forced upon the working class of creating its own embryonic state-machine to carry out the necessary functions of public life and to protect the strike from scabs, right wing gangs and the forces of the capitalist state machine.

However, this is not as yet a revolution, it is the establishment of dual power - a revolution comes when the working class becomes conscious of the need to smash the old capitalist state machine and replace it by its own "bodies of armed men".

The General Strike in Quebec gives ample examples of the beginnings of these organs of working class power, the embryonic form of a workers' state. In Sept-Îles the shops and stores were only allowed to open by consent of the strikers, who imposed rigid price control (something which is quite impossible for a normal, that is a non-corporate, non-fascist, capitalist state). A rudimentary police force was formed to patrol the streets and also to keep an eye on the state police. Elsewhere newspaper offices were broken into and the papers were censored. Anti-strike editorials were taken out and replaced by union notices. At least a dozen radio stations were taken over and used to strengthen the strike.

The strike reached its zenith by the end of the week. Midway through the following week it began to decline, although the union leaders were still imprisoned.

'VIGILANTES'

While the strike was gaining strength, the forces of reaction were also gathering. With the encouragement of the Liberal Party, vigilante groups of 'respectable' middle class citizens were formed.

More important, the right wing in the unions engineered a split, setting up a new breakaway Confederation. In Montreal pro and anti-strike building workers fought it out with pick-axe handles.

The result of the strike was not (as it has been presented) outright victory. The demands were for the release of the three union leaders and the repeal of the anti-union legislation. The Government had always insisted that the union leaders would be released if they appealed against the sentence. The union leaders refused to appeal, saying that this would be equivalent to admitting that there was justice in Quebec. In the end, however, with the strike subsided, they decided to appeal in order to get out and deal with the right wing threat in the unions.

For its part, the Government made the conciliatory gestures of letting them go without having to pay bail and of sacking its old negotiating team.

In these terms the strike was neither an outright victory and certainly not a defeat. But the real, durable gains of the strike lie in the fact that it has given the Quebec working class its first taste of self-reliance, independent organisation and independent political struggle. Although a centralised organ of dual power was not created, in dozens of towns workers partially or completely took over the administration of society.

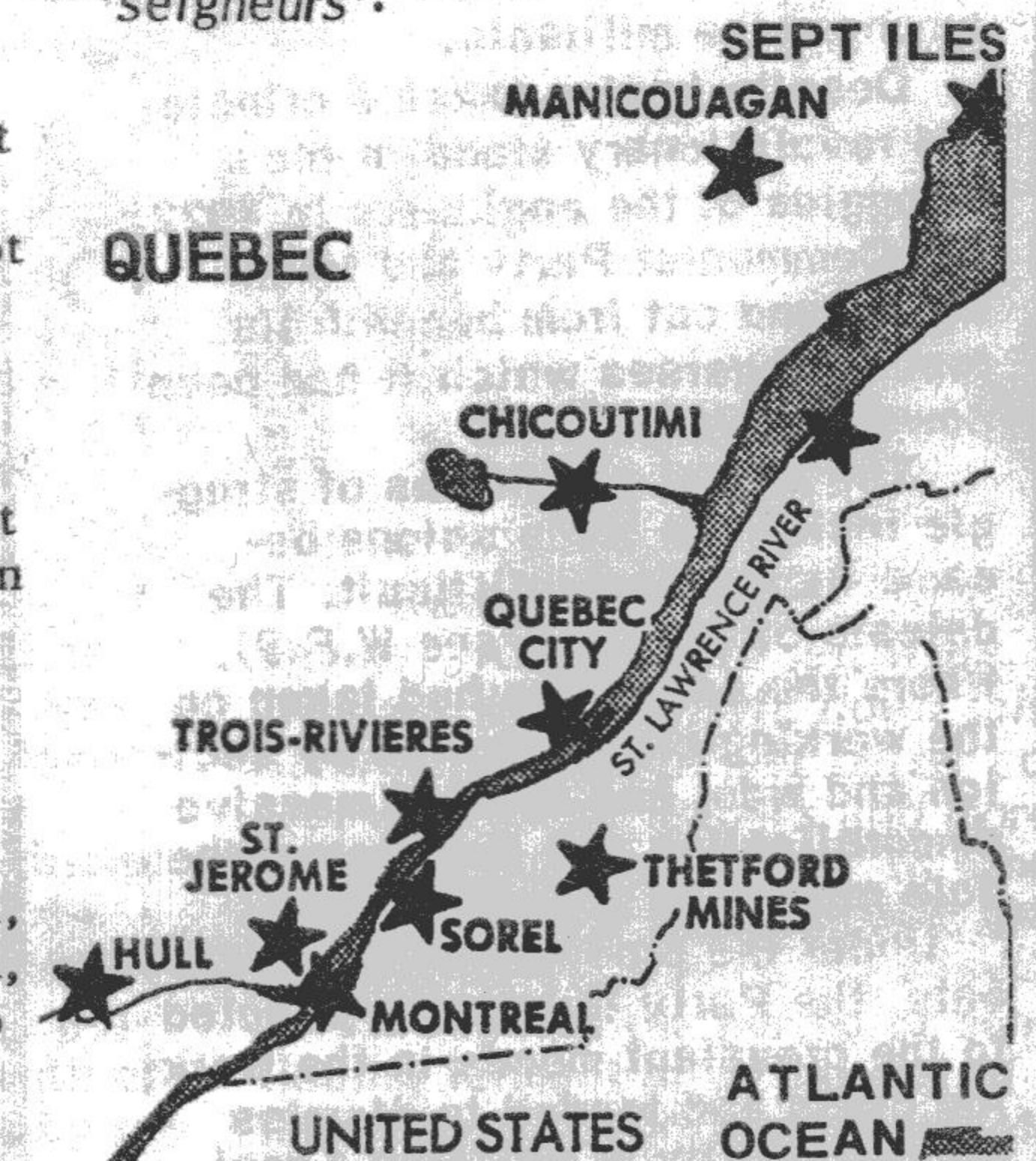
It was an experience that won't be forgotten.

200 YEARS OPPRESSION

The struggle had both a class and a nationalist character. When the three union leaders handed themselves over, 3 000 workers demonstrated outside the jail, shouting "Ce n'est que un debut, continuons le combat". (It's only a start, continue the fight). This slogan was originally coined in the May 1968 general strike in France; later it became the slogan of the Quebec nationalists.

The existence of both English Canadian and French Canadian nations is based on the pushing-out of the original native population of Canada. But from England's colonial conquest of Quebec in 1760 onwards the French Canadian population has been an oppressed national minority within Canada.

In the other major French-speaking area, Acadia (New Brunswick) the English colonists simply deported 10 000 French Canadians. In Quebec, they followed a policy of alliance with the reactionary authorities in the French population, the Church and the 'seigneurs'.



The Quebecois' aspirations for basic democratic rights of self-determination were not beaten down. For example, during the two World Wars the Quebecois showed that they totally rejected the Canadian ruling class's alliance with the imperialist interests of the British bosses. In 1917 there were major anti-conscription upheavals in Quebec. In World War 2 conscription agents who came into Quebec were literally lynched, and over 50% of Quebecois scheduled for overseas service went Absent Without Leave.

Quebec is 80% French-speaking, but still English is the dominant language in industry, commerce, and culture. In recent years the language issue has served to crystallise the whole range of oppression suffered by the Quebecois. Wage levels are 20 to 30 per cent lower than the average for English Canadians.

Unemployment in Quebec is generally double the rate in the neighbouring English-speaking province of Ontario. Over 80% of Quebec's industry is non-Quebecois owned. Educational opportunities are far less for the French-speaking than for the English-speaking.

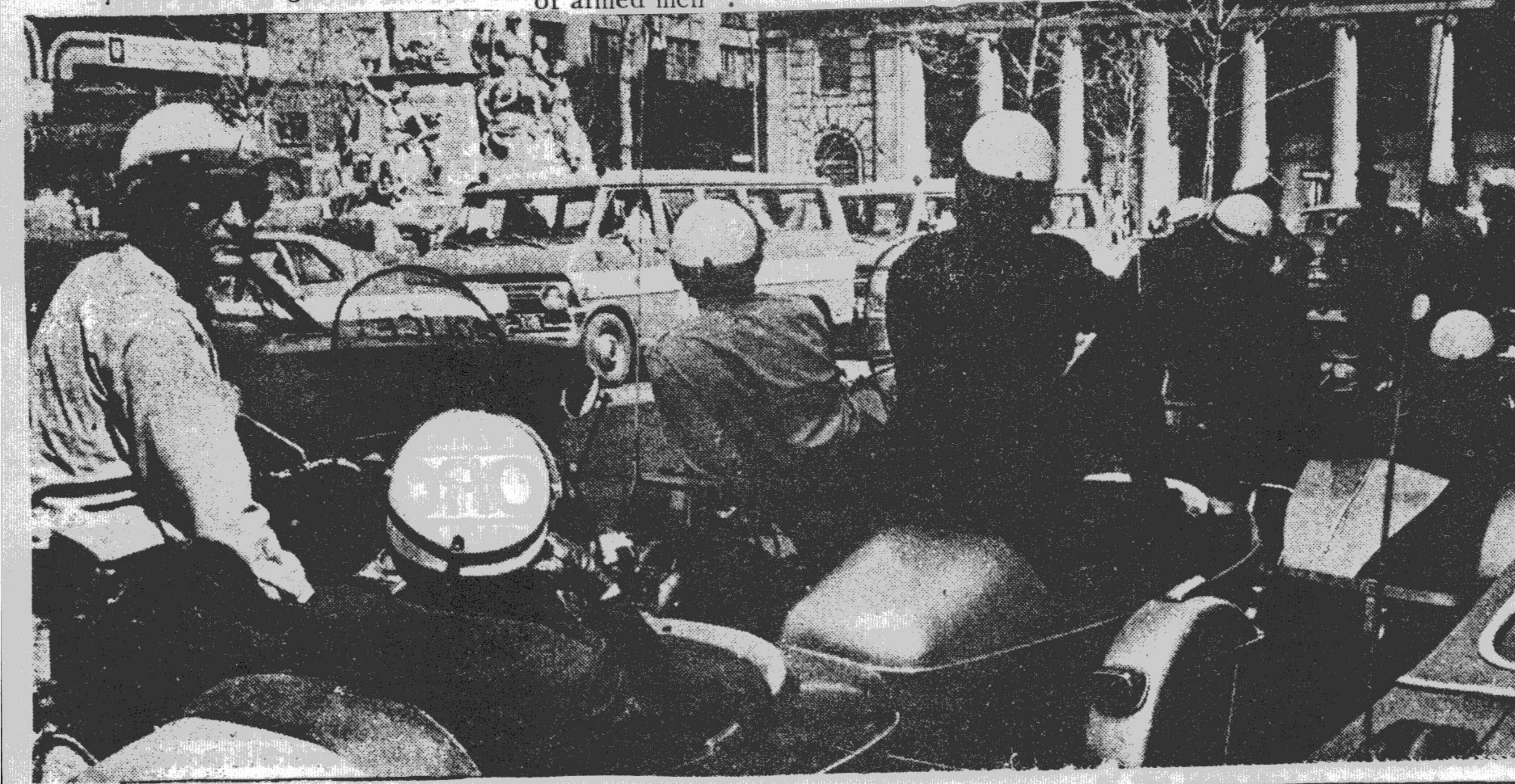
The current upsurge of Quebec nationalism - a whole series of terrorist actions and language struggles since the early 1960s - has up to now been a largely middle class affair. But now the Quebecois struggle against imperialist oppression has been fused, explosively, with the militancy of the working class.

RIKE

The Quebec Minister of Justice complained that the workers had taken over the town and he was quite correct. The local radio station was occupied by the strikers and used to spread the news of the strike.

The workers even forced the mayor to plead with the provincial government for the release of the three union leaders. The premier of Quebec, Robert Bourassa, sarcastically lectured the unfortunate mayor on the principles of a bourgeois democratic constitution and on how the legislature couldn't override the judiciary. (Remember Heath gave similar lectures on constitutional niceties to London dockers... just before the miraculous intervention of the Official Solicitor).

Within days the strike had spread, to a greater or lesser extent, to every town and city in Quebec, and seven more towns had been taken over by striking workers. In effect, there was a general strike.



REVOLUTIONARY TRADE-UNIONISM THE MINORITY MOVEMENT 1924-32

by DAVID BLACK

The Minority Movement was the first and last effort of the Communist Party to develop a nationally co-ordinated mass rank and file movement on the basis of revolutionary politics. At its height it had the active support on a quarter of the organised trade unionists in Britain.

EARLY STRUGGLES

THE MINORITY MOVEMENT WAS founded in August 1924 after almost two years of considerable preparations by the revolutionary militants of the Communist Party. It marked a new rise in labour militancy, and in the organised influence of revolutionary socialism amongst the militants.

Despite having taken a principled revolutionary stand in the struggles of the engineers in 1922, the Communist Party had found the ground cut from beneath its feet by reverses which it had been powerless to prevent.

The actual conditions of struggle inside the trade unions became increasingly difficult. The defeats of 1921/2 (*see W.F.9), where the employers had taken on the working class section by section and won, had created massive demoralisation and lengthened the dole queues to 2½ millions.

Under the pressure of these defeats, the Party leadership adapted to the prevalent moods in the working class and tended to dismiss the possibility of creating a real working class base in the next round of struggles.

This too-pessimistic approach was reflected in the speech of J.T. Murphy, a Central Committee member of the C.P., at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International: "In England we have had a powerful Shop Stewards movement. But it can and only does exist given objective conditions. These necessary conditions at the moment in England do not exist. ... You cannot build factory organisations in empty and depleted workshops, while you have a great reservoir of unemployed workers."

By early 1924, the Communist Party had become so infected with defeatism on the industrial front, that the Red International of Labour Unions (RILU) intervened directly. The work of the British section of RILU was severely criticised for its sectarianism at a time when the class was beginning to recover from the demoralisation of the defeats of 1921/22.

The Executive of the RILU pinpointed the defects of the Communist Party's approach when it stated - "...the work of the British Bureau does not keep pace with the requirements and possibilities of the present labour movement of Great Britain." In short, the Communist Party was idle in the face of new and sharp developments in the class struggle. The transformation of the old purely propagandist groups which had united under the name of the Communist Party in 1920 and '21, into a real Communist Party actively involved in the everyday struggles of the working class, had still to take place.

Consequently the Executive of

RILU fought fiercely for a rapid re-organisation of the industrial work of the Communist Party. The main emphasis of the fight was placed on the urgent necessity of constructing revolutionary minority groups in all sections of industry - and with these groups, a strong national leadership.

William Gallacher, a former leading Clydeside shop steward, was set the task of convening a national conference to forge these minority movements into a unified body of a national character.

NEW WAVE

The success of these new departures was of prime importance to the struggle against the right wing inside the TUC whose

caused the delays in calling a national conference to launch the movement.

MINERS

More through the efforts of Party rank and filers and trade union militants than anything else, a national conference formed a national Miners Minority Movement in January 1924, after a series of district conferences in all the coalfields. The conference decisions reflected the growing determination of the working class to join battle once more with the employers. It resolved that district committees were to be set up in South Wales, Durham, Lancs, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Nottingham and Scotland.

mented. Only at the end of May had sufficient preparations been made to organise local conferences, of which one took place in Manchester and one in Edinburgh.

The support for the Conferences enabled the C.P.'s Central Industrial Committee to launch immediately a Metal Workers Minority Movement. Despite this early success, the pace of development was still slow. Conferences were planned for other districts but did not take place.

These temporary difficulties did not deter the CP, which sought to draw out the lessons of the workers' struggles to date. The Sixth Party Congress of May 1924 assessed the situation thus: "The bankruptcy of the bureaucracy has



The General Strike showed both the organised strength and the political weakness of the young Communist Party

treachery had paved the way for the massive defeats of 1921/22. The new wave of class struggles afforded tremendous opportunities to the revolutionary wing inside the unions. With the correct tactics, the Communist Party would be able to win around it those dedicated fighters and working class militants who had not rallied to it previously, laying broad foundations for a struggle to replace the bureaucracy of the trade union movement with an organised rank and file revolutionary leadership.

This crucial tactical turn towards the mass of militants inside the unions was not, however, met with unqualified enthusiasm in the leadership of the Communist Party. William Allan, a leading CP member, described the reception given to the new policy: "...at the beginning of the National Minority Movement, considerable time was expended to fight down the belief that there was no room for a movement dealing with immediate and 'narrow' economic issues, that it was a reformist conception, and that such an organisation would stand in front of and hide the face of the Party from the workers. Sneering descriptions of the NMM were given in the Party as being an attempt to dress a red man in a pink cloak". This sort of attitude

On 16th. February 1924 the Miners' Minority Movement launched a newspaper The Mineworker whose campaigning focal point was the call for the transformation of the Miners Federation into a national industrial union, the United Mineworkers Union, affiliated to the Red International of Labour Unions. Other demands included the Six-hour day and for real wages to be equivalent to the real wage in 1914.

The biggest achievement of the Miners' section, however, occurred soon after the establishment of the movement when Frank Hodges, the right wing Secretary of the Miners' Federation, resigned to take a post in the Labour Government and was replaced by the left wing A.J. Cook, who was elected secretary by a majority of 15,000. This development was also intimately connected with the recovery of the miners from the defeat of 'Black Friday'.

METAL WORKERS

Elsewhere, however, the progress of the movement was somewhat slower. Proposals for broad agitation in the engineering union were uttered but largely not im-

brought into existence fighting groups of workers in all parts of the country, all battling for a fighting policy for the Trade Union movement. These groups are gradually being co-ordinated into what has become known as 'The Minority Movement' - the new and encouraging sign of the spirit that will one day overcome all obstacles in the path of working class emancipation. ... The Communist Party has on all occasions assisted in the development of this movement, and will continue to do so, but at the same time warns those active workers who participate in it, that only a revolutionary Communist struggle can serve to achieve the object they have in view."

NATIONALLY ORGANISED

By August 1924, the stage was set for the first national conference of the Minority Movement, which was held in London. The gathering was attended by 270 delegates, representing almost 200,000 workers, and united the individual rank and file movements,

formulated a programme of Action and arranged for the election of an executive committee and a general secretary.

The conference was particularly timely in that the Labour government of MacDonald had had 8 months of government and wide sections of the working class were moving into conflict with it. Also, it was a genuine attempt on the part of the C.P. to break from the sterile propagandist sectarianism that had plagued so much of its earlier industrial work, creating the opportunity for its transformation from a tiny propaganda group into potentially a mass party with deep roots in the working class.

The struggle to build strong national unofficial movements around immediate demands was a step towards this mass revolutionary party, as well as an organiser of the immediate working class struggle.

The lessons of Black Friday and the collapse of the Triple Alliance of railmen, miners and transport workers, had bitten deep in the minds of the militants, who felt the need of a movement which could provide an instrument of combat against the right wing inside the trade union leadership.

RANK & FILE

Hence, the first Conference focussed much of its attention on the battle for rank and file control over the union leaderships, in general, and the TUC General Council in particular.

The Minority Movement's Programme of Action mirrored this concern by calling for the setting up of workshop and factory committees, for representation of these committees on the Trades Councils, for industrial unionism, and for the immediate affiliation of the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement to the TUC. These demands were designed to assert the strength of the rank and file in the unions and to make the union leaderships directly responsible to the rank and file.

The inaugural conference also called for a strengthening of the General Council of the TUC, "to mobilise and concentrate all the forces of the working class movement for the purpose of opposing a united class front to the united class enemy."

This may appear to have been in formal contradiction to the stress which the Conference laid on fighting the right wing. Far from it! The delegates were fully aware of the urgency of a parallel growth of rank and file control over the General Council. This was implicit in the statement that

"The reactionaries desire a General Council which will check and dissipate all advances by the workers. We of the Minority Movement desire a General Council which will bring into being a bold and audacious General Staff of the trade union movement. ... We can guard against the General Council becoming a machine of the capitalists .. by, in the first place and fundamentally, developing a revolutionary class consciousness among the trade union membership and, in the second place, by so altering the constitution of the General Council as to ensure that those elected thereon have the closest contact with the workers".

On these firm foundations, the Movement experienced initial successes. Trade Union activity was on the upswing, there was a partial economic recovery from the slump of 1921 to 1923 and unemployment fell slightly, all providing an impetus to the class struggle, with key sections moving into action to recoup the losses they had suffered at the hands of the employers in the past period.

Railmen, engineers, shipyard workers and dockers all filed new wage claims. Into this fray stepped

the Minority Movement.

SUCCESSSES

Substantial successes were gained and new affiliations were secured. March 1926 saw some 957,000 trade unionists organised in the Minority Movement. It was especially powerful in the coal industry, shortly to be the scene of major class conflict. By August 1925 Minority Movement branches had been formed in the mining areas and 16 miners' Lodges had affiliated.

Similar developments took place in the engineering industry. In fact, there were 153 engineering delegates at the next Minority Movement Conference. Further support was derived from substantial membership of the Movement among the East London tailoring and furniture trade workers, who were largely Jewish refugees from Tsarist oppression.

Given this basis, the Movement was able to exercise considerable influence on the course of the class struggle. Under its pressure, the Miners' Federation of Great Britain leadership began to investigate the possibilities of a new industrial Alliance between the members of the old Triple Alliance

T.U.C.

The Movement also achieved a partial success when the TUC Congress of 1925 accepted a resolution empowering the General Council to organise support for stoppages. However, the resolution — framed by the 'left' union leader, Hicks — was so vaguely worded as to be meaningless. Understandably the Minority Movement was dissatisfied with it and stepped up its campaign to urge the TUC leaders to prepare for the coming fight.

Right through to the General Strike, the Minority Movement commanded increasing support, forcing union leaders leftwards and succeeding in having parts of the Programme of Action adopted as union policy. The strength of the Minority Movement was demonstrated by the fact that in July 1925, the TUC was forced to ally itself to the miners and make the Tory government retreat on 'Red Friday'.

PARALYSIS

Yet, at this crucial point, when the Communist Party was clothing the fight for a revolutionary working class leadership in real flesh and blood, the tactics of the Minority Movement began to change.

This change owed its origin to the first manifestations of the growing tendency of the incipient



Miners' leader A.J. Cook

Stalinist regime in Russia to put the programme of world revolution in second place, subordinating it to a reliance on "progressive forces" whose task was to 'neutralise' the hostility of imperialism to the young workers' state in Russia.

In Britain, this change found its expression in the Anglo-Russian Trade Union Committee, which would supposedly offset the vicious anti-Soviet outlook of the British capitalist class. All the bold warriors, Purcell, Hicks, Swales et al who were to be instrumental in betraying the General Strike, were to be found under the canopy of the Anglo-Russian Committee, exploiting a cheap and empty 'left' (pro-Soviet) image in foreign policy to cover a rightist and bureaucratic trade union policy at home, where it meant some-



Below: workers, trying to stop a scab truck, are attacked by police

thing in practice. And it was to this wing of the trade union bureaucracy that the Minority Movement was tied.

In return for the dubious friendship of bureaucrats towards the USSR, the C.P. and Minority Movement began to sacrifice their political independence. The depth of the change is best signified by reference to two statements from leaders of the Communist Party:

1924: "It would be a suicidal policy ... for the C.P. and M.M. to place too much reliance on what we have called the official left wing." (J.R. Campbell in Communist Review).

1925: "The left trade union leaders occupy at present the position not only of the workers in the immediate crisis, but also of the spokesmen of the working class elements in the C.P. ... an alternative political leadership" (Palme-Dutt in 'Inprecorr'.)

The fight to prepare the rank and file in the local areas was muted and limited by the exigencies of the alliance, and the activity of the M.M. was directed towards presenting the 'lefts' as a leadership that could smash the capitalist offensive. On the eve of the General Strike, then, the revolutionary movement was effectively paralysed and the independence of the revolutionary workers' Party heavily compromised.

1926

This was the tragedy of 1926, and everything the Movement did prior to the strike, during the strike and after it was coloured by this policy. The Councils of Action, built up in the previous period and designed to co-ordinate the rank and file against the bureaucracy, were turned over to this policy, being transformed into ginger-groups instead of embryonic organs of working class power.

The C.P. and M.M. failed to play an independent revolutionary role in the strike, despite the courageous efforts of party members in some districts. Possessed of the idea that it was not on the

cards to challenge the domination of the TUC leadership, it raised the preposterous slogan "All Power to the TUC". That is, to the uncontrolled bureaucracy that was blatantly selling out the strike.

LEFT COVER

Even the betrayal did not shake the Party leaders off this course. Only a few weeks after the end of the General Strike, the Central Committee sought to head off great criticism in the ranks with the warning that "There will be a reaction within our Party

against working with left wing leaders. We must fight down this natural feeling and get better contact with these leaders and more mass pressure on them." In other words, not only dig your own grave, but pay for the use of the shovel!

Throughout the period of continuing ferment after the end of the strike the bureaucrats benefited enormously from the restraint of the C.P. and M.M. and the left cover they provided. When they had ridden out the storm, they then broke up — in late 1927 — the Anglo-Russian Committee, and launched a ferocious witch-hunt against the Minority Movement.

The refusal to learn from the bankrupt policy of pressurising the sham Lefts marked the beginning of the end for the Minority Movement (and the Communist Party) as a revolutionary force.

Continued over page



Communist Party leaders Pollitt and Hannington

WORKERS' FIGHT

Where we stand

■ Capitalism is inseparable from the exploitation by the bourgeoisie of the working class 'at home' and (since 'advanced' capitalism became imperialist) of the workers and peasants in the colonies and neo-colonies abroad.

It is a vicious system geared to buttressing the strong against the weak, to serving the handful of capitalists against the millions of workers, and to keeping many millions in poverty so that a few may prosper. Capitalism exalts property and degrades life. It is at the root of the racialism which poisons and divides worker against worker. It is a system of massive waste and social disorganisation, at the same time as it forces the working class to fight every inch of the way to better or even maintain its wages and conditions.

Having once been progressive, in that it at least developed, in the only way then possible, the productive resources of mankind, it is now a totally reactionary force in history. Its expansion after World War 2 gave it merely the appearance of health: in reality the boom was like the flush on a sick man's face. And already economic expansion has given way to creeping stagnation.

■ Today the ruling class can keep their system going only at the price of large scale unemployment and attempts to cut the living standards of workers in the 'rich' parts of the world, of massive starvation and bloodshed in the 'poor' two thirds of the world, and of the ever-present threat of the destruction of humanity through nuclear war.

■ The only way out is for the working class to take power and to bring the resources of the modern economy under a rational working class plan, in place of the present unplanned and blind private-profit system. Having overthrown capitalism and established social ownership of the means of production, the working class will build towards a truly communist society, in which at last the principle will be "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

■ The working class has created political parties for this purpose - Labour Parties, Communist Parties, Social Democratic Parties. But in country after country these parties have joined capitalist governments and managed capitalism. They have betrayed the socialist aspirations of their working class supporters, tied the labour movement to the bosses' state, interest and ideology, and destroyed the political independence of the working class.

■ The task is therefore to build a socialist party which will stand firmly for the interests of the working class.. WORKERS' FIGHT is a group of revolutionary socialists, aiming to build that party: a party which is democratically controlled by an active working class membership, which preserves its political independence and fights the ideological domination of the ruling class.

■ The basis of our activity is therefore the scientific theory of Marxism, the only theory which gives a clear understanding of present-day society and of the necessity of revolutionary change.

■ We fight for the independence of the trade unions from all state control, and within the unions for democracy and militant policies. Although they are not enough for the struggle for workers' power, the trade unions are necessary for the defence of workers' interests. Only a mass national rank and file movement, linking up the different industries in united class action, can, in this period, turn the trade unions into reliable and independent instruments of working class interests.

■ We fight against the Industrial Relations Act, against any incomes policy under capitalism, and against any legal restrictions on trade unionism.

■ We fight against unemployment; for a national minimum wage; for work or full pay; against productivity bargaining.

■ We fight to extend the power of workers to control the details of their own lives in industry here and now. We stand for the fight for workers' control, with the understanding that it can be made a serious reality only in a workers' state. We are against any workers' 'participation' in managing their own exploitation under capitalism.

■ We believe that the "Parliamentary road to socialism" is a crippling illusion. The capitalist class will not leave the stage peacefully: no ruling class ever has. Socialism can be built only by smashing the capitalist state machine, which is the ultimate defence of the bosses' power in society, and replacing it with a state based on democratic Workers' Councils.

■ We give unconditional support to the struggles of oppressed peoples fighting against imperialism, and to their organisations leading the fight.

■ We fight racialism and against immigration controls. We support the right of black minorities in Britain to form defence leagues or independent political organisations.

■ We fight for full and equal rights for women, for female emancipation from the male domination which has co-existed throughout history with class society and has its roots in such society. We fight, in particular, for the emancipation of women of our own class, suffering a double and triple exploitation, who have been most accurately described as the "slaves of the slaves."

■ British workers have - fundamentally - more in common with every single worker throughout the globe, irrespective of race, religion, nationality or colour, than with the whole of the British ruling class. We see the fight for socialism as a world wide struggle, necessitating the creation of a world revolutionary party. We give critical support to the Fourth International.

■ We stand for a political revolution of the working class against the bureaucracies of the USSR and the other countries called 'communist', which we consider to be degenerated and deformed workers' states. The social regime of the different Bureaucracies has nothing in common with socialism, let alone with real communism. At the same time we defend the nationalised economy in these countries against capitalism and imperialism, unconditionally: that is, irrespective of the selfish, usually anti-working class and anti-revolutionary policies of the ruling bureaucrats, and against those policies.

■ There are other political groups (including the official British section of the Fourth International) which have generally similar aims, but methods differing from ours, or differing conceptions about what needs to be done here and now. We consider all these groups to be seriously - sometimes grossly - inadequate in theory and practice. We favour unity in action with these groups where possible, and a serious dialogue about our differences.

FROM PAGE 9

MINORITY MOVEMENT

This policy was taken to extraordinary lengths by the Communist Party leaders so that when the TUC General Council instructed trades councils to disaffiliate from the Minority Movement at the end of 1927 the C.P. advised them to obey! The policy, together with the demoralisation and defeat which descended on the working class, led to a sharp decline in the Minority Movement.

ULTRA-LEFT DECLINE

The sharp turn left of the world Communist movement was to kill the Minority Movement stone dead. Having subordinated to the Union bureaucrats in a period when the working class could have pushed them aside, the C.P. after mid-1929 suddenly appeared to go mad. Not only the bureaucrats were now declared bankrupt - but the Trade Unions too!

Already weakened by its incapacity to assimilate the lessons of 1926, the Minority Movement indulged in the idiotic antics of the Stalinist ultra-left Third Period, attempting to set up 'pure' revolutionary breakaway unions (e.g. the United Mineworkers of Scotland), and describing everything outside these bodies as 'social-fascist' - thus writing off the majority of the class who were concentrated in the reformist unions.

This period was adequately summed up by Brian Pearce in his 1959 article "Some Past Rank and File Movements": "Characteristic of the 1929/31 period was a growing disparity between slogans and achievements. During the Bradford woollen strike of 1930, for instance, the Minority Movement shouted to bewildered workers about "The Struggle for Power" - but proved incapable of setting up a single independent mill committee. The shouting to workers to come to be led, with a general strike as 'the next step' grew louder and shriller..."

Amidst this 'growing disparity between slogans and achievements', the Minority Movement was allowed to die slowly up to 1932, when it was finally buried.

When after about 1934/5 the Communist Party emerged from the ultra-left binge of the Third Period its trade union policy rapidly became one of blatant subordination to the Union machines and bureaucrats, its prime goal the capture of Union office and positions. Rank and file direct action to smash bureaucratic control of the unions was forgotten in favour of gaining positions within the bureaucracy.

CONCLUSION

The Minority Movement in the early stages of its development was the model revolutionary opposition movement in the unions. Led by communists, but having no formal connection with the Party, it was able to win hundreds of thousands to its revolutionary policies of struggle against both the ruling class and its bureaucratic mainstays in the trade union movement. This broad front of militants could - given the leadership of a powerful communist party, capable of ruthless self-criticism - have created the basis for the mass revolutionary workers' party. The very growth of the movement pointed to the fact that key sections of workers were breaking from the road of reformism. But when they looked for leadership it was not forthcoming.

TODAY

Today's tasks bear close similarity to those of 1925. A nationally organised mass rank and file movement is a vital necessity at a time when the TUC leaders, 'left' and 'right', are in headlong retreat before the Tories.

In building such a movement we must learn from the Minority Movement.

There are tremendous possibilities for such a movement today. However, militants must be clear on one thing: that pressure politics alone are useless. This is the lesson which we must learn from the Minority Movement. Any pressure we put on today's union leaders must be backed up by the most detailed preparations to remove them and replace them by a militant leadership and socialist policies. Without this, pressure politics can only play into the hands of the bureaucracy.

That is why the policy of the Communist Party is so dangerous, subordinating the real, militant left in the unions to the phoney 'left' in the leadership. The policy of manoeuvring with the lefts shows only the road to defeat. If the current generation of militants is to be successful, it must learn this above all.

Our attitude to 'our leaders' must be firmly based on the central conception of the Minority Movement in its early days: that we ally with those leaders only as long as they identify themselves with the militants and actively fight the right wing. Or as T.A. Jackson, an early Communist Party leader put it: we may take them by the hand in order (if they retreat) to take them by the throat. Only this way can we carve out the path of victory over the enemy class once and for all.



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WELLINGBOROUGH SOGAT caves in to Hamlyn bosses

The HAMLYN GROUP of publishers is a part of the gigantic I.P.C. empire, which itself is part of the super-monopoly Reed International, which controls the Mirror amongst other things.

Their main distribution centre is at Rushden and Wellingborough, Northants. All the workers there felt secure under the protection of SOGAT, which is a union that can boast of its strength and militancy. But this image is a reflection of the membership, past and present, and not of the executive of the Union, as was indicated during the recent 'pay negotiations' at Hamlyn's.

In the face of falling profits the distribution centre had been moved away from London in a bid to cut down on costs — and one of the major costs is labour. But after a few months' quiet the men put in for a pay rise of £8 on the basic. Management said they would

offer £4 but would cut out guaranteed overtime (worth £8) and in stead substitute an incentive scheme. This incentive scheme meant that the men had to work twice as hard in attempts to achieve a bonus which it was almost impossible to achieve. In fact the proposal amounted to a cut in wages and the men didn't want it.

Management were adamant. The men were thinking of having a go-slow. The two sides were jostling for position.

'CHEAP NATIVES'

While this was going on, an incident locally must have given the bosses hope. Another ex-London printing firm, Lamps and Parragon, was taking on local labour (SOGAT labour too!) at £8 a week less than the ones who had moved up from London.

So there were two different grades of workers doing the same

job. — and the Union told the local branch to accept. Already the national executive was weakening SOGAT's bargaining power locally.

Then, out of the blue, the whole of Hamlyn's workforce here were given the sack — cards and money by registered post. The reason — they hadn't signed a letter accepting totally the management's terms of employment.

It wasn't 'pay negotiations' any more — it was a Lockout.

"One out, all out" would have been the cry in London and other IPC chapels would have come out in support. But this wasn't London and the shop-floor liaison wasn't there. So now the men had to rely on the union machinery.

A superficial look at the bosses' position shows it was empty bluff. No P.45s were sent, no notice money given out, all transport was cancelled and no local labour taken on (although apparently there were a few only too keen, as one of the men said, to leap into dead men's boots). It was obvious the bosses weren't really giving people the sack but were making the men sweat it out without pay.

Round 1 to the bosses.

What was SOGAT executive's reaction? Would they pull other IPC chapels out in support? Would they black Hamlyn's goods? Would they threaten to stop work at all Hamlyn's centres, mail order, etc?

Well first no part of the union bureaucracy moved until about a week afterwards. And when it did, it was soon obvious that militant action was not envisaged.

Management must have noticed this and decided to twist the knife in the wound. They would pick and choose, they said, the men they wanted back, at individual interviews and even then only if they accepted a further 30% changes in conditions of work. These 30 points contained such relevant

items as — pay for your own tea (it's chipping into the profits); no overtime for cleaning toilets (you use 'em you clean 'em) and the standard of forklift truck driving must improve!

Round 2 to the bosses.

Over a week after the lockout SOGAT moved into action. 'Stuff your interviews' says the National Organising Secretary, Powell, to the bosses. At last, thought the men, a bit of action.

Two days later, just two days, 12 days after the lockout began, without a further murmur of protest, Powell accepted the bosses' wage offer, the bosses' incentive scheme, the majority of the bosses' 30 points. This was done over the heads of the Father of the Chapel (shop steward) and of the men themselves. In fact, they weren't even brought into it.

There was numbed shock at the Chapel meeting that night as it was spelled out to the men. The F.o.C. and many committee members resigned in disgust. On Sunday the Executive issued directives — all men will accept, all men will go back.

Game, set and match to the bosses.

The lessons to be learnt from this episode are that to belong to a union which on the face of it is militant and left wing is not enough. Nothing is a substitute for rank and file, inter-chapel, or inter-shop floor liaison to force the union bureaucrats to do what the men want.

When Hamlyn's was in London it was easy; now they are a bit isolated (which is what management wanted, of course). One idea put forward is that liaison should start with London again. It should go further than that — it should be nationwide. After all, everybody's in it together.

Ivan Wels

COVENTRY Eight GEC plants strike

G.E.C. WORKERS IN COVENTRY came out on strike for a fortnight for a substantial wage increase in line with the £6 demanded by the national engineering unions. The Company's first offer was between £1 and £1.50 and was of course rejected straight away.

This was the first GEC local combine strike to be called in Coventry since 1938. It involved over 7,000 manual workers, mainly women, and crippled all 8 GEC plants in the city.

One thing which has made GEC workers more militant is their low pay compared with their brothers in the car factories. For example, since the scrapping of the Coventry Toolroom Rate some engineering workers have jumped ahead of others. BSA Meriden gained £52 for a 40 hour week, while agreements between £45 and £50 have been normal.

On the national claim, too, Jaguar-Daimler workers won a £3 award without a strike, and this £3 has been taken as the norm for other British Leyland workers.

In the past, GEC workers have been told that at least their jobs are secure compared to the car workers, but with the enormous number of redundancies in GEC and lower pay too, GEC workers are beginning to wake up.

After the initial strike threat,

the Company agreed to £2, the same settlement as for GEC Rugby. This too was turned down and the strike started.

A mass meeting was called for Thursday morning June 26th, and so worried were GEC that at ten o'clock the night before, shop stewards were called in to meet the company. The new offer was: 1) £2.25 on the minimum rate immediately, with another 75 in September. 2) an extra day's holiday this year, 2 days next year. 3) discussions on equal pay to start in September.

The majority of the stewards (70 to 30) rejected this, but the Union officials recommended acceptance.

Unfortunately, it was at the mass meeting where lack of experience told on the strikers. Whereas in a car factory Union officials skulk around looking pale and sick, they were allowed to pull the wool over the GEC workers' eyes at the mass meeting, with no real opposition.

There was the usual fiery talk from Crispin of the T&G about the diabolical management, the magnificent spirit of the strikers an inspiration to us all and so on and so on. Then Chater (AUEW) added his bit with warnings about striking near the holiday period, leng-

thening dole queues, best agreement in the combine, etc. And those stewards who spoke against put up only a half-hearted opposition, so really the result was fairly predictable. To end it all, we had a secret ballot and the vote was 4 to 1 in favour of going back.

In the event, the result is not too bad and should show the weary willies and moaning minnies that militancy — and above all united action — pays.

On the other hand, the combine must strengthen itself for the battles ahead. GEC workers will be left way behind unless we learn from the carworkers. Also, redundancies and productivity deals are still hanging over our heads and rumours spreading all the time. We must fight together against all redundancies and productivity deals — whether they are obvious or hidden.

Tom Ramsey

MANCHESTER END OF THE LAST SIT-IN

THE RETURN TO WORK OF THE Metal Box factory at Broadheath, near Manchester, marks the end of the Manchester engineers' struggle.

The Metal Box workers put in for the standard district claim of £4, 35-hour week, a week's extra holiday and progress towards equal pay for women.

After a 14 week sit-in the workers have won a £3 rise and a promise to look at the hours and holiday claim at national level. Before the sit-in had started the management had already offered £2.

Nationally Metal Box have things their own way. There has never been a national combine committee and all negotiations have taken place at factory level.

Thus the workers at Metal Box, Broadheath, had no idea of what wages were like at other factories until they went round the country looking for support.

They found that skilled men at Broadheath (where they make the machinery which makes the tin cans) were earning less than operators in other factories and that throughout the country wage rates differed wildly.

Now, however, out of the action of the Broadheath factory, a committee of all 50 factory convenors has been formed, and it is this committee which will negotiate the hours and holidays claim.

J.W.

INDUSTRIAL FIGHT



B.C.P. Work in

"UCS NOW HAS A BASE IN LONDON;" COMMENTED ONE SOGAT MEMBER AS WORKERS AT BRIANT COLOUR PRINTING COMPANY IN THE OLD KENT ROAD CONTINUED WITH THEIR WORK-IN. MILITANT ACTION IN DEFENCE OF THE RIGHT TO WORK HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN TAKEN BY WORKERS AT UCS, FISHER-BENDIX, AND FAKENHAM. WORKERS IN SE LONDON ARE NOW FOLLOWING THEIR LEAD.

This is not the first time that Briant's workers have faced the threat of redundancies. A year ago, when the firm was operating a three shift system, it was owned by Kitson, the Tory MP for Richmond, who is now Heath's private secretary. He wanted to sack two-thirds of the work force! Since then, the company has been taken over by D.G.Syder through one of his companies especially

set up for the purpose - Hurstville Investments'. Hurstville Investments got their money from Robert Hornes the paper merchants, who happened to be one of the major creditors of BCP!

CO-OPERATE THEN GO UNDER

THE NEW MASTERS OF BCP ASKED THEIR WORKERS FOR FULL CO-OPERATION IN GETTING THE COMPANY BACK ON TO A 'VIABLE FOOTING'. Co-operation was given by the workers and they even got letters of appreciation from the company for their help. Up until the announcement that the firm would close, the factory had been very busy, often turning work away. The workers had been on overtime, and casual labour from their unions had been employed. Summing up their attitude at the moment, BCP workers can see no earthly reason why their factory should close, conclude that they are being conned out of their jobs in the interests of the speculators.

Reading between the lines, it is clear what the employers are up to. They want to transfer most of the work carried out at BCP to other parts of the D.G. Syder chain and sell the land to property speculators. The Old Kent Road is worth more today than the price normally charged to those who are fond of playing monopoly. Bill Freeman, father of the NATSOPA chapel at BCP recognises that property speculators and entrepreneurs have been playing with workers lives for far too long.

YOU'VE HAD IT

Other workers told of the shoddy way they were treated by management when informed of the closure decision. "We left for work on Wednesday (21.6.72) after being on overtime. Then at twelve O'clock we were told 'you've had it', just like that!" The workers were not going to take that kind of treatment. After calling an emergency meeting, they immediately began a work-in.

On the first day of the work-in, the works' director, who had only been with the firm for a fortnight, (presumably he was brought in especially to supervise the closure) locked himself in his office. He is still there! When our reporter was interviewing an FOC, the works' director asked him whether an accountant could enter the factory; "Yes", came the reply, "but he's not going out again! Neither are you, until we get our money back. The workers at BCP are waiting for the company to return their Sports and Social Club money. They are holding the works' director to ransom until they got it.

WOMEN LEAD

Bill Freeman felt that the BCP struggle was part of a much larger one. "This is our struggle, but it is also that of the working class as a whole. We are fed up with the speculators and entrepreneurs who throw our people onto the slag heap. This action has to be taken! Other workers in similar situations should follow our example, as we have followed the examples of workers at UCS and Fakenham".

However, it must be stressed that there are certain dangers inherent in the work-in as a tactic. BCP has aroused our sympathy as did UCS. But BCP is a small factory, which, if it tries to be an island of workers' control in a sea of capitalist enterprise, will soon find orders for work going elsewhere. This will be a pity, since the workers at the moment have displayed a fine fighting spirit. If they lose out in their struggle, that spirit may be broken.

Bas Hardy

GROSS STRIKERS TAKE ON ASTMS

THE BOLTON BRANCH OF Gross Cash Registers Limited was, before its unionisation, typical of many non-union firms. Management had little organised opposition and such occurrences as dismissal on flimsy grounds, pay differentials for identical jobs and victimisation were all common.

Even the advent of ASTMS at Bolton, due mainly to the efforts of a WORKERS' FIGHT member

employed at Gross, did little to alter the long practised activities of the management. To all intents and purposes they continued as if the Union was a bad dream which would disappear if ignored.

Thus a situation arose where the members of the Union was employed at £22 a week whilst the rate was £25. Before unionisation this would have gone unchecked. But now, feeling collective strength, the workforce asked - why the difference?

The management replied with excuses but eventually promised 'to look into the matter'. After two months of such inquiries the situation was unchanged and, by the management's indication, likely to remain so.

The Bolton ASTMS Gross group decided to press for immediate action and that if the management refused them satisfaction a walk-out would be staged.

Gross did refuse, so with the full knowledge of the ASTMS official Gross engineers went into dis-

pute.

The management retaliated by issuing an ultimatum to the ASTMS official (not to the workers) that work must be resumed by noon on Tuesday June 20th - or the men would forfeit their jobs. This reached the ears of the Gross strike committee by that Tuesday afternoon. A hastily convened committee meeting on Tuesday evening, feeling unprepared for such an all-out struggle, decided to resume work the following morning.

After confirmation by a majority vote the information was passed on to the management by the ASTMS official. The management, however, informed him that it was too late - dismissal notices had already been posted.

SMASH UNION

It was quite apparent from the management's action that they were intent on smashing the union, and had seized their opportunity.

Bolton engineers however, des-

pite totally false accusation by the management of threats of violence, and despite ASTMS changing its policy like the wind, went ahead and at a meeting with Birmingham Gross workers were given the promise of further walk-outs in support of the claim - with or without official backing. This solidarity finally pressurised ASTMS into making the Bolton dispute official.

Gross engineers have advanced in their understanding of the struggle tactically and politically. They have learnt that they themselves, the rank and file, must organise to fight the employers, and that rank and file militancy can force the hand of the Trade Union bureaucracy by relying not on that bureaucracy but on rank and file action.

Now Gross have every likelihood of a national strike on their hands, although the ASTMS bureaucrats continue to postpone action, thereby allowing management time to organise against the strikers.

Chris Corcoran