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WORKERS POWER

OUT NOW workers power 4

ARTICLES ON: THE EARLY YEARS OF THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY, THE COMINTERN THESES ON WOMEN, THE SOCIAL CONTRACT IRELAND, EASTERN EUROPE, REVIEWS OF LUXEMBURG ON NATIONALISM AND THE IMG ON FIGHTING THE CUTS PRICE 35P

BREAK CONTRACT NOW!

The Last two months have been marked by a rise in militancy throughout the working class. Dockers, miners, engineers, teachers, public-sector workers, have all taken action against the savage attacks made by the anti-working class Labour Government.

Throughout the country workers have staged demos, occupations and strikes against different aspects of the attack - jobs, wages, equal pay, hospital closures and education cuts.

This mounting resistance, in particular the strike in the Leyland plant, has placed a question mark over the survival of the Labour Government on a further round of attacks on the working class and

egy for making the workers pay the cost of the crisis.

In the present period of increasing militancy, however, the working class is presented with another danger - false unity. The unity which says, 'don't fight yet, wait for everybody else.' This is the voice that calls for weak-kneed protest when the need is for direct attack on the bosses, the force that says pressure on Heffer and company is the way forward, even though, time and again, they have voted for the governments policies.

break the Social Contract NOW, not waiting passively to see what phase three will look like.

The trade union leaders are solidly in support of the contract, workers who challenge it can look for support only to other rank and file workers. The support they need is that of direct action in solidarity with their fight. The organisation of effective blacking, sympathy strikes, mass picketing and financial support will only be done by organised rank and file workers.

The recent increase in militancy has not only the determined and instant action and instant wage of those they officials and represent- as a result, the Communist Party is forc-

ed to take a lead in calling a national conference of shop stewards against the Social Contract.

In their search for a 'British' road to socialism through parliament, the CP stakes everything on trying to persuade the Labour and trade union 'Lefts' to their point of view. The furthest they want to go is to use the rank and file as a stage army in their protests. This is why last year's Labour Assembly on Unemployment came to nothing, why the Liaison Committee has no independent existence and why the CP sees no further than a day of protest on April 20th.

The April 3rd conference brings together a large number of shop-floor leaders. Such a body has the weight in the class that could lead a determined and on-going attack on the Social Contract.

Far from limiting itself to resolutions and declarations the conference needs to issue a call for the formation of local rank and file committees. Such committees are needed to organise strike action for April 20th., active support for workers in struggle against the Social Contract and to formulate local claims that break the contract. Local rank and file groupings, made up of individual militants, delegates from steward's committees, combines, Trades organisations will be essential in overcoming disunity, and developing solidarity with those in struggle. The logic of the CP's policy.

is to put their diplomacy with the Left wing architects of the Social Contract before the needs of the class.

The working class will get nothing from phase three or from relying on the 'Lefts' who have neither the backbone nor the desire to upset the parliamentary apparatus.

Our policy has to be - all out support for all sections fighting the social contract. Build local rank and file committees to link up the different unions and industries and organise strike action for April 20th. For direct action against wage-cuts, public service cuts and redundancies.

by the deal arranged by the Cabinet and the Liberal Party."

These same lefts have voted for successive rounds of attacks on our living standards. They have voted 'confidence' in this anti-working class government. While the right-wingers Walden, Prentice and McIntosh have been prepared to stand by their loyalty to the employers to the point of bringing down the Government, while they have openly fought for anti-working class policies, the left have cringed before every attack.

And what is it that has upset the principles? Is it Callaghan's offer of two more battalions of British troops to prop up the Orange sectarian state in Northern Ireland? Is it the expressed intention of Callaghan to stand or fall on a further round of wage restraint? No. The fire of these 'rebels' has been saved for a chauvinist campaign against direct elections to the European Parliament, for a campaign to preserve the imagined sovereignty of the Parliament within which they are trapped.

The Callaghan government has openly staked its future on further attacks on workers living standards and organisations. Its deal with the Liberals guarantees such policies to the employers. The trade union leaders have made it clear that they put the maintenance of a Labour Government whatever its policies, before the defense of workers wages, services and conditions.

The working class movement

(Continued on Page 2)

LABOUR: Survival depends on more attacks

The vote of 'confidence' in Callaghan's Labour Government was greeted with unconcealed joy by the employers and their press. The Stock exchange bounced up again. The Times and the Financial Times sighed with relief.

The employers and bankers are sure that the Labour Government offers them the best prospects of further cuts in real wages and workers living standards. And they are sure that the trade union leaders will heed the lessons of the 'vote of confidence' and buckle under rather than face the fall of the Callaghan government.

That's why the Times could editorialise Callaghan's victory thus: "A Labour Government stands the better chance of reaching an accommodation with the unions and there will be less political and economic damage if it is such a government that fails" and the Financial Times could gloatingly declare: "The narrowness of the margin by which the Government has just avoided a general election and a possible defeat, indeed may well help to concentrate the minds of union leaders on the need to work more vigorously for an acceptable Phase 3 formula."

The Employers and bankers, national and international, have pinned their strategy of attacking workers living standards and organisation on the Labour Government. After the mauling received by the Tory Government at the hands of the working class, the bosses have looked to the Labour Government, its special relationship with the trade union leaders, to bail them out.

The Labour Government, the TUC, have proved the most faithful of servants. We all know how workers real wages have dropped by

10% under the Labour Government. We all know that the social and welfare services have been pillaged and slashed. And the trade union leaders have accepted this - in the name of the social contract - rather than risk bringing down the Labour Government.

But the employers clearly doubt the ability of the Labour Government to sell another round of wage cuts. Not because the Labour Government or trade union leaders are unwilling. But because they will not be able to hold back the mounting tide of working class militancy and anger. That's why the bosses want to use the 'confidence' vote as a warning to the trade union leaders. Their class conscious message is clear . . . accept another round of wage cuts or we'll boot out the Labour Government.

The employers know that if a Labour Government can't hold the fort for them then new methods will be needed to attack the working class. They know their alternative is an unleashed Thatcherite Tory Government; they prefer to use this as a scarecrow to put the trade union leaders to flight.

The Labour Government has shown its willingness to play the tune called by the bosses. Its election manifesto contained no effective answer to the problems workers face. With mounting inflation, crumbling social services and swelling dole queues, they offered a partial extension of state control within the bosses economy, inadequate proposals for maintaining social services savaged by inflation and 'fine phrases' about shifting the balance of wealth.

Any parts of this manifesto unpalatable to the banks and corporations at a time of stagnation and



made a deal with the Powellites and Liberals to carry it through.

The Trade Union leaders' readiness to accept this is proved, if further proof were needed, by Scanlon's strike-breaking tactics in Leyland.

The militancy of the working class is, as yet, unfocused against the bosses' Labour Government.

One action fights for what it sees as its interests, other sections for theirs. The established leadership in the unions, from the so-called Lefts Scanlon and Jones to the blatant right-wingers, work overtime to strengthen this tendency to division in the class. The interests of public sector workers are presented as the opposite of those in 'productive' industry. The skilled are set against the unskilled, women against men, black against white.

The continuation of this division is central to the bosses strategy

APRIL SPECIAL 5P

Defeating Labourism

the key to victory

The parliamentary crisis of the last few weeks has left us with a Labour Government openly dependent on a bourgeois party for support in continuing its anti-working class policies. One might have expected the ghosts of Ramsay MacDonald, Philip Snowden and Jimmy Thomas — the worthies of the 'Great Betrayal' of 1931, to be seen walking abroad.

In fact what strikes the eye are the dissimilarities between 1931 and 1977. Today the Labour Government has already watched unemployment double. It has already cut 5.75% off the 1977/8 social spending figures and promised a further 8% off the 1978/9 programme. It has already deliberately cut take-home pay by over 3% in the last year. It has done all this with the almost unanimous consent of the entire Trade Union leadership. Indeed, it could not have done it without their support. Individual leaders, Fisher, Scanlon, Benn and Heffer have protested against this or that 'outrage' but none of them has led an all out attack on the whole policy.

defeat

Meanwhile the demoralisation and disintegration of the Labour Party's activists and voting base has continued apace. In Scotland, a traditional bulwark, Labour is poised for a massive defeat at the hands of the Nationalists. Massive abstentions are likely in a future general election. Not since the '30s has the Labour Party had so few enthusiastic and active supporters at the grass roots or in the leadership of the day to day struggles of the class. Despite this within the traditional split of British reformism between the 'economic' and 'political' arenas, the Labour Party still dominates the latter. The working class movement which smashed the Tories' freeze, freed the Pentonville Five and finally sent Heath packing in 1974, has suffered two years of reverses inflicted by the Labour Government/TUC alliance.

The long term and deepening nature of the crisis of British capitalism poses ever more sharply the need for a new leadership to replace not only the trade union bureaucrats but also the present "political" leaders. This raises the question of the Labour Party — can it be transformed into a weapon for the working class or must it, and can it, be replaced?

One of the ironies of the present situation is the sharp contrast between the formal and actual relationship of forces in the Labour Party.

The 'Lefts' with a majority on the NEC, with conference decision galore behind them and powerful friends in the Trade Union leaderships, appear very powerful

in comparison to the 'defeated Jenkins' and Prentices'.

Yet in the recent crisis it was the right-wingers who stood their ground against the Government while Heffer and company could only mouth the feeblest of protests. Why is this?

The right wing of the Labour Party rests squarely on the shoulders of the class enemy, that is their source of strength. The 'Lefts', however, are frightened to develop their only potential source of strength — the self activity of the working class in the fight against the Government's policies. In the last analysis they are more frightened of the power of the working class than of the bosses. They are terrified that the whole parliamentary house of cards would tumble down around them if workers faced the bosses in open class battle.

In that situation neither the bosses nor the workers would have any need of the services of these negotiators. Tied to Parliament and the parliamentary party they can do nothing that might rock the boat in which they sit. Their agonised cries spring from the realisation that a party that poses as the party of social reform but systematically destroys the past gains of the working class is doomed to desertion by the very masses who brought it to power.

Pressure

Capitalising the weakness of these parliamentarians, offers them the support in the Trade Unions and the factories that the 'Lefts' have never dared to build. The CP's strategy (now 25 years old) is to provide 'the movement outside parliament' that can keep up pressure to produce a 'Left Government' that is, a government of the Labour Left and Communist MP's.

The bankruptcy of this strategy is amply demonstrated by the contrast between its parliamentary dimension (no Communist MP's, no increase in strength to the Left MP's) and the fact that it was Communist militants who led the great battles from 1968 to 1974. Despite their leadership in these battles they were robbed of the fruits of victory by having to channel the strength of the movements in behind the Trade Union and Labour Party leaders.

Fighters

Increasing numbers of militants are having to face two facts. Firstly, that the Labour Party is a bosses party in all respects, other than its electoral support of millions of workers organised through the unions. Secondly, that the life and death struggles of the coming years will necessitate not only the total transformation of the unions into fighting organisations, but also the creation of a new political party embracing the most conscious fighters in the factories, offices, docks etc. The way forward cannot be a matter of muddling through with the Labour Party as it is or might be. The struggles ahead mean that either the working class creates a new party and renews the unions or it will surely lose the ones it has under the hammer blows of reaction.

Whilst many thousands of militants are being forced to

these conclusions, for many members of the existing parties the answers are more difficult to come by.

The answer of the two largest groups to the Left of the CP, the WRP (ex-SLL) and the SWP (ex-IS) is to proclaim the alternative, engage in feverish campaigns around immediate and partial slogans (e.g. the Right to Work) and wait for the workers, turning away from the reformists in disgust, to recognise them as the alternative.

Grip

This strategy is doubly useless. On the one hand, through ever more sectarian and pointless party-building campaigns it burns out the enthusiasm of those workers it attracts. At the same time it leads such workers away from the need to fight, alongside reformist workers, for a revolutionary strategy and tactics in the immediate struggles of the class. Only such a fight will build a movement which, through mass direct action can break

the actual increase in power of the section of British capitalism. 'Right to Work Campaign', 'National Rank and File Leagues' and the 'All Trade Industry Alliance' lies not, as the weakened claim, in their militancy, or unofficial nature, but in their ability to rally militants around a fighting strategy irrespective of party label.

Rhetoric

Instead of winning these recruits away from Reformism (not just from a reformist party) these groups simply require ultra militant reformism decked out in rhetoric about Socialism and Socialist Policies.

This mechanical, abstract and therefore, sectarian approach to the need for a new leadership is one pole of the "Trotskyist" movement. At the other are those like the "Militant" grouping in the Labour Party who reduce the revolutionary programme to a set of parliamentary measures like "nationalising the 250 monopolies." For them the task of building a revolutionary alternative to reformism is reduced to transforming the Labour Party by kicking out the right wing.

New Party

The fight for a new party — a revolutionary party is the central task in the years ahead. It is a fight against the reformist leaders who at present mislead the vast majority of British workers.

It is a fight to win workers who still put faith in these leaders, to the strategy and tactics of direct action, that can win the immediate battles of the class against the collaborationism of the Trade Union and Labour Party leaders. Only by winning workers to a revolutionary programme in these battles will the new leadership of the class be assembled. This means

A new period of crisis has opened for world capitalism which sharply affects major capitalist countries. Revolutionary situations have developed in Europe for the first time since the aftermath of the Second World War. In Spain and Portugal today the working class is faced with the task of taking power into its hands. In Italy, France and Britain the working class is faced with struggling to avoid a capitalist solution which will mean the loss of most of its social gains and the weakening of its class organisations.

Britain, although still a major link in the chain of world capitalism, is a particularly weak one suffering chronic decline. The world and British crisis throws the working class movement into a profound crisis of leadership. In Britain the first thrusts of the ruling class attacks on the labour movement — in 1969, In Place of Strife, in 1972, the Industrial Relations Act and in 1974, the Phase 3 of the Incomes Policy — were beaten off and a Tory Government driven from office by rank and file militancy. However, there remained a chronic dislocation between the economic strength and militancy of the working class and its political weakness.

The post 1974 Labour Government, in alliance with the trade union bureaucracy, has managed to claw back most of the gains of 1974. It has gone onto the offensive against the conquests of the past 25 years in terms of wages, social services and employment. The crisis facing workers is not simply one of organisation. It is centrally one of strategy and tactics.

The traditional goals and methods of struggle, the sectional wages struggle, the shop-floor

As

is pure propaganda for 'reformism' adequate to the living struggle which is adequate to the sharply felt needs of millions of workers and their families. Only around such a programme can organisations of struggle develop which will not collapse when faced with the existing leaders of the working class movement. Only around such a programme can the necessary forces be mobilised to provide a workers answer to the crisis.

This answer is necessarily a Governmental answer. It must be a programme capable of depriving the bosses and their agents not simply of parliamentary office but of controls over the real state forces — the army, the bureaucracy and the economy. This transformation is not a matter of taking over the existing machinery of class rule, but of breaking it up and replacing it with democratic mass organs of working class power. It means convincing millions of workers, at each stage of the struggle, that is an unescapable necessity.

fighting alongside those who have illusions in the possibility of reforming the Labour Party or simply replacing corrupt union officials, and thus putting these leaders to the test of action on the key needs of the masses of workers. This means not just 'putting demands' in an abstract literary sense, in a leaflet or a weekly paper. It means organising a movement for these demands — in the Trade Unions, on the factory floor, in the local Labour Party organisations, where workers have the strength to hold their leaders to account, to replace them, to create an organised alternative. Out of those militants who realise the need for this strategy the kernel of the cadre of a party capable of replacing the Labour Party will be built.

PRO FOR

A programme for action must start from the existing fronts where workers are fighting the capitalist offensive. We need a programme of central goals of struggle which is adequate to the sharply felt needs of millions of workers and their families.

Break the TUC/Government shackles. An immediate and unconditional return to free collective bargaining. Active support for all workers whose claim breach the Social Contract. Break the contract now. Don't wait for the Phase 3 negotiation.

AGAINST INFLATION

The working class must not pay for inflation. Lump sum increases now to compensate for two years of wage cuts. Guaranteed monthly rises equivalent to the rise in the cost of living to workers and their families. Committees of housewives and Trade Unionists must be formed to calculate a real workers cost of living index as against the phoney retail price index. A national minimum wage of £5.50 a week take home pay. Guaranteed full lay-off pay for all workers laid off by disputes.

Workers for preventing the employers opening up divisions between stronger and weaker groups of workers. While we demand that this policy be adopted at national level, by the T.U.C. and by the Labour leaders we must not wait for them to act. These demands must be fought for at a plant and local level by direct action whatever the position of the Trade Union and Labour leaders.

AGAINST THE CUTS

The working class must not pay for the employers crisis with declining standards of health, welfare, housing and education. Already those standards are woefully inadequate. Neither must the employers and the Labour Government be allowed to open up divisions in the working class between workers in the public and private sectors. Direct action to refuse to implement the cuts. No covering for unfilled vacancies, no Trade Union acceptance of deteriorating conditions or increase workload. Direct action in the workplaces, where the cuts are intended for implementation holds the key to building a fight against the cuts. Build local trade union based committees against the cuts. They must draw in not only public sector Trade Unionists. They must draw in women's organisations (most importantly Working Womens Chart Groups), trade unions from the manufacturing industries, immigrant organisations, Labour Party and Young Socialist branches. Build a movement that can go beyond protests. Nationalisation of banks and finance houses without compensation. Cancel the crippling debts of the local authorities to the banks and finance houses without compensation. Restore all cuts in Social spending. For a programme of socially useful public works under Trade union control.

Continued from page one

LABOUR

faced with a clear choice. Accept cuts and defeat or face a new, probably Tory, anti-working class government.

Our answer must be equally clear. We will not sacrifice our living standards or organisations to any capitalist government. We must organise now, independent of the Labour and trade union leaders to maintain and defend our living standards. When the Labour Government falls because the working class refuses to accept anti-working class policies, then the responsibility must be laid clearly at the door of the trade union and Labour leaders. The workers movement must organise now to break the anti-working class Social Contract. Only on this basis can we develop and strengthen the organisation to fight the employers attacks — which ever party is chosen to deliver them in the future.

A GRAMMIE ACTION

to extend and develop the hopelessly inadequate social and welfare services, and to provide jobs. Hospitals, nurseries, schools, housing, public transport are all areas of immediate need. We demand the nationalisation with no compensation of all industries necessary to carry this out e.g. the construction industry, the drugs industry.

THE FIGHT AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

The trade union and Labour leaders have stood by passively while the employers have created an army of unemployed numbering over 1.5 million. The employers will attempt to use the threat of the dole queue to discipline those in work. They will try to set the unemployed against the trade union movement.

The fight against redundancy is a fight to challenge the employers right to deploy labour, to organise production as they choose.

We must therefore fight for:

- * Work or Full Pay. Alternative work or maintenance, both at equivalent take home pay rates for all the unemployed.
- * Cut the hours not the jobs. For loss of pay, to force the employers to take on new labour. An immediate end to productivity dealing.
- * Arm the shop floor against the bosses plans. Direct action to abolish business secrecy. Open the books, records, boards and committees to workers inspection.
- * Direct action to stop closures. Occupations to seize factories and plant in all firms declaring redundancies. Occupations to demand nationalisation with no compensation and under workers' control of all firms announcing sackings.
- * Trade union organisation of the unemployed. All unions to register the unemployed, to grant full membership rights. Particular attention must be paid to a trade union campaign amongst unemployed youth — if the labour movement fails to mobilise the anger of the unemployed youth, to lead a real fight on their behalf then the racists and fascists stand to make gains among these workers.

BUILD A UNITED WORKING CLASS OFFENSIVE

Sections of the working population, particularly women and blacks, have been treated with indifference or hostility by the labour movement. The employers will seek to widen and use these divisions in the workers movement. We need policies and action to stop them. This means the strongly organised mobilising in support of the self activity of particularly oppressed groups of workers.

- * Women have been particularly hard hit by the cuts and unemployment. There are often the first jobs to go; cuts in welfare and nursery provision force an increasing burden on women.
- * For a Woman's Right to Work. We must actively oppose the 'women out first' call encouraged by the bosses and many trade union leaders.
- * Equal Pay Now! Full support

from rank and file trade unionists for women workers in struggle.

- * Free Abortion and Contraception on demand.
- * For union meetings in worktime and for creche facilities to enable women to attend, for women's caucuses in the unions.
- * For Unity between Service and Manufacturing Workers! Healey and Scanlon are openly trying to drive a wedge for the employers between the unions in the public sector and those in manufacturing industry. All workers rely on the services provided by the workers of the public sector. A cut in social expenditure is a direct attack on the living standards of all workers. We must campaign in the manufacturing unions for support for a all struggles against the cuts in welfare and social spending. We must campaign amongst public sector workers against all forms of job comes policy and wage restraint.

- * Drive Out the Racists! From the fascists of the

stage of housing symptoms of capitalism in crisis. Labour movement based anti-racist committees must be built to fight for: No Platform for Fascists.

Racists Out of the Labour Movement. Trade union support for black self-defence against police and racist thuggery and the right of black workers to caucus in the trade unions.

THE WORKING CLASS AND NATIONALISM

The working class will never be able to fight effectively for its own freedom while remaining silent over the question of the British ruling classes oppression of other nationalities. We demand the immediate end of the vicious policy of national oppression being implemented by the British Army in Ireland. We are for the immediate withdrawal of all British troops from Northern Ireland recognising the right of the Irish people as a whole to determine their own future. We are for the release of all Irish prisoners of war held in the UK or in Ireland and the immediate, unconditional repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

But the Labour movement must fight to prevent the splitting of the Scots, Welsh and English working class. We must oppose vigorously the threats to that unity posed by the nationalists and by those chauvinist Labour 'Lefts', who actually strengthen nationalism by their attempts to bloc a referendum in Scotland and Wales. We must recognise the democratic right of the Scots and Welsh to self determination up to and including complete separation. But we must campaign vigorously to argue that the interests of Scots and Welsh workers do not lie with either independence or parliamentary devolution arrangements. Against these we do not pose the sovereignty of the British Parliament. We pose a united offensive of all workers to solve the crisis at the expense of the employing class.

FOR THE FIGHTING INDEPENDENCE OF THE TRADE UNIONS

To weaken the ability of workers to resist the bosses' offensive, attempts to incorporate shop floor organisation via participation will co-exist with the use of legal and physical coercion against workers in struggle. Against the 'participation schemes', 'conciliation and arbitration tribunals' and all the legal shackles of the bosses state, we fight for the complete independence of the union unions.

- * Against 'participation' schemes designed to make shop floor representatives co-responsible for management decisions dictated by the bosses, we fight for real democracy in the factories, ie the right of the majority to decide; workers control. To begin with this should mean:

Workers Inspection — open the management books, committees and offices to unfettered inspection by shop floor delegates and any 'experts' they may appoint to assist them.

Workers control of hiring and firing; of production schedules, of the speed and intensity of work and the hours worked.

No trade union co-operation with Incomes policy. No recognition of anti-trade union laws or legal decisions.

Workers defence against picket busting squads. Repeal of all laws against picketing and occupation.

PUT THE UNIONS ON A WAR FOOTING

The labour movement must be transformed if we are to defeat the bosses attacks. We must build working class organisation that can draw masses of workers into active struggle.

- * Democratised the Labour Movement: All officials and representatives in the trade unions and in the Labour Party to be subject to election and instant recall and representation.

Build Shop-floor Organisation. In the struggle for control against the employers the strengthening of shop floor organisation is vital. Where feasible we are for workplace trade union branches with branch meetings in working time. Shop floor organisations will bear the brunt of the struggle against the employers. We are for shop steward committee representation on Trades Councils and in local Labour Parties.

- * We campaign for: A shop stewards committee in every workplace. For effective combine committees in every combine. For industrial unions and amalgamation. For lay democratic union conferences . . . all decisions binding on the officials.
- * For a National Rank and File Unity Against the Offensive.
- * For a National Shop Stewards Movement.

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

We face a Labour Government acting for the bosses and forced to rely on the junior Tories (the Liberals) to carry on with its anti-working class policies. We fight to defeat these attacks. To hold back on any struggle in order to preserve the Labour Government's existence is self-defeating. If the Government falls in defence of the bosses measures that is its responsibility. However we do not call for the overthrow of the Labour Government, we call on all Labour leaders — MPs, counsellors etc to break with these anti working class measures and act for the working class they draw their support from and claim to represent.

We call for a break with all deals open and secret with the bosses and their parties; bi-partisanship on Ireland as much as the unofficial coalition with the Liberals. We fight to build a movement in the trade unions and the Labour Party to do just this. We support the actions of all Labour MPs and counsellors and all trade union officials who are pre-

BUILD A RANK & FILE

Having failed to confront the trade union movements head-on in the years of Tory Government, the bosses have looked to the Trade Union leaders to sell their policies, their strategy to rank and file workers.

The employers have used a simple and time worn strategy. At all levels they have drawn the Trade Union leaders into joint responsibility, into collaboration with capitalism. At plant level the bosses have fought to undermine shop floor independence with participation schemes, with seats on committees and boards. Nationally, Jones, Murray and Scanlon have been empowered to organise and police cuts in workers' living standards that the employers could not achieve through a Tory Government.

In those few cases where collaboration has failed the employers they have not hesitated to threaten the Trade Union leaders through the machinery of the courts. Jackson of the UPW, Drain of NALGO have both immediately turned heel when faced with law court instructions to call off action.

Should the machinery of collaboration fail them then the bosses will turn increasingly to rely on the Trade Union leaders to do their work for them. It was 'Left' Bob Wright who presided over the massive redundancies at Chrysler. The 'Left' Jack Jones has been the principle architect of the Social Contract. The 'Left' Scanlon with the sack unless they called off their action, he has crusades for public spending cuts to fund a revival in manufacturing industry. The NUT NUT leaders have suspended members from the Union for fighting the cuts, while Alan Fisher has opened a campaign for a flat rate wage restraint policy to benefit his members against better organised sections of workers.

The successes of the employers have been legion, and they are, not due to the collaboration of a handful of right wing leaders. The Social Contract has only been sold because of the so-called Left leaders.

The collaboration of the Trade Union leaders has its roots in their place in capitalist society. As brokers between workers and employers the Trade Union bureaucrats have their own distinct social interests. They are not subject to the same conditions as the workers they represent — their living standards, their security depend on the maintenance of the wage contract that they negotiate and bargain. The Trade Union leaders see the improvement of workers' living conditions in term of successful negotiation and bargains with the employers. Faced with a capitalist crisis, with a threat to the maintenance of negotiation, the Trade Union

pared to vote against anti-working class measures and to mobilise workers against them. We fight not only to halt the attacks but for pro-working class measures. We fight to force Labour to carry them out — not disguising the fact that all past experience shows their unwillingness and inability to do so.

This must however be put to the test by the organised supporters of Labour themselves — at present the great majority of the working class. Organised so as to be able alike to bring maximum force to bear on these leaders and to resist their betrayals. To carry the struggle to victory whether the Labour and trade union leaderships are forced forward or openly desert to the enemy.

leaders jump to preserve and maintain the employers' system upon which their livelihood depends. Faced with rank and file initiative and organisation the Trade Union leaders — Left and Right — move to undermine the threat to their own stability and security.

This does not mean that Trade Union leaders cannot be pressured to put themselves at the head of certain struggles. But they will always be looking for ways to contain, control and dampen down the struggle. It is this common interest with the employers in negotiation, in holding back the rank and file that lays the basis for open collaboration with the employers in time of crisis.

The undemocratic nature of the Trade Unions, the irresponsibility of the overwhelming majority of collaborationism officials, buttresses their independence and collaborationism.

The behaviour of the Trade Union leaders over the last two years underlies the absolute necessity of building a movement in the Trade Unions that can organise independently of them whenever necessary. Only on this basis can workers' living standards and organisations be maintained. The alternatives are simple: either a trade union movement dependent on the capitalist class and used to discipline the rank and file or an independent Trade Union movement fighting for the interests of workers against the capitalist class.

Such a rank and file movement would have to fight the bureaucrats for leadership of the Trade Unions. It would have to fight for a clear alternative political programme to that of the class collaborators. The experience of the rank and file shop stewards movement in Britain after the first World War shows that a rank and file organisation with no alternative politics to those of the bureaucrats can be outmanoeuvred and defeated by the Trade Union bureaucracy — however militant and fiery it may be. Built across the unions: the recallability of all officials.

1. The independence of the Trade Unions from the State and the employers at all levels.
2. No incomes policy or wage restraint under capitalism — full protection against inflation.
3. No cuts in welfare and social spending. For a restoration of all cuts.
4. No redundancies — cut the hours not the jobs.
5. A merciless struggle against sectionalism, against all divisions in the Labour movement, a struggle to unite workers in the public and private sectors, against craftism, against all discrimination against women workers and all manifestation of racialism.
6. A readiness to act independently of the Trade Union leaders the minute they back down or attempt to sell out.

It would have to guarantee the maximum democratic discussions of demands, of tactics within this framework.

We consider the building of such a challenge to the Trade Union leaders to be a vital task of all working class militants.

It will not be built by proclamation — by the declaration of a 'Rank and File Movement' as the appendage of a political party, fuelled and maintained by stunts and campaigns. Both the WRP and the SWP (IS) have presided over abortive attempts to summon a rank and file movement into existence by this method.

Neither can it be built without absolute clarity as to the need to organise independently of the officials. The Communist Party's strategy of wooing and pressuring those leaders they designate as Left or progressive effectively prevents them from giving a serious lead. Likewise the IMG — whose amorphous project of building a "class struggle tendency" fails to differentiate between the Trade Union bureaucrat and the rank and file workers.

WORKERS' POWER

BRITAIN: The boom that never was

The Labour Government is claiming that British Capitalism is on the upturn. With their sights set firmly on another round of wage control they are arguing that the economy is on the mend, that they can see the light at the end of the tunnelso long as there is another year of wage-cutting "incomes policy".

Now of course Callaghan, Healy and Foot have to argue that their policies are having effect, that the 'sacrifices' they and the employers demand from the labour movement are only temporary. But a look at the world and national economy shows how false are the claims of the Labour leaders to have cured the chronic sickness of British Capitalism, to be able to plan and organise capitalism.

The strategy of the Labour Government, under Wilson and Callaghan, to overcome the particular deep seated crisis of British Capitalism has been consistent. Faced with the uncompetitiveness of British Capitalism its low productivity, low rates of profit, faced with the redundancy and ineffectiveness of whole sectors of its industry the Labour Government has sought to force the working class to pay for a programme of restructuring and revitalisation.

The strategy of Labour and the

employers has hinged on attacks on real wages, on cuts in social and welfare spending, on largescale redundancies. These attacks were to make available new funds for productive investment in key manufacturing industries. State intervention (in the guise of the NEB) to direct funds into profitable and competitive industry, the closing down of old and redundant plant, a drive for speed up and productivity on the shop floor were to be made possible by the attacks on workers living standards and organisation. Such a programme, the employers and labour leaders believed, would make possible a revitalisation of British capitalism when the slump in the world economy lifted, when a new boom in world markets would stimulate the export, rearmament and services sectors of British capitalism.

Funds

The Labour Government has been able to force down real wages for two years, preside over a doubling of the number of unemployed and savagely attack welfare and social spending. Massive funds have been diverted to private industry in successive Healy budgets, but British capitalism has not experienced a significant increase in investment, in productivity or exports. The world boom, looked to by the Labour leaders to pull them through in 1976, did not materialise on a scale sufficient to dispel the stagnation in the British economy. Fearful of the pressure of inflation the stronger capitalist economies — the U.S., the West German — were not prepared to push up their rates of growth enough to drag British capitalism in the slipstream.

Despite the projections and promises of the Labour Government — it expected a 4.5% growth during the year — 1976 was a year of downturn and stagnation. Soaring interest rates signalled the failure of the Labour Government to stimulate private investment. Production was lower in the third quarter of 1976 than in the second. Inflation rates soared to the present rate of 16.6%.

In 1977 there have been signs of a partial recovery for British capitalism. Both the first quarterly bulletin of the Bank of England published at the end of March, and the OECD report on the British economy note this. But the upturn is of minor proportions, inadequate to the solution of the deep seated problems of British capitalism. There are signs of a small increase in output, but the OECD predicts only a 1% rise in the G.N.P. during 1977 — a "boom" year in the world economy! Exports, in the three months up to February 1977 were up by 1%. But this is less than

Women must not pay the price

The Labour Government's policy of cutting the social services means hospitals and nurseries closing, classes in schools increasing in size, meals on-wheels services being axed, transport services running down and houses not being built.

Not only do all workers in these vital services face massive unemployment but women in particular because of their oppression in the home and super-exploitation at work are particularly vulnerable to these attacks. They form the majority of the workforce in the public sector. Sixty-seven percent of education workers and 76% of NHS employees are women.

They are losing their jobs twice as fast as men and since many women do not join trade unions, they have no elementary protection that these organisations can afford.

Nor are the attacks on women restricted to the cuts. The Benyon Bill, an attempt to claw back even the limited abortion rights that exist, has just had its second reading in Parliament, added to which family planning clinics are being reduced and nursery places cut.

All this means the burden for caring for the young, the sick and

the elderly will fall squarely onto the shoulders of women, pushing them back into the home where they are isolated, disorganised and oppressed.

The 'equality' legislation produced by the Labour Government has been proved to be totally inadequate for working class women. The 21 week strike at Trico where 400 women boycotted the government tribunal, won equal pay and at Yardleys where 390 women are on strike now for equal pay prove women's determination to fight. The work-in at the EGA hospital and the thousands of women on the NUPE demonstration last November prove that women are able and willing to fight back against the attacks.

It also gives the lie to the claim that women are 'naturally' passive or indifferent to trade union and political struggle.

The trade unions record of support for these struggles is lamentable.

The AUEW at Trico refused to ensure effective blacking and solidarity action in the car industries, despite claiming the credit for the victory. Labour MPs have gone unchallenged when demanding punitive taxes against working wives.

Failed

But it is not only the official movement that has failed working women. The demand for 'Women Out First' voiced both by rank and file workers faced with redundancies at Chrysler show the crying need for a campaign at shop floor level around the demand 'For a Woman Right to Work', to prevent the employers solving their crisis by driving women back into the home.

This backwardness of male workers makes it all the more necessary that women organise together at the workplace and on the housing estates to lay the foundation for a fighting working women's movement. To force the unions to recognise their particular needs, women's caucuses must be built to give women the confidence to take the lead in struggles and to build unity in action with working class men.

The Charter

The Working Women's Charter Campaign by organising around the interlinked demands of the Charter can lay the foundations for a working women's movement. However, working class militants, men and women must take up the key demands of the charter in every struggle to combat both the attack on women and to build a united response to the employer's offensives.

Women strikers from Yardleys seeking dockers' support outside Transport House.



As Tories play racist card

PURGE LABOUR MOVEMENT OF RACIST POISON

One year ago, using the pretext of one immigrant family who had been put up for a few days in a hotel near Gatwick Airport as a result of the already inhuman immigration laws, the Press unleashed a vicious campaign against the black and Asian population of Britain and a hysterical call for tighter laws.

Before the campaign relented three black youngsters were dead and hundreds had suffered the attentions of the racists of the National Front as well as redoubled police thuggery. Another such campaign is in the offing. Now Thatcher and Tory Party 'liberals' like Whitelaw are preparing to out bid the National Front for the anti-black vote (as witnessed by their endorsement of their open racist candidate in the coming Stetchford by-election). At the same time Rees for the Labour Government announces the Government willingness to look again at the question of tightening up on immigration.

This sharp turn towards ever more outspoken racism (including endorsements of Powell's 'non-racism' by a member of the Tribune Group, Maureen Colquhoun) has met little response in the labour movement.

Open fascist provocations have it is true roused the left to deliver the only response that will mobilise to make sure that there is no platform for fascism and that they are driven off the streets. An equally important task and one which has as yet made little headway is the fight to combat racism in the

labour movement and to drive the racists out of the ranks of the organised working class.

The legacy of Britain's Imperialist past, the disgusting chauvinism of the British reformist tradition means that the trade unions are awash with hostility to black workers. If we are to give any real meaning to correct slogans like "Working Class Support for Black Self Defence" we must fight to win the trade unions and local Labour Parties to doing just this in action and to ruthlessly hound the racist trade union officials, local councillors or MPs.

If this is not done then slogans like "Black and White Unite and Fight" will remain the hollow mockery they are now when chanted by white demonstrators. Anti-racism is quite as vital as anti-fascism particularly at a time when the official party of the British bosses is poised to outmanoeuvre the National Front as the electoral expression of racism. A mass movement against racism and fascism can only be built if revolutionary fight for it to adopt these key planks.

No Immigration Controls — Repeal all existing acts.

For Full Support for Black Self-Defence. Against Fascist or Police Thuggery.

No Platform for Fascists — Drive Them off the Streets.

Racists Out of the Labour Movement — For Black Caucuses in the Trade Unions.

the actual increase in power markets for British capitalism calculated by the Bank of England. The Bank of England believes that productivity in British industry is increasing at 2½ to 3% per annum — but this is inadequate to either bridge the gap between British employers and their rivals or to cut the size of the dole queues. Rates of inflation continue to increase at twice the average rate within the world economy.

With the American Treasury expecting a downturn in the world economy by 1978/79, with the OECD expecting a slow down by the end of 1977, it is clear that the minor upturn in the British economy does not signal the successful revitalisation or restructuring of British capitalism. The employers, and the Labour Government can only look to further attacks on the working class to pay for their crisis.

Cuts

There will be no let up in the number of unemployed in the foreseeable future. The Bank of England sees no possibility for a decrease this year. There will be further rounds of cuts in welfare spending sugared no doubt with cosmetic tax cuts. But most importantly the employers and Government are absolutely set on pushing through a further round of wage control, while debating 'flexibility' the employers are organising for a show-down with the mounting tide of militancy in the working class movement.

The employers are convinced, nationally and internationally, that the future of British capitalism depends on its ability to force through further cuts in living standards next year. While there is no solution to guarantee the vitality of sick British capitalism its future depends on the working class paying the price.

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BREAK CON-TRACT NOW!

The Last two months have been marked by a rise in militancy throughout the working class. Dockers, miners, engineers, teachers, public-sector workers, have all taken action against the savage attacks made by the anti-working class Labour Government.

Throughout the country workers have staged demos, occupations and strikes against different aspects of the attack - jobs, wages, equal pay, hospital closures and education cuts.

This mounting resistance, in particular the strike in the Leyland works, has placed a question mark over the future survival of the Labour Government.

egy for making the workers pay the cost of the crisis.

In the present period of increasing militancy, however, the working class is presented with another danger - false unity. The unity which says, 'don't fight yet, wait for everybody else.' This is the voice that calls for weak-kneed protest when the need is for direct attack on the bosses, the voice that says pressure on Heffer and company is the way forward, even though, time and again, they have voted for the governments policies.

break the Social Contract NOW, not waiting passively to see what phase three will look like.

The trade union leaders are solidly in support of the contract, workers who challenge it can look for support only to other rank and file workers. The support they need is that of direct action in solidarity with their fight. The organisation of effective blacking, sympathy strikes, mass picketing and financial support will only be done by organised rank and file workers.

The recent increase in militancy has not only the determination and initiative of rank and file workers, but also the support of the rank and file workers.

ed to take a lead in calling a national conference of shop stewards against the Social Contract.

In their search for a 'British' road to socialism through parliament, the CP stakes everything on trying to persuade the Labour and trade union 'Lefts' to their point of view. The furthest they want to go is to use the rank and file as a stage army in their protests. This is why last year's Labour Assembly on Unemployment came to nothing, why the Liaison Committee has no independent existence and why the CP sees no further than a day of protest on April 20th.

The April 3rd conference brings together a large number of shop-floor leaders. Such a body has the weight in the class that could lead a determined and on-going attack on the Social Contract.

Far from limiting itself to resolutions and declarations the conference needs to issue a call for the formation of local rank and file committees. Such committees are needed to organise strike action for April 20th., active support for workers in struggle against the Social Contract and to formulate local claims that break the contract. Local rank and file groupings, made up of individual militants, delegates from steward's committees, combines, Trades Union, etc. will be essential in overcoming disunity, and developing solidarity with those in struggle. The logic of the CP's policy.

is to put their diplomacy with the Left wing architects of the Social Contract before the needs of the class.

The working class will get nothing from phase three or from relying on the 'Lefts' who have neither the backbone nor the desire to upset the parliamentary appeacart.

Our policy has to be :- all out support for all sections fighting the social contract. Build local rank and file committees to link up the different unions and industries and organise strike action for April 20th. For direct action against wage-cuts, public service cuts and redundancies.

by the deal arranged by the Cabinet and the Liberal Party."

These same lefts have voted for successive rounds of attacks on our living standards. They have voted 'confidence' in this anti-working class government. While the right-wingers Walden, Prentice and McIntosh have been prepared to stand by their loyalty to the employers to the point of bringing down the Government, while they have openly fought for anti-working class policies, the left have cringed before every attack.

And what is it that has upset the principles of the Callaghan's Office of two more battalions of British troops to prop up the Orange sectarian state in Northern Ireland? Is it the expressed intention of Callaghan to stand or fall on a further round of wage restraint? No. The fire of these 'rebels' has been saved for a chauvinist campaign against direct elections to the European Parliament, for a campaign to preserve the imagined sovereignty of the Parliament within which they are trapped.

The Callaghan government has openly staked its future on further attacks on workers living standards and organisations. Its deal with the Liberals guarantees such policies to the employers. The trade union leaders have made it clear that they put the maintenance of a Labour Government whatever its policies, before the defense of workers wages, services and conditions.

The working class movement is

(Continued on Page 2)

LABOUR: Survival depends on more attacks

The vote of 'confidence' in Callaghan's Labour Government was greeted with unconcealed joy by the employers and their press. The Stock exchange bounced up again. The Times and the Financial Times sighed with relief.

The employers and bankers are sure that the Labour Government offers them the best prospects of further cuts in real wages and workers living standards. And they are sure that the trade union leaders will heed the lessons of the 'vote of confidence' and buckle under rather than face the fall of the Callaghan government.

That's why the Times could editorialise Callaghan's victory thus:

"A Labour Government stands the better chance of reaching an accommodation with the unions and there will be less political and economic damage if it is such a government that fails"

and the Financial Times could gloatingly declare: "The narrowness of the margin by which the Government has just avoided a general election and a possible defeat, indeed may well help to concentrate the minds of union leaders on the need to work more vigorously for an acceptable Phase 3 formula."

The Employers and bankers, national and international, have pinned their strategy of attacking workers living standards and organisation on the Labour Government. After the mauling received by the Tory Government at the hands of the working class, the bosses have looked to the Labour Government, its special relationship with the trade union leaders, to bail them out.

The Labour Government, the TUC, have proved the most faithful of servants. We all know how workers real wages have dropped by

10% under the Labour Government. We all know that the social and welfare services have been pillaged and slashed. And the trade union leaders have accepted this - in the name of the 'social contract' - rather than risk bringing down the Labour Government.

But the employers clearly doubt the ability of the Labour Government to sell another round of wage cuts. Not because the Labour Government or trade union leaders are unwilling. But because they will not be able to hold back the mounting tide of working class militancy and anger. That's why the bosses want to use the 'confidence' vote as a warning to the trade union leaders. Their class conscious message is clear . . . accept another round of wage cuts or we'll boot out the Labour Government.

The employers know that if a Labour Government can't hold the fort for them then new methods will be needed to attack the working class. They know their alternative is an unleashed Tory Government; they prefer to use this as a scarecrow to put the trade union leaders to flight.

The Labour Government has shown its willingness to play the tune called by the bosses. Its election manifesto contained no effective answer to the problems workers face. With mounting inflation, crumbling social services and swelling dole queues, they offered a partial extension of state control within the bosses economy, inadequate proposals for maintaining social services savaged by inflation and 'fine phrases' about shifting the balance of wealth.

Any parts of this manifesto unpalatable to the banks and corporations at a time of stagnation and



made a deal with the Powellites and Liberals to carry it through.

The Trade Union leaders' readiness to accept this is proved, if further proof were needed, by Scanlon's strike-breaking tactics in Leyland.

The militancy of the working class is, as yet, unfocused against the bosses' Labour Government. One section fights for what it sees as its interests, other sections for theirs. The established leadership in the unions, from the so-called Lefts Scanlon and Jones to the blatant right-wingers, work overtime to strengthen this tendency to division in the class. The interests of public sector workers are presented as the opposite of those in 'productive' industry. The skilled are set against the unskilled, women against men, black against white.

The continuation of this disunity is central to the bosses strat-

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