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Break
links
with
Tories

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Union leader could face jail for defiance

TEBBIT'S LAWS SHOW THEIR TEETH!

EVEN while Blackpool delegates were casting their votes in favour of resuming collaboration with union-buster Norman Tebbit, one TUC union was facing a court injunction under the Tories' 1980 and 1982 anti-union laws.

The National Union of Journalists was served last Tuesday, 6th, with an interim injunction to lift secondary blacking action by 20 NUJ members employed by the Stockport 'Messenger'. The journalists are refusing to supply copy to non-NGA printers while management attempt to break an NGA recognition dispute.

NUJ officials stood firm in defiance of the injunction, and refused to withdraw the union's official support for its members.

As a result the NUJ on Friday 16th faces a further legal action and a probable heavy fine for contempt of court; and next week Messenger newspapers are pursuing court action for a more permanent injunction, together with a writ for the sequestration (seizure) of the assets of the union.

If the union continues to stand firm and refuses to pay the fine,

then a senior official — probably General Secretary Ken Ashton — could face prison.

So far the NUJ, whose Executive meets at the weekend, has stood firmly by its conference policy of defying the legislation and supporting those involved in the secondary action. Usually such actions are declared unofficial.

It is for this reason that, though other employers have sought injunctions under the 1980 and 1982 Acts, this is the first time a whole union has been hauled up before the courts for contempt.

Last summer Fleet Street electricians' leader Sean Geraghty was threatened with fines or jail for his courageous stand in organising supporting action for the health workers: but the legislation used was Prior's 1980 Act — and the EETPU as a whole was not in the dock.

The Tebbit Act, however, goes further in its efforts to stamp out solidarity action. As NUJ Assistant Secretary Bob Norris told Socialist Organiser,

"Tebbit wants unions to dis-

own actions and scab on their members. That we are not prepared to do".

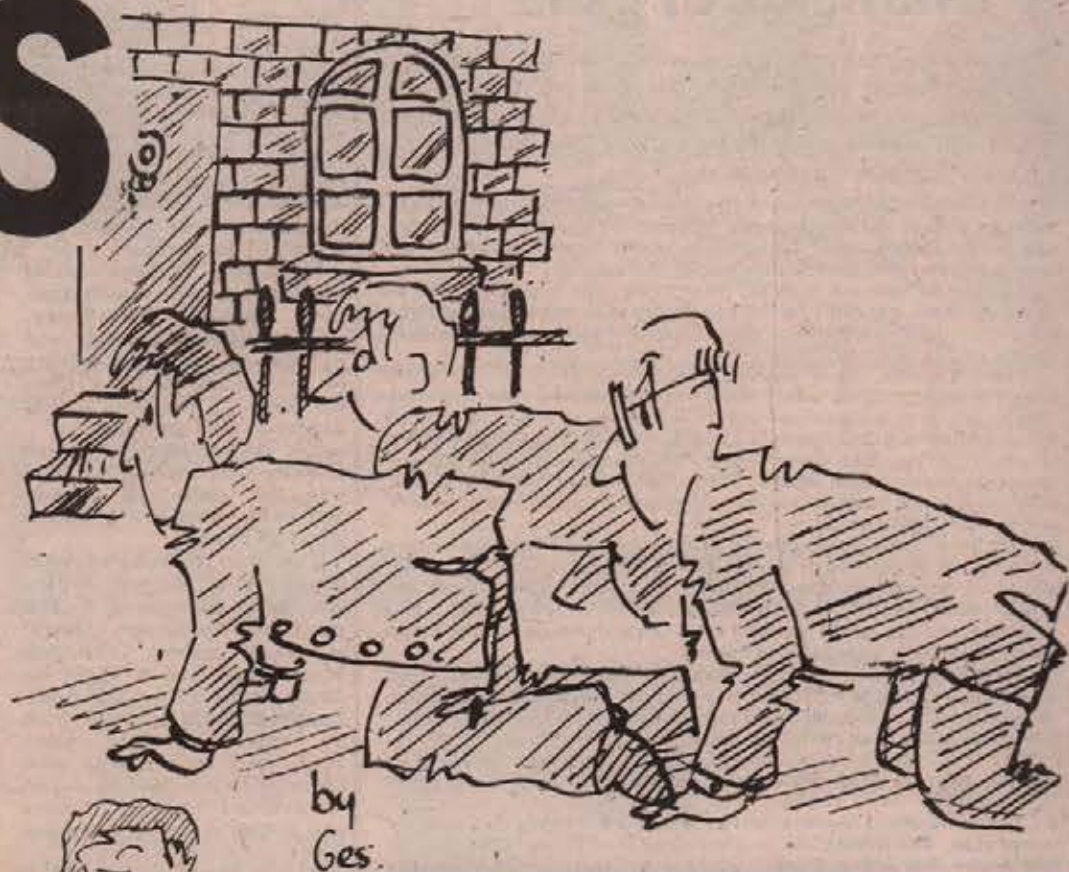
But not all union leaders have such a determined attitude. The Tory legislation relies on the safe prediction that many right wing leaderships — and union officials in particular — will shy away from (and sabotage) action which might be judged unlawful.

One prime example is the present battle by the Post Office engineers to halt the Tory plans to privatise British Telecom.

As part of the fight, the POEU has instituted blacking action of the privately-owned Project Mercury business network — and secondary blacking of the companies which form the Mercury consortium.

This line of action, instituted by the POEU's Broad Left dominated National Executive, has now come under attack from right wing General Secretary Bryan Stanley, who attempted to get the blacking lifted, arguing that it infringes Tebbit's 1982 Act.

If Stanley's approach is accep-



"That's the TUC delegation off to see Norman Tebbit!"

ted, then any real fight against privatisation in British Telecom — and, by implication, anywhere else in the state sector — would effectively have to be wound up, or relegated to a purely propaganda exercise of leaflets, lobbies and letters to MPs.

Tebbit's laws prohibit 'political' strikes: and the struggle against privatisation is quite plainly a political struggle.

But the present use of the courts against the NUJ shows that if trade unionists stick with the letter of the Tory law, then even the most elementary union solidarity is out of the question.

There could be no clearer confirmation of the folly of the TUC pursuing talks with this anti-union Tory government — or indeed with the virulently anti union Social Democratic Party.

The threat to the unions can only be defeated by solid defiance of the 1980 and 1982 legislation, and the education and mobilisation of the membership of the unions in defence of their organisations.

The talks with Tebbit must be called off: resolutions to this effect should bombard the Executive of every union. And the trade union and labour movement as a whole — particularly in the printing industry — should prepare for the necessary solidarity action to defend the NUJ and the NGA from the attacks of the Tory courts.



Chile torture

AS THOUSANDS marched last weekend on the tenth anniversary of the brutal military coup in Chile, General Pinochet's troops and riot police were again in action against workers and youth staging their own increasingly confident protests against the junta.

The death toll of demonstrators since May this year has now risen to 55 — while horrific accounts have emerged of the torture and rape of many of those arrested.

Unrepentant, General Pinochet delivered a hard-hitting anniversary speech in which he insisted that he would remain in office until 1989. His ability to survive that long will depend upon the speed with which the reviving Chilean workers' movement is able to regroup and gain in confidence after the devastating slaughter and repression of the last ten years.

INSIDE: A 16-page pull-out-and-fold supplement on 'How to Fight the Tories', geared to the labour movement conference this Saturday, September 17

EDITORIAL

The British Scargill and the Polish Scargills

IT'S as if a giant reversing lens has been placed across Europe.

Arthur Scargill denounces the Polish Arthur Scargills. At the same time, the time-servers and bureaucrats of the British labour movement support, in Poland, the same working class militancy that they detest in Britain.

Solidarnosc's programme includes: works managers to be subject to recall by elected workers' councils; 'opening the books' of state economic planning; abolition of the privileges of the bureaucracy, free trade unions and the right to strike. That is not anti-socialist.

Solidarnosc was and is about the working class organising itself to speak for itself and fight for its own interests. It represents the same spirit of working class rebellion that Arthur Scargill is associated with in Britain.

Frank Chapple, David Basnett, Kate Losinska and the rest differ from the official Polish 'union' leaders in that even the most right-wing TUC union is a genuine workers' organisation, whereas the official Polish 'unions' are state-controlled fronts. But in spirit they are infinitely closer to the fake union leaders nominated by General Jaruzelski than to Lech Walesa. The narrow-minded devotion to their own careers, the hostility to what disrupts their bureaucratic security and comfort, is the same.

Not all is topsy-turvy, though. For most of the TUC right-wingers were blatant hypocrites in their pious outcry against Scargill's denunciation of Solidarnosc. They themselves continued relations with the official Polish 'unions' as Solidarnosc struggled for life in 1980-1. Bill Sims, now so loud against Scargill, spoke understandingly of the 'problems' faced by his 'colleagues' in Poland.

The timing showed up their hypocrisy. It's no news that Scargill has a scandalous attitude to Solidarnosc. It's not a new revelation to be gleaned from the cynically-timed publication of a six week old letter in the columns of a small-circulation paper.

The TUC right-wingers chose to denounce him last week, not in order to help the Polish workers, but in order to help themselves at the TUC congress.

The name of the reversing lens is *nationalism*. The working class is a world class. The motto, 'An injury to one is an injury to all', applies world-wide. Yet Arthur Scargill clearly sees class struggle as just *British* workers versus *British* bosses.

That's why he can write one third of the world's workers — those who live in the Stalinist states — out of the class struggle, allotting them no role but to support their 'socialist' rulers.

Perhaps he is motivated by the principle, 'My enemy's enemy is my friend': if the Stalinist bureaucrats arouse the hostility of Britain's bosses, then they must be on our side. But working class politics demands more than just blindly kicking against the bosses, saying yes when they say no and no when they say yes.

Perhaps he is concerned to defend the principle of a nationalised economy. So are we. So is Solidarnosc. But military defence of nationalised property relations against an imperialist assault is one thing. Political defence of the bureaucrats who sit astride that nationalised economy against the living, struggling, angry working class is another.

The same nationalism explains why Arthur Scargill, alongside his industrial militancy, supports a not-at-all-militant programme of import controls, withdrawal from the EEC, and siege economy. He is looking for 'socialism in one country', and since that is impossible he ends up with a recipe of 'capitalism in one country'.

Arthur Scargill's nationalism should help us understand the nationalism of the Polish Scargills. Theirs has more justification, in that Poland is an oppressed nation while Britain is still a big imperialist power. And none of them have carried it as far as Scargill: none of the Solidarnosc leaders has come out in favour of Tebbit's laws or Reagan's union-busting.

But some of the Solidarnosc leaders undoubtedly have had illusions in Western, capitalist democracy. And part of the reason must be the same 'my enemy's enemy is my friend' principle that appears in Arthur Scargill's argument.

TUC right-wingers like Chapple cynically try to use the same revolution against Stalinism in order to argue that the unions must collaborate with the Tory 'elected government'.

What we need instead is the spirit of class struggle applied consistently — for the unions to break links with the Tories; and for solidarity with Solidarnosc.

Korean jumbo Holes in Reagan's story

AT FIRST the USSR simply stonewalled over the Korean jumbo-jet disaster, stating only that the jet 'continued its flight in the direction of the Sea of Japan'.

Then it tried to brazen it out. It was a spy-plane and it was over USSR territory, the Kremlin said, so they shot it down. That was that.

This was, perhaps, about what we should expect from the Stalinist bureaucracy, with its habitual brutality and its lack of any accountability to the people it rules over. No wonder it has been a field day for the cold warriors.

But the US also has some questions to answer. Why was the plane off course, and why wasn't it warned it was off course?

The main outlines of what happened on August 31 are not much contested. The plane left Anchorage, Alaska, at 14.00 hours Greenwich Mean Time, on a flight to South Korea. Over the North Pacific it began to stray from its scheduled flight path. From then until it was shot down over the Sea of Japan it deviated steadily further and further from its scheduled path.

It was picked up by USSR radar at about 16.00 as it came over the Kamchatka peninsula, home of major Russian military installations. The plane was then tracked by the USSR. About 1812 hours, and possibly also earlier, USSR fighters came within eyesight of it. By then it was over the island of Sakhalin, again an important USSR military site.

The US says the Russian fighters came very close to the airliner; the Russian account confirms this, since it says that the fighters wagged their wings as a signal to the jumbo-jet, and there would be no point doing that unless it was within eyesight.

Missile tests

According to the US, the airliner had its lights on; according to the USSR, it didn't. According to the US, and the USSR does not contest it, the airliner had switched off its 'transponder', which helps to identify it on radar screens.

At about 1826 the airliner was shot down.

The New York Times has reported that major USSR missile tests were in preparation in the area, but were cancelled after the airliner incident.

The US interpretation of all this is that the plane simply went off course through some mistake or another.

But, for a start, chopping and changing in the US story suggests that they are covering up something. Only semi-accidentally and under pressure of questioning did the US reveal on September 4 that a spy-plane, an RC-135, was near the airliner before it entered USSR air space.

They also made much of the 'distinctive silhouette' of the jumbo-jet while silent in the dark. A US spy plane, the RC-135, was near the airliner before it entered USSR air space. The US first admitted the RC-135's presence only after the USSR fired no

REAGAN has made the most of the USSR's shooting-down of a Korean airliner and subsequent bland 'explanations'. But was the US such an innocent by-stander as Reagan says? Martin Thomas reports.

warning shots, then — on September 12 — conceded that it did. Washington asserted initially that it had 'irrefutable' evidence that the Russian fighters knew it was a civilian airliner, then withdrew this claim.

And the US has steadfastly refused to publish the whole of the tapes it has.

All this sheds doubt on the official US answer to two big questions: why was the airliner off course, and why was it not warned?

Warning

The official US/Japanese explanation for not warning the airliner is that they did not know what was happening until after it had happened. The Japanese civilian air authorities could only go by the airliner's own reports of its position (which was way out); the blip seen on Japanese military radar in Wakkanai could only be identified with hindsight; and the Russian pilots' radio conversations were being recorded on tape rather than listened to 'live'.

But that excuse is spoiled somewhat by the fact that the US also offers another one which contradicts it. 'The danger became apparent only in the final moments of Flight 007 — since other commercial planes have scrambled Soviet defence systems and flown on safely...' (Newsweek, September 12).

This second excuse suggests that US authorities were aware that the airliner had 'scrambled Soviet defence systems', and consciously allowed it to proceed on the calculation that the USSR would not dare to shoot it down.

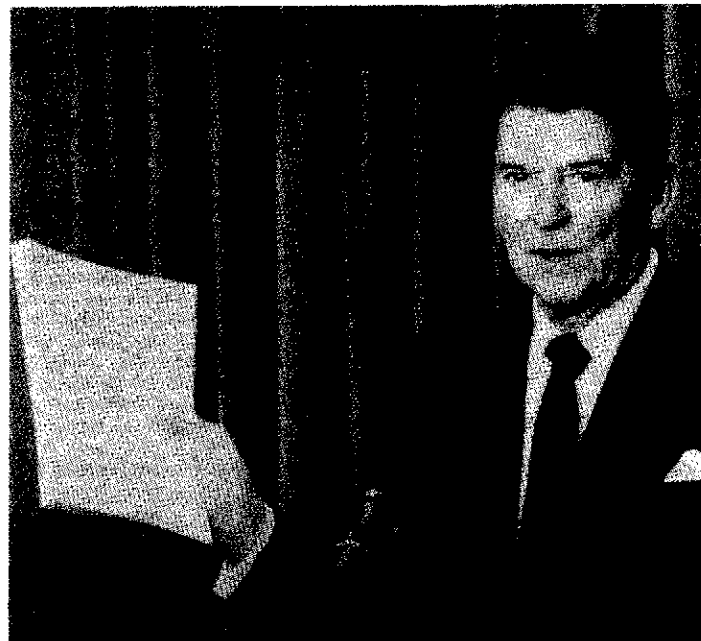
The airliner — according to the US's own account — had stirred the Russian defence system into action for some 2½ hours. Is it likely that the US, which has major surveillance facilities in the area, would have remained unaware of what was going on for so long? The US has a radar station in the Aleutian Islands, in the North Pacific: didn't it pick up the airliner going off course?

The RC-135 spy-plane, according to the US's own account, met the airliner as it was about to enter USSR air space. Why didn't it sound a warning?

Position reports

The press reports indicate that the last position report that the airliner gave to Tokyo was wrong. Were all the previous position reports wrong too? If so, did no one notice that there was an airliner in the positions where it was supposed to be?

In the US government's very first announcements it



Two questions for Reagan: why was the airliner off course, and why didn't the US and Japanese warn it?

the disaster, it was able to give the precise time when Russian radar first located the airliner. The US monitoring facilities certainly picked up that contact.

Did the record really remain unexamined for 2½ hours? Does the US really install elaborate, expensive surveillance equipment, in an area where it, too, has important military bases — only to leave the information gathered by that equipment to gather dust?

The fact suggests that the US, at the very least, consciously allowed the airliner to continue off course. But there seems to be more to the off-course route than just a navigation error.

It took the USA a full week to come up with the claim that part of the navigation system had malfunctioned and been replaced at Anchorage.

Apparently the airliner had a system which would inform the pilot of its position on the basis of measuring the distance travelled from its starting point. If the starting point was put into the system wrong; then the system would give the pilot wrong positions all along.

But Korean Airlines insist that the system was programmed correctly. In any case, if the starting point had been put in wrong, then the plane would have gone off course right from the start — which it didn't.

Activate

Duncan Campbell (New Statesman, September 9) suggests the airliner could have been consciously sent into USSR air space in order to activate the defences and thus provide information for the US monitoring facilities on how those defences work. The Morning Star (September 5, September 7) states that the pilots on the airliner were military personnel, and that past Korean Airlines passengers have told Canadian papers that KAL planes often fly without lights.

Why didn't the KAL pilot respond to the Russian fighters' warning shots and signals? The US says that radio contact was impossible between the airliner and the fighters (the Russians deny this), but the Korean pilot did not even attempt to respond. The most likely response reported from the airliner was the 'decreasing speed' before the jet was shot down.

according to the Russian fighter pilots' radio reports as published by the US.

It looks like the KAL pilot may consciously have decided to go off course and risk the consequences.

The Daily Express — no apologist for the Kremlin — asks whether in fact the plane was equipped for spying:

'Some diplomats claim that the Americans — like the Soviets — have for years been using some civil airlines for photographic missions over sensitive territory.'

'The US is believed not to use its own airlines or those of major Western nations.'

'Usually a country which is economically or politically dependent on Washington is selected to "volunteer" for overflying particularly sensitive areas.'

'South Korea would be a natural candidate.'

'Why did Korean Captain Chun Byong-In, a veteran with 10,000 hours flying, make such a sustained navigational error on a route he must have known by heart?'

'Why did he fail to respond to apparently repeated attempts by Soviet fighters to force him to land?'

'Why was no alert raised when US officers collecting taped evidence of operations by the Soviet fighters must have known that a passenger plane was blundering into appalling danger?'

'Had the Korean pilot known that his plane was equipped for spying he would probably have been under secret orders on no account to put down in Soviet territory if intercepted. He would have had to fly on.'

The Sunday Times summarises: 'There is now growing conviction in the west that the South Korean airliner flew deliberately into Soviet airspace...' (September 11).

If so, that doesn't absolve the Russian bureaucrats from answering the questions about what they did. It doesn't justify them. But it does show the US up to be hypocrites twice over.

Hypocrites because the US ruling class which claims to stand for civilisation and humanity is helping to massacre thousands in Central America at the same time. And hypocrites because there is evidence that the US consciously planned or permitted the KAL flight — in full knowledge of the likely consequences — for its own military/intelligence purposes.

SOLIDARNOSC

WITH EDMUND BALUKA

LET'S GET HIM OUT OF GAOL



North and South

by Paddy Dohard

A Catholic state for a Catholic people?

THE abortion referendum in the 26 Counties led some before the poll to talk of a 'new partition of Ireland'. The result showed they were right.

In a very low turn-out (54%), there was a two-to-one majority to insert into the constitution a ban on abortion (which is already illegal).

For the sponsors of the referendum it was, however, a very qualified victory. Only one third of the electorate voted yes.

There was a sharp division between Dublin — where two thirds voted no — and the rest of the country. And the senior partner in the coalition government, Fine Gael, was heavily divided.

The youth of Fine Gael openly campaigned for a no vote. At the end prime minister Garret Fitzgerald came out, timidly, for 'no'.

The Labour Party, junior partner in the coalition, was divided too: half the deputies for yes, half for no.

The supporters of the amendment pulled out all the stops in their campaign, and they had a lot in their favour. The South of Ireland has long been a Catholic, conservative, society, where the priests are a tremendous social power. It has been in the grip of a savagely repressive sexual puritanism since the mid-19th century famine.

Though the society has changed massively in the last 25 years, with industrialisation and urbanisation, the forces of Catholicism and conservatism are still strong. Over 80% of the people still go to Mass regularly.

Those at the top of the Catholic hierarchy made pseudo-liberal statements that people should vote according to their consciences. The lower clergy made every pulpit a political platform for the 'Pro-Life' campaign.

The mass-circulation press and the provincial press said vote yes. Behind them they had the Catholic teaching that an embryo has a soul from the beginning, and abortion is therefore infanticide.

Most of the opponents of the amendment are against abortion. Some — like Fitzgerald — argued against the amendment on the grounds that, because of ambiguous wording, it could lead to legalised abortion.

Behind the argument about wording, there was also a more important argument about the role of the Catholic Church in Irish society.

The amendment was tailored to fit Catholic social teaching. The Protestant churches in the

South opposed the amendment: they are against abortion, but not as unconditionally or obsessively as the Catholics. Victor Griffin, Dean of St Patrick's, Dublin, put it like this:

"There can be no true Republicanism without equality of recognition, and this implies the toleration of different views and practices in relation to certain moral issues within the framework of an agreed public morality. Such moral issues should be the affair, not of a Republican state, but of the particular Churches, each having the right to exercise its own particular moral discipline and none having the right to enforce theirs on others."

"At present we must admit, however reluctantly, there is no strong commitment in this state to any kind of united Ireland which would involve accommodating the Protestant minority point of view."

A massive blow has been dealt to the pretence that the Southern political parties really want a united Ireland.

The Irish people is divided. Whatever the historical and economic roots, and political/economic underpinnings, this expresses itself in the consciousness of the Catholic and Protestant people as a matter of religion — to which are attached ideas about liberty of conscience, and of the relationship of the individual and his/her conscience to Church and State.

On every count the referendum has been an attempt at a Catholic triumphalist assertion of the dominance of one side over the other. On September 7 the Irish constitution was explicitly identified with the Catholic church. The nationalist cause was identified with the Catholic cause.

Fianna Fail identified completely with the amendment campaign. After a 20-minute (!) meeting of its parliamentary deputies, FF decided to vote yes, and the party's discipline did the rest. Yet Fianna Fail is the Republican Party — and the party which the 'left Republican' IRSP, for example, supported in the last election.

In the North, the SDLP majority was for a yes vote.

Symbolically, even Sean McBride, founder of Amnesty, son of the 1916 martyr, former (late '30s) chief of staff of the IRA, and a possible candidate in the next election for president, voted yes. It was a repeat of his stance in 1951, when the Fine Gael/Labour Party/Clann na Poblachta government buckled under the pressure of the Catholic hierarchy's opposition to a health scheme for 'Mother and Child'. McBride was then the leader of Clann na Poblachta, and forced the Clann na Poblachta Minister of Health, Noel Browne, to resign.

All this is very relevant to the recent dispute in Socialist Organiser about 'federalism' in a united Ireland. The fact is that the forces that dominate Southern Irish politics ignored the protests of the Protestants (and Jews). The two-thirds who voted no or refused to rally to the priests are a basis of hope for the future, but the yes vote won on September 7.

A fight to ensure the rights of the Protestant minority must be part of the fight for a united Ireland.



Hattersley, Shore flop with CLPs Heffer vote is crucial

By John Bloxam

PROBABLY the most significant item of information in the final agenda for the Labour Party Conference, published at the weekend, is a list of nominations for the Leadership and NEC elections.

They confirm not only Kinnock's certain victory for the leadership, but also that his support doesn't just come from a cabal of trade union bureaucrats. The fact that nearly 50% of CLPs have nominated him can partly be explained by a certain defeatism in the aftermath of Labour's election defeat, but mainly shows the extent to which he still has 'left' credentials among the rank and file.

The only other candidate with any support in the CLPs is Eric Heffer. 30 have nominated him, and the indications are that this figure can be increased at the expense of Kinnock in the September mandating meetings as the Heffer campaign begins to have some effect.

The weakness of the organised right in the CLPs is shown by Hattersley's miserable 6 nominations, and Shore's none.

Meacher ahead

The closest contests will be for the Deputy Leadership, Party Treasurer, and the Trade Union and women's places on the NEC. For Deputy Leader, Meacher is clearly ahead of Hattersley in nominations from the CLPs (197 to 79), but the decisive trade union votes are still to be decided.

Meacher's recent performance — a general lurch to the right on policy, staying away from the TUC and a blank cheque for the 'new leadership', followed by a sharp attack on Hattersley — is unlikely to curry favour with the trade union bureaucrats but will probably demoralise some who support him as the left candidate.

The election for Treasurer between Varley and Booth is likely to be as narrow as the Deputy Leadership vote and will probably follow the same pattern.

In the other sections, the general expectation is for gains for the 'left slate' —

although much will still depend on organisation in the last 2 weeks before the Conference, both in the CLP mandating meetings and the Trade Union delegations.

It will also, to an extent, depend on the outcome of a procedural vote on the eligibility of a number of candidates, all except one of whom are on the right wing slate.

The central issue at stake in all the elections remains the witch-hunt in the Party. The size of the vote for Eric Heffer in the first round, the outcome of the votes for the other positions — these will determine both the extent, and even the possibility, of a continuation of the existing leadership's attempt to gut the Party of its serious socialists and militants. They will be the most important votes at the 1983 Party Conference.

As last year, Socialist Organiser is calling for support for the 'left slate' on the basis of its opposition to the witch-hunt and the possibility of overturning the present right majority. In the CLP section this means supporting: Norman Atkinson, Tony Benn, Eric Heffer, Jo Richardson, Dennis Skinner, Audrey Wise and either Michael Meacher or David Blunkett.

In the women's section, and in the absence of specific recommendations from CLPD WAC, candidates who have clearly opposed the witch-hunt in the last year are: Margaret Beckett, Judith Hart, Patricia Hewitt, Joan Maynard.

In the rest of the final agenda book, the amendments add little to either the focus of the debates or change the particular issues likely to come up.

The Conference will still be dominated by the aftermath of the General Election defeat and a concentration on winning the next election. In the meantime most resolutions prescribe sticking to existing policies, and improving Party propaganda and organisation.



Heffer, gaining ground

Amendments add little to this, except to emphasise the way in which a 'labour movement paper' is seen as a panacea by many to opposing the Tories and capitalism.

The NUM add their own twist to this with an amendment to give 'in the meantime' much more support to our existing press namely Labour Weekly, Tribune, and the Morning Star.

The great majority of amendments, however, are not on these issues but on internal Labour Party questions.

A number back-up opposition to the witch-hunt, but most deal with extending democracy. Women's rights and power in the Party should still rightly be the main debate, but the right to establish black sections (on the lines of women's sections and YS branches) has also been made an issue by a number of amendments.

The same is true for extending democracy and accountability to the Parliamentary Labour Party so that it 'will function as an integrated part of the Labour Party; will be seen to be more democratic and thus will depend less upon patronage'. 21 amendments have been organised on this issue alone, more than on any other one.

The right wing have added little to their drive on establishing individual membership ballots, although the debate looks likely to be artificially polarised between the right wing arguing for 'more democracy' and simple support for the status quo.

TASS has submitted a self-interested amendment to the EEPTEU simply saying that elections 'should take

into account the opinion of individual members of the Labour Party and the representative democracy of the trade unions and other affiliates'.

Apart from internal Party issues, the other major block of amendments appears on the issue of Iran — a combination of good organisation by supporters and revulsion at the level of repression by the Khomeini regime. But many glaring gaps in the original resolution booklet remain unfilled.

Waiting?

There are no amendments on withdrawing from NATO in the 'defence' section, so this will not be an issue this year.

There are no amendments to the solitary resolution on gay rights.

The sole perspective for fighting the Tories now, and not retreating into a diet of propaganda and waiting for the next election, is contained in the handful of resolutions based on the model circulated by Socialist Organiser supporters.

SELF DEFENCE
NO OFFENCE!

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POLICE
NEWHAM 8
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Demonstrate in support of the Newham 8:
Saturday September 24,
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Labour Committee on
Ireland, BM Box 5355,
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TUC Congress '83

A measure of the weakness of the left

A WEEK after the 115th TUC has closed, militant trade unionists need to understand what happened.

The 1983 Congress marked a decisive shift from control of the General Council by the Communist Party/Labour Left axis, to a definite (and possibly more permanent) control by a new right wing grouping.

The structural change in the election of the General Council, brought about in 1981, was a direct result of two factors: first the inability of the left to enact a real reform of the TUC away from the domination of block voting by the largest unions; and secondly the shift in numbers away from the industrial unions towards the white collar unions.

The confidence of the right wing in winning this control was expressed in their planning for, fighting for and winning two key composites: Composite 3 on Anti Trade Union Legislation; and Composite 15 on TUC Strategy.

Composite 3, despite a lot of rhetoric, centred on one question: there will be no fight against Tebbit through industrial action; and to oppose the Tory attacks, the TUC will only use 'reasoned discussion' and 'explaining to

Stephen Corbishley was a lay delegate to the 1983 TUC from the civil service workers' union CPSA. This is his report (writing in a personal capacity).

the public the unfair and impractical nature of the proposals.

In an attempt to claw back some credibility, Mick Costello of the Morning Star tried to lump the opponents of this motion as belonging to the Left of the TUC and the

CP in particular (despite naming CP member Jack Henry of UCATT as supporting the motion).

But this rewriting of history cannot cover up the role that the CP-influenced or led unions played, not only in creating the composite but giving their own credibility to the right wing.

Backing the Composite moved by Duffy, and seconded by Jenkins, were ASLEF, UCATT, FTAT, FBU and NUPE as well as a list of right wing unions.

All these unions are part of the 'official left' within the TUC. But no amount

of prattling about the first paragraph of Composite 3 ('It emphasised the importance of enlisting the support of the entire labour movement and the need for the GC to co-ordinate support from affiliated unions with industrial action where appropriate to defend unions if employers use the Acts.') could overcome the fact that the central question was on talks or no talks.

Gill of TASS in moving the amendment which opposed talks (and was lost by 3.59 million to 6.92 million) had no strategy of how to fight, or how to go forward.

The failure of the Left to organise around a clear pole of opposition to talks gave the right wing a more powerful victory than they were entitled to.

This confusion, arising in most cases from the love of the official Left to use the procedures and practices of the TUC against their opponents, became the noose that strangled the chance of building a serious fight against the TUC talking to the Tories.

The power of the right wing (and also proof of the extent of their detailed political preparation for the 1983 Congress) was shown in the success of Composite 15.

Headed 'TUC Strategy', Composite 15 set out — as its author, Alastair Graham of CPSA showed in his speech — not to re-define 'modern trade unionism', but to begin the process of breaking the links between the TUC and the Labour Party.

At the same time, in rejecting 'industrial action for party political purposes' the motion was complimentary to the Composite 3 on Tory anti-trade union laws. In reality it was a motion opposed to any industrial action that would threaten the Government's control.

The core of the Composite was that the strategy now to be followed by the TUC was talks, followed by... more talks with the Tories!

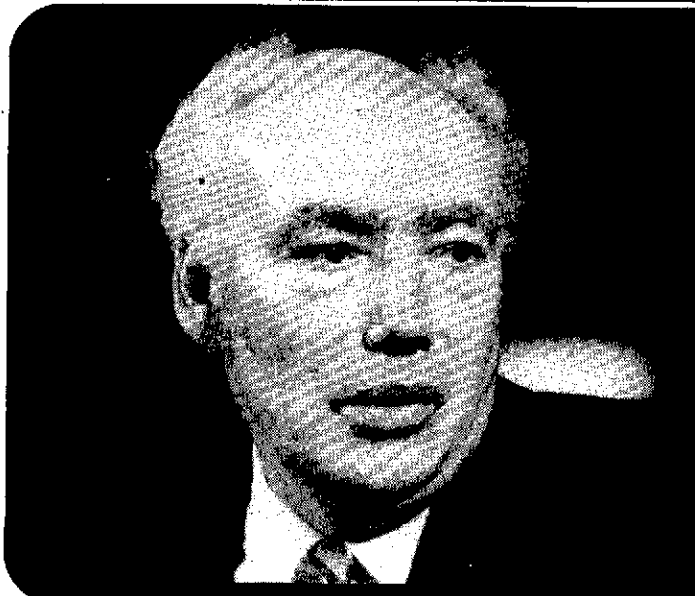
The political basis for this Composite, drawn up and supervised by Graham of CPSA arises from a viewpoint of trade unionism based on the American model — where trade unions wheel and deal with the two capitalist parties, whichever Government is in power.

But at the core of it is the notion that the trade unions should abandon any idea of supporting an independent workers' political party designed to challenge the forces of capital.

The most marked fact however about the debate and vote on Composite 15, was how close the new right wing on the TUC came to getting a completely overwhelming vote for this Composite.

The T&GWU and NUPE were both committed to support Composite 15, though the T&G wanted some assurances given by the mover.

Yet it was only as the debate



progressed and it became clearer how much this Composite was directed at first weakening and then in the long term cutting the links with the Labour Party as it now stands, that the NUPE delegation left the hall, to hold an emergency meeting to cast their vote against, and the T&G switched against.

The final vote in favour of 15 was 5.815 million to 3.999 million votes. If the T&G and NUPE had stayed in favour then Composite 15 would have received over 8 million votes to just over 1½ million against.

This is the real measure of

the weakness of the left both in political and organisational terms.

The barren opposition to Composite 15 without countering any alternative will be the basis not of continuing moves towards greater democratisation of the Labour Party, but of efforts by all wings of the union bureaucracy to push the Party back towards being a 'loyal' opposition, with its left wing purged and its constitution turned back to control by the Parliamentary Labour Party.

The lessons of TUC '83 are that the rank and file of

Labour movement CONFERENCE

September 17

September 17, 10.30am-5pm
University of London Union
Malet Street, WC1

Called by
Socialist
ORGANISER

How to fight the Tories



*So the Tories are back. The bland phrases in their Manifesto are already turning into renewed attacks on jobs, on union rights, new cuts and the privatisation of vital services.

*Already even as Tebbit prepares new ANTI-UNION LAWS — the TUC right wing have run up the white flag. But Arthur Scargill and Ken Livingstone have correctly pointed to the need for mass, direct action by the labour movement on the streets and picket lines. Our conference will focus on the problems, policies, and tactics for achieving this kind of fight.

*Against previous CUTS, many union leaders wrongly argued we wait for a returned Labour government while Labour councils blamed lack of union action for implementing Tory policies. A new 5-year mandate for Thatcher makes this a plainly useless policy: instead we need occupations, supporting strikes, the extension of struggles on a national level — and we must learn lessons from such struggles in the past.

*PRIVATISATION in British Telecom, the NHS and other services threatens jobs, working conditions and union organisation. But the action

against privatisation so far has been either localised and isolated or largely focussed upon protest. We need a plan of action NOW, before the whole public sector is carved up by the bankers.

*The SHOP STEWARDS' MOVEMENT has come under fire in the engineering industry — but has developed in the NHS in the course of last year's pay fight. What policies and politics are needed to rebuild and extend the stewards' movement and defend its independence of full-time union officials and management propaganda?

*New, more radical BROAD LEFTS have been emerging in many unions: but under fire from employers and the right wing, some — like the CPSA Broad Left — can crumble. How can we link Broad Left activity at national level to day-to-day struggles in the workplaces, and develop a consistent, principled leadership?

*Many on the left of the LABOUR PARTY who had fought for left policies and accountability fell silent during the election — despite the right wing sabotage. How can we develop an organised, and politically confident left in the Labour Party capable of standing ground under pressure? What kind of perspective should be put forward by the left to go beyond the limited 'Alternative Economic Strategy' which so plainly failed to convince a sceptical electorate?

*With five more years to work on restoring 'Victorian values', Thatcher's blows will again fall hardest on WOMEN. Why won't the Labour Party and unions develop the special strengths and fighting capacity shown by women workers, and take their special problems seriously?

*BLACK WORKERS too are beginning to organise against tacit and open racism from the bosses, the state, the police and — most scandalous of all, from the labour movement. How can we help develop that struggle?

*Thousands of YOUTH are now faced with another 5 years' seemingly a lifetime — on the dole. Millions of adults are on the same scrapheap. How can we act at rank and file level to remedy the criminal failure of TUC and Labour Party leaders to organise and mobilise the unemployed? How should the unions respond to the new threats posed by Tebbit's so-called 'Youth Training Scheme'?

*OUR CONFERENCE 'How to fight the Tories' will attempt to promote discussion and give some answers to these and other questions facing the labour movement.

Open to delegates and observers from all labour movement bodies.

Credentials (including discussion papers) £2.50 (employed), £1.50 (unemployed).

Please send me details/credentials for the September 17 conference. I enclose £...

Name
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Send to:
Socialist Organiser, 28, Middle Lane,
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Platform and workshop speakers include:

Jeremy Corbyn, MP; Reg Race, Joy Hurcombe (Labour CND)*; Val Dunn (Manchester Labour councillor)*; Andrea Campbell (COHSE Group 81)*; Colin Talbot (POEU Broad Left)*.

*In a personal capacity

Workshop discussions, coupled with the showing of videos, will cover a wide range of topics and current struggles, and enable everyone present to contribute in debate on policies for the way forward.

CRECHE FACILITIES WILL BE AVAILABLE ALL DAY

The rise

WHITE-collar workers: new middle class or new working class? In the wake of the TUC congress, Martin Thomas looks at the evidence and arguments provided by a new book: 'The New Working Class', a collection of articles and excerpts edited by Richard Hyman and Robert Price (Macmillan £7.95).

ANTI-socialist writers often try to have it both ways on the issue of class and socialism.

One day they say that socialism is something foisted on the working class by middle-class semi-intellectuals. The workers themselves are loyal souls, if only they could escape the agitators and activists.

Next day, the story is that socialism was — admittedly deep-rooted in the traditional manual working class, but these are declining battalions.

During the big battles in the Labour Party we heard the first story. TUC week was the time for the second story to come out. The TUC, we were told, will be saved from socialism by the rise of the white-collar unions.

The rise of white-collar work and white-collar trade unionism is certainly a fact (see box). The theoretical issue

it poses is whether we have a new working class, or a new middle class. Is it the unionisation of the white collar workers, or the white-collarisation of the trade unions?

Most (though by no means all) Marxists see most white-collar workers as working class. That was Marx's own view of the question (box), though in his day the numbers involved were far, far smaller.

And there's a lot of evidence for this. The advantages enjoyed by white collar workers in pay and conditions over manual workers have been reduced (though Richard Hyman does point out that the equalisation is not as drastic as often made out). With new technology, capitalist control over office labour processes is increased to a level comparable with the shop floor.

Whereas unions like NALGO and the NUT used to refuse even to affiliate to the TUC, now they are often just as militant at rank and file level

'One (works) as a manager the other as an overseer, the third as a drudge. An ever increasing number included in the immediate command and here it is quite immaterial whether the worker is merely a limb of greater or smaller distance from the machine' (Marx, Capital V)



THE BAYING hysteria against NUM President Arthur Scargill whipped up by the press and TUC right wing at Blackpool was aimed not at Scargill's plainly Stalinist political views on international questions, but at his consistent advocacy of class action against the Tory government. In vilifying Scargill, nonentities like Alastair Graham of the CPSA could combine their own personal image-building efforts with a political fight for a perspective of long-term collaboration with the Tory government and slackening the links between the unions and the Labour Party. Yet the enthusiastic response of rank and file delegates to Scargill on pit closures indicates that however unpopular his line on Eastern Europe, Scargill has a reservoir of support for his fight for anti-Tory action.

Top: not much to inspire women workers at the TUC! Above, left: Jimmy Knapp of the railworkers' union, one of the established 'Left' leaders who crumpled beneath the right-wing offensive.



'STOP the missiles in '83... Strike action by the TUC' That was the chant to be heard from members of YCND outside the TUC. Unfortunately these sentiments were not shared by most of the Trade Union leaders dry and warm inside.

The centre/right of the TUC managed to push through a tooth-

less resolution on nuclear disarmament, which concentrated on Cruise and Trident, and limited itself to 'opposition' rather than a serious campaign of action.

However, all is not lost, Cruise missiles have not yet been installed and there are still rank and file trade unionists willing to take action against them.

That rank and file needs to organise. One way to do that is to build for the YCND young trade unionists conference, at which we hope to discuss the work YCND can do within the trade unions, and the possibility of industrial action against Cruise, Trident and Civil Defence.



PHOTOS: JOHN HARRIS

of the white collar unions

manual unions. Shop steward representation among white collar workers is growing. The white-collar unions are not bastions of the right wing.

Labour Party

But they do differ systematically from the manual unions in one respect: relations with the Labour Party. NALGO, the CPSA, and the NUT are affiliated, and not likely to affiliate soon. White-collar unions that are affiliated generally have very high rates of voting out from the political party: in ASTMS, for example, in 1975, 85% opted out. Such facts have led some writers, both Marxist and non-Marxist, to question the political significance of the unionisation of white-collar workers. George Strauss puts it, 'White collar workers join unions, not because they reject their middle class aspirations, but because they see unionism as a better way of obtaining them'.

engineer, technologist, etc., manual labourer or even other types of labour are not of productive labour... whether the job of a particular aggregate worker, is at a manual labourer. (p. 1040, Penguin edition).

'The commercial worker produces no surplus value directly. But... what he costs the capitalist and what he brings in for him, are two different things. He... adds to the capitalist's income by helping him to reduce the cost of realising surplus-value...'

'(His) wage tends to fall, even in relation to average labour, with the advance of the capitalist mode of production. This is due partly to the division of labour in the office... Secondly... the progress of science and public education...'

(Marx, Capital Vol. III, p. 300)

This argument is countered most devastatingly by some non-Marxist sociologists, who asked white collar workers and manual workers about their attitudes to unions. 11% of white-collar unionists questioned said they had joined the union for ideological reasons, and 54% for bread-and-butter reasons. Among manual unions, 8% had joined for ideological reasons, 38% for bread-and-butter reasons, and 49% because of a closed shop.

Manual workers can have 'middle class aspirations', too! enjoying high living standards and considerable autonomy in their work, are closer in their situation to the old petty bourgeoisie [small shopkeepers, self-employed craftsmen, etc.] than to the working class.

And even among the main bulk of white-collar workers, a good chunk are considerably better-off than the average of the working class. A real socialist party has to rouse and mobilise the most oppressed sections of the working class. So there is no room at all for complacency about the low percentage of manual workers in the ranks of the Left.

So not all white-collar workers can be lumped together. Many professional workers,

logical reasons, and 54% for bread-and-butter reasons. Among manual unions, 8% had joined for ideological reasons, 38% for bread-and-butter reasons, and 49% because of a closed shop.

Manual workers can have 'middle class aspirations', too!

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A real socialist party has to rouse and mobilise the most oppressed sections of the working class. So there is no room at all for complacency about the low percentage of manual workers in the ranks of the Left.

Collective trade union action generates the seeds of socialism — but that's not the same thing as unions in themselves being inherently socialist.

Universal

The drive to form unions is so universal in the working class as to be practically automatic; but the political coloration of trade unionism depends on more specific political and ideological factors. In roughly similar economic situations, trade unions can be explicitly pro-capitalist (US 'business unionism'), religious (Italy, France, Belgium, etc., etc.), syndicalist, Labourist or revolutionary.

It depends on the 'vanguard', the active minority who shape the semi-automatic drive of the working class into specific channels. Economic militancy creates better chances for a socialist active minority, but it does not guarantee it success.

The Labour affiliation of the manual unions in Britain was not an automatic product of economic evolution. It was a product of huge struggles. It will take equally huge struggles to plot a conscious political road for the rising white-collar unions.

The business-as-usual Labourism of Roy Hattersley or Neil Kinnock will never win them away from the SDP.

Its hold even on manual workers is decaying fast under the pressure of the slump.

A better guide is the history of the Railway Clerks' Association, as recounted by David Lockwood.

It was the first militant white-collar union. At each step — when it registered as a trade union in 1899, when it affiliated to the Labour Party in 1909, and

when it called a national strike in 1919 — more cautious members warned that such actions would alienate the Conservative majority of clerks.

'Bolder counsel prevailed'. The result? The union grew, won victories; and after 1927, when the Tories made the political levy a matter of opting in, 83% of RCA members continued to pay.

★ The white-collar share of the workforce rose from 19% in 1911 to 43% in 1971. Today there are probably more white-collar workers in Britain than manual workers.

★ The white-collar share is especially high among women workers. 40% of waged women are in clerical work alone.

★ Together with the rise of the white-collar share has gone a rise of services as against the industrial sector (mining, manufacturing, construction, energy). In 1980 56% of the UK labour force was in services, as against 48% in 1960. 70% of women workers were in services.

★ Another parallel increase has been in higher education. By the late '70s, 20% of the 20-24 age group in the UK was in higher education, as against 9% in 1960. The UK is way behind most advanced capitalist countries in this respect: in the US, some 56% of the age-group are in higher education.

★ White-collar union numbers doubled between the years 1911-21 and the 1930s; then doubled again between the 1930s and 1961; and once again between 1961 and 1978. By 1978, 39% of all trade unionists in Britain were white-collar workers.

★ 43% of white-collar workers were unionised by 1978. (For manual workers the unionisation rate is about 60%).

★ Between June 1973 and June 1983 the workforce in metal manufacture fell 50%; in textiles and clothing, 44%; in mechanical engineering, 30%.

The workforce in insurance, banking and finance rose 25%, and in 'professional and scientific services', 17%.

Who's past it?

by Sharon Jones



It wasn't quite Barry Manilow — not quite the old Who, either

A WEEK ago ITV showed the final night of the Who's final tour. After almost a couple of decades the Who have definitely (as far as the TV networks see it) packed it all in.

The programme focused on Townshend, Daltry and Entwistle. Keith Moon's replacement Kenny Jones didn't get much of a look in (presumably out of respect for Moon) which turned out to be just as well, he was even duller than the rest of the band.

The concert was really rather sad. 2 men at least 40 odd, leaping around and singing 'My Generation' has to be either comical or sad. Especially when one looks like Peter Cook and the other is wearing two loose-fitting zippy black things, presumably to hide his paunch.

I wasn't sure if Daltry's stylish squatting at the back of the stage was a dramatic pose, or if he was just trying to get his breath back!

Most of the songs were from 'Who's next' — their last album — or from albums released after '76. '76 was a turning point in the style, the year they released Who by Numbers and the single Squeeze Box.

When The Who started off they were the Mod and they have been identified as such ever since.

Their songs were about being a young bloke, having a bit of money, and being generally quite bitter.

In fact by their second or 3rd album the Who were no



longer only straight Mod music, psychedelia had crept in. 'I can see for miles' owed more to acid than to the Mods pills.

Between the 'Mod' music and 1976 the Who produced some of their best material. They moved on from the early 3 chord wonders like 'Can't Explain' to complicated double albums, operas like Tommy. Neither did they become as pretentious as the other bands around.

Things changed when the long awaited 'Who by Numbers' came out. Most reviewers (and Who 'fans') were appalled. The songs were very different. They were about making records and obviously autobiographical.

The Who had branched out.

Daltry had a go at making solo albums but specialised in becoming an international film star. Townshend also made a few solos — and a couple with other musicians. His last solo album, Empty Glass, contained an excellent tribute to Keith Moon. Entwistle surprised everyone by writing pleasant, tuneful albums.

Moon's death could well have been what finally split the band — some 4 years later. But the last album he's on — 'Who are you' is reported to have been made bit by bit.

Of course there have been last concerts before, but judging by the looks on Daltry's and Townshend's faces they have had enough.

Born too soon?

SCIENCE

By Les Hearn

PREMATURE birth is still a major cause of death in the new-born. Survivors also have a higher chance of ending up brain-damaged, blind or deaf.

And yet the huge majority of babies that suffer death or damage from prematurity would have been perfectly normal if born at the right time. The degree of prematurity is important — after only 6 months gestation, a baby has a low chance of survival, but after 8 months, most will survive.

Preventing prematurity would therefore save a lot of unnecessary misery and suffering.

The French newspaper, Le Monde, recently ran an article describing a successful prevention programme, started in the '70s with the support of the Health minister, aimed at reducing the risk of premature birth.

The result has been a drop nationally from 8% to 5½% of all births over a decade, with only 3% premature in some hospitals. Some 6,000 normal births per year would otherwise have been premature.

Class

Of course, there is a class aspect to this problem, with working class women running a much greater risk than middle-class women, but even this differential has been reduced, though not abolished.

How has this been achieved? The article looked at the work of a research team at a hospital in Clamart, near Paris. The team started by looking at the inequality between poor and well-off women. They showed prematurity to be linked to aspects of the everyday life, a major factor being heavy working conditions. They found that clear warning signs appeared in pregnancy well before miscarriage or premature birth took place, and advising women to rest following these signs often allowed the pregnancy to

resume its normal course.

Furthermore, women attending ante-natal clinics were asked about their work and home conditions and advised to stop doing heavy jobs.

Another initiative of the team was to make use of women's mutual aid networks and their knowledge of pregnancy and childbirth. Isolated women, such as young women living in tower blocks on council estates, often do not have access to this knowledge and support. So, for example, they might have no idea what a contraction felt like and therefore be unable to interpret its meaning.

Traditional health knowledge ('old wives' tales') points to the dangers of such activities as heavy lifting, hanging up wet sheets, etc. The Clamart team felt such knowledge should be spread not by formal health education lessons but by reintroducing the traditional 'wise woman' as a community midwife.

Contraction

This would help women regain the skill of relating what they did with the way their bodies felt. Thus, if a certain type of effort caused a contraction, the pregnant woman could learn to recognise this and to avoid repeating the effort. And when the right time for the birth had come, she could use her knowledge to actually encourage contractions to start. Thus women could start to regain control over the course of their pregnancies.

The Clamart hospital's prematurity rate is now only

3%, well below the national average.

Paradoxically, this achievement, initiated under conservative government, is now threatened by the austerity (for workers) programme of the so-called socialists. There are fears that the mortality rate for the new-born could creep up to the level of... Britain!

Record

For the British record is a sorry one, apart from isolated examples, and is soon to get even worse. And yet, so much more could be done.

As the Clamart team point out, the damage that can lead to prematurity, to do with the development of the placenta and the position of the baby, takes place between 6 and 7½ months of pregnancy. But French women only get ante-natal leave from 7½ months.

Capitalists are unwilling to pay for extra leave which would benefit the whole of society and women rightly fear the increased discrimination in jobs that would follow an increase in leave. Giving up heavy work is most difficult precisely for the poor woman, and the woman who goes out to work will usually have the second job to do in the home.

How can these women be able to stop doing heavy work without being penalised? And legislation about workplaces alone will not help those doing heavy work in the home.

This is an example of how 'new' biological knowledge needs new social conditions for it to be put to use.

Read all about us!



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SOUTH

Oxford. SO is sold at the Cornmarket (Saturday 11 to

1) and outside Tesco, Cowley Rd, Friday 5 to 7. Also at EOA Books, Cowley Rd.

Basingstoke. Business meeting Friday September 23, 7.30 at Chute House.

LONDON

North-West London. Contact Mick, 624 1931.

Haringey. Next meeting Thursday September 22, 8.30pm at Haringey Grove Community Centre, Denmark Rd, N8 (near junction of Wightman Road and Turnpike Lane). Speaker from Labour Campaign for Gay Rights.

Islington. Next meeting Sunday September 25, 7pm. Caxton House, St John's Way, N19. Debate on the Common Market. Details: ring Linda, 278 1341.

South East London. Contact via 28 Middle Lane, London N8.

Hackney. Contact Andrew Hornung, 76 Carysfort Rd, London N16.

Richmond. SO is sold at Richmond Quadrant every Saturday, 11.30-1.30. Further details, contact Nick De Marco, 876 6715.

Southwark/Lambeth. Meets every other Wednesday at Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, London SE5. Business 7.30, discussion 8.30. Next meeting Sep. 21.

Orpington. Contact c/o South East London.

Tower Hamlets. Susan, 377 1328.

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There will be an informal meeting to discuss a Socialist Science Policy at 2pm, Sunday September 25, at 55, Innis House, East Street, London SE17. More details will follow.

ASTMS Broad Left — Scotland. An inaugural meeting will take place on Sunday September 18, at 2pm in the Trade Union Centre, Carlton Place, Glasgow, for the purpose of setting up a Broad Left in Scotland. Pooled fare and creche.

For further details, contact: Bill Day, No.2 Hold-ing, Errol, Perth, PH2 7ST. Telephone (day) 0738 21202 x 2246, evening 08217 381.

Big support for NHS work-in

DESPITE pouring rain, 250 joined the demonstration in support of the Thornton View hospital occupation in Bradford last Saturday, 10th.

Miners walk out

THERE has been growing militancy in the Yorks coalfield over the last few months.

The present example of this is at Dodworth Colliery which is on strike for the 5th time in less than a month.

The dispute is over a miner alleged to have pushed an overman in the shower. Management sacked George Marsh and the miners walked out.

Local branch officials compromised, and had the miner transferred to Barrow, another Barnsley pit.

This was not to the satisfaction of the men or George Marsh. This time Redbrooke Colliery which is joined underground with Dodworth walked out in support, meaning that 1,250 men were now on strike and picketing in both pits.

Unfortunately a handful of scabs have been going through the line with police protection.

This is not deterring the strikers who have tabled an emergency resolution to the Yorks NUM Conference calling for an all-out coalfield strike.

Print battle

A STRUGGLE against victimisation in Islington will soon enter its 3rd month.

In early July, J.T. Orange, an anti-trade union firm, made 2 members of the NGA redundant.

The union regarded this as victimisation because all workers had been told: 'if there were redundancies union members will be the first to go'.

After the union took limited industrial action the company sacked all the NGA members.

Despite harassment — there have been two physical assaults — the picket line has been in operation continually. SOGAT members have refused to cross the picket line and are giving free support.

J.T. Orange are asking for contributions to their funds. Send to J.T. Orange Dispute Committee, 2nd Floor, 14-18 Old St., EC1V 9AB. 251-5493.

There were many banners, not only from the Bradford labour movement but also from other cities — including Wirral Trades Council.

The theme of all the speakers at the rally was that Thornton View had made a stand against the Tories, and there could be no retreat.

Picket

Local Labour councillor Barry Turner called for supporting strike action. NUPE general secretary Rodney Bickerstaffe was there supporting the occupation. Alex Carina, from the hospital unions, stressed the need to keep up the 24-hours, seven-days picket to stop patients being moved out.

Meanwhile a district administrator who crawled into the occupied hospital through a window has publicly admitted that it is well-run.

UCW betrayal ends fight over sacking

THE WEEK-LONG strike by UCW postal section workers in Basingstoke ended last Friday, 9th, thanks to the UCW Executive.

The strike started on Saturday 3rd after the sacking of Alan Fraser, postal section secretary and a Socialist Organiser supporter. The following Wednesday, the second appeal, brought forward and heard in Basingstoke, was bungled by Gerry Casey, the UCW regional officer.

Casey admitted to the mass meeting on the picket line that the initial brief to him and to the other official, Joe Payne, had been to end the strike.

The postmen voted overwhelmingly to stay out, and resumed a 24 hour picket in strength.

Payne and Casey, together with the local UCW committee, had been in contact all week with UCW national officer John Taylor at the TUC in Blackpool. Taylor

said he would meet post office management in Basingstoke on Friday, and assured the local committee that the bottom line was getting Alan's job back.

In the event, after six hours, Taylor urged Alan to accept a £7000 pay-off from the Post Office. When he refused, officials called in Alan's wife Angela to make him accept it. She told them to stuff it, too.

Taylor then phoned around several different postal districts to get Alan transferred. Of course, no-one would take him.

A branch meeting was called for 6pm. The postmen wanted the outside supporters, including Socialist Organiser and GMBU hospital workers, inside with them. But Taylor insisted on members only, even excluding a UCW delegation from Croydon.

The committee, sworn not to mention the attempted pay-off, were exhausted and shattered.

But when the decision was put to them, the strikers voted to carry on.

Taylor, who at the start of the day had said he would escalate the strike, put an end to that by claiming that the majority was not enough. It was the end of the road and they had to return to work.

The local officials, confused by the sudden change in Taylor's words and emotionally wrecked, were helpless as a second vote narrowly overturned the first.

Emotion, frustration and exhaustion broke, and as Angela Fraser finally managed to reach the platform to say that if they had voted to continue they would win, many broke down and wept openly.

A full account of the victimisation and the betrayal by the UCW bureaucrats will appear in next week's Socialist Organiser.

Esso strikers seek 7%

OVER 2,500 sub-contract workers at the giant Esso (Fawley) oil refinery, Southampton, walked off the job on September 5 after an early mass meeting had decisively backed a call for strike action.

The strikers are demanding a seven per cent pay increase plus a 38 hour working week and non-contributing pension scheme. The main contractor on the Fawley site, Bechtel UK, had offered a straight 4.9%.

Senior shop steward Bob Stevens (GMWU) pointed to wage differentials between contract labour and Esso's retained workers (also AUEW, EETPU & TGWU).

Other stewards spoke out against many years of wage cuts that pushed earnings right down the table.

Speakers from the floor of the mass meeting demanded that any strike action be made official so as to preclude any union-inspired sellout.

Total support was given for indefinite strike action on a simple show of hands. As a result a 24-hour picket is now on duty at all the refinery's main gates.

Strong picketing throughout

the first day, Monday, proved very effective with up to 90% of all refinery traffic being turned away.

The response from transport drivers, though has been mixed and confused, doubtless due to the fact that (at the time of going to press) the Confed Executive had still to concede official backing to this dispute. This also explains why Esso retained staff are still working.

Workers' fears were realised by the second day when the discovery was made that TGWU officials and management were actively collaborating to break the picket.

Tanker drivers had been issued with signed written instructions

by Esso Senior Steward D. Buckley (TGWU/2/326) authorising them to bust the picket line. Protests from angry pickets soon forced the strike committee to countermand this scab directive, though it is still a problem.

Mass pickets!

Though the cops have restricted their numbers to six it remains clear to many workers that only through mass picketing and blacking of Esso can they hope to secure a rapid victory.

The Confed must be forced to make this strike official. It is crucial to any further escalation of this company-inspired conflict.

Britain solid

PRESSURE is building up on management at Britain's toy factory in Walthamstow, East London.

They have big orders in hand in preparation for the Christmas rush, and are using the non-union office staff in order to try to get them out.

But the 180 TGWU members, mostly Asian, who have been on official strike since July 29, are determined to win. They are demanding a cut in working hours from 50 to 49 and that the management put on an extra shift and recruit more workers.

The police have limited pickets to four, but the strikers are organising for mass pickets and have also gone out to get trade union boycotts by dockers and seamen of Britain's goods.

Donations etc. to Britains Ltd Strike Fund, c/o TGWU, 205 Fore St, Edmonton, London N18.

Not-so-radical newsletters

SINCE July 28, members of the National Union of Journalists and the National Graphical Association have been picketing the offices of Latin American Newsletters. They are editors and production workers who were sacked and locked out for taking action in defence of basic trade union rights.

Radical

Latin American Newsletters is well known for its radical position as far as Latin American political affairs are concerned; it has been critical of the dictatorships and military regimes which govern much of the region, and has given sympathetic coverage of trade union disputes in countries like Brazil, Chile and Argentina.

But the new management which took the company over last year, headed by two Argentinian journalist-businessmen, Rodolfo Terragno and Miguel Angel Diez, decided in June to move production to Paris rather than sign agreements on wages, conditions and new technology which had been negotiated in February.

The company also attempted to force individual contracts on employees, removing rights previously held — including the right of the unions to organise and bargain within Latin American Newsletters. Union members

who took limited industrial action against this move were sacked.

In solidarity with those dismissed, most of the company's correspondents in Latin America have stopped writing for it, while the French printing union, CGT-Livre, has taken an active part in efforts to stop production of the newsletters in Paris.

The support and solidarity shown by our comrades overseas contrasts sharply with the behaviour of those people in the London office who have sided with the management. These include three journalists and one or two others who argue that British trade unions are 'reactionary', and claim that their work at Latin American Newsletters is of paramount importance.

Refugees

Among these people are some who themselves benefited from the aid offered by British trade unions when they were refugees from Chile after the 1973 coup. The same people now claim a monopoly on political rectitude.

The Latin American Newsletters management has shown no sign of willingness to negotiate but the pressure of the dispute is having its effect, in the shape of low-quality newsletters and late arrival.



Government plans racist monitoring

IT HAS been announced this week that the government is to go ahead with plans to divide people who claim benefit into racial groups. This would be done by clerks on an 'individual and visual assessment of the claimant'. It is very unlikely that people will know they are being 'assessed' unless they read the poster which should be displayed telling them of the checks.

Already office managers and officials from the CPSA have said they are opposed to the plans, but the ironically-named Commission for Racial Equality has accepted them.

CPSA officials described the plans as 'colour-tabling' and say that local staff, already under great pressure, will become quasi-immigration police.

It's quite possible that the results from the monitoring system will be used by the government and other racists to re-inforce their myth that blacks are social security scroungers, when in fact we put more into the state than we claim.

Hopefully the CPSA will decide not to co-operate with these racist plans and force the government to withdraw them. These plans must be fully publicised so that if they do take place people are well aware of what is going on.

Prejudice in Schools

A BLACK headmaster claims that prejudiced whites are growing up to be teachers and spreading myths about black people.

The headmaster says that a survey has shown that many white teenagers believe that people in the West Indies live in Shanty Towns and eat coconuts all day.

Further he says that teachers often express the view that West Indians are only good at sports and dancing, and nothing else.

It is already well known that blacks are over-represented in educationally sub-normal schools (ESN) and there is a very good book which covers this area: 'How the West Indian child is made educationally sub-normal in the British system', by Bernard Coard.

School curricula should also be looked at closely as they are more than often too Eurocentred, ignoring the achievements of black authors, thus giving an impression that black people have not achieved anything.

Racism in Medicine

THE British Medical Association, at its AGM in June, passed a resolution calling for a racist control over the number of overseas doctors entering the country.

Again we see the case where black people are welcomed with open arms when there is a shortage and when the going gets tough it's blacks who are used as the scapegoats.

Coming soon!

Our Annual General Meeting is on Sunday October 30, 10.30am to 5pm in County Hall, London SE1.

On the day before, Saturday 29th, there will be a Socialist Organiser day school, also in London.



Hive-off study suspended

GRANDMET have told Wandsworth tenants that their pilot study on privatising the housing department in the privatisation-mad Tory borough has been suspended 'until the council has sorted out its communication problems with tenants'.

Tenants are continuing the campaign until the council drop the plan altogether. A picket has been kept up outside the District Housing Office in Roehampton during opening hours in all weathers — mainly by women tenants, some with small children. A petition against privatisation is now being taken round door-to-door, and demonstrations have been held at the Town Hall and Grandmet's offices.

Caretakers, already facing privatisation of their jobs, will strike for one hour to join the picket at the Housing Office this Wednesday, 14th; and trade unionists from Hangers artificial limb factory have also come to give support.

Socialist ORGANISER

Speaking out on Turkey

A RALLY in London last Saturday reached a significant milestone in the fight to break the silence on conditions in Turkey.

The rally, timed to coincide

with the third anniversary of the coup heard Islington North MP Jeremy Corbyn report back from a visit to Turkey the previous week, and Anthony Kendall, leader of Hackney Borough Council, introduce publication of a pamphlet sponsored by Hackney, Islington and Haringey councils in conjunction with the Turkey Solidarity Campaign.

There is a consensus of silence about conditions in Turkey.

EEC and NATO governments, and the media they patronise, remain resolutely indifferent to the regime's crimes against democratic and human rights.

The worsening situation in Turkey has brought no change in this policy but has seen a strengthening of solidarity activity amongst Turkish exiles and their supporters in many European countries.

An important campaign has developed around the mass trial of the former mayor and townspeople of Fatsa, a Black Sea coastal town at the centre of the anti-fascist struggle prior to the coup.

Though only one of a number of such trials — others involve trade union, peace campaigners, lawyers, socialist organisations and Kurdish nationals — it has provided a vehicle for drawing together wide support from local councils in most Western European states.

Co-ordinated by the Swiss-based CEDRI, it presently includes well over 200 such bodies and has this year organised a series of delegations to observe the trial.

Hackney Labour council leader Anthony Kendall spoke of the importance of the Turkish community in his borough (Turkish is the next most spoken language after English) and how the council's eyes had been opened to governmental and state repression. He saw publication of the pamphlet — on the Fatsa trial — as a practical way of drawing in other councils nationally. It was reported that Sheffield City council have just pledged support.

A meeting of over 100, mainly Turks, heard Jeremy Corbyn recall experiences from his visit, saying it had deepened his conviction that British governmental complicity with the junta had been tolerated for too long by the labour movement and that the Labour Party must place class solidarity central on its agendas.

Also speaking at the meeting was the Kurdish Solidarity Campaign and representatives of DISK, Cahit Baylav of the Bank workers union and Gultekin Bekdemir, General Secretary of the Underground Miners Union.

Imperialist hands off Lebanon!

WITH Druze and other militias threatening to cut off roads to Beirut, the governments in Jerusalem and Washington are searching frantically for a way of saving the reactionary set-up they have imposed on Lebanon and on the Palestinians.

Just over two years ago, Israel invaded Lebanon. The invasion had two certain immediate aims (and several more tentative and more ambitious options depending on the balance of forces): to destroy the PLO — thereby crushing the national aspirations not only of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon but also of the Palestinians on the West Bank; and, secondly, to deny Syria the possibility of establishing its authority in Lebanon.

These aims co-incided entirely with US interests, though Reagan was under pressure — above all from Saudi Arabia — to dissociate the US government from Israel's actions.

To achieve these aims the Zionist-imperialist 'solution' involved the establishment of a regime in Lebanon which would be pro-imperialist, hostile to Syria and implacably opposed to any politically and militarily organised Palestinian presence. The regime of Amin Gemayel fits the

by Andrew Hornung

bill perfectly.

But in one crucial respect the Phalangist regime has not lived up to the hopes of Washington and Jerusalem: it has not been able to end the civil war in its own favour without imperialist and Zionist intervention.

This inability was glaringly exposed once the Israelis — themselves in a state of political chaos — withdrew to the Awali River.

Jerusalem is now being forced to consider returning to its old positions (and going even further), a move that would provoke fury inside Israel just now.

Meanwhile Washington is having to consider further beefing up its military commitment and officially authorising offensive action on the side of the Phalangists.

Again, this commitment is likely to provoke a big response from a US public wary of being drawn now into two more Vietnams — one in Central America and now another in the Middle East.



On Tuesday 13th Reagan authorised US commanders in Lebanon to order air strikes without consulting Washington

The failure of the Israelis (and in a different way of the Syrians) to control the situation in Lebanon and the ignominious withdrawal of US forces from their intervention in Lebanon in 1958 should provide Reagan with enough lessons to show him the futility of intervention.

But Reagan is not a quick learner. As we go to press it has been disclosed that 2,000 more Marines have been moved from the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean off Lebanon.

A battleship is also sailing from the Atlantic to the area to join the existing US off-shore presence.

In addition there are 12,000 US Marines in Beirut as part of the multi-national 'peace-keeping' force.

This force — which includes France, Italy and Britain — is clearly lined up with the Phalangist government which they helped set up. All these nations' forces, except Italy's have combat aircraft in the area.

What is threatened now is a big, open, imperialist intervention. What holds it back is the likely reaction at home if these forces are used openly for offensive purposes.

At present Syria is support-

ing the Druze and other militias which were part of the Lebanese National Movement. Not many years ago Syrian troops were siding with the Phalangists in order to defeat the Lebanese National Movement and the Palestinians.

The Syrians then tried to enforce strict observance of the terms of the Lebanese National Covenant by which the Christians are guaranteed a six-to-five majority in all spheres of national life (although the Christians are in approximately a six-to-five minority of the population).

The current situation provides Assad with a favourable situation for striking a bargain with US imperialism — something Syria has been trying to do for some time now — to the cost of the anti-Phalangist forces.

It is impossible to see how the conflict will end. There may be a new government in Beirut (guaranteed jointly by the US and Syria), a renewed occupation or — most likely — a hardening of the

de facto partitioning into three areas.

As socialists we should demand an immediate end to all imperialist and Zionist intervention. We are opposed to the system of confessional representation along the lines of the National Covenant (or some modification of it).

Despite the failure of the alliance opposing Gemayel to develop any consistent and unifying democratic perspective and despite the shadow of Syria which hangs over the alliance, we must support the Druze forces and their allies in their struggle to bring down the Phalangist regime.

It is only out of a victory for this alliance that the confessionalist grip can possibly be broken, that the conditions for a continuation of the leftward shift in Lebanese politics of the late sixties and 70s can be achieved and that the Palestinian struggle can be strengthened.

Such gains would mark a set-back for imperialism in the region as well as for Arab reaction.

FUND:

WITH the change in the weather, out-door fund-raising has become less pleasant — but, it seems, nothing will daunt SO supporters in their turn to open spaces.

Monday's carrier pigeon brought us the following report:

'Despite driving rain and howling winds, 11 comrades still managed to make a profit from the SO stalls (Newspapers, books, ear-rings, bread, barbecue & soup) at Sheffield's Anti-nuclear Festival, Sept. 11.'

Thanks to the comrades involved: Ellen Taylor, Lesley Potts, Myra Rennie, Gordon Cross, Pete Myatt, Cath Rangeley, Rob Dawber, Mick Sidaway, Brian Wood, John and Matthew Whittton, who raised £32.70 for the fund.

Meanwhile, Pete Firmin (46) has given us a report on his progress collecting sponsorship: 'Tramping the streets of Neasden is adding years to my life. But the £s are mounting up, and I'm driven on by the thought of all the other SO groups collecting sponsorship too.'

And Patrick Spilling adds: 'A 3-miles sponsored swim for SO is just what we need in Brighton. This is an event which can appeal to the whole of the Party. Pete Firmin (51) has really thought of something. With all this excitement, I can hardly keep away.'

Remember: 50% of sponsor money your group collects will be credited to your group; and 50% to Pete's group.

Thanks this week to: Pete Cashman, £7.50; Lol Duffy, £3.25; Angi Driver, £20; Jeff Evans, £1; Will Adams, £1; Glasgow supporters, £5; Steve Hall, £1.50; Brent supporters, £13.80; Oxford supporters, £29.75; Haringey, £8; S/E London, £13; Leeds, £12.50; Sheffield, £45.70; Hounslow, £12.25; Bristol, 80p; E London, £9.90; Islington supporters, £11.50 and from the bike ride, £2.80 (MARTIN) and £19 (Linda); Chelmsford, £10; Southwark, £6.50; Stoke, £23.40; Leicester, £15.75; Jo Thwaites, £10; Tony Twine, £3.50; Les Hearn, £5.00.

Sponsor forms from, and donations to.
214, Sickert Court, London N1 2SY.

Group	August & Sept
Glasgow	20.50
Edinburgh	26.00
Liverpool	
Manchester	52.50
Rochdale	
Stockport	
Wirral	20.75
Durham	
Halifax	10.00
Harrogate	14.50
Huddersfield	
Hull	38.00
Leeds	12.50
Leicester	15.75
Sheffield	45.70
York	10.00
Birmingham	65.00
Coventry	166.10
Nottingham	10.00
Nottingham	38.90
Stoke	23.40
Basingstoke	1.50
Oxford	103.24
Cardiff	120.47
N/W London	24.40
Hackney	
Haringey	58.00
Hounslow	23.25
Islington	54.30
S/E London	43.00
E London	44.50
Southwark	76.50
Others	160.49

Totals:
£315.60 this week; £564.20 so far in September.

Nigg under fire

By the time this issue of Socialist Organiser appears, union officials may finally have succeeded in forcing the 2,000 strikers at the Highland Fabricators Oil Rig Construction Yard at Nigg (in the Cromarty Firth) to end their strike.

The dispute began on August 11, when the workforce struck in opposition to a series of management attacks on working conditions at the yard. A week later, all 2,000 strikers were sacked by management, though 1,600 selected workers were offered their jobs back in they accepted the new working conditions.

But management's divisive tactics failed to break the unity of the strikers. And the few scabs attempting to enter the yard have been prevented from doing so by mass-pickets, in open defiance of Tebbit's anti-picketing laws.

Having suffered a series of humiliating defeats, management resorted to the ultimate weapon: negotiations with union full-timers, who, throughout the dispute, have refused to make the dispute official.

But with only one vote against, a mass meeting of the strikers threw out a 'return-to-work formula' put together by a joint meeting of management, union officials, and the 2 SDP MPs representing the area from which the yard draws its workforce.

Shop stewards followed up this victory by travelling down to the TUC, in an attempt to win support from full-timers of the unions involved in the dispute (AUEW, EEUPTU, GMBATU). But, despite the danger of similar methods being employed at other yards if management at Nigg are victorious, the shop stewards came away from the TUC empty-handed.

Union officials instructed shop stewards to attend talks in London with themselves on Wednesday (September 13) where they would be instructed to accept the above agreement. AUEW full-timer John Baldwin openly stated that the shop stewards would be under pressure to accept the formula and, to underline this point, that only one hour would be allowed for the meeting.

The Nigg strikers have stood firm in the face of management intimidation, a witch-hunt in the media, and financial hardship due to the DHSS and their own unions refusing to make any payments to them.

If the shop stewards refuse to be browbeaten into returning to work at Wednesday's meeting, full support should be given to their fight, above all by the unions, whose rights the strikers are fighting to defend.