

workers' ACTION

No.128

Dec.9-16, 1978

10p

- ■ Labour, break all links with the Shah!
- ■ Stop Arms Sales to Iran!
- ■ Down with the Shah!

Demonstration, Sunday 17th December
Assemble 1pm, Speakers Corner.

Called by Committee Against
Repression in Iran



Stop arms for Iran

LAST FRIDAY the Shah's army again massacred hundreds in the streets of Iran.

Huge mass demonstrations have continued daily since then, defying the troops. Strikes have re-started in the strategic oil industry.

Two powerful forces confront each other. Both, so far, appear inexhaustible.

On one side, the courage and determination of the Iranian people, fuelled by anger which has built up over 25 years of the Shah's brutal and corrupt rule. On the other side, a large,

heavily-equipped army.

The army is virtually the only reliable support the Shah has inside the country. The richest capitalists have fled the country taking much of their money with them. The judges are on strike. The employees in several key ministries are also on strike.

ARMY

The army owes its solidity to the fact that huge proportions of Iran's big oil profits have been spent on it.

American arms supplies to Iran total \$8,000 million since 1973, with another \$12,000 million on the order books. **British arms sales to the Shah are about \$1800 million EACH YEAR.**

A team of several thousand US military advisers provides a backbone for the Iranian army. In effect it is the British and American governments which are shooting down the people in Iran — with the Iranian army acting as their proxy.

Blood is being spilt on the streets of Iran to protect profits: the key profits made from Iran-

ian oil, controlled by British and US interests, and amounting to 9% of world production; and the profits from extensive US and British trade with and contracts in Iran.

REBELLED

The power of profit is not inexhaustible. Already individual conscript soldiers in the Iranian army have rebelled on several occasions. And the example of Vietnam stands to show the Iranian people that a

fight for freedom can be won against the worst military odds.

In the Vietnamese struggle, a key factor was the revolt of a mass movement in the USA against their government's war-making. Now we need a movement in Britain to insist that the Government ends its backing for the Shah.

Join the demonstration on 17th December in solidarity with the Iranian struggle, to demand that Labour break all links with the Shah's regime, and to end all arms sales to the Shah.

Time's running out at the Times

THE TIMES and the SUNDAY TIMES have closed down. On December 14th their workers are due to be given notice (varying in length from 2½ weeks to four months) unless by then they have agreed to drastic management ultimatums on job cuts, work conditions, and disputes and negotiating procedure.

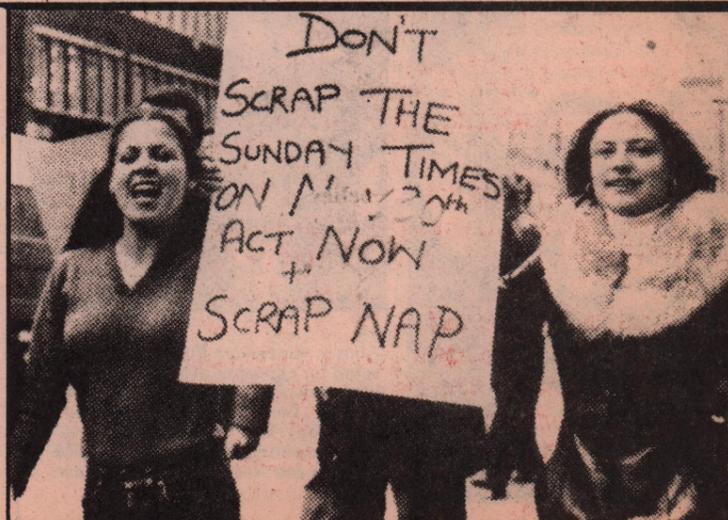
But still the unions are doing nothing to organise concerted resistance.

All except the NGA are still negotiating with the bosses. Some groups of Sogat, AUEW, and NUJ members have signed the agreements.

Having made the fine 'concession' of postponing the lockout for two weeks (the workers are currently going into work but not producing any papers), the bosses are now

whittling down union strength bit by bit. They must reckon that by the time the first dismissal notices expire (early January) they will have managed to isolate the militant resistance.

But nothing is irrevocably lost yet. The provincial journalists' strike gives the print unions a great chance to help both themselves and the striking journalists by calling out their members in (at least) Thomson Regional Newspapers, the chain of provincial papers owned by the same firm as the Times. And the postponement of the lockout gives more time in which to argue and organise for the workers to occupy the Times and use the premises to produce their own strike paper at the service of the labour movement.



'Act now', workers demanded: but even after the closure, union leaders are still dithering

The bulldozers get ready for Crossroads

In August 1977 the homes of 15000 people at Modderdam and Werkgent were bulldozed to the ground by the South African government. In January 1978, the 10,000 inhabitants of Unibel suffered the same fate.

Next on the list is Crossroads. Crossroads is a settlement on the outskirts of Cape Town, which houses about 20,000 people — 3,000 families. The men-folk have been drawn to Cape Town from the barren and undeveloped 'homelands' in search of work.

According to South Africa's apartheid laws, they are supposed to live as bachelors in bleak and often overcrowded hostels, leaving their families thousands of miles away. The people of squatter camps like Crossroads are there because they have rejected such hostel life and chosen to bring their families to whatever form of shelter they can put up for themselves.

Nearly all the households (80-90%) have at least one member working in Cape Town, while many are self-employed within the settlement as traders, dress-makers, mechanics, handymen etc.

The community is divided into four wards, each with a committee, whose functions are peace-keeping, hygiene, settlement of disputes, dealing with problems about rent, transport etc. Representatives from these commit-

tees form a general committee. Basic sanitary and medical facilities are provided by the local authority, which raises £4.50 a month from each household.

Two schools initiated and built by the people also serve as community centres for religious, educational and social purposes.

Although officially most of the residents are 'illegally' in the Cape Town area, the average length of time they have been in Cape Town is 18 years for the men and 12 years for the women.

In May 1978 eviction notices were issued to all the residents. Since then the community has been harassed by mass police raids. In two raids in June, 113 people were arrested while tear gas was used to disperse crowds. In September, 400 men, women and children were arrested in a midnight police raid, and a week later there were two dawn raids, in which a man was shot, many people were beaten, hundreds were arrested, and tear-gas canisters were fired into crowds.

The South African government uses bulldozers, tear-gas and dawn raids because the denial of residential rights to blacks in 86% of the country is essential to the maintenance of the apartheid system. The evictions coincide with a new push to establish the Bantustans, which in theory are to be the 'homelands' of all blacks, even if they have lived

and worked for generations in Cape Town or Johannesburg.

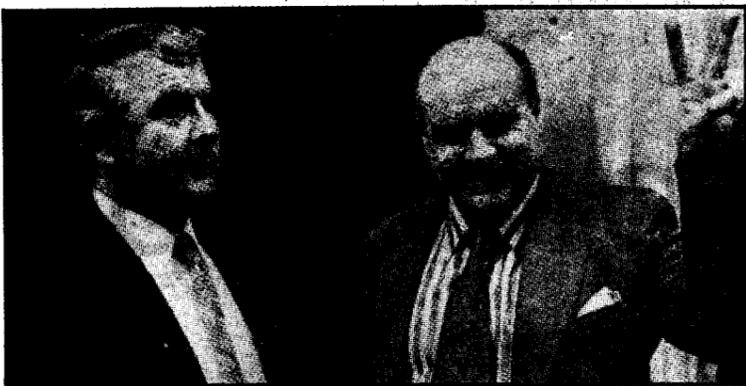
The apartheid system must ensure that blacks in these areas are insecure and unable to organise politically. Moreover, the whites want to shift the social costs — provision of housing, schools, medical facilities etc — onto the Bantustans so they don't have to be borne by the white local and central government.

Whether they are shot at, bulldozed, arrested or 'persuaded' is of no concern to the government, which has threatened: 'Time will determine what method we will use. There are many methods.'

Crossroads arose because of apartheid; now it is scheduled to go, in the interests of apartheid.

The resistance of the people themselves and the national and international protests occasioned by the brutality used against the other settlements, have delayed the demolition of Crossroads. Continued pressure would support the fight of the people of Crossroads against eviction.

Bring the matter to the attention of your labour movement organisation for protest action. Send messages of support to the Crossroads Residents Committee at Cowley House, 126 Chapel Street, Cape Town 8001, S.Africa. Or contact the Crossroads Action Campaign c/o CCSA, 1 Cambridge Terrace, London NW1.



WILL NUM ACCEPT SOVIET SMEARS OF KLEBANOV?

THE Russian bureaucracy has apparently succeeded in crushing both the independent trade union organisation launched by a small group of workers in the USSR late last year, and a successor organisation. Meanwhile the British National Union of Mineworkers looks like deciding to make no protest on the issue.

The main leader of the 'Free Trade Union' movement set up last year was an ex-miner, Vladimir Klebanov. After telling Western journalists about the movement, he was arrested, and since February he has been held in prison or in psychiatric hospitals. Other leaders of the group have also been shut up in psychiatric hospitals.

A team from the NUM, headed by union president Joe Gormley, met a Russian trade union official in Warsaw last month and were told that "Klebanov had started to behave strangely after suffering a head injury underground" and that "Klebanov had left his wife to go and live in Moscow with a younger woman".

According to the Observer, "the eight-man delegation ... were broadly satisfied with the explanation they received".

The bureaucrats' smears against Klebanov hardly answer the charges raised by Klebanov's

group against the official 'trade union' structure in the USSR. Another group established in October as a successor to the 'Free Trade Union' movement has recalled those charges, in a manifesto cited in the latest issue of Labour Focus on Eastern Europe.

"Soviet workers" the manifesto says "are afraid to press their claims because they lack any independent channel to do so and are intimidated by repressive measures from the authorities. And, despite the promises of their official trade union and of the Soviet Constitution, trade union officials take the side of the authorities, thus betraying the interests of the workers. Their activities are in fact an extension of the government apparatus."

The leaders of the new group — the Free Inter-Professional Association of Workers — were arrested days after issuing their manifesto.

Many British trade unionists still feel that criticism of the official 'trade unions' in the USSR will help the right wing Cold Warriors. But the greatest help is given to the right wing by those who pretend that the Russian bureaucrats really represent the workers of the USSR.

The police have got your number

LATEST TRIUMPH for 'open government': an official committee has reported on safeguards over personal files held on computers.

As Duncan Campbell reveals in the *New Statesman*, MIS and the Special Branch flatly refused to give the committee any details of their police computer files.

The committee had to rely on scraping together what hints it could. But it found that 3.8 million people are on file at the Police National Computer, with details not only of convictions or other 'hard facts', but also of 'known associates', 'details of association with an organisation', and police suspicions about the people involved.

A local system in the Thames Valley is even more alarming: it has a capacity for 150,000 personal records, ten per cent of the entire Thames Valley population.

All this, however, is mild stuff compared with practice in Northern Ireland. According to the Dublin weekly *Hibernia*, the Army's computers have well over half a million personal files, plus files on almost all vehicles in Northern Ireland. The RUC is building up similar files for its own use.

Another work risk: murder?

LAST MONTH meetings throughout the USA commemorated the anniversary of the death of Karen Silkwood.

When Silkwood died, in November 1974, it looked like an accident. Since then more and more facts have come out, until today widespread agitation for more safety in the nuclear power industry centres round the case.

Silkwood did not die from contamination at the Kerr-McGee plutonium plant, where she worked. She was killed in a car crash.

But the car crash — so investigated by Silkwood's union has revealed — was caused by her car being rammed from behind. She was driving to see a union official and a newspaper reporter about safety violations at the plant. And the documents on safety which she was taking with her disappeared after the crash — stolen, so it now turns out, by Kerr-McGee officials with the cooperation of the police.

The cops' cooperation with Kerr-McGee was already well-established. They had been jointly wiretapping Karen Silkwood's flat.

Kerr-McGee, after all, is one of the biggest firms in the state of Oklahoma. It is also a union-busting firm. In 1972 it smashed a strike demanding better safety and training. Karen Silkwood was one of a few activists trying to rebuild the union's strength.

Now the plant is closed down and Karen's parents are pressing a civil law suit against Kerr-McGee and the FBI.



Karen Silkwood

German steel workers fight for 35hr week

In Britain the 35-hour week is now a standard item in trade union claims — and it is nearly always the first demand to be dropped by the union negotiators.

In West Germany, however, steelworkers have just started a strike with the 35-hour week as its main demand. 37,000 workers in eight steel mills were called out by the union [IG Metall] on Tuesday 28th. The employers had offered a 3% pay rise and an extra week's holiday, in reply to a union claim for 5% and the gradual introduction of the 35-hour week.

In the fourth year of the world steel crisis, the West German steel industry is working at only two-thirds capacity. About 1000 steelworkers a month have been made redundant over the last few years, and another 40,000 to 50,000 jobs are expected to go in the next few years.

To the workers, the situation indicates the need for the 35-hour week; to the bosses, it indicates the need to resist this demand, which could cut into their profits.

In reply to the strike, the bosses began a lockout on Friday 1st, affecting 79,000 workers in 16 steel mills. The strike is also likely to affect the car industry soon. Widespread lay-offs have been threatened.

The IG Metall leaders have talked of bringing out other union members in support of the steel workers who have been locked out, but it remains to be seen if they will actually do this. 'Industrial peace' has always been their aim in the past.

PETE FIRMIN



Above: Alexander Podrabinek, arrested for exposing the use of psychiatric hospitals as prisons for dissidents. Left: Vladimir Klebanov and [top] his 'free trade union' group meeting. Top of page: NUM leaders Joe Gormley and Lawrence Daly.



FEREYDOON GILANI describes the struggle against the Shah's censorship



On October 11th, two army colonels arrived at the offices of Etelaat and Kayhan, the two leading Iranian newspapers. They announced they had come to oversee the papers' production and contents.

While the management was still negotiating terms, the workers stopped the presses. By the 16th, the journalists' union had won a declaration from Prime Minister Sharif Emami, with three guarantees: freedom of the press from state interference; job security; and the right of journalists to trial in civil courts, not military tribunals.

FEREYDOON GILANI, Deputy Editor of KAYHAN, told *Workers' Action* what happened next:

“We had 15 days without censorship. We still could not criticise the government or the army or the Shah. But we told the truth. We wrote about the people's struggles, about how many were dead and injured, all over Iran.

In 25 years, no paper had been able to print the truth. It was something quite new. Our circulation in those 15 days went from 200,000 to over one million. We could have sold two million but we just didn't have the machinery to print them.

The state tried to make us afraid. For instance, I put in a report, a signed article, about how 4 years ago 52 newspapers were illegally closed down. SAVAK called me up to say 'Do you remember 1953?' That was when there was a time of free expression and the Shah's coup stopped it. He was saying to me 'You are stupid if you think the regime will change, that you can safely put your name to such an article'.

After 15 days, the officials of the martial law came to the papers and told us that they made the decisions, not the government. They said they would censor the papers. The Editorial Board had declared that if censorship didn't stop, they gave a week's notice of a strike. In fact when the army officers came in, everyone walked out.

That was just before the military government of General Azhari came in and took over the radio, TV and newspapers. By the way, they also arrested the government minister who had been giving us our orders while SAVAK's censorship was lifted!

Since then there are no papers. We will not write under military orders.

We have opened a strike fund — an account at a bank, and we have appealed to people to pay contributions into it. Other strikers have done the

'FOR 15 DAYS WE WERE ABLE TO PRINT THE TRUTH'

same thing. Rumours were put around that Ayatollah Khomeini had put half a million pounds into our fund, but that was denied by our union. But we did get that much money, just from the people themselves.

The first priority for the fund will be the workers and the distributors, who need it most.

The journalists put out a joint declaration together with the printers, in solidarity with the mass struggle, against censorship and so on. There have been several of these, and the last one I saw was four pages, like a small newspaper.

I think soon it will be reporting on other workers' struggles too. It will become a newspaper for the people. We can print it as long as there's a private printing press we can use. And if there isn't a press we can use, then we'll just have to write it by hand!



LONDON MEETING TOLD

Liverpool dockers will black arms to Iran

“FOR FOUR DAYS and nights and nights now the people have been on the streets. They have not gone home.

Tomorrow I am going back to Tehran. I am going back to fight shoulder to shoulder with the struggle, not as a journalist or a poet, but as a fighter.”

A hushed audience listened to Fereydoon Gilani as he described “my country's struggle against a regime which I am ashamed even to name”. He told of scenes he had witnessed in the streets — small boys beaten by soldiers; troops going down a street in the poor district of Tehran, smashing in every door and beating everyone they could find inside. “The people have no weapons. They go up to the soldiers and appeal to them, and the soldiers shoot them down.”

“Please do not believe what the newspapers say. The movement is not reactionary. The people know that when they get rid of Pahlavi they will still not be free, they will still have to fight imperialism.

“They are organising very fast. News goes around the cities in an hour or two. I have seen a demonstration of a million people, organised into groups of 5000 with 200 metre spaces in between so that they can escape if they are shot at.

“Power workers have cut off the street lights while demonstrators are on the streets breaking

the curfew.

“Radio and TV workers have organised a union. Other workers are creating their organisations, very fast.”

Then he appealed to the British labour movement: “As we are sitting in the comfort of this hall the people are being shot down with British-made bullets. You can and must change the policy of Owen. If you do not, you are responsible for every bullet.”

The meeting, organised by the Committee Against Repression in Iran, had begun with a minute's silence for the victims of the regime. Later, the mainly Iranian audience warmly applauded two Liverpool dockers who brought greetings from the Merseyside dockers and the promise to try to black military supplies to the Shah.

Liverpool port shop stewards, they said, would approach the National Port Shop Stewards Committee to involve other ports in solidarity action. “If the trade union movement has acted on Chile, then it must do so on Iran.”

The second speaker from Liverpool docks declared: “British workers made the Shah's murder machine and British seamen took it there. But it wasn't by their decision. It was done because of the betrayal of this Labour government. Now British workers must stop any more arms going to the Shah.”

NOT AN ISLAMIC STATE, BUT WORKERS' RULE!



EVEN IF the Ayatollah Khomeini wanted to turn the clock back 1300 years — and all evidence, on the contrary, is that he favours a moderate bourgeois-democratic and nationalist programme — the cries of the Shah's apologists about ‘Islamic reaction’ would not be justified.

The scope and character of a tremendous mass movement like the one in Iran are not determined by the ideas in the heads of a few Muslim theologians, even if the masses do shout Khomeini's name. They are determined by the clash of class forces. And it is from that point of view that the real dangers of the religious colouring of the movement can be seen.

If the crisis deepens to the point where the top circles of imperialism decide that the Shah must be dumped, their first alternative option is a military dictatorship with an Islamic ideology, on the model of Pakistan.

Supposing that sufficient material concessions were made to win some of the Muslim leaders and the opposition businessmen to this military regime, it could hope to divert the mass revolt into the channels of religious fervour.

Every day on the streets or on strike, however, teaches the Iranian workers and peasants that their salvation has to come through their own efforts, not through the favour of God. Their chief demands are not religious.

The most ultra-Islamic government has little chance of stemming their revolt without taking some steps to meet the demands for democracy and an anti-imperialist policy. That is why the US and Britain have backed the Shah so solidly, and look like continuing to do so for a while yet.

A reforming, nationalist Islamic Republic would offer the ruling class in Iran a more flexible framework. The big merchants of the Tehran Bazaar — the men who finance the Muslim opposition — would come to power, with the class nature of their rule concealed by the fact that they are good Muslims just like the workers.

Reforms offered by such a republic would, however, be limited and unstable. The workers would remain exploited. The radical aspirations of the present movement would remain unfulfilled.

Some strikers, by refusing to take money for their strike funds from the Bazaar merchants, have shown an awareness that their class has a different struggle to wage from the merchants, even if they also cry ‘Allah is Great’. Trade unions are being formed, representing a beginning of independent working class organisation.

To bring the Iranian workers' movement to victory, however, WORKERS' COUNCILS must organise the struggle now and the future revolutionary power after the overthrow of the Shah.

Fred Halliday had spoken earlier, attempting to assess how effective the Shah's army would turn out to be. “We must face the fact” he said “that so far the army is holding, and doing the job it has been trained and equipped to do since 1953.” It had 19,000 professionals, and the Shah had spent a lot to make sure the soldiers had no grumbles of their own.

Another problem was the political weakness of the opposition. “The religious leaders forbid their followers from cooperating with socialists and Marxists. And the 1906 Constitution they wish to restore does not allow women to vote.”

But the Shah's crisis was very deep indeed. In earlier crises, he had been able to promise future prosperity and social reforms. “Now he's played all his cards”. The bourgeoisie were deserting the country in droves.

A speaker from CARI wound up the meeting. “Just a year ago, the Shah could speak of Iran as an ‘island of stability’. But the silence was the silence of a people gagged. In the last year, the silence has been broken.”

Now the Shah faced something his army couldn't deal with: wave after wave of strikes with political demands.

Bank workers had exposed the way the rich were running away, taking their money with them. One man, supposedly in jail for

the past six months for corruption, had got out \$40 million!

But the British Labour Government remains loyal to the Shah! “After a 5-minute interview on London Weekend Television, I can tell you who is the second most unpopular man in Iran: Britain's ‘most handsome Foreign Secretary’ David Owen”

“Owen said the movement was made up of reactionaries and fanatics. Who is a fanatic? The madman who sits covered in jewels on a throne in a big crown and calls himself ‘King of kings, Light of the Aryans’ — or the people fighting for freedom on the streets?”

The British press is just as bad. For the last four days, Tehran had been a battleground riddled with gunfire, tank and shell fire, with bodies strewn in the streets. Yet the “ugly incident” that the *Observer* spent most of its report on was a gathering of demonstrators outside the house of a US military advisor — who wasn't even harmed.

It was up to the British labour movement to break through this wall of support for the Shah. He urged a campaign in the trade union movement to black the movement of arms for Iran, support for CARI's demonstration on December 17th, and action to oppose the Queen's visit to Iran in February — “if there's still a Shah for her to visit...”

ON THE DAY Malcolm X was killed, Bobby Seale ran out of the house, picked up six red bricks and broke them in half to throw at passing police cars. "I wanted to have the most shots I could have, this very same day Malcolm was killed".

That was February 21, 1965. In just over a year that raging sadness was worked into organisational form: the Black Panther Party was founded by Bobby Seale and his close friend Huey P. Newton. "Malcolm's influence was ever present", wrote Huey Newton. "We continue to believe that the Black Panther Party exists in the spirit of Malcolm".

Who was Malcolm X? And what did he really think?

He was born Malcolm Little in Omaha, Nebraska, in May 1925. Rev. Earl Little, his father, was a free-lance Baptist preacher and unofficial organiser for Marcus Garvey's black nationalist movement, the Universal Negro Improvement Association. Rev. Little was killed by racists when Malcolm was six. By this time the Little family lived in Michigan. There Mrs Little fell prey to poverty, abuse, and the pestering of 'welfare authorities'. While Malcolm was still young she was committed to the State Mental Hospital, leaving the children to be fostered and Malcolm to be

brought up in the local 'detention home'.

After leaving there, he graduated on the northern ghetto streets from shoe-shine boy to pimping, drug peddling and addiction, and house-breaking. At the age of 20 — "I had not even started shaving" — he was jailed for ten years. But in 1948, after being introduced to the ideas of the Black Muslims, the zoot-suited hipster known as 'Detroit Red' was converted to the Nation of Islam. On leaving prison, he rapidly rose in the ranks of the Nation. In 1963, when he was suspended indefinitely, he was its best known figure and second in its organisation only to the Muslims' leader, Elijah Muhammad.

The ostensible issue that led to Malcolm's suspension was his statement on the death of President Kennedy that "the chickens had come home to roost", adding, "Being an old farm boy myself, chickens coming home to roost never did make me sad; they've always made me glad".

Elijah Muhammad strongly disapproved. "That was a very bad statement", he said. "The country loved this man... I'll have to silence you for the next ninety days so that the Muslims everywhere can be disassociated from the blunder".

There were also questions of jealousy, as Malcolm was increasingly seen as the leader of the

Muslims — and fear, as Malcolm had found out that Elijah Muhammad had repeatedly broken the strict sexual code of the Nation of Islam. But essentially the break was an expression of the Nation's failure to relate to the rising militancy of the ghettos and Malcolm's determination to do just that.

The situation was well expressed by Malcolm himself. "If I harboured any personal disappointment [over the failure of the Muslims to wage a defence campaign for some brothers shot by police in Los Angeles], it was that privately I was convinced that our Nation of Islam could be an even greater force in the American black man's overall struggle — if we engaged in more action... It could be heard increasingly in the Negro communities: 'Those Muslims talk tough, but they never do anything...'"

In March 1964, Malcolm announced that he was leaving the Black Muslims and setting up a new movement to be called the Muslim Mosque Inc.

That spring he travelled to Mecca and toured Africa. That journey had a tremendous impact on him, and shortly after his return he founded the Organisation of Afro-American Unity "to unite Afro-Americans and their organisations around a non-religious and non-sectarian constructive purpose for human rights". Malcolm had become an orthodox Muslim: it was a first step out of the narrow-mindedness of Elijah Muhammad's cult. He emphasised religion less and less, though he never renounced it.

Soon he was off to Africa again, returning in November. In three months he was to die from an assassin's bullet.

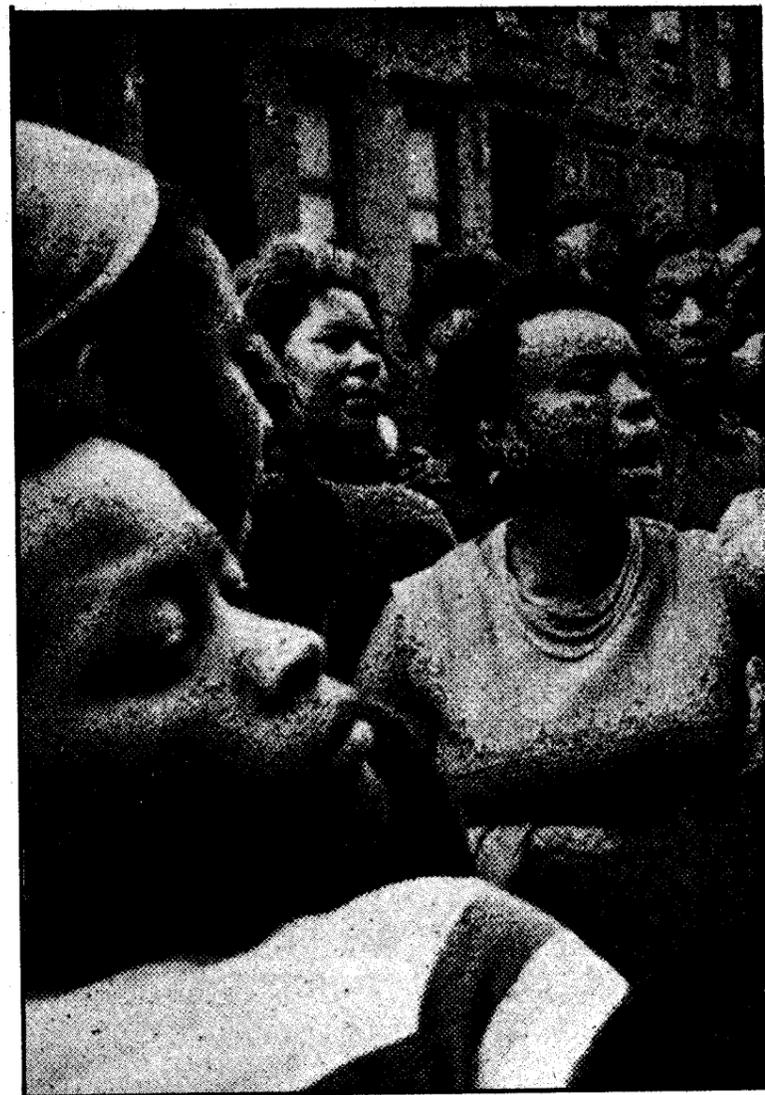
While he was a Black Muslim, Malcolm's ideas were essentially the ideas of the movement's leader, Elijah Muhammad.

There were only two exceptions. Without going beyond the Nation of Islam's doctrines, Malcolm always stressed a more active relation to the rising ghetto militancy. The black community was constantly a victim of police brutality, and the last months of Malcolm's membership of the Muslims were marked by the beginning of a series of ghetto rebellions.

Secondly, Malcolm forced the Nation to address itself to the question of a separate black state in the South, thus giving the psychological nationalism of the Muslims a radical political expression. As the Trotskyist writer, George Breitman, has said in his book on Malcolm's last year, "There was more than a grain of truth in the complaint... that 'it was Malcolm who injected the political concept of "black nationalism" into the Black Muslim movement...'"

In his last speech as a Black Muslim, Malcolm declared, "The only lasting or permanent solution is the complete separation on some land that we can call our own. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad teaches us that the race problem can easily be solved, just by sending these 22 million ex-slaves back to our own homeland where we can live in peace and harmony with our own kind..."

"If this white government is afraid to let her 22 million ex-slaves go back to our own country and to our own people, then America must



JAMES DAVIES CONTINUES HIS SERIES ON BLACK

MALCOLM AGAINST UN AGAINST UN

set aside some separate territory here in the Western Hemisphere, where the two races can live apart from each other..."

On founding the Muslim Mosque Inc., Malcolm announced a clear break with the utopian do-nothing approach of the Nation of Islam. "I myself intend to be very active in every phase of the American Negro struggle for human rights"

He set out the Muslim Mosque's political programme: "Our political philosophy will be black nationalism. Our economic and social philosophy will be black nationalism. Our cultural emphasis will be black nationalism."

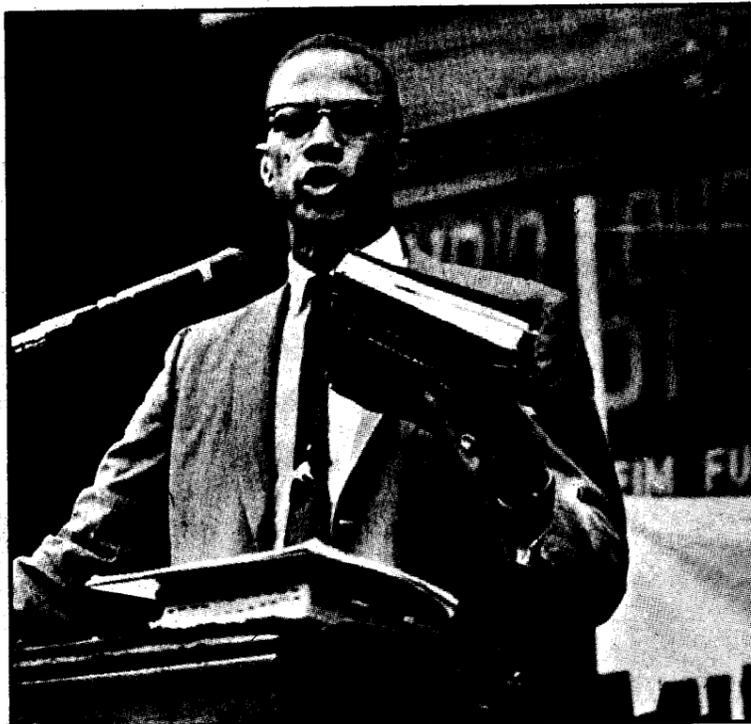
"Many of our people aren't religiously inclined, so the Muslim Mosque Inc. will be organised in such a manner to provide for the active participation of all Negroes in our political, economic, and soc-

ial programmes, despite their religious or non-religious beliefs".

"The Muslim Mosque Inc. will remain wide open for ideas and financial aid from all quarters. Whites can help us, but they can't join us. There can be no black-white unity until there is first some black unity. There can be no workers' solidarity until there is first some racial solidarity".

He also affirmed that: "The best solution is separation... But the separation back to Africa is still a long-range programme, and while it is yet to materialise 22 million of our people who are still here in America need better food, clothing, housing, education and jobs right now".

In this speech he outlines all the main themes of his outlook after his break with the Black Muslims: human rights, black national-



AFTER HIS mother was committed to the State Mental Home, young Malcolm was put in the local 'detention home'. It was run by the Swerlins.

"I remember one day when Mr Swerlin, as nice as he was, came in from Lansing, where he had been through the Negro section, and said to Mrs Swerlin right in front of me, 'I just can't see how those niggers can be so happy and be so poor...'"

"And Mrs Swerlin said, me standing right there, 'Niggers are just that way... That scene always stayed with me... What I'm trying to say is that it just never dawned upon them that I could understand, that I wasn't a pet, but a human being... They never really did see me'."

MALCOLM DID very well at school. So, in time, his teacher asked, "Malcolm, you ought to be thinking about a career. Have you been giving it thought?"

"Well, yes, sir, I've been thinking I'd like to be a lawyer... Mr Ostrowski looked surprised... and said, 'Malcolm, one of life's first needs is for us to be realistic. Don't misunderstand me now. We all

here like you, you know that. But you've got to be realistic about being a nigger. A lawyer — that's no realistic goal for a nigger... Why don't you plan on carpentry?'"

SOON MALCOLM was in the big city, shoe-shining and racking up pool balls. Then he went into dope, into numbers, and into pimping.

In jail, he joined the Black Muslims. "I had never dreamed of anything like that atmosphere among black people who had learned to be proud they were black, who had learned to love other black people instead of being jealous and suspicious. I thrilled to see how we Muslim men used both hands to grasp a black brother's both hands, voicing and smiling our happiness to meet him again."

"The Muslim sisters, both married and single, were given an honour and respect that I'd never seen black men give to their women, and it felt wonderful to me."

"The salutation which we all exchanged were warm, filled with mutual respect and dignity: 'Brother'... 'Sister'... 'Ma'am'... 'Sir'. Even the children used those terms. Beautiful!"

In defence of complacency

THE LAST four years of Labour Government have damaged no so much as the Tribune group.

The group still, on paper, claim one Labour MP in four as a member. But its resistance to right-wing Government policies has become increasingly feeble.

In July this year the New Statesman published a survey showing the Tribune group had 'vanished' as a coherent force in Parliament. Of five MPs out of Tribune's 80 could be found who had never voted against the Tribune line. Three MPs voted against their group 26% of the time, on average, whipped votes, and there were members of the group who voted against its line over 80% of the time!

Since then Tribune has been criticised to the grim situation of trying to argue, against the New Statesman, that Michael Foot has 'betrayed trust' by his performance in the Government. Foot is still a member of the Tribune group.

Now Tribune has hailed, in its gloom, a new pamphlet from Labour Party information



is that those so-called Negroes involved in the human-rights struggle don't look upon themselves as Americans.

"They look upon themselves as a part of dark mankind. They see the whole struggle not within the confines of the American stage, but they look upon the struggle on the world stage. And in the world context, they see that the dark man outnumbered the white man". And so they are bolder.

Malcolm's view of the nature of the struggle within the US was inseparable from his perception of the world-wide sweep of the anti-colonialist struggle outside and against the US.

Neither the idea expressed in the first speech nor the idea expressed in "The Black Revolution" were new. The American Communist Party (through its front organisation the Civil Rights Congress) had had the idea of hauling the US government before the UN, with the document, "We Charge Genocide", presented in December 1951 by Paul Robeson and William L. Patterson. And both the Garveyites and the Black Muslims took an international view of the situation of American Blacks.

What was new was the momentous historical development in the '50s and '60s by which dozens of nations in Africa and Asia emerged as independent — often after long and violent revolutionary struggles against imperialism. Thus the CP-USA's rather empty gesture and the utopianism of the Garveyites and Black Muslims could be transcended.

Struggling for 'human rights' meant going beyond begging the white man for a share of America. It meant joining the blacks of Africa and the non-whites of Asia

"ALMOST EVERY one of the countries that has gotten independence has devised some kind of socialistic system, and this is no accident..."

"None of them are adopting the capitalistic system because they realise they can't. You can't operate a capitalistic system unless you are vulturistic; you have to have someone else's blood to suck to be a capitalist..."

"What they are using to

solve their problems in Africa and Asia is not capitalism. So what you and I should do is find out what they are using to get rid of poverty and all the other negative characteristics of a rundown society"

"THINGS ARE very different in Europe and Africa. There are communists and socialists all over, and no-one makes a deal out of it. They can't imagine how narrow-minded this country is"

instead of the world race war which he foresaw earlier, he pointed to: "a global rebellion of the oppressed against the oppressor, the exploited against the exploiter"

In the context of the early '60s, even his contact with the bourgeois leaders of Africa moved him to a more radical anti-imperialism.

While he was a Black Muslim, Malcolm had taught that whites were 'devils'. At the founding of the Muslim Mosque Inc. he saw alliances with whites as possible — once Blacks themselves had organised.

After his pilgrimage, where he saw many white Muslims and discussed with Algerian revolutionaries, Malcolm moved further.

Speaking at a New York meeting after his second trip to Africa he explained: "You have all types of

people who are fed up with what's going on. You have whites who are fed up, you have Blacks who are fed up". The trouble, he claimed, is that communication between the two is via the Uncle Tom blacks.

"So when the day comes when the whites who are really fed up — I don't mean these jive whites, who pose as liberals and are not, but those who are fed up with what is going on — when they learn how to establish the proper type of communication with those up-town who are fed up, and they get some coordinated action going, you'll get some changes"

In the next weeks he went further, saying that he saw all militant whites as allies. And he declared: "We are living in an era of revolution, and the revolt of the American Negro is part of the rebellion against the oppression and colonia-

lism which has characterised this era..."

His political development in the last weeks of his life bore the promise that Malcolm would become a Marxist revolutionary of the highest calibre. The bullet cut short that promise.

Malcolm X like no other spoke to the condition of the ghetto blacks. And like no other he was able to hitch the aspirations of this oppressed people to the bold historic sweep of anti-colonial struggle. In his person he connected the rising ghetto rebellions and the civil rights struggles of the South with the liberation of Africa and Asia.

Malcolm was moving towards a revolutionary socialist perspective. He had cordial relations with the Socialist Workers' Party of the USA. But he was not a socialist. Still very much a product of American culture, finding socialism an alien term, pragmatic and hooked on the power of media publicity, Malcolm remained unclear as to the nature of the revolution he proclaimed.

The combination of outstanding political boldness and ideological unclarity makes his legacy ambiguous. Dozens of groups claim to follow in his footsteps. The fact that he was an inspiration to them all is a measure of his greatness and the movement's failure till now really to transcend his contribution.

POWER

UNCLE TOM, UNCLE SAM

ism and separatism, black-white relations and organisation.

In a speech, "The Ballot or the Bullet", given ten days before the founding of the Muslim Mosque Inc., Malcolm explained his idea of human rights as distinct from civil rights. "When you expand the civil rights struggle to the level of human rights, you can then take the case of the black man in this country before the nations of the UN. You can take it before the General Assembly. You can take Uncle Sam before the world court"

The following month, speaking in "The Black Revolution", this international vision went further. The difference between the thinking and the scope of the Negroes who are involved in the human-rights struggle and those who are involved in the civil-rights struggle

in creating a new world order.

When Malcolm X went to Cairo to attend the organisation of African Unity, he sat at its meetings as a representative of the Afro-American people. The nation had a representative even if it had no land. For the Harlem Black, his man wasn't begging that Texas cracker Johnson, his man was over there sitting with the heads of African states. And his man, moreover, was a poor ghetto black like himself.

If Malcolm ignored or was blind to the shortcomings of leaders like Kenyatta, that personal connection between the ghetto struggle and the liberation struggle in Africa and elsewhere was profoundly progressive.

Soon his view on separatism changed. Now it was not merely "long-range", but irrelevant. And



"I DON'T favour violence. If we could bring about recognition and respect of our people by peaceful means, well and good. Everybody would like to reach his objective peacefully."

"But I'm also a realist. The only people in this country

who are asked to be non-violent are black people. I've never heard anybody go to the Ku Klux Klan and teach them non-violence, or to the Birch society and other right-wing elements."

"Non-violence is only preached to black Americans

and I don't go along with anyone who wants to teach our people non-violence until someone at the same time is teaching our enemy to be non-violent."

"I believe we should protect ourselves by any means necessary when we are attacked by racists"

Frank Ward: "In Defence of Democratic Socialism". Tribune has carried two enthusiastic reviews, by Stan Newens MP and Hugh Jenkins MP, and the pamphlet is also recommended by Eric Heffer MP ("a tremendous theoretical contribution") and by author Walter Kendall ("an important milestone in British socialist thought").

The pamphlet will, according to Newens, save the official Labour Left from the situation where they "continue to be outflanked" by the "ultra-left".

Ward, however, "proves" rather more than Tribune supporters might bargain for. His thesis is that the British state is no longer capitalist. There is a "relative stalemate" between the classes, with "a continuing, slow" — and almost certainly unstoppable — "erosion" of the capitalists' power.

"Pressures from overseas, such as the conditions imposed by the IMF... may force us to slow down the rate of internal change, but they cannot do more". "Only minor and temporary reversals of this process are likely despite the illusions of our right-

wing Tories".

If this picture of a society advancing steadily across "a broad but dangerous plain" to socialism is true, then indeed the so-called 'ultra-left' idea of socialist revolution is (as Ward contends) a dogmatic fantasy. Our efforts are a waste of energy. But... so, then, are Tribune's.

Socialism, in Ward's theory, will come in due course (it will be a long time, says Ward, but nothing can be done about that) — provided only that "the present pressures of the labour movement are maintained". No need for any extra push from the left is mentioned. Perhaps the reason why the Tribunites like Ward's pamphlet so much is that it shows that their lack of impact doesn't really matter!

Ward notes "that capitalism, since the last war, has been through the longest period of sustained growth in its long history", but contends that: "It has not been capitalism which has been responsible for the advances of the last thirty years". The credit belongs to the pressures of socialism and of democracy.

So if Ward is right, then 'creeping

socialism' is pressing ahead even in the USA, where there is no political labour movement! For in the USA, also, there have been improved workers' living standards, welfare measures, Keynesian economic policies, and increased state intervention... developments hailed by Ward as signalling the erosion of capitalism.

But Ward's chief proof is the Labour Government of 1945-51. "Through [it] the British working class put its imprint upon the future pattern of British society... After 1945, it seemed that the Parliamentary road to socialism... did not have to be regarded as so impossible after all".

Yet most of the reforms carried through in 1945-51 had been proposed during the war by Liberal and Tory politicians. The Tory Lord Hailsham (Quintin Hogg) summed up ruling class thinking on those reforms: "If you do not give the people social reform, they will give you social revolution".

Now the Labour Government is hacking the National Health Service to pieces and making the workers in the public sector the chief victims

of wage-freezing and job-cutting policies. In 126 pages Ward says nothing about this.

Even Hugh Jenkins (hardly an ultra-left) cannot share Ward's bland confidence. "There has been not so much a decline in the power of the rich as a change in the means by which that power is maintained".

Ward's pamphlet, he points out, "does not cover adequately... the lack of control or even effective influence by the Labour Party over Labour Governments". Recent Labour Governments, Jenkins says, have been like "a tasteful pink jelly poured into an old blue mould".

Frank Ward gets round these hard facts by extreme vagueness. His great theory about state power shifting from the bosses to the workers is hedged around with statements like: "The exact balance between the classes... can be open to varying estimates"; and, indeed, the only concrete facts he cites go to disprove his theory!

the directors of the state-owned Bank of England and 70% of all directors in the major companies.

"Half the output of officers from Sandhurst comes from public schools... Nearly 80% of the judges come from the same narrow strata of society, as do close to 90% of the diplomatic service..."

On some questions Ward is markedly to the right of the Tribune hardcore. He considers that the labour movement suffers from too much criticism of Labour leaders and MPs, and writes favourably of the 1964-70 government. He also calls for state financial subsidies for the trade unions.

Jenkins, though describing Ward's pamphlet as "formidable", feels it does not manage to present "Parliamentary socialism as a proposition which a rational young person can be expected to embrace with enthusiasm". Newens recognises that "In many respects, there can be no doubt that the present Parliamentary system is a facade and that real decision-making does not take place in the

continued on page 6

In defence of complacency

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

House of Commons".
But both Jenkins and Newsen eagerly second Ward's attempt to show that the idea of "Soviets [workers' councils] as the alternative state" is utopian. That is the essence of the argument: the frankly half-hearted efforts to prove that socialism can come through Parliament serve only to provide consolation after demonstrating that nothing can come through "direct action socialism".

"The basic reality must be faced by the ultra-lefts. Soviets have hardly appeared throughout the last half century". Ward's argument is simple... and simply false.

Direct democracy has begun to appear in every major workers' uprising of the last ten years: Portugal 1975, Chile 1973, Quebec 1972, Italy 1969-70, and France 1968. Ward, however, relies on his British readers' idea of workers' councils as something "alien" to assure them that 'ultra-lefts' only see Soviets because we have the eye of faith.

Despite the rather right-wing Labour tone of parts of his pamphlet, in other parts Ward argues that he is a better Marxist and Leninist than the 'ultra-lefts' are. Lenin, he says, stressed organisational flexibility; in line with that principle, we should recognise that Bolshevism may have been appropriate for Russia but Labourism is appropriate for Britain.

So Jim Callaghan represents, for the Lenin conditions of Britain, what Lenin represented for Russia? An idea from Lenin is indeed relevant here.

Arguing against those who belittled the role of conscious Marxist intervention, Lenin recognised that there were spontaneous tendencies to socialism in the working class. The outcome, however, depended on how those tendencies interacted with conscious intervention. Interacting with the consciousness of priests, they produced Catholic trade unions; interacting with the consciousness of Marxists, they produced a revolutionary labour movement.

In Britain, the spontaneous socialist tendencies of the working class have been channelled by Methodist middleheads, narrow-minded trade union officials, Fabian elitists, and glib careerists. Jim Callaghan and the 'pink jellies in a blue mould' are the result.

The task of militant socialists is to liberate the class instinct of the working class from its bureaucratic shell and to fuse it with a Marxist intervention... thus shaking up the labour movement in the most radical way.

Frank Ward used to think that way: in the pamphlet he informs us that he was a member of the Trotskyist movement up to 1949. He came to the conclusion that "The Parliamentary Labour Party of 1945... implemented a far more radical programme than had ever been predicted by the ultra-lefts of that period" and that Tito and Mao had achieved revolutions without "anything remotely resembling a Bolshevik Party" and gave up.

'Gave up' is right. For Ward admits he has no answer to the present crisis of capitalism, and that it may lead to "a turbulent political situation in which many of our present assumptions would have to be radically modified". He admits he sees no prospect of achieving socialism within the working lifetime of the present generation.

All that is left for him is to stress the importance of the routine ticking-over of the labour movement ("keeping records... negotiating... mastering procedures... funding... learning election regulations... studying administrative problems") — and to denounce bitterly the "ultra-lefts" who say that something more is needed. "The adverse effects of their never-ending emphasis on the strength and cunning of the ruling class, coupled with constant denigration of the reforms achieved by working class struggle as futile, is something for which they will ultimately have to answer to their own consciences".

Ward's pamphlet is important because it shows that the core of Tribune's opposition to the 'ultra-left' is do-nothing-ism: blind attachment to routine, demoralised reliance on history to put things right sometime, somehow.

Tito or Mao did not have Bolshevik Parties. But they had a radical opposition to that do-nothing-ism. And so had everyone who has ever played a positive role in humanity's struggle for liberation.

* 'In Defence of Democratic Socialism', by Frank Ward. £1 from Rye Express, 204 Peckham Rd London SE22

NUJ calls for print support

By
JAMES RYAN

More recently, the Press Association chapel was itself involved in a programme of lightning strikes for its own pay claim; taking advantage of the shift system at the PA, Pearson called a chapel meeting when the chapel leaders were absent and engineered a return to work.

Blow

Already Pearson and his co-thinkers have dealt the provincial NUJ members a savage blow. A local newspaper can often be produced, after a fashion, even though the NUJ members are on strike: the editor and possibly one or two non-union journalists can use raw news provided by the Press Association to keep the presses rolling. For this reason, the NEC also instructed the PA chapel to come out from this week.

But they voted on Monday, by a narrow margin, to ignore the instruction — giving a green light to strikebreakers up and down the country.

Many PA journalists, however, have obeyed union instructions to strike, and organised pickets, seriously disrupting the PA service. Other NUJ members are blacking PA copy.

The PA chapel's decision is all the more disloyal because the NEC had voted to pay the PA members £50 a week strike pay, whereas the provincial journalists are to get nothing at all apart from hardship payments on an individual basis. (The NUJ has been running through its strike fund at a terrific rate, owing to the large number of official disputes fought and the high level of strike pay, recently £25 a week.)

So a bitter struggle is on the cards. Fortunately, not all NUJ members are scabs. The NEC has called for a voluntary levy of the 20,000 members who are not on strike at the rate of £5 a week to cover hardship payments. And the union officials have shown their solidarity by voting to take a salary cut of £50 this month as a contribution to the hardship fund.

The NUJ has also called on the print unions SOGAT, Natsopa, Slade and the NGA, as well as the T&GWU and the EETPU, not to cross picket lines. This could crucially affect both the length and the outcome of the dispute. However, the print leaders are not very likely to jump to the aid of the NUJ, and hard picketing will be needed.

The journalists' greatest asset is their own determination and will to fight. Despite the usual inflated reports about chapels refusing to come out,

militancy among the provincial chapels has never been higher. They have suffered greatly under the last few years of wage freeze, and many journalists are among Britain's lower paid workers.

Crucial

The strikers are demanding a £20 a week rise and an hour off the working day. The employers have offered about a quarter of that, talking about a 'joint approach' to the Department of Employment to plead the special case argument for their offer (which runs at 8.9%). The members overwhelmingly rejected both the miserable rise offered and the special case plea.

For the NUJ the outcome is crucial. Its credibility as an effective trade union is at stake. Defeat could bring the onset of reaction in the union; victory will consolidate the marked trend among journalists to labour and act like members of the labour movement.

Support the strikers at your local paper. Join the picket. Raise the demand for support in your Labour Party and trades council, and for solidarity if you belong to any of the unions involved in newspaper production. Take collections for the hardship fund at your place of work.

FOR THE first time in its history, the National Union of Journalists last Friday instructed all 9,000 members working for provincial newspapers to stage an indefinite strike for higher pay as from Monday 4th December.

In a ballot over the action, over 80% of members favoured strike action.

Almost immediately the Executive's 14-7 vote brought repercussions. Harold Pearson, representative of the London News Agencies, declared that he intended to resign.

He will not be missed. In May of this year the NEC called a one-day strike in support of members in Kettering fighting to defend a closed shop; Pearson, who works for the crucial Press Association news agency, ignored the strike instruction.



ANL turns to the shop floor



JULY 1974: White workers at Imperial Typewriters, Leicester, influenced by the National Front, demand the victimisation of black strike leaders. The ANL Trade Union conference discussed campaigning against racism on the shop floor.

'We want our jobs back' say Triang workers

200 SACKED WORKERS at the Triang toy factory in Merthyr Tydfil started a work-in last Friday (1st December). The company, which makes pedal cars and tricycles, is in the hands of the Receiver, and on Thursday 23rd November 200 out of the 340 workforce got dismissal notices.

The work-in was supported by trade unionists from local factories, including Hoovers where cutbacks are also threatened, and the Action Committee from the Nant Garw coke works, also faced with closure.

The Triang workers say they are prepared to continue their work-in until they can get their jobs secured.

But there are no attempts to control production, and the Action Committee has strenuously

denied suggestions that the work-in is a form of occupation. Nothing has been said about what will be done if the Receiver starts to shift machinery out of the factory... or if the workers simply find themselves locked out one morning.

The Committee is holding talks with the Welsh TUC, which is casting around for a suitable entrepreneur to run Triang.

What is needed in the stricken South Wales areas is immediate occupation of works like Nant Garw and Triang that are facing closure, and a joint campaign to demand that work is shared out without loss of pay and the companies nationalised without compensation and under workers' control.

THE ANTI NAZI LEAGUE must make a decisive turn to the shop floor, and must grapple not only with the fascists but with the racism and discrimination which riddle the workplaces of Britain.

That was the message coming from the ANL Trade Union Conference held last Saturday, aptly in the basement of Congress House (TUC headquarters). Despite the short notice and somewhat mysterious organisation of the conference, 512 delegates attended from trade union branches, shop stewards' committees, regional and executive councils and work-based ANL groups.

Many delegates were clearly annoyed at the refusal of the platform to allow resolutions or even amendments to the declaration they had presented.

The declaration itself was a masterpiece of political tightrope-walking, avoiding even the sniff of controversy.

A number of useful proposals were, however, contained in the declaration, such as the suggestion that all trade union journals be approached to carry articles exposing the National Front as fascist and anti-trade union. A series of industry-based ANL conferences are scheduled for the New Year, including a miners' rally to be held in February, a print and media workers' conference and a teachers' conference.

But the declaration was silent on what to do about fascists and active racists in the unions — and about the work permit system, the rights of black workers, and about the responsibility of the organised working class to defend blacks under attack from fascists or the state, rather than relying on that state to deal with the fascists.

There was the predictable hypocrisy from the 'personalities' present: Ernie Roberts glorified the ANL's role in East London's Brick Lane, and Bill Keys (SOGAT General Secretary and Chair of the TUC Race Relations Committee) pledging

full support to the ANL while forgetting to mention that it was he who pressured Natsopa into dropping a motion of support for the ANL at this year's TUC.

But they and their declaration were marginal to the discussion. Several speakers pointed to the overwhelmingly white composition of the conference, emphasising the need to win the confidence and the involvement of black workers, and called for action to end the super-exploitation of blacks.

The most important single initiative reported to the conference was the decision of the South East Regional Council of the TUC to make a serious recruitment drive among Asians in the East End of London. According to Jack Dromey, this would also involve a 'war of propaganda' against racism and discrimination within already organised workplaces.

Dromey advocated a campaign to train black workers in order to overcome their ghettoisation in the worst-paid jobs, and also suggested that union meetings should be conducted in two or three languages and should be held at times convenient to women workers.

If carried through, these proposals could have a tremendous impact on the situation in the East End [and elsewhere].

Another important area in which the organisers got more than they bargained for was the repeated call for a democratic policy-making conference of the ANL, and the election of a Steering Committee. Despite the straitjacket imposed on delegates, enough pressure was felt by Ernie Roberts for him to 'assure' those present that a conference to discuss structure and policies would be convened, though he hastened to add that this 'might take a long time'.

ANL activists must continue to demand of the Steering Committee that such a conference be arranged at the earliest possible date.

LEYLAND EVEN THE 5pc HAS GOT STRINGS ON IT

IN THE LAST three weeks, two meetings of the Leyland Cars Joint Negotiating Committee, made up of BL convenors and senior stewards, have voted to accept a 'new' management offer on wages and jobs. The agreement was ratified last week at a meeting of BL senior stewards at Radford, Coventry. It will now be put to a ballot of the Leyland workers, to be carried out in the next two weeks.

On the Joint Negotiating Committee, union officials usually attend but do not vote. This time, led by Granville Hawley of the T&GWU, they cast votes in favour of accepting the bosses' offer and rammed it through with a big majority.

But the deal is not a new offer. The bosses' previous offer had been for a 5% increase and a productivity scheme, conditional on the workers accepting a parity and regrading scheme throughout British Leyland. This deal is almost exactly the same.

The claim made on November 24th by Longbridge convenor Derek Robinson, that the bosses were prepared to drop their demands for acceptance of the parity scheme and give the 5% with no strings, has been blown apart. The bosses' document for the Joint Negotiating

Committee stressed that they were offering a package deal or nothing. Another reported concession, that the bosses were going to allow consolidation into the basic of previous rises under the wage limits, was also disproved... they won't even consolidate their 5% offer into the basic pay.

The only concession from the bosses is that they are prepared to introduce the new 'minimum time rate' in February 1979 instead of doing it in three stages to be completed in November 1979. But this is still tied to acceptance of the parity deal, and won't be backdated (as it appeared it might be).

The parity scheme is the key to the bosses' offer. It means accepting re-grading accompanied by stringent productivity and job loss conditions.

Exactly how many jobs the bosses will cut isn't known. 7,000 is the minimum. BL chairman Michael Edwardes was reported as saying in New York that he hoped to get rid of 14,000 workers from the cars division next year.

A vote in favour of the bosses' offer will mean a vote for Edwardes to slash jobs. The deal must be rejected. Cut hours, not jobs, should be our reply to BL's crisis.

After the election re-run CPSA needs a strategy not just a strike fund

RESULTS are due next week from the civil service union CPSA's new elections for a National Executive Committee.

The left wing NEC elected at the CPSA's last conference was sacked in October by president Len Lever. Under threats of court writs from leading right winger Kate Losinska, Lever declared that the vice-presidential elections were invalid, and then annulled the NEC elections, too, on the grounds that Peter Colman — who was elected a vice-president at conference but then deposed by Lever — had not been able to stand.

Although the irregularities in the voting for vice-presidents mostly concerned right wing branches, the right wing used Lever's ruling to start a smear campaign against the left.

The Right is likely to make some gains in the new NEC elections. They are better organised than they were at the union conference, where the elections came shortly after exposure of their close connections with the employer-financed far-right group TRUMID.

The press has backed the Right, and the senior full-time officials got an editorial into the CPSA journal Red Tape (edited by self-proclaimed Stalinist Clive Bush) attacking the Left for being as bad as the Right.

Election addresses have been circulated for the first time, which is a step forward. But the officials have refused to print the address from Viv Lacey, an International Marxist Group member who was elected to the NEC at conference. They claim that one sentence 'libelled' Kate Losinska, though Viv Lacey has a lawyer's advice that there is nothing libellous in her address.

The big issue behind the elections is pay. Recently released figures from the official Pay Research Unit show that civil service wages have fallen well behind the private sector: 20% or 30% behind for managerial grades, up to 20% behind for clerical grades.

The PRU system ties civil service pay to pay elsewhere. Militants in the civil service oppose the system because it makes civil service workers parasitic on the militancy of workers elsewhere. But the system has now turned against the Government.

A campaign has been mounted for a Special Delegate conference to decide on this year's pay claim

and — more importantly — on the strategy for winning the claim.

Civil Service bosses are already making plans to keep key computers running and to discipline workers taking industrial action. To win the claim, widespread stoppages will be necessary, covering every computer and revenue-earning centre.

The top officials of the various civil service unions have set up a strike fund of £1 million... but it is under the control of a joint union committee staffed by bureaucrats.

A Broad Left NEC will certainly be preferable to a right wing NEC. But it cannot be relied on to win the pay claim for the rank and file. Area committees must be turned into effective strike co-ordinating bodies, in preparation for action in 1979.

STEPHEN CORBISHLEY
(Secretary, CPSA British Library)

DIARY...

With this issue, we are starting a special column for events which we specially call on our readers to support.

Friday 8 December. Garners mass picket; from 6pm at the Whitcomb St restaurant (near Trafalgar Sq.)

Saturday 9 December. Iran Solidarity Campaign demonstration: 'Down with the Fascist Regime of the Shah; Cut all links with the Shah's Regime; Stop Arms shipments to Iran; US and British Imperialist hands off Iran'. Assemble 1pm at Embankment Underground station.

Sunday 10 December. Hornsey Labour Party canvaas for Ted Knight. 10.30am, from Hornsey Labour Rooms, Middle Lane, N8.

Sunday 17 December. 'Labour, break all links with the Shah'. Demonstration called by the Campaign Against Repression in Iran: 1pm from Speakers' Corner.

EVENTS

Small ads are free for labour movement events. Paid ads (including ads for publications) 8p per word, £5 per column inch — payment in advance. Send copy to Events, Box 1960, Rising Free, 182 Upper St, London N1, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

Friday 8 December. Iran Solidarity Campaign public meeting. 6pm, Large Lecture Theatre, Polytechnic of Central London, 115 New Cavendish St, London W1.

Sunday 10 December. Liverpool Trades Council conference on Ireland. At AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant. Apply for credentials to the Trades Council, 70 Victoria Street, Liverpool 1.

Wednesday 13 December. Spartacist League public meeting. Workers must rule Iran. Down with the Shah! Down with the Mullahs! 7.30pm, Co-Op Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N7.

PUBLISHED by Workers' Action, Box 1960, Rising Free, 182 Upper St, London N1, and printed by Anvil Press [TU]. Registered as a newspaper at the GPO.

CORRECTION:

In last week's report of the ANL Working Council, we wrote that this Council is 'not an elected body'. That is not quite true. ANL groups did elect delegates to the Council. However, the basis of representation on which delegates are elected is unclear, and certain delegates were present ex-officio.

'Mothers Inferior'

Teachers used to have maternity benefits that were the envy of other groups of workers. This is no longer true, as Newham Rank and File teachers show in a new pamphlet on the case for better maternity leave.

The present basic entitlement in Newham (East London) is four weeks' maternity leave on full pay plus 14 on half pay. State maternity allowance is deducted from pay during the four weeks on full pay.

The state maternity leave scheme allows for forty weeks' leave — 34 unpaid, six at 30% of full pay. In some areas teachers get the best of both the state

scheme and the employers' scheme, with 18 weeks' paid maternity leave and 22 weeks' unpaid. Not in Newham: you must choose the shorter paid leave or the longer leave with less pay.

In addition, maternity leave depends on having worked for the employer for at least one year.

Newham Rank and File teachers are demanding that maternity leave on full pay be extended to 63 weeks, for all teachers whatever their length of service. They also demand six weeks' paternity leave on full pay, and the right to leave with pay to look after sick children.

"We believe we are asking for

very modest improvements", they say, citing provisions in other countries and agreements made by other unions in Britain. In Austria, mothers get four months' leave on full pay; in Hungary, 20 weeks on full pay and further leave, with child care allowances, up to the child's third birthday. The NUJ at Penguin Books have negotiated 24 weeks' leave, 16 on full pay and eight on half pay.

Copies of the pamphlet, "Mothers Inferior", are available from 60 Meath Road, London E15 at 15p plus 10p p&p.

PREGNANCY TESTING

Quick, cheap and safe

FINDING OUT if you are pregnant can be a problem. Your GP can arrange to have the test done for you free of charge, but you have to wait anything up to ten days for the results.

A local chemist will charge you a considerable amount (usually between £3 and £4). For a similar sum, you can buy a do-it-yourself kit, but these are often difficult or inconvenient to use.

The only other alternative is a local Family Planning Clinic. Not all clinics do the tests, and those who do may only consider you if you are already a patient.

So a group of Newham women have set up a local pregnancy

testing service which aims to overcome some of these problems. We are able to carry out the test quickly and give the results immediately, and all that is asked is a 20p donation to cover the cost of the chemicals.

We also provide an opportunity for women to discuss their problems about contraception and pregnancy in a sympathetic and informal atmosphere.

We do not see ourselves as a kind of alternative medical service. Women whose test results are positive are urged to see their GP straight away. We are, however, concerned about the unsympathetic treatment women often re-

ceive from the Health Service.

We feel that by offering quick and inexpensive pregnancy testing we are meeting an obvious need — clearly shown by the response we have had since the service opened.

NEWHAM WOMEN'S GROUP.

Pregnancy testing every Monday, 6pm to 8pm, at 17 Woodford Rd, Forest Gate, E7. No appointment needed.

If you are interested in setting up a similar service in your area, and would like information and/or advice, then contact: Newham Women's Group, 63 Churston Ave, London E13.

SHORTER HOURS AND MORE WORK

The 42-hour week promised at the end of last year's firemen's strike will be introduced on or before April 1st 1979. The Fire Brigades Union recall delegate conference on 28th November ratified the agreement reached at national joint council level.

Brigades in Scotland and in some Labour-controlled areas in England will go over to 42 hours from January 1st, and the rest before April 1st.

However, the FBU leaders conceded almost every demand that the employers made for harsher working routines. On top of that, much is being left to local negotiation, where the weaker areas could really get sewn up by the employers.

The 42-hour week will be introduced at the cost of cuts in standards of fire cover and even the closure of some fire stations.

DOUG MACKAY

Mick Moran

It is with deep regret and sadness that socialists in Nottingham must announce the tragic death at the age of 25 of their comrade Mick Moran.

Mick died suddenly and unexpectedly on 29th November after being admitted to hospital only six days before. He will be particularly remembered for his tireless work around the strike at Stanton Ironworks a year ago and for his energetic opposition to racism and fascism.

His honesty, warmth, and selfless devotion to the cause of his class will be greatly missed by his many friends and comrades of all political viewpoints in Nottingham. We offer our sympathies and condolences to his family.

NOTTINGHAM WORKERS'
ACTION SUPPORTERS

workers' ACTION

supporters' groups

exist in most major towns. For more information, or to subscribe to Workers' Action, complete this form and send to the address below:

NAME

ADDRESS

I want more information

I want to subscribe for 25 issues/50 issues.

Subscription rates: Britain and Ireland, 25 issues £4, 50 issues £7.50. Rest of the world: Surface mail, 25 issues £4.50, 50 issues £8.50; Air mail, 25 issues £6, 50 issues £11. Cheques etc payable to 'Workers Action'.

SEND TO WA, Box 1960, 182 Upper St, London N1.

JOURNALISTS DEMAND AN END TO LOW PAY

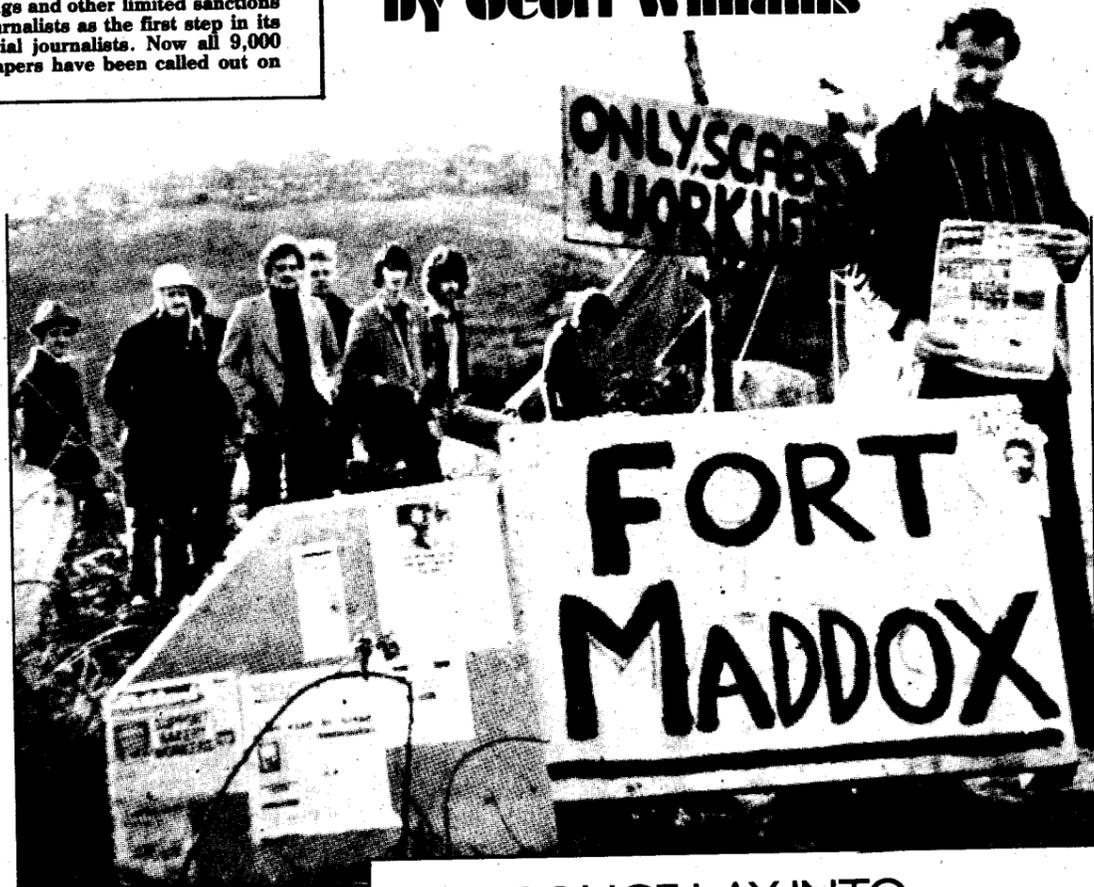


JOURNALISTS ON the Bolton Evening News were sacked as soon as they started the mandatory union meetings and other limited sanctions decided on by the National Union of Journalists as the first step in its campaign for £20 pay rises for provincial journalists. Now all 9,000 NUJ members on the provincial newspapers have been called out on strike. STORY, page 6.

WORKERS' ACTION

SUPPORT FROM OTHER UNIONS IS KEY TO BAKERS' VICTORY

by Geoff Williams



Bakers on a picket line at Mothers' Pride, Plymouth.
Photo: News Line.

POLICE LAY INTO FLOUR MILL PICKETS

On Friday 1st December, over 100 bakery workers from South Wales and Bristol clashed with police on a picket line outside the flour mill in Tewkesbury — one of two in the country still supplying ABF and RHM bakeries.

Two pickets were arrested, and one had to have hospital treatment for a slashed hand. Reports also say three police were taken to hospital.

After violent fighting, mill workers and lorry drivers got into the mill. Police eventually overwhelmed the bakers' pickets and got the flour wagons out.

Police kicked and punched pickets indiscriminately. But seeing the extent of the violence, some mill workers did refuse to cross the picket line.

Later, the pickets went to the local police station and demanded the release of their two brothers. A police dog was brought out to frighten us off, but the response was 'You can run the lot of in if you like'...

Then we found out that the two arrested pickets had been shipped out to Cheltenham. So we got into the buses and went there to get them out.

The funds for organising flying pickets are having to come from our Strike Fund, though the union has supplied a few minibuses.

But we need more resources for picketing. The union should be pressing for other unions to give us money to carry out this vital picketing job.

The TGWU on Cardiff buses has now been approached, and efforts have been made to get low-cost hire of a bus with volunteer bus drivers to ferry pickets where they are needed.

MASS PICKET of Heavings Flour Mill, Tewkesbury.

From 4am, Tuesday 12 December.

THE BOSS of Merritts bakery in Cardiff has promised scab van-salesmen that he personally would see that they got into another union, USDAW, if their suspension from the Bakers' Union becomes expulsion after the strike ends.

A letter from the General Secretary of USDAW has made it clear that in no way will USDAW accept such scabs. The matter will be brought up again at USDAW's next meeting with the bakery bosses.

BAKERY WORKERS are still crowding the picket lines after four weeks on strike. Rumours that the strike is crumbling are just the desperate lies put out by the baking bosses RHM and ABF.

Their profits are being hit every day. Bread is being returned to bakeries unsold, and being shipped out against the next day, as more and more people are showing their preference for the products of independent bakers.

But other unions are letting down the strikers. Though ASTMS supports the strike, its members are among the management scabs still producing bread in some of the big bakeries.

Machinery is being maintained by AUEW members, who are still working in the majority of plants. These engineers were only supposed to work on machinery so that bread could be made for hospitals, but they are in fact carrying on as normal.

And the TUC has done nothing to help the strike, for all their humbug about helping the lower-paid.

But the bread strikers are refusing to be demoralised. Flying pickets are now being organised nationally, and maximum effort and resources will be put into stopping flour deliveries from the mills.

The pickets' experience is that talking to the drivers when flour deliveries arrive at bakeries is useless. One driver said to me "If there are any pickets in my way, I'll run them down". And this has already happened to some pickets.

So the pickets are going to the mills. Mass pickets are being organised for two mills which are still producing — in Tewkesbury and in Uxbridge.

Union officials are still arguing that pickets should stay at the bakery gates, to stop loaded vans going out. While this is still high on our list of priorities, if we can stop the flour at its source that would be even better.

The more pressure put on the Federation of Bakers (now composed only of RHM and ABF), the sooner we will win. They are losing more as time goes on — their Christmas produce isn't even started.

Now miners in South Wales have given their support to the strike and are organising contingents of pickets to help at the flour mills.

This sort of support is needed nationally, from the rank and file of all unions; and financial aid is also needed.

The T&GWU and GMWU have given their support — on paper. But that goes nowhere in helping the strike. We need these unions to stop their members crossing our picket lines — NOW!

WE WANT MORE JOBS NOT BIGGER WORKLOADS

Coventry's 190 dustmen began a strike on Monday 4th December. The entire City Engineering Department struck in support. Mass pickets by dustmen have closed the Foleshill Road depot and not one council vehicle there has been able to move.

The strike is against a new manning agreement imposed by the management, that would mean an increased workload. The dustmen have said they don't want the extra work even if it means more money and are demanding the council employs more dustmen to deal with any extra work.

Apart from the increased workload being harder, and actually dangerous to a worker's health, the strikers have made it clear that they want to force the council to create more jobs and cut down unemployment in the town.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Socialist Organiser

Paper of the Socialist Campaign for a Labour Victory

Second issue due out January 6th. 12 pages for 15p. Bundles can be ordered in advance: 10 papers for £1 post free.

From SCLV, Box 127, Rising Free, 182 Upper St, London N1.

CARF



CAMPAIGN AGAINST RACISM AND FASCISM
No. 7 OUT NOW 15p

Articles on
★ Racism and the Judiciary
★ The East End
★ State Harassment
★ Racist Attacks
★ plus news and reports

Available from progressive bookshops. Bulk orders from CARF Box 35 182 Upper St London N1