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US MINERS DEFY ANTI-UNION LAWS



Carter

The entire trade union movement in the United States faces a crucial test this week as President Carter brings the full weight of US strikebreaking legislation to bear in a bid to break the back of the United Mine Workers Union.

UMW officials representing the 160,000 coal miners have now been served with court orders issued under the union-busting Taft-Hartley legislation.

Carter hopes this will force an end to their 96-day strike that has caused an energy crisis in 11 states.

The orders tell officials to instruct their members back to work for a "cooling off period" of 80 days for renewed negotiations.



Miller

If they fail to comply, they face fines in the courts, and strikers who stay out will cease to receive the Federal food stamps that have helped sustain them in their struggle.

It is certain that the vast majority of strikers will follow the UMW tradition of ignoring such legal ultimatum.

On three previous occasions injunctions under Taft-Hartley have failed to force the miners' union back to work.

Threat

But this does not detract from the threat such action poses to the whole US labour movement.

Carter and the coal bosses recognise that the miners' struggle is a test of the ability of US employers to force through an all-round attack on living standards, working conditions and trade union rights throughout industry in order to "solve" the acute

Carter's labour mediator Wayne Horvitz made this clear when in January, he pointed out that:

"The employers believe that for many years they have given away more than they should across the table to the unions, and that perhaps this is a good time to get some of it back".

The coal bosses are acting in this spirit.

Fines on strikers

The employers' original demands included a \$20 a day fine on unofficial strikers, provision for sacking strike leaders, the scrapping of the miners' hard-won 30-year old free health care benefits, and a savage attack on retirement benefits, as well as the introduction of Sunday working.

These demands were integrated into a proposed contract that won the endorsement of UMW President Arnold Miller but aroused only fuming hostility from rank and file miners, hundreds of whom invaded the union's Washington Headquarters and forced the 39 man bargaining council to reject it 33-3.

Then in a much publicised "climdbown" the bosses withdrew their insistence on the \$20 a day fines and on Sunday working. All the other attacks remained unchanged.

Press campaign

The UMW bargaining council, scared at the prospect of a major confrontation with the Carter government, endorsed the "new" proposals and submitted them to a ballot vote of the membership, backed up by a \$40,000 public relations exercise, with press, TV and radio adverts plugging the deal.

The result was a devastating 2-1 rejection of the deal by miners determined not to surrender their rights.

Carter, confronting a major energy crisis, the prospect of premature shipwreck for his much vaunted "cheap coal" energy plan to cut US oil consumption, as well as the growing instability of the dollar, was pressed into action, invoking the Taft-Hartley laws.

Tied to Democrats

He did so knowing that leading US union bureaucrats—tied to the capitalist Democratic Party—would endorse his action.



Miners march in Pittsburgh

Militant/Nancy Cole

Build general strike against Taft-Hartley!

declared in advance that he would not object if Carter invoked Taft-Hartley injunctions.

He announced that his long familiarity with the mine workers had convinced him that the union's internal troubles required strong government measures—and that if he were President, he would already have seized the mines!

The United Auto Workers President, Douglas Fraser, agreed with Meany that "a government takeover for a brief period would be acceptable".

And the AFL-CIO Execu-

The fight against such treacherous leaders must centre on the struggle for general strike action by the organised working class alongside the miners, to defeat Taft-Hartley.

These laws, part of the battery of legislation that impedes the independent struggle of US workers, are an attack on the whole working class.

Solidarity

If the law helps Carter defeat the miners, then next in line for similar treatment will be rail, airline and postal

next year.

While the fight for supporting strike action must be taken up with urgency, this does not lessen the need for immediate solidarity action—in particular the blacking of non-union coal by transport and other unions, and the raising of financial and physical support for the hard-pressed miners who face the danger of Federal military intervention if they continue their highly effective picketing operations.

Miners should take the initiative in calling on the thousands of trade unionists in every area who have shown

of action to organise practical backing.

Huge meetings in support of the miners across the United States indicate that basis for such committee of action clearly exists

But miners are hampered in this by the lack of any new leadership developed within the UMW in the course of the strike.

No new leaders

The collaboration, an increasing isolation, of Miller has not been accompanied by the emergence of a genuine alternative leader. All currents within the union remain tied to the Democrats.

While clearly demonstrating their willingness to fight the capitalist Democratic government and their allies in the Republican Party, the mass of miners have clearly not recognised the necessity to break the workers movement from these capitalist parties and to build a Labour Party to repeal anti-union legislation and implement measures to defend their own class interests.

Labour Party

A fight for committees of action would give miners the opportunity to raise the demand for a Labour Party amongst the most advanced class conscious sections of the American working class and give an organisational foothold for such a party.

At the same time miners must step up the fight within their own union for the ousting of Miller and those bargaining council members that endorsed the bosses' no strike contract, and replace them with leaders prepared to call on the whole American labour movement to support their struggle against capitalist state repression.

Socialist programme

In this the urgent question is the construction of a Trotskyist leadership within the UMW dedicated to developing the complete political independence of the working class, fighting for the formation of a Labour Party on socialist programme.

This is a vital part of the fight for a workers' government in the USA which will nationalise the major industries without compensation and under committees of workers management.



INTERNATIONAL

W. German officials working like beavers

A great responsibility now rests with the union bureaucrats of West Germany.

Every capitalist is now looking to these corps of volunteer hangmen, both to deal a mortal blow to the maturing strike of print workers and to suffocate the metal workers' strike while it is still in the cradle.

Loyal to the interests of capitalism, the union leaders worked like beavers to contain the pressure of militancy behind a carefully constructed dam of class-collaboration.

Safer quarters

Now they are being reluctantly swept along with the flood. But they still keep an experienced eye open for the first opportunity to leap back to safer quarters, and resume their historic task of building obstacles.

In negotiations with the employers, Eugen Loderer, President of IG-Metall, tirelessly proclaimed his readiness to bargain away the union's 8% wage claim and accept a level actually below that recommended in government policy.

But all this was in vain—the employers refused to concede even a paltry 5% increase.

Angry demands from the rank and file finally left Loderer no option but to hold a ballot in the two major industrial areas.

Daunting majority

This revealed that 90% of the members were in favour of strike action.

Undeterred by this daunting majority, the union's national executive persevered in its campaign of sabotage. At their next meeting, these 'leaders' unanimously called a strike in North Wuerttemberg-North Baden from March 15.



German SPD leader Schmidt (centre) with Party Chairman Wily Brandt (right)

But at the same time they postponed indefinitely the decision on strike action in the even more important region of North Rhine-Westphalia.

IG-Metall has 700,000 members in the two areas, and joint action in both regions would swiftly cripple West German industry.

This gesture of goodwill to the capitalists was generously accompanied by an unconditional agreement to the employers' plea for talks before the strike is due to begin.

These are the actions of desperate men, who can see their nightmare of independent action by workers becoming a menacing daylight reality.

Meanwhile their fellow bureaucrats in IG-Druck continue to ride out the

storm in the printing industry by a similar combination of manoeuvres.

Threatened by employers with a national lockout, they have struck back—by an offer of virtually unconditional talks on the introduction of new technology.

Persistent traitors

Such moves are the risks that need to be taken if the labour leaders are to succeed in defending capitalism by frustrating the independent interests of the working class.

It is the fight against these persistent traitors that is central to the present struggles of workers in West Germany—a fight that can be carried through to victory only by a revolutionary leadership armed with the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International.

CP's HISTORIC SELL-OUT

Only one article in their pact with the Christian Democrats seems to have disagreed with the leaders of the Italian Communist Party.

Their demand that the police unions should be legally free to affiliate to the major union confederations was rejected by the bourgeois government party.

The demand in itself was a further example of the Stalinists' method of presenting the bourgeois state in a glamourised, reformist distortion. It is precisely this pernicious 'analysis' which has been used to justify the 'historic compromise'.

The compromise has now been realised on terms that represent a degree of betrayal that is scarcely credible even from such experienced operators.

Full support has been reaffirmed for the Christian Democrats' 'austerity programme' of vicious attacks on the working class. The CP has also stepped forward as a proud and staunch advocate of bourgeois law and order—that is, unrestrained repression of any opposition to the full-scale campaign to restore national capitalism at the

confederation, spelt out the full meaning of this: 'moderate' wage claims and possibly state wage control; agreement to redundancies and plant closures; a pledge of higher productivity and co-operation with moves by employers towards speed up, rationalisation and 'job mobility'.

In return for this licence for an assault by the ruling

class, the CP has secured absolutely nothing. Cynically responding to the guarantee of Stalinist support to maintain the government, Christian Democrat Prime Minister Andreotti has reshuffled his pack of ministers without including a single joker in the shape of 'left technicians' requested by Berlinguer.

The dictators of the Central American republics give one standard response to democratic demands: swift and brutal repression.

Such an argument has obvious advantages, but it is not guaranteed to succeed in every situation, as General Anastasio Somoza has been discovering lately.

For two months, the spasms of insurrection have convulsed Nicaragua.

Somoza's regime is threatened from every direction. The murderous practices of

'human rights' campaign.

The US imperialists are seeking a viable alternative in those sections of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie hostile to the Somoza dynasty of presidents because of the family's unyielding grasp on the country's wealth and resources.

The Democratic Freedom Union (UDEL) was floated, and the Stalinists of the Nicaraguan Communist Party welcomed aboard this coalition of bosses, bishops and bureaucrats. But even with such expert advice on the basic methods of class-

collaboration and betrayal,

BLACK TRAITORS FACE CLASS FURY

'Mr Smith is very fond of doing things at the wrong time'. This rueful comment was Bishop Abel Muzorewa's response to the raid into Zambia by the security forces of the racist regime.

The supporters of his fellow collaborator, Chief Chirau, expressed the same meaning with a crude clarity.

Arguing that the attack was justified by the military situation, they confessed that:

"The interim government will find it difficult to interfere with decisions made by the commanders of the security forces".

To make such a frank admission of the wretched political betrayal involved in the 'internal settlement' would hamper Muzorewa's current role.

The Bishop has been allotted the task of selling the deal to an impatient international market.

His objective is to politically isolate or compromise the leaders of the Patriotic Front—using the professional assistance of the Carter

The ancient empire of Ethiopia is now being forged anew by the forces of the deformed workers' states.

Without troops, equipment and 'advice' from Cuba and the Soviet Union, the repressive military dictatorship of the Derg could never have hoped to succeed in its wars in the Ogaden and Eritrea.

Now the massive counter-offensive in the east is steadily restoring the territorial losses inflicted by the Western Somali Liberation Front and by forces from the republic of Somalia itself.

Under seige

But this front is far less significant than the struggle to subjugate Eritrea.

Assurances from assorted Stalinists that they will not intervene in this 'internal dispute' are believed by nobody.

The present phase of the Eritreans' struggles for inde-

pendence has lasted 17 years, and now the liberation armies control almost the whole country, except the major garrison towns, which they have laid under siege.

Talks toward fusion are once again taking place between the two nationalist parties.

Capitulation

Agreement could only be achieved by a capitulation of the left-wing Popular Liberation Front (EPLF) to the petit-bourgeois nationalists of the Front for the Liberation of Ethiopia.

In the liberated areas, the EPLF has introduced land reform, universal education and other progressive measures.

It is scarcely surprising that a leadership which has accomplished such gains should enjoy overwhelming popular support.

Consternation

It is clear that the battles to destroy this revolutionary movement will be far fiercer, and far more protracted than those against the Somalis.

This prospect, and a recognition of the consternation such actions would cause amongst its allies and dependents, may well persuade the Soviet bureaucracy to stay its hand.

But these pressures must be gauged against the necessity which first drove the Stalinists to structure this black fiasco of diplomacy.

To preserve their own privileged position, the Kremlin bureaucrats need to safeguard the gains of the October revolution and preserve a balance of global power with the international bourgeoisie—a balance that at once prevents major aggression from imperialism and restrains the development of independent proletarian revolution.

Naval bases

Part of this strategy is the search for secure naval bases to ensure Russian control of the southern access to the Red Sea.

The main candidates for this role lie in Somalia and Eritrea.

But a series of tactical blunders now makes it inevitable that the Cuban and Russian forces must either use the threat of their military power to extort such a concession from Somalia, or move on in a vicious counter-revolutionary campaign to crush the independence of the Eritreans.

Nicaraguan despot shaken

ous forces it unleashed by organising national strikes and protests.

The workers and peasants have not shown the slightest inclination to be contained in their struggles by the forms and demands proposed by the 'democratic' bourgeoisie. In the town of Masaya the vicious and bloody suppression of demonstrations by the National Guard led to further violent confrontations which culminated in a massacre on 25 February.

Apparently acting under the direction of the Castroite FSLN (Sandinist Front for the Liberation of Nicaragua)

and promptly executed two government informers. At least 30, but probably many more Indians were killed and hundreds wounded as the state military struck to crush this local uprising.

The battle at Masaya has urged forward a fresh wave of mass protest action.

All these sporadic tremors herald a massive eruption. Yet the fiercest heroism and determination cannot compensate for the revolutionary socialist leadership that the Nicaraguan workers urgently need, but tragically lack.

Somoza's dictatorship



Somoza

only a one sided victory.

They will discover that their struggles against exploitation and oppression must be prolonged and intensified over a long and bitter period.

INTERNATIONAL

BELGRADE. United stand against socialist revolution

For six months now diplomats from Russia and America, Eastern Europe and Western Europe have been engaged in prolonged manoeuvres in Belgrade at the follow-up conference to the Helsinki agreement on European Security and Cooperation.

The Conference whose opening was accompanied by a campaign led by President Carter against violations of 'human rights' in the USSR, seems set now to end in a non-controversial and unanimous joint resolution reaffirming the 'principles' of Helsinki.

As yet it is difficult to delineate in any detail what has emerged from the smoke-screen of diplomatic hot-air and double talk which has shrouded the whole proceedings.

But one thing is clear.

Representatives

The Stalinist bureaucrats of Russia and Eastern Europe and the imperialists of Europe and America have brought together their diplomatic representatives in Belgrade, not out of any concern for 'human rights', but to discuss the threats which the deepening of the world

economic crisis and the forward movement of the working class throughout Europe presents both to the stability of capitalism in Western Europe and the future of the parasitic Stalinist caste in the degenerated workers states.

Mutual fear

Though the social formations on which the Stalinist bureaucrats and the imperialists rest are entirely counterposed, yet both are drawn together by their mutual fear and hatred of the working class as a revolutionary force.

In Helsinki and Belgrade they have sought to reach agreement on a clear limitation and demarcation of the conflicts between them so as not to sharpen by precipitate action the contradictions which threaten to tear apart both the post-war balance of power in Europe and the stability of their own regimes.

At the 1975 Helsinki Conference the formal declaration ratified the national and political boundaries established in post-war Europe and endorsed the 'principle' of non-interference in the affairs of sovereign states.

The content of this formal declaration was an agreement to preserve the political status quo within Europe.

Though nowhere mentioned on the agenda, the pre-



Stalinist leaders—against revolution

revolutionary crisis in Portugal was foremost in the minds of both sides. The Stalinist bureaucracy by its actions and the guidance it gave to the Portuguese Communist Party gave positive assurance to the imperialist powers that it stood firmly opposed to any revolutionary

movement in the European working class.

The spontaneous strikes against price rises which swept Poland that same year gave clear notice to the bureaucracy that the unleashing of the proletarian revolution would present a grave challenge to its own existence.

But the limited agreement reached between the Stalinist Bureaucracy and imperialism could not in any fundamental way dissolve the class antagonism between the proletarian revolution on whose degenerated conquests the bureaucracy rests and world imperialism.

Neither the limited agreement reached between the Stalinist bureaucracy and imperialism could not in any fundamental way dissolve the class antagonism between the proletarian revolution on whose degenerated conquests the bureaucracy rests and world imperialism.

Neither did their agreements with imperialism serve in any way to defend the gains of the October revolution.

Serious obstacle

Indeed the events of the last few years have shown clearly that the Stalinist bureaucracy and its deals with imperialism stand as the most serious obstacle not only to the extension of the socialist revolution but as the gravest internal danger to the socialised property relations.

The contradiction between the nationalised property and the parasitic caste of bureau-

crats and state managers is obstacle to the development of conscious planning which requires the active participation of the organised working class.

Massive defeat

The last decade has seen a marked slowing down in the rate of economic growth in the USSR, now less than a third of what it was in 1951, while deficiencies in the plan are increasingly made good by a turning to the world market.

The Soviet grain purchases are the most outstanding example of this. Soviet trade with the advanced capitalist countries has increased from under 1% of GNP to around 5% in 1975 and the USSR now runs a massive trade deficit with the USA, amounting to 12 times its exports in 1975.

The dependence of the Eastern European countries on Western agricultural and industrial imports is even more marked with many now dependent on massive loans from foreign banks.

Rumania is now a member of the IMF and Poland has applied for membership.

Penetration

All these developments threaten the monopoly of foreign trade, opening the way to penetration of the economy by imperialist companies and undermining the socialised relations of production.

At the same time from within parts of the ruling elite a growing number of right-wing dissidents have been spawned who look to the capitalist West both for an economic model and political philosophy.

The right wing exiles Solzhnitsyn and Bukovsky who admire the Chilean junta are only the more extreme examples of a definite trend.

'Human rights'

By calling for 'human rights' the 'democrat' Carter who sends state troops to break the American miners' picket lines and gives aid to the most repressive anti-working class dictatorships from Chile to Iran, does not in any sense mean the granting of greater political freedoms to the working class in Russia and Eastern Europe.

It is not 'human rights' that Carter is seeking, but the rights for right-wing dissidents to organise to fight for the restoration of capitalism and for bourgeois democracy.

That the Stalinist bureaucracy has, as far as can be seen, made no concessions to the West on these points indicates that they fear that the social consequences of such concessions to the right would undermine the entire stability of the ruling caste.

But the Stalinist bureaucracy is itself capable only of temporarily holding back the development of these contradictions.

The only way which the social gains of the October Revolution can be defended against imperialism and its supporters within is by the working class carrying



Lessons from 'Black Thursday'

'Black Thursday' is the name Tunisians now give to the day of the general strike on January 26.

But the different classes and sections of society see this blackness in different ways of course.

The bourgeoisie was confronted by the massive revolutionary potential of the proletariat, while the workers experienced the full brutality of the bourgeois state.

Union leaders and militants remain in prison, but the police have now generously promised to release those who are not proved guilty.

The Bonapartist government of President Bourguiba and Prime Minister Nouira has now clearly recognised both the necessity and the opportunity to press on with a sweeping attack against the political independence of

who opposed the workers' strike have now eagerly volunteered as the ready lieutenants of the ruling class in its new offensive. With 11 of its 13 executive members still in prison, the UGTT has held an extraordinary congress to 'reconcile' the union with the ruling Destour Socialist Party that is imposing repression throughout the country.

Tijani Abid—a reliable henchman of the DSP—has been installed by the state as secretary-general; a range of bureaucratic 'reforms' has been imposed on the constitution, and the UGTT has apologetically withdrawn from its earlier militant positions.

But even this large offering of humble pie will not be enough to satisfy the appetite of the bourgeoisie.

hostility might again find violent expression in the near future, the government has conceded a paltry increase in wages.

Achour has also extorted a considerable price for this in a renewal of the social pact—a piece of thorough class-collaboration.

The government has also moved against the Tunisian youth, who formed the determined core of the strike movement and protest demonstrations. With unemployment an acute problem that the regime has done nothing to resolve, Bourguiba's son and special advisor now solemnly declares that these youth 'refuse' to work, because they suffer from the mandarin complex of long fingernails and hands which they prefer not to soil.

This reactionary cant is

drafted on forced labour projects to disperse them from the cities.

At the same time others will quite simply be exiled to rural areas.

Repressive in themselves, these measures will be fully exploited to break up any groups which emerge in hostility to the government.

Students, who have continued academic strikes and attempted demonstrations in the last few weeks, will be an obvious and immediate target.

Calls for the restoration of democratic rights and for the independence of the UGTT from the state are dangerously inadequate to counter these far-reaching attacks.

Syndicalists can derive only the negative lessons of disillusionment and a hostility to political issues

BUDDY CAN YOU SPARE \$27 Billion?

"Screw more out of your workforce" is the blunt warning to US employers from the international bankers and oil magnates, delivered in the form of a slump in the value of the dollar in the money markets.

The bankers are concerned by the massive \$27 billion annual deficit in the US balance of payments last year, and by evidence that a similar figure will arise in 1978.

This occurs at a time when a shrinking, recession-blighted world market is forcing every other ruling class to impose drastic "austerity" measures, rationalisation and mass sackings to drive up the rate of exploitation of their own working class.

The US economy, which was the bedrock of the post-war reconstruction of capitalism, and, through its massive aid programmes, provided the basis for the rationalisation and re-equipment of German and Japanese industry, has lagged behind such developments.

US manufacturers now find themselves outpriced and out-produced in world markets, while growing penetration of imported goods into the US has brought widespread appeals from the bosses for protectionist measures to safeguard less competitive

domestic industry.

Congressional committees in Washington are now investigating anguished calls for protectionist trade measures on goods which comprise two-thirds of the imports at present coming from EEC countries!

Vicious package

The weak competitive position of US industry can only be "solved" by the Carter administration through a vicious package of anti-working class and deflationary measures designed to force through cuts in public spending, cuts in working class living standards, a ruthless rationalisation of outdated plant, and the imposition of drastic speed-up and sackings on the powerful US labour movement.

The difficulties of carrying through such attacks are clearly shown by the current miners' strike. Carter's need to impose attacks also coincides with figures suggesting that inflation is well on its way towards double figures—lending added fuel to the fires of working class resistance.

The dollar crisis finds the capitalist class internationally caught indissolubly in the contradictions of their own system.

To strengthen the dollar and restore stability to the money markets, Carter must prune back

the US economy.

But to impose such measures would deal a savage blow at the already depressed level of world trade—forcing a further round of closures and redundancies in each capitalist country.

Yet if the dollar is not stabilised in value, then key sections of the capitalist class—in particular the Middle East oil producers, who sell their oil for dollars and keep huge dollar reserves—stand to make thumping losses.

This is why oil producers in Kuwait, Iraq and Qatar are already pressing for an increase in the price of oil, to compensate for the loss in value of the dollar.

Such an increase as took place with the five fold price increase in 1973, would of course signal a new leap in inflation internationally and a further attack on the chronically depressed levels of production in the capitalist countries.

Protectionism

Carter faces no easy options. Whichever road he follows to safeguard the dollar and US industry must lead into the capitalist cul-de-sac of intensified protectionism, all-out trade war, and galloping recession.

Under these conditions it is absolutely essential that the work-

ing class internationally preserve its complete political independence, opposing all forms of class collaboration.

Gangrene

Protectionism is today a gangrene infecting sections of the leadership of the workers' movement.

It is one of the economic last resorts of a leadership which refuses to fight for the independent interests of the working class.

It is rife among fake 'left' union leaders and MPs in Britain. It is a major policy of the Communist Party.

And, not surprisingly, it is most widespread of all inside the workers' leadership closest to imperialism, the leaders of the AFL-CIO union confederation in the United States.

Carter's government is already imposing wholesale protectionist measures—mostly in such disguised forms as "voluntary" export restrictions from other countries.

Shining shoes

But this is not enough for the AFL-CIO leadership. At an executive meeting two weeks ago in Florida the AFL-CIO council



Carter

adopted a 15 point protectionist charter.

Most of this is not new. But in the new programme there is stronger emphasis than ever before on restricting imports, especially from "low wage countries" and on demanding that US capitalist corporations invest at home and not abroad.

"If all of our manufacturing continues to move overseas we are going to be reduced to shining

each other's shoes."

So says pro-imperialist AFL-CIO president George Meany, a man accustomed to having his shoes shined for him by US and other workers.

The US working class can be led along a proletarian internationalist road only by the destruction of such leaders and the construction of a political party representing the independent interests of labour.



Police attack youth and anti-fascists in Birmingham, Feb 18.

YOUTH MOB FASCISTS

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

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

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

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

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

Name.....
Address.....
Trade Union/Occupation.....

A massive spontaneous movement by youth in High Wycombe has on two weeks running driven the National Front from distributing leaflets in the town's shopping centre—the Octagon.

On the first occasion, Saturday March 4, less than 20 anti-fascists were distributing leaflets when about six members of the NF arrived.

In the ensuing struggle, the fascists' leaflets were destroyed and within about five minutes they were surrounded by some 150 people—mainly school youth, black and white, who burst through a thin blue line of police and chased the fascists through the shopping centre into a carpark where unfortunately they managed to escape in a lift.

Mobilised

Following their narrow escape the NF did not dare show their face in the Octagon this Saturday.

Earlier in the day a handful appeared briefly in

fascist forces were again mobilised.

A large crowd of about 80 youth including Asians, blacks, punk rockers and others were waiting for a glimpse of the NF.

Liquidation

Police were very much in evidence but were unable despite "moving people on" to disperse the crowd.

The eagerness with which youth in High Wycombe have demonstrated their willingness to fight fascism must be translated into the building of organisations to develop that strength—in particular the National Union of School Students, the union of those at school.

Unemployed youth must fight for admittance to the trade union movement. The whole of the workers' movement locally must be mobilised to follow the example set by the youth and take action to drive the fascists off the streets of High Wycombe.

Workers defence squads, including trade union and NUSS forces must be set up.

MILITANT AND THE COWLEY 9

Following our article in last week's *Socialist Press*, which drew attention to the failure of the 16-page *Militant* to report the struggle to defend the Cowley 9 victimised TGWU members, the *Militant* group have stated that they intend to carry an article in their next edition.

The article, they inform us, was delayed for technical reasons.

As we stated in our article last week, *Militant* supporters are actively campaigning in defence of the Cowley 9 with the TGWU.

But the opportunist

political line of the *Militant* leads them to a position of seeing the Cowley victimisations as simply a question of democratic rights within the TGWU rather than part of a major turn in the development of bureaucratic moves to defend capitalist interests in Leyland and throughout industry.

The fact that *Militant* could fail to carry an article on such developments is not a sign of their links to the TGWU bureaucracy—as we suggested in our last issue—but rather an indication of their failure to bring such major turns into the centre of the editorial policy of their "revolutionary" paper.

The Transitional Programme



"It is a programme for action from today until the beginning of the socialist revolution.

And from the practical point of view what is now the most important strata of the proletariat in the direction of the social revolution".

TROTSKY

30p plus 10p p & p from
WSL, 31 Darimouth Park Hill
London NW5 1HR



Hayward vies with Thatcher for bosses' vote

Workers engaged in trade union struggles and anti-fascist mobilisations, and youth harassed by police provocations, who have gained the distinct impression that police repression is on the increase, are right.

But in case they feel like protesting to their Labour leaders and demanding this trend is reversed, they should take into account that Labour's right wing is openly boasting about the increased cash allocated to the police under Wilson and Callaghan.

Labour's General Secretary Ron Hayward last week chose the pages of that well-known workers' paper the *Financial Times* to spell out the reactionary stand of Labour bureaucrats on "law and order".

Greater resources

Hayward bragged to the *Financial Times* solidly Tory readers that:

"Labour has devoted greater resources to combating rising crime than the Tories ever did. In the life of this Government we have spent £250m or more in real terms on public expenditure covering law and order and protective services than was being spent when we took office. An extra £50m was pumped into the system last year."

Social frustration

Much of this extra cash "pumped in" to the repressive police apparatus was of course siphoned out of education, social services, housing and health spending, thus helping to create the kind of social frustration and unemployment that create violence and other forms of "crime".

Hayward does not reveal how much of last year's extra £50m was spent on training the brutalised thugs of the Special Patrol Group for their picket-busting activities at Grunwick, and their violent attacks on anti-fascists.

Nor does he elaborate on the amounts devoted to protecting meetings and marches held by the National Front from the legitimate hostility of the trade union and labour movement.

Deterrent

But he does make the point that:

"The greatest deterrent to the criminal [not to mention the picket, or the demonstrator] is police on the street. Suggestions that the number of policemen has fallen since the Tories lost office are just untrue Tory propaganda."

"By the end of 1977 Britain had 7,500 more policemen than it did in 1974".

And by the start of 1978 those policemen had conspired with the reactionary Lib-Lab Coalition Government to deprive the workers' movement of the hard-won democratic right to march through London—effectively giving the National Front the right to veto any Labour movement march by declaring their intention to hold a counter-demo.

Hayward, however, is not satisfied with even this number of uniformed state thugs. "We need more", he tells his no doubt enthusiastic businessmen readers.



Hayward

employers that it was the Labour leadership that has finally implemented the Criminal Law Act—which creates a whole new series of offences carrying jail sentences for those engaged in factory occupations, college sit-ins, or squatting in empty accommodation.

"So who can say that Margaret Thatcher is more repressive than us?" is the implicit question throughout the letter.

Hostilities

But of course the ruling class and their spokesmen in the judiciary are not content even with the reactionary moves carried out by the Callaghan regime.

Only last weekend Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls expressed the hostility of the bourgeoisie to the fact that the law is not invoked against unofficial strikes.



Thatcher



Demonstration against the Criminal Law

The law knows no right to strike, said Denning, especially when a strike harms "innocent bystanders", disrupts "essential services" or brings "the country to a halt".

The workers who carry out such strikes are exercising not their rights but their power, he spluttered.

Forbidden

The courts have been forbidden by Parliament to act against strikes "in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute".

Denning wondered why unofficial strikes—sometimes even called contrary to union instruction—should be

exempt from the law. Judges of course stand to the right of the political spectrum.

Warning

But as with McKinnon, they have a habit of putting into words thoughts in the minds of the capitalist class that pays fat salaries.

And with Hayward the entire Labour leadership trying to out-Thatcher the Tories, this is a warning Labour Party militants should not ignore.

The fight to reverse the ban on marches must be stepped up alongside the fight to break the Lib-Lab coalition.

Action needed to halt Front

Major confrontations between fascists and anti-fascists will be necessary to stop the NF holding meetings in the run up to the London council elections in May.

Several Labour-controlled councils have a policy of banning fascists from using their halls.

But to do this in the election period when those standing candidates have a 'right' to the use of school premises for election meetings would involve taking a stand against the law.

Minimal

The likelihood of Labour councils who have obediently imposed savage cuts on public services taking a stand against the law on this issue is—to say the least—minimal.

It is only by the physical intervention of anti-fascists that the NF can be stopped from holding these meetings.

Trades Councils and Labour Parties should be being called on now to make the necessary preparations, to bring together squads of workers from trade unions, Labour Party branches, tenants associations, youth clubs etc to cordon off halls and beat off the fascists.

Clearly the police will be the major obstacle in this process and mass mobilisations will be necessary in each case.

But another obstacle will be all those liberal and bourgeois elements involved in existing anti-fascist organisations who oppose physical attacks on fascists and who want to uphold the law.

In fact all the many such organisations have built exactly these elements into their ranks.

Some were set up in response to the circular last year urging Trades Councils to form anti-racist committees with their local Community Relations Committees.

These morally righteous and useless Uncle Tom bodies, hated by working class blacks, are steered by local political and church worthies and police liaison officers.

In the London borough of Islington, the Communist Party-dominated Trades Council, which had refused to actively defend black youth in the area from police attacks or to campaign for jobs for youth, leapt forward to form a committee for 'racial harmony' with the CRC, where it happily receives assurances of goodwill from the police.

But the Socialist Workers Party-initiated Anti Nazi League suffers similar defects.

This body, instead of being based on a policy of beating fascists off the streets and building a socialist alternative, appeals to individuals regardless of political affiliation, on the basis of moral opposition to fascism.

Thus SWP members and supporters who had so courageously and successfully helped inflict a blow against fascism in Lewisham last July found themselves in Ilford, as members of the ANL, constrained by SWP stewards to 'orderly behaviour' beyond the police cordon.

Leading ex-Liberal spokesman, Peter Hain had promised 'peaceful' activities and had welcomed the two month ban on all marches in London as a 'victory'.

From their previous refusal to mobilise the workers movement as a whole in confrontation with the fascists the SWP have apparently swung with the ANL to opposing any confrontation at all.

Many of the local committees against racism and fascism begun and coordinated by the IMG, are similarly popular-frontist class alliances, including church figures and Liberals.

Some, however, are labour movement bodies fought for through trades councils.

The approach of the International Marxist Group seems to be to set up some kind of organisation and decide the policies later.

The national co-ordinating newspaper *CARE*, carries no statement of policies whatsoever, gives no explanation of the causes of fascism, and says not a word of the necessary socialist solution.

Nor does it criticise trade union and Labour Party leaders, who, by their strangling of workers' struggles hold back the development of the socialist movement and are themselves responsible for the problems which provide the breeding ground for fascism.

Liquidation

This problem of bankrupt and reactionary leaders is the key problem facing the working class.

The liquidation of an allegedly Trotskyist organisation like the IMG into such a 'popular' and apolitical campaign follows directly from its Pabloite, 'Socialist Unity' perspective of forming an alliance with any 'left' tendency in the hope of 'reforming' them to revolutionary positions.

But the fight against fascism is a class question. Anti-fascist committees must be based on workers organisations.

Workers must rely on their own strength, and combine the fight against the fascists with the fight for socialist policies to solve the problems of low wages, unemployment and bad housing.

Central to this struggle is the fight to break workers from, and overthrow the existing labour movement bureaucracy.



PHOTO: Laurence Sparham, IFL

PRESS GANG KKKlick

David Duke, the Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan made sure to pack his flowing white robes before setting out for England.

His aim of securing links with the fascists in this country seems to have been a secondary one.

Most of his time in this country was spent in clandestine interviews with fascinated reporters and posing for pictures.

One by one newspapers and radio stations made contact with the "elusive" Wizard in unnamed suburbs, anonymous pubs or over the telephone.

In each interview the American fascist pressed for

white races to visit each other. In each interview his super-human powers to avoid being found by the police were heightened.

The radio reporter who told Duke that his views were "repugnant" was a rarity.

More typical were those who allowed him to rant on for five minutes at a time about 'white supremacy' and the need for 'racial purity'.

Duke's ambition, so he said, was to have a tourist-type shot taken of him in his robes in front of the Houses of Parliament.

It was the press who drove him to the appropriate spot on the embankment, watched while he slipped into his robes and snapped away with their cameras while he posed.

every single Fleet Street paper obliged by broadcasting his picture on Page 1.

Most billed him in a role. The familiar world coziness of the made the picture editors of Fleet Street feel safe harm.

Yet that is the same exactly that the NF accorded less than a ago.

Fascinated, strangely attracted and efficiently repelled Fleet Street has done for the KKK the fast talking fascist not do for himself—given them the publicity crave.

When Duke packed white robes for Britain knew what he was doing knew the press would bring him down.

"Under the influence of the betrayal by the historical organisations of the proletariat, certain sectarian moods and groupings of various kinds arise or are regenerated at the periphery of the Fourth International".

Transitional Programme.
This was how Trotsky in 1938 characterised the political origins of sectarian elements whose positions, then and now, have always threatened to liquidate the programme and principles of Trotskyism into sterile propaganda circles and discussion clubs, divorced from the practical struggle to build a revolutionary leadership in the working class.

The decision last month by twenty two members of the Workers Socialist League to resign from the Trotskyist movement, and to seek fusion with the sectarians of the International Spartacist tendency is clear proof that the political essence of Trotsky's warning has not been fully grasped even today.

Sheer arrogance

The twenty-two—not one of whom had been part of the original nucleus that formed the Workers Socialist League in sharp opposition to sectarianism in December 1974—devoted the 11 weeks of discussion prior to their departure at the WSL's Second Annual Conference to attacking every aspect of the record and programme of the movement they had joined.

The leading members of this sectarian grouping displayed their particular talent for combining fraudulence with ignorance and sheer arrogance by usurping the title "Trotskyist Faction" and entitling their revisionist opposition document "In Defence of the Revolutionary Programme".

In taking space in our press to examine the political issues involved in the desertion of these forces we are not so much concerned to answer their lame and largely dishonest arguments for withdrawal from the class struggle.

Our purpose is much more to ensure that our movement and supporters draw the necessary political lessons from the struggle, and gain a clearer assessment of the political problems confronting the working class as a whole—of which the factional struggle within the WSL was a reflection.

Exasperation

Trotsky analysed sectarianism as the product of frustration within certain layers of the workers movement at the betrayals carried out by their leaders.

This is then coupled with the frustration of layers within or around the revolutionary movement at their inability to win workers to their programme.

In their exasperation, sectarians lose patience with the struggle for revolutionary leadership, and seek to substitute the issuing of stern ultimatums for the painstaking intervention needed to win workers to Marxism.

"At their base lies a refusal to struggle for partial and transitional demands, i.e., for the elementary interests and needs of the working masses, as they are today. . . . They propose turning their backs on the 'old' trade unions, i.e., to tens of millions of organised workers—as if the masses could somehow live outside of the conditions of the actual class struggle! They remain indifferent to the inner struggle within reformist organisations—as if one could win the masses without



PHOTO: John Sturrock, Report

Heathrow engineers vote to continue their strike

the Workers Socialist League were no exception to this general characterisation.

Seeking to substitute wooden dogma and rigid formulae for the flexible demands and tactical approach of the Trotskyist movement, they grew impatient with every contradiction that conflicted with their schemas.

It is no coincidence that their documents and their contributions in the pre-conference discussion always studiously avoided coming to grips with the real contradictions inherent in the class struggle—the very contradictions that offer opportunities for the revolutionary movement to develop.

In particular they made no reference whatever in their 14-page "positions document" to the international economic crisis of capitalism.

At the centre of this crisis is the desperate attempt by the bourgeoisie in every country to halt the fall in the rate of profit.



Lenin addressing workers

This objective economic crisis—itsself the product of the irreconcilable contradictions of the capitalist system—provides the material basis for political developments.

It forces the employers in every country onto the offensive against the working class, not simply on the wages front, but also through the drive towards rationalisation, speed-up, mass sackings, and cuts in public spending programmes and social services.

At the same time the intensifying competition for international markets in a period of recession opens up a period of escalating trade war and protectionism—containing within it the threat of a renewed world war.

Under these conditions the scope that existed in the 1950s and 1960s for capitalism to concede reforms to head off the growing strength

The reformist trade union and Labour leaders and the Stalinists who oppose the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and argue for 'peaceful', Parliamentary action by workers are now transformed into the open policemen of wage control and speed-up—and are increasingly sucked into the most brazen collaboration with the employers and their institutions, as shown by the Lib-Lab coalition deal and the growth of "worker participation" schemes throughout industry.

Determination

The opposite to this rightward movement by both the capitalist class and their lackeys within the workers' movement is the continuing strength and militancy of the working class itself.

Again and again workers have shown their capacity, their willingness and, given a lead, their determination to struggle not only against the employers but also against the Labour leaders in the government and against their own treacherous union leadership.

Leyland toolmakers, Port Talbot electricians, Heathrow engineers and firemen have each in their own way inflicted setbacks on their bureaucratic leaders and come into sharp political conflict with the government.

Real opportunities

It is on the basis of these material conditions, and not on the basis of ideal utopian schemas, that the Workers Socialist League has, since its formation, insisted that real opportunities exist for the fight for the Trotskyist programme within the working class.

The Trotskyist programme sets out, in Trotsky's words:

"... to help the masses in the process of their daily struggle to find the bridge between present demands and the socialist programme of the revolution. This bridge should include a system of transitional demands, stemming from today's conditions and today's consciousness of wide layers of the working class and unalterably leading to one final conclusion: the conquest of power by the proletariat".

By mobilising workers in the fight for demands which correspond to their material problems but lead on to show the necessity to overthrow capitalism, the transitional demands bring workers into head-on conflict with their reactionary leaders, who act in defence of the capitalist system.

In this way the question of new leadership is raised in life within the labour movement.

For the programme to have this effect, it is necessary

IN DEFENCE A REVOLUTIONARY ORIENTA Against sectarian

This is the first part of an extended analysis of the struggle of Marxism which resulted in the split of 22 members of the Second Annual Conference. By John



PHOTO: John Smith, IFL

The firemen's strike — 'selective' trade union work would have left Trotskyists in the role of mere spectators:

"Revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class, and this change is brought about by the political experience of the masses, and never by propaganda alone". (Lenin, *Left Wing Communism*, p.86).

The problem begins when forces in or around the revolutionary movement lose sight of the revolutionary opportunities contained in the contradictory developments of the class struggle—and respond simply to surface impressions and appearances. Their view becomes one-sided and cut off from the movement and the conflict that must be the life-blood of revolutionary intervention.

Transitory moods within the working class become mistaken for profound shifts; the apparent "strength" of the bureaucracy is mistaken as a sign of the "weakness" or "illusions" of the working class; and the economic crisis is viewed as a static factor, within which possibly the employers could hold back from attacking the working class.

Such an approach represents a capitulation to the empirical methods of bourgeois commentators.

It leads to two, apparently different types of response. The opportunist response

class—softening the fight for transitional demands, accommodating to "left" bureaucrats, abandoning points of principle in the search for an easy "unity" which might offer a short term increase in numbers.

"Politically backward"

This kind of approach is typified in Britain by the chameleon-like International Marxist Group, and internationally by the "United" Secretariat of the Fourth International.

The sectarian response to the difficulties of intervening in the working class is to avoid the struggle altogether.

The sectarian brands the workers as too "politically backward" to merit the attention of his group of (inevitably petty-bourgeois) "professional revolutionaries".

The time is never quite right for him to transform his copious flow of words into even the most modest form of action.

Sooner than make a mistake, or sully a principle, the sectarian will do nothing at all. Trotsky summed up their attitude in the Transitional Programme.

Sterile

"These sterile politicians generally have no need of a

the other shore. They simply dawdle in one place, satisfying themselves with a repetition of the selfsame meagre abstractions. Political events are for them an occasion for comment but not for action".

The most chemically pure form of a sectarian organisation today is the international Spartacist tendency.

We will show in due course however that all their efforts to guard against opportunism by abstaining from action have been to no avail—and that the most bankrupt reformist positions coexist in their propaganda alongside the most hysterical ultimatums to the working class.

But this link between opportunism and sectarianism is no accident—it is the rule.

The apparent contrast between the opportunist's lightminded contempt for principles and the sectarian's lightminded contempt for practical work is only a difference in form.

In practice, since neither the opportunist nor the sectarian will fight for transitional demands against the existing reformist and Stalinist leaders of the working class without an alternative programme or leadership. While it may score a

CE OF IONARY TION abstention

against sectarian revisions of
Workers Socialist League at its
Lister.



tors.

Spartacists merely preserve it in brine, withholding its demands from the living struggle, the actual consequence of each position is the same.

The intimate working relations between opportunism and sectarianism are most clearly demonstrated by the curious hybrid positions advocated by the Workers Revolutionary Party.

On the one hand the WRP scorns the fight for trans-

leadership proclaims its international movement—the International Committee—is the only defender of Trotskyist principles, and the Trotskyist movement: on the other hand they grovel unashamedly to the Gaddafi dictatorship, to bourgeois nationalist forces in the Middle East and to Vietnamese Stalinism.

The most rank opportunism features side-by-side with ultra-left sectarian positions.

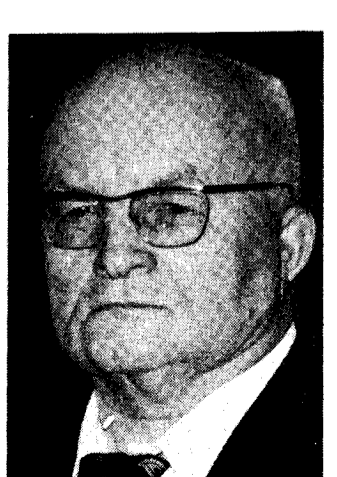
Class context

In devoting considerable attention to tracing the roots of sectarianism and its close links to opportunism we may appear to have digressed from our examination of the recent split in the Workers Socialist League.

But our political struggle cannot be understood outside of its material and class context.

Because while the fake "Trotskyist" faction within the WSL dressed up their arguments with ringing statements about internationalism and the history of our movement, their *real* starting point was petty bourgeois timidity in the face of the daunting task of constructing a Trotskyist party in this country based on the working class.

A second article will examine more closely the positions argued by these



WRP leader G. Healy—WRP demonstrates link between opportunism and sectarianism.

itional demands, and advocates in their place simply the expropriation of all major industry: on the other hand WRP members join class collaborationist "participation" committees.



Trotsky

national questions.

We should point out here, however, that while there were many points of disagreement on the historical points thrown in for discussion by these people, none of those points provided grounds for a split.

Nor were they seriously argued as such. The real interest of the opposition was in withdrawal from the class struggle of today.

This was why it was no accident that their arguments, conveyed with a frenzy of arm-waving histrionics, failed to convince a single one of the industrial workers within our movement.

Jaded

The petty bourgeois forces they did attract were a motley combination of raw, inexperienced new members, intermingled with jaded individuals weary of politics, and a number of individuals that responded to the inevitable problems of building a movement in the working class by running away.

These people had, for varying reasons, failed to participate or learn from the major qualitative development of the Workers Socialist League in 1977.

During that year our movement succeeded in a number of areas in sinking far deeper roots into the working class movement.

Important new layers within the movement were trained to the point where they are capable of intervening and giving firm leadership in workers' struggles.

Rationalisation

But such a change did not emerge spontaneously. A sustained fight had to be waged against certain petty bourgeois elements within the movement who resisted becoming directly involved in the class struggle, and those who deterred by their own failures to develop such work in the past sought out "easy" solutions.

The self-styled "Trotskyist" Faction epitomised that resistance, and in its document gave a political rationalisation for the abstention of such people from all forms of practical struggle—whether it be trade union work, or sales of our weekly paper.

Their statement on trade union work was a masterpiece of dishonesty blended with diplomacy:

"The WSL's trade union work has no overall national plan, and is without clear perspectives. No attempt has been made to concentrate forces in particular factories or unions of importance. In an unconscious way the WSL has turned to work in support of particular strikes as a primary field of activity, without

any consideration of what political lessons can be drawn from them, and with no consideration of whether we have the resources to do this work without damaging other fields of work, or the training of cadres".

The whole passage circuitously avoids stating the *real* thought in the minds of the authors: the belief that cadres can be "trained" by *abstaining* from intervention in particular strikes.

Linked to this is the repulsive notion that Trotskyists should clinically assess the possible benefits to be gained for their movement before supporting workers in struggle.

Preparation

The question that arises, of course, is *what are we training cadres for?* Are they to be professional talkers, debaters, commentators.

Or are they to lead struggles of workers in preparation for the time of the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism?

The Workers Socialist League is absolutely convinced that the second answer is the correct road for Marxists.

We must fight in the class struggle where it erupts; and we must build and strengthen our support where no open struggles are yet in progress.

The sectarians took a very different view. Falsely accusing the WSL of undertaking "haphazard 'mass work'", they went on to counterpose the petty bourgeois daydream of smoothly-run, "planned" trade union groups, based on the full transitional programme.

These, they informed amazed WSL members, should be built:

"in selected factories and trade unions, where our work will have the maximum political impact, and which can serve as an example of how communists do trade union work".

Once again, the essence of the sectarian policy of "selecting" exemplary areas of work is the decision to *withdraw* from and *ignore* other areas of work.

Spectator

And, to be consistent, this must be adhered to regardless of developments in the class struggle.

If such a fanciful schema had been adopted at the First Annual Conference of the WSL, then we would have found ourselves reduced to the role of sideline spectator on almost every one of the major struggles that erupted in the course of 1977!

These struggles—which involved questions of government and the power of the state—began with such outwardly unpromising sections as unorganised and immigrant workers in engineering and film processing plants and the catering trade, as well as apparently conservative layers of skilled engineers, electricians and firemen.

Nobody could have predicted that these sections would lead major struggles.

But then to believe that Marxists can in advance "select" and move into the arena of the main class battles is as dangerous and reactionary an illusion as the IMG's eternal search for a "new mass vanguard" of ready-made politically independent workers with whom the IMG can simply "fuse".

Petty bourgeois notion

The concept that underlies this whole refusal to intervene in workers' living struggles is the petty bourgeois notion that Marxists can be recruited and trained on the basis of words, ideas and abstract propaganda alone.

This was spelled out in an underlined passage in the

document":

"Revolutionaries today like the Left Oppositionists of the 30s, will not assemble their initial forces primarily through a strategy of direct recruitment of trade-union militants whom we have been able to lead in struggle, but through a central emphasis on the struggle to win subjectively revolutionary elements in the workers' movement through the power of our ideas, of our programme."

Trotsky held a very different view of the relationship between propaganda and practical work. Rather than counterposing propaganda to agitation work within the working class, the Transitional Programme spells out the essential need to *combine* them, defining the period as:

"a pre-revolutionary period of agitation, propaganda and organisation".

He went on:

"The present epoch is distinguished not for the fact that it frees the revolutionary party from day-to-day work but because it permits this work to be carried on indissolubly with the actual tasks of the revolution".

The Transitional Programme stresses that it is only on the basis of *practical* struggle that the bureaucracy can be defeated.

Class society

And unless Trotskyists demonstrate their ability to fight the bureaucracy, they will be unable to win the best elements of workers.

Propaganda, Trotsky spelled out, is not enough:

"By means of propagandistic literature, if it is good, one can educate the first cadres, but one cannot rally the proletarian vanguard, which lives neither in a circle nor in a schoolroom but in a class society, in a factory, in the organisations of the masses, a vanguard to whom one must know how to speak in the language of its experiences.

The best prepared propagandist circles must inevitably disintegrate if they do not find contact with the daily struggle of the masses...

During revolutionary events the masses do not inquire for the address of this or that sect, but leap over it".

All the high sounding sectarian calls of winning "subjectively revolutionary elements" by the "power of our ideas" is an elaborate cover for their *real* programme of action—professionally intervening in revisionist and centrist meetings, attempting to score debating points and win sectarian elements within those 'left' groups.

Insofar as the WSL has successfully won forces from other left groups it has been on the basis of our serious approach to the struggle for the programme of Trotskyism within the working class.

Abstention

Yet the sectarians would have us engage in an endless abstract debate completely divorced from any practical work in the mass organisations of the working class!

Trotsky had little time for such a position:

"It is not enough to create a correct programme. It is necessary that the working class accept it. But the sectarian, in the nature of things, comes to a stop upon the first half of the task. Active intervention into the actual struggle of the worker masses is supplanted for him by an abstract propaganda of a Marxist programme".

(Trotsky, *Writings 1935-61*)

Having decided to throw aside the approach embodied in the Trotskyist programme the sectarians within the WSL followed their Spartacist mentors into the most remote wilds of sectarian abstention.

Next week:

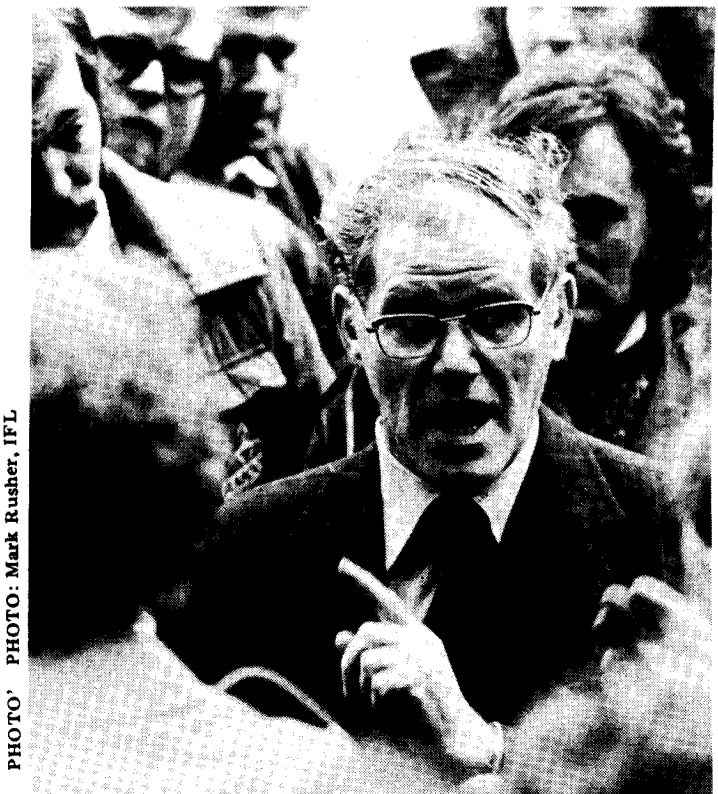


PHOTO: Mark Rusher, IFL

Deakinism and the TGWU witchhunters

By Di Parkin

Though the witch-hunt and attack orchestrated against the nine Cowley militants by the TGWU bureaucracy and other agents of the right wing trade union apparatus is without parallel in recent years, it is not unique in the history of the British labour movement.

At periods of crisis when the struggle between labour and capital is at a sharp point the employing class has frequently been unable to carry through plans unaided and has needed to act through its minions, the treacherous trade union bureaucrats.

Shabby trail

The period of particular parallel with today is the early 1950s when extreme right wing General Secretary Arthur Deakin blazed the shabby trail now being followed by Region 5 officials.

Deakin set a new style of dictatorial rule over the TGWU, which is now fighting to become Britain's least democratic union.

But nothing starts completely from scratch.

Deakin himself learnt his methods and built up his techniques from an earlier



Bevin

period of witch-hunts in the TGWU which took place long before the name 'McCarthy' meant anything.

In the 1920s, the major oppositional force within the trade union movement had been the Communist Party, organised initially within the Minority Movement.

Rank and File

Following the defeat of the 1926 General Strike the Minority Movement was reorganised as a Rank and File movement based on

trade union branches and shop stewards' organisations.

This Rank and File movement was strong in the bus workers' section of the TGWU and produced the paper *The Busman's Punch*.

Its particular base was in the Central London Bus Committee of the TGWU, as the Movement had the support of the 31/50 branches of London busmen.

Independent

Then, as now, the union bureaucracy could not tolerate the existence of a body outside its control—a body which instead reflected the independent interest of the working class.

In acting against it the TGWU used the infamous Black Circular issued by the TUC General Council in 1934 which asked the executives of unions 'to give consideration to the possibility of drawing up regulations or amending the rules of your organisations so as to empower them to reject the nominations of members of disruptive bodies for any official positions within your organisation'.

Rule change

For "disruptive bodies" read—militant bodies

prepared to fight for the working class, including, at that time, the Communist Party.

At the same time the TGWU adopted a change of rule, requiring members to sign a declaration to "observe the constitution of the union"—a declaration designed to leave the door open for vague and unspecified allegations against militants.

In the 1930s it was the London busmen who received the attentions of the TGWU's kangaroo noosemen.

Constitutional

During a strike over wages and for the seven hour day at the time of the coronation of George VI in 1937, the Central London Area Bus Committee refused to accept the Executive Committee's document on the strike.

They put out their own leaflet and printed material in the *Daily Worker*.

As the Committee was a constitutional body of the union, there was little the bureaucracy felt able to do about it.

Bevin, (later the infamous

minister of Labour in the war coalition and then TGWU General Secretary) spoke in 1937 of the impossibility of carrying out his "duties" (ie. suppressing workers' struggles) when there was an "organisation within an organisation". Clearly Bevin objected to the existence of a body prepared to defend the working class!

He instituted a Finance and General Purposes Committee inquiry into "unofficial" movements.

This star chamber inquiry led to a motion being forced through the Biennial Delegate Conference of the TGWU.

Under the provisions the rights of members to take part in unofficial action, affiliate to 'unofficial' bodies, or issue journals or literature not authorized by the union, or even to hold unofficial meetings, were drastically curtailed.

Suspended

It also gave the TGWU bureaucracy the ability to proscribe organisations which dealt with wages, hours, conditions, in a manner they thought to be detrimental to

the union.

After the bus strike the Central London Area Bus Committee was suspended and the eight leaders either expelled or banned from the union office; among these eight were Bert Papworth and Bill Jones.

Reinstated

Some militants at this point tried to set up a break-away union the National Passenger Workers Union.

The CP policy however, was correctly to oppose such breakaways and instead to raise the demand "strengthen the union and change the leadership."

Papworth and Jones were eventually reinstated into the TGWU after massive protests, and they remained to fight the TGWU bureaucracy under Deakin in the post-war period.

Once again they were to be witch-hunted and purged

in the grand era of anti-communism in the unions—the early 1950s.

Next week

Deakin and anti-communism.



TGWU Region 5 Secretary Brian Mathers arguing his way past Cowley transport drivers outside the Kangaroo Court last month

IN REVIEW

AVOID THIS PLAY!

Sheilagh Priestman reviews Steve Burchol's play 'East' showing at the New London Theatre, in the West End.

One of the delights of the middle class has always been to laugh at the comic and quaint ways of workers.

Big fat ladies with shrimp-sized husbands on seaside postcards; Woodbines and curlers; hobnail boots, cloth caps and clogs—funny lot the working class.

Entering a West End thea-

gruesome experience—the audience well groomed and trendily dressed—full of supposedly sparkling ideas and theories about art and culture and life.

The New London surpasses this. The foyer is shared with a smart restaurant and there is great danger of getting entangled with

you up to the bar area with elegant furnishings, and halves of lager for 30p served from a stall resembling a space module whose shutters descend automatically.

Having survived that ordeal and got inside the theatre—like a carpark with carpets—a worse ordeal was to follow.

This was recommended as a brilliant piece of parody on working class life in East London—in fact it was a piece of titillation for the middle class audience.

The characters were stock figures: Dad in overalls and boots; Sylv, a peroxide tart; two 'bovver boys' and mum, of course wearing scarf, curlers and slippers. Mum was for some reason played by a man, so she looked like the 'women' in Monty Python.

That was one of the first direct copies from something else, closely followed by the Dad figure being a classic Alf Garnett racist and patriot.

One of the lads worked in a boring men's wear shop with an awful employer who forced people into nasty garments 'just your shade sir'.

His meanness was well described. But of course this em-

type in the book was trotted out. Doubtless the author and 'sophisticated' audience saw these as being parodies of something but they were not challenged within the context of the play.

There is no parody in offering the remark that when mum got old 'her tits hung below her mini-skirt'—roars of laughter from the audience.

The play—whose plot is largely irrelevant—was obsessed with the sexual obsessions of its very male and manly young heroes who described with great relish their different sexual exploits, reducing women to a combination of sexual parts.

The young female does protest but only in terms of wishing she was a man.

This simply added to the notion that men and their sexual powers are marvellous and women necessarily passive objects who will end up by being flabby, feeling-

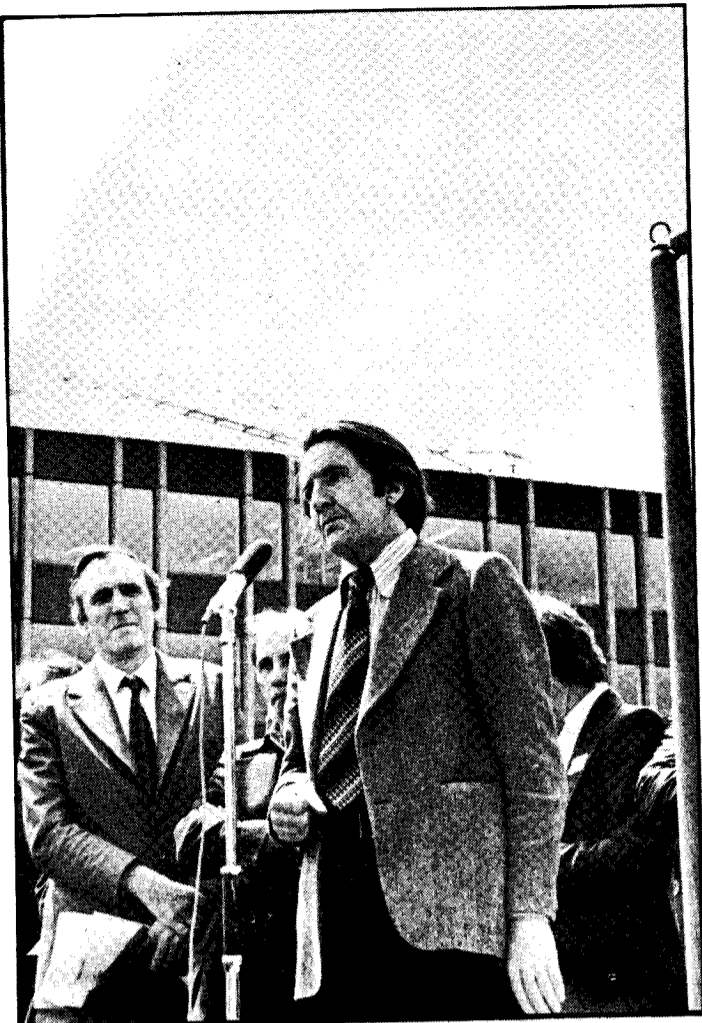
This sexism dripped from every part of the play, as did its view of the working class as violent and unmannerly people who spit cake out when they speak.

The tone of patronage and insult was so appalling that your reviewer was unable to stay until the end.

Doubtless some trendy twist in the tail at the end attempted to undo the harm done all the way through; but short of turning the house lights on and interrogating the audience as to why they found Jews, blacks, and women and workers so degradingly amusing, there was no redemption possible.

Obscene

There is something fundamentally obscene about the 'workers' being offered up to middle class theatre goers to titillate and amuse them. Avoid this play!



'Left' Dennis Skinner—wheeled out by Stalinists to address a Parliamentary lobby

When Harold Wilson said that 'Labour is now the natural party of government', he was expressing in his own way the truth that as the capitalist crisis has intensified since the mid 1960s, the reformists have become the main agency for the maintenance of bourgeois rule in Britain.

Since Labour came into government in 1964, it has dealt with the working class through a series of wage freezes and by deliberately induced unemployment.

Collaboration

These policies have won increasing support from the trade union bureaucracy and have been responsible for the first falls in workers' living standards since the 1930s.

The short period of Tory rule in the early 1970s showed many sections of the capitalist class the necessity for the active class collaboration of the trade union and Labour leaders and convinced them that the policies of confrontation could only lead them to disaster.

This period has also shown clearly the immense strength of the working class.

It was the action of the working class which in 1969 defeated Labour plans to shackle the unions contained in the notorious In Place of Strife White Paper.

Successes

It was the action of the working class which forced back the anti-union legislation of the Tory administration of 1971-4, and it was the strike of the miners and the support they secured that forced the Tories out of office in 1974.

These battles have won unprecedented successes for the British working class.

They have been accompanied by unprecedented betrayals by their leaders and the growth of 'participation' and class collaboration of a particularly vicious kind.

The successes of this period of class struggle and the gains which have been made as a result of the mobilisation of the working class, have not caused large numbers of workers to turn away from their traditional mass organisations.

Centrist organisations like the Socialist Workers Party

OUR POLICIES

Make the 'Lefts' fight

By John Docherty

which offer themselves as 'the alternative' to social democracy have failed to pick up any substantial numbers of workers as their membership shows, or even widespread support, as can be seen from their votes in by-elections.

Very limited

This should not come as a surprise. As Trotsky put it in writing on *The Class, the Party and the Leadership*:

"Workers in general do not easily break with the party that awakens them to conscious life . . . (It is not) as if the proletariat was in a well-stocked shoe store, selecting a new pair of boots. Even this simple operation, as is well known, does not always prove successful. As regards new leadership, the choice is very limited. Only gradually, only on the basis of its own experience, through several stages, can the broad layers of the masses become convinced that a new leadership is firmer, more reliable, more loyal than the old."

The overthrow of capitalism will only be carried out by a revolutionary party which can take the working class through these 'several stages'.

Verbal support

At this point within the British working class, as workers move into struggle they come up against the 'left' wing of social democracy which expresses verbal support for struggles against the right wing, but works ceaselessly to tie the working class to reformism.

In every great battle of the working class—from the miners strike to Grunwicks

and the firemen's struggle—the 'left' MPs are to be seen doing their regulation stint on the picket line in front of the TV cameras, abetted by the Stalinists, who constantly reiterate the opinion that there is no further need to develop any struggle against the bureaucracy because of the fact that 'somebody up there loves you'.

The Stalinists and left reformists insist at every turn that workers do not need to be further mobilised, to go beyond spontaneous struggle, to break with their misleaders because, they claim, there is another way forward—through appeals to the 'lefts'.

These phenomena are of central importance in the development of the class struggle.

The 'lefts' provide the main ideology and leader-

ship for rank and file Labour Party members, as voting results from the constituency parties for the Labour NEC will show.

'Unmasking'

The 'left' provides at the same time all the excuses for those who can see no way to oppose the Lib-Lab coalition and the policies of the right wing.

The 'lefts' pose as an alternative, but provide none.

And just in case the workers become disillusioned with the empty words of the 'lefts', then there will be an article or an interview in the Stalinist *Morning Star* which will try to bolster the 'lefts' as supporters of action and militancy.

For all of these reasons it is essential to develop an



PHOTO: John Sturock, Report

Delegates at the LCDTU conference—arena for lefts

orientation towards exposing the 'left' wing of social democracy.

Such a policy is even more timely now after long periods of social democratic government than it was when Trotsky wrote it in 1926 that:

"The present stage in the development of the British proletariat where its overwhelming majority responds sympathetically to the speeches of the 'lefts' and supports MacDonald and Thomas (ie the right) in power is not of course accidental. And it is impossible to leap over this stage. The path of the Communist Party [not of course the Stalinist mutation of later years], as the future great party of the masses, lies not only through an implacable struggle against capital's special agency in the shape of the Thomas-MacDonald clique, but also by the systematic unmasking of the left muddleheads by means of whom alone MacDonald and Thomas can maintain their positions". (*Writings on Britain*, vol II, p.153).

J.E. Brown

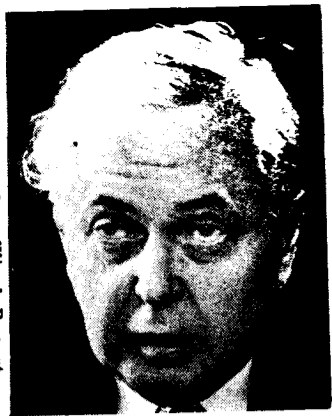


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Wilson

undertake such 'systematic unmasking' by simple propaganda and denunciation—though of course there must be some of this.

To leave it at that is the method of sectarian blockheads, who aim simply to convince *themselves*, while leaving the masses under the tutelage of their present leaders.

This is why it is necessary for revolutionaries at this stage to place *demands* on the 'lefts' as part of the struggle to expose them before the masses, to bring workers one step nearer breaking from their present leaders and espousing the independent revolutionary leadership essential for their success.

Exposure

While explaining the treachery of the 'lefts', we in the Workers Socialist League at the same time fight alongside those workers who continue to place confidence in them, by demanding that these 'lefts' vote against the Lib-Lab coalition; that they themselves take part in mobilising the working class against wage freezing and unemployment; and that they launch a fight to drive out the right wing Healey-Callaghan clique.

Only by the fight on these policies and the exposure of the refusal of the 'lefts' to carry out such a struggle will workers in the Labour Party and elsewhere who retain confidence in the 'lefts' be convinced of the need to make a definitive break from reformism.

Only such a break will make it possible to confront the struggle for power.

Retain confidence

It cannot be seriously said that to place demands on the 'lefts', to demand that they should be as good as their word, is to place any confidence in them or to support them as against the right.

So long as they retain the confidence of any sections of workers, it would be wrong *not* to place demands on the 'lefts' because this could simply be to leave these workers with their illusions and to accept their arguments that there is nothing they can do.

It is sometimes said that the 'lefts' do not have the support of significant sections of workers.

But so long as the great majority remain in their traditional organisations and come into conflict with the right wing as they have done constantly in recent years then the role of the 'lefts' as the means of heading off independent struggle will remain significant.

Possibilities

As workers' struggle develop in the next period more and more sharply against the bureaucracy, the possibilities of a clear break with all sections of reformism are posed.

The development of an independent revolutionary party will then take place not by the proclamation of necessity, but through the process of struggle within the mass organisations.

Those who are sensitive to the nature of this break will be capable of leading the revolutionary party necessary for the overthrow of capital.

No-'Annie' offers no comfort

Leeds,
6th March 1978

Dear Comrades,

I must take issue with the review of *Annie Hall* in S.P. 89.

I am tempted to take the review line by line, so riddled is it with contradictions, but I will instead confine myself to a few general remarks.

Comrade Thompson rightly observes in her title and elsewhere that a central feature of the film is neurosis, but, what she fails to observe, is that it is the central feature.

Most of Allen's work has centred on neurosis and this film must mark the present point that that work has reached.

Comrade Thompson then moves on from a recognition of neurosis as an ingredient in the film to say that the film as a whole is 'balm for neurotics' and that 'it is a parado-

xically calming, reassuring little film'.

Far from it: I found the film perplexing and difficult, as must Comrade Thompson if she so missed the point.

The point is this, neurosis is a product of bourgeois society. The family in bourgeois society generates neuroses which are reinforced by experiences outside the family.

Woody Allen is that neurosis personified. He now looks for a new relationship which will be different and isolated from all his other relationships in society: a relationship in which all his fears about society and his place in it will disappear in the face of that relationship.

In this way he hopes his neurosis will disappear. Of course, no relationship separate from the rest of society

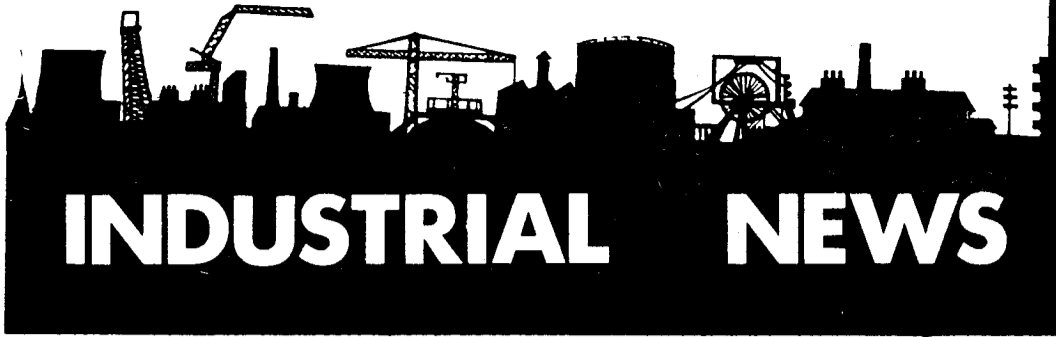
can exist, both parties, (Woody Allen and Diane Keaton in this case), have to relate to the rest of society.

All their attempts to make their solution work are doomed to failure and the failure is made all the more poignant by the fact that 'Annie' is as neurotic as 'Alvie' and is looking for exactly the same solution as he!

All neurotics internalise external problems. A problem for society becomes a neurotic problem and a search for a personal solution becomes the neurotics answer.

The point that the film rams home, (and perhaps Allen never intended this), is that such a search will be futile.

It is for this reason that many neurotics will discover that the film is far from being



INDUSTRIAL NEWS

OCCUPY GEC!

English Electric workers at the GEC factory in Fazakerley, Liverpool, are to be thrown on the scrapheap as yet another factory faces closure in the area.

Martin Jay, managing director of English Electric Consumer Products, said all 670 workers on the plant would lose their jobs.

The firm, which makes electric cookers, has just lost an order from the electricity boards for 55,000 cookers, out of a total production of 63,000. Losses in the last three years are said to be £6 million.

The factory is on the same site as a GEC gear factory employing 2,300 workers whose jobs are said to be what the employers call 'safe'.

Massive changes in working conditions and methods of pay leading to speed-up have been rammed down the

English Electric workers' throats over the past three years.

These have been sold to the workers as necessary for the preservation of their jobs.

Now the brutal lesson of the cynicism of the employers is being brought home in the most bitter way.

The multi-million pound organisation has picked this factory out for closure despite every effort of the workers' leaders to collaborate.

A company spokesman said:

"Since October there has been a significant improvement in performance and many obstacles to improve productivity have been overcome.

But the market for electric cookers remains very low".

Eddie Roberts, TGWU district organiser responded to the news by attacking the competence of management and declaring that he had

done his bit by cooperating with speed up.

Workers at the plant must now see the futility of collaboration.

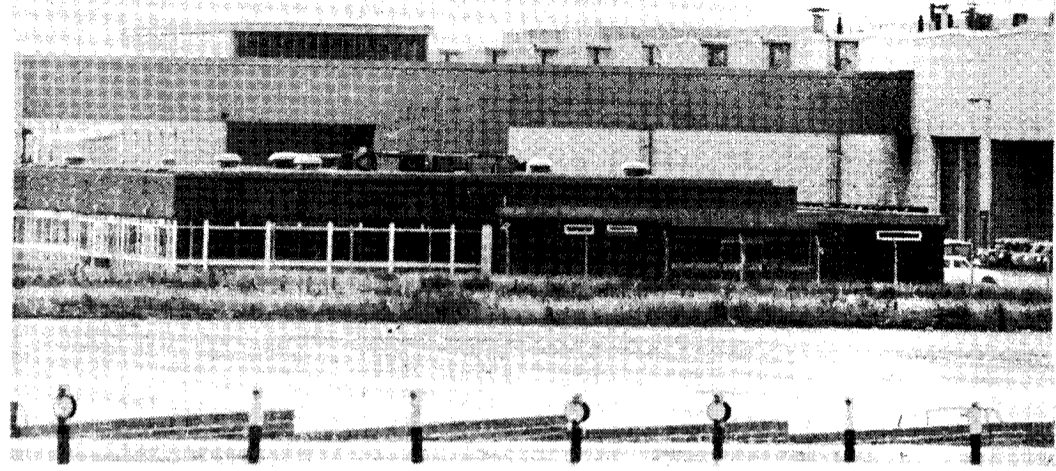
They must build a leadership ready to fight the closure plans and begin to prepare an occupation of the plant.

The workers should strive to draw in the other 2,300 GEC workers on the site into the occupation.

They must demand that the books, plans and inner secrets of GEC are laid bare to an elected workers' committee and that such a firm which cannot or will not meet the demands of its workers must be nationalised under the management of the workforce without a penny in compensation to the owners.

They must also demand a programme of useful work for the factory with all available work shared out among the workforce without loss of pay.

LIVERPOOL: -FIGHT THE SACKINGS!



Speke leadership crisis hits action

The struggle against the closure at Speke No. 2 plant faces very real dangers.

The stewards have put no call for an occupation of the plant and have yet to call a mass meeting to organise a fight against the closure.

In the absence of any clear lead, many workers are saying they will take the redundancy pay.

The more militant stewards argue that they can't stop anyone taking redundancy pay and can only organise a fight with those workers who want to stay.

Mothballs

They are putting forward a utopian scheme for maintaining the plant in mothballs until a future date.

The fight against closure has to also be a fight against the present leadership on the stewards committee.

The convenor and senior stewards have gone right along with participation, and the Edwardes plan which includes the closure of Speke.

Therefore the fight against closure has to also be a fight against participation.

Any talk of maintaining part of the factory is a recipe for failure, since Edwardes'

closure plan can only be defeated by an all-out occupation of the plant.

Confused Basis

The IMG, Big Flame and SWP have come together to form a "Trade Union Defence Committee" for Speke on the completely confused basis of uniting all forces to save Speke.

The first meeting of this committee was held on 7 March with about 25 present but only 8 workers from Speke.

Pat Hickey, IMG steward from Rover Solihull addressed the meeting calling for widespread support to stop the closure and to make the struggle at Speke "another UCS".

Of course he forgot to mention that at UCS the workers accepted massive speed-up and redundancy and that the struggle was in no way a victory for the working class which remained entirely in the hands of reformist and Stalinist misleadership.

The Liverpool Trades Council was praised for having pledged support and organising a conference

against the closure.

However the most likely speaker on the platform of such a conference is Stalinist Derek Robinson, Longbridge convenor and chief participator in the Edwardes plan!

The "Defence" meeting in no way tackled the immediate question which is the struggle for a principled leadership in Speke that can give a clear perspective to the workers of how to fight the closure.

Diversion

This fight must be central and the committee that was set up can only be a diversion if it fails to confront this task.

The closure can only be fought on the clear basis of occupation of the plant and withdrawal from participation.

Instead of collaboration, the books of Leyland and its subsidiaries must be opened to an elected committee of trade unionists to show the need for the nationalisation of Leyland, along with component manufacturers and other car monopolies as part of a planned, integrated car industry, under workers' management.

Save this hospital!

Hospital workers and representatives of the local labour movement are still fighting to save Bethnal Green Hospital in East London.

Socialist Press recently reported a move by their action committee to demand that leaders of the health service unions take serious action in defence of the health service.

Resolutions are being sent through trade union branches calling on the National Executives of NUPE, COHSE and ASTMS to pledge themselves to call all-out area-wide strike action in the event of any attempts by the Area Health Authority to move equipment and patients out of Bethnal Green.

The need to expose and fight the inaction of the trade union bureaucrats is now being seen as more vital than ever.

NUPE leader Alan Fisher (who has made a profession out of talking against government cuts in the health services, has not even bothered to reply to an invitation requesting his presence at a major public meeting being held at York Hall, Bethnal Green in defence of the hospital.

Authority

Many hospital workers now realise that, while happy to sound off on TV and in the newspapers, Fisher prefers to stay away from those who would expect him to talk about action.

The union leaders have the power, the authority and the resources to prepare their membership for the massive struggle needed to defend and improve the health service.

While they refuse to act, workers at Bethnal Green are left to make the best of their situation.

Preparations are being made to ensure regular picketing of the hospital and a meeting of local union representatives is taking place.

But without the leadership needed much energy has been turned in diversionary protest actions.

Several lobbies of management and government bodies, as well as a petition have been organised. Such methods can be useful in so far as they attract new support through the publicity they receive in the labour movement, but when they are the only form of



Fisher postures for press cameras

myth being peddled that other London hospitals (the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and St. Nicholas) have been 'saved' by such methods. In fact no commitment has been made for state finance to the EGA and St. Nicholas will only stay open at the expense of other hospitals.

The central question remains, the need for all out defence of the health service as a whole; strike action and occupations against the cuts; and the battle for state financing of a decent health service through a massive injection of funds with regular increases to meet inflation.

Only this perspective offers a way forward for health workers and the labour movement.

Union leaders must be challenged with these policies. So must 'left' MPs like Ian Mikardo who has declared his support for Bethnal Green Hospital, but continues to give his support in Parliament to the Lib-Lab government that is making the cuts.

No headway will be made under a labour movement leadership that grovels before Callaghan Steel and the ruling class whose profits they are defending at the expense of workers' living standards, jobs and social services.

Expose Wright in office

Terry Duffy, the right wing candidate in the AUEW Presidential election pointed out last week that he had "great difficulty" in finding any disagreement with the positions put by the current President, the one-time 'left' Scanlon.

Scanlon—whose flight to the right has been just as marked as that of his TGWU stable-mate Jack Jones—was the 'left wing' candidate when elected.

But in response to the profits crisis of British capitalism he has vigorously undertaken the job of policing the AUEW's 1.2 million members to enforce speed-up, sackings and wage control.

control exercised by AUEW officers.

He proposes to end the system of regular re-election for officials which has made the AUEW the most democratic of the big unions.

And he wants to amalgamate with the viciously anti-communist leadership of the EETPU, notorious for their suppression of the least resistance from their rank and file.

Best exposed

There is no doubt that Duffy's 'Broad Left' rival Bob Wright will be drawn towards the same path as that traversed by Scanlon. He offers no principled opposition to the right wing.

Yet Wright can be best



stated opposition to the EETPU merger talks.

For this reason *Socialist Press*

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Birds Eye—only a threat to sack? NUIJ chapels picked for victimisation

With major factory closures being announced almost daily on Merseyside, it is clear that the threat of mass sackings is increasingly the means that management use to discipline workers and solve their crisis of profitability.

Management announced on Tuesday 7 March their intention to close the Bird's Eye factory and throw 1,200 workers on the dole.

This followed a 14 week strike by 110 engineers for a pay claim in excess of 10%.

Bird's Eye announced they would pay no redundancy money, since the production workers refused to cross the picket lines and therefore were also on strike!

The closure announcement came the day after T&G production workers had agreed 456 redundancies.

But the 110 engineers were still solid on their original pay claim.

The statement on the closure was therefore management's final attempt to force speed-up and redundancy on the workers.

Climbdown

At the weekend the threat had the desired effect. The engineers voted to call off their strike having failed to win their claim, in the hopes of saving the 1,200 jobs.

Both AUEW and TGWU agreed to submit to every one of the management's demands.

Such a climbdown—

instead of laying plans for the occupation of the Bird's Eye plant and mobilising support throughout the firm—will only strengthen management's determination to press ahead with rationalisation plans.

Predictable

'Left' Labour MP for Kirby, Robert Kilroy Silk's solution to the closure announcement was to call on the coalition government to stop all grants and aid to Bird's Eye's parent company, Unilever.

Callaghan's predictable reply to this pathetic gesture was that grants to the giant Unilever monopoly must continue—but that workers on Merseyside must stop going on strike!

Journalists on 18 provincial newspapers stand in severe danger of being thrown to the wolves as part of the NUIJ's annual wages deal.

They work on eighteen papers which have yet to grant backdating on the 10% pay rise to January 1. All but six of the chapels still involved are confronted by the same management—Westminster Press.

Backdating

Provincial employers—members of the Newspaper Society—refused to backdate the pay agreement after the NUIJ successfully imposed sanctions to force changes in a clause on local pay claims over and above the national agreement.

Now almost all of the 200 plus NUIJ chapels in the Newspaper Society have forced their employers to give ground on backdating through local action. Those that are left are being lined up by the employers for a thorough dose of union bashing. All non-union journalists have already received the increase of £7.09 a week.

Penalty period

Offers made to NUIJ members seek to extract a penalty period for applying sanctions of anything up to

six weeks.

It is no coincidence that among the Westminster Press chapels singled out for attack are some which proved a thorn in the management's side during the protracted Darlington 'closed shop' strike—including the Oxford Mail and Times chapel and the Kentish Times chapel.

Outside Westminster Press the Camden and Islington Gazette chapels, who have won a strike a year for the past three years, have also been refused backdating.

Sanctions have now been stepped up on all the remaining papers to the point where union members have all but stopped work. Members are refusing to use the phones, travel by car, work outside 'normal' working hours or start work on a second story until the current story is complete—a rule which is causing long delays.

Mandatory

Meetings are being called in working hours to disrupt production.

The South Shields chapel, growing frustrated at the delay, has been in a mandatory chapel meeting for two weeks.

But despite the unity and anger of the members the NUIJ nationally has done little but congratulate itself on the fact that so many chapels have won.

Those that are left are

demanding that national action is organised in their support. What started as a national (and seemingly trivial) dispute has been translated into a local and fundamental one.

Inadequate

The NUIJ strategy of permitting local deals has been translated into its opposite, in that local managements are being given a free hand to attack their chapels.

Once again the NUIJ leadership is proving itself hopelessly inadequate to the tasks demanded of it.

The work to rule, where vigorously applied, has had a major effect on the newspapers but it has not stopped them appearing. If continued indefinitely it will have a destructive effect on the membership.

While a strike under these conditions—where managements are clearly reluctant to lock out the NUIJ members—is a tactic to be carefully used, immediate steps must be taken to draw back into the dispute chapels which have already settled.

Climbdown

Nothing will have a quicker effect on producing pressure on Westminster Press and the small managements to settle than howls of protest from Thomson Newspapers, United Newspapers and the rest that their chapels are taking action against them.

The employers have virtually allowed the Newspaper Society to cease to exist as an organisation during the dispute. They must be forced to resurrect it as the body which will produce a climbdown.

Impotence

The present strategy of the NUIJ leadership, which amounts to little more than refusing to sign the national agreement until a deal is reached, is a classic example of its wretched poker faced impotence, compounded by an arrogant belief that it is displaying good tactics.

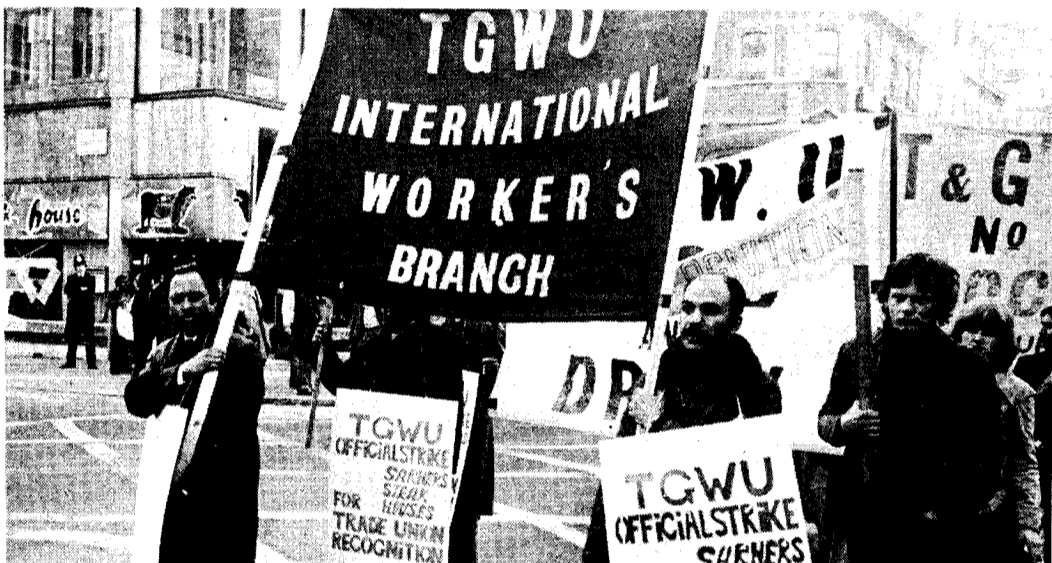


PHOTO: Andrew Ward, Report

Garner workers before the ban on marches

TGWU PREPARES SELL OUT

There is no question of a TGWU District levy to back the Garner Steak House recognition strike, according to Catering Officer George Abraham.

He told strikers on Monday that if they raised such support for Garners strikers they would have to do it for everyone!

This marks a definite shift from Abraham's earlier statements that to get such support "takes time"—and makes it clear that TGWU officials have no intention of fighting this battle to win.

Abraham had earlier revealed TGWU intentions to

sell out the strike in an interview with the *Daily Telegraph* on March 9.

He was prepared to call off the strike immediately, he said, provided only the employers would guarantee no victimisation and would abide by an ACAS recognition inquiry.

Determined

Abraham speaks only for himself, not for the strikers. They are determined to stay out until they win union recognition.

Speeches of this kind, and the treacherous role of the TGWU in not mobilising any real support behind the

strike, creates confusion among the strikers.

The example of Grunwick showed that ACAS is not the solution for recognition, but is designed to subordinate the workers to the machinery set up by the state in order to head off struggle.

The TGWU bureaucracy is doing everything to prevent the all-out confrontation necessary to crack the employers. They continuously refuse to implement the strikers' demands for such a confrontation, with mass picketing and full blacking of Garners Steak Houses.

By such positions TGWU officials represent a real

threat to the strike.

But the fight can and must continue despite Abraham's betrayals. A strike committee responsible to mass meetings of strikers must be elected at once to mobilise forces in this struggle.

The strikers must mobilise for their next trade union branch meeting to pass a resolution and call on Region 1 Committee to implement the following policies:

- *No talks, no return, until the bosses recognise the union!
- *Mass picketing to be organised every Saturday.
- *Blacking of all suppliers,

supplies and maintenance.

*A regional levy to finance the strike.

All messages of support and donations to the strike fund should be sent to: TGWU room 84, 12-13, Henrietta Street, London WC2.

STILL AVAILABLE

"The Hotel Strikes"

Published by the Hotel and Catering Workers National Action Committee
Available, price 35p plus 10p p&p, from WSL, 31, Dartmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR



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LIKE THAT OF ALL SOCIALISTS, THE OFFICIAL'S WORLD IS AN INTERNATIONAL ONE...
...ONLY THE SIDES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THE GUILTY!

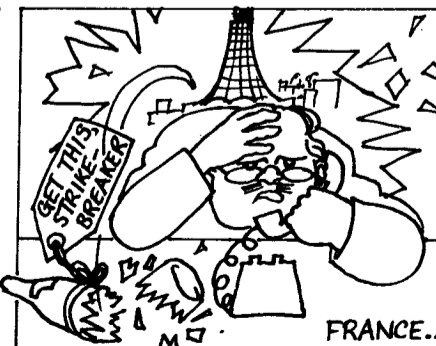
U.S.A...



WEST GERMANY...



YEAH I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN LADS... THE WORKING CLASS IS IN RETREAT HERE TOO!



FRANCE...



ITALY...

SOCIALIST PRESS ★

WORKERS

SLAM TGWU

WITCH-HUNT

Support is clearly mounting within the TGWU for the nine members at British Leyland's Cowley Assembly Plant who are fighting victimisation at the hands of their own union officials.

Around 100 prominent union members—including plant convenors, branch officers, and shop stewards have now sponsored a call for a conference of TGWU members on the issue, to be held in Oxford on April 8 "to discuss the best means of preventing a serious blow to basic trade union rights".

McCarthyism

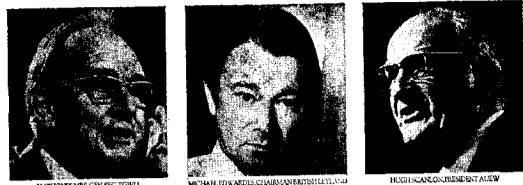
This step is the result of increasing sections of the union becoming aware of the McCarthyite witch-hunt being conducted within Region 5 of the TGWU against the convenor, three deputy convenors, two shop stewards and three other members in the Cowley Assembly Plant. They face recommended



Cowley transport drivers register support for framed up convenors.

sentences including expulsion from the union in the case of deputy convenor Alan Thornett, and banning from all union office for life in the case of fellow deputies Tom White and Frank Corti.

The 'crimes' they are accused of include "campaigning against" officials of the union, disagreeing with the TGWU leadership on wages policy, and walking out of a District Committee meet-



WE'RE ON THE SAME SIDE OF THIS FENCE.

We believe that it is essential for British Leyland to become successful. Not only for everyone who works for the company and its seven thousand different suppliers, but also for its shareholders and for the country.

The loss of Britain's biggest car manufacturer and exporter would wipe out the current benefits of North Sea Oil at a single stroke.

The world is watching Leyland

getting better all the time. Abroad, our friends and competitors alike see the company's progress as a barometer for Britain's very existence as an industrial power.

We have had our disagreements in the past. And no doubt we shall disagree again.

But not on the basic need for management and unions to work together in the difficult, but not impossible task of making Britain's own car company successful again.

BL Great cars—and a great deal more for Britain.

Jones and Scanlon publicly reveal the motive for the Cowley witchhunt—anyone on the other side of the fence is to be suppressed.

ing. The convenors who are now victims of these charges had been reelected to office by popular vote in a factory-wide ballot only three months ago.

Known opponents

But all nine are known for their opposition to wage control, to worker participation, and to the job slashing Edwardes plan for Leyland.

Assembly Plant convenor Bob Fryer had been the only convenor to speak against the plan when it was unveiled at Kenilworth last month.

Alan Thornett is well known throughout the TGWU for his opposition to all forms of class collaboration and his fight at the last union conference for the policy of a sliding scale of wages in opposition to wage controls.

Speke

With British Leyland now being used as a testing ground for the government's policy of wholesale closures, speed-up and sackings—as the closure of the Speke TR7 plant shows—the union leaders who have declared

their full support for such plans, must move ruthlessly to stamp out any principled pole of opposition, if they are to enforce such policies on union members.

If these unprecedented moves to witch-hunt Trotskyists and left wingers in Cowley are successful, then they will become the precedent for similar action against any militant that opposes betrayals by TGWU officials.

All unions

And the fact that right wingers from the AUEW and ASTMS are also already involved in the preparation of the "case" against the Cowley 9 indicates that such witch-hunts will not be confined to the TGWU, but apply to any union where a fight takes place against the leadership.

The large number of sponsors for the April 8 conference indicates the broad hostility within the TGWU to McCarthyite frame-ups.

The Tunnel Miners national branch has passed a resolution and sent telegrams condemning the disciplinary action to Regional and National headquarters.

And TGWU members of the National Port Shop Stewards Committee meeting last Saturday pledged to report the full facts of the case back to docks branches of the union.

Can be stopped

These initial responses show that if decisive action is taken within the TGWU this bureaucratic offensive can be stopped in its tracks, and the right to fight for socialist policies against class collaboration can be restored.

Such a fight would create the conditions in which an entirely new leadership could be built within the TGWU, capable of defending jobs, wages and working conditions.

Resolutions

We urge all TGWU members to support this crucial struggle. Pass resolutions in union branches, stewards committees or other TGWU bodies condemning the witch-hunt and demanding the charges be dropped.

Elect delegates or simply attend the April 8 conference in Oxford.

French CP, SP must break from bosses—take the power!

The acute political and economic crisis of the Fifth Republic in France has by no means been resolved by the results of the first round of the elections, in which the workers' parties won 49.5% and the bourgeois parties, 48.4% of the vote.

As we go to press the news has just come in that an arrangement to ensure that the best-placed workers' party candidate goes forward on the second round has just been concluded between the Socialist and Communist Party leaders.

Also included in this uneasy reformist-Stalinist alliance is protection for their bourgeois stable mates in the class collaborationist "Union of the Left"—the so-called 'Left Radicals'.

But despite this one thing

workers' parties will want to see some tangible results.

The pressure on CP and SP leaders to come to an arrangement on second round voting was reflected in a statement from the reformist CFDT trade union confederation which pointed out that workers would not understand why any of the worst placed workers' candidates should refuse to withdraw in order to ensure the defeat of the bourgeois candidate.

Stalinist leader Marchais, whose party took 22% of the vote, had seemed to be bending to popular pressure on this issue—while holding out for certain conditions in the 'Common Programme'.

The reason for these manoeuvres has been interpreted in different ways.

'commissars'—as if the French Communist Party retains any more than the name 'Communist'.

But left wingers who argue that Marchais wants to impose a 'left' government are even more confused.

Stalinist Marchais is determined to ensure that any possible government including CP representatives is tied hand and foot to the institutions of the capitalist Fifth Republic.

But his problem is that the aspirations behind workers' votes go well beyond this reactionary aim.

Their support for CP and SP candidates indicates a desire to make a real fight to end the 20 year-old Fifth Republic and bring to power a government that will act in their interests in their struggles to defend jobs, wages and working conditions.

waging a struggle against French capitalism. Both are dedicated to heading off struggles of the working class.

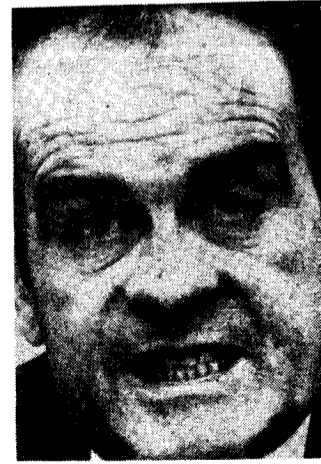
But in forcing these parties into office for the first time since the war, and pressing for their demands in conflict with these leaders, new layers of French workers can begin to learn the necessity for revolutionary leadership.

Demands

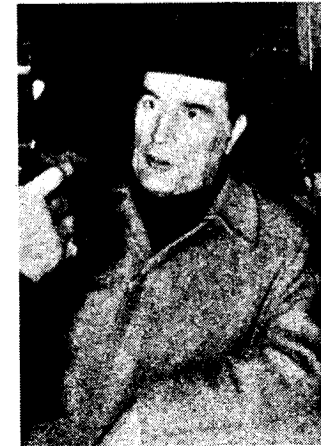
This is why it is vital that revolutionaries aim for the victory of the Communist and Socialist Parties by urging a vote for the best placed workers candidate.

At the same time they must agitate for those socialist demands which a CP-SP government must be forced to implement.

And, while refusing to vote for bourgeois Left Radical candidates workers must fight harder than ever to break their parties from all alliances with such bourgeois political formations and from the reactionary Common Programme that means nothing more than capitulation to the structure of



CP chief Marchais



CP leader Mitterand

FUND

With exactly £205 in so far towards the March monthly fund and half the month now gone it is clear that we are beginning to fall behind.

This means urgent action is needed by our readers and supporters to ensure that the fund, all £600 of it, is raised in full by the end of March.

With costs rising all the time we cannot afford to fall short in the raising of the cash necessary to maintain and develop the coverage of Socialist Press.

All donations to the fund should be sent to: Socialist Press Monthly Fund, 31, Darnmouth Park Hill, London NW5 1HR

MORE DETAILS

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